

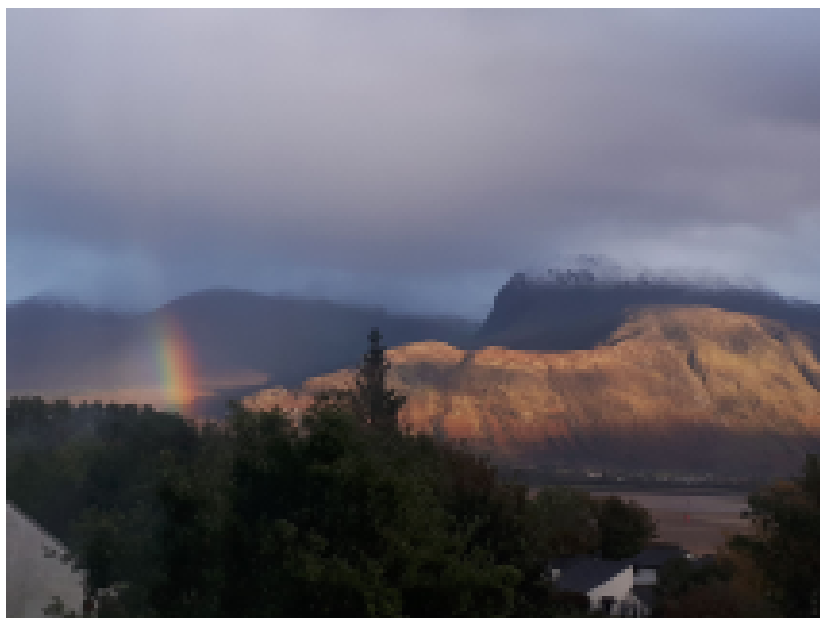
Issue No. 69 November/December 2020

delivered free to every home and business in Kilmallie

NAIDHEACHD COIMHEARSNACHD CILL MHALAIDH

KILMALLIE COMMUNITY NEWS

WINTER'S COMING



Snow is on the hills, and it looks like winter is truly on the way! Don't feel like you are on your own this winter. Get in touch with our resilience team if you need help; if we can't help, we can send you in the right direction. Please see inside for phone numbers and up to date info.



in this issue

- P2 View from the chair
- p3 Failure to plan, Kilmallie volunteers
- p4 New Belford update, KCN News, KCC Meetings
- p5 Community rocks, Canal news
- p6 Stay safe
- p7 Level I guidelines
- p8 Councillors corner
- p9 Helpline no.s
- p10 STEM centre update, Rugby Club news
- p11 Kilmallie Community Cupboard, Kilmallie Community Company
- p12 planning, community police
- p13 Peat, the blar and the climate emergency, Corpach Marina update, Warm home discount scheme
- p14/15 Speeding through the village another perspective
- p16 FACTS
- p17/18 Kilmallie Community Centre p19 Turning seasons
- p20 From Eliza, Greenfinger
- p21 The rise, fall and rise of Wolfhouse gym, Banavie Primary
- p22 Dathan an Fhogair, Banavie Play Park
- p23 Support your West Highland Museum, Giving Tree, Kilmallie Helpline
- p24 Christmas lights fund, SEISS extension
- p25 Business Grants, Furlough Extension, Scottish Child Payment, Self Isolating Grant
- p26 Crimbo Crossword
- p27 Kids section
- p28 Sponsors

Community Cupboard Halloween Makeover

The View from the Chair

Times move on and, to my surprise, I find myself as acting chair of the Community Council since Colin Wood wants to stand back for a bit. We look forward to seeing him back soon.

The past few months have been pretty variable with the return of some visitors which would have slightly helped those in the tourism sector, though we hit a behavioural low at the end of August when someone, presumably from a camper van, dumped their chemical toilet waste close to the long horse in the Banavie children's play area. This kind of action is very difficult to comprehend but we are very grateful to the anonymous party who cleared up and disinfected the area.

Many of us now have awareness of Covid through our own or extended family but at the end of September it struck our midst in the Moorings Hotel. Our Community Cupboard is still operating at the Kilmallie Community Centre and regularly needs donations of non perishable foods and toiletries. Thank you if you have already donated.

Russell writes elsewhere about the liaison group that we are trying to put in place with Highland Council, residents, the larger businesses at Annat and the Ardgour Community Council, with the purpose of finding a better means of minimising and managing the noise and other issues causing complaint. The needs of business and the community have to be brought together since we must coexist but we also have to find a sustainable means of working together.

We are also trying to resurrect the partnership or alliance of local community councils around Fort William. There are several common issues that call for united action, not the least of which is the new Belford on which you'll see an update on a later page.

Colin wrote about traffic speeds in the last Newsletter and this is something the KCC presses the Police on regularly. I have personally written to Transport Scotland seeking signs to encourage drivers to give cyclists space. The signs that have been erected through Caol are not authorised for trunk roads but I am told that alternatives are being considered.

Despite Covid, the KCC is still meeting by Zoom on the 4th Monday in the month, excluding December, at 7.15 and you are welcome. Agendas are posted on the notice boards in Banavie and Corpach around a week before, together with joining instructions. You can contact us through secretary@kilmallie.org.uk.

We're approaching the time of year where it is even more important to keep an eye out for our neighbours, especially those living on their own. We all need to make a plan in case we suddenly find ourselves self-isolating, how we'll get messages, etc.

Last but not least, the Kilmallie Community Council sends its congratulations to Mrs Sheila Sutton, Annat, on her 100th Birthday on 31st October!

I do hope you enjoy this Kilmallie Community News for which our thanks are due to Carol Anne Campbell and Ann Moffat. The entire Community Council wishes you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year when it comes – we will make the best of it! Nollaig Chridheil agus Bliadhna Mhath Ùr Duibh Uile!

John Hutchison

Acting Chair KCC

Noise and pollution from Annat

We have received more complaints about noise and other pollution from Annat than any other issue over the summer. These issues affect Corpach and also residents on the Ardgour side of the loch. The industrial businesses at Annat have to work within a number of planning conditions and noise is also covered by Environmental Health regulations. However, there can be different interpretations of planning conditions and enforcement is complicated. Kilmallie Community Council has proposed a liaison group for Annat so that the operators can understand the impact they are having on the community and the community can understand the constraints of the operators. The hope is that this will help resolve the issues in a way that is satisfactory for everyone. To find out more please contact secretary@kilmallie.org.uk.

Failure to plan is a planning failure

If there is one message to take away from the Covid-19 pandemic, it should be that both healthcare and the environment must be given much higher priority in future decision making at local, national and international levels. Destruction of the environment was the reason this Coronavirus first made its way into human populations, and taking more care of the environment is essential to reduce the risk of future pandemics. If they do happen however, we need the best possible healthcare to address them. Here in Lochaber, the Covid-19 pandemic should be driving a new emphasis on healthcare, and provide further impetus for the new hospital to replace the Belford that has been needed for so long. However, the opposite seems to be the case. Concerns and frustration are growing at the recent lack of progress.

An ongoing issue is the lack of co-ordinated planning for developments on the Blar, including the hospital site. The need to care for the environment was largely ignored when the Blar development received planning permission. The peatbog has been dug up at huge environmental cost and loss of local amenity. Given this, the least we should expect is careful and meticulous planning to make full benefit of destroying a pristine site for development. Kilmallie Community Council has repeatedly highlighted that the lack of an overall masterplan for developments on the Blar will result in the loss of opportunities to maximise the benefits of projects through coordinated developments. This was included in a planning objection regarding the housing development (18/05939/MS) where we also raised the issue of the lack of suitable bus routes. We did not get anywhere with our suggestions that there should be design and guidance for the site as a whole so that the development could deliver the quality of civic design that we would all like to see. Now it seems like even the simple issue of a through bus route to serve the hospital, housing, medical centre and High School, cannot be agreed.

For years now, cyclists and vehicles heading across the Blar have faced the inconvenience of driving round a pointless roundabout instead of along a straight road, while visitors have been confused by incorrect road signs to nowhere; all lasting reminders of the Tesco that never was. These planning failures are a result of a lack of joined up thinking which would have ensured that proposed developments were properly thought through before being given permission. Instead, irresponsible developers were allowed to do whatever suited them and then walk away. With construction of the housing already started at the Blar, there is an urgent need for both Highland Council and NHS Highland to properly engage in ensuring that their developments complement each other so that the environmental destruction of the Blar provides the most benefit to the community.

Russell Leaper



Kilmallie Volunteers

Our helpline is still running on 01397 470 880 - we didn't imagine we would still be here and needed, but we are! If you are isolating or still finding issue with getting shopping or prescriptions we can help. The Community Cupboard is also still running at Kilmallie Community Centre and is open daily from around 8am. We now have an actual cupboard and small bookcase thanks to the community centre, and these are now in the main foyer .

We really need your donations at the moment coming up to Christmas.

You can drop them at the Community Cupboard on the days it is open; longlife milk, tinned goods, non perishable and hygiene items. If you wish to leave a monetary donation, please contact us and we can let you know how to do that. If anyone cannot make it to the hall, or cannot make it on the open days, please get in touch and we can make you a parcel and bring it to you, please don't go without. Thank you so much to everyone that has donated so far and continues to do so - and thanks again to our amazing volunteers!

Call : 01397 470880

Email : secretary@kilmallie.org.uk

Web : www.kilmallie.org.uk

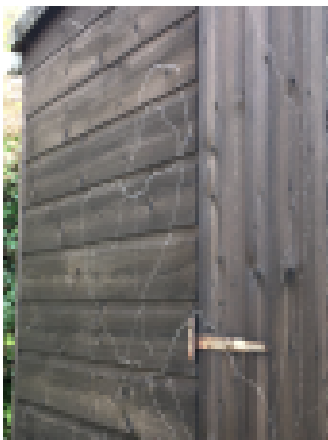
Facebook : www.facebook.com/KilmallieCC

New Belford Update

Before giving an update on anything it's always sensible to check your previous reports and having done so the current position certainly makes grim reading. In September 2018, I was reporting that 'NHS Highland's target remains for a construction start in 2021.' Since then very little progress has been made. It has proven difficult for the NHS to agree a Clinical Model (defining which services will be undertaken and how they will be provided) which in turn leads into the Workforce Plan and the Business Case. No matter the strength of political support, which we have from across the parties, if the basic case has not been assembled and presented to the Scottish Government then the project simply won't make progress.

Since its inception five years ago, KCC has provided a community rep to the Steering Group and will continue to do so – the new site is in our KCC area after all. Reps from the other communities are similarly frustrated.

MSP Kate Forbes has described the project as "moving at a snail's pace" – but the snail may have been moving in a similar direction to the one on our shed recently.....



Which direction?

We understand why the Covid 19 crisis can account for delays over recent months but we have also seen NHS projects in Broadford, Aviemore and Raigmore moving ahead.

In response to recent media concern, Katherine Sutton, NHS Highland's newly appointed Chief Officer for Acute Services, said: 'Much of our business as usual activity was paused during the Covid -19 lockdown period whilst our clinicians were redirected towards managing the response to the pandemic. As we come out of lockdown, project teams comprising many of our key clinical staff are being re-established to support taking this work forward. These teams will be considering the delivery of services in the post-Covid world to meet the refreshed challenges in delivering high quality acute services as locally as possible.'

There have been a couple of very small signs that post-Covid resilience may increase decentralisation of services from Raigmore and this is something to encourage and on which we'll press for clarification. (I have heard of a few cases recently where folk have been called to Raigmore for consultations only to be told on arrival that they could have been seen in the Belford, so it's always worthwhile to check if you are invited.)

I have remained part of a small group remaining from TBag which was formed in 2003 (along with Messrs Sedgwick, Foxley and Robinson) that has written to Boyd Robertson the Chair of NHS Highland seeking:

- a firm timetable for the stages of the project, eg. completion of the clinical model, submission of case to Scottish Government, etc;
- a direct access from the Health Centre at Camaghael to the new hospital site, working with Highland Council;
- the appointment of a locally-based project manager with drive and determination; and,
- a review of the project management structure to make the steering group an effective force with proper accountability.

At the time of writing, mid-October, we await a firm date for a meeting.

John Hutchison, Acting Chair KCC

Kilmallie Community News

As we are finalising this newsletter, another month long lockdown has been announced in England. Luckily this doesn't affect us at the moment, but it does feel like anything can happen and life is very uncertain.

This issue is paid for by the Supporting Communities Fund, but then we are in to our normal call for help and sponsorship, we cannot do these newsletter without your help! If you think you can support the newsletter in any way, please do get in touch. This could be by supplying much needed funds, or by offering your assistance in gathering article/behind the scenes, or by writing articles.

Please contact newsletter@kilmallie.org.uk to sponsor the newsletter, or to offer your services to the cause.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the newsletter team or the community council.

We are grateful for funding from the Supporting Communities Fund provided by the Scottish Government, via Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), to support the production and distribution of this edition of the newsletter.



KCC Meetings

the place to share
your ideas and concerns
about local issues – everyone welcome

Monthly meetings will all be online until further notice. Notification of meetings is via our distribution email list.

Our next meetings are scheduled as follows:-

**23/11/2020, 25/01/2021, 22/02/2021,
22/03/2021, 26/04/2021, 24/05/2021, 28/06/2021.**

Minutes and Agendas are posted on the noticeboards at Banavie and Corpach and are emailed – if you would like to be added to our distribution list please contact secretary@kilmallie.org.uk.



Community Rocks!

Thanks to everyone that has painted rocks for a community project, apologies for not getting everything together sooner, but I just seem to keep running out of time! Thanks for bearing with me, once I manage to get things moving again I'll update everyone.

#communityrocks!

#kilmallierocks!

CANAL NEWS

I'm sure for some this year has passed very slowly but for others it has probably flown by. Since we opened to vessel traffic again in July we have definitely been feeling the latter. With the Covid outbreak, numbers of vessels have been down to around 40 to 50 percent of what we could normally expect but working within the Pandemic restrictions with a diminished number of staff due to Covid has definitely been very challenging for the local team. It is also certainly more traffic than we expected before opening. BEAR Scotland have now finished their maintenance of Banavie Bridge with the painting of the bridge ends and the installation of the new road barriers completed. The new marina project behind the sea lock is gathering pace with the concrete for the slipway poured, ground services being installed and rock armour put into place. It's certainly been fascinating watching the concrete sections coming together like a giant Lego set.

Boat wise the highlight of the season for me was the arrival of the Classic Motor Yacht Fair Lady, a beautiful vessel built in 1928 by Camper and Nicholson. I do not envy those who have to maintain the stunning varnished wooden panelling on the superstructure though. Hire fleet numbers have been strong throughout our opening period although their operating pattern has been a bit different this season due to the requirement of a deep clean between charters. We have also seen a fair number of Royal Navy training vessels, fishing boats, Pilot boats and Wind Farm support vessels transiting through the Canal as well as our usual yachts and private cruisers.

We now start looking to the beginning of November, the end of the boating season and the start of our winter works. The canal will be closed to boat traffic at Gairloch this winter for replacement of the top gates onto Loch Lochy, the biggest gates on the canal. Plans are also afoot for the installation of new Barriers and Wigwags on Gairloch Road Bridge to increase safety for bridge operators and vehicles approaching the

bridge but I am yet to see the final plans or have confirmation. Our local ops staff are now drawing up winter works for towpath and fencing repairs and hopefully some of the pontoons in the West District as well as facility maintenance but we will have to keep an eye on Government guidelines during the Pandemic. Safety First.

Finally, on behalf of the local operations team and myself I would like to say massive congratulations to John Stafford who retired over the summer after many years' service to the Canal and the local community as Supervisor and Harbourmaster at Corpach. We will all miss you John and wish you and Karen a long and happy retirement. The office biscuit tin is a lot safer now though unless John pops in to see us with Ralf the springer, as I am sure he will.

Steven Ingram

Canal Supervisor / Harbourmaster



Many thanks to Steven for his first article as new Harbourmaster - here's to many more!

Stay safe, protect others, save lives.

November 1st - COVID protection levels: a new system of local protection levels has been introduced, Highland Region placed at Level One - please see guidance on next page.

You should :- wear a face covering (mandatory in shops, public transport, museums, libraries and similar indoor areas)

- avoid crowded places
- clean hands and surfaces regularly
- stay 2m away from other people
- self-isolate and book a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms

Anyone in Scotland who is self-isolating because they are showing symptoms can be tested.

Current Symptoms of Coronavirus

The most common symptoms are a new:

- continuous cough
- fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater)
- loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

For coronavirus symptom information and to book a test go to NHS Inform at:-
<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-general-advice>

Or call the NHS coronavirus helpline on 0800 028 2816

Test and Protect vital to containing spread of COVID-19.

Once a positive case is identified, contact tracers will call all of their close contacts and advise them to self-isolate for 14 days.

Calls from contact tracers will come from one number – 0800 0308 012 – and the identity of the positive case will not be disclosed.

WASH YOUR HANDS REGULARLY

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser before eating and drinking, and after coughing, sneezing and going to the toilet.

Level 0

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4

Scottish Government
Riaghaidh na h-Alba
gov.scot

Level 1 Measures

These are the protective measures that apply in your local area from 2 November. These will be updated, check www.gov.scot for updates.



In all levels and settings, please follow relevant public health advice and requirements such as on the use of face coverings.

Socialising No in-home socialising (limited exceptions) 6 people from 2 households outdoors and in public places, eg. hospitality settings	Hospitality 21:30 Last Entry 22:30 Closed	Travel Essential travel only to/from level 3 or 4 areas in Scotland and to/from rest of UK Follow rules and advice on international travel	Transport Active travel (walk, run, cycle, wheel) where possible Avoid car sharing with people not in your household
Shopping Open	Close contact services Open ✓ mobile dose contact services	Support services ✓	Places of Worship Open Restricted numbers 50
Early Learning and Childcare Open with standard protective measures in place	Informal Childcare ✓	Unregulated (children's) activities ✓	Schools Open with standard protective measures Colleges and Universities Blended
Visitor Attractions Open	Public Services Open	Public buildings Open	Driving Lessons ✓
Offices and Call Centres Essential only/ work from home	Other workplaces Open Work from home default	Shielding Level 1 Shielding Rule	Sports and Exercise All permitted except age 18+ indoor contact sports
Leisure and Entertainment Open ✗ adult entertainment ✗ nightclubs	Life Events Weddings/ civil partnerships: 20 Funerals: 20 Wakes and receptions: 20	Stadia and Events ✓ Outdoor events seated and open space ✓ Small seated indoor events ✓ Stadia - open with restricted numbers ✗ Outdoor grouped standing events	Accommodation Open

Latest updates at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Check here for the latest face covering information:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-covering/>

This table is indicative and will be updated over time. Exemptions apply for these protective measures. Please see guidance for details. Regulations in relation to each level will be published on legislation.gov.uk and relevant public health advice (such as physical distancing and enhanced hygiene measures) applies. Find relevant guidance on www.gov.scot. All restrictions will be kept under review to ensure that they remain proportionate and necessary to address the ongoing public health emergency.

Our Community Council lies within Ward 11 – which is represented by 3 Highland Councillors. Allan Henderson, Ben Thompson and Denis Rixson. Here two of our councillors share some of their views on recent events...

Savour the moment

I am sure you are all fed up reading, or hearing, that you can't do this, or that; councils or government are having difficulty balancing budgets. Everyone is in the same boat, whether it is a household budget, or a business budget that you are managing. News doesn't make great reading during a Covid pandemic as life seems to be online or on hold.

However one advantage I have found this year as a result of not feeling comfortable opening up our home to B&B, is using the extra time at weekends by revisiting less travelled parts of Lochaber, saving thousands of air miles, in what I have called my Lochaber holiday. Since lockdown ended, heading out to the glens and back roads with a simple flask and sandwich proves to me that there is nowhere in the world to beat our scenery. Over the years I have had the opportunity to showcase and sell Lochaber, the Outdoor Capital of the UK to many parts of the world through travel trade shows or tourism advertising but few parts really start to compare with the level of stunning beauty and features we have, be that mountain, river or geological feature. I will only highlight a few here as space is limited.

Braeroch with its incredible, irresistible

parallel roads and seemingly endless walk through the estate farm over gentle relatively flat countryside, alongside an exquisite river was one of the first revisited and did not disappoint on a lovely sunny Sunday afternoon. It also came with a bonus--no camper vans and only one visible, but sensibly sited wild camp.

Another Sunday found me on the Corran Ferry and then slowly meandering along the A861 past Ardgor to Kinlocheil. Some of the views of Ben Nevis, across Loch Linnhe, or Loch Eil, are simply stunning. The Ardgor side of the two lochs really do have unrivalled open clear views of the mountain ranges. The way Corriebeg interacts at right angles to the Glenfinnan hills would attract any artist. I didn't manage one of my favourites---a walk up to the telecoms mast--but you need to leave something for another day. However, I did think I would be envious of the silence on that side, but strangely the sounds of normal traffic on the A830 echo across the loch pervading the landscape, but there were few camper vans.

The forestry road from Braveheart car park to Dun Deardail is another not to be missed, especially now as a lot of the forest has been cut, affording the open views of 30 years ago, either down the glen to Kilmallie or up to Achriabhach. This path is a dog walkers paradise while also meeting the needs of cyclists or smiling walkers who have

completed the West Highland Way. Lochaber is never complete without a jaunt up the B8004 past Muirshearlich to Loch Arkaig. Ever since my uncle Jock explained the historical significance of the Dark Mile I have been fascinated by that area and the dark waters of the waterfall.

To complete this bit of roaming about Lochaber we had to go up the A830 from Kilmallie to Mallaig (I won't mention the camper vans). The view from the new road whether looking from Arisaig to the Cuillin on Skye, or backwards to the Roshven hills, is breath-taking. Moving on to the B8008 makes you realise why so many want to cherish a spot at the roadside along the silver or golden sands, but it does make for an uneasy relationship between humans and nature.

I apologise if your favourite spot is missed, but I just neither have the space, nor that many spare Sundays, to get around them in one season. Just cherish what we have.

Allan Henderson



To borrow or not to borrow?

There is a lot of talk from the Scottish Government just now of 'financial flexibilities'. This is political code for more borrowing. All tiers of government are in a jam at the moment. The economic costs of Covid are enormous. The UK government is borrowing on a colossal scale to operate the furlough arrangements and the various business support schemes. These are now changing but Westminster is still on the hook for an awful lot of future borrowing. The Scottish Government and the Scottish Local Authorities are under similar pressures at lower levels. How do we pay for all this? How do we keep businesses afloat; compensate those who have lost their livelihoods; manage increasing Unemployment and Universal Credit claims. Putting up taxes is not an appealing solution in times of acute economic distress.

One answer is to borrow more. The Scottish Government is encouraging Highland Council

to look at this option which is what we did at a Special Council meeting on 1st October. The Highland Council Administration, (a coalition of Independents, Liberal Democrats and Labour), is not anxious to rush down this route. The attractions are obvious. Interest rates are at an historic low. We can kick the can down the road and leave it for others to pick up the tab in future years. They'll have to face the voters – not us! This seems ideal politically but many of us have severe doubts about such a course of action. Why?

Highland Council is already up to its neck in debt – approaching £1 billion. That debt has to be serviced; i.e. we have to pay interest and loan charges. These come out of our revenue budget and currently account for about 10% of all our expenditure. For every extra £1 we borrow we add to our total debt, increase our loan charges and restrict our ability to spend money on other things. The more we borrow now the less freedom of manoeuvre we'll have in the future. Instead of the much-advertised Bank of Mum and Dad we are actually borrowing from the Bank of Child and Grandchild. So, we avoid pain now by accruing pain for later. But will our

children thank us for this? Should we burden them in this way? There is a moral as well as a political dilemma here.

How do we compare with the other Local Authorities in Scotland? Well, I asked this question of Highland Council recently and I have been told that, in relative terms, our loans charges are the third-worst amongst the 32 councils in Scotland. This is not a League Table we want to top. Hence my hesitation about taking on more borrowing. In the end, Covid may give us little choice but I am not keen to make our children pay for our problems. There are no easy answers on this one – whatever the politicians might say.

Denis Rixson



KILMALLIE VOLUNTEERS

We are still shopping and delivering prescriptions for vulnerable individuals and those self isolating.
Call 01397 470880

Highland Council Helpline

For advice on benefits, personal support, education, social care and business advice as well as signposting to other services. Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm.
Call 0300 303 1362



Lochaber Citizens Advice Bureau

Lochaber CAB is currently unable to deliver face to face advice and is operating an extended telephone and email service with telephone lines open from 10am - 4pm Mon - Fri.



If you require advice and assistance please call us on **01397 705311**, email adviser@lochabercab.casonline.org.uk or visit our website www.lochabercab.org.uk

Lochaber Womens Aid

01397 705734

Our telephone opening times are:
9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday
9.00am - 2.00pm Friday

Saturday and Sunday message checking service now also running.

Or email us <https://www.lochaberwomensaid.org/contact-us.html>



Lochaber Hope

Lochaber Hope is still providing a service to our community; however it will look slightly different for a while. Our staff and volunteers are working remotely so the office is not manned.

Counselling and mentoring will be delivered remotely (via Skype or Zoom) and we can take on new clients. We have also set up a variety of groups on Zoom manned by volunteers, offering a chance for the community to support each other during this challenging time. If you would like to join in with these groups, please visit our Facebook page or see this link for more details on the times and days they are held.



We have also set up a Webchat service which can be accessed Mondays to Fridays 10-11am and 5-9pm.

We can still be contacted on 01397 704836 or via private message on Facebook.

<https://www.lochaberhope.org.uk>

EWEN'S ROOM

is running 'EWENME', a helpline aimed at connecting people and reducing loneliness and social isolation. Call 01967 750845 or fill in the form at www.ewensroom.com/ewenme/

Lydia Rohmer, Principal of West Highland College UHI, talks about the exciting plans to create the new STEM Hub on the Blàr Mòr for the West Highlands

Kilmallie residents will know of the plan to create a new regional STEM hub for the West Highlands. Whilst the multi-million pound, state-of-the-art technology building is at the core of our plans, the hub is also about building capacity, expertise and qualifications to create opportunity and a sustainable future for our young people, communities and businesses.

The College, as part of the University of the Highlands and Islands, has invested heavily over recent years in addressing the historic inequalities in STEM education opportunities across the West Highlands, seeking to reduce the rural 'post code lottery' in access to future-ready qualifications, industry expertise and specialist facilities.

After success with the Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund, a partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and HIE, the College's initial £1.6million Advance Manufacturing project is designed to provide businesses with access to appropriate technology and expertise. The project will target support for small and medium-sized enterprises and micro-businesses involved in manufacturing across different industry sectors including food and drink, construction, aquaculture, metals and

timber products.

To lead the College's STEM strategy, David Campbell joined us as Project Director STEM, bringing with him more than 30 years of industrial training experience with Rolls Royce, to assist the College and businesses in moving skills and workforce development in STEM sectors to a new level.

With over 70 businesses in the West Highlands already signed up to participate, the College is creating a new 'Industry 4.0' advanced manufacturing,

The Advancing Manufacturing in the West Highlands project forms a core part of our plan to build the major STEM Centre (Science, Technology, Engineering and Health) on the Blàr. The complementary AI and robotics hub at Ocean Frontier on An Aird will commence from January 2021.

This fully "shovel ready", multi-million pound STEM development is a regional priority of the UHI and has the strong support of HIE and the Scottish Funding Council, with a fully approved business case. It will create a building of approximately 3400m² on the 2.5 acre site, to the north of the roundabout, with an estimated 20 new jobs. The building will house state-of-the-art specialist

facilities and be home to around 350 new learners, providing access to engineering, construction, green technology, digital, health and social care qualifications.

The state-of-the-art technology and innovation campus is a key part of the Fort William 2040 Masterplan and close discussions with the Scottish Government regarding funding are ongoing. The Centre will play a key role in enabling and supporting inclusive economic growth and wellbeing for the whole of the West Highlands, retaining local young people, and attracting new talent into the area, supporting businesses to invest and innovate, accessing a skilled local workforce.

With Covid-19 and the looming post-Brexit future creating a challenging outlook for many, the case for investing in local future-ready STEM skills and innovation has never been greater.



New committee leading Lochaber Rugby Club through changed times

Lochaber Rugby Club (LRFC) have voted in their new committee posts for the 2020/21 season who are now looking forward to continuing the sterling effort of the previous season, having endured the significant challenges and changes that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to the Banavie-based rugby club and the local community.

The club committee have welcomed faces old and new who have already met virtually and are busy making plans for the coming months. COVID-19 protocols have been implemented in line with Scottish Rugby guidelines and the Club has been expertly assisted by Dr John Wallace, acting as Club COVID Safety Co-Coordinator, supported by a number of COVID Team Leaders and Assistants who have ensured the Club can continue to provide training for their junior and senior sections safely.

Charlie Donaldson, newly appointed Club President and former First XV Captain, commented saying:

"Community is at the heart of everything we do at Banavie, we're a core values driven club looking to develop our players, coaches and opportunities for all as we look ahead to 2021 and beyond. The pandemic has been very hard on the local community and has impacted our Club as well. The new

committee and I will be pushing on with plans for the future, ensuring the Club can prosper and continue to instil our core values that include leadership, respect and enjoyment."

Charlie further commented on the forming of the new committee in the current setting, saying:

"I would like to say a warm thank you to all that have supported and continue to support Lochaber Rugby Club. We have endured a challenging few months and recognition must be made to the former committee members who have worked tirelessly to ensure the Club remained a strong part of the community and as a base for so many people's enjoyment, laughter and sense of purpose. Thank you."

LRFC offer rugby opportunities for all so get in touch with them by heading online to www.lochaberrfc.co.uk or by searching Lochaber Rugby Club on Facebook and join the fun.



Mark Gibbings

KILMALLIE COMMUNITY CUPBOARD

KILMALLIE COMMUNITY CENTRE

OPEN DAILY

PLEASE TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

**PLEASE OBSERVE SOCIAL
DISTANCING GUIDELINES**

PLEASE LEAVE WHAT YOU CAN

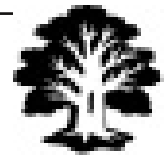
**IF YOU ARE ABLE TO DONATE WE ARE LOOKING FOR ITEMS SUCH AS :
NON PERISHABLE FOODS & HYGIENE AND SANITARY ITEMS.
PLEASE LEAVE ITEMS BESIDE THE CUPBOARD.**

**PLEASE LOOK AFTER YOUR COMMUNITY CUPBOARD AND CENTRE. WE
WILL BE CHECKING REGULARLY BUT IF YOU SEE/HAVE ANY ISSUES PLEASE
CONTACT THE RESILIENCE TEAM ON 01997470000**

THANK YOU 🙏



Kilmallie Community Company



Corpach Woods - AGM

Our AGM was held on Friday 23rd October. Held by ZOOM; a new experience for many, but the meeting was well attended.

We covered the usual items for an AGM . The main achievement in the year was the construction of a new fence around the pine wood. Three main work parties were held (before Covid), two to clear away the remains of the old fence and the third to clear the path and accesses at the bottom of the pine wood. Volunteers also carried out some maintenance of drains and cleared vegetation from the edges of the paths in the oak wood.

Thanks are due to David Govan who presented the accounts, which showed a small positive balance.

Two of our directors Douglas Runciman and Simon Wells came to the end of their first term of 3 years, agreed to stand for a second term, and were appointed. Stuart Hood accepted nomination as a new director and was also appointed to the Board .

Others on the Board are Angela Mercer, Jane Halewood, Gill Barnes, Allan Thomson, and Jan MacLugash.

If anyone has any views or concerns or wishes to help please feel free to get in touch with any of the directors above, or email the secretary, Paul Biggin at kilmalliewood@gmail.com

plans afoot

Here are the local applications we've noticed on the Weekly Lists in the last few months, up to 08/11/20. Some may have been already determined.

For further information about the Weekly Planning Lists, see the Sept 2014 edition of Kilmallie Community News. If you would like to receive weekly lists by email, please contact KCC Secretary on secretary@kilmallie.org.uk.
PIP= Permission in principle

FUL= Full application
LBC = Listed building consent
PNO = Prior notification
OHL = Overhead Electricity Line
ADV = Advertisement
MSC = Matters Specified in Conditions (ie typically follow-up details to a permission already granted)
SCOP = Scoping application



18/08/20	20/03338/PIP	Erection of house Location of Works: Land 45M NW Of Drumlog Cottage, Kinlochail
18/09/20	20/03449/FUL	Change of use from former Pulp Mill Social Club to workshop and storage. Location of Works: Boyd Bros, Annet Point Corpach
15/10/20	20/03778/FUL	Erection of temporary storage building Location of Works: Boyd Brothers (Haulage) Ltd, Annet Point Corpach
22/10/20	20/03994/FUL	Alterations and extension Location of Works: Stanton Villa, Annet Point Achbladen, Fort William, PH33 7NH,

Community Policing

I hope everyone is well.

As we approach the winter months we see the earlier dark nights and a drop in temperatures. With this in mind Road Safety remains a priority and I ask that you all take care when out and about on the roads or pavements.

I continue to receive complaints with regards to speeding motorists travelling on the A830 through Corpach and Banavie. Police patrols have been increased in the area and a number of extra local community Policing Officers have recently been trained in the use of the speed detection equipment and will deploy to the area duties permitting.

I have also received a number of complaints regarding vehicles being parked on pavements causing an obstruction. I would ask anyone who parks their car on a pavement to think twice and identify a safe place on the road / designated parking area. If a complaint has been made regarding this kind of obstruction, the registered keeper will be spoken with and may lead to action being taken which would include a fixed penalty notice being issued.

If whilst out on your daily journeys you identify any persistent offenders in the above scenarios can I please ask that you contact 101 or email myself if not ongoing to report this.

As always if anyone has any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me via my Police email address – ross.mccartney@scotland.pnn.police.uk.

If you require to speak to police urgently or there is an ongoing issue then use 999, or 101 for a non-emergency.

Thank you and stay safe,

Ross McCartney
Police Sergeant
Liaison Officer for Kilmallie Community Council
Twitter – 'LochabSkyePol'

Peat, the Blar and the climate emergency

When peat dries out it releases carbon. To obtain planning permission for the development on the Blar, it was claimed that there would be no release of carbon – zero emissions – as a result of the development of the site.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of protecting and conserving peat bogs as a key part of efforts to tackle the climate emergency, both because of the amount of carbon that they store, but also for their ability to extract carbon from the atmosphere. When a peat bog is dug up, there is both a release of carbon and the loss of the ongoing carbon sink. Since 2015, Scottish Planning Policy has required estimates of the expected carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions associated with the disturbance of peat for any major planning application. We requested to see this required assessment at the very start of discussions on Highland Council's planning application for the Blar, but were repeatedly told how complicated and difficult such calculations were. So no assessment was made available in the run up to the planning meeting where the decision was made on giving permission for the Blar development. However, when the planning committee met, they were told that 'there would be **no** release of carbon as a result of the development of the site'. The claim was not just that the amount of carbon released would be very small or negligible, it was that it would be **nothing**. Planning permission was granted on the basis of this unsubstantiated claim, despite the fact that if it were really the case, it would be new to science. Looking at the mounds of peat drying in the sun over the summer it is hard to believe this claim could be correct. When developers are allowed to make last minute claims at planning committee stage that appear unlikely to be true it seriously undermines confidence in the planning process. When Highland Council is both the developer and the planning authority there is an even greater need for the information provided to be credible.

Russell Leaper



A mound of peat on the Blar drying out over the summer



Thomas Telford Corpach Marina Project

Phase 1 - the car park and slipway will be completed in early November and local builder GCF will make a start on Phase 2 - the marina facilities building. This should be completed in January 2021. The project team are navigating through extremely complex and tedious bureaucracy to put in place the funding required to award a contract to Gaelforce Marine for Phase 3 - the floating marina and infrastructure.

It is unlikely Thomas Telford Corpach Marina will be open in time for the start of 2021 season, but the building will be open as soon as it is deemed viable to do so without marina customers. We can promise locals and visitors that the coffee in An Cala, the coffee shop which is an integral part of the project, will be the best in town.

Andy McKenna

Warm Home Discount Scheme

DON'T FORGET TO APPLY! If you are on pension credit, or on a low income/have young children, you could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2020 to 2021 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The money is not paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between September and March. Contact your supplier to find out.

Speeding through the village - another perspective

Colin's article in the August edition of Kilmallie Community News concerned speeding through Corpach, relating how easy it can be in our busy day to take an eye off our car's speed, and touched on the impact speeding can have on our neighbours within our community. Colin challenged readers to stick to the speed limit for one week to see if it made any difference to their daily life, and rightly said that it might make a world of difference to our neighbours. Did you take up his challenge? If you did then a very big thank you and we hope you have continued keeping within the speed limit; if you didn't then perhaps you do not know of, or appreciate, the problems your neighbours within our community experience through living and working close to a very busy trunk road.

Road traffic statistics in 2017, the latest date available, show that an average of 2,200 vehicles passed through the four census points on the A830 every day and it goes without saying that the majority of vehicles will have passed through Corpach. 64.3% of the vehicles were cars, 25.6% were light goods vehicles, 7.7% were HGV's and the remaining 2.4% made up of buses, coaches, motorcycles and mopeds. More recent statistics would most likely show a higher volume of traffic and greater percentage of HGV's.

We all know the toll such a volume of traffic takes on the road; how many of us have suffered damaged tyres, lost wheel rims and bad backs through driving over the many potholes and sunken drain covers that permeate through our Highland roads. Would it be a surprise though to find that there are many health hazards connected to living by a busy road?

The impacts and damaging health effects of pollutants such as emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons are well documented but we were surprised to find in our research that particles from brakes and tyres ends up as dust by the side of the road and can be small enough to be inhaled, and that pollutant dispersal depends on several factors including the street characteristics (e.g. street width) and traffic speeds. It appears that faster speeds tend to generate more turbulence and cause greater dispersion.

We were also surprised to learn that the World Health Organisation (WHO) classify noise from road traffic alone as the second most harmful environmental stressor in Europe, air pollution being the first. The harmful effects of noise arise mainly from the stress reaction it causes in the human body, which can also occur during sleep. These can potentially lead to premature death, cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, sleep disturbance, hypertension and, at the very least, annoyance. Even in the UK the Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling has said "Noise pollution makes the lives of people in communities across Britain an absolute misery and has very serious health impacts." We can all relate to the sounds of traffic and in particular the lorries and motorbikes we can hear on an evening travelling from at some point on the Blar all the way down Locheilside!

There are many reports on the issue of speed and road traffic noise and they have the general theme that there is a measurable link between traffic noise and speed. Apparently if we reduced our speeds from 37mph to 30mph we would cut noise levels by up to 40%. (UK Noise association) now that is a WOW!

We cannot do anything about the volume of traffic that passes through our community but we can make life easier for our neighbours who live near the road and safer for bus travellers, walkers, cyclists and school children who have to cross it; how, simply by following the legal speed limit.

We also surely, given the considerable sums that Ferguson Transport and other haulage companies taking logs to and from the sawmill must pay to the Scottish Government in road taxes and levies, coupled with the activity through the port recently of massive windmill parts, which disrupted but offered no benefit to the community, should be able to get Bear Scotland to rectify on a regular basis the drain slumps created by heavy traffic through the village. The roadside dwellers will tell you the constant ba..bump, ba..bump over the dropped drain covers is enough to drive anyone round the bend!



sunken drain cover at bus stop at
Kilmallie Gardens

Some may say, well you can always leave if you don't like it, but if you are local and have lived in the home you love for 35 years why not stay and try and make life a wee bit better for all. Our community also has a history of coming together regardless of what part of Kilmallie they live in; take the recent rubbish sorting proposal by the Highland Council for Annat, residents and businesses came together from all over the community to fight the proposal which could have resulted in vermin, smells, increased traffic noise etc. in the immediate vicinity affecting the industrial site and residents of Drumfada.

Given that residents, businesses and their workers do come together to keep to the 30mph and 40mph through Corpach that leaves motorists along the route to Mallaig, Knoydart and the Isles. How can we get our message through to drivers driving over the limit through Corpach?

We have our Safety Camera, classified as a camera enforcement location, meaning that the location has been identified "where speed or red-light running is an issue" sited near to Banavie school. You will have seen from Woody's article though that he was "shocked by how fast drivers were going." It would appear from the very few times that we see the Safety Camera mobile on site that the location is being treated more as a Short Term / Flexible Deployment so we have asked our Community Liaison Officer Ross if he can clarify this situation for us and we await a response from his colleague the area Camera Safety Manager.

Looking online in general we have found that in August it was announced that there would be a 20mph speed limit trial of 18 months being introduced in 80 towns and villages across the Borders. The only exception to the new 20mph speed limits will be trunk roads, as Transport Scotland is currently carrying out its own

research into lowering the speed limit to 20mph on sections of trunk roads that currently have 30mph speed limits.

We also found that some villages have resorted to residents patrolling their village with speed guns but we believe this may be a step too far ... no sheriffs or deputies in this western village!

Some villages use cut out figures holding speed guns, a bit like the Policeman cut out in a shop in the retail centre, but would it be effective, not so sure.

Looking around Highland villages to see if they have found solutions, we notice that Fort Augustus has a good flashing "your speed" sign, better than our 30, and many have 30mph signage that welcomes motorists to their village on the way in and thanks them and wishes them a safe journey on the way out. The road surface by the sign also has very clear mph signage. Fort William has the signs as does Spean bridge and villages on the route to Oban. The sign for Drumnadrochit is interesting as it is of a good size and also has a graphic of the famous Urquhart Castle. Drumnadrochit also has a very effective traffic calming measure as many travellers to Inverness will be aware of.

Could additional welcoming signage, new and refreshed road markings and your speed flashing sign, coupled with a generous presence of the safety camera, provide Corpach with a relatively inexpensive and unobtrusive solution to the speeding problem? If new signage and road markings were to be made available to Corpach by Transport Scotland would it not then be the time to address the situation of the 40mph speed limit from the Corpach Hotel down to Drumnadrochit?

Back in 2013 KCC requested a number of changes to the A830 through Corpach including a reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph from the Corpach Hotel to Annat.

KCC requested that this route (classified as Corpach West by Transport Scotland) be reduced to 30mph in order that the residents in Corpach West receive the same road safety protection of the reduced speed limit as the residents in Corpach East. The National Speed Limit Review supported the retention of the existing 40mph limit on Corpach West and Transport Scotland advised KCC that the situation would not be revised until a new roundabout was created on the A830 at Annat.

KCC have worked for many years to achieve the reduction of speed from the roundabout on the Blar to the 30mph sign at Banavie, the new road layout at Banavie School road end junction and the pedestrian crossing at the Co-op; Transport Scotland take things very slowly, or is it the A830's rural location!

Back in September 2011 in the first edition of the new Kilmallie Community News on page 2 you will find in the subject of meetings "traffic speeding through Corpach." You will also find it in several of the issues over the years since. If we possibly go back to earlier Community Council newsletters prior to 2011 we will find it there also.

Now surely must be the time to undertake a major effort

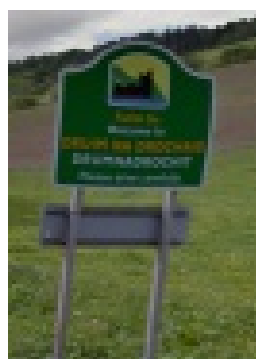
to tackle this speeding problem that troubles so many members of our community and is a danger to others. We are sure KCC would support any move to try to reduce speeding through Corpach. They are a small band of dedicated volunteers who cannot take this on for us alongside everything else they have to do but, as shown by the recent proposed rubbish sorting facility, do have the contacts of "partners" such as Transport Scotland, who by Scottish Government decree, must listen to and meet with them. An A830 group would therefore be able to meet with Transport Scotland through KCC if KCC were in agreement with their proposals.

Transport Scotland will want to see that there is enough of a demand to start the process going and to this end we have created a survey on survey Monkey at:- www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/63D3K3X It is not onerous, only 10 questions. The survey can be completed on a PC, tablet or smart phone. If you do not have access to this technology but would still like to participate, perhaps you may wish to drop off a note with your thoughts on the article in to the KCC post boxes near the Co-op and at Banavie car park.

You can also email us at A830Corpach@gmail.com with your thoughts, suggestions and any offers of support. Please be kind, we know that any curtailing of speed may get some people's dander up but all that is being asked is a sticking to the legal speed limit, which after all is there for a good reason, and, let's face it, will only add a couple of minutes to your journey!



Signage at entrance to Fort William. Welcoming signage, speed camera warning and clear road surface mph signage.



Welcome and thank you signs at Drumnadrochit



Welcome sign at Spean Bridge.
3 countdown chevrons leading up to this sign.



Some concerned Corpach residents

Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

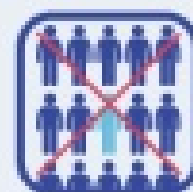
F

Face coverings



A

Avoid crowded places



C

Clean your hands regularly



T

Two metre distance



S

Self isolate and book a
test if you have symptoms



nhsinform.scot/coronavirus
#WeAreScotland





Report from Kilmallie Community Centre – October 2020

Since our last report in July 2019 it's been a rather challenging time at the Centre due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Large events carried out during this period were the Carol Service raising £114.50 and the Xmas Fayre raising £429.50 both during Dec 19. A huge thank you to the crafters, vendors, entertainers and committee members who made the delicious soups and cakes and a big thank you to all the folk who came along and enjoyed these events! Unfortunately, that all events and activities have had to be cancelled due to the pandemic but some events are beginning to start up again.

We were delighted to receive £4,200 funding from The National Lottery Community Fund back in January. Due to the pandemic, the spending of this funding has been delayed until now and you may have seen the first results of this with our fab repainted hallway in the Centre carried out by Gae – here's some photos:



We also have a lovely new baby changing wall unit which has freed up lots of space in the disabled toilet (when it's lifted up)

We are over the moon with our beautiful new donation boxes! A huge thank you to Cameron Baxter from The Workshop at Lochaber Hope who made them. Cameron has also been commissioned to make our new front doors so you should see them installed in the next few weeks.



The chair and hall flooring will be professionally cleaned in the next couple of weeks and we are considering using the rest of these funds to bring the Centre back up to a good standard throughout.

We are also very pleased to have hosted the very welcome and successful Kilmallie Community Cupboard run by the Kilmallie Community Council during the countywide Lockdown. It has now been considered to fit into a single cupboard that will be available for any locals to use while the Centre is open going forward.



We have given our full support to Lochaber Environmental Group with their project to install an E Bike Hire Scheme (such as the one shown below) in and around Lochaber. We have advised them that we would be delighted to provide a hub for E-bikes at Kilmallie Community Centre and thus encourage locals and visitors to travel between areas by bike rather than by vehicle. This will reduce the amount of cars that travel for short journeys and in particular along from Corpach to Fort William. It will also have the added effect of reducing the congestion -

particularly at the Road to the Isles roundabout, reducing carbon emissions and thus improving things for the environment as well as showing folk other parts of our beautiful area – for example the cycle route along the Caledonian Canal and Loch Eil to travel to Fort William.

We have been in discussions with The Highland Council regarding our Asset Ownership Transfer Request to obtain the car park from The Highland Council. We are still waiting for due process to be carried out but hope to have some positive news at the end of November. Once ownership is obtained we are planning to resurface the car park together with providing other services such as electric car charging points, elsan disposal, outside water tap, discrete lighting and a paint recycling facility. We will keep you informed with any developments as they come to fruition.

The Kilmallie Community Gardens are still in need of volunteers to help tidy them. Do contact our Centre Manager should you wish to use the tools in the shed for this purpose.

Our AGM is scheduled for Thursday 26/11/20 at 6.30pm - subject to government COVID-19 guidance. We really need YOUR support to help the committee provide the facility that YOU want so please do come along and support us.

This is my last report to yourselves as I gave notice at the last AGM that I would step down as Director so I can concentrate on other activities closer to home. This means that we are recruiting for a new Treasurer so if you would like an interesting and varied role which wouldn't take more than 2 hours a week of your time then do get in touch with me (contact details below). Full training and support will be given.

Our thanks go to all our customers for using our facilities as well as to our Centre Manager, Jimmy Milne, for all his hard work and commitment to the Centre.

We hope all readers keep safe during this challenging time and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sarah Kennedy FMAAT FCCA (Treasurer)
Tel: 07768 805040
E-mail: treasurer@kilmalliecommunitycentre.co.uk

VOLUNTARY ACTION LOCHABER and **CARE LOCHABER** can both help with delivering shopping and prescriptions.

VOLUNTARY ACTION LOCHABER HELPLINE: 01397 719514 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm)

We are also offering a "Plugging the Gaps" service to help ensure Lochaber residents who are not accessing assistance from any established groups can be supported by one of our volunteers or sign-posted to an appropriate service.

CARE LOCHABER: 01397 701222 (Mon-Fri 9am-2pm)

TIME 2 CHAT TELEPHONE BEFRIENDING SERVICE The Rotary Club of Lochaber have partnered with **Voluntary Action Lochaber** to deliver a telephone befriending service for those who are suffering from isolation or loneliness throughout the Covid 19 crisis. If you or anyone you know would like to access the service please contact:

01397 719511 Monday – Friday 10.00 - 16.00

Turning Seasons

For once, as I write we are enjoying a proper autumn. We have had some sharp frosts at the end of September, the mornings are filled with mist, rising in clouds over the River Lochy, and, yes, there are plenty of showers to keep us on our toes. The bracken has turned, and the leaves are starting to fall. The colours of the autumnal trees this year have been spectacular, with more reds and oranges than is often the case. This is largely a consequence of September sun and the early cold snaps. Do take the opportunity to enjoy the woods around Corpach and along the Lochy, whilst the beeches and oaks still retain their leaves, although the reds of the rowans and cherries will already have gone, by the time you read this. We have had a bumper crop of brambles, which the sun has actually ripened. Other berries have been notable by their absence locally, after a bumper crop last year. For the first time since we moved to Lochaber, our rowans have failed to fruit. There is also less in the way of beech mast, acorns and spruce cones.

One tree that seems to have fruited well this season is the hazel, which has a good crop of nuts. The red squirrels that were busy swinging off our peanut feeders all summer have now abandoned us. Sporting their dark winter coats with thick, bushy tails, they can be seen busily harvesting hazel nuts along the banks of the Loy, often spotted dashing across the road in their hunt. Most of these nuts will be cached in the ground over the winter, with each squirrel keeping the location of its stash a secret from the others. Often nuts are lost or forgotten, allowing new hazel trees to spring up. The jays, too, have left the garden to search for nuts and acorns in the surrounding woods. These canny corvids have a phenomenal memory of where they hide their stores, but are still a driving force of oak regeneration.

Our pine martens now also have their thick winter coats and are visiting the feeding station earlier as the nights draw in.

In the hills above Glen Loy and from the heights of Druim Fada the red deer can be heard bellowing. The sound seems to carry well in the early mists, but work on Rum has shown that rutting activity carries on throughout the night. During this period there is little time for the dominant stags to rest. The opportunity for mating is brief, and he must not only guard his harem from intruding rivals, but constantly round up straying hinds. Take time to watch a herd through binoculars and see a soap story unfolding before you. There are plenty of deer around Glen Loy this year. Given the coronavirus situation there has been a dearth of visiting stalkers, so the local keepers will have their work cut out to cull the requisite number of stags needed to keep the environment healthy. Unless deer numbers are kept in check there is a real danger that many will starve after a hard winter.

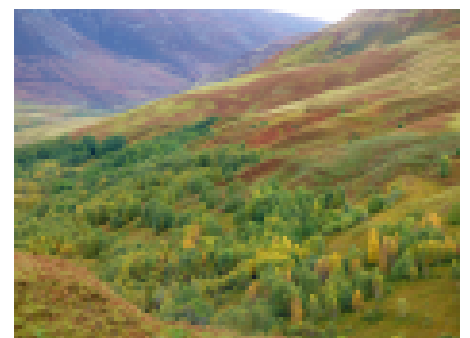
Most local eagles appear to have done well in lockdown over the summer, although the pair in Glen Loy failed yet again. We have seen several of this year's young flying during our travels around Lochaber, including a youngster hunting over Beinn Bhan. Young golden eagles have a lot of white on their tails and notable white patches under their wings, so can be confused with white-tailed eagles at a distance. The autumn is the best time to watch eagles as the adults stay close to their offspring on their breeding territories. As the winter progresses and the young eagles grow in skill and confidence, they start to wander further, and may travel right across the country over the next 3-4 years until they reach maturity.

As we move towards the run in to Christmas, we may have to accept that things will be different this

year. One way we can celebrate, whilst saving money, is to dress our houses with evergreen foliage. Holly, with its bright red berries, is a firm favourite, and is abundant in the community woods above Corpach. There seems to be a slightly better berry crop this year than last, so we will hope to collect some before the thrushes strip it all. Ivy is also plentiful around Corpach. Wrapping the ends of cut sprigs in wet tissue will stop them withering too soon in the house. Ivy flowers are a big draw for late insects in the autumn and attract butterflies such as the currently plentiful red admiral. There are a surprising number of moths that emerge over the winter, and the larger species, including the December moth, will also nectar on ivy. To complement this duo, we have a large number of conifers that again provide attractive branches and decorative cones. Evergreen species otherwise thought of as pests such as rhododendron, cotoneaster and shallon can all be used to create florally festive displays. Merry Christmas!

Jon Mercer

Glenloy Wildlife



...From Eliza

Hàlo, 's e Eliza a th' ann a-rithist.

Tha mi air ais aig sgoil, term a-nis. Tha tidsear ùr agam, Mrs MacLellan agus tha i gu math coimhneal. Tha mascot aig an sgoil againn a-nis - 'sionnach'. 'S e an ainm aige "Seonaidh Sionnach". Bha bhòta againn agus 's e sin an ainm a' bhfheàrr leis a h-uile duine.

Cha robh Mòds beò an bliadhna seo, ach bha Mòd air-loidhna aig Lochabar agus aig am Mòd Nàiseanta. Chuir a h-uile duine a stigh email bhideo aige fhein. Bha e gu math àraid agus chuir mi mios air am "buzz". Fhuair mi 3mh aite airson an fhidheal agus airson seinn ann a' farpais Caledonian MacBrayne. Tha mi an dochas gum bi mi aig Mòd Nàiseanta Inbhir Nis an ath bliadhna.

Tha grian Fobhair a còrdadh ruim agus bidh mi a coiseachd agus a dol air a' baiseagail agam. Is toil leam a bhidh dol gu Fassfern agus ri taobh a' chanal. Agus bha mi eadhon aig an tràigh aig Camusdarrach.

Thoisich mi còmhlan comhla ris a' charaid agam Skye - "Beenest". Tha tòrr spòrs againn! Bidh sinn a' sgrìobhadh an òran againn fhein. Bidh Skye a' sgrìobhadh na facail agus bidh mise a' sgrìobhadh an ceòl. Bidh sinn aig aireamh 1, aon latha!

Sin e math tha, Nollaig Cridheal dhuibh uile bho "Beenest" agus tioraidh an drasta bho Eliza.

Hello it's Eliza again.

I've been back at school a whole term now and it's been really good. I have a new teacher, Mrs MacLellan, she's very nice. Our school has a new mascot - a fox. His name is Seonaidh Sionnach. We had a vote and that was the most popular name.

There were no live Mòds this year, but Lochabar had a virtual one, so did the National Mòd. Everyone had to email a video of themselves for each competition. It was very odd and I missed the buzz. I came 3rd in the under 13 fiddle competition and in the Caledonian MacBrayne solo competition. I look forward to next year's Mòd in Inverness.

I've been enjoying the Autumn sunshine, walking and riding my bike. I like going up Fassfern and to the canal. I even got a late paddle at the beach at Camusdarrach.

I have made a band with my friend Skye - 'Beenest'. We have lots of fun! We write our own songs, Skye writes the words and I write the music. We will be at No1 one day!

Well, that's it for now. Have a Happy Christmas from "Beenest" and bye for now from Eliza.

Green Fingers

Here we are, at the end of a very strange year. However, I have found several new suppliers of plants, bulbs etc. This has made my husband somewhat nervous when the Postie comes. I have planted dozens of various Alliums and look forward to them coming out and filling the gap between early Spring and summer when colour can be in short supply.

Carrots are still in the ground and seem to be all right for now. Sprouts are prolific and will be fine if we get frosts, Parsnips the same. Most of the Leeks went to seed, I think it was the variation in weather, same has happened to lots of other gardeners. Onions did well and are stored in the spare bedroom. We still have the occasional Raspberry, an Autumn Variety called Joan Jay, they don't seem to get any disease and are a real treat at this time of year. The new Garlic, Germadour, has been planted so fingers crossed for a decent crop.

I did a job I hate, cleaning out the pond! We keep the fountain going all year as it helps to stop it freezing over, also drop a football in the water as that also keeps at least a small area open.

The Wild Birds are very prolific this year, never seen so many Sparrows. We feed them daily and it's a good idea to wash the feeders thoroughly, in hot water and washing up liquid, once a week as it helps to keep the birds healthy. We have a nut feeder near the front door, this is a mixed blessing as the birds come in to the porch and pick the wallpaper off! we could, of course, move the feeder.

The Hyacinth Bulbs, planted indoors, are almost ready to flower, looking forward to having some lovely scent and colour in the house. Will keep the bulbs and plant them outside next Autumn, if I remember.

New seed catalogues have arrived so the job between Christmas and New Year is to get orders in for next year. Lets hope for a better 2021 for getting out and about, however, those of us who love our gardens have plenty to be getting on with



Time for tea and cake now.

Morag MacKell

THE RISE, FALL AND RISE OF WOLFHOUSE GYM.

Colin Morley 54 and Emma Hebborn 31 decided back in 2018 that Lochaber needed a new Gym. Colin, a fairly regular gym goer since his teens had always dreamed of owning his own gym. Emma a Personal Trainer in Fort William after a career in the Armed Forces also had that vision, and so after chatting decided to look into it. Fast forward to 14th December 2019 we had done it, a year of planning and searching we opened Wolfhouse Gyms doors at 6am. We had created a huge space with superb kit that we both recognized as essential for any gym at Unit 3/4 Annat Point Industrial estate in Corpach (The old Nevis Bakery Building) Our membership was growing and our members and visitors on day tickets loved it. Day 97 of being open on March 20th 2020 we closed our doors due to Lockdown. This we certainly had not put in our business plan!

And so, the weeks and then months ticked by, Limbo. Lockdown started to ease; we watched every new update but no mention of gyms re-opening.

Most shops and takeaways started to open from end June, pubs, hairdressers, cinemas, tourist attractions could open from mid-July, but still no mention of when gyms could open. The fitness industry asked the Government for their evidence for keeping gyms closed as by this point gyms in England and across Europe had been open for weeks with their own evidence of non-transmission and Track and Trace systems in place that gyms operate as a matter of course.

We spoke to many people during this time and even non-gym goers could not understand why takeaways, pubs and even the steam train were allowed to open before a well ventilated, super clean, sober and spacious gym.

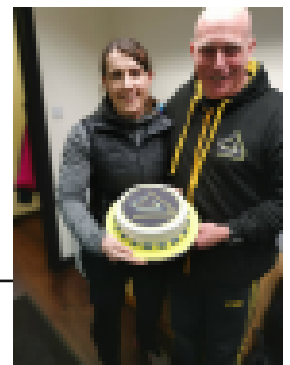
Scotland is infamous for being an unhealthy country and as with most countries has growing mental health problems, so why were gyms left closed but it was fine to go and get trolled and get a takeaway on the way home but not attend a facility to help fitness and mental health! (Rant Over)

After five and a half months closed, we finally reopened our doors at 6am on 31st August 20 and that is down to the support we received from our members. We only lost a quarter of our members during those months and many of those were apologetic for having to cancel, which we fully understood, this lockdown has had some effect on every person on the planet. We felt very privileged and humble that so many people supported us after only being open for 97 days. We are now trying to thank everyone personally as we see them come in the gym, without that support, no matter how small, we would not have survived this horrible period and we thank each and every one of them. Your gym will keep on growing because of them.

If you would like a free guided tour of the Gym please phone us on 01397 772777 or email wolfhousegym@gmail.com



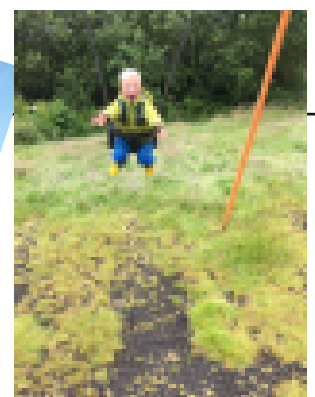
Congratulations on the opening of your new business Colin and Emma - we hope everything goes more smoothly for you now!



FRIENDS OF BANAVIE PARK

2020 has been quite the year to try and progress the Banavie Park Redevelopment, but the committee weren't going to let a global pandemic stop them trying! After years of hard graft we finally reached our fundraising goal back in January 2020. This meant we could now approach our funders for the remainder of the development costs. Before we can do this however, we have to work our way through deciding the final park design, signing the land lease, and jumping through other administration and planning hoops. This is all currently in progress. We want to say a big 'thank you' again to everyone who has helped us get to this stage - the new park feels as if its inching ever closer.

Clare Hageman



Dathan an Fhogair

Chuala mi nach eil cus dhinn aig am bheil comas mòran chraobh aithneachadh no ainmeachadh. Tha amharas agam gum bhiodh sin fìor air chraobhan bhreagha a tha taisbeanadh dathan an fhoghair, buidhe-ruadh, taobh thall a chanal bhon thaigh agam.

Ged a tha an critheann dùthchasach do dh'Alba chan eil iad bitheanta idir. Tha iad furasda gu leor ri aithneachadh as t-samhradh.

Chithear na duileagan a' criothnaich, fìus ann an ghaoth aodrom. Tha sin far an dh'fhuair iad an ainm aca. Bh'abhaist cuid anns na seann laithean *teanga nam mnatha* a chuir orra, a' cumail a mach gun robh boireannaich an còmhnaidh a' cabadaich ach chan eil sin fìor no cothromach, dìreach claon gnèach! Cha bu chòir dhomh an còrr a radh no, 's docha, an t-ainm saidheansail *Populus Tremula*, a chleadhadh

Tha mi a' tuigsinn nach eil iad a sgapadh tro sìol, mar craobhan eil. Fasaidh craobhan ùra as na fhreumhan nan seann chraobh agus, air sgath sin, chi sibh bad dhiubh an àite aon chraobh a' seasamh na h-

aonar. Tha craobhan eile, mar as trice, fireann agus boireann aig an aon àm agus, air sgàth sin ni iad sìol torrach gu math furasda. Eu-coltach craobhan eile tha critheann dìreach fireann no boireann agus tha e air leth doirbh dhaibh sìol torrach a' dhèanamh.

Tha cuid dhuibh ri lorg aig Polldubh ann an Gleann Nibheis, ri taobh Loch Aileoirt, anns am Fasadh Fearn agus air cul Talla a' bhaile Drochaid Ruaidh a bharachd air am bad beag againne, an seo, ann am Banbaidh.

Autumn Colours

I gather that few of us, these days, can identify or name many trees and I guess that this is true of beautiful specimens that are displaying their autumn colours of red and gold across the canal from me.

Although aspen are native to Scotland they are far from common here. They are easy enough to identify in summer as their leaves tremble in even a light wind giving them their Gaelic name critheann, meaning trembling one. They also have another name that translates as wives tongues, unacceptable today as a sexist stereotype implying

that girls like to chatter. Perhaps we should stick to the scientific name, *Populus Tremula* (Trembling Poplar)

I understand that they don't spread through seed but from suckers coming up from their roots and because of that it is usual to see them in clumps rather than as individual trees. Trees are generally hermaphroditic, being male and female at the same time and therefore able to produce fertile seed very easily. Aspen are usually one or the other and a whole stand may all be of one gender.

As well as our stand in Banavie there are some at Polldubh in Glen Nevis, beside Loch Ailort, at Fassiefern and behind the village hall at Roy Bridge.

Ronald Cameron



Banavie Primary News

To Kilmallie news,

We have been back in school for two months now and there are some adjustments like having to use hand sanitiser and other small changes but we are still enjoying it. P6/7 have been fundraising for Macmillan cancer support instead of a coffee morning. Two classes walked up to the CIC hut and we have raised over £2,400 and we are very proud. In class we have been learning about landscape as our Topic. We have looked at how different mountains are formed, how volcanos are formed and how they explode, different types of rocks such as sandstone and granite. Outward Bound instructors have come to our school to do outdoor learning with us, we have done problem solving skills, a bit of numeracy, listening skills, coordinates, communication and we have been doing some puzzles.

We are glad to be back after lockdown.

By P6/7 Banavie



Support your West Highland Museum

The West Highland Museum in Cameron Square may be outwith Kilmallie but our links are strong. The Museum is operated with the aid of volunteers, many of whom live in Kilmallie and we also have directors, former directors, the Manager and Curator all living in our community council area, from Muirshearlich to Kinlocheil – that's a pretty strong connection.

Museums are important for everyone, since they safeguard and preserve aspects of our culture, language, heritage and sport. The West Highland Museum is something to be proud of in those respects and it is exceptionally well regarded across the museum sector as well by visitors, gaining Tripadvisor reviews on a par with the National Museum.

Two years ago, with the help of the Scottish Land Fund, the Museum acquired 40 High Street, currently tenanted by the PDSA and there is a plan to extend operations into those premises next year to give a visible High Street frontage. Several years ago the Museum dropped admission charges with a consequent huge increase in the footfall from 7,500 to 60,000 in 2019. The Museum now needs to sustain itself through sales and donations. While these had been growing, Covid 19 has taken likely income down to 10% of that in 2019.

The Museum's book and gift shop offers a unique range of books and you will find it well worth a visit as we approach the annual challenge of finding something different to give at Christmas.

Three years ago the Museum's legal structure was changed to a charitable company limited by guarantee which allows anyone living in Lochaber to become a member and it's from the membership that the directors are elected. It is now truly a community based organisation that you can join. Again, with gifts in mind, you could consider giving gift membership at £15 a year. Families are £25 and junior members are free.

The Museum is constantly changing. If you haven't been for a few years you won't have seen the much-praised Commando Room and the nationally recognised Jacobite Collection which has recently been renovated and re-presented.

The website is currently undergoing change but all information can be found at <https://www.westhighlandmuseum.org.uk>

Christine Hutchison
Volunteer



Kilmallie Community Helpline

01397 470880

Our volunteers are still available to get shopping and prescriptions for those isolating or shielding, and to offer advice or support.

Please contact us on the number above, www.facebook.com/kilmalliecc or by email secretary@kilmallie.org.uk

Kilmallie Christmas Lights Fund

The AGM of the Christmas Lights Fund was held by Zoom on 24th August 2020. The Chairman reviewed our activities in 2019-20 and a copy of his report is printed in full below.

This Christmas we will endeavour to provide a cheerful display of trees and lights as in previous years. Unfortunately it will not be possible to hold our usual "switch-on" ceremony due to Covid restrictions.

Our fundraising activities have been considerably limited this year due to circumstances and consequently our funds have been seriously depleted. Any donations from individuals or organisations would be most welcome. Please contact any member of the committee.

Chairman's Report for Year 2019-2020

Presented by Zoom at AGM on Thursday 27th August 2020

General

The festive season activities followed more or less the pattern that has evolved over the past few years. There were some minor setbacks, mostly to do with equipment failures, but these did not detract from a generally successful year. Our financial position remains satisfactory and the intention of the committee is still to upgrade and improve the equipment as the need arises. We are, however, reluctant to do this while the future holds so much uncertainty. BEAR Scotland and Highland Council seem to be changing

their policies on Christmas lights and it is difficult to know precisely what we will be permitted to do in the future. Consequently, we are reluctant to spend money at this point.

Trees

Once again the Loch Arkaig Community Woodland Trust provided us with two excellent trees and delivered them on site. These were slightly larger than in previous years and proved to be robust and stable despite some gale force winds over Christmas and New Year. They drew much favourable comment from the public. We have made a financial donation to the Trust and we hope to maintain our good relationship with them in the future.

Tree Lights

In the past we have experienced some failures with these, usually during periods of bad weather. They have also proved to be virtually impossible to mend. We now seem to have found lights which are much more reliable and resilient. Nevertheless, we have experienced some failures but, as they are fairly inexpensive, we are able to regard them as expendable.

Pole Lights

This is our area of major concern. The Banavie lamp standards are the responsibility of the Highland Council and consequently we get full co-operation and assistance. The Corpach poles are the responsibility of BEAR Scotland and we are having to undertake a fairly complicated application process in order to gain consent to erect lights. This process is still ongoing but we are hopeful that we will gain the necessary permission in time for the festive season.

Switch-on Ceremony

This was very successful and seems to be becoming something of an event! A crowd of approximately 100 gathered on a fine Friday night in November. The Switch-on was completed successfully by two youngsters from local primary schools to much applause. The volunteers from local charity STAR for Harris showed their usual cheerfulness and enthusiasm while providing refreshments in the Community Centre afterwards. We are extremely fortunate to have their support. Looking forward to Christmas 2020 we would like to improve some of our displays, in particular to the Corpach pole lights and the area near the Corpach Christmas tree. To this end we will continue our negotiations with BEAR before making any further financial investment.

Community Involvement

As always happens we have had tremendous encouragement from many individuals and organisations in the Kilmallie area – so many in fact that it would be impossible to name them individually. We would however wish to record our appreciation to the following: Robert Skinner. (Thistle Access) Linda and Duncan Carmichael (Tradewinds) Loch Arkaig Woodland Trust Slipway Autos Moorings Hotel

In conclusion I would like to thank the committee members for their hard work and support over the year.

Paul Brian
Chairman

Self Employment Income Support Scheme Grant Extension

The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme grant extension provides critical support to the self-employed in the form of 2 further grants, each available for 3 month periods covering November 2020 to January 2021 and February 2021 to April 2021.

Who can claim

To be eligible for the grant extension self-employed individuals, including members of partnerships, must:

- have been previously eligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme first and second grant (although they do not have to have claimed the previous grants)
- declare that they intend to continue to trade and either:
- are currently actively trading but are impacted by reduced demand due to coronavirus

- were previously trading but are temporarily unable to do so due to coronavirus

The third grant will cover a 3 month period from 1 November 2020 until 31 January 2021.

The Government has already announced that there will be a fourth grant covering February 2021 to April 2021. The Government will set out further details, including the level, of the fourth grant in due course.

How to claim

The online service for the next grant will be available from 30 November 2020. HMRC will provide full details about claiming and applications in guidance on GOV.UK in due course.

Business Hardship Fund grant applications sought

Grants of £1,000 and £1,500 are available for eligible businesses up to a maximum of £10,000 if the business has multiple premises.

To be eligible for the grant, the business must be:

- A hospitality business or certain gyms which are required by the current regulations to operate in a restricted way; or
- A producer/wholesale business based in Scotland supplying primarily short-life goods or produce to hospitality businesses which have been required by the regulations to close or operate in a restricted way. These businesses must be able to evidence a 25% reduction in turnover during the current brake period.

Businesses are asked to go to the Council's COVID-19 Business Grant page on its website and check to ensure that they meet the full range of eligibility criteria. Eligible businesses are then asked to complete the online application form accurately and in full while ensuring that they submit the specified evidence. This will enable applications for this grant to be assessed and for payments to be made in due course.

For more information please go to www.highland.gov.uk/businesshardshipfund

Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Government is introducing a new Scottish Child Payment for low-income families with children under six. Applications are open from the 9th of November, with the first payments beginning from the end of February 2021. Low-income families with a child under six will be able to apply for £10 per child, per week - equivalent to £520 per year. There are no limits on the number of eligible children supported by Scottish Child Payment.

Summary

- payment level: £10 per week, per eligible child
- eligibility: households with children and in receipt of a qualifying benefit (Universal Credit, Legacy Benefits and/or Pension Credit)
- timescales: early delivery to eligible families with children under 6 with first payments from end of February 2021. Full rollout to eligible families with children under 16 is planned for the end of 2022.

Government extends furlough to March 2021

Workers across the United Kingdom will benefit from increased support with a five-month extension of the furlough scheme into March 2021.

Covid-19 Self-Isolation Support Grant

The Scottish Government has announced a new Covid-19 Self-Isolation Support Grant for individuals who are in receipt of low-income benefits and who will lose income as a result of being isolated.

If you have been asked by NHS Test and Protect Service to self-isolate on or after 28th September 2020, either because you have tested positive for Covid-19 or you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, you may be entitled to a £500 Self-Isolation Support Grant.

Applications can be made each time you or anyone within your household have been asked to self-isolate by the NHS Test and Protect Service.

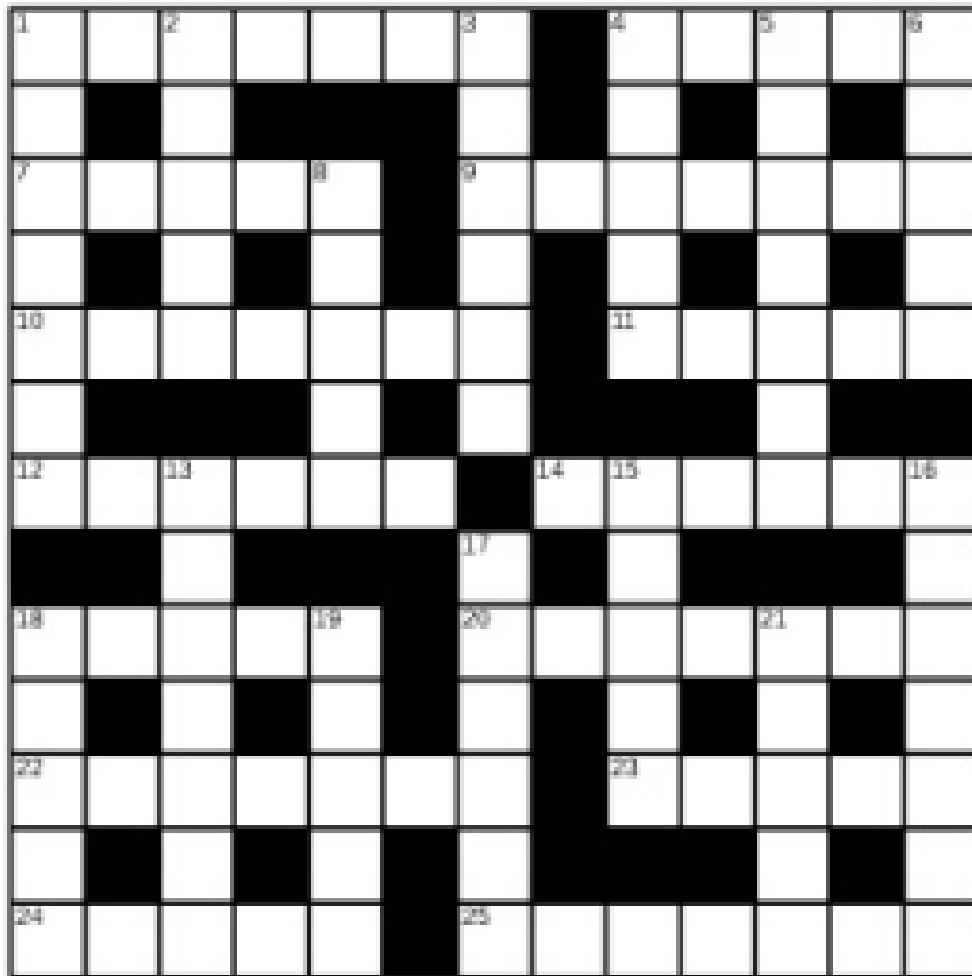
People in the same household can each make an individual application to receive the payment, if they each meet the eligible criteria.

This scheme will end on 31 March 2021.

To apply contact our Scottish Welfare Fund Team on 0800 083 1887 or the Welfare Support Team on 0800 090 1004.

A Bit of a Crimbo Crossword

Some straight, some cryptic, some easy and some not so easy and some with a Christmas theme!



Across

- 1 The red nosed one (7)
- 4 Heartless egg scooped up by man and turns into a girl (5)
- 7 Does she sing a Christmas song? (5)
- 9 Taking part before seeking to look into the future (7)
- 10 I'm leading men south east, but it's big! (7)
- 11 Dr Sisy is all confused when going the distance (5)
- 12 Does this Christmas drink come from chickens? (6)
- 14 You might find this if it is a white Christmas (6)
- 18 10 of these leap at Christmas (5)
- 20 Traditional Christmas veg. (7)
- 22 Can keep around the patella (7)
- 23 These are swimming at Christmas (5)
- 24 You may find these on top of Christmas trees (5)
- 25 Cancel cinders confusion (7)

Down

- 1 It's said to be better to give than this at Christmas (7)
- 2 Spending money in Tajikistan (5)
- 3 The wolf did this before he puffed (6)
- 4 Nothing dismayed these gentlemen (5)
- 5 You may have these problems after Christmas dinner (7)
- 6 Christmases (5)
- 8 Log in wrong, or is it just jargon? (5)
- 13 Reg tangled with the bear and turned into a flower (7)
- 15 Sent at Christmas (5)
- 16 Old flame modelled naked (7)
- 17 One in 11 in a Christmas song (1,5)
- 18 Apparently important for Facebook users (5)
- 19 Oh no, not those again in my Christmas stocking? (5)
- 21 Where the troops on duty may get their Christmas dinner (5)

many thanks to Tony Whitelocke
for this crossword!

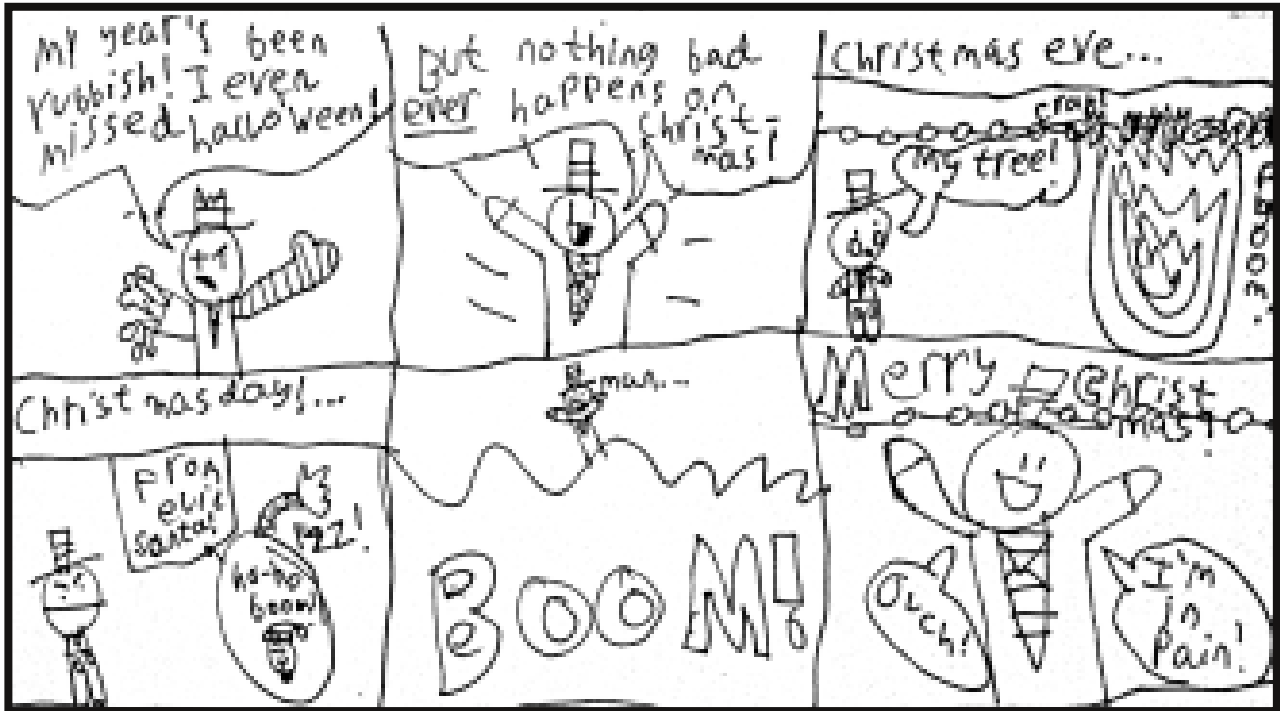
Answers for this crossword will appear on the website - www.kilmallie.org.uk



all new kids zone



Here we hope to showcase local kids talents, with a regular comic strip from Connal. So if your kids would like to contribute with a story, picture, poem, puzzle etc. please mail us at newsletter@kilmallie.org.uk



Winter Wonderland

Q	Z	K	I	T	S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E	S	E	V
I	C	E	S	K	A	T	I	N	G	Z	P	C	J	N	T	O
N	Q	I	J	R	D	S	K	F	H	F	O	A	M	K	A	P
O	M	J	S	S	N	U	Q	G	R	L	C	W	Z	U	L	H
S	L	M	I	O	R	M	T	X	D	K	O	N	F	I	O	N
C	K	F	W	T	N	A	S	N	F	N	O	O	V	Q	C	O
M	K	M	T	D	T	A	O	R	H	V	C	X	Z	B	O	B
Q	A	Y	G	M	Z	S	O	G	Z	L	S	M	S	B	H	S
N	X	D	J	K	E	S	P	G	N	N	K	L	E	X	C	N
U	O	W	S	S	T	T	L	M	E	R	E	C	J	N	T	O
L	S	J	V	K	R	O	P	T	L	D	P	R	F	H	O	W
M	E	U	Q	U	I	M	T	D	G	Y	S	R	D	A	H	B
G	L	T	F	N	W	I	Z	I	U	U	O	C	O	M	X	A
U	C	D	Y	F	M	R	N	F	C	Z	J	H	S	R	F	L
Y	I	I	R	D	C	G	D	G	E	A	Z	L	C	F	T	L
R	C	B	U	N	L	D	D	N	N	T	B	R	X	H	N	S
V	I	R	Y	A	M	H	Z	R	O	P	W	J	F	Y	K	V

Frozen Icicles Ice Skating Mittens Cold noses Hot Chocolate
 Jack Frost Skiing Snowballs Snowman Sledging Snowflakes

a huge thank you to lots of generous individuals
& all these businesses
for
sponsoring
the newsletter

