

Ness News

Community News & Events

March 2021



Lockdown Doorstep Challenge





I think we are all fed up with this weather and looking forward to warmer Spring days and more daylight hours. Over the last couple of months, the local community has been hit hard with so many local deaths so it's good to see an engagement and birth notice in this issue.

The Community Council have been busy trying to get the Highland Council to do repairs on the Achnaconeron and Ardachy roads and sort out signage there as well as on the Auchterawe road.

The main car park in Fort Augustus has gone for planning so fingers crossed that something will be done by the summer to alleviate some of the parking problems.

The 3 Glens have been busy setting up a group and there is an article on P4 to explain its aims to the local community.

There is also an article from the Loch Ness & Great Glen Recreational Development Group who are moving forward with their plans for a leisure centre with help from Voluntary Action Lochaber.

The works at the canalside have been problematic but necessary and will be finished at the end of March.

This photo was taken as Amey Plc who are working at the SSE substation in Auchterawe gave £500 each to the Fort Augustus Children's Christmas Parties and Fort Augustus Senior Citizens.

If you have local issues or concerns, please contact one of your local community councillors.

The content and photographs in Ness News have been obtained by authorised contributors and any local news, stories or photos can be sent to nessnews-paper@outlook.com

Regards
Deirdre MacKinnon
Chairperson
Fort Augustus and
Glenmoriston Community

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The Glengarry Trust



We are responsible for distributing community benefit funds from the Millennium windfarm and the Stronelairg Community Fund. We also manage the funds for a small Hydro project in the South Laggan area. We have supported many projects over the years from the infamous Glengarry fireworks evening, to the Glengarry Community Hall heating project, various clubs and groups for children and adults and also a large number of students.

We hold meetings to discuss grant applications four times a year with the meetings held on the second Monday of June, September, December and March. Closing dates for applications are always three weeks before each meeting on the Monday and the cut-off point is 5pm on that day.

If you are a community group, organisation or individual furthering your studies we would be delighted to hear from you. Community benefit funding is available and it is our job to make sure it reaches those people and groups that need it.

Additionally, the Glengarry Trust, Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company and Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust run a joint apprenticeship scheme to support young people within the three community council areas of Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston, Glengarry and Stratherrick & Foyers.

Get in touch with us if you would like more information on either applying for a grant or an apprenticeship and remember our next deadline for grant applications is Monday 24th May at 5pm.

You can apply for grant funding online, but please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would prefer a paper application form or any advice or support. Information on some of the projects we have funded is available on our website.

Website: www.glengarrytrust.org.uk
Email: glengarrytrust@gmail.com

Please also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/glengarrytrust

For more information about the projects we fund, upcoming deadlines and news about our work and other funding that might be available.

Fort Augustus Senior Citizen Association

Like everyone else, the SC group are missing their usual social activities i.e.. Whist, Keep Fit, Games afternoons, annual sale and of course our Summer Outing and Christmas Lunch. .

Just before Christmas, The SC Committee, organised door step Gift Bags containing Festive shortbread, a quiz and Christmas card, for everyone in the village over sixty. Thanks to Angela, Angela's Gift Shop, who sourced the shortbread and cards and helped make up in excess of 150 gift bags. Thanks also to Pauline for compiling the quiz and to the members of the SC Committee who decorated the bags, wrote the cards and distributed the gifts. Gifts and cards were also given to each of the residents of the Telford Centre.

As we were unable to have our annual fundraising sale we are very grateful to the Vernon family, for their generous donation which help to fund this project.

When we are able to socialise again, anyone over sixty is welcome to join in any of the activities. This may also be a good time invite you to our AGM, whenever that may happen (usually April). Please come along as we need new faces, especially younger ones, with new ideas. Could we also ask you to contact Carmelita on 366201 or Cathy on 366309, if you know if we have missed anyone who should be on our over sixties list or if you wish to add your own name if you are now eligible.

Finally, as most of you know, we like to give a gift and card to those who are ill, or have had a stay in hospital. Special gifts and cards are given to anyone celebrating their 80th, 90th or 100th Birthday (last year we gave 11 such gifts) .This seems to be a healthy place to live. Please tell us if you are aware of anyone coming up to these ages.

The vaccinations seem to be going very well, so hopefully some of our activities can restart this year and we can look forward to socialising again. Look out for the posters

Until then, keep safe. Best Wishes and Good Health in 2021

News from Glenmoriston

2020 saw the formation of a new voluntary community group in Glenmoriston, snappily acronymed GIG (Glenmoriston Improvement Group)! No sooner was the group in place when lockdown hit. Nevertheless, GIG has managed a few developments, supported by funds from Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company:

War Memorial improvements.

Glenmoriston Estate, who own the land around the memorial, have given approval to erect a commemorative bench and to stone-chip the area where people stand. This will help in 2021 to make the Remembrance Day events safer and more accessible.

Christmas Lights

The small garden area near to the Millennium Hall was the site for a display, which was designed after consultation with local children. It featured coloured rope lights, Star, Snowmen and Deer, Candy Canes, Wise Men and Angels along with Golden Christmas

tree shapes outside the hall on the A82. Next year we plan to light the row of trees alongside the car park, once we get permission to access the electricity supply there. Many thanks to the Glenmoriston Millennium Hall Committee, who allowed us to use their electricity to bring a smile and much-needed cheer to our community.



Website

A Glenmoriston.net website is in development. It will feature all the amenities in Glenmoriston, links to Heritage and History and offer a community forum. This should be live by March. Anyone wishing to contribute or have a link to their website, please contact GIG.

So, what next?

Glenmoriston Beastie Trail

Plans are afoot to set up a heritage/nature trail around Invermoriston and Glenmoriston, with marker posts which offer Beastie brass-rubbing possibilities. It will be similar to the Newtonmore Wildcat Trail. If anyone knows exactly where the Pool of Twenty is, or other sites linked to local stories, please let us know so that we can include them. Funding is currently being sought to set this up.

Invermoriston Recreation Field

The playing field is in a sorry state, with its rarely used football pitch and an apology of a playground. We would love to develop this area for more community use and invite your suggestions. So far, suggestions have included an improved children's play park – essential, we think- and also a tennis court, five-a-side pitch, community garden or allotments and adult exercise park. Please let us have your ideas, to GIG via Carol or Lynne

Research into Glenmoriston's Musical Heritage

A joint venture assisted by funding from SNH with Joyce Gilbert and musical researchers Ceit Langhorne and Munro Gauld. Local Gaelic speaker, Donald MacDonald, has also been helping. It aims to produce a report detailing the extent of Glenmoriston's musical heritage and its local and wider cultural significance, recordings of local songs, poems and tunes in formats suitable for sharing on community websites, social media etc. The project will detail a range of potential options for the future use, interpretation and development of Glenmoriston's musical heritage.

Contacts for GIG : Facebook Glenmoriston Improvement Group : Carol on invermoriston@gmail.com: Lynne on 351769

THE 3 GLENS RESILIENCE GROUP

A year of service and support...

Since March 2020, the 3 Glens Resilience has been working in the communities of Fort Augustus, Glenmoriston and Glengarry to provide support to those who have been affected by the pandemic, providing a range of services. From the start we have been blessed to have such a dedicated group of volunteers who have really made a difference in their communities. Their hard work has enabled so much to be done. Over the year, we have delivered prescriptions, shopping and 228 larder boxes and provided sanitiser stations for the communities. We've also provided a range of grants, organised café sessions in Fort Augustus Village hall, provided technology to allow people to stay in touch during lockdown and distributed 2200 hot meals



through our Meals on Wheels initiative. To help with this we were also able to secure funding for a new cooker for Glengarry Community Hall, something which will serve the community for years to come. So all in all, a busy year!

It goes without saying that none of this would have been achieved without the dedicated hard work of our volunteers. We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all our funders who have been so generous and helpful during a very difficult time. Our thanks also goes to all those in the local community who have expressed their support and encouraged us over the year. A big thank you to you all.

"Very good service. The volunteers were all cheerful and friendly and helped make a difficult situation bearable. Thank you."

"Keep up the good work! You all did a wonderful, thoughtful job. Thank you!"

"It's a good help for me, thank you very much."

Get Involved!

When the pandemic first began we were overwhelmed with offers of help, and whilst we tried to share out the workload, we apologise if we weren't able to contact you, but your offer was much appreciated. As we continue our work in 2021, we recognise that things are still difficult for many and we continue to offer a range of services. So if you have some spare time, are interested in volunteering and helping us help the community, we'd love to hear from you! Please contact Deirdre on 01320366556.



Business Information

Business Group

Throughout 2020, a group of local businesses came together to develop a united strategy for safely reopening once restrictions were lifted. This was very effectively carried out in the summer last year, with the group



securing funding for a number of banners and sanitiser stations for the local communities. A stock of hand sanitiser was also secured for business use, and this is still available to all businesses in the 3 Glens area. The group share their skills, experience and information to ensure all businesses are Covid safe. All businesses in the 3 Glens area are welcome to join the group.



Business Grants

There are a number of grants available to businesses who have been affected by the pandemic. Information about these can be found on findbusinesssupport.gov.scot Other support can be found at: **-Business Gateway-** www.bgateway.com or 01463 896 810 **-The Scottish Rural Network COVID-19 Information Hub-** ruralnetwork.scot/covid-19-information-hub latest guidance, news, funding opportunities and resources for rural businesses can be found.

The following is just a snapshot of what is available. We encourage businesses to visit any of the websites above for a fuller picture of the grants available.

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme-** extended until 30 April 2021.
- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme-** Details about the fourth grant will be announced on 3 March 2021.
- VAT Deferral-** VAT payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 can now be paid over a number of monthly instalments (up to a maximum of eleven) but all instalments must be paid by the end of March 2022. Deadline 21 June 2021. For more information, contact HMRC on 0800 024 1222.
- HMRC Time to Pay Service-** If you cannot pay your tax bill on time because of Covid-19, you may be able to delay it without penalty using HMRC's Time to Pay service. Call the HMRC Helpline on 0800 024 1222.
- Statutory Sick Pay Rebate-** Allows small and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay paid for sickness due absence due to COVID-19. Visit www.gov.uk for more information.
- Local Authority Discretionary Fund-** If your business is still being adversely impacted by Tier 4 restrictions (and you have not received any support), you are eligible to apply. www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus
- Non-Domestic Rates Relief (Specific Sectors)-** Rates holiday for 2020/21 tax year. Retail, hospitality, leisure and aviation businesses will have their relief extended for at least an additional three months beyond the original date of 31 March 2021. You do not need to apply for this relief. It will be applied to your bill by your Highland Council. Contact Highland Council for more information.
- VAT: reduced rate for hospitality, holiday accommodation and attractions-** Allows VAT registered businesses to apply a temporary 5% reduced rate of VAT to certain supplies relating to hospitality, hotel and holiday accommodation and admissions to certain attractions, that are made between 15 July 2020 and 31 March 2021. Visit www.gov.uk for more information.
- Scottish Wedding Industry Fund-** Support for businesses whose main income comes from the wedding industry, which has been impacted by the pandemic. To apply go to www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot
- Covid-19 Residential Outdoor Education Centre Recovery Fund-** Fund to support the sustainability of residential outdoor centres in Scotland. Find more information visit the YouthLink Scotland website.

Services Available

Whilst we all hope that the new vaccines will bring back some normality, we realise that the effects of the pandemic continue to be felt by many, and so the 3 Glens Resilience group continues to provide the following services to those who have been affected. If you have any ideas about anything else we could do to support people, please let us know.

COVID CRISIS GRANT

Have you been financially affected by the pandemic in any way?

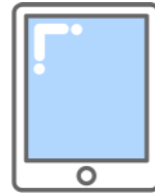
£100 Grants available

Get in touch now to access funding!

iPads for Loan!

We have a couple of iPads and Portals available for loan.

Instructions included, so don't let being a beginner put you off!

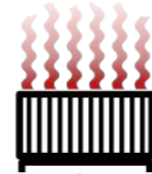


HEATING SUPPORT GRANT

Furloughed at 80%?

Financially impacted some other way by the pandemic?

Needing to heat your home more than normal due to circumstances?



Grants of **£50** monthly may be available

Community Larder Boxes



Pandemic making it hard for you to access essentials? Having to self-isolate? Been financially affected by the pandemic? Our larder boxes are packed with everything you need!

If you've already received a box, but could do with a little more help, please get in touch.

228
delivered
so far!

Self-Isolation Grant

Have you been advised to self-isolate by Test and Protect? Are you, or one of your household showing symptoms?

Don't let fear of financial hardship stop you from self isolating!

Apply now for a grant of between £100 and £300 to enable you to keep yourself and the community safe.

SAVE £10

Alternative Larder Boxes

Choose from Pack A or B



Special Offer boxes from DJ MacDougall Butchers for just **£20!** (usually £30)

Available for collection or delivery. For fresh meat, orders can be placed on Wednesday for collection on Friday.

To Apply for any of these services, please contact:

Harry - 01320 366215

Maria - 07718 316540

Community Company - 01320 366800 Email - contact@communitycompany.co.uk

Nature Notes

Well – that was cold! Snow that arrived before Christmas is still with us in mid-February, and although we have dodged the large falls further east, the length and intensity of this cold snap (apparently caused by Sudden Stratospheric Warming in the high atmosphere above the Arctic) has been exceptional. We are able to fend off the cold in our centrally heated houses and using extra layers of clothes (my long-johns are welded on!), but spare a thought for animals and plants who must survive outside all the time. Upper-most in my mind are the effects on deer. With the higher hills deep in snow, deer have been pushed downhill into the woodlands and fields trying to find food. At Dundreggan, they have spent the last few weeks desperately scraping snow away from whatever grasses and other plants they can find and are spending as much time as possible in the shelter of the woodlands here. On my lockdown daily walk, I'm coming across red and sika deer at all times of the day. They seem much less nervous than usual in this sort of weather, and it is sometimes possible to get pretty close to them if you are careful to approach from the down-wind side of them and don't make too much noise. Their sense of smell is superb of course, but in very cold, still weather they are less likely to sniff you out. Once they do see you, they are much less likely to charge away out of sight and quite often will stand and stare, just keeping an eye on you. I think this is because they need to conserve all their energy just to keep warm, so will only run off if they absolutely have to.

Some birds too stick out the winter with us and I often marvel at how such wee beasties as blue tits, robins and wrens are able to keep warm in minus double digit temperatures. Wrens, one of our smallest birds, have a neat trick to keeping warm – they roost together at night, forming little gangs at dusk and squeezing into a tree hole or an old house martin nest to cooie into each other. By contrast in the spring, they are fiercely territorial, so it must be quite a shock to be up close and personal with other wrens during this cold snap.

Up on the hills, there is very little activity although ravens are preparing for the coming nesting season already. These hardy birds will be hatching chicks in March which means eggs sometimes in February – yes, they'll soon be laying! I also noticed activity on our nearest black grouse lek over the last few weeks and even managed to capture them using a trail camera. It's hard to imagine how such animals glean enough food from the wintry landscape to sustain themselves but they manage – Nature has a way!



Announcements

Engagements



Seonaid MacDonald and Cairn Urquhart got engaged on the 31st of July 2020 at Borlum Bay. Due to get married this summer.



Daniel Buckley and Coreigh Sonley got engaged on the 18th September 2020 at the Tattu in Edinburgh



Matthew Clark and Nadia Dedman got engaged on Christmas Day 2020

Marriages



David Saunders, married Bipa in a (just) pre-lockdown ceremony on the 4th of January 2020 at the village Church of Scotland



Brian MacDonald and Leanne Duncan got married on the 31st October 2020 at St Stephen's Church. The Pandemic got in the way of their original plans but had a wonderful day none the less and look forward to celebrating with everyone next year.



Rebecca Blakey and Conal O'Callaghan Married at St Peter and St Benedict's Catholic Church, Fort Augustus on Saturday 2nd January 2021

Births



Donny and Rachel Kennedy welcomed the birth of their son, Levi Cameron Kennedy born at 7.26pm on 8th May 2020 weighing 8lb 8oz at Ninewells Hospital

Penelope Ostara Macdonald Moira & Innes welcomed a beautiful baby girl to the family. Born at home on the 20th of March 2020. A little sister for Abigail, Lillyanna and Innes John. 37th grandchild to Maureen & Neil. Sending love to all our family & friends.



Martin and Emma Cameron welcomed Lachie John Cameron was born on the 16th May 2020 weighing 8lb 6oz.

Coreigh Sonley and Daniel Buckley welcomed Oliver Stuart Ray Buckley on the 11th April 2020, Weighing 10lbs 2oz.



Heather and Aaron Clark welcomed their second child, Lewis Cramm Clark on the 16th June 2020, weighing 9lbs 4oz.



Maeve Lily Holden, 22-6-20, 8lb2



Simon and Jenny Kennedy welcomed their second child, Summer Alba Kennedy Born 4th July 2020 at 04.31am 8lb 6oz Princess Royal Maternity, Glasgow.



Allan and Nicola Stewart welcomed Rory Godwin Stewart 6lb 11.5 oz Born 8/8/20 at Raigmore Hospital.



Lauren Johnstone and Grant Boyd welcomed Molly Boyd on the 22nd August 2020 weighing 8lbs.



Raymond Robertson and Rachel Pinkerton welcomed Struan John Robertson on 5th September 2020, weighing 7lb 2oz.



Mathew Clark and Nadia Dedman welcomed Faith Anne Evelyn Clark Born on the 15th November at 13:17 in the Gilbert Bain hospital in Lerwick weighing 7lb 13oz



Izzy and Lewis Watson (Dalchreichart) welcomed Theo Richard Watson 21st December 2020 at 7.59am Weight 6lb 14oz.

Deaths



Michael Scott-Moncrieff. 1st Dec 1940-10th March 2020 Beloved Michael passed away in the Belford where most of his family was able to visit before he went. His sister, Mrs. Findlay has written a long poem about him. This is the last verse; '—brother, father, uncle, 12

friend, Bowed but wonderfully thraven, you did outface Illness with laughter, to the very end. God's love for you, and yours for Him, Now rest at last in reassured embrace.'



Catherine Cameron, Balmaglaster, 16th March 2020. Much loved wife, mum, granny and friend to many and dearly missed.

Jenny MacKenzie died 22nd April 2020



Maggie Smart died peacefully at the Telford Centre on 23rd April 2020



Peter John Taylor of Cluanie, Fort Augustus passed away peacefully at home on 8th June 2020 aged 76 with his family at his side. A much loved husband, father, grandfather, uncle and

John Northcote died on 11th July 2020



John Sloggie sadly passed away on Sunday 30th August 2020, aged 81 years. John was not only the beloved husband of Mabel, father to Eddie, Mark, Matthew and Peter, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather, he was also crofter, stalker,

caman maker and shinty legend. He will be sadly missed by all.



Hughina Ann Stewart, Bank House, Invergarry beloved wife of the late Duncan Stewart and mother to Iain, Douglas and Ewen passed away on 22nd September 2020 at Mossspark Nursing Home, Fort William aged 86 years.



Roddy was born on the 18th of February 1937, the only son of Murdo & Lizzy Cameron, Inshlaggan. He enjoyed a second home with his neighbours, the Stewarts, and this friendship continued throughout his lifetime. Roddy started his schooling in Inshlaggan School, he was the last pupil to be taught there and at the age of 7 years, he

attended Invergarry School. There was no school transport in those days and Roddy had to lodge in the village during the week. He continued his schooling at Fort William High School and resided in the hostel. On occasional weekends he would visit his Auntie Jess, Uncle Peter and their family. Forming a close bond with his cousin Donnie, Roddy was academically gifted & would complete homework quickly & accurately. The Head Teacher recommended Roddy for further education but he was keen to enter the world of work & be taking home a wage. When he left school he worked in construction before being called up for National Service. He served 3 years in the REME, 2 of those in Gibraltar. He spoke about the behaviour, or more often the misbehaviour of the apes. Roddy loved music and one of his favourite tunes was "The 79th Farewell to Gibraltar". When he left the army he went to work in the Forestry Commission. He later returned to public work including rock blasting which took him to many parts of the country. When Roddy returned home he was employed by the Forestry Commission before joining Marine Harvest McConnell where he spent 18 years prior to retiring. As well as enjoying the company of his pet dog "Patch", he was a keen bird watcher and very interested in wild-life. While working in Skye, Roddy discovered if you played music, the seals came up to listen. Roddy was the

third generation living in Stone Cottage, Inshlaggan and like his parents and grandparents before him, was a stalwart of Tomdoun Church. He passed away on the 28th September 2020, was the last native living in the Glen and will be sorely missed by many in the Glen & further afield.



Sandy Greig died peacefully at Raigmore Hospital on 8th October 2020 after a short illness



Hilda Dargie died peacefully on 11th October 2020 aged 98. Originally from the Dundee area, Hilda and Jimmy lived in Fort Augustus in the same house in Jenkins Park for 52 years. Hilda moved to the Telford Centre in 2016



Reay MacKay, a well known local who achieved so much in his 46 years. Fondly remembered for his friendships to many, rally accolades and his love of travelling. Reay sadly lost his battle with myeloma cancer on the 11th December 2020. Sorely missed by so many.



Ileen was born at Kytra, Fort Augustus on 27th March 1924 to parents Andrew and Mary Bain. Andrew was lockkeeper at Kytra as was his father before him. Ileen and her five brothers and sisters walked down the canal bank daily from Kytra to attend St Columba's RC School where Head Teacher, Miss Bowie kept strict discipline. No school

transport in these days!!

First employment was at the tree "nursery" in Auchterawe. Father, Andrew, rowed Ileen and older sister Megan across the Kytra Pool on River Oich in a leaky old wooden dingy after which they walked a relatively short distance to work. Sometimes their crossing was perilous to say the least and involved grabbing riverside branches to avoid being swept over the rapids downstream. But they always made it. Ileen had fond memories of her work for the Forestry Commission and in particular the fun and laughter with her colleagues.

She married Sandy in 1952 and moved in to a lovely new Forestry house at 12 Jenkin's Park. Just a few years later, 29 The Riggs became the Russell family home until 1972 when Sandy's job at McDermotts, Ardersier gave rise to a move to the bright lights of Inverness.

It's safe to say that Ileen loved Inverness although she was always a Fort Augustus girl at heart. She was fond of shopping and enjoyed shop work too. Robertson's Rainwear and ultimately Arnotts benefited from her employment and she took great delight in blethering to her old friends and acquaintances from the Fort. Brother and sister, Dessie and Morna were regular visitors to the town and met up with Ileen most Saturdays for a catch-up in her favourite shop, Marks

and Spencer's.

Ileen passed away peacefully at home in Inverness on 15th December 2020. She leaves behind husband, Sandy, her sister Morna, sons Gordon and Malcolm, daughter Angela, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She will be sorely missed.



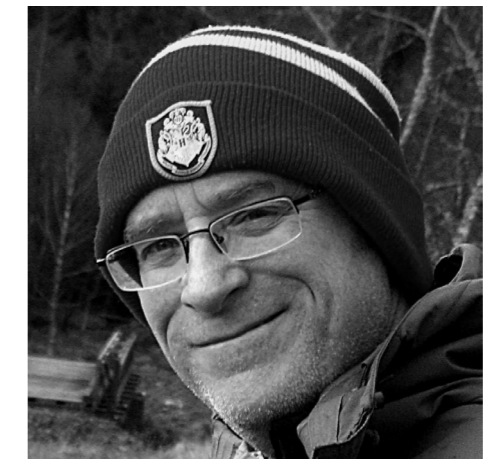
Marion Gordon (1955-2020) passed away peacefully on 23rd December 2020 at the Telford Centre with her son, Douglas by her side. She worked for a number of years in the Royal British Legion and the Telford Centre before retiring. She was full of life with a heart of gold and always up for a laugh. She will be sorely missed by all her family and friends



Jenny Keane, born in Nairobi in 1948 to Angus Sharp Collett and Janet Robinson. Jenny spent the early part of her childhood growing up with her mum and aunt Wendy. Her dad was an engineer on the railways in South Africa and India. Jenny moved to Devon with her parents and in later life became a self-employed taxi driver. This is where she met John Keane and when they married, Karen came to live with them. They had a thriving taxi company in Torbay called Brixham Radio Taxis. They both used to holiday in Scotland travelling around the beautiful Scottish scenery until one day, Jenny, John and Karen decided to move to Invergarry. Shortly after Jenny and John divorced. In Invergarry, Jenny decided to start up the luggage company as well as running the local filling station single-handedly as well as helping Karen through college. She started Aberchaldler Baggage Transfer and this became very busy transporting walkers' luggage up the A82 whilst they walked the Great Glen Way she became well known amongst the B&B and guest house owners along the way. Before moving to Scotland, Jenny found she had a half-brother in Australia with nieces and nephews, Janette, Michelle, Barry and Chris. In 2001, Jenny's brother John and his wife Olga came to Scotland; this changed her life completely. Jenny used to work on Nevis Radio and during this time knew and shared her knowledge of musicals that

she loved. Jenny absolutely loved her animals and during her later life, the birds always got fed before herself. She spent her later life raising funds for Munloch Animal Aid which is where she rescued her many dogs from. Jenny passed away on the 9th January 2021.

George Allan formerly of Bracadale, Invermoriston sadly passed away on Friday, 5th February 2021 after a short illness aged 69 years



Willie Hosie was born in Glasgow on the 22nd of June 1958 and grew up in Shettleston in the East End. He moved to the Highlands in his teen years and worked as a warden for several SYHA hostels including Tomintoul, Loch Lomond & Uig in Skye. He started his career as a chef after studying catering in Edinburgh and worked in various locations around Scotland, most recently in Fort William & Invergarry. He settled down in Fort Augustus in 1995 with his family. His passions were playing & listening to music, painting and getting out into the hills and photographing the Scottish scenery. He was a much-loved husband of Rebecca and

devoted dad of Ailsa, Gavin, Eirinn & Shannon and will sorely be missed my many. He died on the 31st of January 2021 in the Belford Hospital after a short illness.

Glengarry Community Woodlands: Eco-tourism at the community woodland

When the community set up Glengarry Community Woodlands in 2015, it had to demonstrate there was a plan to manage the woodland in a way that would generate income. This was not only important to satisfy the usual financial commitments that come with owning property, but also to fund the very things that the community said it wanted to use the woodland for – new paths, courses, education programmes and clubs. But what was most important to the public agencies who helped hand the publicly owned woodland over to the community was the opportunity it presented for economic regeneration. The gradual withdrawal of traditional employment sectors such as forestry, hydro, and agriculture has changed the economies and make-up of small communities like Glengarry. Management of the community woodland has to take this situation on board - and try - where possible to plug the gap by creating jobs and contributing to the local economy where it can.

Why tourism?

The idea for a tourist business was core to the community's case for purchasing the woodland in 2015. The woodland has a lot going for it – its very attractive, with scenic views across the Glen and up to Ben Tee, and its located on some of the major Highland tourist routes. Tourism was identified early on as the best way the community could use the woodland to generate income and create new jobs. So for the last 2-3 years, we have been carefully planning a business which – once operational – will secure the community woodland financially, create new jobs, and offer something that is currently unavailable in the area.

The business concept

The concept of the business is simple: it will offer an authentic forest cabin experience for guests, in 8 spacious, well-designed, off-grid wooden cabins. Guests will have to walk for 5-10 minutes into the woodland to get to their cabins, each with its own compost toilet and wood burning stove for heating and simple cooking. The cabins will be spacious and fitted out to high standards to ensure that they are comfortable and cosy. Guests will have access a new fully serviced amenity building with wifi & charging points, hot showers, flushing toilets, kitchen and lounge facilities. The office and guest reception will be situated within the old forestry depot which was renovated last year as part of an initial phase of capital works.



Forest Cabins: A high standard of design and fitting out will ensure high standards for guests

Cabin designs

To achieve the designs we were looking for, we chose to work with one of Scotland's leading timber building architects at North Woods Design & Construction (Ullapool) who created a bespoke cabin design for us.

The next step is to raise the finance and start construction, with an aim to be operational as soon as we can. The success of this community owned business, will secure the future of the community woodland. It will allow us to put into practice some of the ideas discussed by the community back in 2014/15, such as new paths, guided walks, information panels etc. The new business will also play a major part in justifying the public resources that were invested in the community to give Glengarry the woodland back in 2015.



The Community Company has had a very busy few months with lots of grants approved, new apprenticeships started, and the continued work on the new homes project, as well as supporting the 3 Glens Resilience Group with their work. Read on to find out more...

Grant scheme

The past year has been a very odd one for the grants scheme. Many of the grants that we gave out previously have yet to be spent, because of the limitations on so many activities. However it was great to see some new applications coming through, albeit some of those will be postponed for when restrictions are lifted.

The next grant application deadline is the 18th May. If you are interested in applying do give us a call to chat about your plans and let us know if we can help with your application.

Community Caretakers

We are a core team of three at the moment, as with the complications of social distancing in a small yard, it has been easier to keep things tight. Our seasonal team member, Zander, has secured a winter contract with 'Compass' working on the new housing. We wish him good luck with this new role. Like many of you we have had periods of furlough to protect both ourselves and the community. We have managed to maintain the essential services though throughout the lockdown period.

Autumn brought about its annual battle with the continuous leaf fall, keeping the pavements clear and reducing any slip hazards. By and large we are on top of it. Our rock salt quota was also delivered by the council ready for the harsher days and conditions that winter brings our way. Please feel free to help yourself to the salt in the numerous yellow grit bins around the villages should you need to treat your own garden paths.

As you would imagine, the general waste volume has dropped dramatically due to the lack of tourists at



the moment, however, we still carry out regular litter patrols. The team on patrol tolerate picking up accidentally dropped waste. Our frustration really kicks in though when we repeatedly have to tidy up deliberately dropped waste in certain areas. This really isn't on and shows a complete lack of respect for your village and the residents within. Please, show some respect for yourselves and don't take the community caretakers for granted. Just use a bin! There are plenty of them!

We are really looking forward to getting back to a more normal schedule and being able to have a friendly chat with you all – without a face mask to hide our smiles!

Grants March– December 2020

£980- Badminton Club– To hire the school hall for a year.

£600– Cadets - To send a cadet to visit the battlefields in France.

£10,000 - Fort Augustus Golf Club– To buy quad bike for grounds maintenance.

£8,200- Loch Ness and Great Glen Recreation

Development Group– Set up costs and to update the feasibility study for the viability of a Leisure Centre.

£11,000- 3 Glens Community Care– For establishing this new service.

£1,875- Glenmoriston Improvement Group– Seating by the war memorial and to set up a community website.

£8,380- Telford Centre– To improve communal facilities at the care home.

£800- Gaelic Group- to run a 10 week course for all who want to learn Gaelic.

£20,000- Glenmoriston Millennium Hall Towards a bigger project in improving the public toilet facilities.

9 Student Travel grants



Apprenticeships

Full-time college or university not for you? Would you prefer to earn while you learn? With an apprenticeship you can do just that. We met with Cameron Findlay, who recently completed his 4 year electricians apprenticeship with MacRaild and Smith, to discuss how his apprenticeship has made a difference for him.

There are many reasons for choosing to do an apprenticeship rather than going on to full-time college or university. For Cameron, it was pretty simple. "I wanted to earn some money, and I wasn't too keen on school. I prefer learning on the job, so an apprenticeship seemed the right route to take." An apprenticeship allowed him to do just that. Following two years of block release at college, there was then a year of working on the job before taking the all-important final exams.

Learning on the job has great advantages, but the college side of things is also important. As Cameron says, "You might think that just because it's an apprenticeship and not full-time university it's going to be easy- but it's not. There's a lot of studying and work that you need to put in to pass the exams." Certainly there is a lot of commitment and hard work involved if you want to successfully complete your apprenticeship.

"Some of the college tests and exams could be hard, but I preferred the on the job learning" Cameron says. And learning on the job is something he's had plenty of. During his apprenticeship he worked on everyday domestic maintenance jobs, as well as large scale jobs such as the 26 new houses on Belford Road, Fort William; a new office for Fergusons Transport in Corpach and the new MacBrayne Apartments on Fort William High Street. "The new flats were probably the most challenging," Cameron explains, "There was a lot of complex work needed for the lift system." From lifts to lights, it's all in a day's work for an electrician.

If you're considering an apprenticeship, or are a new apprentice yourself, Cameron has this advice- "Stick at it. You need to work hard at it if you want to succeed, and it won't necessarily be easy. You might find all the studying and exams difficult, but it's a great reward at the end of it."

An apprenticeship is a great choice if you want to gain experience and a qualification whilst earning a wage. If you are considering whether an apprenticeship is right for you, contact us 01320366800 or contact@communitycompany.co.uk to discuss options.

New Homes for Old Convent Land

Over the last year we've made a lot of progress despite delays caused by Covid-19. Before lockdown, we hosted an open day where you voted 'Caledonian Court' as your name of choice for the new street and we were able to confirm this with Highland Council allocating the name to us in September.



Work began on site in June, thanks to all the work done in preparation by the project team during lockdown. Compass were awarded the contract in April, and were raring to go. In the last nine months they've transformed the site and the new homes are really taking shape.

A lot of thought and work has been put in by the project team and the Director's housing sub group to ensure that the designs of the different houses fit the community's needs. There will be a range of house types, including 2 bungalows which are suited for anyone with mobility issues. To keep all the homes energy efficient and cost effective to heat, each property is fitted with an eco-dan air source heat pump.



The directors have been busy reviewing the allocation process, and application packs will be prepared shortly. These will be available in March. If you haven't already expressed your interest, please email Karen at contact@communitycompany.co.uk and we will pass on all the relevant information when it is released.

If you'd like to stay up to date with all the latest news about the new homes, be sure to follow and like our 'New Homes for Old Convent Land- FAGCC' Facebook page.

Glenmoriston Toilets

As many of you will know, the Millennium Hall in Glenmoriston had to close their toilets to public use due to problems with the septic tank and soakaway. The lack of a public toilet facility led to many local problems in the surrounding area.

For the last few months, a substantial amount of work was put into a joint bid to the Rural Tourism and Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) to upgrade the toilet facility at the Millennium Hall and to replace the toilets over at Foyers. The upgrade at the Millennium Hall included a new septic tank, soakaway, pump and internal improvements to the toilets themselves to make them COVID compliant and more environmentally friendly. Also included was the installation of a waste disposal point for motor homes in the car park. In parallel to work on the bid, discussions were also taking place with the Highland Council regarding the long term maintenance and management of the facility

Despite many hours of work and an incredibly detailed bid, the submission to RTIF was only partially successful. It is currently on a waiting list to see if schemes who have been offered funding fail, in which case we should be successful in securing funds. We will know soon if that is the case.

However, in parallel to the bid to RTIF we had bid for and secured funding from Fern Community Funds and also from Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company. After much discussion, an alternative plan was put forward to use these funds to undertake the essential works to the septic tank etc which would allow the toilets to be opened to the public as a stage 1 project. If RTIF does offer funding, this would then allow stage 2, the upgrade to the toilets, to take place.

As we go to press, work is being undertaken behind the scenes to secure all the detailed permissions, costing and tenders to get to the point where stage 1 can go ahead.

There is still a lot of work to do to make the project happen but we are cautiously optimistic that we may be able to start on site this year.

Thanks go to the many people and organisations involved in the project to date - the Millennium hall committee, the community of Glenmoriston, Stuart Findlay, Highland Council, Harry Whiteside, FAGCC, Fern Community Funds, Morham and Brotchie, Kearney Donald Partnership and more.

Watch this space for more updates.



Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Council

Draft Minutes of the Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 27th January 2021

Members Present:

Deirdre MacKinnon - Chair (DM)

Helen Clay - Secretary (HC)

Stuart Findlay - Treasurer (SF)

Jeff Dymond (JD)

Mike Anderson (MA)

Margaret Davidson - Councillor (MD)

Iain MacKnocher - Vice Chair (IM)

Note Taker: Samantha Cornelius (SC)

1. Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 25th November 2020 were agreed to be an accurate and true reflection. Proposed by SF and seconded by JD.

Update on ETAPE: Malcolm Sutherland (MS) advised that ETAPE Loch Ness that was planned for the end of April has today been postponed. It was now quite clear that there was absolutely no chance that an event of this kind could take place. A contingency date of Sunday 22nd August has been agreed with the relevant parties. All participants will be automatically rolled over to that date although they will have the option to either get a refund, donate their entry fee to MacMillan Cancer Support or defer to April 2022. SF raised concerns about the date in August. MS stated that he has been speaking to other Community Councils both before and since Christmas, as well as business people and he thinks people are desperate just to get back to a level of normal. The event will follow all British and Scottish Government advice and there is no way that the event would take place if there is any fear for the community or participants. Other planning for the event includes: a degree of social distancing, starting the event 15 minutes earlier which allows for a greater spread of people from the start which assists on progress during the course and also a reduced number of participants. The exact numbers would be dependent on what participants choose following today's announcement. There would be an increase in the number of aid stations, on previous events there were three stations. They would no longer be feed stations as the participants would receive their food and sustenance the day before the event and be self-sufficient on the day. There would be medical support, portaloos and mechanical support and there would be a contingency of water for those who couldn't carry enough. The event would relocate to Bught Park where greater spacing is available. SF was concerned by the August date due to the possible increase of tourist numbers (domestic) if foreign holidays are not allowed and English schools are still on holiday. MS had spoken to other communities who recognise that it is an extraordinary time and an extraordinary year and he thinks people are simply desperate and if everything is sitting correctly for an event like this to take place it would be a reason for celebration but he appreciates that the area hopefully will be busier and will be operating as normal, well as near normal as possible. There may also be reduced foreign tourism levels. SF asked if they had considered moving the event to September. MS stated that the Loch Ness Marathon is on the 3rd September which would close the roads on the south side twice in a month, massive number of marshals and volunteers needed around the loch; at the moment there is six-week separation and that is considered tight for volunteer fatigue and also daylight is an issue.

Presentation by Scottish Water: Kelton Bennett (KB) gave a quick update on the project.

- At the raw water intake there are still some civil works to be undertaken which should be completed within the next few weeks. There remains a temporary generator that is being used for operating the pumps as the permanent power supplies are not yet finished.

- At the water treatment work site itself, the commissioning work is going pretty well, the first part of the chemical dosing is mostly completed. There are still some civil works to finish including a couple of chambers on the Great Glen Way. The works to repair the landslip is pretty much completed which just leaves the final tie. The pipes have already been tested so the reinstatement in its entirety will then be checked before the Great Glen Way is re-opened.

- The civil works at the service reservoir are mostly complete and the power supply cabling is due to start from the 8th February, there are about four weeks of ducting work to do from the burn crossing down towards Fort Augustus and up the hill into the service reservoir site.

- The pipeline works in the village is virtually complete and the work at Lovat Terrace is ongoing. There is a final connection date with the Networks team on the 10th Feb.

- The booster pumping station work should be starting about the 8th Feb, initially with the clearing of sight lines along the road, then construction of the new access junction into the site before any of the actual development can take place. Booster Pumping Station 2 commences on 8th Feb and then three to four weeks after that work,

commences on Booster Pumping Station 1. There may be some overlap for tree felling for sight line clearance. DM said that the no one had approached Girvans Hardware Store to advise that the traffic lights were on the road longer than they were initially told. KB stated that there had been an issue with the power plant and apologised that no one had notified them.

2. Matters Arising

Invermoriston Toilets: MD stated that the Hall didn't get an award even though they met all the necessary criteria; unfortunately, the fund ran out of money. They are now on a reserve list and there will be a Scottish Government Financial Statement tomorrow and they may make an announcement of putting more money into it. Fergus Ewing was bidding to get £10M but they only got £3M. Both Invermoriston and Foyers bids were successful. There have been efforts to find a fallback position in case we don't get the go ahead by the end of February. Beinneun have confirmed that the outside septic tank can be installed with the £100,000 that they donated which should also cover a tidy up of the toilets but not the fundamental refit of the toilets that were planned. The Community Company also had £20,000 contingency for the Hall. MD is hopeful that something will be in place by July.

Scottish Water: Monthly report provided.

3. Police Report

Incidents between 25 Nov 20 and 24 Jan 21:

There have been 8 fixed penalty notices issued to drivers travelling in excess of the speed limit within Fort Augustus over this period. A prohibition notice was provided to one driver due to a dangerous trailer which was being towed through Fort Augustus. A 30-year-old woman was arrested on the 28th of November on the A82 near to Invermoriston for driving whilst controlled drugs were in her system. She was released later on with instruction to appear at court at a later date for the offence.

On the 31st of December 2020, a 31-year-old man was found in possession of a small amount of cannabis within a vehicle on the A82 south of Fort Augustus. He was issued with a recorded police warning and also instructed to return home as he was in breach of COVID regulations.

On the 20th of January 2021 there was a report of a theft of sporting equipment from outside a flat in the Abbey, Fort Augustus. Police are following a positive line of enquiry and appears to be an opportunistic crime with no wider concerns.

4. Treasurer's Report

The balance as of today is £5,775.96.

5. Community Amenity Issues

Ward Boundaries: The CC submitted a letter and received a copy letter from Rev. Dr. Adrian Varwell which has been acknowledged.

Car Park: An agreement has been reached with both parties and is now sitting with the solicitors.

Roads: Patch work has been undertaken at the canal bridge, Richmond House and throughout the village. One of the culverts at Aberchalder has also been done and will return to finish the other one. No update on the section at Inchmore where RH thinks there isn't enough signage. SF has travelled the road and thinks there is sufficient signage.

DM stated that there is a really deep pot hole on the road up Glendoe between the Keepers Cottage and the cattle grid. IM commented that the state of the road below the Keepers Cottage is also in a terrible state and has been for a long time, minor repairs have been done previously but they don't last. The Ardachy road from Glendoe side is falling away and also have deep rutted verges but is not so bad after the Ardachy bridge

heading towards the A82. Both sides of the canal are terrible and also there's pothole outside 4 and 10 The Riggs. MD asked DM to send an email to John Taylor and cc herself and Alan Johnstone. There is water going over the road before Inchewan and a really rough patch at the corner after, going northbound into Invermoriston.

Sheltered Housing: They have started the groundworks at the Telford Centre, MD to get the plans of the Telford footprint to understand what is going on in there to see what we can do to speed things up and also to have a discussion with the NHS just to move it on a bit. The other houses came up at the Community Company AGM; they won't now be ready until July. Question as to whether there were many on the Council housing waiting list, MD said some but not many. Some people on the list with the Community Company are not on the Council list. MD has spoken with John McCarthy about another batch of housing in the village and he is looking at some land. DM states that some people are having difficulty using the Council's online housing application form, the paper form seems much easier, and the online application may put some people off. There are a lot of young people who are on the list with the Community Company but not on the Council list so the applicants will be asked to go on the Council list too. Allocation policy is yet to be decided by the Community Company; it won't be on points but more local focused. Julie Vivers (Head of Housing) is keen to see if we can get more than one move and more than one house for people coming out of bigger Council houses and she will discuss that with the Community Company.

Kilchuimen Cemetery: The cemetery road has been inspected and flood engineer Kenny Carmichael believes it will need gabion baskets and concrete slabbing to hold it into the road which is very expensive. MD is drafting a letter to Rob MacDonald and also to John MacLean who runs the cemeteries who is going to talk to Jim Sandeman. The project is being taken seriously due to the state of deterioration.

Invermoriston Cemetery: MD confirmed that the gate had been re-hung so believe that the issues are all resolved.

6. Renewable Energy Projects

Fiodhag Windfarm: Previously known as Fasnakyle, the environmental impact studies are ongoing but there is no update. Cloiche Windfarm: No update. Glenshero: Waiting on the outcome of the appeal. Corrie Glas: No update. Dell Windfarm: The representative from Dell was supposed to speak to the CC but there have been no approaches. Tomchrasky Windfarm: CC submitted comments

Loch Liath Windfarm: Near Bhlaraidh windfarm there is a scoping application for 26 turbines by Statkraft UK Ltd (German developer) the scoping has to be in by 2nd February. The CC needs to look at the cumulative impact if they all go ahead as right in Balmacaan Forest, next to Bhlaraidh windfarm. Bhlaraidh currently has 32 turbines with a possible 20 if the extension is approved making a total of 78 turbines. There are four possible access routes to get the turbines to the site; SF to enter a scoping comment about routing through the village and the cumulative impact.

Bhlaraidh Extension: No update.

Fort Augustus Substation: The last meeting was on the 13th January which HC and JD attended. Andy Henderson is leaving the project with Laurie Kibblewhite taking over. They raised the seven-day working application which was turned down after Christmas for AMEY, from the 23rd January to a date in August. They are going to reapply with a more targeted application. Notification received of an outbreak of Covid in the workforce.

7. Planning & Licensing

20/04565/FUL - Land 325M SW of Torr Dhuin, Auchterawe, Fort Augustus. Erection of battery energy storage system, steel containers, GRP meter building, access track, fencing, new trees.

Comment submitted by the CC.

20/04841/FUL - Development Site at Old Military Road, Auchterawe, Fort Augustus.

Erection of a house. No comment by CC.

21/00250/FUL - Plot 15 Glendale Park, Invermoriston, Inverness, IV63 7AB. Erection of house.

No comment by CC.

20/05081/FUL - Dunard, Fort Augustus, PH32 4DT. Erection of extension to house.

No comment by CC.

20/05111/FUL - Land 170M East of Dundreggan Farmhouse, Glenmoriston. Installation of drainage system (amendment to planning permission 20/02270/FUL).

No comment by CC

20/05117/FUL - Land 25M West of Dunard, Fort Augustus. Erection of house. No comment by CC.

21/00101/s36 - Land at Carn Na Saobhaidhe, Gorthleck, Inverness. Corriegarth 2 Wind Farm - Erection and Operation of a Wind Farm for a period of 30 years, comprising of 16 Wind Turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure.

21/0116/FUL - Land to South of Cnoc Fearna, Dalchreichart, Glenmoriston. Erection of house. No comment by CC.

8. Correspondence

Email from Charles Stephen about winter resilience.

Received a letter of complaint from Mr C Ellice of Aberchalder complaining about the lack of Christmas lights in the village. DM replied direct that there were lights in the village but not on the A82 due to the costs involved as BEAR were charging £800. Everything else was in place on the 2nd December.

9. AOB

3 Glens Community Care: More interviews will take place on Friday. There are only three working that have cars, the other two are doing Fort Augustus because they don't drive. Have to speak to the Highland Hospice to get more befrienders. We've also had to use the Community Company village officers to grit roads as some of them are difficult to get to. Trying to get grit boxes in Mandally which is not our area as it is under Lochaber but MD advised to contact Alan Johnstone, the foreman who will drop some off.

3 Glens Resilience: A further £10,000 has come from Beinneun Community Fund for this community council area. The Community Company and the Glengarry Trust will work together to facilitate it for the 3 Glens Resilience Group.

Leisure Centre: DM asked for an update to be provided to the CC so that it can be minuted for the community. The report has now been completed and is quite encouraging.

MA investigated ways to improve broadband delivery which is not good within the village. There is a scheme run by the Community Fibre Partnership which allows you to engage with Openreach to enable you to upgrade the capabilities of the local exchange and there is something called the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme which then enables you to get from the exchange to businesses or homes. This was sent to the Community Company who will look at it in February.

A couple of people have raised the issue of parking in The Riggs as works vans and school buses are parking there. MD stated that unless they get residents parking which will incur an annual charge, no one will enforce. There is a large car park opposite which is free for overnight use.

DM is to approach the dog warden after many complaints about dog fouling, which must be being perpetrated by locals as there is no tourism at present.

There will be a by-election in the Ward on the 11th March.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 24th February at 7.30pm via Teams.

