

# SLATEST NEWS

Your free community newsletter produced by Ballachulish Community Forum

Edition 20 – April / May 2020



*Beavers trip to the Mountain Rescue centre in Glencoe*



*Showstoppers Vintage Afternoon Tea at the Village Hall*



# CORONAVIRUS

Please be aware that this article is being prepared approximately 10 days - 2 weeks before you read it due to the time taken to produce, print and distribute Slatest News. It is therefore highly likely that any advice at time of writing will have been superseded by now.

The following websites are expected to contain up to date medical information:

- <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/>
- <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

The following website is expected to offer broader information:

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

And this website has some travel advice:

- <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention-advice/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

If you do not have access to the internet, it is expected that regular updates will be broadcast on both TV and Radio. If your concerns are more urgent, we advise you telephone someone you know with internet access who can find the information you need.

It is expected that all community groups will act responsibly and follow any government guidelines. Therefore, any ***events or activities detailed in this edition of Slatest may be postponed or cancelled at short notice***. Please use common sense in all circumstances and follow any official advice given.

The Community Emergency Resilience committee has met recently to update the Community Emergency Plan to ensure that we are best prepared for any foreseeable eventuality resulting from Coronavirus. We are building a team of volunteers prepared to respond if required, and have set up a facebook group – @covid19balla – and an e-mail address. Michael Chisholm has kindly offered his call centre as an emergency contact number – 01855 811999. Please only dial this number in an emergency situation if local assistance is most appropriate, and we would ask that you dial from a landline whenever possible to allow calls to be more easily traced if necessary.

***Please follow all current advice to avoid transmission of the virus.***

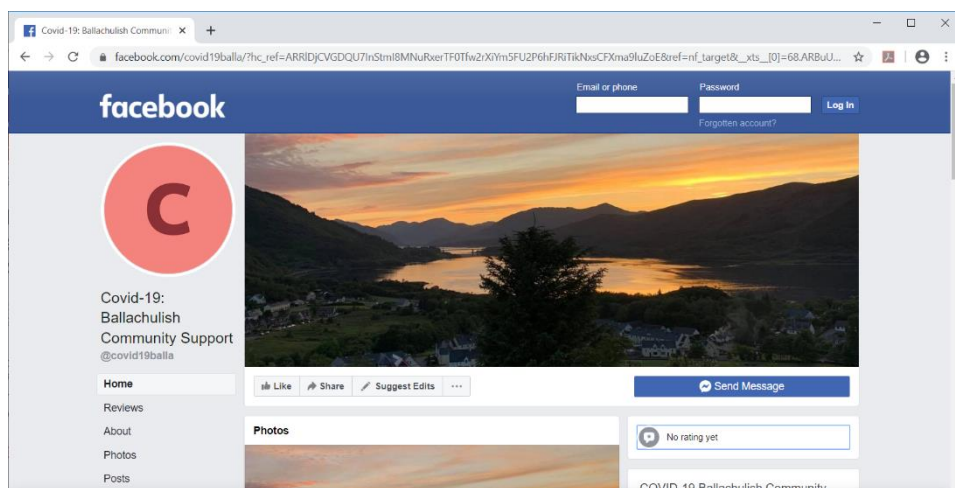
# VULNERABLE PEOPLE and SELF ISOLATION

- Please be aware of elderly or vulnerable relatives, neighbours or friends and ensure that they have everything that they need, including medical attention if required.
- If you consider yourself to be a 'vulnerable person', whether due to age, health issues or other considerations, please ensure there is someone who can keep an eye on you and offer assistance where necessary. Community volunteers are available to perform this role if you don't feel you have anyone else you can ask.
- If you need to self isolate, please be aware that there is volunteer support within the community should you need it **For any reason.**
- Can you help? If you have any skills or abilities which may be of use to the community, please let us know.

If you live alone and need to Self Isolate, please consider the following:

- Check in daily by phone or social media with someone local to confirm you are ok.
- Ensure you have access to sufficient food and drink
- You need not be alone. Use the phone, skype, facebook etc to keep in touch with friends and family
- You can use the Green / Red cards provided in a window to identify if you need assistance.
- Use NHS24 / 111 as a first port of call for medical assistance.
- Do not open the door to visitors – talk through a closed window or by phone.
- **DO NOT BE EMBARRASSED OR AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP.**

We are building a team of volunteers to help and assist anyone who needs it.



# WELCOME!

Thank you to everyone who has supplied articles for this edition of Slatest. This is your magazine, and it always has room for new items. If you have some interesting snippets of local history or have found some old photos or want to share a memory, please get in touch – rileyrob@btinternet.com, we can also help put articles together.

Slatest belongs to the community, and needs your support to continue being a success. The deadline for the next edition is **14<sup>th</sup> May 2020** with deliveries by the end of May, so please get in touch if you have any events or ideas!

## WHO'S WHO?

With so many important things happening in the community at present, there have been a number of questions about the roles of the main community groups.

### Community Council

This is the statutory elected body for Ballachulish, Glenachulish and Lettermore. They are not allowed to own property, but act as the primary link between the community and outside bodies such as the Highland Council.

### Community Company

The Community Company was originally set up by the Community Council to pursue projects which were outwith the scope of the Community Council's role. This has included the recent work on the Hydro schemes, and a variety of other projects over the years.

### Community Association SCIO

This is a registered charity which was set up nearly 40 years ago with the original aim of providing the community with a village hall. Since then, the association has maintained the hall and offered a wide range (in conjunction with other groups) of events over the years, and continue to do so.

Both the Community Company and Association have similar constitutions, but the company is better suited for riskier projects to protect the village hall for the community.

### Community Forum

The Forum is an unconstituted grouping of all of the above, and any other community groups who meet periodically. Their main project is the Community Action Plan (see centre pages), but they can also act as a discussion group for any other projects which need widespread community input.



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# DUROR AND ST MUNDA'S PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Many of you will have heard that we are having problems with St Munda's church building. We knew that a lot of attention was needed and that we had problems with the heating and the electrical system generally but a routine survey began to reveal a good deal more.

We have now had a surveyor, several tradesmen, a heating consultant and a group from Presbytery, which included an architect and quantity surveyor, look at the building and it is hard to see how we can deal with all that is required.

Issues identified include the lack of efficient heating in the church area, the poor condition of the flooring and solum area, the condition of the internal plasterwork and the dangerously poor condition of the electrical switch board serving the whole building. Externally there is cracking on the bell tower, extensive repointing needs to be done all round and the entire roof and its leadwork flashings need to be overhauled. It is suggested that the minimum total budget could be in the order of £420,000.

At present we have around £20,000 and it is hard to see how we could raise such a vast sum to make up the difference. In any case the Church of Scotland General Trustees, who effectively own the building, have a policy of minimising the spending on buildings and are encouraging congregations to work towards 'well equipped spaces in the right places', including sharing buildings with other groups.

We are not choosing to leave the building but it seems that circumstances may well force this on us. This is a matter of great regret to many in the congregation and, no doubt, would be to many in the community. A final decision on our course of action will only be made after full exploration of our options. In terms of options we have wondered whether we might be able to build something of a more modest scale somewhere in Ballachulish and we have also spoken with the Community Association about the possibility of the church building the community hall extension. The Association broadly supported exploring further possibilities with both the Church and Showstoppers (who also approached BCA with some ideas) and propose to hold a joint sub-committee meeting in due course.

In the meantime the worship and work of the Church continues and we hope that there is a positive future for the Church of Scotland in Ballachulish and Glencoe. If anyone would like to contact me about any aspect of this my contact details are below.

With best wishes,  
*Rev Sandy Stoddart*

[astoddart@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:astoddart@churchofscotland.org.uk) 01631 740285



# BALLACHULISH PRIMARY CAREERS FAYRE

A busy week was had in Ballachulish and Duror Cluster Schools. As part of the Developing the Young Workforce week, the pupils had a careers Fayre, an assembly to show parents communication skills, a drama filled day acting out roles in the workplace and a day full of visits on Thursday.

## P6/7

P6/7 went for a visit to Liberty Alcan as part of our developing the young work force week. They learned all about how the factory operates and how the hydro power powers the factory and can sell to the national grid. They also learned about the different jobs and routes into employment there. It was great to have a



former pupil Ross MacLean, who is now an apprentice there, give a chat about how he had to work hard at school to get his job. Nathan's dad also works there and was telling us all about his job.

## P4/5

Ballachulish and Duror pupils went for a visit to a Croft in Cuil Bay. They learned about all the work that needs to be done to maintain the Croft and the animals there. The tips about the poly tunnel

will also help them to transfer their skills when working in our new poly tunnel.

## P1-3

Here is the picture from P1-3 Duror and Ballachulish children on the Corran Ferry. It linked in with finding out about jobs in the community and the Katie Morag topic. The staff were so welcoming and even showed the children the engine room. The children saw all the different kinds of people who had to cross the ferry to get to work. We even met Alan 'The Drama Man' on his way to work at another school.





## 4<sup>th</sup> Lochaber Scout Group

Beavers 6-8 years, 5.30-6.30pm

Cubs 8-10½ years, 6.45-7.45pm

Scouts 10-14 years, 8-9.15pm

We meet at Ballachulish Village Hall on Thursdays

Ballachulish Beavers and Scouts would like to express their thanks to Glencoe Mountain Rescue for showing them round the centre and equipment recently. As you can see from the photos of the Beavers, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves!

The Scouts are hoping to continue their program as long as the Schools remain open, but will follow all national advice given. We have an exciting summer program planned, and hope that it can be carried out.



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# RAIN RAIN GO AWAY (Come again another day??)

## What is a month's rainfall?

I have a small weather station in Glenachulish and following the storms this year and the flooding in other parts of Britain here are some of the figures that I have recorded over the previous four years of our rainfall. (2016 – 2019)

Our average annual rainfall has been 2,720 mm. (9 feet 11 inches). 226 mm per month. 7.5 mm each day.

In a little over six weeks this year we reached 1,000 mm of rain, on 15th February. Last year it took until June to reach that figure.

In January 2020 we had 612 mm. The average of the previous 4 years is 309 mm

In February 2020 we had 590 mm. The average of the previous 4 years is 277 mm

The wettest month in those 4 years was January 2016 with 440 mm. The driest was April 2019, 48 mm, closely followed by November 2019 at 49mm. December 2019 was then very wet with 403 mm.

This means that in the first two months of this year we have had an average of 20 mm of rain each day. (Just over three quarters of an inch)

*Ian Hamilton*

Not directly related, but here are a couple of photos of the exceptional high tide, at 4.3m, in mid March from Debs Fyfe.





# SOUTH LOCHABER BOWMEN

Archery Club at the Leven Centre, Kinlochleven  
Otters (5-7yrs) Cubs (8-12yrs) Juniors (13-17 yrs)  
Monday evenings 6-8pm £2.50 per session  
Adults 18 and over Tuesday evenings  
7:00-9:00pm - £4 per session - All equipment supplied



Archery sessions are run by qualified coaches in both Field and Target Archery.  
You can also find us on facebook: [www.facebook.com/SLBowmen](http://www.facebook.com/SLBowmen).

The club is now a member of the Scottish Field Archery Association (SFAA) which allows current year card holding members to attend club shoots and Championships all around Scotland. Further details of this opportunity can be obtained through South Lochaber Bowmen Facebook page. Your questions will be answered promptly.

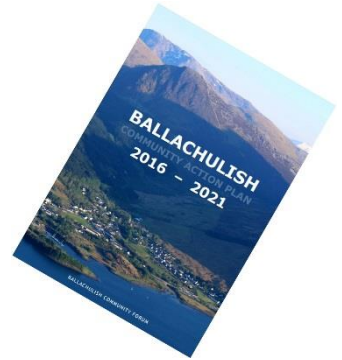
***New members are always welcome, whether you are a first timer or experienced archer please feel free to come along and try out your skills!***

Every  
Tuesday & Thursday  
Ballachulish Village Hall  
9:30-11:30am  
£1.50 inc snack 😊  
(Suggested Donation)  
Contact Alice Wilson - 07709100618

A large, vibrant rainbow with all the colors of the spectrum arches across a light blue sky. The rainbow is decorated with small white stars. At the base of the rainbow are two fluffy white clouds. The text is centered within the rainbow's arch. In the bottom right corner of the graphic, there is a circular logo with a white cross on a blue background.

# COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Community Forum have recently started work on the next Community Action Plan for 2021-26. The initial plan was for the Residents Surveys to be distributed after the Easter Weekend, however this timeframe is under constant review due to Coronavirus as it is paramount that the health and wellbeing of all residents comes first.



We do, however, hope that the survey will be carried out in the coming months. Many of you will remember the previous CAP process, which we are aiming to replicate within the community rather than incurring the expense of the consultants again.

We urge all residents to take the time to complete the survey, whether by using the paper form that will come through your door, or the online version. The more responses we receive, the better able we are to pursue the projects that you want to see carried forward.

## WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

Since the completion of the first Community Action plan in 2016, the community has been working hard on a number of ideas raised in the Action Plan. Some projects have been completed, some are still work in progress (some always will be!) and others have stalled for one reason or another.

### Community and Recreational Facilities and Activities

- Develop the village hall - *Work has recently been restarted on this*
- Improve play and sports areas – *Mobile Skatepark visited, other work is ongoing*
- More community events and arts and cultural activities – *Ongoing with some exciting new (long-term) ideas.*

### Environment and Heritage

- Develop and promote local heritage – *Various ideas being investigated but wider community input is needed*
- Make more of the loch and waterfront – *This has recently come to the forefront of local awareness, and work is ongoing, but we need more community support to achieve the desired outcome.*



## Access to Services and Transport

- Improve access to the primary school – *some work carried out by Safe Routes to School*
- Protect and improve health and care services – *Local representatives are working on the Belford replacement committee to try and ensure sufficient services are maintained and available 24/7.*

## Local Economy and Tourism

- Develop the Hydro Scheme – *Unfortunately work has been mothballed due to changes in government funding and support; LEG are investigating the Glenachulish scheme*
- Develop Ballachulish as an area hub for communities and visitors – *Everything we achieve hopefully furthers this aspiration*
- Support existing businesses and encourage new businesses – *Local community groups and businesses continue to have a productive relationship*

## Housing and Village Enhancement

- Develop more affordable housing –
- Develop Open Spaces – *The open land at the village hall has been cleared further and other areas are being maintained*
- Village enhancement – *flower tubs are maintained, new Christmas lights have been purchased, the Derrick Crane and Wagon have been installed opposite the Hall.*



**EXPLORERS**

for young people aged 14 - 18 yrs who are up for the challenge.

**SKILLS FOR LIFE**  
4th Lochaber (Ballachulish) Scouts

**EXPLORER OPEN EVENING**  
Tuesday 17th March  
7:30pm St Mundas Church Hall  
Ballachulish  
Contact Karl 07769809236  
for further information

  
**Scouts**

# NETHER LOCHABER SEWING GROUP

In order to fit in with peoples' busy schedules, last autumn we started an afternoon sewing group in addition to our evenings. The new group is going strongly. Keen participants have been known to attend both the afternoon and evening sessions!

Nether Lochaber Sewing Group developed from classes held in Kinlochleven Community Centre teaching folk how to use their sewing machines. Participants come from all over the area.

People bring their own projects: mostly making quilts, bags and

cushions. Most members bring their sewing machines but some folk bring hand-sewing or other crafts with them. There is a great range of skills from beginner to competent. Everybody is friendly and helpful. There is always time for a cuppa and much chat.

As well as sewing on Wednesdays, we have an annual weekend away learning a new sewing skill. In the October school holidays we spent a day sewing quilts, bags and cushions for Lochaber Women's Aid and last summer we had a day sewing quilts for the Linus charity that donates quilts to children in need and in hospitals. This July we are planning a trip to the Festival of Quilts in Birmingham. We are also hoping to organise a group project.

We would be delighted to have more folk join us in the Nether Lochaber Hall on a Wednesday. Each session costs £2. Afternoons run from 2pm to 4pm and evenings from 6.30pm to 9pm. We have a break during school holidays. For more details please contact Jan on 07729 001362 or Davina on 07724 465776 or just drop in!



# BALLACHULISH VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Ballachulish Community Association SCIO will be holding their AGM at the village hall on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 5pm. Please come along if you can, to support the trustees, and perhaps volunteer to help. As you can see from Sandy's comments in the church column, there are some exciting proposals coming forward, so new ideas and new support will be warmly welcomed.



# TAKE TEA WITH THE SHOWSTOPPERS

The Lochaber Showstoppers are busy rehearsing for their upcoming production of 'The Sound of Music', in the Nevis Centre, Fort William.

While the gang are busy learning words and choreography and how to solve a problem like Maria, they've also planned some exciting events which really put the 'fun' in 'fundraising'.

A Vintage Afternoon Tea was recently held in Ballachulish Village Hall, and it is hoped that this will be followed by a Vintage



Afternoon Tea at Spean Bridge Community Centre with live entertainment again provided by some of the Showstoppers' talented members.

There is also a new crowdfunding page on JustGiving.com which is hoping to raise funds towards the orchestral accompaniment for the show. Any donation of any size makes a real difference – just search 'Lochaber Showstoppers' at JustGiving.com

To find out more, or if you are interested in getting involved with 'The Sound of Music' on- or off-stage, please contact [info@lochabershowstoppers.co.uk](mailto:info@lochabershowstoppers.co.uk) or visit their Facebook page.

*STOP PRESS: Please not that due to the current Coronavirus situation, previously advertised dates have been put on hold. We hope to have an update soon.*

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# THE COFFIN BOAT

Glencoe Folk Museum is displaying a very exciting object this season for the first time in years: a 'Coffin Boat', one of three that were used by local clans to transport bodies to Eilean Munde in Loch Leven.

The 'burial island' is the site of a graveyard once used by the Stewarts of Ballachulish, the Camerons of Callart and the MacDonalds of Glencoe. Each had their own port – "the Ports of the Dead" – and shared maintenance of the island and graveyard even in times of conflict. Among the MacDonalds said to be buried there is Maclain, 12th Chief of Glencoe, who was murdered during the infamous massacre of 1692. The last burial took place here in 1972.

The boat has been returned to temporary display this year to coincide with Visit Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters. These themed years take place every two years, and 2020 will see events, exhibitions, festivals and activities around the country highlighting our beautiful seas, lochs, rivers and beaches.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to our team of helpers (pictured): John Poolman, Ewan Smith, Sandy Coldwell, Jon Ure, Bill Strachan, David Doogan, Scott Fraser and William Stewart. Particular thanks go to Michael Chisholm and all at Chisholm's Garage and Chisholm's Recovery Specialists, who transported the boat from our stores to the museum.

You can see the Coffin Boat for yourself when we reopen on the 1st April!



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# SOB'S SHOP



To those of a certain age, Sob's Shop played a huge part in village life.

As someone said recently – "if you lived in West Laroch, Sob's was the go-to shop for newspapers, cigarettes and sweetsies!"

Everyone who knew Sob and his shop has tales to tell. And we would like to hear them, so that this important part of the social history of Ballachulish is not lost and forgotten.

So – if you have a memory to share – anonymous or otherwise! – please get in touch with Marjie at [greasort23@gmail.com](mailto:greasort23@gmail.com).

If you don't use email why not write down your story and pop it in to Flat 1, Laroch House?



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# LOCH LEVEN OPEN WATER SWIMMERS

If the dark winter months and storms have tested your motivation, why not consider something guaranteed to shock your senses into life and improve your mental and physical health?

Open water swimming is a growing sport and there is a thriving group based here in Ballachulish. You might have seen them out in all weathers – smiling or perhaps grimacing...you'll never know until you give it a try!

New swimmers are always welcome to join and the best way to find out more is to join the Facebook page - Loch Leven (Glencoe) Open Water Swimmers. The group have a mix of abilities, personalities and a friendly welcome and the page serves as a platform for members to share articles, ask questions and most importantly arrange to swim. (NB. All swims are informal gatherings and participants join at their own risk) Maybe we'll see you in the Loch soon.

## OSS Responsibility Statement

Loch Leven (Glencoe) Open Water Swimmers operate all swimming activity under the OSS Swim Responsibility Statement guidelines. The Loch Leven (Glencoe) Open Water Swimmers group is purely a network of people interested in swimming with others at entirely their own risk. We maintain to be an open and welcoming group for swimmers of all abilities.



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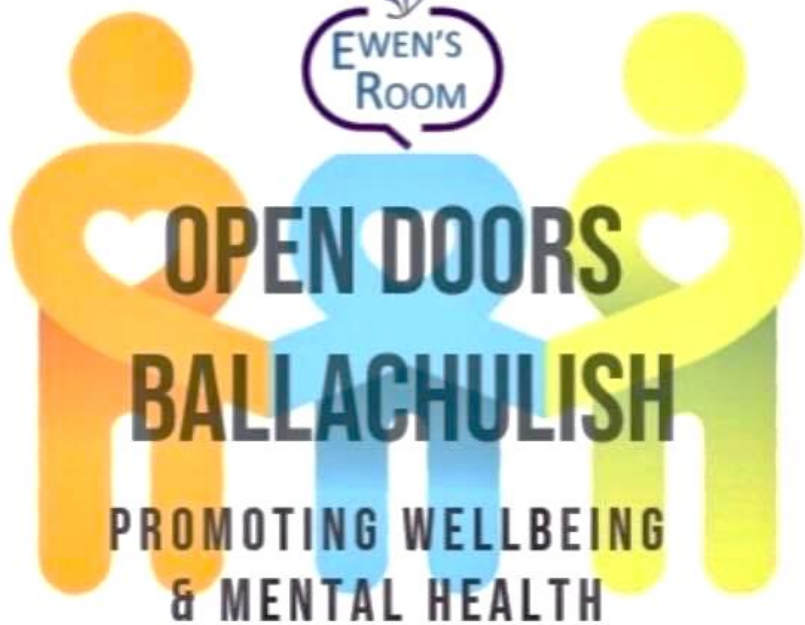
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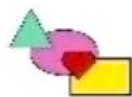


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**KINLOCHLOVIN HUB, BALLACHULISH** (Next to Chip Shop)

# USEFUL CONTACTS

If you have any questions about what is going on in the community, or would like to help with anything, please get in touch with someone below:

**Community Council:** [www.ballachulish.org.uk](http://www.ballachulish.org.uk)

Our Community Councillors are: Michael Chisholm, Shirley Grant (Vice-Chair), Alisdair Jack (Treasurer), Dave Kitson (Secretary), Rob Malpas, Anthony McKenna, Kevin Smith (Chair)

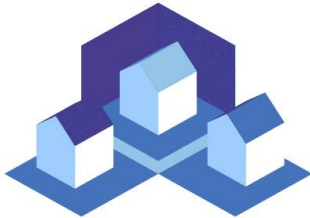
**Community Association:** [www.ballah-hall.co.uk](http://www.ballah-hall.co.uk)

Our Trustees are: Brian Dickie (Vice Chair), Mags Ingram, Donella MacDonald, Rob Malpas (Secretary), Sheila McLean, Sandy Stoddart, Marjie Thornton

Booking Secretary: Judy Bigham 811758

**Community Company:** [on Facebook](#)

Brian Dickie, Simon Ingram (Treasurer), Dave Kitson, Angus MacInnes, Niall McLean, Kevin Smith, Morgan Smith



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# REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Please note some activities do not meet during school holidays.

## Monday

- 10am Local Walking Group meet at TiC 
- After school primary football – Jubilee Park
- 7pm Highland Hustle at School
- 8-10pm Scottish / Country Dancing at Village Hall

## Tuesday

- 9.30-11.30am  Playgroup at Village Hall
- 6-8pm Junior Shinty Training at Village Hall / Jubilee


## Wednesday

- 6.30-7.15pm Zumba at Village Hall
- 7.30-9pm RockSkool at Village Hall

## Thursday

- 9.30-11.30am  Playgroup at Village Hall
- 10.30-1pm Knit & Knatter, Coffee & Crochet at TiC
- 5.30-9.15pm   &  at Village Hall
- Evenings – Shinty Team Practice at Jubilee Park

## Friday

- 10am Local Walking group meet at TiC 
- After school dancing session at school

## Sunday

- 11.30am Church of Scotland Service at St Munda's
- Episcopal Church Service at St Mary's, Glencoe
- Catholic Church Service at St Mun's

## RBS Mobile Bank

### Tuesdays

10:45-11:15 Abbeyfield

11:30-12:30 V Hall

### Fridays

10:30-12:00 V Hall



The Royal Bank of Scotland Group

## Mobile Library

### Thurs 2 & 23/4; 14/5

12:40-12:55 Square

13:00-13:10 Lochside

Cottages

### Wed 8 & 29/4; 20/5

(13:30-14:25 School)

14:30-15:15 W Laroche

15:20-16:00 Park Rd & Abbeyfield

16:05-16:30 Albert Rd



As you can see, ours is a very busy community with lots going on. However, if your group isn't mentioned above, please get in touch!

If you are interested in any of the above, we're sure you will be made very welcome. Contact details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, on facebook or simply ask us and we shall pass your enquiry on!

## Also active locally:

- South Lochaber Bowmen – Archery Club
- Ballachulish Football Club

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

*Please note any events or activities detailed in this edition of Slatest may be postponed or cancelled at short notice.*

## April

- 4<sup>th</sup> Community Council Meeting, 7pm at shinty pavilion
- 14<sup>th</sup> Happy Easter!
- 18<sup>th</sup> Schools go back

## May

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Ballachulish Community Association SCIO AGM at 5pm at the Hall
- 5<sup>th</sup> Community Council Meeting, 7pm at shinty pavilion
- 8<sup>th</sup> VE Day Bank Holiday

## Advertising

If you would like to advertise your local business in this newsletter, please get in touch. Adverts will cost £20 per issue, for a quarter page. We will take a maximum of 12 adverts per issue, and can do the artwork for you if that helps.

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Ballachulish Community Council, Ballachulish Community Company and Ballachulish Community Association SCIO (SC023308) have worked together to produce this newsletter.

**Editors:** Rob Malpas and Sheila McLean

**Distribution:** Sheila McLean and Kath Small (with helpers) to approximately 380 properties in the Ballachulish and Glenachulish community. Funded through Ballachulish Community Association SCIO, Ballachulish Village Hall, East Pier Road, Ballachulish PH49 4LE



### ARGYLL & LOCHABER JOINERS

New Builds | Kit Erections  
Extensions | Doors & Windows  
Kitchens | Renovations  
All Joinery Work Undertaken



### ARGYLL & LOCHABER PLUMBING & HEATING SERVICES

Bathrooms | Kitchens  
Boiler Servicing & Repairs  
All Plumbing Work Undertaken



### ARGYLL & LOCHABER PAINTING & DECORATING

Interior & Exterior Painting  
Ames Taping  
All Paining & Decorating  
Work Undertaken

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