

Ben Ledi View

Feb/Mar 2022

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Cover Photo by Carol McGowan



Hello Readers,

There's an article in this edition of the magazine that I'd particularly like to draw your attention to. On page five we have a piece about the Callander Place Standard Survey. It's important for all residents of Callander, who want to positively improve the town, to express an opinion on this matter. We need to protect and properly utilise our precious green spaces! Have we got the right balance between tourism and other employment opportunities? Can the heavy, and sometimes speeding traffic that passes through the town be better managed? So, if you haven't had your say please do so before the deadline of 28th February.

On the theme of having your say I'd like to invite readers to submit articles to us that highlight particular natural aspects of the town and its environs that they find interesting and uplifting. This might be a favourite walk, bike ride or view point. It could be an historical site or a place with a natural history interest. Such articles would be particularly valuable for newcomers and visitors to town. So, if you'd like to see your name in print send your articles to our editors at editor@benlediview.org

As Susan King writes on 16 and 17 of this edition the plans for the redevelopment of St Kessog are coming along nicely. A new charitable

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organisation or Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) will be formed to run the facility on behalf of the community. It would be good if they get a wide cross section of Callander residents on this so keep a sharp lookout for advertising concerning these positions.

As I'm writing this in mid-January it looks that we have seen the worst of the omicron variant of Covid. The Scottish Government has just announced that most Covid restrictions are going to be lifted next week, hurrah! One thing I'm particularly looking forward to, hopefully this summer, is the return of foreign tourists to Callander. They have been very much missed over the last two years. I look back with fond memories of visitors with foreign accents asking me if they are on the right path to the Bracklinn Falls!

As you probably know the Ben Ledi View is produced and distributed entirely by unpaid volunteers. We are particularly looking for volunteers to join us in the advertising section of the magazine. If this is something that might interest you, please contact our advertising co-ordinator, Wendy Munro, on advertising@benlediview.org

I'd like to sign off with a whole heap of thanks to the many volunteers whose hard work makes the Ben Ledi View possible

Convenor

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Callander Community Council (CCC)

Writing this in the first week of January, it is tempting to consider ways in which the positive outcomes of 2021 can be developed further. By December, there were eight full members of the Community Council. We are all involved in both different and overlapping areas, and various community needs have emerged. Some of these have been place-specific: traffic speeds, overflowing boreholes, speed bumps, and other things that any reader will recognise. In these cases, the task of CCC has been to contact the relevant authorities and to urge action. That is our role, to act as a communicative link between the community and official bodies. Two projects are now coming to fruition:

- The 'Places to Chat' Benches project, (see below), is a good example of the way something voiced by an individual at a Community Council meeting can grow quickly from an idea to reality, benefitting from our contacts with other individuals and organisations.
- The refurbishment of Camp Place Play Park is now fully funded and we are awaiting the arrival of the play equipment for installation early this year.

Other events were unexpected. In late November, Storm Arwen hit all of us in different ways. We are currently working on how to learn from that experience. We need to identify areas which require more thought or investment and then to find realistic ways of building up our resilience. Effective communication both within the community and with relevant outside bodies must be a priority.

The most positive and productive feature of the last few months has been the ability of Community Council members to work closely together. Honest discussion, trust and the confidence to disagree when necessary, have made us a strong team. The ongoing support received from Stirling Council has helped this. By the end of the year, the eight full members had been joined by three Associate Members, each able to focus on a specific area. These are:

- St Kessogs Working Party: Tim Crone
- Bracklinn Bridge: Alasdair Wyllie
- Transport: Gordon Addison

This expansion will help us all to focus on specifics, which will benefit the whole community. We hope to add more Associates and would welcome any expressions of interest in working with us. By the time you read this, the Community Council should also have a new Co-opted Member. The voting takes place after the deadline for submitting this article, so their name cannot yet be revealed. If you have followed our website and Facebook pages, you will have found the news there.

Susan Holden, Chair, Callander Community Council

Happy To Chat Benches

What are they? Patricia Kent from Callander Youth Project, (CYP), who suggested the idea, says: "I found out about the idea online and thought it would be great for the Callander Community to do, due to the number of suicides happening. Callander is a small community and it is important that we all support each other, especially in difficult times. With this in mind, we purchased a bench for CYP and put it outside the building. I then spoke to Callander Community Council (CCC), and McLaren High School about placing other benches around the town. David King, one of the Community Councillors, took on the task of speaking to Stirling Council and secured permission to put a plaque on a bench in the Square and another in the Meadows. Lodge Ben Ledi No 614 kindly bought and paid for a bench to be put in the High School grounds. I hope that having these benches around the town will encourage conversation and social interaction amongst locals and visitors. It is important that we continue to talk about mental health and get people chatting again."

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-50000204 is an article with more detail.

After Patricia made this suggestion to the CCC in September, I decided this would be something for CCC to take on board and realised we needed to contact Stirling Council Land Services to get permission to put plaques on some of the benches. Martin Earl, our Ward Councillor, helped us to find the right contact and Derek Leitch worked with us to obtain a positive decision from his department.

After looking at the existing benches that would be suitable for this 'chat' support, we agreed on one in Ancaster Square and one in the Meadows car-park, looking onto the river. During November, Derek got the required permission for us and then the CCC agreed to pay for and fit the plaques. This was achieved in time for the switching on of the Christmas Lights at the beginning of December.

Following Patricia's original suggestion, we are now looking ahead and would like to put more plaques onto benches in several places. The aim is to help raise awareness about this heart-breaking illness that affects so many families. Getting together and chatting on a bench can be one way of providing some personal support.



David King Callander Community Council

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Bracklinn Falls Path

The path to Bracklinn Falls has now reopened following the removal of Bracklinn Bridge. Locals and visitors can now walk to Bracklinn Falls and back, though the full circuit walk cannot be completed as there is currently no access to the east side of the Falls. Bracklinn Bridge was removed following specialist engineering and timber surveys, which identified areas of deterioration and advised that replacing the current structure would be the safest course of action. Plans to replace the bridge will be progressed in 2022.

Elaine Brewer Media & Campaigns Manager, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park

Callander Place Standard Survey

By now every household in Callander should have received details of the Place Standard survey. The response so far has been excellent, but we need to get as many residents' opinions as possible. If we want to shape the future of our town, we need to prove that our Place Plan has the support of the majority of Callander households. The survey closes on February 28th, so it's not too late to have your say.

In the past three months, there have been some significant developments. Drummond Estates are negotiating the sale of the field at Camp Place and the land they own at Lagrannoch is now under consideration as the site for a retirement home. If both sales go through, the only remaining level green space in the east end will be the playpark at Camp Place.

Stirling Council and the Park are "revisiting" the Callander South Masterplan. This means that a consultant will be asking landowners how they want their land developed. This latter move is unusual, to say the least. Stirling and the Park are fully aware that we are in the process of developing our Place Plan and that, by law, they must listen to the community as well as the landowners. I asked Drummond Estates if they would consider the sale of the Camp Place field for community use, possibly for allotments. Their reply stated that they "are currently negotiating with another party concerning the field. It is zoned for light industrial use in the local plan and our negotiations take that into account with regard to value."

However, the community did not ask for this land to be zoned for light industrial use.

In the 2012 Charrette, we clearly asked that the land along the south banks of the Teith should form a riverside park and that the green open spaces on the north bank should provide accessible footpaths and a pedestrian bridge. The decision to zone this site for industrial use was taken by the Park, Stirling Council, and the landowner. The field in question is ideally suited as the site for a pedestrian bridge, the other option being at the end of the Lagrannoch industrial estate, next to the sewage works, which is far from ideal.

We need to make our voices heard. The Charrette was supposed to give the community a say on how Callander could grow sustainably over a 15-year period. It was an excellent consultation and resulted in a manageable and attractive vision for new housing and economic development in the future. Successive plans by the Park and Stirling Council have whittled away at the core principle of the Charrette, which was to "Open the town up to the River Teith, to make it more integrated with this beautiful landscape which is one of Callander's best features."

The Place Plan gives us all the opportunity to insist that our green spaces are protected and that the principals established in the Charrette are adhered to. Have your say by taking part in the Place Standard Survey. Find the online version at https://callandersfuture.uk/place_standard_survey.

Paper copies are available at the library, or you can call me on 07926 426672, leave a message, and I will put a copy through your letter box.

The final Charrette report is available online at

https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Callander-Charrette_Report-Part-1.pdf

Helen Terry, Local Place Plan Co-Ordinator

www.callandersfuture.uk

- Visit Callander's Place Plan website.
- Discover the FACTS about Callander.
- Find out what the authorities have planned for the town.
- Take part in our surveys and focus groups.



IF WE DO NOTHING, NOTHING WILL CHANGE.

6 Community

Update From Councillor Martin Earl

Bins

Since the cuts to grey & blue bin collections, the service has continued to struggle to cope. This was evident over the Christmas and New Year period, where many collections were cancelled or missed across the Council area. There will be circumstances that can affect capacity to collect, such as staff shortages or bad weather. However, reducing collections to monthly has left no ability to cope when issues arise. I remain opposed to these cuts that were brought in without any prior consultation. It has been put forward that these changes are to increase recycling. However, the only other Council in Scotland that has them has seen their recycling rates fall and the amount of fly tipping increase. We all want to see better and more recycling, but this was not the way to achieve it. All it has done is cut a basic service to the bone. I will keep working to get them changed and a proper consultation carried out with residents as to what collection service should be in place. Also, the recycling centre at Lagrannoch needs to have better opening times if the Council is serious about recycling.

Roadworks

BEAR will need to complete the resurfacing of the Main Street that they started last year. The final section, including the main traffic light junction, was provisionally scheduled for March 2022. Welcome though having the road surface completed and the junction upgraded is, the work cannot take place too late and cause additional disruption during Easter holidays and the start of the visitor season. I am seeking meetings with BEAR regarding the timing of the works.

Car At The Post Office

The saga of that abandoned vehicle in the disabled parking bay outside the Post Office has been extraordinary. I hope that, by the time the BLV appears, it will have been removed. It is incredible how long this has taken, as it was left there last September. Apparently if a vehicle is taxed and insured it cannot be removed unless it is in a dangerous location. Blocking access to an important service should be grounds to have a vehicle removed. Fines should have been issued every week to encourage the owner to do so.

Speeding & Road Safety

There have been continued instances of vehicles travelling through and around the town at speeds well in excess of the limit. We all know that the police cannot catch all those often travelling at dangerous speeds. A static speed camera would provide a permanent presence. However, national rules in place do not allow their siting for preventative or proactive reasons. At present any potential location must be “justified” by data showing incidents and accidents have taken place. This needs to be changed to allow sensible decisions to be taken and these cameras used where they can prevent speeding.

Martin Earl

Storm Arwen Power Outage

During storm Arwen and the ensuing power outage it became obvious that Callander is badly in need of a facility for people to access in such an event. The residents of Trust Housing in Callander had to rely on neighbours with access to cooking facilities, the help of the tireless manager working on a day off, the kindness of residents making several trips to ferry hot drinks and soup, and for the manager trips up and down stairs as the lift was out of action. While this was much appreciated, only a handful of people could be assisted. Although Callander neighbours more than likely helped each other, there were many young families with no facilities. Also elderly people living alone, Trust Housing in Buchanan Place or Ashlea Nursing Home were without access to warmth and hot food and drinks. It transpires that Strathyre, Aberfoyle, and Doune Primary Schools were all opened to provide assistance. Much smaller places, yet they managed to help their residents. Councillor Martin Earl asked Stirling Council why some facilities were open and others not. This was their response: “we worked closely with the utility providers to understand what locations had guaranteed power supplies and which ones didn’t or could be subject to intermittent disruptions. There were limited generators available due to the scale of the power outage across Scotland, and the utility providers prioritised facilities such as old folks homes, care providers, health etc. We are actively working through additional non-council facilities to ensure access and additional support during any other events such as these.”

So, what does Callander need?

- Access to a centrally located community hall, church hall or school which has cooking facilities during a power outage. If a building can be sourced, could the community council pay for a wood burning stove to be fitted, or could several Calor gas stoves be purchased? Could the community council also pay for a stock of camping lights?
- Provide keys perhaps to the Managers of care homes, so they could access the building, or to designated community members willing to be keyholders.
- Make it widely known that this facility will always be opened if an incident like this happens again so that people would know where to get a bit of warmth, a cup of tea, a hot meal, as well as some company and word of what is happening.

Feasibly this could happen again anytime between now and April; the sooner something is put into place the better. A long-standing former member of the Community Council had mentioned that during events of this nature they used to be out knocking on doors seeing where assistance might be needed. This wouldn’t be necessary if there was a designated building available for use by any Callander residents who might need it.

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That dog bit me without any warning, or did it?

Most likely there was a warning, but we did not see the signs as the dog was communicating in "dog language" and we are not fluent in "dog". Here is a list of increasing signs that say "I am not happy with this situation" to hopefully help you defuse the situation before the dog feels he has no other option but to bite to get its message across.

1. Yawning, blinking, nose licking.

Are signs of anxiety: the dog is saying "I am worried"

2. Turning head away

"I am trying to avoid any confrontation"

3. Turning body away or sitting and pawing.

"I am asking please don't carry on"

4. Walking away, creeping, ears back, gaze aversion

"I need to remove myself from this situation because I am uncomfortable, and you are not respecting my feelings - I really don't want confrontation".

5. Standing crouched, tail tucked under.

"I am really feeling tense now"

6. Lying down leg up, tail tucked under

Appeasement behaviour, begging for space, this is not submission or an invitation to rub my tummy. Another dog would smell the pheromones coming from the groin area we can't, so we need to recognize the behavior and respect it - back off and give the dog some space. This is not a relaxed playful dog rolling about with tail relaxed and out in contact with the floor saying "notice me, give me attention".

7. Stiffening, staring.

This says "now I feel I must defend myself"

8. Growling.

Growling is still a warning. This is communication; "please back off. I am getting close to my limit".

9. Snapping

They often will miss or do little damage. That's intentional. This is your last warning. Often little dogs get the reputation for going straight to snapping. This is normally because in the past humans had repeatedly ignored the early signs they have tried, so they have learned going straight to snapping or biting which works best to get people to listen and to back off. Whereas if a Rottweiler or German Shepherd growls we more likely to heed the warning and back off, because we feel they could do us some damage

10. Biting

The dog is at the point where it feels it has no choice.

Dogs don't always display every step in sequence. Depending on their past experiences, current health (both physical and emotional), breed or type characteristic and the level of perceived threat they may well skip some behaviours, but it is your job to learn to speak "dog" and recognize any of the behaviours above in a dog so as to avoid pushing the dog to the point where they feel they have no option left but to bite. It is especially important when a child interacts with a dog as young children only speak "human". They get too up close



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and personal, hugging, grabbing and often not letting go. They often are excited, high energy, making noise, fast unpredictable movements which make all dogs nervous and uncomfortable to some degree. So always supervise the interactions between child and dog. Teach the child to respect the dog's need for space especially when it retreats to its bed. The child must learn not bother the dog.

During this COVID pandemic there has been so much talk about human mental health and how important it is to look after our emotional health and happiness, but it is also true for our pets. Nowadays vets and veterinary nurses know that the emotional state of a pet is just as important as the physical state and how one affects the other - it is a big subject. If your pet has a behavioral problem, please don't ignore it. There is a lot we can do to help you have an emotionally healthy & happy pet. And as it is such a big and important subject there are also specialists out there that you can be referred to if the problem is not simple to sort.

Maybe next time I should talk a wee bit about our often misunderstood feline friend?

Look after each other (whether 2 or 4-legged).

*Marslaidh Smith BVM&S MRCVS. Riverside
Veterinary Clinic, Callander*

Porthos

Many of you might remember the ongoing saga of Porthos, our last guide dog puppy.

He went into advanced training down in Newcastle in early 2020 and was potentially matched with a lady on the waiting list for a guide dog.

Then, of course, the Covid 19 pandemic put us all into lockdown and halted all ongoing activities for Guide Dogs. Training had to cease, as it is an extremely tactile, person-to-person procedure, breeding stopped as access to the Breeding Centre and all the homes of breeding stock became impossible and the puppy walking system was severely restricted with supervision going on to Zoom. Hundreds of puppies at all their various stages were put 'on hold'. Porthos, therefore, was boarded out to various available boarders and essentially became a family pet. This suited our fun-loving boy really well and we hear he delighted those families he stayed with. Sadly, under Guide Dog rules, we weren't allowed to have him back at this time.

Months later, when his trainer tried to resume his advanced guiding training, he had lost his motivation to work (feels familiar?!) and was returned to the Edinburgh service as it was felt he would be a good buddy dog. And yes, that has proved to be the case.

A year ago, he was matched with a partially sighted teenager in Manchester and we are delighted to find out that the partnership has been a huge success. He has been welcomed into the wider family and has greatly improved the quality of life of the lad in question. We have received some great photos of him helping with a charity for disabled children run by grandparents, and most special of all, a wonderful photo of the best buddies together.

So, although his potential as a guide dog has not been realised, we are so pleased that there are years ahead of a good partnership and Porthos is much loved and appreciated.

The Guide Dog charity has taken the opportunity of the time over lockdown, to reassess and revise a lot of the practices that had been used for years. They have made changes to training programmes, admin procedures and communications, so the systems are more efficient and will therefore lead to a much better service in the future. It will always remain all about helping folks who are blind or partially sighted to lead a more positive and integrated life and although we are not taking any more puppies ourselves, we wholeheartedly support the work they do.

Steve and Marilyn Willett




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Thought for the Day

To every thing - turn, turn, turn; there is a season - turn, turn, turn
Made most famous by The Byrds, it was Pete Seeger who wrote those lyrics in the late 1950s. Did you know that he is quoting from writings in the Book of Ecclesiastes that are approximately 2500-2900 years old? This ancient book is a collation of sayings and stories written to help future generations avoid the mistakes of their predecessors. I find the wisdom of the book timeless because even back then it was warning the reader of the pitfalls of consumptive materialism and selfish individualism. How did that old author know about contemporary marketing, Instagram influencers, and mass-consumption culture?! Amazing. I guess it just goes to show that “there’s nothing new under the sun” (yup, that’s also from Ecclesiastes).

It is a new season and a new year. I make it a habit every year to look to the ancient wisdom as I make my resolutions. Have you made some resolutions? I wonder how many of you, like me, will make too many plans and goals and will fail by February?

There’s a tonne of advice about making your resolutions stick available in books, papers and online - how many of our feeds are full of self-help gurus selling you their special fix this time of year? Oh, just me? Hmmm... Well, I don’t wish to add to the cacophony of the Productivity Industrial Complex, but let me suggest one thing as you start the new year.

I think that the wisdom of Ecclesiastes can be summed up like this: “The difference between expectations and reality is where sadness lies.” How do you moderate your expectations in line with reality whilst not getting stuck? Well, the ancients recognised that steady, small, and regular changes work better than many large promises. “But I need to make a big change in lifestyle or circumstance!” you say, and they’d reply that you can break even huge tasks down to bite-sized chunks – just ask an architect. Make a tiny goal, and when you stick with it, you create momentum for the next and the next after that. I’m going to try that this year. Will you do it with me? For you’re not in it alone. Life works better when lived together. More on that in the next instalment.

Best wishes for 2022 and all your resolutions coming true.

*Rev Jonathan Connell
St Andrew's Church*



COOK'S CORNER by Audrey Corrieri

RICH CHOCOLATE CREPES

Makes 12 Crepes

INGREDIENTS

100g plain flour
2 tbsp cocoa powder
300ml semi-skimmed milk
1 tbsp caster sugar
1 egg plus 2 egg whites
3 tbsp vegetable oil
Filling and topping:
750ml chocolate ice cream
125ml chocolate sauce

METHOD

Sift the flour and cocoa into a mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre. Gradually beat in the milk, sugar, whole egg, egg whites and 1 tbsp oil to make the batter. Cover and chill for 1 hour.

Heat the remaining oil in a 18cm frying pan. Pour out excess oil and reserve. Pour 50ml of the batter into pan. Quickly tip pan until batter is spread over base. Cook over a medium heat for 2 mins until slightly browned and top is set. Turn the crepe over. Cook for 1 min. Slide the crepe onto a sheet of non-stick baking paper.

Repeat with the remaining oil and batter, stacking the cooked crepes between sheets of baking paper.

For the filling: put a few spoonfuls of ice cream along one half of each crepe. Roll up to enclose. Then drizzle with the sauce.

Serve

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What's On for February and March

REGULAR MEETINGS

Mondays:

- Body Fit 7.00-7.45 am McLaren Leisure
- Active Life 9.30-10.30 am McLaren Leisure
- Core Fit 1.00-1.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Climbing Club (children) 4.00pm and 5.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Soccer School (5-7 yrs) 5.00pm, (8-11 yrs) 6 pm McLaren Leisure
- Highland Dancing 4.00pm Kirk Hall (not 14th Feb or 21st March)
- HIT Circuits 7.00-7.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Cycle Fit 7.00 -7.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Indoor Cycling 8.00-9.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Core Fit 8.00-45pm McLaren Leisure
- Guides 6.30-8.00pm St Andrew's Church Hall
- Callander Pipe Band practice/teaching 7.00pm Masonic Hall

Tuesdays:

- Callander Cycle Meander meet 10.00am Ancaster Square (contact 01877 339074)
- Yoga Basics 12.30-1.45 McLaren Leisure
- Gentle Yoga 2.00- 3.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Strength and Balance 3.00 -4.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Power Fit 6.00-6.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Badminton Club 7.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Evening Yoga 7.30-9.00pm
- Taekwondo 7.00-9.00pm McLaren Leisure

Wednesdays:

- Cycle Fit 7.00-7.45 am McLaren Leisure
- Active Life 9.30-10.30 McLaren Leisure
- Citizens Advice Bureau 10.00am-12.30pm Callander Library
- Teapot Café 10.30am Callander Kirk Hall Library
- Body Fit 1.00- 1.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Core Fit 4. 00-4.45pm McLaren

Leisure

- Body Fit 7.00-7.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Cycle Fit 8.00-8.45pm McLaren Leisure Taekwondo (contact falkirktaekwondo@gmail.com)

Thursdays:

- Aqua Therapy 9.30-10.30am McLaren Leisure
- ChairYoga 11.00am-12 noon via Zoom (contact julia.osfield@googlemail.com)
- Town Break 10.30-12.30 St Andrew's Church Hall
- Craigard Club meet for lunch 12.30-2.30pm Callander Hostel
- HIIT 7.00-7.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Cycle Fit 7.00-7.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Core Fit 8.00-8.45pm McLaren Leisure

Fridays:

- Body Fit 7.00-7.45 am McLaren Leisure
- Power Fit 1.00-1.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Cycle Fit 4.00-4.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Determinator 7.45-8.00 and 8.15-9.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Spike Island 8.15 -9.15 pm McLaren Leisure

Saturdays :

- Body Fit 9.00-9.45 am McLaren Leisure
- HIIT 9.30-10.00am McLaren Leisure

FEBRUARY

Friday 4th

Ben Ledi View published

Saturday 5th

- Volunteering: Rhododendron Removal with Forth Rivers Trust, 10am-3pm

Monday 14th

- Community Council meets on Zoom 7.30pm

Friday 18th

- German-speaking group 7.30pm on Zoom (contact jenshearer@gmail.com)

MARCH

Friday 4th

Ben Ledi View deadline

Friday 11th

- Wonders of the Universe: talk and star-gazing evening 7.30-9.30pm Callander Hostel Free but booking required on www.callanderslandscape.org/events

Saturday 12th

- The Sky above Us. Space Activities for all the Family 12noon-4.00pm McLaren Leisure free but book planetarium sessions on www.callanderslandscape.org/events

Monday 14th

- Community Council meets on Zoom 7.30pm

Wed 16th-Friday 18th

- *Sound of Music* 7.30pm McLaren High

Friday 18th

- German-speaking group 7.30pm on Zoom (contact jen.shearer@gmail.com)

Saturday 19th

- *Sound of Music* - matinee 2.30pm McLaren High

Monday 21st

- Blood Transfusion Service in Kirk Hall 1.30-3.30pm and 5.00-7.00pm

APRIL

Friday 1st

Ben Ledi View published

Callander Target Sports Club

Club Update:

We are now open again after the Xmas and New Year break. Unfortunately the Covid restrictions are still with us. We ran three open nights for members of the public to come along which appears to have been successful as we have now enrolled several new members. Within the past 3-4 months we have increased our membership by 10, these coming from as far afield as Taynuilt, Glasgow and Bo'ness. This now gives us a membership of well in excess of 50 members.

Unfortunately with the Covid restrictions and bad weather it is restricting some of our members from attending as often as they would generally do.

The winter leagues are now well under way with some very good results:

Cumbria leagues:

7 of our shooters have been competing in the Cumbria outdoor 50m Benchrest leagues this winter. So far we have completed 4 rounds with mixed success. But all 7 have raised their averages from last season. Weather and Covid permitting, we hope to complete the other 6 rounds as scheduled.

Perthshire Prone:

Following an error in the production of rounds 1 to 6 of the league tables, Callander A has dropped down to 2nd position. After 7 rounds, both Callander A and B teams are now in close 2nd positions to St Andrews A and Dulnain Bridge B respectively.

Perthshire Benchrest:

The Club has 9 members shooting this Season in these challenging times.

Results to round 4 of 10 at this time.

Div 1 - Willie Jenkins is tied in 2nd position.

Div 2 - John Johnston is in 1st position with Mark Griffiths in a strong 2nd position.

Div 3 - Robert Farquhar is tied in 1st position.

Div 4 - Peter Jamieson is tied in 1st position.

For further club details, contact our secretary Bob Farquhar 07721-744229.

John Russell



What a busy start to 2022 we have had. From swimming to fitness classes, new memberships and soft play, we have been delighted to welcome you all back this New Year.

What's New for 2022?

January has seen a big change at McLaren Leisure as we launched our first ever All Inclusive Membership options. The health and wellbeing of our wider community is paramount to us. We are excited to bring this new option to you as we continue to do our bit to ensure our facilities are accessible in every way. The NEW All In Membership now allows you access to all bookable sessions at your local swimming pool, fitness suite, fitness classes, climbing wall, soft play, sports hall (single court) and fun sessions.

Along with our new memberships we have launched lots of new fitness classes. From low impact to high intensity interval training, we have something for everyone. Fitness classes are a great way to socialise and stay active. Check out the What's On pages for when you can join us and take the first step to improving your health and wellbeing for 2022.



Our kids' birthday parties are in full swing as children run, climb, bounce, slide and splash their way into a new year. We have two brand new party options available in the form of our ultimate inflatable fun runs, now available in both wet (pool) and dry (sporthall) options. Give us a call to find out more.

As we progress through the year we will be looking to bring you more online bookable activities, events, family fun, kids' camps, swimming lessons and much more. Look out for more information in future editions of the BLV and on social media.

We would like to say thank you for all of your support over the last few years. We look forward to continuing to serve our community and all of your health and fitness needs.

Rachel McLean

McLaren Leisure
Mollands Road, Callander, FK17 8JP

Swimming pool	Holiday Activities
Fitness classes	Birthday parties
Climbing wall	Kids' Activities
Soft play	Fitness Suite
3G Pitch	Sport hall
Cafe	

www.mclarenleisure.co.uk 01877 330 000



We are now moored in Gibraltar, occupying a narrow peninsula of Spain's southern Mediterranean coast. We brought the New year in with a BANG as the Hogmanay fireworks ricocheted off the concrete jungle surrounding us. We decided to venture up the rock to the famous Windsor Suspension Bridge that spans over a 50m-deep gorge overlooking the Straits, the bay and the city. As midnight struck, the city lit up with sirens and fireworks in all directions. Although I did miss the fond memories of flinging myself around at Hogmanay ceilidhs in the Dreadnought Hotel, what a show it was in Gibraltar!

With the impressive fireworks echoing off the limestone rock surrounding us, what a feeling mixed with the adrenaline rush of being on the bridge above a gorge, which to our surprise is where the Barbary macaques (wild monkeys) hang out at night... needless to say once we realised this, it didn't surprise us that we were the only people there! Monkeys don't like the annual show one bit; made very clear from the screeching and chaos building below us... naturally we didn't hang around! We wound our way back down to the marina with our wits about us.

Our marina is located by Ragged Staff Wharf, developed by the British in 1736 with the purpose of providing 'better victualling of men-at-war'. Ragged Staff Wharf also became the traditional landing place for newly-arriving Governors of Gibraltar at the steps known as Governor's Landing – which are still in use as part of the Marina. With a jaw dropping maximum length of 75m (Berzerk is a mere 10m) we've seen a few super yachts glide in and out, making the necessary preparations for their Atlantic crossings.

Our own winter installations on Berzerk are slowly developing, getting us closer to being self-sufficient in water and power generation for the expedition ahead. Talking about expeditions... what better way to kick off 2022 than our first Mediterranean bikepacking trip!

We loaded our frame mounted bikepacking bags and headed across the Frontier into Spain and towards Tarifa, Cádiz with two locals we met who could speak the lingo and knew the area like the back of their hand. We spent 3 days riding and 2 nights wild camping in the el Pino (pine) forest above Tarifa's stunning beaches. We started out on Playa de Los Lances; this beach is 10km long! (That's the same distance from Callander out to the Brig o' Turk tearoom!).

The riding was tough along the beach but the white sand, the lively swell and the buzz of the kitesurfing community was an experience we won't forget. Even the trails through the el Pino forest varied between hard packed dirt and loose sand... quite unique. The sunset was unreal on our first night under the stars, engulfed in pine smelling air as we looked out to the horizon towards Morocco from a small cliff top. As the sound of the crashing swell picked up throughout the night it felt like we were right down there on the beach.

Interestingly we learned of communities who live off the forest in this area of Cádiz and who, to the locals take the name "Pino-People". It was lovely to bump into a "Pino family" as we drifted down a sandy bank through the trees. The young girl with sunkissed, matted hair decorated with some flowers, loose clothing and barefoot was absorbed by the bikes/gear that were visiting her forest. Smiles and a hint to the best route from the parents with a baby cocooned on the mother's chest were exchanged.

The following day we pushed our bikes to the top of a huge sand dune, Duna de Bolonia. Rising to heights of over 100m they are so mammoth some of the surrounding pine trees have been buried below the golden grains. Needless to say we worked up a sweat getting up there and what a view! The dune is surrounded by a canopy of pine trees- a bizarre natural



sight. The second night we relaxed around a campfire (needed as our petrol-fuelled stove gave up on us) cooking and sharing bike touring stories. We camped near an old military battery dating back to the siege of Tarifa, 1812. So naturally we had good views of the Straits of Gibraltar as the sun set.

Getting a taste of meeting local cyclists, experiencing cultural phenomenas and the adventure that lies on land from anchorages as we travel by sailboat has really got us excited for the year ahead where we will capture and share what the world has to offer by bike on our YouTube Channel; [DEEPBLUEDIRT](#).



Here's to many wild and wonderful adventures for you this year, near and far... stay curious.

Ciao!
Jenni & Chris



At last, we can share with you the latest floor plans for St Kessog's and more about how it will run when it opens.

The plans haven't changed significantly since you last saw them in the August/September 2021 issue, but a lot of the background work has now been completed so the design is just about fixed - a few minor details may change, but we don't expect any drastic alterations.

A quick tour...



Through the entrance on the ground floor, are 8 public toilets plus an accessible toilet/baby change area - we know the most frequent question in the visitor centre and shops is still "where are the public toilets?" and finally we will have some right in the centre of town!

Going through doors into the lobby, there is the lift and on the left, a wall of information boards, video screens and some cases of retail items. Community notices and information will be displayed here, and if there is another major incident which knocks out communications, everyone will know that the notice boards at St Kessog's will be updated.

Through the door on the left is the main business hub area with individual workstations, break out seating, and

meeting rooms. The business hub is a very important part of this re-development. The associated capital funding from the City Deal makes this redevelopment possible and it will be a big contributor to the ongoing financial viability of the venture. Just as important is the impact it can have on helping new businesses get started and grow. There is already interest and commitment from business support organisations such as Stirling Enterprise Park (STEP) to utilise the various spaces within the building. They are keen to use the one-to-one meeting room for meeting business gateway clients, the meeting rooms to hold small workshops or the community hall to hold events like the Rural Business Network. More importantly they are keen to hold regular drop-in sessions to help businesses access the support they require in the rural areas.

The library will be situated straight through doors in the lobby, with a reception/office area to the right. We all know how well-loved our current library is, not just for borrowing books but for all the help and kindnesses Fiona and her team provide. The library will move to the central area on the ground floor and we trust everyone will enjoy using it even more than before.

The old chancel area will be set aside as a quiet area and also used to display Callander's history and geographical importance.

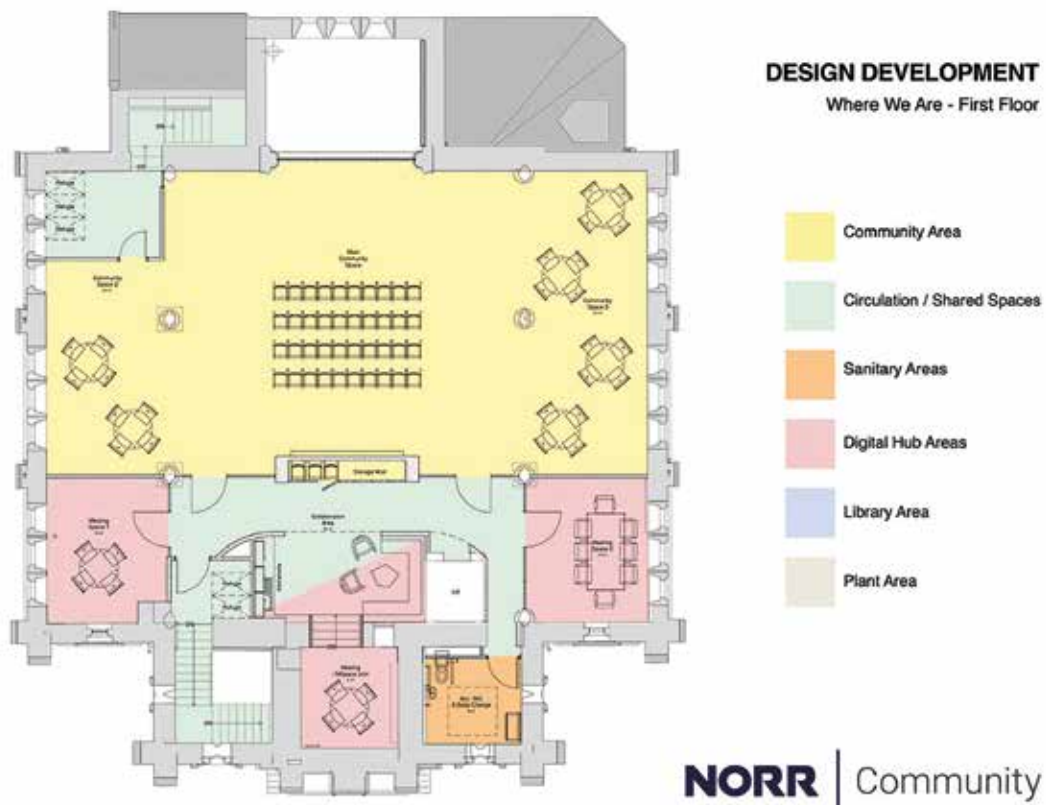
Taking the lift or stairs to the first floor, there is a meeting /collaboration area, a small kitchenette for users of the business hub, 2 larger meeting rooms on either side, and a smaller one up a few steps in the spire. There is also an accessible toilet/baby change facility.

The remaining space upstairs is a large community area - it should be spectacular with original features such as the arches, roof beams and stained glass windows. All the rooms and community area will be bookable by anyone via an on-line booking system.

We will make these plans available as a link from the Callander Discussion Forum on facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/857630654975208/?ref=share>) and also hope to add a link to the 3D tour of how St Kessog's will look.

Who will run St Kessog's when it's open?

The St Kessog's working party has been working with Stirling Council to pull together an organisation that will run St Kessog's and a financial plan as a guide to how this will work. We want to share this with you now, even though it's still in draft form and will undoubtedly change as we progress towards opening, but we want to explain where we are in our thinking.



Set up a new trust

Stirling Council owns the building and will continue to do so. They are funding the refurbishment from a number of sources and will also be responsible for the relocation and running of the library.

The lease of the community and business hub areas will be based on costs only and will be proportionate to the footprint of the area occupied. A new charitable organisation or Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) will be set up to hold this lease and be responsible for running these areas on behalf of the community. This is similar to the way McLaren Leisure and the Callander Youth Project Trust are run, although we will not own the building as they do. We have taken advice on this from Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise and they have confirmed this is the best solution for us.

It will be a 2-tier trust in that we will have a board of trustees and members, who will be invited to meetings and AGMs and will share in the running of the trust. Our aim is to be as open and transparent as possible, which is why we are sharing our plans with you now, at the same time as we are sharing the same information with the various committees represented on the working party. Soon we will be advertising for trustees and applying to set up the trust early in 2022.

Operational funding

We want to make St Kessog's a place where all residents are welcome; to borrow a book, work at the business hub or attend some classes or meetings, and the hall and hub bookings will contribute to our income.

But we want to do more - running new events where there is something for everyone to join in, for example family events, food festivals, mental first aid classes, music evenings... the list is very long and we intend to employ someone to organise these events so it really does take off.

Lastly, we want ask as many people as possible to join our "Friends of St Kessog's" trust by taking out a small annual subscription, which will help towards the ongoing operational costs.

When we did our leaflet drop in early 2020 (seems like such a long time ago) the feedback you gave us supported all these ideas and provided lots of suggestions of new events we could run. Thank you.

Want to read more or contact us?

By the time your read this, the draft operational plans and the floor plans will be available from a link on the Callander Discussion Forum facebook pages (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/857630654975208/?ref=share>) so please do have a look and comment if you wish - there is a lot more information in these documents than we can include here.

We really want your feedback, ideas and suggestions. St Kessog's will be a place for all of us, so feel free to get in touch by emailing StKessogs.survey@gmail.com or leave a phone or text message on 07591312227.

We will put out more details for anyone thinking about becoming a trustee in January/February and if you are interested, please drop us an email any time to the address above...we really want to hear from you. Thank you.

Susan King (Member of the St Kessog's working party)

Christmas Lights and Santa's Sleigh

I am delighted that despite the weather and a few little hiccups, the switch on of the Christmas Lights by Calum Menzies together with the arrival of Santa on the most spectacular sleigh was a great success.

There was a fantastic atmosphere, helped considerably by Callander Brass. Great decorations were created by Lorraine Isgrove, Lynn Schroder, Sue King and Nicola Luti. The stunning tree was kindly donated by Cambusmore Estates. The mince pies and sweets went down a treat. Mulled wine, donated by Julie Carmichael at Deli Ecosse, was delicious.

On behalf of the working party I wanted to say thank you to all the people who came along in dreadful rain to get the canopies up under the supervision of Lynne Schroder. Thanks too to Mhor Bread, Main Street Bakery, Tesco and Co-op for mince pies; Anne Docherty for collection buckets and her advice;

Tangled Ladies, the Fire Service and Police

Scotland; Mike and Brian

Luti for donation of prize monies; all the volunteers who helped serving wine and pies and to 41 Club. The sleigh was just splendid. Well done James, Craig and Leah.

Final thanks go to the main man, Santa. He was amazing. He took time to talk to every child who came to see him. The expressions on their faces made everything worthwhile.

Best wishes for 2022.

Elaine Watterson on behalf of Christmas Events Working Party.



Riding for the Disabled – An Appeal

In 2014, Scotland lost its leading centre for disabled riders - Bannockburn Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA). There was a national outcry as over 350 people lost access to a life-changing community that had provided essential therapeutic, employment, volunteering, social and respite opportunities.

In response to the loss, Equi-Power Central Scotland Riding for the Disabled Group was established: their vision – [#StartSomethingSpecial](#) for the whole community; to create a new, purpose-built RDA centre of excellence in Central Scotland.

For the last five years we at Equi-Power Central Scotland have been working hard behind the scenes to secure the site at Kildean as the permanent home of Equi-Power RDA.

The good news is that we are ready to submit a planning application to Stirling Council, with a view to being on site in 2022. The bad news is that due to the impact of the pandemic, we simply can't afford to progress the project any further.

So we are crowd funding to raise money to get Equi-Power on site at Kildean in 2022: and this is how YOU can help. Our Crowd Fund is NOW LIVE at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/startsomethingsspecial> and we urgently need your help to make it a success!



German-Speaking Group in Callander

Wegen der gegenwärtigen Anzahl der COVID Fälle haben wir beschlossen, bis wir uns im Frühling einen Eindruck von der Lage verschaffen können, unsere Treffen auf Zoom weiterzuführen.

Also, das nächste Treffen findet um 19.30 am Freitag 18. Februar (auf Zoom) statt. NB Wir fangen jetzt eine halbe Stunde später als vorher an. Das Thema für Februar und den Link zum Treffen werden wir im Voraus per Email allen Mitgliedern zuschicken. (Datum für Ihren Kalender: Freitag 19. März 2022, entweder bei mir oder auf Zoom...mal schauen)

Falls Sie bis jetzt an unseren Treffen nicht teilgenommen haben aber jetzt mitmachen möchten, schicken Sie mir bitte eine E Mail um die Einladung zu unserem Treffen zu erhalten: jenshearer@gmail.com.

Wir freuen uns auf ein Wiedersehen.

Jen Shearer

CHAS



Heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part in the Christmas Music for CHAS morning in the square. What a lovely atmosphere it produced.

A special thanks to Linda Cantlay for co-ordinating the choirs and Brass Band and for producing the song sheets. Rotary and their games and Knit and Natter just added to the fun.

The final total raised for CHAS was £784.68

Fiona House

Rotary in Callander



On Saturday 18th December Rotarians were pleased to be involved in Callander Friends of CHAS' Christmas Music for CHAS in Ancaster square.

While the Brass Band played and the Junior Choir sang round the Christmas tree Callander Rotarians ran Festive Fun in the Square, with a lucky dip, a Christmas treasure map, and the ever popular games of Splat the Rat, and Potty Dotty. A lot of chocolate was won and eaten by delighted children (and adults!).

Everyone enjoyed it and thanks to the generosity of visitors and participants, we were able to make a good donation to CHAS.



If you would like to find out more about Rotary please look at our website, www.callander.rotary1010.org, or on Facebook.

Derek House

Neighbourhood Circle



Wow! What a year 2021 was.

We'd like to send a heartfelt thank you for all your help, support, guidance and our best wishes to all those who have benefitted from us in 2021! Here's hoping we can carry on providing a helpful service to families and individuals this year. Particular thanks go out to the businesses who assisted us most recently in many ways: Munro Electrical Services for the use of their warehouse for storage, the many evenings bringing us warm drinks, and for generally just being there for us if needed; WD Harley for printing ALL our flyers for us; Callander K9 for printing posters and donations and the Shortbread Factory for providing mounds of shortbread donations.

A massive thank you must go out to Louise Rolfe who will sadly be leaving our committee. Since we started, her perseverance and organisational skills have been invaluable to us, and we look forward to catching up on less 'non-perishable' terms.

We were excited to hear about Callander Cricket Club applying to the CORRA Foundation for a community fund of £5,000 which was successfully disseminated within 48 hours. We feel this demonstrates a laudable level of community spirit, and we are so happy to see help being offered from various directions in these trying times. It's lovely to see the community helping each other out, as this is one of our founding principles.

Now that Start Up Stirling will be resuming its services to the area, we are assessing how to be most useful to Callander and the surrounding area. To this end, we have created a survey that we would be incredibly grateful if as many people as possible could fill it out. You can find it at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/K56TG5X>

Once again, a massive thank you to everyone who has been involved in the Neighbourhood Circle.

Your friends, the Neighbourhood Circle Committee

St Andrew's Church

On 20th November, the members of St Andrew's Church were very grateful to be able to host a Christmas Fair once again. One of the highlights of the church's calendar, it was a privilege to open our doors to the community so that everyone could get into the Christmas Spirit!

At first glance, we weren't certain whether we'd be able to have the Fair in the church building, but after an extensive risk assessment and many prayerful deliberations, we found that we could make it work within the Government's COVID guidelines.

We are so very thankful for the many people who made the Fair a wonderful success: the welcoming Guides and Scouts, the lovely vendors, the kind donors to the tombola and raffle, the excellent caterers and servers, and the fabulous volunteers who created an exquisite seasonal atmosphere.

Most of all, we owe a big thank you to the members of the local community (as well as people from far-flung places like the Western Isles, Cumbria, and Northumberland) who came through the doors by the dozen, bringing their sense of Christmas delight to one and all.

We look forward to welcoming you all later in the year for another Fair. In the meanwhile, we wish you all the best for 2022!

Your neighbours at St Andrew's Church



Callander and West Perthshire U3A

It's a new year and despite the challenges, a number of our groups are going strong. Zoom, which none of us had even heard of three years ago, has been such a valuable resource, particularly through the winter months.

In December we had an excellent presentation by Peter Ireland who shared his knowledge of Ancient Greek art. The pieces chosen were his particular favourites. Each piece was set in context and we had the opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

In February, Rosalind Holmes, who last year delivered a fascinating talk on 'China: the last hundred years through the lives of the women of one Beijing family', will join us again. This time her subject is 'It's all in your genes'.

If you are retired or semi-retired, find out what's happening at our Callander and West Perthshire u3a website. It's never too late to enrol (for the second half of the year the fee is only £5). Membership will also give you access to u3a: Online Across Scotland which provides members with the opportunity to share expertise and engage in active learning, not just in their local u3a but right across Scotland.

Callander Youth Project

The Co-op Local Community Fund annually gives money to local causes, helping to bring people together and make a difference. They give preference to projects run by small, local organisations that make a difference to people in their community.

This year, Callander Youth Project (CYP) was chosen as one of the designated funds for the Callander and Killin Co-op area. CYP provides a rural youth hub for the McLaren High School catchment area, providing opportunities for local young people. Through youth clubs, support and weekend outdoor programmes, they help reduce issues of rural isolation for young people who cannot access the same services and opportunities as their urban peers. Activities are provided free of charge, through funding, so accessible for all.

CYP also delivers training and employability programmes and offers opportunities to gain qualifications and accreditations.

Through the Co-op partnership, in which members can buy selected own-branded products to give 1p of every £1 spent to good causes, Callander Youth Project will fund a local chef to work with young people from McLaren High School and CYP trainees, providing catering training, a great learning experience and the opportunity to gain additional qualifications.

CYP would love local members to choose them as their cause so they can grow their training offering for those undertaking training and employability programmes with CYP e.g. Modern Apprenticeships, Community Jobs Scotland and Steps to Work Award. In addition, it will provide the chance to gain skills in an alternative learning environment for students at McLaren High School who may be struggling to engage at school.



Co-op members can visit <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/56938> to pick the Callander Youth Project as the local cause they support.

Laura Kearney

Callander Woodland Group

A new Callander Woodland Group has been set up to collaborate with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) in development of their Land Management Plans for Callander Woodlands which include Coilhallan, Callander Crag (upper part) and Wester Torrie. (The lower part of Callander Crag is owned by Stirling Council).

We are not looking to purchase any woodlands for community ownership; all will remain in the ownership of FLS which therefore retains responsibility for safety and annual inspections. Our aim is solely to enhance the management of these woodlands for the benefit of our local community.

This group will come under Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT)

The Steering Group of approximately twelve people includes a FLS representative plus local volunteers who represent various interests including improved amenities and habitat management for wildlife. Subgroups will develop plans which will be integrated into short and long-term plans, likely starting with Coilhallan Wood.

Six members of the group will work with FLS to develop the next 10-year Callander Land Management Plan, starting in 2022. They will represent the interests of the wider Callander Community and will report progress. As a starting point we have the results of previous drop-in sessions about Coilhallan but will also organise new surveys to update and include the other woodlands. Groups such as schools, cubs, scouts will be contacted to find out how they currently use our

woodlands and what they would like to see in future. Plans will have to be realistic, within funding and manpower constraints and, without a doubt we won't be able to please everyone. A balance between differing interests will be needed but the intention is to primarily address improvements for Callander residents, although visitors will inevitably benefit, whilst ensuring the wildlife habitat is preserved and improved.

As part of their planning process FLS will also organise a drop-in session for community buy-in to their plan.

We also have a group of approximately twenty-five practical volunteers who are interested in looking after the woodland eg by keeping paths clear and removing non-native species such as rhododendron, piri-piri burr and rogue Sitka spruce saplings. Any work will have to be agreed with FLS and carried out under their guidelines which means hand-tools only, so bigger management tasks will remain with FLS. Initially Callander's Landscape Project will lead practical sessions and train future leaders so we can be self-sufficient in future. The first session is planned for early February.

If you are interested in joining this group, offering practical help, expertise or inputting into plans then please get in touch
mlhawkins@tiscali.co.uk

Lesley Hawkins

Stamps for Hedgehogs

It has been estimated that the British hedgehog population has declined from around 30 million in the 1950s to less than 1.5 million today. The exact reasons for this decline are unknown. It is believed that in the last 15 years alone, the hedgehog population has declined by between 25 and 40%. In 2020 the British hedgehog was officially classified as 'vulnerable to extinction'.

So, what can we do to save these lovable creatures? By supporting organisations such as the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, research, of which not enough has been done, can be funded. There are many ways of providing funding and the people of Callander, at no cost to themselves, can do their bit. Rather than throwing them away, simply tear off used postage stamps (leave the backing paper on) and post them through my letterbox. I can then send the stamps to the BHPS for them to sell on. Apparently, they can be worth as much as £5 per kilo, and thousands of pounds have already been raised for charitable purposes. If you include your contact details, email or mobile, I will acknowledge your contribution.

Thanks in anticipation

*Michael Kay
4 Bracklinn Road
Callander
FK17 8EH*



BHPS logo

The Sky Above Us is Back! 11-12 March

Callander's Landscape plan to bring Astronomy events back to Callander this March. Our first dark skies event was held in 2018 but subsequent events moved online due to Covid-19. We are excited to provide another opportunity to learn more about the sky above us! On **11th-12th March**, there will be

activities for all ages, including an evening talk and stargazing session at Callander Hostel on Friday, with the main event on Saturday at McLaren Leisure Centre. The mobile planetarium will be back, the solar telescope outside (weather permitting) and a variety of cosmic activities and experiments to enjoy.

Events are free thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Booking is required for the evening talk and planetarium shows. For more information see www.callanderslandscape.org/events or follow us on social media. We look forward to seeing you there!

Julie Wilson



CAOS

CAOS finished 2021 on a positive note with a successful concert in early December along with Callander Kirk Junior Choir, singing a mix of songs from *Sound of Music* and Christmas favourites. Thanks to all our supporters who came along.

We intend to carry this positivity into 2022 and will stage *Sound of Music* in the middle of March - a full two years since we had to cancel at the beginning of the pandemic. Rehearsals commenced again in October and it was heartening to see that a lot had been remembered from all those months ago. Sadly some cast members have been unable to recommit to the 2022 performance because of work or school commitments - thanks to Aidan and Steven in particular for their previous efforts and good luck with the exams! We have, however, been able to find excellent replacements and none of the remaining youngsters have grown too much!!!

As usual, the show will take place at McLaren High School and there will be three evening performances from Wednesday 16th to Friday 18th March, starting at 7.30pm. The final show will be a matinee on Saturday 19th starting at 2.30pm. Many of you will have retained tickets from 2020 and these remain valid for this year's show. For those who need tickets, they are priced at £5 for a child (12 and under) £11 concession and £14 full price. There will be no child or concession prices for the Friday evening performance. Tickets will be available from the beginning of February from the Post Office.

Of course there is still concern regarding Covid restrictions, but hopefully these will become more relaxed as the show approaches. Rest assured, CAOS will be following all the latest Covid guidelines and will work closely with McLaren High School to ensure everyone can enjoy the performance safely.

In the meantime we value your continued support and hope to see you in March. As always, if you do have any questions, please speak to any member of the Society or go to the website www.c-a-o-s.org.uk.

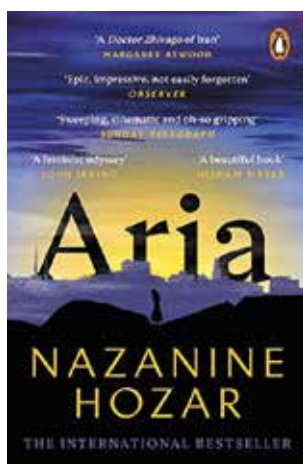
Keep safe and well.

Steve Murphy for CAOS

Book Club Review

This issue's book review title is *Aria* by Nazanine Hozar (Penguin, 2021).

Aria is the first novel by Hozar and is an impressive, epic debut. The book spans four decades following a group of Iranians in the lead up to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The book's title is the name of its central character, Aria, (meaning noble). The story begins as she is born in Tehran in 1953 only to be quickly abandoned in a back alley of the city.



The book is divided into four parts, spanning periods of Aria's life. Part One (1958-59) focuses on Aria's early childhood living with her 'father', Behrouz, who found the new born Aria hidden next to the trash bins. Behrouz's wife,

Zahra, reluctantly becomes Aria's primary carer but is a neglectful and violent step-mother. Such is the level of cruelty and neglect, Aria is nearly blinded by an untreated eye-infection. She is subsequently moved to her second 'mother' Fereshteh who, whilst financially secure and able to provide for Aria, is emotionally unavailable, having historic demons of her own.

During this period (1959-1968), Aria is at school and meets other key characters, Hamlet and Mitra. A complex friendship develops between the three of them with tragic consequences.

Described by one reviewer as a 'feminist odyssey' the theme of motherhood is central to the book. The first three parts are named after each of Aria's three 'mothers' (Zahra, Fereshteh and Aria's birth mother, Mehri) whilst Part Four is entitled 'Aria' at the point that she herself becomes a mother. This period from 1977 to 1981 is graphic and harrowing through its description of the Revolution and the bloody actions of revolutionaries and soldiers. The outcome of 1979 is the emergence of a different Iran, particularly in terms of the role of Iranian women and how they should dress and behave in public.

Aria is one of my favourite types of book. I'm not sure what the generic term would be, but it combines place, history and fictionalised characters combined with both imagined and significant actual events. It was fascinating to learn more about Iran and the events that led up to 1979 and how this impacted on men and women from different backgrounds, classes and religions in the country.

The next BLV book club review will be *The Art of Wild Swimming Scotland* by Anna Deacon and Vicky Allan (Black and White Publishing, 2021).

Maggie Magor

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Jessica Carmichael

Jessica was born at Duart House, Callander on the 27th November 1927, the youngest daughter of William and Jessie McMichael.

Jessica had a happy, loving and caring childhood. She attended Callander Primary School and McLaren High Secondary School, becoming dux of the primary school in 1939. At secondary school she excelled in her academic qualifications and showed a great flair on the tennis courts and hockey pitches where she captained the school team. Jessica was an active member and organiser of the McLaren High Former Pupils Reunions, especially the regular reunions of the 'War' pupils. She was a regular contributor to the FP Newsletter and very knowledgeable about McLaren history with plenty of stories of former teachers. She was especially involved in the 100th Anniversary celebrations in 1992 and the 125th celebrations in 2017.

With Jessica's caring demeanour and kindness, nursing was always going to be her profession of choice. She started her devotion to the cause in June 1946 continuing until May 1970. During this time she worked in many UK hospitals and in Canada, gaining many professional qualifications covering medical and surgical nursing, midwifery, tutoring and as an examiner. From 1946 -1953 she worked in Glasgow at The Sick Children Hospital, Rottenrow and Glasgow Royal, achieving the qualified status of RSCN. SCM RGN.

She worked in London from 1954 – 1960 at Hammersmith Hospital, The Australasian Hospital, West Middlesex Hospital and Brook Hospital, completing her SRN during this time. Jessica then spent time in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, before returning, in 1960 to work at The Jubilee Hospital, London. In the early 1961 it was back to St Nicholas, Glasgow and a year later she was appointed Nursing Tutor at Glasgow Royal. From 1964 – 1970 Jessica worked at Stirling Royal Hospital.

Student nurses from this time remember her as an excellent teacher. She had high standards and expected her pupils to work hard, but she explained things clearly and was always willing to listen to their worries and give help and encouragement.

In June 1970 Jessica married Crawford Carmichael with whom she would share 36 years of joyful marriage. Jessica loved many things in and around the Callander area, the hills, lochs, rivers, its natural beauty which she would digest every morning when she awoke. A massive lover of music she played piano and violin, was instrumental in setting up Rusty Strings and played for many years with the Stirling Reel and Strathspey society. A group of Rusty Strings members played at her funeral.

She and Crawford were enthusiastic Country Dancers and for many years were part of the committee of the Callander Country Dance Club. Gardening and baking were other pastimes in which she took great pleasure, presenting and showing at many Callander shows, gaining many plaudits for her floral arrangements, her empire biscuits and jam but, alas, no winners rosettes.

Together with her love of the great outdoors she had many other personal interests where she put the Callander community at the forefront of her efforts.

I have already mentioned her being a founder member of Rusty Strings and a member of Callander Scottish Country Dance Club but there was so much more. She was also a founder member of the Craigard Club. She was editor of the Ben Ledi View for a spell and for many years edited the Callander Kirk magazine. She was an invigilator at the High School during exam time and an active volunteer and spokesperson of the charity Children 1st.

As you can see, Jessica certainly played her part in the Callander community. For most of her life Jessica lived in the family home, Duart House, but in her latter years moved round the corner to a smaller house in Tulipan Crescent.

Jessica died at home on October 16th, 2021 just short of her 94th birthday. We extend our sympathy and condolences to her family and friends. Thanks to Scott for providing details about Jessica's life.

Kath Millar

Amia (Mae) McLean

Mae and Jim with sons Allan and Ian came to Callander in 1983, when Jim was transferred to Strathgry Forest by his employer the Forestry Commission.

Mae belonged to Pitlochry, a town for which she never lost her love and soon she became equally fond of Callander. She was a member of the WRI and the bowling clubs. For many years, Mae thoroughly enjoyed coordinating Callander Meals on Wheels, only giving it up when she became unable to fulfil the duties.

Throughout her long illness, she was very appreciative of the care and help from friends, neighbours and agencies including Doctors, Staff and District Nurses at Callander Medical Practice, CERA Care and Crossroads Caring Scotland.

Thanks to all for the £183.35 that was donated at the crematorium for Rachel House Children's Hospice. A cheque for £400 was forwarded to Rachel House.

We wish to express the family's appreciation to Rev. Jeff McCormick for home visits and a comforting service at the crematorium.

Our thanks to George Currid of Somers and Currid Funeral Directors for the care, professional help and advice with Mae's funeral.

Many thanks to all for the cards and kind words received following Mae's passing on 2nd December. They were all very much appreciated.

James McLean

Mrs Elizabeth Ann Tweedie (Ann)

It is with great sadness that we announce that, on 5th November 2021, Ann Tweedie passed away at the age of 95. The majority of her life was spent in Callander, a place she loved for its people, its community and its scenery. Her wish was that she should die in her own home in Callander. This she achieved!

Ann was born in Cape Town, South Africa, her parents being farmers in Kenya and her happy early life was spent there. She attended a PNEU school which believed that "children are persons" who should be treated as individuals who need to be stimulated

at an early age by a broad curriculum. Their motto was and remains: I am, I can, I ought, I will.



This philosophy remained with her throughout her life and, having completed a teaching qualification, Ann moved to Callander in 1967 to take up a post of Teacher of Mathematics at McLaren High School. Here she made lifelong friends amongst the teaching staff, had a career that she loved, gained her independence and was able to support her children, James and Morag, through school, university and beyond. She was a born teacher, helping many to understand the complexities of mathematics and supporting them through exams at all levels.

She is remembered by former pupils and their parents as 'amazing', 'phenomenal', 'wonderful', 'supportive', 'patient', 'inspirational' as well as being a 'lovely' person. Several noted that it was because of her that they gained their Higher Maths allowing them to progress to their future and rewarding careers.

During her career, and particularly after retirement, Ann had a full and active social life. She was a keen golfer (indeed she was Ladies Captain a couple of times) and country dancer; both of these activities allowing travel to play on new golf courses and to attend dance rallies throughout Scotland. She was an accomplished bridge player, learning how to play online during lockdown and

delighting in the fact that she still had the ability to win just weeks before her death. She was an avid reader, often 2-3 books at once and also completed the cryptic crossword daily. Over the years she took part in Callander life, working on committees, attending film nights and indeed delivered copies of Ben Ledi View for many years. She continued learning in later life as an active member of U3A and undertook activities ranging from art appreciation to knitting, garden visits and latterly learning Mahjong. However it was outside in nature where she was happiest, be it walking in and around the Trossachs, tending her much loved garden or travelling within Scotland and abroad.

Because of her social nature, her interest in people and through these many activities Ann built a wide circle of friends in Callander and beyond.

Her family, too, were a great source of pride and joy. She was a sister, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, a great-aunt, and a cousin giving her time to support them all, at the same time enjoying nothing more than family times together. Her grandsons, Thomas and Peter gave her such pleasure and her interest and pride in them never waned. Over the past few years she enjoyed seeing her step-great-granddaughter grow from baby to starting primary school.

Ann's family and friends really were at the heart of her life and it is without doubt that, though she may not have known it, she had a very positive influence on many lives. She will be sorely missed by all.

The family would like to thank everyone who sent cards, letters and messages as well as those who attended the recent Celebration of Life Ceremony, in person or by live stream. A huge thank you to Ann's neighbours Clare and Peter and the attending paramedics for their care in her final few hours and to all at the GP practice, particularly Drs Scott, Mathieson and Webster as well as all the District and Community Nurses, for their care over the past years. Thank you to Belinda Braithwaite, Humanist Celebrant, for conducting both ceremonies, to Sally Simpson for her Music and to Eric Brown and team at the Roman Camp Hotel. Finally huge thanks to Kevin Devine and Ross Anderson from Andrew Anderson and Sons, Funeral Directors for their support and very professional services.

Morag Tweedie

Current Planning Applications

- Conversion of garage and erection of car port Open Balraig House Keip Road Strathyre Callander FK18 8NQ Ref. No: 2021/0459/HAE | Received: Thu 16 Dec 2021 | Validated: Mon 20 Dec 2021 | Status: Current
- Tree Works within a Conservation Area - 186 - group of two mature ash trees, 15 metres in height approx. - Pollard by up to 50%, 187 - willow, height approximately 11 metres. - Fell. Cycleway North West Of Callander Meadows South Of Leny Road Callander Ref. No: 2021/0458/TRE | Received: Wed 15 Dec 2021 | Validated: Mon 27 Dec 2021 | Status: Current
- Erection of a conservatory Ach Na Feidh Glenfinglas Road Brig O Turk Callander FK17 8HT Ref. No: 2021/0444/LAW | Received: Fri 03 Dec 2021 | Validated: Fri 10 Dec 2021 | Status: Current
- Change in the use of existing office building (Class 4) to residential dwelling (Class 9) and erection of garage and single storey extensions to front and rear of existing building (Modification of approved planning application ref 2020/0071/DET) Meadows Cottage Invertrossachs Road Callander FK17 8HW Ref. No: 2021/0415/DET | Received: Wed 17 Nov 2021 | Validated: Mon 22 Nov 2021 | Status: Current
- Erection of carport with associated electric charging points Lorachan Leny Feus Callander FK17 8AS Ref. No: 2021/0406/HAE | Received: Wed 10 Nov 2021 | Validated: Thu 11 Nov 2021 | Status: Current
- Lawfulness of proposed Installation of additional window on rear elevation 40 Robertson Way Callander FK17 8JF Ref. No: 2021/0397/LAW | Received: Mon 08 Nov 2021 | Validated: Mon 15 Nov 2021 | Status: Current

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Hobbies are really good for you. But with some hobbies it is fantastic just how much they can achieve in the world.

Take 'Knit and Natter'. The natter part is essential to almost all humans; it lifts most people's spirits. The knit part in this case involves highly skilled 'workers'. Not for them the dropped stitches discovered as the holes appear; what they produce is beautiful, a joy to behold. But the good being done does not stop there. These hand made garments are sold to raise hundreds of pounds for the Air Ambulance and Mountain Rescue regularly. So perhaps you can get a bit involved in 'Slow Fashion' and help charities, with a little bit of a search on the street?

Beavers About



While out walking along the river today at the Meadows we noticed what we thought were storm damaged trees close to the bank. There were lots of storm-damaged trees near the river and along the Craggs woodland walk. On closer inspection we could clearly see the small trees had been gnawed through by beavers: so not storm damage at all. We have seen identical beaver activity like this elsewhere in the Tay basin. We had heard they had been seen in the Forth/ Teith catchment area before but this is the first time we've seen proof of their presence. I've sent some photos. I do hope they get peace and thrive in the area, it's absolutely perfect for them.

Cheers. Tom Lucas,

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Callander	Gartmore	Locheemhead	
Deanston	Killearn	Strathblane	

We may be able to build in other communities in the future – please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us plan for the future.

If you are interested in renting one of our properties when they become available please contact us:

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Local Council Office & Registrar:
[01877 33004](tel:0187733004)

Social Work: [01786 471177](tel:01786471177)

Post Office: [01877 330267](tel:01877330267)

Stirling Council: [01786 404040](tel:01786404040)

National Health

Callander Medical Practice [01877 331000](tel:01877331000)

Prescriptions [01877 331001](tel:01877331001)
(10.00am till 3pm)

District Nurse [01877 330150](tel:01877330150)

NHS 24 [111](tel:111) or www.nhs24.scot
www.nhsinform.scot

Callander Dental Practice [01877 330703](tel:01877330703)

Chemists

Farrens **M-F** 9-6 **S** 9-5 [01877 330132](tel:01877330132)

Trossachs **M-F** 9-1 2-6 [01877 330016](tel:01877330016)

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Callander: [01877 381213](tel:01877381213)

Schools

McLaren High: [01877 330156](tel:01877330156)

Callander Primary: [01877 331576](tel:01877331576)

Callander Kirk



The Church of Scotland,

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Trossachs Church Service on Sunday

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Callander Baptist Fellowship

We warmly welcome folks to join us in worship.

Since Covid restrictions have been eased, on Sundays we have resumed some in-person services. In between we are having zoom services and small fellowship gatherings in homes.

Our weekly prayer meeting remains on a Monday evening at 8pm on zoom.

Please contact :

callanderbaptistfellowship@gmail.com

for full details of times and venues.

Bin Collections

Bins are now collected on a Saturday or a Tuesday. The day is in the week following these Sundays

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Brown/Green Bins	Sunday 6th
BrownBin /Blue Box	Sunday 20th
Grey/Blue Bins	Sunday 27th

March

Brown/Green Bins	Sunday 6th
BrownBin /Blue Box	Sunday 20th
Grey/Blue Bins	Sunday 27th

April

Brown/Green Bins	Sunday 3rd
BrownBin /Blue Box	Sunday 17th
Grey/Blue Bins	Sunday 24th

www.stirling.gov.uk/waste

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- Saturday 10.00am-1.30pm
- Sunday closed
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Leny Road, Callander

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Midweek Worship at St Andrew's (BCP), Wednesdays, 10.30am.

For further information please contact:

Revd Jon Connell h: ([01877](tel:01877382887)) [382887](tel:07983897841)
m: [07983 897 841](tel:07983897841) or

Liz Balding Secretary to St Andrew's Vestry

m: [07825 635 428](tel:07825635428)

St Joseph's Catholic Church



Glen Artney Road, Callander

Thursday Mass 10.00 am

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Sunday Holy Mass 11.30 am

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Rev Leszek Wiececzek S.A.C.

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Travel Line Scotland: [0870 6082608](tel:08706082608)

Leisure Centre: [01877 330000](tel:01877330000)

Library: [01877 331544](tel:01877331544)

Visitor Information Centre: [07727 288 585](tel:07727288585)

Floods & Environment

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SEPA website:

www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/index.htm

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BLV DEADLINES

The next issue of the Ben Ledi View will be published on **Friday 1st April 2022.**

Advertisements copy & artwork

Please send all advertisement copy for the **Apr/May** issue to our Advertising Co-ordinator Wendy Munro at:

advertising@benlediview.org by **Wednesday 2nd March 2022** Full details of sizes for advertisement and artwork specifications are at www.benlediview.org under the Advertise tab. Please call or email for advice if in doubt.

We request full payment before we can accept advertising material for publication.

Editorial copy

All editorial contributions for the **Apr/May** issue should be emailed to editor@benlediview.org or handed in to the Callander Library by **Friday 4th March 2022.**

Items received after the deadline may be held over to next issue.

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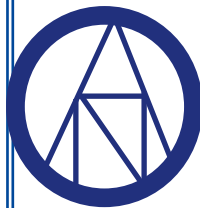
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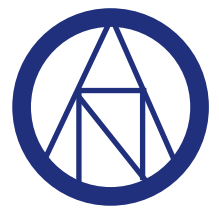
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