

# Ben Ledi View

Callander's news and views since 1987

## Mental Health Awareness Week



**CALLANDER  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
MATTERS**

Fundraising Events Ancaster Square  
Sat. 9<sup>th</sup> May & Sat. 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026



## Ben Ledi View

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The Ben Ledi View is a community newspaper produced and distributed bi-monthly by volunteers free of charge to approx. 2,000 households and businesses in the Callander area. Letters and articles published in the newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views, beliefs or opinions of the Editorial Committee, who also reserve the right to shorten, edit or not publish any particular letter or article. Contributions will only be published if accompanied by a contact name and address; these will be withheld at the author's request. Articles and advertisements are accepted and printed in good faith. The Ben Ledi View is published by

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**Cover:** Last year's Mental Health Week

## HAVE YOU BEEN AFFECTED BY SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

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## Convenor's Welcome Message

### Hello Readers

**T**HE weather for the first two months of 2026 has been rather miserable but, as I sit to write this, the sun has come out, it feels quite warm and perhaps spring is finally with us. We should shortly see the return of a number of migratory birds and we feature a timely article about these remarkable creatures and how we can assist them.

The improved weather has allowed the painters to return to Main Street to finish redecorating a number of shop fronts, in addition to those done last year. I'm sure that you'll agree that this work, organised by Callander Enterprise and the Development Trust and funded by Stirling Council and the UK Government, has really improved the look and feel of Callander, so thanks must go to all involved.

As in previous issues, we feature a number of reports of charity fund raising, particularly in our pubs, and of groups helping others including the Ripple Retreat. I don't think anyone will have missed the increase in the number of people suffering from poor mental health, so it is very reassuring to hear of the new Child and Youth Counselling service which has been launched, supported by a number of local organisations. I'm sure that this, together with Callander's Mental Health Awareness Week in mid-May, will help those seeking support.

I have also commented previously about Callander having been found to be a happy place to live but it seems that this isn't everyone's experience; I leave it to you to judge whether enhanced surveillance would be positive or negative in this regard.

To close, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers and advertisers a Happy Easter on behalf of all the volunteers at the Ben Ledi View.

**Mark Griffiths**  
 Convenor, Ben Ledi View SCIO  
[convenor@benlediview.org](mailto:convenor@benlediview.org)

**YOUR BLV STILL NEEDS YOU!!!!** The Ben Ledi View is produced, published, administered and distributed by a small, keen and dedicated team of volunteers. To keep publishing the paper we are seeking more team members to cover a variety of roles including: ● Administration/Accounts ● Editing / checking articles ● Proof reading ● Advertising liaison. In most cases this work involves working with Microsoft Office products such as Word and Excel and Outlook. Assistance can be given with these programs as required. The time commitment is dependent on the role and the individual but isn't onerous. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact us via email to [markg@benlediview.org](mailto:markg@benlediview.org) or [editor@benlediview.org](mailto:editor@benlediview.org).

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## Subscribe

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 Annual cost: UK £15 & Outside UK £40  
 Please make cheques to: Ben Ledi View Community Newspaper SCIO.  
 Or you can ask to join our email list and we will send you out a copy by email each month free of charge.

## New Art and Hobbycraft Supplies shop!

**W**E are excited to introduce our new shop to Callander – Surface Detail!

We provide art materials and hobbycraft supplies, including ready to use stretched and primed canvases and boards, sketchbooks of many varieties, alongside paints, pastels and acrylics to use with them! We have a variety of tools and accessories, beads, crafting and jewellery wire, tapes, glues and fixatives... We are also very happy to provide a selection of sculpting, effects and weathering materials for all the modelling and miniature enthusiasts out there (including Fergus who will gladly chat with you about methods and materials for as long as you like!)

A brief insight into why we opened the shop:

We have always loved all manner of creative crafting and Megan is already one half of Stitchcraft – the yarn and fabric shop on Main Street which opened in 2022 to provide ethically produced textile craft supplies for knitting, crochet, sewing and needle crafts.

We also wanted to share our love of other artistic avenues, to encourage people to try new mediums and discover, develop and continue to delight in all things Art and Hobbycraft.



The new shop is on Ancaster Square



All manner of arts and crafts are catered for

While we aren't professional artists, our families are both creative and we appreciate the joy and mindfulness that making something can bring. We have two young children (who will surely accost you if you come into the shop, sorry!) who love art and expressing themselves through fashioning all kinds of fantastical things. As there was not an art materials outlet in the town, we hope that we can provide this in our new space!

Callander has a wonderful community of creative, artistic, crafty people and we have been delighted to welcome many locals and visitors since we opened at the start of February, also learning all about the interests and crafts you enjoy.

At present we are concentrating on building up stock and making sure we have the materials our customers want - so please do come and have a chat with us about what you need to start or continue your creative journey!

We are open Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 to 16:00 (currently closed Sunday and Monday). You can find us at 22 Ancaster Square, contact us at [info@surfacedetailarts.co.uk](mailto:info@surfacedetailarts.co.uk), or view our Facebook page at [facebook.com/surfacedetailarts](https://www.facebook.com/surfacedetailarts). Hope to see you soon ...

*Megan and Fergus*

### NEXT ISSUE DATES & DEADLINES

**Publish Date: June 6th 2026**

#### Advertisements copy & artwork

Please send all advertisement copy for the **April/May** issue to our Advertising Co-ordinator Agnes Allen [advertising@benlediview.org](mailto:advertising@benlediview.org) by **May 8th**.

Please email for advice if in doubt.

#### Editorial copy - May 1st

All editorial contributions for the **June/July** issue should be emailed to [editor@benlediview.org](mailto:editor@benlediview.org) or handed in to the Callander Library by **Monday May 4th**. We will do our best to accommodate items received after the deadline but these may be held over to next issue.



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## Callander Community Development Trust



### Hydro Awards

WE were pleased to award the following Community Hydro Grants from the most recent round of applications:

**Andrew Anderson & Sons, Funeral Directors and Douglas Pearson MBACP** – £7,745 for Callander Children and Young Person's Counselling Project running costs

**Friends of Loch Lomond & Trossachs** – £1,100 for a revision and reprint of the Trossachs Trail leaflet

**Stirling Citizens Advice Bureau** – £30,000 towards a continued service in Callander supporting local people facing difficulties with professional advice and support. This includes a £10,000 Hardship Fund to be administered at the point of crisis.

Congratulations to all recipients! The next deadline is 30th June, with decisions being taken 6 weeks thereafter.

### Local Place Plan Projects

WE are liaising with Callander Community Council on progressing the priorities identified in Callander's Local Place Plan. Updates on the Pedestrian Bridge (CLLP ref. 1.i.a) and Safe Routes to School (1.i.b) will be communicated via our social media pages and in the Callander Connect newsletter.

The painting of seven more shopfronts on Main Street (5.iii), with help from a second award from the Premises Improvement Grant, administered by Stirling Council, is to be completed in the spring, pending suitable weather conditions.

### Meadows Masterplan (2.i) and Station Road

A REDEVELOPMENT design for Station Road car park has been published and is on display in Callander Connect for public view and feedback. This is a development of the initial visions produced as part of the Green Adventure Gateway project in January 2025, and has been drawn up in liaison with Stirling Council and Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority, with the aim of improving facilities and enhancing the arrival experience into Callander for those stopping there.

This is a further indication of what could be implemented, but is very much subject to securing large-scale funding, further investigative works beneath the car park, public consultation and planning regulations. In terms of the stages of project development, we are just at Stage 2 for this project.

See the inset graphic from the Royal Institute of British Architects for a very simplified graphic showing the eight

project stages. Our thanks go to the funder, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Place Programme Fund.



### Riparian tree planting

BY the time this is published, we should have finished our riparian tree planting on Callandrade Meadow. Thanks to the landowner, Forth Rivers Trust, the National Park Authority and Forth Climate Forest for helping to deliver this project. We hope this will have a very positive impact on the site's biodiversity and water retention, also benefitting fish by reducing climate warming impact on river temperatures. If you are interested in helping with annual maintenance of the trees as they grow, we would love to hear from you.

### Callander Old Primary School

BY the time this issue is published, the feasibility study for the acquisition and conversion of the current Callander Primary School building into a community, arts, education and training centre will have been compiled. This would complete Stage 1 as shown in the above graphic. Many thanks to everyone who attended our public drop-in event at the school in early February and completed one or both of our surveys - we were pleased to receive well over 320 responses.

Our thanks to the Scottish Land Fund for funding the majority of this stage. If the project concept is deemed to be viable, we can begin the asset transfer process, subject to further funding.

### Callander Connect

THANKS to funding from Forth Valley Lomond Youth Local Impact Fund, we have continued to be able to run "Create at Connect" – bimonthly drop-in art sessions which provide a warm, friendly and non-judgemental space for people of all ages and abilities.

With activities including tetrapak etching, block printing, zine making, watercolour, willow weaving, mending and felting, it has been fantastic to see people of different generations get stuck into creative media that they may not have otherwise tried.

We hope to continue the sessions – please keep an eye on Facebook by liking the Callander Community

Development Trust page or joining the Callander Connect group.

We have also been fortunate to be awarded an 'Awards for All' grant from the National Lottery to go towards some of our running costs as well as a budget for events – watch this space on our newsletters and social media!

## E-Bike Share Scheme

**B**Y the time you are reading this, our fleet of four community e-bikes will have a new home in the small shipping container at Station Road car park - on loan from Stirling Council, but refurbished and repainted with help from the students of Callander Primary School.

For inductions to join the e-bike share scheme, please get in touch directly. Fingers crossed for some cycling-friendly weather! Our thanks to Forth Valley Lomond Community Led Local Development Fund for the grant to carry out the works on the container.

## Visitor Information Centre

**W**E are back open for the 2026 season and look forward to welcoming the thousands of visitors who come to Callander each year. With our wonderful volunteers and staff, we hope this will be the best season yet! We hope locals looking for gifts will also be able to enjoy the array of updated items in our gift shop.

Remember that CCDT members receive a 10% discount! To find out about joining, please get in touch at the details below.

To find out more about our projects, including those not listed here, please get in touch or drop into Callander Connect on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday.

*Freddy Bowen-Bate*  
secretary@callandercdt.org.uk

07415497659



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## Stop press! New pilot bus service

**A** new pilot bus service, the C61, launches on Monday, March 30, 2026, connecting Callander, Thornhill, Port of Menteith, and Aberfoyle with four daily round trips, utilizing a 16-seat minibus. This service replaces previous, limited transport, providing a direct, fixed-route, and on-demand link for residents and tourists. Further details will be provided in the next issue.



Image: alpegor/Adobe Stock



The wooden heart is used by guests to pick out their favourite spot

## Entering into Spring at the Ripple Retreat

THERE are many special touches at the Ripple Retreat, but perhaps one of the most meaningful is our beautiful wooden heart. Before families leave at the end of their stay, we invite them to place the heart somewhere in the house that has meant something to them during their time with us. Sometimes, we find it on the large dining table where families have gathered to share meals, laughter, and precious moments. Other times, it sits quietly on the stool beside the electric piano or drum kit, looking out across the gardens and the beauty of Loch Venachar.

When we return each Wednesday to prepare for the next family, one of the first things we do is look for the heart. It's a small gesture, but it tells us a lot about the memories made during the week.

Alongside the heart sits another very special item – our “R Book.” Families are invited to leave a message before they go. The comments are always deeply touching and remind us just how important a stay at the Ripple Retreat can be for families going through some of the hardest times imaginable.

“Heartfelt thanks to the amazing Ripple Retreat, for giving us the gift of time together. This beautiful space allowed us to truly relax, reconnect and create precious memories. We are so grateful for the peace, kindness and care that made our stay so special”

“We are so grateful for every second we have spent here following eight years of our son fighting cancer. From the minute we walked in, we felt the calm and the stress lift from us”

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Behind the scenes, the past few weeks have been busy with maintenance and improvements to ensure everything continues to run smoothly. Our private water supply has been serviced, our generator – which proved invaluable during a few winter outages – has been maintained and our CCTV system has recently been upgraded.

The new technology caused a moment of confusion recently when a visitor arrived in the garden to carry out some planned work but hadn't quite confirmed the timing with us. As he worked away, a voice suddenly asked, from various corners of the grounds, “May I ask what you are doing?”

What he thought was a recorded message was actually Joyce, the Ripple Retreat manager, speaking live through the new microphones positioned around the buildings and gardens! After that brief moment of surprise (and some laughter once everything was clarified), our visitor made plans to return the following week. The wonders of modern technology!

We were also delighted to welcome a very large team from Kitchens International, which has supported the charity for nine years now, who arrived at the Ripple Retreat for a team-building day in February. Not only did they enjoy the setting, but they also rolled up their sleeves and carried out several improvements and repairs around the property. Their time and effort were hugely appreciated and we look forward to welcoming them back soon.

Community support continues to grow too. The Hawkers, a Stirling-based band blending folk and country music, recently visited for coffee and cake to learn more about the



work of 'It's good 2 give' and the Ripple Retreat. They have kindly chosen the charity as their Charity of the Year. The band performs regularly around Stirling and the local area, so if you see them advertised, do pop along and support them – or follow them on Facebook to keep up with their music and fundraising.

Another fantastic supporter is Laura Williamson of Lakes2Lochs, whom many of you will recognise from the open water swimming community on Loch Venachar. Laura organises regular swims and events and has also chosen 'It's good 2 give' as their Charity of the Year. In August she will take on the Loch Lomond Relay as part of a team of six – an incredible challenge. If you see Laura and her swimmers in the loch, be sure to give them a wave and please support them if you can.

Joyce and Alison visited Lunar Eclipse, a Callander-based charity offering support from their wonderful therapy ponies. Following our visit, it was agreed that this would be a wonderful collaboration for our two organisations. Our co-founder, Lynne McNicoll agreed to put a plea out to find a supporter to donate £600, to allow suitable families over the next 12-18 months to benefit from the therapy which Lunar Eclipse offers. Within an hour, we had secured this funding and our first family is booked to meet the ponies in March. These unique moments will make such a difference to the mental wellbeing and healing of our families.

Training is also an important part of keeping the Ripple Retreat safe and welcoming. Staff and volunteers regularly take part in refresher sessions and this year Alison, our family coordinator, and Gavin, our maintenance lead, completed 'Workplace Health & Safety' and 'Workplace First Aid' training, whilst Joyce completed IOSH certification. In March, the full team will also undertake basic fire safety training.

With spring now officially here (meteorologically speaking!), our attention turns once again to the gardens. Between March and October, we welcome community groups, individuals and corporate volunteer teams to help



Spring is here and the red squirrels are about



Volunteers from Kitchens International making a difference keep the grounds looking beautiful for visiting families.

If you would like to lend a hand in the gardens or offer your skills as trades, please contact Joyce at:

[rippleretreat@itsgood2give.co.uk](mailto:rippleretreat@itsgood2give.co.uk)



Finally, as always, the Ripple Retreat remains very much part of the local community. If you would like to come and see and hear what 'It's good 2' give is doing to support families across Scotland who have a child or young person going through cancer, you are very welcome.

The kettle is always on, on a Thursday. Just send us a message and we can arrange a suitable time for you to visit – or simply drop by. If we're busy, you might just find yourself joining in!

### FUNDRAISING

PLEASE consider supporting our charity, donations large or small, volunteering your time, talking about us in your community, choosing us as your organisation's charity of the year, bringing a team together from your workplace, running a local 10k, walking the Kilt Walk, attending any of our events. <https://www.itsgood2give.co.uk/>

This year our Co-Founder Lynne McNicoll is raising £500k through her #Challenge26 before her 70th Birthday in December – let's make sure she reaches her target!

*Joyce Burnett*

## After Dark in Callander: Why the Conversation on CCTV Can No Longer Wait

CALLANDER has always been a town where people feel comfortable walking home in the evening, where businesses lock up with a reasonable expectation that they will return to things as they left them and where neighbours look out for one another without fuss. That sense of quiet security is part of what makes life in Callander what it is.

However, recent months have brought a noticeable change – not in the character of the town, but in the nature and timing of certain criminal activity. Most reported incidents are not happening in broad daylight. They are taking place after dark: vehicles entered during the early hours, sheds and outbuildings targeted overnight, suspicious movement in residential streets once footfall has disappeared and activity on the outskirts where lighting is limited and properties sit beside open ground.

Darkness offers anonymity. In a small town, that anonymity can be all that is required.

### A Changing Pattern of Crime

WHAT is particularly concerning is the increasingly organised feel to some of these incidents. Across rural Scotland, there have been documented cases of criminals using drones to survey properties before acting. A drone flown quietly at height can identify access points, outbuildings containing tools or machinery, the presence or absence of security lighting and whether vehicles on a driveway suggest a property is occupied.

Callander's road network, while modest, offers a number of straightforward entry and exit routes that make swift movement possible. The A84 road runs directly through the town, linking south towards Stirling and the motorway network, and north-west towards Crianlarich.

From the town centre, the A81 road branches off, providing a direct route south-west towards Aberfoyle and

onward to Glasgow. This corridor also connects drivers quickly into the heart of the Loch Lomond area, offering multiple onward routes through rural terrain.

In practical terms, that means a vehicle entering Callander late at night can leave just as quickly in several directions – towards Stirling and the Central Belt, towards Glasgow via the A81, or deeper into the national park road network where traffic is sparse after dark.

For those intent on committing theft, that flexibility reduces risk and increases confidence.

Combined with the potential use of drones to scope properties in advance, this creates a pattern that feels more deliberate than opportunistic. A property can be identified remotely, access points assessed, and an approach and exit route planned before a crime is attempted.

In a town that sits at a natural crossroads between Lowland Scotland and the Highlands, this is a vulnerability that deserves acknowledgement.

Drone use does not mean every overhead light is suspicious, nor should it create paranoia. But it does reflect a reality: technology and geography together can work in favour of those prepared to misuse them. Pretending that this is something that only happens elsewhere would be naïve.

### Why CCTV Is Part of the Answer

CCTV is not a cure-all. It will not eliminate crime entirely. But it can serve three important functions: deterrence, detection, and reassurance.

Deterrence: Visible cameras, particularly in the town centre, main car parks, and at key entry and exit routes, signal that movements are recorded. Opportunistic offenders often look for the easiest option. If Callander is no longer that option, they may think twice.



CCTV could act as a deterrent

Image: John Corry/  
Adobe Stock

**Detection:** For more deliberate activity — including late-night vehicle movement linked to theft — recorded footage can be invaluable. Identifying number plates, vehicle types, or even establishing the timing of movement in and out of town can significantly assist police investigations. In rural crime, where offenders may operate across several communities in a single night, this information can be crucial.

**Reassurance:** Perhaps just as important is the steady reassurance it offers residents. For those living alone, for older members of the community and for business owners who have invested their savings and livelihoods locally, knowing there is some level of oversight during the small hours matters.

### Focus on After-Dark Monitoring

The case being made is not for intrusive surveillance of everyday life. It is for proportionate, professionally managed monitoring concentrated on the hours and locations where problems are occurring — overnight in particular.

Strategic placement would be key:  
Main street and commercial areas.  
Public car parks.

Access roads into and out of town, including the A84 and A81 corridors.

Selected points on the outskirts where properties are more isolated.

Modern systems allow for clear governance, strict data protection compliance, and limited retention of footage. Proper signage ensures transparency. This is about community protection, not community intrusion.

### Preserving What Matters

CALLANDER'S strength has always been its steady, grounded nature. It is not a town prone to exaggeration. Yet ignoring a pattern because it feels uncomfortable would do none of us any favours.

We sit beneath Ben Ledi in a setting that draws visitors from far and wide. That will not change, nor should it. But as technology evolves and rural crime becomes more sophisticated, our response must evolve too.

Introducing CCTV — with a clear emphasis on after-dark activity, strategic road coverage, and the emerging use of drone reconnaissance — would not change the character of Callander. It would protect it.

This is not about alarm. It is about foresight, common sense, and taking measured steps now so that the town remains what it has always been: a safe, welcoming place to live and work.

*Greig Guthrie*

## Callander Kirk

THE congregation of Callander Kirk is continually grateful for the continued support from members of the community and other churches.

We are always looking for gifts of food/toiletries for our Community Larder, located outside the Kirk Hall. We never cease to be amazed at the generosity of so many.

Please remember to check the best before date on the items.

### Food Items

Instant meals (Pot Noodle, Mug Shot, Pasta in Sauce), Cup-a-Soup, tinned soup, cereal bars, cereal,



tinned pasta (spaghetti, ravioli, macaroni cheese), dried pasta with a jar/carton of sauce, rice, jars of fish/meat paste, oatcakes/crackers, tea bags, coffee, UHT milk, tinned tomatoes, tinned meat, tinned veg, tinned fruit.

### Other non-perishable food

**items:** baking potatoes, carrots, apples, bananas, oranges...

**Toiletry Items:** Toilet roll (these are always required), sanitary products, shampoo, toothpaste, soap, shower gel...

**Garden Produce:** goes in basket on table

Callander Kirk Guild meets at 2.00pm in the Kirk Hall on Friday 8th May (AGM and 120th Anniversary Celebration of Callander Kirk Guild). All welcome.

\*\*Please note change of day in May due to Scottish

Parliament Elections taking place in the Hall on Thursday 7th May.

Services - Callander Kirk - 11.15am worship every Sunday

## We are on the Move!

**C**ALLANDER Christian Fellowship has been blessed in its current home at St Andrew's Church for a number of years, firstly in the church hall and, for the past year, in the church itself. We are all extremely grateful for the welcome and warmth we have felt from the Rector, Jon Connell and all the congregation. It has been lovely to share events as well as a venue with them.

However, as St Andrew's have a morning service, we have held our service at 4.00pm on a Sunday but have really longed to meet in the morning instead. Recently, a new option for us has arisen, as most generously, Callander Kirk has offered the use of their hall on a Sunday morning. They currently don't need it themselves.

So, from March 1st, CCF will hold a morning service each Sunday at 10.00am in Callander Kirk Hall. We are delighted with this opportunity and it feels there is real ecumenical cooperation happening in our town as we move our

fellowship alongside another, whilst maintaining our links with St Andrew's as well.

CCF is an independent fellowship, led by our Pastor, Rev. Nate Swisher, with a service of worship, teaching and prayer. We have provision for children during the sermon and share tea and coffee (and chocolate biscuits!) after the service.

For more details, please contact by phone or email:

Tel: 07851 529481 Email: [admin@callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk](mailto:admin@callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk)

Or visit our website: [www.callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk](http://www.callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk)

Do come and join us!

*Marilyn Willett*



CCF members

## Stirlingshire Scenic Site Falls of Falloch to Temporarily Close

**T**HE Falls of Falloch are to close temporarily to the public week from the end of March for 10-12 weeks for essential safety and access improvements.

The investment project will introduce redesigned parking bays, including a dedicated turning area to reduce hazardous roadside manoeuvres near the A82. Clearer and more durable walking routes, new protective barriers, updated signage and nature interpretation, and measures to support woodland ecology and habitat recovery will be delivered as part of the upgrade.

During the closure, visitors are encouraged to avoid the site both on foot and by vehicle and to explore alternative nearby locations with parking, including Tarbet, Inveruglas and the Dalrigh car park in Tyndrum.

# TALK TO US

If things are getting to you

Talk to us any time you like, in your own way, and off the record – about whatever's getting to you.

**116 123** FREE  
This number is FREE to call

**07725 90 90 90**  
Standard text rates apply

**jo@samaritans.org**

**samaritans.org**

A registered charity

DO YOU HAVE A DRINKING PROBLEM?  
DO YOU WANT HELP?  
RING ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

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**Cathedral Estates**

### Wild in Callander

WE are pleased to announce the arrival of a new project in Callander called Wild. We have made a home in what used to be Jasmine Beauty, on Cross Street and was originally the old stables for the Ancaster Hotel. We've taken down a few of the internal walls, revealing the period-feature sandstone windows in their glory and have given the place a wee 'spruce' up.

The vision for Wild is a space to encourage health and wellbeing of people and planet. It's a place to gather, share our love of nature and reconnect to the cycles of life whilst enjoying a good cuppa too.

As well as a shop selling things made from wild materials or to inspire wild life, there will be regular sessions open to locals and tourists alike, including plant studies, foraging, forest bathing and wellbeing, and we hope that you'll join us on the last Monday of the month for 'Almanac Afternoons'.

From 4:30pm - 6:00 pm, we will gather around the table with books and lay out what we might expect for the month ahead.

Some of the topics include; weather, astronomical data, animals, food growing/foraging, folklore and whatever else you want to see in our monthly almanac. It will be a chance to reconnect with other like-minded folks and get more in touch with the seasons. Monday the 27th of April will be the first session: drop in or come for the whole thing.

Feel free to bring your own books too. It's a £4 donation to cover costs.

By the time of printing, we should have already opened, so please pop in and say hello, browse or borrow some of our books and of course, share some of your own stories of the natural world.

Email Arleen on gatheredwildshop@gmail.com if you want to be involved in any way. Or check out the website gatheredwild.co.uk for details of what's on. We hope to see you soon.

Arleen Sinclair



Wild's new premises on Cross Street



## A'Chruinneag

A short-term let flat on Main Street available at a reduced rate for friends and family of locals.

3 Bedrooms: 1 Double (ensuite), 2 Twin; spacious living room and kitchen/diner; finished to a high standard throughout.

Friends and family of CCDT members receive **20% off** bookings when enquiring direct.

Contact [secretary@callandercdt.org.uk](mailto:secretary@callandercdt.org.uk) for how to become a CCDT member.





Scan here to book direct.



**CALLANDER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST**  
callandercdt.org.uk

### Corrections and clarifications

Unfortunately our previous issue contained some incorrect text at the beginning of the Callander Community Council article. This was due to a production error and we apologise to those concerned.

# Ben Ledi View

## Advertise to 2000 households & businesses

Scan the QR Code or visit <https://benlediview.easyportal.app/media-pack> for more information



### Walk in the Park

Join us for our range of free, movement-inspired, weekly wellbeing activities, supporting people to be more active more often, connecting with each other and nature.

Our participants have been embracing the start of 2026, enjoying every season, thankfully not all in the one day! During our Callander to Kilmahog walk, the group didn't let the weather get them down and brought plenty of smiles



to a grey morning - and during our Bridgend and Meadows walk, there may have been a light dusting of snow still on the ground, but there

were also beautiful blue skies and amazing views to be seen, with Ben Ledi standing proud in the background.

Start off your week by joining us every Tuesday at 10.20am with our weekly Callander 'Walk in the Park', meeting up and departing from Ancaster Square (occasionally Callander Medical Centre - please check our walk schedule for details). Great news too, that all our walks are suitable for all abilities, as well as for those living with dementia and their carers.

If you are looking for an enjoyable way to spend the lighter nights, we are pleased to advise that our popular evening walks will restart in April. Meeting every Wednesday, 7pm at Ancaster Square, the walks are a great opportunity to enjoy a leisurely stroll and connect with others and nature.

With thanks to funding from: Loch Lomond and the National Park Authority, Peoples Postcode Lottery, Scottish Forestry.

#### Strength & Balance Session - Gentle exercise for all

WE are delighted that our Callander 'Strength & Balance' was chosen to be part of the Co-op Local Community Fund this year. Local Co-op members can support us for free, by choosing our project as your cause. The total amount we receive depends on how many members have chosen our cause by October 2026.

Co-op members who live within approximately 15 miles of Callander Co-op (or Doune or Killin) can choose our cause by finding 'Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Countryside Trust':

- Online - <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/97617>
- On the Co-op App

If you're not a Co-op member yet, you can join at <https://www.coop.co.uk/membership>.

There are often extra prize draws for members, where you can win something as well as your chosen cause.

As a charity, we work hard to raise money so that

people can attend our activities at no direct cost to them. Any funding we receive from the Co-op Local Community Fund will be used to continue the coordination and delivery of our weekly, safe, social Strength & Balance sessions. These sessions support people's mobility, confidence and their physical, mental and social wellbeing.

We'll be talking a lot about this easy opportunity to support us over the spring and summer, so keep an eye out and please share with others you know.

Join us for our free weekly 'Strength and Balance' session every Tuesday from 2pm-3pm, 1st Floor Dance Studio at McLaren Community Leisure. Our Strength and Balance exercises focus on building strength, improving balance and mobility which may help build confidence and improve our overall wellbeing. The classes are always welcoming, fun and a great opportunity to socialise.

These gentle exercises are suitable for all abilities and are a great complement to our health walks or perfect on their own. Come along and enjoy moving with others in your community! To find out more about Walk in the Park, Strength & Balance, or volunteering with us, please visit our website at [www.trustinthepark.org](http://www.trustinthepark.org) or get in touch: Fiona@trustinthepark.org or call 07843 842323 (Monday to Thursday)



Callander On Tuesdays  Always 10:20 AM

Date	Meeting Place	Walking Route	Car Share	Dementia Friendly
07/04/2026	Ancaster Square	Callander to Kilmahog		
14/04/2026	Ancaster Square	Bridgend and Meadows		
21/04/2026	Ancaster Square	Invertrossachs Road		
28/04/2026	Ancaster Square	NCN7 Lagrannoch		
05/05/2026	Ancaster Square	Tulipan & Meadows		
12/05/2026	Ancaster Square	Leny Falls		
19/05/2026	Medical Centre	Keltie Bridge		
26/05/2026	Ancaster Square	Railway & Golf Club		
02/06/2026	Ancaster Square	Doune Allotments		



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# Ben Ledi View

## Advertise to 2000 households & businesses

Scan the QR Code or visit  
<https://benlediview.easyportal.app/media-pack>  
for more information



### Trossachs Church

Friday 3rd April – Monday 6th April  
Spring Festival. Music, heritage  
and crafts

## Community Hub

The Community Hub is open on

**Wednesdays**  
**12.30-2.30pm**



**Callander Kirk Hall,  
South Church Street,  
Callander**

Gail and her

volunteers

have a light lunch and a warm welcome for all every Wednesday, an opportunity to catch up with friends old and new.

Pop in anytime between  
12.30 -2.30pm.

Advisors from Citizens Advice will be on hand to provide information and advice on benefits, housing and energy costs.

Start Up Stirling would like to thank the many businesses in Callander who support our hub and thanks also go to our volunteers who help make the hub a great place to be every Wednesday.

*If your business would like to help or you would like more information contact Gail on 07951 013470 or [gail@startupstirling.org.uk](mailto:gail@startupstirling.org.uk) #workingtogether #cuppaandchat*

**Cooper Cottages**  
self catering accommodation

[coopercottages.com](http://coopercottages.com)  
Tel: 07879 853139

Social Media:  
[@coopercottages](https://www.instagram.com/coopercottages)

Contact us: [enquires@coopercottages.com](mailto:enquires@coopercottages.com)  
About a let or to let your property for you.



Clan Macnab country included the lands around Killin and Glen Dochart

Image: drhfoto/  
Adobe Stock

## Heritage Society Report

**A**T our February meeting, Jack Black gave a talk on ‘The Clans and Tartans of Callander and The Trossachs’. A clan is a group of people united by kinship and descent. The word ‘clan’ is derived from the Gaelic word *clann* meaning ‘children’. Each clan has a leader called a chief. Many clans had a coat of arms and a motto. The clan members looked after each other. Clans often raided and fought with neighbouring clans.

Tartan, from the Scottish Gaelic: *breacan*, is a patterned cloth consisting of crossing horizontal and vertical bands in multiple colours, forming repeating symmetrical patterns known as *setts*. Tartan patterns vary from simple two-colour designs to more intricate patterns using many colours. Made from woven wool, tartan is most strongly associated with Scotland, where it has been used for centuries in traditional clothing such as the kilt. Specific tartans are linked to specific clans, with patterns and colours derived historically from local natural dyes. Today artificial dyes are used.

The oldest tartan found was discovered during a dig at the Antonine Wall in 1923. It is dated as being from 200/300 BC.

After the 1745 Jacobite rising, wearing tartan was confined to soldiers in the army but came back into popular use in the 19th Century. Now there are more than 10,000 tartans registered.

Many clans have connections to the Trossachs.

**Clan Macnab: Lands around Killin and Glen Dochart.  
Motto *Timor Omnis Abesto* (Let fear be far from all)**

**T**HE name Macnab is derived from the Scottish Gaelic ‘Mac An Aba’, which means child of the abbot. According to tradition, the founder of the clan was Abraruadh who was the Abbot of Glen Dochart and Strathearn. He was a younger son of Kenneth MacAlpin, the first king of Scots. Angus Macnab was brother-in-law of John III Comyn, Lord

of Badenoch who was murdered by Robert the Bruce in 1306. Macnab then joined forces with the Clan MacDougall in their campaign against the Bruce. After his victory at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, the Macnab lands were forfeited and their charters were destroyed, although they were restored by David II.

Many battles were fought between the Clan Macnab and the Clan Neish. The last battle between them was the Battle of Glenboultachan where the Macnabs were victorious and the Neishes were killed almost to a man.

### Clan MacGregor

**C**LAN MacGregor also known as Clan Gregor, claims an origin in the early 9th century. Clan Gregor held lands in Glen Orchy, Glenloch and Glenstrae. According to legend, the MacGregors were descended from an ancient Celtic royal family, through the Abbots of Glendochart. This is alluded to in the clan’s motto: “Royal is my Race”. There is also a tradition that Gregor was the brother of Kenneth MacAlpin. In 1603, at the Battle of Glen Fruin, the soldiers of Clan MacGregor massacred the soldiers of Clan Colquhoun. As a result, James VI stripped the clan of their name and made them outlaws. This meant that members of the clan could be legally killed. Clan members therefore had to take other names.

The clan’s most famous member was Rob Roy MacGregor who was born at Glengyle, Loch Katrine and is buried at Balquhidder. He was a well-known cattle thief.

### Other Clans in the Trossachs area were:

Clan Colquhoun whose lands were around Loch Lomond and Luss.

Clan Graham had lands in Menteith.

Clan Campbell had lands in Argyll.

Clan Lamont possessed most of the Cowal peninsula.

Clan Buchanan had lands east of Loch Lomond around Drymen, Arnprior and Callander at Leny. The present Chief of the Clan Buchanan lives at Cambusmore.

*Kath Millar*

Ben Ledi View Issue 347

## The Crown and The Abbotsford - Charity and Community Events Update

FEBRUARY marked the return of National Heart Month, a vital period for raising awareness of the 7.6 million people in the UK living with heart and circulatory diseases. It was an exceptionally busy time for The Crown Crew's fundraising for The British Heart Foundation Scotland, headlined by an exciting Race Night and elegant Ladies Afternoon, both designed to bring people together for a great cause.

The Race Night sparked much debate and discussion around Callander as to who or what might actually be racing round The Crown on the night. You may have seen "the horses" out and about around the town, as they popped in to visit some of the sponsors and to raise awareness of National Heart Month. They even managed a race around Deli Ecosse, much to the amusement of the customers!

The Race Night on 27 February 2026 was a resounding success, bringing together both the community and visitors to Callander for an unforgettable evening, compered once again by the charismatic Shaun Stenhouse. The pub had a full house, the Crown Crew having



The Crown Race Night was much anticipated

transformed it with vibrant red heart decorations and bunting to celebrate Heart Month. The night was filled with great fun and high energy as guests cheered on their chosen horses. Excitement peaked during the highly anticipated auction race which was won by Chef Ryan. It was a brilliant night of laughter and friendly competition that truly captured the spirit of the month.

The Abbotsford provided the perfect setting for the Ladies Afternoon on Sunday 1 March. Guests enjoyed a day of fine food and fantastic live entertainment from Mr. Colin Scougall. Everyone commented on the beautiful little heart favours, kindly knitted by Callander Knit and Natter Group and Alina Smith Gregorek, and set out on the guests' places. They were joined by Angela McCormack from The British Heart Foundation Scotland, who spoke about the work that the charity is doing and also thanked them for

their support.

Thanks to the continuing support and generosity of the local community and businesses, the current total raised from both events was a spectacular £3269. As with



The Race Night proved a huge success

previous fundraising, match funding will hopefully be secured for this.

The next fundraising event in The Crown will be The Canmore Trust Quiz Night during Mental Health Awareness Week in May. Please watch out for information on posters and social media nearer the time.

The boards and cards are now tucked away for the warmer months as the Games Night on Wednesdays has officially ended. It has been a great success over the winter months, although highly competitive at times! It has been well attended by locals and visitors to The Crown who have enjoyed playing some old favourites such as magnetic chess, Uno and Jenga and several varieties of dominoes. However, most hilarity was created by playing "Red Herring" – a game of truth and lies which no one has quite appeared to have mastered. Thank you to everyone who came along and joined in the fun, friendly rivalry and of course, fibbing!!!

*Deborah McDermott*



Ladies afternoon at The Abbotsford

## The Dalgair Steps Up to the Oche: Over £500 Raised for Macmillan Cancer Support

THE staff at The Dalgair’s Back Bar on Main Street are celebrating a “bullseye” achievement after completing an intensive Darts Marathon for Macmillan Cancer Support – a cause deeply personal to the whole team.

Organised by Nikki Wilkie, the dedicated crew volunteered their own time to tackle the marathon challenge. Over the course of the event, they played an impressive 73 games, ultimately raising a fantastic £515.48. These vital funds go directly to supporting individuals and families living with cancer across the UK.

The Dalgair is a much-loved fixture in the heart of Callander – a family-run, community pub offering a warm welcome, bar meals, eight ensuite rooms and home to Greg’s Bistro. It is exactly the kind of community spirit that the venue is known for. That shone through in this fundraising effort, with the generosity of local patrons and residents helping to push the total to such an impressive figure.

If you haven’t had the chance to chip in yet, it isn’t too late. Every donation—no matter the size—helps Macmillan to provide essential care and comfort during life’s most difficult moments. In their mission, truly every pound counts.

Macmillan Cancer Support is a cause that has touched many lives in and around Callander, making the achievement even more meaningful for those who took part and donated.



Players got through a remarkable 73 games

And it seems this is just the beginning – Team Dalgair has more fundraising events planned for 2026, so the local community can look forward to seeing them in action again before long.

*Nikki Wilkie & Ruth Stevens*

### Community Donation Fund: Apply Today!

*Looking for that extra piece of funding to achieve your community project then why not apply? We are keen to promote and support causes within the rural Stirling area.*

You could be eligible for funding if your project will benefit:

- The Association’s tenants or prospective tenants – either directly or indirectly; or
- Rural Stirling communities more generally.

Previous donations include contributions towards:

Play facilities (Buchlyvie)

Stirling Carers Centre

Bench seat (Killin)

Purchase of a new van: The Food Train

**Eligible applications are awarded on a first come first served basis so don't delay, apply today.**

Further details visit our website news and events page:  
[www.rsha.org.uk/community-donation-fund/](http://www.rsha.org.uk/community-donation-fund/)

SCAN ME

*Providing affordable homes: sustaining rural communities*

Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849  
 Rural Stirling Housing Association is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 No. 2376 (s)  
 Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator HAL232

## Do you need an affordable home?

**Rural Stirling Housing Association aims to support local communities by providing quality homes at affordable rents for families, couples and single people in housing need.**

**We currently have over 680 rented houses and flats.**

**Around 40 of these become available for rent each year.**

**At present we have properties in the following communities:**

Aberfoyle

Balfron

Buchlyvie

Callander

Croftamie

Deanston

Doune

Drymen

Gargunnoch

Gartmore

Killearn

Killin

Kinlochard

Kippen

Lochearnhead

Strathblane

Strathyre

Stronachlachar

Tyndrum

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha and Tyndrum. 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 to plan.

For a downloadable application pack please visit our website [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk) providing affordable homes: sustaining rural communities

Rural Stirling Housing Association,  
 Stirling Road, Doune FK16 6AA  
 01786 841101 [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk)  
 enquiries@rsha.org.uk

Registered as a Scottish Charity No SC037849  
 Property Factor No. PFO00330 & Letting Agent Registration Number: LARN1907004

SCAN ME



## Free Child and Youth Counselling Project Opens in Callander

**W**E are delighted to say that Callander now has a free and confidential counselling service, offering support to children and young people aged between 3 and 25 years.

The service will be delivered by Douglas Pearson, a specialist Child and Young Person's counsellor, who qualified in 2012 and is a registered member of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). Douglas has 36 years' experience supporting children, young people and their families in a variety of contexts.

Young people may come to counselling for a whole range of reasons. Maybe they are feeling a bit lost, or dealing with stress, anxiety or overwhelming feelings and emotions. They might be struggling with relationships, going through big life changes such as parental separation or bereavement, or dealing with issues such as self-harm, eating disorders or suicidal thoughts. Regardless of the challenges they are facing, they are encouraged to seek the support they need and this is now freely available.

Our project aims to help children and young people manage these challenges and develop healthy coping mechanisms, whilst promoting improved mental health and resilience. The counselling service provides a safe, non-judgemental and confidential space where children and young people can explore their feelings, thoughts and experiences, using a variety of age-appropriate therapeutic techniques, such as talk, play, art or creative therapies.

The service is client-led and uses an open-ended therapeutic model, which allows the young person the number of sessions they need and which are helpful to them. Referrals can come from anyone, such as self-referral, parents, GPs, schools, Callander Youth Project,

Andrew Anderson & Sons, Funeral Directors or any external agency.

Whether you are a parent looking to have a confidential chat about your child's needs or thinking about referring yourself, we are here to support you. If you are curious or would like to make a referral, you can use the QR code below or just send an email.

This project has been made possible by the generous support of the Callander Community Hydro Fund and works in partnership with Ross Anderson at Andrew Anderson & Sons Funeral Directors. In addition to the whole range of issues for which people may come to



Image: Photographee.eu/Adobe Stock

counselling, this partnership enables young people in families impacted through bereavement to have access to free counselling should it be required. We are also grateful to Callander Mental Health Matters and Callander Youth Project for their written support.

Just a wee reminder that everything you share, whether through the referral form or in conversation, is completely confidential (within the limitations of safeguarding) and only accessible to the counsellor.

For more info visit [www.ccy.c.info](http://www.ccy.c.info) or email: [douglas@ccyc.info](mailto:douglas@ccyc.info) or scan the QR code.



Ben Ledi View Issue 347





Callander & District  
Horticultural Society

## Pruning the Community Orchard

Members of both the CADHS and CAC teams visited the Community Orchard at the McLaren Leisure Centre in late February to do some seasonal pruning of the fruit trees, under the watchful eye of Chelsea from FEL Scotland. The trees had produced a great crop of fruit last year, which was used to make fresh juice with our new apple press at the Pressing Matters event in September.

Despite the weather forecast the night before, threatening a very wet morning unsuitable for a pruning workshop, both for the trees themselves and us, it turned out to be a beautifully dry and sunny day - perfect for the job in hand.

The Spring Bulb Show & Shared Table Event

A big thankyou to everyone who exhibited or attended



It was a beautiful day for the pruning our collaborative event at the end of March. It was great to see so many of you there and lovely to have that splash of colour from the spring flowers & bulbs, reminding us that the lighter, longer days are coming and winter is behind us! Results and photos from the event will be published in the next issue of the BLV.

Special thanks to Chef Josh who not only made our delicious soup for lunch but also delivered a very interesting talk on foraging for fresh ingredients and



Climate Action  
Callander

preserving produce out of season.

Thank you to all of the various stall holders, giving us plenty to think about or get involved in and not forgetting those that entered the various competitions.

A big shout out to FEL Scotland for sponsoring this fantastic community event, where we could share our experiences and learning on “growing” in general.



The CADHS bulb show

Keep an eye out for the upcoming event in the autumn, which is set to be another collaboration between CADHS and CAC. The focus will remain on community involvement, sustainability and climate adaptation. This time, the annual show will be somewhat scaled back, with a selection of exhibits and competitions as before.

Details have not yet been confirmed, so please check online and in the BLV for updates as they become available.

## Callander Mental Health Awareness Week 2026



**D**ear Community,

We are once again so encouraged by the support of our community that Callander Mental Health Matters (CMHM) is once more looking forward to fundraising for the following causes during Mental Health Awareness Week running from Saturday 9th - Sunday 17th May 2026:

Callander Primary School  
 McLaren High School  
 McLaren Leisure Centre  
 The Canmore Trust

The launch of our fundraising appeal will be made via social media and with our collecting tins, displaying a QR code, placed at local business premises.

Once again, thank you to all the businesses that have agreed to take our collecting tins and buckets.

We are grateful for every penny you put in a tin or bucket but would really like to encourage you to use the QR code, as gift aid can be claimed.

Last year we raised £2,350.00! (£100.00 more than last year.)

THANK YOU!

Ben Ledi View Issue 347

Our grateful thanks to Fiona Muir from CCDT for distributing the funds and to our giving site GOOD HUB.

McLaren Leisure Centre is again supporting Mental Health Awareness Week. Please see their article opposite.

To all our local businesses and friends, thank you for your support for supplying marquees, donations for our stalls and vouchers which can be redeemed in Callander.

Thank you to our local fire brigade volunteers who supported us last year and to Trust Housing for their kind donation from their coffee morning event.

CMHM has also helped in supporting the process of securing a local 'young people's counsellor' who will provide free counselling sessions for young people in our community. Please look out for more information on this important initiative in this edition of the BLV.

Our fun CMHM video will be launched on the Callander Community website at the start of Mental Health Awareness Week!

To end the week, on Sunday 17th May at 11am, there will be an ecumenical service at Callander Kirk.

Our talented Callander Brass Band ensemble will be playing and a retiring offering for the schools and charities will be taken. Everyone is welcome!

CMHM is a very small group of volunteers from our local community that come together in Mental Health Awareness Week and with your kind donations you are helping someone smile, whether old or young, and giving them hope.

We look forward to seeing you on Ancaster Square for Mental Health Awareness Week 2026!

### Events

Saturday 9th May, 10am-2pm, Ancaster Square  
 Gift and Bottle Stall, Bric-a-Brac Stall, Baking and Garden Plant Stall  
 Saturday 16th May, 10am-2pm, Ancaster Square  
 Gift and Bottle Stall, Bric-a-Brac Stall, Baking and Garden Plant Stall

Community organisations and charities will be present to support mental health awareness in our community

### Sunday 17th May, 11.15am, Callander Kirk

Church service with Callander Brass Ensemble with a retiring offering for our schools and charities. All welcome.

### Date and time TBC, Trust Housing

Coffee morning/afternoon

## McLaren Leisure Centre

### A busy start to 2026

The first few months of 2026 have been filled with energy, motivation and plenty of moments that brought our McLaren Leisure community together. The year began with a wave of determination across the building as members embraced new routines and made the most of our early weekday openings. Fitness classes have been thriving, swimming lessons continue to build confidence week after week and our community sport sessions remain firm favourites in the weekly planner. One standout highlight was our 'Ultimate Fitness' class, a high-energy session that truly lived up to its name. Participants pushed themselves through a fun and challenging workout, combining new exercises with some class favourites.

We also hosted our first 'AquaFIT Disco', transforming the pool into a lively workout space with music, lights and plenty of energy. A huge well done to everyone who took part in these events; the effort and encouragement from everyone involved, perfectly captured what McLaren Leisure is all about.

**Easter & School Holiday Fun:** With the Easter holidays just around the corner, our popular 'Kids Camp' returns to keep young minds and bodies busy. Expect action-packed days filled with sports, games, creative activities and new weekly themes to keep things interesting – perfect for keeping children entertained, active and engaged all holiday long. Alongside 'Kids Camp', we'll also be running family swim sessions, inflatables and more activities across April. Check out what's happening and book online.

**Mental Health Awareness Week:** May marks an important moment in our community calendar as we support Mental Health Awareness Week and continue our valued partnership with Callander Mental Health Matters. Thanks to their funding, our community playgroup continues to provide a welcoming space where parents, unpaid carers and little ones can connect, play and build supportive relationships.

June, who attends the playgroup with her grandchildren, shared: "Attending the Thursday playgroup has been a joy and a blessing ... The uplift to my mental health and wellbeing watching my grandchildren learn, play and grow is the most magic part of my week."

We're also looking forward to a new 'Wellness Event' on Sunday 10th May, funded through this partnership. The event will include gentle movement, relaxation sessions, calming music and a welcoming space to pause and reconnect. More details will be available soon at [www.mclarenleisure.co.uk/events](http://www.mclarenleisure.co.uk/events).

**Our Impact in the Community:** Each year, McLaren Leisure supports thousands of people through affordable activities, inclusive programmes and partnerships with local organisations. Over the past year, the centre welcomed over 243,000 visits, with more than 41,000 class

participants taking part across all ages and abilities. Through health partnerships, we supported over 660 NHS-referred participants, helping people improve their wellbeing. McLaren Leisure now has more than 1200 active members and provides 34 local jobs, including opportunities for 15 young people aged 16–25.

As a community organisation, we also help reduce rural isolation, support health initiatives and attract over 5,000 visitors annually to the local area. The impact is clear: 96% of participants report improved mental wellbeing, 93% feel physically healthier and 76% have built stronger social connections through McLaren Leisure.

**Price Update:** Like many organisations, we are experiencing increased operational and maintenance costs. In addition, there have been continued reductions in our grant funding. As part of our commitment to maintaining and improving our facilities and services, and to ensure we can continue operating sustainably, we will be implementing a modest price increase from 1st April 2026. This will apply to membership fees and pay-as-you-go prices. We remain committed to keeping our services as affordable and accessible as possible. Our priority continues to be providing high-quality facilities, programmes and experiences that support the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of our entire community. As always, any additional revenue generated will be re-invested directly into your community facility.

**Sun Powered Sports:** Work has now begun on a significant solar energy project, marking an important step towards reducing energy costs and improving the building's long-term sustainability. The installation will see solar photovoltaic panels fitted across several of the centre's roofs, generating clean, renewable electricity for the facility and helping to reduce its carbon footprint. The system currently being installed will represent around 140kW of solar capacity. The project represents a major renewable energy investment for the community.

The installation is being carried out by Ledi Renewables, a local renewable energy contractor and work is expected to be completed in the coming weeks. The project has been made possible with support from the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). There are also identified opportunities to expand the solar capacity in the future, should additional funding become available. Further updates will be shared as the project progresses.

**The Arrival of Spring:** The arrival of spring brings longer days, lighter evenings and fresh energy, and there's plenty to look forward to at McLaren Leisure. With Easter activities, 'Kids Camp', wellbeing events and our regular classes all coming up, the next few months promise to be another busy period at the centre. Whether you're joining us for a class, bringing the kids along to holiday activities or simply popping in for a swim, we look forward to welcoming you soon.

*Rachel McLean*

Ben Ledi View Issue 347

## From Grassroots to Great Things – Callander Supporting the Next Generation

It's often said that sport is at its best when it builds for the future and here in Callander that future is looking very bright indeed. The club is now being used as a training centre for Scottish Target Shooting's youth development programme, a significant vote of confidence in our facilities and, more importantly, the volunteers who keep it running.



Callander will now be able to offer youngsters high-level coaching

Working alongside the national governing body to support young shooters is something we're immensely proud of. It places Callander firmly on the map as a hub for developing talent and it ensures that the next generation of athletes can access high-quality coaching and structured progression without having to travel halfway across the country. We're already seeing the benefits. One of our teenage members is now competing in national competitions, gaining valuable experience against the best in her age group, while one of our university students is rapidly establishing herself as an exciting prospect on the international scene, balancing academic life with elite-level training and competition.

For a small community club to be contributing to the national pathway in this way is something special and it reflects the supportive, encouraging environment that has always been at the heart of Callander Target Sports Club.

**Bon Accord Beaten:** In the STS Winter League the prone team have delivered what can only be described as a statement win. Seeded 6th out of more than 40 teams across Scotland at the start of the season, we found ourselves in the top division of six. After important wins against two other sides in the division, Round 7 produced the standout moment when Callander handed league leaders Bon Accord of Aberdeen their first defeat of the season - no small feat given their form up to that point. It

was a superb team performance and one that should cement our position in 4th place in the top flight. From bottom seeds in the division to comfortably holding our own, the victory represents a remarkable turnaround.

In the STS individual Medals competition there's also good news. Both J. Shepherd and M. Buchanan have progressed to Stage 2 in Class B, the latter also making it through to Stage 2 in the Veterans category. The knockout stages are where things start to get interesting, so fingers crossed for the rounds ahead.

**Perthshire Prone League:** After 4 rounds Callander has shooters firmly in the promotion conversation across several divisions, notably F. Buchanan-Winch, who leads Division 3 outright, a superb start to the season.

In Division 2, G. Winch sits joint top of the table. There are also strong performances in the lower tiers, with J. Bowen-Bate (Division 15) and T. Pate (Division 16) both sitting second in their respective divisions, keeping pressure on the leaders approaching the midpoint of the campaign.

**Perthshire Benchrest League:** Callander shooters are making a serious impact after four rounds, with several sitting at the top of their divisions; B. Farquhar (Division 6), W. Thomson (Division 7) and D. Heaton (Division 14) all boast perfect records so far and lead their respective tables. Just behind the leaders, M. Griffiths sits second in Division 9, K. Cairns second in Division 10, while C. Miller and I. Bruce are both level on points near the top of Division 11. With momentum building across several divisions, it's shaping up to be an excellent season for Callander in the Benchrest ranks.

**Cumbria League:** It's fair to say the Cumbria competitions have been proving a stern test this month. While not exactly sweeping the divisions, Callander continues to be well represented across the tables, with plenty of members digging in and battling for every point. Sometimes league shooting is about dominance, other times it's about character-building; we'll confidently describe this season as the latter! With plenty of rounds still to come, there's ample opportunity for a late-season surge - and we've never been ones to peak too early.

To find out more about Callander Target Sports Club, visit [callandertargetsports.com](http://callandertargetsports.com) or scan the QR code.

*Iain S Bruce*



## Supporting Our School Community

THE PTA works alongside, but independently from, the Parent Council. Both groups collaborate closely to strengthen the connection between home and school and to support the wider school community.

The PTA's primary role is fundraising, helping to enhance pupils' experiences by providing resources and opportunities beyond those covered by the core school budget. Through the dedication and creativity of

volunteers, funds are raised by selling drinks and snacks at school events and by securing grants from organisations such as Tesco, The Co-operative Group and Callander Hydro Project, as well as from generous local donors.

This support enables the school to invest in valuable additions such as science equipment, art materials, books, sports kit and contributions towards initiatives including the breakfast club. These enhancements make a tangible difference to pupils' day-to-day experiences.

The PTA is run entirely by volunteers and prides itself on being friendly, relaxed, and welcoming. New members are always encouraged to get involved, and fresh ideas are warmly welcomed.

We are also extremely grateful for the ongoing generosity of local businesses whose contributions make a real difference. Our sincere thanks go to Campbell's shortbread, Mhor Bread, Willow Plants, Woodlane Doune, Deanston Distillery, The Smiddy, Heart of Scotland, Stirling Distillery, Feeds and Stoves, Harvey Maps, Galleria Luti, Stitchcraft, Heather McDermott Jewellery and Main Street Bakery, along with many others who continue to support our school community so generously.

Anyone interested in becoming involved is warmly encouraged to join — every contribution, big or small, helps strengthen our school community. Please contact the High School, who will be delighted to put you in touch with the PTA.



The primary role of a Parent-Teacher Association is to raise funds for the school

### Cook's corner with Audrey Corieri Paprika Lamb Serves 4

#### Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp Plain Flour
- 2 Tbsp Paprika
- Salt & Pepper
- 700g Lean Lamb Shoulder or Leg Steaks, cut into small pieces
- 1Tbsp Oil
- 1 Medium Onion, peeled and sliced
- 2 Carrots, peeled and sliced
- 400g Can Chopped Tomatoes
- 150ml Lamb Stock
- 1 Tbsp Tomato Puree
- 3 Tbsp Sour Cream
- 1 Tbsp Chopped Parsley

#### Method:

Mix together the flour, paprika, salt & pepper on a large plate. Add the pieces of lamb and toss until evenly coated. Heat the oil in a large heavy-based pan over a medium heat. Add the onion to the pan and fry for 5mins until soft and golden. Add the lamb. Cook for 5mins, stirring occasionally until evenly browned. Stir in the carrots, tomatoes, stock and tomato puree. Bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 30mins or until the lamb is tender. Turn the heat down and stir in the sour cream. Do not boil as the sauce may curdle. Serve sprinkled with the chopped parsley.

## Callander Bowling Club

Callander Bowling Club will be having its opening day on the 11th of April to start off the 2026 outdoor bowling season. If you would like to join the club or are interested in joining, this is the perfect opportunity to come and see the sport for yourself. We look forward to seeing you on the day.

For more information, please contact: [callanderbowlingclub@gmail.com](mailto:callanderbowlingclub@gmail.com)



Image: grandaded/Adobe Stock



The new charging points will allow visitors to charge their EVs at either end of Loch Katrine

### Eco Tourism Boost at Popular Trossachs Visitor Attraction

**E**CO-CONSCIOUS travellers can now visit Loch Katrine in the heart of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park by electric car (EV), safe in the knowledge that they have access to newly installed EV chargers in the car and coach parks at either end of the loch.

As part of ongoing investment to enhance visitor facilities and position Loch Katrine as a more sustainable, low-carbon destination, the Steamship Sir Walter Scott Trust has installed nine charge points, including one suitable for electric buses. The project has been supported with financial assistance from the Scottish Government-backed Energy Savings Trust's Rural Fund.

### Eco-Friendly Steamship

**L**OCH Katrine is home to the historic Steamship Sir Walter Scott, which has introduced hundreds of thousands of visitors to the area's natural beauty on scenic cruises for more than 125 years. The Steamship is also making a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions, having operated on environmentally friendly biofuel for the past 20 years, following conversion from coal-fired boilers.

Steamship Trust CEO and Lead Trustee James Fraser said: "As part of our continuing efforts to improve visitor facilities and the overall quality of the Loch Katrine experience, we have been keen for some time to cater for the growing number of visitors arriving in electric vehicles.

This has only recently been possible following major investment in site infrastructure, the introduction of the latest generation of EV chargers and the availability of 100% Scottish Government backed grants designed to strengthen the rural charging network."

He added: "We are delighted to be making a positive contribution to creating a more eco-friendly and low-carbon visitor destination within the National Park. We intend to build on this further with additional initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint and raise awareness of the special natural heritage qualities of Loch Katrine."

Among those initiatives is the development of Scotland's Rainforest Nature Trail, linking to the site above Trossachs Pier recognised as the 'Birthplace of Scottish Tourism', where visitors can enjoy the award-winning Scenic Tower and Lookouts overlooking the landscape that inspired Sir Walter Scott's 'The Lady of the Lake'.

*Paul Saunders*



The Sir Walter Scott is powered by biofuel  
Image: C.M.M./Adobe Stock

## Welcoming Back the Birds: Can You Provide a Home?

Finally, it feels like spring is on the way and birds are singing to defend their territories and attract a mate. However, our swallows, swifts and martins are just starting on thousands of miles migration from warmer wintering grounds.

Sand martins (brown and nest in riverbanks including Callander Meadows) will be the first back from mid-March, travelling approx. 4000km from south of the Sahara. House martins, right, (white rumps and nesting at McLaren Leisure) will be back from North Africa in April/May. Swallows (forked tails) also appear from mid-April, having flown from South Africa. Last to arrive from mid-May is the swift (all black, scythe-shaped) from as far away as Mozambique.

Did you know that swifts may fly continuously for three years after fledging until they nest, because, if grounded, their legs are too short to take off again?

Children at Callander Nursery (and their families?) are

learning all about these amazing birds. Next time you are in McLaren Leisure Centre coffee area, have a look at their impressive display and keep an eye out for information panels to be installed by Keir, builders of the new school.

Unfortunately, all these species are in decline across the UK, with climate trends impacting food supplies and breeding success, so they need as much of our help as possible.



All readily use nest boxes so would you consider putting up bird boxes on your house?

If you are worried about droppings beneath boxes, a platform underneath will catch them and swifts are good housekeepers that do not make any mess near their nests. Boxes should be installed before the end of March.

On-line sites give installation information, patterns to make your own boxes (RSPB) and boxes to buy, in wood or long-lasting composite materials: search online for RSPB, Ark Wildlife or C J Wildlife for more information.

Lesley Hawkins



Nesting boxes can make a difference for migratory species such as these swallows  
Image: Eric/Adobe Stock

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## Deer Management by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)

This potentially controversial topic was covered by Paul Bekier, area wildlife manager, FLS (Forestry and Land Scotland) Central Region, explaining why and how deer are managed by FLS in his talk to Callander SWT in January.

FLS is Scotland's largest land manager. As the Scottish Government's agency, it is responsible for managing 640,000 hectares of Scotland's national forests and land, which make 9-10% of Scotland's land mass, from mountain tops to loch shores, much of it unforested. It currently



The islands in Loch Lomond support a population of fallow deer

receives a small Government subsidy, but aims to become self-sufficient, largely funded by sustainable timber resources. Its role includes planting ten million trees per year, tree protection, maintaining a road infrastructure, creating a safe public environment and protecting the natural environment. It aims to be carbon neutral and prevent further biodiversity loss by 2030, stop decline of designated sites and respond to climate change.

FLS land is home to many iconic species such as beavers, eagles, ospreys and water voles, not necessarily individually managed, but benefitting from habitat improvement across woodlands, peatland and heather uplands. Around one million deer in Scotland (doubled since 1990) have a negative impact by browsing of newly planted trees and several other fragile ecosystems, including peatlands which are important carbon-sinks and upland heather, which is vital for ground-nesting moorland birds such as curlew. The remaining deer are healthier and more able to survive winter. Unfortunately, this is linked to a greater number of ticks! You should always check yourself for ticks after being out in places with deer, to reduce chances of catching Lyme disease (see NHS UK website for further information).

Looking after young trees gives straighter ones which are more valuable and reduces replanting costs, especially in broadleaves which are an increasing component of today's planting strategy. Fencing versus individual tree guards depends on the vulnerability of the species, its crop value

and location: fencing is expensive and, on exposed high ground, may not last more than three years. However, strategic fencing may be used where neighbouring estates have high deer density and where deer migrate to sunny lower slopes in winter. Fencing has been used in Coilhallan round a newly planted productive oak wood but the next two coupes to be felled and replanted will use individual tree guards.

Deer culled on FLS land are mainly the native red deer, with fewer roe which are more in the urban environment. Non-native Sika deer are difficult to cull but need to be controlled as they can cross-breed with reds, diluting their gene pool. The Loch Lomond islands have a population of attractive but non-native fallow deer.

Thermal imaging drones, which detect body heat through vegetation, are a very efficient way of counting deer. Not your average drone though - one with an 8ft diameter can lift a culled deer carcass from difficult terrain! Helicopters with infra-red cameras can cover greater areas. Survey data and calibrated deer population models are used to develop FLS strategy and annual business plans. The target density is 2-5 deer/km<sup>2</sup> and FLS has removed half of the 42,500 deer culled across Scotland in 2024-25, including about eight thousand in the Central region. This requires around fifty people working year-round, increasingly at night using thermal imaging rifle 'scopes. There is no seasonal protection for stags, but hinds are restricted and mainly culled late Jan to Mid-Feb, avoiding any that are pregnant or have young.

Since stags mate with many females, reducing them still leaves a healthy birth rate.

Good quality animals are sold for venison, a high quality, lean meat, via a dealer in Dundee. Gralloch (the entrails or offal of a dead deer) and some carcasses in poor condition, are left on the hill to support raptors such as golden eagles.

Questions to Paul covered a wider range of species. He felt it was too early for the re-introduction of lynx as natural predators.

Beavers have spread from the Tay population and moved upstream along the Teith, so are now in most lochs and rivers, with about seventy in Loch Ard, where it is thought



The number of deer in Scotland has doubled since 1990

Image: dvlcom/Adobe Stock

they may help with local flooding.

Whilst tree felling does alter riparian habitat, many trees are effectively coppiced and will recover as beavers move around. What density is acceptable isn't yet known.

The otter population is also widespread and healthy. Capercaillie re-introduction to the Central Region may be possible using animals from Scandinavia, but this would likely remain an unsustainable, isolated population.

A few other species are controlled, such as mink to

protect water voles and stoats, weasels and fox are controlled to protect ground-nesting birds such as black grouse.

Control of Sitka spruce regeneration is a big task but a few invasive non-native plants in forests are considered too difficult so not prioritised, such as rhododendron and pirri-pirri burr, thriving in all our local forests. Callander Woodland Group would love more help to tackle them; please contact [callanderwoodlandgroup@gmail.com](mailto:callanderwoodlandgroup@gmail.com) for more information.

*Lesley Hawkins*

## Invasive plants and animals on our doorstep

THE speaker at the February meeting of the Callander SWT Group was Grace Wild, head of operations for Forth Rivers Trust (FRT), who described invasive non-native species (INNS) along the Forth river catchment. This is the largest river catchment in Scotland and includes 25% of the population with associated infrastructure.

The emphasis was on plants, but animals mentioned included the North American mink, released from mink farms in the 1970s, now preying on fish and water voles. Present around Callander, the female can enter vole burrows and slaughter small colonies.

Invasive plants that FRT records and controls are predominantly Himalayan balsam (HB), Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and American skunk cabbage. Luckily, Callander doesn't have giant hogweed which can grow to 3 metres tall with seeds readily spread along railways and riverbanks. The main problem is the sap which causes painful skin blisters and a long-term photosensitivity, often restricting access to infested areas. Small plants can be controlled by sheep (especially Scottish black-face) or cattle grazing and stem injection of glyphosate, but bigger plants need to be sprayed from a safe distance.

Callander has a few sites of American skunk cabbage, pictured above. This is a leathery leaved plant with a bright yellow spathe around its flower spike, more attractive than its smell! It grows in damp areas, usually an escapee from ornamental ponds. It can be sprayed or its deep roots dug out in late April to May.

Callander does have several sites of Japanese knotweed which FRT is controlling. It is injected with glyphosate in autumn as the plant draws down sap and is never strimmed, as every small piece can re-root. It can grow through tarmac and must be removed before selling property. Spraying of any species requires a pesticide license with specific training for use near water courses.



Himalayan balsam is the species most easily controlled by volunteers, as it has no nasty effects and is easily uprooted. It is an annual but grows rapidly from seed up to over six feet in one season, each plant producing up to 3000 seeds which are flung up to five metres as pods dry. Water courses then spread these seeds far and wide.

In Callander it is found at several sites along the Eas Gobhain, in the Meadows, upstream of the pedestrian bridge, in the 'Roman Camp' gardens and along the Teith from Geisher Road to the caravan park. The local SWT (Scottish Wildlife Trust) group has been uprooting it from the latter two sites since 2013, making good progress. However, missed sessions around COVID and when the river was too high, means it is again a problem. It is easily pulled up by the roots and hung up to dry before it seeds.

If it is not possible to hand-pull, strimming/flailing is OK away from rivers and if cut below the bottom node, since it readily regrows.

Field trials of a rust that will weaken then kill Himalayan balsam are underway, after ten years of research to ensure it is species-specific. However, HB has 5 sub-species in the UK, possibly several within a single patch and the rust is very specific, so more field trials are needed before it is a universal solution.

Several sessions are planned this summer to uproot as much HB as possible along the river in Callander: on 4th July, it will be along the Eas Gobhain from Loch Venachar to the Meadows, organised by Anne Gilchrist: contact [abgilchrist@hotmail.com](mailto:abgilchrist@hotmail.com).

6th June, 11th July & 8th August will cover from the library bridge to the turn-pool, downstream of Geisher Road: contact [callanderswt@gmail.com](mailto:callanderswt@gmail.com).

More information will be available nearer the time on local Facebook sites and our website page Callander | Scottish Wildlife Trust. Meanwhile, if you see any of these invasive plants, please report them on Forth Rivers Trust Invasive Species Reporting Site.

*Lesley Hawkins*

## Stirlingshire in Bloom!

### **DUNBLANE GARDENS Dunblane FK15 0ER**

Open: Sunday 10th May, 1pm - 5pm, admission £7.50, children free. A ticket available from St Blane's House, High St, will give admission to all three gardens.

St Blane's House, High Street is a well-established 2-acre garden with a wide variety of trees, rhododendrons, azaleas and other shrubs with extensive perennial borders including a large bed of meconopsis. There is also a vegetable garden with polytunnels and short walks within a wooded area.

A plant sale will take place here with rhododendrons and azaleas from William Campbell.

The Old Smiddy, Smithy Loan is a constantly evolving, wildlife-friendly garden, full of cottage garden plants, trees and shrubs. Features include a small stream and ponds, a blacksmith designed gate and handrails. There is a newly established rose area and a very productive set of compost bins. Pots of bulbs and herbs add interest to the courtyard. There will be a plant sale here of cottage garden plants. Please note that there is limited wheelchair access.

Cranford, Smithy Loan is a small colourful cottage garden on a slope with well-established rhododendrons and azaleas - some with an unusual history. A winding path up to a tree cabin allows you to look down on the garden. Please note that this garden is not suitable for wheelchair access.

### **MOLLAN HOUSE, Thornhill, Stirling FK8 3QJ**

Open: Sunday 17th May, 12pm - 4pm, admission £6.00, children free. There is artwork in the garden to be enjoyed too.

Mollan House has a large, three-acre garden in rural Stirlingshire, set in softly rolling farmland. The garden is designed as a series of smaller interlocking gardens, each

with a distinct character, packed with rich, colourful planting and meandering paths. There is a formal lawn, a wildflower meadow, two ponds and a productive kitchen garden. This year, we are opening in springtime to give an opportunity to see the garden at a different time of year. The rhododendrons that form the backbone of the garden will be in flower, alongside tulips, magnolias and camellias.

### **KILBRYDE CASTLE, Dunblane FK15 9NF**

Open Sunday 24th May, 11am - 5pm. And open by arrangement 16 March - 30 September. Admission £6.00, children free. On the 24th May opening, there will be refreshments on offer and a plant sale.

Kilbryde Castle gardens cover some 12 acres and are situated above the Ardoch Burn and below the castle. The gardens are split into three parts: informal, woodland and wild. Natural planting (azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias) is found in the woodland garden. There are glorious snowdrops, spring bulbs and autumn colour provided by clematis and acers. Within the wildflower meadow, the meconopsis are happily spreading.

### **BRIDGE OF ALLAN GARDENS Bridge of Allan FK9 4AT**

Open: Sunday 31st May, 1pm - 5pm, admission £7.50, children free. Tickets and maps will be available only at St Saviour's Episcopal Church, Keir Street, Bridge of Allan FK9 4AT. There will be a plant sale in the church gardens and teas will also be served at the church.

Bridge of Allan gardens will again feature a selection of gardens - some terraced, some quirky, some with water features, others with artworks. They will highlight various species of rhododendrons and azaleas plus many varieties of spring blossoms, plants and flowers as well as areas left for wildlife.

*More details and directions for all the gardens can be found on the SGS website [www.scotlandsgardens.org](http://www.scotlandsgardens.org).*

*Fiona Campbell*



Stirling Council flooding team are closing in on completion of our optioneering for **Callander Flood Protection Scheme** and will shortly be advertising **community engagement** drop in events in April/May for all to come and discuss the project with the team. Keep an eye on our dedicated webpage for the dates and times: [flooding.stirling.gov.uk](http://flooding.stirling.gov.uk).

Despite the removal of Callander flood protection scheme from the Scottish Government Cycle 1 flood scheme funding, Stirling Council are aiming to have an option in an 'off-the-shelf' ready position, should future funding become available.

The **Callander Surface Water Management Plan** is also progressing at pace, with flood modelling largely complete and options beginning to emerge for testing. Information on this will be posted on the dedicated webpage too.

Any queries on these projects can be sent by email to [flooding@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:flooding@stirling.gov.uk).

## What's happening at Trossachs Church?



**J**ANUARY and February have flown passed with Architects' meetings, funding applications, discussions with future event partners and planning lots of exciting things for the year ahead. Get your diaries ready!

Whilst we conclude the conveyancing process to take ownership of Trossachs Church, Friends of Trossachs continue to trial various events and activities. Saturday 7th March saw our inaugural film night.

We were delighted to be invited to join the Callander Adventure Film Fest 2026 — back for its third fantastic year and bigger than ever!

The Callander Adventure Film Fest brought the very best in outdoor and adventure filmmaking to the heart of the Trossachs. Powered by the London Mountain Film Festival and rooted in our local community, this week-long festival ran from 7th–13th March 2026, with two special film nights including our own Nature Connections at Trossachs Church.

It was an inspiring evening, including four short nature films from the London Mountain Film Festival and a delightful short film about Glen Finglas, developed as part of a local student's Art & Design college portfolio. The evening was brought to an exciting finish with a special screening of a WILDfilm documentary created by Stirling Young Filmmakers, most of whom are students at McLaren High School.

The Big Outdoor Adventure then followed on Friday 13th March 2026 at the Callander Hostel, Callander showing a thrilling selection of adventure films from the London Mountain Film Festival programme — from skiing and climbing, to paddling and beyond.

All profits from both Film Nights were donated to Callander Cinema and Friends of Trossachs — helping to keep film and the outdoors at the heart of our community.

### Upcoming Events – Save the Dates for Trossachs Church

Friday 3rd – Monday 6th April - Spring Festival

At the time of going to print, plans are well underway for a varied program of events including music, craft and heritage over the holiday weekend. We also hope to share some of the feedback and design work from the architect team.

Please see our website or keep an eye on social media for more details and timings for the programme planned.

Friday 1st May “Wild like Wolves”

Friends of Trossachs are delighted to be part of a collaboration between local artists, local community groups, a local social enterprise and local businesses with generous funding from Scene Stirling. Our part will involve a community art exhibition, a pre-concert talk on local wolf legends, followed by a ‘Wolf Tales’ concert featuring the Wildwood Cello Duo. And what's even more amazing ... admission is FREE!!!

Please see our website or keep an eye on social media for more details and to find out timings for the programme.



## Volunteering

**T**rossachs Church is run for the community and we'd love a few more friendly hands to help keep this special venue thriving. Whether you can spare an hour now and then, pop in on an ad-hoc basis, or offer a little time when it suits you, it genuinely makes a difference. Every volunteer helps us to create opportunities for our local young people and keep this place welcoming for everyone. If you feel you could lend a hand, even just occasionally, please get in touch — you'd be so appreciated.

How to find out more

Join us on Instagram @friendsoftrossachs Visit our website [www.trossachschurch.co.uk](http://www.trossachschurch.co.uk) where you can also sign up as supporter to receive monthly email updates.

Hope you can join us sometime soon!

## What's On for April & May 2026

### April

#### Wednesday 1st

- **Holy Week Service**  
Callander Kirk 7pm

#### Thursday 2nd

- **Joint Holy Week Service with Callander Kirk with St Andrew's Episcopal Church,**  
Callander Kirk, 7pm

#### Friday 3rd

- **Spring Festival – Music, heritage, and craft (until April 6th).** [www.trossachschurch.co.uk](http://www.trossachschurch.co.uk), Trossachs Church
- **Ecumenical walk & meditation around Callander.** All ages are welcome to come and take part. Kirk Hall garden, 10.30am
- **Good Friday Service,** Callander Kirk, 7pm

#### Sunday 5th

- **Easter Sunday worship by the river near Tom na Chessaig**  
8.30am

- **Easter Sunday Service**  
Callander Kirk, 11.15am

#### Saturday 11th

- **Callander Bowling Club Open Day.** For more information, please contact [callanderbowlingclub@gmail.com](mailto:callanderbowlingclub@gmail.com)

#### Monday 13th

- Music and Memories Callander Kirk Hall, 2pm – 3.30 pm

#### Thursday 16th

- **'All about Hedgehogs' by Morag Boyd,** People's Trust for Endangered Species plus brief AGM (SWT) £3 suggested donation includes tea/coffee and biscuits. St Andrew's Church Hall, 7.30pm

#### Sunday 19th

- **Callander Film Society. Film: I, swear.** McLaren Leisure, 7pm start, doors open 6.30 pm. Free to members, non-members £5 each.

#### Wednesday 22nd

- **'Gods of the Roman Frontier' by Bethany Simpson, hosted by the Callander Heritage Society**  
Masonic Hall. 7pm for 7.30 start

#### Monday 27th

- **Almanac Afternoon,** £4 donation. Wild Shop, Callander 4.30-6pm

### May

#### Friday 1st

- **"Wild Like Wolves" - WildWood Cello Duo Concert and Community Art Exhibition,**  
Trossachs Church and Brig o' Turk Tearoom, 7pm-9pm

#### Saturday 9th

- **Callander Mental Health Awareness** 10am-2pm, Ancaster Square

#### Monday 11th

- **Music and Memories**  
Callander Kirk Hall, 2pm – 3.30 pm

#### Saturday 16th

- **Callander Mental Health Awareness** 10am-2pm, Ancaster Square

#### Sunday 16th

- **Callander Mental Health Awareness Church Service with Callander Brass Ensemble**  
11.15am, Callander Kirk

#### Wednesday 20th

- **'The Eco-Museum of Scottish Mining Landscapes' by Dr Catherine Mills, hosted by the Callander Heritage Society,**  
Masonic Hall 7pm for 7.30pm start

#### Friday 22nd

- **A Night at the Movies: A Cabaret Night in aid of 'It's Good 2 Give', the Ripple Retreat charity.** Thackray House, Callander, 7 for 7.30 pm. Dress to impress! For tickets, contact [Callanderfootlights@gmail.com](mailto:Callanderfootlights@gmail.com) or see local social media.

#### Saturday 23rd

- **Greener Callander plant sale and tombola.** Ancaster Square, 10-4pm. Come and buy cheap, Callander-hardy plants and support Greener Callander's gardening around town.

### June

#### Saturday 6th

- **Himalayan Balsam Bash.** Contact [callanderswt@gmail.com](mailto:callanderswt@gmail.com) for details. 10-1pm

#### Thursday 25th

- **Scottish Chamber Orchestra**  
<https://www.sco.org.uk/events/summer-classics/>  
Callander Kirk, 7.30pm



**Music and Memories**

Come along for a trip down memory lane, familiar songs, friendly blether, and a cuppa. Everyone welcome, including those living with dementia and their carers.

Join Us on Mondays:

April 13th      Callander Kirk Hall  
May 11th      2.00-3.30pm

For more information please contact Ann Ross: 07720 887720

# Regular Meets & Classes - Something for Everyone

## Mondays

- Scrabble, Callander Connect, 2-4pm 1st and 3rd Mondays
- Music and Memories, Callander Kirk Hall, 2-3.30pm every 2nd Monday of the month (except July)
- Greener Callander, South Church Street Garden, 1.30pm every 2nd Monday of the month
- Highland Dancing, Kirk Hall, 4-5pm
- Callander Amateur Operatic Society, McLaren High School. Rehearsals for the next show resume on the last Monday in August. For further information, contact: <https://www.caos.scot/contact-us>
- Guides, St Andrew's Church Hall, 6.30-8pm
- Callander Pipe Band, Masonic Hall, 7pm

## Tuesdays

- Callander Cycle Meander Ancaster Square Meet 10am (contact, 01877 339074)
- Citizens Advice Bureau, Callander Library, 10-12noon
- Callander Writer's Group, Room above Callander Library, 10.30-12.30pm. Contact Jen Shearer, 07710 232908 if interested
- Walk in the Park, See schedule for meeting location, 10.20am
- Rotary in Callander, Pips Coffee House, 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 6pm for a 6.30 start

## Wednesdays

- Citizens Advice Bureau, Kirk Hall, 12.30-2.30
- Teapot Cafe, Callander Kirk Hall Library, 10.30am
- Knit and Natter, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in Callander Connect, 43 Main Street, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in Callander Library, 2-4pm
- Evening Walk in the Park, Meeting at Ancaster Square, 7pm

## Thursdays

- Chair Yoga, , 11-12 via Zoom

(contact Julia Osfield)

- Town Break, St Andrew's Church Hall, 10.30-12.30pm
- Craigard Club, Callander Youth Hostel, 11.30-1.30pm (lunch served at 12noon)
- Citizens Advice Bureau, Killin Pavillion, 12.30-2.30pm
- Thornhill Players theatre group - 7.30 -10 pm most weeks in Thornhill or members' homes. Contact 07752 948781 for more information
- Traditional Scottish Music

Session, All musicians welcome, McNabs Bar, 8pm onwards (2nd Thursday of each month)

- Citizens Advice Bureau, Callander Library, 10-12noon

## Fridays

- Citizens Advice Bureau, Callander Library, 10-12noon

## Sundays

- Service, Callander Kirk, 11.15am




# ADULT CLASS TIMETABLE



MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	SATURDAY
07:00-07:45 <b>RigFIT</b>	07:00-07:45 <b>RigFIT</b>	09:00-09:45 <b>RigFIT</b>
09:30-10:30 <b>Active Life</b>	09:30-10:30 <b>Active Life</b>	
11:00-12:00 <b>Chair Yoga</b>	12:15-12:45 <b>RigFIT</b>	
12:15-12:45 <b>KettleFIT</b>	17:30-18:00 <b>CoreFIT</b>	
17:30-18:15 <b>RigFIT</b>	18:00-18:30 <b>Aerobics</b>	
18:00-19:00 <b>YogaFIT</b>	18:45-19:30 <b>CycleFIT</b>	
18:20-19:05 <b>CycleFIT</b>	19:00-20:30 <b>Pickleball</b>	
19:00-20:00 <b>Walking Football</b>	THURSDAY	
19:15-20:15 <b>CycleFIT sport</b>	12:15-13:15 <b>AquaFIT Lite</b>	
19:15-20:15 <b>PumpFIT</b>	17:30-18:15 <b>RigFIT</b>	
19:30-21:00 <b>Table Tennis</b>	18:00-18:45 <b>SwimFIT</b>	
20:15-21:00 <b>CoreFIT</b>	18:00-19:00 <b>YogaFIT</b>	
TUESDAY	19:00-20:00 <b>CycleFIT sport</b>	
09:15-10:00 <b>CycleFIT</b>	19:15-20:15 <b>PumpFIT</b>	
10:45-11:45 <b>AquaFIT Lite</b>	20:15-21:00 <b>StretchFIT</b>	
11:00-12:00 <b>MumFIT</b>	FRIDAY	
12:00-13:00 <b>Yoga</b>	07:00-07:45 <b>RigFIT</b>	
18:00-18:45 <b>PowerFIT</b>	09:15-10:00 <b>RigFIT</b>	
19:00-19:45 <b>RigFIT</b>	10:00-11:00 <b>Active Life</b>	
19:15-20:00 <b>AquaFIT</b>	11:00-12:00 <b>MumFIT</b>	
19:30-21:00 <b>Yoga</b>	17:30-18:00 <b>CycleFIT</b>	

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Email - [callander.physiotherapy@gmail.com](mailto:callander.physiotherapy@gmail.com)

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## Library



### Opening Times for Callander Library

**Monday** Closed

**Tuesday** 9.30-1 pm 2-5 pm

**Wednesday** 9.30-1 pm 2-5 pm

**Thursday** 9.30-1 pm 2-7 pm

**Friday** 9.30-1 pm 2-5 pm

**Saturday** 10-12 pm

Books, DVDs, hearing aid batteries.

**A**re you, or is someone you know a housebound resident of Callander?

The Housebound Library Service currently has space for more subscribers to the service in Callander.

For more information and contact details, please visit the council website:

<https://www.stirling.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/libraries-and-archives/libraries/housebound-library-service/>



## Pastoral &amp; Worship



**We warmly welcome you to join us in worship on a Sunday afternoon.**

This takes place in Callander Kirk Hall at 10.00am each week, followed by refreshments.

Our weekly prayer meeting is at 7.30pm,

Monday evening.

**Pastor:** Rev Nathan Swisher

**Contact :** Tel: 07851 529481 | email: [admin@callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk](mailto:admin@callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk) or visit : [www.callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk](http://www.callanderchristianfellowship.org.uk)



### Callander Kirk

**The Church of Scotland,**

South Church Street, Callander  
Please join us every

Sunday 11.15am also live streamed on Facebook

#### Services

11.15am every Sunday

Rev Jeffery McCormick BD

[jmccormick@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:jmccormick@churchofscotland.org.uk) 01567 820247

Church Office/Hall Bookings:

[callanderkirk@btconnect.com](mailto:callanderkirk@btconnect.com)



### Saint Andrew's

**Scottish Episcopal Church**

Leny Road, Callander

**Sunday Worship** 9.30 am

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

For further info please contact:

Revd Jon Connell Rector of linked charges of St Andrew's Callander and St Mary's Aberfoyle h: (01877) 382887 m: 07983 897 841 or

Liz Balding Secretary to St Andrew's Vestry m: 07825 635 428

[www.standrewschurchcallander.co.uk](http://www.standrewschurchcallander.co.uk)  
Hall for hire by the hour - contact 07795 244333

### Citizens' Advice Callander



Citizens' Advice outreach sessions in Callander:

- Every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in Callander Library 10am - 12 noon, 12.30-2.30pm Kirk Hall



### St Joseph's

**Catholic Church**

Glen Artney Road, Callander

#### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

#### Tuesday & Thursday

Holy Mass at 10.00am

#### Sunday

Holy Mass at 11.30am

**Parish Priest:** Rev.

Leszek Wicaszek SAC

**Website:** [stfdac.co.uk](http://stfdac.co.uk); Phone: 01877 330702

**Email:** [stjosephcallander@dunkelddiocese.org.uk](mailto:stjosephcallander@dunkelddiocese.org.uk)

## Bins &amp; Waste

Download the collection calendars at: [www.stirling.gov.uk](http://www.stirling.gov.uk)

April 2026


S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2


May 2026


S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

 : Glass

 : Plastic, cans and cartons

 : Non-recyclable Waste

 : Paper & Cardboard

 : Food and Garden

## Waste Recycling Centre Opening times

## PREBOOKED ONLY

- Monday - Friday 5.00pm to 7.40pm & Saturday 10.00am-1.30pm
  - Sunday closed
  - Lagrannoch depot [01877 330492](tel:01877330492) Also for sandbags and grit
- Stirling Council Main number [08452 777000](tel:08452777000) (Functions as emergency number from 5.00pm to 9.00am and over weekends. Also use for non-collection of wheelie bins.)



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- Administration/Accounts
- Editing / checking articles
- Proof reading
- Advertising liaison.

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[markg@benlediview.org](mailto:markg@benlediview.org) or  
[editor@benlediview.org](mailto:editor@benlediview.org)

## Important Contact Details

## Emergency Services: 999

## Callander Police: 101

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)

## Councillors

Martin Earl - [earlm@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:earlm@stirling.gov.uk)

Gene Maxwell - [Maxwellg@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:Maxwellg@stirling.gov.uk)

Elaine Watterson-[wattersone@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:wattersone@stirling.gov.uk)

## MSP

Evelyn Tweed - [evelyn.tweed.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:evelyn.tweed.msp@parliament.scot)

## National Health

Callander Medical Practice [01877 331000](tel:01877331000) (Prescriptions (10.00am till 3pm))

District Nurse [01877 330150](tel:01877330150)

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

## Chemists

Farrens [01877 330132](tel:01877330132)

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Trossachs [01877 330016](tel:01877330016)

**Mon-Fri** 9am-1pm and 2pm-6pm

## Vets

Callander:[01877 381213](tel:01877381213)

## Schools

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

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

## Recreation

Rail Enquiries: [0845 7484950](tel:08457484950)

Bus Station (Stirling): [01786 446474](tel:01786446474)

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 &amp; Environment

SEPA emergency: [0800 807060](tel:0800807060)

SEPA website:

[www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/index.htm](http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/index.htm)

Floodline: [0845 9881188](tel:08459881188)

Select option 1 followed by: [06213 121](tel:06213121) (the Teith at Callander)

Scottish Water emergency information re flooding from mains or sewers: [0800 778778](tel:0800778778)

## Location of defibrillators

- Dreadnought Garage
- Station Road, on wall to left of post box
- Callander Golf Club
- McLaren Leisure Centre
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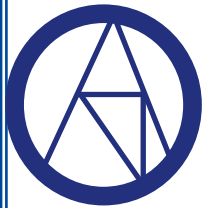
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Callander and the surrounding villages.  
If you've ever wondered what your home might achieve in  
today's market, feel free to give **Claudine** at our Callander  
office a call for a relaxed, no-obligation chat.

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