

# Lairg Magazine

LAIRG & DISTRICT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Shirley Morrison

## Contents:

- Page 2** - Farewell from Kaye
- Page 3** - Lairg Local MBE
- Page 4** - Quiz/Notice Board
- Page 5** - Lairg & District Learning Centre
- Page 6** - Lairg Lunch Club/Quiz Answers
- Page 7** - Lairg Primary School
- Page 8** - Lairg Community Centre
- Page 9** - Lochview Rural/IT Feedback
- Page 10** - Lairg Local Plan

## The Big Chill

It has been a bitterly cold and stormy start to the year, with sub zero temperatures making our area one of the coldest places in the UK. Altnaharra, once again took the official record for being the coldest place in Britain at -18.9.

While the weather can bring fantastic photo opportunities (thanks to Shirley Morrison for the stunning winter wonderland pic above!) and while snow days from school are great fun for kids to go sledging and build snowmen, the cold weather can also bring worries about heating your home and keeping warm. If you are having to choose between heating or eating - please see the Helping Hand Fund advert on page 4.



After five years as Chairperson it is time for me to step down from Lairg & District Community Initiatives. However, I will be staying on as a volunteer and running the Food Larder and the Lunch Club with my husband Carl.

I am very proud of all of the projects the LDCI board has delivered whilst I have been the Chair. To name but a few:

The **Lairg Magazine** was started during the Covid pandemic to help tackle social isolation and is still going strong today. It has a circulation of over 160 paper copies and is also published online. When delivering them we are constantly being told how great the magazine is and how (particularly) the older generation enjoy reading a hard copy of it.

The **Helping Hands Fund** has made such a difference to many of our local residents and continues to be available for anyone who is struggling financially, to apply to for help with their heating costs. (See advert on page 5)

The Lunch Club it is a great little club for our elderly residents that meet every Thursday for a hot meal and a good old blether.

The **Sutherland Arms Way houses** - well this has to be the biggest project the board has ever taken on and I am so proud to have been in the Chair from when we purchased the land to seeing them completed and knowing that they are full of all local people.

And finally the **Playpark**, it is wonderful to have such amazing, modern equipment in the Ferrycroft park again - and to see all the children playing on the different items is really heart warming - knowing that we as a board achieved that...

So, if you would like to help shape future projects here in your community, I encourage you to get involved with LDCI, either as a board member or a volunteer - you can help make a real difference and it is very rewarding!

Kaye Hurrion, LDCI Outgoing Chair.



**Lairg resident recognised in King's New Years Honours**

Jonathan Brett Young, of West Shinness has been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). Mr Brett Young is being honoured for his services to veterans and vulnerable people in Sutherland.

Jonathan Brett Young was brought up in Australia, and served in the Royal Australian Navy for 14 years which took him around the world. He saw active service in four theatres of war and also served with the Royal Navy, the US Navy, the Ethiopian Navy and the Indonesian Navy.

He moved to the UK in 1969 with his wife and their

two sons and settled in Sutherland in 1984, where he ran West Shinness Lodge as a guest house.

Mr Brett Young founded the East Sutherland Village Advisory Service which has since developed into the East and Central Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau. The service provided advice and assistance on issues including employment and debt.

He has also been involved with the armed forces charity SSAFA (Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association) for more than 30 years. He was chairman of the Sutherland SSAFA branch for 13 years. The work involves supporting veterans.

He helped set up Sutherland Care Forum, which helps many people in East Sutherland whose needs are not met by the statutory authorities and he was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of the county in 1995.

Mr Brett Young said *"I am very honoured to receive this award. But we should never forget all those in Sutherland who give of their time and work tirelessly on behalf of the community. The Lord-Lieutenant Major General Patrick Marriott CB CBE has kindly agreed that the presentation of my MBE will be in Sutherland - not in London. This will occur on Armed Forces Day in Golspie which will be on Saturday, the 29th of June. I asked for this because I would much prefer to be with the people of Sutherland with whom I have been involved over the years."*

Many congratulations to Jonathan - and also to Hayley Bangs and Dave Goulder from the Creich Community who also received awards in the honours list.





1. In the film 'Monsters, Inc.' Celia, the receptionist, has hair made from what?
2. 'Anthony Charles Lynton' are the first three names of which British Prime minister?
3. Which renowned Scottish International and Manchester United footballer died in January at the age of 84?
4. Erich Weiss was the original name of which Magician and Escape Artist?
5. Which playwright coined the word 'bedazzled'?
6. What is the northernmost Firth on the east coast of Scotland?
7. What cut of beef shares its name with a peerage rank?
8. Which country made history this month, by becoming the fourth to dock a spacecraft in orbit?
9. What is the capital city of Afghanistan?
10. Which actress, known for her TV role in 'Birds of a feather' has had her diagnosis of Dementia announced?

## Lairg & District Community Initiatives

# AGM

at 7.00pm

Thursday 6th February 2025

In the Kinvonvie Suite,  
Lairg Community Centre

**All Welcome!**

Email: [projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk](mailto:projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk) | Tel: 07961372427

Schoolhouse, Main Street, Lairg, IV27 4DD

Charity Number: SC033349

Company Number: SC230960



LAIRG

## HELPING HAND FUND

IT'S OKAY TO NEED SUPPORT



Lairg & District Community Initiatives' Helping Hand Fund provides one off financial support to households in Lairg Community Council area who are struggling financially.

Grants of up to £250 are available to households who need help to pay an energy bill, or purchase an energy efficient white good - or provide assistance towards the costs of heating system repairs.

Confidential support is provided by our colleagues at the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust.

Contact Fiona:

[fiona@kyleofsutherland.co.uk](mailto:fiona@kyleofsutherland.co.uk)

01863 766190

Lairg &  
District  
Community  
Initiatives







Having secured some family funding last year, as with all new beginnings, we see some endings; the Highland Community Waste Partnership and our Flight Path project will both be coming to an end in March. However, we plan to go out with a bang, with lots of diverse classes on offer!

During the month of February, we have one-off Art, Sewing, Gardening, and Creative Writing classes, along with the first of three First Aid sessions. And back by popular demand, a 2-week taster session in Pottery with a feathered theme, plus a new addition for us – Mosaic Making!

As an entry into World Gaelic Week, from the 24th Feb – 2nd March, we are currently booking in a Storytelling/Poetry class related to birds up at Lyth Arts Centre; there will be some Gaelic used in this class, suitable for all levels.

A big THANK YOU to High Life Highland Countryside Rangers for the services of Ranger Andy Summers for two separate talks as part of our Flight Path project. He accompanied us to the Bradbury Centre in Bonar Bridge to give a talk on Highland Owls and his experiences with them to the residents.

They were keen to ask a few questions after the talk & to share their knowledge with him.

We are looking forward to receiving Ranger Donald Mitchell, who will be talking to the Lunch Club in Lairg on the 25th Feb, and then Marcia O'Hara who will be along to have a talk with the children at Lairg Primary School about Spring Migration on the 4th March.



You can find all of our other classes on our Eventbrite page, or through the QR Code on the left

LAIRG &  
DISTRICT  
learning  
centre



Ionad  
Ionnsachaidh  
SGÌRE  
AN LUIRG



Scan Me!  
eventbrite

In December, Lairg & District Community Initiatives (LDCI) was delighted to receive support from Cooke Scotland to fund 34 Christmas Hampers filled with festive food and goodies for Lairg Food Larder clients, as well as elderly members of the community who attend 'Lairg Lunch Club'. All produce in the hampers was purchased from the local shops in Lairg. Kaye Hurrion, LDCI's chairperson said,



"We are so grateful that a local fish farm business - Cooke Scotland supported the Lairg Larder by sponsoring hampers, so that we could give vulnerable members of our community a special treat at Christmas. Thank you so much!"



Do you know that LDCI's Lairg Larder project has some shelves in the Lairg Learning Centre? The shelves are generally stocked weekly with non-perishable goods but occasionally, there is also fresh produce (usually donated by CFine). Nutritious pheasant curry has also recently been available (donated by the Country Food Trust via KoSDT). Anybody is welcome to pop in and pick up some items.

## Quiz Answers

- |               |                  |                    |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Snakes     | 4. Harry Houdini | 8. India           |
| 2. Tony Blair | 5. Shakespeare   | 9. Kabul           |
| 3. Denis Law  | 6. Dornoch       | 10. Pauline Quirke |
|               | 7. Baron         |                    |



It's been a snowy start to the term, with the school closed due to the snow and ice. But that didn't mean the learning stopped! Pupils still enjoyed fun days at home, taking part in a scavenger hunt, playing cards, and drawing penguins, which they later shared with their friends at school.

This term promises plenty of exciting learning. One of the highlights is our Tell Me A Dragon project. The children will be drawing dragons, exploring landscapes, and getting creative with watercolours. It's a fantastic opportunity for them to let their imaginations run wild. In science, we're diving into the world of magnetism and electricity, and exploring the forces of push and pull. It's an exciting way to see how these concepts come to life in the world around us.



### **Nursery News**

It's been wonderful having everyone back in nursery and getting settled into the new term. We've been making lovely cups of herbal tea, snacking on hot cross buns, and mince and tatties – all freshly 'cooked' by the little chefs!

The children have been busy with a range of activities including measuring, painting, drawing, den building, and playdough. They're certainly keeping their hands busy and their imaginations running wild.

### **Older Children's Learning**

Our older children have been learning about the solar system and loved creating their own planets. It's been fantastic to see them so engaged with the topic. They've also been exploring number patterns, which has been a fun challenge for everyone.

### **Ceilidh Dancing Practice**

Our ceilidh dancing competition in February is fast approaching! The children have been practicing their moves and are excited to show off their skills. We can't wait to see them in action and to catch up with all the other schools in our area at the annual competition in Brora.

**Looking Ahead** As we move into spring, we're looking forward to more exciting learning and fun activities. The term is shaping up to be full of creativity, exploration, and lots of hands-on experiences.



Happy 2025 to you all! We are back open after the Christmas break, although the snow caused a few cancellations but that is par for the course at this time of year. We are busy with the usual regular bookings and a full schedule is posted (usually on a Friday), to our Facebook page and also on the noticeboards around the building so you can see the events that are happening in the centre each week.

Late last year we took delivery of a Community Car to cover transport to medical appointments where people are unable to arrange suitable transport. Please note that to use this service the person being transported will need to be able to get in and out the vehicle unaided. We are still working through the many hoops we need to jump through to get this service up and running but more details on this to follow soon. It is anticipated that it will cover the Ardgay, Bonar Bridge, Lairg, Shinness and Rosehall areas. The car cannot be used unless we have volunteer drivers available to meet the requirement of bookings and we are currently compiling a list of volunteer drivers for this service. If you feel you could offer a few hours as a driver please let me know. This service will be entirely dependent on there being volunteer drivers available! We will also be needing to look at onward funding to maintain and run the car.... Any ideas on fundraising for this would be greatly appreciated.

The books have opened for our Community Markets and we are pretty much fully booked for some months already. We will re-start the markets in March and plan to run them on the third Monday of each month through until December. A typical market line up contains an array of locally sourced produce. Shop local and support small local businesses and enterprises!

As always, we are looking for volunteers to keep the centre thriving as a hub for community activity. If you feel you could assist in any way, or would like more information on anything please let me know by email [lairgcommunitycentre@gmail.com](mailto:lairgcommunitycentre@gmail.com), on 01549 402843 (the office is only manned part time) or by messenger. We are also on Facebook and the market has both Facebook and is on Instagram....

Just a reminder that Voluntary Groups Sutherland (VGS – formerly based in Golspie) are now housed in our main office. The staff will be in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and have retained their original phone number, 01408 633001, should you need to contact them.

For those of you who may not know we also have the local library housed within our building which is always made good use of. Please check their social media pages for opening times.



**Lairg  
Baby &  
toddler group**

Every Thursday during term time  
10:30 - 12:30

Lairg community centre

0-5 years.  
£2 per child, 50p per additional child.  
0-6 months - Free.

Toys, Snacks, Bookbug, Crafts  
and Tea & Coffee for the Adults!

- Everyone Welcome -



We are thrilled to share that our vibrant Young Crofters and Junior Crofters sessions will be resuming soon! We're targeting the end of February to kick things off, but please note that the start date will depend on weather conditions.

Our Young Crofters group welcomes enthusiastic individuals in S1 and above, providing a fantastic opportunity to engage with fellow young crofters. This session will take place every other Friday from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM, featuring hands-on activities that promote learning and collaboration in a fun atmosphere.

For our younger participants, the Junior Crofters group is designed specifically for kids, meeting every other Saturday from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM. This session offers a chance for children to explore the world of crofting through interactive games, crafts, and outdoor adventures.

We currently have spaces available in both groups, so if you're interested in joining us for these exciting sessions, please don't hesitate to send us a message! We can't wait to welcome new faces and share the joy of crofting together!



## Lairg Learning Centre

We're reaching out to gather some feedback for a report we're preparing for our funder, about the IT Clinics we offer at the Learning Centre. If you've attended one of the clinics with Ryan, we'd love to hear how it helped you! Just a few words would make a big difference.



Your feedback is incredibly valuable—it helps us when applying for further funding so we can continue offering these clinics to the community.

**What would you like to learn?** Email us your top 3 topics!

You can either email [admin@lairglearningcentre.org.uk](mailto:admin@lairglearningcentre.org.uk) or leave a message below. Or alternately fill out the google form through the QR code.

Thank you for your time and support!

Lairg Community Council have submitted a notice of intent to produce a Local Plan for Lairg and now need to hear your views ahead of a public consultation to be held in early 2025.

# LAIRG LOCAL PLAN

## 2025-2030

### ONLINE SURVEY

- HOUSING
- BUSINESS
- LEISURE
- TOURISM
- JOBS
- TRANSPORT

# SCAN TO HAVE YOUR SAY



## THANK YOU!

Do we want a skate park, outdoor gym, or perhaps a MUGA in Lairg?

Should we refurbish and develop the jetty and lochside?

How do you feel about tourists?

Should we be doing more?

How's business?!

Have your say on the future development and preservation of Lairg. To complete the survey, scan the QR code, find the link on Lairg Community Council Facebook page or call Miranda on 07912032583 for a paper copy of the survey.

Thank you for reading issue 76 of the Lairg Magazine! If you would like to submit something to the magazine, please send it to: [zoe@lairglearningcentre.org.uk](mailto:zoe@lairglearningcentre.org.uk)

Phone: 01549 402050 or write to us at: Schoolhouse, Main Street, Lairg, IV27 4DD

**The deadline for the next issue is the 19th of February.**