

Lairg Magazine

LAIRG & DISTRICT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Photos by Rachel Porter

Contents:

- Page 2 - Light Up Lairg/ Flow Country
- Page 3 - Quiz/ Recipe/ AGM
- Page 4 - Lairg Primary/ Health Walk
- Page 5 - Lairg Primary
- Page 6 - River Fiag Walk
- Page 7 - Fiag Walk/ Community Association
- Page 8 - Learning Centre
- Page 9 - Scottish Snippets/Quiz Answers
- Page 10 - Bradbury Centre
- Page 11 - Fire Safety Info
- Page 12 - Activity

Rare 'Mother of Pearl' Nacreous Cloud spotted over Lairg

Some of us here in Lairg were very lucky in seeing this very rare phenomenon recently.

Nacreous (Type II Polar Stratospheric Clouds) are supposed to stay inside the Arctic Circle. They made a rare appearance over Scotland at Sunrise/ Sunset on the 29th and 30th of January.

Earth's stratosphere is very dry and normally it has no clouds at all. PSCs form when the temperature in the stratosphere drops to a low -85 C. They can be widely-spaced water molecules that begin to coalesce into tiny ice crystals. High-altitude* sunlight shining through the crystals creates intense iridescent colours.

**High-altitude is 18 miles above sea-level.*

Light up Lairg was originally formed in 1994 by Lairg Community council.

We are delighted to finally have our very own store; it only took 29 years!

During lockdown Light up Lairg decided to see if it was possible to get funding for our very own store, so after lots of research, phone calls and emails, we found out this could be possible.

Our next step was to get costs, so we went to Lockharts to see if this was something they could cost, very difficult during the pandemic and the unstable market prices, however we got a plan of attack together.

We were fortunate to be awarded grant aided money from Lairg, Achany and Rosehall windfarms (Foundation Scotland) to build our store and very lucky to be able to locate it on the LDCI community owned land, with agreement to keep the place tidy.

We are planning an official opening in the Spring so everyone will be welcome to come up and have a look.

(By Stephen MacLean)

Please see an article below taken from The Northern Times in December 1994

'Christmas Lights – The Main Street in Lairg this year has been handsomely illuminated by a display of 15 Christmas lights attached to the Regional Council lighting columns.

The lights, constructed by Lairg Community Council and friends, comprised Christmas motifs in the form of candles, stars and bells (That are still used today) all designed in lumalite, bound to steel framework.

The frames were welded and fabricated from scratch by John Quinn, with assistance from Hubert Corbett, while Alison Magee and Rosa Macpherson helped out, painting the frames and brackets with rust proof paint.

Other local councillors and friends provided general assistance, and a team of nine with three sets of ladders, erected the lights on the lamp posts in a howling gale, on 10th December 1994.

Connection to the mains supply was carried out by Mr Macleod, Brora Roads Department on the following Monday. The results are a credit to the community and the hard work involved – all done on a voluntary basis.'

Thanks also goes to the local clubs and businesses who contributed to the cost of the steel and lumalite equipment, as well as to the HRC for a grant awarded for materials, and more recently to CASE who are enabling the community to extent this display.



Flow Country Consultation

In response to the growth in local and external interest in peatland restoration, biodiversity, and carbon credits, a group of local organisations has come together to think through how to put together a Green Finance Initiative (GFI) for the Flow Country. **The Flow Country GFI** aims to address concerns and to work out a model of financial return from our peatlands that would offer clear pathways to benefit local communities, as well as enable us to tackle the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis. We are hosting a series of drop-in sessions and invite you to join us to discuss green finance and peatland restoration **at Lairg Community Centre on Monday, February 27th, from 4-7pm.** (By Mary Rollinson)

QUIZ TIME!

1. Who won the Sports Personality of the Year in 2022?
2. Which word is said 11 times in the speech made famous by Martin Luther King in Washington in 1963?
3. What is the name of the Australian singer who died last year at the age of 73, known for starring in the film "Grease"?
4. What sector has businesses with insignias of a horse, an eagle, 3 chevrons and what might be described as a white bow tie on a hexagon?
5. Who is the present Chancellor of the Exchequer?
6. In finance, what do the letters GDP stand for?
7. Strontium flame is what colour?
8. Which actor has been charged with involuntary manslaughter after a shooting incident on the set of the film "Rust" in New Mexico?
9. The town of Ramsbottom holds the world record for throwing what type of foodstuff?
10. In which Scottish city has Stagecoach launched its first fully electric city bus network?

Lairg & District Community Initiatives

AGM

WITH AN UPDATE ON THE CARE &
WELLBEING (HOUSING) PROJECT
BY SUSAN CLARK

at 7.30pm

Thursday 9th March 2023

In the Kinvonvie Suite,
Lairg Community Centre

Lairg &
District
Community
Initiatives

Schoolhouse, Main Street, Lairg, IV27 4DD

Charity Number: SC033349

Company Number: SC230960

Recipe for Under a Fiver



Tuna & Sweetcorn Burgers

Ingredients:

85g white bread, torn into pieces
198g can sweetcorn, drained £0.90
2 x cans tuna in water, drained £1.40
25g grated cheddar £0.26
3 spring onions, finely chopped £0.50
1 egg, beaten £0.29
2 tbsp vegetable oil
4 x Burger buns .£0.80

Total cost - £4.15

Method:

Whizz the bread in a food processor to crumbs, tip into a bowl, then whizz half the sweetcorn until finely chopped. Add the chopped corn, remaining whole corn, tuna, cheese, spring onions and some seasoning into the bowl with the bread and mix well. Add the egg, bit by bit (you may not need it all), until the mixture is sticky enough to be shaped into four even-size burgers. Heat the oil in a non-stick pan, then cook the burgers for 5 minutes on each side until golden and hot through the middle. Stuff into wholemeal buns with your favourite lettuce and a good dollop of salsa.

As part of literacy and writing P6 and 7 were learning about figurative language. They had to use alliteration, personification, similes and metaphors. Here is a sample of just some of the wonderful poems they wrote.

'THE JUNGLE'

On the earthy forest floor a cool stream snaked past the towering trees which stood like silent guards.

Flowing water splashed up against the elephant's feet as the sound of birds singing was drowned out by the lion's roar.

Zebras scattered and snakes slithered silently.

Trees towered terrifyingly over the homes of millions of animals.

Elephants stomped thunderously, shaking the trees around them.

Giraffes rose over the trees and the insects stayed below.

Sloths hung lazily from the trees and overlooked the Jungle below as monkeys jumped tree to tree.

Lions moved swiftly through the bushes stalking its prey.

By Katie, P7



Sun rising as the birds sang happily, the giraffe swam through a sea of colossal trees to find the great oak tree with the best emerald leaves.

Roaring rumbled repeatedly in the distance the hungry lion was stealthily swerving through the sea of trees.

Murky water flowed quickly as the crocodiles snapped at the tiny frogs as they jumped out of the way just in time onto the slippery rocks above them. The sun was yellow like a dandelion in bloom as the zebra slept quietly under the hot sun.

By Jessica, P6



Lairg Health Walks

Unfortunately, we were not able to hold a Health Walk in February but we are pleased to say that there will be a walk next Thursday - on the 2nd March 2023. We will meet at the Ferrycroft Visitor Centre Car park at 10.30am. You can just turn up on the day but if you wish to let us know that you are coming you can email projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk or call 07961 372427.



‘Jungle’

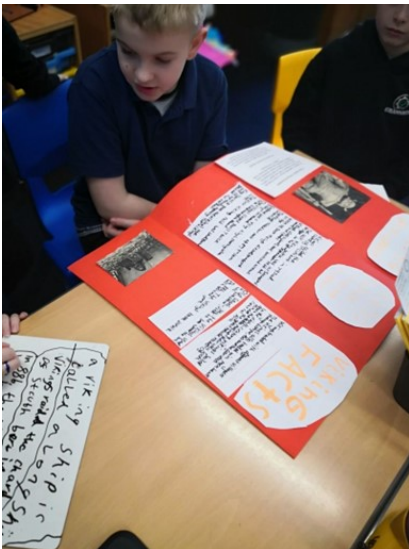
An ocean of fluorescent green leaves covered every surface. Zig-zagged Zebras were looking fearfully. While a lion prowled in the shadows.

A slippery, snake slithered shakily Into a terrifyingly towering tree, high in the sky, the giraffes were like pillars breaching sky.

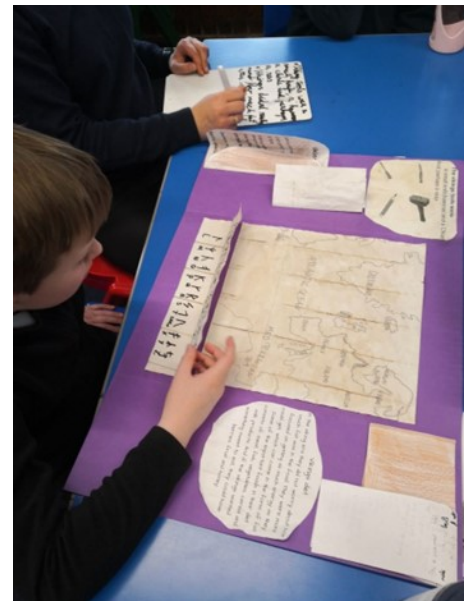
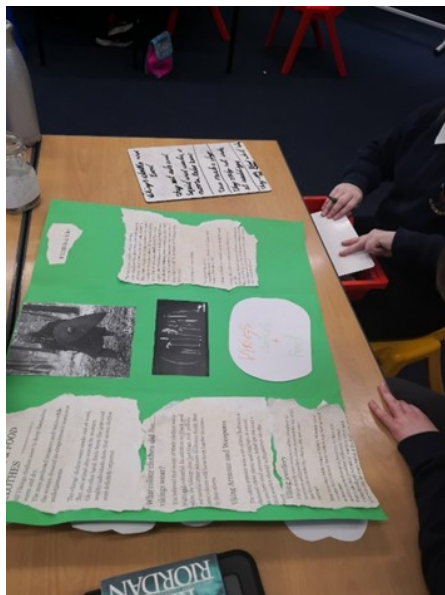
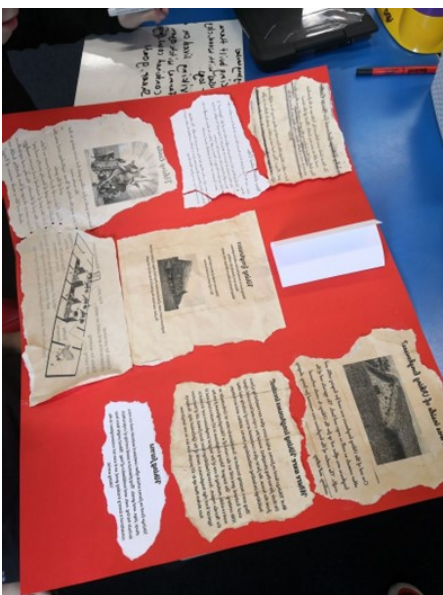
Colossal trees danced majestically.

With the summer breeze, birds sung bright and pure. There was a stream, clear as crystal, flowing noisily through the Jungle.

By Hamish, P7



P6/7 have been learning about Vikings and have created lap books. They were put into groups to find out about different areas of Viking life. They are in the middle of making a Viking longboat and are really enjoying the topic.



A recent article in the Sunday Times travel section highlighted a walk up the Fiag River in Sutherland. This river runs into Loch Shin about 10 miles north of where I live at West Shinness Lodge.

And so recently with good friends - together their Labrador Pipit and of course Arkle we decided to explore this lovely remote Highland river. After obtaining the key to the gate by the main road we drove, very slowly, the five miles up the track to the Lodge which stands beneath Ben Hee (783M) - almost a Munro.



We first came upon a fish trap, set by the Fisheries Board to catch young salmon smolts as they come out of the river into Loch Shin for the long journey out into the Atlantic. However they are unable to get down the dams in Lairg and so are collected and released into the River Shin below the dams ready for the long journey. In one to three years' time, they will return to the same river to spawn. And then suddenly out of the woods on the far side of the river flew an osprey flying beside us for a while and then disappearing no doubt in search of food.

Shortly after again on the far side of the river a roe deer appeared bounding along with his white bottom bobbing up and down. He soon left us behind and disappeared back into the woods. On a rock in the middle of the river I noticed a dipper. A small bird which bobs up and down before entering the water in search of food.

After about three miles the forestry ended, and we were in open moorland. We parked beside the road about half a mile short of Fiag Lodge for lunch. As we walked down to The lodge Pipit chased a black grouse out of the grass beside the road. It flew off with a great flap of wings. As there was probably a female sitting on eggs nearby, we quickly moved on.



We were then greeted by the most incredible sight. Dorothy and I had visited the lodge over 35 years ago when it was a ruin. But what we found was a modernistic eco-friendly lodge with beautifully landscaped grounds around it and a boat shed down below. It was almost like something out of a James Bond film.



Continued on page 7

We then walked back along the track and took in the breathtaking scenery of this remote and beautiful part of the highlands. This really is John Buchan country. It was easy to imagine 'John McNab 'poaching deer and salmon or Richard Hannay fleeing across the moor' being chased by an aeroplane. Truly breathtaking. We stopped halfway to the main road and had tea by the river. Occasionally a trout would rise leaving a splash on the water.

After locking the gate we proceeded for home along the main road but stopped at a Lochan where I knew that red throated divers were breeding. And sure enough, a pair of these beautiful birds were gliding across the water not 200 yards from us. The red throated divers breed on lochans, whilst their cousins, the Black throated divers, breed on larger lochs. On Loch Shin below my house there is an RSPB floating island and I hope that this year Black Throated divers will come to breed and we can once again hear their mournful cry across the water.

This was a magical afternoon which we will all remember for a long time. The highlands in all their beauty, utterly remote, no sign of any other human, just nature coming slowly back to life after a cold and rather miserable winter.

As David Hockney said recently 'nature is beautiful.' He was introducing his new exhibition of Spring in Normandy. He is absolutely right!

Lairg Community Association

Volunteers from the community centre are hosting Winter Warmer sessions at the community centre on a Tuesday afternoon until the end of March. Drop in any time between 2.30pm and 5.30pm for a hot drink in a warm cosy space where you can chat, read or maybe even have a game of cards or dominoes. The library is open too.

As many of you will know, John Chatten, who was our caretaker for more than 10 years stood down at the end of October. John is enjoying more time doing the things he enjoys including indoor bowling at the centre. He's never far away and continues to support us with all his years of experience. Following in his footsteps, Corne Boshoff now joins us as part time caretaker and we welcome him to the team.

We have some exciting new sessions available within the Community Centre. Adult Dance Fitness suitable for all fitness levels run every Monday at 18.45 - 19.30. No need to book, just turn up. Would you be interested in adult Jui Jitsu classes? Get in touch and let us know. We also have plenty of keep fit classes and current sessions available every week, make sure you keep an eye on our facebook page and lovely brand new noticeboard for weekly updates on classes as well as new/upcoming events.

Current sessions available include, but not limited to: Pilates, Whist, Dance and Jui Jitsu for youngsters plus Tai Chai and Badminton.

With just over a month to go to the restart of our Community Market, we cannot wait to welcome back our Stall Holders, Customers, and Visitors to Lairg. ****Monday 20th March - 13.30 till 16.00**** There will be plenty of stalls available to sink your teeth into, but make sure you leave a little time to have a cuppa and a treat at the end of it all, we're always up for a chat!

We would love to hear from anyone wishing to hold a session within the Community Centre, hire equipment, hold their own stall or even just looking for more information. Contact Ros our administrator 01549 402 843 or email lairgcommunitycentre@gmail.com

The annual general meeting of the Lairg Community Association who run the community centre takes place on March 14th at 7.45pm in the Kinvonvie. Feel free to let us know if you intend to come along! (By Amy MacAlasdair)



The following activities are coming up at Lairg & District Learning Centre in March:

Tuesday 7th March 10am – 2pm: Woodworking: Peanut Bird Feeder

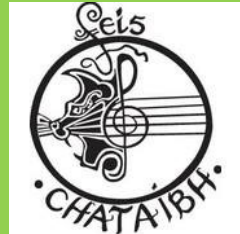
Saturday 11th March 10am – 2pm: Peanut Bird Feeder

Saturday 18th March 10am – 2pm: Pet Beds

Monday 20th March 11.30am : I pads & Tablets for Beginners

For more info or to book a place contact LDLC on: 01549402050 or
admin@lairglearningcentre.org.uk

Fèis Chataibh is taking place again this year for the first time since 2019. There will be a Fèis Day at Golspie High School on Saturday 18th March for young people aged 5-18 to experience traditional music and arts. To find out more and book a place contact feischataibh@feisean.scot.



Lairg Gaelic Gathering



Sunday 26th February 2023

2pm - 4pm

Lairg Community Centre

Join us for a traditional Cèilidh event celebrating Gaelic language and culture in Lairg as part of Seachdain na Gàidhlig (World Gaelic Week). There will be live music, song, story, poetry, a quiz, refreshments and more.

Suitable for all ages! No previous experience of Gaelic necessary!

Tickets are £5 and free for under 16s.
You can book in advance on Eventbrite
or by contacting LDLC on 01549 402050 or admin@lairglearningcentre.org.uk .
Tickets will also be available on the day

WWW.SEACHDAINNAGAIDHLIG.SCOT



Alexander Selkirk, Sailor, born 1st February 1676 in Lower Largo, Fife

ALEXANDER SELKIRK 1676 - 1721

-oOo—



Statue is in Lower Largo, Fife

Alexander Selkirk was a Scottish privateer and Royal Navy officer who spent more than four years as a castaway (1704 – 1709) after being marooned by his captain on an uninhabited island in the South Pacific Ocean. Selkirk's job on board was the navigator who controlled where the ship needed to go and where it was at that point in time. He warned the captain about certain repairs that were needed but the captain ignored Selkirk and carried on sailing. Selkirk knew the ship was to drown at any given moment and tried to demand that the repairs were taken care of but was ignored. They had stopped at an island to restock fresh water and supplies. Selkirk said he would rather stay on the island than continue to ride on a dangerous, leaky ship. So there he was left. He had last minute second thoughts and tried to get back on board. The captain of the ship, Captain Stradling refused and left him on an island off the coast of Chile.

At the time of his rescue, he had been gone for about four years. He was very familiar with crafting things himself out of resources on the islands and having to use his survival skills. He heard noises and when he went to find out what it was, he saw ships on the horizon. He didn't know if they were on his side or enemies but he knew he had to try. He got their attention and so they sailed over to his island. Once they had beached on the shore, Selkirk came out from the bushes with his hands up. It turned out they were English and on his side. They let him aboard their ship and they were at sea for another year, stopping off at a few places, before returning to England.

The castaway of Alexander Selkirk has become famous because of the fictional book "Robinson Crusoe" written by Daniel Defoe. **Daniel Defoe** was an English writer, trader, journalist, pamphleteer and spy. He is most famous for his novel published in 1719.

Selkirk had a lonely existence on his island, not like the adventures of "Robinson Crusoe".

In November 1941 Roy Plomley had an idea for a radio programme, "Desert Island Discs". It is the longest running radio programme and still running after 80 years.

LDCI Quiz Answers

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Beth Mead | four main banks) | 7. Red |
| 2. Dream | 5. Jeremy Hunt | 8. Alec Baldwin |
| 3. Olivia Newton John | 6. Gross Domestic Product | 9. Black Pudding |
| 4. Banking/ Finance (The | | 10. Inverness |

The Bradbury Centre in Bonar Bridge continues to be busy and there have been lots of activities in the new year keeping people active with stimulating games including bingo, cards, quizzes, and crafting and we have unearthed and renewed lots of creative talents during our crafting sessions which included glass painting and decorating, wooden coasters, painting canvases and stones, Valentines hearts, and knitting. The regular visits from Reflexologist, Carrie Veters continue to be popular.

As well as items to take home and enjoy, we are lucky to have had some lovely crafts and knitting donated to our sales table that contributes towards our ongoing necessary fundraising.

We were privileged to be asked by Christine Mackay, Deputy Lieutenant of Sutherland to be involved in the centenary plans for the Creich War Memorial celebrations by knitting poppies and this has kept the ladies busy and our pile of poppies is ever growing.



Our Christmas party held on 21st December was a great success with everyone receiving a small gift along with £10 to help contribute towards the ever-increasing cost of living. The three course lunch was enjoyed by everyone from all the areas we cover. It was lovely to see everyone reunited as a collective after not seeing each other for such a long time. After lunch, entertainment was provided by the Evergreen Band who played a lovely selection of tunes and had us up dancing. The staff had a fun quiz for users before lunch and a quick game of bingo and a big raffle with some lovely prizes.

A special thanks to Donald from Munro's Private Hire, Lairg for transporting our Lairg users, also to all the funders who helped make this a very special day.

A key highlight of January was our three course Burns lunch, with a Burns quiz and entertainment. Another highlight in February was Valentine's Day where we took part in themed quizzes, activities and crafts.

If you would like to join our group, we have space every weekday apart from Thursdays for those from Bonar Bridge & Lairg. Transport is available to collect and return you from your home to the Centre. On arrival at the centre, you have time for a chat over coffee/tea and either toast or biscuits before the fun activities begin, this is followed by a 2 course lunch and an activity before its time to return home. We also enjoy parties and outings and these are provided throughout the year. The cost of a day at the centre is £6.50 and includes lunch and activities. For those frailer members of our community who have personal care needs or need a bit of extra support we have dedicated support staff who will help. We welcome pre planned day visits to see the centre and what is available. If you are a carer and need some respite or someone who feels they want to join us then please contact the office on 01863766772.

BRADBURY SILVER ANNIVERSARY

This year is a special year at the Bradbury as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary. We plan to celebrate with a week of outings and parties for our users on the 19th August.

More details of our Silver anniversary events will be posted on Facebook and local posters nearer the time.

(By Lorraine Askew)



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland



We're gradually coming towards Spring now, but it's still cold enough that some winter safety advice remains relevant. And of course, some safety advice applies throughout the year.

Heating the home is becoming increasingly expensive, but beware of advice from social media on cheap alternative methods. These are often ineffective or unsafe. You can get free, impartial advice on having a warmer home and lower bills from Home Energy Scotland (homeenergyscotland.org), including information on current financial support. If you are burning wood, ensure it has been properly dried and stored. It should have a moisture content of no more than 20%, any higher than that risks clogging the chimney and starting a fire. With an open fire, ensure you have and use a fireguard to reduce the risk from sparks.

Power cuts can not only cause inconvenience, but increase danger in the home, both from fire and from falls. Avoid using candles or paraffin lamps as back-up lighting, it's much easier to knock these over in dim light, especially if children or pets are around. Use battery lamps or torches instead, and make sure they are readily to hand. You can get battery-powered LED lights which are intended for use under shelves. Stuck to a bedside unit or next to a living room chair, they can give instant light when the power goes out while you look for the torch. 3-in-1 night lights will come on when the power cuts out and provide sufficient illumination for a whole room for up to three hours. Customers who meet certain criteria (e.g. age or health) may be registered for priority service in the event of power cuts, check with your supplier.

Make sure you aren't overloading electrical sockets, or daisy-chaining adaptors (one plugged into another) when it's easy to lose track of how many items are running off one socket. Avoid block-style adaptors and use strip-type instead where required. As a simple rule of thumb, no more than four items fitted with 3 amp fuses should go into an adaptor, any item fitted with a 13 amp fuse should always go straight into the socket.

Don't leave electrical items switched on unless they are designed to be. Unplug all electrical items that don't need to be left plugged in, especially if you are going away for extended periods. At night, close internal doors, especially kitchen and living room doors. This will prevent a fire from spreading quickly and allow your smoke alarms to warn you of fire.

Check smoke alarms regularly, ideally once a week. All homes should by now have interlinked smoke and heat detection, so that closed doors won't prevent you hearing an alarm in another part of the house. If they go off, and you don't immediately know that it's a false alarm, always assume it could be a fire and leave the house quickly and smartly, then call the Fire Service on 999. Make sure that everyone in the house knows in advance what to do and how to get out, and that any keys needed are readily to hand. For more advice, ask for a free Home Fire Safety Visit.

Finally, be aware that fires outdoors, whether carried out as a muirburn or less formally e.g. while camping, always have the potential to cause a wildfire. Observe appropriate precautions for the type of fire, and advise SFRS fire control on 01382 835804 of any muirburn activity. For any fires which require a response from the fire service, always use 999. See page 12 for some useful links. (By Stephen Reid)

Colouring in - Snowdrops



Useful Fire Safety links:

<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety.aspx>

https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/868522/SFRS_PowerCuts.pdf

<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-householders/home-fire-safety-visit.aspx>

<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/outdoors/spring-safety/>

<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/outdoors/rural-safety/>



Thank you for reading issue 57 of the Lairg Magazine! If you would like to submit something to the magazine, please send it to: projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk.

Phone: 07961 372 427 or write to us at: Schoolhouse, Main Street, Lairg, IV27 4DD