



OIL RIGS - Love Them or Hate Them?

(Editor's note: For context, compare the image above with the current view)

From Alan Plampton:

'At the latest Community Council meeting, there was a discussion about how we should respond to the debate on the Oil Rigs in the Firth, and how they are affecting the community of Cromarty.

There seems to be divided opinions and, if Members of the C&DCC are to truly represent the Community, we need to find out what the majority think. We therefore URGENTLY need Cromarty residents to give us their opinions.

Please email them to cromartydistrictcc@gmail.com or, for those without an email facility, please write in a sealed envelope, addressed to the C&DCC, and post through the letterbox of 12 Bank Street (opposite the Stores). Please respond by Monday 10th August.

So that we can check that opinions are not being double counted, please include a postal address. All emails and letters will remain totally confidential to the C&DCC and will be deleted/destroyed after a month. Only the summary results, containing no personal details, will be kept.

Results from this 'survey' will be made known, as soon as possible, and will be considered at the next C&DCC meeting where decisions will be taken on what action to take. Thank you for helping the C&DCC to represent Cromarty.'

Update from Cromarty Care Project

It's now about 4 and half months since we were hit by the COVID-19 virus and some of us still haven't had a haircut. The author was told he was looking like a scarecrow the other day when walking down the street! Much to the laughter of the passers-by.

The Cromarty Care Project has responded to the changes in the situation, the grocery delivery service has cut back to meet demand from those most in need- it provides picking and delivery service on Tuesday and Friday (details from shapcott@pitt.edu). The newspaper delivery service has stopped, although the author hears constantly that people want it started again- there could be an opportunity for a young entrepreneur (contact shapcott@pitt.edu if interested in discussing this). Meals on Wheels is due to end on 1st August. Although those that would like to benefit from the service should contact shapcott@pitt.edu.

If you have been shielding for months, getting back to a more normal life may seem daunting. If you would like some support then do get in touch with Jill Stoner, Chair of CCP on 07850889014 or email info@cromartycareproject.co.uk and we will see what help we can offer.

CCP has started a new initiative and is helping with the cost of going back to school or onto further education for those families that have lost income due to Covid. To apply email info@cromartycareproject.co.uk or text Jill Stoner on 07850889014

Representatives of CCP still attend the weekly Black Isle Partnership and Highland Council video conference meeting and have an associated member of the Community Council where important planning for the future is being discussed. The Community Council is taking the lead on discovering the issues of young people and the effect on them of the crisis through the Youth Cafe.

The CCP is about to publish a booklet (funded completely separately) so that we can look back on how we spent the Spring and early Summer of 2020 for the households of

Cromarty (and donating organisations and with it a fundraising page), so look out for it in your letter boxes soon.

Hot off the press, the CCP has been invited to apply for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Groups, we may not succeed but are very glad of the local recognition.

Support The Black Isle Visitor Campaign



We will all have witnessed a huge difference in the number of visitors to Cromarty in the last few weeks. Fortunately most appear to be acting sensibly and observing Government guidelines and the businesses are benefitting greatly from increased footfall. However, if you have concerns about the potential spread of the virus, or simply want people to be mindful of our local communities, you can help spread the word by printing off a poster and sticking it in your window. There are four key messages to choose from. Go to www.black-isle.info/coronavirus

Activity Book For Young People

Recently appointed Youth Worker, Fraser Thomson, has produced a fun activity book for younger (and older) members of the community. Perfect for summer holidays when the weather doesn't exactly scream

'summer holidays'. Copies of the book can be obtained by e-mailing Cromarty.youthcafe@hotmail.com

Fraser has also set up a Facebook page which shares lots of really useful information about things going on locally for young people.

Follow www.facebook.com/cromartyyouthcafe



Bored? Fed Up? Looking for a challenge?

Free Distance Learning Open University Courses

The Open University is one of the leading universities for flexible, innovative teaching and world-leading research in the United Kingdom and in 157 countries worldwide. In response to COVID-19 the OU has developed a series of wide ranging free courses for people of all ages and experience from ages 13 and up. www.open.ac.uk/courses/coronavirus.

Founded by the OU, FutureLearn offers courses from universities all over the world. This is where you can find the list of free courses, some very short (just give it a try): www.open.ac.uk/courses/short-courses And the full list of free courses: www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue

On successful completion of a free course, you will be able to download a statement of participation. It can help show your interest in a subject and a commitment to your career or provide evidence of continuing professional development.

Give it a go!

A sniff of Gin?.. or Vodka?.. or Rum?

Latest news from the Development Trust:

A new local distillery-based business is being seriously considered, with a view to bringing the development to Cromarty. Those behind the plan have already established a successful enterprise in the Highlands and want to start another. They've been in touch with the Community Development Trust (CCDT) to look at possible sites and community opportunities.

We're hoping to meet their representatives this week for exploratory discussions, to see if there is an appropriate location in Cromarty – one that would suit the developers and be of benefit to the community.

The idea of establishing a micro distillery in Townlands Barn had already been mooted, as this Newsletter reported some months ago. Peter McIlhenny, a partner in LDN Architects who have offices in Edinburgh and Forres, is working with the CCDT on options which would give our oldest building a new role in the 21st century. He has been involved in planning several distillery projects, and thought one could work in the barn.

This most recent approach is quite separate and comes from a different source.

The CCDT had already agreed proposals for the barn, which would embrace mixed rental and workshops. They would not be changed or varied without full public community consultation.

Green Moves

The CCDT and the Cromarty and District Community Council are exploring the possibility of establishing a Rural Transport Hub in the town. This would offer environmentally friendly, coordinated services and would include: the purchase of two electric vehicles (EV) for community car-sharing; the Cromarty- Nigg ferry; electrical charging points for EVs - cars and buses; bike hire and electric bike hire.

Cromarty is geographically compact and flat so the Hub could be spread between nearby sites or on one site.

It is hoped that the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) could provide much of the necessary financial support. Initial approaches have already been made to VisitScotland by Nigel Shapcott. If there is anyone out there who is interested in this proposal please contact nigel.shapcott@gmail.com

Local and Visitor Attractions

The RTIF also offers the prospect of funding to allow a much-needed upgrading of the South Sutor to the Viewpoint highly popular local walking route. The number of visitors using it has increased in recent years. Meanwhile during the recent lockdown, many more local residents than normal were using it for their permitted daily exercise.

There has been resulting damage to the path and steps over the years, which will have to be repaired.

The CCDT gained a lot of experience applying for RTIF support over the past year and a half - not always positive. But it would all be useful in preparing future applications.

It is thought that a wider group of volunteers of those interested in pursuing the transport hub and/or the upgrading of the 100 steps should be formed.

Anyone interested in helping with this project, please send your names to Jacquie Ross - jacquie.ross44@gmail.com

Slipways

There were times when we thought we were never going to be able to say this, but work is due to start any day now on the replacement of the Nigg and Cromarty slipways.

For much of the last year, it has seemed that for every step the CCDT took forward on this project, it was forced to take two backwards. But the Beaulay-based builders Simpson are now poised to start breaking up the old structures, starting on the Nigg side.

The 25-year lease of the slipways from the Cromarty Estate, is just about to be signed as everything has now been agreed. VisitScotland has confirmed that the first tranche of the £300,000 RTIF award will be released once the lease is signed, and Simpsons can start.

The money will not come to the CCDT directly. It will be transferred to the Highland Council, who will then pay the bills as the work progresses.

Despite all the setbacks, Cromarty will be amongst the first communities amongst last year's winners, to see work actually start on its RTIF project.

We hope to be able to deliver an equally positive report on the Whitedykes campsite in the not too distant future.

Cinema

From Fraser Mackenzie:

We are consulting with our volunteers to determine the best way to move forward given the current guidelines on cinema re-opening. We hope to make an announcement about our re-start plans in the next few weeks. The car parking for the office hub and cinema has just been completed but will take a few weeks to bed in.



Peace Group

In this year of 75th Anniversaries marking the end of the Second World War, and as we approach VJ Day, it is important that we also remember those affected by the

horrific atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Cromarty Peace Group is going to be holding a Hiroshima Day 75th Anniversary Commemoration event at Cromarty Harbour on Thursday 6th August at 4pm. There will be bagpipe music, appropriate readings and an Act of Remembrance. We will, of course, be observing social distancing!

Courthouse News

We Are Now Open!

Cromarty Courthouse Museum will be open on Saturdays and Sundays during August from 12am until 4pm. We look forward to welcoming our visitors once again. Admission is free.

Since Easter, we've given our attention to making improvements to the exterior of our building, with repairs, repainting and the usual maintenance work in the garden. More recently, we have been focusing inside - on putting in place our plans to ensure the safety of our staff and visitors when we reopen.

We have had to make some changes within the museum in order to comply with Covid-19 standards but hope that visitors will still be able to enjoy seeing our historic Courthouse.

Staff and volunteers will be on hand to advise you on your route through the Courthouse and they will ask all visitors to use the hand sanitiser provided, wear a suitable face covering and maintain safe physical distancing.

In addition to our usual displays, we have a temporary exhibition of the 2007 "Under the Surface" images from the SEA CROMATY SPARKLE celebration that formed part of Scotland's Year of Highland Culture. Hard to believe that was 13 years ago!



A reminder to residents and visitors that the Cromarty Courthouse garden is open to the public every day for a quiet seat in the sun or a little stroll around the path cut through the wildflowers and grass in the fruit garden at the back. It's a lovely, sheltered space and well worth a look!

History Society

We've decided, after much discussion, to cancel the 2020-2021 programme of History Society talks. The future of Covid and the physical distancing requirements are so uncertain that we can't see how we can guarantee the cosy sociable and friendly events our members and audiences want while keeping everybody safe. The tea and shared chatting afterwards are important and enjoyable parts of what we do.

After the new year, we'll look again and MAY be able to offer some of the planned talks; and if so, we'll announce them in the usual way - on our website, in this newsletter and via the posters in the usual Cromarty windows.

We are holding our AGM online, and members have had an email asking them to comment - please do so, by the end of this month.

Thanks,

Sheila Currie, for Cromarty History Society Committee

Middleton Trust

Applications Open For 2021-2022 Awards

The Middleton Trust is inviting applications from organisations to fund social, cultural, educational or recreational projects/activities planned in the year 2021-2022 that benefit young people in Cromarty & District. A simple application form and further details can be found on the Cromarty Live website www.cromartylive.co.uk/middleton-trust or contact the Secretary, Gillian McNaught on 01381 600337 middletontrust@gmail.com

The deadline for completed applications is Friday 11th September 2020 and all applications will be considered at the Trust's AGM on October 8th 2020.

Funds disbursed in 2020 supported the following:

Cromarty Primary School's new 'Chillax' space and lego club

The Hugh Miller Writing Competition Awards for young writers

After school French classes for Cromarty Primary School children

Two further awards were granted to the Cromarty Community Rowing Club and Cromarty Tennis & Sports Club, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the groups were unable to fulfil their projects as planned. Jacquie Ross, MT Chair said, "huge thanks" go to both clubs for returning their funds this year which Trustees agreed should help young people in Cromarty through Covid recovery. Newly appointed Assistant Youth Worker, Fraser Thomson, will use the Middleton Trust funds to support the health and wellbeing of young people and help in their return to school and work.

If you are a young person up to 25 years of age and require support in any way, please contact Fraser Thomson through Messenger or Instagram.

Sutor Creek

We are now open as a deli and take away Wednesday through Sunday 10am-8pm. All our meals and wood-fired pizzas are available to order through our online booking system - orders can be made up to a week ahead so if there is a time you specifically want, book early! Our deli is full of creative freshly made salads including Cous Cous & Roasted Vegetables; Mackerel & Duck Egg; Puy Lentil, Rocket & Broccoli. We have dressed crabs, langoustines and lobster (weather dependent) and a lovely range of cooked items like Smoked Haddock & Spinach Quiches and Haggis Scotch Eggs. Items change daily so pop in and see what's new! Our outside seating area is up and running so pop down for a drink, coffee, pizza or snack. We look forward to welcoming you.

Calluna

We have a lovely new range of raincoats (perfect for our Summer climate), joggers, denim jackets and jumpers from our fabulous ICHI brand. ICHI is a Scandinavian label with Japanese influence, embracing both the minimalism of Scandinavian fashion and quirky trend driven styles of subcultures in Japan. Also new-in is the beautiful gold & semi-precious stone jewellery from MyDoris - unique rings, earrings and necklaces that are well designed and sourced from artists around the world. Our Great Plains Spring/Summer line is currently on sale with up to 40% off. Come in, see what's new and maybe find yourself a bargain too! Open daily 10-5pm.

And finally...

A Plea To Parkers

The Community Council has received numerous complaints of inconsiderate car parking throughout the town.

Residents are reminded that in accordance with The Highway Code, Parking, Rule 243:

DO NOT stop or park opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorized parking space.

We hope that you will adhere to this request and thank you for your co-operation on this matter.

We hope you've found this an interesting and informative read. Please let us know what you think, or send suggestions and ideas for articles via editor@cromartylive.co.uk

The Cromarty Live Newsletter team is Jon Palmer, Jeremy Price, David Ross, Laura Shepherd

The Newsletter is currently sponsored by Sutor Creek. Printed copies are available at the Stores for those unable to access the online version.

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