



## Community Council Working On Your Behalf

Alan Plampton reports:

At their latest meeting on Monday 26th October, the C&DCC made a couple of important decisions in their continuing efforts to support the Cromarty community.

### Munlochy/A9 Traffic Junction

Members unanimously agreed that Paige Shepherd, the Chair, should sign a letter of support for an emergency measure, proposed by Highland Councillor Gordon Adam, to immediately introduce an extension to the 50mph speed limit on the A9 between the Kessock Bridge and Artafallie, to help avert a repeat of the tragic events last winter. Details of this letter will be published around town and on the Community Council's website 'Cromarty Live' and Facebook page. It was also agreed by members that we should strongly encourage individual residents of Cromarty to write individually in support of this proposal.

### 100 Steps Volunteer Project

With the amazing support of folk in Cromarty, volunteering to help the community during these challenging times, the C&DCC had hoped to have already started a renovation project on the South Sutor '100 Steps'. However, initial attempts to find funding for this work proved unsuccessful. Despite that disappointment, the C&DCC has already paid for tree surgery to deal with some major safety issues on the 100 Steps and, with expert guidance from our resident project maestro Kari, the C&DCC made the decision to immediately self-fund a slightly reduced scheme. In this way we would be utilising

the skills of our energetic team of volunteers (before they go off and take part time jobs at a Santa's grotto, now that many are sporting new additions in the facial hair department) and have a vastly improved '100 Steps' facility before next Spring. It was agreed that the Community Amenities Fund would be used to finance this project, which we hope you will agree will bring much benefit to the community, both resident and visitor, by improving one of the major amenities of Cromarty. If you would like to get involved then please email the C&DCC on [www.cromartydistrictcc@gmail.com](mailto:www.cromartydistrictcc@gmail.com), and Kari will be in touch with details.

## School Bags To Help For Everyone

On 6th October, with funding from the Tesco's Bags of Help Fund, the Cromarty & District Community Council in partnership with the Cromarty Youth Cafe, presented every Cromarty child of Primary School age, with a bag containing essentials and some fun! It certainly seemed to help produce some smiles, as we all work together in our community, to make life a little more bearable.

On 28th October, with funding from the Middleton Trust Covid-19 Resilience Fund, the Cromarty Youth Cafe in partnership with the Cromarty & District Community Council, presented every Cromarty young person of Academy School age, with a bag containing some essentials and a few bits to help in these challenging times and the lead up to Christmas. Messages of support were included to try and make everyone know they are not alone.

Thanks again to Tesco and the Middleton Trust for their funding, the Cromarty Arts Trust staff at Ardyne for last minute printing, Liz Sutherland (Tesco's Community Champion Manager) and all the volunteers who made this happen.



Some of Cromarty's Academy students receiving their bags. It's all smiles behind those masks - honest.

## Youth Cafe Goes Under Cover

With the clocks going back, afternoons getting darker and the Victoria Hall unable to open, the Cromarty Youth Cafe plans to go under cover!

Members of the Youth Cafe are desperate to keep coming together on Mondays after school, so in an attempt not to disappoint and keep them safe from the Cromarty winter weather, the Youth Cafe are investing in a large waterproof outdoor structure, including lighting, ground covers and furniture. We are hoping this will begin on Monday 2nd November. The ever keen Youth Workers, Fraser and John, will be doing all the work to erect and then dismantle every week. This will be supported by the Victoria Hall to provide certain facilities and infrastructure. No stopping the Young Folk of Cromarty!

## Extra Support From Cromarty Care Project

From Jill Stoner:

'Cromarty Primary School will be doing a lot more learning outside because of COVID, during the coming months. Cromarty Care Project has funded waterproof clothing for all the pupils. We hope they have a great time learning outside but keeping warm and dry. Don't they look great.'

Cromarty Primary and Parents Council said on Facebook: 'Huge thank you to all at Cromarty Care Project who have supported our development of Outdoor Learning by financing outdoor jackets, trousers and hats for every child... for the coming year! We will make very good use of them!'



Space to grow?

## Time For Remembrance

From Flora Thomson:

'This would have been my 33rd year doing the country dwellings poppy appeal round here in Cromarty. I saw a post on the Fortrose page re colouring in poppies to place in folks' windows as a mark of respect for the fallen. I contacted Miss Dunwoody at Cromarty primary and she welcomed the idea as well. Hopefully, we will see lots of poppy pictures in people's windows. Templates can be got from me at the shop if they wish.'

I will also be attending the primary school on November 5th when the children will be laying crosses at the war memorial and hopefully the war graves too.

Next year is 100 years since the Poppy was first issued and I am looking into doing a sponsor for this event so watch this space as they say.'

## Cromarty Advent Window Trail

Becky Richmond writes:

'This Christmas Season, Cromarty Sunday Clubbers along with the congregations of Cromarty West Church and St. Regulus, are hoping to bring some Christmas Cheer to Cromarty by creating an Advent Window Trail. In the early evening of 1st December, the first of 25 windows will appear in a house or business somewhere near you. Each day a new window will appear, as we create a living Advent Calendar and a Trail that will weave its way colourfully through Cromarty. The final windows will be revealed on Christmas Eve, when you will have 2 to look out for, just like the double doors you often find at No. 24 on an Advent calendar.

In recognition of the fact this Christmas season is going to be a little bit different, our hope and aim is to give the people of Cromarty something to enjoy and look forward to each day,

Keep your eyes peeled for more information over the coming month and we look forward to seeing you out and about in December, hunting for the next Advent Window.'

## Pavement Gritting Update

After being a lead volunteer for the Cromarty Gritters for 6 years Duncan Bowers has retired. Duncan did a fantastic job in getting the Sheddie built, training and maintenance for the mechanised snow plough gritting machine, and finally making the logical transition to manual gritters. Huge thanks to him for all his efforts over the years.

So thanks to Duncan we now have a much less complicated and more efficient way of gritting. The town is divided into 4 areas and we plan to have 4 volunteers at one time grit their area- using this method we will do almost all our gritting after school or in the early evenings in less than an hour.

With time passing, our numbers of volunteers have slipped in the wrong direction so we need more volunteers. Inspired by Allan and Constantine we are opening our list of volunteers to the younger people of Cromarty as well as anyone else that wants to help out.

In this time of COVID, if we can prevent one hospital visit due to a fall, we are doing our bit to relieve a hard pressed NHS so that they can concentrate on treating others.

Please contact [nigel.shapcott@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.shapcott@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering or have any questions. If you are younger than 18 you will need parental permission.

Thank you, Nige.

The Cromarty & District Community Council oversees this totally volunteer effort.



The season's look everyone aspires to, surely?

## Active Travel Map

From Julian Paren:

'Transition Black Isle has published the Third Edition of its map The Black Isle by foot, bike, bus and train.

The map is two sided. One side shows in detail nine Black Isle settlements (including Cromarty), while the other covers the Black Isle and beyond to Inverness, Beaulieu and Alness. The overall map shows the main paths and tracks you can walk and suggested routes between Black Isle communities for both hardy and leisure cyclists.

Today most people rely on maps on their mobile phones but those provided free ignore the footpath network entirely. The Ordnance Survey is notoriously out of touch in mapping what is, or is not, a possible track for getting

around. Transition Black Isle's version has been tested and updated by Black Isle residents with their feet on the ground or with their bikes in the woods.

For the new edition, around 40 more footpaths are included. Some are outside the Black Isle proper, and include paths along the Rivers Conon and Beauly, in Strath Peffer, and around Evanton and Alness.

Nearer to Cromarty, the footpath network has been improved with extra paths in the Cromarty Woods and a realignment of part of the Cromarty to McFarquhars Bed path beside Gallow Hill. The map looks forward to the opening of the Mobile Home Park in 2021 and the return of the Cromarty to Nigg Ferry.

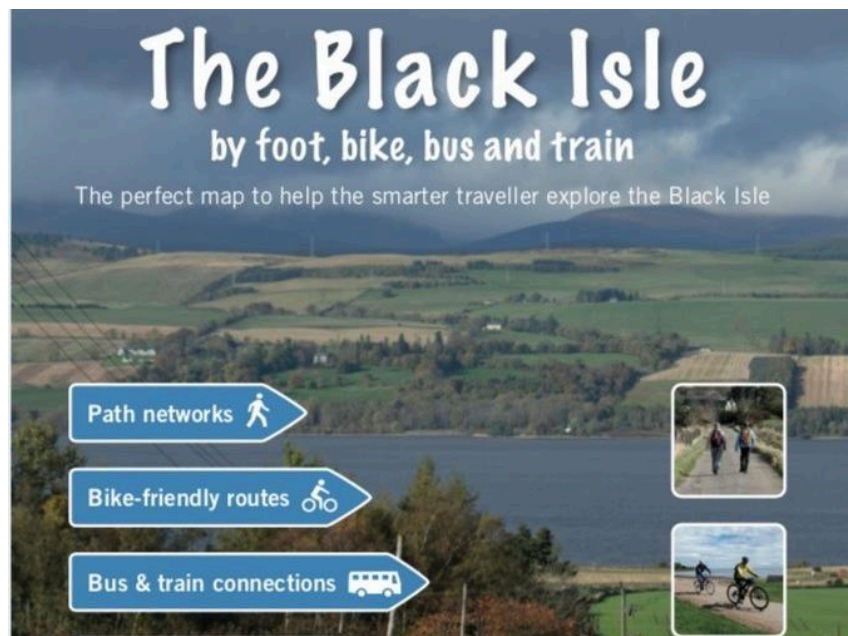
Nobody knows what the future may bring, but focusing one's leisure near to home is certainly good for the planet. The Black Isle is promoted as a good area for Slow Tourism - and with the new Black Isle map there is enough to explore to keep the curious engaged for some time. Don't worry, the minor, minor paths are missing - they are for you to find serendipitously.

Feedback from users will help make future editions a more reliable source of information. I hope the maps encourage more people to explore locally, and reflecting the strap-line of the Black Isle Tourism Team, they may savour the unexpected.

The map is priced 50p and is available from the Cromarty Cheese House and the Emporium, or by post (price £1.15 with postage included)

For more information go to: [www.transitionblackisle.org/active-travel-map](http://www.transitionblackisle.org/active-travel-map)





## James' Support Group Latest

We have attained Scottish registered Charity status and can now expand our services across The Highlands which we intend to do as soon as we are safely able to. Being a registered charity means we can claim 25p in every pound donated through Gift Aid, and that will help tremendously. We are currently applying for funding which can be a minefield, and of course accepting donations via our [webpage](#), you will also find Gift Aid forms which can be downloaded or printed off.

We have placed an advert in The Inverness Courier, The Badenoch & Strathspey Herald, Ross-shire Journal and Caithness Courier every week from the start of October to the end of March to cover the six months peak period for suicides, and hope that we can continue to help anyone who is bereaved by suicide, and anyone who has suicidal thoughts either now or previously.

We will have a pop up shop with hand made crafts in our conservatory, as we did last year, on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th December (entrance via the front door and exit via the back garden door).

Thank you to Marcel & Kitty, Estelle and Lorna for allowing our Mental Health ribbons to be sold on 10 October to mark World Mental Health day. We raised a total of £52.18.

## Our First Face to Face Meeting Since February

We will be in the Maclean suite at Ross County on Thursday 19 November.

Sessions will run for one hour and be limited to six people. You will need to contact us to book your place for either 5 to 6pm, 6 to 7pm or 7 to 8pm.

On arrival you will be temperature tested, then shown to the meeting room where hand sanitisers will be available along with refreshments.

To book please either message on Facebook, our webpage or by text via our 24/7 helpline on 07554 271983. You can also email to [p.mullery61@gmail.com](mailto:p.mullery61@gmail.com)

Kind regards,  
Patrick & Wendy Mullery  
07754 271983 or 07563 572471(24/7 helpline)  
Scottish Charity registration number SC050519

## More Activities To Keep You Motivated

### Have you tried knitting?

'Then enter our competition and win a prize. For all children on the Black Isle.

Please send a photograph of your knitted item with your name, age and school to [kyrie@ibnetworks.net](mailto:kyrie@ibnetworks.net) by 21 December 2020. The prizes are funded by the Karen Napier Fund and the categories are:

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for children aged seven years and under.
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for children aged eight years up to 11 years of age.

We also have a prize for best adult beginner too, for those who started knitting in 2020. Winners will be chosen by an independent panel based on technique, creativity and colour. Good luck!

## Cromarty Firth Communities Questionnaire

I am a Landscape Architecture MA student at Edinburgh University, and this semester we are doing a project on the Cromarty Firth region. I am interested in the Community side of how we look after our landscapes, which is why I am contacting you with a [survey](#).

I wish I could visit in person and just chat to people, but with COVID restrictions it isn't possible right now. If you could spare a few minutes to fill in the questions I would be really grateful. If you would like to email me personally, that would be great too, my university email address is [s1615613@ed.ac.uk](mailto:s1615613@ed.ac.uk)

Thank you in advance for taking part,

Melissa Viguier '

## Arts Trust

The Cromarty Arts Trust continue to successfully run arts and crafts courses in the Stables with reduced participant numbers and numerous COVID precautions and procedures in place. The feedback has been incredibly positive and folk are clearly loving the opportunity to get out of the house and indulge in some fun, absorbing creativity.

We have four courses remaining before the end of the year:

7th & 8th November - CELTIC ART – fully booked

14th Nov – FREE MOTION EMBROIDERY – one place available, due to cancellation

15th Nov – SEWING: CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS – two places available

28th Nov – DRUMMING DAY – three different classes for different age groups: Toddlers (pre-school); Primary age; Secondary age + adults. Numbers limited but places still available.

Full info for all at [www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk](http://www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk) or email [info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk) for details or a booking

form.

And unless regulations change again, we will be holding our annual CHRISTMAS MARKET at the Old Brewery on 28th & 29th November, 10am – 4.30pm. Plenty of unique, quality craft and other items on sale. Come and have a wander through (we will be operating staggered entry at the door and a one-way system to ensure social distancing is adhered to) and pick up some Christmas shopping whilst supporting local makers and vendors!

## Cinema and Film Festival Update

Fraser Mackenzie reports:

We are really disappointed not to be able to run the Cromarty Film Festival this year but hope to be back next year with a bang.

In the meantime we are trying to offer community opportunities within the COVID guidelines including private hires of the Cinema, which have proven to be really popular and, in the coming months, limited public screenings in partnership with Eden Court.

In relation to public film screenings, the Cromarty Cinema Volunteers would like to thank all those who participated in our recent survey around opening the Cinema for public screenings. We had over 120 responses, with over 70% of you comfortable with having public screenings and likely to attend films at the cinema. Top of everyone's mind was COVID of course, and the ability for the Cinema and those who came to watch films to act in accordance with both Scottish Government and our own guidelines, as well as the very clear and real need for us all to have something fun to watch and celebrate being together safely through the winter. Please know we want the Cinema screenings to be safe and healthy for all, and will share more news about our next steps restarting public screenings soon on all the usual channels.

If you are interested in hiring the Cinema you can find all the details on

[www.cromartyandresolisfilmsociety.org/cinema](http://www.cromartyandresolisfilmsociety.org/cinema).

# Middleton Trust

At the October AGM of the Middleton Trust, Alison Vandyke was appointed Chair, following the resignation of Jacquie Ross in the summer. Alison is joined by Trustees Phoebe Fox, Antonia Gordon, Paige Shepherd, Denis Torley & Nora Watson, with Tony Vandyke as Treasurer and Gillian McNaught as Secretary.

A significant change at this year's meeting was the resignation of Stephanie and Marek Kulesza. Both played a vital role in establishing the Middleton Trust eight years ago, following a generous donation by Stephanie's father, Henry McKenzie Johnston in memory of his wife, Marian Middleton and all the Middletons of Rosefarm. Denis Torley, on behalf of Trustees, thanked Stephanie and Marek for their "wise counsel over the years and their good work of building strong foundations for the future".

The Middleton Trust fund is specifically set up to benefit the young people of Cromarty and District and may provide grants to organisations for the purpose of promoting the social, educational, cultural and recreational development of these young people.

This year, Trustees agreed four awards to assist the following organisations in the year 2021-22:

Cromarty Tennis & Sports Club: to train the Club's own tennis coach

Cromarty & Resolis Film Society: to deliver a programme of sessions on all aspects of film making with Cromarty Primary School

Cromarty Community Rowing Group: towards purchase of a winch and new lifejacket for young rowers

Cromarty Youth Café: funding towards the post of Assistant Youth Worker

Trustees will welcome new applications in August 2021 and further details will be published in due course. For any further information please contact the Secretary, Gillian McNaught: [middletontrust@gmail.com](mailto:middletontrust@gmail.com)

# Business News

From Phoebe Fox:

## Sutor Creek

Thank you to everyone in Cromarty who has supported us this year. It has been a challenging time for us all in the hospitality business but we are glad that we made the decision to adapt our wee restaurant into a Take-Away and Deli. This format is proving to be popular so while the Pandemic continues to wreak havoc we will continue as is. If you haven't been in to check us out, drop by and grab a coffee & cake, pick up something delicious from the deli or order yourself a meal cooked by award-winning chefs!

**SPECIALS:** Over the winter, our Specials will be a nod to our old Specials nights in the restaurant; TAPAS week, CURRY week, BBQ week.. keep an eye on our FaceBook & Instagram posts for the menus. Meanwhile, if you have already sampled our menu, then why not try our Fish & Chips, Flank Steak or Sutor Burger - all have been huge hits on the Take Away menu! For all our CHRISTMAS PIZZA fans - that cracker will be back on the menu from Wednesday 25th November.

**DELI:** In addition to a range of freshly made Scottish seafood, salads and desserts, our Deli offers a wide range of sauces, oils, vinegars and olives. New in are a range of food & drink Gift Sets - perfect for pressies or having something a little bit different at home this Christmas. We also have a wide range of Gin, Rum & Whisky including Badachro, Harris and Sutors.

**HOT LIQUEUR DRINKS:** Fancy a chat up with a friend.. Why not meet up under a starry umbrella at Sutor Creek and enjoy a Baileys Hot Chocolate or a Gaelic Coffee? Available from 11am - 7.30pm Wednesday to Sunday.

**DELIVERY:** Delivery within Cromarty now available Wednesday through Sunday 5-7.30pm and Sunday lunch - use our online booking system to select delivery option or request delivery when phoning. For delivery, we ask that a £2 contribution be made towards our Pay It Forward fund. This fund is providing meals to those in the community who may be ill, vulnerable, isolating or

needing a treat. For further information please phone 01381 600 855.

## Calluna

Calluna's Private Shopping Evenings have proved to be a hit! Come on your own, with your partner, or come with your bubble and enjoy complimentary Prosecco while taking care of your Christmas shopping (or treating yourself). The shop is full of Christmas decorations, sacks, stockings & gifts for everyone on your list from young to old! Books & Games; Toiletries from Scottish Fine Soaps; jewellery from Alison Moore, Hot Tomato, My Doris, Lisa Angel & Chris Lewis; accessories from Sophie Alport, POWDER and Tif Tiffy; and clothing from ICHI, Great Plains and Brakeburn (for both men and women). Phone 01381 600 464 to arrange a time that suits you. Open daily 10-5pm. Shop local, spread the word about our amazing independent shops in Cromarty and keep our businesses going this winter! We look forward to welcoming you to Calluna.

And from Jenny Henderson:

## The Royal Re-opens!

We are looking forward to reopening our bar, restaurant and accommodation on Monday 2 November. Relax beside our log fires with a coffee (liqueur versions available!), pint of local ale, or join us for lunch or dinner. Tables available inside, outside (weather permitting but we do have hot water bottles to keep you cosy!) and our menu is also available to takeaway. Dogs are welcome in our bar and conservatory. Please follow us on social media (facebook, Instagram and twitter) for our latest offers. We are now open five days a week (closed Wednesdays and Thursdays) during the winter months. Thanks so much for all your support, it really is appreciated. Please get in touch if you'd like to book a table or order a takeaway, telephone 01381 600217 or email [info@royalhotel-cromarty.co.uk](mailto:info@royalhotel-cromarty.co.uk) Stay safe folks and we look forward to seeing you soon!

## Development Trust



With the completion of the ferry slipways, Cromarty has been amongst the first communities to deliver a project in round two of the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

In June last year the Highland Council announced that six Highland projects had been successful in attracting £1.4m of funding from the £2.8m available in the second round of the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF).

The Cromarty Community Development Trust's (CCDT) award of £300,000 was to be split between two projects – establishing a camp site for motorhomes, and the upgrading of the slipways at Nigg and Cromarty.

The latter would account for roughly two thirds of the award, and the council has now confirmed it was the second Highland project to be completed.

The first was on Skye. Car parking was increased, a picnic area added and two composting toilets were built, all at the foot of the mountain Bla Bheinn (Blaven). This is on the road between Broadford and Elgol. The work was completed in March just before the national lockdown.

But it wasn't until three months later, and after many setbacks, that the CCDT managed to strike a deal with Simpsons the Beaulieu-based building firm to take on the slipways.

The CCDT would like to pay tribute to Simpsons for the manner in which they have gone out of their way to work with the community.

As anyone can see the decaying and disintegrating slipways that the ferry operator had to work with these



past few years, have been replaced by impressively engineered structures.

Their length and width have been significantly increased – now 50m x 8m previously 40m x 5m. So ferry users will no longer have to fear embarking/disembarking from - or on to – the two narrow strips of concrete which at certain stages of the tide didn't even reach the water - always a bit of a disadvantage for a ferry operation.

The trust is currently negotiating with Simpsons with a view to them undertaking the development of the motorhome site at Whitedykes, once the planning process is completed.

## The Lease

CCDT has signed a lease with the Cromarty Estate in the form of the Wakelyn Trust to lease the slipways for 25 years at the peppercorn rent of £20 a year.

It is being registered in the Registers of Scotland in Edinburgh. The Highland Council is taking out a standard security over the lease. This is to protect the publicly financed RTIF investment, in the event of the development trust ceasing to operate. Hopefully that will never happen, but if it did the council would take over the lease to ensure a ferry continues to operate.

Under the terms of the lease the development trust is effectively limited to using the slipways for the operation of a ferry. The CCDT is, however, responsible for maintaining and repairing the slipways.

This has all involved some complex legal negotiations between the trust and the estate. The latter's legal costs are being deducted from its circa £15,000 contribution to the CCDT's projects.

## One More Photo of Youngsters To Finish

The Sunday Club has been back for another outing last weekend. After a couple of sunny sessions the weather was not very favourable this time but still 11 Cromarty children braved the drizzle and cold temperatures to go

on a scavenger hunt about local Saints - interestingly there are at least 6 Saints with (sometimes vague) relations to Cromarty!

The final clues led the children to the Community Garden at the Courthouse (which usage was gratefully offered by its trustees), so the children could enjoy hot chocolate and marshmallows from the open fire.

Because everyone loved being around the fire it was decided to have another session with stories and hot chocolate on Sunday 29 November at 3.30pm.

Cromarty Sunday Club is run by the local church congregations and is open for all young Cromarty Children. Sessions are always free and fun! Currently outdoors only, all activities are run in line with Scottish Government Coronavirus guidelines so numbers of attendees are limited. For more information or how to get involved get in touch with Carsten Flieger on 07958 550333 or [carsten@mylittlecampfire.com](mailto:carsten@mylittlecampfire.com).



## And Finally...

The Cromarty Live Newsletter is two years old! As well as providing vital information for residents it has a global readership with subscribers across the UK, in the US and Eastern Europe. The format is fairly standard and pretty simple to operate. Putting it all together takes three to four hours a month. If anyone would like to step up, Jon Palmer would quite like to step down. A proper hand-over would be arranged. So... Any budding journalists, editors,

or communications experts out there, please get in touch.  
(Visor optional).

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](mailto: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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