



## Spring is Upon Us

It's been a rollercoaster of a month: from snow, to sledging, to -12 degrees Celcius, to bright sunshine, snowdrops, and birdsong... dare we say it, spring is here?

Here's a round-up of what has been happening — and what is to come — in our little town.



## Firstly, a Big Thank You

*Paige Shepherd writes:*

A huge thank you goes out to our amazing team of gritters for their contributions during a really long and hard winter. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed as you braved all the elements to keep the town safer.

A special mention to our young volunteers also who have had a great impact!

Thank you all again  
- The Cromarty and District Community Council



Just so much snow... Thanks to those who helped grit our streets!

## **Cromarty Community Development Trust**

*Sheila Currie from the Cromarty Community  
Development Trust writes:*

### **Inner Moray Development Plan**

Several directors attended the community meeting with the Highland Council Planner this week to hear about and comment on the Inner Moray Firth 'main issues' report.

This is the 'listening phase' before the draft Development Plan comes out later this year, so it is vital that communities get their wants – and our 'not-wants' – into the ears of the planners.

The Development Trust will be making a submission to the Council, so let us know what you want us to say. Endorsement of the Sandilands Field land for housing would be useful, as well as comments about any other potential housing sites that are identified in the Report. It is useful to remind the Council that we DO need housing in Cromarty, just the right types in the right places.

It was interesting to hear the Planner say they would be open to extending the camper van site to the west (ie away from existing houses) and that the landowner wasn't opposed. Highland Council reduced the number of camper van pitches from 14 to 10 in their planning permission, so this is potentially good news, though we'd need to find more funding for that.

We believe there is a demand for new workshop spaces in Cromarty, so that folk can set up local businesses. Please let us know and let Highland Council know.

We also know of interest in community food growing in Cromarty (as well as the allotments which are run by individuals) and please let us and the Council know of this interest and where it could be.

### **Slipways**

We hear the ferry service is hoping to start in May, which is excellent news. We'll be getting some safety markings and signage done in time.

We were appalled though to hear that Highland Council are thinking about cutting their subsidy to our ferry service; and they need to be told that this is madness, especially after so much public money has been spent on upgrading the slipways.

### **Barn**

The Trust is meeting the Sutor Gin people this Friday (26 February) to discuss their proposals for working with the community on a gin project at the Barn.

This is not our only option for the Barn, so we welcome other ideas and proposals. Of course any proposals – by a business or from the community – will be fully consulted on with the community before anything is confirmed.

## **Housing**

Still no reply from Albyn Housing re our offer to take back the land for housing and we hope to keep at them to commit to building or releasing the land.

## **Thank you Dave!**

And this month we say farewell and many, many thanks to Dave Ross as he and Mary move to Inverness. Dave has been an utter stalwart, with his knowledge of land politics, excellent relationship with our lawyer and his journalist's eye for getting to the point and finding things out.

We hope he'll continue to stay involved and we all know he's made a huge difference to the Trust and to Cromarty.

## **Cromarty Harbour**

*Pat Haynes from the Cromarty Harbour Update writes:*

### **Repairs and Restoration**

The Harbour Trust plans to start the next phase of harbour repairs in early March. Work is planned to re-lay the most uneven areas of the granite sett surfacing on the West pier and deal with undertake grouting where necessary to address some of the cavities in the structure. This work is funded by a Historic Environments Coast and Waters Heritage grant and the FCC Communities Foundation with additional support from the Cromarty Trust and Friends of Cromarty Harbour.

The Trust has also recently been successful in gaining an additional grant of £30,000 from Marine Scotland's fund to support ports and harbours infrastructure projects where their income has been adversely impacted by the Covid pandemic. This has all been rather last minute and the grant needs to be spent by the end of March but the additional funding will allow the Trust to repair most - if not all - of the sandstone surfacing of the mole. Lochshell Engineering has been appointed as contractors for the

project. The restrictions caused by the pandemic have also meant that the trainees from UHI Construction and Built Environment course, whom we had expected could participate in this project will no longer be available, as the start of their training has been deferred until September, we do however hope that they can become involved in future projects.

We are hopeful that activities around the harbour will be able to return to some sort of normality this coming season but revenue from harbour activities barely covers routine maintenance even without the limitations imposed by the pandemic. The Trust, through the volunteer working group is looking to the future and working to source funding for further repairs to the piers and the mole and also to undertake a wave attenuation project to protect the harbour basin from strong tides and storm surges. In the next few weeks, we plan to install three additional finger pontoons and a new ladder on the wall of the west pier.

Our small maintenance team of volunteers has been busy over the winter carrying out routine repairs to make the harbour ready for the summer and is always looking for more volunteers to help, whether that be as a member of the maintenance team or on an ad hoc basis if you have some spare time and the relevant skills or just plain enthusiasm for helping to preserve and develop our beautiful harbour.

Please email [info@cromartyharbour.org](mailto:info@cromartyharbour.org) if you would like to get involved.

### **Health and Safety**

Recently a swimmer cut herself in some old wiring close to the outer wall on the west pier. No serious harm was done and a full recovery is expected. However, the incident serves as a reminder that with some 250 years of active history our working harbour can still present hazards. With wild swimming taking place outside of the harbour, I would ask that all swimmers be careful when they are close to harbour walls as they can trap all manner of debris from the tides. The area is regularly checked but our volunteers can't be on patrol 24/7. In the highly unlikely event of something occurring, please report it to

our harbourmaster or email [info@cromartyharbour.org](mailto:info@cromartyharbour.org).  
Be safe and enjoy.

## **Harbour Jigsaw**

Last orders (for now). We still have a small supply of this season's charity harbour jigsaw ready to go. Thinking about an Easter present to remind friends of Cromarty? Looking to wind time down until 26 April? Priced at £22, with free local delivery, just drop an email to [friends@cromartyharbour.org](mailto:friends@cromartyharbour.org) to order or go online to [cromartyharbour.org](http://cromartyharbour.org) when it can be done online. Many thanks to all that have supported this initiative. You will have read above that new works are about to start, your contributions to Friends of Cromarty Harbour have assisted in bringing this latest phase of the renovation to fruition.

## **Cromarty and District Community Council**

*Alan Plampton writes:*

### **Private Use of CCTV Cameras in Cromarty**

The Community Council has had a number of requests for guidance with regard to the private use of CCTV cameras in Cromarty. It is a sensitive issue that covers both the personal security and privacy rights of many residents. It is also a difficult legal subject.

The Scottish Government guidance on regulations for the use of CCTV gives help, for Black Isle residents who are unsure of these regulations, and how they apply to them. This can be found on: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-strategy-public-space-cctv-scotland/pages/2/>

We also include the link to a case history, which may be of interest, as it gives an insight into what can happen if CCTV regulations are not followed. Users of CCTV have a duty of care to their neighbours and other residents when using any surveillance technology, which may also include 'smart' doorbells. Especially when the front door opens on to public property: <https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out->

[law/news/scottish-court-issues-damages-to-couple-over-distress-caused-by-neighbours-use-of-cctv](#)

But these are not the only information sources available, which is what makes it such a difficult subject, so we also suggest people, concerned with the use of CCTV, do their own research – Google CCTV regulation Scotland.

Whatever you read or think, we suggest that all residents in Cromarty read, and follow, the Scottish Government guidance, but above all, attempt to be a good neighbour, especially in these times when we all desperately need the support of each other.

## **Business News**

### **Sutor Creek**

Until the next phase of lockdown lifts, we will continue to be open from 10-8pm Friday to Sunday weekly with delivery in Cromarty available 5-7.30pm. We offer starters, mains, desserts, wood-fired pizza, deli and a selection of drinks - all available to order online or phone us on 01381 600 855. Website [here!](#)

We have added to our collection of single malts and craft gins - pop in for a look at what's available in our Deli! Open from 10-8pm for ready made meals, deli items and our ever growing selection of drinks including Cromarty Brewery and fine wines!

### **Calluna**

We are now online! Visit [www.callunacromarty.co.uk](http://www.callunacromarty.co.uk) and you will find clothing, footwear, accessories, gifts and cards. All available with free delivery within Cromarty or can be shipped anywhere in the UK. If you are looking for something specific give us a call on 01381 600 464 or email [info@callunacromarty.co.uk](mailto:info@callunacromarty.co.uk).

**WIN** a collection of Calluna Bath & Body products for Mother's Day - nominate who you think should win on our Calluna page on FaceBook or Instagram and win this gorgeous gift with a £55 value. Can also be shipped to any UK address in time for Mother's Day. Good luck!

### **Ingrid's House**

We have missed seeing all our customers and are hoping to be allowed it open at the end of April with all other non-essential shops. In the meantime, we can offer local delivery or we can post out so if there is something you can't wait for please email us on [ingridshouse@gmail.com](mailto:ingridshouse@gmail.com). We can also offer a personal shopping experience via Zoom, WhatsApp or FaceTime where we walk you through the shop using video and then can deliver or post out your shopping.

We hope to see you very soon!

Best wishes, Ingrid and Pete



## Lockdown Banner

*Becky Richmond from Cromarty Sunday Club writes:*

Now that we know that the current restrictions will still be with us for a little longer Cromarty Sunday Club is inviting all children and teenagers to **design a flag with images or words that illustrate something you are looking forward to being able to do again once the lockdown restrictions ease for good.**

We will provide you with a blank flag and some fabric pens!

We would like to have enough flags to be able to decorate the lamp posts between the West Church, St Regulus and all along to the primary school.



To sign up to design a flag please reply on Facebook, email [becky@brachla.co.uk](mailto:becky@brachla.co.uk) or contact Carsten on 07958 550333.

Please let us know by 5 March if you're up for it - it would be great to have flags from as many young people as possible!

CROMARTY SUNDAY CLUB, ST REGULUS AND WEST CHURCH

# CROMARTY'S LOCKDOWN BANNER

CALLING ALL CROMARTY CHILDREN AND  
TEENAGERS

Help us make Cromarty colourful by  
designing a flag for our Lockdown  
Banner.

We'll provide instructions and all the  
materials

To sign up or for more info contact  
Becky at [becky@brachla.co.uk](mailto:becky@brachla.co.uk)  
or  
Carsten on 07958 550 333

## It's Ok Not To Be Ok

*Wanda Mackay writes:*

After many weeks of hard work, I would like to say a huge thank you to our S5 pupil Tilly Grist, in conjunction with the Wellbeing in the Black Isle Partnership. We thank Tilly for the time and effort put into creating this poster. We would also like to express our gratitude to those

involved, across our Black Isle community, for supporting and promoting the important message –

**“It’s ok to say that you’re not ok!”**

**It’s ok to say that you’re not ok!**

1 in 4 of us will experience mental health issues at some point. There’s no shame in that. If you’re concerned about yourself or someone else, the following helplines can offer support and advice.

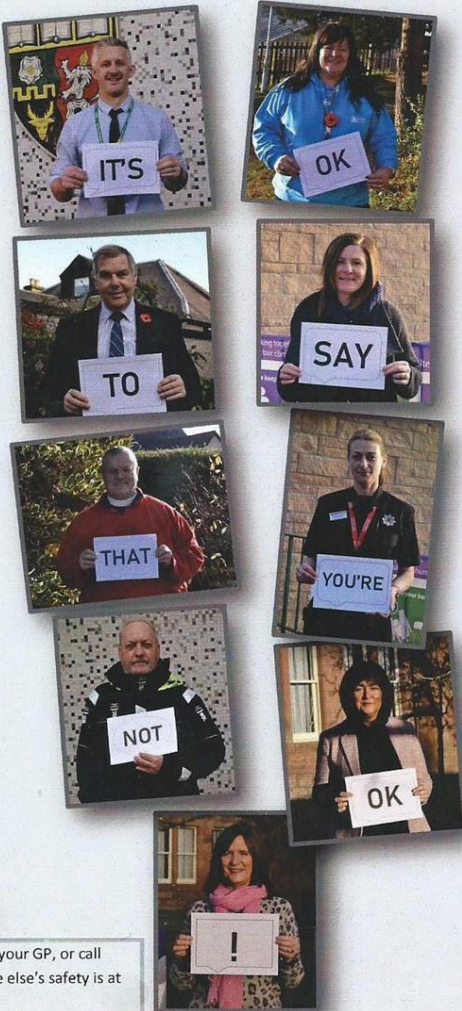
**Samaritans**  
116 123  
Confidential support for people with feelings of distress or despair.

**Mind**  
0300 123 3393  
Advice and support for anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

**Breathing Space**  
0800 8385 87  
For anyone over the age of 16 who is feeling low, anxious or depressed.

**Childline**  
0800 1111  
Free, private and confidential service for people up to 18 years old.

For further support, please contact your GP, or call NHS24 on 111. If your own or someone else’s safety is at risk, call 999.



Tilly's great poster.

## **A Message from James Support Group**

*Related to the piece above, Patrick and Wendy Mullery from James Support Group write:*

Our "it's ok not to be ok" campaign is going from strength to strength, with support from several 'famous' faces, some 'infamous' faces and others all willing to support us by giving a video saying "it's ok not to be ok."

Coverage this week in the Inverness Courier and Ross-shire Journal gave a good report of this, along with online including the First Ministers offering which we have had since last February. We were just waiting for the right time to use it and launch this campaign at the start of January.

Thank you to all who have responded to this call—I am sure you are helping people's general wellbeing by raising awareness that it really is ok not to be ok: just reach out and talk.

Our 24/7 Helpline is 07563 572471

The Samaritans 24/7 Helpline is 116123

NHS 111 is also a 24/7 service

Regardless of your problem, please do not suffer alone—we are all here for you and happy to listen.

## **Highland Environment Forum Event**

*Caroline Vawdrey, on behalf of the Highland Environment Forum, writes:*

We all know that tourism is essential to the Highland economy, and yet it brings its challenges to communities and nature too. An online seminar organised by Highland Environment Forum on 'Highland tourism, landscape and nature' will be considering how we can encourage tourism and tourist behaviour that benefits the region and cares for nature. The seminar will include contributions from Visit Scotland, Highland Council, John Muir Trust, and Wester Ross Biosphere with plenty of time for questions. To find out more and to book go to <https://heftourism.eventbrite.com>.

You can find out more about the Highland Environment Forum at <https://www.highlandenvironmentforum.info>

## **Purple Friday**

The Fortrose Academy Equality and Diversity Group celebrated Friday the 26th in recognition of Purple

Friday, a day to stand against homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. It's a day for showing our support for LGBT+, Equality & Diversity.

The day is named after the purple stripe on the LGBT rainbow flag which represents "spirit". Here's a link to a short [PowerPoint](#) for more information.



## **Cromarty Arts Trust Latest**

*Georgia Macleod writes:*

Rather than cancel our popular Ukulele Weekend for the second year running, we will be holding it as a virtual event this year on 20th & 21st March. Regular tutor, Finlay Allison, reports that his Celtic Connections workshops in January were hugely successful with folk joining in from around the world! Whilst we'll miss the craic and evening entertainment of our usual live event, we hope the online workshops attract newbies from far afield and those that prefer to learn from the comfort and anonymity of their own home.

You can choose to sign up to as many or few of the workshops as you choose, so if you enjoyed the first one, you can always book a ticket to do another at the last minute. Finlay's daughter Amy will be taking the 'First Steps in Uke' class on the Saturday afternoon, intended

for those new (though not complete beginners) to the instrument.

Workshops cost £10 + booking fee each. All information and links to book tickets are on the relevant page of our website, [www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk](http://www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk)

Please note that the Notebook Making Workshop and Introduction to Willow Weaving that were initially programmed for 27th & 28th March, have now been moved to the 1st & 2nd May respectively. There is currently ONE place remaining on the Willow workshop and several on the Notebook Making.

Many of our later courses are filling up fast so please do take a look at the website and get in touch if you fancy trying your hand at arts & crafts this year.

And don't forget...we now do Gift Vouchers (for any amount) that can be redeemed against our workshops, events and gigs (once they return!). Just contact the office if you'd like to purchase one: [info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk)



Happy folks during a workshop with tutor Finlay Allison.

## **Another Thank You**

A big thanks to Cromarty Rising for sponsoring this newsletter for the next 12 months (and thank you to Sutor Creek for their support in getting us this far)! We really couldn't write this without you.

## And So Our Newsletter Draws to A Close...

And as quickly as the snow melted in Cromarty, this newsletter comes to a rather abrupt ending. Thank you for reading!

Cheers for this little town and for the arrival of our gorgeous spring.

Hope is on the horizon!

- *The Editorial Team*

We hope you've found our newsletter 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 and Catriona Mallows.

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

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