

# The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue 63 June 2013

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## Resignations Trigger Community Council Election

**D**ue to the resignation of six Members of the Community Council an interim election is required as only two Members remain; insufficient to form a quorate. The election is to take place between 12<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June by postal ballot. Highland Council is responsible for co-ordinating and overseeing the electoral process and for Community Council protocols.

The reason for the resignations relates to a previous resignation of one Community Council member back in January. Following that resignation the CC planned to discuss the appointment of a new member in private. However, two CC members were concerned that this was not the correct procedure and therefore sought advice from the Highland Council Ward Manager, Mr Charles Stephens. He confirmed, in a letter to the chairman, that the CC should hold private meetings only in '*exceptional circumstances*' and that '*filling of that vacancy... is clearly a matter of public interest and any discussion about it should be in public*'. He further noted that '*the general rule should be that **all items** of business of the Community Council should be discussed in public*' and asked the CC to '*ensure this happens*'. It was in response to the Ward Manager's advice that five CC members decided to resign.

## Defibrillator comes to Stratherrick

**S**hortly there will be a community defibrillator located at the Village Hall in Gorthleck. This will be open and available to all and will be protected by the new CCTV system to be installed in the hall. The funding for this came partially from a collection at the funeral of Mathew Rickets which was kindly organised by his parents Steve & Jane. A top up grant was received from the Community Trust.

To take this to another level we are proposing a community/ first responder for our area and we need people from the community to come forward to man this. Full training will be given by NHS Highland and a recognised First Aid course will be part of the training.

A meeting is planned for **Tuesday 18th of June @ 7.30 pm** in the Gorthleck Hall to explain what the intentions are and how to take this forward. If you are interested in helping your local community please come along and find out what it is all about. **Contact** [neil.kirkland@sfrs.org](mailto:neil.kirkland@sfrs.org) - **Foyers Fire Crew.**

**Community Website** [www.stratherrick.net](http://www.stratherrick.net)

## Margaret Davidson - Independent Highland Councillor Aird and Loch Ness May 2013

It was with some sadness that I heard of the resignations from the Community Council. I have worked with Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council for 6 years now and have always enjoyed working with all members. I would like to pay tribute to those who have resigned and thank them for their years of service.

Meanwhile many things are still happening in Stratherrick and Foyers and I will use this opportunity to update you on several.

**Safe routes to school at Foyers and Gorthleck.** We still need to complete the footpath in Foyers and I am waiting for results of questionnaire in Gorthleck.

**Roads.....**Keeping at Highland Council to get road improvements moving. RES ( Dumnaglass have almost completed their work. Corriegarth is dragging its heels and we have no dates and details).

**Housing proposals at Gorthleck.** I hope there will be proposals ready for the new community council in June.

**Glenlia Foyers.** Getting the drainage and road repaired AT LAST.

**Sub Station application.** We are still waiting an application to be lodged. I have asked for the site to be pegged out to see clearly where it is.

**Foyers Pier Improvements.** Scotland Canals (British Waterways) are drawing up plans that will come back to the community. We also need to discuss what improvements we can make to the Pier itself, for safety, plus information for those coming ashore.

**New Parking space at Foyers.** Still in negotiation and working up a design.

**Old school house at Foyers.** We need to discuss again. Any ideas and problems please get in touch

Margaret Davidson 01463 861424 07818-015689 Margaret.davidson@highland.gov.uk

### Community Benefit and your Community Council

From Alex Sutherland

I'll begin by emphasising that these are my own views based on my experience as the local Community Benefit negotiator for almost nine years.

Our Council has the highest concentration of green energy schemes per square mile of any in Scotland and if we don't stand up and fight for the best deal in community benefit payments the money may disappear towards Inverness and Highland Council's coffers.

Unfortunately, cash payments to soften the disturbance and disruption from wind farms and hydro schemes are here to stay and local Community Councils have to obtain the best deal while somehow distancing themselves from the planning application process. However the political enthusiasm for these schemes may secure no more than damage limitation.

At present the Community Trust through the Community Council receives income from Glendoe, and River Fechlin hydro schemes and Dunmaglass wind farm agreed and part paid. Negotiations are ongoing in respect of Aberchalder and Garrogie hydro, Corriegarth and Dell wind farms. Knockie

hydro and Stronelairig wind farms are also in train but simpler because the developers have already offered the recommended rate per megawatt output. The sums of money are very significant, and we have already had to take our neighbouring community council to arbitration to win back several hundred thousand pounds of benefit from the Glendoe scheme spread over 25 years.

It is important that whoever is appointed should be determined and capable of some hard nosed bargaining. It is also essential that our Community Trust and Community Council don't simply sit on a large bank account but show that they can invest these funds to generate income and benefits long after the annual payments run out, and, dare I say it not waste time bickering about points of administrative detail .

In 5 years time we could be in receipt of an annual income in excess of £500,000 per annum. Any new Council and newly appointed negotiator has to pick up on these live negotiations as an early priority. I wish them well for as you know I have tendered my resignation. Please let your new Councillors know if you think this is an important issue.

# PROFILES OF CANDIDATES FOR THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION

## Ian Bateman - Whitebridge

Ian's family moved to Stratherrick (Knockie) in 1900. He is married to Fiona. They are both teachers and have lived in Whitebridge since 2006. After a spell heading up an International School in Kenya, Ian put teaching on hold to be near to his parents in the latter stages of their retirement at Ardoch. Fiona is currently a p/t assistant at Foyers Primary.

## Iain Brown, Whitebridge

My wife (Jane MacNally) and I moved back to the area 16 years ago to be near our families who have lived in the area over several generations. Both children do/will attend Kilchuimen. My mother taught in Foyers and my father was our County Councillor, employed at the aluminium plant in the early 60's. As a civil servant, due governance, openness and public accountability is the norm which is how all community organisations should operate. I will bring this inclusive, respectful, constructive, partnership approach to bear when representing our community's opinions and interests. I also bring skills in successful negotiation, multimillion pound Project Management and knowledge of the Renewables industry, as my employer's N. Scotland Renewables Liaison Officer. I believe these skills and knowledge will help us build a sustainable community – energy efficient and affordable housing, transport for all needs and ages, local care services, hence local employment.

## Martin John Donnelly – Craigdarroch House Hotel, Foyers.

Myself and my wife Elinor moved here 6 years ago. Now with a young family and happily settled in the area, I feel it's a good time to give something back to the community. My interest is to build on existing improvements within Stratherrick and to get involved in making the area the best it could be for all who live here. What with bringing up my kids here and running the local hotel, I have a long term interest in Foyers and am committed to ensuring it will always be a lovely place to live and work.

## Katie Ellam, Easter Boleskine

Lived in Foyers since 2004. Aged 60. Son, daughter-in-law and 3 grandsons also live in Foyers. "I feel that the Community deserves fuller information made available more promptly so that residents have increased opportunity to make informed choices regarding community circumstances and business. Working with the more experienced Councillors I hope to achieve a pro-active, accessible, welcoming, open and transparent Community Council. As a prospective candidate I would like to offer the community my commitment to ensuring that all information relating to community business is distributed and that response and opinion will be encouraged and respected. I have administration skills to offer and I believe I could bring honesty and openness working within the Council to eliminate the use of confidential, private or secret issues. In short I pledge to offer and bring three things to the community, information, information, information".

## Catriona Fraser – Gorthleck

Married with two children, I have lived in Stratherrick for 25 years. In the past I served on the Parent Council of Stratherrick Primary and, along with the late Marion Simpson, was instrumental in the formation and running of the Stratherrick and Foyers Nursery. At present I am the Treasurer of Boleskine Shinty Club.

In my opinion, if our community is to be sustainable we need:

- 1 Reliable and convenient public transport provision which is essential for all sections of the community.
- 2 Affordable rural housing which is important not only for our elderly residents but also for young people to ensure the community's economic future.
- 3 Thriving local industries, new and traditional, working in harmony with the environment.

If elected, it would be a privilege to serve this community and I hope that people would find me approachable, a good listener and willing to take on board their concerns.

## Sarah (Sally) McGuire, Glenlia, Foyers

A permanent resident in the district for 6 years although a member of the community for 12. "I was a founder member of the Glenlia Residents Community Association where I served on the board as Secretary. During this time I came to know many people in the wider community and benefited greatly from the growing sense of community generated from the interaction of the different Stratherrick wide groups, particularly during the year 2012 with the Olympic programme and Jubilee Celebrations. It is this spirit I wish to bring to the C.C. with a more open and interactive approach. I have been attending C.C. meetings for most of my time here, sometimes the only non-member, and feel it is a duty to contribute to the wider community in any way I can be of service. As a retired IT lecturer who worked for many years in the charity sector I feel I have much to offer".

## Ros Rowell, Torness

Lived here for 30 years. "I'm a country person and love living where I do. I've raised my family here and run a local business. I've just turned 60 and it's perhaps time for me to contribute to local affairs. I'm an outgoing, friendly, fun person, and will always speak up if it will help anyone. I'm standing for the community council as I'd like to encourage communication and co-operation between the people of the area. I would be happy to be part of an accountable, easily accessible, democratic community council with meetings where all are welcome and can have a say, and where people can also find out what is going on. Anyone who would like to contact me about my application to the cc, just phone 01463 751314, or email me at [artist@highlandart.com](mailto:artist@highlandart.com) "

# SUMMARISED VERSION OF MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST TAKEN FROM COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Full minutes can be seen on community website including issues relating to roads etc.

Website: [www.stratherrick.net](http://www.stratherrick.net)

## JANUARY 2013

**Foyers Public Toilets** - Draft Lease and offer of let received. Advised by solicitor that Lease is satisfactory. Need to know costs of required work, cleaning and maintenance, and an approach made to Community Trust for funds. Advertise for someone to clean and maintain.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ordinary A/c Balance: £1738.53 (includes £362 for Monument survey) Project A/c Balance: £2286.94  
Cheques cleared since last meeting: £242.80 - Scalpings

### **Policing Matters**

F. C. requested Police to prosecute anyone found removing timber from FC land without permission.

### **Draft New Articles of Association for Community Trust -**

New Articles give the Trust more flexibility of action in a number of areas, including energy efficiency. Changing the name to include 'Development' is intended to signal the Trust's aim to be active in the community and to be seen to be spending money well and re-investing in the community. It has nothing to do with housing development. Alex Sutherland noted that some Trusts have been criticised for being too cautious and not getting money out into the community. As previously reported, a new survey of community wishes is to be carried out, and it is hoped the new Articles will help to achieve some of these.

CC Members felt a Trust quorum should be four rather than three, and the number of CC members on the Trust should be three. They agreed grant applicants attend Trust meetings in order to clear up any queries quickly; more publicity for the Trust is desirable - easily accessible list of names of Trust Directors and a contact name and details. Discussion on length of service of Directors, and the need for continuity with experienced members. Query regarding age limits. Agreed it would be desirable to have a younger Trust member. Lower age limit of 16 suggested. Discussion on method of appointing Directors - whether any benefit in electing Directors or continuing with current method of applicants with most relevant skills/knowledge being selected by existing Directors. Important to ensure independent continuation of the Trust in the event of the CC ceasing to exist.

### **A.O.B.**

Letter of resignation from Mr Fraser Ross.  
Mr Brown - Reported the Forestry Commission is setting up conditions for community involvement in renewable

projects on FC land.

## FEBRUARY 2013

Mr Alex Reading - **Green Highland Renewables** presentation on the proposed hydro scheme on F.C.land at Allt Luaidhe, Whitebridge

**Foyers Public Toilets:** Quotations being prepared for hot water. Comfort Scheme payment confirmed as £200 per month - April to October. Cllr. Davidson suggested the Discretionary Budget to cover hot water installation.

**Winter Resilience Scheme:** Mrs Cameron reports sites identified around the district for grit heaps and extra grit bins. Plenty of volunteers and Scheme should be in place for next winter. Reminder in the Boleskine Bulletin next Autumn suggested.

**Resignation of CC Member.** Notice given to discuss this item in private at next CC meeting to look at options for filling this vacancy.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ordinary A/c Balance: £1383.53 (includes £362 for Monument survey)  
Cheques cleared £27.00 - Remembrance Day wreath; £168.00 - Boleskine Bulletin, printing of Minutes; £150.00 - Solicitor, Lease for public toilets Project A/c Balance: £2286.94 (unchanged)

**Policing Matters:** P.C. Mathieson reported on Public Contact Project - all non-emergency calls will go to 101 phone number which will be routed through Inverness. Requests to contact local officers will have to be made through the control room.

### **Community Trust New Articles of Association:**

Matters raised at the last meeting were discussed with Trust Directors at a special meeting called by them. A number of queries were taken back to Solicitor, minor amendments made, and further advice received, resulting in a final draft. Mr MacNally wished the Articles checked by another solicitor. After discussion no agreement was reached so the Chairman called a vote. Check by another solicitor: those in favour 2 (Mr MacNally wished his name recorded as in favour); those against 5. Proposal not passed. A number of items were raised in relation to the Articles, all of which had been discussed at the last CC meeting and at the meeting with the Trust Directors. Members discussed acceptance of the Articles as now presented - no agreement was reached so the Chairman called a vote. Accept Articles as now presented: those in favour 5; those against 2 (Mr MacNally wished his name recorded as against). Proposal passed. Additional CC members were needed for the vacant CC places on the Trust. Mrs Merther and Mrs Cameron agreed to fill the vacancies.

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES continued

**March Minutes.** Not available at this time. Minutes were taken at the meeting but these have not been ratified due to collapse of the Community Council in April.

**April Minutes.** Only three members of the Community Council were in attendance , therefore a quorum was not in place. Statements of resignation were read out by Alex Sutherland on behalf of Mark Houston, Liz Merther, Kenny Fraser and Sandy MacPherson.

### Community Council Update

The Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council is simply in abeyance until quorate again. This means that no new business can be taken forward, but anything already discussed and agreed is being dealt with by the Highland Council which is the regulatory body for Community Councils.

There was no complaint made against any ex-Community Council members this year. We sought advice from Charles Stephen (Ward Manager) regarding our concerns with the minutes and private meetings. Charles Stephens sent the Chair an email from the Highland Council stating that the co-opting of new members was not a reasonable reason for private meeting.

We do NOT agree with private C.C. meetings to discuss community business. This issue was brought up a year ago by us, and led to the ward manager addressing the SFCC and stressing the importance of following the constitution, standing orders and code of conduct set out by the council for Community Councils to follow. We both strongly feel that all C.C. business should be open and transparent to everyone in the community.

We look forward to continue working with the community and with the new CC members.

We would like to give our thanks for the amount of support received now and over the last 14 months.

**Community Council Members : Mrs Morag Cameron & Mr Liam MacNally.**

### LETTER TO THE BULLETIN FROM RESIGNED MEMBERS OF THE CC.

In a matter of importance to the community we are extremely disappointed that the BB has refused to publish the Statement issued by the resigned members of the Community Council, or to print it as a one page insert paid for by ourselves. This Statement can be downloaded from the official community website: [www.stratherrick.net](http://www.stratherrick.net) or can be seen in local notice boards. If anyone has difficulty in accessing this they should contact any of the resigned CC members for a copy. **Liz Merther ex Secretary on behalf of resigned members: Mark Houston, Kenny Fraser, Sandy MacPherson, Alex Sutherland**

***B.B. REPLY: The BB has always had a policy whereby we do not accept any items which contain defamatory statements against named individuals and which could be construed as libellous. We would advise that the decision not to print the Statement was debated most sincerely. BB Committee***

### EDITORIAL

The recent resignations of some Community Council members are a tragedy as their hard work has always been appreciated. All has not been well for some time now; there have been criticisms of the behaviour of some CC members which relate to the planning application of the Lower Foyers Caravan Park. Whatever has been said and by whom is neither here nor there. It takes two to tango and the CC should have remained professional and detached. Instead, defamatory letters and statements published by some CC members that accuse other CC members as well as, collectively, a great many innocent members of the

community, are unacceptable, insulting and indeed libellous. Private meetings are certainly not appropriate when dealing with community matters. Issues that are not perceived to be open and transparent lead to mistrust and Highland Council were quite correct in advising the CC to avoid private meetings. Let us hope that the new Community Council will have learned the lessons of the past ensuring that there is always openness and transparency, fairness and objectivity and, when presented with genuine concerns within the community, will listen and take heed. We need to move forward and it is up to us to elect and take an interest in the business of those who represent us.

## **Stratherrick and Foyers Community Development Trust – June update**

**Fiona Ambrose, Secretary, Evergreen, Inverfarigaig, IV2 6XR - tel.no.486717: e mail ctsecretary@stratherrick.net**

As requested at the AGM, we will ensure that the community is better informed of the work of the Trust. We will initially 1) Provide an update in each Boleskine Bulletin 2) Post approved Minutes on the Community Website, on Noticeboards and in key locations. 3) e mail monthly updates to include approved minutes. To add your e.mail address to a distribution list please e mail the Secretary at ctsecretary@stratherrick.net.

Following an advert seeking new Directors, 6 applications were received. 3 applicants subsequently withdrew, 2 citing lack of time and 1 because of concerns with the objects of the Trust. A panel of 4 Directors, 2 of whom were Community Council nominees interviewed the remaining 3 candidates. **Paula Page** and **Graeme Ambrose** who have a range of skills and experience have been appointed as Directors. Also, the Trust is delighted that Michelle Allcock has taken up the position of Treasurer.

### **GRANT AWARDS:— March – May 2013**

**Summer Feis** - £700 for bus transport from Stratherrick /Whitebridge to Fort Augustus

**Destination Loch Ness** - £4,000 towards construction cost of a new section of the South Loch Ness Trail near the Suidhe

**Stratherrick Primary School Parent Council** - £4,000 to supplement parental contributions for a week long activity trip to Loch Insh,

**Private Water Supply Improvement (contaminated supply) - Whitebridge** - £358.75

**Energy Saving Grants:-** Errogie - £2803.50, Inverfarigaig - £1,768.80, Gorthleck - £3,000, Whitebridge - £1,750

Over a year ago we began a review of the Articles of Association as they were difficult to interpret and didn't meet the needs of the Trust. This was a long, difficult process but we now have a set of Articles which are fit for purpose at the present time. The views of the community will be considered in future changes, particularly the desire for the democratic appointment of Directors. The Articles are on the community website – [www.stratherrick.net](http://www.stratherrick.net) or ask the Secretary for a copy.

Following the AGM, the annual accounts to June 2012 were reviewed and approved by all the Directors before being submitted to Companies House prior to the deadline of 31 March. The Annual accounts are on the community website.

If anyone wishes to become a member of the Company (Trust) so as to be entitled to attend Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings, and to vote on resolutions to change the constitution, each person must sign, and send to the Company, a written application for membership. The new application form is on the Community website or please ask the Secretary, Fiona Ambrose (486717) or e mail ctsecretary@stratherrick.net for a copy or for further information.

And finally – **please** take the time to fill in the questionnaire – we need to know what your priorities are for the future if our community is to continue to grow and develop in the best ways to benefit everyone

### **ERROGIE SMIDDY COTTAGE - PROJECT UPDATE (MAY 2013).**

Following the AGM the Directors investigated the expenditure identified under the Errogie Smiddy Cottage project. We discovered that our accountants had failed to respond appropriately to an email from the Treasurer at the time, who had identified expenditure that needed to be allocated to this project. Once these items had been included, the expenditure amounted to £27,921 year ending June 2012, with a further £738 being expended in year ending June 2011.

As reported at the AGM, the Trust Directors had become increasingly concerned at the rising costs of this project. There were a number of reasons for this, including the discovery of bats, the cost of improving the road and the reluctance of North British Wind Power to bring forward or to contribute more generously toward the road improvements.

However, a decision was made to balance this alongside our commitment to Mrs Greenaway who had offered the property to the Community Trust on the basis that her sub standard house would be replaced with two semi detached houses (one with a life rent for her and one to let to a key worker). When it became apparent that costs were rising, Directors agreed to defer the project but were persuaded to continue following receipt of a 19 signature petition and letter from residents in the Errogie area expressing their disappointment at this course of action.

Subsequently, Mrs Greenaway was offered a permanent place in Elmgrove Nursing Home. As she was happy there she decided to accept it. The Directors decided for the second time to withdraw from the project. This decision was taken in the knowledge that Highland Council had indicated that they would now carry out the improvement to the notorious Errogie corner. Following these works the Community Trust is optimistic that it will be handed back the remainder of the site and can again consider how best to meet the Community's expressed wish of increasing the local housing stock particularly for key workers.

**Dear Editor,**

### **SHOULD THE COMMUNITY TRUST BE OWNED BY THE COMMUNITY?**

The Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust is a limited company just like companies that we all deal with every day from HIS to British Telecom. The big difference is that those companies are limited by shares and have shareholders that have put money into the company. The Community Trust is limited by guarantee which means that it has members who guarantee to pay in £1 in the event of the company being unable to pay its debts.

That structure is quite common for community companies and is the structure adopted by the Fort Augustus Community Company and the Wadebridge of Whitebridge Trust.

The big difference between our Community Trust and the two local companies above is that membership of those companies is open to everyone in the community. Our Community Trust has but one member, the Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council.

The new constitution of the Community Trust **adopted in February** (and I expect that may come as a surprise to many of you, particularly those who were at the AGM in February) contains a procedure for any member of the community to make an application to become a member. Being a member of the company would not entitle you to attend board meetings or to have a say in every decision on grant applications for example. The day to day running of the Trust would still be carried out by the directors. But you would have a vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Using a recent event as an example, if you disapproved of the new constitution, you could have voted against it. Furthermore, if 5% of the members so require, the Community Trust can be called upon to propose and vote on a resolution on almost any subject. So, for example, if you felt that the company should not invest/deposit funds in some particular bank or institution, you could propose a suitable resolution and, if passed by the majority of the members, that would be binding on the directors. Some matters require a 75% vote in favour to be passed.

There are no downsides. Your liability is limited to £1. Why not apply to become a member? After all, this company is likely to receive millions of pounds of community money (your money/our money) over the next 25 years. Any person in the community has the opportunity to become a member of the company. If members of the community choose not to become a member of the company, there can be no complaint that the company is unrepresentative.

The directors do not have to accept your application nor do they have to give a reason for refusal. But a demonstration of accountability and democracy in action is surely what the energy companies who are paying this money, or indeed the Charity Regulators to whom an application for charitable status will surely have to be made at some time, will want to see.

Elsewhere in this issue is advice on obtaining an application form. Please get one and act on it. I can be contacted on 01456 486691 if you have questions or need help obtaining the form.

**Frank Ellam – Easter Boleskine**

Dear Editor

### **Resignation Statement**

Dare we hope that after this last inflammatory outburst from retiring members of the Community Council we shall hear no more on the matter. We have always been lucky here to have many people modestly and quietly giving time and effort to community progress more often than not without the financial backing available today.

We would hope that the new Community Council will show respect for and tolerance of those whose opinions differ from their own, be they other members of the Community Council or the community at large. The ability to accept criticism and admit mistakes and to be guided by advice from the Highland Council representatives and to observe the dictates of the constitution are not mere bonuses but obvious necessities. The community council, after all, acts as an important link between our community and the Highland Council.

So, please, let us move forward and forget recent unpleasantness and give our whole hearted backing and encouragement to our future Community Council.

**Ian and Lorraine Fraser. The Old Orchard, Elm Bank, Foyers.**

**FIGHTING WILDFIRES**

April 2013 and the Isle of Skye and the hills around Loch Duich were ablaze. The especially dry late winter had created the ideal conditions for wildfires to spread out of control and fire-fighting teams from all over the Highlands were drafted in to help. We were one of them.

Driving through the spectacular Kintail hills, we could see vast palls of smoke hanging over the Skye hills and, fanned by brisk winds, long lines of flame, some several kilometres long, marching over the heather clad slopes threatening to engulf properties and forests in their way.

On arrival at the makeshift incident command centre at a local school, our orders were to climb up into the steep, heather-clad ground above Auchtertyre and fight the fires using beaters. In full fire-fighting gear, this is hot work and, close to the flames, the heat is intense enough for us to need full protection of hoods and goggles and fire gloves. Fighting a rapidly moving line of flame is all about teamwork. Teams of three, with the front man beating out the flames and then no.2 and 3 following on and damping down, is an effective fire fighting method. There is always the danger that the fire flares again once you have passed, so no.3 hangs back a little and catches any flare-ups as they occur. There is also a trick in 'reading' the ground and knowing when to fight the fire and when to leave it. A hillside is rarely a uniform shape with uniform vegetation. Looking more closely, you can see damp areas, deer or sheep tracks, rocky outcrops, areas of shorter grass and rises and hollows etc. These variations colour the way in which a wildfire will move. A fire in deep heather moving up a steep slope is usually too dangerous to fight directly, but when it reaches a damp patch or an area of short grass, that's the time to strike.

Sometimes of course, there is no choice and, with properties at risk, we will fight the fire in deep heather as best we can. Beneath our heavy kit, we are pouring with sweat and, when the fire is finally out, it is a weary looking team who tramp slowly off the hill back to the engine.

Over a three day period, we also found ourselves creating dams for gathering water to protect the houses in the path of the flames, running out long lines of hose and soaking ground around houses to create a wet barrier for the advancing inferno. We also fought other wildfires elsewhere in the area as far north as Portree and spent our last hours standing atop a high rocky outcrop, with fabulous views of Kintail round to the Kylerhea narrows, and guiding in a helicopter to dump vast quantities of water on the final stubborn heather fires that were unreachable on the steep ground. As darkness fell, the fires were out at last. And the next day, it rained..... and, after three exhausting days of constant fire-fighting, fire-fighters throughout the Highlands heaved a sigh of relief.

**We hope our articles will persuade you to look around your own properties and make sure that you are 'fire safe'. We can help with this and.....for a FREE Home Fire Safety Check from our team call FREEphone 08000 12 13 12 or, for more information, visit [www.hifrs.org](http://www.hifrs.org) and click on the "Community Safety" page link on the left hand side**

## Forestry Commission News



Peter Walling, Planning Forester, Inverness Ross and Skye Forest District, Forestry Commission Scotland.

The revision of our Forest Design Plan for South Loch Ness will be starting in July of this year. This will result in a 10 year plan which sets out our proposals for felling, thinning, replanting and associated civil engineer works on Forestry Commission land situated along the south side of Loch Ness. This area extends from Drummond Farm in the north to Knockie in the south and also includes Dunmaglass. The total area is 4402 ha.

Plan production takes account of Environmental, Landscape, Heritage and Community, Recreation and Tourism considerations. As well as consultation with our Statutory Stakeholders; Highland Council, SNH and SEPA and the Utility Companies, we will involve the people who live and work in and around the forest area. Meetings will be held over the autumn and winter of this year where we will welcome comment.

We will keep the community up to date with progress via the Community Councils, Community Websites and this publication.  
May 2013



# South Loch Ness Heritage Group

The Heritage Group has fixed the following dates for the remainder of 2013:-

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June:** A guided visit to the Highland Archive Centre, Bught Road, Inverness. Meet at the Centre at 5.45pm; the visit will finish by 7.30pm. Please let Alan Findlay, 01463 751258 (alan@tramstop.org) or Alister Chisholm (alister.chisholm@btinternet.com) know if you intend to come, as numbers will be restricted to 25 maximum. The Centre holds a vast amount of heritage and historical information and includes a genealogy department which is in great demand worldwide, so this promises to be a fascinating visit.

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October:** Stratherrick Hall, Gorthleck, at 7.30pm. An illustrated talk by Bob Powell, Curator of the renowned Highland Folk Museum at Newtonmore. Bob will be describing the history and aims of the museum, with illustrations of many of the exhibits, ranging from original, full-size buildings (including the old Boleskine shinty pavilion!) to artefacts that can be held in the hand. Bob is soon to retire, so we'll be privileged to benefit from the knowledge and experience of his many years at Newtonmore.

Bob's talk will be preceded by a very brief AGM of the Heritage Group.

**Secretary:** The group has been limping along for some years now without a Secretary. We're coping – just – but if there's someone out there who thinks they could help in this respect, we'd love to hear from them. The duties are not onerous!

**Website:** The group's website, [www.southlochnessheritage.co.uk](http://www.southlochnessheritage.co.uk), contains many photos and articles relating to the area. Due to time pressures, it has not been much updated lately, but is still well worth a look.

**Publications:** The Group has these publications for sale:

**A Country called Stratherrick**, by Alan Lawson (£7) – the definitive book of South Loch Ness, and  
**South Loch Ness** (£3), a heritage guide published by the Heritage Group itself.

## The Foyers Shinty Pavilion

The Pavilion was officially opened at Highland Folk Museum, Newtonmore on the 28th March at 1pm. The oldest living Boleskine player, Teep Macdonald, cut the ribbon into the refurbished building.

The impressive sympathetic restoration, with the traditional Boleskine dressing room now being laid out as a typical sports changing room, includes a display of Boleskine memorabilia. The buildings other rooms - the away dressing room hosts the exhibition of Shinty in Badenoch, whilst the centre room with welcoming fire place has various information display panels.



To commemorate the opening, an Under 14 six a side Shinty competition for the Am Fasgadh Cup was contested for by teams from Newtonmore, Kingussie, Boleskine & Laggan/Kincraig.

The Highland Folk Museum which is open seven days a week is well worth a visit. It is situated just on the left hand side as you enter Newtonmore from the north. Entrance to the Museum is free. For official website go to <http://www.highlandfolk.com/>

**Alister Chisholm**

## Lots of Thanks from South Loch Ness Nursery

**Thank you ...** to Foyers Stores for organising a raffle, with the proceeds being donated to us and thank you to all those who bought tickets. We are very grateful and the money will be well spent as we have plans to improve our garden over the coming weeks.

**Thank you...**to Foyers Medical Centre for allowing us to visit them again (and for the goodies the children took home with them.) The children had been learning about doctors and hospitals and they loved seeing the real instruments.



**Thank you ....**to Foyers Fire Brigade for visiting us and letting us explore the fire engine and some of the equipment while we were learning about people who help us.

**A huge thank you..** to Matt Cameron, Scott Simpson and Abi Kirkland who spent their February break painting the nursery. We would also like to say a massive thank you to Eric Law and Neil Kirkland for their help in transforming the nursery from a very cluttered environment to a bright and breezy child friendly learning and play area. The children are delighted with it. The money to pay for materials and new flooring was kindly donated by Liz Scott, from Childcare Partnership at Clachnaharry.

**Thank you...**To Stewart MacPherson for giving up his morning to show us around his farm and letting us feed the lambs. Amy, thank you for the wonderful pancakes. We loved the baby lambs and puppies.



## **Inland, Upland and Cold – Gardening on the Edge**

I confess to a prejudice against garden grass. So much time has been and is spent here in eliminating grass from what was originally rough grazing, that I'm reluctant to put any back. Admittedly ornamental grasses can look amazing. In Fife, Cambo Estate's autumn garden is an outstanding example of this kind of planting, although a lot of the pretty grasses they grow would not survive here.

As to a grass lawn, I refuse to have one. Mowing grass is to me a loathsome task – a bit like having to endlessly Hoover outside all summer! The only grass I planned to have was a path between two rows of hazel trees, but too much shade and too much moss resulted in sparse grass. Even grass for shade and a clover mix did not work. So I'm experimenting at one end of the nut walk. Such grass as there was has been removed along with the edging boards and flowers currently under the hazel trees like leopard's bane, bluebells and wood anemones will be encouraged to spread across the erstwhile path. I may need to put some stepping stones through the planting, for access.

Although I'm not a fan of instant gardening, I couldn't wait so I've already planted two drifts of false oxlip ( a primrose / cowslip cross ) and some blue Geranium sylvaticum and its white version. Native celandines might work too in this white/ yellow/ blue colour scheme which will need pepped up with something startling, yet to be decided – much more exciting than monoculture grass. Do enjoy your summer mowing!

**Wee Gairdner**

## **THE KNOCKIE TRUST**

At the Knockie Trust meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013, Angus Fraser stood down as a trustee and Susan Fraser as secretary/treasurer. They had both served for many years and had decided it was time to let someone else take over. This was due to two factors, their own work load in the firm of Angus C Fraser and also their work with the finances of both the Free North Church, Inverness and with the Madras Street Mission for those with drug and alcohol addiction problems.

**The new contacts for the Knockie Trust are : Fiona and Ian Bateman, Dalruideah, Whitebridge. 01456 486646**

*The Boleskine Bulletin has for some time tried to distribute the BB to our elderly folk who for various reasons have had to move from the area into nursing and residential accommodation. We are delighted to report that the Knockie Trust has agreed to support us financially for this service. We are very grateful. Thank you. Ed.*

## **BOLESKINE LUNCH CLUB**

The Lunch Club has been running successfully for over 18 months and now we would like to be able to include more of the Community. **We have removed any age limit** so if you would like to come along and join us you would be very welcome. If you have lived here for years or have recently moved to the area try to come along. Transport can be arranged if you cannot get to the Stratherrick Hall .

We start with an aperitif and then enjoy a lovely home-cooked meal. In May we enjoyed Beef Goulash, with Rice and Garden Peas, followed by a really scrummy pudding of Apple Flan and Cream and lots of friendly chat.

See page 17 for details. Places are limited so please book to avoid disappointment. "Join the Club"  
Membership is only £2.00 - payable each time you come.  
Hope to see you there.

## **COMMUNITY TRUST DIRECTORS:**

Willie Fraser - Chair  
Lyn Forbes - Vice Chair  
Morag Cameron  
Sharon Ferguson  
Fraser Ross  
Justin Sharp

Paula Page (New)  
Graeme Ambrose (New)

## **LITTER PICK - FRIDAY 14TH JUNE**

**Please come and join us**

We are meeting at The Nursery, Lower Foyers  
at 9.30 am Friday 14th June

Hoping to tidy around the banks of Loch Ness  
and the Shinty Pitch

When we have finished there will be tea and cakes  
made by the children

## **FOYERS SCHOOL BINGO NIGHT**

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

**School Hall**

**7.30 p.m - 9.00 pm**

We will be holding an evening of fun and socialising through Bingo! Hope you can join us at 7.30pm in the school hall, until 9.00pm approx.

**Tea and coffee included**

**Entry £2.**

**All welcome.**

## **Stratherrick and Foyers Parent & Toddler Group**

The playgroup would like to thank Susan, Marjory, Morag, Ishy, Carol Ann and Julia for their recent fundraising sponsored walk from Foyers to Fort Augustus via the South Loch Ness Trail on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Well done girls!**

The walk raised £350 for playgroup funds.

## **YOUR HIGHLAND COUNCIL CONTACTS**

**Our Highland Council Ward is Ward 13 - Aird and Loch Ness**

We have four councillors representing us.

Helen Carmichael Tel: (01463) 782555 E.mail:helen.carmichael@highland.gov.uk

Margaret Davidson Tel/Fax: (01463) 861424

E.mail:margaret.davidson@highland.gov.uk

Drew Hendry Tel: (01463) 811480 E.mail:drew.hendry@highland.gov.uk

Hamish Wood Tel: (01463) 712530 E.mail:Cllr Hamish.Wood@highland.gov.uk

**The ward manager is Charles Stephen** Tel: 01463 724246

Email: Charles.Stephen@highland.gov.uk

## **CHRISTIAN COMMENT**

In the last edition I had written about Gods promise that when we call to Him and pray to Him he will answer. In Jeremiah 29 v13 God says, "you will find me because you will seek me with all your heart."

I used to think that finding God was about trying really hard to do the right thing, know all the answers and follow the rules - I quickly got to the point that I couldn't keep it up. In despair I talked to an older wiser person who loved God with all his heart and he showed me that finding God is about following in Jesus footsteps, NOT about getting it right all the time or earning our way into Gods good books. One way to find out more about how to seek God with all our heart is to read Matthew, Mark, Luke or John in the bible. There we find out what Jesus said about God, Gods love for us and his acceptance of us as we speak to him with complete honesty and seek to know him wholeheartedly.

**Iain King**

## **Church Meetings**

**Church of Scotland:** Sunday - Boleskine 10.00am, Dores 11.30am. Mr I. King 01463 751293

**United Services for Boleskine & Dores** are at 11.00 a.m. on last Sunday of each month at alternate venues.

**Episcopal Church:** St Paul's Strathnairn – Sunday 11.00am.

**Free Church:** Sunday 4.30pm Errogie. Mr S. McLure, 01456 486435

**Free Church Continuing:** Sunday 11.00am & 6.30pm, Wednesday 7.30pm. Dores Mr D. Fraser 01456 486408

**Free Presbyterian Church:** 12 noon, Gorthleck, every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Mrs E. Fraser 01456 486282

**Roman Catholic Church:** 12.30 pm, alternate Sundays, Whitebridge. Contact : 01463 232136



## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY RONALD**

Ronald MacDonald of Elmbank recently celebrated his 91st Birthday at the Telford Centre.

After this he went out for an enjoyable trip to Howden's Garden Centre.



## **CALLING ALL GIRLS**

**RAINBOWS IS FOR GIRLS AGED FROM 5-7 YEAR OLDS.**

**BROWNIES IS FOR GIRLS AGED FROM 7-10 ½.**

**GUIDES IS FOR GIRLS AGED FROM 10 ½ - 14.**



**GUIDES**

**NEW TO STRATHERRICK - STRATHERRICK IS GAINING THREE GIRL GUIDING UNITS WHICH ALL MEET ON THURSDAY NIGHT IN STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK.**

**RAINBOWS, BROWNIES AND GUIDES ALL HAVE FUN. THEY PLAY GAMES, MAKE FOOD, CRAFT, WORK TOWARDS BADGES, LEARN NEW SKILLS, MEET NEW FRIENDS AND GO ON TRIPS.**

**IF YOU HAVE A DAUGHTER WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN JOINING EITHER OF THE ABOVE GIRL GUIDING GROUPS THEN PLEASE RING JANE ON 01456 486738 FOR MORE DETAILS**

**PLEASE HELP US MAKE THESE GROUPS SUCCESSFUL FOR OUR AREA.**

<b>SERVICE 16 INVERNESS-FOYERS</b>	<b>MONDAY TO FRIDAYS</b>						<b>SATURDAYS</b>	
	Sch.	NSch.						
Upper Foyers	07.55	08.04	09.55	11.55	13.55	16.20	09.00	13.30
Lower Foyers	08.00	08.09	10.00	12.00	14.00	-----	09.05	13.35
Inverfarigaig	08.07	08.16	10.07	12.07	14.07	16.27	09.12	13.42
City Centre	08.45	08.54	10.45	12.45	14.45	17.05	09.50	14.20
				Sch.	NSch.			
City Centre	09.00	11.00	13.00	15.15	15.30	17.50	12.30	18.10
Inverfarigaig	09.38	11.38	13.38	16.08	16.08	18.28	13.08	18.48
Lower Foyers	09.45	11.45	13.45	16.15	16.15	18.35	13.15	18.55
Upper Foyers	09.50	11.50	13.50	16.20	16.20	18.40	13.20	19.00

<b>SERVICE 18 WHITEBRIDGE - INVERNESS</b>	<b>MONDAY TO FRIDAYS</b>					<b>SATURDAYS</b>	
		Sch.	NSch.				
Raigmore Hospital				13.35			
Retail Park Tesco				13.45			
Inverness Bus Station	06.10	08.05	08.10	13.50	15.10	10.00	16.20
Inverness Royal Acad.	06.20	08.14	08.20	13.59	15.35	10.10	16.30
Torness – Coulanour Jct.	06.57		08.55		16.12	10.47	17.07
Torness		08.50		14.35	16.17		
Torness – Coulanour Jct	06.57	08.55	08.55	14.40	16.22		
Errogie	07.01	09.00	09.00	14.44	16.26	10.51	17.11
Gorthleck	07.05		09.05	14.48	16.30	10.55	17.15
Whitebridge	07.15	09.12	09.12	14.55	16.40	11.05	17.25
Knockie Road End	07.20	09.17	09.12	15.00	16.45		
			NSch.	Sch.			
Knockie Road End	07.25	09.17	15.00	15.00	16.45		
Whitebridge	07.30	09.22	15.05	15.05	16.50	11.10	
Gorthleck	07.40	09.30	15.12		17.00	11.20	
Errogie	07.44	09.35	15.17	15.25	17.04	11.24	
Torness – Coulanour Jct.	07.48	09.40	15.22	15.30	17.08		
Torness	07.53	09.45		15.35		11.28	
Torness – Coulanour Jct.	07.58		15.22		17.08		
Inverness Royal Acad.	08.40	10.26	15.53	16.16	17.45	12.05	
Inverness Bus Station	08.53	10.35	16.04	16.25	17.55	12.15	
Retail Park Tesco		10.45					
Raigmore Hospital		10.50					

**DUE TO THE ONGOING ROAD CLOSURES PLEASE CHECK WITH STAGECOACH BEFORE SETTING OUT.  
0871 2002233 (10p per minute)**

## **FOYERS and STRATHERRICK**

### **COFFEE CLUB**

Held on the **2ND THURSDAY** of the month

The Waterfall Café, Foyers

10am - 12 noon

All Welcome

Community Website: [www.stratherrick.net](http://www.stratherrick.net)

## **A FEW SCOTTISH WORDS**

**BAUCHLE** - an old shoe; worn down at the heel

**BAIRN** - Child, Infant

**CLOOT** - a piece of cloth or rag

**CRACK** - Talk, gossip, conversation

**HORNIE-GOLLACH** - Earwig (Aberdeen)

## **REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS**

2013	GREEN BIN	BLUE BIN
June	12th, 26th	5th, 19th
July	10th, 17th	3rd, 17th, 31st
August	7th, 21st,	14th, 28th
Sept	4th, 18th	11th, 25th



## **LOCH NESS LUVVIES**

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# **OLD ACTORS NEVER DIE**

*They just lose the plot!*

Written By Lynne Brittny.

Directed By Frances Abbot



## **Gorthleck Hall**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June

and

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Curtain up at 7.30pm

**Tickets £5 each**

Tickets available at the Foyers Shop, the  
Whitebridge Hotel and at the door.

Contact 01456 486233 for further details

## **MOBILE LIBRARY**

**Route 12 – Gorthleck -Whitebridge – Errogie**

### **THURSDAYS**

(June 20th, July 11th, August 1st and 22nd).

Stratherrick Public Hall 12.35 -12.50

Stratherrick Primary School 13.15 – 13.55

Whitebridge Old Post Office 14.00 -14.25

Errogie Bridge before 'Ark' 15.00 – 15.35

## **Visits every third week**

**Route 3 – Torness – Errogie –Foyers – Inverfarigaig**

### **WEDNESDAYS**

June 5th and 26th, July 17th, August 7th and 28th)

Torness 10.30 – 10.40 Errogie Church 11.00 – 11.15

Lower Foyers Riverside 11.40 – 12.20

Park Terrace H/B 13.20 – 13.30

Foyers Glenlia Road 13.30 – 13.55 Primary School 14.05 – 14.40

Coach House 14.50 – 15.05 Inverfarigaig 15.15 – 15.40



## Stratherrick Hall - Regular Groups

- Mondays** - **After School Sports Club 3.15 p.m. - 4.15 p.m.**  
 - **Keep Fit 7.30 pm**
- Wednesdays** - **Parent, Baby & Toddler Playgroup 10.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.** S. Denoon 01456 86411
- Wednesdays** - **Scottish Country Dancing** Contact J Borup 01456 486464 (starts again after summer)
- Thursdays** - **Guides/Brownies/Rainbows** Contact Jane 01456 486738 for details
- Saturdays** - **Karate 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.** Contact Nicholas Walker 01456 486205

The Hall is available for hire at very reasonable rates. It is well equipped and ideal for a family party, group bookings, meetings etc. For further information and bookings please contact Pam Simpson, Beechwood, Gorthleck. 01456 486364. Emergency keyholder. Kathy Stoddart 01456 486329

### After School Sports Club

Athletics -Tennis – Zumba – Kung-fu - Shinty

For all primary age children

**Stratherrick Hall**

**Mondays 3.15pm – 4.15pm**

£1 per week

Contact:sarah.liebnitz@highlifehighland.com

or

Morag 486475 /Sharon 486771.

#### **Stratherrick & Foyers**

#### **Parent, Baby & Toddler Group**

Stratherrick Public Hall, Gorthleck

Wednesdays 10.30-12.30pm

£2 per family



Come along and meet other children and parents in the area for a chat and a cup of tea.

Weekly organised activities include:

Arts and crafts  
Storytelling  
Baking



#### **Activities at playgroup for May & June :**

Classes with "Enjoy-a-Ball" teacher, a multi sports activity for pre-schoolers

Creative arts workshops with Lucy from Eden Court

Playgroup trip to Playzone in Inverness

The mums and children would like to give a big thanks to Susan Denoon for all her organising and running the playgroup over the past 4 years

**"Thank You Susan!"**

Playgroup contact info Elinor 01456 486400

### BOLESKINE LUNCH CLUB

**All Welcome**

Held on the **last Friday** of the month

**STRATHERRICK HALL, GORTHLECK**

**12.30 pm £2.00 each**

To reserve your place telephone Joyce Wills

**01456 486 269**

#### Next 3 Lunches:-

**28th June** (Book by Friday 21st)

**26th July** (Book by Friday 19th)

**30th August** (Book by Friday 23rd)

**TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT PLEASE REMEMBER TO RING AS NUMBERS ARE LIMITED**

### KEEP FIT

#### STRATHERRICK HALL

**Every Monday at 7:30pm**



We have a projector, large screen and dance/keep fit DVD's. Come along and enjoy a fun, relaxed evening while making use of those dusty DVD's and doing a bit of exercise.

Cost: £2 or £3 a session, depending on numbers.

For more information contact Jan on 01456 486233.

## STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS COMMUNITY

Have your say!

Join "VOICE"

**YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT WEBSITE -  
FORUM**

### COMING ITEMS

- 1.) SELECTION BY ELECTION
- 2.) THE SMIDDY PROJECT
- 3.) THE STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS  
COMMUNITY TRUST CONSTITUTION & AGM.

Come and join us in the exchange or debate.

You can find your local Community Voice  
website at [www.stratherrick.org.uk](http://www.stratherrick.org.uk)



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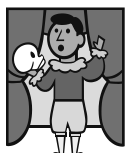
*Tel 01456 486400    [www.hotel-loch-ness.co.uk](http://www.hotel-loch-ness.co.uk)*



## **LOCH NESS LUVVIES**

We have a Facebook page  
'Loch Ness Luvvies'

where details will also be posted.





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**The Schoolroom Café**

will be open on the following long weekends:

7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> June: 11am – 5.30pm

5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July: 11am – 5.30pm

Also the weekends of :

3rd August and 7th September 2013

and by appointment  
for groups of 8 or more

The shop will be open 8am – 5.30pm  
on above long weekends and by arrangement.

*Quality in the Scottish Highlands, naturally!*

# FOYERS STORES AND WATERFALL CAFÉ

01456 486233



(You will find us opposite The Falls of Foyers)

**The Café** is open daily for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. We offer a wide selection of home baking, cakes, pastries, teas and soft drinks. Freshly ground Italian coffee is prepared on our traditional Espresso machine. Open until early evening on Friday and Saturday for sit in meals or take away service.

The Café has local artist's works, photography and crafts on display and for sale.

Free Wi-Fi available. Disabled toilet.

**Foyers Stores and Post Office** is also open daily and offers a traditional Village Store that is well stocked with all your household needs at competitive prices. We also stock Daily Newspapers, Souvenir's, Fishing Tackle and our Off Licence has a good selection of wine and beers. There are regular deliveries of Fruit & Vegetables and good quality meats from 'Grants of Speyside'; an ordering facility is available for these products. We use local companies and suppliers wherever possible.

**Your Custom is Valued - Please Support Your Local Store**

## Opening Times:

<b>Shop</b>	Mon-Sat	9.00 am – 5.30 pm
	Sunday	10.00 am – 1.30 pm
<b>Post Office</b>	Mon-Sat	9.30 am – 4.30 pm
<b>Café</b>	Mon-Thurs	9.00 am – 5.30 pm
	Fri/Sat	9.00 am – 8.00 pm
	Sunday	10.00 am – 3.00 pm



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**Or mobile: 07712 589 626**



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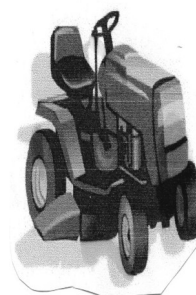
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Corrugated iron sheets, electric wire, mowers,

w/machines, tanks, car batteries etc. etc.

If it's metal - I move it. (Free)

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**BB**

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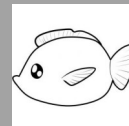
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