



What's On in Ardross

Edition Seventy Five
January to March 2024

ARDROSS COMMUNITY HALL

Pub Night at the Hall

The bar is open!

Come and join the craic at the bar on the last Saturday of every month.

Cash and card payments accepted.

Thank you to everyone that came to the bar nights in 2023, you helped to make it a great success. It's been lovely to see so many familiar faces and meet some lovely new ones too. We've even got some 'regulars' now. We have a small selection of non-alcoholic drinks for any drivers or non-drinkers as well as the usual selections of beverages available. Please do come along, bring some friends, or snacks, or board games, whatever you like!

We are open on the last Saturday of every month except JULY. The dates are as follows:
**27th January, 24th February, 30th March, 27th April, 25th May, 29th June, 31st August, 28th September,
26th October, 30th November & 28th December.**

Put them in your calendar now and plan a night out. We look forward to seeing you in 2024!

ARDROSS HALL YOGA

Yoga classes are held on Wednesday evenings

7.30-9.00pm Iyengar style yoga class

Beginners and intermediates welcome.

Please bring a yoga mat and any props you have (brick, block, belt etc.)

Cost £10 and £8 concessions.

Information about classes contact Juliette Lowe 07835458623 or juliette@dalreoch.co.uk

ARDROSS SWI

Ardross SWI will restart in the Community Hall on **18th January** - Crochet lesson with Tatiana, end product a finished blanket, **15th February** - Show and Tell - unusual item and use, **23 February** - Annual Whist, **21st March** - Slides of Greenland. New members welcome.

Contact Joan Scott 882914 or Betty Fraser 830 689

CEILIDH DANCING

Ceilidh dancing will restart on **16th January**.

Future dates and times are advertised via social media.

Please check the hall website or Facebook page for updates.

ARDROSS LUNCH CLUB

Ardross Lunch Club will restart on the 10th January - Quiz
7th February - a Burns Celebration
6th March - be aware of scams (TBC)

Please come along and enjoy a soup and sweet lunch. We are looking for some help so if you have spare time on the first Wednesday of the month, please get in touch.

Contact Joan Scott 882914 Jackie Davies 880994

Upcoming Shows in Ardross Community Hall

More details for booking will appear in the next newsletter/on the website and Facebook pages for Ardross Community Hall, closer to the dates.

Alice VR

Sunday 7th April (Easter Holidays)

Time: 15min slots from 2.00pm

Tickets: £5.00

A family children's show, "Alice in Virtual Wonderland" (presented by Jasmin Vardimon Company)

Step out of the ordinary and into the unexpected, fantastical, and fearless world of Alice - a multi-sensory virtual reality experience.

This unique dance theatre VR experience is an imaginative adaptation of the timeless story "Alice in Wonderland".

Feel up close with the performers in a magical adventure and be completely immersed in a VR Wonderland. Using Oculus 2 headsets, audiences are immersed in a spectacular 360-degree wonderland with 3D sound.

There will be the opportunity for the children to take part in a workshop to complement the VR session where they can make their own film and take the dingle away.

Gold

Saturday 11th May

8pm

Tickets: £12

A comedy theatre show - by Stafford Collett Productions - 4 star reviews at Edinburgh Fringe 2023

A thrilling and hilarious new comedy featuring 1980s music, terrible dancing, hidden gold and guilty secrets. Julie and Dave live in suburbia, with an Uptown Girl daughter, a nice house and a huge secret which has held them together for 40 years. They met in 1983, when the music was gold, the fashion was gold, and Julie and Dave stole a lot of gold from a very bad man. Four decades later, how are they going to sell it and, more importantly, avoid the elderly psychopath who wants revenge - and his gold back?

Frankie Morrow

Monday 3rd June

8pm

Tickets: £14/£5 U18's

Female Musical Artist, Scottish 5 led piece - alternative rock folk - performed at Glastonbury 2023

ARDROSS TODDLER GROUP

The Ardross Toddler group is held on
Friday mornings 9-12 in the Ardross Community Hall.
Everyone welcome, enjoy coffee and a chat while the children play.
Covid risk assessment in place.
For more information please message Laura Pearson on **07393 639799**.

POST OFFICE

The mobile Post Office van will be in Ardross Community Hall car park
From Tuesday 9th January 2024
11.00 to 11.30am
The vehicle has an electronic tailgate for those that need easy access.
A wide range of services will be available

ARDROSS COMMUNITY HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Hall AGM & Management Committee Meeting will take place at 7pm on 23 January 2024.
All welcome.

Have you got any time to spare to help out at your community hall? Please come along and join the meetings, we are a friendly bunch and we have biscuits (and sometimes cake).

We are looking for more people to be involved in the hall entertainments - your ideas/time/contacts/expertise (maybe you're a sound engineer!). **Please email/phone to express your interest to Petria - email: petriabrookecarr@gmail.com - phone: 01349 883641/07723096435** or speak to one of the hall committee members or come to the next hall committee meeting (23/1/24). We have a fabulous local hall and we would love to see it being used more by the community for things you want to be taking part in or bringing in and where it doesn't have to cost too much!

We are also looking for volunteers interested in creating a film group to programme and screen films in our hall. Film Hub Scotland, called Spotlight will give support and will meet with an interested group later in January/February. **Please email/phone to express your interest to Petria - email: petriabrookecarr@gmail.com - phone: 01349 883641/07723096435** or speak to one of the hall committee members or come to the next hall committee meeting (23/1/24).

We have a meeting every 6 weeks and would like to encourage anybody with an interest in the hall to please come along and get involved. The hall belongs to the community and your involvement will help us ensure that we continue to meet user's needs. For information about the hall please go to www.ardrosshall.com or give us a like and follow on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ArdrossCommunityHall>

For bookings and general enquiries please email ardrosshall@hotmail.com or check the Ardross Community Hall website - www.ardrosshall.com or Facebook page - <http://www.facebook.com/ArdrossCommunityHall>

Rory Bews, Chair, Ardross Community Hall Management Committee
randgbews@hotmail.com 07880 701974

Windfarm Community Electricity Payment

If you have lived in Ardross Community Council area for more than 6 months and a member of your household is aged 65 years or older you will qualify for the Windfarm Community Electricity Payment. The Ardross Community Council have agreed to make the twice yearly payments a standard £100. If you have not claimed this payment previously and a member of your household is 65+ years of age please get in touch.

For an application form and information about how to apply please contact:

Alison Gordon, Treasurer Ardross Community Council
07770325507 or alisongordon56@icloud.com or TreasurerAcc2021@outlook.com

Free Fruit Trees



The Ardross Community Council will fund up to 2 fruit trees to each household in the Ardross Community Council area that wants them and has the space. So that would be a plum and/or an apple, both self-fertile and bare root.

If you would like to take up this offer please contact Elliott at janchan@supanet.com to place your order before 14th February 2024, so they can be ready for a spring plant. You will be contacted and asked to come to the hall to collect your trees sometime late March/early April.

APPLICATION FOR A ONE OFF PAYMENT TOWARDS RISING ENERGY COSTS

The Ardross Community Council has agreed to make a one off payment of £150 per household, from the Community Benefit, in order to help towards the rising costs of energy. This is the second year of this project. The Community Council were delighted with the uptake of this generous offer in 2022/23. **One application per household can be made up to 31.03.24** If you meet the criteria below then please get in touch & ask for an application form. Ardross Community Council funding will be awarded by way of a cheque.

Criteria to qualify:

**Only one application per household.

**Owned, mortgaged, tied or rented home located in Ardross Community Council area

Excluded:

Holiday lets/Air BnB properties/second homes

For an application form please contact **Alison Gordon, Treasurer Ardross Community Council** 07770325507 or alisongordon56@icloud.com or TreasurerAcc2021@outlook.com

Crop Swap - Ardross & Surrounding Areas

Crop Swap - Ardross & Surrounding Areas is a community group that is simply opening the virtual door to offer our neighbours something that we might not need. It is just an online offering at the moment, but hopefully, if the interest grows, then in 2024 we will have 'pop up' swaps at the Ardross Community Hall.

The theory is you can offer anything you have that is to do with food, gardening or farming.....

Examples: Eggs, Fruit, Vegetables, Herbs, Jams/Chutneys, Plants, seeds & seedlings, tools, jars, netting & poles also Books on relevant subjects. Gardens grow in cycles, we might not always have something to offer as a swap but don't let it deter you from getting involved. If you have something to offer and do not use Facebook please contact Emma Chisholm by emailing : upperachandunie@gmail.com or phone/text 07900556213.

Ardross Primary
Rag Bag Fundraising - Textile Recycling
Raise £400 per tonne for your school.



Ardross Primary is participating in the Rag Bag Textile recycling scheme which provides regular fundraising for our school and raises awareness about recycling. There are two outdoor clothes banks located in the playground for you to drop off donations in a securely tied plastic bag for collection as soon as possible so we don't lose this help. Good quality clean **men's, ladies and children's clothing, belts, bags and paired shoes** (tied together). The bags will be collected and transported to the Rag Bag factory where they will be sorted and graded for reuse or recycling. The school then receives payment for these collections which goes towards our school funds. Thank you!!

ARDROSS ONLINE

Ardross Online, run by volunteers in the community was set up to get fast broadband to all of Ardross. After many frustrating years with the support of the Ardross Community Council a wireless network was constructed to serve Ardross. The network is being run by Cromarty Firth Wireless [CFWN]. Ardross Online is still operational if only to ensure that Ardross remains connected to high speed broadband connections.

Although our project is closed there is plenty of capacity on the network and an extensive network built to cover Ardross. If you want to get connected to broadband please contact Cromarty Firth Wireless direct by visiting them at www.cfw.co.uk Phoning them on 01349 805040 or emailing them at enquiries@cfwn.co.uk

CFWN have also asked us to mention that if you have any issues with your broadband connection please do get in touch on any of the above contact details.

John Edmondson john@ardross.online, Director, Ardross Online CIC , SC561188
Tel: **07762 879404** or **01349 884440**

Ardross Pot

The Ardross Pot is available to organisations based in Ardross for help with a project, but not running costs. It is also available to individuals, but there must be a clear benefit to the community should the applicant be successful. Application forms are available from the Secretary: **John Edmondson, Dalreoch, Strathrusdale, Ardross on 884440/07762 879404** or email secretary@ardross.community

Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Benefit Awards

The Community Council is always interested to hear of new ideas and suggestions of ways to help improve our community facilities. So please let us know of any ideas you might have by contacting **John Edmondson, Peter Allen or Alison Gordon** or any other Community Council member.

ARDROSS ARK

(formerly Ardross Church)

December was a busy month at Ardross Ark and as per 2022 the Ark was open every Sunday from 11.00am to 3.00pm - Advent Sundays - for everybody to view the amazing decorations and spend time to reflect with teas, coffees and refreshments provided.

The decorations were superb and in this respect we have to give a big thank you to Gunta, Kristine and Michael Mackenzie for the hard work and long nights spent in accomplishing this feat.

On **3rd December** book readings were held by author Claire Walsh an Ardross Ark supporter. Claire also ran a well attended craft event for the younger children. Tea, coffee and refreshments were provided.

On **10th December** the Annual Ardross Carol Service was held with refreshments once again being provided. The number of people attending our Carol service was slightly down on last year but it was still a well attended service. Thanks go to all who made it possible. Jenny and Eleanor Kirkwood, Lucy Smyth and Lexie Campbell - string music, Pete for vocals and for leading the singing, Calum soloist, Jamie for the reading, Michael Janetta -keyboard and finally Hugh Kirkwood who lead the service. What amazing local talent we have in Ardross and surrounding area

On the **12th December**, Ardross Ark was the venue for Ardross Primary Carol service. Alness Community transport failed to materialise however administration staff at Ardross school took care of this hiccup and ensured the concert went ahead in the Ark. Ardross Ark trustees were very pleased to host this event.

On the **17th December**, Ardross Ark hosted the Alness joggers who were holding their annual memorial run. During refreshments they received a book reading by Beth Jordan and Claire Walsh. Later that day a musical concert was performed by Elizabeth Reah. This is believed to be the first known concert to be held in the Ark

All performers and participants did a terrific job and lastly a huge thank you to everyone who came along.

To keep up on events, Ardross Ark has a **Facebook page (ardrossark)** and to make a booking please call **07876 683999**

Ardross Ark is very pleased to advise that a number of wedding bookings have already been received for August of 2024.

All at Ardross Ark take this opportunity to wish readers a very happy 2024.

CLEANING SERVICES

* Home * Apartment * Office * B&B *

Services available in Ardross, Alness, Evanton, Invergordon and local area.

Call 07821108255 – Kasia

or email kasiazietara70@gmail.com

for free quotation and arrange your services.



ARDROSS COMMUNITY COUNCIL...NEWS

ARDROSS COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The new Ardross Community Council has now had its inaugural meeting and chosen the Office Bearers until the next AGM in June 2024. Peter Allen is Chair, Emma Chisholm is Vice-Chair, Alison Gordon is Treasurer and John Edmondson is Secretary. As well as the elected representatives, the Ardross Primary School Parent Council are an Associate Member. The Community Council has one vacancy at the moment.

OfGEM are currently undertaking a consultation at the moment into standing charges. Standing charges in the Highlands are some of the highest in the UK, and high standing charges hit the poorest the most. Details are on our website as to how to respond.

We responded to the consultation on the Morangie Forest Plan.

We are still waiting to hear from the Access Officer regarding the newly installed padlocked gate on the Core Path around Loch Dubh. The original gate has been removed and the new gate does not allow access as required for instance for buggies and horses. The car park sign has been removed as well and this was required as a Planning Condition for the Distillery. We want to ensure that all users can use the Core Path and will keep pursuing this. Unfortunately it is not unusual for Council Officers not to respond, and it is becoming increasingly common.

We have previously reported that the Ardross Mobile Post Office has had issues connecting to the Ardross broadband network to undertake various transactions. It is still unresolved. This is solely down to the inefficiencies of the Post Office; apparently an ethernet cable is a "special procurement", it is genuinely exasperating and we will keep you updated on Facebook.

There is a common theme emerging if you read through this Newsletter entry; and that is that it is almost impossible to get any information at all out of the Highland Council at the moment. With the Highland Council increasingly being unable or unwilling to co-operate our job as a Community Council becomes a lot harder.

ROADS

You can report pot holes using the Highland Council website, but it is cumbersome and seems to be designed to discourage reporting. There is an alternative way of reporting these potholes which is a lot easier <https://www.fillthathole.org.uk/hazards/report> and seems to get results. So if you come across a pothole that you think needs repairing please report it. Remember once a pothole has been reported the Highland Council becomes liable for any damage to vehicles caused by these potholes, after a reasonable time.

Over the Christmas holiday period there have been a spate of accidents on the B9176 Struie Road. The majority of these have occurred just beyond the snow gates at Strathy and a significant number on the Stittenham bends. We wrote to the Highland Council as early as 2022 about the section at Strathy which was part of the over layering. We have asked for it to be surface dressed which is what was done at Newbridge and although starting to wear has been a distinct improvement. Repair and/or replacement of the barriers at Stittenham bends have been marked as a priority by the Highland Council, although as of yet nothing has happened.

The Community Council are seeking improvements to the Dalnavie cross-roads to improve the junction safety, in particular making it a safer place for pedestrians. The Ardross Community Council for a long time have wanted to lower the speed limit to 40mph here. The Highland Council have produced a Report on recommendations for improving the road safety at Dalnavie cross-roads, but have ignored our Freedom of Information Request to

ARDROSS COMMUNITY COUNCIL...NEWS (cont'd)

produce it, it is looking likely that we will have to make an appeal to the Information Commissioner to get the Highland Council to release the information. Without knowing what plans if any the Highland Council have, then getting a solution for the road safety at the cross-roads gets harder.

ELECTRICITY PAYMENTS

The Ardross Community Council have extended the eligibility for the electricity payments to households with anybody over the age of 65 years. There are more details elsewhere in the Newsletter. Please get in touch with Alison Gordon on **07770325507/882740** or **TreasurerACC2021@outlook.com** or **alisongordon56@icloud.com** if you think your household is eligible.

At our ACC meeting in October we agreed once again to making one off energy payments until 31 March 2024 and increase the amount to £150 per household. There are details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

WEBSITE

Have you visited our website **www.ardross.community** ? This is getting expanded bit by bit. We have information on current Consultations and Planning as well as the latest Minutes and Agenda. There are Archive files as well, where we have started to archive the Newsletters. Of course we still have our Facebook page which tends to have more up to date information.

PLANNING, WINDFARMS & PYLONS

Windfarms

It is our understanding that EnergieKontor will start construction on the Strath Rory wind farm this quarter.

Pylons

SSEN have announced their preferred routes for a large new pylon line running from Beauly to Spittal. More details came out in December and SSEN have chosen the route that goes through Strathrusdale skirting around the bottom of the Novar wind farm. It should be noted that neither OfGEM or SSEN have still not demonstrated that there is a need for these pylons, indeed OfGEM have indicated that they will finally determine any need, after the planning process has finished.

You can find more details on the project on the SSEN's own website or by following the link **<https://www.ardross.community/ssen-ohl-project.html>**

Planning

A further public information event was held for the Cromarty Hydrogen Project close to the Aultnamain. The issue of closed snow gates preventing delivery of the hydrogen has yet to be resolved. The huge amount of water required is supposed to be coming from a new water mains laid from Newmore, which will be disruptive. The water could be obtained via a bore hole at the site, which could have implications for local private water supplies.

The first battery storage plant near the Alness substation has been approved.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Recent Grants and getting an Award

The Community Council funds the Newsletter and makes a regular annual payment to the Ardross Primary School for organised trips. We also fund electricity payments to eligible households.

ARDROSS COMMUNITY COUNCIL...NEWS (cont'd)

The eligibility for the electricity payments has now been extended to households with at least one member of the household being over the age of 65 years. It has also been decided to make a flat amount paid twice a year of £100. If you think you are eligible please get in contact with Alison Gordon for application form **07770325507/882740**, TreasurerACC2021@outlook.com or alisongordon56@icloud.com. Details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

We are also extending the one off payment for the Energy Grant for 23/24 to all eligible households. There are details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

At our December meeting we agreed to fund up to 2 fruit trees to each household in the Ardross Community Council area. There are details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Between April 1st 2023 and 31st December 2023 the Community Council have distributed **£87,209.00** of Community Benefit to eligible projects.

If you have a project or ideas for a project that would be eligible for an award please get in touch with Alison Gordon, TreasurerACC2021@outlook.com or alisongordon56@icloud.com or John Edmondson secretary@ardross.community for an application form or come along to one of our meetings to discuss your ideas. The Ardross Community Council want to help any group or individual if they have an idea that will benefit the community. But please bear in mind there are certain restrictions as to how the Community Council can distribute the money placed on them by the wind farm operators, they differ slightly so it is best to talk to us.

MEETINGS

The Community Council hold their meetings in the Ardross Community Hall on the second Monday of the month at 8.00pm. These meetings are public and all are welcome. Blended meetings have proved difficult to arrange and so currently these are not being offered.

Our first meeting of 2024 is on the **8th January** at 8.00pm thereafter on **12th February, 11th March** and **8th April 2024**. Updates on our meetings will be posted on our website: www.ardross.community and our Facebook page. Copies of Minutes and the Agenda are also available here. Agendas are published online the week before the meeting and are also available on our Facebook page.

John Edmondson - Secretary for and on behalf of Ardross Community Council

Dalreoch, Strathrusdale, By Aness, IV17 0YQ

Tel/Text 01349 884440 Mobile 07762 879404 secretary@ardross.community www.ardross.community

RODDY'S CHARITY CHALLENGE FOR BARNARDOS

I live in Ardross and work as a Coop Store Manager and in 2024 I plan to take on two challenges to raise both money and awareness for our fantastic charity partner Barnardo's, to help them achieve better outcomes for children. They have been supporting vulnerable children for over 150 years. The first challenge in February is to trek 50km through the Sahara Desert then in November the second challenge is to trek from Lukla Airport to Everest Base Camp with summit of Kala Patthar 18,519ft. I am planning various fundraising events over the coming months and welcome any support to organise events, raffles or help to sell a football card or two. Please email: roddy_barnardos@outlook.com Donations can also be made on my Just Giving Page using the link: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/roddymac-barnardos2024> or by scanning QR code.



Thankyou
Roddy MacLeod, Cnoc Ruadh, Ardross

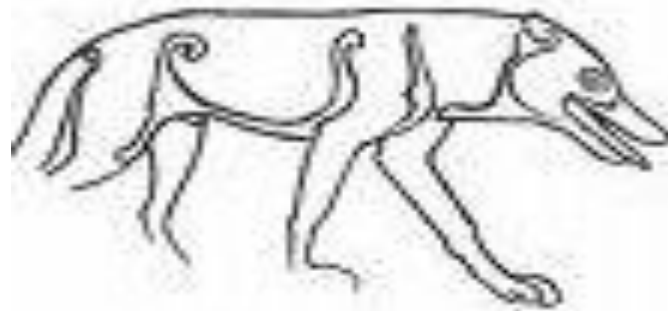
There are now 60 newsletters emailed.

If you would prefer to have your newsletter emailed to save on postage or your address is not correct on the envelope in which your newsletter is enclosed please let Alison know by email to: alisongordon56@icloud.com

The Ardross Community Council has agreed to meet the cost of posting out a newsletter to households in the Ardross Community Council area. If you know of any household who has not received a newsletter please contact Alison Gordon 07770 325 507 or alisongordon56@icloud.com

If you would like to put something in the next newsletter please get in touch.

Alison Gordon is the co-ordinator of the details for "*What's On in Ardross*"
Contact details: Alison Gordon 07770 325 507 or alisongordon56@icloud.com



Looking back at the Archives

Ardross Community Newsletter

"The voice of the Community"

The Ardross Community Newsletter was first published in May 1997 and was produced by Iain Black with the help of Alison Gordon. There was already a newsletter produced by the pupils of Ardross Primary school in June & December called the "Ardross Parrot" so in order to avoid clashing with this publication it was agreed the community newsletter would be produced in October & March.

We thought you might be interested in some of the news that featured in the newsletter all those years ago. So here are some extracts from Easter 2002. (Anyone with old editions of the newsletter from 1999 to 2002 please get in touch).

Old Hall News

The old hall is being bought by Highland Council Education Department and will be turned into an extension for the Primary School. The proceeds from the sale, £20,000 less legal costs, will be paid to the hall.

Ardross Community Council Meeting 11 February 2002

The weekly postbus has been withdrawn from the Ardross run.

There had been a meeting with the Roads Transport Manager of Highland Council to discuss having Direction/Indication signs mounted on existing road sign supporting poles and for the Council to try and remedy the flood problems at the Hall and school.

The replacement trees for the avenue had been planted on 9th February 2002, those planted by the school children appeared to be coming on the quickest.

Ardross Church

The second half of the church floor has been replaced thanks to a grant from Awards for All and a generous donation from Mr John McTaggart, Ardross Castle.

Other groups

A good way to meet others in Ardross was to come along to the Ardross Lunch Club which meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month.

Ardross Nursery & Playgroup were looking for more volunteers and help with fundraising.

The Ardross Youth Club was looking for helpers, funding and ideas for activities to do with the young people of Ardross.

Frank McConnel's Ceilidh dance classes were very successful with lots of folk having a great time learning new dances as well as some of the old favourites.

There were plays and dances and an Indian Scottish Fusion night on at the hall and planning was in place for a special retirement party being held at the Hall in June for Mrs Shona Gray who was a primary school teacher at Ardross Primary for many, many, many years. 😊

If you have any copies of the first few editions of the Ardross Community Newsletter in your loft or at the back of a cupboard please let Alison Gordon know so we can keep a record of what was going on in Ardross & share the news from all those years ago.

