



To contact the Community Company, call 01320 366800
or email contact@communitycompany.co.uk
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Community Larders

The Community are delighted to introduce the Community Larders across the 3 Glens. Reducing food waste and food poverty while promoting recycling and healthy eating, the Community Larders are open to the whole community.

No booking or registration, just turn up and leave or take what you need. Non-perishable goods like tinned and dried food, washing powder and deodorant are available for you to swap, donate or use for yourself.

The Larders are topped up by the Community Company and largely run by volunteers. Locations are listed below:

Fort Augustus, behind Tarff Trading

Dalchriechart, behind the Hub

Invermoriston, behind the Millennium Hall



Samhain Evening

A spooky yet warm and inviting evening in the Convent Woods at the Samhain Evening.



The night saw a celebration of the Celtic Festival under the full harvest moon at Old Convent Woods. The night was lit up by the bonfire with the majestic misty hills in the distance.

The woodland was full of a golden autumnal array of colour, glowing with a trail of fire torches to guide the guisers through the dark old woods towards the fairy lights and bright fires of the festival.

The evening began with everyone dressed in their guising costumes and gathered by the fire for the traditional Samhain ceremony, followed by

divining at the magic camp, storytelling and weapon displays at the highland warrior camp, fire spinning under the moonlight, dookin' for apples and some tasty food.

There were three fires in the gathering to keep everyone warm as they sipped on the mulled apple juice and enjoyed the hot soup and stovies.

A huge thank you to all the guisers, creatures and human folk who came along and for all the staff and volunteers involved in creating the event; it couldn't have happened without the help, dedication, and commitment of you all.



MIDAS Training

The Community Company proudly funded six further Volunteer Minibus Drivers.

The six candidates all met with M.D Fiddes driving instructor for the theory class and test. Practical driving assessments were carried out in and around Fort Augustus.



We are delighted to confirm all six volunteers passed both the theory and practical assessments. This means that local groups and clubs can hire the minibus with an array of volunteer drivers to approach. The cost is £25 per trip plus the petrol.

If you would like to hire the minibus, you should contact Kilchuimen Academy. The list of voluntary drivers is available from the Community Company.

Convent Land Community Consultation

Convent Land Development Officer, Chris Rose, held a community consultation on 21st November in the Fort Augustus Village Hall.

The purpose of the consultation was to discuss and pull in ideas for potential uses for the Convent Land. Chris was on hand to talk about the proposals and explain how they might work, while giving the community the opportunity to have their say.

We will be publishing the full results soon but for now we can report the consultation attracted thirty-nine members of the community and inspired some fantastic conversation around the possibilities of how the land can be utilised for the good of the community.



Grants awarded

Since the last issue of Ness News, the following grants have been awarded:

- £4,800 to Kilchuimen Parent Teacher Council, to pay for students to attend the Abriachan Forestry School.
- £3,600 for six student grants.
- £934.70 to Loch Ness TaeKwon-Do for floor mats.
- £1000 for the annual Children's Christmas Parties

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on 21st November at Fort Augustus Village Hall with thirty-four attendees. Thanks to everyone who came along, it was lovely to see you all on such a miserable evening.

The Chair, Felix Paterson, was unable to attend physically but did have a virtual presence. The Vice Chair, Helen Clay, welcomed everyone and introduced the board of directors. She gave the Chair's report on the company's completed and upcoming projects and a summary of grants the company has funded.

It was announced that Lizzie MacEachen and Felix Paterson would be standing down as directors. The Vice Chair thanked Lizzie for her hard work and commitment over nine years. The Board also wanted to thank Felix for all of his efforts and will do so personally when he is feeling better. Lorn MacKay stood for re-election along with 2 previously co-opted Directors, Fran Mansell and Kelvin Hill.

The company's accounts and financial standing were explained by a representative from the auditing company. Operations Manager, Karen Edwards, reported on the work the company staff have completed through the year and explained some of the up-and-coming work in the next year.

If you would like to become a member, allowing you to vote at the AGM, please either go to our website www.communitycompany.co.uk or contact us on 01320 366800 for an application form.

Community Caretaking Team – Seasonal Team Investment

We may always appear busy, and a bit grass covered, as there is always plenty of work to do. The grass never stops growing! However, we are approachable, and the team is always willing to help improve the appearance of the villages and make you smile.

This year we saw an expansion in the team, with the additional help of two young recruits on a part time / seasonal basis. James and Fraser. It was reassuring that two young men from the area were willing to join the team and get involved in maintenance of all sorts. We hope the employment opportunities were useful to both and helped encourage them to continue to pursue a career in the outdoor sector.



As always, the community composting area is proving ever popular, and we are starting to see useable leaf mould / enriched compost materials. We hope to be using this finished product in a floral display project later in the year, (watch this space). All branches donated were chipped and have been spread around the villages used as a mulch on raised beds etc. We are delighted it's a useful service for the communities, however, it can be time consuming for the team. Please can we remind users to dispose of their vegetation in the right bays and as far back in the bay as possible. If it becomes overwhelming or abused, then the service might have to be stopped.

Highlighted projects for the core team over 2023 have included the construction of the top play park bridge, completion of the Auchterawe Cemetery entrance path and the Riggs post and rail timber fence to name a few.

We are now preparing ourselves for the icy pavements and snow that winter brings!

Tarff Trading – Hardware store



Your local hardware store continues to get busier and busier with your support.

There has been a consistent high demand for chilled items such as milk and soft drinks. So, we have fitted a new fridge to stock everyday chilled items such as big bottles of milk, butter, yoghurts, ham, cheese, bottles and cartons of juice plus chilled fruit and vegetables. All asked for by the community!

If you have any suggestions for other items for the store then let Donna, Nigel or John know.

The staff at Tarff Trading have been busy getting the Christmas decorations ready. If you're stuck for last minute items, then do pop in and see what they have. There are also some very handy Christmas gifts for those last-minute presents.

Christmas trees, lights, decorations, and ornaments are all available in-store. You might not need to go into Inverness or Fort William for those small things that make your home that little bit more special this Yule tide!

Instead, why not pop into your local hardware store and get what you need. You can always have a coffee and a chat with the team while making your choices.

If you want to pre-order your essential food items for Christmas, do pop in and pick up the food order form. Orders must be in by 15th December for collection the following week.

Christmas opening hours for the shop are:

24th December and 31st December – open 8am till 3pm

25th & 26th December and 1st & 2nd January – closed.



Happy Christmas everybody.

