

The Strath Times

Contact the Strath Times

By email strathtimes2020@gmail.com or for editorial contributions contact Miranda Wharam on ☎01997 423337 For advertising contact the Community Centre on ☎01997 421989

Advertising rates

Single issue
 Full page £70 ½ page £40
 ¼ page £25 ⅛ page £15

Deadline for the autumn edition is **Wednesday 15th October 2020**

Apologies for the late arrival...

Our apologies for the late arrival of the second edition of the new Strath Times. It was due to be the summer edition but because of the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic we have had to let that slip. Hopefully now that the lockdown has been eased we can begin to find a new kind of 'normal' until a vaccine can be found to combat this virus.

Being new to the village I had no idea that we are the third group to be producing the Strath Times. Looking back at some of the early editions I can see that over the years a lot of time and effort has been put into making the Strath Times a success.

The one constant theme I noticed in



reading the old issues were repeated pleas of help from the editor for news and stories from the readership. Nothing has changed. Without news and stories the Strath Times will not succeed. So please contact us with any news or ideas that you may have for articles that you think would have interest to folk up and down the Strath.

Bruce Messer team@strathpepper.org

Village Website



Please don't forget to check out and subscribe to the village website: www.strathpepper.org

Strathpeffer Community Centre Reopening

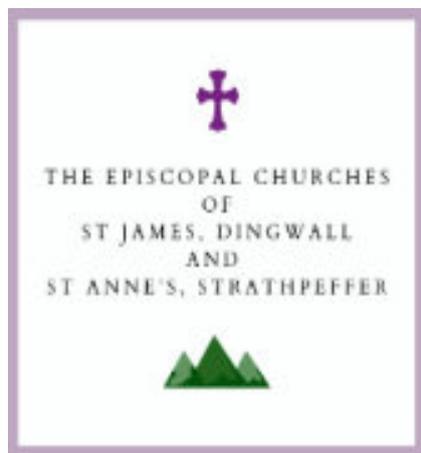


We are really looking forward to reopening the Community Centre as soon as Government Guidelines allow. We wanted to thank all our supporters and user groups for their patience and hope that you will continue to visit the Centre. Things will be a little different. We will have measures in place which will provide a safe environment for our staff and visitors. Hand sanitiser dispensers have been put up, along with a reception desk screen and new signage. We hope to have events rescheduled and will keep you informed as soon as we have firm dates for your diaries. We hope that you will be understanding and supportive of any changes that we make and we can continue to operate the Centre for the benefit of our community into the future.

Thank you

Karen, Kate, Miranda, Peter and Sheila.

The Management Board



During lock down I, like many others, have had to learn new digital skills. From Zoom meetings to zoom coffee mornings, Facebook,

Facetime, YouTube services, we have quickly learnt new ways of being a church. It has been so heartening to see people connecting with God and with each other in new ways. As we emerge from lock down into the "new normal" we are looking at how the lessons we have learned can enable us to bring God's message of hope, love and healing to a world that is so sorely in need of them. At a time when so much is strange and uncertain, it is of great comfort to remember that God offers fresh hope and strength for each new day. As the words of that lovely hymn remind us;

"Great is thy faithfulness!"

"Great is thy faithfulness!"

Morning by morning new mercies I see;

All I have needed thy hand hath provided -

"Great is thy faithfulness"

Lord, unto me!

As ever, if I can be of any help to you or someone you know please do not hesitate to get in touch. For now worship remains online and can be accessed via our website or Facebook page, where you will also find meditations and details of our virtual social events.

You can also access our church magazine Grapevine

Rev Julia Boothby

Crystal House - electric power points installed !



The three new 7kw EV chargers have now gone live. This £22k project is available to our guests and other visitors to Strathpeffer. Tourists can charge their cars whilst enjoying the delights of our village. From classic cars to electric cars, Crystal House welcomes them all !

Strathpeffer Medical Practice



The last few months have been a challenging time for everyone and we would like to thank our patients for their understanding and support. We have made several changes to our services and have done so to ensure the safety of both our patients and staff. As lock down eases we will continue to follow Government Guidance and offer as many services as it is safe to do so.

Our GP appointments will remain as telephone contact for the initial consultation to ensure we continue to reduce footfall to minimise the risk of a resurgence of COVID-19. Please continue to come to the Surgery only if you have been asked to do so and we would be grateful if you could wear a face covering too.

We now offer video consultations which have proven to be very popular with our physio, and have found more innovative ways of delivering our patient review process. Our Dingwall branch has remained closed throughout however as we enter Phase 3 we will open for specific clinics as required.

We would not have been able to reach Phase 3 had it not been for the tremendous effort from everyone staying at home and following the guidance, and we would like to thank you all once again. We will continue to ensure all patients still have access to the care they require. Please keep following the advice on face coverings, avoiding crowded places, cleaning hands, physical distancing and testing/self isolating if you have symptoms.

Nature scene and heard in July

I've just moved into Strathpeffer, literally just before lock down so haven't had much chance to meet other people who will have far more knowledge about the local nature than me. When it comes to nature, I am an enthusiastic learner, and hope you'll forgive any errors in my notes.

During one warm, sunny walk up to Loch na

Crann I suddenly came across several Green tiger beetles (*Cicindela campestris*) along the same 30 metre stretch of path. Although these are not rare beetles they are usually hidden among the undergrowth hunting other insects and I have counted myself lucky to see one very occasionally. I can only imagine they were busy finding mates. These are very fast predators, probably the fastest runners among insects.



Later, on the same walk, through cool and damp shade I was finding Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*) in flower. This carnivorous plant, often overlooked, gets some of its nutrition from small insects caught on its sticky leaves. It has single purple flowers on long stems. Its leaves may have been used in the past to curdle milk to make butter, hence the common name.



One of my many favourite flowers is Wild thyme which is glowing beautiful pink just now. These flowers were only faintly thyme-scented but it is the flower commonly named in folk songs. This particular patch was also being enjoyed by this bumblebee, which I think is a White-tailed (*Bombus lucorum*) or Buff-tailed (*Bombus terrestris*) but the photo isn't great. A walk by the riverside at Rogie falls in July showed this wonderful Grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) which was collecting invertebrate food for its young. This is mainly a summer migrant to the Highlands although they are over-wintering in Britain more often, probably as a result of milder winters.

Nat Ure

The number 27 Bus



You may have heard that the Number 27 bus service has now been curtailed at Strathpeffer reducing what was a very important service to Contin. As a result, a transport study is currently underway to look into how we might improve opportunities for people to access a form of public transport in these community council areas:-

- Strathpeffer
- Contin
- Marybank, Scatwell & Strathconon
- Garve

A consultant has been appointed to examine the issue and he has now held consultation meetings in the areas covered by the study. While there was not a great turnout at the Strathpeffer meeting, ideas can still be fed to him. If you would like to input to this study please email Derek Halden at admin@dhc1.co.uk with your thoughts and comments.

Strathpeffer Community Council

During these difficult times when meeting up as groups is not easy, the community council in Strathpeffer is still meeting on its usual monthly frequency using video conferencing facilities. If you want to raise any issues please do not hesitate to get in touch with one of your local community councillors or email Ron McAulay at ron.mcaulay@bopenworld.com.



Progress with the Peffery Way – more milestones achieved

We have now achieved another major milestone on this project to create an ALL abilities foot and cycle path between Strathpeffer and Dingwall.

A section which runs for about 350m alongside the operational railway on the



steep slope of Knockbain Wood has now been partially completed. The foundation for the path along this section has now been installed by Highland Conservation Ltd. We are now seeking further funding to install the finished surface on this foundation and if you would like to donate towards these costs then please visit our website - www.pefferywayassociation.scot - where there is a link to our Virgin donate page.

Although the final surface is not yet installed, the work that has been completed has opened up this part of the path and made it much easier to walk or cycle through this section. It also links two previously completed sections now giving people access to a stretch of easy path just short of 2.5km long.

Access from Foddery cemetery car park has just been made a lot easier thanks to David Lockett at Knockbain Farm and the Highland Council. A new link path has been constructed at the rear of the Fodderty cemetery by David Lockett, and the Highland Council has agreed to allow people to pass through the cemetery from the car park to connect with this link path. A new gate has been installed in the fence to make it easier access the path.

Please remember to show respect to those visiting the cemetery and please avoid any services that may be underway. Dogs will be allowed on the path through the cemetery providing they are kept on a lead, while in the cemetery and any dog poo must be bagged and removed. Cyclists must also dismount in the cemetery.

The Peffery Way Association (PWA) held another volunteer maintenance day on the 25 July 2020 and managed to clear a lot of weeds and cut back the verges of the path. If you would like to join one of these volunteer maintenance days please go to and join up as a member of the PWA. You can then receive email updates and be kept advised of future volunteering activity.

Strathpeffer Fountain back up and working!



After almost two decades, it is wonderful to see the fountain back up and working in Strathpeffer Square. This has been possible through a grant the Community Council obtained from the Town Centre Fund (TCF). The TCF is a fund administered by Highland Council on behalf of the Scottish Government.

The fountain is operated by a timer and will come on in the morning and go off some time in the evening. It is proving to be very popular with both visitors to the village and locals too.

The pump that serves the fountain has now been replaced and the old pump has been refurbished to allow it to be used in the waterfall cascade opposite the Deli. There are still some works to be completed within the waterfall cascade pond before we can switch it on but we are hopeful this work can be completed soon. This work involves some re-pointing of the stonework within the pond and most importantly, cleaning out the pond.

If you would like to help clean out the pond, please contact Ron McAulay at ron.mcaulay@btopenworld.com. We are hoping to organise a group of volunteers to get this work completed.

Many thanks must go to Bryan MacKenzie for working his magic and getting these works completed.

Improvements to the Square – Construction of the new gazebo progressing well

Another element of the project being funded by the Town Centre Fund is the erection of a new gazebo on the old dancing platform opposite the Deli. Work on the installation of the foundation slab has now been largely completed and the fabrication of the steel work for the frame of the gazebo is well underway.

The steel work should be erected on site within the next three or four weeks once it has been galvanised and painted. Then the roof and the finished dancing floor will be installed. Hopefully this new gazebo will prove popular for occasions such as the highland dancing and possibly some specially arranged events.

Pump Room Sweetshop Closes



After eight years at The Pump Room running our local Arts and Crafts Giftshop and the Sweetshop, alongside the museum Spa Exhibition and Information Point, we are closing this season. We would like to thank all the colleagues we have worked with in other organisations and businesses, volunteers who have helped out, people who have loaned or donated to the museum and lastly a big thank you to all the thousands of visitors from near and far. Most of whom have enjoyed the museum and architecture and have supported us by buying a locally made product or just a bag of treats. We hope you

have all been safe and well throughout these recent events and wish you all health and happiness for the future.

Anyone who would like to get in touch, please do so in the usual way, via Post to The Real Sweets & Gift Company at The Pump Room, on Facebook, Twitter or email us at the sweetshop address: realsweets@me.com

Highland Museum of Childhood - open again !

We're delighted to see the Old Station platform busy again with folk visiting The Museum, Coffee Shop, Small Planet gift shop and True Beauty salon.



The museum is now open every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11:00 am until 4:00 pm. We aim to stay open right through the winter this year and will frequently be changing some of our displays to coincide with seasonal events – so there will always be something new to see!

If you haven't visited in a while, you are in for a real treat! Over the past nine months we have undertaken an exciting refurbishment project at the museum - making changes to the museum and gift shop layout and creating a brighter environment within the building. Look out for our new entrance on the car park side of the building and our new vintage train themed exhibition room! In addition to this we have recently been awarded a Covid Adaptation grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help make our facilities safe for visitors, volunteers and staff whilst Covid remains as a widespread risk.

We have also launched a NEW membership scheme for regular museum visitors.

Membership will be available on an individual or family basis with members benefitting from free entry to the museum, a quarterly newsletter and 50% reduction on child and adult workshop costs! Please contact us at members@highlandmuseumofchildhood.org.uk for more information on becoming a member of the museum.

We've missed having you all at our craft workshops over the past few months but now that children are permitted to play together and we've completed our refurbishment works, we have planned a programme of workshops for the coming months – you can find more details on our poster or on our social media channels. Bookings must be made in advance for workshops. We will also be piloting a series of adult workshops over the coming months – more details to follow.

Please email: curator@highlandmuseumofchildhood.org.uk for more info or to book any of our workshops, and don't forget our our [Facebook page](#) for the latest list of activities and events.

Coul House- back in business !



Cool Times certainly not! However, I am pleased to say that with the support of the local community and our loyal guests; here at Coul House Hotel we are once again up and running after the enforced sabbatical.

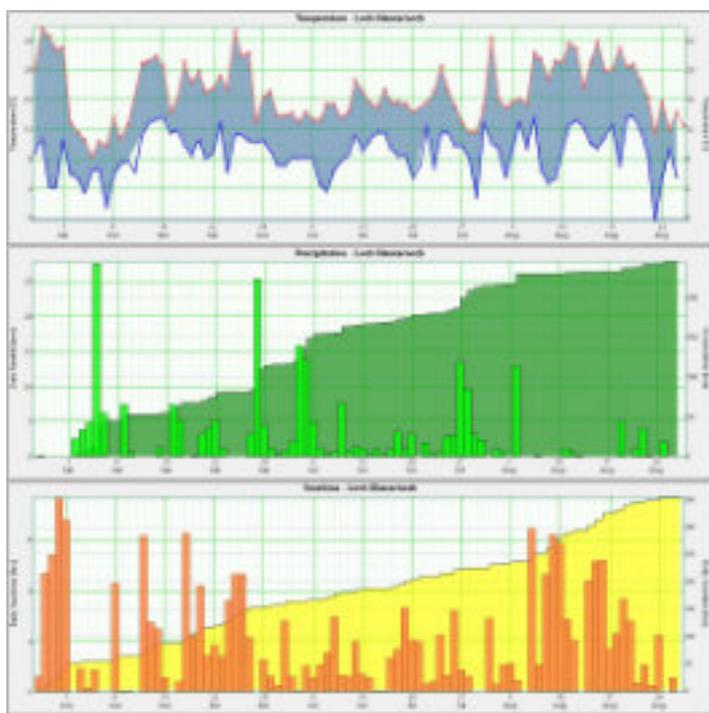
I have to admit by early May I had quite relaxed in to the new quiet way of things, enjoying the serenity of the Coul House garden in the rare summer sun and walking and running the dogs on the quiet forest trails. It was odd to feel like the "lord of the manor" rather than "Basil Fawlty", after seventeen years of running round Coul House trying to elevate and maintain our standards, not to mention the constant upgrading of the infrastructure of the old building. It was quite

shocking to suddenly find myself forced to close and having to turn away guests for Mother's Day with nothing to do after the initially disheartening task of keeping track of all of the room cancellations and refunds; not knowing when and if we would be able to reopen.

I have to say a huge thank you to all of the guests that e-mailed and called us with their kind words and memories of their stays here at Coul House; offering words of encouragement and promises of visiting as soon as we reopen. It lifted our spirits and gave us the fortitude to see us through to where we are now, back in business serving afternoon teas, lunches and dinners and welcome lots of new guests from all around the UK.

Stuart
Proud Owner
[Coul House Hotel](#)
In the hills above Contin
Ross-shire, IV14 9ES
Tel: 01997 421 487 Fax: 01997 421 945

This Summer's Weather



Summer 2020 in our part of the Highlands has been quite average as regards temperature, never reaching the dizzy heights further south, but pleasant enough. I noticed that there was a very late, or should that be very early air frost (-0.6°C) in Sutherland on the morning of the 8th July. After the dry spring June was rather a wet month locally, but July and August has seen below average

rainfall. There have been some sunny days, but generally sunshine has been no better than average, and July was rather a dull month.

FOR SALE

As you may have read in this edition of the Strath Times we are closing our Gallery and Giftshop and Sweetshop. As we are leaving the Pump Room, we will be selling a number of items in the near future. These include a number of furnishings/ fittings, display and business or point of sale items. We also have some empty sweetshop jars (recyclable plastic) to give away if you would like them for storage. We will be posting most of the items for sale on the local Buy Swap and Sell sites, but if you want to make an enquiry please get in touch at :-The Real Sweets & Gift Company on Facebook or Twitter or Email us at the sweetshop address : realsweets@me.com.

An appeal for old photographs



I recently rediscovered a number of old photographs of events and scenes from Strathpeffer from the early part of the 20th century. Margaret Spark kindly agreed for me to digitise these photographs and add them to the [village web site](#) for all to see. There could be hundreds of other old pictures are now fading and gathering dust in houses up and down the Strath, and it seems a crying shame that many of them are destined to end in landfill or recycling without ever seeing the light of day again. Please drop me an email if you would like me to add any any of your old images to the village website collection. Hopefully this will become a treasured resource for villagers now, but in the future, and serve as a reminder to us all of how things used to look in times gone by.

Bruce Messer team@strathpeffer.org

New Owners of Fodderty Lodge and a new start !



Colin Coutts and Mia Sabel moved to Fodderty Lodge in May 2019 having been seduced by its charms whilst on holiday, and recently celebrated 25 years together by getting married. Thanks to everyone for extending such a warm welcome, especially the Peffery Way team and fellow volunteers.

Colin, an Aberdonian, who trained as an architect and photographer, is thrilled to be back home in the North after 25 years in London. When not working on the house and garden, or fine-tuning his bicycles in the workshop, he'll be found cycling, walking or exploring somewhere forested or mountainous. His love of drawing, sketching, planning and pouring over maps lets Colin explore future escapes and adventures, bicycles and cabins.

Mia, a Londoner, has a background in theatre, brand and design, but retrained as a saddler and has worked with leather for over a decade. When not restoring luggage and making bespoke watch straps and accessories, she is likely to be found horse-riding on the Black Isle. As a keen amateur naturalist and forager, she enjoys pottering around the garden, greenhouse and polytunnel, as well as baking and preserving home-grown produce.

Fodderty Lodge is a grade C listed building which was built in 1730 by the Countess of Cromartie as a manse for the minister of Fodderty Church. The original date stone appears above the door to the main house and there is also a marriage stone in the dining room in the names of the original occupants. During the mid 1800s, the house became a shooting lodge, and then evolved from guest house to family home.



SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY COTTAGES

<i>East Wing</i> 1 bed/2ppl	<i>Honeysuckle Cottage</i> 3 bed/6ppl	<i>Lodge Barn</i> 2 bed/4ppl
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Fodderty Lodge
Dingwall IV15 9UE
+44 (0)1997 421393

foddertylodge@gmail.com
www.foddertylodge.com
@foddertylodge

MR COLIN COUTTS
+44 (0)7765 253716

MISS MIA SABEL
+44 (0)7765 253811

Fodderty Lodge has 3 self-contained, self-catering holiday cottages (1, 2 and 3 bed) to let individually or as a whole.

Fodderty Lodge Cottages
foddertylodge@gmail.com
www.foddertylodge.com
 01997 421393
 07765 253716

SABEL Saddlery, Bespoke Leather Design
sabel@bespokewatchstraps.com
www.sabelsaddlery.com
 07765 253811



Dark clouds lifted from the Strathpeffer Pavilion



The future of Strathpeffer Pavilion, the Pump House and the Victorian Gardens have all been secured. Ownership of the iconic Pavilion building transferred to the Strathpeffer Pavilion Community Trust (SPCT) from the Scottish Historic Building Trust on 25 May 2020. And now under Community Asset Transfer Legislation, the Highland Council has passed ownership of the Pump house and Victorian Gardens to SPCT as of the 15 September 2020. This event once again brings the Pavilion and Victorian Gardens under single ownership thus preserving the future of these local asset to benefit the community.

Whilst COVID19 has imposed restrictions and the Pavilion has been closed to the public, the Trust directors and HighLife Highland have continued to move forward with plans for the future development of the Pavilion, Pump House, the Victorian gardens and surrounding land.

There was a magnificent response for the recently advertised part-time development officer, suitable candidates were interviewed on 11 August and hopefully the post will be in place by the end of September.

Due to the restrictions, the Highland Council have delivered a reduced maintenance and grass cutting service for common land. With progress on the transfer of the Victorian gardens nearing completion, it was decided the grass cutting was a priority for the area around the Pavilion for it to be kept neat and tidy for residents to continue using for exercise, so decided to do work themselves.

An application to Foundation Scotland (who administer the Corriemoillie Windfarm Community Fund) was granted for funds to purchase grass cutting and other gardening equipment. We have now purchased a new

lawnmower, brush-cutter, leaf blower and hedge trimmers. We've also advertised for volunteers to help do the work and the response was encouraging so we have created the Strathpeffer Pavilion Community Garden Group to maintain and develop the Victorian gardens.

If interested please contact Nadine at nadinepaterson@spctteam.com for more information. Our first workday on Saturday 8 August was a great success and under the guidance of our new Estate Manger Stevie Rock, the Pavilion grounds were given a make-over and its looking great for resident and visitors to enjoy.

Fundraising will always be a priority and we will be welcoming some of the UKs most recognised artists, and support coming from our local artists, to raise funds for the upkeep of the Pavilion and grounds. We're delighted to announce, **Toploader, one of UK's top live bands will perform on Friday 29 January 2021 with support from local Ross-Shire Band This Machine !**

Chair of Strathpeffer Pavilion Community Trust, Fraser Mackenzie, said

"We are delighted to start 2021 with Toploader as one of our first ever fundraising events" and "The event marks the start of a very early joint venture with High Life Highland to put the Pavilion firmly back on the map within the music venue industry. This is hopefully the start of several repeat nights with more top talent coming to the Highlands".





Autumn & Winter Activities for Children

5th September - Nature Mobiles & Garlands (12:00-1:30)

12th September - Dandelion Canvas Painting (12:00-1:30)

19th September - Treasure from the Trees (12:30-2:00)

****26th September- Drop in crafts in the Museum****

3rd October - Wild Weaving (12:30-2:00)

10th October - Vintage Toy-making (12:00-1:30)

****17th October - Drop in crafts in the Museum****

24th October - Bush-craft Broomsticks (12:30-2:00)

****31st October - Drop in Halloween Fun in the Museum****

7th November - Sparkler Art (12:00-1:30)

14th November - Bush-craft Lantern Making (12:30-2:00)

****21st November - Drop in Crafts in the Museum****

28th November - Vintage Toy-making (12:00-1:30)

5th December - Christmas Crafts (12:00-1:30)

****12th December - Drop in Christmas Quest in the Museum****

Due to Covid19 control measures, all activities must be BOOKED IN ADVANCE.

For info & bookings please email:

curator@highlandmuseumofchildhood.org.uk

All activities £5.00 per child, £2.50 members ****Drop In activities FREE****

Although all these activities have had to be cancelled or put on hold for the moment due to the COVID-19 resurgence, please still contact the Museum to express your interest in any of them for when restrictions are lifted and they can be run.



Upcoming Adult Workshops At The Highland Museum of Childhood

Our workshops for adults are presented by expert crafters and instructors. All materials and tools are supplied however you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer. Light refreshments are provided during a short break in each workshop, inclusive of workshop fees.

All workshops are £24.00 or £12.00 for Museum Members. Please email to book:
curator@highlandmuseumofchildhood.org.uk

Dorset Buttons

Saturday 26th September

10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

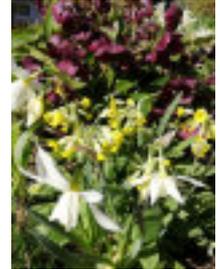


Perfect Pot Inspiration

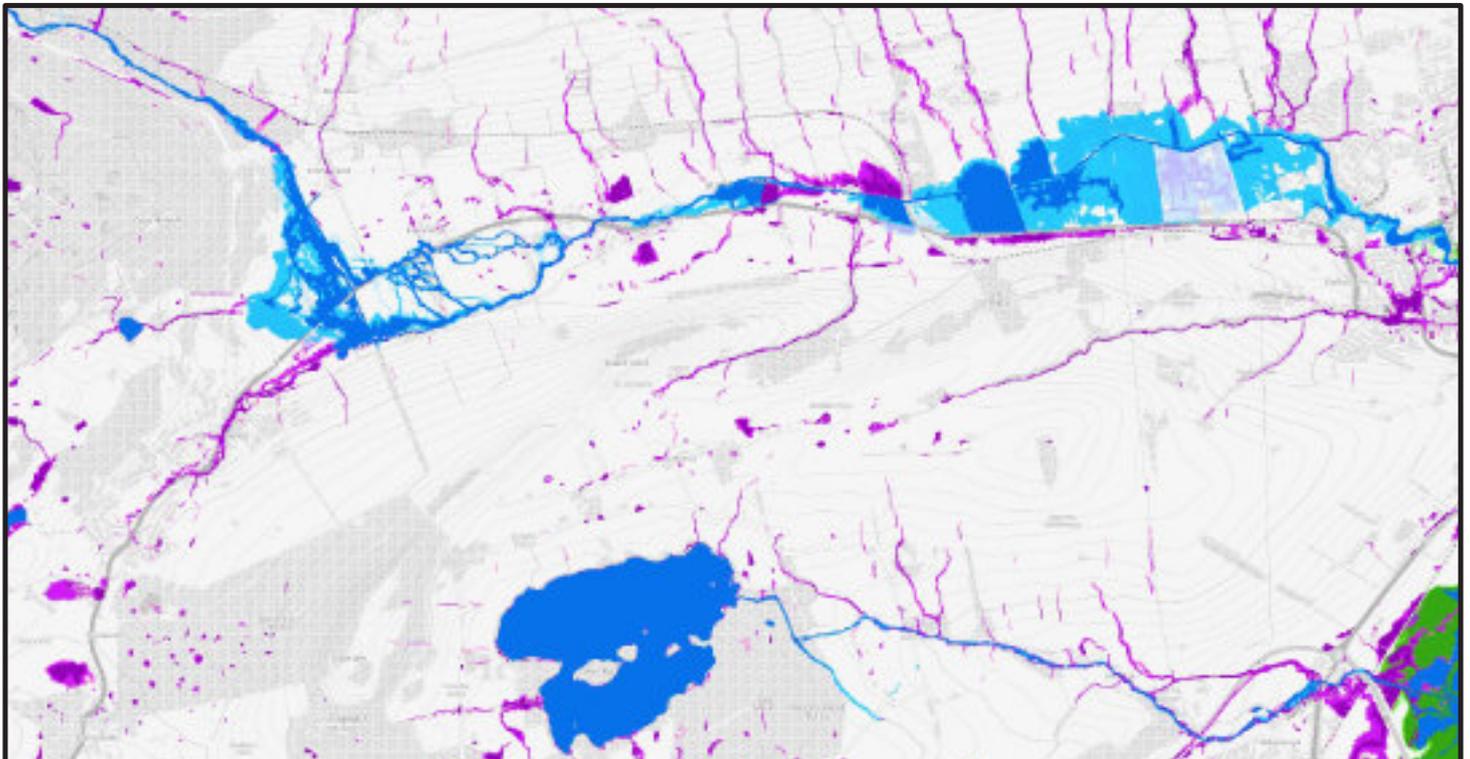
Horticulture tips for year round colour in the garden

Saturday 24th October

10:00 am - 1:00 pm.



Flood map of the Strath



The [SEPA website](http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm) (<http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm>) contains some very useful information about flooding. The interactive flood map highlights all areas that are at risk of either surface, river or coastal flooding. As you can see the Peffery to the east of the village is at particular high risk of flooding along the A834 road to Dingwall. As global warming continues in the years to come the risk of flooding can only increase.

Children's Page - Animal Facts

More Otters...



Hi all !

In the spring edition we showed a photo and sea otters holding hands. Here's some more fun otter facts :

- Sea otters live in the Pacific ocean. They often sleep in the water and link hands to stay together while asleep in the water.
- Our native European otters live and sleep on land in burrows called Holts. They look different and use water to find food and play in, but don't sleep in it.
- Their territory can be up to 11 miles and can stay underwater for four minutes as they have large lungs and can slow down their heartbeat.

Ten riddles

1. What can you catch but not throw?
2. What begins with T, finishes with T, and has T in it?
3. I'm tall when I'm young, and I'm short when I'm old, what am I?
4. What is so fragile that saying its name breaks it?
5. What answer can you never answer yes to?
6. I am an odd number. Take away a letter and I become even. What number am I?
7. What is always in front of you but can't be seen?
8. What's black and white and red all over?
9. What word is spelled wrong in the dictionary?
10. What becomes wetter the more it dries?

Answers

1. A cold
2. A teapot
3. A candle
4. Silence
5. Are you asleep yet?
6. Seven.
7. The future.
8. A newspaper
9. Wrong.
10. A towel

Delivering the Strathpeffer Community Action Plan – creating a new development trust for Strathpeffer and the surrounding area.

Last year the Strathpeffer Community Council published the Community Action Plan for Strathpeffer and District. This plan had been prepared after various consultation events held within the community during 2019 and copies of the finished plan can be viewed on the village website – www.strathpeffer.org.

One of the key actions included in that plan was to set up a Strathpeffer and District Development Trust that would work on behalf of the community and would help support the work of the various groups that already exist within the area. Rather than create another new company, a suggestion was made that we should transform one of the existing charitable companies that exists within the community into the new trust. At a Special General Meeting of its members on Monday 21st September 2020, it was agreed unanimously that the Strathpeffer Community Association Ltd which is responsible for the ownership and operation of the community centre, should begin the process of transforming itself into a development trust for the area. This process will take several months to complete as formal approvals are required from Companies House and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Once established, members of the community will be able to become members of the trust and to help steer the direction the trust takes in helping make our community an even better place to live. Further updates will be provided on the village website – www.strathpeffer.org – and in future editions of the Strath Times.