



OBAN AND LORN ANGLING CLUB

Charity No. SCO47428

Newsletter 2025 - Number 3

2nd August 2025

Dear Member

Here is a round-up of the news for our Club. Nothing terribly exciting, but there are some items from Forest and Land Scotland which you need to be aware of. It is good to be able to tell you of a new boat on a loch which many write off as "too weedy".

Membership

We now have more than 105 subscribing members, which is another record, or at least more than for many years. I thought that when we reached 101 last year it might be a "one-off" due to some combination of factors that brought an unusual number of new members. This year the proportion of members re-joining has been higher than usual, so there must be something worth staying for.

Shared Access Gates

We have four gates leading to the lochs which are shared with other users. These are the Sandpit Gate, the Dorlin Gate, the Nant Gate, and the Collaig Road Gate. In opening these gates, members should be particularly careful to replace the OLAC padlocks where they do not lock out any other user. The photo below shows the Nant Gate lock arrangement:



As you can see, the locks are all locked to each other. This allows anyone with the key or code for any of the locks to open the gate. There have been several occasions this season where the locks have not been reinstated as shown, with the result that SSE or Barachander Farm have been unable to open the gate. This is inconvenient to all and means that the gate cannot be passed until the misplaced lock has been moved to its correct position. Please take care when you see multiple padlocks on a gate that our lock is not returned where it can bypass any others.

Forest and Land Scotland

As our primary landlord, Forest and Land Scotland (formerly the Forest Commission) own many of our lochs and the access roads to them. They have asked me to inform members that there may soon be restrictions on the road from Loch Nant to the Sior Lochs. Harvesting operations are about to begin in the area where the road runs out of the forestry block and passes over the cattle grid. Please follow any instructions from F&LS operatives and not the signage which has been put in place. The photo below shows the signs as you approach the site of the impending operations:



One of the lochs which we lease from Forest and Land Scotland is Loch Dubh Mhor, at Kilmelford. This has, until this season, had a boat moored on it but it recently became apparent that our lease did not include the consent to moor a boat here. This has now been added to the lease for the loch. While reviewing our leases, we requested that we also be granted consent to put a boat on Loch na Sreinge. Those of you who fish this loch will know that the banks are quite hard going, so a boat will make it easier to fish and we thank F&LS for granting us permission to put a boat here. Members will be advised when work parties are needed to place a mooring and boat onto loch na Sreinge. This is not likely to be in

2025, given the work still outstanding.

F&LS have asked me to remind members that while access to the forest roads is granted under our leases, members should at all times follow Scottish Outdoor Access Code once they have reached their destination.

Road Closure

Any of us get to Avich from Kilmelford. This somewhat confusing sign has been placed at the road end just after the turn off at Kilmelford from the A816.

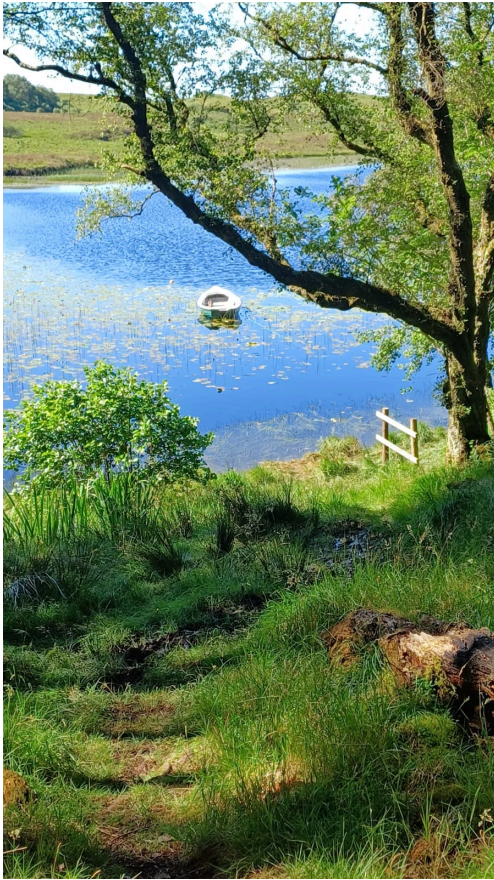


It seems to tease with the suggestion that the road will be closed for one day, but they're not going to tell us exactly which day. Whatever happens, you may see more signs when there is a diversion in place.

Boats

We are pleased to announce the deployment of a boat on Dubh Loch Mor, Barcaldine. We are very grateful to Adrian Hatton who has provided this for members to use. The loch is notorious for weeding up from July onwards, leaving the bulk of the water clear but tantalisingly out of reach except by those with float tubes. This will no longer be the case, with the two-man boat now moored at the point of entry to the loch. The

photo below shows the boat on its mooring after it was launched earlier in July.



Loch Nant

The extreme low water reported earlier has now been replaced by water at a level above our mooring gabion. In fact the boat, which remains upturned on the shore, is now but a few metres above the waterline. This means that the boat will not be usable until the water level recedes, but at least the banks are not so hazardous and members are advised that fishing is possible once more. Iain Moody reported a steady days fishing with most fish coming to a sedge imitation (Red Arsed Green Peter).

Loch an Droguinn

Peter MacKay fished here from the bank, and had a few fish. The boat would probably be a better option, but this is ashore with repairs in progress. The deck was found to be rotten when a member stood on it and his foot went through. On inspection, there was a very thin layup of GRP over the ply deck and this has crumbled over time. A patch has been laminated to replace the weak area but has yet to be fitted. Members will be advised when the boat is back in commission.

Loch an Leoid

The Loch an Leoid boat has seen little use, which is a shame because it gives access to all parts of one of our loveliest lochs. The limestone substrate creates clear water and an underwater habitat very unlike the Nant which is just along the road. This is an under-fished loch that can produce beautiful fish right up until the end of September. If you venture out, never miss a drift past the crannog here, it might not be a genuine former human habitation but the trout are always in residence hereabouts.

Boat News

We now have seven boats which can be booked. These are on Avich (two boats); Dhub Loch Mor, Barcaldine; Gleann à Bhearraidh; an Leoid; Seil; and Oude.

Nant and Loch Dubh Mhor, Kilmelford need (respectively) less water and new keel bands.

Loch an Droguinn will have priority in the repair queue.

We have been granted permission to move the Oude boat mooring to a location on the west bank of the loch, where it will be more easily accessed and not force members to cross the A816. Further details will be forthcoming but suffice to say that this will give our less mobile members another loch to fish from the boats.

Work parties

The last work party recruited from the wider membership was well attended and we were able to launch the Avich boats and re-lay the moorings so that the boats lie further out into the loch. Other informal work parties were recruited from the committee through the summer to do jobs as they arose. We will need a work party to move the Oude boat to its new location.

Friday Morning Sessions

Peter and I met regularly at the Hut on Friday mornings to keep the work going. Thus we were able to make and deploy a mooring for Dhub Loch Mor and work on the spare oars. These (photo below) have just been given a coat of "viking oil". It seems to keep the oars in good order even if they spend a lot of time soaked through.



We are always glad to see members who can lend a hand. The aim is always to be at the Club Hut, Mossfield for 11:00 on Fridays and work until 14:00 or 15:00. If you want to come and find us, this is a fixed time and place. NOTE having said that, this will not be happening on Friday 8th or 15th of August 2025 because I shall be away. Friday 22nd should see normal service resumed.

Competitions

The competition against Lochgilphead was postponed from Easter Sunday 20th April until Sunday 5th May. Despite (or maybe due to?) the change of date, only four members of Oban and Lorn Angling Club went down to take on the Lochgilphead team. They fielded 14 anglers, so some random assignment was needed to equal up the contest. In the end it was to Oban's benefit because the draw gave us a result of 12lb 4oz against 9lb 5oz for Lochgilphead. So we won, although by a statistical fluke.

Let us hope that on 21st September our members can show more enthusiasm. As always, the competition

will begin by a meet-up at the Nant Gate for 10:00. A meal will then be partaken by all competitors at the Brander Lodge Hotel. For full details, our organiser Jim Grout can be contacted on 07772 288497.

Catch Returns

I haven't had many (any) catch returns or pictures of fish to share with you but here is one that Andy posted to Facebook. This is what it's about, wild fishing. This isn't a big fish but it's in perfect condition and probably never been caught before. Superb.



I will have to go and get some pictures myself for next time, but meanwhile I hope that the impending storm Floris (who?) spares your garden and that our boats come through unscathed.

I'm just going to go up to Loch Dubh Mhor, Barcaldine now because I remembered that the boat bridle we fitted has no swivel. This is needed to stop the swinging of the boat unwinding the lay of the rope. I have a replacement bridle and just need to loop it in. So many jobs, so little time...

Kind regards

Jonathan

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