

Up for award

■ ARGYLL and Bute Council's procurement teams have been shortlisted for an impressive three Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards.

Councillor Dick Walsh, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, said: "This is welcome news and I'd like to congratulate the teams on their efforts and hard work. It is extremely rewarding to be recognised by your industry and wish them well at the awards."

The council has been named as finalist in the Best Customer Engagement Award for its home care re-design initiative.

It will also be considered for the People of Today and Tomorrow Award - for organisations that support youth employment and are investing in the creation of Scotland's future procurement skills.

Both the Procurement and Commissioning Team and the Renewables Procurement Programme have made the final in the Local Government Team of the Year.

This GO award recognises leadership, communication, innovation, collaboration and a collective team ethic and approach to delivering excellence in public services.

The Go Awards Scotland are aimed at celebrating procurement excellence in Scotland - with winners announced at a special ceremony being held next month.

Folk concert

■ FOLK STAR Eleanor McEvoy is set to take to the stage in Cove Burgh Hall and tickets for the performance are now on sale.

Eleanor will be making a one-night-only visit to Helensburgh and Lomond in November as part of her Naked Tour.

The Garelochhead and Rosneath Peninsula First Responders have organised the concert set to take place on November 20 to raise funds.

Tickets and information available at universe.com/emcevoycove and are also available at Kilcreggan Post Office and Discography Records.

Children of War special report

# Ukrainian children's respite from conflict

## Villagers host visiting youngsters as part of national trip

By DANIELLE LAPPIN

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**A LOCAL group has provided 25 children from war-torn Ukraine "an escape from it all" during a trip to Scotland.**

The Arrochar and Tarbet Community Development Trust invited the children - many of whom were orphans - to the Three Villages Hall for lunch and a trip on a boat on Loch Lomond.

Dr Maria Jemicz, director of the trust, heard the children were paying a visit to Scotland through friends who are also part of the Ukrainian community in Edinburgh and knew that the trust could help.

She said: "I am a member of the club in Edinburgh as my father was Ukrainian and I like to stay in touch with my roots. I have a summer house over there and I go over

to teach English.

"The trip organiser Bohdan Nastiuk and his wife contacted me and after hearing the story I was keen to help."

All 25 of the children who visited Arrochar were from the war zone in Ukraine and they all lost their fathers as a result of the conflict.

The trip to Scotland was the first of its kind and organiser Bohdan was keen to see the children get the opportunity to get away from it all for a little while.

He said: "My parents were Ukrainian and so is my wife we know the situation over there and we wanted to get the children away. They are only kids, they didn't cause anything and have nothing to do with the politics."

The children are visiting Scotland for 10 days and staying with foster families across the country. The aim of the trip was to get to help get the children's minds away from losing a parent and show them that war wasn't everything.

All the children were between 10 and 15 years of age and were loving their time in Scotland.

One of the boys, Denys Bilichevko, 15, told of his experiences so far.

He told *The Advertiser*: "It is my first time here; it is a very beautiful country. Seeing the nature has been great."

"I was so excited to come and it was great to get the opportunity, the other kids are all great and it's been fun."

"Every day is exciting and I can't wait for the boat trip, I'd love to come back someday, it's beautiful."

The children on the trip came from all over the country and most didn't know the others before-



■ Bohdan Nastiuk and Dr Maria Jemicz

hand. They are staying with foster parents in pairs and Bohdan explained that it has been great to see them come out of their shells.

He said: "They arrived on Saturday and I picked them up at the airport, getting them to open up to myself and their foster parents was hard but they have opened up now they have been there a while."

The children on the trip were selected by a charity in Ukraine which has inspired Bohdan and his wife to try and set up a charity here called Children of War, to make trips like this a regular occurrence.

He said: "Children of War is a charity we are in the process of setting up and trips like these are something we would like to continue. So far everything on this one has gone to plan, a few little hiccups but that's to be expected. Even the weather has been great for us."

Maria, was delighted with how everything had gone, and that the trust was able to help.

She added: "It's been fantastic, the children are great and we couldn't have asked for better



■ Organiser Bohdan Nastiuk

weather. Travel broadens the mind, as they say, and hopefully this has let the children see how people feel about them and creates international connections.

"Just them getting up in the morning and not having to worry is great. I think it's a great experience for them."

Volunteers were on hand to offer their services and help to make the day run so smoothly. Two volunteers from the Arrochar GP Practice were on hand to help in any way that they could.

Angela McKell, a nurse manager, and Jean Cearns, practice manager, run a youth group and wanted to see how the day went as the group are looking to volunteer with projects like that one.

Jean said: "This has been a fabulous opportunity for us to get involved and for the town to showcase the area and what we have."

The trust thanked Cruise Loch Lomond, Melanie Tonks, Rhona McFarlane and Chris Fowler for their support.



■ Some of the volunteers



■ Jean Cearns and Angela McKell



■ The group in Arrochar



■ Stopping for some lunch



■ Denys Bilichevko



■ Enjoying some lunch

Bus changes

■ THE route and timetable of Sunday buses between Helensburgh and Glasgow will change slightly from later this month.

First Glasgow's 1B service will be diverted to run via the Castlehill area of Dumbarton on Sundays only from October 23.

This will be instead of it operating direct via the A814 between Castlehill Road and Kyle Terrace.

The route and timetable from Monday to Saturday remains unchanged.

Full details at [firstgroup.com/greater-glasgow](http://firstgroup.com/greater-glasgow).

Awards list

■ LOVE Loch Lomond is a regional finalist for two awards in VisitScotland Thistle Awards.

The destination organisation which represents tourism and hospitality businesses across Loch Lomond, The Trossachs and the Clyde Sea Lochs, provides information and events for visitors via its website.

The organisation is in the running for 'Working Together for Tourism', for its partnership work to help businesses across the area develop. Love Loch Lomond Destination Manager Karen Donnelly is also

nominated for Regional Ambassador, which recognises an individual who has dedicated their time and energy into making a difference to tourism.

Destination Manager Karen Donnelly said: "I and the Love Loch Lomond team are honoured to be finalists in these prestigious tourism awards; we're proud to be in the company of so many inspiring tourism businesses across Scotland."

"The Love Loch Lomond vision focuses on people, places and experiences, and working together at a local and national level and collaborating with industry partners, including other destinations such as Glasgow and Argyll means we can offer a much greater and higher quality experience".

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