

THE LEWIS AND HARRIS TRAIL NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2026

A monthly update from The Lewis and Harris Trail

First of all, thank you all for your patience in waiting for this newsletter! Who knew that setting one up would be so difficult?!

It is nearing the end of September now and as things begin to grow a little quieter on the Lewis and Harris Trail website and Facebook group, the LHT HQ thought that we would begin a monthly newsletter to offer a brief update into what's going on – not only with The Lewis and Harris Trail but also on the island itself. You'll find some summer reflections, a list of what's on, place of the month, a Gaelic corner and a couple of other things. Thanks for reading!

The Lewis and Harris Trail

The Lewis and Harris Trail has been expanding this year, with more members to our Facebook group and an increase in the number of hits on our website too.

We've updated the downloadable booklet, have created a 7 day Itinerary for download and over the winter months, will be updating the Honesty Box map too.

As you can imagine, things are always changing on the island in terms of business and because of that, we have been adding new businesses to the website on a weekly basis this year.

We continue to ensure that the website offers a free website listing to all and any business on the Isle of Lewis and Harris. Therefore, we are always very grateful to those businesses who choose to support The Lewis and Harris Trail by joining the Patreon. They not only support us in running everything behind the scenes but all the other businesses listed on the website, keeping it free for everyone.

We'll update you on our next 'what's happening behind the scenes' in the next newsletter.



Photo by Fraser McFadzean on Unsplash

Summer Events



Photo Credit: Lochs Show and Pexels



It was another busy summer in Lewis and Harris, with the Heb Celt Fest, the agricultural shows, tractor runs and plenty of community get-togethers to get us out the door, even when the weather was doing its best to keep us in!

The agricultural shows seem to get better every year and always bring in good crowds. The Point Show kicked things off, followed by the Lochs Show, South Harris, the Westside, Carlaway and North Harris. There was the usual livestock judging, the produce and crafts, amazing small businesses selling their wares, community stalls and stuff for the kids to do – my personal favourite was probably the mini golf (although I did lose to my 10 year old in spectacular fashion!)

To my mind, there's nothing quite like a show day for bumping into some distant relation or having a blether with folk you haven't seen since last year or saying you're only going to hang about for a couple of hours and a cup of tea before staying for the whole day. (Case in point – me and my entire family who said we'd 'only go for an hour or two and then didn't leave until closing time!)

In September, there was the very first Stornoway Fringe Festival – with events not just in Stornoway but in Uig, Borge and Harris. As the inaugural event, it went spectacularly well, with comedy and magic for young and old, with plenty of good banter. The acts all loved it so much, they're planning on coming back again!

All in all, there's been plenty going on across the island. The craft fayres continue on through the next few months and there's always a good few events as the weather begins to change. You can keep an eye on the Facebook group as every week, we put up a 'What's On?' post... and we're thinking about setting up some sort of island wide calendar but that's going to take a bit more consideration!



***Callanish Stones,
Isle of Lewis***

Place of the Month

Every month, we thought we'd stick up a little bit about somewhere in Lewis and Harris – somewhere vague, somewhere well known... it'll change every month.



This month: Clach an Trushal

As you make your way through Ballantrushal on the west side of the island, you might see a sign for 'Clach an Trushal' / 'Clach an Truiseil' – meaning 'Stone of Compassion' (or 'Stone of Gathering' depending on who you talk to).

It's been standing there for thousands of years, long before the roads, villages and crofts we know today came to be. Standing around 5.8 metres high (19 feet), it's believed to be the tallest standing stone in Scotland and, even though you feel slightly awkward standing just outside someone's house to see it, it's a truly impressive sight.

There's a lot of stories attached to the stone, as there are with so many of the old monuments on the island. Some think it was part of a much larger stone circle, with others linking it to old battles, a Norse warrior or a princess from Norway. Local tradition claims it marks the last great clan battle between the MacAulays of Uig and the Morrisons of Ness. There are stories of magic and charms, of ghosts and faeries all linked to the stone, which, I think, makes it a little bit mysterious. No-one can really say for certain why it was originally put there but it certainly has withstood a good deal!

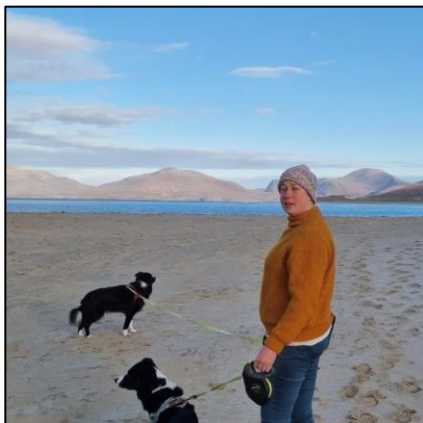
It's seen generations of islanders pass through this world, it's weathered storms and blazing sunshine, looking much the same as it probably did when it was first placed there.

It can be easy to just drive past it without much of a thought but the next time you're passing, it might be worth a wee stop and a drive down to see it.

Behind the Business

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE: THE CRAFTY WEAVER

A chance to get to know one of the island's businesses a little better.



One of the things we've launched recently on The Lewis and Harris Trail is 'Behind the Business'.

This gives us a chance to show off one of the island businesses and helps you get to know them a little better. (And if you search in the group, you will be able to find all the businesses we've interviewed so far!)

If you missed it on our Facebook group, then you have the chance now to learn more about The Crafty Weaver.

Read on...

1. Tell us your name, your business name and a bit about where you live.

Hi, I'm Nikki, Master of all that is The Crafty Weaver. I live in Upper Coll on the Isle of Lewis and moved here from near Bristol back in 2009.

2. What first sparked your interest in your business?

My business happened by accident! Not long after moving here I learnt to weave Harris Tweed. That was my main job for many years but I pretty quickly realised that I could make something with the leftover yarn and waste selvedge that weaving produced. I had just taught myself to knit when I moved to the island too, so I started knitting my Sheeps and Coos with the leftover yarn and stuffing them with the waste selvedge edge that gets cut off the Tweed while being woven. I also realised I could knit while weaving.

I took them in to a local craft shop and the owner loved them and asked for a bin bag full.....I laughed at that.....I didn't know then that I'd still be making them 16 years on....by the bin bag full.

We kept sheep back then too, so I had the fleece spun and I dyed it, and mad kits and patterns, which I'm still doing but I don't have sheep anymore.

The rest sort of just happened, I learnt to sew and started making things out of Tweed and some of the local shops liked what I was doing. So my part time creating became my more than full time business and weaving Harris Tweed moved to a part time job.

3. What does a regular day look like to you?

After waking up (whenever, the joys of being self employed!), coffee, coffee, coffee. Get out of my pj's and take the fourleggers out for an explore.

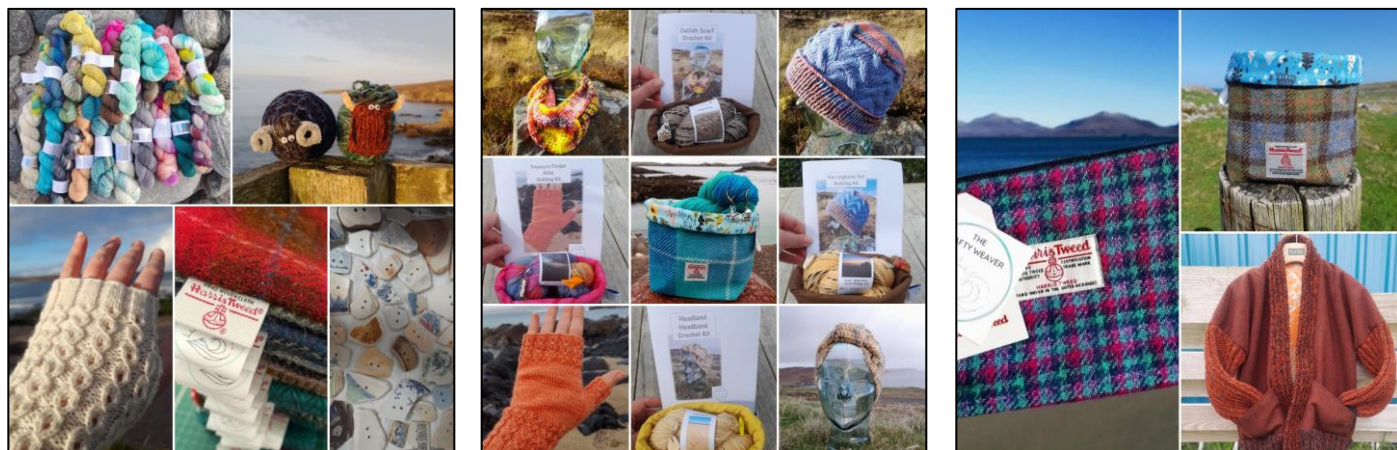
Then it's either out to the loomshed to weave and knit sheep and coos, a day in the kitchen dyeing yarns, or upstairs to my workroom to sew.

Lots of coffee and snacks throughout the day to.

On days when I'm out delivering to the local shops that stock my makes, I load up the van with makes and the fourleggers, take lots of flasks of coffee and head off to deliver. The fourleggers also get extra exploring on delivery days.

4. What are some of your hobbies outside your business?

I love being outdoors, whether wandering along the beaches and shores of the islands looking for beach treasure or walking out in the hills and moors. I've been a hillwalker for 25 years so I'm always happy to be out exploring.



5. What's the one thing you couldn't live without, business or otherwise?

Coffee

6. Can people come to visit you? What day/times etc? If not, where can they purchase from you?

I have an honesty shop that's open from March to October (exact dates will be on my social media). It's open 24/7 (unless it's very stormy) and has a selection of lovely things in.

I have makes in quite a few local shops too around Lewis and Harris.

I attend some markets too (dates will be on my social media nearer the time) and I have a webshop Thecraftyweaver.sumupstore.com if you are further away.

I don't open my loomshed to visits.

7. Do you have any plans for your business/crafts this year?

Just to make lots more lovely things!

8. Anything else you'd like to tell us?

I have 2 crazy Border Collies, Pip and Ben, affectionately known as the fourleggers.

My coffee cup holds nearly a pint.

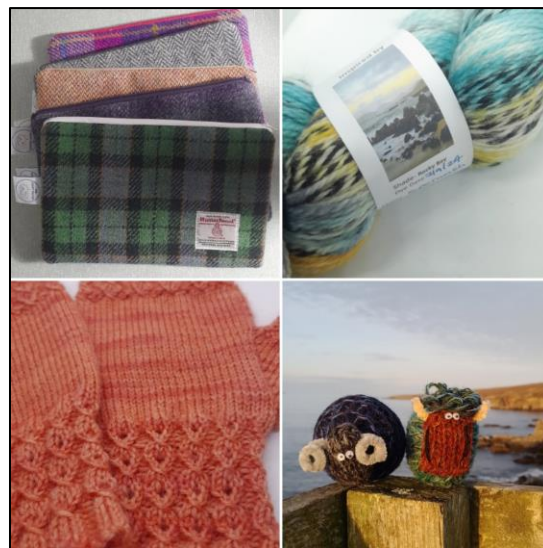
My social media often has pictures of lovely rocks on it.

I have Fibromyalgia.

I'm a white van driver.

I love working with colour

I drank 2 cups of coffee while writing this!



What's On?

KEEP AN EYE ON THE FACEBOOK GROUP

Every Friday there's a 'What's On?' post in the Facebook group, and we hope this newsletter list will grow month on month too.

- 5th October: Linda Norgrove Foundation 10k Run and Walk, 12pm Riof Beach, Bhaltois, Uig.
- 6th, 7th and 8th October: Stornoway Town Hall Markets
- 9th and 10th October: The Quality Craft Emporium
- 16th October: Bingo at Grinneabhat
- Alpaca Felting Workshops – check www.alpaca.co.uk for dates and details.
- Buckberry Stornoway – check their Facebook page for upcoming workshops and dates

Gaelic Corner

Gaelic word of the month! Plenty of this around at the moment – mud or poll. You can find audio here for pronunciation: [poll](#) Or, if you're in town, you can pop into An Taigh Ceilidh and ask.

How about: Fhuair mi leagadh anns a' pholl! (I fell flat in the mud!)



Photo of the Month



This month's photo was taken by someone in LHT HQ's family – not quite sure who – but features myself in a box on Coll beach a long, long time ago!

We'd love to feature some more photos in our newsletter, so do feel free to send them to us – you can email them to izzy@thelewisandharristrail.com

(They never did return me to Lochinver!)

GET IN TOUCH

If you have suggestions, content or feedback for next month, then please email: izzy@thelewisandharristrail.com