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LANDSLIDES AND FLOODS IN WAKE OF WEEKEND DELUGE



by Jamie Willis
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Flooding and landslides have struck across Lochaber as the west of Scotland was hit by a weekend of torrential rain.

Around a fifth of the area's average October rainfall fell in a single day as readings over 50mm were recorded in a 24-hour period at SEPA weather stations at Glen Nevis, Tobermory and Polloch.

The downpour led to flooded streets, swelling rivers and cancelled services.

Travel faced major disruptions. A landslide saw the edge of the B8007 fall away at Ardslogish, forcing the sole road to Kilchoan to close on Saturday.

Although it was re-opened on Sunday, the need for significant repair work means the road will be shut from 9am to 11am, 11.30am to 1.30pm and

2pm to 4pm for the rest of the week. The A884 from Strontian to Lochaline also closed on Saturday before re-opening on Sunday.

After-effects of the peninsula's rainstorms were still being felt on Tuesday when a landslide hit the B849 at Drimnin. Highland Council said subsidence had resulted in the single carriageway loss of any verge or edge protection. At the time of going to press, HGV traffic was barred from the road and an estimated three days of repair work meant limited access mirroring the times of the B8007.

On the railways, Scotrail pre-empted the storm by announcing on Friday it was cancelling trains on the West Highland line on Saturday with no replacement bus service. The lines remained closed until Monday, after which the lines re-opened with speed restrictions. The exception was the Fort William to Mallaig line, which re-opened

on Sunday. That re-opening allowed West Coast Railways, which operates the Jacobite steam train, to restart its service after cancelling the famous journey on Saturday by instruction of Network Rail.

The multitude of closures on the roads and railways led to reports of stranded holidaymakers and locals. Two guests staying at Sanna Croft on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula found their holiday unexpectedly extended by a day due to the road issues at Ardslogish, coupled with the continued lack of a vehicle ferry between Kilchoan and Mull.

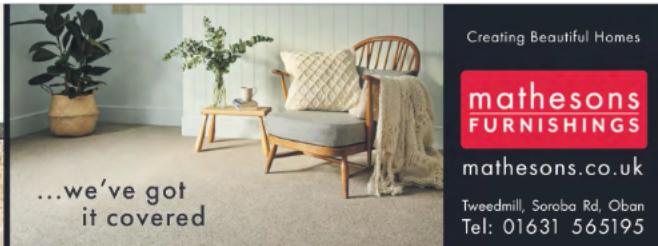
Graham Crearer, owner of Sanna Croft, said the guests were due to leave on Sunday, but stayed on until Monday at no extra charge.

"With the single track road and the unreliable ferry, we have kind of got used to the scenario. But for the guests it was exciting...something they can

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