

# FAIRTRADE PEOPLE

An t-Oban - *Baile Malairt-chothromaich*



Oban was reminded not to rest on its laurels after being named Scotland's newest Fairtrade town and, to make sure it doesn't, Murdoch MacKenzie tells Lorn Life what it means to be Fairtrade.

FAIRTRADE guarantees a better deal for poor people around the world. It is dedicated to fighting poverty through trade. As Fairtrade people in Oban and Lorn we are helping people around the world, from poor and disadvantaged communities, to use their skills to build sustainable businesses. On November 3 the Fairtrade Foundation's Certificate was presented to the people of Oban whereby Oban became the 203<sup>rd</sup> Fairtrade Town in the UK and the 19<sup>th</sup> in Scotland. If you give people fish you feed them for a day. If you teach them how to fish you feed them for a lifetime. Fairtrade ensures that farmers and fishermen, tea and coffee plantation workers and those on sugar and banana plantations, not only learn new skills but also receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. Oban people, like Murdoch Gatward of Imani Enterprise Limited, work directly with people in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Not only is there fair pay but there is also a premium fund



Picture courtesy of Highland Photos

invested in 100 local community development projects which since 1998 has supported - 56 projects in education, 15 in health, seven in water and sanitation and 22 others with a total value of £850,240. 10,628 children are being educated at primary level and 6,232 in secondary schools.

Both Marks and Spencers and Virgin Trains have now switched to Fairtrade as has Argyll and Bute Council. In Oban and Lorn eight retailers, four cafes, four bed and breakfasts, six churches and nine businesses have become Fairtrade and are

listed in the Oban Fairtrade Directory. But this is only a beginning. We each have our part to play. When we buy, or ask for, Fairtrade clothes, snack bars, wine, tea, coffee, chocolate, honey, pineapples, mangoes and bananas, we are contributing directly to the well-being of poor people across the world.

It was the Dalai Lama who said: 'If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito!' Each time we buy Fairtrade, sometimes paying a little extra, we are making a difference.

(More information on [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) or from ObanFairtradeGroup on 710550)