



Landmark The Atholl Arms

Dunkeld hotspots are getting facelift

Home improvements at Atholl Arms and Taybank

Melanie Bonn

The popular summer tourist destination of Dunkeld is getting a pre-season makeover, with two of its key buildings undergoing repairs and improvements.

The Atholl Arms is the first sight that greets visitors to the beautiful Highland

Perthshire town as they cross the impressive span of the 19th Century Thomas Telford Bridge.

Currently, the street-side exterior is being painted and alterations are being made to the bar.

Elsewhere, a prestigious Edinburgh interior design company is set to move into the adjoining building, previously an antiques centre. And just along from

there, famous traditional music venue and bar, The Taybank is wrapped in scaffolding, as major work is carried out.

Christine and Neil Sinclair took over the Atholl Arms in 2011 and have gradually made improvements.

Last year work was done on the Riverview Restaurant and, having recruited a chef from Perth's Sante restaurant, the menu was overhauled and improved.

They have recently demolished two buildings in the garden - a derelict garage and chalet - to give an uninterrupted view of the river for restaurant diners.

Later in the summer a deck and pavilion are to be built near the water.

Explained Christine (53): "Right now we are on about day 10 of redeveloping the whole bar area, which we hope to have open by the end of February.

"We are returning it back to the old name it used to have, 'The Meeting Place'.

"We've put in a new open fire and the original sash windows are all being restrung.

"The idea is to open up a space that wasn't being used and to make it very child-friendly, with new seating, new carpets and curtains.

"We're also very excited that a new stone-based pizza oven is going in.

"We're not looking for Michelin stars, just a good balanced menu and a place where people feel at home."

Neighbouring property, The Taybank, changed hands in June 2014 and new owners Roddy Hand (32) and Lucy Davidson (30) have an even

bigger job on their plate. "Pretty much everything you can see is being fixed," Roddy told the PA.

"The Taybank Bar is closed at the moment for a two-week intensive overhaul.

"The bar is getting a deep clean but will keep its traditional feel."

Lucy revealed that a whole new look menu is planned.

"It used to be all about stovies, but not any more!" she said.

"Then over two months the big structural work on the roof is being done and all the stonemasonry - we're basically bringing the old building back from many years of neglect."

Roddy and Lucy plan to have everything done in time for the Neil Gow Festival on March 20.

After numerous negative Trip Adviser comments damaged the Taybank, Roddy explained that it would be a while before it regained its reputation.

He explained: "The toilets were branded 'desperate' and there were loads of comments that the whole place looked tired.

"Lucy and I are both from the village and we've watched with concern as there was talk about the pub being made into flats.

"I managed here when Dougie Maclean had it and I care a lot about the old place."

Meanwhile Jeffrey's Interiors, hailing from the smart Stockbridge area of Edinburgh, is planning to move into the empty building next door.

Opening in April, it will stock top brands like Ralph Lauren Home.



We've watched with concern as there was talk about the pub being made into flats. I care about the place
Roddy Hand



Hard graft Roddy and Lucy outside the Taybank

Pitlochry hotels among best in the UK and Europe

Staff Reporter

Three Pitlochry hotels have been named as some of the best in Britain and Europe.

Fonab Castle Hotel, Knockendarroch House Hotel and Atholl Villa all earned top billing in the prestigious TripAdvisor ratings.

And Mid-Scotland and Fife MSP Murdo Fraser has used a parliamentary motion to call on fellow politicians to congratulate the staff at all three sites for providing top class service.

Fonab Castle took third place in the UK luxury category, Knockendarroch was ranked the 11th best small hotel in Britain, and Atholl Villa ranked sixth in the UK and

Europe small hotels category.

Neighbouring Atholl Palace hotel was also recently named by Travel Guide as a must-visit hotel before you die.

Murdo Fraser MSP, Scottish Conservative Spokesperson for Tourism, is delighted that businesses in the local area have scooped such prestigious prizes.

He said: "There is something for everyone in Perthshire and this is encapsulated by Pitlochry which boasts world class hotels, breath-taking scenery, fantastic food and great entertainment.

"Their inclusion will hopefully result in more people choosing Perthshire's as a holiday destination."

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