

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

"WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER" is a fairly discredited political economic statement. I thought it might well be adapted to describe the weather, which is a perennial subject for discussion. However, in retrospect, it is not really appropriate, as we in these fair islands live in micro-climates, of which the isle of Seil is a prime example. We have recently dodged all last year's flooding, snow can, and has recently seriously disrupted life not too far from here, and fog is an almost unknown occurrence. It is fairly common for people to complain about the weather, and recently there has been some dissatisfaction with last summer being the wettest on record, but you would think that some parts of the country would have welcomed this with open arms to replenish almost empty reservoirs and the threat of stand-pipes, hosepipe bans, and toilet flushing restrictions.. Our micro-climate hereabouts saves us from all these inconveniences.

Seil and Easdale Community Council held a public meeting on Tuesday 22 January at Seil Island Community Hall.

Terry Heggarty, Community Empowerment Outreach Worker from Argyll Voluntary Action attended to discuss Community Resilience and Emergency Planning. Emergency Planning has become increasingly relevant since communities have had to face more extreme weather events. Argyll and Bute are now leading the way, aiming for all Community Councils to have Resilience Plans. It is recognised that communities have different needs due to varying services and that the core of any plan will involve writing down what has traditionally been local knowledge.

Scenarios proposed by the public include the closure or restrictions on Kilninver Bridge and a lack of ferry transport to Easdale. The use of First Responders was discussed and the Seil Directory highlighted as useful tool. Other suggestions included: identification of 4x4 and tractor owners, short wave radio operators, identification of places of safety, vulnerable members of the community, members of the community with specific skills and / or equipment and a map to accompany any contact list. John Gordon has agreed to take the plan forward with support from others.

Charles Struthers gave an update regarding Scottish Water. The majority of issues are now resolved although discussions regarding the fence and Pumping Station 3 continue. The community are encouraged to continue to report further concerns.

The potholes on the Seil Road have been fixed although there are issues with cars being forced off the edge of the surfaced track. Settlement across the road by the new house at Whinbank was noted. The Winterton Road repairs remain incomplete.

The bollards at Balachuan House have been damaged. Discussions are ongoing regarding making this a surfaced passing place which SECC will continue to press for. The holes left by bollards at Balvicar have been filled but quality is questionable. They have also been

proposed to mark the road edge where there is currently a plastic fence near Cnoc a Challtuinn. These will be on the verge thus should not suffer from similar damage.

Other roads issues discussed include: the 30mph speed limit through Clachan Seil which is pending; roadside vegetation which is due to be cut back; ongoing discussions with landowners regarding a passing place at Atlantic Bridge and a further request from SECC to make funds available for the resurfacing of Cnoc a Challtuinn

A meeting took place on Tuesday 15th January on Easdale Island to discuss medical evacuation. Representatives included Scottish Ambulance Service, OMRT, Strathclyde Police, Easdale Residents Association, Argyll and Bute Council and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. Various scenarios were discussed. Ambulance staff will now be able to go across to Easdale to triage patients but still reserve the right to refuse on safety grounds. Dr Hannah stressed that the table top exercise on Easdale showed that the community is resilient but that the non emergency situations needed to be fully considered.

Homecare provision was transferred to Carr Gorm on Monday 21 January with one existing carer moving over. At present, members of the community continue to receive care although from different staff. SECC will continue to monitor the situation.

There is a call for a satellite dialysis unit in Oban although a recent report shows that there is capacity elsewhere in the system. Improvements in medication (including home dialysis) and transplants mean that hospital dialysis is becoming less necessary. It was argued that the Lorn and Isles Hospital needs support to become a centre of excellence and that keeping high class facilities was a key to attracting high class professional staff.

Repairs have been completed to the Sea Wall. There is a rope across the path to discourage pedestrians, with planning permission granted for a more substantial barrier.

There has been a generally positive response to plans to purchase the land from the Inglis Family. At their next meeting (Tuesday 5th Feb), the Kilbrandon Trust will appoint a Chairperson and following this, the purchase of the land will be further explored.

Constable Moore gave his apologies and notification that there was little to report. He encourages members of the public to get in touch with him should there be any issues.

At Balvicar crossroads SECC continue to object to the amendment to planning, meaning that a grass verge and kerb has been agreed in place of the original pavement. It was suggested that the kerb will move over time, the verge will soften and pedestrians will be forced onto the road. It was noted that the road is busy, it is a complex junction and a place where school children disembark from the local bus.

Sue Vest will be stepping down as secretary to SECC and leader of Kilbrandon Guides as a change in job in April will make these commitments impractical. Since the meeting a potential secretary for SECC has been found. However, anyone interested in supporting SECC and / or the Guides is encouraged to get in touch with Sue.(300160)

Seafari hope to put a petrol storage facility on the pier. The Community was reassured that it will meet all relevant safety standards.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday 26th March , 19:00, Seil Hall

Wildlife Gardens

Gardens are so important to wildlife, and with a little thought, it is possible to have your own mini-nature reserve. When choosing plants for the garden, it is worthwhile thinking whether they will encourage bio-diversity. When choosing a tree, for instance, it is best to get a native species which will support a large number of insects that will be a food source for birds. The silver birch is a good example as it is very attractive to aphids and to the ladybirds and hoverflies that prey upon them, and acts as a magnet to insect eating birds, such as blue tits. If you do not have room for a full-sized tree, there are lots of shrubs that are good for wildlife. One of the most decorative must be the buddleia. They are attractive to butterflies and bees together with other insects that are looking for an abundant supply of nectar. You can expect to see many of our native species of butterfly such as the small tortoiseshell, red admiral and peacock. You do not have to go as far as planting permanent trees and shrubs to help wildlife. Even a packet of seeds can make a difference, and it is cheap and quick enough for children to enjoy a reward. Sunflowers are always good for children to grow as they grow quickly and are very colourful. They can compete with their brothers, sisters and friends to see who can grow the tallest, and it can provide an opportunity to spot the different pollinating insects that are attracted by the flowers. Other ideas: Rowan, hawthorn and cotoneaster have colourful berries in autumn/winter and attract blackbirds, thrushes, redwings and fieldfares. Hawthorn is particularly beneficial to wildlife as its prickly, dense growth offers cover for large and small animals, while its foliage provides food for over 50 species of moth.

HERE'S A THING

With a wee bit of space going a begging at the foot of this page, it might be worth recording a rather unusual feature about Oban which may not be generally known to all and sundry, and particularly to the sundry residents of Seil Island, and anywhere else that these words are perused. Although there are eight (8) traffic lights within the boundaries of Oban, there is only one which is responsible for the direction of motor vehicles. All the others are purely to make safe passage for pedestrians.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION BOOK SALE

The Easdale Branch will be holding a Book Sale in **Seil Island Hall on Saturday 23rd February 2013 from 11am till 3pm** to raise funds for Forces' charities.

Refreshments will be available.

SHOWSTOPPERS

Get ready to lift the curtain on the greatest show on earth!

Something for everyone, from the most experienced actor to the most stage-shy – come and join us at Showstoppers, a holiday club for Easter 2013. Storytelling, games, crafts and activities for pre-school to teens. An opportunity to make new friends while getting to know more about Jesus and his love for us.

Organised by the Netherlorn churches working with the young people of Hilton Church, Inverness. More details to follow!

AN UPDATE FROM SEIL SKIFF

The skiff is progressing well, and hopefully we will be launching her just before Easter. We now have a list of names to choose from—some suggestions from the school, some from the builders and some from the shareholders. You are invited to vote for your first and second choice on the website – seilskiff.org.uk or hand your choice in at the surgery—you don't need an ailment to visit the surgery.

**SEAMEW — SOUL OF SEIL — SGUMAN
SIABAN — KELPIE — SELKIE — MARA
TORNAL — CUAN — SCARBA**

HALL LOTTERY WINNERS

DECEMBER

£75 Rollover

£10 Wendy Dugdale

£10 Donald & Joy MacKenzie

£10 Mary Sandilands

JANUARY

£100 Pat Jones

£10 Peter Thorpe

£10 Mrs Geoghegan

£10 George Fleming

FEBRUARY

£50 Rollover

£10 Frances Hill

£10 Aofi Danskin

£10 Kim Rowswell

AMONG FORTHCOMING EVENTS

There will be an **EASTER SALE** on Sunday 7th April in SEIL ISLAND HALL from 11am until 2pm. An Easter Egg Hunt at Noon (£1 per child—bring your own basket). Teas available. £10 per table. Donations of Easter Eggs or cakes gratefully received. Anyone wanting more information, or to book a table should contact Wendy Dugdale at the shop 300373 or at 300737