

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 13 No.6

www.seil.oban.ws

December 09

EDITORIAL

As a follow on from the last issue when I questioned where the word FARM was taking us (apropos wind farm) here are some tongue-in-the-cheek suggestions which may get me into hot water -

Doctor's Surgery—Ailment Farm

Maternity unit—Baby Farm

Planning Department—Frustration Farm

Roads Department—Pothole Farm

House of Commons—Expenses Farm

Prison—Miscreant Farm

Airport—Delay Farm

Golf Course—Dog poo Farm

If any of this gets up your nose, please lobby for my resignation.

As you will probably be aware, we have a new Community Council beavering away on our behalf and before things settle into a routine which your editor can deal with, things may be a bit topsy turvy

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The inaugural meeting of the new Community Council took place in Seil Island Hall on 17th November 2009. Seumas Anderson is Chairman, Mike Shaw will be Vice Chairman and Treasurer. For any local road issues please contact Charles Struthers. As highlighted elsewhere in this issue of the Seilachan, there will be forthcoming top-up elections given the disappointing public response in September and we would urge anyone interested to step forward and show their support.

PROPOSED RAERA WINDFARM N Power is aiming to submit its planning application before Christmas and will be sending a newsletter to residents in the New Year to inform them with details of the planning reference number and information about how to make official comments on the development to the Council. In addition to a copy of the application being available in the Council offices in Oban and Lochgilphead, there will also be a copy held at the Balvicar Stores and Post Office. Please watch the noticeboards for more information and take the opportunity to make your views known.

CONGRATULATIONS Following Eilean Eisdale's success in being on the shortlist of five final applicants for the British Gas Green Streets programme we're sure that you will be as delighted as we were that the Easdale community was se-

lected to receive funding of £130,000 to implement a range of measures to tackle community and household energy efficiency and to lower our carbon footprint. The directors look forward to discussions with the community about this very positive project in the near future.

HEALTH MATTERS There has been no further progress on Dr Hannah's letter to residents, SAS, ferryman and NHS24 regarding medical evacuation on Easdale Island. There was also no news of any progress on landing lights for helicopter arrival after dark. Dr Hannah also gave an update on swine 'flu. Some patients are reporting symptoms and about half of these are swine 'flu on testing. Vaccinations are now available on demand although he stressed that most patients' experience of the illness is relatively mild. Despite the news recently reported in the Oban Times concerning the setback for The Oban Hospice, fundraising will continue towards improving facilities for patients requiring palliative care. Finally, NHS Scotland is inviting people to take part in consultation about new Cancer Waiting Times. Visit www.isdscotland.org/isd/5013.html or contact Susan Burney on 0131 275 6359 or email susanburney@nhs.net Closing date for responses is 8th January 2010.

SCOTTISH WATER On Thursday 19th November Seil and Easdale Community Council organised and attended a Drop In meeting with Scottish Water in the Seil Island Hall. The event was an opportunity for residents to discuss with Scottish Water staff the long running waste-water project, and associated reinstatement. Some 40 residents braved the atrocious weather to present their problems, and seek solutions. The Community Council was already aware of considerable dissatisfaction locally: dissatisfaction clearly reflected in the large turn-out, and the enthusiasm with which residents presented their views.

We received assurances that the Balvicar Bay outfall pipe will be re-laid early next year, but few firm promises were made on other issues. However, we have been assured that all problems will be examined, and answers given. Some outstanding matters relate to individual properties, and will be pursued by the residents concerned. The Community Council will willingly assist residents dissatisfied with Scottish Water's reaction, while vigorously following up numerous complaints of a more general nature.

The following is a list of the most notable issues, but residents are invited to bring any others to the attention of Community Councillors.

1. There are some unpleasant smells, notably around Balvicar and Balvicar Bay. These should be reported direct to Scottish Water by telephoning **0845 6018855**. Frequent such calls should help.
2. Screening and planting at the main treatment works is inadequate.
3. Screening is required for the most prominent green "boxes".
4. Further work is required on roads and verges.
5. Scottish water must improve arrangements for dealing with residents' problems, and reacting to individuals' complaints.
6. There should be a final inspection by Scottish Water, and a "snagging" list prepared.

Scottish Water have asked that people be careful about what they put down toilets. Inappropriate items cause problems. Only human waste and toilet paper please. Their message is, "BIN IT AND BAG IT – DON'T FLUSH IT".

SOS (SAVE OUR BIRDS)

Looking out the window and listening to the heavy rain and gales reminds me that winter is a hard time for birds. They need to be strong, healthy and well fed to make it through the winter—the cold weather is unforgiving. Tiny birds such as wrens and blue tits need to eat food quantities almost equivalent to their own body weight every day during a cold spell, just to survive the night and stay alive to forage.

A good position in your garden for a feeding station should be clearly visible with some shrubs or trees nearby for the birds to use for shelter, perching and preening. Feeding does not need to be expensive, but it should be ongoing. Once they have discovered a new food supply, birds will quickly come to depend upon it. So forgetting to put food out in a cold snap can make the difference between life and death for some

Setting up a feeding station in your garden can be easy and there are lots of simple things you can do to help. Put up a bird feeder or bird table and fill them with seed and nuts, and you can also put out bread and cheese. Make a speedy bird cake, by gathering together lard, birdseed, raisins, peanuts and cheese. You will also need some clean empty yogurt pots or milk cartons. Warm up the lard, then put all the ingredients into a large bowl and mix them evenly. Fill your containers and leave them to set. Yogurt pots can be hung upside down with the bird cake mixture inside. Make some pine cone feeders by simply pressing cheese or the bird-cake mixture into the gaps and hang them up at the feeding station.

Water is vital for birds survival as they need to drink, even in the coldest weather, and they also need to bath, so setting up a water bath can be a real lifeline. Hang an upside down dustbin lid from a tree and the birds can use the rainwater in the lid for bathing and drinking. Alternatively, place a dustbin lid upside down on the ground with some bricks underneath to keep it steady.

Feeding birds in the garden is a popular activity with over half the adults in the UK, but supplementary feeding can't provide all the natural proteins and vitamins that adult and young birds need, so it is important to create and manage your garden through planting flowers, shrubs, and trees that attract and provide food for wildlife..

Richard Wesley.

Editor PS—This newsletter is not specifically for recipes, but bird cake is a timely exception.

HALL NEWS

PLAYPARK –PEOPLES MILLIONS

After being placed on the reserve list,our application to the Peoples Millions Lottery Fund failed to reach the final stages of the competition. The committee is now investigating other potential sources of grants, and proceeds from various events are being allocated to the project

LOTTERY WINNERS—November

£75 rollover	Charlie Watts	£10	Mike Shaw
£10	Jean MacFarlane	£10	Robbie MacLarty

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS—Continued

POLICE REPORT PC Jeremy Moore said there had been 23 crime reports over the past few months with the majority being road traffic accidents. One of those was a case of drink-driving at Kilninver which involved a visitor to the area. There is also an ongoing issue with vandalism in Easdale which is awaiting laboratory reports. As reported in the Oban Times, thieves have recently been operating across North Argyll stealing quads, trailers, outboard engines, other equipment and cash. Police believe it may be that contractors working in the area are spotting items in unlocked sheds and garages during the day and then returning at night. PC Moore asked everyone to take the precaution of keeping equipment locked away. Four extra police officers have arrived in Oban and there is a new shift pattern in operation for a trial period. The six community police officers in the area are now on a rota which means that each of them take turn being responsible for their entire combined areas. This new way of working is transitional but there is the possibility that it may affect PC Moore by leaving him less time to be as visible or proactive as local residents have been used to. As the situation develops, the Community Council is available to represent views to Strathclyde Police if necessary

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held on 26th January at 7pm in the Seil Island Hall.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS—DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SEIL CRAFT FAIR

The next Christmas Seil Craft Fair will be held on Sunday 6th December at Seil Island Hall between 11am and 4pm. The following stalls will be included—Christmas Cards and Decorations, Cake stall, Wood Crafts, Felted and Knitted Crafts,Childrens Clothes,Local Photography,Face Painting, and much more. There will also be light lunches available.

SNHG CHRISTMAS PARTY

Seil Naturas! History Group is holding a Christmas Party in Seil Island Hall on Saturday 12th December, starting at 7.30pm. Please bring a bottle and some food to contribute towards the evening—and if you feel able we may ask for a song or a recital of prose or poetry. There will be no charge and this event is open to all, but please phone Richard Wesley to book your seat if you are not a member of SNHG

HALL AGM

The AGM of the Seil Island Hall will be held on Sunday 13th December starting at 7pm. Immediately after the AGM there will be a meeting of the new Hall Committee.

NEW YEAR DANCE

The traditional New Year Dance will be held on Saturday 2nd January 2010 starting at 10pm. Look out for further information on posters nearer the time.

ANN ARCHIBALD—OPERA RECITAL

On Saturday 13th February 2010, the internationally renowned opera singer Ann Archibald is giving a recital at Seil Island Hall, accompanied by an ensemble of singers. There are 150 tickets available at £10 each available from Committee members or phone Lisa Robinson on 300573

Editors note—sorry about the mixture of type sizes.