

# SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 13 No.1

[www.seil.oban.ws](http://www.seil.oban.ws)

February 09

## EDITORIAL

I am an oyster—one of your Seil Sound oysters. Most of the time, we oysters have a pretty good life, chewing the fat, flirting, and swapping stories with our mates in our little mesh container communities. And we do enjoy periodic visits from our owner, who gives us the turn around to make sure that we all get our fair share of the nutrients available. However there is one fly in the ointment in this neck of the creek—at certain stages of the tide we do get this malodorous pong in the water which we understand is a by-product from some of the landlubbers living on our shores. The good news is, and I have this on good authority from one of our neighbouring enclaves, that on a recent visit by our owner he was heard to say—” You are in for a real treat once all this seismic activity ceases”. We hope he is right.

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

Our first public meeting of 2009 was held in Seil Island Hall on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January and was well attended. Twelve good men and women and true plus a policeman!

## CC REVIEW

This was first among several important agenda items and is becoming quite a saga. Despite a flurry of paperwork and meetings – many of them cancelled – we are not much nearer understanding how the review is to be run. We are sure it is going to happen and there are several good reasons why it should. However, we have still not been told officially that our April elections have been postponed – though we are fairly sure they will take place in October (if the review is complete). What we are sure about is that you have got the present incumbents for a few months more! It is a pity the review has got off to a confused start as it is spreading some alarm among volunteers who have valid concerns about the future of the locally based Community Councils. There is an issue about Ward boundaries and whether Community Council boundaries should mirror these larger, more diverse areas so reducing the number of CC's. There is also concern about the lack of volunteers to the CC's and a need to identify and resolve the difficulties faced by Councillors and Community Councillors. Whatever, we will do our best to ensure a satisfactory outcome and keep you informed.

## POTENTIAL WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT

We have been advised by N Power that they are submitting a scoping study request to the Council this month for a 25 turbine wind farm in Raera Forest, 8 miles south of Oban. We do not know the exact location but planning permission for 3 anemometer test masts has just been verified. They intend to keep us informed through the Community Council, in newsletters, a public exhibition in the early summer and their web page. This is: [www.npower-renewables.com/raera/index.asp](http://www.npower-renewables.com/raera/index.asp) This site, naturally, is full of the good bits about windmills and their benefits. However, at this stage, we are keeping an open mind until the full facts are made available and understood. There is a lot more to come on this and we are sure it will arouse a lot of interest. Please watch the press.

## RECYCLING

We now have a much better site at the Seil Island Hall for our recycling bins. They have been fenced in and are now on a hard standing. The area looks much tidier and hopefully not so much waste will be blown about. The Council do rely on residents to let them know if the bins need emptying as they can only afford to provide the service on demand. So, if you see the bins nearly full, please help by calling 01631 562125 and ask for Derek Crooks or leave a message. Their response is now quite speedy.

## DIRTY DOGS

We are still having problems with dog fouling, particularly in our more densely populated village areas. We have spoken to Peter McLuckie, the Dog Warden, who has put up more signs and has put bags for dog waste in the ferry sheds at Ellenabeich and Easdale. We have also asked him to increase his patrols. Please remember that owners can be fined if they allow their dogs to foul public places. The Dog Fouling Act covers any place the public can access, by payment or not. This includes private land to which the public have access. Residents are encouraged to report offences. This can be difficult in a small community – but if not reported, the results could be worse! Peter McLuckie can be reached on 01631 562125 extension 2185.

## POLICE REPORT

Good news and bad news. The good news is that we have got a CCTV camera which will be installed in the pier area at Ellenabeich to help counter the vandalism that occurs there from time to time. The bad news is that we are losing our brand new Beat Officer, PC Andrew Simpson. He was at our meeting and explained that because of a shortage of police officers in Oban, he was being drafted back for duties there. He was very sorry this has had to happen as he was beginning to find his feet in his new role and had been through a competitive interview process to get the position. We are sorry too as it is important to be able to speak to an Officer who knows and understands the community. However, all is not lost as PC Simpson says that we will still have the support of a Community Team in Oban, we will still have visits by local Officers and we can still call him at Oban Police Station. If you have been reading press reports, you may know that Chief Inspector Hall has now retired. No-one has been selected yet to replace him.

## SCOTTISH WATER

The great green boxes have arrived and are causing a bit of a stir. Some say they are much bigger than necessary and they certainly look out of place in some sites. There are a number of discussions taking place but we are not sure if they can be changed – perhaps they can be camouflaged better.

There was an 'open day' with Scottish Water in Seil Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> January which was well attended and gave people the opportunity to ask questions and discuss problems. They still appear to be roughly on time with the main digging to be finished by the end of January – perhaps- and the electrical, mechanical work due to be complete by the end of March. Thereafter, restitution of the sites will be ongoing.

At the meeting, we asked Scottish Water if they would build us a pathway from the new cemetery at Balvicar to the old cemetery and the war memorial. Though they could not give a definitive 'yes', they thought it would be a good opportunity to do something for our long-suffering community and appeared very positive. Graham Campbell, who owns the land, has kindly given his permission for it to go ahead and the Council have said they would maintain it. This would mean people could use the car park to visit the old cemetery and allow access to the war memorial on Remembrance Days.

## HEALTH MATTERS

Tina Jordan has been busy keeping us up to date with developments including the possibility that, due to new funding, we may get a new building for our NHS dental services in Oban. Please also note the extra opening hours of our Surgery advertised in this bulletin. We have also been asked to publish the following item about stroke identification. This was mentioned at the last Locality Public Partnership Forum.

## STROKE IDENTIFICATION

A stroke is the equivalent of a heart-attack, but in the brain, and needs appropriate attention as fast as possible. If anyone suspects someone has suffered a stroke e.g. they have stumbled or fallen without apparent cause – think S-T-R. Ask the person to do the following:- S for Smile, T for Talk, R to raise both arms and lastly, stick out their tongue. If the person has difficulty with any of the actions, call 999 immediately and tell the call-handler the symptoms.

## LOCAL ROADS

These seem to be increasingly difficult to identify so we did a drive round with the Head of the Roads Department to show them how badly damaged they are. He stated that they had actually 'failed' in places! We are anxious that they are reinstated properly before the contractors depart and feel the community deserves a decent road after all the disruption we have suffered. There was no disputing the scale of the problem, only the scale of the budget to put it right. However, we said we wanted a decision as to whether it was a one lane or two lane road. If single lane, it must be properly marked with more passing places and proper roadside support (kerbs) and drainage. There is one positive aspect and that is it cannot be worse than it is now. Can it?.

That's all folks! Our next public meeting is in the Seil Island Hall at 7 p.m. on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March. We hope to be able to bring the results of our Conservation Areas appraisal to this meeting for your comments so please watch the noticeboards.

## A WIGEON'S TALE

Small numbers of Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) return to Seil from late July onwards, following their breeding season further north and can be seen easily on Teddy's Pond at Balvicar as they prepare to change into their eclipse plumage. During this period of a few weeks they are flightless and look unremarkable. Slowly as we move towards late autumn and winter they take on their new pristine appearance and numbers begin to build until they reach a flock of about sixty birds as they move into Balvicar Bay.

The male Wigeon has a small grey bill with a black tip, a round chestnut brown head and a creamy-yellow forehead and crown. The breast is grayish-pink, with a grey body and a white and black stern. In flight, birds show white bellies and the males have a large white wing patch. The female is an orange washed grey-brown overall with heavy mottling and speckling; with a white belly. Juveniles resemble the female but are browner.

They are largely vegetarian, and can be seen grazing on grassland such as the golf course in Balvicar Bay. They have a short, serrated-edged bill and also enjoy dabbling for pondweeds, roots & other aquatic plants. Their haunting whistling calls are often heard more distinctly during the evening and towards dusk evoking a sense of wildness and space.

They eventually leave us again by late March, early April and head towards their breeding grounds possibly in Northern Scotland, Iceland, Scandinavia or even Russia, and the cycle starts again. This species breeds in lowland freshwater marshes, slow-flowing large rivers and shallow lakes and lagoons with ample submerged, floating and emerging vegetation.

Richard Wesley – Seil Natural History Group  
Website: - <http://seilnature.spaces.live.com>

## EASDALE MEDICAL PRACTICE -SURGERY TIMES

Monday	9.30-10.30	4-5pm
Tuesday	9.30-10.30	
Wednesday	9.30-10.30	4-5pm
Thursday	9.30-10.30	
Friday	8.30-10.30	4-5pm

ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS ARE AVAILABLE MONDAYS  
18:00-18:30  
PLEASE PHONE FOR AN APPOINTMENT

## CHRISTMAS FAIR

A very successful Christmas Fair was held in the Hall on 7th December, which raised £1093. The money raised was shared equally between Easdale Primary School and the Sports and Amenities Group. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all. We will be holding a Summer Event on Sunday 23rd August. Many Thanks to all who donated, help on the day and attended the event! Sue Croft

## ISLE OF SEIL GOLF CLUB

The 13<sup>th</sup> AGM was attended by 15 members in Seil Community Small Hall on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February, and was followed by a brief committee meeting, at which it was agreed that membership, sponsorship and green fees for 2009-10 will be held at the 2008-09 levels.

The club will soon be issuing invitations to members to renew their memberships for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, and the first monthly medal will be held on the weekend of 11-12<sup>th</sup> April. It is therefore an appropriate time to invite all members of our community to consider either joining as playing members, or supporting our activities as non-playing members (supporters). We also invite local businesses to participate as sponsors. There are currently 3 types of sponsors: Playing sponsors enjoy full membership benefits, non-playing sponsors pay a reduced fee and can advertise their services on the course, which attracts many visitors each year. Those sponsors who wish to entertain guests can opt to receive several free tickets for play.

Considerable improvements have been made to the course over the last 2 years, including some new tee off areas, and improvements to greens. These improvements have been consolidated by an enhanced regime of fairway and green cutting during 2008-09, and several new paths have recently been constructed. The worst of the disruption caused by the sewerage scheme works is over and we expect the contractors to vacate the vicinity of the course completely before the summer.

Membership information and application forms can be obtained from: The Secretary, Isle of Seil Golf Club, Balvicar PA34 4TF (Tel: 01852 300347; e-mail [jbseas@hotmail.com](mailto:jbseas@hotmail.com)). Sponsorship information and forms can be obtained from the Sponsorship Secretary (Tel 01852 300475; e-mail: [kilbridecroft@aol.com](mailto:kilbridecroft@aol.com)).

Dog-Fouling on Golf Course: In spite of our earlier polite entreaties (Seilachan August 2008) the fouling problem has continued. We remain aware that most dog walkers on the course take their responsibilities seriously and carry bags and pooper-scoopers and clear up as is required. However, it is clear that an irresponsible few are flouting the rules. They are reminded that the golf course is privately owned land, and the rules for dog walking thereon must be adhered to. These are that the dog must be kept in close proximity to its owner, preferably on a leash, not be allowed to 'free-range', and all dog fouling must be removed by the owner. We will be monitoring the occurrences of dog-fouling, and offending owners will be liable to prosecution.

## HALL NEWS—UPDATED LOTTERY RESULTS

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
£50 rollover	£75 Cheryl MacColl	£50 Geordie Lawson
£10 Danny Nee	£10 Isobelle Smith	£10 Torquil Shaw
£10 Rose Martin	£10 John Barr	£10 Betty Clark
£10 Martin Waddell	£10 Val Shingler	£10 Robert Howie

JANUARY 2009	FEBRUARY 2009
£50 rollover	£75 Sheila Lawson
£10 Alan MacAskill	£10 Jean Ainslie
£10 Alan Fothergill	£10 Bruce Campbell
£10 Robert Rae	£10 Roger Kirk

## PLEA FOR HELP

The Committee would like to bring music and drama groups to perform in the hall but lack expertise in this field. We are looking for people who have knowledge of how to organise and fund such events and who would be willing to work with some committee members to achieve this. If you would like to help, please contact Janice Mitchell at 300348.