

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

These crafty old Rowan trees know a thing or two. They just KNEW that a pesky anticyclone would park itself in the wrong place, at the wrong time, and give us a prolonged spell of Arctic weather. Unfortunately, no-one gave them the nod about a bit of global warming. Consequently, their super abundant crop of berries peaked rather too early to maximise the benefit to our feathered friends.

And there you have it -an Old Wives Tale if ever there was one.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The deadline for nominations for the forthcoming Community Council by-elections has passed and five new members have been nominated. This means that the election is likely to be uncontested. Heather Chaplin, Christopher Dugdale, Alan Macfadyen, Robert Rae and Martin Waddell will be welcomed on to the Committee after the election on the 4th of March.

PROPOSED RAERA WINDFARM

You will no doubt have received a newsletter from N Power outlining their planning application for the proposed development. Representatives from N Power attended the public meeting at Seil Island Hall on the 26th of January to answer questions regarding noise levels, visual impact and the possibilities of what a community benefits package may offer if the application is successful. They promised to get back in touch with some answers to any questions which they were unable to answer on the night and we hope to get these posted onto the Seil Island website.

SCOTTISH WATER

The company says that it has been inundated with customer issues relating to the 'Big Freeze' and that bad weather has hampered work since before Christmas, particularly with landscaping. However, the Contractor should be back on-site mid to end of February for around six weeks. Scottish Water will be responding to individual customer problems over the next couple of weeks. They have asked the community to rest assured that they are committed to resolving outstanding issues as soon as possible.

LOCAL ROADS

Argyll and Bute Council has confirmed that it has spent £325,000 this financial year on the upgrade of the B844. District Engineer Graham Stone has asked to spend a further £220,000 on the B844 this year on the section from the Atlantic Bridge toward Easdale on the Isle of Seil. This would upgrade the road to a similar standard as the mainland section between Kilninver and the Atlantic Bridge. In 2011 it is envisaged that the whole route will be surface dressed to give it a uniform appearance and resistance against further normal deterioration. In the immediate future the roads department are starting a programme of pothole repairs in Lorn. This will take at least two weeks and it is hoped that all existing potholes will be filled with a permanent fix hot material. The damage to the Lorn area roads is estimated at £100,000 from frost and the recent winter weather.

HEALTH MATTERS

It is hoped that the scheme for the Oban Dental Access Centre in the current Harbour Bowl will be complete by April 2011. This is subject to no change in the capital allocation for Argyll & Bute CHP. At the previous Community Council meeting mention was made of the article published in the Oban Times that week about the Hospice. Concern at the negativity of the article was expressed at the Locality PPF meeting and the notes state that the current situation is that a number of interim developments for palliative care at the hospital have been agreed. Both CHP and the hospital remain committed to the development of Nelson Ward in the long term. The date of the next Locality PPF meeting is 8th March.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Now is your opportunity to have your say about how Seil and Easdale should develop in terms of roads and planning over the next ten years. What facilities do we need? What sort of houses should be built? Do we need more business and leisure premises? Argyll and Bute Council is keen to hear from residents and has extended its consultation deadline from the 31st of January to the 31st of March. There is a questionnaire included with this issue of the Seileachan which we would urge you to complete so that we can properly represent local opinions on these issues. Alternatively, Community Councillors will be holding a drop-in session at Seil Island Hall on Saturday the 27th of February from 3 to 5pm for anyone who would prefer to give their views in person. We would strongly urge everyone to respond to this consultation and make a case for what they think about traffic management, affordable housing, ribbon development, etc. If residents don't speak up now then it will be even more difficult in future to challenge planning decisions at Council level.

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held on Tuesday the 23rd March at 7pm in the Seil Island Hall.

American Mink (*Mustela vison*)

Where Mink are found, it would be safe to say that little else in the way of small mammals and water-birds would be anywhere in the vicinity, for this dark polecat sized demon is possessed with a ferocity unequalled amongst our mammals and will kill viciously just for the sake of it. Mink like to live near water and are seldom found far from seashore, loch and marshes. Even when roaming, they tend to follow burns and ditches. Sometimes they leave the water altogether for a few hundred metres, especially when looking for food.

Introduced into this country from America during 1929, to be bred for its valuable fur, escapees and releases from farms in the 1950's soon colonised areas of the United Kingdom. Whilst they have few enemies they will also kill fish and game to such an extent that they have been classified as pests. Unlike the otter, which is only active at night when there is no danger of human disturbance, the mink is about at all hours, even when people are in evidence. Should you ever corner one by accident, make no attempt whatsoever to approach them as they will attack, showing no fear and its razor sharp teeth can cause serious injury.

Over thirty years ago the islands around Seil were full of breeding sea birds, but with the release of Mink locally this all changed. These days it is hard to find any islands with gulls or terns nesting, a great loss to the natural history of the area. Disappearing wildlife is usually an accurate pointer that mink have invaded an area. Some islands have been cleared of Mink and birds slowly return, but the trapping is an ongoing process and time consuming, as by law the traps have to be checked daily. So unless a concerted effort is made to clear large areas this mammal will continue to decimate our local wildlife.

Richard Wesley—Seil Natural History Group.

LOCAL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

For those who are unaware of the continuing effort involved in painting the Forth Rail Bridge—as soon as the Lothian end is reached, it's back to the Fife end to start again (or vice versa). This is much the same sort of situation with the Local Telephone Directory—as soon as it is up to date someone moves or builds or buys a house. However Jim Watson, who has his ear close to the ground (no, he is not a dwarf) has given us a lot of amendments and deletions to bring it up to date. These have all now been incorporated, but if you are a new resident within the last year, and would like to be included, please supply name, address, and telephone number to jimcee6@hotmail.com and have your entry included (no charge).

HALL NEWS

Seil Craft Fair Sunday 6th December 2009

The Hall Sports and Amenities Group and Easdale Primary School would like to thank all members of the community that helped make this event a success. A total of £1294.81 was raised on the day, with the proceeds being split equally between the two organising groups.

The event was a great success due to the generous donations of raffle prizes and home baking plus the support given in time and effort. Your commitment to helping in our community is very much appreciated. Thank You to all !!

Brian Mitchell and Mary Norris stepped down from the posts of Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively; the Committee thanked them for all their hard work. Following nominations, Seamus Anderson was appointed Chairman, with Ronnie Robinson as Vice Chairman, John Gordon as Treasurer and Julie Ferris as Secretary. Mary Norris agreed to continue in the role of Bookings Clerk.

Following the success of the Beechgrove Garden project, funding is now being sought to develop a Children's Play Area. Work on the grounds continues, with Richard Wesley and Kim Rowswell leading groups on Thursday/Fridays and the last Sunday of each month (weather permitting)

The hall now has it's own website up and running, where you will find out what is in the pipeline. Just Google into www.seil.forargyll.com/

Lottery

December	January
£50 Julian Taylor	£50 Rollover
£10 Tim Goodwin	£10 Sue Telfer
£10 Miranda Brunner	£10 Brien Dickey
£10 Betty Campbell	£10 Jim Danskin

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Opera Recital Saturday 13th February 7pm

Ann Archibald, a former Scottish Opera Soprano, will be giving a recital in the Hall. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a first class performer - please join us if you can. Admission £10, all proceeds to the Play Area fund. For tickets and further information contact any Committee Member or call 300573.

Jumble Sale—Saturday 3rd April 11am –4pm

This is being run by Argyll Animal Aid in conjunction with Seil Natural History Group. Details and bookable sale tables are available by contacting Richard Wesley on 300388.