

# SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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## EDITORIAL

When you think about it, and probably there are not many who have given it a thought—with all these islands off our western coast, it is really surprising how many finish up with the letter A. Working in a northerly direction we have Gigha, Jura, Scarba, Shuna, Torsa, Lunga, and Kerrera. Then deviating out westwards we have Iona, Staffa, Ulva, Gometra, Fladda and Canna. Even further westward we have Barra, Benbecula, and finally Hirta on St. Kilda. While investigating this phenomenon I happened to glance around the north to Orkney and was surprised to find that it is made up of many individual islands, nearly all ending in Y, which is at the opposite end of the alphabet. Must desist to leave room for the SECC deliberations.

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPORT

The meeting of Seil and Easdale Community Council held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 in Seil Island Hall was attended by Cllr Elaine Robertson, PC Jeremy Moore and 30 members of the public.

### Emergency Planning Preparation

The Seil Telephone Directory was complete. Work continues on the Emergency Plan.

### Scottish Water

Charles Struthers continues to deal with Scottish Water on outstanding issues:

Lids are on the tanks and the new tank, which has increased capacity for the treatment works, is functioning well.

A site meeting will be held to discuss the fence around the treatment works. Discussions are ongoing about some screening for Pumping Station No.2. A site meeting will be held to agree location of the noticeboard by the shop.

### Roads

Again, Charles continues to liaise with A&B Council over all issues pertaining to roads.

The importance of cutting back verges and brush has been stressed. A&B Council will continue to spray knotweed – report any new sightings to the Community Council.

There has been no change to the status of Kilniver Bridge. The Community Council continues to press for a long term solution. Puddles and potholes are an ongoing problem. PC Moore was asked to bring pressure to bear on this issue as it is a hazard to road users. Concerns about speeding motorists continue. PC Moore noted that it is an offence for motorists to soak pedestrians by driving through puddles and any such cases should be reported.

### Health

The provision of defibrillators is progressing. They will be located in the former telephone kiosk on Easdale and at Seil Island Hall.

The MacMillan Suite in the Lorn & Isles Hospital had opened the previous day and was a great enhancement to the service. There had been a successful evacuation by helicopter of a person taken ill on Easdale at New Year.

### Police Report

There had been a spate of thefts in surrounding districts – lock up! Recent rain and hail storms had led to a number of crashes – watch your speed. There had been a high level of fraudulent activity on Gumtree and Ebay – beware of scams/unbelievable bargains.

## Planning

### **Proposed kayakers' facilities at Cuan**

The Community Council has made a submission supporting this well-thought out, well-integrated application, and continues to seek resolution to issues relating to increased traffic on the Cuan road. The applicant was aware of the need to maintain pedestrian access through the site to the shore between Cuan and Elle-nabeich and was willing to facilitate this.

### **Applications since the last meeting**

Formation of access and parking area Coquet Lodge Annexe Balvicar

Alterations and erection of single storey extension Seil Grange

Change of use for the siting of storage container, installation of petrol storage tank and erection of associated fencing Land Adjacent to Public Car Park Elle-nabeich

Site for the erection of 20 dwelling houses Land South East of Oban Seil Farm

There was clearly much interest and concern relating to two of the proposals. Please contact any member of the Community Council to express your views.

### Installation of petrol storage tank

Mr Tony Hill read a statement and answered a number of questions relating to this proposal. The Community Council will gauge the views of the community and submit a response to the planning department to reflect these views.

### Erection of 20 dwelling houses land south east of Oban Seil Farm

A number of concerns were voiced by members of the community. The Community Council has applied for an extension to the deadline for responses, and this has been granted to 27<sup>th</sup> February. Again, SECC will form a response that reflects the views of the community.

## AOB

Anyone organising a **litter pick** can apply for a grant from the GRAB Trust.

### **Easdale Slate Quarries**

Documentation relating to a proposal by Historic Scotland to designate the Easdale Slate Quarries as a scheduled monument were tabled and discussed. Historic Scotland would be visiting Easdale in March and had offered to give a presentation and Q&A session on the proposal.

### **Paddock for rent or sale**

Concerns were expressed over a recent advert in the Oban Times – the Community Council would keep a watching brief on the situation.

### **Thanks for work on Easdale power supply**

Alan MacFadyen, on behalf of the residents of Easdale Island, thanked SSE, A&B Council, Shane Cadzow and Ian Mitchell for all their assistance in keeping the power on.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014, 19.00, Seil Island Hall

## Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*)

The largest of the UK's divers, it has a bigger, heavier head and bill than its commoner relatives. It is largely a winter visitor to our west coast and can often be seen locally although some non-breeding birds stay off northern coasts in the summer. One of our largest of the divers, this bird has a heavy almost dagger like bill, black or dark grey in colour and an angular head shape, often with a bump on its forehead. These birds have red eyes.

In winter plumage, the great northern diver has a brown back with paler brown edges to the feathers creating a wavy pattern across the back. The tail, back of the neck and crown are plain brown. The throat, chin and cheeks are white. The belly and front of neck are also white. During the breeding season April to May it has a chequered plumage, a black head, white below, checked black & white mantle, sexes are similar.

When the birds land on water, they skim along on their bellies to slow down, rather than on their feet, as these are set too far back. The Great Northern Diver swims gracefully on the surface, dives as well as any flying bird, and flies competently for hundreds of kilometers in migration. It flies with its neck outstretched, its flying speed is about 120 km/h (75 mph) during migration

The divers feed on large fish, crabs, other crustaceans amphibians, and bring flatfish to the surface after a dive. Hawks, eagles and sea otters are all predators that like these divers, and their eggs can fall prey to gulls, crows, ravens, even mink as well.

They are known as "The Common Loon" in North America, a name thought to have been derived from their far carrying and haunting call, although some say it is so named because of its clumsiness on land, which is due to its feet being so far back on its body to achieve propulsion under water. These divers can dive as much as 200 feet (60m) and can sometimes stay submerged for several minutes.

Richard Wesley.

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## **ISLE OF SEIL GOLF CLUB**

16 members attended the 18<sup>th</sup> AGM of the golf club in Seil Island small hall on Sunday 2nd February. The Captain, Colin Campbell paid tribute to the late Janet Duncan, a sadly missed committee member, who supported the golf club for many years. David Nathan (treasurer) reported a deficit in the income and expenditure account. This was largely due to a drop in visitor green fees in 2013. John Blackstock (secretary) reported a slight increase in membership numbers last year, and read out a report submitted by Donna Campbell on the successful junior and adult coaching programmes run by Mary Phillips and Donna. It is proposed that a 'portaloos' will again be hired and sited on the golf course from April to early September. Ian Galloway (greens convener) intimated that the condition of the greens has been badly affected by adverse weather, and it is planned to give them a lot of care and attention this spring.

Our green keeping team and other members expressed concern over dog walkers walking on the greens and fairways, and the large gouges, which are present on many playing areas; caused by running dogs skidding on the saturated surfaces. These need time and money to repair prior to the commencement of next season's play. Dog walkers are reminded that the Golf Course is on privately owned land, and that, although dog walking is tolerated, it is not a right. We appeal to all dog walkers on the course to act responsibly, and keep to the sides of all fairways, and so help to minimize damage to the golf course.

J.Blackstock

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## **RBLs BOOK SALE**

The Easdale Branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland are holding a Book Sale in the Seil Island Hall on Saturday 22nd February from 11am to 3pm to raise funds for our various Forces' charities. Refreshments will be available.

We look forward to seeing you there.

## **A NOTE OF THANKS FROM KILBRANDON CHURCH**

On Saturday 2 November last year, Kilbrandon Church held a very successful coffee morning and Gift Day, with a range of stalls highlighting the different activities in which the congregation is involved, both locally and internationally. This event raised £2,025 for our congregation. We are very grateful to the Seileachan distributors who helped beforehand by distributing invitations to households on Seil, and to everyone who participated in the Gift Day and who gave so generously.

Martin Waddell, Session Clerk

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## **HALL NEWS**

Thanks to everyone who organised the New Year's Dance and contributed so much to such an enjoyable evening.

## **WRI INTIMATION**

An open meeting on Tuesday 4th March in Seil Island Hall. Ceri Houlbrook, post graduate student from Manchester University will give a presentation on the excavation of the Ardmaddy Wishing tree—come and find out more about the history and folklore surrounding this local landmark.

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## **MALAWI LINK.**

It only takes 90 Kg to eat someone out of poverty and pay for one child to go to high school in Malawi! 90 Kg of Kilombero Fair Trade rice from Malawi have been sold at Kilbrandon Church Fair Trade stall, at the Seil Island Craft Fairs and in Easdale Primary School. We have now have taken up the challenge of selling another 90Kg. In addition, a Malawi meal, sale of jams and pickles and other fundraising in the community have provided 15Kg fertiliser for each of the 40 poorest farmers in Malawi. Many thanks to everyone in the community who has contributed to this.

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## **BUMPS AND BEYOND**

A new group for Mothers and toddlers on Tuesday afternoons in the small hall in Seil Island Hall from 12 till 3. £2 per session. Further details from Lindsay McGhee on 300062.

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## **BEGINNERS FITNESS CLASS**

Fitness for any age in Seil Island Hall starting Monday 10th February from 2-3pm £3 per session. Further details from Sheila Lawson 300261.

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## **HALL LOTTERY RESULTS**

January	February
£50 Aileen McFarlane	£50 Rollover
£10 Avril Nicol	£10 Ewan Warnock
£10 Mary Blackstock	£10 Mrs Geoghegan
£10 Alistair Danskin	£10 R. Campbell-Walters