

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 11 No.5 www.seil.oban.ws

October 07

EDITORIAL

Better late than never—sorry that this issue is coming out a bit later than usual, due to circumstances outwith the editor's control. But with the imminent occupancy of our new hall, this should be a fairly upbeat issue of your newsletter, to make up for any deficiencies editorially.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The demolition of our old drill hall meant that our public meeting of the Community Council took place in Easdale Primary School on 27th September. The agenda included items of concern to a number of residents and it was well attended with 23 members of the community plus Cllr MacIntyre, PC Steve McAleer and a representative from Scottish Water.

HEALTH SERVICES

Our Health Forum representative reported that a third Consultant is now in post at Oban Hospital. Routine NHS dental services are still not available in Oban. Several sites have been identified for the development of a new service and it is hoped that a Consultant will be appointed to manage the project and present a business case before the end of the year. Meanwhile, emergency appointments can be made by ringing the hospital.

In November 2005 we arranged Heartstart training for groups of volunteers on Easdale and Seil. As always, procedures and practices have altered so we are planning a refresher course for those interested. We shall be contacting those who attended the training, but if you are interested, please call Tina Jordan on 300 274.

The next meeting of our Easdale Medical Practice Patients' Participation Group is on Friday 9th November at 2.30 p.m.

LOCAL ROADS

We continue our crusade to get improvements to our roads and piers and Cllr MacIntyre announced that, as a result of our persistent lobbying, funding is being made available for a major review and repair of the B844. This is good news, particularly as recent telephone cable laying and water works have caused a lot of damage to an already hard pressed surface and verges.

We have been trying for some time to get advice about imposing speed limits on the Island. It appears that there are a number of conditions to be satisfied before this can happen and we do not fulfil the criteria. Enforcement would also be a problem. Instead, we have asked for better road management which would

include warning signs about pedestrians and cyclists better scrub cutting to improve sightlines of bends and bridges and white lining the road edges to allow space for walkers and keep vehicles off the verges! We asked for vehicle priority signs for Clachan Bridge but have been told that these can be used only where there is sufficient forward visibility. As stated before, we send a list of problems to the Area Roads Manager after each of our meetings and will continue to do so. Knotweed is also spreading on the Island and its environs. It is notable that it is mainly along the road edges and we are sure this was imported as a result of roadworks. PC McAleer said that, in his capacity as Wildlife Officer, he was investigating the spread of this alien 'notifiable' plant. He said a rhizome the size of a thumb can infest an acre of ground each year and it is very difficult to eradicate. Neither the Scottish Executive, SNH nor the Council want to take responsibility for the problem so the police are having to prepare a case for the Procurator Fiscal to resolve the impasse and order action to be taken.

SCOTTISH WATER

We are all familiar with the blue barriers and equipment dotting our roads and verges as Scottish Water upgrade our mains water pipes. Unfortunately, the work is proving to be more complicated and expensive than expected. Mr Tom Tivendale, the Customer Services Manager for the project, asked to come to the meeting to explain what is happening. He said the pipes in the ground and the plans they are working to do not always correspond. The project was based on cement/asbestos pipework which they could drill and burst without having to dig it up - inserting new pipework within the old. However, they have come across lengths of plastic pipe which has to be dug up - a longer and more costly process and approval to do the additional work has to be obtained on each occasion! He said they expect the work to continue through to March next year and urged anyone with questions or problems to call the Helpline on 0845 601 8855.

PLANNING

Under the new Planning (Scotland) Act 2006, our planning system is undergoing a radical overhaul to make it more efficient. There have been concerns that in order to speed the process, there may be less local decision making with decisions being made centrally by Council officials. We have been assured that this is not the case but we have decided to exercise our statutory powers, held by Community Councils, more assertively. Accordingly, we will continue to monitor all planning applications in our area and, if an application is considered to be of

significant importance to, or affect, the community, the the Community Council will, at its discretion, decide whether or not to respond to the Council in support of or against an application. The decision to do so will be taken at a special meeting of the Community Council and be by a majority vote of the members and based on the Community Council's view of the best interests of the communities of Seil and Easdale. The first such application considered by the Community Council is for the pontoon facility and car park on Seil Sound in Clachan Seil which the Community Council has supported following a majority vote. This was discussed at the meeting and has understandably generated a range of views and feelings. We have asked for conditions to be applied to ensure that, if the application is approved, the interests of nearby residents are considered. We await the outcome.

REPRESENTATION BY THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL At our meeting a question was added to the agenda as follows:- 'How can residents' interests be represented by the Community Council?'. It is our view that their interests are already represented, as Community Councils are democratically elected by the community to act on its behalf. If residents do not agree with their performance, they can vote accordingly at the next election.

Individually, residents can write to or E-mail the Secretary with matters they would like the Community Council to consider. One month before each meeting - held every 2 months- the date of the next meeting is advertised and residents are invited to suggest items for inclusion in the agenda at the next public meeting.

All submissions by residents are discussed by the Community Council members - in committee or at public meetings. All residents will get a reply.

All residents are invited to attend public meetings. An agenda notice is put on 7 notice boards before each meeting. We hope that this answers the question satisfactorily and we look forward to seeing you at our next meeting which should be in our new hall in Ellenabeich on Thursday 29th November at 7 p.m.

VOLUNTEER CAR SCHEME—Update

We're still busy on Seil - taking people to the surgery, hospital, shopping in Balvicar and Oban, the hairdressers... all sorts of places! We now have 20 volunteer drivers and 50 registered passengers on the island. So, if you haven't yet registered as a passenger and think we might be able to help you just call Margaret Anfield on 300368. Similarly, if you would like to become a volunteer driver please call Margaret, you'll be very welcome!

Thank you for all the 'loose change' you put in our little red car collection boxes in the surgery, shop, T & T and the Oyster Bar - donations are always welcome.

SEIL NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

The inaugural meeting of this group will be held on Wednesday 14th November in the new Seil Hall at Ellenabeich between 7.30 pm and 9.30pm, and thereafter every second Wednesday in the month. To view the Seil Natural History Group website please click on the link <http://seilnature.spaces.live.com/> or alternatively contact Richard Wesley on 300388.

DO YOU Have a SKILL or KNOWLEDGE to add to COMMUNITY EDUCATION?

Community Regeneration is happy to recruit new lecturers/instructors from within our community to run courses in our hall. If you have a skill and think there may be demand for a course they would like to hear from you. Courses are run under the control of Clydebank College so you would need to apply to them to be a part-time tutor. Payment is in the region of £20 per hour. If you are interested you can get further information from Trish Slater at the Community Regeneration office in Oban (road beside Birchwood Service Station).

SEIL ISLAND HALL

At last—the news for which we have all been waiting and working—your new Seil Island Hall is due to be handed over at the beginning of November. The much loved old Easdale Hall was demolished on Thursday 27th September, and the New hall project entered it's final stages. The contractors work is nearing completion and working to a hand-over date of 2nd November 2007. There is great enthusiasm from locs clubs and societies to commence their activities as soon as possible, and to this end the Hall Committee, hard at work on the details of commissioning the SEIL ISLAND HALL, has resolved to make the hall available as soon as possible. At first there will remain much to be done with fine-tuning the facilities and improving the interior and exterior, and car park, but with help from all the community, these matters will progress in good style. A very encouraging number of people, not previously involved, met with committee members, for a final gathering within the old hall on Tuesday 4th September, with enthusiastic suggestions, and many offers of help. Subject always to the works being on schedule, bookings can be accepted for events from 12th November, and the Committee have published the following initial programme of events –

MONDAY 5th NOVEMBER 7pm

First Hall Committee meeting in the new hall.

FRIDAY 9th NOVEMBER 7.30pm

Tour of the hall and briefing for all user clubs and societies.

SATURDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2pm to 5pm

Hall open to visits and tours for ALL local residents.

MONDAY 12th NOVEMBER SEIL ISLAND HALL available for

bookings. Contacts -Mary Norris (300339) Brian Mitchell (300348) Mike Shaw (till 15th November) (300400)

Bowls club—Big hall 8pm—10pm

TUESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 3.30pm

Tea and tour of the Hall, with discussions for all local Senior Citizens.

Over 50's Badminton Big Hall 2pm—4pm

Country Dancing club Big Hall 8pm—9.30pm

WEDNESDAY 14th NOVEMBER

Natural History Group Small Hall 7.30pm -9.30pm

Badminton Big Hall evening

THURSDAY 15th NOVEMBER

Bowls Club 8pm—10pm Big Hall

SATURDAY 17th NOVEMBER Evening

Events for local citizens 18 years and older.

THURSDAY 29th NOVEMBER 7.00pm

Community Council Meeting Small Hall

FRIDAY 30th NOVEMBER 8pm

Saint Andrew's Night Ceilidh for ALL (BYOB)

SATURDAY 29th DECEMBER

New Year's Dance for ALL Licensed

JANUARY 2008 (date and time to follow) Official opening of SEIL ISLAND HALL

SIGN UP NOW!

We have liaised with Community Regeneration, Oban, to start some community education classes in the new hall from January 2008.

There will be a class on Thursday afternoons 1 -3 p.m. with Ian Gowdie in either Digital Photography or Art. We also hope to run a class on a Wednesday evening, probably 7 -9. This evening course could be a language or book-keeping for the self-employed. Each course will run for 10 weeks with a minimum class size of 6 and maximum of 12. The cost is £32 per course with a discount for concessions and free for those on benefit. We need to know now which subjects are most popular so tutors can be organised. There will be a sign up notice in Balvicar Stores and in the Tigh an Truith. Please sign up early to avoid disappointment. If all subjects are popular we will try to organise additional classes and tutors.