

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 13 No.5

www.seil.oban.ws

October 09

EDITORIAL

Here is a thing. For as far as one cares to go back in history, a Farm has been a Farmhouse with several outbuildings, maybe a cottage or two, and a largish tract of land, sectioned off into fields. These selfsame fields have been utilised for the production of food of one sort or another—subdivisions here could encompass dairy or arable Farm depending on whether the output was liquid or solid.>

In more recent times we have had the advent of the Fish Farm, which is based on water, and not fields, but is still devoted to the production of food—so fair enough. But coming right up to date we now have the advent of the Wind Farm whose only connection with terra firma is a bit of firma, and has nothing to do with the food chain. What next in the Farming vocabulary?

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The final meeting of the present Community Council took place in the Seil Island Hall on 29th September 2009. As you are probably aware, from the Press and noticeboards, there has been a review of Community Councils and elections of new members are taking place. These elections happen every four years though the present team has been on duty for four and a half years because of delays caused by the review.

The closing date for nominations was 24th September 2009. The number of members of the Community Council depends on the number of people on the electoral register for the Seil and Easdale area. In our case, the maximum is ten and the minimum for a properly constituted Community Council is five members. If we had had more than ten nominations, a postal ballot would have been held on 29th October. However, we had only five nominations – the minimum. These five candidates have been declared elected and no poll will be held.

It is disappointing that, despite our best efforts to publicise the election and the fact that several of the current members would be standing down, so few new people expressed an interest in coming forward – particularly as we are aware that some people hold strong views on certain issues. Community Councils are taking greater responsibility in representing their community and this is becoming more and more important as budgets get tighter and legislation more complex.

The impact of the Community Council and the benefits it brings to the community are clear and include arranging public meetings about windfarms, waste water schemes, road schemes, Conservation Appraisals, coastal erosion projects, this newsletter, our noticeboard, the local telephone directory and so on. We do really need to support these.

The five people who have put their names forward and will form the new Community Council are -

Seumas Anderson-Tina Jordan-Anne Robin- Mike Shaw- Charles Struthers.

The present Community Council will finish on 29th October 2009 and the newly constituted Community Council will start on 30th October.

LOCAL ROADS The repairs and resurfacing of the B 844 north of Clachan Bridge is nearly complete and we think a great improvement. We have written to the Roads Department expressing our thanks but at the same time raising the matter of the state of the road south of the Bridge. We know Scottish Water contractors are still working in the area and that we must wait for the repairs to 'settle' before resurfacing can take place – but we do not want to let things drift. We are aware of the fact that budgets are getting tighter and we do not want to lose any funds earmarked for this area. Ideally, we would like the road finished properly as a single-lane road and marked accordingly with more passing places. At the moment, it is a single-track road trying to be a two-lane highway with the consequent damage to roadsides and offside wing mirrors!

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SEIL This is something we have felt has been needed for a long time. Instead of reacting to plans and developments, we want to be proactive and have more influence over what happens here. This will be taken on as a major community project by the new Community Council. It will be a long process and, like the Conservation Areas Appraisal, we will need to solicit everybody's views and ideas. We will probably have to establish a sub-committee, issue a list of ideas to everybody and hold some public meetings. We do not expect to change things overnight but we should be better able to influence and affect future developments if we have a clear idea of what the community would like to happen.

NOT STRICTLY CC BUSINESS

Due to repeating part of part of the above information, I found myself with a large chunk of type to delete. This only came to my attention at the last minute. Fortunately I received a last minute request from the Voluntary Car Scheme to say that they would welcome new volunteer drivers. Now the page does not look lop-sided.

SCOTTISH WATER Engineering work and reinstatement work goes on and the frequent presence of a number of large sludge tankers suggests it might be going on for a while yet. We have written to Scottish Water Solutions asking about the bendy Balvicar Bay outfall pipe and we understand the design of this is being reviewed. There have also been questions about aspects of the design of the main treatment plant and the absence of bunding to screen this. We have been told that, though these were on original plans, the whole plant was set lower into the ground and the bunds dispensed with in the final planning application.

Anyhow, there are still a number of residents with questions and concerns so we have asked Scottish Water to hold a final public meeting later this month in Seil Island Hall. This will give everyone the opportunity to discuss matters. Do watch the noticeboards.

PROPOSED RAERA WINDFARM An exhibition was held in Seil Island Hall on 8th September and more than 70 people attended. Originally, N Power were not intending to do this as they were having one at Kilmelford. However, we insisted and they did and thanked us for having done so as it was so successful. The number of turbines has dropped to 16 and N Power expect to put in their planning application in November. The Community Council as a statutory consultee will be making its view known as soon as the application is validated. In the meantime, we are trying to establish the overall view of the community – for or against or undecided. At the moment, it seems 50/50 though we are surprised at the apparent lack of interest and awareness – despite our best efforts. We have also set up a facility on our website – www.seil.oban/ws so people can comment. However you feel about windfarms, do make your own views known when the planning application is submitted – when it's done it's done!

The next meeting of the new Community Council has been pencilled in for 17th November at 7 p.m. in the Seil Island Hall. This has to be confirmed by the new Committee so, again, do watch the noticeboards.

AUTUMN'S HARVEST Autumn is a season that happens more or less when it is supposed to, whilst others seem to drift from one into another, and you can hardly mark their beginnings. The first day of September can still be warm and summery, but by the end of the month colder nights and misty mornings are commonplace. There is no criticism however, for what can match the beauty of such mornings, when through a hazy mist the earth is bathed in gold and every spider's web is hung with dew. For the farmer the annual harvest is well on its way, with hay being cut throughout the month, especially on the drier days.

At this time of year the hedges and woods yield up tasty morsels for every walker who cares to pause for a while. Blackberries are at their best, for surely this is the most prodigal of all our wild fruits. On moorland and in open woods, Bilberry or should I say Blaeberry, can be found, also providing a delicious harvest. Another edible berry the Cranberry is found on wet moorland and is famous for the sauce made to accompany turkey or venison. Cowberry often confused with Cranberry is also commonplace but the red berries, although edible are bitter to the taste. The third of these moorland species is the Cloudberry a close relation of the blackberry, low growing with crinkled, glossy, lobed leaves and having hard

yellow fruits. These last three are all bitter eaten straight from the plant but make delicious sauces, jellies and jams.

The wild strawberry which can be found locally in hedgerows and scrubland is smaller, but far sweeter than the cultivated variety. Sloes the fruit of Blackthorn are by appearance deceptively mouth-watering, for their skins have the colour and bloomed texture of expensive olives. They are however intensely bitter, but make very tasty jelly and wine. In the distilling trade they are used for adding extra flavour to gin.

Seil Natural History Group

THE WEDNESDAY LUNCH GROUP (12.30 – 2 p.m.)

A group of volunteers are still putting on lunches in the Seil Island Hall for anyone who would like soup and sandwiches (and other culinary delights) in convivial company each Wednesday. Good cooking includes some delicious home baking. It is a chance to get out and meet people and if you need transport, you can use the Voluntary Car Scheme. Call Margaret Anfield on 300 368. The first lunch for newcomers is free, thereafter it costs £2.50 (this includes copious amounts of tea/coffee!). Why not give it a try? If you are interested, just turn up or call Ann Reid on 300 311. Perhaps you might like to join our team of helpers?

FITNESS CLASSES

Every Monday—£4 per class in Seil Island Hall

NIFTY FIFTIES 1.15pm—2.15pm

An easy to follow class suitable for all fitness levels

BODY TONE 2.15—3.15pm

Aerobics, toning and lots more—work to your own level

BODY BLITZ 6.45pm—7.45pm

A mix up of circuits, toning and core work.

For more information please contact Kirsteen Connelly on 07748845411 or easdalekirst@live.co.uk

HALL NEWS

Lottery winners -

Sept. £50 John Macfarlane	Oct- £50 Rollover (next month £75)
£10 Jane Nichols	£10 Richard Allan
£10 Ken Lacey	£10 Jean Bisp
£10 Nancy Gardiner	£10 Lyn McPherson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS (chronologically)

Friday 30th October in Kilbrandon Church at 7.45pm

“OLD EASDALE WITH SOME REFERENCES TO OBAN”

An illustrated talk by Bob McCulloch & Charlie Drummond.

No ticket needed—just turn up—donations accepted.

Tea/coffee and usual sustenance provided

Monday 2nd November Seil Island Hall 2.30—4.30pm

“SPANISH FOR BEGINNERS AND BEYOND”

A 6 week course with Robert Reid

For further details or to sign on contact John Gordon 300 332

Saturday 28th November Seil Island Hall 8.00pm onwards

“St. ANDREWS NIGHT CELEBRATION”

Ceilidh Bandido's Band Scottish Fayre

Look out for posters for further information.

Sunday 6th December—Seil Island Hall 11am—4pm

SEIL CRAFT FAIR

Just in time for those Christmas presents

More details on posters nearer the time.

A REMINDER

If you have anything you would like to appear in future issues of THE SEILEACHAN, or if you have amendments for the local Telephone Directory please contact jimcee6@hotmail.com