

FREE!

Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre Community Newsletter

'The Review'

April 2016

Produced by: Rousay Community Association

Subscriber: Electronic

Rousay Primary School

is looking for people with basic ability (or more!) in

Knitting, Crocheting, and Sewing



to support our pupils at our weekly handwork sessions
(probably Friday afternoons at 2.15)

Please contact the school on 821 226
or
Gill Charlesworth 07931 115 577

Church Services

for April

11.30am

In the Church Centre



Sunday 3rd April	Local
Saturday 9th April	Roy Cordukes (service followed by AGM)
Sunday 17th April	Local
Sunday 24th April	Roy Cordukes - "Songs of Praise" Come and sing your favourite hymns.

All welcome

What's On at a Glance

Saturday, 2nd

→ Orkney Poker League Final, The Taversoe, 11am-5.30pm

Sunday, 3rd

→ Service, Church Centre, 11.30am

Tuesday, 5th

→ Taversoe InnQUIZition, 8pm

Wednesday, 6th

→ Felting Fun Workshop (Art Club & YCREW), The Crafhub, 2pm-4pm

Saturday, 9th

→ Service & AGM, Church Centre, 11.30am

Tuesday, 12th

→ SWI, Rousay School, 8pm

Thursday, 14th

→ Circle Dance, Church Centre, 11.15am-2pm

Friday, 15th

→ Treasure Trove, The Crafhub, 12.30pm-1.15pm

Saturday, 16th

→ REWGCC Meeting, Church Centre, 10.15am

Sunday, 17th

→ Service, Church Centre, 11.30am

Tuesday, 19th

→ Service, St. Mary's Chapel, Westness, 11.30am

Thursday, 21st

→ Mobile Library

Friday, 22nd

→ Felting Fun, The Crafhub, 11.30am-1.30pm

Sunday, 24th

→ Songs of Praise, Church Centre, 11.30am

Friday, 29th

→ Printing, The Crafhub, 11.30am-4.30pm

Saturday, 30th

→ Make a Patchwork Bag, The Crafhub, 10am-1pm

→ String Art Pictures, The Crafhub, 2pm-5pm

To subscribe, or to send in articles for the next edition of the newsletter, please use the following contact details:

Editor: Kayleigh Tipper

E-mail: kayleigh@aroundrousay.co.uk

Telephone: 01856 821360

Write: Howdis Meadow, Rousay, KW17 2PR

Deadline: 27 April 2016 (5pm) - late articles are not guaranteed to be included

Funder logo



From the community
For the community



Mobile Library
Visits Rousay & Egilsay
Thursday 21 April



**Orkney Citizens
Advice Bureau**

We will be making an outreach visit to Rousay on 24th August. We will be in the Church Centre from 11:30am to 2:30pm.

We are there to advise on any issue. To make an appointment or arrange a home visit, please contact 01856 875266 no later than Friday 19th August.

**Rousay
Community
Association**

Community Rooms must be booked, in advance, for use through the booking clerk on 821 383 / 07522647794.

Failure to book may lead to the room you wish being unavailable.



SWI

The next meeting of the SWI will be at 8pm on Tuesday 12th April at the school, where competitions will be A Spring Flower Arrangement and A Bere Bannock.



**With Spring just around the corner,
feel energised with Tai Chi**

Rousay Tai Chi Chuan

Every Tuesday at the School.
(Including over the Easter break)

1st hour is energy exercises and starts at 3:15
2nd hour is the Tai Chi Form and starts at 4:15
£2.50 per hour, come for one or both.

All ages and abilities welcome.



www.facebook.com/orkneytaichi



Thanks to REW DT for part funding this.

Events at The Taversoe

Orkney Poker League Final



Saturday April 2nd from 11am till 5.30pm

We predict we will be very busy during this time

Taversoe InnQUIZition

Tuesday April 5th @ 8pm

Free Entry

Snowball Jackpot

Light Snack Supper



Rousay Circle Dance

Thursday, 14 April

11.15 - 2pm

Church Centre



Shared lunch

Donations to Christian Aid

All welcome, regardless of experience

"Dancing wakes us up. It brings our senses to life."
Kimerer Lamothe

Advance Notices for May

Chinese Buffet

Sunday May 1st at 12.30

Last buffet before the summer

Please call to reserve a table

Taversoe 821 325



Taversoe InnQUIZition

Tuesday May 3rd @ 8pm

Free Entry

Snowball Jackpot

Light Snack Supper



Service

Service at St Mary's Chapel, Westness, on
Tuesday 19th April at 11.30am. All welcome.

News from the Pier Bar



The Bingo evenings are proving very popular and are raising funds for the RNLI through a raffle. We would like to thank everybody who donate prizes. Bingo will return to the third Thursday of the month following Easter with eyes down at 7-30pm light snack are served half way through along with the raffle.

Since the restocking of the shop it is increasing in popularity with many items on special offer and we are only too pleased to add to our fast growing selection of non-perishable goods with items suggested by our customers.

The Pool table has at last been recovered with new spots and stripes balls to bring back memories of how pool was played when it first arrived from America and is still available for 40p per frame.

The poker nights were well supported with the top three players gaining seats at the final to be played at the Taversoe on Saturday 2nd April. We hope to continue with the Friday evening Poker later in the year.

We are in the process of creating a new menu for the summer with more affordable prices along with a takeaway menu to include Pizzas.

The Taversoe

Winter Opening Hours

Monday & Tuesday - CLOSED*
Wednesday/Thursday/Friday -
11am to 2pm & 5pm to 11pm**
Saturday - 11am to 11pm**
Sunday - 12 noon to 10.30pm**

Kitchen last orders:

Wed-Sat 9pm & Sun 7.30pm

* We will be open at 6.30pm on
the 1st Tuesday of each month
for The Taversoe InnQUIZition

** If the Taversoe is empty
at 9pm we reserve the
right to close

For Sale

Large antique Orkney hand made yole

Quality made with stand.

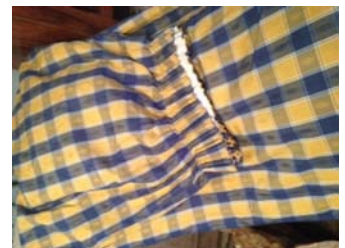
Sensible offers please.



Thick lined curtains

108 inch wide x 65 long

35.00



Tel Trish 07712341450 of 821 487

Work Wanted

Anything considered

Call David 821 244



Rousay Public Bus

Every Thursday, 7am-7pm

To book, call 821 360.



The Crafhub c.i.c.

APRIL 2016

CRAFTHUB NEWS

VOLUNTEERS - Directors would like to welcome Julie Morgan as a volunteer at The Crafhub. If you have an hour or two to spare, we can still use volunteers on the rota, pop down to have a chat, full training will be given. You can have a regular slot or even if you can only cover occasional shifts, all offers will help out to support our community asset The Crafhub.

SPRING RAFFLE Tickets for the Spring Raffle are still available. The prize is a painting kindly donated by our resident artist Sheila Scott. Pop along today to purchase your tickets to have the chance of owning one of Sheila's works of art.

EASTER BARGAINS - There are still a few sale items available at The Crafhub reduced to make way for new season stock. Pop down to The Crafhub today to pick up a bargain.

The Young Crafters of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre (The YCREW)

The newly formed group for secondary age children, the Young Crafters of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre have chosen a name for themselves - The YCREW. They are now working on a logo for their group. One of the areas the group is interested in developing is photography and last month Max Fletcher, local Rousay photographer was invited to give a talk to the youngsters. He gave them tips to develop their skills and showed them some of his work. The YCREW meet at The Crafhub on Sunday mornings from 11am - 1pm.

WORKSHOPS IN APRIL

Monday Coffee Morning – Every Monday from 11am – 1pm. £2 a session – All welcome.

ART CLUB – Children's Art Club every Wednesday from 3.15pm – 4.30pm, Age 5 plus (Wed 6th April 2pm - 4pm)

THE YCREW – 12+ Young Crafters on Sundays from 11am - 1pm - £3.00 a session

SPINNING CIRCLE – Drop in Spinning Workshops will start in April on Wednesdays from 11am - 1pm £3 a session

*** ALSO IN APRIL ***

Easter Holidays Felting Fun Workshop – Art Club and YCREW join together for an Easter Holidays workshop to explore felting and other activities on Wednesday 6th April from 2pm - 4pm.

Felting Fun – Explore Needle Felting techniques - Tutor - Hilary Byland at The Crafhub on Friday 22nd April from 11.30 - 1.30pm - £20 including materials and refreshments (grant funding available from REWDT - see below).

Treasure Trove in Scotland – Lunch time talk on Recent discoveries from Orkney by Dr. Natasha Ferguson on Friday 15th April from 12.30 - 1.15pm at The Crafthub, bring along your local treasure finds. All welcome FREE entry.

Laldie Haans Craft Festival – Over the weekend of 29th April - 1st May there is a Craft Festival with many workshops taking place all over Orkney, brochure available from The Crafthub. At The Crafthub, there will be the following workshops.

Friday 29th April - Printing with Jeanne Bouza Rose - 11.30am - 4.30pm - £25 including materials and refreshments.

Saturday 30th April - Make a Patchwork Bag with Sarah Odling - 10am - 1pm - £15 and String Art Pictures - 2pm - 5pm - £15

Many other art and craft workshops on the Mainland. Pick up your programme and booking forms from The Crafthub today. Residents of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre will be able to access 80% grant funding towards these workshops from REWDT (forms from The Crafthub).

APRIL OPENING TIMES

During April **The Crafthub** will be open Monday – Saturday 11am - 5.30pm

e-mail : crafthub@btconnect.com

website : www.crafthuborkney.co.uk



St MAGNUS
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL

MUSICIAN HOSTS NEEDED

The St Magnus International Festival is looking for Rousay residents to host the three members of **SIROCCO WINDS** Friday 24 June for the afternoon and evening of their 8pm performance at The Space on Rousay. It would be ideal if one person could host all three musicians, but individual hosts would be equally appreciated.

Hosts would be responsible for meeting their musician at the Rousay pier off the 14.45 ferry, providing transportation to and from The Space, an evening meal, bed and breakfast, transportation back to the pier Saturday, and famous Rousay hospitality!

If you are interested in helping, please contact Kira Hoffmann by email at
kira.hoffmann@stmagnusfestival.com

THANK YOU!

Heat Smart Orkney - Funding Success

As you may have heard in the local media, we have been successful in being awarded £1.2 million from the Local Energy Challenge Fund for our Heat Smart Orkney project. We have now engaged in the due diligence element for the funder, providing further evidence to support the application. This project will use the electricity which would have otherwise been curtailed from our Community Turbine and divert it into new heating devices in 100 households in our islands. These devices may be electric heaters, flow-boilers (connecting to wet radiator systems), and immersion heaters to provide hot water. The systems are secondary to the heating that is already in place as we have to mitigate if there is no curtailment or the wind does not blow. We hope to complete the due diligence by May. Watch this space for further announcements.

2016/17 Grants Information Update

This year the Trust has agreed to keep the overall funding for all grants the same as last year, but the categories this year have changed.

The funding this year will be split into the following categories:-

- General Grants
- Bursaries (for nationally-recognised qualifications only)
- Driving Lessons (via a recognised driving school - this funding will be available for 2016/17 only)
- Well-being (this will cover all sporting, craft, art, and other non-certified learning and general well-being courses/workshops/events) and is for individuals and groups

All Residents Survey 2016

We are currently advertising for someone to conduct another 'all resident' survey (see later in this article). It is now 4 years since we last invited all residents to comment on what the Trust should be working towards and the directors and staff would like to hear from you again. We would like to discuss with you what we have done, what we are currently working on, and what you would like us to do to inform our next 5-year Development Plan. More information to come next month.



Free Swim Sessions

Children

The Trust would like to extend our 'Free Child Swim Sessions' for a further year. This scheme provides free swims at the Pickaquoy Centre Swimming Pool, to under-18s in full-time education and resident on Rousay, Egilsay or Wyre, as well as a parent/guardian accompanying a children under 8. New free swim cards will be automatically issued to all of those currently holding scheme cards. If you wish to apply to the scheme for the first time, please contact the Office.

Adults

The Trust are pleased to launch a 'Free Adult Swim Sessions' scheme, providing free swims at the Pickaquoy Centre Swimming Pool, to residents of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre. To apply for a scheme card, please contact the Office.

Rousay Wi-Fi Centre

With effect from 1 April 2016, the Rousay Wi-Fi Centre at the School will close. Free wi-fi is available at the Trust's office in The Manse, during Office 'drop-in' times, together with the provision of a laptop and printer. If you require use of the wi-fi and equipment outwith the 'drop-in' times, you will need to make an appointment with the staff, who will try to be as accommodating as possible.

Brinian Playpark

You can see that the playpark is coming together with the fencing going up. We still need to get the surfacing laid as the weather dries up into the Spring. As the construction of the playpark continues, the Trust requests that everyone keep away from the site during this construction phase, and remain away until the Trust is sure it is safe to enter. We will let you all know when the playpark will be opening. Thank you.

Office/Project Assistant

10 hours per week @ £10 per hour

A vacancy has arisen for an Office/Project Assistant to assist in the day-to-day operation of the office and delivery of projects being developed by REWDT for the benefit of the community.

The person appointed will be expected to assist in both administrative and practical delivery of the projects, including: administration of day-to-day office duties; the grants procedure; community engagement; asset monitoring; collation of information; and escalation of findings.

Current projects include: Heat Smart Orkney; REWDT Car Club; The Brinian Playpark; Home Support; EV Charging at Tingwall; Year of Learning; Rousay Lap; and a Community Space Solution.

Applicants should be able to work as part of a team, have experience of dealing with people at all levels, and be keen to be involved in community development.

The job holder will be polite, self-motivated, enthusiastic, flexible, be able to work with minimum supervision, support the aims of the Development Trust, and be based on Rousay, Egilsay or Wyre.

Appropriate training will be provided. The successful applicant may be subject to Protecting Vulnerable Groups checks.

The post is funded at a rate of £10 per hour, and the postholder will be expected to work from the Trust's Office at The Manse, Rousay.

For an application form and job description, please contact the Trust's Offices on 01856 821229, or e-mail info@rewdt.org or visit www.rewdt.org

Closing date for applications is 23 April 2016.

New Community Survey Researcher Post - Tenders Welcome

The Development Trust once again would like to ask the community for their input, to determine what projects the Trust will develop now and during the next five years. The results from this survey will feed into the Trust's new 5-year Development Plan.

An opportunity has arisen for a Researcher to contact households in Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre to gather information, collate, analyse, and to present findings to the Board of Directors, and to help present the end information at the Development Trust's Annual General Meeting, due to be held in November 2016.

Tender applicants should have experience of communicating effectively with people at all levels. The post will be on a self-employed basis, and the applicant must be polite, self-motivated, and enthusiastic; and be based on Rousay, Egilsay or Wyre.

The post is funded by REWDT, and applications must include a breakdown of their costings, and these should include hours per week, number of weeks needed, sundry expenses (i.e. postage), and mileage. REWDT is looking for tender applications in the region of £5,000, and will expect all residents to be contacted.

Timescales - **Closing date for this post is 23 April 2016**. Interviews will be held during the week beginning 2 May 2016. The initial findings from the survey will be ready for the August Board meeting (and e-mailed to the Company Secretary by 8 August 2016, with the final draft ready for Board approval by 21 September 2016).

If you would like more information before submitting an application, please e-mail info@rewdt.org. If you think you could provide this service within the timescales and budget, please submit your tender in a sealed envelope, clearly marked 'Researcher Post', with a summary of your experience and how you would complete this role, to: REWDT, The Manse, Rousay, Orkney, KW17 2PR.

Grass Cutting - Tenders Welcome

The Development Trust would like to welcome tenders for regular grass cutting and general maintenance at both the new Brinian Playpark and Allotment Site (approximately half an acre in size). Initially this will be for a one-year contractual period.

The Trust would require the grass to be cut at least 10 times during the summer months (May to September) and at ad-hoc times to be determined during the remaining months. This is to include strimming and all removal of grass cuttings.

Any maintenance issues found in the weekly checks undertaken by REWDT staff will be reported to the successful contractor, and if they have the skills, they will be invited to do the work outside of the grass cutting element of this tender submission.

The successful contractor(s) will be paid upon receipt of invoices, within 30 days of receipt. The successful applicant will need to be registered as self-employed.

For further information and a tender application, please contact the Trust's Offices on 01856 821229, or e-mail info@rewdt.org or visit our website at www.rewdt.org

The closing date for tender applications is 23 April 2016. Please post tender applications in a sealed envelope, clearly marked 'Grass Cutting Tender', to: REWDT, The Manse, Rousay, KW17 2PR.



IT Tutor

REWDT is looking to help a resident gain IT tutoring skills, and is working with VAO via their One Digital programme, Making Digital Everyday.

This training will help you to pass on Basic Digital Skills to others through everyday interactions and ultimately enable the applicant to be the paid tutor via the REW DT engagement programme for 2016/17 'The Year of Learning'. This training will be conducted in your own time.

Who should join?

This is for you if you are already or wishing to work with any residents, clients and end users, and know they would benefit from using information technology better. You should have basic digital skills yourself, but are not expected to be an expert.

This programme will involve:

- A one day face-to-face FREE training session (expected to be from 9.30am until 4.30pm during April/May in Kirkwall).
- As part of this training you will develop an action plan for applying your Basic Digital Skills training back on REW and as part of the DT's Year of Learning as a Digital Champion.
- You'll then undertake an online training module to build on your face-to-face training and have access to a digital community with further support and resources.

For more information and a REW DT application form, please contact the Trust's Offices on 01856 821229 or email info@rewdt.org or visit our website at www.rewdt.org

For information on the One Digital programme either contact the DT office or Edwina at VAO edwina.lloyd@vaorkney.org.uk and look at <http://digital.scvo.org.uk/onedigital/>

Under the 'Year of Learning', REW DT will require this person to pass their training and then provide a weekly session (over 8 weeks during the summer months) to provide a training/support group for residents. Thereafter, the successful applicant will be required to provide future IT training and support which may be on a volunteering basis.

Disclosure checks will need to be completed before the tutoring element of this role can commence.

Closing date for applications is 23 April 2016.

'Year of Learning' Programme

From May 2016, the Trust will be putting on FREE certified short courses on Rousay, for all REW residents. We would like to hear what courses you would like us to put on. So far, the following suggestions have been put forward:

First Aid Course

ISOH Working Safely

Undertaking Risk Assessment

Hydraulic Nozzle Course

Working at Height Awareness

Manual Handling & Ladder Safety

Customer Care

Abrasive Wheels

Safe use of pesticides

First Aid for Kids

Basic Food Hygiene

Please register your interest in the above, or forward any other ideas to Helen at the Trust Offices. Courses will be cancelled if the minimum numbers required are not reached.

Office 'Drop-In' Times

Our 'Drop-In' times are 10am to 12 noon on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Outside of these times, the inner door of the Manse will be locked. Should you need to speak to our staff outwith these hours, please call to make an appointment.

REWDT Car Club

Our electric car is available for booking through our Car Club. For rates and information, and to book the car, please go to our website or contact the Office.

Free Rechargeable/Solar-powered Lanterns

The Trust has purchased rechargeable/solar-powered lanterns for Islands View Surgery to distribute to vulnerable members of the community. If you feel that you qualify, please contact the Nurse (821 406) or Anne (821 265) at the Surgery.

Here2Help

The Trust provides a subsidy towards the cost of Age Concern Orkney's **Here2Help** service. If you would like more information on this service, please contact Gillian Skuse at Age Concern Orkney. Telephone: 01856 872438
E-mail: gillian@ageconcernorkney.org.uk

Grant Applications and Education Bursaries

For a grant application form, please go to our website or contact the Office.

All applications must be received a minimum of **two weeks** before the planned Board meeting date or training event. This is to allow sufficient time for applications to be processed.

The following meetings are planned (any changes to these will be published on our website): Wednesday 11 May; Wednesday 29 June; Monday 15 August; Wednesday 5 October; Saturday 12 November (AGM); Wednesday 7 December.

Contact Us

Telephone: 01856 821229

E-mail: info@rewdt.org

Website: www.rewdt.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/rewdt



Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

Co. Reg. No: SC318527 Charity Reg. No: SC040407

Registered Office: The Manse, Rousay, Orkney, KW17 2PR

Rousay, Egilsay, Wyre & Gairsay Community Council

The representatives of the REWGCC are: Mr Angus Firth, Ms Chris Cox, Ms Rachael Harris, Mr John Garson, Mrs Carole Maguire, Mr Eric Shortland and Mr Richard Tipper.

REWGCC Meeting – 16 April 2016 @ 10.15 a.m.

The REWGCC meets on Saturday, 16 April 2016 @ 10.15 a.m. in the Hall at the Rousay Church Centre. Members of the public are welcome to attend and view the proceedings.

Bag the Bruck 2016 - Saturday 16th – Sunday 24th April 2016

Every year hundreds of volunteers throughout Orkney mainland & the isles do their bit to clean their parishes of the debris that inevitably accumulates, particularly after the winter storms, on beaches, loch sides, ditches, etc. Community Councils can support local groups and charities who participate in the clean up by sponsoring them.

This year the event is scheduled to take place over a nine day period, extending from Saturday 16th until Sunday 24th April 2016.

If your group is interested in applying for sponsorship, an application must be received by the Clerk prior to the event date. Send your request to the: - REWGCC, c/o the Clerk at email: rewgcc@btinternet.com or to: Midgard, Rousay, KW17 2PT.

Should any groups/individuals wish to help over this weekend, they are asked to contact bagthebruck@gmail.com Bags, gloves and health and safety information will be provided the week before the clean-up weekend. (The CC does not organise the supply of cleaning equipment).

Vermin Eradication Grant Scheme – Purchase of Rat Poison

The members of the REWGCC have reviewed this scheme and agreed to fund the project for another year. They have set up a grant to assist with the purchase of rat poison for the eradication of vermin and the grant is available to all residents within our community council area.

Successful applicants can claim up to 50% of the net cost (excluding VAT), up to a maximum of £50 in one financial year (April 2016-March 2017).

To claim this grant send your name, address and receipted invoice to: Mrs Diana Compton, Clerk for the REWGCC, Midgard, Rousay, KW17 2PT, who will then arrange payment.

Any requests for financial assistance or points to be brought to the attention of the CC need to reach the Clerk no later than 14 April 2016. Clerk's contact details:

Email: rewgcc@btinternet.com and addressed to the REWGCC c/o Mrs Compton or send to Midgard, Rousay, KW17 2PT or contact your local representative.

Letter from School Place

March sadly saw the passing of composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, a resident of Sanday since the late 1990s. In November 2009, as a member of the Sanday Fiddle Club, I was privileged to take part (1st violin, 4th desk) in a celebratory concert and ceilidh at Glasgow's Old Fruitmarket for Max's 75th birthday, and to play in the recording of his *A Birthday Card for Prince Charles* for Classic FM. I can't say I exactly relished our reward of a free performance at the City Halls of his opera *Taverner*, but that is the thing about Max's music: some of it (putting on my "emperor's-new-clothes hat") can be a vexation to one's auditory faculties, while other of his compositions (like his Orkney pieces) are a delight to listen to. Either way, his music will not be forgotten. Max was a great advocate of the Sanday tie, which he could often be seen wearing in TV interviews, while conducting *The Proms*, and even at audiences with Her Majesty The Queen.

My eldest son, Wulfric kindly represented me at Max's funeral, as on the same day I was sitting on the interview panel for the new KGS head. We have appointed Donald Hawkins, who is currently Depute Head at Fraserburgh Academy. I have already made him aware of the importance of ensuring good communication with the parents of Isles' pupils at KGS and the necessity of appreciating the transport challenges we have to face in order to attend parents' meetings, for example. He has stated he intends to improve links between KGS and the Papdale Halls.

I have also been involved in the selection of a new head for North Walls School.

At the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting we reviewed our license fees. It is interesting to see the list of the things we require licenses for, for example: dog breeding, caravan sites, metal dealing, skin piercing, and zoos. I don't think we have ever licensed a zoo, but we have issued a dangerous wild animal license in the past.

I attended a meeting of Eday's community council and stayed at the island's hostel for the first time. Now we are back to the normal winter ferry timetable, it is no longer so straightforward to travel directly from Sanday to Eday and back (the refit timetable does have some benefits!), so unfortunately I was unable to get over to this year's British Science Association event there.

At the Education, Leisure & Housing Committee meeting we discussed the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and how OIC will support schools to make individual and collective bids to the Attainment Scotland Fund. Regarding the planned expansion in hours of Early Learning & Childcare, we were presented with the results of the parents' questionnaire. I am pleased to report that the Care Inspectorate inspection of the Papdale Halls of Residence is indicating ongoing systematic improvement, with all gradings being either "good" or "very good". I am looking forward to an "excellent" next time. We have (as you may have heard on Radio Orkney) identified two properties in Kirkwall to house Syrian refugees, should any request to come here. It is important not to jump to assumptions about what such families would be like, for example that they will not speak English and will be Muslim. English and French certainly were taught in Syrian schools, and 10% of Syrians are Christian. The Syriac Church broke away from the early Christian church after the First Council of Ephesus in the year 431.

Now to the mobile library service. In my last *Letter* I wrote about the savings OIC is being forced to make owing to the massive cut in our funding from the Scottish Government, and how we are striving to make these as painless as possible. To do this we are distributing the savings across services, taking a little from each. This is likely to mean a reduction in the frequency of visits by the mobile library van to all areas (including the Mainland). However, we are determined that this should not impact on Isles folks' accessibility to books, so we are exploring ways to make books available locally during the periods between visits by the van. We will be working with communities to facilitate this, and any good (low cost) ideas from Isles' residents would be most welcome. I have my own cunning plan, which for the time being I am keeping under my (sorting) hat.

I have also attended meetings of the Orkney College Management Council, the Constitutional Reform Working Group, and the Monitoring & Audit Committee. I've been to a planning enforcement presentation, I participated in a meeting with representatives of the Department of Culture, Media & Sport on the forthcoming World War I commemorations, I flew up to Shetland for an Orkney & Shetland Valuation Joint Board meeting at the Sumburgh Hotel, and I met Hajime Kitaoka, the Consul General of Japan, in Kirkwall. Our General Meeting of the full Council lasted a mere 4 minutes 10 seconds—that's the sort of meeting I like!

We now have a short recess over Easter.

I shall be attending the Rousay, Egilsay, Wyre & Gairsay Community Council meeting on the 16th April.

Cllr Dr Stephen Clackson

West Manse, Sanday

stephen.clackson@orkney.gov.uk



RIP Max