



# Kyleakin & Kylerhea Community Company Newsletter

Newsletter No. 2

January 2009

## ***Since the last Newsletter***

Hello, and welcome to the second newsletter from the Kyleakin and Kylerhea Community Company.

Although the original idea was intended just to keep you informed of what was going on with regard to the work of the Community Company, we never envisaged the amount of discussion some of the items included would provoke!

It looks like that, although a Community Company initiative, there is a genuine need for a newsletter to keep people informed of what is happening. Ideally the West Highland Free Press is the first source of information, but regarding the day to day happenings in the area (apologies if I am sounding like an episode of the Archers) perhaps this newsletter will keep you informed of what is happening with say the Kyleakin Gala Committee, the SWRI, the youth club and any other group within the area.

So, if you are part of a voluntary group within the area and want people to know more about what you do, drop me a quick email ([pjlconsultancy@aol.com](mailto:pjlconsultancy@aol.com)) and if your article is appropriate we will try and include it in the next newsletter – due out around the end of March.

Paper copies of the newsletter will be available in a suitable location within the village and on the village notice board. If you currently don't receive your newsletter by email and would like to do so, please can you let me have your email address?

Oh and a belated happy New Year to you all.

## ***From the Chairman of K&KCC***

It's over a year now since the Community Council called a public meeting to discuss the impending sale of the SYHA hostel in Kyleakin.

It was at this meeting that a Steering Group was formed to bring about the formation of a Community Company with an objective to bring the former SYHA Hostel into community ownership.

This was a very upbeat meeting with promises of bountiful finance and a SYHA that was sympathetic to local communities.

The Steering Group was duly formed and went about its task of forming the Company. This turned out to be a considerable task in parallel with trying to acquire the hostel building.

A year on a lot has happened, but we have been unable to tap into the bountiful finance and it would appear that the SYHA have not been at all sympathetic to the local community buy out.

I would like to thank all the members of the Steering Group for the hard work put in by all of them, which brought the Community Company to life.

The Kyleakin and Kylerhea Community Company was incorporated on the 22nd March 2008.

One of the first tasks to be performed was to put in an offer to purchase the building which was the SYHA hostel in Kyleakin.

This has, so far, been unsuccessful, and at present the preferred bidder for the SYHA is the Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association.

## **Kylerhea/Glenelg Ferry**

**The community owned Glenelg-Skye Ferry is currently closed but will open up again at Easter 2009. For further information see <http://www.skyeferry.co.uk>**

## ***From the Chairman of K&KCC (continued)***

This will clearly take the hostel out of the commercial sector and will never provide opposition to the remaining SYHA hostels in the rest of the Highlands.

It will however deliver a crippling blow to the remaining businesses in Kyleakin that used to do business with the people staying in the hostel.

The current stance of the Community Company is to oppose the change of use planning application, made for the hostel building by the Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association, and maintain that the building should be put to commercial use.

### ***Financial Matters***

Since the beginning, members of K&KCC have attended a number of meetings regarding applying for funding.

We have had several meetings with the Land Unit. Initially, they were enthusiastic and they attended some of our meetings. They set out some criteria for us to meet, which we did, but when we approached them, the funding available had been withdrawn. I understand they wish to talk to us again, so hopes rise once again.

There have been a couple of meetings with the Scottish Government representative regarding the Land Reform Act 2003 Part 2, to date we do not fulfil the requirements to apply, however, new information has been obtained and this course of action is being investigated again.

The Company is now officially registered and surprise surprise, we receive a request for corporation tax. Our funds were limited so we were worried what our liabilities might be. A chat to the tax office revealed that all we had to do was inform them when we get charitable status and we will be off the hook.

We have also been to 2 open days at the College in Sleat, one for IT skills, blogs, WIKIS etc. The other was

for the Development Trusts Association Scotland. The stages to go through to get funding (amongst other things) were discussed. They are lengthy and involved and require a particular set of skills, which we are currently lacking.

Once again, we met some very enthusiastic people who would like to help with the regeneration of the area, but trying to nail them down for money has proved to be particularly difficult.

The K&KCC has had countless meetings, mostly on Wednesday, my wife's day off, which didn't always make me very popular. My involvement in K&KCC has enabled me to meet some interesting people; I've nearly learnt the etiquette of meetings and speaking in turn and I have met a number of people with impressive skills.

One of the main people who has helped us is Henry Mains, he should have a paragraph all of his own for his sheer enthusiasm and determination. He has helped out in so many ways, from how to conduct a meeting to advice about setting up a community company to projecting a vision of how Kyleakin could be in 10 to 20 years time.

If you have something that you could offer, even on an informal basis, please get in contact. Our most valuable asset is time, and it is in short supply.

I would like to thank those that have donated to the K&KCC and Steering Group, the Community Council for their initial donation of £250 and a recent donation of another £250. There was also a donation from Annabelle, who organised a quiz night and raised £154.

Once all the bills have been paid we will have £200.49 to cover future expenditure. Donations are welcome from any quarter, individuals, local businesses and benevolent organisations.

---

## ***We're on the Web!***

***For copies of the minutes of the Directors meetings and also the newsletter see:***

***<http://kkcc.co.uk>***

---

## **K&KCC Quiz Night**

In order to raise funds for the day to day running of K&KCC, we are holding a Quiz Night at the Kyleakin Village Hall on Thursday 5th February at 7.30 pm. The cost per team for 4 people will be £6.00 and refreshments will be available.

So - if you attended the successful SWRI quiz in December and want another chance to be the brainiest team in the village please do come along.

**KYLEAKIN**, what a magical name that conjures up thoughts of Vikings, Norse Gods, long boats and in modern days, a thriving ferry port.

Alas no more, after the ferry was replaced by a bridge that was supposed to bring prosperity to the island, Kyleakin was bypassed and seemingly forgotten. We were promised that the village would get all sorts of funding, but apart from £100,000 for a yachting pontoon and a few new lamp-posts, it would appear that we have been left to fend for ourselves.

In the past 10 years, business after business has closed, we have lost the bakery, car hire, a woollen shop, moped hire, chip shop, Skye boat trips, filling station, mini-bus tours and we are about to lose the last shop in the village which also houses the Post Office. This does not take into account the 35 jobs that were lost with the closure of the ferry.

Then in 2007, came what seems like the final blow. The SYHA decided to close the International Youth Hostel. This was a knife to the heart of the village, with its closing; we lost 120 tourist bed spaces, the internet cafe, tourist information, laundry and drying facilities, showers, toilet and a games room for local children. What is the use spending £100,000 on a

yachting pontoon if we do not have the facilities to cater for people arriving in the village from the sea?

In 2007 Kyleakin & Kylerhea Community Company (K&KCC) was formed to try and halt the decline and find ways to regenerate the village by putting back some of the facilities that have been lost. At the centre of this is the International Youth Hostel, which is paramount to our plans.

Our aim for the building would be to try and put back all the things that have been lost and also to incorporate the village shop and Post Office, a cafe, conference/meeting rooms and disabled facilities and group accommodation facilities. Additionally, the building could house the local Youth Club and a Tourist Information centre. A tourist information centre could include information on not only accommodation but things to do while visiting the area e.g. walks, cycle hire, mountain climbing, canoe and other water based activities.

The accommodation could be made available for groups to cater for divers, canoeists, instructors, Scouts and Guides, Forces Personnel, Colleges and Universities that come to Skye. With a vigorous advertising campaign to all Colleges and Universities, etc., we would be able to sustain the hostel and create jobs for locals with profits being used for other projects within the area.

Another of our aims is to provide a motor home/caravan park and camp site within the confines of the village; this of course would have to be a serviced site with toilets, showers and electric points for the motor homes and caravans. Again, this would create employment albeit only seasonal, but with visitors staying in the village it would be more business for local bars, restaurants and the village shop.

The cafe within the hostel would be a good meeting point for the elderly and young alike, the elderly would be able to use the cafe for lunch whilst doing their laundry and have lunch and meet up with other local people. The young will have somewhere to go in the evening instead of congregating in the bus shelter or pub doorways, which is what usually happens, especially in wet weather.

We feel that the village is at a tipping point and if measures are not taken now to recover some of what we have lost, the community spirit that has kept Kyleakin together will disappear, people will lose heart, groups will disband and the village will become a disparate and a desperate place to live.

Only by an injection of money to the groups we now have together, can save the village from losing the last few businesses we have in Kyleakin.

To turn a blind eye would be fatal.

### ***Kyleakin Environmental Group***

Last year, Kyleakin Environmental Group members collected a staggering **637** bags of litter from in and around Kyleakin (including the Annual Harbour/Foreshore Clean-Up).

Many thanks to all our volunteers for their time and support and also to The Highland Council for providing Bin Bags & Gloves, also to the Kyleakin & Kylerhea Community Council for donation of equipment to enable us to continue our 'labours'.

Let's all try and do more to Recycle this year and encourage others to USE THE LITTER BINS as that way we can get the total DOWN!

***If you or your company would like to sponsor the cost of the newsletter, either by means of money or the donation of materials (i.e. paper, ink, etc.) please feel free to contact the Chairman. Your details will be included in future newsletters as a sponsor – so if you are interested in a little bit of free advertising.....***

### ***FOR SALE***

#### ***Antique Double Bed***

***Newly restored and upholstered base, hand carved head and foot board with decorative cane work (cane work in need of TLC)***

***Price £199.00 (O.N.O.)***

***Tel: 01599 534641***

## **WANTED.....**

**2 Directors are urgently needed if the work of K&KCC is to continue.**

**Please contact the Chairman if you are interested or for further information.**

## **The Directors**

Chairman	Nigel MacDairmid
Treasurer	Rick Terry
Secretary	Harry Slater
	Mairi MacKenzie
	Flora Strachan
	Phil Lyons

[nigelmacdiarmid@aol.com](mailto:nigelmacdiarmid@aol.com)  
[email@rickskye.co.uk](mailto:email@rickskye.co.uk) +  
[harrycoffeeskye@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:harrycoffeeskye@yahoo.co.uk)  
[kyleakin@supanet.com](mailto:kyleakin@supanet.com)  
[flora\\_strachan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:flora_strachan@yahoo.co.uk)  
[pjlconsultancy@aol.com](mailto:pjlconsultancy@aol.com)