

Sherkin Newsletter

March Issue 2012

'ello 'ello Arlo! A warm Sherkin welcome to Arlo James Lacken, born in Dublin on 23rd February to Deirdre (Walsh) and Dave. Everyone looking forward to seeing ye all very soon!



Congratulations to Syd Cheatle on being elected chairperson of the newly formed West Cork Islands Community Council. The new website can be found at www.westcorkislands.com

Condolences to Margaret O'Driscoll (The Strand) and to Florence O'Driscoll (Cork) and the extended family on the recent death of their sister Catherine in England.

REMINDER

The Abbey Pier is a pier and not a long term car park. So, if you are leaving the island for a few days you are requested to leave your vehicle at home and to use the bus instead.

This makes the pier a safer place for everybody.

This newsletter is produced by Karen Mould and Sue Cahalane and published by SIDS. We welcome articles of news and of general interest, and please do contact us with information about forthcoming events. Articles can be sent to us by email to sherkinnewsletter@gmail.com, or delivered by hand, and any enquiries to 087-7715862. We look forward to hearing from you! *Next deadline is 10th April*

SIDS AGM, 19th February, 2012 - Interim Chairman's Report.

Good afternoon everyone, you are very welcome to the reconvened 2010 AGM, thank you for coming. It has been pointed out to me that the rules of this Society make no provision for the post of *Interim* Chairman. Well exceptional circumstances call for exceptional measures. Anyway there won't be anything *interim* about the Committee we shall establish today.

As a result of the first part of this AGM, these salient facts came to light: a great deal of money has been expended from the building deposit fund, while for a couple of years hardly any was coming in. In the absence of audited accounts for 2010, there was no tax clearance certificate, and it had been impossible to draw down Government funds that had been allocated to the various projects, most seriously the BAVA course. The Monitoring Committee had been stone-walled by the Management.

The Interim Committee had to undertake the difficult task of establishing the facts. We were shocked to discover, for instance, that in 2010 €6822.54 had been expended for travel and subsistence, mostly to the then Chairman, though these expenses were unvouched, and it is not even possible to know to which project they should be allocated.

We are extremely fortunate to have had a very active interim secretary, treasurer and assistant treasurer. It's a pity Barry can't be here, but he has sent us a most incisive account of the state of the SIDS affairs. You will see that we owe a very big vote of thanks especially to Barry Mahon, as well as Maureen O'Neil, Robbie Murphy, Linda O'Beirne and Mags O'Reilly.....Also the rest of the Interim Committee and everyone else involved in saving SIDS from a fate similar to that of the *Costa Concordia*, at the very last minute. Quite a few questions unfortunately remain outstanding, and of course these 2010 accounts that we shall adopt today are now very out of date. The 2011 accounts should be ready in another couple of months' time.

Anyway the Interim Committee has been able to stabilise the immediate financial situation, obtain a tax clearance certificate, and set about drawing down funds in respect particularly of the BAVA course. A great deal depends on how successful this will be. Turning to the future, one question which arises is, to what extent will the new Committee be authorised to use such funds as we might manage to draw down, for the purpose of meeting current liabilities, and in particular for the purpose of funding the BAVA course? But we will discuss this under item 10 of the agenda.

One lesson to be drawn from the debacle is that it is no good expecting one or two volunteers to run everything. Sub-committees are going to have to feature big-time, and each of the Society's projects need to be separately accountable. A sub-committee is being formed to take up the challenge of trying to secure the future of the BAVA course, while we have already set up a sub-committee to develop the foot-path from near Horseshoe House along the cliffs to the West End near the Watch-house. If you might be willing to help with this project, talk to Syd Cheatle or Anthony O'Reilly.

We are also setting up a sub-committee to manage the waste and re-cycling business, although so far the only volunteers are Martin O'Driscoll and myself. We all know how vital it is, so think about it, and if you are interested in serving, please give me your name at the end of this meeting.

Another important step by the Interim Committee has been to facilitate arrangements with the Local and Community Development Project for the appointment of a new Development Worker for Sherkin, Heir and Long, to be based here, although for the time being the management will have to be undertaken through the Bere Island Projects Group.

There will be yet another sub-committee for the rebuilding of this Hall. The Interim Committee was of the opinion that it will have to be limited to the rebuilding of the part that was destroyed, on the old foundations, which would at least provide a more satisfactory office for SIDS and the Development Worker than the computer room here in the front. It will fall to the new Committee to progress this as they find possible.

Finally, looking forward, allow me to reiterate my opinion that the outlook for SIDS, and indeed the whole community here on Sherkin, will be bleak, unless we can develop our own productive base and a real income stream, instead of depending simply on squeezing funds out of the Government. I

recommend to the new Committee that it might dramatically reverse the decline we have witnessed lately if it could succeed in establishing our own indigenous supply of electricity. After all, this island is steaming with natural, renewable energy. We could set Sherkin up as a pioneering example of the way out of the current environmental and economic crisis, by way of community power!

To make a success of SIDS in the future, we are going to need all of you to think what you might possibly contribute, to get stuck in and participate, to the best of your ability and beyond!

I will now pass you on to the Secretary, who I may say deserves a special round of applause for all the work he has put in during these last couple of months – Robbie....

Joe Aston

Interim Chairman, 19th Feb.2012

Secretary's Report to the reconvened SIDS 2010 AGM; Feb 19th 2012

Thank you Chairman.

Good afternoon everyone. As you will already know the 2010 AGM was initially held on Dec 4th 2011, having been called by the then Management Committee of Dan Reilly (Chairman), Karen Mould (Secretary), Feargal O'Connor (Treasurer) and Cliona Walsh.

However the AGM could not be concluded due to the incompleteness of the Audited accounts of 2010.

The Monitoring Committee, comprising of Maureen O'Neill, Sean Kelly and Barry Mahon, presented their Report for 2010, which was read out at that meeting. A copy of that report was published in the Sherkin Newsletter last December.

The General Meeting of Dec 4th agreed that an interim Management Committee would be elected, which would be tasked with enabling the completion of SIDS 2010 Audited accounts so as to be able to reconvene the 2010 AGM and also to establish the facts about SIDS present condition. Three of the current board did not seek election to this Interim Committee, Dan Reilly, Karen Mould and Cliona Walsh.

There were nine nominations for membership of the Interim Management Committee and all were elected.

The Interim Committee met for the first time immediately after the General Meeting of Dec 4th 2011 and it comprised of:

Joe Aston (Chairman),
Robbie Murphy (Secretary),
Barry Mahon (Treasurer),
Michael Collins (Vice Chairman),
Maureen O'Neill (Assistant Treasurer),
Anthony O'Reilly,
Feargal O'Connor,
Mark O'Neill,
Martin O'Driscoll.

At the meeting of Jan 9th 2012 Syd Cheatle was co-opted on to the Committee.

Also at the first Committee meeting of Dec 4th 2011, the Committee reappointed Feargal O'Connor and Cliona Walsh as authorised signatories of SIDS, fulfilling the wish of the members of the General Meeting on the same day.

I wish to point out at this stage that the Official Minutes Book, received at the General Meeting of Dec 4th 2011, does not contain any minutes of any meetings following the 2009 AGM, held on June 13th 2010 up to the date of the General Meeting of Dec 4th 2011.

The present Committee has held six meetings since Dec 4th 2011, minutes of which are in the Official Minutes Book.

One of the first tasks of the Committee included reviewing documents supplied by the former Chairman in order to determine outstanding issues that needed addressing, both financially or otherwise.

One of these issues related to a letter from SIDS solicitor Patrick McCarthy, dated Oct 10th 2011, which stated that he was retiring from practise. In response to this information the Committee, at a meeting of Dec 13th 2011, agreed that Wolfe & Co Solicitors would act as SIDS Solicitor and that they would receive all documents that Patrick McCarthy held on SIDS behalf.

Another task of the Committee was to identify and list as many organisations and individuals, who have dealings with SIDS, and then notify them of the make up of the new SIDS Committee.

Due to the lack of minutes and the absence of any recording of incoming mail to SIDS the Committee is unsure whether it has received all documents belonging to SIDS. The present Committee has endeavoured to rectify this issue of recording mail by stating, in its correspondences that all mail would be care of (c/o) the SIDS Secretary and would be entered into a logbook.

And finally the Management Committee approved the application of two new members to SIDS, Linda O'Beirne (Dec 4th 2011) and Donal O'Connor (Jan 9th 2012).

Thank you.
Robbie Murphy, Interim Secretary, SIDS

Treasurers Report to the reconvened SIDS 2010 AGM; Feb 19th 2012

When I volunteered to be Treasurer of SIDS, following the incomplete AGM on Dec 4th 2010, I had some idea of what would be involved, since I had been asking the (previous) SIDS Chairman for information for at least six months. I have since discovered that the situation was worse than anyone could have imagined.

The two months since December have involved what can only be described as detective work and I want to acknowledge the enormous amount of work done by Maureen O'Neill, Linda O'Beirne and Robbie Murphy in trawling through documents, negotiating with the bank and the accountant and providing information.

In summary, there has been no overall comprehensive financial management, budgeting or reporting for SIDS since at least 2009, and, in practise, since 2008. This was pointed out by the Monitoring Committee in both the 2008 and 2009 reports and the Monitoring Committee was unable to undertake their monitoring work for 2010. I wish to acknowledge that there was detailed accounting information prepared, until September 2009, when Margaret O'Reilly resigned, but this was not acted upon or followed up.

Shortly after taking over the role of Treasurer I received a copy of a text message sent by the previous Chairman to the effect that the SIDS Deposit Account had been used to fund the activities of SIDS since 2010, but that there was money "due" from various funding sources.

So, we started the work to try to recover the situation. Apart from the Cargo Subsidy, no money has been drawn down from the various Government funding sources for 2010 and 2011, because SIDS had no tax clearance certificates.

On the basis of the bank statements and various other documents, the estimate for the money "owed" to the SIDS Deposit Account is €100,000. This includes the money transferred by the previous Management Committee to SIDS current accounts and the overdrafts operated by the Committee. In addition, money due for work done by SIDS on behalf of Comhar na nOilean Teo and money due from the HSE for social inclusion activities had not been applied for.

On the income and outgoings it appears that DIT staff were paid without deductions; money for the bus was not accounted for; the total paid for the cargo subsidy for 2010 exceeds the amount received; the total costs of the President's visit are not available; expenses were paid without vouchers; private transport was used by individuals and paid for by SIDS; payments were made without corresponding invoices; contracts were entered into without budgeting; money from the County Council, apparently for recycling, was not accounted for; the insurance on the hall was not paid since 2009.

We have managed to generate, with the help of our accountants, the tax clearance certificate for 2010 which will be usable for 2011 also. We have written to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the

Gaeltacht with a summary of the SIDS expenses on the BAVA course for 2010 and 2011 and requesting payment of the outstanding grants. I don't think I need to remind you of the financial situation of the country, so, whether we get what we are "due" is out of our hands. We have also applied for reimbursement of the money spent on behalf of Comhar na nOilean Teo and will apply for the HSE social support grant.

I should point out that, even if we receive all the money we have requested or what remains of the grants, we will not be in a good situation. SIDS has not had the money to pay the staff working on the BAVA course in recent weeks, they have volunteered their services, but this cannot continue indefinitely. The amount, which will be left in the Deposit Account after paying off the current commitments and overdrafts, is about €20,000.

The budget estimate for 2012, which I prepared for the Management Committee, shows that, without the BAVA course expenditures, SIDS has commitments of over €13,000 for the year. We have tried to reduce or eliminate certain commitments entered into by the previous committee, and have succeeded in reducing some expenditures, such as removing the fax line, but others, such as the lease/purchase of the photocopier, cannot be reduced or can only be eliminated if SIDS pays a lump sum to finish the contract. Since we are working on an overdraft to pay the current expenses for the ESB, Insurance, etc., we cannot spend any money on extracting SIDS from commitments. Neither can we make commitments for repairs.

There is also an amount owed to the West Cork Arts Council (WCAC), about €19,000, to repay a loan given by them to restart the BAVA course. If we wish to continue the BAVA course at the same level of expenditure as in 2010 and 2011, SIDS will have total commitments of almost €50,000 per year. The present contract for BAVA/DIT grant support would appear to be finished, we are awaiting clarification on this.

As I said at the beginning, the situation is worse than we might have imagined, I see no point in pretending otherwise.

Any money SIDS might get for grants not drawn down is "owed" to the Deposit Account. The decisions facing the Membership are stark, we have to raise money, even to keep SIDS operating at a minimum level.

We have been informed that a Development Officer will be appointed for Sherkin, Heir and Long Islands as soon as possible. He or she will be based on Sherkin and SIDS will receive money to support him or her and provide an office. This will provide some income to pay for electricity, heating etc. The HSE social activities grant, if we receive it, will provide some small additional income. Apart from those the only other income for SIDS are the Membership fees, what the Regatta might provide and anything we can raise from other sources.

I am sorry that this report is so depressing, but I want to ensure that all the Members are fully aware of the situation following several years of mismanagement and lack of information.

Barry Mahon, interim Treasurer, SIDS.

SIDS COMMITTEE MEETING 21st FEBRUARY 2012.

At the SIDS Committee Meeting on 21st February the following committee officers were duly proposed and elected.

Chairman:	Joe Aston
Vice Chairman:	Michael Collins
Treasurer:	Barry Mahon
Assistant Treasurers:	Maureen O'Neill, Martin O'Driscoll
Secretary:	(Pending the availability of funding it is hoped that part time paid assistance can be secured to fulfil this role.)
Minutes Secretary:	Syd Cheatle.

The committee extended its thanks to Robbie Murphy who has performed the exacting task of interim Secretary over the past few months in exemplary fashion. At a subsequent committee meeting held on the 6th March, Linda O'Beirne was nominated and accepted the vacant post of Secretary to the Committee.

**Bere Island Projects Group Ltd
Local & Community Development Programme (LCDP)**

Wish to invite applications for the position of Community Development Worker (27 hours per week) until 31/12/12 with the possibility of a longer term position in the future subject to funding

The person appointed will need a good understanding of Island life and community engagement, along with excellent administrative ability and communication skills.

This person will work as part of a team implementing the workplan actions for Sherkin, Heir & Long Islands. The office will be based on Sherkin Island.

Interviews will be held on Sherkin Island on Friday March 23rd 2012

Recruitment pack available through email, from the Staff Sub Group, contact BIPG on 027 -75099. Email: bereisle@eircom.net

Completed application form and CV
to be forwarded by post, on or before **4:30pm, Friday the 16th of March clearly marked "Sherkin, Long & Heir Islands Development Worker Position"**

Bere Island Projects Group Ltd
Community Centre
Bere Island
Beara
Co. Cork

Bere Island Projects Group Ltd Local & Community Development Programme, is an equal opportunities employer

Funded under the Irish Government's National Development Plan 2007– 2013 (NDP) from funds made available by the National Lottery



Rainfall for February 2012

The February rainfall at Sherkin Island Marine Station was 44.0mm, with 32.6mm falling on 6 days.

3 rd	3.3mm
4 th	5.6mm
7 th	4.6mm
8 th	6.7mm
17 th	5.7mm
21 st	6.7mm

The month was the 5th driest February since 1973. The driest February since 1973 was 1986 with 16.2mm. The wettest was 1990 with 232.8mm.

Energy

Sherkin Island N.S. has been working on the theme of Energy for our next Green School Flag. We have learned a lot and would like to share some of it with you.

Firstly we identified all the source of energy available to us as islanders. They are electricity, gas, coal peat and oil. We then identified ways of reducing our dependence on these fuels. Oil, coal and peat should be used sparingly as they are non-renewable fuels. Soon our world will have to find ways of replacing these fuels. We think solar, wind and water or wave power should be harnessed and maybe our island could become the first Irish island to become self sufficient as regards energy.

We would like to see Sherkin being an example to others and we would love to help save you money. For that reason we have made a list of ways you could cut down on your energy bills.



Ways to save money.

1. Turn off light when the room is not in use.
2. Close doors to keep heat in.
3. Close curtains when it is dark outside as the black absorbs the heat.
4. Use draft excluders on all doors especially external doors.
5. Heat only rooms that are in use.
6. Open curtains and let sunlight in to save electricity.
7. Unplug items not in use as turning off the switch in the plug can still allow usage of electricity.
8. Unplug phone chargers when not in use as they can cause fires.
9. Make blocks from all recyclable paper and burn them instead of coal.
10. All light bulbs should be energy saver bulbs.
11. Change batteries to rechargeable ones.
12. Hot water tanks should be lagged.
13. Only boil enough water in the kettle that you will use. If you boil too much put the excess in a flask for later use.
14. Wear enough clothes so that you won't have to be using extra heating when there is no need.
15. Fridges should be defrosted regularly.
16. Deep freezers should be kept as full as possible to reduce energy usage.
17. Clothes should be folded soon after drying to cut down on ironing.
18. Insulate attics.
19. Turn off lights when you are not using them.
20. Don't let your computer on standby.

We hope these tips help you cut down on bills.



Sherkin Library News

Josephine Jefferies

Statistics for February

Books borrowed	171
Internet sessions used	26
Visitor count	82
New or renewed memberships	12

Opening Hours

Tuesday	1.30pm – 5.30pm
Thursday	11am – 2pm
Friday	5.30pm – 8.30pm

New Energy Era

Last Call ... for the **New Energy Era** Forum at Liss Ard Estate, Skibbereen, Ireland, this May 8th, 9th, and 10th. for details please visit:

http://www.localcampus.com/Regions/Europe/Countries/Ireland/westcork/New_Energy_Era_Forum.html

The line-up of speakers for the ‘**New Energy Era**’ forum is nearly complete. This is going to be an incredible event. If you want to take three days out and indulge in a retreat of wonderful global discussions with amazing minds, this is your chance. The discussion will put topics like the Fiscal Compact, worldwide unrest, nuclear developments, fracking, renewable energy developments, and others into perspective, and help you make important decisions for the future. Some if not all of these speakers will be written about in a hundred years time as the clear thinkers that foresaw world events and new developments for the new era. Please book fast as numbers are limited. Here are the speakers and topics:

1. **Dr. Colin Campbell** – Changes in World Energy Supplies, and the consequences.
2. **Chris Sanders**, Sanders Research Company – Financial Implications for the New Energy Era;
3. **Jim O’Donnell** - “Towards a philosophy for the care and maintenance of a small planet”
4. **Robin Challis**, Qualitative Research, ‘Whither Consumerism?’ Likely consumer trends over the next decades.
5. **Professor Austin Darragh** - Farewell Petroleum , Hail Carboleum
6. **Rob Heyland** – ‘the collapse of capitalism is the best thing for us all’
7. **Professor Hartmut Frank**, University of Bayreuth, Germany - ‘Ethics, Science and Education for the New Era’
8. **Dr. Michael Hayes**, University of Limerick ‘The lignocellulose of wood, energy crops, and agricultural residues as the sources of chemicals to replace petrochemicals’.
9. **Daniel Podmirseg** , Vienna – ‘JUMP UP! Bite your lips, get up and dance!’ - promising concepts to rebuild local social and economic interdependencies, focusing on urban and vertical farming. For more details and booking please check the following website address.
http://www.localcampus.com/Regions/Europe/Countries/Ireland/westcork/New_Energy_Era_Forum.html

Trichomonosis warning alert and interim bird report, March 2012

Julian Wyllie

Trichomonas is not a word that trips off the tongue. It is a parasite that causes trichomonosis in garden birds, infecting the back of the throat and gullet. Symptoms include laboured breathing, regurgitating

food and having difficulty swallowing. The disease may progress over several days and the outbreak can last for weeks. It was first noticed in the UK in 2005 and outbreaks have recurred in every summer since. Greenfinches and Chaffinches are most affected. 'Garden Bird Health' maintain a dedicated website at www.ufaw.org.uk/gbhi that contains downloadable information. Around the second week of February, two Greenfinches were seen in Farranacoush, both of which were obviously in the final throws of the disease – not a heart-warming sight I can assure you. Where they contracted the disease is anyone's guess – quite possibly Sherkin and equally possibly Baltimore, Cape or further afield. As one of them was in my own garden I can only hope it wasn't too local. However, it is not all bad news. By simply making sure that all bird feeders and water dispensers are kept clean, the disease can be kept at bay. The easiest way of cleaning feeders is by giving them a soak and rinse in a 10% Milton solution at roughly bi-monthly intervals. I can only urge all of you with bird feeders to follow this simple procedure. I am happy to be able to report that these are the only two ailing specimens I've seen so far and that all Greenfinches seen in the past week or so have had far more spring-like things on their minds.

And so to bird news, which despite all my promises of regular updates via twitter (only joking..!) is kind of fairly disjointed this month, but at least there's something – a distinct improvement on last month! An adult Whooper Swan in Farranacoush from 21st February until the end of the month was a lovely birthday present, especially as it could be seen from my back door, and was only the sixth for the island. Two Grey Plovers around the same time which took O'Connors beach as their habitat of choice were nearly as rare, being less than annual visitors to Sherkin, although Heir Island attracts them more regularly. The unprecedented influx of Iceland Gulls this winter, mostly involving birds from Greenland, has resulted in at least three different birds reaching Sherkin's shores (which can sometimes be translated as "It was seen from the ferry, so surely it counts as a Sherkin bird...") At least a further two individuals have been seen in Baltimore. An adult American Herring Gull at the fish factory beat me in all my efforts to catch it passing through Sherkin airspace. Four Mediterranean Gulls included two first-winter birds, one second-winter and an adult hanging around Cuinne which can only be described in superlatives. Water Rails have yet again been making themselves known through their strange 'mechanical' callings, easiest heard from the water pump in west Slievemore. And finally, spring has proved to us that it is well and truly on its way not only by treating us to butterflies (Peacock & Small Tortoiseshell so far) but, far and away the best of all, five Swallows which showed themselves to one lucky dog-walker as they perched on wires along the Dock Road on 11th March. Bring it on..!!

For more information or to report sightings, please contact Julian on 087 0619186 or at jhwylie@gmail.com.

Membership of SIDS SIDS Committee

We would like to remind everyone (once again!) if you wish to continue with your membership of SIDS it **MUST** be renewed on a yearly basis. If it is not renewed your membership will lapse. We are currently updating the membership list and those who have not renewed will be removed from this list and deemed no longer to be a member of SIDS. Forms are available in the library for all those who may have mislaid them or who have just forgotten to renew.

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Dates for your diary

March

- Sat 17th St.Patrick's Day! Mass at 4.45pm, St.Mona's church.
St. Patrick's Day Parades starting in Schull at 2pm and Skibberreen at 2.30pm
An evening of musical delights from Katy Salvidge on the piano at the Jolly Roger from 8pm
- Sun 18th Mothering Sunday
- Mon 19th Public Holiday
- Fri 23rd Daffodil Day - the main fundraising day for Cancer Research, lots of local events.
- Tues 27^t Station Mass at Joe and Fiona's Horseshoe Cottage @ 7.30pm. All welcome
- Fri 30 –Sun 1st Ballydehob Irish Traditional Music Festival see www.ballydehobtradfest.com

April

- Sun 1st Baltimore Choir fundraiser for the Tit Bonhomme Fund in Fr.Cashman Hall
Baltimore @7.30pm
- Fri 6th 'Island Crafts' re opens for the 2012 season in Baltimore, the place for a locally made gift for any occasion. 028 20347 further details
- Sun 8th Easter Sunday