

# The Shapinsay Sound



LOCAL

The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.  
Registered Charity Number: S0034818; Registered Company Number: SC255127.

Contact Information : Email: [SDTOffice@shapinsay.org.uk](mailto:SDTOffice@shapinsay.org.uk)

Telephone: 01856 711733.



The residential trip to Hoy went really well. The children had a great time doing lots of different activities. One of the best things that they did was the "Cuillags Challenge" which 8 of the children completed. This involves climbing the second highest hill in

Orkney as quickly as possible. The children are the first primary group to do it and we are very proud of them (and Annette who did it with them!). Other activities were the Tyrolean Traverse (crossing a cliff on a rope), gorge walking, coasteering, bush craft and archery. The children all had a great time. Part of the purpose of the trip is also about gaining independence and being away from home, and for some of the children this was their first trip. The children were an excellent advert for Shapinsay through their fantastic attitude and behaviour. Well done children! Thank you to Annette who came with us and to the SDT, the Community Council and to the Parent Council who all helped with funding.



All of the children from Nursery upwards have been working on Bike ability. Most children have now learned to ride their bikes without stabilisers which is great to see, and all of the Nursery to P3 children have completed a "play on pedals" course with Sue. The older children have all completed Bike ability Level 1 or 2 with Ian. Well done everybody!

The Nursery children have been outside lots, playing with water squirters and practising for the Picnic. They have also been welcoming the new children who will be starting Nursery after the summer. P1 - 3 have been making their own toys and games, visited Lunch Club to interview them about what toys were like when they were young and have been learning a song in French called "j'adore jouer au football". P4 - 7 have been learning about Earthquakes and Floods, making their own buildings to withstand Earthquakes from wood and their own flood defences from Lego. They have been using journalistic writing in English and have been making their own tuned musical instruments in Music.

The term finishes on Monday 2nd July; a full report on the end of term events in the August Shapinsay Sound. Happy Holidays everyone!

Published by the Shapinsay Development Trust. Disclaimer: The content and opinions expressed in Shapinsay Sound are those of individual authors and their represented groups. These views are not necessarily shared by the publisher

SHAPINSAY  
DEVELOPMENT  
TRUST

# The Shapinsay Sound

July 2018

INSIDE  
THIS  
ISSUE

Shapinsay  
Picnic

1

Shapinsay  
Community  
Council

2

Garden Notes  
from Old School

3

Garden notes  
part 2

4

Shapinsay Wildlife  
Matters

5

Learning Skills at  
the Boathouse

6

Shapinsay  
Heritage and  
Crafts

7

Shapinsay School

8

## Shapinsay Picnic

Saturday 23rd June saw a rather wet and windy day, but it didn't dampen anyone's spirits for the Picnic. There were lots of folk taking part in all the different events, from the very youngest children to adults. Events were won by many different people, and the scoring for the overall winners was particularly close in some categories this year.

**Pictured are the winners in each category:**

Primary School Children: **Sinclair Leslie** (P1 - 3 boys winner and runner up in Primary School Boys), **Paul Bady** (P4 - 7 boys winner and most points in Primary School Boys), **Erin Boyd** (P4 - 7 girls winner and most points in Primary School Girls) and **Orla Boyd** (P1 - 3 girls winner and runner up in Primary School Girls).

**Under 16 and Adults: Thomas Leslie** (runner up, Mens), **Ashley Boyd** (winner, Mens), **Alex Hall** (winner, Under 16 Boys), **Markus Muir** (runner up, Under 16 Boys), **Floris Girdwood** (winner, Womens), **Rachel Evans** (runner up, Womens), **Keira Moncrieff** (winner, Under 16 Girls) and **Charlotte Harbour** (runner up, Under 16 Girls).



**Well done to all the winners, runners-up and to everyone who took part in the events.**



After the Picnic tea and children's prize giving, the tug of war took place. The girls in the school children's tug of war triumphed after a closely fought contest. In the North v South tug of war, the South end won. The tug of war was perhaps one of the most cheered on events of the whole day (plus the rain had eased off a bit by this stage!)

In the evening the dance and prizegiving were well supported and there was a great atmosphere. The Shapinsay Music Group played brilliantly and it was a really enjoyable evening. A huge thank you must go out to all the many people who help to bring the Picnic together. Firstly to all those who take part in the events. There couldn't be a Picnic without you! Thank you to Caroline for saying the Grace at the tea, to Fiona and Alison for running the bar and to the Shapinsay Music Group for their wonderful music at the dance. Finally, thanks to all those on the Picnic Committee. A lot of work goes in to put the Picnic together and it takes a lot to make it work - from setting up the field for the events, checking the equipment, making the many sandwiches and cakes, scoring the events and working out the points and then clearing everything up afterwards. It takes people giving up their time voluntarily to make the Picnic what it is, and it really demonstrates the community pulling together to make a really good day.

**Roll on Picnic 2019 (and fingers crossed for sunshine next year!)**



## Shapinsay Community Council

### Date of Next Community Council meeting – 5 September 2018

If you have an item(s) you wish members to discuss at this meeting please can you ensure that they are with the Clerk **10 days** before the meeting, or they may be held over to the following meeting.

Shapinsay Community Council  
c/o Democratic Services  
Orkney Islands Council  
Council Offices, Kirkwall  
01856 873535 Ext 2237  
email [shapinsayclerk@gmail.com](mailto:shapinsayclerk@gmail.com)

## Safety work planned for Kirkyards

Work on headstones found to be in an unsafe condition is about to begin at kirkyards in Orkney.

Orkney Islands Council announced recently that in common with local authorities across the country, it is carrying out a safety review of the county's burial grounds.

"To date, we have found that a handful of headstones need immediate attention," said Darren Richardson, the Council's Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects. This will start as soon as possible. We will also carry out repairs to around 20 headstones that need urgent work to make them safe.

"Many other headstones need attention and we will plan how best to progressively address this in the coming weeks."

Orkney's kirkyards date back over a considerable period and some of the headstones are extremely old. Others have been affected over the years by the wind, rain and frost.

If records allow, the Council will contact family members and advise them of the action that has taken place or is planned.

Darren Richardson added: "We have a responsibility to inspect burial grounds and make sure they can be visited safely. We will do our best to get in touch with families in advance to let them know that work is planned. Sometimes, however, we will need to take more immediate action if the inspections show this to be necessary.

"It is important to reiterate that relatives have responsibilities to keep family graves in good order and we would ask that people check on headstones and make sure they are in a safe condition. As part of this current process we expect to be tracing relatives of affected headstones at some point in the future."

People with any concerns, or in need of further information, should get in touch with customer services at the Council on 01856 873535 and provide as much detail as possible about the location of their relative's headstone.

## Road Scheme - 2018

The Shapinsay Community Council has allocated funds towards road improvement costs

Island residents can apply for financial assistance towards the cost of road materials, by applying in writing to the Interim Clerk, Shapinsay Community Council, c/o Democratic Services, Orkney Islands Council, Council Offices, Kirkwall, or emailing [shapinsayclerk@gmail.com](mailto:shapinsayclerk@gmail.com) by **Monday, 27 August 2018**.

## Shapinsay Heritage Arts and Crafts

### Sewing Workshops Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29th July 2 -4 pm in the Heritage Centre.

**Open to everyone, all levels of sewing skills, children and adults.**



Come along, either one or both afternoons, to learn basic sewing skills, or for the more experienced sewers, bring your own project and help others master their skills.

We will have a variety of projects (hand and machine sewn), with materials and equipment, available for you to make an item (perhaps something for Shapinsay Horticultural Show) during one or both workshops. The projects we plan to include are cushion covers, bags, a rabbit toy, patchwork pincushions or pot pourri holders and aprons.

If you prefer, bring along your own materials and a pattern of your choice. We can also help with sewing skills as putting in a zip, hems, repairs, alterations etc.

No booking needed, just drop in during one or both afternoons.

Contact Mary Horgan or Jean Coomber if you would like any further information.

Please let us know any suggestions for further craft workshops.

Scottish Charities Incorporated Organisation Number SC030206



## Learn editing skills at the Boathouse



Local history enthusiasts are being offered training in how to edit audio gathered as part of the Heritage Lottery funded 'Shapinsay Speaks' oral history project. The wealth of recorded material is being divided up into different topics for a new website being put together for our island.

Volunteers are now being offered the skills they need to keep adding to the website over time. Amongst those learning to edit is Richard Lawrence who became interested in the oral history project when he and wife Sue moved to North School last year and started renovating the former school room at their new home.

Anyone who is interested can learn at the Boathouse how to gather and edit new or existing material "We

now have some fascinating accounts of life on Shapinsay in days gone by" says project co-ordinator Lynne Collinson, "but there is so much more that can be added and we want to ensure that happens". If you'd like to get involved contact [cao@shapinsay.org.uk](mailto:cao@shapinsay.org.uk) or phone 711733

### Shapinsay School pupils gathering oral history at Lunch Club about the Toys of the past



## Garden Notes from Old School

It's a well-worn cliché that farmers and gardeners like nothing better than to complain about the weather but after the recent winds that Mother Nature threw at us, I think we're entitled to have a moan. During winter when plants are dormant, damage is usually limited and broken shrubs will regrow in spring but when everything is in full growth, damage can be considerable. Luckily, my flower garden is relatively sheltered but the veg garden is a different matter. In a vain attempt to protect broad beans plants I wrapped fleece around the whole row but even so the leaves were blackened and several of the tops broken off. Hopefully they will regrow from the base but it's questionable whether there will be a crop of beans this year. Gooseberry and currant bushes were stripped of their fruit and leaves. These will definitely not produce this year; all I can do is make sure they are well fed and watered to help the plant recover.



It's ironic that only last month I was writing about plants that tolerate wet conditions and now we are having to cope with a prolonged period of dry, breezy weather. The official definition of drought in the UK is a period of at least fifteen consecutive days on which the rainfall is no more than 0.2mm; I'm not sure if that has been the case here but it can't be far off. Our clay soil has cracked in places to look just like crazy paving. I planted a couple of young white beam trees which should have grown well but after struggling through one winter and one summer, they gave up trying and by this spring they were well and truly dead. When I dug them out, the roots had not grown out of the original planting hole because the clay soil was too dense with no air spaces for the roots to extend and feed. A simple lesson that it's essential to put the effort in to improve the soil before planting; I need to dig in grit and plenty of soil conditioner/compost which is free to collect from Hatston or Bossack.

Another problem this year is the number of pests on crops, particularly greenfly and caterpillars. When plants are stressed by climatic conditions they are less able to tolerate these pests. Even in the greenhouse, the lettuces were suddenly covered in small green caterpillars which I painstakingly removed and fed to the hens but there seems to be so many plants affected this year that I have ordered an organic pest control spray to try to keep on top of them. In the meantime I'm using a combination of soapy water for the greenfly and diatomaceous earth powder for the caterpillars which is helping. Bedding plants or other annuals that are grown for a big display over the summer need regular deadheading to prolong their flowering period and keep the plants compact. Incidentally, don't be alarmed if plants bought from the garden centre or nursery contain small round orange coloured balls that look like they might be the eggs of some pest, they are simply a slow-release fertiliser that is mixed in to the potting compost. One of the things you might find if you are potting on an older plant is white vine weevil grubs in the soil or an adult on surface of the soil. The adults are hatching out at this time of year and will 'play dead' if disturbed. If a plant has notches eaten out of the leaves this is most likely vine weevil. There is an effective nematode that can be watered onto the soil which will attack and kill the larvae but it won't kill the adults. The RHS website is useful for identification purposes; go to their Advice page where they have a simple to use Common Pest Identification Guide.





## Garden Notes

## Part 2



In spite of everything there are plants looking beautiful and a reminder that all is not lost.



Thanks to a lot of hard work from my better half, I am now the proud owner of a three-bay composting area so that I can easily combine garden waste, grass clippings, kitchen waste and cleanings from the hen house to make wonderful compost so next year I will have absolutely no excuses for not growing perfect crops – apart from the wind, the rain, the cold, the pests.....

If you have any garden tips that you would like to share or any special plants that you would like to tell others about please let me know and I will include them next month.  
Karen Evans, Old School, Shapinsay

[karen@evanssmallholder.plus.com](mailto:karen@evanssmallholder.plus.com)

## Shapinsay Cubs and Beavers



The Cubs and Beavers have been busy working for their gardening and environmental awareness badges.

Each person has a bed in the polytunnel to look after over the summer, and at the moment the boys are growing things like strawberries, peas, carrots and tatties.

## Shapinsay Wildlife Matters

by Paul Hollinrake

### Golden Plovers on Shapinsay



*Golden Plover in full breeding plumage*

Golden plovers are bonnie wee wading birds found mostly in the uplands of Britain in summer and on our coasts and fields in winter. In their breeding plumage they are striking birds with spangled golden backs and jet black underparts. In winter they lack the black underneath and look pale below, appearing far less contrasty but still with golden feathers and a prominent black eye.



*Golden Plover in full winter plumage*

Ella Moncrief and her Mum Carol were lucky enough to see golden plovers on the heather clad East Hill of Shapinsay on their walk out towards Castle Bloody in early June this year. Ella spotted one chick and they also saw the parents. This is now a rare sight in Shapinsay, and I think it is many years ago since they have bred here. So well done for confirming breeding this year. They used to breed more commonly when there was more heather on the island. They can be difficult to locate in summer on the moors. Their call is a plaintive whistle similar to the sound of a pub sign that needs oiling if you've ever heard one! They can throw their voice like a ventriloquist, then run fast over the ground in an attempt to confuse you about their whereabouts.

In winter huge flocks gather in Orkney and you can see them wheeling about in tight groups. They characteristically hold their wings in stiff scythe like position when flying, which is easy to pick up once you get your eye in. They land on grassy fields where they feed on soil invertebrates or Minnie Beasties often in association with their lapwing cousins.