

Isle of Seil Coastal Rowing Club Convenor's Report, 2020

The year started well, with outings possible in January, between storms. No rowing was possible in February - very unusual not to be able to row in every month of the year. Luckily we had an outing planned for 23 March - rather breezy but lockdown was announced that very evening. It was to be our last outing until 24 August, when outdoor contact sports were allowed to resume. Isle of Seil were the very first club back on the water that day, in glorious sunshine. Rowing has continued, sporadically, since then, with a risk assessment and covid precautions in place. Sue undertook a covid officer course with SportScotland. A core of folk are turning out, with two new members. I don't know if the other rowers are not comfortable with the training/field of play bubbles or if timings don't suit. Rowing is necessarily more limited, both because of Covid and the weather, but in September, we took part in the international Castle to Crane Five Miles from Home time trial. We rowed to Degnish Point, and didn't embarrass ourselves. It was good to be part of a bigger community effort.

The skiff has been parked in an out-of-the-way spot in the boatyard this year. With an ageing launching trolley, and ageing crew, launching and recovery is quite a graunch, especially at low tide. The final straw was when a wheel came off the trolley. The trolley, made from offcuts, has lasted us for seven years and been well patched up. Sue applied for funding, unsuccessfully, and a new launching trolley with double wheels and a jockey wheel was ordered from Teal Engineering. Winter maintenance this year will include fitting foot straps and some experimental gates for the oars.

The club masterminded a successful community beach clean at Seaview in February, but unfortunately was turned down by the GRAB Trust for funding, as it was less than a year since our last cleanup (!) Individual members cleaned the Sound shore during lockdown.

Sue continues as a trustee of Scottish Coastal Rowing, now a SCIO. She organised a Passage Planning weekend for SCRA members from all over Scotland in Seil Hall in late February. Many thanks to all club members for helping with catering - especially as there was a power cut!

Sue, in her role as RowAround Scotland (RAS) coordinator, was very involved with merchandise, passage planning, publicity and trialling the bespoke microplastics trawl at SAMS. On 17 March, the RowAround launch in Gretna, planned for 25 March, was postponed. It was hoped to be able to resume the circumnavigation later. Inevitably, the weather was perfect in early May for, what would have been, our section of RAS. Sue then coordinated the Virtual RowAround, which then lasted for six months, using the original timetable. RowAround Scotland 2021 is now on the drawing board.

Thanks to Mary for juggling the books, and to James for not complaining, too much, as cox. But it would be great to have more folk happy to cox - it would allow more flexibility for outings.

SCW Fenton
October 26 2020