

March 2010



Farewell to the Ormlie Manager

TO ALL RESIDENTS

I expect many of you have already heard that we are losing our Manager Lorna Simpson and I can fully appreciate that this may well be causing concern bearing in mind what Lorna has achieved for Ormlie during the past 8 years. For that reason I felt it is important to let you know what arrangements have been made by your Board to ensure that it is business as usual for OCA.

The Board obviously has to decide on how we move forward from here but this will take some time as we want to make correct decisions for the long term and not dive in and make quick decisions which are not in OCA's best long term interest.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THEN?

- All group activities etc. will go on as normal – please continue to support them.
- For the next say 3 months Helen Allan has agreed to cover the Manager's role. Helen joined the Board last year following her retirement from Highland Council. She lives locally and has been involved with OCA since the start through her job with HC. This leaves her well placed to look after things for us and I am grateful that she has agreed to help us. She will be doubling up with Lorna until 19th March.
- Lorna's new post with HC is community based so that she will continue to have contact with OCA. It is therefore comforting to know that her expertise will not be lost.

WILL THERE BE A FAREWELL DO?

Lorna has achieved wonders for Ormlie and I know that many of you are also grateful for what she has done for you on a personal basis. For that reason you can if you so wish contribute to a thankyou collection at the office in Marr Terrace.

Her last day is **Friday 19 March** and we are holding a farewell do in the **Community Centre at 2.00pm** to which you are invited and it will give us all the opportunity to thank Lorna and to wish her well for the future.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Of course in an ideal world it would be nice to hold on to Lorna but we must remain positive and build on the great things she has achieved for us. The original aim of OCA was to improve the infrastructure of Ormlie and to improve the lives of the residents. I can assure you your Board will never lose sight of this objective so I would encourage you all to continue to support OCA and by working together we can go on and make further improvements. You the residents deserve it and we cannot let Lorna down either after she has put her heart and soul into it for 8 years.

Brian Leonard, OCA Chairman



Message from Lorna Simpson, OCA Manager

As Brian has just said, I will be leaving my job on Friday 19 March 2010. I began work in Ormlie in November 2001 and had a specific remit to develop the Ormlie Centre, a new playarea and Home Zone for the estate. All these projects were built and have had a very positive impact on the community. In 2001 the estate looked very different than it does now! In those old days it was a dreich, dark place with no colour, flowers, trees and shrubs. How could we ever forget those dreadful black fences which looked like barricades. Yes I appreciate that some do still exist at the rear of Lord Thurso Court but OCA has been waiting to hear whether the moors development is to go ahead! Back in 2001 Ormlie was summed up to me by a resident as being '350 houses and one shop—that's it!'

Now when I speak of Ormlie I have an enormous sense of pride. It is a lively and inclusive community where people are actively involved in what's happening on their estate. Young people now take a real interest in their community—they come along and help at fun days, clean-up days, Christmas events, whatever is on!

I have made many new friends and feel honoured to have worked with so many loyal and dedicated people. At times the project was extremely difficult but the support I received from the community was second to none. It has been quite an incredible journey and I will retain some amazing memories eg being part of a video project which projected images onto the dome at Dounreay at 2.00 am on Midsummer, to speaking at the House of Lords to giving HRH Prince Charles a guided tour of the Ormlie Centre. All great fun and something to tell the grandchildren!

May I take this opportunity of thanking everybody who has supported me over the last 8 years. Without your help I would never have been able to achieve all the improvements which have taken place within the estate. I would like to thank all the staff, Board and volunteers for their loyalty and commitment to OCA. It definitely made my job much easier and enjoyable! Thank you.

Lorna Simpson, OCA Manager



Lorna speaking at the House of Lords, London

The Book Launch 'Swings and Roundabouts'

Swings & Roundabouts

Ormlie
Community Association Ltd

Swings & Roundabouts
The highs & lows of a Community Association

FRONT COVER PHOTOS BY: MARFINS CROSS PHOTOGRAPHY COVER DESIGN BY: WWW.STUDIOGRAFF.CO.UK

Swings & Roundabouts

THE HIGHS & LOWS OF A COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

"Swings and Roundabouts" is not, as you may imagine from the sub-title, a reference book but more a book which may be referred to. It is the story of a small part of a community and how the people who live there were galvanised into action as a consequence of a near miss road accident, not only to improve road safety issues in their area but also to question officialdom and seek the improvements to their living environment which was long overdue.

The story is told in words and pictures and hopefully in a style which may be unexpected of this type of publication in that it is told "warts and all."

In essence this is a story of people power, battles won and battles lost, not so much being in the right place but more the right frame of mind at the right time, and most importantly, being led by the right people.

Ormlie
Community Association Ltd

Robert M Sutherland



Author Robert Sutherland (front left) with funders rear—Charles Findlay HIE, Colin Punler, UKAEA and Robbie Mac-Intoshear) and Brian Leonard (OCA)

Ormlie Community Association is proud to have produced a book which tells the story of the last 12 years of regeneration on the Ormlie estate. The author Robert M Sutherland was an ex-Community Safety Officer with Northern Constabulary as well as a past Chairperson of Ormlie Community Association so was able to reflect on his experience from both a professional and community perspective. The book is told in an honest and at times amusing, manner without frills or spin.



Jimmy and Inez Mackay at the launch

To show the full range of work that has been undertaken over the last 12 years we have included a pictorial journal of events, improvements, visits by MPs, MSPs, 'officials' and members of the community.



John and Anne Rainford enjoy the event

A launch of the book was held in the community centre in mid December and the turnout from the community was excellent. As our space is so limited within the Centre it was necessary to hold another 'launch' for our funders, and the statutory/ voluntary organisations who have supported OCA over the years. The book costs £7.99 (or 2 for £13.00) and is available from the Ormlie Office, 108 Marr Terrace, Thurso or Jim Bews Bookshop, Thurso;



Front seats for Jodie, Tracey, Margaret, Annabell and Sharleen and her niece

Caithness Horizons, Thurso and DR Simpson, High Street, Wick.

Caithness Energy Advice

OCA Launches New thermal Imaging Service

Ormlie Community Association has launched a new thermal imaging service in partnership with the Highland Council Housing Services, Pentland Housing Association and Albyn Housing. A high quality thermal imaging camera can detect areas of heat loss in homes and identify issues such as slumping insulation and gaps in cavity wall insulation. Exterior and interior images are taken and analysed by experienced staff. Reports on the findings are then produced for the respective housing agency with a view to improvements being undertaken to improve the efficiency of homes. Funding for the project was secured through the Climate Challenge Fund, Highland Leader, Wider Role through Pentland Housing Association, HIE and the Highland Council. For further information on the project please contact Angela Craig on 01847 896524.

New Staff at CEA

We are delighted to welcome three new members of staff to the Caithness Energy Advice Service. Gill Halliday and Cathel Levack joined the team to work on the thermal imaging service whilst Andrew Murray who was initially a New Deal trainee with OCA, has been appointed to produce thermal imaging reports for our partner agencies.



From left: Angela Craig, Cathel Levack, Gill Halliday and Andrew Murray

Worst Winter for Years

Caithness Energy Advice has been inundated with requests from residents throughout Caithness to give assistance with dramatically high heating bills. This winter saw the worst weather conditions for years and has resulted in people's heating being switched on for much longer periods and at a higher temperature than in previous years. The end result has been huge gas and electricity costs for householders.

Have you had horrific fuel bills and need some assistance? Would you like to find out if you are entitled to a reduced tariff? Are you interested in finding out more about different types of energy efficiency systems. If you have answered yes to any of the above questions please contact Angela Craig, Energy Team Leader or 01847 896524 or call at CEA Office, Davidsons Lane,

Young Mothers Project



Claire Clark (front centre) with Samantha Newlands (front second left) with some of the young mothers

Well what can we say! This project has gone from strength to strength and Co-ordinator Claire Clark now runs four sessions per week—three held at the Ormlie Centre and one in Castletown. The project aims to give young mothers the opportunity to think about and plan what they would like to do once their children start attending school. It could be that some mothers would like to gain new skills or qualifications which would allow them to find employment. All the mothers enjoy joining in with the wide variety of weekly sessions which are lively and fun. These have included talks from a wide range of guest speakers, 'Cant Cook, Wont Cook competition', messy play with the children, exercise and swimming, photography, arts and crafts, hair and beauty sessions, first aid and basic child development. If you are interested in attending please call Claire on 01847 893486

Junk2Funk Programme

What is the Junk2Funk project, you may well ask! Well the aim is to give tenants the opportunity to



Dan works on his renovated cupboard

renovate recycled pieces of furniture or equipment into works of art for their own homes. It has been a tremendous success and is now at full capacity. The group work on individual pieces and are so enthusiastic that they are planning to hold an exhibition of their work in Caithness Horizons, (old Town Hall, Thurso) during May 2010. The project works well as there are tenants of all ages working and learning together. The sessions are led by Bettine Bain from Wick, who was the artist involved



Diane checks out coloured glass for mirror

in the mosaic wall project during the summer. Contact for more info—01847 891789

C ommunity Partners Programme (CPP)



Article 16—the right to privacy

We are delighted to report that the CPP groups continue to flourish with 6 sessions held every week along with 1 session of drama which is held at Thurso High School. The groups cater for children and young people aged between 7–13 years, exploring lots of different themes and activities in a fun and interesting manner. For the past few weeks some of the groups have been looking at the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which may sound quite daunting but Sue and Jackie have developed the programme in such a manner that

allows children to understand. For example Article 16 states that children and young people 'have a right to privacy' which could relate to keeping a private diary. Article 31 states children and young people have the 'right to relax and play'. Drama is used to help act out the meaning and the end result has been very positive. The groups also get involved in fundraising, help identify and develop areas on the estate which need improving, gardening and many other projects. If anybody is interested in finding out more about the groups, please give Sue a call on 01847 891789 and remember you don't need to live in Ormlie to join—it is open to anybody from the Thurso wide area.



Article 31—the right to relax and play!

O ther News

Parent and Toddler Groups

Three sessions per week are held at the Ormlie Centre for parents and their toddlers. Pauline Mathers runs the sessions and the feedback OCA has received is extremely positive. The Ormlie Centre has had a bit of a make-over and the end result is excellent. All the rooms have new seating, flooring and decoration. The Centre is widely used by many different groups including the writers group, Thai Chi class, Surestart, Homestart Caithness, Citizens Online and Key Housing. If your group need space contact us at the Ormlie office to check availability.

Friday Night Club

Are you a High School pupil? Do you feel that there is nothing to do at the weekends? Well how about coming all to the Friday Night Club at the Ormlie Centre from 7.30–10.00 am. The Club has been running for nearly a year and is proving very popular. There are laptops, widescreen TV, music, decks, pool table and play stations. The group is run by Samantha and Donna who have built up an excellent rapport with the young people. We are also working on running another session mid-week. If you would like more information please contact the OCA office on 01847 891789

Basic Computer Training

OCA continues to run basic computer training for people who want to learn new skills. The courses are very flexible and are designed to meet the needs of the participant rather than 'off the shelf' courses. The Friday morning class is very relaxed and the participants have been learning a range of useful skills including emailing, accessing the internet, use of auxiliary devices and desktop publishing. The Monday night class is more structured but again caters for beginners. Interested in joining?

NewsFlash!!!!

We are planning to open a **JOBCLUB** at the Ormlie Centre in the near future. It will allow unemployed people the opportunity to access the internet, get help with CVs, interview skills and preparing for work as well as training. **WATCH THIS SPACE!**

M ore News

Dates for Your Diary 2010

- **Basic Computer Training—Ormlie Centre**
(Fridays 10–12 noon) (Mondays 6.30–8.30 pm)
- **Young Mothers Group—Ormlie Centre**
(Tues and Wed 1–3 pm) (Thurs 1–3 pm)
(**Tues 10–12 at Castletown**) (crèche at all sessions)
- **Junk2Funk Programme—Ormlie Centre**
(Thurs 3–5 pm) (crèche facilities available)
- **Tai Chi Classes—Ormlie Centre**
(Thurs 7.30–7.30)
- **Internet for young people—Ormlie Centre**
(Thurs 4.00–5.30 pm)
- **Friday Night Club for teenagers —Ormlie Centre**
(7.30–10.00 pm)
- **Mother and Toddler Groups—Ormlie Centre**
(Every Tues/Thurs 1.00–2.30 pm)
(Wed 10.00–11.30)