



THE ISLE OF GIGHA HERITAGE TRUST

**Brief for Invasive Non-Native Species Removal  
Protecting Gigha's Woodlands Project  
October 2023**

**1. Requirement**

The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust (IGHT) wishes to commission work to remove rhododendron ponticum and skunk cabbage on the Isle of Gigha.

The works are part of a project to eradicate all invasive non-native species (INNS) on the island, as well as establish a hedgerow system that will benefit and connect habitat, to enhance Gigha's current woodlands and ensure its protection in the future.

The works to which this brief applies will work to the advice and guidance of NatureScot with regards to INNS treatment methods and timelines. Site visits are necessary prior to tender to fully understand the scope of the work.

**2. IGHT Background**

IGHT was established in 2001 and is the community body that took ownership of the island following the community land buyout, with the support of The Scottish Land Fund and the Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The Trust is managed by a Board of Directors to develop the assets of the island and take forward plans and projects for the community.

The main activities of IGHT include:

- Ownership of the majority of the island's built infrastructure and land including housing stock, farms, Hotel, Boathouse Restaurant, self-catering accommodation units, Post Office and Shop
- Operating moorings and pontoons, an airstrip, a Camp & Motorhome site, and Achamore Gardens
- Managing and maintaining 4 wind turbines

Since the buy-out in 2002, IGHT has:

- Renovated 28 houses as part of an ongoing investment programme.
- Sold 14 plots for private development.
- Developed 4 wind turbines which help fund IGHT development and regeneration on Gigha.
- Installed moorings and pontoon facilities.
- Created a new camp & motorhome site.
- Developed over 22km of path networks.
- Created a conservation plan for the island's historic sites and developed interpretation of key natural and cultural heritage site.
- Successfully marketed its self-catering accommodation, activity centre, airstrip and Achamore Gardens.

IGHT currently has 10 full-time paid employees and 4 part-time paid employees. IGHT also has 7 voluntary Directors who are appointed on behalf of the island residents to make decisions on behalf of approximately 110 Members.



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### 3. Protecting Gigha's Woodlands Project

This landscape scale project will aim to eliminate invasive non-native species (INNS), create a system of hedgerows to improve habitat connectivity, and provide a wider diversity and structure of habitat. The project will be the springboard to protect and promote naturally regenerating woodland areas and possible future woodland expansion projects. The project will include two outcomes: remove all the INNS, as well as establish a hedgerow system for greater habitat connectivity.

The project will remove approximately a total of 22.3 hectares of rhododendron ponticum, skunk cabbage and Himalayan balsam populations in their entirety at a landscape scale that are threatening both existing woodland and areas where woodland is naturally regenerating or has been identified as potential future planting areas. The methods expected to be taken for plant removal have been chosen based on information published by Forestry and Land Scotland, and in accordance with the guidance from NatureScot. These methods will be carried out in an environmentally sensitive way as to not harm existing habitat or mitigate risks of activities that could be at the detriment of environmentally sensitive seasons such as bird nesting season.

In addition to the INNS removal, the project will create a system of hedgerows. Despite hedgerows being a historic attribute of the landscape across the UK and Scotland, as well as Scotland's agri-environment schemes making leaps and bounds in hedgerow establishment across the country, there are currently no established hedges on Gigha. The project will plant 2760 metres of hedgerows to increase tree cover and provide greater structure, connect pockets of isolated woodland and naturally regenerating areas, as well as provide hedgerow habitat that over half the UK's priority species make use of for travel, nesting and foraging.

The community has historically been concerned with the protection of its natural environment, and consequently the number of expanding INNS. Community groups such as Zero Carbon Gigha and Gigha Coast and Countryside Group have both advocated for INNS removal and for improved management of the woodland habitat across the island.

There have been no investments in Gigha's natural habitat in years prior to the Gateway to Gigha project which saw a Ranger Service and land-based path network installed. This meant that woodlands have been allowed to naturally regenerate but have remained isolated and are infested with INNS.

This project is supported by the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund, managed by NatureScot.

### 4. Support Required

For clarity, the focus of this contract is on the removal of INNS only.

The successful bidder will undertake the removal of Rhododendron ponticum and skunk cabbage across the following sites on island:

Site	Site location	Grif Reference	INNS	Area size (ha)	Treatment method
4.1	Carn Ban	NR667535	Rhododendron ponticum	0.0012	Mechanical/manual removal
4.2	Ardaily	NR637499	Rhododendron ponticum	4.85	Stem injection; Cut, spray and burn



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4.3	Fire Station Woodland	NR646481	Rhododendron ponticum	0.47	Stem injection; Cut, spray and burn
4.4	Gallochoille	NR651474	Rhododendron ponticum	13.58	Stem injection; Cut, spray and burn
4.5	Achamore Gardens	NR644478	Rhododendron ponticum; Skunk cabbage	1.5	Stem injection
4.6	Achamore Woodland	NR646475	Skunk cabbage	0.3	Stem injection

**4.1 Carn Ban - Rhododendron Ponticum Removal**

This site is made up of three medium stands and surrounding seedlings within active farmland (cattle farming). Cattle are free roaming at the north end. Please see location map below.

Herbicide is not permitted in this area of the island by the land tenant. Off-road vehicle access is possible to this site, and plants will require manual or mechanical removal. Removed plants will be required to be burned in a suitable location within the site.

All works are to be carried out with the agreement of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team and land tenant. The Contractor should arrange the supply of machinery, equipment, and relevant PPE.



*Carn Ban site*

**4.2 Ardaily - Rhododendron Ponticum Removal**

This site is made up of a variety of stand maturity within active farmland (cattle farming). Please see location map below. Off-road vehicle access is possible close to the site.

All stem injected plants are to be left in situ. Plants to be cut and sprayed will require cuttings to be burned in a suitable location within the site. One burn site should be chosen to service all stands within the Ardaily site.

All works are to be carried out with the agreement of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team and land tenant. The Contractor should arrange the supply of herbicide, and relevant PPE.



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*Ardaily site*

### **4.3 Fire Station Woodland - Rhododendron Ponticum Removal**

This site is made up of six stands of Rhododendron ponticum. All but one stand in this site were identified as mature (the remaining identified as medium). 100% cover was identified in areas outwith the individual stands. Please see location map below. Vehicle access is not possible at this site.

All stem injected plants are to be left in situ. Plants to be cut and sprayed will require cuttings to be burned in a suitable location within the site. One burn site should be chosen to service all stands within the Fire Station Woodland site.

All works are to be carried out with the agreement of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team and land tenant. The Contractor should arrange the supply of herbicide, and relevant PPE.



*Fire Station Woodland site*



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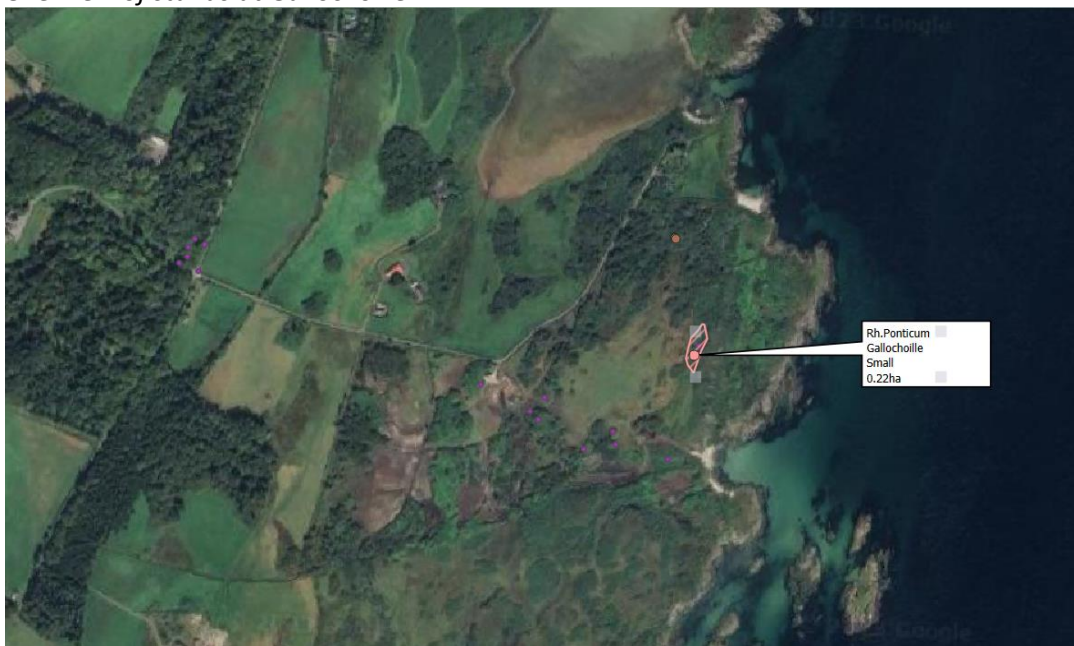
**4.4 Gallochoille - Rhododendron Ponticum Removal**

This site is made up of a variety of stand maturity within active farmland (cattle farming). Please see location map below. Vehicle access is possible within this site.

All stem injected plants are to be left in situ. Plants to be cut and sprayed will require cuttings to be burned in a suitable location within the site. All works are to be carried out with the agreement of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team and land tenant. The Contractor should arrange the supply of herbicide, and relevant PPE.



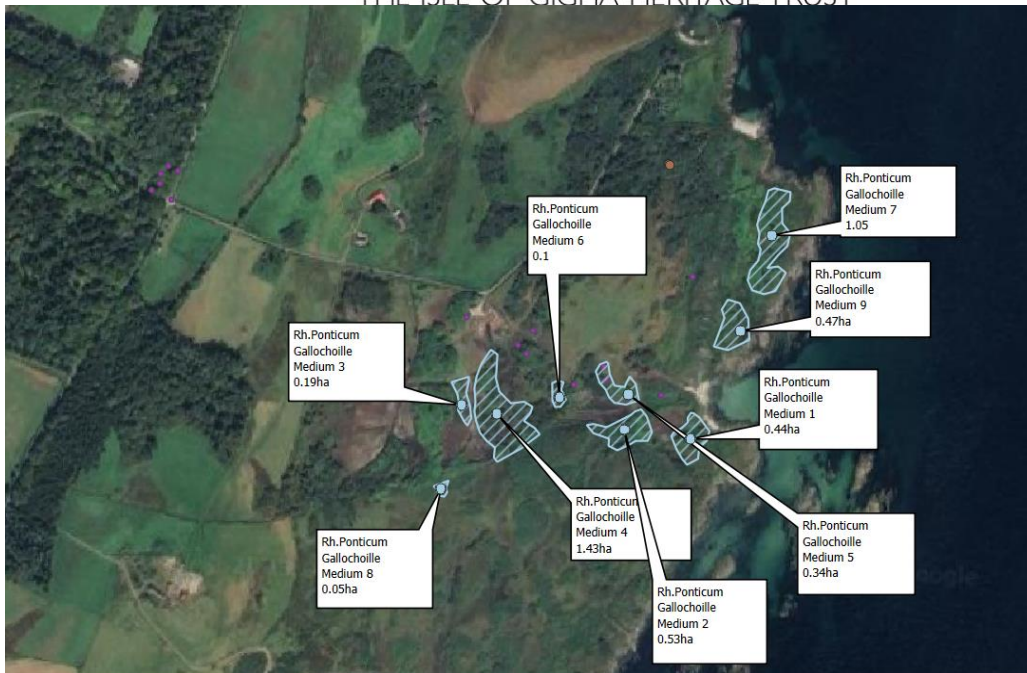
*Overview of stands at Gallochoille*



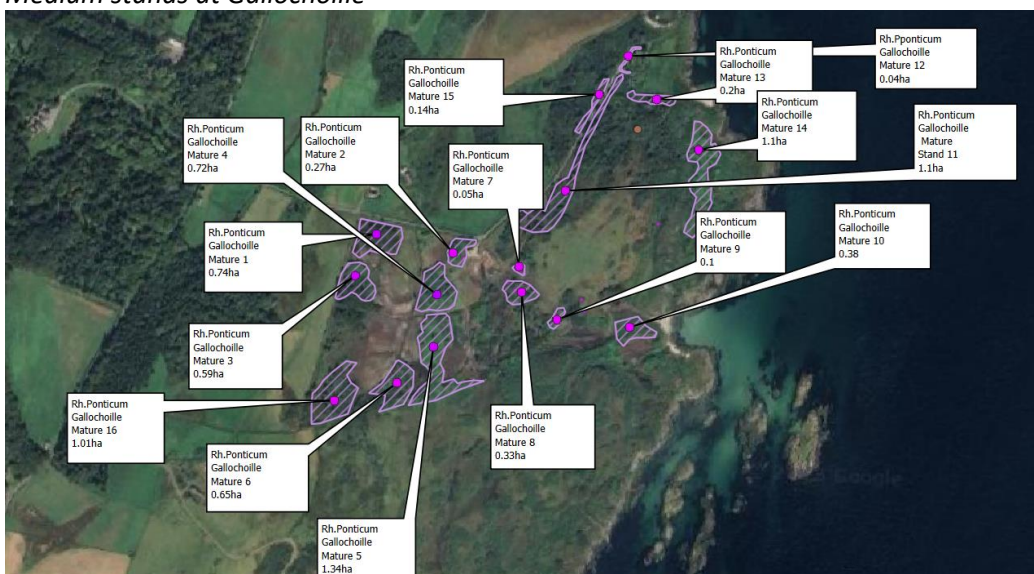
*Small stand at Gallochoille*



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Medium stands at Gallochoille



Mature stands at Gallochoille

### **4.5 Achamore Gardens - Rhododendron Ponticum & Skunk Cabbage Removal**

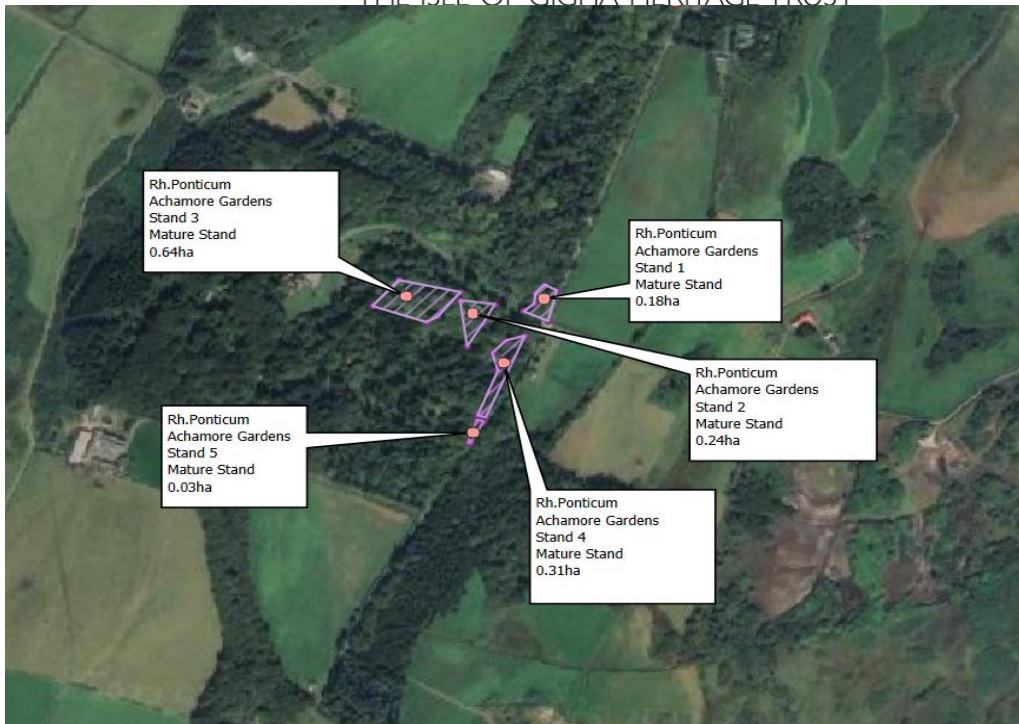
This site is made up of mature stands of Rhododendron ponticum, and skunk cabbage within an ornamental garden. The Rhododendron stands are 100% coverage and are located within woodland along with the skunk cabbage. Please see location map below. Vehicular access is restricted within this site.

All stem injected plants are to be left in situ.

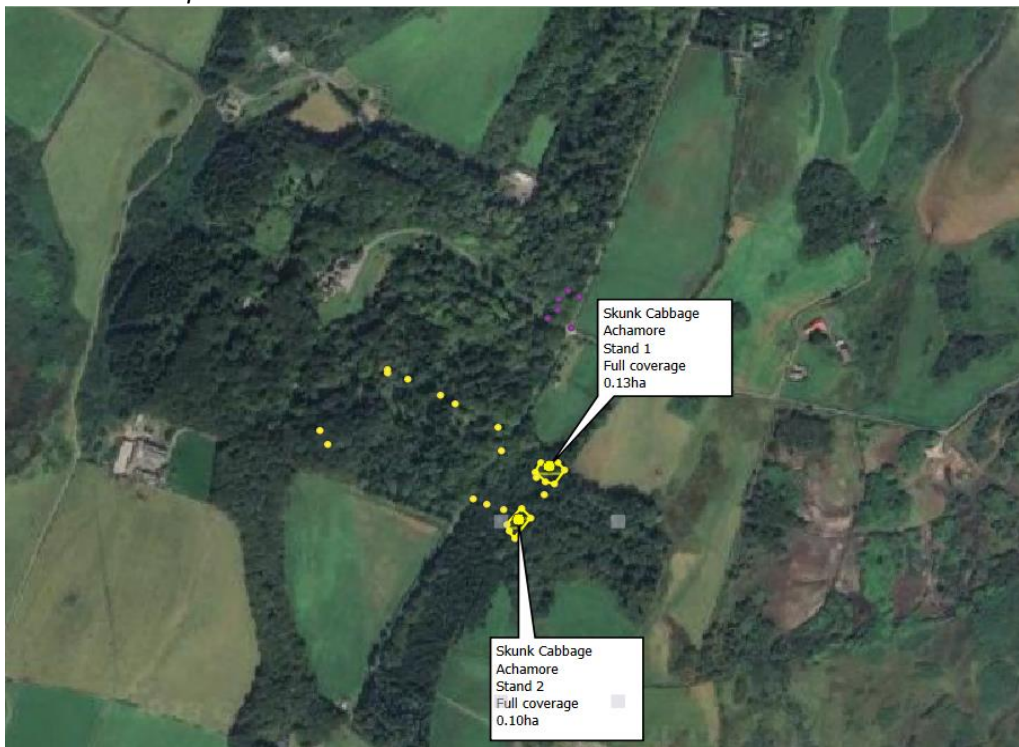
This work must be undertaken under the supervision of the Head Gardener at Achamore Gardens, and wider Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team due to heritage species and cultivated rhododendron plants present on site. The Contractor should arrange the supply of herbicide, and relevant PPE.



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*Rhododendron ponticum stands in Achamore Gardens*



*Skunk cabbage within Achamore Gardens*

**4.6 Achamore Woodland - Skunk Cabbage Removal**

This site is the woodland south of Achamore Gardens and is heavily infested with skunk cabbage at 100% coverage. The woodland leads out into a drainage ditch where the skunk cabbage is also present. Please see location map below. Vehicular access is not possible within this site.



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All stem injected plants are to be left in situ.

All works are to be carried out with the agreement of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust staff team.  
The Contractor should arrange the supply of herbicide, and relevant PPE.



*Achamore Woodland site*

### 5. Timescale & Contract Management

The contract will be let by the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust (IGHT). IGHT expect the works to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

The Contractor will need to factor in possible weather-related delays into their tender.

The Client has already secured required land permissions.

A Payment Schedule will be confirmed prior to contract signing with the final payment (10% of contract value) made following post-completion inspection and satisfactory attendance to any outstanding issues.

Proposals for the work should be guided by this Brief and following a site visit. Site visits can be arranged by contacting Casey-Jo Zammit, Countryside Ranger, by email [ranger@gigha.org.uk](mailto:ranger@gigha.org.uk) or telephone 07596855398.

### 6. Tender Requirements

Contractors are asked to submit their proposals no later than 5.00pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 to Jane Millar, Development Manager, by email: [jane@gigha.org.uk](mailto:jane@gigha.org.uk). The following should be included:





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- A price breakdown for this work. This should include all labour, materials, transportation, machinery, preliminaries, and VAT. Cost proposals should include fees for any additional support required which will be managed and sub-contracted by the lead contractor.
- Confirmation the contractor has the skills and resources to undertake this commission within the timescales mentioned.
- Proposed methodology, including a timescale for each site (including any periods of unavailability) and for overall completion.
- A Health & Safety Plan
- Risk Assessment
- Copy of Public Liability Cover

### 7. Tender Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated on a Quality / Cost ratio.

60% Quality focussing on:

- Experience of working on similar projects in similar locations (20%)
- Proposed methodology (20%)
- Understanding of community and environmental issues (10%)
- Understanding of Gigha and logistical considerations (10%)

40% Cost focusing on:

- All tenders to be inclusive of VAT.
- All tenders to be inclusive of labour, materials, transportation and machinery.
- All tenders to be inclusive of necessary preliminaries.

Assessment of tenders will begin on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 with an appointment made by 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The Scoring Panel will comprise of IGHT staff and directors.

