



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the January 2021 Gigha News

Dear Member,

Please find enclosed this month's newsletter and a copy of December 2020 Board minutes and IGHT's Action Plan for 2021.

Regards,

Ian Wilson
Chair
For and behalf of The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Gigha Community Fund

The current round of the Gigha Community Fund received two applications. The Parent Council in conjunction with the Village Hall Committee were awarded £467.30 to purchase lights to create the Achamore Gardens Christmas Trail. Kenny Wilson was awarded £100 to participate in a Communities Leading in Tourism course, held over January, February and March. Kenny will share the outcomes of this course with other tourism business on the island.

The next submission deadline for the Gigha Community Fund is 30th April 2021. If you have a project which will benefit the community, please contact the Trust office or visit www.gigha.org.uk to download an application form and guidance notes on how to apply.

Trust Housing Maintenance Issues

If any Trust tenant has a maintenance issue, please report this directly to the Trust Office. During the current COVID-19 lockdown restrictions the Trust Maintenance Team can only attend emergencies within the property. For any issues with utilities these should be reported directly to the provider.

To report an issue with electricity supply call SSE on 105.

To report an issue with mains water supply call Scottish Water on 0800 077 8778.

Dialysis Unit and Red Cross Collection box

There is a collection box in Ardminish Stores in memory of Donald MacDonald, who sadly passed away recently. The money raised will go to the dialysis unit in Campbeltown Hospital and to Red Cross Transport.

Gigha Primary School

Happy New Year from everyone at Gigha Primary School and Early Learning Centre!

School is presently closed due to COVID-19 Restrictions and staff and pupils are working and learning from home. There is someone in school building most mornings so please call the school number if there is anything you wish to contact us about – 01583 505259.

We managed to complete some of our Christmas activities over December before lockdown. Many thanks to everyone that participated in our Christmas raffle. We had some fabulous prizes and the children were astounded at the response from the community which helped to raise £390 for the children's chosen charity (Scottish Wildlife Trust). Other funds collected will go to the food bank in Campbeltown.

Thank you too for all those that ordered the children's Christmas DVD produced and directed by Phoebe Brown. We have had some struggles with the technology, but for those interested in obtaining a copy please email enquiries-gigha@argyll-bute.gov.uk and we will take things from there. Our big news is that the school will be an official partner with a new initiative called Gigha Community Nature Reserve and will be working with others to establish a new nature reserve on the land in front of the hotel. The children were waiting for news of the project's future and everyone is delighted that the land has now been granted for this purpose. You will be hearing a lot from the children on this issue and Caitie Wilkieson will be leading on a children's and young people's project to design a logo for the reserve. There is an initial survey for interested friends and supporters to engage with the project here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6Y6DV6N> Folks don't have to be resident on Gigha and can be of any age to respond to the survey. Thank you for helping the group to get established so that the children can begin to design an action plan for their leadership and involvement.

We have had requests from the community for an updated copy of the Gigha Phone Book. The older children stand ready to provide any updates and to begin reprinting. If you no longer wish your name and details to be in the phone book please would you email enquiries-gigha@argyll-bute.gov.uk and let us know. Also, if you have any updates or amendments, please would you let us know these for the new copy being printed.

STV Studios Television Production

Scottish based Production Company, STV Studios, will be filming a new television series on the Isle of Gigha, in May 2021. All Trust Board members are unanimously supportive of this project and will share further details about the series in due course.

The island – which will be fictionalised and not mentioned by name – will be the setting for a new television production.

The production will use a number of public locations – buildings and infrastructure as part of the filming, to be agreed in advance. The filming period will play out over the course of approximately one-week, but there will be a number of weeks pre-production to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Safety is of the upmost priority to STV Studios; they will adhere to the industry COVID-19 protocols. They will quarantine and regularly test every member of the production team to ensure compliance with the strictest health and safety measures.

We appreciate your discretion at this time. More specific information detailing the industry protocols, filming dates and ways to get involved will be made available over the coming weeks.

Gateway to Gigha – Update from Project Manager Craig Whyte

It's been four months since I began work on the Gateway to Gigha project, the program which will create a network of walking and cycling paths and improve access to Gigha's incredible wealth of heritage features and places. You won't see any evidence of on-site delivery of the project just yet, but rest assured that the planning, research, discussion and team-building phases are progressing and that, come the spring, you will start to see the beginnings of a paths network that will, I hope, be a great asset to the island and visitors.

Much of the groundwork of the project can be done from my home in Dunblane, but by far the best parts of the job are the days and hours I've spent on Gigha, meeting members of the Steering Group, fellow IGHM staff, and getting out and about familiarising myself with the land, nature and folk of Gigha. I can tell you it's been a joy. My teenage son accompanied me on one visit and is asking when he can do so again!

Sadly, COVID-19 restrictions put a stop to one visit, and the weather curtailed another. Despite this, we have a solid plan in place, an Evaluation Consultant appointed, a Paths Designer in the pipeline, and a Heritage Consultant will soon be selected to help plan and deliver heritage

interpretation in a way that ties in with the paths network and reveals many of the island's amazing stories of past, place and legend.

It's not too late to contribute to our growing bank of knowledge, or to help guide the paths development, so please do get in touch if you would like to pitch in. Many of you will have stories – fact, myth or somewhere between, personal experiences perhaps – that can add colour to what's been published before.

In the meantime, I and others involved in the project, look forward to welcoming members of the wider project delivery team to the island, including expert paths designers / builders and heritage professionals, as soon as COVID-19 rules allow.

Countryside Ranger

It is tough to pull ourselves away from our warm homes and get out amongst the changeable, "dreich" weather right now. But at the moment Gigha is teeming with life, and nature can be a great relief from our lockdown blues. Our recent flurry of snow brought some beautiful white scenes which have been accompanied by many winter visitors, one of which is the Greenland White-Fronted Goose. We are lucky to see this species, as they are in heavy decline, and can be easily confused with greylag geese which litter the island. We can tell the white-fronted from the greylag by a large white patch on their face, behind their beaks. It is said that the whole global population of this species overwinter in Ireland and western Scotland for our warmer climate from October to March!



Greenland White-Fronted Goose

Greylag Goose

There are also signs of life popping up in the form of daffodils on the sides of the road in the village, as well as throughout Achamore Gardens.

One slightly sad situation, but one we have all become accustomed to hearing about is the amount of plastic washing up around our shores.

Countryside Ranger continued

The winter-time always brings a more dramatic plastic layer to our shorelines due to stormier weather and rougher seas, which have left the bays east of Cuddyport, the rocks surrounding Garbh and Leim bay looking sorrowfully colourful just now. BUT, the Ranger service will be creating beach cleaning stations at these three sites consisting of accessible bins that will be emptied frequently. We will also be weighing the amount of rubbish collected to see how much litter we can remove from our coastline throughout the year! Our marine creatures need our help!

Winter in Achamore Gardens

December saw a new event in the Achamore calendar with the first ever Gigha Primary School Christmas Treasure Trail. In the run up to the treasure hunt Mari Sheriff and staff and pupils at the school, the Village Hall Committee and many other volunteers worked tirelessly to transform the Gardens into a winter wonderland, festooned with decorations and lights, and featuring scenes and clues from all sorts of children's books. There was a gingerbread house complete with candy canes, lollipops and gingerbread men, the Gruffallo and friends took up residence at the pond, the old overgrown pigsties were transformed into homes for the Three Little Piggies, and the dinosaurs in the dinosaureum were having what looked like a marvellous Christmas feast. The newly painted garden bothy was home to a certain bearded gentleman and the bamboo maze became an a-mazing tunnel of sparkling light. The whole place looked wonderful and it was great that the rest of the island was able to enjoy the spectacle over the weekend after the school event had finished.

I'd like to thank every single person who helped make the Christmas Treasure Trail such a success, and to all the volunteers who helped tidy the garden back up on the Monday – there was not a scrap of Sellotape, a single stray drawing pin or even the tiniest bit of string left when they finished. I hope that this becomes a new Gigha Christmas tradition and we can make it even better (if that's even possible!) next year.



In the last newsletter I gave you the great news that HIE's Tourism Capital Investment had given us a grant to make improvements to the car park and entrance path to the Gardens. We started some preparatory work before Christmas when Tim Lister and Andy Steininger volunteered their time and expertise to help Andy Clements remove two dangerous, hung up trees over the entrance path to make it safe for the works to commence – thank you gentlemen! Tim Lister has been contracted to carry out the path works and car park extension and has already made a great start cracking on with widening and re-surfacing the path, as well as replacing the rotten bridge with a new, maintenance free, culvert over the main drainage ditch here – we hope you like the new path and we will be adding new plantings to it over the coming year to make it even more welcoming for visitors. Talking of drainage, I'd also like to thank Jim, Finn and Morven Beagan for volunteering to help clear this ditch, and many more around the Gardens. Jim's knowledge of the drainage system throughout the Gardens has been invaluable to myself and Tim.



Achamore Gardens continued

The newest member of our team in the Gardens is Morgan Russell, who joined us a couple of weeks ago as the new Achamore Gardens Modern Apprentice. Morgan has already jumped in at the deep end and has been doing a sterling job helping Maggie, Ellie and myself cut our way through the forest of brambles that are choking out the South East Garden.

And finally, it might be January, but there's still plenty of colour and scent to be found in the Gardens. Rhododendron season is officially underway with the first shrubs in flower on the Green Drive and many of our winter flowering shrubs are in full glory right now. There are some beautiful young Witch Hazels (*Hamamelis* sp) in bloom on the main drive, behind the stables in the South Walled Garden you will find the Christmas Box (*Sarcococca hookeriana* and *S. confusa*) who's diminutive wee flowers pump out a surprising amount of scent on a sunny day, and if you wander into the North Walled Garden you will find the air full of perfume from the magnificent *Daphne* that is flowering it's heart out near the greenhouses.



'Our Island: Creatively Exploring Gigha'

The Our Island: Creatively Exploring Gigha is now underway. As a reminder this project aims to enable islanders to get involved with creative activities over a winter lockdown with the overall theme of exploring what it means to live on an island and also to connect us all with the heritage of the island. Another key aim is to capture voices and stories and photographs (old and new). The final output will be a film which will be available to everyone on Gigha. Keith Wilson has offered to help with digitising some of the old photos and this is really helpful in creating a lasting legacy and a potential book in the future. We can also use these to help people tell stories and create a picture of how Gigha has changed and what has stayed the same. If you have some photos which you could share that would be brilliant. We will return them promptly.

How to get involved

- Join the writers group: We meet on a Monday night over Zoom but are also keen to know how we can involve people who want support with writing (creative writing or otherwise). Please get in touch if you want to be involved.
- Interview someone in your family or someone you know and capture their story. Guidance is available on how to do this.
- We will be making lino cut kits available to anyone who wants to give it a go – thanks to Michelle Wool for offering to do this.
- We would like to engage with the Gaelic heritage of the island so Gaelic speakers are needed to help share the Gaelic place names and the stories behind these. We will be commissioning a new Gaelic song for Gigha.
- Get involved with an up and coming crafts based project.
- Make a short film and share it with us.
- Share your photos - old or new. Take a photo of your favourite place on Gigha and send it to Ellie telling her why it is important to you.

More opportunities to get involved will emerge in the coming weeks. So please keep an eye on the Our Island Facebook page and the noticeboard at the shop. Or email Ellie.shesingsalways@gmail.com

Storage Units

We have noted there is some demand for storage spaces on the island. We are therefore requesting that anyone who has an interest in letting a storage space to please contact the Trust office and register their interest. Should there be a high enough level of demand, we will explore options for further storage provisions.

Salt bins

Due to the recent cold weather, Argyll and Bute Council have refilled all salt bins and have provided additional salt bins near the shop, in the village layby and have left some additional salt (covered) in the corner of the car park at the Village Hall.

Gigha's New Clothing Brand: Flye by Judy Gorman

I am an aspiring pilot (which inspired the name and logo behind the brand). Wanting to keep myself busy and productive during this trying time, I started experimenting with tie-dyeing. I found it so much fun that I decided to share my creations with everyone.

To order a T-shirt or sweatshirt, send me a text on 07717 370396 or get me through Facebook @flyedyes or Instagram @f_l_y_e. All designs are unique; I can base your order off one of the designs posted on my page or I can make you a custom order. All profits made are going towards my flying lessons.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported me so far.



The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust Ltd is a company registered in Scotland (registered number: 334141) and a Registered Scottish Charity (charity number: SCO 32302).

COVID-19

The Trust has a small supply of masks and gloves for the community's use. Please contact the office if you require any of these items.

Should you or someone you know need support during this on-going difficult time, support is available from: Shopper Aide - 01586 551 600 – Providing support to those ages 60+.

Ardminish Stores - 01583 505 251 – A home delivery service for your groceries and supplies.

Kintyre Community Resilience Group - eric@skdt.org - source of accurate and up-to-date advice and information about all aspects of the impact of the outbreak in Kintyre.

NHS free COVID helpline - 0800 028 2816

Airstrip

The Trust board would like to ask the members for their thoughts on the future use of the Airstrip as the volume of aircraft using it is very low, generating very little income. If you have any views on this please contact the office.

Please note that the Airstrip is still the recognised landing site for helicopters involved in medical evacuations and any other official business. There is no plan to change this arrangement at this time.

Main Contacts

IGHT enquiries: 01583 505 390

GTL enquiries: 01583 427 300

For general enquiries:

shona@gigha.org.uk

For development enquiries:

jane@gigha.org.uk

For housing and estate enquiries:

office@gigha.org.uk

For all GTL enquiries:

trading@gigha.org.uk

For accounts/finance enquiries:

ightcentralaccounts@gigha.org.uk

For Gardens enquiries/volunteer opportunities:

gardens@gigha.org.uk

Trust Office Opening Hours: The office will be staffed but will be closed to the public during COVID-19. Please contact the office using the above details.