



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the July 2020 Gigha News

Dear Member,

Please find enclosed this month's newsletter and a copy of June 2020 Board minutes.

Regards,
Ian Wilson
Chair

For and behalf of Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Mediation

In last month's newsletter we asked those that had an interest in the mediation process to contact the office. We have had 2 households register an interest and we will be discussing the appropriate process to move forward with these members. Should you be interested in being involved in a mediation process, please contact the Trust office.

OSCR

IGHT will be undergoing an OSCR investigation. The Board will endeavour to provide OSCR with evidence towards the allegations and concerns that have been raised. We hope that OSCR can feedback any further recommendations for the Board and community to take into consideration.

AGM

The provisional date for the AGM is Thursday 24th September. The AGM may have to take place over video call, however further details will be issued closer to September.

COVID-19

A total of £8729.00 of the Supporting Communities Fund has been spent within the Gigha community. This has covered the cost of necessary PPE and activities that have developed in response to COVID-19. The Fund will end by 30th September so please contact Cara at covidsupport@gigha.org.uk if you would like to express an interest in the Fund.

A full visitor information pack is now available at www.gigha.org.uk. This is to advise visitors on what to expect when returning to Gigha. This information pack will be updated in line with any changes to Scottish Government guidelines.

Gigha Primary School

Many thanks for all the interest, support and resources people have gifted us for the new school growing area. Our kitchen garden building is taking shape - the land has been cleared and the grass is growing healthily! Many thanks to the Vipurs family for taking on this work. We would still like donations of wood for building raised beds and any soil, compost, or mulch to fill them with. This will help us to get a strong start to our Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag award work on Food/Biodiversity in August.

We hope to be starting some (appropriately distanced) family nature club activities during the first two weeks of August. We hope to work with family groups to achieve a John Muir Trust Group Award for exploring, discovering, and conserving nature on a chosen part of Gigha. Please look out for adverts placed locally for venue, date, and times.

Gigha Community Fund

The Gigha Community Fund has awarded £1,370 this financial year (20-21). The next submission deadline is Monday 19th October. Please contact the Trust office or visit www.gigha.org.uk to download an application form and guidance notes on how to apply.

One of the successfully funded projects included Keith Wilson's implementation of dog foul signs and bag dispensers on the island to help keep Gigha pristine. As seen in the photo below, the signs have been designed for the island and aim to remind and encourage people to clean up after their dog.



Gateway to Gigha

We received a high number of applicants for the Gateway to Gigha Project Manager position. After a competitive selection process, a candidate from Dunblane has been offered the position and will work on the project remotely with regular visits to Gigha. This post is part-funded for 2 years to manage the full delivery of the project.

We are now seeking an Island Countryside Ranger to support the delivery of the Gateway to Gigha project and manage Gigha's countryside.

This challenging role will involve practical work including building and repairing paths, signage, and fences to assist people who visit our countryside. You will be leading on community heritage projects and other countryside related events and activities for both residents and visitors. You will advise the Trust and land managers on conservation issues, propose and deliver habitat improvement works, and survey and record the Island's habitats and wildlife. You will report to the Gateway to Gigha Project Manager and IGHM Business Development Manager and also be responsible for regularly updating and engaging with the Gigha community and ensuring our stakeholders and partners are kept fully up to date with progress.

This role is supported by the ERDF LCTT Programme and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This is a fixed term position from September 2020 to June 2022. The salary is £20,000 pa (full time equivalent) and relevant training can be provided.

We are looking for a committed, highly motivated, and hardworking individual with the ability to work on their own initiative and who has an understanding of working within a small community. If this is you, please submit a CV along with a max 500 word statement as to the skills and experience you will bring to the role, giving due consideration to the job description and personal specification, and explaining how you would develop this project to make Gigha a better place to live and visit. Applications should be made by 5pm on Friday 21st August 2020 to Jane Millar.

The full Job Description and Person Specification can be viewed at www.gigha.org.uk > About Gigha > Job Vacancies

Achamore Gardens

July has been a busy month in the Gardens as we prepared to welcome visitors back to Achamore whilst complying with all the new COVID-19 guidelines. So far it has been a great success, and it's wonderful to see and hear the gardens busy with people again; although it was lovely to get to know the gardens without visitors during lockdown, I do believe that gardens exist to be seen by people, and Colonel Horlick always intended for Achamore to be accessible to the public so it's been great to welcome all our visitors back into the garden. Achamore is rightly known for its Rhododendrons which are normally thought of as spring flowers, but here we are in high summer and there are still Rhododendrons and Azaleas in flower. Indeed, the late flowering and magnificently scented Rh 'Polar Bear' beside the visitor cabin still hasn't bloomed so you will have to enjoy a photo of its beautiful buds instead – hopefully I'll be able to share a photo of it in bloom in the August newsletter. The Hydrangeas and Fuchsias are in full bloom now and come in all sorts of shapes and colours – look out for them throughout the gardens and let me know your favourites.

If you have visited the gardens recently you may have noticed the hard work that our volunteers have been doing around the gardens. We have had many compliments about the improvements in the beds in the Walled Garden, which is largely down to Margaret Lister's efforts – thanks Margaret! Our revamped and re-launched volunteer programme allows you to volunteer at times to suit you, for as long as you want, and is open to anyone over the age of 16. There's a wide variety of tasks available to suit everyone, with full training available, and we've also put in place a range of measures to keep our volunteers safe during the pandemic. Whether you are a gardening expert or a gardening newbie, if you have an hour or two a week to spare and would like to get involved in Achamore's restoration, please do get in touch with myself (gardens@gigha.org.uk) or the Trust Office.

Achamore will soon be advertising our new, 2-year horticultural apprenticeship, delivered in partnership with Argyll College. This is an exciting opportunity for a young person to get full hands on experience of working in a heritage garden, whilst also gaining a nationally recognised qualification in horticulture. The Trust hope that this will be of interest to one of the Island's youngsters, but it may be that the ideal candidate lives off island and would need to move here.



Achamore Gardens continued

We are also recruiting a Countryside Ranger for the Pathways project and hope to employ an assistant gardener for Achamore soon too. As you know, accommodation is at a premium on the Island, so we are keen to hear from any Island resident who would consider taking in lodger in return for a small rent. If you have a spare room and would be willing to provide board and lodgings for either a youngster or an adult please get in touch with the Trust Office.



Craft Workshops 2 & 3

The board have reconsidered the letting of Craft Workshop 3 and this will now be offered to let on a long-term lease (up to 5 years). Craft Workshop 2 is also available for a long term let (up to 5 years). Full business proposals are invited from interested parties. Please email shona@gigha.org.uk or telephone the office for more details. The closing date is Monday 10th August, with lease commencing on 1st September.



Our Island” – Creatively exploring Gigha

Ellie Logan would like to run a creative project over the winter exploring our lives here on Gigha. Potential funding is available to which IGHM can apply. It would enable us to have some artistic input from off the island but also utilise creative talents on the island. If this funding package does not come off, Ellie has identified other potential funding.

Over to Ellie...

“We all have a story to tell. Some of us have many stories! This project would be centred on capturing people’s stories and thoughts and weaving them into a tapestry of narrative based performance, which can be safely performed and captured on film and kept for future generations. Gigha has a rich history and heritage and the project would look at how this has shaped the land and the lives of people here and how we continue to have a relationship with the island.

The format would be simple. We capture our stories through videos, photographs, music, drawings, and paintings. I hope that we can also commission a new Gaelic song for Gigha. Some workshops will take place in a small group setting (socially distanced or outside) and some online. We can bring in artists from outside the island to help us where we do not have the skills here and we could commission a film maker to help us craft a final film. There would also be a socially distanced outside per I have worked with the communities of Eyemouth and Coldingham on similar project for many years. We have done a few productions and are currently devising one about contemporary life in the towns – including how we are all dealing with Covid. This involves people of all ages, from 8 to 80.”

If you would like to register an interest or support for the project proposal, please contact Ellie Logan or Jane Millar.

Broadband update

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is managing the rollout of fibre broadband across the Scottish Highlands and Islands as part of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) BDUK programme delivered by Openreach, and sadly there are currently no plans within Openreach or DSSB to bring fibre broadband to the Isle of Gigha.

Openreach are accelerating the roll-out of ultrafast fibre broadband through their 'Fibre First' initiative which aims to deliver full fibre service across the UK. Openreach aim to get FTTP service to 4.5 million homes and businesses by March 2021 and [if the conditions are right] reach 20 million homes by the mid to late 2020s.

Whilst there aren't any immediate plans for Gigha, we are advised to keep an eye on their website www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband as if anything changes it will be updated here.

Community Fibre Partnerships [CFP's]

A CFP is where Openreach work with a local group representing two or more premises to bring superfast, or ultrafast, to an area. Where possible, Openreach bring together funding from Local Authorities, Government voucher schemes, and other grants to help make things affordable, plus Openreach contribute toward the cost in line with their own commercial model too.

At present, around 1000 communities across the UK have signed up for a CFP with Openreach via this scheme which is helping Openreach to bring fibre broadband to communities sooner than otherwise would have been possible – either via commercial or publicly funded BDUK plans.

Anyone interested in this option can find more information and register on our website: <https://communityfibre.openreach.co.uk/https://communityfibre.openreach.co.uk/>

Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme (RGVS)

Full fibre broadband connections offer the fastest and most reliable speeds available, and the government is committed to a full fibre Britain. The RGVS provides grants worth up to £3,500 in rural areas to help small and medium sized businesses get a gigabit capable connection. The vouchers can also be claimed for residential premises worth up to £1,500 in rural areas.

The vouchers can part or fully fund a CFP scheme, and more information, including eligibility can be found on the website below:

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural/https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural/>

Holiday Cottages Lease

The holiday cottage business will be re-advertised on August 1st with a view to signing of the lease on October 1st. To request an expression of interest form please contact shona@gigha.org.uk

Wild Camping

Under the Land Reform Act 2003 wild camping is permitted in Scotland. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code is to be followed by wild campers but unfortunately this is not always the case. We are disappointed to learn of human waste being discovered by locals. The new campsite is due to open in 2021 which will provide facilities to help manage this matter.



Mink activity

There have been a number of mink sightings recently around the island. There was a great effort a few years ago by our community and Scottish Natural Heritage with around 200 mink trapped, but unfortunately some traps have since been destroyed and discarded. Without the on-going trapping mink numbers have increased again. This is a call for volunteers from our community to help the island with its mink problem. Please contact the IGHM office for more information.

Main Contacts:

IGHM 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:

cottages@gigha.org.uk

For finance/accounts enquiries:

ightcentralaccounts@gigha.org.uk

For COVID-19 support:

covidsupport@gigha.org.uk

Trust Office Opening Hours:

We ask that you please contact the office using the details above between 9.00 and 5.00pm to avoid direct contact with the office staff whilst COVID-19 restrictions are in place.