

Dear Member,

Please find enclosed this month's newsletter and a copy of October and November 2021 Board minutes.

This will be the last newsletter for 2021. The IGH Board and staff would like to wish all members and the Gigha community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Regards,



Ian Wilson

Chair

For and behalf of The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Members meeting Update

An online Members meeting was held on Thursday 25th November at 7pm. The meeting was recorded and is available to view at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGyqkHx6KfMIGHT>.

A full update on finances, housing, estate, Achamore Gardens, Countryside Ranger Service, Gateway to Gigha and other development projects is provided.

SAVE THE DATE - Tuesday 15th March 2022

As you may know, we are going to be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the community buyout on the 15th of March 2022. We are planning to host a community event on the afternoon of the 15th, where all residents, island stakeholders and key individuals that were involved with the buyout process will be invited to come together and celebrate this important occasion. We would love to see as many residents at the event as possible to celebrate as a community, so if you can and would like to attend, please save the date. Further information and invitations will be sent out in the new year.

Dark Skies Gigha Community Event

Come and time travel to the past with Dark Skies Gigha. Yes, it's true - we can actually see into the past when observing objects in the night sky. You will also be able to see three planets and the Moon.

Friday December 10 from 5-6pm in Gigha Hotel Car Park. Wrap up for the cold and bring a torch. Binoculars available to use and hot drinks to keep you warm. If cloudy, we will try again on Saturday December 11, same time same place.



Dark Skies contact details: Tel 01583 505006 or email dark.skies.gigha@gmail.com

IGHT Director

The IGH board would like to welcome Liz McCrindle who has been co-opted on to the board. Liz is the manager of LRM Holiday Lets, that manage the Ferry Crofts and The Steadings.

Kartli anniversary

The 18th of December will see the 30th anniversary of the Russian ship the "Kartli", running aground off the north west coast of Gigha after being hit by a freak wave off Islay. A memorial cairn with a plaque in Russian and English was commissioned for the 25th anniversary in 2016, which saw many of the people involved at the time of the tragedy attend a ceremony to commemorate the four crew members who had died. The cairn can be found just north of Tarbert Farm overlooking the wreckage site.



Crafty Gigha

Crafting sessions are being held in the Church every Wednesday between 2-4pm. Come along to craft, learn and blether! Donations to the Church will be appreciated. Contact Marion Wilson on 01583 505006.

Church News from Susan Allan, Treasurer

There will be a Carol service on 12th December at 11am in the church followed by tea/coffee, etc. at the Hotel. All welcome. We will be joined by members of Clachan and A'Chleit churches. Julius Weeks will be playing the organ.

On January 2nd we have been invited to join Clachan and A'Chleit at Clachan Church for an informal service led by Clachan's session clerk Mrs Elizabeth Ball at 10.15am. Their normal service is at 10am but they have changed it to suit us. This will be followed by tea/coffee.

There are big changes happening now in the Church of Scotland both nationally and locally. The numbers of presbyteries are being reduced by amalgamating current presbyteries. Argyll at present is still on its own but the presbytery plan has to be changed. Because the number of people entering the ministry is considerably less than those retiring it is no longer possible for every parish to have its own Minister. The current plan for Kintyre is for 2 Ministers. One for south Kintyre and one for North Kintyre. It's not yet clear which will include us! This is just a draft plan but it is highly unlikely that we'll ever have a minister just for Gigha again. If anyone wants to know more about this please get in touch.

Meanwhile we carry on as we are. Notices for services will be posted in the church notice board. There will be a communion service in February when Rev Anne McIvor is next over.

Countryside Ranger

It's been one year already! The Ranger Service on Gigha has now been set up for a whole twelve months, and I'd just like to take the opportunity in this newsletter to highlight what the service has been up to in that time, and to say it's been a fantastic year, and an absolute privilege to be Gigha's first Ranger!

In my first ever newsletter entry I outlined some of things I would like to achieve in post, and one of those was engaging in a volunteer programme.

Between April and September, the Service gained 84.5 volunteer hours through beach cleans, path maintenance, bird and water surveys, invasive species removal and patrols. The majority of those hours were made up by fantastic residents, so thank you ever so much to everyone who gave me a hand this year. Another huge thank you to all of those who attended the 10 Ranger Service summer events and weekly guided walks, which saw 158 participants. Next year it would be great to see a few more residents on the guided walks - if you have any suggestions of walks you'd like to take, or locations you'd like to get to, let me know and I can make that happen.



We have also had great interest and involvement from the community with regards to the three courses we ran to upskill young people and keep skills on island. The chainsaw, drystone walling and first aid courses gained maximum capacity, and in the new year we are looking to run another chainsaw course for those who weren't able to attend the first round.

Perhaps the more traditional role of a Ranger is to monitor the species we have on island. As this was the first year of recordings, we can't identify any trends but there's good foundations to start us off, and we had some great results:



Countryside Ranger continued

a first record of breeding long-eared owls (right outside my bedroom window!), rare butterflies such as graylings, and a white-tailed eagle no less! In the next 12 months it'll be great to start to discover the patterns, trends and changes in our flora and fauna!

From the traditional to the entirely experimental, visitor management this year was a bit of a guessing game. The hoards of visitors we received in this new era of staycations and realisation about how beautiful Scotland is, rivalling those European beachy resorts, did take its toll on our natural surroundings. However, the road/track signage was relatively well received, and the dedicated motorhome area gained positive feedback and prevented many a campervan pulling in on our roadsides. It's hard to say whether the leaflets/signage for good environmental behaviours were effective, but the bins were incredibly well used, which was great. This coming summer, the next experiment will be to remove the bins, including our new beach bins, before the visitor season to see if we can encourage people to take their litter home with them. This is stated in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, and will mirror the set-up in Achamore Gardens which has very few littering issues.



This year has also been one of collaborations. This autumn, Hannah Storie and I have set up a monthly Forest School - our first session was so much fun. These sessions are a relaxed opportunity for families to get outdoors and aim to build confidence, motor ability, team working,

and social skills in young people. Another part of the job description is also working to reduce Gigha's carbon footprint, so I have been involved with the Zero Carbon Gigha group, which is a community led way to make positive changes for our environment. And finally, I have also been working with Gigha Primary school, supporting their home lockdown activities and summer events for Gigha Family Nature Club, which has been an absolute joy.



Here's to the next year... Thank you very much residents of Gigha and I look forward to my second year in post.

Broadband update

IGHT are still working with BT and Openreach to have broadband surveys carried out between Gigha and Tayinloan. They are looking into supplying dedicated fibre on the mainland and having a mast erected on the mainland and on Gigha to pick up the signal as similar has been achieved on another island. We will continue to work with BT and Openreach to find a solution to the current broadband issues.

Zero Carbon Gigha Group

The Zero Carbon Gigha group plans to host a Community Day on Saturday 29th January 2022 at the Gigha Village Hall. The event will provide information as well as an opportunity for community members to feed into aspirations for the island in tackling climate change. Keep an eye out for posters closer to the date that will have timings and more information.



Achamore Gardens - Survey

We are issuing a survey to gather feedback from both residents and visitors on how they would like to see Achamore Gardens develop. Whether that is to have more facilities available, better access to information, events, guided walks, or anything else! Please take the time to fill in this survey to help us understand how to develop the experience at Achamore and steer plans to submit future funding bids. The survey should not take longer than 5 minutes and will be anonymous. The survey can be found online at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R9DST9V>.
Please contact the Trust office if you require a paper copy.

Smoke and Heat Detector Legislation

Under the new regulations, by 1st February 2022 every home in Scotland must meet the 'Tolerable Standard' by having smoke alarms in every circulation space, smoke alarms in the rooms most frequently used, a heat alarm in the kitchen and a Carbon Monoxide alarm where there is a fuel burning appliance or flue. In order for the Trust to become compliant with this legislation, we will require access to all Trust properties to initially survey each home to home to establish how many detectors are required. Please expect a visit from the Trust Maintenance Team over the next few weeks to carry out the survey.

Gateway to Gigha

Progress on the path-building has been good the past month ago, and my thanks go to Tim and Stanley Lister, and to Scott Murdoch and his Arran team for all their hard, steady, high-quality work. Colin Campbell, too, continues to contribute enormously. Work is about to commence on the remaining two paths in Phase 1 – you might have seen the temporary access tracks near the Boathouse and in the wood opposite the Fire Station. Once aggregate has been delivered on site, these areas will be re-instated, leaving only the 1.5m wide path for us all to enjoy. Meanwhile planning for Phase 2 continues, and there will be a fuller update in the next newsletter.

Heritage interpretation-wise, we are still working with our consultants to develop content, including words and images, and we will be engaging with Argyll stone wall builders soon to identify a builder for our interpretation board plinths.

We will also be placing a large order for plaswood (recycled plastic in wood effect) for our secondary interpretation panels, and for our path's waymarkers, fingerposts and boardwalk.

The Community Heritage Project is proving to be an exciting aspect of the project, with Archaeology Scotland coming on board alongside Historical Environment Scotland & University of Glasgow academics, to deliver training and engagement opportunities for community members. Elsewhere, 7 of our 10 e-bikes are now on the island, with the remaining 3, plus the training maintenance workshop, set to be delivered in early spring.

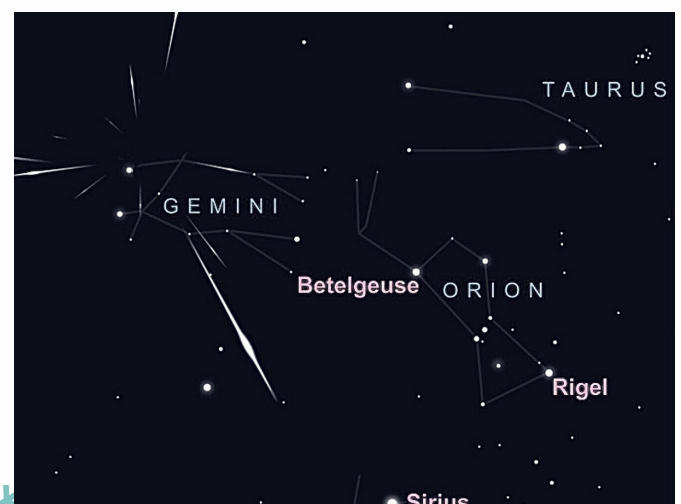


SS E T E A I R N S G

Asteroid fragments over Gigha!

December 13/14 is when you have a chance to catch some meteors over Gigha. The annual Geminids meteor shower usually has over 100 meteors per hour. The meteors from this shower are due to the Earth passing through the debris left behind by a rocky asteroid, in this case asteroid Phaethon.

The shower peak is expected a little after 2am on the 14th when the constellation Gemini is high in the southern part of the night sky and the Moon has set below the horizon. The meteors will appear to originate in the constellation Gemini, which you can find to the left of the well known constellation of Orion. However, weather permitting, and if you are patient, you will almost certainly see some meteors earlier in the evening. Good luck getting clear skies and Happy Christmas from Dark Skies Gigha.



Countryside Ranger Photo of the Month:

The newly finished path leading to Eilean Garbh



Christmas and New Year break

The Trust office will be closed from Thursday 23rd December, reopening on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

If there is a maintenance emergency at any Trust property during this time, please call 07444 756140. Please leave a message if your call is unanswered and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Main Contacts

General: shona@gigha.org.uk

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Housing and Estate: office@gigha.org.uk

Gigha Trading Ltd: trading@gigha.org.uk

Accounts / Finance:

ightcentralaccounts@gigha.org.uk

Achamore Gardens: gardens@gigha.org.uk

Countryside Ranger: ranger@gigha.org.uk

Marketing: marketing@gigha.org.uk

Achamore Gardens Christmas Lights Trail

Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th December 2021

The Trail will be open from 3pm Saturday until 10pm on Sunday for everyone to enjoy!

Walled garden activities:

Saturday 4-6pm - Santa's Grotto Saturday 7.30pm-9pm - Snacks available

Sunday 3-4pm - Christmas Singing

This is an unsupervised event, please take care if walking in the dark and all children should be supervised by an adult.

The trail is only marshalled during Santa's Grotto. Please bring your wellies and a torch!



**Merry Christmas from the
Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust**

