



GIGHA NEWS

Welcome to the July 2019 Gigha News



Dear Member,

Please find enclosed this month's newsletter.

Please also find enclosed the Board meeting minutes for May and June 2019.

Regards,

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

Date for your Diary

Gigha Raft Race - 27th July

All day entertainment from 12.30pm including live music, food stalls, bouncy castle, face paintings and more! Adult/Junior Raft Race commences at 2.30pm and it is a £5 entry fee per raft/kids go free. This event is organised by the Boathouse Restaurant so please contact them directly on 01583 505 123 for any queries, restaurant or camping reservations.

Church Flower Festival - 8th & 9th August

A flower festival is being held in the Gigha and Cara Parish Church. Anyone can enter a floral arrangement however it would be helpful to know in advance those who would like to do one. The theme is "Love is...!" Arrangements can be placed in the church on Wednesday 7th or earlier if more suitable. There will be tea, coffee and home baking from 11am to 4.30pm and there will be a sales table as well.

Gigha Cost and Countryside Group Walk - 28th July

Next walk is over to Cara Island leaving from the South Pier at 1pm. Please contact the Cost and Countryside Group if you plan to attend so they can arrange transport over.

Asset Sales

The sale of Braehouse completed on Friday 19th July. All proceeds of the sale will go towards further debt reduction. IGHT would like to thank those involved in helping the transaction to run as smoothly as possible and would like to welcome the new owner to the island!

EGM Vote

On Thursday 18th July, members were called to an EGM to vote on altering the Memorandum and Articles of Association to reduce the Trust's membership age from 18 to 16 years old, thereby allowing those 16 years and older to vote in future. The result of the vote was 28 For and 21 Against. For the resolution to be carried, a 75% majority of members voting either in person or by proxy would have been required, therefore this resolution will not be carried.

The Board are very disappointed with the outcome of the vote due to the importance the younger generation have towards the islands future development and economy. The Board were also concerned that less than 50% of members voted on this matter, therefore the decision to re-visit this vote is being considered.

Members are again invited to make suggestions as to any other alterations they believe are necessary within the Memo & Arts.

Young Members of Gigha Community Letter

Dear Board Members,

We are writing to express our disappointment at the outcome of the EGM vote and not allowing 16 year olds the chance to vote on community matters.

Firstly, we would like to thank the members which have supported our proposal. Secondly, we would appreciate feedback on the reasons as to why this vote wasn't carried.

The island was purchased to ensure the stability and success of Gigha's future and as the next generation, we feel that the earlier young people are informed about the Trusts responsibilities, the better the islands future will be. 16 year olds all over Scotland are allowed to vote on matters which are going to affect their future. Unfortunately we do not have the same opportunity to do so on Gigha, a 'community owned' island. Although we respect the members decision, we propose a review of the IGHT voting procedures and methods. We suggest this because although the majority vote was in favour, this was still not enough for us to gain a say in how our island is run. Gigha is our home and we are passionate about its success and development. We hope that you all share in our passion and will provide us with feedback on this matter to better the future for our community.

Kind Regards, The Young Group on Gigha

Members Communication

Issues around Members communication has been raised recently, where members feel there may not be enough communication delivered from the Board to its Members. The Board would like to remind Members of the monthly newsletters and Board and Members meeting minutes that are distributed along with additional letters including calling notices, notice of drop-in sessions, meetings and further important information. All communication to members is delivered either via post or email, therefore, the Board is looking in to the ability to additionally upload these documents on to the Gigha website. Should any member wish to update their means of communication, please get in touch with the Trust Office.

The Board is making every effort to communicate as fully and constructively as possible. Members are invited to make an appointment with directors at the Office to discuss any issues.

The Board recognises the importance of input from Members and would always welcome new ideas being brought forward. However, recently, the tone and content of communications to Board and Trust at Members meetings, within the Trust Office and in Trust properties has been unacceptable.

The Board would like to be very clear that this type of behaviour from members or tenants will not be further tolerated. In particular, at Members meetings, should attendees be aggressive or hostile, the meeting will be called to a close or members may be asked to no longer attend these meetings. Aggressive behaviour at members meetings is damaging to the Gigha community membership. The Board are aware it stops other Members from attending when the Board wants to hear their views too.

The Board has also given careful consideration to the recent request of producing a map of the island that includes details on leased land ownership, however due to General Data Protection Regulations, the Board are not able to produce this now or in the future.

Mediation

After much consideration into the feedback the Board received from the mediators who carried out an information gathering day on Thursday 13th June, the Board did not feel it was appropriate at this point in time to spend further money on the mediation route given the low turnout from members.

The mediators did give the Board some really useful ideas and pointers as to how to work more collaboratively with the community. The Trust have a number of projects coming forward which the Board hope to use to develop this more collaborative approach with the community.

Housing and Community Hub Development

John Forbes from Community Housing Scotland as part of the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT) was on Gigha on Thursday 18th July to promote the launch of their survey. This survey is open to the whole Gigha community and is crucial in identifying the housing and community needs for the islands future. The survey only takes 5 minutes to fill in and is available online at: <https://www.hscht.co.uk/chs-surveys.html> or alternatively you can contact Jane Millar at the Trust Office to receive a paper copy and a pre-paid return envelope.

Financial Update

The Trusts financial position has improved immeasurably. Overall debt has now been reduced to c £900,000 from £1.35m a year ago. The Trust has also built up substantial reserves in all of the companies. The Trust is now in a position where it is no longer losing money, therefore the decision has been made to released funds to start a detailed housing repair programme. The Board has approved £30,000 + expenditure on major housing repairs.

Core costs have also been significantly reduced in a sustainable way and the Board are hopeful that the year end deficit for IGHT will be significantly reduced for 18/19 - compared to c £100,000 deficit in 17/18.

Boathouse Restaurant

The Boathouse Restaurant lease is now in new ownership as of Wednesday 17th July. Grant Berry, the new lease holder, hopes to run the restaurant much the same as it has been - a great seafood restaurant.

We would like to wish James and Sharon Clark all the best in their future and also wish Grant Berry well in his new venture on Gigha.

Small Communities Fund

It is proposed that IGHT and its subsidiaries set up a Community Fund, allocating in the first instance £5000 pa from profits generated by renewable energy to be granted to different projects within the community.

The Fund would be administered by IGHT but decisions subject to an independent Fund Board comprising:

1. 1 nominated IGHT Director
2. 2 nominated GREL/ GGPL Directors
3. 2 independent Directors

The Board will then appoint a Chair who will serve for a 2-year term.

All Directors will serve for 2-year terms but can be reappointed. The Board should look to replace at least 2 Directors at the end of every 2 years.

The Fund to be administered by IGHT finance and development staff and a clear audit trail will be established with IGHT accountants. The accounting year end for the Fund will match the accounting year end for GREL/ GGPL.

GREL/ GGPL will nominate a Director of its Board to have oversight of the Fund who will ensure half yearly reports are provided to the IGHT and GREL/ GGPL Boards on awards made, outcomes achieved, Fund administration and any issues.

Application forms for the Fund will be available online in a special section of the IGHT website. Applications should be submitted at least 4 weeks before the next published Board meeting. Details of Board meeting dates, applications made and awards granted will be published on the IGHT website also.

Should you be interested in being an independent director of the Fund or wish to find out more, please get in touch with the IGHT Board by contacting them directly or emailing chair@gigha.org.uk



Visit Scotland's Coo Van had a recent trip over to Gigha! Brochures provided by Visit Scotland are available in the Trust Office.

Job Vacancy

IGHT has a part-time seasonal vacancy to join the self-catering cottages housekeeping team. For further post details, please contact Jacqui Smith on 01583 427 300 or alternatively call in at the Trust Office.

Main Contacts:

General Enquiries: 01583 505390
IGHT Estates: office@gigha.org.uk
GTL Estates: cottages@gigha.org.uk