



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the October 2020 Gigha News

Dear Member,

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

Regards,

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

Woodland Management

We are at the very early stages of preparing a Woodland Management Plan for the island following a recent conversation with Scottish Forestry. We intend to appoint a consultant to develop this Plan and it is expected this work will take at least 18 months. There is grant funding available to support this work.

Once a consultant is appointed, we are proposing to hold a public community consultation meeting with Scottish Forestry in attendance so that everyone can be made aware of all the rules, regulations, and options, and actively feedback on how Gigha's woodland should be managed. Details on arrangements for the meeting will be made available when appropriate. In the meantime, please note that only clearance of dangerous trees is permitted (with certification for chainsaw use) and an appropriate felling or thinning license is required to clear any woodland within your lease. Achamore Gardens is in the process of applying for a felling license to remove older trees from the shelter belt.

Holiday Cottages Lease

The Gigha Holiday Cottages Business was leased to LRM Holiday Lets on 1st October 2020. Liz and Richard McCrindle bring lots of experience and enthusiasm to the role and are looking to move to Gigha as soon as possible. We wish them all the very best with the business. Please note that the GTL email address has now changed to trading@gigha.org.uk and enquiries about booking the cottages should be directed to LRM Holiday Lets: <https://www.lrmholidayletsgha.co.uk/>

Gateway to Gigha

IGHT is delighted to have appointed Casey-Jo Zammit as our new Island Countryside Ranger. Casey-Jo is currently based in Cornwall and will be moving to Gigha to start her new role on 2nd November.

A steering group for the island wide pathway, interpretation and heritage conservation work has formed with our Project Manager, Craig Whyte, leading the project. Initial steps are being taken to identify, explore and design the routes across the island. Once these details are confirmed we intend to present these in the newsletter.

Campsite Update

The Campsite project has been delayed due to COVID-19 implications and procurement matters. Updated timescales will be made available when possible.

Community Hub Update

It was agreed earlier this year that a new build community hub is not to proceed due to the high expense involved. Scottish Salmon Company kindly donated a portacabin to IGH that is currently situated behind the Craft Units. It is proposed that the portacabin will act as a community hub. Funding applications have been submitted for furnishing the hub with expectations the hub could be open by Summer 2021.

Gigha Community Fund

There were no funds awarded during the latest round of the Gigha Community Fund. The next submission deadline for the fund will be the end of January 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.

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 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.

Gigha Primary School

On Thursday 1st October the children held their first One Planet Picnic: An Eco-Schools picnic which is good for us and good for the planet. We grew a lot of vegetables including potatoes, turnips and carrots, which Jackie used to make us a delicious soup. We saved food miles by eating seasonally and shopping locally. We used the Village Store to buy ingredients for Jackie to make an amazing apple and bramble crumble (we picked the brambles!) to have with our ice cream. We used our own plates and cutlery to save as much waste as possible. Our picnic was really healthy and we had so much fun eating great food, connecting with nature and enjoying the sunny weather which was good for us too. Thanks to everyone that helped us with our food growing and sustainability projects this year – what a great harvest!



Book Week is coming up in November – if you would like to be interviewed online about your favourite book when you were a child, please let Morven Beagan know by telephoning 01583 505 259. The children are ready with their questions!

Our thoughts are turning to Christmas and which charities to help this year. We are also wondering what to do about our Christmas play and ways to be in touch with people on our island as we miss seeing everyone so much. Suggestions for things that the children can do to be in contact with you around Christmas time (we cannot have our usual play so are looking for alternative ideas) would be warmly welcomed. Also please send in ideas/information for wee projects for charities that the children can help and support. We usually give them a choice of three and they decide on a local one and one which is more national/global, so it would be good to have a big range.

Any thoughts and ideas to Mari Sheriff, Parent Council Chair, please at the school.

Finally, thank you to everyone who participated in the Halloween pumpkin hunt and to the Village Hall Committee for the goodie bags!

October in Achamore Gardens

Work has really ramped up in the garden this month, with significant progress now being made in the recovery of Colonel Horlick's First Garden – the area east of the Summerhouse. This area is choked with brambles, overgrown with Rhododendron ponticum and filled with many, many weed tree saplings, so it's going to take us a while to get it back to anything close to its former glory, but Maggie and Ellie, ably assisted by Thomas, Malcolm and some of our volunteers have been doing a brilliant job on the initial clearing of this area. They have removed trailer loads of brambles and Maggie has proved to be a dab hand with a mattock, carefully prying the roots of the brambles out of the ground to help destroy them for good. Ellie has uncovered half a dozen rhododendrons that were so overgrown with brambles that we didn't even know they were there, and everyone has put their back into lopping, sawing and cutting out the Rhododendron ponticum and weed trees. It's hard, muddy work, but the whole team have kept their spirits up throughout, and there's been plenty of laughs along the way. We've had a bonfire burning nearly continuously for the last week to get rid of the Rh ponticum, and it's been a very welcome way to warm up on these wet autumn days. If you are passing by when they are working please give them a cheer to encourage them on in their labours!

Before and after photographs:



October in Achamore Gardens continued



Rh ponticum is a major weed in the garden as it is very vigorous and resilient so it quickly swamps out other plants, but much worse than this, it is a major vector for a fungal disease called Phytophthora ramorum. This is an imported pathogen which kills susceptible plants (which includes our other Rhododendrons, and many of our tree species) and is causing huge problems in commercial forestry plantations and botanic gardens all over the West of Scotland and beyond; it has already affected Achamore twice in recent years so it is vital that we remove the Rh ponticum to minimise the chance of re-infection. We burn the removed plants as close as we can to where we take them out so that we're not transferring them to other parts of the garden and unwittingly spreading any fungal spores they may be carrying.



I've had a few questions recently about the pink and blue ribbons that are appearing around the garden, so thought I'd take a minute to explain them. These are used to mark plants so that our staff and volunteers can tell at a glance what is to be done with them. Pink ribbons mark plants that are to be removed, and the blue ribbons are for plants that need some gardening intervention (usually pruning, or re-planting) or to highlight a plant to be kept in an area that we are clearing. Please don't remove them if you are visiting the gardens – they are meant to be there.

Achamore Gardens

We are in the process of appointing a consultant to deliver an Achamore Gardens 10 Year Development Plan which will focus on the overall management and funding strategy for the Gardens. This Plan will form the basis of the on-going restoration of the Gardens. We have also appointed Garden Designers, Rankin Fraser, to start work in the new year (subject to securing funding) to deliver the overall Design Strategy for the Gardens. This strategy will take into consideration the priorities, areas for restoration, areas for new development, facilities required and on-going maintenance of the Gardens. We have also budgeted some funds from the Gateway to Gigha Access project for Achamore Gardens including the upgrading of a route that goes through the woodland and Gardens with some signage and interpretation.

COVID-19

If anyone within the community requires more PPE, please contact the office and we will arrange distribution. Sanitising units have been implemented at the Playpark and Gardens to ensure continued safe use of public areas on Gigha. 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+.

Achamore Gardens – gardens@gigha.org.uk - Volunteering opportunities to support your well-being.

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

Housing Update

Following the housing needs feasibility study that was undertaken by Community Housing Scotland in July 2019, IGH is progressing plans for more housing on Gigha. We are now proposing to deliver 5 homes made up of the following:

- 2x 2 Bed Wheelchair Bungalows
- 1 x 2 bed Bungalow
- 2x 1 Bed Cottage flats

An application to the Scottish Governments Rural Housing Fund will be submitted by 31.12.20. Collective Architecture are working up the detailed designs, however the draft design is below.

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.

