



# GIGHA NEWS

## Welcome to the January 2019 Gigha News



Dear Member,

Please find enclosed the IGHT Board of Directors Action Plan for 2019. This will be discussed in further detail at the Members meeting on 31 January in the Hall.

We will also be presenting the details of the Business Plan for the proposed campsite development, a copy of which will be available afterwards on the Trust website.

Regards,

Ian Wilson  
Chair

For and behalf of Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

### Financial Update

Cash position for the Trust has improved since August last year where the balance was critically low at £9,000.

However, following the sale of the Lodge, the Trust were able to pay down some of the Triodos loan and clear the security charge on the Lodge. The free cash from disposal of the Lodge has been set aside and put into a high interest earning bank account.

Also, the Trust received cash from income arising out of the refinancing of the E33 turbine which has also been put into the high interest earning bank account. This now means that the Trust has sufficient reserves in place to meet cost such as insurances and other regular commitments for a period of a minimum of three months as required by the reserves policy.

The overall debt, which at the start of the financial year (1st April 2018) was sitting at £1.3m, has reduced by £133,000 (due to the sale of lodge), reducing monthly repayments to Triodos by £850 per month, giving an annual saving of £10,200.

Focus continues to be on monitoring cashflow, ensuring there are enough reserves in place to continue trading solvent and increasing revenue.

### Members Correspondence

IGHT are sorry to report that, yet again, individual Directors have been subject to personal attacks and aggressive communications.

While the Board recognise the input from Members and welcome constructive ideas, both the tone and terms of recent communications to Board members has been inappropriate. Board members work on a voluntary basis on behalf of the Trust and as such are entitled to be addressed courteously and not be subject to abuse or personal comments. This is a well-accepted right and if infringed, may be a matter that the Board will consider taking further.

In light of this recent activity, we intend to be very clear at the Members meeting that, should attendees be aggressive or hostile, we will call the meeting to a close. A lack of respect and courtesy is damaging to everyone and especially to the Gigha community. We know it stops other Members from attending when we want to hear their views too.

Should this occur we will look for new ways of communicating with Members.

### Asset Sales

At our last meeting the Board explained the rationale for the limited sale of assets – to reduce the level of debt that Gigha carries and release some of the money used on repaying debt to help improve our financial position. We have also decided to use some of the proceeds of asset sales to undertake housing refurbishment works.

The sale of South Lodge completed on Friday 11th of January 2019. This was a very quick sale and IGHT would like to thank those involved in helping the transaction to run as smoothly as possible.

DM Hall visited Gigha towards the end of December 2018 and carried out a home report and valuation for Woodend Cottage. The property was valued at £160,000. For the reasons outlined above, we propose to put Woodend Cottage on the market.

## GREL / GGPL Update

We were very busy at the back end of 2018 and spent in the region of £20K refurbishing the tower sections of the Dancing Ladies. This involve painting the internal sections of the towers where we had had water ingress through the tower joints causing rust - these have now been cleaned up and resealed. While on site, the contractors also touched up damaged areas on the exterior of the towers and resealed the joints. This time we used a new company, Cleanwind, who came up trumps and were a pleasure to deal with and we will use them in the future to try and keep our maintenance costs as low as possible and to try and help the longevity of the Dancing Ladies.

We have also spent roughly £30K on maintenance within the nacel units, replacing bearings, shafts, yaw motors and completing outstanding jobs that Vestas have identified while carrying out the twice-yearly services.

I have been asked a number of times why we still use Vestas. What we must remember, our turbines are now in their 27th year and if we need spare parts, they are getting harder to find, however, by using Vestas, who originally manufactured our turbines, they can access parts very quickly which means less downtime, which means more money for GREL.

Rest assured we are constantly looking to minimise the operation and maintenance costs for GREL and will continue to do so going forward.

The E33 keeps ploughing on through the strong winds and we have had a couple of breakdowns but because she is new machine, we are unable to restart locally. Enercon can see this remotely and are quick to respond. Overall, we had a good finish to 2018 with plenty of wind and there has only been a handful of times where we have had to turn the ladies off due to high winds as this can cause damage to them due to over-speed.

GREL are working closely with HIE and Gigha Halibut to see if GREL could supply energy directly to the fish farm. This has been discussed at several points over the years but HIE have appointed consultants now to look closely at all options and hopefully we can get to a plan that we can discuss with the membership in the near future. Any plan would need to minimise any risk to GREL and be advantageous to both parties. Gigha Halibut have been extremely enthusiastic about working with GREL and we hope some progress can be made this time.

## GREL / GGPL Update Cont'd

All refinancing is now complete for the E33 and we are closing down all the Coop accounts and looking forward to a positive working relationship with our new lenders Triodos bank.

## IGHT Board Update

Barney Higgins resigned from the Board on the 17th of December 2018. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Barney for his contributions to IGHM during his time.

On 18th December 2018, Brandon Clements was co-opted onto the Board. Brandon hopes to focus primarily on youth engagement on Gigha and will be sharing views from the younger generation. Welcome to the Board Brandon!

Andy Oliver resigned from the Board on Monday 21st January 2019. We would like to thank Andy for his work for the IGHM Board during his time as a Director.

## GTL Update

Gary Gardner resigned from the Board of GTL on the 28th of December 2018. We would like to thank Gary for his input during his time on the GTL Board.

The Gigha Boats Activity Centre will be opening again this summer season. GTL are looking for volunteers to create a rota for running this service. If you would like to put your name forward, please contact Jacqui Smith, GTL Estates Officer on cottages@gigha.org.uk.

The self-catering cottages received an excellent 9.4 / 10 rating from Booking.com and bookings are quickly filling up for 2019. Well done to all the GTL team! Following on from the Ferry Croft upgrades in 2018, The Steadings have been freshly painted and decorated with new soft furnishings. Jacqui is also investigating the possibility of installing WIFI in all cottages as this is something that is regularly mentioned by visitors.

## Campsite Update

The public drop-in meeting held in early December 2018 was largely positive with good constructive feedback which has been factored into both the development plans and the funding applications.

LEADER funding has been submitted (25th January 2019) and will hopefully be taken to the Local Action Group meeting in March 2019. The second funding application is for the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund and this is due to be completed on the 31st of January 2019. Highlands and Islands Enterprise have also confirmed in principle their financial support for the project which should be finalised towards the end of February 2019.

There will be a short meeting to walk over the site on Saturday 9th Feb 2019 at 10am (weather permitting). The walk will begin at the ferry car park. All welcome!

Please note: the funding we have applied for the campsite development is specifically aimed at tourism and economic development. It is not funding that can be used on routine housing maintenance.

## IGHT Staff Structure

Members have asked for details of who is working for the Trust. Our current staff structure is below.

Kathryn is leaving us on the 31st January 2019. We would like to thank her for all her help during her time with the Trust. We have advertised for her replacement (which is being part funded by HIE) and hope to be able to provide an update at the meeting.

Finance Manager – Pamela James (1 FTE)  
Business Development – VACANT (1 FTE)  
Bookkeeper – Jacki Currie (0.5 FTE)  
IGHT Estates officer – Andy Clements (0.5 FTE)  
GTL Estates officer – Jacqui Smith (0.5 FTE)  
IGHT Maintenance – Thomas Shaw & Malcolm McNeill (2 x FTE)

## Conflicts of Interest

Board Directors have reviewed all relevant conflicts of interest in line with the current Conflict of Interest policy. The latest policy and all Director Interests will be on the IGHT website over the next couple of weeks.

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).

## Member Communications

Following representations from Members and in the interests of better communicating the work and direction of the Trust, we have decided to:

- Publish Board minutes. These will not include any confidential information. They will usually be published 4 weeks after the meeting on the IGHT website to give time for approval.
- Hold quarterly members meetings
- Publish all IGHT policies on the IGHT website as they are updated over the course of the next 12-18 months.

## Memorandum and Articles of Association

We have been discussing with the Working Group suggestions for updating the IGHT Memorandum and Articles of Association.

This might include lowering the voting age for residents to 16 and introducing a Directors Code of Conduct. If anyone wishes to give ideas or suggestions on things they think could be improved, please email me.

This is a long-term project as any changes require 75% of the members to approve.

## Woodland Management Meeting

There will be a woodland management meeting on Thursday 7th February at 7pm in the Village Hall. All welcome!

If you would be interested in managing some woodland on Gigha, please register your interest with Andy Clements by emailing him on [office@gigha.org.uk](mailto:office@gigha.org.uk).

## Main Contacts:

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