



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the August 2020 Gigha News

Dear Member,

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

Regards,
Ian Wilson
Chair

For and behalf of Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Member Communication

We ask that all Members enquiries and correspondence is addressed to IGHT's Chair, Ian Wilson, who can then share with the Board at their monthly meetings. You may email your enquires to chair@gigha.org.uk or send a letter by post to the Trust office. If you wish to arrange a meeting with the Board, please contact the office. IGHT is always looking at opportunities to cut core costs, therefore if you are able to receive members communication by email rather than post, please contact the office to update your communications preference. Please note that no further Members meetings will be scheduled until public gatherings are able to resume. We hope that monthly Newsletters and Board minutes are providing all members with sufficient updates during this time.

AGM

This year's AGM will be held on 24th September 2020. With COVID restrictions still in place, this years AGM will have to take place via an online video. A calling notice and nomination papers will be distributed prior, along with an opportunity to submit any questions Members wish to be responded to at the AGM. Full details of the arrangements for the AGM will be issued to all Members in the coming week.

Mediation

In our June and July 2020 Newsletter, we have asked that those Members who wish to engage in mediation to contact the office. To date, we have only received a note of interest from 2 households. As a Charity with restricted funds, the Board require clear evidence that a mediation process would be beneficial for the community. We therefore ask that any further interest in mediation be noted to the office by 14th September.

Kintyre Medical Group - Gigha Surgery

GP appointments will resume from Wednesday 2nd September at Gigha Surgery, but this is not the return of the normal GP clinic due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Please call Muasdale Surgery on 01583 421206 to access your GP, who will issue you with an appointment if necessary.

COVID-19 Lockdown

As the Scottish Government lifts the COVID-19 lockdown, the Trust would like to thank all members and visitors who have respected guidelines to keep everyone safe during the lockdown and beyond.

COVID-19 Supporting Communities Fund

Funds are still available from the Supporting Communities Fund to assist the community in response to COVID-19. If you wish to apply for funding for PPE, please contact Cara on covidsupport@gigha.org.uk before 30th September.

Craft Workshops 2 & 3

The new tenant of Craft Workshop 2 is Gigha's Natural Skincare and Craft Workshop 3 has been leased to Andzela Bajoruniene, who will be retailing arts and crafts. We wish both tenants success in their new business venture.

Residential plot for sale

A 0.25-acre plot located to the south of Croft 5 and Croft 6 is for sale, with offers in the region of £50,000 being considered. The purchaser is responsible for planning and services. Full details are available on the website or please contact jane@gigha.org.uk



Achamore Gardens update from Bryony White

As the seasons pass and I get to know Achamore more, the garden throws up continual surprises with new plants coming to the fore. Every time I'm in the gardens I notice a new flash of colour that draws my attention and has me asking "what on earth are you?" This month's biggest surprise is both a Beauty and a Beast. The plant has soft, furry, pink, new leaves which beg to be stroked, and when you crush the leaves they release an intoxicating scent of lemons, but beware! The whole plant covered in vicious thorns and even that soft new growth has spikes on its underside. After a bit of research, I learned that this is one of the *Zanthoxylums*, better known as Sichuan pepper, a key ingredient in Chinese 5-spice mix and a close relative of the citrus family, hence that lovely smell. Unlike the more familiar black peppercorns, in Sichuan pepper only the thin husks of the seeds are eaten, not the inner core, and the plants aren't self-fertile, meaning that we would need both male and female plants to get seeds, so it's unlikely that we will be harvesting our own Sichuan peppers anytime soon. With more than 250 species in the *Zanthoxylum* family, I haven't quite managed to identify it to species level, but I'll continue the investigations. If you'd like to see our very own Beauty and Beast, you'll find it in the walled garden at the bottom of the border near the south gate.



Another superstar plant from earlier this month was the Pohutukawa or New Zealand Christmas Tree, *Metrosideros excelsa**. The New Zealand Christmas tree is revered in Maori tradition where it is considered to be the Chiefs tree, symbolising power, strength and beauty, and it's crimson flowers represent the blood of a young warrior who perished trying to avenge his father's death. When Christian settlers arrived in New Zealand they quickly adopted it as it flowers around Christmas time in the southern summer and the Pohutukawa is now much loved by New Zealanders at home and abroad. The fluffy, red flowers are composed of many stamens and it is rich in nectar as evidenced by how crazy Achamore's bees were for it when it was in flower – the buzzing around the tree was extraordinary.



*Some of our New Zealand followers on the Achamore Gardens Facebook page suspect that our tree may, in fact, be *Metrosideros umbalalta*, the Southern Rata. More investigation required!

Talking of our new Facebook page, have you visited it yet? You can find it here

www.facebook.com/AchamoreGardensGigha Please have a look and like and share our posts so that more people can discover our beautiful gardens. We are always in need of more photos of the garden so if you've taken a good shot or two that you are happy to share please tag the gardens or email them to me at gardens@gigha.org.uk with permission to use them.

Away from the amazing array of flowers, there's been a lot of insect activity around the gardens. Having moved from a fairly rural part of the central belt, I didn't really expect there to be much difference in the insects, but I've been amazed both by the diversity of insect life and the sheer volume of insects, both in the gardens and across the wider island. Gigha's insect biomass per acre must be vastly higher than an equivalent area on the mainland! Of particular note this month have been the dragonflies, damsel flies and darters. They move so fast that it's really hard to properly identify them, never mind get a decent picture, but this male Gold Ringed Dragonfly obliged for a few seconds. They are huge dragonflies, considered to be the longest in the UK, and are more like helicopters or drones buzzing around the garden – they've taken me by surprise on more than one occasion.



Achamore Gardens continued

And finally... Last month I promised you a photo of Rhododendron "Polar Bear" in full bloom. I'm glad to say it didn't disappoint and I hope you took the chance to go and enjoy in and sniff it's beautiful scent.



Gigha Community Fund

The next submission deadline for the Gigha Community Fund is Monday 19th October. 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.

Scottish Salmon Company

The Scottish Salmon Company are in the process of upgrading their premises at their Highfield site and have very generously gifted their old office Portakabin to the Trust. We would like to thank SSC for the Portakabin, which is situated at the rear of the Craft Workshops. This will be used as a Community Hub, comprising of a gym area and a meeting space.

Public Toilets

Argyll and Bute Council have decided not to reopen the public toilets at the ferry terminal car park and they are now locked. Should you see any misuse of the toilets or car park area, please report this to Argyll and Bute Council.

Mink activity

Please contact the IGHM office if you wish to volunteer in helping with mink eradication on the island. Please note that volunteers may be required to walk difficult terrain in order to regularly check traps.

Chimney Sweeping

Mark Taylor, Chimney Sweep, will be coming to Gigha on Monday 28th (1pm onwards) until Wednesday 30th September. This service is available to all island tenants and homeowners so please contact the office before Friday 18th of September to arrange a time for having your chimney swept so that we can prepare a schedule. It is the responsibility of the tenant to pay for this service.

Gigha Primary School

After quite a long time away our children and staff have all returned to school and early learning centre safe, happy and well. We are really grateful for all the support of our community during this very challenging time and appreciate how well families have been looked after and cared for. Everyone has done such a great job of making the most of outdoor opportunities for learning and play and we know that we now have some budding farmers, chefs, natural historians and archaeologists, sportswomen, engineers and marine biologists with skills and a secure future in these employment sectors! We hope that you will continue to help us explore these important jobs.

You will notice that our playground and school are off limits to everyone but staff and children at the moment. If you wish to visit, please call the school office in advance to arrange this and to find out about our infection control procedures. We have been making the most of getting out and about and also appreciate your assistance when we are on the beach or in the woods as a group. Normally we would be very pleased to have you join in and share our space, but with covid-19 procedures in mind we will try to mark out a clear area where the children will know they are safe to play. The boundary markers will also be there to help people, especially visitors to the island, to keep their distance from the group. We know that you will understand the importance of modelling to the children safe social distancing practice and hope that you will help us with this. Many thanks as always for your support.

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.