

# ISLE OF GIGHA HERITAGE TRUST NewsLetter March 2025

The IGHT Board meet the third Monday of every month; therefore, for any correspondence to be considered at these meetings, we ask for it to be submitted at least 1 week prior to give the Board time to review. Correspondence sent within 1 week of the Board meeting will be delayed for review until the following month meeting. Anonymous correspondence will not be considered by the Board.

Contact us by emailing [directors@gigha.org.uk](mailto:directors@gigha.org.uk)

## Gigha Day

A huge thank you to everyone who came out on 15<sup>th</sup> March to mark the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the community land buyout. This year the flag was raised by Naomi Elder, Gigha's youngest resident. We then went on to have a look inside the new housing development and hotel bar refurbishment – both which are progressing well and nearing completion!

We also took the opportunity to thank Ian Pinniger for his contributions to the Trust and Gigha as he plans to retire from the IGHT board on 31<sup>st</sup> of March. Ian contributed on and off for around 10 years to the Trust board, and his knowledge in financial management greatly assisted the Trust in both positive and challenging times. Thank you again Ian for all of your support and time. We look forward to still seeing you around when you visit!



## Gigha Emergency Plan Group

The Emergency Plan Group has been working on a Home Emergency Plan which will be finalised and distributed to every household in the near future.

The group are still looking for volunteers who can support the Emergency Plan Group, ideally checking on residents and parts of island close to where they live.

Please make contact by email [admin@gigha.org.uk](mailto:admin@gigha.org.uk) or telephone 01583 505234 if you are interested.

Many thanks, Emergency Plan Group



GIGHA VILLAGE HALL

# EASTER EGG HUNT

SUNDAY 20TH APRIL  
1PM - 3PM

GIGHA VILLAGE HALL

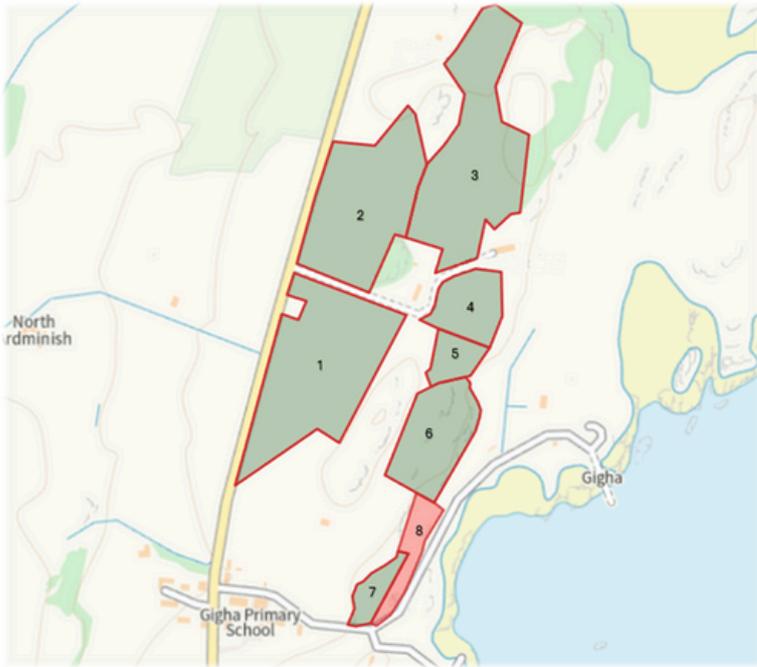
Join us for an Easter Egg Hunt  
followed by tea, coffee, cakes &  
hot crossed buns and lots of  
Easter fun!



Look forward to seeing you there!

**ALL WELCOME**

To book the Gigha Village Hall please email [gighavillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:gighavillagehall@gmail.com)  
or telephone Joe on 01583 505251



### Achavinish Land Seasonal Let 2025

Land is available for seasonal let (Apr-Oct 2025). For full details please contact [shona@gigha.org.uk](mailto:shona@gigha.org.uk) Deadline for Submission: Friday 11th April 2025.

Please note fields 4 and 8 are not available.

### Gigha Hotel

Bar renovations are largely complete with just the patio works to be finished off. There are plans to have the bar open as soon as possible - we will require a completion certificate before this can happen however our design team and contractor are working towards this.

We are continuing the process of securing a long term lessee for the Hotel.



### Achamore Gardens

Well, it's been a hectic and productive month in the garden continuing the clear up from Storm Eowyn. Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of March dawned bright and clear, and trundling off the ferry came Euan MacCormick and Jonny Stableford, our two fantastic tree surgeons, complete with lots of machinery. The gardens team spent Monday morning familiarising themselves with all the new toys, getting the all-important safety and emergency procedures nailed down, and working out our plan of attack for both Fire Station Wood and the gardens. Training done, we decided to start at the carpark and work our way in from there, with the focus on making the garden safe and accessible once again.

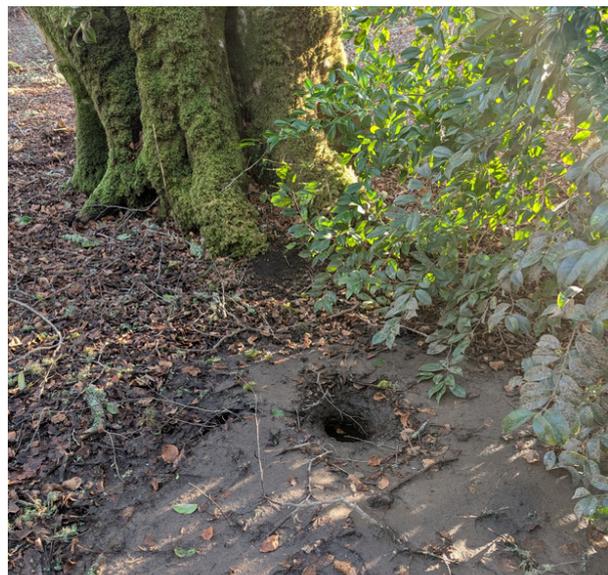


## Achamore Gardens continued

First order of business was tackling the half dozen or so trees that were hung up near the carpark, as well as learning how to operate the (alarmingly new and shiny) tractor and timber winch to haul out some of the felled trunks, and getting used to working with the brilliant tracked chipper that made short work of chomping through the huge piles of brash and branches that litter the site. By the end of the day it was astonishing to see how much we'd managed to clear!

On Tuesday the team was further supplemented by the arrival of Adam Reidi; Adam is a tree health and tree safety advisor and he had a crucial role to play, inspecting Fire Station Wood, Leim Wood and the gardens to identify any hazardous trees we might have missed, ensuring that they are as safe as woodland can be for public access. In the gardens he was also tasked with assessing a great number of storm damaged trees and deciding their immediate fate. For many of the trees impacted by the storm, their outcome was obvious and unfortunately terminal, but there were at least 50 trees where we were unsure whether they were safe or not and this is where Adam came in. Many of those trees exhibited evidence of liquefaction where the vibrations of the root plate during the storm had liquified the soil, much the same as what happens when you tap your foot up and down on damp sand to create a tiny patch of sinking sand. Apparently there's very little in the arboricultural literature about this effect, but Adam is relatively confident that these trees should be fine. The gardens team will, of course, keep a very close eye on these trees, but amidst all the destruction it was a great relief to watch so many of these, and other storm damage trees be marked with "R" for retain.

The following two weeks continued in much the same vein, with the whole team giving maximum effort every day so that we could clear as much as humanly possible and the progress over 2 short weeks was nothing short of remarkable. The gardens team were ably assisted by our off-island volunteer David, and June W held the fort in the Walled Garden, weeding her fingers to the bone and making it look as beautiful as possible ahead of our reopening. Thanks to some generous island bakers the whole team were kept very well fuelled at break times, and we'd like to thank everyone who's helped us in any way over the last few weeks – your support means a huge amount to the whole team.



## Achamore Gardens Storm Recovery Fund

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our storm recovery fund. If you still wish to donate, please use the QR code or visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/achamore-gardens-storm-recovery>.

Donations can also be made directly to the Trust, either in person or by bank transfer – please contact the Trust Office for details and Gift Aid forms.

## Gigha Church in the Parish of Mid Kintyre and Gigha

### Gigha Church Services

13<sup>th</sup> April Palm Sunday will be a Zoom meeting with Tarbert at 11.30 am in the Church

20<sup>th</sup> April Easter Sunday a Joint Service at A'Chleit

27<sup>th</sup> April Gigha Church at 12 noon

Further details of Holy Week and Easter are on the Church noticeboard.

Contrary to current rumours the Church of Scotland has NO plans to sell the Gigha Church. We will continue to use it for worship and are looking to use the building for other suitable events. We are hoping to start on the necessary repairs soon. The plans have been passed by the Presbytery but still need to be agreed by the General Trustees. Meanwhile some necessary fundraising is going on. Currently there is a quiz sheet, anagrams of "Creepy Crawlies" with a suggested donation of £1 available from Susan Allan or in the Wee Isle Cafe, Campsite or Gigha's Natural Skincare shop. But you will need to be quick as the closing date is 19<sup>th</sup> April. There will be another one available after that date.

### Tayinloan Car Park

Ian Pinniger has purchased the field opposite the Tayinloan ferry car park and has very generously gifted this land to the Trust to operate as an overflow ferry car park. Ian has secured a change of use for the field, meaning it can legitimately operate as a car park and is now available for use. It will remain as a grass field but will provide much needed additional parking for during the peak season. Signage will be installed to encourage donations from visitors and outline the purpose of the field which is to provide car parking and not be used for long-term stays of vehicles or items. We are extremely grateful to Ian for this generous gift to the island.

### The Sound of Gigha

Thanks to everyone who has purchased tickets for The Sound of Gigha 2025 – it sold out in record time and we think it's going to be a great weekend. If you have tickets and are no longer able to attend, please let us know as soon as possible as we have a long waiting list of people eager to attend if they can and we will be able to send you a refund. If you sell your tickets on to friends/family, please be aware that our door list will be in your name, so please let us know. And if you bought tickets at the residents' reduced rate and sell it to a non-resident, then they will need to pay the extra £10 on the door.

We're still finalising the programme for the Saturday and Sunday daytime events, but will share our programme with you as soon as we can.

### Gigha Community Fund

The Gigha Community Fund has recently awarded funding to The Sound of Gigha for PA equipment which will be used to improve the annual weekend of events in June and all future fundraising events.

A replacement cabinet for the community defibrillator at the Village Hall has also been purchased using the fund.

### Island Ranger Service

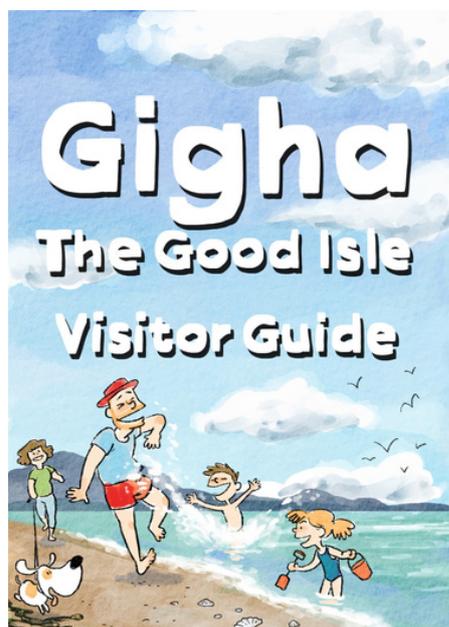
March has been a "head down" kind of month, which remarkably has meant we have seen some pretty cool creatures! The grasslands on the west are teeming with toads, buzzards (okay fine, that's looking up) are pairing off demonstrating mating displays, the wild garlic/ramsons are already flowering, and we spotted our first bluebell at a relatively sensible time this year. The last couple of years have shown some really strange seasons with things happening much earlier than usual, and some things not happening at all, so it's a relief this year to see things back to some sort of status quo.



## Isle of Gigha Ranger Service Continued

This “heads down” approach has been to primarily plant as many trees in our hedgerows as possible and deal with storm damage, but also get ready for the “soon to be upon us” visitor season which is literally around the corner.

In the spirit of being prepared we have organised a path maintenance plan, and have been fixing, repairing, and sprucing up visitor facilities. The interpretation panel at the north end of the island has taken a real beating by a number of things from being driven into to wind damage. Whilst we have now resecured the panel to the stone plinth, we expect that further work will be needed to make this bomb proof, and this goes for others too, mainly the one at the south end.



We have also been focusing our attentions on the Visitor Hut and visitor information. Last year was one of the worst for fires, litter, and disruptive parking. In an attempt to help improve visitors' understanding of keeping our natural spaces beautiful we have produced a pocket sized leaflet, illustrated by on-island artist, Adam Murphy. The leaflet is intended to reflect the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and inform visitors about appropriate behaviours but in a funny, relaxed, and positive way, as we know that most people make mistakes that harm the environment unknowingly and without understanding the consequences of trying to have a wonderful time on holiday. We really hope this leaflet makes a small difference and we will be using these awesome illustrations on our social media pages to reach even more people.

We are delighted to say that thanks to some super enthusiastic residents, the Gigha Community Fund and proceeds from the latest auction in the Village Hall, we have been able to secure local archaeologist, Clare Ellis, to come to Gigha to survey the floor of Kilchattan Chapel. In recent years, we have lost many of the gravestones that were once visible to vegetation, despite huge efforts made during the Gateway to Gigha project and the help of Archaeology Scotland. We simply can't keep up with the extraordinary growth we have on Gigha!



Clare will be helping us to rediscover and record formally what lies above and below the surface of the chapel floor in order to make an informed decision and professional recommendations of how we can conserve the site and the stones in the future. Clare will be here for two days in April and is welcoming residents to join in the work. However, in order to protect this special site and ensure no harm or damage is done, we need to limit the number of people on site at one time. We are asking that you contact the Ranger Service for dates and times and to book a place using [ranger@gigha.org.uk](mailto:ranger@gigha.org.uk) / 07596855398. We can't wait!

## New Housing

Registration and application for the new housing development are open again! Please make sure to get in touch if you are interested. If you have previously registered and applied, your application will remain valid. Please be aware that the registration for these new homes is different from the current HomeHunt process, so please double check if you plan to apply. Gigha residents will be given priority for this initial allocation, so now is the time to consider if a different property would be better suited to you. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please contact the office.



# ARD BRUACH

OCCUPY FROM MAY 2025

1 BED RENT = £460 PER MONTH

2 BED RENT = £500 PER MONTH

## 5 NEW HOMES TO RENT

- 2 x 2 bed bungalows, designed to wheelchair standards.
- 1 x 2 bed bungalow with shared use layout.
- 2 x 1 bed cottage flats.

All properties have private parking and garden areas.

**To register your interest, please email [shona@gigha.org.uk](mailto:shona@gigha.org.uk)  
or telephone 01583 505390.**

**You will then be issued an application form  
and a copy of the allocation policy. Applications must be submitted  
by Friday 18th April 2025. Priority will be given to existing Gigha  
residents. Earlier applications remain valid.**

**Viewings will take place prior to offers and acceptance.**

## Visitor Levy Consultation

Argyll and Bute Council are moving forward with a Visitor Levy for the region, however, now is the time to have our say on how we think the process should be managed. Discussion points previously raised by local residents included:

- How funds are reinvested in Gigha when the Council has a limited remit on the island
- How visitors are distinguished from locals (i.e. residents staying overnight in mainland Argyll for appointments, ferry cancellations, etc).
- How small businesses are expected to manage an additional administrative function
- The VAT implications for businesses

You can complete the consultation as a resident and a business - it is important that Gigha is well represented, so please take the time to complete the consultation prior to April 10<sup>th</sup>. Even if you are not an accommodation provider or tourism business, the levy will have an impact. Paper copies are available from the Trust office if required.

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/recreation-and-leisure/argyll-and-bute-visitor-levy-your-voice-matters/visitor-levy-0?](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/recreation-and-leisure/argyll-and-bute-visitor-levy-your-voice-matters/visitor-levy-0?fbclid=IwY2xjawJOGLhleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHZSiZKtDNTki3Buvy5S0972N1_u1kVxY3tyYxCOaDujkasbOELkEhMnbLw_aem_EbLkmc2cprIndKQbmEsJuA)

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## Gigha Community Council – Local Place Plan

Our Gigha Community Council Local Place Plan survey was the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken of islanders' attitudes to planning and land use on the island.

Thanks to everyone who returned the questionnaire.

Islanders' views are important so we can inform Argyll and Bute Council of our wishes for Gigha over the next ten years.

We have had a 54% response, which we are told is the highest in Scotland, with Scalloway in Shetland having a 45% return. Reportedly, most communities have response rates of about 15%.

We've already completed the preliminary analysis, an advantage of closed questions, and have satisfied the 95% confidence limit with an 11% possible margin of error, so are very happy with the representative accuracy statistically.

The national strategic setting set out in Scotland's 2023 National Planning Framework 4 was the base position for our Gigha household attitude survey and our community's views are fully referenced to this national guidance.

We'll be producing a full report on the results in the next month or so.

## Eilean Garbh north beach

Photo courtesy of Keith Wilson



## Gigha Primary School and Early Learning Centre

This month we have been busy creating! Earlier in the month we took part in the 'Sewing for Hope' project with The Kilmartin Museum. The project saw pupils, staff and members of the pupils create a felted design which will form part of a patchwork quilt. These quilts represent our wishes for the environment and shared individual thoughts and messages. The finished quilts will initially be on display in The Kilmartin Museum before forming part of a display in the National Museums of Scotland. We are delighted to have been a part of this project and look forward to visiting Kilmartin to see the finished work.

Following January's storm, pupils have also taken advantage of the amount of sea glass and pottery which has been washed up on our shores. Over three visits, pupils collected different 'treasures' from which they have designed and created their own sea glass creations. It has been amazing to see such unique, carefully thought out designs. These will be on display in the Sound of Gigha Art Gallery in June and we look forward to sharing our work with you.



In the ELC, children have been learning about children who help them and have been visited by Claire the Nurse. The children loved finding out about Claire's job and some of the exciting things she keeps in her bag!

Finally we would like to bring your attention to the current vacancy within the school for a Lunchtime Classroom Assistant. The post, which is two hours a day, initially until July, will be based within the Primary Classroom and will support children during lunch and playtime. There is some flexibility around the hours for this post which can be found at <https://myjobscotland.gov.uk/councils/argyll-bute-council/jobs/classroom-assistant-elc-418317>

I would like to wish you all a very Happy Easter.

Kind regards, Mrs Vipurs

## Seasonal Maintenance Operative

We are looking for a seasonal maintenance operative to join the team! 30 hours per week on a fixed term basis for 6 months (Apr-Sep / May-Oct 2025). Personal protective equipment and uniform will be provided for the post.

To apply, please submit a covering letter and CV. Applications should be made by 5pm on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Email: [office@gigha.org.uk](mailto:office@gigha.org.uk)