



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the July 2021 Gigha News

Dear Member,

Please find enclosed this month's newsletter and a copy of June 2021 Board minutes.

Regards,

Ian Wilson
Chair

For and behalf of The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

AGM date

Although Covid-19 restrictions are easing, there is still concern within the community about larger public gatherings. Therefore, the AGM will be held virtually again this year. The proposed date for the AGM is Thursday 16th September. Details will be issued in August ahead of the AGM.

Big Lottery

The Big Lottery contributed a considerable amount of money to help the community buyout happen in 2002. One of the conditions, however, was that they had security (this is the legal term for the condition of lending by the Big Lottery) over Gigha for 80 years. We are delighted to confirm that the Big Lottery security over Gigha has been discharged early after nearly 20 years of community ownership. The Big Lottery have recognised the efforts that IGHT has made, therefore have decided to remove all securities ahead of our 20th year of community ownership. The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved for their support, hard work and dedication.

Water Consumption

Water plays a vital role in our daily lives, from drinking tap water to washing, cooking, cleaning and gardening. We use it almost every moment, every day, and warmer weather and "staycationing" means we will be using more than usual, so Scottish Water have suggested some simple ways that we can save our precious water source here on Gigha for the benefit of each other and the planet!

Please visit

<https://www.yourwateryourlife.co.uk/watersaving/> for ways to reduce your water consumption.



Every Drop Counts

Our friends at Scottish Water want to share some important messages with you – please follow the advice and help protect our precious water resources

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth or shaving

Take shorter showers

Use a watering can instead of a hose

Use a bucket & sponge to clean the car

Whatever the weather, there are lots of small steps we can take in & around the home to save water, save energy & reduce your personal carbon footprint. It's good for the planet & your pocket!

Community Nurse retirement

Anne Shaw, Gigha's Community Nurse for the last 22 years, is retiring at the end of July. We would like to thank Anne for her dedication to the Gigha community and we wish her well in her retirement.

Screen Machine

The Screen Machine is returning to Gigha on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th August showing Peter Rabbit 2; documentaries Small Country and Islands in Film; Nomadland, Black Widow and In the Heights. (Please note that showings may be subject to change).

Screen Machine

Scotland's Mobile Cinema Taigh-dhealbh Siùbhlach na h-Alba

Countryside Ranger

The bracken is well and truly taking over this month, it seems to have shot up in a blink. Whilst this is a major nuisance for those who would like to explore the island in the glorious sunshine, it is a great habitat for an amazing array of butterflies. Common blues, ringlets and small whites are frequently about the island, but a lesser known and a priority species that has recently emerged is the grayling. It seems the north end is littered with their marble-like underwing, occasionally flitting into Achamore Gardens to impress a visitor or two. But the positives of bracken aside, this month a huge task has been to clear pathways throughout the island during peak growing season. Routes such as the woodland opposite the fire station, as well as leading up to the Ogham stone, across Cnoc na Croise and into the village have been strimmed. Work has also been done to improve access around Upper Loch and out to the west, as well as up to the North Cairn – but please be patient, this is a work in progress!



This year's late spring has really been evidenced by the wildlife seen across the island. There are a number of amazing species that are really just making an appearance. Juvenile sparrowhawks, long-eared owls, and peregrine falcons are observing the village area and a number of minke whales have been roaming the waters off the west of the island. We have also seen a huge surge in bee numbers within Achamore Gardens and dragonflies galore! It seems this is a super special time for our wildlife, so keep your eyes peeled!

August will hold the first summer event programme run by the Ranger Service, please see insert for details. The events are family friendly and a great way to survey as well as protect our wildlife, from counting butterfly species and cetaceans to building bat boxes. The programme will run from 31st July to the 28th August, and it is advisable to bring some lunch with you as the events will be held from 12:00-14:00, so please join us!



Litter & Bins

We recognise that litter and overflowing bins is becoming an issue again this season. Our Countryside Ranger is keeping monitor of our bins to try avoiding overflowing, however, there is shared responsibility of bins across the island between businesses, the Local Council, and the Trust. The Trust has purchased additional bins for marine litter and have arranged collections for these. We have contacted Argyll and Bute Council to see if larger bins can be provided or arrange additional collections, however, it seems that any requests for additional bins across Argyll are being refused. In the meantime, we are encouraging our visitors to take their litter home with them if bins are full.

Gigha and Cara Parish Church

It was good to be back in the Church for a Sunday service on July 11th. We will be continuing to have services once a month for the time being. They will be on the second Sunday in the month up to December:

- 8th August with James McLellan
- 12th September James McLellan
- 10th October with Anne McIvor
- 14th November with Douglas Allan
- 12th December with James McLellan

At the moment there will still be limited numbers and masks will be worn but things might change and we will let you know by posting notices on the Church board, the noticeboard at the shop and in the Hotel. We look forward to welcoming you into the Church again.

Campsite

Works at the Campsite has begun. We would like to remind everyone that access to the site can only be permitted by the contractor, Duncan MacGregor. Any questions regarding the build can be directed to the IGH T office.

Visitor Surveys

As part of the Gateway to Gigha project, we are evaluating our visitors experience on Gigha and how this can be improved. The visitor survey has been shared online

(www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Gigha_Visitor_Survey) and our Evaluation Consultants have carried out some in-person surveys.

We are looking for a member of the community to help us collect more in-person visitor surveys. We are offering £150 in receipt of 50 visitor surveys being completed. Our consultants have suggested that on average, up to 8 surveys can be completed every hour. You will have the flexibility to choose when suits you to collect responses, and you can ask a helper and share the money if you wish. Paper copies of the surveys, pens, and a clipboard will be provided. Please contact jane@gigha.org.uk as soon as possible if you are interested. The opportunity will be offered to the first person available.

Marketing Graduate

We would like to welcome Carly Robertson as our new Marketing Graduate. Carly is based in Campbeltown and will be making regular visits to Gigha as part of her role which is being supported by the HIE ScotGrad programme for 12 months.

Carly will be supporting the delivery of the new Visit Gigha website and online platforms* as well as working with our local businesses and marketing partners. Carly will be in touch with local businesses soon to meet everyone and understand how you wish to be represented on the new Visit Gigha platforms as well as understanding your branding and how the Visit Gigha platforms can complement this.

*The Visit Gigha website and online platforms will host information on accommodation, places to eat, attractions, local businesses, walking and cycle routes, our heritage, the Ranger service, Achamore Gardens, camping, general visitor management, and how to get to Gigha. We will be working with a web designer to develop the website, and Carly will be collecting and updating content. Carly will also be creating "content calendars" to ensure that all businesses are equally represented online and as agreed.

We understand that maintaining sustainable visitor numbers, rather than largely increasing visitor numbers, is of importance to the community. Therefore, we are proposing that the Visit Gigha branding will target:

- Those that are environmentally mindful
- Those looking for a destination of discovery and to slow down
- Those interested in our wildlife and nature
- Those that understand our sense of community
- Those that are interested in and considerate of our heritage

If you are interested in the marketing of the island, or want to share thoughts and ideas on content that should be included, please contact Carly via email at marketing@gigha.org.uk

Achamore Gardens

HES Grant - We are delighted to have secured £5,000 from the Historic Environment Scotland Support Fund for Achamore Gardens. The funding will allow us to commission a Garden Designer to help develop an initial overarching design plan for the Garden and support the overall restoration plans and the development of a long-term strategy that recognises the Garden's historic and cultural value, the changing needs of visitors, and the ongoing maintenance requirements. We have commissioned Rankin Fraser Landscape Architects for this project and look forward to working with them later this year.

Coach parking -The coach turning area opposite the Village Hall is now complete. The area is to be dedicated to coach turning and parking, as well as access for deliveries for the Gardens. Thanks to Tim Lister for doing a great job as usual!



Tesco Community Grant - We are in the customer vote for a Tesco Community Grant! It's a scheme which gives community projects like us grants of up to £1,500. Tesco customers will now vote in the Campbeltown store during July-September to decide how much funding we get, so please support us next time you shop at Tesco!

Achamore Gardens continued

General update – We are looking forward to our annual meeting with National Trust Scotland next month to review the Gardens and discuss our 10-year development plan for Achamore. A 10-year development plan has been prepared on the basis of the Head Gardeners restoration projects and how this can be funded and sustained. Once the initial design work with Rankin Fraser is completed, we would like to share details of the proposed restoration plans with the community and have your feedback. The plans are all dependent upon securing funding and are designed to be sustainable for the finances and resources available. Hopefully, feedback can be received in the form of a drop-in session at the Gardens later this year.

Gateway to Gigha

Paths Network – Our first shipments of path-building rock are ready for loading at Glendanda quarry and by the time you read this hopefully they will have arrived at the South Pier. Our enormous thanks go to Colin Campbell for his hard and invaluable work, crunching out the costings and logistics of transportation, including onward distribution to the points at which our path builders, Tim Lister and Scott Murdoch, will start to turn the path network dream into reality! Meanwhile, Phase 2 planning is well advanced, with costings and specifications drafted for our trod or 'upland' trails, which will form loops in the south, north and west of the island, and links to heritage spots such as the Fisherman's Cave and the North Cairn.

Heritage – Following the Heritage Consultation event in the Village Hall last month, we and our Heritage Consultants Lateral North and Lucidity Media are working towards design themes for our heritage interpretation. The 'jury' is split over whether this should be timber or stone-based (anyone with strong feelings on this, please get in touch asap), and as soon as this is determined we can move on to more refined designing. We are planning to install an illustrated 'orientation' map near the ferry terminal, and interpretation boards at the Craft Workshops, Village Hall, South End (near South Pier), the start of the Eilean Garbh trail, with other interpretation at the likes of Ardailly, opposite Ridh a'Chaibheil and Carn Ban.

We also ask for input in formulating the Gateway Project's 'Community Heritage Project'. This should be led by the community rather than the Trust and is funded to the tune of up to £20,000. Ideas so far include: a small heritage centre, a 'new' standing stone to celebrate community ownership and the island's rich culture and history, and excavation and interpretation of the Ardminish Cist.

Anyone with other ideas or who would 'vote' for one of these, or anyone who would like to comment on our planned heritage interpretation, please do get in touch.

E-bikes – Following recent holiday visits and chats with e-bike rental operators on Islay and a community-run initiative on Coll, research and enquiry is now well advanced. I hope to report in next month's newsletter that our fleet of e-bikes have been ordered and that they will be ready to rent by the start of next spring!

We will be sending out a separate letter by post soon, to consult more deeply on aspects of the Project.

Contact Craig on 0755 469 2799 or at craig@gigha.org.uk

Driving on Trust Roads

Please be reminded that the speed limit on Trust roads is 10 mph. This is particularly important as the roads are so dry and there are a lot of loose stones to be aware of.



SETEAIRNSG

Watch out meteors about!

Hopefully we will get some more warm summer nights in August which will make meteor watching a joy. The meteor shower in question is the Perseids.

This year the Perseid meteor shower occurs in the late evenings/early hours of August 11, 12 and 13. The Moon won't spoil the show so this guarantees a dark sky to spot them.

Perseids are usually bright and under Gigha's dark skies you may see up to 60 meteors per hour at the shower's peak. The meteors will start to appear in mid-to-late evening.

Debris from Comet Swift-Tuttle which litters the comet's orbit is responsible for the Perseids. The debris hits the Earth's atmosphere at over 200,000km per hour, lighting up the night time with 'shooting stars'.

Meteors all come from a single point in the sky. If you trace the paths of the Perseid meteors backwards, you'd find they all come from a point in front of the constellation Perseus. But don't worry about finding Perseus (shown on the next page) - just find a dark location, look up, be patient and hopefully you will see lots of 'shooting stars' streaking across Gigha's dark night sky.

Scottish Islands Passport

The Scottish Island Passport Project is part of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, which is intended to provide visitors with a comprehensive guide to 73 Scottish Islands. The app is in the early stages of development, so any feedback on the Gigha section, or the app in general, would be greatly appreciated. Please download the app and pass any feedback or suggestions onto Carly at marketing@gigha.org.uk so that we as a community can show all that Gigha has to offer.

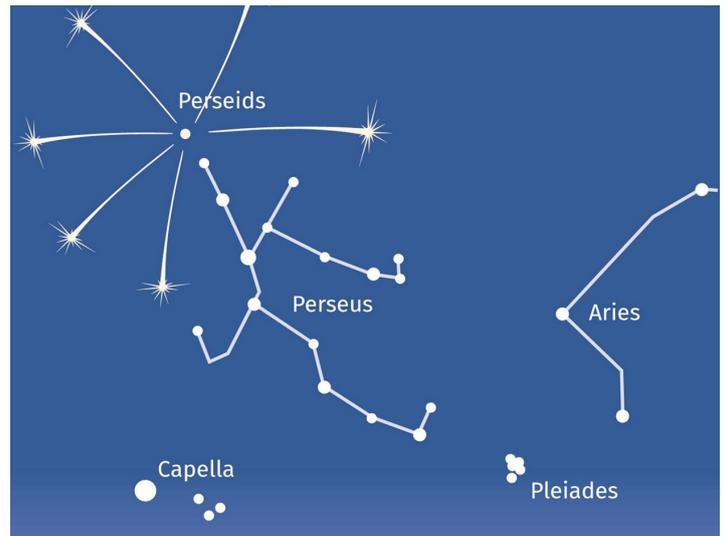
**THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS
PASSPORT APP IS NOW
LIVE FOR GIGHA**



Download our app for tips from locals, island experiences and to collect passport stamps. Head to www.islands.scot or scan the QR code below!



Seeing Stars



Countryside Ranger's Photo of the Month

The crystal clear waters of Gròb Bàgh



Main Contacts

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 For Gardens enquiries/volunteer opportunities:
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 For Marketing enquiries:
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Ranger Service &
Gigha Family Nature Club



Summer Events Programme

Join us for some summer fun helping to survey and protect our wildlife, as well as clean up our beaches! Please ring 07596855398 or email ranger@gigha.org.uk to reserve a place.



Cetacean Spotting

31st July | 12pm | MEET AT SOUTH PIER

We'll take a ramble from South Pier up to Carn an Leim to search for the magnificent creatures we have living in our waters. Please bring some sturdy shoes and some lunch. There are 6 pairs of binoculars to borrow. These are limited to one pair per family/group.

Big Butterfly Count

8th August | 12pm | MEET AT THE FIRE STATION

Join us to contribute to the Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count. We will take a walk through the woodland, around the village and finish at Rubha a Chinn Mhoir for some crafty activities. Please bring some sturdy footwear and some lunch.



Clean Up on Garbh Beaches

14th August | 12pm | MEET ON GARBH BEACHES

Come along for a relaxed beach clean. Litter pickers, bags, tea, coffee & biscuits will be provided. Please feel free to bring a picnic and a blanket to chill out on the sands.

Build a Bat Box

28th August | 12pm | MEET AT SOUTH WALLED GARDEN, ACHAMORE GARDENS

Help us to promote and protect the island's bat life by spending the afternoon creating your own bat box. Equipment provided, please feel free to bring some lunch.

