

ISLE OF GIGHA HERITAGE TRUST

NewsLetter May 2025

The IGH 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

Members Meeting

The next members meeting will be held at 7pm on Thursday 12th June in the Gigha Village Hall. A Calling Notice and Agenda has been issued - the main purpose of the meeting will to be review the Trust's financial position and consider income generating projects that will provide a sustainable and significant income source to the Trust.

Gigha Hotel & Bar

The bar in the Gigha Hotel is now fully open for the season! Opening hours are 2 till 8pm Sunday through Thursday; and 2pm till 12am on Friday and Saturday. Please be aware that there is no food service or accommodation available currently.

Recruitment is ongoing for a management team to take on the running of the hotel with view to having the hotel fully operational by 2026. There are still lots of works on-going so please bear with us while we continue to create a welcoming hotel once again.



Gigha Church in the Parish of Mid Kintyre and Gigha

Work begins on repairs to the Church on 9th June, though as I write the scaffolding is already going up and the Church is now a building site. Provision has been made for us to use the Church at the Sound of Gigha, on Saturday 7th June for a singing workshop and Sunday 8th for a Songs of Praise service. The work is due to take about 12 weeks but we will be able to use the Church or worship on the Sundays we are due to have a service. Otherwise, the Church is a BUILDING SITE and inaccessible to the general public. This first phase will be mainly on the roof and repointing of the walls. Fundraising for the second phase is ongoing. To that end we will have a sales table at the Sound of Gigha Makers Market. We will be happy to sell anything (legal!) at the table. Donations gratefully received!

We have enjoyed having the Furbochs at the Church but they will be moving on soon. First to the Sound of Gigha festival and then on to pastures new.

Upcoming services:

8th June Songs of Praise 12noon (looking for favourite hymns with a musical theme)

22nd June with Rev Lyn Peden 12 noon

29th June joint service with the rest of the linked parish 12 noon

Save the Date!

IGHT Members Meeting – 12th June at 7pm, Gigha Village Hall

Gigha Village Hall

To book the Gigha Village Hall please email gighavillagehall@gmail.com or telephone Joe on 01583 505251.

Achamore Gardens

Hard to believe, but it's been just 4 months since Storm Eowyn visited our wee island. Since then, the gardens team, along with our brilliant volunteers and tree surgeons, have worked their socks off clearing up and reopening as much of the garden as we can, and I hope you will agree that they've done a brilliant job. Most recently we've managed to get the beautiful Springbank path reopened – it was closed due to a massive conifer that had toppled from the top of the ridge line, sadly crushing several important plants as it fell, before coming to rest fully across the path, and it was a bit of a head-scratcher to work out how to safely remove the tree without it slipping further down the hillside and causing yet more damage. Thankfully our tree surgeons came up with a plan and executed it perfectly, despite this head gardener's initial scepticism! We've still got a lot of work to do clearing up at the Summerhouse, so this area remains closed for now, but I hope to be able to give you better news on that front in the next newsletter.



Achamore is lucky to have access to our trio of tree experts, Euan, Jonny and Adam, and we've had a huge amount of advice, support and downright hard graft from all three, along with all the specialist equipment and machinery they've brought to the garden since the storm. None of that come cheap, but thanks to the incredible support we've had from around the world we've managed to raise over £20,000 already, which has covered the bill for most of the work we needed to get the garden safe to reopen. Literally every penny counts, and we are so grateful to all of our donors, from the child who gave up their week's pocket money, to the Hurtigruten Foundation who gave us a 1,000 Euro grant, and the anonymous donor who, incredibly, gave us £10,000 to kickstart the fundraiser. If you still wish to donate, please 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.

However, there's still a huge amount of work to do, from path repairs to tackling the swathes of damage in the shelter belts; these areas are so vital in protecting the garden, but there's several hundred trees in the shelter belts which have fallen or been severely damaged, all of which need to be made safe, and of course, new trees purchased and planted to replace them to ensure the shelter belts continue to keep the garden safe. Much of the clearing work will need to be carried out by our tree surgeons, and we also have to hire in the machinery we need to move and process the many tons of timber that are stacked around the gardens so that we can make use of this important resource, rather than letting it go to waste.

Achamore Gardens continued

All of which means we need to raise more money, a lot more money. Now that the immediate crisis and clean up are over, we're actively hunting for funders and grants which we can apply to, but we're also going to have to raise a lot of it ourselves through direct fundraising. The whole team are beavering away coming up with ways to raise the money, but we can't do it alone. We know how much your garden means to you, and we know that Gighans never back down from a fundraising challenge, so now we are asking for your help.

- Have you got an idea for a fundraising event we could run?
- Fancy doing a sponsored something for the gardens?
- Are you a keen crafter or a business owner who could donate a fantastic prize to the online raffle we're planning?
- Perhaps you are a social media whizz who could help the team tell Achamore's story, or a keen photographer who'd be happy to help with some lovely images.

Every penny counts, and so does every bit of effort, so please get in touch and share your ideas.



Isle of Gigha Ranger Service

What a May we have had! It has been beautiful and always seems to be one of the best months for wildlife, which has made our summer surveys an absolute joy. This year we have started weekly Shorewatches. An initiative by Whale and Dolphin Conservation to conduct 20 watches a month to spot cetaceans, and also monitor wider ocean-based activity from feeding birds, pinnipeds (seals), and vessel movement. Up to now we haven't been lucky enough to spot any whales or dolphins on the official watch, but we have had sightings of both dolphins and minke whales at the north end of the island. Let us know if you would like to join us on a Shorewatch, it's a lovely way to spend an hour, especially in the sunshine!



Our weekly butterfly transects have also started up again, and this month the island is FULL of small heath and green-veined white butterflies, and we even spotted our first painted lady! We expect the abundances of different species to differ month to month, as the summer progresses we will expect to see less small heaths or orange tips, and we are likely to see more meadow browns and red admirals.



The conservation volunteers have had a pretty long hiatus, but we were back with a bang starting up our monthly Bioblitz in Achamore Gardens. We managed to spot so many pond creatures including dragonfly nymph, mayfly larvae, midge larvae, caddis fly larvae, toad tadpoles, damselfly nymph, and even a diving beetle larvae trying to eat a poor tadpole!

We haven't seen many toad tadpoles in the pond at Achamore Gardens, and we are wondering whether this is because there are so many successful predators that we always record on surveys such as beetle larvae and dragonfly nymphs which are ruthless! We also spotted some wonderful birds including willow warbler, blackcap, chiffchaff, barn swallow, siskin and song thrush. There has also been a number of owl sightings across the island lately, please get in touch if you see an owl, we would love to know what you're spotting!

Isle of Gigha Ranger Service continued

Our summer focus this year will be to create as many bird and bat nest boxes as possible. The loss of so many trees across the island during the storms has meant that many species have lost their preferred habitat found in mature trees, so we are aiming to mitigate this with a few boxes here and there to help. It seems an unusual time of year to be making boxes, as National Nest Box Week falls in February, but there are many arguments to say that a box that is in situ longer may be more successful as birds are getting used to the new furniture. This is also the case for bats that are currently frantically feeding, fattening up to mate in autumn when they will hibernate over the winter. They will use these boxes for a safe and stable place to roost, raise their young, and hibernate!



Gigha Primary School & ELC

We started the month with the Gigha Primary School and ELC Summer Fair and Pet Show held at the school. The afternoon was very well attended and in total we raised £1038.30. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated raffle prizes and baking and who helped us to raise so much money. This will be used to help our pupils access their annual swimming lessons at Campbeltown Aqualibrium which start in June.

This month we have been enjoying the beautiful weather and have been completing many of our lessons outdoors and at the beach. Pupils have begun their new topics of World War Two and have been finding out about the lives of Evacuees during the time period. They have also discovered rationing and have been creatively thinking of meals which could be made. Older pupils have been reading the story 'Goodnight Mr Tom' and have been keen to find out what happens next when we finish each chapter.

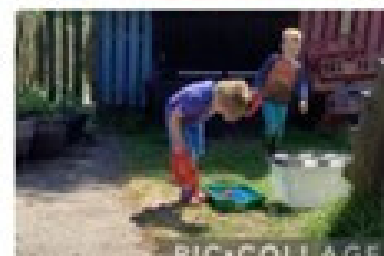
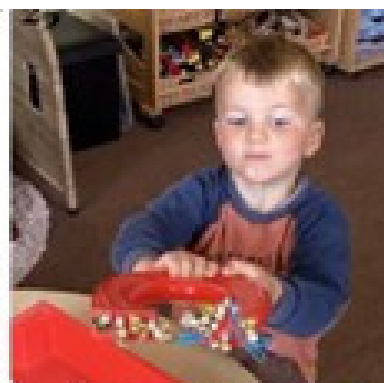


We have also been finding out about the religion of Judaism and recently went on a visit to The Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre and Synagogue in Glasgow. We found out lots about the synagogue and how Jewish food practices differ to our own. Pupils asked lots of interesting questions and were able to link new information with their current understanding.



In the ELC after finding a Bee in the Nursery Garden, pupils have been learning about the life cycle of bees and their importance in our environment. We discovered some delicious honeycomb too! Pupils have now moved on to learning about magnetic objects and have been using magnets to test items around them.

Mrs Vipurs, Head Teacher



Friday Evening

WEEKEND WARM-UP

Friday 7-Late
Gigha Village Hall

ARCHIE & ARRAN McALLISTER
&
SGÓRR CEILIDH
SOLD OUT



Saturday Evening
THE BIG GIG
Saturday 7-Late
Gigha Village Hall

CULLA
&
BELUGA LAGOON
SOLD OUT
Followed by Late Night Disco
Food available to purchase

Saturday Daytime

FAMILY FUN DAY

11.45 Opening Parade & Kintyre Schools
Pipe Band

Ardminish Village - 12-4
Makers' Market - Licensed Bar
Kids' Zone - Funky Chicken
Furboch Fun - Art Gallery
Bouncy Castle - Craft Tent
Festival Hub Stage
12.15 Tanya Ward
1.00 Highland Dancers
1.15 Gigha Young Voices
1.30 JayWalker
2.15 Highland Dancers
2.30 Kintyre Schools Pipe Band
3.00 Curiosity Shop

Gigha Parish Church
12.30-1.30pm Find Your Voice Workshop

The Boathouse Restaurant
presents
4-7pm Lauren O'Donoghue

Sunday Daytime

BACK TO NATURE DAY

Achamore House, 10.30-12.30
10.30-12.30 Fika Swedish Coffee Morning
11 - 12 Gigha Ukelele Group
11.30 Brogan Bannatyne

Achamore Walled Gardens 11-3
11.00 Wake Up and Stretch - Yoga for All
12 - 3.00 Kokedama &
Tie-dye drop in sessions
1.00 Achamore Gardens Tour

Gigha Parish Church
12.00 Songs of Praise

Gigha Hotel Beer Garden
2-4pm Sip and Paint*

Gigha Brewery
4-8pm Survivors' Session

*book in advance on
www.thesoundofgigha.co.uk

Saturday 7th June - The Family Fun Day

ARCHIE & ARRAN McALLISTER

&

SGÓRR CEILIDH

Friday 7th at

Gigha Village Hall

Archie and Arran McAllister will join forces to entertain for the first part of the evening.

Hailing from Campbeltown and coming from a great musical landscape they have varied musical tastes - expect driving jigs and reels, Gaelic airs and haunting renditions of local songs and covers of well-known bands.

Sgòrr, an up and coming trad band with fiddle, Highland bagpipes, drumkit, piano, vocals and whistle, will then lead us through a ceilidh.

Their sound is strongly rooted in the West Coast piping and Gaelic traditions with some added modern elements.

Makers' Market with Licensed Bar, 12-4pm

Local food produce, handmade crafts, spotlighting local skills and talent as well as a licensed bar and delicious lunch options

Art Gallery

Gigha Hotel, 12-4pm

Talented artists from Gigha will display their arts in our art gallery exhibition and the very talented children of Gigha Primary School will display their fantastic photographs. A very special judge will award the prize for best photograph.

Kids Zone, 12-4pm

Funky Chicken entertainment with face painting, Furboch Fun and Bouncy Castle. with sweets stall.

Craft tent with flower crown making, bracelet making and clay sculpture

Festival bell tents full of games and activities

Find Your Voice Workshop

Gigha Parish Church, 12.30-1.30pm

For anyone who thinks they cannot or can sing, here is a workshop focussed on breathing, vocalisation and world music. We will make a beautiful noise inspired by music from around the world.

Children must be accompanied by an adult

Venue may be subject to change

Opening Parade, 11.45am

Join us in a parade from the fire station to the Festival Hub, accompanied by the Gigha Fire Engine and the Kintyre Schools Pipe Band

Festival Hub Stage, 12-4pm

Musical entertainment throughout the day - right next to the market and the Kids' Zone. Including the Kintyre Schools Pipe Band, Tanya Ward with blues, folk and sea songs, Jay Walker, an island based DJ, as well as a wee performance by the children of Gigha Primary School.

The fantastic James McCorkindale School of Highland Dancing will also be performing a demonstration for us.

The stage will be headlined by Curiosity Shop, an alt-folk group with a unique and recognisable sound blending folk, jazz and indie influences with elements of the enduring musical traditions of Scotland.

The Boathouse Restaurant Stage, 4-7pm

presents

Lauren O'Donoghue

Keep the party going with The Boathouse Restaurant from 4-7pm, where Lauren O'Donoghue of the Laurette's will be performing outside while you sip your drinks and eat a delicious meal.



Sunday 8th June - Back to Nature Day

CULLA

&

BELUGA LAGOON

Saturday 7-Late

Gigha Village Hall

Culla will open the evening - A young up and coming lively trad band with roots in both the Outer Hebrides and the Central Belt.

The main event - Beluga Lagoon whose music encapsulates the beauty of the Scottish landscape.

Followed by Late Night Disco

Food available to purchase (cash only)



Fika Swedish Coffee Morning, with live music

Achamore House, 10.30-12.30

Per and Monica, the Swedish residents of Achamore House will be serving up delicious traditional Swedish coffee and cakes. Accompanied by live acoustic music from the Gigha Ukelele Group and Brogan Bannatyne.

Bring cash for donations for cake!

Sip and Paint

Gigha Hotel Beer Garden, 2-4pm

Join local artist Adam Murphy to capture the beauty of Gigha in this welcoming workshop in pen and watercolor sketching, designed for all skill levels.

We'll sip and sketch in the Gigha Hotel beer garden overlooking the sound—or head indoors if the weather has other plans.

Basic materials are provided

Limited places, Book online or at the Saturday Market

£10/person

Songs of Praise

Gigha Parish Church, 12 noon

A musical church service will be lead by the church elders

Nature Activities - FREE, no booking required!

Achamore Walled Gardens, 11-3pm

Wake up and Stretch - 11am

Yoga for all - join Anna Maria for a special Sunday practise using breath and movement incorporating the magical energy in Achamore Gardens - mats provided, you may wish to bring a blanket.

Natural Crafts Drop-in Sessions, 12-3pm

Kokedama Making

Kokedama are orb-like decorations made from mud, clay, moss and plants - you'll have great fun making a mess and your own Kokedama to take away

Natural Tie-dye T-shirts

Using natural dyes, we will be tie-dyeing Sound of Gigha t-shirts - the perfect souvenir from the weekend.

Achamore Gardens Tour

Meet in Achamore Walled Gardens, 1pm

The Head Gardener will lead a tour around the fabulous Achamore Gardens - expect to hear about the history and design of the Garden as well as the plants you can find and some interesting and amusing facts

Survivors' Session

Gigha Brewery Taproom, 4-8pm

For those still standing, we'll be heading up to Gigha Brewery Taproom for a final drink and a chance to reminisce about our favourite bits of the weekend.

Parking is limited - walk or cycle if you can. And bring your own instrument if you fancy a jam.