



GIGHA NEWS



Welcome to the May 2021 Gigha News

Dear Member,

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

Regards,

Ian Wilson

Chair

For and behalf of The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust

Enercon E33 "Harmony" Turbine

We have had more issues with the E33 Enercon turbine due to the length of time it has not been running. The turbine has heaters in the nacelle unit but also relies on self-generated heat to keep the electrical components dry and we now have many parts corroding due to dampness up in the nacelle housing.

The parts required are pole shoes on the generator and although these are on urgent order there is unfortunately a global shortage of them, which is not only affecting Enercon, but all turbine producers. The problem is due to issues with raw materials and also long production and logistic lead-times from manufacturers in China and globally.

As soon as the parts become available, Enercon will prioritise a team to fit them and carry out all other work required to get our turbine up and running again.

We are eligible for a compensation claim but this take many months to arrange and it will therefore be some time before we see any money coming back in.

This will also have a detrimental effect on the Trust's spend budget.

Asset Sale

IGHT tenants were asked in 2018 if they would be interested in purchasing their home. The tenants of Gallochoille House expressed an interest in purchasing their home and after an independent valuation was undertaken, we sold Gallochoille House on Friday 30th April. The new owners had rented the property for the last 9 years and have set up a business on Gigha. We would like to congratulate them and wish them all the best. The proceeds from the sale have been put towards IGHT debt reduction.

Finance Update

The cash position for the Trust is considered healthy with the Loan debt outstanding with the Trust as at 24.05.2021 at £533,375 and is expected to be reduced further by the end of the financial year to around £488,900.

The net debt position (cash available less debt repayable) of the Trust and its subsidiaries as at 24.05.2021 is £235,802.25.

Countryside Ranger

Following on from last month's update, the Ranger Service has started to carry biological monitoring on all the "B's" (birds, butterflies, bats, blossoms, bumblebees).

We seem to be suffering a fairly cold spell, and this has meant that number of bumblebees and butterflies are on hold! Our butterfly transects are located around the village and include a number of habitats including road verges, woodland and open grassland in order to make sure that we cover all the different species and their preferences. Unfortunately, our transects have counted just one butterfly... The cabbage white! But no need to fear, they are out there. Peacock butterflies have been seen flitting around Achamore Gardens and a small copper was spotted down at Leim.

We have also had low number of bumblebees and few species. Namely, the buff-tailed bumblebee and tree bumblebee are around just now and hopefully these numbers and species diversity will increase when the warmer summer winds blow our way!



Our bird surveys, however, have made up for the lack of our delicate pollinators. There are goslings and cygnets around the island just now, occasionally popping their grey fluffy heads above the rushes and out from the sides of the lochs. Our recent survey counted 5 goslings and 2 cygnets, and I'm confident there will be more around the rest of the island.

Countryside Ranger continued

Peregrine falcons and kestrels have also been spotted out on the west, having a bit of an altercation with an “unkindness” of ravens (that’s right folks, apparently the word for group of ravens is “unkindness” or “conspiracy”). And the number of house sparrow chicks is too high for my counting skills! If you happen to have a mound of mud, a raised bed or a bare area in the garden, it’s likely you’ll see these chicks ruffling their silky, fuzzy feathers amongst the dirt and dust.



The natural world is about to treat us with its summer displays and you may have already noticed a kaleidoscope of colour from the seaweed along the seashore, and an influx of bright butterfly species such as peacocks, cabbage whites and orange tips! From the end of April onwards the Ranger Service will start its summer biological monitoring of cetaceans, and all the “B’s”: blossoms, birds, butterflies, bumblebees, and bats! In the upcoming weeks, the Ranger Service will also be putting out a guided walks programme that covers the natural and historical heritage of the island, and starting up monthly events for both the community and visitors focused on nature watching. Please get in touch if there is an event you would like to see carried out, a route you would like to walk, or for more information.

June is meant to be a particularly exciting month for nature in Scotland, so here’s to the back of this cold spell, more nature sightings, and some glorious sunshine!

Achamore Gardens

We advertised a Trainee Gardener position through the Kick Start scheme. Finn Beagan was successful in securing the placement and will be working alongside the team in the Gardens for the next few months.

Visitor Management

IGHT has been awarded £7,800 from the Better Places Green Recovery Fund to help with visitor management for the 2021 season. This includes a chemical waste disposal unit to be situated at the temporary motorhome parking at the north end, information panels as part of a visitor welcome point near the ferry slip, and materials to build beach cleaning bins.

Visitor leaflets for the 2021 season have now been printed and are in various locations across the island. If you would like some for your business, please contact the office. We are also expecting to receive leaflets from Explore Kintyre as part of the K66, so these will also be distributed.

A message from the Scottish Salmon Company

Dear Neighbours,

Due to the continued strengthening of health and safety, biosecurity and auditing levels within the aquaculture industry, we have had to review how people are accessing our shore base at Highfield. To allow us to manage our biosecurity, site security and health and safety to the standards required, we have had to change our approach and now require that any visits to the shore base are by previous appointment only.

We are aware that there are boats moored in the adjacent bay and this will mean people require access to the site and the use of the pier from time to time. We would greatly appreciate anyone who does letting us know in advance either by phone/text on 07551 129582/01583 505319 or email: ross.fennell@scottishsalmon.com. This will help us manage safe access to the site.

Ross Fennell

Marine Sites Manager, Isle of Gigha

Marketing Graduate

We are recruiting a Marketing Graduate to join the team! The post, which is being supported by Scot Grad, will be for 12 months and will support the implementation of the new Visit Gigha website as well as developing relationships with local businesses and marketing partners. To find out more visit: <https://bit.ly/3fIDjEz> or email jane@gigha.org.uk for any informal enquiries.

STV Filming

We would like to thank all residents for their cooperation during the last month whilst STV have been on island. This was a new experience for Gigha, and we hope that members of the community and local businesses have benefited from this experience. We hope that the coverage of Gigha will showcase what a great destination Gigha is.

Gateway to Gigha – Update from Project Manager Craig Whyte

As I write this, my colleagues and I are in the process of offering contracts for the Phase 1 path construction work. It's just a little too early to divulge the outcomes of the appointment process but you will hear more about this in the next newsletter.

Also on the paths front, Scott (Path Designer), Casey-Jo and I have been out on our Phase 2 trails – the upland-style natural ones, including the proposed southern and northern loops and the western route, linking Ardlamy to the road south of Tarbert, via Ardailly. As part of this we are thinking more and more about how and where the island's incredibly rich heritage should be interpreted. The visit of Lateral North and Lucidity Media, our heritage consultants, at the end of last month pushed us a big step towards determining which Gigha stories to tell and how we might tell them. We are planning to hold a 'heritage stories' event at the Village Hall on the weekend of 26th/27th June (Covid depending). You are more than welcome to come view and hear our ideas and, importantly, help mould them.

And staying on the heritage theme, I am looking for input to help decide the focus of Gateway's 'Community Heritage Project'. Suggestions have included: A new heritage-inspired sculpture, perhaps based on a standing stone, celebrating community ownership and empowerment; Developing a Heritage Centre in the workshop next to the Craft Units (perhaps with a small genealogy section); Showcasing and interpreting the small cist opposite the school; Protecting and presenting the medieval slabs at Kilchattan – perhaps recreating the medieval warrior effigy. We're open to ideas!

And one final plea... If anyone has any expertise in electric bikes, I could use a second (or third) opinion on what's required for Gigha's roads and tracks. We need to order our fleet of e-bikes (for hire) soon to ensure we will have them in time for the start of the 2022. Such is the new demand for Active Travel!

craig@gigha.org.uk Tel: 07554 692799

First Aid Training

Arrangements are being made for Trust staff to undergo First Aid training. As there may be additional spaces available on the course, please contact the office to register an interest if you wish to attend. The date and costs involved are still being agreed with the trainer.

Our Island - Photo Story Competition

This is a competition with a slight difference! We are looking for the story behind or within the photos. This could be a memory of an event at the place (e.g. a family picnic, cattle show, new home), or could be a story from the past (e.g. the Bodach and Cailleach), or it could also be a fictional or imagined story or a story happening right now (e.g. the STV filming)!

To enter please submit:

- Up to 3 photos of a place on Gigha with up to 500 words which describe the story being told by the photos.
- Entrants need to be sent to Ellie Logan by email by 5pm on Friday 4 June - shesingsalways@gmail.com (or on a memory stick if email is going to be difficult)

We will have prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and the competition is open to all current residents of Gigha of any age.

In submitting an entry, you will be giving permission for the photos to be used by the Our Island project. We may feature these online, in the final film, and would like at some point to display them somewhere on the island.



Gigha Internet

Despite being in touch with BT we are not able to report any progress. A follow up was sent via BT Local Business on the 7th May but we have received no response. We are following up yet again and await a survey booking.

Campsite

We are pleased to announce that Duncan MacGregor Joiners and Builders Ltd have been awarded the contract for the Campsite construction. The contractor is expected to start on site at the beginning of July for a 23-week build period.



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Gigha Eclipse Watch and Seeing Stars

With the light early summer nights you won't see many stars unless you stay up late. But don't despair, because we have one star close by that is going to put on a show for us on June 10 in the daytime! A 'ring of fire' or annular eclipse will take place over the Arctic but here on Gigha we will see what is known as a partial eclipse of the Sun. It will look like the Moon is taking a bite out of the Sun! An eclipse happens at the time of a new Moon when the Sun, Moon and Earth align themselves in a straight line and the Moon passes in front of the Sun. The alignment this time however isn't perfect so we only see part of the Sun being covered by the Moon. The Moon will first appear to take a bite out of the Sun at around 10:10am and will reach maximum eclipse around 11.15am and then move off the Sun by 1.20pm on 10 June, 2021. From Gigha, around 30% of the Sun will be covered by the Moon so you won't notice a reduction in sunlight. Even if it is partially cloudy at least some of the eclipse should be visible. Looking at the Sun with your naked eyes or through sunglasses is dangerous - it can cause serious permanent eye damage. You need to use solar eclipse glasses to ensure your eyes stay safe. Dark Skies Gigha will be holding a Gigha Eclipse Watch for adults and children in front of the Craft Workshops between 11.00-11.30am on June 10. We will provide special sun safety glasses for you to use to observe the eclipse. A magnified projection of the eclipse will also be set up for you to see. Why not take a few minutes out of your day to join us for the eclipse on Gigha. Please follow Covid-19 guidance and observe social distancing. Keith Wilson



Members Meeting

We hosted our first virtual members meeting in April 2021, which was also our first ever members meeting hosted by our young Director and with updates being provided by the IGHT staff team.

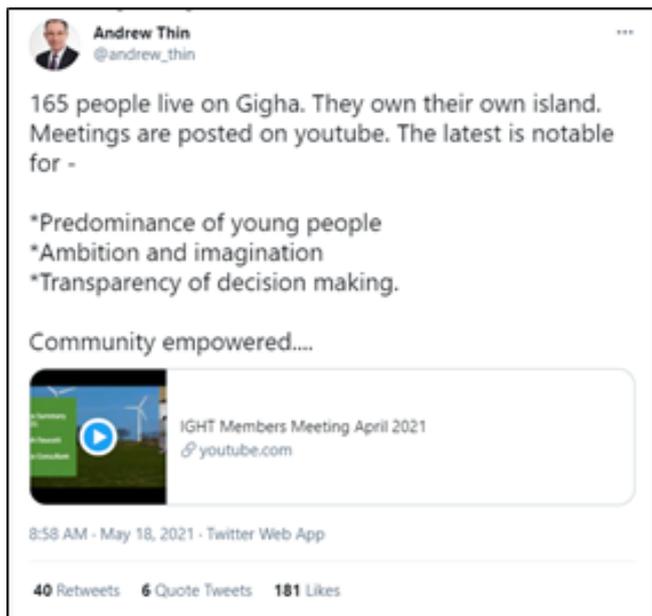
The meeting has been uploaded to YouTube and has since received over 300 views: IGHT Members Meeting April 2021 - YouTube

The meeting link was shared in our members newsletter as well as on our website and Facebook page. The meeting received positive feedback from our members, as well as by other stakeholders online. We have attached copies of the comments that have been posted. It is really encouraging to see the progress Gigha has made being recognised and so highly praised. Gigha would not be in the position it is today without continued support and guidance from our stakeholders, funders, private benefactors, and lenders, whom we wish to acknowledge and thank for their continued assistance over the years, mainly:

- Community Land Scotland
- Development Trust Association Scotland
- Friends of Gigha
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Nationwide Building Society
- OSCR
- Scottish Government
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Scottish Land Fund
- Triodos Bank

Finally, with thanks to our community, including residents, volunteers, Directors, and employees who have worked incessantly to make the community ownership model succeeded this far. We look forward to celebrating 20 years of community ownership in March 2022.





Countryside Ranger's Photo of the Month



Countryside Ranger Guided Walks

- An Introduction to Gigha: Wednesday 2nd and 16th June. Meet at Village Hall 12pm.
 - The Past and the Future: Wednesday 9th and 23rd June. Meet at Village Hall 12pm.
 - Southern Shoreline Circuit: Wednesday 30th June. Meet at South Pier 12pm.
- All walks must be booked in advance by 4pm the Tuesday before the walk by emailing ranger@gigha.org.uk.



Gigha Primary School

It has been a busy time at school and the children have very much enjoyed working with several different partners in learning to develop their skills for learning, life and work. Thank you to everyone who has worked with us over the last few months as these opportunities and supportive relationships have helped children to broaden digital learning skills, their outdoor safety, water and adventure skills and their understanding of music and media, filmmaking, animation and local history.

The children have planned their summer term to include many of the activities that can be enjoyed outside at this time of year. We would welcome your continued help with the following:

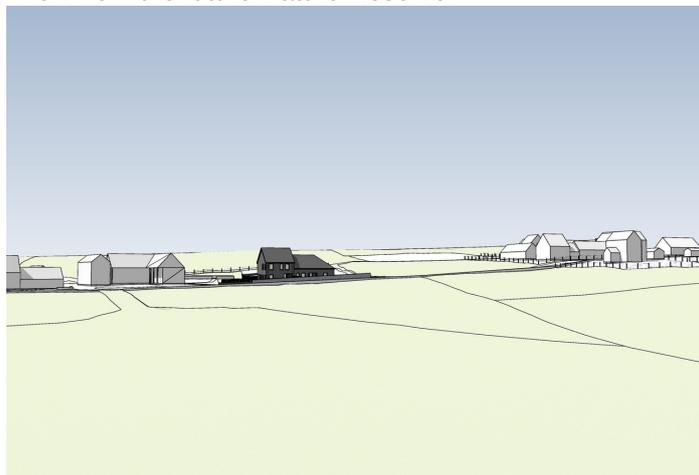
1. Our Plant and Seed swap table is up and running at the end of the school car park driveway. Please help yourself to seeds and plants on the table top and if there is anything you can swap for them we would be happy for you to leave it in the boxes under the table. Any donations for our food growing garden and Bee Wild pollination wild garden gratefully received.
2. The children and families will be engaged in a sponsored walk to raise money for their gardening and food growing activities. The challenge is to visit the three 'peaks' to the north of the island. The walk will take place on Saturday 5th June from 10am – 12noon and will involve visiting places around the beach and pathways. If you are travelling to the north end next Saturday, please be aware that there might be extra cars parked and also families walking on short bits of the road.

The children are entering a competition about making infographics based on data collected from households about energy use, waste, travel and impacts on climate change. There will be some surveys where households will be asked to collect data over the period of a week. Please look out for these and contribute data if you can, as it is a great opportunity to support the children in taking action on issues that are important to them.

Housing Development Update

In 2019 we commissioned Community Housing Scotland to carry out a survey on housing and community needs. There were 54 responses to the survey, representing 132 people. 91% said they permanently reside on Gigha, which is a good representation of the community's views. 17 people expressed a desire to move on, or back to, Gigha. This accounted for island residents, those looking to leave home and set up their own home, and those who have left the island but wish to return. The overall preference was for 1 or 2 bedroom homes.

IGHT has therefore proceeded with developing plans for 5 affordable housing on the site adjacent to the Craft Workshops. This will consist of 3 x 2 bedroom cottages and 2 x 1 bedroom flats. Collective Architecture have been working hard on the design and we are pleased to now be able to share these and welcome any comments. View from the future Nature Reserve:



Main Contacts

For general IGHT enquiries:

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For development enquiries: jane@gigha.org.uk

For housing and estate enquiries:

office@gigha.org.uk

For all GTL enquiries:

trading@gigha.org.uk Tel: 01583 427300

For accounts/finance enquiries:

ightcentralaccounts@gigha.org.uk

For Gardens enquiries/volunteer opportunities:

gardens@gigha.org.uk