

ISLE OF GIGHA HERITAGE TRUST NewsLetter April 2025

The IGHTR 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 will be issued in advance, but the main purpose of the meeting will be to review the Trust's financial position and consider income generating projects that will provide a sustainable and significant income source to the Trust.

Hotel - Volunteering

We have had expressions of interest to help volunteer to tidy up the outside of the Hotel. We are arranging a volunteering day on Friday 9th May from 10am. If you have gardening gloves, please bring them as we will be tackling the weeds and doing a general tidy up out the front and in the beer garden.

Gigha Hotel & Bar

We are excited to share that the Hotel Bar will now be open from weekend from Friday 25th April! The bar opening hours are Fri & Sat 2-11pm and Sun 2-8pm. Hours may increase depending on demand as we head into the summer season.

We are still on the hunt for a Hotel Manager. We were unable to secure a lessee so have now advertised for an employment opportunity – deadline is the 12th of May. The post holders would be employees of GTRL, and the Hotel would operate in a similar fashion to the Campsite.

In the meantime, there are still works on-going with replacing windows, upgrading heating and rewiring the ground floor.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY - GIGHA HOTEL

The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust is looking to employ a dynamic couple to manage the Gigha Hotel with a commission share or performance-based bonus. Salary guide is £50k per annum including on-site accommodation within the Hotel.

The employment will be full time and will involve running of the bar, restaurant and bedrooms on a phased operational basis, with view to being fully operational by 2026.

We're looking for a team who will be the heart and soul of the hotel, bringing experience in hospitality and a willingness to get stuck into the day to day running of the hotel.

The hotel is at the heart of the community and offers one of the only places for islanders to socialise, especially during the winter months. We are looking for employees who will embrace island life, support the local economy, and make Gigha their home.

Just a stone's throw from the beach, the Gigha Hotel has 12 bedrooms, a cozy bar, and a homely restaurant. Situated on the picturesque Isle of Gigha, a 20-minute ferry ride from the mainland, our island offers natural beauty and a welcoming local community.

Gigha is a community owned island, 7 miles long by a mile and a half wide, three miles west of the Kintyre peninsula, less than three hour drive from the city of Glasgow. The Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust owns several of the island's assets, including the Hotel.

If you share our passion to make the Gigha Hotel the heart of the community, we invite you to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

Please email shona@gigha.org.uk or telephone 01583 505390 for full details. Applications must be submitted by 12th May 2025.



Stan Uttley

Sadly, we have learned of the passing of Gigha's oldest resident, Stan Uttley. Stan was well known within the community and frequented the Gigha Hotel pub in recent years. Our thoughts are with Stan's family.

Save the Date!

Transport Users Group Meeting – 15th May at 7pm, Gigha Village Hall

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

New Housing

Applications for the new housing has now passed. We were pleased to have received a plenty of applications. Those that are not offered a new property should get in touch with the office if they wish to remain registered with Home Hunt for other Trust properties that become available.

Gigha Village Hall

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

Gigha Parish Church

Services for May will be at 12 noon. May 11th will be a communion service and May 25th will be Songs of praise. So if you have a favourite hymn now is the time to let us know so that it can be included in the service.

Easter Sunday service was held at A'Chleit and there were people from all 5 churches at it. It was lovely to see the church so full. For those who don't know which churches are in our parish they are Tarbert, Skipness, Clachan, A'Chleit and Gigha. We arrived over in time to partake of breakfast before the service! A roll filled with bacon, sausage, mushrooms!! With so many people together the singing was great. The service was also zoomed to a couple of households. This seems to be the way forward for services when the Minister is unable to get over.

The work on the church is getting nearer to being started. The scaffolding has arrived on site! The creepy crawly quiz to help raise money for the work was won by Gail McIntosh from Carradale. A new quiz will be out soon and will be available from me, Morven and the Wee Isle Cafe.

Susan

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.

Achamore Gardens

We are pleased to have the Gardens reopen to the public from the 5th of April!

The ticket office was badly damaged in the storm, so will be demolished in the next few weeks. However, thanks to help from the wider Trust staff team, we've given the old visitor cabin a bit of a spruce up and both cash and contactless honesty boxes are up and running there now.



Island Ranger Service

April, woohoo, we are moving out of the chill and into the... less chilly! What a great start to the Spring. Now that Achamore Gardens is open, the plethora of birds including the migrants can be heard in full force, a true delight! In those moments you often find in Achamore, where there is a peace with a back drop of birds, chiff chaffs, great tits, blackbirds, blackcaps, robins, goldfinches, chaffinches, bullfinches, grey herons, ravens, and buzzards can all be heard making their cheery sounds, and filling the Gardens with a tweeting orchestra! Just beautiful! We have also already spotted the terns, gannets and a number of cetaceans in the bay. Just marvellous.



We have now finished our Protecting Gigha's Woodlands Projects. The project has managed to achieve 15 hectares of invasive non native species removal including Rhododendron ponticum, skunk cabbage and Himalayan balsam, and planted 2270m of hedgerow, working out at approximately 13,600 trees! The invasive species will be an ongoing battle for quite the number of years as seeds can lay dormant between 1 and 7 years for the above plants. However, this has been such an excellent start and has made space in some of our best habitats including heathlands on the west of the island, and freeing up our broadleaf woodlands for natural regeneration and greater diversity! The hedgerows will also increase the islands biodiversity, with the hope of providing habitat for birds, butterflies, moths, bats and small mammals, creating food sources, connected wildlife corridors, and improved boundaries across agricultural land. We are delighted with the outcomes of the project as Gigha's first landscape scale environmental initiative, and to ensure its success we will continue to remove and treat the invasive species and hope to secure additional funding to help us do this. We want to thank ALL the volunteers who helped this project succeed, from the those who helped remove Rhododendron ponticum over the last few years, to those who worked so hard to plant all these amazing native trees species. Our projects would not be possible without the work of volunteers, and Gigha is so fortunate to have such an awesome group of people that are so willing to chip in!



Isle of Gigha Ranger Service Continued

Next in the exciting project list is our recent archaeological dig at Kilchattan Chapel. The site is a 13th Century Scheduled Monument and has been recorded to have over 30 gravestones within its walls. A group of keen local volunteers have been working tirelessly over the last few years to keep the vegetation at bay so that we do not lose these stones, but despite all the efforts, it has been a real challenge in keeping them visible. Thanks to the Gigha Community Fund and the funds raised from the auction in autumn 2024 organised by June & Gordon Watson, we managed to secure Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Environment Scotland and bring Argyll Archaeology over to the chapel to rediscover the sites gravestones. We had an absolutely brilliant two days and managed to find all but two of the previously recorded gravestones. We used previous records of the chapel floor to inform our dig and only removed vegetation where we were likely to find overgrown stones. Very carefully we removed the turf and top soil by hand with small trowels and brushes, digging a slightly deeper trench around the outsides of the stones to encourage water run off where pooling water on the stone surface could damage the carvings, under the instruction and watch of our archaeologist, Clare. We were also under the watchful eye of Historic Environment Scotland during an inspection of the dig, where we had a super exciting moment! We unearthed an unrecorded stone depicting a sword and ornate floral pattern, similar to other gravestones across the site which can now be added to the official records of the chapel! The next phase was to formally map and record each stone, their size, shape, features and location, as well as measure the soil levels once the dig was finished. The next step is to gain recommendations from Argyll Archaeology and Historic Environment Scotland on how we can best preserve and conserve these stones for the future. It was a true pleasure and honour to be a part of this project, and again, this was only possible due to the enthusiasm and effort of local volunteers. We can't wait to see what's next for this site.



Dark Skies Gigha

Dark Skies Camera

Dark Skies Gigha continues to host a group of young people who are leading our All-Sky Camera project so that we can see what the skies over Gigha look like at any time by accessing the camera online. People will be able to stargaze over Gigha from the comfort of their own home! We are working with two other Scottish islands who will hopefully each have a camera so this is a great chance to meet young people from different places and also to be involved in new technologies and space science career opportunities at school, college and beyond.



Co-Op Community Fund

For those of you who are Co-op members, you can choose Dark Skies Gigha as the annual recipient of your vote for community funding. Read about our project, click the tab at the top to sign in as a member and choose DSG in one simple step: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/93490>. Please send this link to friends and family across the UK – anyone can become a Co-op member and vote for Dark Skies Gigha. The more votes we get the more funding comes our way for festivals and events so please encourage people to sign up for membership and vote for us! You also have a chance to be one of ten members each month to win £500 for yourself and £5,000 for Dark Skies Gigha if you swipe your card at the local co-op and have Dark Skies Gigha as your chosen membership charity. How cool would that be!

Sky Watching Packs

Look out for the launch of our Dark Skies Gigha Sky Watching Packs which can be booked out by holiday makers and visitors as well as Gigha folk. The packs include binoculars, red-light torches, information leaflets and guidebooks to support seasonal nature connection, daytime sky watching and nighttime stargazing activities of all kinds.

Bookable Walks and StarGazing Sessions

Our trained Dark Skies Gigha volunteers are ready to support bookable daytime walks and evening stargazing sessions for groups of six or more, which we plan to make available all summer from June onwards. These will be suitable for all ages and will include some of the following themes:

- Catching some Sun – A guided walk looking at seasonal nature linked to our solar calendar. Learn about our solar system, create sun prints and make a pinhole calendar to take home.
- Walking Under Wildskies – A guided walk looking at the seasonal and astronomical forces which shape our skies. Come cloud watching and try to predict the weather, learn about the animals of the air, fly kites and catch the power of the skies!
- Voyaging with Vikings – A guided walk to some ancient sites on Gigha with storytelling and drama. Create some constellations and learn how the Vikings navigated using the stars and made their voyage to Gigha a success!
- Chasing the Moon – A guided walk with storytelling and nighttime nature watching. Chase the moon with us, learn some cool moon facts, look at some nighttime creatures who enjoy moonlight.
- Eyeing up Stars – Come stargazing with us, watch for shooting stars, pick out the planets and learn about our seasonal night skies.

Upcoming Events

We hope to launch our online and in person versions of Celtic Moon Club at the beginning of June. Look out for more details soon.

Annual Perseids Party Weekend – 7th -10th August 2025

If anyone would like to lend a hand with any of the above events, train to be a DSG volunteer or share their expertise and experience in our workshops and clubs, we would like to hear from you. Dark Skies Gigha can be reached by email at dark.skies.gigha@gmail.com



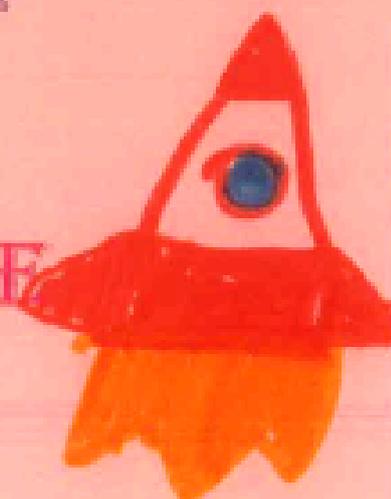
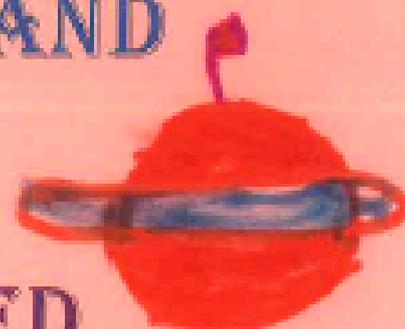
ON SATURDAY 3RD OF MAY
GIGHA PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND ELC ARE HAVING A
SUMMER FAIR.

11:15PM PET SHOW

AT 12-2PM AFTERNOON
TEA, BOTTLE STALL AND
RAFFLE.

THE MONEY WE RAISED
WILL HELP US TO HAVE
SWIMMING LESSONS.

PLEASE WILL YOU COME
AND SUPPORT US.



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY
HEAT IN - COLD OUT

NON-MEANS TESTED GRANTS ARE
AVAILABLE TO INSTALL INSULATION
MEASURES IN YOUR HOME.

FOR FREE & IMPARTIAL ENERGY ADVICE
AND TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST PLEASE
CONTACT OUR REFERRAL PARTNER:

HOMEENERGYSCOTLAND.ORG
0808 808 2282

FUNDED BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT



Argyll and Bute Council have been awarded Scottish Government funding through the “*Energy Efficient Scotland - Area Based Scheme*”, to provide non-repayable and non-means tested grants of between £9,000 and £13,500 (plus rural uplifts where applicable) for the installation of energy efficiency measures to eligible householders in Argyll and Bute:

- Owner Occupiers and Private Rented Householders in Council Tax band A-C Properties
- Owner Occupiers in Council Tax band D Properties with an EPC of E, F or G
- Island Properties In addition to above eligibility, Council Tax Band E and above with an EPC of E, F or G (subject to approval)
(second/holiday/empty homes are not eligible)

Argyll and Bute Council’s Energy Efficiency Team administer the Scheme, with the contract for works between the Householder and the Councils Trusted Contractor, BCA Insulation Ltd. They will:

- *Carry out a Technical Survey and Energy Performance Certificate for your property, **at no cost to you**, and will determine the most suitable insulation measure(s) for your property’s construction type*
- *Provide a quote for works recommended for your property (normally at no cost to you)*
- *Install the measures*

Should you require more information, please contact:

Jacqueline Westerman, Home Energy Efficiency Project Officer
01586-555943 jacqueline.westerman@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Brenda Galbraith, Housing Improvement Assistant, Energy Efficiency
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