

# ISLE OF GIGHA HERITAGE TRUST

## NewsLetter August 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](mailto:directors@gigha.org.uk)

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

Services in the church for September

- Sunday 14th September at 12 noon led by Jim Malcolm
- Sunday 28th September at 12 noon Harvest Thanksgiving

Gifts of non perishable goods will be donated to the Gigha food bank.

Work on the church building is progressing well and hopefully this first phase will be finished by the end of September. This will make the building wind and watertight. The vents on the roof are to be reinstated which will allow for better air circulation.

Bev the Rev Furboch has been greeting visitors in the church at Sunday services as well as going to Clachan for the Church's prayer shawl meeting but regretfully she was unable to attend the Furboch ceilidh. On the last Sunday in August she will be going to Skipness for the joint service and to meet with Brendan.

### Gigha Hotel

As summer is coming to an end and the island is slowing down a bit we're winding down our daytime hours through the week, but our weekend and evening hours will remain the same!

New opening hours will be:

- MONDAY 3PM - 10PM
- TUESDAY CLOSED
- WEDNESDAY 3PM - 10PM
- THURSDAY 3PM - 10PM
- FRIDAY 12PM - 12AM
- SATURDAY 12PM - 12AM
- SUNDAY 12PM - 10PM

Thanks for your continued support!

### Gigha Village Hall

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

### Gigha Primary School & ELC

It was lovely to see all our children back after the summer and to hear about what they have been up to over the summer. Pupils also met our new Teacher, Ms Podlesny, who started with us this term and will predominantly be working in the Early Level. There has also been a change of roles within the school with Michelle Bannatyne taking on the position of Childcare and Education Worker in the ELC, joined by Jamie Penfold as Classroom Assistant. Kayleigh Hawthorn has joined Mrs Flett and myself in the classroom as ASN Assistant. From next week Bailey Bannatyne will also be joining the school as Classroom Assistant, covering lunches and delivering Literacy and Numeracy supports as well as covering Clerical duties until Tracy Wilson returns.





## Gigha Primary School & ELC continued

Pupils enjoyed taking part in this year's Roots and Industry Show with entries for our ELC grown potatoes, eggs and drawings of a Bee. We were very pleased with the rosettes we won and are especially proud of one of our pupils who won the Children's cup for the most points won overall for their picture of a bumble bee. The opportunity to take part in activities which develop their individual talents is a right which all children have under Article 29 of the UNCRC and we enjoy finding ways to allow pupils to experience these creative opportunities.

In the ELC pupils have been increasing their knowledge of communication through Makaton using daily songs. Our children are learning the signs for daily greetings and routines including saying Good morning, days of the week and saying Goodbye. Children are also learning more about people who help us in the community and beyond and we are looking forward to engaging with community services to develop their knowledge of this.

## Island Ranger Service

This year we have had a major break through! From 15 tonne bags, the amazing volunteers have managed to get a firm hold on the control of Himalayan balsam around the Village, and this year only collected 1 tonne bag's worth! This is an excellent achievement. The area is now brimming with bird's-foot trefoil, umbellifers, orchids, purple loosestrife, and knapweeds, showing just how important it is to remove invasive species and make space for our native wildflowers that can provide a much longer period of foraging for our pollinators.

Along the same lines, we have been incredibly fortunate to have been awarded £13,310 from Highland and Islands Environment Foundation. This funding will allow us to continue our work tackling the American skunk cabbage that has been spreading throughout Achamore Gardens, the woodland opposite the Gardens, along the ditch system that leads through residential gardens, and out to the Sound. We have seen a significant reduction in flowering plants since our Nature Restoration Fund project which began in 2023, which proves our method of treatment has been successful, and we have broken the 3-year growth cycle. Hooray!





## Island Ranger Service continued

This month we finished up our summer events programme with some rockpooling. We started the session at the pontoon doing a little bit of crabbing, we managed to catch five green shore crabs (safely released unharmed!), and then headed along to Rubha a' Chinn Mhòir (Jonny Shore) to discover beadlet anemones, snakelock anemones, shrimp, teeny weeny fishes which we thought may be juvenile sand smelts. It was a marvellous session and a great way to end the season. A massive thank you to everyone who came along!



## Achamore Gardens

The garden team recently enjoyed a visit to Arduaine, a National Trust for Scotland garden overlooking Loch Melfort. It was a great opportunity to meet the team, exchange ideas, and share experiences. Arduaine and Achamore are similar in many ways, they share the warming influence of the gulf stream, have similar plant collections, and are both regularly battered by strong Atlantic winds. We have also both recently suffered the loss of many trees. Most of you will be aware that here at Achamore we were badly damaged by Storm Eowyn. Whereas Arduaine suffered from an outbreak of a disease called *Phytophthora ramorum*. This led to the removal of some 900 larch trees which had formed the garden's shelterbelt. Arduaine is a bit further along the road to recovery and it was heartening to see how they have bounced back. We came back inspired and with some great ideas for ways to improve Achamore!

Autumn is slowly making its way into the gardens, transforming them into a rich tapestry of colour. Keep an eye out for our Japanese maples and liquidambar, they're changing colour daily, turning shades of crimson, amber, and gold. Our katsura trees are smelling fantastic, emitting a lovely caramel smell as the leaves fall.

Finally, we are delighted to announce that the Summerhouse is now open! This was one of the first areas we uncovered during the garden's renovation, so it feels great to have it open again.





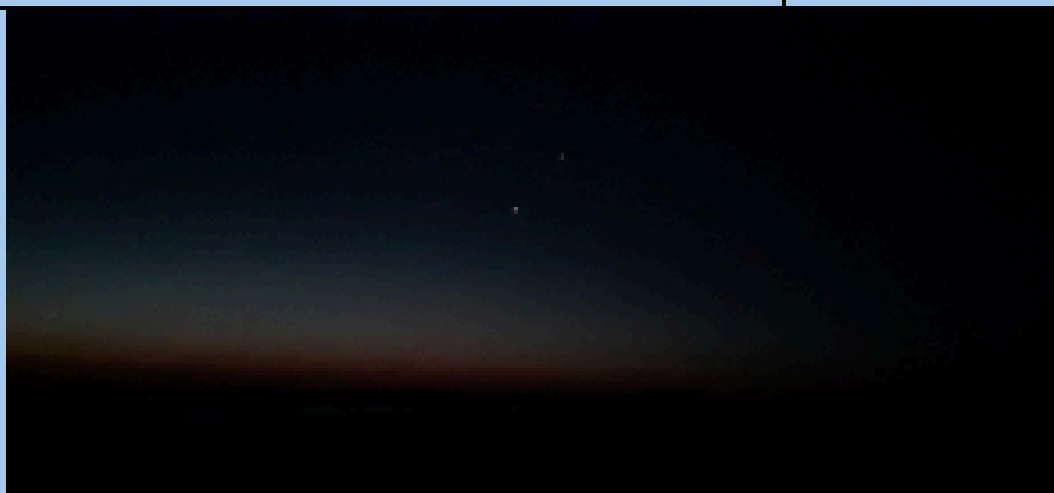
Thank you to everyone who supported and helped to organise our annual Perseids Party weekend this year. Like last year stargazing and moon watching events were very well attended and full of fun and adventure. This year, to take some steps to fulfil our community's desire to achieve Dark Sky Island international status for Gigha (the second island in the UK), we introduced some nature conservation and reduction of light pollution activities into the programme. There will be follow up activities for all of these in the coming months as we work towards our main Dark Skies Festival in November – 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>.



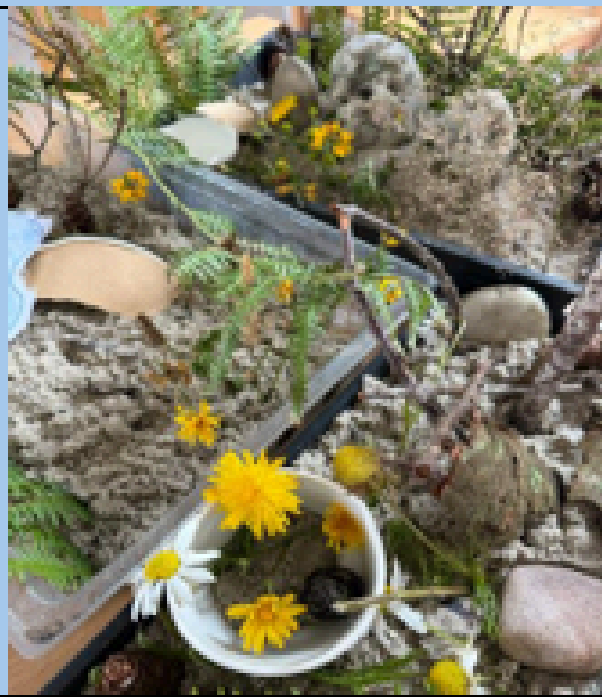
Gigha residents, holiday makers and visitors have all enjoyed our Meteors and Moonlight activities as well as regular stargazing events for groups that have booked with us for night walks and other sessions. Special thanks to Anna and the campsite staff for all their encouragement of people staying there to get out in the dark with us. We have particularly enjoyed walking to the golf course (thanks to the golf course committee for permission) with groups – it is a wonderful place to lie and watch the stars, spot planets very early in the morning and gaze at the moon.

Many thanks to our Campbeltown Co-Op Store Manager Colin Middleton and Team Leader Courtney Lang for supporting our In the Night Garden afternoon tea by donating delicious berries, scones and lashings of clotted cream!

There's still time to choose Dark Skies Gigha as the recipient of further funding from the Co-Op Community Fund and be in with a chance to win some money for yourself in the member prize draw. Click the link to go to our Co-Op page and find out how you can choose us: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/93490>.



Venus and Jupiter just before dawn looking east from Gigha



We are so grateful to Rachel Bailey for her wonderfully informative and enchanting In the Night Garden Workshop. We had some great conversations about how to take care of bats, moths and other creatures that love the dark as we constructed wildlife friendly gardens and planned how to reduce ALAN (artificial light at night – with apologies to any Alans out there). We want to build our commitment to ensuring Gigha's skies stay dark to preserve the wellbeing of plants, animals and humans. Rachel will be back with us in the Autumn to do some follow-up and to explore possibilities for a Dark Skies Gigha Community Garden with Gigha residents. Get your creative thinking caps on about astronomy themed garden spaces!

We had a wonderful exploration of moths led by Cat and Archie Walker – this was a very hands-on activity, thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who crowded out the tent.

We certainly have a wide variety of beautiful moths on Gigha and keeping our skies and gardens as dark as possible ensures that their populations continue to grow. Installing artificial lighting outside has a very detrimental effect so we encourage efforts to curb this.



Our Gigha Ranger Service did an amazing job of constructing bat boxes with groups of people. Some of the boxes were taken away to give new homes to bats in different parts of the UK. We will be keeping track of these with our new-found DSG bat friends. The rest of the boxes will be sited on Gigha to give our bat species a safe space to roost. Dark Skies Gigha hopes to sponsor more bat box making for Gigha in the future as well as some owl box construction to encourage our owl population to grow and thrive. We love night creatures!

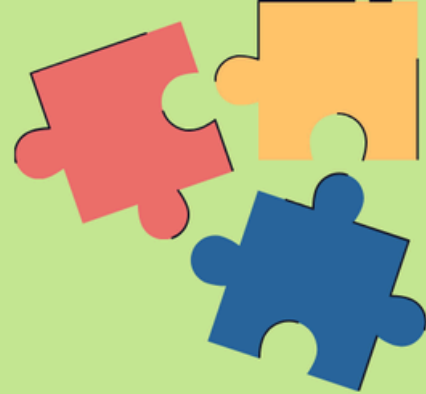
Like and follow us on Facebook @darkskiesgigha to keep up to date with astronomy club and regular stargazing events on Gigha. Look out for details of Autumn astronomy events coming up at the village hall as well as how you can be involved with our November Festival. Email [dark.skies.gigha@gmail.com](mailto:dark.skies.gigha@gmail.com) for more information. All photos courtesy of Edgelands Gallery and Cultural Centre @edgelands.gallery.



# Income Generation Workshop

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September

7pm Gigha Hotel



Securing Gigha's Future - Building ideas for future income generation for IGHT.

Come along to discuss and form working groups.

Please submit your ideas by Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September to [directors@gigha.org.uk](mailto:directors@gigha.org.uk)



FREE ENTRY

**4TH OCTOBER 2025**  
**2 - 10 PM**

DRINK ★ FOOD ★ MUSIC

# Oktober fest

★ **BEER FESTIVAL** ★

ACHAVINISH TAP ROOM

GERMAN LAGERS \* FANCY DRESS COMPETITION \*  
STEINS \* SILLY GAMES \* PRETZELS \* BRATWURST\*



# 80s Disco - Gigha Hotel!

Saturday 30th August, it's time to dust off your leg warmers and crimp that hair – because Dave & Marc's 80s Disco is taking over the Hotel Bar!

Expect neon. Expect synth. Expect absolute chaos on the dancefloor as your favourite duo spin the biggest retro bangers all night long.

From Whitney to Wham  
From Bowie to Bananarama  
And maybe a few sweaty singalongs too

Saturday 30th August 7PM till late  
Gigha Hotel Bar  
Fancy dress encouraged.

