

## **Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust Members Meeting**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April

Gigha Village Hall at 7pm

**Present from IGHT:** Fergus Christie (FC) – Director; Jane Clements (JC) – Director; Tim Lister (TL) – Director; Adam Murphy (AM) - Director; Ian Wilson (IW) – Director; Keith Wilson – Director (KW)

**Apologies from IGHT:** Gordon Watson - Director (GW)

**Members in attendance:** 27

**Minutes:** Casey-Jo Zammit

### **1. Welcome**

AM welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2. General Update**

#### ***Isle of Gigha Hotel:***

John & Janette McKie have started as of this week.

#### ***IGHT Staffing:***

Billy Watt has resigned. Discussions about maintenance plan currently ongoing. General maintenance completed by Tim Williams.

#### ***Gardens recruitment:***

Lead Gardener almost complete.

#### ***Turbines replacement:***

Colin Anderson gave presentation on feasibility options. This feasibility study was funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The conclusion was to keep the Dancing Ladies going by continuing maintenance with current contractor. Funding is not available for more ambitious options at present. The income from the turbines will be significantly less than has been due to the end of ROC subsidy.

#### ***Communications:***

Forum system going live soon and will be monitored by KW. Those who are not online will find a summary of all questions and answers within the following month's newsletter.

Members raised concerns about communications with individuals rather than solely public communications. The Board outlined that surgeries are soon to be put in place and that submitting questions or topics prior to surgeries will allow Board to designate the appropriate Director. Upon completion of the surgery, a letter summarising discussion will be issued. Confidential enquiries to the Board can be made via letter or in surgeries.

#### ***Members raised concerns regarding MUGA project:***

Members felt a lack of, and incorrect information was given to tenant regarding location changes and restricted access of the MUGA, as well as having questions around planning permission. The Board outlined that due to tight funding deadlines, these changes were unintentionally not communicated, and that these changes were not deemed significant enough for planning permissions to be altered.

The tenant requested the following to be minuted: if this issue rises again, the tenant will put a stop to any works.

The Board takes full responsibility for the lack of communication, and recognises the need to improve. The Board agreed a solution to the issue will be found with the land agent and the tenant.

### **3. Road's Policy**

#### ***Current Position:***

- We have reviewed the existing policy of 2012.
- The policy is unworkable as it notionally divides the financial responsibility in percentage terms.

- Each road has its own issues: condition and necessity for work; liability for payment of repairs.
- The Trust has in varying degrees responsibility for every road on the island (not the main road).
- Private owners pay according to their title deeds, but these are varied – some stating a specific percentage for the whole road, others are restricted to parts of the road and others depend on “usage”. Usage is impossible to quantify.
- Prior to commencing any work involving a partly privately owned road, need to have agreement of the private owner and assurance of payment - potential for areas of dispute if a private owner does not consider the work necessary or refuses to pay.
- IGHT tenants have no obligation to pay.
- Farmers / land tenants might have an obligation to pay given heavy usage, but this depends on their lease agreement.
- Agreement can be difficult, particularly where there are multiple parties and can give rise to factors: unable to pay, unwilling to pay.
- Trust cannot enforce payment without incurring legal expenses.
- The Trust does not have a specific budget for roads improvements. This falls within the current £30k per annum “estates budget” which includes a variety of activities such as road side verge cutting, playpark maintenance, helipad maintenance, tree felling, etc.
- How does the Trust decide which roads to prioritise on this basis – consultation to follow.
- Members raised concerns about users historically paying their contribution and why this was no longer the case. The Board stated that due to a right of access, and despite a moral obligation to pay, previous negative responses from community members, leads the Board to believe others would not pay their way. Title deeds are not clear enough to be used in court against those who refuse to pay.

#### **Keill Road:**

- Jan/Feb 2025 – Community Council raised matter of Keill Road maintenance with IGHT.
- March/April/May 2025 – TL provided ballpark figure of £10k-12k to make improvements to Keill Road. The Board received this estimate but did not proceed due to lack of available funds.
- May-September 2025 – Conversations on-going with Community Council regarding proposed works and costs involved.
- October 2025 – Community Council identified funding with Scot Gov. Funder aware of £10k-12k approx. estimate but suggested revisiting to allow for higher spec of works though stressed limited funding was available and could not achieve tarmac road standard.
- October 2025 – Asked Maintenance Team to prepare a scope of works for Keill Road. TL reviewed this and made some comments, suggesting a budget of £20k would be sufficient.
- November 2025 – Applied to Scot Gov for £25k grant which was approved. £25k was to allow for contingency.
- December 2025 – 6 contractors received the same brief for Keill Road works including TL.
- January 2026 – 3 quotes were received. TL asked to quote based on same spec as 2 other contractors. 3 quotes were: £55k; £70k; £75k
- January 2026 – TL was the lowest priced contractor. Given financial constraints, the Board agreed to offer contract to TL but on a reduced spec to meet the funding available. IGHT procurement policy states to “achieve best Value for Money” and to “procure goods and services from local sources where possible, but without compromising competition”.
- February/March 2026 – works were completed and funding drawn down.
- Members queried whether there were materials or money left over from the project. The Board outlined that the surplus materials were used to make improvements to Gallochoille road, Woodside road, the road in front of Keill cottages, and for the Gigha Hotel. There is approximately 25 tonnes of Type 1 aggregate left, equating to approximately £2000 in value.

#### **Gallochoille Road:**

- Some repairs were undertaken with machinery and materials available from Keill Road works.
- Private residents and farm tenants were asked for fair contributions based on their title deeds and lease arrangements.

- Owners of Drumallan requested the following to be minuted: owners made contributions to Gallochoille track in line with the percentage/amount outlined in the title deeds upon purchasing the property as they recognised their responsibility and importance of contributing to the community.

***Directors / Conflicts of Interest:***

- Directors are permitted to do work for the Trust provided they are not being paid in their role as a director. This is within the Memo & Arts which were created prior to the current Board standing.
- TL was a contractor for the Trust prior to directorship and does on occasion complete landscaping works voluntarily.
- TL was not involved in the decision making process for reviewing the tenders for Keill Road.

***Road Policy Consultation:***

- Board requested ideas for improving the current situation from the members- (road survey/priority list/other).
- Each group asked to list top 3 points related to improving Trust roads. Board presented a few community suggestions at the meeting. The Board will collate the information and discuss these at a future Board meeting, and distribute options/suggestions back to the community.
- Members asked whether the quarry could be reopened and whether a quote could be obtained to compare to stone delivery.

**4. AOB**

***Playpark:***

Insurers deem that playpark is unsafe, and will be incredibly high to insure. GW has presented small options and repairs for the meantime.

***Visitors using Leim track:***

Parking at Leim Farm and using Leim track. Board to discuss this in future.

***Adam Murphy resignation:***

AM thanked all members and the Board for their support but is stepping down from the Board.

***More involvement or volunteers from the community:***

General call from the Board to the community for more involvement and volunteers for the Board.

**Meeting closed: 8.45pm**