

ISLE OF GIGHA PLACE PLAN 2025-2035



The Isle of Gigha lies two miles off the west coast of the Kintyre peninsula some 19 miles to the north of Campbeltown and 18 miles south of Tarbert in Argyll and Bute

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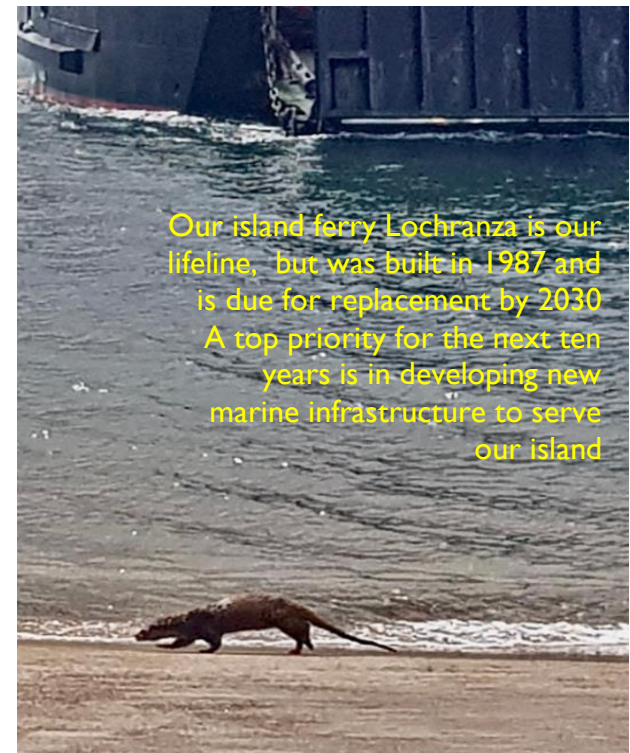
Setting the Scene

What Issues On Gigha Relate To Development ?

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 states: *“A local place plan is a proposal as to the development or use of land. It may also identify land and buildings that the community body considers to be of particular significance to the local area.”* (Part I, Schedule 19).

The 2022 Circular on Local Place Plans provides an inventory of examples of development / land use which might feature in Gigha’s Local Place Plan. These include:

1. Climate change adaptation, such as renewable energy or flood mitigation;
2. Local initiatives for travel infrastructure improvements;
3. Community food growing (requiring land or paths/routes to be formed);
4. Proposals for community asset building involving land use changes or repurposing buildings;
5. Retaining, improving, and expanding open space, play facilities and informal recreational facilities;
6. Housing considerations;
7. New and/or retained local employment;
8. New tourism/community facilities;
9. Conservation of the natural/built environment;
10. Improvements in Ardmish village;
11. Local preferences that may modify Local Development Plan 3, or expand existing policies;
12. Support for National Planning Framework 4.



National Planning Framework 4



Sustainable Places

1. Tackling the climate and nature crises
2. Climate mitigation and adaptation
3. Biodiversity
4. Natural places
5. Soils
6. Forestry, woodland and trees
7. Historic assets and places
8. Green belts
9. Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings
10. Coastal development
11. Energy
12. Zero waste
13. Sustainable transport



Liveable Places

14. Design, quality and place
15. Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods
16. Quality homes
17. Rural homes
18. Infrastructure first
19. Heat and cooling
20. Blue and green infrastructure
21. Play, recreation and sport
22. Flood risk and water management
23. Health and safety
24. Digital infrastructure



Productive Places

25. Community wealth building
26. Business and industry
27. City, town, local and commercial centres
28. Retail
29. Rural development
30. Tourism
31. Culture and creativity
32. Aquaculture
33. Minerals



National Planning Framework 4

Relevance for Gigha – Key Policies

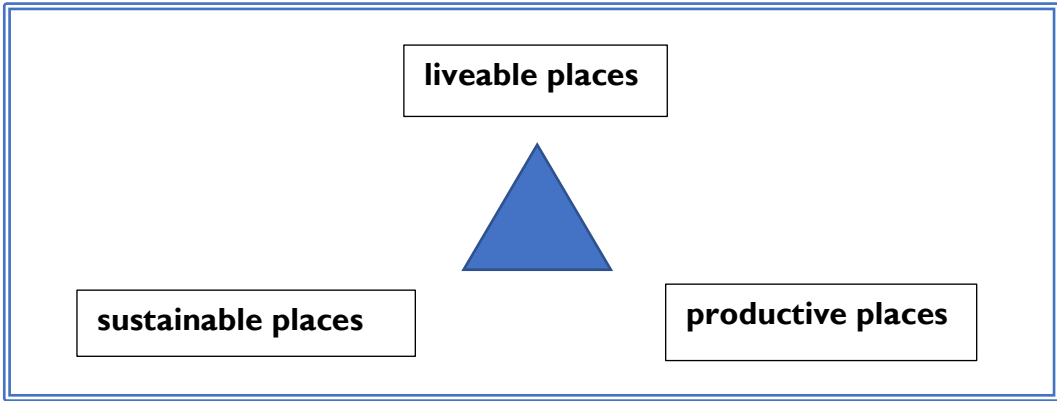
The 2023 Scottish National Planning Framework is oriented towards climate change, sustainability, and reaching net zero targets, with an emphasis on:-
sustainable places,
liveable places,
productive places

Historic Conservation

To protect and enhance historic environment assets and places, and to enable positive change as a catalyst for the regeneration of places.

Health and Wellbeing

To protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate risks arising from safety hazards and encourage, promote and facilitate development that improves health and wellbeing.



Climate Change Resilience

To protect, restore and enhance natural assets making best use of nature-based solutions.

Recreation, Play and Sport

To encourage, promote and facilitate spaces and opportunities for play, recreation and sport.

Sustainable Housing

To encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities across Scotland.

Biodiversity

To protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks.

Sustainable Transport

To encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably.

Climate Action

To encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis.

Business

To encourage, promote and facilitate business and industry uses and to enable alternative ways of working such as home working, live-work units and micro-businesses.

Forest and Woodland

To protect and expand forests, woodland and trees.

Rural Housing

To encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable rural homes in the right locations.

Energy

To encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore. This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure

Tourism

To encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable tourism development which benefits local people, is consistent with our net zero and nature commitments, and inspires people to visit Scotland.

Rural Development

To encourage rural economic activity, innovation and diversification whilst ensuring that the distinctive character of the rural area and the service function of small towns, natural assets and cultural heritage are safeguarded and enhanced.

Aquaculture

To encourage, promote and facilitate aquaculture development and minimise any adverse effects on the environment, including cumulative impacts.

Infrastructure

To encourage, promote and facilitate an infrastructure first approach to land use planning, which puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of placemaking.

Village Greenspace

To encourage, promote and facilitate compact urban growth and use the land around our towns and cities sustainably.

Repurposed Buildings

To encourage, promote and facilitate the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings, and to help reduce the need for greenfield development.

Climate Mitigation

To encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.

Digital Infrastructure

To encourage, promote and facilitate the roll-out of digital infrastructure across Scotland to unlock the potential of all our places and the economy.



Gigha is aligned NNE to SSW and is roughly 6m (9km) from north to south, just under a mile wide at its widest and a hundred metres at its narrowest. It is 3550 acres, so almost six square miles (15.5 sq.km) in total.



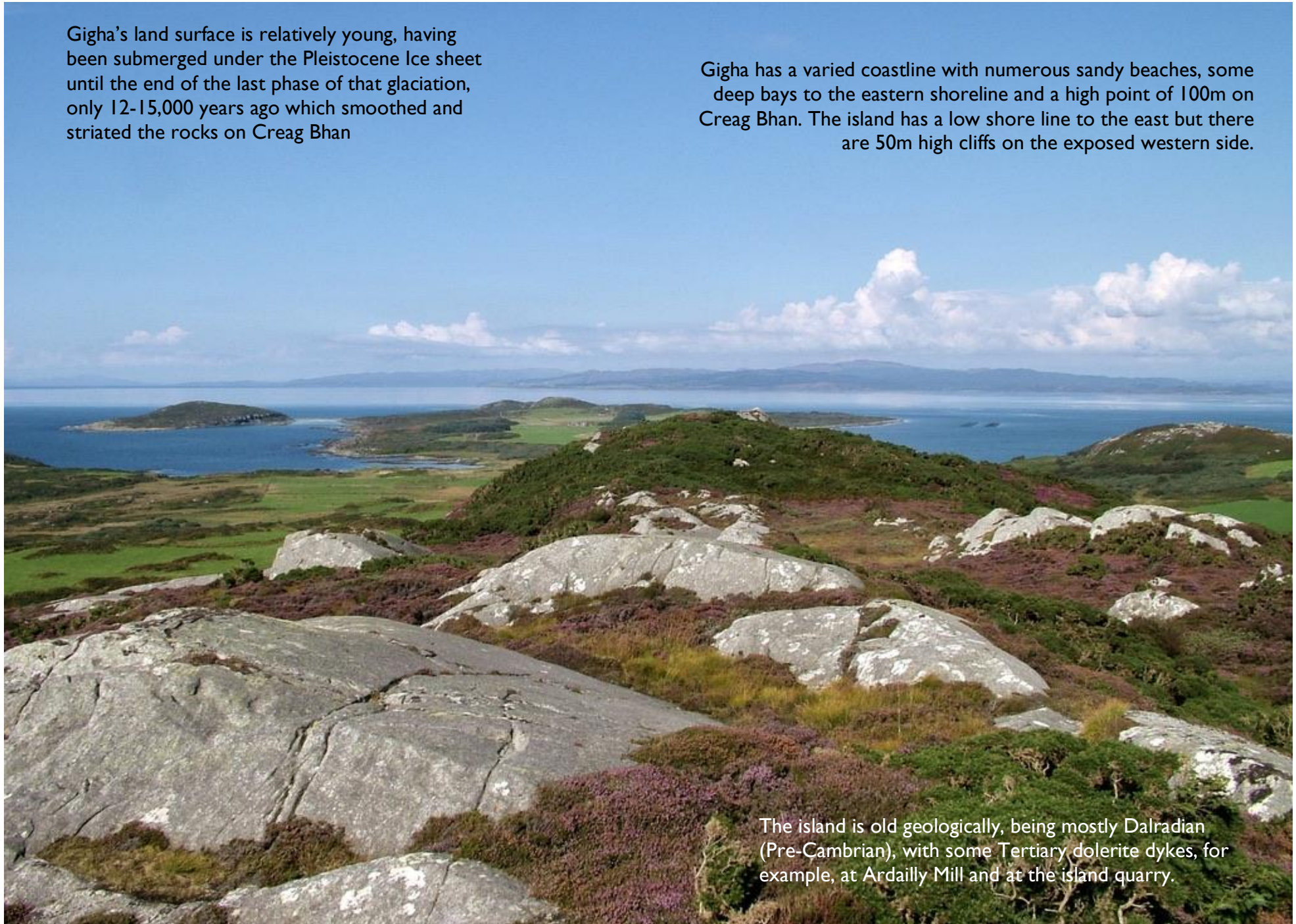
Our ferry takes 20 minutes



Our island landscape is less than 12,000 years old, and our raised beaches, such as those south of Leim, were still at the shoreline even up to 6500 years ago.

Gigha's land surface is relatively young, having been submerged under the Pleistocene Ice sheet until the end of the last phase of that glaciation, only 12-15,000 years ago which smoothed and striated the rocks on Creag Bhan

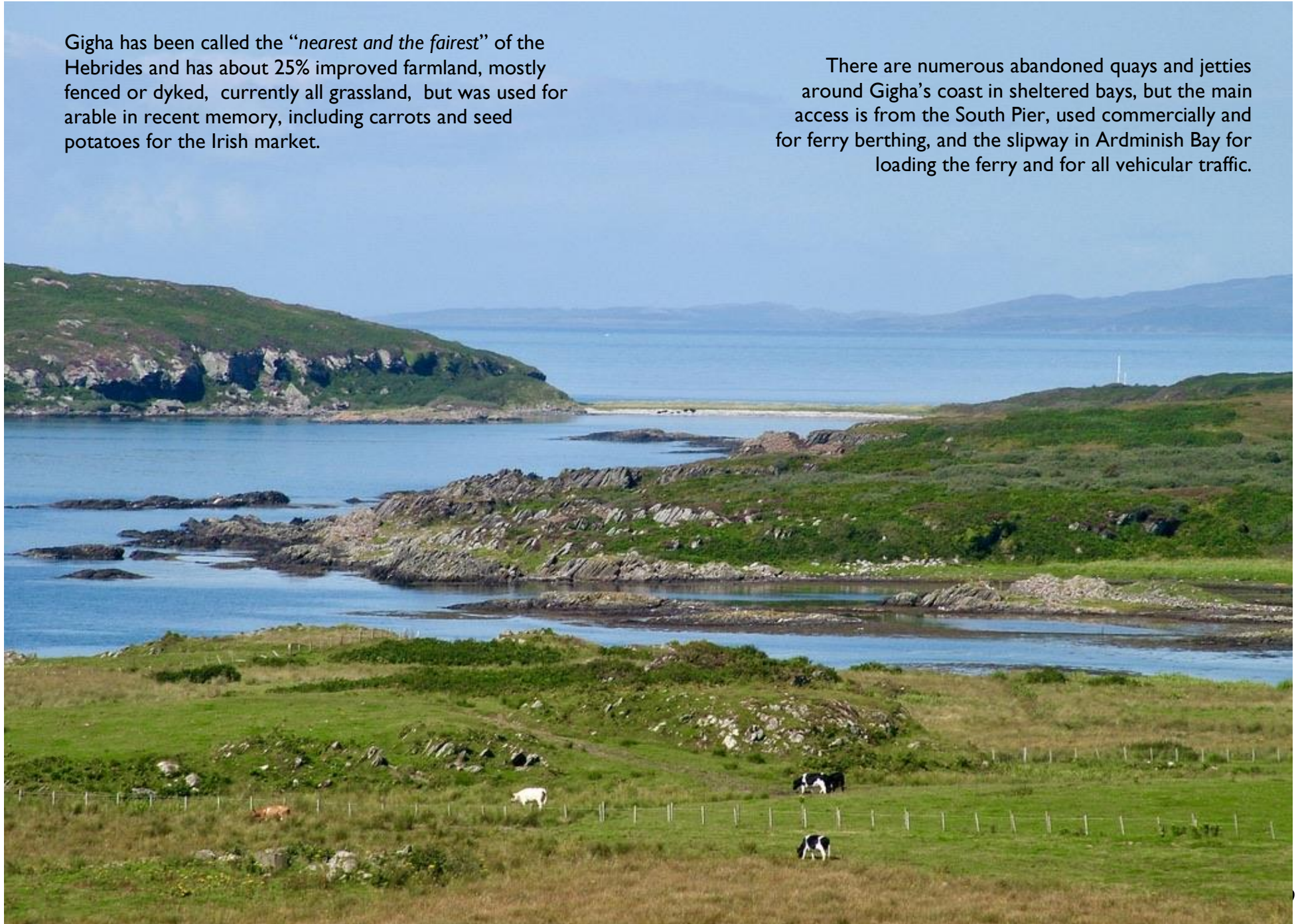
Gigha has a varied coastline with numerous sandy beaches, some deep bays to the eastern shoreline and a high point of 100m on Creag Bhan. The island has a low shore line to the east but there are 50m high cliffs on the exposed western side.



The island is old geologically, being mostly Dalradian (Pre-Cambrian), with some Tertiary dolerite dykes, for example, at Ardailly Mill and at the island quarry.

Gigha has been called the “*nearest and the fairest*” of the Hebrides and has about 25% improved farmland, mostly fenced or dyked, currently all grassland, but was used for arable in recent memory, including carrots and seed potatoes for the Irish market.

There are numerous abandoned quays and jetties around Gigha’s coast in sheltered bays, but the main access is from the South Pier, used commercially and for ferry berthing, and the slipway in Ardminish Bay for loading the ferry and for all vehicular traffic.



Gigha has been settled by man since the Mesolithic, some 6,000 years ago, and there are many archaeological features and artefacts.

Some of the older stone remains are hundreds of years old. None of these artefacts, nor the exceptionally well preserved fish trap in Drumyeon Bay, or Fisherman's Cave, are formally protected, and we have lost the Yacht Carving and Holy stone, but there are twelve Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and very many sites of archaeological or cultural interest.

The oldest and best preserved croft remains are at Ardailly, once the largest settlement on the island.

The island has two small lochs and a number of lochans. The Mill Loch is aquifer fed and sustained from groundwater, but with some minor leets feeding into it from the Upper Loch and lochans.

There is no natural surface drainage on the island and no burns or larger streams. There are ground water springs in several places, and all the traditional farms were located near spring water supplies.

The longest of Gigha's manmade watercourses is only a few hundred metres long, and is the mill leet from the Mill Loch to Ardailly Mill with some of the ditches along the traditional farm boundaries also being hundreds of metres. Scottish Water have a water treatment works by the Mill Loch which was upgraded some ten years ago.

The aquifer that feeds our water supply is 14 sq km in area and is classified by SEPA as being a “small local aquifer with low output”.

Scottish Water have calculated the nominal gross re-supply rate for the Mill Loch at over 350 cubic metres per day. This is substantially above current consumption levels.

However, the island’s population and business enterprises are practically constrained by water resource capacity, with the net supply volume capped by the size of the island waterworks, plus infrastructure leaks.

The current best estimate of total use capacity depends on average water usage, for both households and enterprises.

Water consumption has progressively increased for domestic uses, but this has been considerably offset by the reduction of the island’s dairy herd from four farms of 60-70 cows to one, although milk processing adds to consumption here.

Climate change has already involved longer dry periods in spring and summer and these progressively affect ground water levels.

During a recent summer drought the Mill Loch leet was dry for several weeks, so Mill Loch replenishment must have been below island consumption levels. Water has had to be supplied to the island by tanker in recent years on a few occasions, and residents asked to curtail water usage for their gardens.

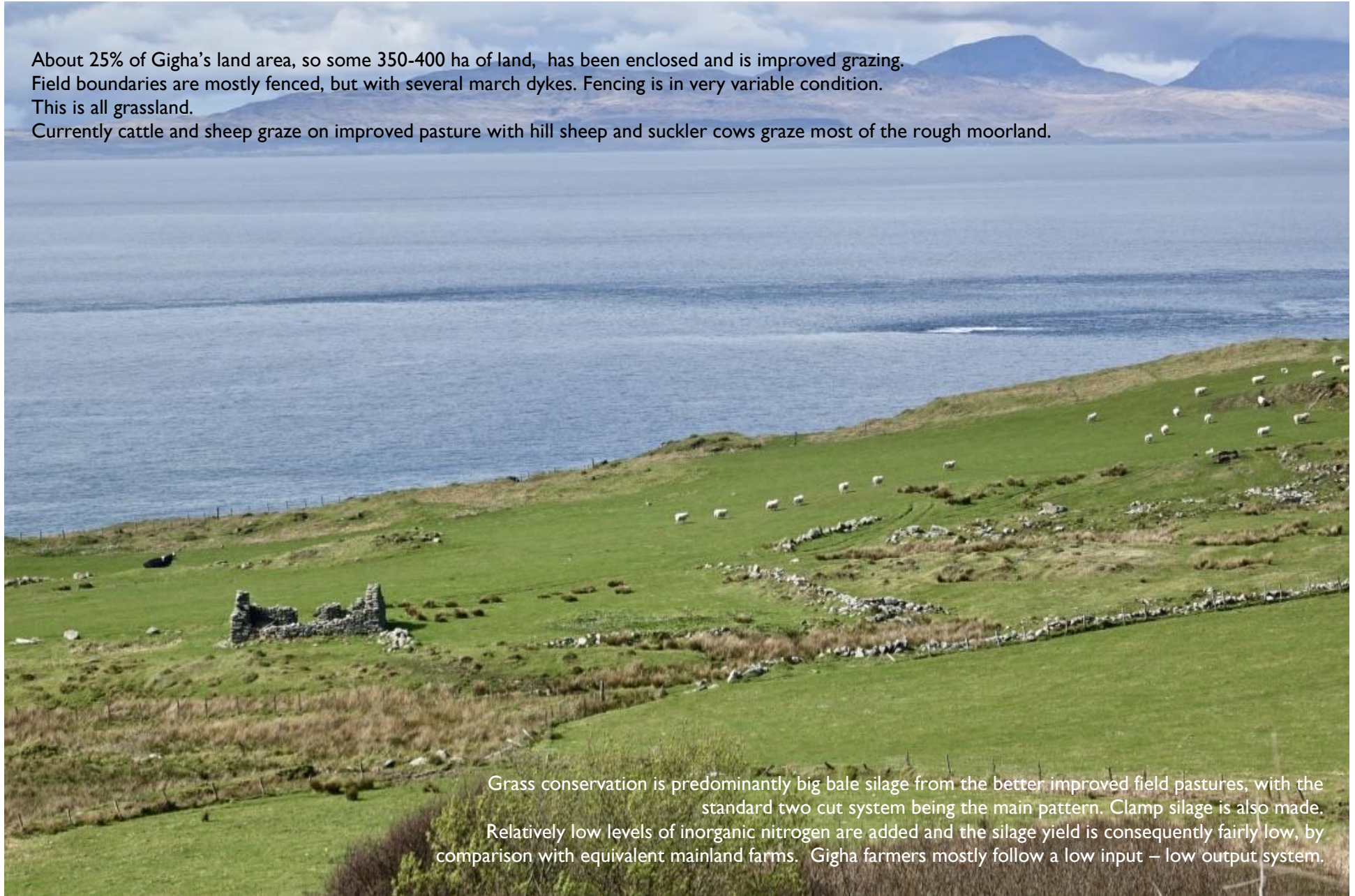
A reasonable estimate is that current capacity could serve an island population 10-15% higher than is current, plus additional commercial demand from farms and tourist amenities.




The Ardailly Mill was once powered by the supply from Upper and Mill Lochs.

About 25% of Gigha's land area, so some 350-400 ha of land, has been enclosed and is improved grazing. Field boundaries are mostly fenced, but with several march dykes. Fencing is in very variable condition. This is all grassland.

Currently cattle and sheep graze on improved pasture with hill sheep and suckler cows graze most of the rough moorland.



Grass conservation is predominantly big bale silage from the better improved field pastures, with the standard two cut system being the main pattern. Clamp silage is also made. Relatively low levels of inorganic nitrogen are added and the silage yield is consequently fairly low, by comparison with equivalent mainland farms. Gigha farmers mostly follow a low input – low output system.



There was potential for the former Gigha cheese making dairy to be re-established some fifteen years ago, but this option was not pursued. Fortunately, Tarbert farm, still in dairying, has very successfully innovated through diversifying into both liquid milk sales and ice cream production, and so has 'added value' enterprise. This farm of some 180ha has assimilated the 400ha of Kinnererach as supplementary grazing and for grass conservation. Across the island there is a small dispersed patchwork of conifer plantations, established in the 1980s, but these total under 100 ha. None of these has been thinned or managed. They are mostly sitka spruce.

All the stock that is grazed on rough moorland requires supplementary feeding with silage through the winter months, such are current stocking levels. The number of farms has reduced since 2002, and land has been assimilated into four main holdings, with some part time pastoral farming of the remaining land in smaller units. The four farms are all pastoral and only one remains in dairying, with a small herd of 60-70 milking cows. Three farms have ceased commercial milk production in the last ten years. The closure of the Campbeltown cheese making plant has had and may have a further impact on Gigha's farm enterprises as milk contracts are insecure.

Recent changes in farming patterns have led to major encroachment by bracken and briars. There has been much bracken expansion in the last twenty years, probably approaching 100 ha. in total, but such bracken invasion has been the pattern since the 1990s. Much of this can be attributed to reduction in sheep numbers, especially in the last decade.



There have been changing grazing patterns on Ardlamy in the west and Kinnererach in the north, with reduction of sheep permitting a significant enlargement of bracken and willow scrub in the west, as stocking ratios and grazing pressures have been reduced, and increased hill cows in the north.

Rough grazing is mostly grass moorland on mineral and shallow organic soils, with some heather on drier areas, and willow scrub in wetter areas. Most rough grazing is now ranched with stock allowed access to large areas of land, even including selected enclosed fields through the winter months.

Native woodland is very restricted indeed, and mostly limited to willow, birch and some rowan. There is little alder and there are virtually no native mature hardwoods such as ash, oak and wych elm, outside the few in planted shelter belts and copses.



Gigha's best farm land is graded in 3.2 - 4.2 group under the Scottish Land Capability classification, and has arable potential, including cereals and potatoes, though most enclosed land is only suitable for grazing. Unenclosed land is rough grazing, scrub or moorland. Some has rich herb assemblages.



There is land suitable for small scale horticulture and/or market gardening, and orchard fruits in sheltered locations, mostly to the east of the island.

As well as coniferous blocks there are some small deciduous woodland copses and plantings, totalling under 100ha, largely around Achamore House, and which were planted by Horlick to act as a crucial shelter belt for Achamore Gardens. These are now over mature and susceptible to wind throw.

East side shelter belts have been progressively weakened in recent years after storm damage and now require a major regeneration scheme. This is a very high priority.

Achamore Gardens is about 30ha in total, and is maintained as an important west coast ornamental garden, supported by visitor contributions, and managed by a small team of gardeners employed by IGHT. It is the island's unique attraction and visitor 'honeypot'.

Ardminish Bay

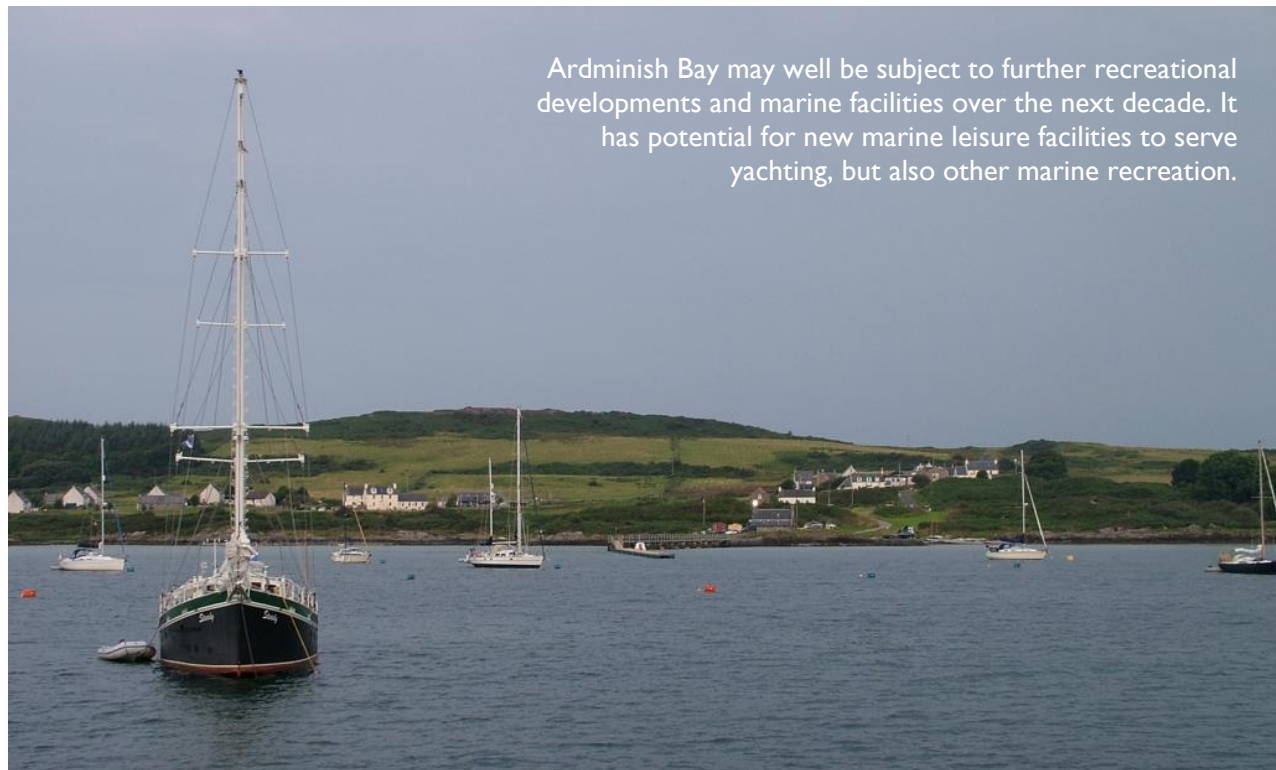
The island is currently served by a 12 vehicle capacity ferry which docks at the ferry slip in Ardminish Bay, with a car park and waiting room close by, but berths at the South Pier.

New and improved jetty facilities and a replacement for our ferry are due within 5 years.

The new ferry will have double the 12 vehicle capacity of the Loch Ranza.

Ardminish Bay will be subject to several new substantial development proposals for our ferry in the next few years to permit berthing and double the existing capacity.

This will have a substantial knock on impact on wider island traffic and parking at island beauty spots, as well as in the village.



Ardminish Bay may well be subject to further recreational developments and marine facilities over the next decade. It has potential for new marine leisure facilities to serve yachting, but also other marine recreation.

Island fishermen work from the South Pier and Gallochoile. but there are no on shore facilities, except for oyster handling. Fish processing facilities at the land site are potentially available but are currently mothballed. There is scope for renewed fish processing operations, given these unutilised facilities at the former Gigha Halibut site.

Gigha is surrounded by the Gigha Special Protection Area of 363 sq. km. The Sound of Gigha's status as a Special Protection Area (SPA) is specifically designated for four bird species, more specialist conservation than most general Marine Protection Areas

These are Great Northern Diver, Slavonian Grebe, Common Eider, and Red-breasted Merganser.

The Scottish government currently have very limited monitoring and enforcement of restrictions within MPA/SPAs, with one vessel and two aircraft only.

With limited resources to even tackle illegal practices like electro-fishing, recent proposals to restrict some damaging marine activities such as bottom trawling and scallop dredging are currently under review by the Scottish government.

These have no timetable for implementation, though Scotland is not currently meeting its legal marine conservation commitments in terms of the level of protection and biodiversity.

There are areas of sea grass off the island and other marine habitats and niches requiring protection.

Gigha can certainly sustain full time creel fishermen.

Restrictions on industrial fishing methods would probably enhance marine shell fishing opportunities in future, (as has been demonstrated at the Lundy MPA in the Bristol Channel and the Lamash Bay No take Zone off Arran).



Aquaculture

It is very difficult to predict a long term future for open cage fish farming, given current trends in both Canada and Norway away from open cage systems, and vulnerability in international markets, as well as sustainability issues.

There are two sites covering aquaculture, plus two bays with managed oyster beds.

The current open cage fishfarms are served by a base at Highfield, due for expansion with new on shore facilities to cover the additional demands of the forthcoming west side fishfarm.

The land site is currently closed, having formerly housed Gigha Halibut. As well as the tanks, there is a fish processing facility on site. The future of this site is unknown, but Gigha Halibut was a very important and valued employer on the island, and a new enterprise of some form on this site is highly desirable.

It is very likely that there will be modifications of open cage aquaculture during the period 2025 to 2035 with proposals for new and possible more diverse aquaculture enterprises at various locations around the island, and especially in more exposed positions.

The current setting is of increasing water temperatures long term which are likely to reduce the viability of South Hebridean sites in future, as caged salmon are vulnerable to micro jellies as well as lice and other adverse health issues as temperatures continue to rise.

The island currently relies heavily on this sector for local employment. Bakkafrost are a valued island employer.

The new open cage aquaculture strategy is to shift open water sites to better oxygenated waters in “high energy” environments but with truncated periods of fish being reared in cages involving one summer only.

A large new open cage site off the south west of the island will be developed by Bakkafrost after the recent planning consent granted in December 2024.

However, Bakkafrost has made it clear that the continued long term operation of the two east coast sites will only be considered in the light of the successful operation of the new West Gigha fishfarm, and the future of the East Tarbert Bay and Drumyeon Bay installations will be kept under medium term review.

Drumyeon Bay cages pictured behind East Tarbert oyster beds



Tourism

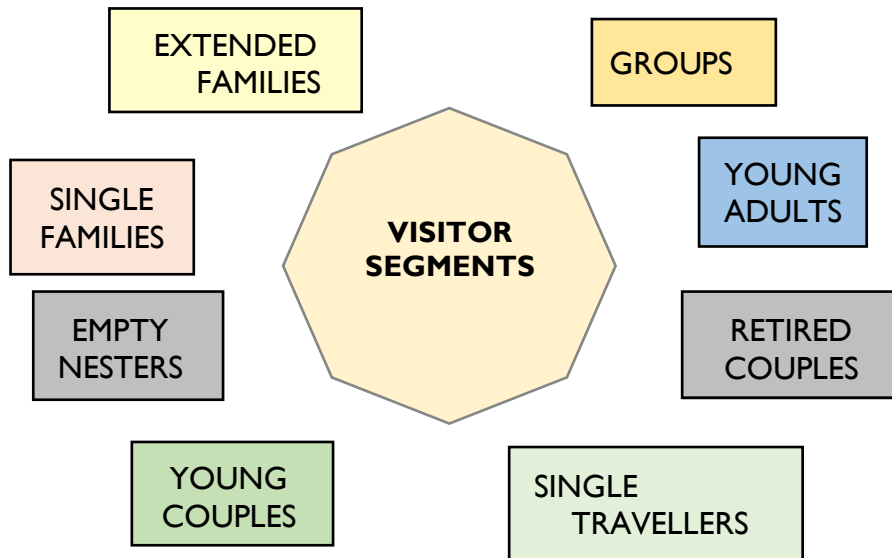
In Scotland the three most frequently cited positive features are:-

Hospitality and welcome;

Culture and heritage;

Landscape and scenery.

All these feature strongly in Gigha's visitor offering.



Gigha visitor segments are of several types, depending on age, family status and stage of life.

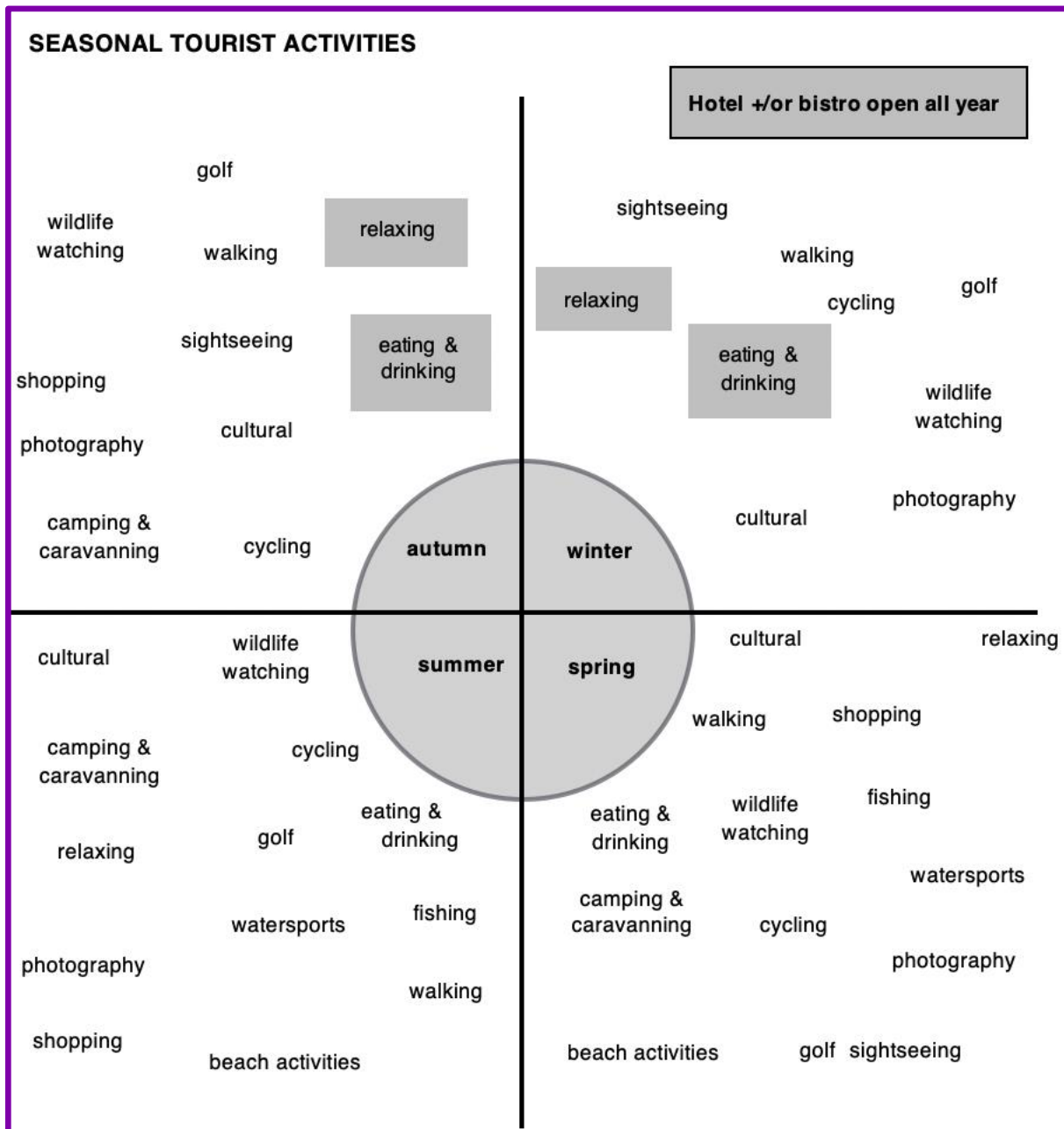
For example the 'grey surfer' is an active, footloose, retired person.

Different visitor segments have different preferences for types and affordability of accommodation and activities.



A positive visitor experience depends on :-

1. The comfort, welcome and quality of accommodation;
2. Affordability, range and quality of local services;
3. The range and type of local facilities and activities.



Gigha Tourist Issues

1. Can visitors stay all year round?
2. Is there a wide enough range of all year round activities?
3. Is there an affordable range of accommodation and services available?

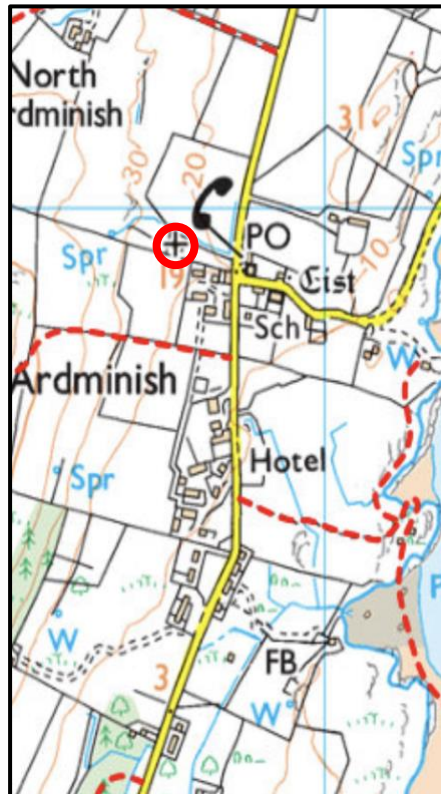
These questions all require a YES answer to make an area an attractive area for visitors.

Continuation of availability of the three elements above are crucial to extending the visitor season, often with specialist activities bringing in special interest visitors.

Culture

Cultural issues that affect land use, for both conservation and development, include:

- Community buildings such as Gigha church, Village Hall etc;
- Dedicated surfaced recreation paths and trails;
- Unsurfaced island vehicular tracks;
- Archaeological features and Scheduled Monuments.



People and Employment



The relatively poor and fluctuating service offered by BT for broadband has led those self employed people working from home (WFH) to shift to satellite or mobile phone providers whose service standards are closer to modern IT requirements.

Gigha's online worker sector has increased in recent years and there is scope for further expansion, provided that IT infrastructure meets employer requirements. This is a crucial issue.

IGHT are the largest employer on the island, both directly and indirectly with the Hotel being let as a quasi detached operation.

Farming employs roughly 6 persons and aquaculture 10-12 persons, with most fishfarm workers currently coming from the mainland on a daily basis.

Tourism and visitor based enterprises provide the main economic backstay for the island, and are the largest employers across both accommodation and visitor services sectors. These range from the collection of yacht mooring fees to bistro waiting..

However, Gigha has a relatively short season of 15-20 weeks, and there is a sharp falloff in both shoulder months and off season.

Most tourism is still the day visitor segment.

Gigha attractions are not all weather and visitor numbers are vulnerable to poor weather.

Thus employment in tourism is heavily seasonal and insecure, as are tourist revenues.

There is also a small group of high quality self employed Gigha skilled trades and services, ranging from joinery and microbrewing to artisan baking.

The local market is insufficient for expansion without crafts persons working off island, or being able to access internet marketing, yet there is considerable potential for crafts persons to base themselves on the island if workspaces were available.

Future employment trends are difficult to forecast in terms of economic development, but farm diversification and high 'added value' food and drink sectors offer potential, as does the WFH group.

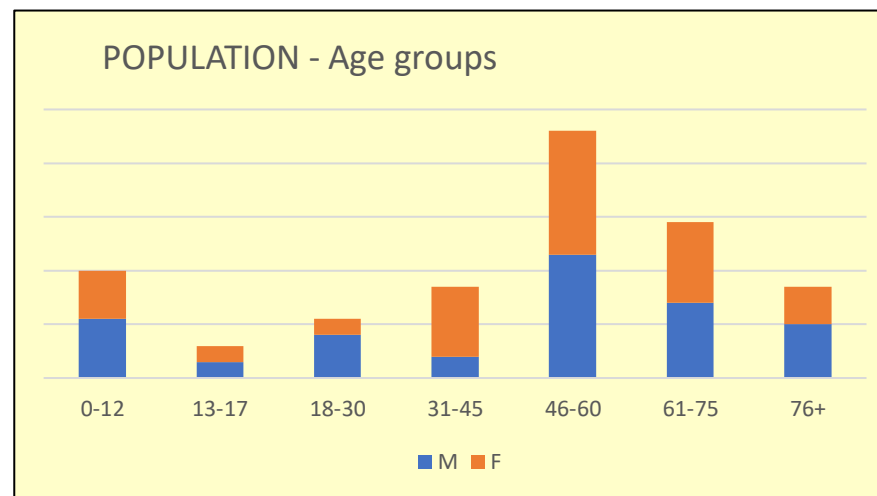
Working from home requires residential properties to have adequate home office space, and space standards in new dwellings, across all tenure types, need to recognise this.

Demography

Age / Sex Structure_ (Data GROS 2001 Estimate as at Sept 24)

2001	M	F	Total
0-19	11	10	21
20-29	2	4	6
30-39	12	7	19
40-49	6	9	15
50-59	12	10	22
60-69	4	7	11
70-79	7	6	13
80+	2	0	2
TOTAL	56	54	110

2025	
UNK	13
0-19	23
20-29	12
30-39	9
40-49	19
50-59	33
60-69	29
70-79	17
80+	12
TOTAL	167

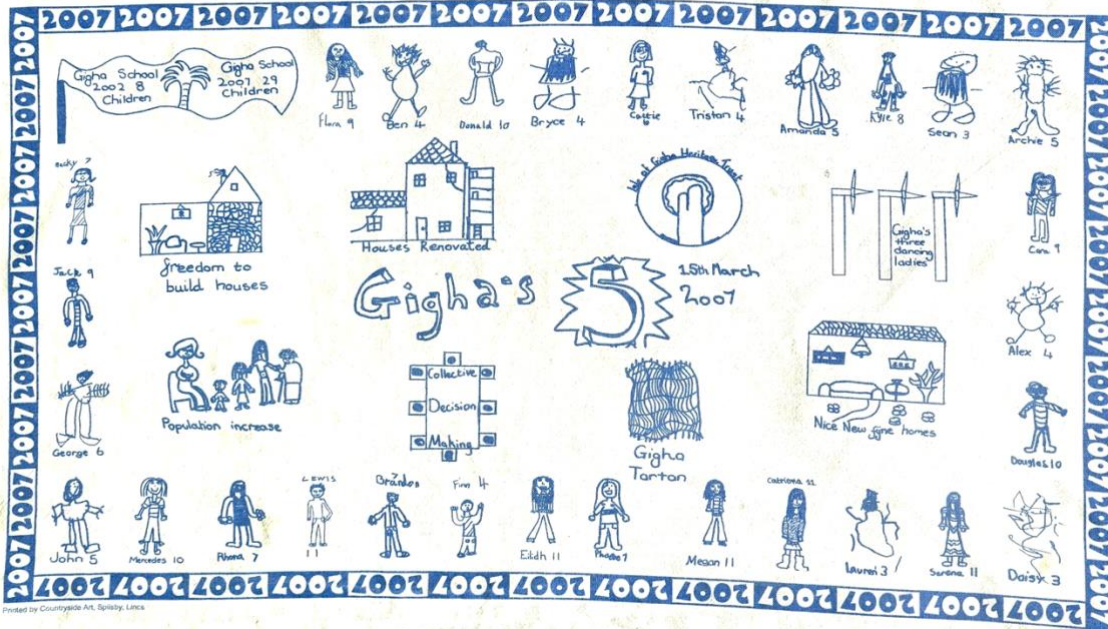


- 1) Gigha's population has expanded from 110 in 2001/2 to 167 in 2024.
- 2) This is an increase of c.50% since the 2002 buyout, mostly due to the two housing association schemes built, plus Gigha benefitting from local family returners.
- 3) The island's population is now between 160 and 170, but there is a small group of summer only workers moving in seasonally that temporarily boosts the island's population.
- 4) The current demography is of an ageing population, as for the rest of highland Scotland, but the largest demographic cohort currently is 40-65, not 65+.
- 5) This means that there will be a rising retirement group, many of whom will retire during the 2025 - 2035 period.
- 6) This may then open up new employment opportunities for a younger workforce, but Gigha's total population is not likely to increase or decrease dramatically.
- 7) Two thirds of Gigha households are 1 or 2 persons, including those in younger age groups.
- 8) Almost all owner occupied housing is underoccupied.
- 9) In 2025 the primary school only serves 3 or 4 households with under 12 children, and there is a very small cohort on the island in the age range where young families may be started. The school is now sustained by incoming families into the two schemes, though there is also a small group of home schooled children of primary age.
- 10) It is the allocations policy for the Housing Association which has had the largest impact on the island's demographic makeup since the schemes' completion.

Gigha Population Dynamics.

Gigha Primary School 2007

Where are they now ?



In 2007 there were 29 children from 3-11

All are now working age adults

7 are still living and working on Gigha. **24%**

12 are living and working away but their parental home is still on Gigha **41%**

10 have left Gigha and their parents have also moved off island **34%**

* **Two thirds of those children attending Gigha Primary School during those busy years either still live here or their parents do.**

* **One third have moved away and so have their parents.**

This small case study gives us an indication of the extent of social and economic mobility since the buyout.

Residency

Household size		%
1	26	30
2	31/32	36
3	15	16
4	4	5
5+	2	2
Void/Part	10	10
(Rounded figs at Aug 2024)	89	

- * There are 4 vacant properties and 5 new dwellings under construction so 80/89 are currently occupied as at 3/25. (This is an unusually high void rate.)
- * Of 80 households occupied all year round 54 families (65%) have lived on Gigha for more than 5 years;
- * 29 (35%) of Gigha households have been resident for less than 5 years.
- * Gigha seems to have a stable population base with 65% of islanders being long term residents.
- * There are also 11 (12) Second Homes where the owner occupies the property for part of the year.

Migration

The now lost Ship Carving represents Andrew MacCallum's parting to his sweet heart before he went away to sea.

Just as for all rural areas, migration has long been a Gigha tradition with sons and daughters leaving home in their teens to higher education or for a career, often at sea.

This island depopulation often starts with a move to Glasgow / Central Belt at the end of High School to find work, or for university and FE college courses, but the opportunities for making a living on Gigha are limited and only a few can return.

Of the Gigha Primary 2007 cohort:-

12 are living and working away but their parental home is still on Gigha **41%**

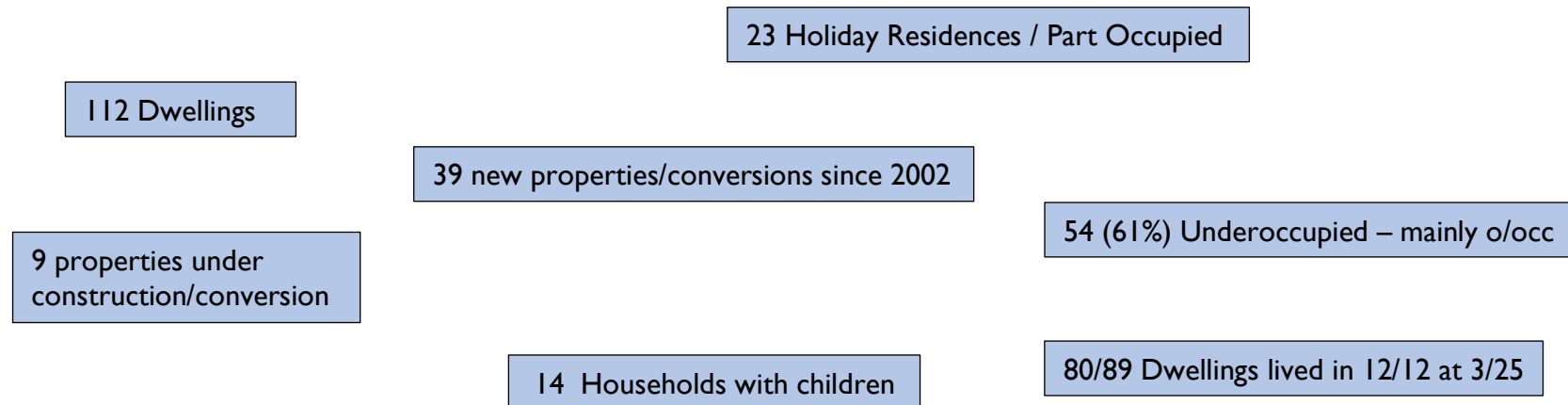
10 have left the island and their parents have also moved away from Gigha **34%**

That means that currently 75% of Gigha youngsters move away at the end of their secondary education.



(© E Marrison)

Accommodation Inventory



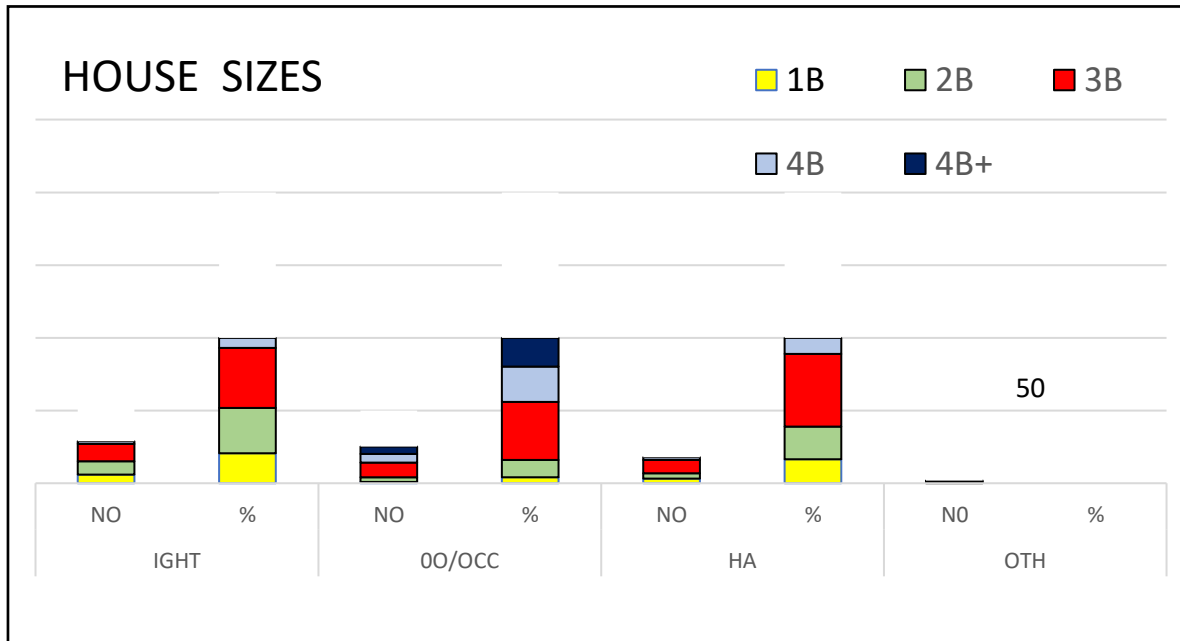
Properties

TOTAL	ALL YEAR	HOLIDAY	IGHT	Private	Public
112	89	23	43	48	21
%	79	21	39	42	19

(Includes all holiday cottages and those temporarily occupied. Public includes Housing Association, A&BC and NHS)

Property Sizes

BEDS	NO	%	IGHT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC
1	22	23	14	4	4
2	24	22	10	8	6
3	47	44	17	21	9
4	12	11	2	8	2
5+	7	4		7	
	112		43	48	21



Local Place Plan – Islander Survey

This section will summarise the issues that islanders identified in the survey as being most significant for planning Gigha’s future, and outline proposals for prospective courses of development for the next decade.

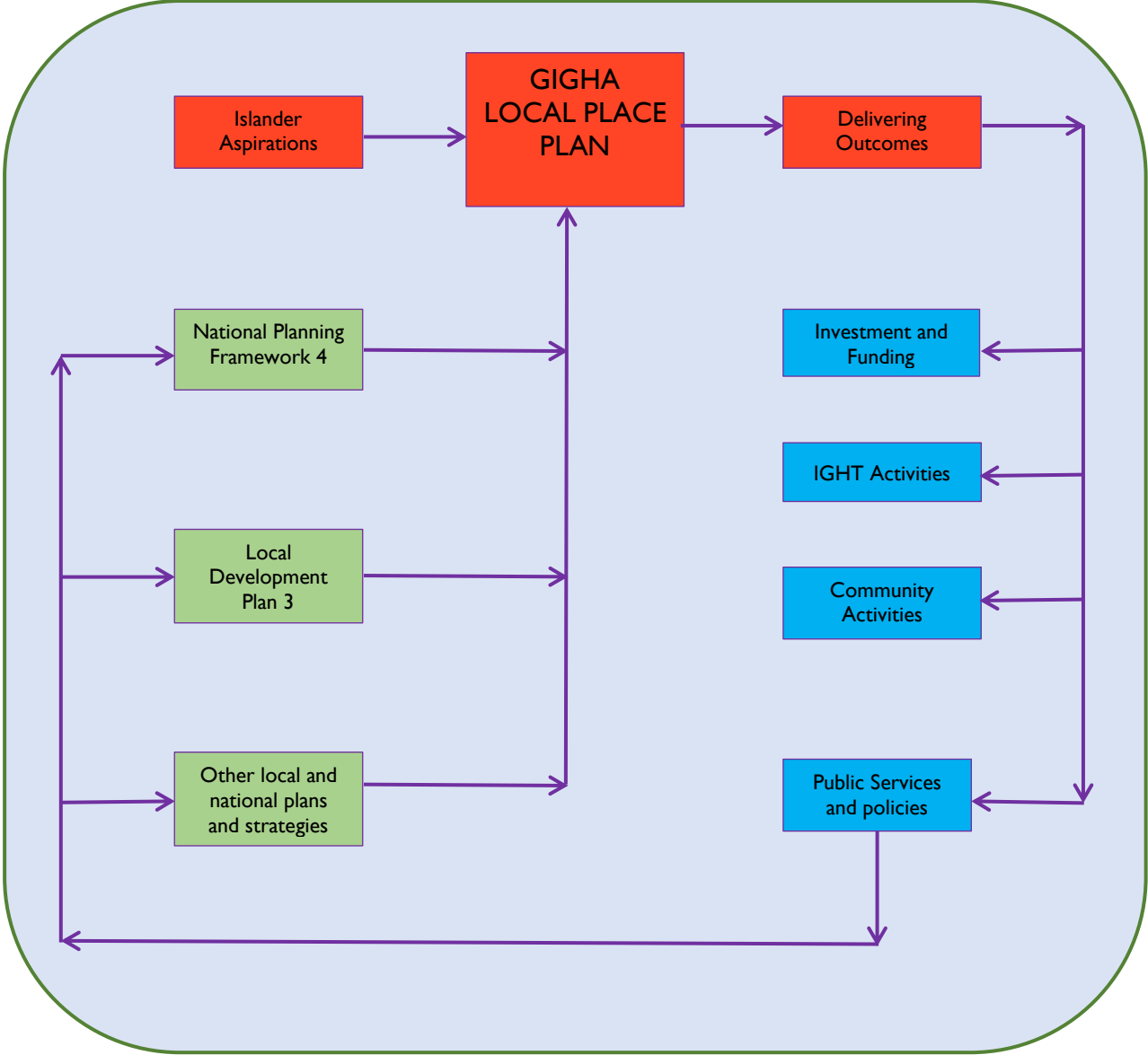
- 1) Gigha Community Council is a statutory body with a duty to represent the collective views of islanders. Our remit requires the consideration of islanders’ attitudes and dispositions to island land use and developments, and the identification of community viewpoints in support, or otherwise, of current and future change.
 - 2) The 2025 Gigha Community Council survey is the most comprehensive ever undertaken of islanders’ attitudes to planning and land use on the island.
 - 3) Land use planning in the UK is a public process and the actual ownership of land is not a material consideration in making planning applications, nor in commenting on potential developments.
 - 4) Land ownership does not affect the legal right of individuals to comment on any formal land use planning proposal.
 - 5) The Local Place Plan also reflects the wider context of Scottish government planning policy under National Planning Framework 4, which includes longer term and wider strategic planning goals, including climate change targets.
 - 6) In Argyll and Bute some twenty plus Community Councils and Development groups are consulting their local communities in terms of how they see future developments in their areas.
 - 7) The whole Local Place Plan formulation is intended to represent an extension of every Scottish resident’s democratic right to be involved in the planning and development of their community.
 - 8) On Gigha, where IGHT embodies the principles of community ownership, engagement with community planning has been seen as an entitlement. This may have reflected in the high level of response to the March 2025 Gigha household survey with 54% return being one of the highest recorded in Scotland..
- . Each question had two responses. The first asked whether the issue is of interest or not, the second is the specific preference.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Of interest to this household	<i>Is this topic relevant to me and our household ?</i> TICK your choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	<i>What is my/our response to the question ?</i> TICK your choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Of interest to the island generally		<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not of importance as an issue		<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	

The first set of responses intended to identify which issues islanders see as most relevant, or which may have most impact for the island. This aimed to identify the significance of the subject.

The second response was a choice regarding the options offered. This statement is of the preferences of islanders of the alternative actions and direction for Gigha over the next ten years.

Several questions had multiple choice options for varied defined outcomes, as well as the ‘Don’t Know’ alternative.



Housing

There are a number of background considerations in looking at options for new developments and housing generally.

- IGHT currently sell 0.25 acre plots bare, without planning permission or services.
- There are strict criteria applied to all potential new developments to the west of the island and in open countryside under the current Local Plan.
- There are also limits to the number of potential new builds on the island due to the capacity of infrastructure service like water and broadband, as well as siting and other planning considerations.
- Younger persons in the UK wishing to become owner occupiers are experiencing difficulties in accessing the property market.
- An ageing population may see a need for the flexible provision of accommodation for socially vulnerable persons in future, or at least older households having the option of a spare bedroom for family or social carers.
- The largest permanent resident grouping is currently the 45-65 age range, and most Gigha households are one or two persons, so an increase in the next ten years in terms of health and social support may be expected.

Village Development

Should Ardmish village be allowed to expand beyond its current boundaries ?

Significance

22

Personal Interest

76

General Interest

15

Not significant Issue

Response

63

YES

26

NO

7

Don't know

Gigha has a wide range of potential locations for new housing. Islanders' were consulted on their preferences for location and type of new dwellings.

96% signified housing as an important consideration in future land use planning.

Only eight new builds in more rural settings have been approved since the community buyout in 2002, most to the south of Gigha. New builds in open country will also be infrequent in future.

The main future developments will be within Ardmish village. There was a spread of preferences, though twice as many people felt grouped dwellings were preferable, either in a single scheme or within small developments, rather than as single dwellings.

A proviso was noted that single dwellings were preferable outside the village curtilage, but better grouped within Ardmish. In general planning consents for new single dwellings outside the current zoning as noted in Local Plan 2 in more rural and isolated settings are subject to a high level of scrutiny.

41

YES to North

35

YES to South

33

NO to North

24

NO to South



Greenspace Around Ardminish Village



Are there existing areas of open space around the village which islanders do not wish to see developed in future, but wish to be retained undeveloped as green space or for other public purposes ?

Significance	22	Personal Interest	72	General Interest	9	Not significant Issue
Response	70	YES	26	NO	7	Don't know

A	61
B	78
C	57
D	43
E	17
F	41
G	30
H	35
J	27

Opinion on future village expansion was mixed, with 63% feeling that expansion beyond current boundaries is acceptable.

However, there was a strong view that the character of Ardminish village needs to be both conserved and enhanced through future development.

This includes retention of valued greenspace within and at the margins of the village as well as identifying suitable sites for any expansion.

Areas A, B and C on the map should be excluded from development and retained as green open space.

Area G is proposed to become a community garden/orchard for local tenants and should also be excluded from future building.

Area E has site advantages and would seem to be the preferred and the obvious location for future development

Areas J and H are currently registered croft and Area D is mostly scrub so less attractive for development.

Although it is sloping there is some potential for house building on sites within Area F, if carefully positioned relative to existing buildings and overlooking criteria.

Since the 2002 buyout about 40% of island residences have become owner occupied.

IGHT have sold a bare building plot roughly every two years since the buyout, with most sales in the first five years after 2002.

Building on Gigha carries a considerable cost premium and project management is often more difficult. For example, the new 2025 IGHT houses, one and two bedroom residences are costing an average £380,000 each, *excluding* site costs. This price point is clearly well beyond most younger persons as an entry level.

Access to the 'housing ladder' in terms of owner occupation for younger persons is both a UK wide but also a Scottish national issue, and also may influence the desirability of Gigha as a place for young people to settle permanently on the island.

There is an advantage in off the peg mini-houses, as high specification factory built kits, which can then quickly assembled on site, both in terms of ease of building and costs.

The survey aimed to identify what level of interest in this route to owner occupation existed on Gigha.

Some 20% of islanders signified a direct personal interest, with 96% in total accepting that unconventional buildings were worth consideration, with 48% thinking there should be a presumption in favour of such housing.

UNCONVENTIONAL BUILDINGS

Significance 20 Personal Interest 76 General Interest 11 Not significant Issue **Response** 48 YES 41 NO 9 Don't know

HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS – VILLAGE LOCATIONS

Significance 13 Personal Interest 83 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue **Response** 39 YES 28 NO 28 Don't know

Should new dwellings be concentrated in Ardminish village ?

Should new dwellings be concentrated in a single scheme and/or small developments in Ardminish village ?

TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Significance 20 Personal Interest 74 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue **Response** 20 39 35 7
Prefer Single Prefer Grouped No Preference Don't know

New dwellings can be single units, developed lineally, or grouped in clusters.
They may be within the general Ardminish village boundaries or in more open countryside.

Marine Setting

Fishing and Aquaculture

Gigha's marine setting, and the economic and environmental concerns this creates, means that islanders have expressed a wish to be engaged in the future management of the coastal waters surrounding the island.

92% of islanders considered marine protection an issue, and 80% of islanders wanted to see locals having more direct involvement.

The 'tragedy of the commons' refers to *"That which is common to the greatest number gets the least amount of care. Men pay most attention to what is their own: they care less for what is common."*
Aristotle

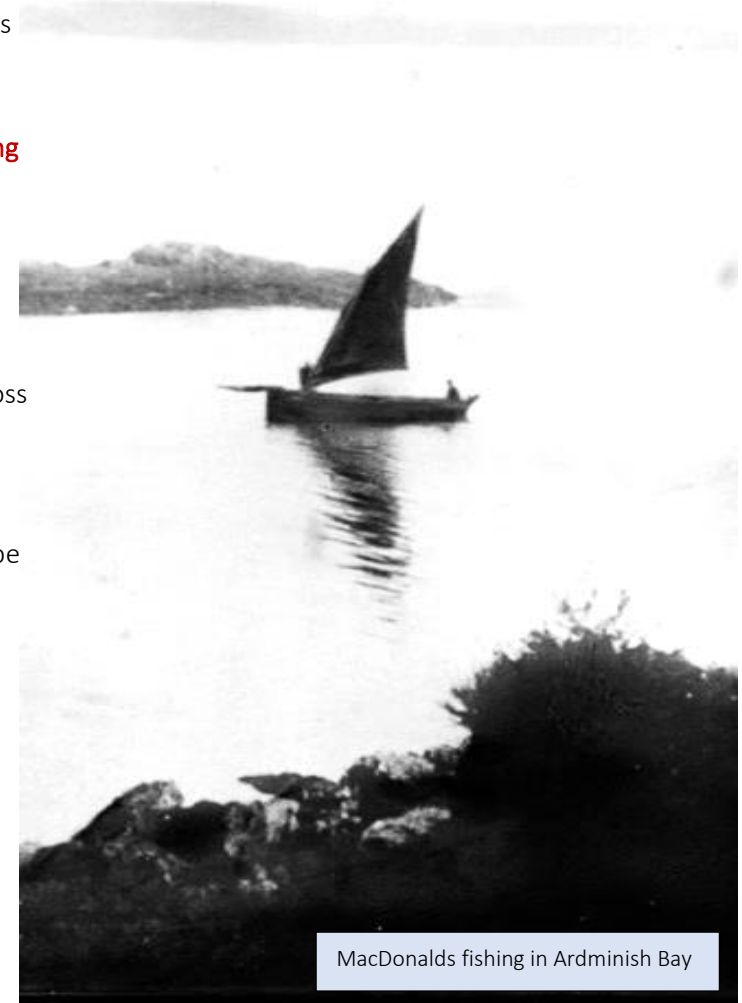
However, managing "commons" has always been a hugely problematic area, both environmentally and economically, though often essential to the longterm welfare of local peoples, both in Scotland and across the planet. The 1977 herring ban represented the ultimate failure in Scottish 'commons' fisheries management, stocks being virtually wiped out.

That this has proved a very intractable issue, and has currently been inadequately addressed at both UK and Scottish Government levels, does not mean that it does not need referencing, and steps invited to be taken to remedy existing failures.

Long term marine degradation will reduce the opportunities for islanders to make a reasonable living from the sea that surrounds us, as well as reduce our environmental quality. A productive Gigha fishery and marine environment will bring more secure prospects for local fishermen as well as improve biodiversity and species protection.

The work of Elinor Ostrom is essential in addressing how commons might be managed and is included here as a start point for debate. Her eight principles for managing 'commons' are:-

1. Commons must have clear boundaries;
2. Rules should be guided by a partnership of local people with local ecological and economic needs fitting local circumstances;
3. Participatory decision-making is vital;
4. Commons must be monitored;
5. Sanctions for abuse of commons should be graduated and negotiated where possible;
6. Conflict resolution should be easily accessible;
7. Commons management requires the right to legitimacy from other authorities.
8. Commons work best when integrated with larger networks and wider regional and national cooperation.



MacDonalds fishing in Ardminish Bay

Despite the clear sustainability objectives in the National Planning Framework 4, the scope of this Local Place Plan is limited on this matter, and local interests need to consider what longer term actions can be initiated and organised and how these can operate effectively locally.

Aquaculture

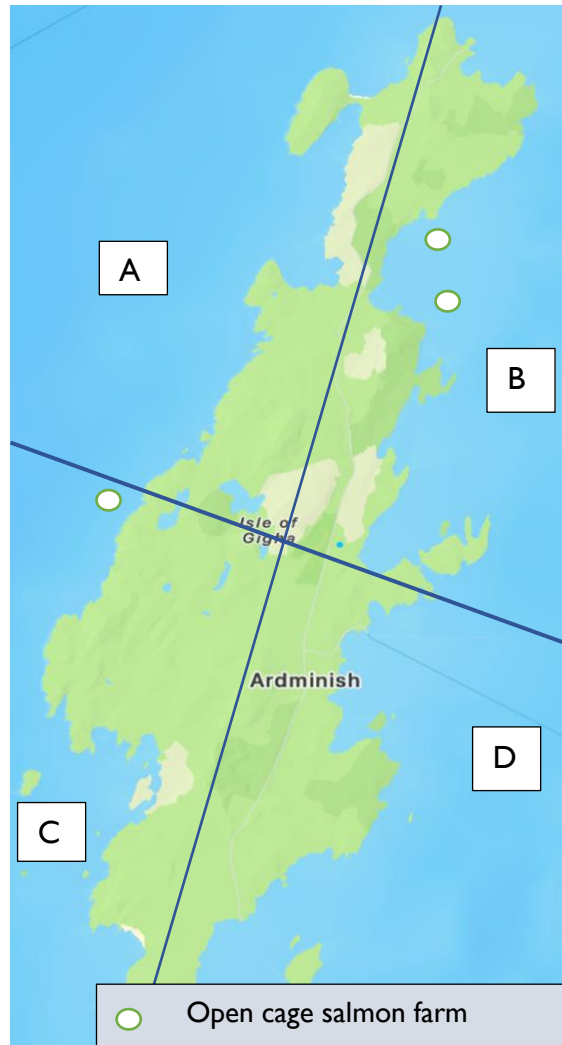
Significance

- 22 Personal Interest
- 70 General Interest
- 2 Not significant Issue

Please tick one or more boxes if you think future aquaculture expansion is acceptable in that sector of the island's coastline. (You may tick all or none.)

Response

- A 30
- B 22
- C 22
- D 13



There is a low level of community support for further aquaculture expansion, beyond the new West Gigha fishfarm, in the next ten years.

This support refers predominantly to open cage fish farms.

Islander opinion runs counter to both Scotgov. and Argyll & Bute policy but is a significant majority on Gigha.

However, alternative sustainable aquaculture operations such as mussel farms or lobster hatcheries were not offered, and any future aquaculture proposals must be evaluated against sustainability criteria and the longer term management of the Marine Protection Area (SPA).

Renewables

Do you agree with possible Photovoltaic (PV) developments in the next decade on Gigha?

Significance

15 Personal Interest 85 General Interest 7 Not significant Issue

Response

83 YES 4 NO 9 Don't know

Do islanders wish to maintain roughly the present scale of development, or see potential expansion in wind power development ?

Significance

17 Personal Interest 83 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue

Response

(Multiple responses were involved)

48 Possible expansion larger turbines 46 Possible expansion more turbines (roughly same size) 26 Redevelop at current scale

Orientation of new building for PVs and solar.

About 5% of residential properties on Gigha currently have roof PV arrays, with all the early IGHT housing renovations including solar water panels.

There is still scope for further PV retrofits and all new development should have such orientation as to permit optimum PV output from roof pitches.

1) Redevelopment of wind turbines and PV installation



There is a longstanding and strong commitment to community renewables on the island as a result of the innovative approach adopted by IGHT in 2004. Renewables revenues are a crucial element in IGHT finances.

The Dancing Ladies are overdue for renewal and there is also the option for a PV installation, diversifying renewables generation on the island, and expanding available future revenues.

There is 80%+ support from islanders for expansion of current capacity, either through installing larger turbines or by placing more of similar size, plus an equivalent level of support for a PV installation.

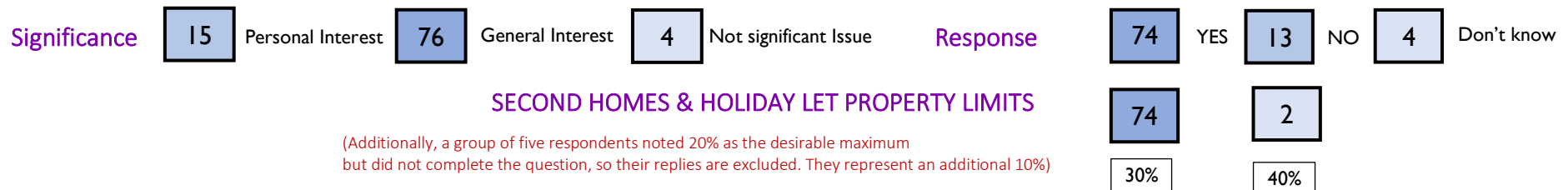
There is a material advantage given an existing potential site with grid connection that would permit PVs being part of wider land site fish farm regeneration, plus there are adjacent alternative locations.

A 2.0 MW ground-mounted solar PV array would require 8-10 acres of land, and this development scale is available on this site.

The key limiting factors for future renewables development on Gigha are the costs of grid connectivity and availability of investment funding.

Second Homes & Holiday Lets

Is there a limit to the % of dwellings that should be used for holiday purposes, and which are not in permanent occupation ?



On a small island the potential for 'over-tourism' is considerable.

There is very considerable concern that Gigha will gradually become another second home enclave, and the island progressively lose its sense of community and also island facilities and services, as have all those communities dominated by a high level of second home ownership. It is a UK wide issue.

As a result, islanders are apprehensive about the prospects of continued growth in the proportion of second homes.

Islander opinion is very strongly in favour of limiting expansion of this use of island housing.

91% felt it a significant issue with 74% considering that a limit to holiday cottage growth is necessary and that the limit should be 30%.

Many felt that 20% (roughly the current level) should represent the limit for holiday homes, and not 30%. Aggregate support for 30% or fewer holiday homes is 84%.

Holiday accommodation, whether second homes or dedicated holiday lets currently takes up about 20% of island properties. They are not directly comparable in that second home occupancy is typically 4-6 weeks a year and holiday cottages aim for 15-20+ weeks.

However, self catering represents about 40% of the overnight accommodation market in Argyll and Bute and growth in this type of accommodation will be necessary if there is to be growth in Gigha's overnight tourism.

The issue then becomes how any trend to a gradual increase in second home ownership can be slowed or halted without damaging wider tourist development objectives.

There are several options:

- 1) Specific developments of holiday cottages / lodges / and pods that provide a wide range of choice and varying price points for the self catering market, possibly including time share options, and aiming to reduce demand for second homes;
- 2) Establish hutting as an alternative option for frequent return visitors to the island;
- 3) Further increase council tax levels for second home owners, as a financial disincentive;
- 4) Require formal planning consent for change of use to accompany property sales of permanently occupied houses to intending second home owners, and for change of use to Air B'n'B and short holiday lets. *

Items 1) and 2) will enable expansion of overnight holiday accommodation without affecting the residential property market.

However, items 3) and 4) need to be retained and available as control options.

** There are legal powers available to Scottish planning authorities that allow planning limitations to be imposed. Article 4 Planning Directions may be made removing all or some permitted development rights. Made by the local authority, they must be approved by Scottish Ministers. These are the Directions currently used to suspend permitted development rights around dwellings. Gwynedd in North Wales is introducing such control measures on June 1st 2025 to limit expansion of second homes in Eryri (Snowdonia National Park).*

"Hutting" was popular in Scotland in the interwar period and is now an increasingly popular form of basic accommodation using off grid small chalet buildings held on long leases (often 20yrs). It is very popular in the Nordic countries.

The hutting movement in Scotland has been boosted recently with general support in Policy 30 of NPF4, and planning authorities are obliged to consider hut applications. Nationally demand still seems to exceed supply. On Gigha there may be a possible 4-6 sites within existing conifer blocks.

Gigha is within easy reach of the Central Belt for access to huts, and there are possible sites on the island, potentially within conifer plantations or elsewhere.

Hutting is a low impact **alternative** to increasing second home ownership, and huts can provide an additional choice of accommodation, for regular visitors, Huts have a maximum size and must comply with planning policy.

"A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation, having an internal floor area of no more than 30m², constructed from low impact materials, generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage, and built in such a way that it is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Huts may be built singly or in groups" Scottish Planning Policy 2014

Only seasonal use is permitted. They **cannot** be let out.

Huts may provide a beneficial revenue source for IGHT. Financially, hutting sites are leased on a 20 year basis plus there is an annual service charge, hence proceeds are split between capital and revenue receipts, evening out cash flow benefits.

It is proposed that there is a general policy of permitting expansion of self catering accommodation but that this ought to be restricted to properties unsuitable for all year round occupation, and that planning conditions are applied to ensure that the island’s permanent housing stock is not further eroded by second home expansion, if necessary, within the 10 year timescale of this plan.

At the present time monitoring over the next 3-5 years will enable a fuller picture to be obtained, but Article 4 Planning Directions must be retained as a future option.

Campsite Extension

Motorhome usage by visitors has expanded considerably in the last ten years and further growth may mean a campsite extension is necessary, especially after the new 24 vehicle capacity ferry comes into service. (currently projected for 2029-30)

Managing motorhome access to the island is highly desirable in 2025, given current ferry capacity, but a new ferry with double the capacity will permit much increased entry to the island, and potentially present many more management problems in future.

The current camp and motorhome site in Ardmish Bay adjacent to the ferry facilities is on non-agricultural ground, but with poor drainage, and robust groundworks would be required to expand the number of pitches. The current issue of motorhome tourism on the island is under discussion, and the continued success of the existing facility depends on wider tourism patterns across Argyll. It is an important issue for islanders.

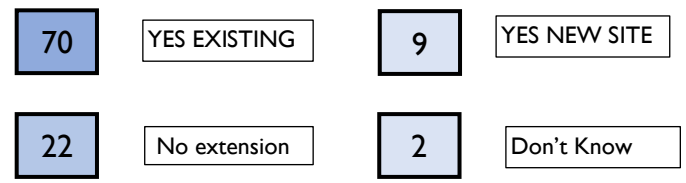
An extension to the existing campsite may be required.

70% of islanders preferred an extension of capacity on the current site but almost a quarter of islanders felt that there should be no extension, presumably restricting overall motorhome access in future.

There is also potential for locating pods / lodges within the existing campsite, subject to site limitations.

Significance **33** Personal Interest **70** General Interest **Response**

Is an extension on or adjacent to the existing campsite desirable, or should a second location be sought ?



GIGHA INFRASTRUCTURE - Conservation, Regeneration and Development

Rural communities with smaller populations tend to suffer from the conventional numbers game justification of infrastructure investment being reduced to a single cost benefit calculation on a per capita basis, so 160 islanders are much less likely to secure funding for projects than areas with larger populations, despite such infrastructure then benefiting visitors as well as residents over much longer timescales, and disregarding universal service entitlements.

Sources of investment for Gigha are constrained and channelled through IGHT; statutory bodies like Argyll and Bute Council and Scottish Water; government agencies like HIE; private sector businesses and individuals. Ease of availability of capital for investment is a continuing issue for Gigha, as it is for almost all small rural communities.

This applies to much general service infrastructure but can be especially difficult for individual projects.

For example, tenant farmers have traditionally had major problems in securing capital given their lack of collateral, making diversification more difficult, however beneficial for national planning objectives that might be.

How Gigha addresses this in future is open to debate.

IGHT have the primary role in terms of the island estate, but there is a continuing need for individual businesses to be able to access investment, whether as self employed or small businesses.

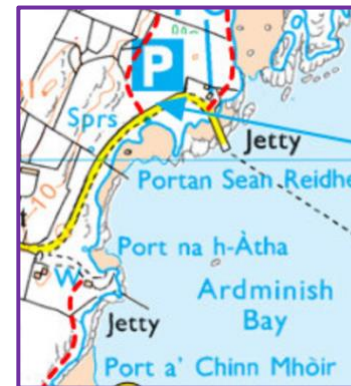
There is also the concern that statutory providers are currently failing to adequately maintain and/or enhance island services and infrastructure.

The island's road was last fully surfaced in 2008; the South Pier still has repeated lighting failures affecting daily ferry services, and internet service infrastructure investment has been considerably lower on Gigha than on the mainland with the superfast broadband link to Campbeltown passing us by, and persistent internet service failures still adversely affect island households and businesses.

Essential - Ferry, Roads, Water, Power, Retailing, Housing, Internet connectivity

Desirable - Footpath network, Car parking, Landsite

Optional - Gardens, Holiday accommodation



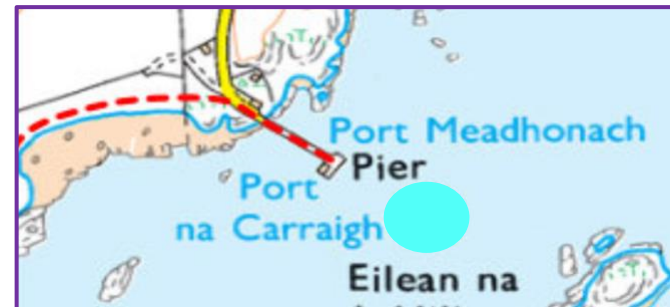


South Pier

Significance Personal Interest General Interest Not significant Issue
 Response YES NO Don't know

If the ferry infrastructure is relocated to Ardminish Bay, then the future options for the South Pier need to be considered.
 Should there be any **NEW** developments considered for the South Pier?

The South Pier will remain essential island infrastructure and require both adequate maintenance and regeneration serving marine enterprises.



Ardminish Bay Development - New Jetty and Ferry Infrastructure

Significance

33

Personal Interest

70

General Interest

Response

78

YES

20

NO

2

Don't know

There ought to be a presumption in favour of new ferry berthing and slipway to accommodate the new ferry. Do you agree?



Until new berthing and slipway facilities are in place, then deployment of our new ferry will not be possible.

Calmac will allocate new ferries on the basis of berthing and jetty availability.

It is crucial for this Gigha infrastructure development that early site appraisal is undertaken. Preliminary investigations will be undertaken during 2025.

Consultations will be necessary with both statutory and operating bodies as the Ardminish Bay proposals are progressed, given the likely scale and impact of these developments.

The most important island infrastructure development projects in the next decade will be associated with the new ferry.

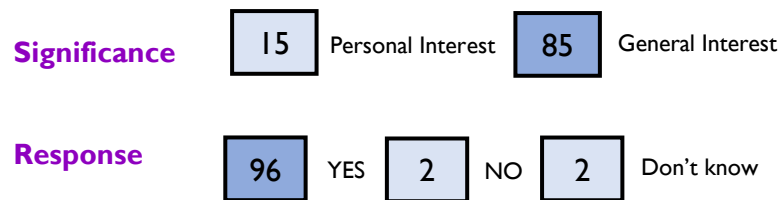
Island Infrastructure - Conservation / Regeneration / Development

The two main regeneration locations are the island church and the presently closed landsite, plus the recovery and renewal of Achamore Gardens after Storm Eowyn.

As the Holy Stone and Yacht carving have been damaged or lost, then there is conservation concern over the Fisherman's Cave carvings, plus several Neolithic and crofting sites which are vulnerable to degradation. Ideally, there would be a comprehensive review of the adequacy of the existing levels of site protection and archaeological safeguarding. Gigha's complex cultural history is an attraction for visitors.

Between 2025 and 2035 the major areas of **Conservation / Regeneration / Development** will include:-

Church



Does the community want to retain the church as a public building?

There was virtual unanimity in the community wishing to retain the church as a public building. This means retention, both as a place of worship, as well as conservation and regeneration to ensure its availability for wider island social and community purposes.

Conversion to alternative use such as residential is not acceptable.



Achamore Gardens Developments

What type and scale of developments might be considered suitable for Achamore Gardens in the next decade to sustain its botanical and visitor interest?



Achamore Gardens recorded 96% as the level of islander significance in regarding it an important island resource, and very highly in terms of local interest and engagement in its management.

The gardens are our main island 'honeypot' and essential to Gigha's identity and tourism.

Future management over the next decade will almost certainly involve formal land use planning procedures as well as general horticultural and silvicultural management.

Evidently future Achamore Gardens management will require elements of all of '*Conservation, Regeneration and Development*'.

Those islander preferences expressed for future infrastructure of both new glasshouse/domes and a visitor centre recognise the need to enhance the Gardens as an attraction, and its scope for revenue generation.

Future expansion of the shelter belt may not need planning consent but reconfiguration of the current shelter belt would be subject to oversight by Scottish Forestry via a Forest or a Management Plan hence involving a formal consent process.

The high level of islander endorsement expressed ought to represent strong support for future bids for resources in IGHT plans for Achamore Gardens.

Significance 22 Personal Interest 74 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue

Response

70	Restore / Expand Shelter Belt	52	New Plant Collections	9	Don't Know
61	New glasshouses or domes	35	New Other facilities		
61	New Visitor Centre	9	No New Built Developments		

Land Site Fish Farm Infrastructure and Future Use

Significance

9 Personal Interest 87 General Interest 4 Not significant Issue



“In Principle”
How important is it that there is either a new use or redevelopment of the presently closed land site?

Response

54	Very important	2	Slightly important
15	Fairly important	11	Not important
13	Important	13	Don't know

The Gigha Halibut enterprise was a highly valued employer and successfully raised the island’s profile through their product marketing.

Ownership issues and resultant regeneration options are very complex for this location and require detailed engagement and discussions with stakeholders and the wider community to seek a mutually beneficial course of action, and ideally, partnership.

At present there is no obvious leadership for project initiation or options appraisal.

Amongst other options, the site is suitable for a photo-voltaic array in both location and south facing aspect, and there is potential for adjacent IGH land to be integrated if necessary in a larger project.

However, most possibilities would require major site clearance and levelling before redevelopment. The capital investment needed for any project would therefore be complicated by front loaded costs.

Island Infrastructure - Conservation / Regeneration / Development

Dark Sky Status

Significance 28 Personal Interest 59 General Interest 13 Not significant Issue **Response** 70 YES 20 NO 11 Don't know

Should there be a presumption against development that will compromise Gigha's Dark Sky status and development conditions imposed that keep our skies dark and/or reduce light pollution?

Dark Sky status ought to be an active consideration for all developments to ensure minimum light pollution.

Developments around farms

Significance 13 Personal Interest 67 General Interest 17 Not significant Issue **Response** 41 YES 39 NO 17 Don't know

Farm buildings involve special procedures for planning purposes, with automatic presumptions in favour of development for farm related business purposes. Should there be any local advice on island standards and design?

Evidently, design and landscaping standards must be applied for all development, but there was no consensus as to local character or design.

New Tracks and Trails

Significance 26 Personal Interest 78 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue **Response** 57 YES 39 NO 4 Don't know

There are unexplored options for off road cycling and an expanded walking network, should visitor demand prove robust. Should new routes be considered?

Off road cycling is still a growing recreational sector in Scotland and there are unexplored and unfulfilled options for both cycling and an expanded walking network for the island.

That 26% of responses identified a personal interest in this issue reflects the success of the Gateway Project, but this did not provide a full island wide network. There is scope for further investment and islanders are broadly supportive.

Ideally the Gigha access network should be sufficiently extensive as to provide scope for short stay visitors and locals as well as the day visitor market.

Small businesses

There are currently few suitable easily available workspaces for new or existing small scale enterprises and businesses on Gigha, but several options exist that might enable new businesses to get established on the island or for self employed people to expand their current business.

In rural areas many people have several jobs and flexibility is needed in serving the needs of small businesses.

On Gigha suitable workspaces might include the repurposing of existing buildings, (including farm steadings), the spare room in residential properties, and/or new constructions including containers as well as smaller spaces like sheds.

Use Of Containers as Semi-Permanent and/or Permanent Storage

Should shipping containers be seen as a valuable way of erecting flexible buildings ?

Significance 4 Personal Interest 76 General Interest 17 Not significant Issue **Response** 72 YES 20 NO 11 Don't know

The use of former shipping containers has potential as an important role for storage units, workshop bases and even as small business premises, but if these are to be used on a permanent basis there are planning implications. For example, there is a micro-bakery in a converted shipping container on another island.

New Business Workspaces

Are more options and facilities necessary ?

Significance 11 Personal Interest 83 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue **Response** 83 YES 9 NO 7 Don't know

Permitted Development Rights

Residential planning permissions on Gigha usually have permitted development rights suspended and sheds etc., require further planning consents. Should future residential planning permissions allow full permitted development rights ?

Significance 13 Personal Interest 76 General Interest 2 Not significant Issue **Response** 54 YES 30 NO 11 Don't know

Islander opinion is very strongly supportive of enabling small business development and the provision of more options and facilities is seen as essential. It needs to be added that the formal planning process both procedurally and in terms of timescales is often seen as an obstacle and disincentive to small businesses and the self employed.

Land Use and Management – Diversification

What choices should be made on Gigha in diversifying land use to meet future national farming, climate change and conservation objectives?

Significance

30

Personal Interest

63

General Interest

Response

65

REWILD and/or REWOOD non improved land where suitable

63

IMPROVE biodiversity when possible

61

ENCOURAGE diversification into arable and/or horticulture

15

KEEP land use as it is

13

ACCEPT a limited general presumption in favour of diversification **only** to meet legal commitments

4

Don't know

There is very strong islander endorsement for substantial changes in overall land use over the next decade, with over 60% support for each of the top three elements of land use diversification, and low approval for the status quo.

Scotland's national targets for tree planting are to increase woodland and forest cover from 19% to over 30% by 2045 with the aim of undertaking 18,000 ha of new planting every year.

"Scotland is committed to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045." (<https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change/>)

Gigha has the highest % of improved agricultural land of any of the Hebrides with about 25% as improved pasture.

Over the last ten years, as on the mainland, the trend on Gigha has been away from dairying and towards extensive stock ranching, but also with a reduction in sheep grazing. Bracken expansion has been continuous over many years.

There has been very successful revenue diversification on Gigha farms in recent years, but overall land use has remained the same.

We have experienced both very wet and dry summers in the last decade, and changing patterns in our weather, so adaptation of existing farming practices and land use is very likely.

There used to be arable on the island, including growing seed potatoes and even carrots, (a demanding crop).

There is potential for diversification away from exclusively grazing land use to include some arable, horticulture, orchard fruits and especially agro-forestry, like wood-pasture, and reduction of bracken coverage.

The Scottish government (Scotgov.) has a number of policies required to meet both climate change commitments and biodiversity objectives which will require changes in land use in the next 10-20 years. These are legal commitments.

They include rewilding, increasing tree cover, improving biodiversity, and widening food production.

Choices will be mostly driven by future Scotgov farming policy and subsidy, but the needs of expanded food production, net zero targets and local wood production are going to have an impact on Gigha land management.

Farm subsidies are likely to change substantially in the next few years. The 2025 Scottish Rural Payments scheme actively encourages both diversification and new woodland.

Is it achievable ? Scotgov. woodland and biodiversity targets are demanding. Can they be met on Gigha ?

There is relatively little tree cover on Gigha, and no fully mature native woodland. There is only one 'wild' oak in open country.

Current wood/scrub cover is 8.5% c.300 acres or 140 ha (est.)

New planting plus existing cover would equate to a target of about 1000 acres or 30% of Gigha's total land area.

Roughly 675 acres of new woodland would be needed to increase tree cover to meet Scottish government targets.

This is roughly 10 ha pa over a 25 yr period.

However, full funding will be available for all future woodland options. (<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/108-the-forestry-grant-scheme-a-guide-to-grant-options-for-woodland-creation/viewdocument/108>)

400,000 trees planted on Gigha over a ten year period would almost counter balance all current carbon emissions – so Gigha could be effectively carbon neutral by 2045 from tree planting alone. (2023 UK emissions data)



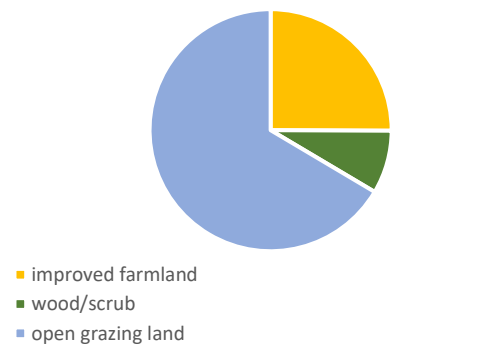
Recolonising scrub – Mill Loch

The majority of land holdings on Gigha are on a variety of agricultural leases on different terms and conditions, and over different timescales.

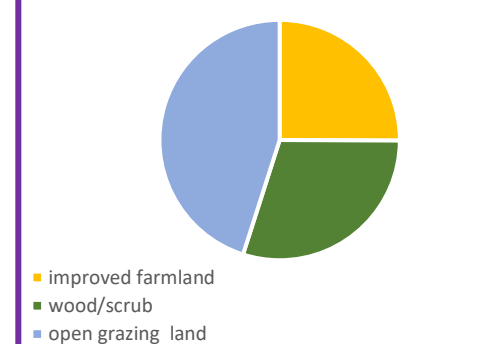
Clearly, there would need to be a partnership between tenants and IGHT, as well as funding agencies, in terms of overseeing land use changes that meet national objectives.

Existing land occupiers should be the main beneficiaries through being enabled to receive additional grants available under Forestry and Rural Payments Schemes, with land use changes creating new revenues and expanding employment opportunities for farmers, plus creating openings for new horticultural and orchard businesses.

Gigha Land Use 2025



Gigha Land Use 2045



SUMMARY of PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Dark Sky status ought to be actively considered in all development proposals to ensure minimum light pollution.

2. Regeneration or redevelopment of the presently closed land site is a high priority.

3. Developments in Achamore Gardens are essential to sustain its botanical and visitor interest through the next decade.

4. Shipping containers should be seen as a valuable way of erecting flexible buildings for temporary or semi-permanent use.

5. Local interests need to be actively involved in the management of Gigha Marine Protection Area (SPA).

6. There should be no further developments of open cage fish farms on Gigha without majority islander support.

7. New off road cycling and walking routes should be considered to create an integrated island network, should use levels prove robust.

8. Diversification of Gigha's land use to match national farming, climate change and conservation objectives is essential.

9. Expansion of the existing campsite ought to be on the existing site or an adjacent location.

10. Gigha church must be retained as a public building.

11. South Pier is essential island infrastructure and will require both proper maintenance and regeneration to serve marine enterprises.

12. Full permitted development rights should be considered for all development to support sufficient provision of new workspaces

13. Expansion and replacement of renewables infrastructure is a high priority on Gigha, both for wind and PV.

14. There should be no development to the east of the road in Ardminish village. (Areas A,B,C)

15. New island housing should be concentrated in Ardminish, with expansion of the boundaries if necessary.

16. Active policies are needed to limit the further expansion of holiday accommodation, especially second home growth.

17. Holiday accommodation development should be limited to property unsuited to all year round occupation.

18. Unconventional housing options should be actively considered for new residential development.

19. Business workspace provision requires expansion.

20. The development of new ferry infrastructure is a very high priority.

21. Local management of Gigha's marine environment is highly desirable