

Notes from Iona

Here we are – in the middle of the year and the visitors’ season, both Mac and Abbey closed for resident visitors – and yet in some respects as busy as if we were open for business.

The small team of the international resident community – vollies, staff, members and associates, works well together, sustaining our three daily services, running the shop, and engaging with day visitors as well as those staying elsewhere for a week or more in B&Bs, hotels, pods, hostels and occasionally Camas, and looking after and improving our properties and their environment on the island. We have discovered that hospitality is something wider than just welcoming residential guests!

The old Saturday to Friday rhythm of Abbey worship has given way to a more flexible approach as people come and go throughout the week, but services are as well attended as if we were hosting resident guests and people are keen to engage to discover what the community is about and stands for. We offer a number of one-off programme sessions like “What is the Iona Community”, “Radical Hospitality”, “Singing for Justice and Peace”, “Stories from Mull and Iona”, “the 6Rs” and an “excursion to the north end in search of varieties of seaweed”.

Many feel challenged and encouraged by our services and appreciate our spirituality of engagement with burning issues of societies and world – and they clearly say so.

The team, almost completely new since the spring, works well together and is happy to go the extra mile when needed.



Some of the team going off to Staffa

Our common life has its challenges and joys as is to be expected in a community of people who have not chosen each other but are determined to engage with what daily life throws at us, working and praying together and living and relaxing at very close quarters. We have a critical friend in Jon Lloyd who works with us once a month, helping us to understand the dynamics of the group and resolving conflicts that have arisen.

It is a joy and a privilege to serve the Iona Community and its work on the island in a year unique in its history; I am delighted to work with a team whose approach to (almost) everything is "Yes, we can." Thank you.

HT