



The IWALC Bulletin

October 2021

Your questions answered, your experiences shared... news and information from across the Island...links and updates...

Your IWALC Matters!!

Message from the Chair.

It has been a busy month for IWALC.

The highlight was the Community Resilience Workshop on 25 September. The purpose of the Workshop was to learn lessons from the successful 'partnership working' during the height of the Covid pandemic. It was originally planned for July but had to be postponed, due partly to Covid but also to the major changes in both local councils and the Isle of Wight Council following the May elections. In the end, the new date worked out well, because it coincided with the news that the Island has received a Silver award from the Institute of Excellence in Public Service for its response to Covid and that the IW NHS Trust has been rated 'Good' and taken out of special measures. The workshop was well attended and the atmosphere very positive. The challenge now, of course, is to turn these positive words into action!



We have also played an active role in the consultation on the Draft Island Planning Strategy, which closed on 1 October, and organised further training courses. Reports in more detail on these and other activities are included in this issue of the Bulletin.

Our next important event will be a 'topic meeting' on Thursday 28 October. IWALC holds meetings for its members every month. We alternate between Executive Committee meetings and meetings on specific topics. The latter are usually attended by a guest speaker and this month the guest will be Cllr Phil Jordan, the Isle of Wight Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Infrastructure. He will brief members on the implications of changes to the Island Roads PFI and answer questions on any other aspects of his challenging portfolio. The meeting will be held at 7 pm in the Council Chamber at County Hall. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Isle of Wight Council for allowing us to use the Council Chamber free of charge for several recent meetings and training events.

Last but not least, we are still seeking your views on the Bulletin. Do you find it useful? Is it too long or too short? Should we continue to produce it monthly or reduce the frequency? Please email your responses to Jill at jwebster.iwalc@outlook.com.

Diana Conyers (Chair)

STOP PRESS - We have just heard that Ryde's Town Clerk, Lisa Dyer, has won the Society of Local Council Clerks (SSLC)'s New Clerk of the Year Award! The award will be announced at SSLC's National Conference on 13 October. Congratulations, Lisa!

Contact - IWALC County Officer, Heather Rowell (heatheriwalc@gmail.com)

Website - www.iwalc.org - Check out our Facebook page too.

The Bulletin - Communications Officer - Jill Webster - jwebster.iwalc@outlook.com

The deadline for the November issue is October 31st - thank you!

DISCLAIMER.

The function of the Bulletin is to inform members of issues and happenings that are of concern. All articles are taken in good faith and the opinions expressed in the Bulletin are those of the submitter. Submitted articles do not necessarily reflect our views. We cannot take responsibility for any legal queries resulting from these.

We reserve the right not to print submitted articles.

IWALC News...

Community Resilience Workshop

On Saturday 25 September, IWALC hosted a Workshop on Community Resilience. The purpose of the Workshop was to look at the way in which organisations across the Island worked together during the height of the Covid pandemic and to consider how this experience can be used to improve the quality of general service delivery in the future.

The Workshop was organised in conjunction with Community Action IW and the Isle of Wight Council. Sponsorship was received from CCLA, a national organisation that provides funding support for charities and public bodies, and Hovertravel, who played a critical role during the height of the pandemic. It was held at Sandown Town Council's Broadway Centre and refreshments were provided by Aspire Ryde.

About 45 participants attended the Workshop. They included representatives from parish and town councils, local community organisations, the IW Council, the NHS and a number of voluntary organisations. We were particularly honoured by the presence of Sue Baxter, chair of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), and Lora Peacey-Wilcox, the Leader of the Isle of Wight Council.

The day began with brief presentations on the way in which the Island responded to Covid, including case studies of responses in Ryde, Freshwater and East Cowes. Participants then broke into four discussion groups, comprising a mixture of local and county-level representatives, to discuss the following questions:

1. How can parish, town and community councils work with other local organisations to strengthen their communities' capacity to address local needs?
2. How do differences in size and resources between councils affect what they can do?
3. What changes are needed at the county level to support these local community partnerships?

The atmosphere was very positive and a number of useful conclusions and recommendations emerged from the discussions. They included the need to:

- Work together to improve coordination and make maximum use of scarce resources;
- Be innovative and 'think outside the box';
- Build on existing resources and partnerships rather than try to establish new structures and systems;
- Explore ways of providing support to local community development efforts, drawing lessons from the existing Community Connector posts in the Ryde and Freshwater areas;
- Strengthen and broaden the volunteer base;
- Explore alternative sources of funding.

A full report on the Workshop will be issued soon. Meanwhile, a steering group has been formed to follow up the recommendations made.

Draft Island Planning Strategy

At the end of July, the Isle of Wight Council published the second draft of its proposed new Island Planning Strategy (IPS) and invited members of the public to give their views. The IPS will be the Island's core planning document, replacing the current Island Plan. The Council's planning team visited individual parish, town and community councils to brief them on the document and many have submitted responses to the consultation, which ended on 1 October.

At IWALC's August topic meeting, it was agreed that we would submit our own response, incorporating key points raised by member councils. We drafted a submission, which was approved at an Executive Committee meeting on 30 September and submitted the following day.

Our submission supports most of the proposals in the Draft IPS. It welcomes the reduction in housing targets and, while wishing that it could be even lower, recognises that it will be difficult enough to convince the government to accept the proposed target of 486 a year. It points out that accepting this target doesn't mean that attempts to argue the case for lower numbers through other channels cannot still be pursued.

However, it maintains that these measures will not be enough to address the Island's current housing crisis. It calls upon the Isle of Wight Council to work with housing associations and other housing providers to find alternative ways of meeting this need, including the provision of council-owned housing. It also points out that experience in other parts of the country suggests a variety of possible measures to address concerns about second home ownership on the Island.

The submission suggests a number of other areas where stronger action is needed, including addressing the impact of climate change, enforcing developers to deliver on time and taking enforcement action against anyone who breaches planning regulations. It also calls for financial contributions made by developers through Section 106 agreements to be spent in the local area and in consultation with local councils.

Training

Two versions of an Introduction to Planning course were planned: a face-to-face version on 22 September and a virtual session on 29 September. Unfortunately, the face-to-face version had to be cancelled at the last minute because the trainer, Chris Turvey, Ryde TC's Planning Clerk, had to self-isolate. However, the virtual session took place. Another face-to-face session will be organised as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, there will be an Introduction to Finance course on Wednesday 27 October from 6.30 to 9.00 pm in the Council Chamber at County Hall. The course will be delivered by Sue Chilton, East Cowes Town Clerk. Any councillors or staff wishing to attend should contact their clerks. There will also be a Code of Conduct course on 24 November.

Executive Meeting 30 September

The meeting was held in the Council Chamber at County Hall. Turnout was low, due probably, at least in part, to the weather. This led to yet another debate about the relative advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face and virtual meetings.

In addition to finalising IWALC's response to the Draft IPS, members agreed to:

- Oppose a proposal to increase NALC subscriptions by 1% next year that will be considered at NALC's October AGM;
- Get professional support to upgrade the IWALC website;
- Accept an offer from Cllr Watts (Rookley PC) to provide a social media course for members;
- Accept an offer from Cllr Phil Jordan to brief members on changes to the Island Roads PFI at the October Topic Meeting; and
- Approve a redistribution of responsibilities between the County Officer and the Publications Assistant, who will now be known as the Communications Officer.

Issues Related to Water, Drainage and Flooding

Southern Water have attracted a lot of media attention recently – unfortunately most of it bad. In order to get some idea of the extent of the problems, IWALC has requested members to tell us about any major or longstanding water supply or drainage problems in their area. However, members should continue to also report any problems directly to Southern Water. You are advised to email Keith Herbert (keith.herbert@southernwater.co.uk) or Laura Moran (laura.moran@southernwater.co.uk). They will do their best to assist you.

We have also been informed that, following the severe flooding in many parts of the Island in July and August, the Isle of Wight Council have commissioned JBA Consulting to investigate the causes and impacts. Anyone affected by the flooding is invited to submit evidence to the enquiry. For further information, go to: <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Environment-Planning-and-Waste/Planning/Watercourse-Consents/Flood-Investigations>.

How do we work out the yearly IWALC subscriptions?

The subscription that your town or parish council pay to IWALC each year is made up of two parts, the NALC subscription and the IWALC subscription.

The NALC subscription is notified to us by NALC and is worked out on the electorate of all member councils, each elector is charged at a rate of 7.42 pence and this year we paid NALC £6432.47 for our membership. By using the December electoral roll from the IW Council I work out each town or parish councils NALC contribution and include this amount in your invoice. It looks like the NALC subscription will increase by 1% next year taking it to 7.49 pence but this is not final yet.



The IWALC part of the invoice is a slightly different matter; this is worked out on the tax base of band “D” properties which I also obtain from the IW Council but as I have to prepare my figures for the January meeting of IWALC before all the councils have set their new precepts I work from the previous year’s reports. IWALC charge 34 pence for the first 2000 properties then 17 pence for the next 3000 and anything over this 5000 is not charged.

For example, **Small Parish** having an electorate of 350 so NALC charge $350 \times 7.42\text{p} = \mathbf{25.97}$ and the tax base is 185.80 so IWALC charge $185.80 \times .34\text{p} = \mathbf{63.17}$ so final invoice is **£89.14**.

On the other hand Big Town having an electorate of 8500 so NALC charge $8500 \times 7.42\text{p} = 630.70$ and the tax base is 5269.50 so IWALC charge $2000 \times 34\text{p} = \mathbf{680.00}$ plus $3000 \times 17\text{p} = \mathbf{510.00}$ and the remaining 269.50 are not charged so the final invoice is **£1820.70**

Because 2020 was a very strange year with the Covid 19 pandemic when it came to working out the figures for 2021 – 2022 I was able to give a 35% discount to all member councils of IWALC in the previous year 20/21. That is not something that happens often and this year the subscription invoices will be back up to the normal level so be prepared to see an increase from last year.

Sue Hardy - Treasurer

Zoom Meetings with MP Bob Seely



These fortnightly meetings are very popular with Town, Parish and Community Councils and all Councillors and staff are welcome to take part. Log-in details, dates and times will be circulated via your Clerk.

News & Information from NALC

September was an eventful month with virtual meetings of the NALC Management Board, the National Assembly, the Smaller Councils Committee and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association (HLOWLGA) taking place. The highlights are set out below.

1. 2022/23 budget and affiliation fees

These issues were considered by the Management Board where it was agreed to recommend a 1% increase in affiliation fees to the National Assembly for 2022/23 I argued both at the Management Board meeting and at the National Assembly for a subscription freeze next year given the financial pressures on many councils during the pandemic and also taking account of the fact that NALC showed a trading surplus of £102K in 2020/21.

The National Assembly backed the Management Board recommendation which will now go to the NALC AGM on 27th October where it will be opposed by IWALC delegates.

Another controversial matter was a recommendation from the Management Board to bring forward the final date for county associations to pay the first instalment of affiliation fees. Currently the NALC constitution requires county associations to pay over 80% of affiliation fees by 30th June.

The Management Board recommendation, supported narrowly by the Assembly, is to bring forward the date for first payment to 31st May in order to improve NALC's cash flow situation. This will now go forward to the AGM where a two thirds majority will be required as this will require a change to the constitution.

IWALC delegates to the AGM will oppose this change which if approved will simply transfer the cash flow pressure to CALCs and member councils.

2. NALC Governance Arrangements

There is general agreement that NALC's constitution is out of date and in need of review. The National Assembly therefore has agreed to set up a task and finish group in the New Year to review NALC's governance arrangements and constitution and report to the 2022 AGM with any approved changes being implemented in 2023.

3. Local Government Reorganisation and a "County Deal"

At the meeting of HLOWLGA on 24th September the issue of a "county deal" once again raised its head which could involve Hampshire County, the Island, Portsmouth, Southampton, all Hampshire districts and boroughs and a relationship with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

The meeting was told that this could involve resurrecting the idea of a directly elected mayor for the region which, I was led to believe, is still in the Government's thinking. Whilst this in itself does not involve reorganising existing principal councils, proposals for local government reorganisation with moves to unitary governance is taking place in various parts of the country.

With this in mind NALC will be holding a virtual roundtable session for Assembly members and county officers during the week commencing 18th October. Whilst there is nothing to suggest this will affect the Island or our near neighbours I think it is necessary to have a watching brief and keep an eye on developments.

4. NALC elections 2021

Nominations have opened for NALC's national committees.

In addition to members of the National Assembly being able to stand for election to the Management Board and other committees there are opportunities for colleagues from IWALC member councils who are not on the National Assembly to stand for direct election to the Larger and Smaller Councils' Committees.

The Larger Councils Committee is restricted to members from councils with an electorate of over 6,000 and/or a budgeted income of over £600K. There are seats for eight directly elected councillors, four directly elected clerks and two “super councils’ network” members.

The Smaller Councils Committee includes three directly elected members representing smaller councils as nominated by county associations. “Smaller councils,” for the purpose of these elections are councils not meeting the “larger councils” definition.

The Smaller Councils Committee is of the view that three directly elected members is insufficient and is pressing for this to be increased by at least two.

If you are interested in standing for election to either the Larger or Smaller Councils Committee an induction pack and nomination forms are available either from the NALC website or by contacting me at: bobblezzard@btinternet.com

The closing date for nominations to be received by NALC is 25th October. Candidates wishing to stand for the Smaller Councils Committee will, in accordance with NALC’s election rules need to be endorsed by IWALC and should therefore advise the County Officer.

Voting will take place online by members of the National Assembly. The term of office is for two years commencing on 1st January 2022.

Bob BLEZZARD (October 2021)

IWALC Members’ Views and Suggestions

We encourage IWALC members to express their views on topical issues. Let us know what you think about the views expressed below.

I am a newly elected Councillor for Sandown and Lake on the Isle of Wight. Recently I had my Planning training, hosted by IWALC. This was by Zoom, which is so much more accessible, and easy to see everyone in the 'room' so-to-speak!

We were able to introduce ourselves and speak about our community and we then had a slide- show on eight concepts of the Planning Process.

It was easily explained and members attending were allowed to ask questions at every stage and comprehensive answers were given by Trainers, Chris Turvey and Diana Conyers.

We got through many issues that Councillors have to deal with, along with discussions on some points where improvements might be attained, and what might be the way forward to help in addressing these issues. One such issue which was discussed was enforcement, and it seemed apparent that planning enforcement seemed to be very poor! We need this to be addressed and need to gain funding for more enforcement officers to be able to tackle problems - this would help. Chris told us that Ryde TC have a considerable sum of money in the budget each year to be able to help fund this.

Is this something that other Councils would be willing to contribute towards?

A thoroughly informative training evening and I was very pleased to have done this.

Cllr Jenny Hicks (Lake PC and Sandown TC)



News from West Sussex ALC

Some 12 miles NE of Bembridge lies Thorney Island; older islanders may remember RAF aircraft taking off over the Solent. The RAF relinquished the site in 1976 and in 1982 it was taken over by the Army as Baker Barracks and is the home of two Royal Artillery Regiments, the only regular army presence in the County. Some 1800 military personnel and their families live on Thorney Island.



Thorney Island is the second least accessible Army base in the UK, the first being Benbecula in the Hebrides. No public transport runs on to the base and it is a four mile walk to Emsworth with much of the walk without a footway – a challenging prospect for dependants without a car.

The West Sussex Civilian and Military Partnership Board, on which WSALC has a seat, agreed to pursue an application to the Armed Forces Covenant Grants Fund to purchase a mini-bus to operate from Baker Barracks to run into Havant or Chichester for shopping trips. Drivers will be off duty military personnel and the vehicle will be stored and maintained by the Army. We should know if the grant application has been successful around the end of October.



Emsworth Residents Association and three parish councils adjoining Thorney Island have 'bought into' the arrangement with financial contributions and the mini bus will also be used by community groups when not in use by army families.

There are a number of strands to the Covenant Grant Fund and this bid is to assist with improved integration between the military and civilian communities. We also anticipate the mini bus possibly being

used to assist veterans in the area (there are 40,000 veterans in West Sussex) by taking them to the Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Clubs in Bognor Regis or Portsmouth.

Trevor Leggo (CEO, WSALC)

News from Member Councils

Shalfleet Parish Council

Shalfleet Parish Council still has no movement from IR/ Highways on the installation of the footpath through Bouldnor Field - although this was agreed in April. Even the developer is not receiving any instructions.



Shalfleet Parish Council

The residents of Shalfleet raised questions about sewage disposal and overflow of water into the sea. As a result, Councillors were invited to see the sewage treatment plant. Many questions were answered and copies of the licences have been received. This PR exercise by Southern Water is appreciated as we can now answer residents' questions.

Two Councillors attended the IWALC Resilience Workshop in September and found it interesting and a useful session in "spreading the word" as to how the hubs can be maintained, strengthened and developed.

Two Councillors attended a First Aid at Work course recently. Any Council meeting carries the potential of a medical emergency. This was something that a few years ago we felt should be addressed. Updates on the provision and cost of defibrillators was most useful. There are defib. packs that can be taken to venues, as they are battery powered. I thought you ought to know about this and it will give you the opportunity to discuss this in your own parish.

Clr Helena Hewston

Cowes Town Council

The nights are drawing in quickly and autumn is just around the corner. Summer plants have been removed and the watering contract ceased.

We are looking ahead to Remembrance Day, keeping our fingers crossed that the Service and Parade will be able to go ahead this year. It will be lovely to hear the sound of the marching band approaching Northwood Park for the service and watch the procession down to The Parade.

Plans are underway for the Christmas lighting and the town's Christmas tree. Christmas really isn't far away! We hope to be able to enjoy this year with our families and friends.



We are having a number of items of street furniture painted outside of the main tourist season for minimal disruption to visitors.

The Town Council's public meetings have resumed in the main building at Northwood House, albeit in a larger room to provide space for social distancing.

The Clerks are kept busy updating policies and risk assessments; quotations for contracts commencing in April 2022 are being sought. The budget setting cycle is about to begin.

Kate Gibbs (Assistant Town Clerk)

(Photo of one of our magnificent hanging baskets on The Parade)

Havenstreet & Ashey Parish Council

Park's Panoramic Picnic Perch

Havenstreet and Ashey Parish Council have installed two new park picnic benches to overlook the nearby meadow, and look across the valley to the Ashey Down Sea Mark.



Working with Island Roads and local residents, the local council have been able to fund two new benches, with a further picnic bench and improvements in the park, with the meadow due to be cut for the winter, and renewed in the Spring.

Parish Chair, Veronica Hattersley said, 'It's really important, especially during the recent covid pandemic, for residents to have a high-quality public space to get exercise and a breath of fresh air, and we have prioritised installing new benches for the Autumn'.

Cllr Mick Lyons added, 'It is a breathtaking view and these new seats will allow more families to enjoy the recreational ground, as well as spend time together'.

The Parish Council are considering funding a new defibrillator for the Parish in the near future, as well as other initiatives. *Richard Priest (Clerk)*

Picture (L-R) Cllr Hattersley and Cllr Lyons

Chillerton & Gatcombe Parish Council

Electric Charging Points

Some people try to ignore that the electric car is taking over our lives, as now all the adverts on TV are for all makes of electric vehicles. What prohibits me at the moment from purchasing a new electric car, is that some are dual-fuel and all are not self-charging - this means you have to charge regularly at home. Or, is it the lack of charging points?



Where can we find these points if we need one? The first on the Island was at Ventnor Botanical Gardens and we have some odd ones springing up at Bembridge, Newport, Ryde and various supermarket service stations. My concern is that we need them in our rural locations.

In Chillerton & Gatcombe we have decided to try and provide some charging points, for our residents and visitors, in designated bays. However, one of the problems in the towns is no close parking and there has been some talk of using the lamp columns, but some of these, as you know, are the other side of the footpath and this would mean trailing a lead across to your car. This would be a hazard for the pedestrian and the visibly impaired. Therefore, should all new properties have a charging point? And maybe all the housing associations should be installing them?

Finally, how do we go about this as a Town & Parish Council, as there is always a cost? We need a metered mains supply and a controlled designated bay and, of course, the charging point/column. However, I understand there are now grants available and a good financial return on the power used to us as the provider, so not all bad news!

Your Clerk will be able to help, I'm sure.

Cllr Peter J Whiteman (Vice Chair Chillerton & Gatcombe Parish Council)

Fishbourne Parish Council

Spruce Up Saturday!

On Saturday 11th September the residents and councillors of Fishbourne came together to 'Spruce Up' the parish.



Signs were cleaned and cleared of weeds, broken posts on the Green were replaced, litter was picked in all areas and even the weeds alongside the pavements were cleared in one road.



Thanks to the excellent weather we were able to end the morning with a snack and drink on the lawn at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club. More than 20 residents took part, and we hope to get even more involved in the future.

Maxine Warr (Clerk)



Freshwater Parish Council

Freshwater Skate Competition-
Saturday August 21st 2021.

At one point there were about 100 people watching and/or taking part and we raised over £100 in donations. This whole event was put together by Hamish Fleming and Paul Blackley in less than 10 days. Heather Rowell (Clerk)



After looking like the weather had let us down, all the skaters got active and swept and squeegeed the puddles, then it rained again! Finally, the sun came out.

Although the turnout was already great, people kept on arriving and the commitment to the new park was tangible. Everyone helped get ramps out and in place and we began. We started with mini challenges such as "hippy jump" and "ramp to ramp" with all ages and abilities taking part. Passers-by stopped to check it out as there seems to be a new understanding since the Olympics got the world's attention.

Further enthusiasm for the new park was demonstrated by the amazing and generous prizes donated from businesses across the island such as Freshwater Parish Council, Craft Vegan Pizza Ryde, Reaper Surf Co, Teemill, Rapanui, Westwood Signs, Steve Miles Artist, Canopy, and Wight Trash.

The event was captured on an insect-like drone and 360 camera, flown and shot by Steve Martin, giving a futuristic feel as the drone flew amongst the skaters. The vibe was rad; it felt like a new beginning for this corner of Skate Island. I can't wait to welcome everyone to Canopy coming soon.

Hamish Fleming



Arreton Parish Council

Here in Arreton it is everything from dog bins to oil wells! We have installed another bin situated in Heasley Lane, near to the gates to Heasley Manor, which is a popular route for dog walkers. As for the oil wells, the application from UKOG for an exploratory well is likely to go before the IW Council Planning Committee in the not-too-distant future, which will no doubt stir another flurry of activity.

A success story (we hope) is the prevention of rabbit damage in Gore Cemetery. As it is a very sandy site it is extremely attractive to rabbits. If they would simply confine themselves to eating the grass there would be no problem but, unfortunately, their burrowing activities have undermined some of the headstones. The installation of a suitable new fence, plus other measures, has seen a significant reduction in their numbers; to such an extent that the grounds maintenance contractors now have to cut the grass – something that they have not had to do for some years. Sheila Caws (Clerk)



East Cowes Town Council



Charity Bike Ride

...from Largs To East Cowes and in aid of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust, the Piam Brown Unit and Teenage Cancer Trust.

Well done to the brothers, Nicholas and Matthew Earley, who raised a magnificent £4570.

Isle of Wight Society Conservation Awards.

The event was held at East Cowes Town Hall and was well attended.



IWALC Community Resilience Workshop (Saturday 25 September 2021)

East Cowes and Whippingham Community Support Hub was one of three case studies presented at the Workshop. Here is the report we presented:

As we look back over the past 18 months, we all started with no idea of what was to come and we just had to make it up as we went along. The Isle of Wight Council set up a volunteer hub for the island. I then contacted the volunteers to match them up with people who were 'shielding' and who had been assigned to our hub.

The one-to-one shielded, and others who needed help, worked well for us as this allowed them to go through the past 18 months with the same people. The requests for help were sent straight out as soon as they were received from IOW Covid support. This was for medical prescriptions, shopping and phone calls. We also set up a system with the local chemists for timed collections and deliveries. There were also local shops who took on home deliveries and who supported the community.

There were 435 requests for help in the first phase of Covid in just one week. We covered every request, each day, thanks to our 68 local volunteers. We received support from so many firms, local companies and even PPE from a firm in Lee-on-Solent. This was delivered by Rib on a Sunday morning with the help of the Cowes Harbour Master.

I was asked if we could take on the Whippingham Ward as well as there was no cover and for the community there, we collected medicines from Ryde, Newport, Wootton and St Mary's Hospital.

I decided to step down from the Town Council in August 2020 as Covid had made this a full-time task which needed continuity. The situation changed from day to day but Local Councils don't work in this way, but I was able to report back to the Council each month as to how the pandemic was going. We had learned many things and the Community hubs zoom calls gave us information which helped to plan ahead.

The Isle of Wight Council passed on the next phase to Community Action and most of the systems that we developed have worked well and are still in place. This stage was more about supporting people and families in need. This made money available to help with utility bills and put together food parcels using money from the local council funds. We helped many people who had been furloughed or had lost their jobs, and also helped many families who had sick children.

The next part of our journey was to get people to be vaccinated. We worked with East Cowes Medical Centre and arranged to get everyone vaccinated by arranging transport to Westridge, at Ryde. If the Medical Centre had not filled all the appointments, they would give me details to put on our 'social media'. Our best result was 250 people booked in one hour. We also used the Optio Voluntary Car Service. Our volunteers have now taken part in Mental Health First Aid and are working with Optio Car Service. Looking ahead, the volunteers who were part of this fantastic effort for their community and have come forward at each stage of the pandemic, will be remembered. Some of the community made scrubs, face masks and children's art packs.

The time has now arrived for the East Cowes Town Council to take the community with them to build on the amazing community-spirit evident during the pandemic, and to enable them to enjoy some form of normality after the most dreadful period we have experienced since wartime. Work has started on the East Cowes Community Hub and Library. Here, we will be able to signpost residents on where and how to get help from external organisations, charities and agencies. There will be a meeting room, which will be available for community use, as well as a flexible library/community area for groups and individuals to meet up and enjoy various activities, together with the library service. It will also house the administrative offices. The Council are hoping that it will truly become a vibrant, central hub for East Cowes residents. Also, on the agenda for the council to take forward, is the leasing of the Jubilee Recreation Ground in York Avenue and the Victoria Grove Play Park and green areas from the IW Council.

The Council will soon be considering how best to develop the Jubilee Recreation Ground and one idea is to create a sustainable garden. This would potentially be the first garden of this type in the UK and could provide the local community with a place to meet and relax in a beautiful woodland setting. It will also provide an opportunity for the community to volunteer to look after the garden as part of the NHS Social Prescribers Programme and could include a sensory garden as part of that well-being programme. The well-being of the community, and making East Cowes a better place to live, work and play, is always at the heart of the Council's aims. To this end, we have recently taken the lease for the landward side of the Esplanade and are working to develop this into an attractive and enjoyable recreational area that the local community and visitors alike will find appealing. We are also supporting a local voluntary group who are working very hard to install gabions along the landslip area of the seafront, so that this too can be enjoyed. A recent addition to our thriving Town Hall has been the installation of cinema equipment to develop a community cinema. We are hoping that this will encourage people back out into the community once more.

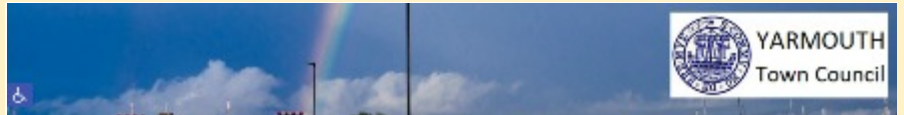
In an effort to raise the Council's profile and improve communication to residents we have launched a refreshed website, a Facebook page and a quarterly newsletter, which is delivered to every household in the town. The newsletter has been instrumental in helping us to recruit a team of volunteers who undertake litter picking, develop the community cinema and support the library. The council feel that this has been another method of encouraging people to get out and enjoy social interaction once more.

The Council are confident that the experience they have gained over the last twenty months has fully prepared them should the pandemic resurge. The pandemic brought out the very best in the East Cowes Community. Our voluntary support hub quickly had a bank of volunteers who were ready and willing to do whatever was required and they are happy to return if needed. We have tried-and-tested plans in place and have undertaken specialist training to deal with all future forms of support to the vulnerable in the community. All the services have worked together during this dreadful period to ensure the 'Covid response' worked well, and I am confident that we will be able to provide a well-connected network to respond to whatever comes. My hope is that we will not need to bring these plans into action again. *Cllr Michael Pater (Mayor)*

Phone Boxes.... What Have You Done with Yours??

...thanks to Brian for these photos....

Yarmouth Town Council



Yarmouth Town Council purchased the telephone box in the town and have used it to mount a montage of historic photos of Yarmouth.

Brian Jacobs (Clerk)



Other News...

Elder Awareness Campaign

The multi-agency campaign (developed by the Isle of Wight Council in partnership with Inclusion Isle of Wight, Age UK Isle of Wight and Carers Isle of Wight - also being supported by the Alzheimer's Society as well as local domestic abuse specialist support services, Paragon and Hampton Trust) aims to prevent domestic abuse in the elderly community and asks us all to be good neighbours, especially in the winter months. At its heart is the underlying message that help is closer than you think.

Teresa Brimble-Brennan, the council's domestic abuse project officer, said: "This is a very different campaign to what we usually do. We want to reach people who may not realise they need help and signpost them to local support. Winter will soon be here and older people may feel alone and isolated once more. We want them to realise that, even if they don't have family or friends, they do have a community and we are here to help."



Older people can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and unable to defend themselves. Fear and infirmity can be major barriers to seeking and getting help, and sometimes spotting and challenging abuse in the elderly can be difficult. Another topic will be dementia awareness and early identification — looking at challenging behaviours and how they could be misunderstood. The campaign also comes at a time when Inclusion, which provides support to people affected by drugs or alcohol, is reporting an increase in referrals from elderly parents seeking support for their adult child. The campaign will highlight the support available in situations where someone has had to move back home with an elderly parent or have an elderly parent move in.

Throughout the month there will be weekly social media messages as well as local newspaper coverage. Remaining are-

Friday 15th October – Elderly parent displaying challenging behaviours?

Friday 22nd October – Your elderly neighbours need you!

During the month there will be a pre-recorded webinar from our commissioned providers Paragon and Hampton Trust to talk about their services and how to make a referral for support and Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friends will be delivering a FREE 45 minute information session on Zoom where you can learn more about dementia, how it effects a person and what you can do to help people affected by dementia in our community.

Teresa Brimble-Brennan (Domestic Abuse Project Officer)



Valuable not Vulnerable: a world for all ages

1st to 29th October 2021

The webpage for Valuable not Vulnerable has been launched.

Hosted via the Age UKIW website, organisations can find resources, examples and events happening across October.

Please visit Valuable not Vulnerable: a world for all ages

Contact Details: Helen Lewis, AFI Engagement Officer Email: helen.lewis@ageukiw.org.uk Tel: 01983 525282

The 'Pavements for People' project has been co-produced by members of the Age UKIW Older Persons' Steering Group, as part of the Age Friendly Island initiative and in partnership with Island Roads. The project explores common access issues that older people and those with a range of access needs can encounter when walking or navigating pavements. The useful resource covers topics including parking on pavements, overhanging hedges and various trip or slip hazards. It explains which organisations are responsible for access issues and how to report matters of concern.

Service Director Steve Ashman said: "We have previously done some work through our training programme to help our staff understand some of the challenges faced by people in the community who are less mobile. This new partnership with Age UKIW is a natural next step and we are looking forward to continuing our work with the charity to see what we can do to support older people as we carry out our work on the Island."

Age Friendly Service Manager Emma Lincoln said: "Keeping pavements clear for people, particularly those with mobility and sight loss challenges is vitally important so they can continue to move freely and safely in their everyday lives. This project has helped pinpoint the type of challenges faced by older people and we are grateful to Island Roads for their help in working with us to create this useful resource. We look forward to their continuing involvement with AFI and in welcoming other organisations to sign up to our Charter."

Here is a link to the booklet: [Pavements for People-emmy.lewis Flip PDF | AnyFlip](#)

Hard copy available by calling our main number on: 01983 525282.

Change Lives Change Your Own Volunteer with Age UK Isle of Wight

Volunteers are some of the most valued members of our organisation, and play a pivotal role in supporting our island residents.

We know that this support lifts moods, reduces anxieties and loneliness and most importantly allows somebody to smile again!

But we could not do any of this without individuals like you, who are prepared to donate their time to us!

We are urgently looking for volunteers to support in the following areas:

- Befriending - face to face and telephone
- Transport -for medical appointments or leisure
- Shopping - with or for our clients
- Prescription Collection & Delivery
- Dog Walking

To find out more please contact us on 01983 525 282 or head to our 'Get Involved' page on our website www.ageukiw.org.uk where you can register your interest and a member of the Good Neighbours Scheme team will contact you for an informal discussion. Allison - Age UK IW Team Leader - Good Neighbours Scheme

Aspire, Ryde

We are starting a new service to help to get people out of their homes and to support them in going out shopping again if they have been isolating and are anxious about starting again. Or just if they struggle to get to the shops and back. Details in the flyer. *Trevor Nicholas*

Shop & Drop – Supported Shopping



Shop & Drop: Helping you with shopping weekly

Be collected from home in our minibus

Trip to Tesco Extra in Ryde to complete your shopping
Help on and off the minibus and with loading shopping
Dropped back to your home and help provided with
shopping bags to your door

Our minibus unfortunately cannot accommodate
wheelchairs at present



Tuesdays – starting from 12th October
9am – 10am – collections from home
10am – 11am – shop at Tesco Extra (Ryde)
11am – 12pm – drop back off home
Suggested Donation of £2
Ryde area only at present

Contact our Reception Team at Aspire Ryde on
01983 716020 to book your slot on our minibus.



DUE TO THE **GENEROSITY** OF THE PUBLIC, WE HAVE PLENTY OF -

Cooking Sauces * Baked Beans
 * Tinned Fish * Tinned Meat
 * Tinned Veg * Pasta *
 Cereal * Soup *
 Tinned Fruit * Tinned Tomatoes
 Rice * Packet Tea *

Thank you

Isle of Wight Council

A report to the Isle of Wight Council's Cabinet reveals the scale of government funding that was needed to support Isle of Wight firms through the COVID pandemic crisis.

The Isle of Wight Council has paid out a total of £99,799,908 in 21,984 individual grant payments since May 2020, mainly to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses.

During 2020 and 2021 the government allocated money to local authorities to support business, initially paid on the basis of business rates, but later topped up with other funds that councils could distribute to other businesses that did not pay rates, such as taxi drivers, market stall holders and those in the supply chain for the tourism, hospitality and retail sector. A final grant was provided to assist businesses prepare for reopening after the last national lockdown, and applications closed in May 2021. No more money is now expected from the government.

On the Isle of Wight, only about 0.25% of the total remains to be distributed, and councillors will be considering how to make best use of the funds to aid the recovery of the Island's economy. Examples of how this could be used include activities supporting town centres including Small Business Saturday and 'pop up' shops in the lead up to the Christmas period; delivering training for businesses linked to COVID recovery; supporting short courses, work placements and apprenticeships particularly in the hospitality sector; and support for cultural activity.

The government has said that the money from all the grants has to be used by the end of March 2022, and so councillors will decide now how the remaining funds will be allocated between now and that deadline.



Passengers can look forward to better bus stops thanks to a £150,000 improvement programme which is already underway. A number of rural bus stops on the Island are being upgraded to improve safety and accessibility as part of the Isle of Wight Council scheme. The works are specific to each location but include the introduction of dropped kerbs, new road markings and signage, tactile paving, increased hard standings and improved drainage.

The council worked closely with the Isle of Wight Bus and Rail Users' Group, the Local Access Forum and Southern Vectis to draw up a list of more than ten bus stops to be upgraded. Local community requests were also considered.

Completed works so far include bus stops at Chale Street, Chale, Whitwell Road, Ventnor, Shanklin Road, Sandford, Alum Bay New Road, Totland, and Hillway Road, Bembridge.

The remaining accessibility improvement programme includes:

Location	Estimated Start	Estimated Finish
Forest Road, Newport - just west of Snows Garage	Mon 11/10/2021	Fri 22/10/2021
Gunville Road, Newport - just south of Forest Road	Mon 25/10/2021	Fri 05/11/2021
Park Road, Cowes - o/s Skate Park	Mon 08/11/2021	Fri 19/11/2021
Newport Road, Northwood - o/s County Show Ground	Mon 22/11/2021	Fri 03/12/2021
Nodes Road, Northwood - north of Uplands Road	Mon 06/12/2021	Mon 13/12/2021
Whitcombe Road, Gatcombe - Cox's Corner	Mon 03/01/2022	Fri 14/01/2022

Pedestrians and cyclists making their way along the National Cycle Network between Newport and Ryde will notice a big improvement at Spencer Road. Work has just finished on laying a fully-sealed Tarmac surface, creating a safer and smoother surface for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooter users along a 200 metre section of the route. Costing £11,000, the project was funded from a Section 106 agreement with a local developer.

Councillor Jonathan Bacon, Cabinet member responsible for rights of way, said: "This section at Spencer Road was one of the weak links in the popular cycle route between Newport and Ryde. The surface was unmade and quite rough and bumpy making it far from ideal for cyclists and walkers. The new surface will enhance the experience for all types of users as well as improve safety and accessibility which will be extremely welcome."

The route is a well-used link to Ryde town centre from Binstead (and vice-versa) when also using Ladies Walk.

Details of a proposed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for the Island will be considered by Isle of Wight councillors this week. The BSIP is the first step towards an 'Enhanced Partnership' between the council and the local commercial bus operator, Southern Vectis. The plan is the result of the government's £3 billion Bus Back Better scheme, which aims to improve services and create greener, more flexible travel options for communities.

The BSIP includes targets to:

- reduce average bus journey times by five to ten per cent across the Isle of Wight by 2025;
- improve bus journey time reliability with 90 per cent of services operating on time (between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late) by 2025;
- increase frequency of bus links in rural areas to encourage 25 per cent more bus journeys from rural locations by 2040 and working with Southern Vectis to identify areas for improvements;
- deliver new 'mobility hubs' at key areas, providing a range of smart mobility, commercial and employment services. This could include shared workspaces, EV charging points, e-bike and e-scooter hire;
- work towards a carbon free bus fleet through zero emission vehicles by 2030.

The BSIP will also help achieve the targets set within the council's recently adopted Climate Change and Environment Strategy, which sets out plans to on how the Island can be carbon-neutral by 2040. It also supports the council's wider aim for a sustainable transport network, which will be a key feature within the new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) currently under development.

As part of the Bus Back Better scheme funding, councils must commit to enter 'Enhanced Partnerships' with local bus operators by the end of March 2022. The strategy places a need on all Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators to create a BSIP, which will set the standard for how we are going to try to improve bus services on the Island in the next few years. The recommendation is that that Cabinet approves the Isle of Wight Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), in preparation of an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators.

Report for IWALC from MP Bob Seely

Island Plan

Thank you to everyone who has commented on the draft Island Plan. My response can be viewed here: <https://www.bobseely.org.uk/news/mp-responds-island-plan-consultation>, or you can email me at bob.seely.mp@parliament.uk.



My Vision for Change (Housing/Planning)

I believe that the Island should make the case for genuine 'exceptional circumstances' in housing need. This would mean creating an Island housing needs assessment, complementing the Council's work evidencing the Island's delivery constraints.

The Government has informed me of the potential viability of the exceptional circumstances approach.

The current method used to generate housing targets is not appropriate for calculating the Island's current or future needs. More generally, we need to develop a more sustainable future for the Island.

The IW Council plans to accept, in practice, the current targets, but to argue that the Island cannot meet those targets. I believe that the Island should in principle, argue for exceptional circumstances and NOT accept the current numbers on principle as well as arguing that it cannot build the numbers required.

The Island does not have the infrastructure, public services or inward investment to support the proposed housing targets. Our current housing targets are unachievable; despite having over 2000 dwellings permitted and unbuilt, at no point during the last decade has Island development met the new target. Simply put, I believe we cannot build enough homes to meet a target any higher than 300-400 homes per year.

The Council plans to accept a housing target of approx. 480 homes per year. It will not achieve this target and will simply set itself up for failure, allowing developers to potentially run riot over the Island's countryside. We must not accept a target we cannot achieve.

Furthermore, the Island's undeveloped landscape must be better protected. This would involve a significantly lower proportion of greenfield development. To protect our landscape, the Island requires recognition and support for wider statutory designations. This includes options for expanding the Island's AONBs (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), or creating an 'Island Park' designation, which could be tailored to our specific needs. Protections should include recognition of the Island's landscape as a UNESCO biosphere and of the importance of sustainable interaction with the environment.

In addition, whilst the updated policy on high-quality design is welcome, this is an opportunity for the Council to strategically coordinate with local communities and designers to transform the standard and character of the properties we build.

The Island needs housing; for Islanders, in sensitive numbers, in existing communities, in a recognisable Island style. What it does NOT need is generic, low density, car dependent, carbon inefficient, environmentally damaging, sprawl housing estates which destroy the landscape, are not built for Islanders and damage the Island's economy and quality of life.

Freshwater Housing Development

This month I objected to plans for 130 new homes on greenfield land in Freshwater.

This is an exceptionally large development for a small rural town and one that is clearly not wanted by residents or justified by housing need.

I have many concerns about this development; the pressure it would put on health services in the West Wight, the opportunities the layout of the development creates for crime and disorder, the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, and the environmental impacts.

It is clear that this development has not been planned with the real need for affordable and social housing in mind.

Southern Water Investment Plans

I cautiously welcome Southern Water's plans to invest over £56 million in water and wastewater services on the Isle of Wight.

The pressures on the Island's water system are growing and I am concerned that without strategic investment, discharges will become more commonplace. Long-term investment is needed to reduce discharges and upgrade the Island's water system. I believe this is key to protecting our environment, its amenity, and residents' safety and standard of living. I want to see everything possible being done to prevent raw sewage from entering the Solent.

The Government is now legislating to reduce discharges from storm overflows, and I am keen to ensure that Southern Water supports this aim.

While I welcome Southern Water's investment in the Island, I want to ensure that these schemes will fix the worst problems. I also want to know what their plans are to invest in their infrastructure under roads and people's homes to avoid disruptive works and potential flooding. I will be writing to them again with more questions and I will be monitoring their performance closely.

Bob Seely

Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

IW Chamber Business Awards

The Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce Business Awards will take place in May 2022 with entries opening at the end of this year. The Island's most prestigious and long-established awards will be presented on Friday 6th May in a ceremony at Cowes Yacht Haven.



"We're excited to be able to name a date for the future," says IW Chamber CEO Steven Holbrook. "My team has been working hard on this event ever since we presented the 2019 awards, consequently many of our sponsors have been in place since the start of last year and I know from talking to businesses that there is a huge desire for the return of this event. The Chamber's Business Awards are a highly significant event and a big part of our year. I know that businesses will welcome the opportunity to celebrate success once again."

Categories will be announced in the coming months with entries opening in December and set to close at the end of January 2022. A shortlist will be published in March, ahead of the event on May 6th 2022.

As always, the Chamber's Business Awards for Excellence will be open to any Island based business, of any size or sector and are the premium recognition for business success here on the Island. You don't have to be a member of the Chamber to enter. We encourage every business to enter, not least because the whole process of applying involves self-reflection and analysis which is key to business development. The awards themselves are highly respected and winning one can really help an Island business to move to the next level.

Please encourage entries. Find out more via

<https://www.iwchamber.co.uk/event-directory/business-awards-for-excellence/>

Emma Spinelli

It's been a very busy and exciting start to the new academic year, however, we are also planning for new courses starting next September.

We are looking forward to welcoming you to our **Open Day** on **Saturday 6th November** at our **main campus in Newport** and our state-of-the-art engineering centre, **CECamm**, in **Whippingham**.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Debbie Lavin, Principal



**BACK
WITH A
BANG!**

*We can't wait to
show you around!*

DEMOS
TASTER SESSIONS
PRESENTATIONS
LIVE Q&A SESSIONS
STUDENT AMBASSADORS
APPLICATION HELP
INTRODUCTION TO T LEVELS
STUDENT HUB & FINANCIAL ADVISORS

6TH NOVEMBER 2021 | 10AM -2PM
ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE - NEWPORT
CECamm - WHIPPINGHAM

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