



The IWALC Bulletin

March 2022

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

Your IWALC Matters!!

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the March issue of the Bulletin! I am pleased to see the large number of entries from member councils. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. Please continue to do so!

IWALC's main purpose is to provide a vehicle for the Island's local councils to work together to share experiences and achieve common objectives. However, it is also a means of enabling us to work with other organisations for the good of the Island. As a passionate believer in 'partnership working', I am very pleased that this issue of the Bulletin includes three examples of the positive impact it can have.



One example is the benefits that are emerging from the Community Resilience Workshop we held in September last year. As you will see in the section on IWALC News, these include the launch of a new community support service that reflects the recommendations made at the Workshop and recognises the importance of local councils.

Another is the recent announcement that the Island is to have a dedicated Roads Policing Unit. In this case, the outcome was the result of combined pressure by the Isle of Wight Council, our MP Bob Seeley and local councils. IWALC's role included writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner and District Commander and raising the issue at a meeting of the Isle of Wight Council's Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

The third example is our February Topic Meeting, which focused on affordable housing. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Isle of Wight Council (including the Leader and Deputy Leader), 18 local councils and three locally-based housing providers. The outcomes remain to be seen but the spirit of cooperation was encouraging. You will find further details of the meeting under IWALC News and of the Isle of Wight Council's housing plans under Other News.

Meanwhile, local communities on the Island are again rallying round, this time to support the people of Ukraine. The campaign is being organised by MADAid, a local charity that works in Moldova, one of the countries to which Ukrainian refugees are fleeing. For further details, go to their website:

<https://www.mad-aid.org.uk/>

Diana Conyers

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 April issue is March 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 publish any contributions that for any reason we consider inappropriate.

IWALC News...

Topic Meeting

February's Topic Meeting, which was held on Thursday 24 February at the Riverside Centre, focused on Affordable Housing. The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways in which local councils can work with the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) and housing providers to increase the supply of affordable housing, focusing in particular on housing for local residents in local communities.

The meeting was well attended. Representatives from 18 of IWALC's 26 member councils were there, together with the Leader of the IWC, Cllr Lora Peacey-Wilcox, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Ian Stephens, and the Cabinet Member for Planning, Paul Fuller.

The Leader and Deputy Leader emphasised their administration's support for increasing the supply of affordable housing in general and rented housing in particular. They pointed out that the 2022/23 budget, which had been approved the previous evening, included £40 million for housing.



Participants heard presentations from four speakers. The first was IWC's Strategic Manager for Housing and Homelessness, Jamie Branchley, who highlighted the extent of the housing problem on the Island. John Prickett, the Council's Community-Led Housing Officer, then explained how local community groups, including local councils, can get technical and financial assistance to establish their own housing schemes.

The third speaker was Martyn Pearl, Chief Executive of Vectis Housing, the only one of the Island's three main housing associations that is locally based. He described how Vectis works with local communities to provide the sort of housing they need. Finally, Peter Griffiths, Director of Capture Housing, a new affordable housing provider, briefed participants on Capture Housing's projects. He said that it's possible for private developers to provide more than the statutory minimum number of affordable homes if they can get land at the right price and urged local councils to negotiate with the developers on this and other concerns.

There followed a lively discussion, in which local councillors expressed their wish to have more say in all aspects of housing development, from the assessment of need and identification of sites to the design of developments and allocation of properties. IWC representatives assured them that this was their intention. It was agreed that, in order to meet the enormous housing challenge, everyone needs to work together.

The meeting received good publicity in the local press (see below) and we have since been contacted by Island Cottages, a small social housing provider. They would be happy to talk to any council that has land available. For details, see their website <http://www.island-cottages.co.uk/>

Follow-Up from Community Resilience Workshop

The Community Resilience Workshop, organised by IWALC in conjunction with Community Action IW and the IWC, continues to bear fruit. For example:

- The tender for the IWC's new Living Well and Early Help Service has been won by a consortium of local organisations, led by Aspire Ryde and including West Wight Sports and Community Centre, Ventnor Town Council and Pan Together. The service, which will be launched next month, will build on the community partnerships set up in many areas during the height of the Covid pandemic. The aim will be to establish semi-autonomous community hubs, providing a range of support services, throughout the Island. Local councils will have a vital role to play in this programme and IWALC looks forward to working with the consortium.
- Kirk Millis-Ward, the NHS Trust's Director of Communications and Engagement, who attended the Workshop, has requested an opportunity to come to a future IWALC meeting, to introduce the Trust's new Chief Executive and to get our views on health and care needs as part of a review of the IW Health and Care Plan. We are liaising with them to set a date for this, with a view to possibly combining it with a presentation on the new Living Well and Early Help Service.
- Mike Bulpitt, Community Action's Chief Executive, Trevor Nicholas, Chief Executive of Aspire and Diana Conyers have been invited to join Ian Lloyd, the IWC's Strategic Manager Partnerships and Support Services in Adult Social Care, at a workshop on community resilience in Romsey on 18 March. The workshop will be attended by local councils and community organisations from across Hampshire. It will be an opportunity for us to publicise what we are doing on the Isle of Wight.

Training

On 2 March IWALC held a face-to-face Introduction to Planning course. This event should have been held last September but had to be cancelled at the last minute due to Covid. The course was held in Ryde in conjunction with Ryde Town Council. Unfortunately, health issues once again upset it, in that the presenter, Ryde Town Council's Planning Clerk Chris Turvey, was taken ill the day before. However, rather than cancel it yet again, Diana Conyers, who had worked with Chris in preparing the presentation, stepped in and led the session. There were 23 participants and the feedback was good. We would like to thank Ryde Town Council for their cooperation on this event.

The next course will be a face-to-face session on Code of Conduct by Sue Chilton, East Cowes Town Clerk and our principle local trainer, in April. Details will be circulated nearer the time.

Visit to Southern Water's Sandown Waste Treatment Works

Also on 2 March, councillors were invited to visit the Sandown Waste Treatment Works. We would like to thank Laura Moran, Southern Water's County Customer Manager, for organising the visit. Thanks also to Peter Whiteman for writing a report on the visit, which you will find below. Southern Water will be organising further visits, so don't worry if you were unable to attend this one.

Press Releases

Following IWALC's recent very successful and well-attended topic meeting on Housing Needs across the Island, our press release has been widely reported. In case you missed them, here are the links...

<https://onthewight.com/82-per-cent-reduction-in-number-of-private-properties-available-for-rent-iwalc-meeting-reveals/>

<https://easycaptures.com/fs/uploaded/1459/3125773884.jpg>

<https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/19957157.isle-wight-rental-fall-means-hundreds-temporary-housing/>

https://www.islandecho.co.uk/local-councils-to-have-more-say-to-help-improve-affordable-housing-situation/?utm_source=newsletter-551&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter

<https://www.iwradio.co.uk/news/isle-of-wight-news/local-councils-to-have-more-say-in-housing-decisions/>

Meeting with Bob Seely MP on 16 February 2022

Sixteen representatives of local parish, town and community councils attended the February meeting with the MP, which was as usual held via zoom.

The MP began by reporting that:

- He realised that the £1 million recently awarded to the Island under the Levelling Up programme was not enough, but it was a start and a recognition that the Island has special needs
- He had just had discussions with Southern Water and they will be doing three repairs to sewers in the Seaview area soon
- He would be meeting the Police and Crime Commissioner later that week to discuss the need for a dedicated Roads Policing Unit
- He will be contacting local councils regarding issues related to crime.

He then answered questions on the Island Deal, the government's Levelling Up White Paper, the proposed removal of all remaining legal Covid restrictions, his vision of the future of the Island's economy, Red Funnel's commitment to consult with East Cowes Town Council, ongoing difficulties in accessing primary care services and the need for a government-funded programme to construct social housing, like that after the Second World War.

In response to the question about the Island Deal, he said that it's not a single pot of money, but a collection of ad hoc measures that help to address the Island's special needs. He gave examples of achievements to date and was optimistic about the implications of the government's recent announcement to establish an Islands Forum.

On the removal of Covid restrictions, his response was that deaths from Covid are relatively low now and have to be seen in the context of total deaths. He acknowledged that there are still problems in accessing some primary care services, The main concern, he said, continued to be the shortage of dentists. He is encouraging the government to recruit Indian dentists.

He agreed to write to Red Funnell, reminding them of their commitment to consult with the Town Council on their development proposals and to find out more about the role of the proposed regional Levelling Up Directors.

In response to the question on a national programme for the construction of social housing, he said the problem is money, which is getting tighter. Meanwhile, he is continuing to argue the case for housing that Islanders need on brownfield sites.

See also the MP's own report under Other News



Monthly Meetings with Bob Seely

All Councillors and staff of IWALC Member Councils are invited to take part in these online meetings.

The Zoom log-in details will be circulated to Clerks in advance.

In addition, IWALC continues to be included in the monthly Heads of Organisations meetings with Bob Seely,

Visit to Sandown's Waste Water Treatment Plant (March 2 2022)

Firstly, some of us arrived at the incorrect location as there was a mix up with the Southern Water's water treatment plant in Lake. However, we met Keith Herbert and the plant manager and they explained how it all worked.

They screen down to 6mm the entire intake from all sources and remove all the debris, i.e. wet wipes, stones and general rubbish and dispose of all this, in skips, to landfill. They did say there is a strict Environment Agency permit system in place which monitors the intake and heavy fines are given if they breach this permit and release any un-treated intake to the rivers or the sea.

We were told of the problem that most of our pipe work on the Island is on a shared 'one pipe foul and surface water' system, which overburdens the plant, and if every house had a water butt that would help. He also said that the review of the Island Plan should insist that developers should incorporate a dual pipe work system into any large developments. My comment would be, I thought this was always the case and a problem arises in the main road connection, as most of it is one pipe, as Southern Water's infrastructure is not in place to accommodate two pipe systems. This is due to their lack of investment.

The plant was a very smelly and noisy environment and most of the equipment was encased and hidden from view, but it was interesting to have it explained how it all works.

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



Informative, but it is a vast amount of knowledge to take on board in a short space of time. I have passed my thoughts onto my fellow councillors, and as discussed on the visit day, there are to be more open days organised which I have passed on, and advised that these opportunities should be taken up. I had been on a site visit prior to the site opening twenty years ago, but because of the immensity of it all, it is easy to forget so the above opportunities, when they occur, should be taken - best regards, *Cllr Richard Whiting (Brading TC)*

What a fantastic event. Thank you so much for arranging it. Most of us never even knew that the facility was there. I would highly recommend this tour to anyone interested. *Cllr Kai Wacker (Wroxall PC)*

Very interesting and informative tour of Sandown Wastewater Treatment Works this morning, thank you Southern Water for hosting, and thanks to IWALC for arranging the visit. Good to meet the staff and hear their views for the future. *Cllr Michael Pater (Cowes TC) (Thanks to Michael for the photos.)*

It was very interesting and answered all my questions. A little bit on the long side but I am sure it will be quicker when they get the new portacabin. *Cllr Mike Jones (Rookley PC)*

I do not have a list of those who attended - but I guess there was about a dozen councillors from across the Island.

After a brief introduction, we had a complete tour of the water treatment facility hosted by Laura Moran, the Customer Services Manager for the Isle of Wight, with technical input from two senior water treatment managers. They were very 'open' and happy to answer all our questions and are keen to promote a better /wider understanding of the process and problems by creating a modern 'visitors' centre' which will be available to all, in the not too distant future. The tour includes an element of clambering up and down steel stairs, but there are plenty of handrails - health and safety is well in evidence!

Some interesting statistics -

- Sandown processes waste water for 90% of the Island population
- The other 10% is processed initially in 19 smaller installations, mainly in central/rural Wight
- Sandown discharges its treated water by pipeline 1.5 km offshore in Sandown Bay
- The discharge is at up to 850 Litres per second. Plans are in hand to increase this to 1050Lps

I would encourage others to attend.

Cllr Ian RigaudBarrett (Rookley PC)

Feedback: (written by a retired water engineer - so may not be typical). I thought Southern did an excellent job of showing us round. However most of the processes were covered in order to minimise odours and there was nothing in the way of process flow schematics to give an understanding of what was happening. The processes were more complex than in most plants, making it more of a challenge to explain them.

We were told that matters are in hand to provide information boards at the various locations around site, and this should make it much easier to understand the plant and processes employed.

Cllr Martin Kimber (Arreton PC)

A short personal view of John Metcalfe, whom I have known for 25 years.

I guess there are few elected members who remember the young John Metcalfe when he was appointed Head of Community Development to the Isle of Wight Unitary Authority in 1997 – well I do - I was a member of the interview panel!

It did not take John long to get in amongst the two Leisure Centres and Medina Theatre, and when I became Leader in 2000, we spent many a long hour talking with, and obtaining suggestions from, those working and providing our services at Sandown Leisure Centre and Medina Leisure Centre and, of course, the Theatre.

December 2015 saw John Metcalfe appointed Chief Executive from his then position of Deputy Managing Director. But believe you me, the position was not handed to him “on a plate.” He, like other applicants, underwent an extensive interview process.

Just a brief mention of Covid here on the Island. John and his team gave regular update briefings through the media and “Teams” and I doubt anyone could find better throughout the UK.

I, like many others, wish John every success and know he will take the dedication he gave us, to Cumbria.

Cllr Shirley Smart (Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council)



IWALC would like your help on two issues:

1. We have had a number of enquiries about local plans. We are therefore considering organising some sort of training or discussion session on this topic. In order to help us plan this, we would be grateful if you could tell us if your council has any of the following: a neighbourhood plan, place plan, parish plan, corporate plan, statutory planning document, housing needs assessment - or any other type of planning document.

2. We would like to include some information about local council precepts in the Bulletin. We would therefore be grateful if you could let us know whether you will be increasing your precept in 2022/23 and if so by what percentage. This will be used for information purposes only. We will not be making any sort of judgement regarding the decisions that councils have made.

Thank you to those Councils who have already responded - could we ask those who haven't if they could do so - please send your responses to Heather (heatheriwalc@gmail.com)

First monthly meeting with members of IWC Cabinet



Opportunity for members to raise any issues of concern

Open to all councillors from member councils

12.30 pm on Thursday 10 March via Teams

Link will be sent out before the date.



Please remember to check IWALC's Facebook page regularly for more NALC information and news.

Correction - Parliamentary Boundary Review

Apologies - in last month's Bulletin we reported that the dates of the public consultation sessions on the Parliamentary Boundary Review at the Portsmouth Marriot Hotel were on Thursday 27th and Friday 28th March.

The correct dates are Thursday 17th and Friday 18th March.

News from NALC

NALC Webinar on Levelling Up White Paper

On 23 February I attended a NALC webinar on the government's recent Levelling Up white paper. The meeting was chaired by Justin Griggs, NALC's head of policy and communications. There were three speakers: Tom Walker, who currently works in the Cabinet Office and was involved in producing the white paper but will shortly be moving to Essex County Council; Alva McNabola, from Power to Change, a charitable trust that supports community enterprise; and Will Tanner, from Onward, which describes itself as a centre right think tank.



After a brief introduction to the paper by Tom Walker, Alva and Will gave their views on it and there was then a question and answer session. An interesting parallel discussion took place in the chat box.

The three speakers were generally supportive of the paper. They maintained that it was a step in the right direction, and that, although there are not many specific references to parish and town councils, it supports the general concept of devolution to more local levels of government. They argued that local councils should use it to strengthen their case and achieve their own objectives and pointed to the potential of the associated Shared Prosperity Fund.

The participants' views were more mixed. Concerns were raised about, among other things: the emphasis on principal authorities, especially cities and metro-mayoral authorities; the variations in prosperity within local authority areas; lack of any reform of the local government funding system; the need for untied funding rather than ad hoc funds for which local authorities have to bid; and the limited powers of neighbourhood plans.

If you want to know more about the white paper, you can download the full report or a summary at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>.

Diana Conyers

NALC STAR COUNCIL AWARDS 2022

NALC has launched the Star Council Awards for 2022. The categories are:

- Clerk of the Year
- County Association Project of the Year
- Young Councillor of the Year
- Councillor of the Year
- Council of the Year

Candidates in all categories can be nominated by individuals online through the NALC website, www.nalc.gov.uk

Simply go to the "OUR WORK" section and complete the online nomination form. Last year there were over 200 entries and NALC is keen to increase the number this year, particularly wishing to see more entries from smaller councils. Nominations close at 11.45pm on 27th May 2022.

The Awards Ceremony will be held online during October or November.

Bob BLEZZARD (March 2022)

News from Member Councils

Arreton Parish Council
Brading Town Council
Brighstone Parish Council
Chillerton & Gatcombe Parish Council
Cowes Town Council
East Cowes Town Council
Fishbourne Parish Council
Freshwater Parish Council
Godshill Parish Council
Gurnard Parish Council
Havenstreet & Ashey Parish Council
Lake Parish Council
Nettlestone & Seaview Parish Council

Newchurch Parish Council
Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council
Niton & Whitwell Parish Council
Northwood parish Council
Rookley Parish Council
Ryde Town Council
Sandown Town Council
Shalfleet Parish Council
Shorwell Parish Council
St Helen's Parish Council
Wootton Bridge Parish Council
Wroxall Parish Council
Yarmouth Town Council

Rookley Parish Council

There is a new development underway in Rookley by Captiva Homes, at the west end of the village, and it was nice to be consulted on possible road names.



Construction work has meant a lot of mud on the road along with damage to the verges, which the company have agreed to repair.

One question that has exercised the Parish Council is where the extra sewage will go. The main sewer towards Godshill is already 'overloaded' as a result of expansion at the Lakes Country Park. Getting a sensible answer out of the developer/Southern Water is still work in progress.

Unfortunately, trying to address this issue through the planning process seems to be a waste of time.

Mike Taplin (Clerk)

Chillerton & Gatcombe Parish Council

This week Chillerton and Gatcombe PC are planting a hedge in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. It will contain a range of native species in a mixture designed to encourage wildlife.

We have, together with the Community Association, already planted a number of trees.

Cllr Nigel Phillips (Chair)



Niton & Whitwell Parish Council

I am proud of being a part of Niton and Whitwell Parish Council, and I am the 5th generation of my family to live in Niton. I follow in the footsteps of my father, who was a Parish councillor for many years, starting in the 1980s. I am particularly pleased with what Niton and Whitwell Parish Council achieve and hope to achieve for our local community.



We aim to deliver excellent service and invest in the local area, for the enjoyment and benefit of parishioners and visitors to the Villages of Niton and Whitwell.

The Parish Council have successfully been awarded leases from the Isle of Wight Council for three local assets in the Parish -The Exchange (and a Telephone Kiosk), Bert Sprake Memorial Garden and Allotment Road Car Park. Members of the Council aim to improve these assets for the benefit of the local community.

We are very grateful to the Isle of Wight Council for granting us the leases on these three important local assets and we intend to make full use of them for our community.

The Exchange was initially the Old Telephone Exchange for the Niton area, then a library and it has more recently been used as a storage facility. With the acquirement of this lease, The Exchange will provide the Parish Council with a central office in Niton, and in addition to office space, we intend to make the building available to the local community and create a hub. So far, the Police and our Ward Councillor have held local surgeries at the Exchange. Improvement work is scheduled to commence in the next financial year that will bring the building back to life and once again, the Exchange will become a focal point in the Village.



Within the land at The Exchange is an old, dilapidated telephone kiosk. Plans are afoot by a group of local people, in conjunction with the Parish Council, to convert the kiosk into a tourist information point, with a telephone that "speaks" to people about local attractions, along with information on the local smugglers route in Niton Village. Plans include recording the voices of villagers to inform visitors about the local attractions, via voice recordings on the telephone.

Bert Sprake Memorial Garden is in memory of a local Niton postman who was a Parish Councillor and was involved with the local horticultural society. The garden is a little sad at present, but the Parish Council intend to provide a makeover prior to the summer and to get a new plaque to commemorate the memory of Bert and all he did for our community.

Allotment Road Car park will be revamped to provide safe community parking.

I feel very fortunate to be involved with the Parish Council and to be in a position to make a difference and to help build community and civic pride in Niton and Whitwell.

Cllr Lorraine Sheerin (Chair, Niton and Whitwell Parish Council)

Photo shows our new window at Niton and Whitwell Parish Council's new office, "The Exchange" in Niton, along with Cllr Lorraine Sheerin on the right and Ward / Parish Cllr Claire Critchison on the left hand side.

Gurnard Parish Council

Sadly, in an echo of last month's rant, there is more destruction of habitat in Gurnard to report. The big concern has been the flattening of a long swathe of the shrubs and trees to the south of the Esplanade where the yellow gas pipeline markers stand.



Despite our best efforts (several councillors went to the site, and requests for information from IWC were made) we were unable to get any clear information about what was happening until a site visit was made by the Tree Officer three days after the clearance started. Work was stopped, however a big area of dense shrub and undergrowth has been completely destroyed just as the bird nesting season is about to start. Without careful intervention, it will take decades to regenerate.

It was impossible to verify the protections which the Parish Council believed were in place for this area in time to save the dense bushes and undergrowth.



There has to be a lesson in this for all local councils. We are the local structure that knows the area best; we need to ensure that we have the relevant information about protections in existence and to be doing more to protect the green spaces which are left to us. The climate crisis will hit us harder and harder if we carry on destroying natural defences like this.

What value our Biosphere status in this situation?

Cllr Penny Acton



Photos - top left, looking east towards Cowes; left and above, panning to the right.

Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council



AND SO IT CONTINUES

Town, community & parish councils will all have set their budgets by the time you read this. In Newport & Carisbrooke we have limited our precept increase to 2.5%, giving us a net income from April of £730k.

Looking back 10 years our precept was just £127k. A sixth of what it is now.

It was then that County Hall started cutting services that weren't statutory, but we felt were essential for our residents. So, like many larger councils, we have taken on public toilets, maintenance of recreation grounds, play parks, funding of school crossing patrols, allotments, youth club support, etc. etc.. We even offered to contribute to a joint fund for beach cleaning despite being landlocked, but our offer was never taken up. Our residents use beaches as well, particularly those from more deprived areas like mine who don't have holidays.

This year, we added planning enforcement to the list. County Hall has cut planning services to the bone over the last 10 years and enforcement has become nigh on invisible.

Of course, being one of the two largest local councils, we can do this sort of thing and I often wonder why smaller councils don't make joint arrangements to commission for lost services. That would make them far more affordable.

Until and unless we get the mythical 'Island Deal' from central government, one thing is for sure; the larger councils will be picking up more services from County Hall as the country starts to pay for the pandemic, and government support for principal authorities dries up.

Cllr Geoff Brodie (Chair of Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council)

Fishbourne Parish Council

Readers may remember that last year we took over the local BT phone box and turned it into a book exchange. This has been popular and, thanks to the efforts of Cllr Cheryl Fontana, has led to the establishment of a book club. The club meets on the first Thursday of the month at Quarr Abbey café.



We are also planning to hold a monthly coffee morning and information point, targeted in particular at older or isolated residents. This will be a joint effort between the Parish Council, Aspire Ryde and the local Social Prescriber (a support worker attached to GP surgeries). It is part of a wider partnership recently established between the Council and Aspire.

Cllr Diana Conyers

Cowes Town Council

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is progressing well, with the routes identified during the consultation process now being audited. We look forward to seeing the report at the end of March.

The Cowes and Northwood Place Plan is being progressed and there is much interest from local businesses and organisations. Councillors are undertaking an in-depth review of the Plan to look in detail and prioritise the Plan's recommended improvements and actions.

The Projects Committee has several projects in progress including installing a new information board on The Parade to promote the story of the Ark and the Dove leaving the port of Cowes in 1633. It is important to promote these events to preserve the history of the town for future generations.

We are discussing the purchase of new Union Jack flags and red, white and blue bunting for the High Street and nearby areas to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to brighten the town throughout the summer season.

Our Spring Newsletter has been distributed to residents and town centre businesses. To view, please visit: <https://www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Newsletter-Spring-2022-FINAL.pdf>

The Town Council will be promoting the LCWIP and Cowes and Northwood Place Plan at the Community Day on 19 March 2022, details below:

Kate Gibbs (Asst Town Clerk)



 **Isle of Wight
Volunteer
Centre**

Community Day
IOW Community Club
Saturday 19th March 2022
11 - 3pm

**An opportunity to find out about
local groups that support the
community of Cowes,
Northwood & Gurnard and how
you can get involved in a range
of opportunities that help them
make things happen
All Welcome!**

 **Community Action
Isle of Wight**

 **Isle of Wight
Community Club**


Register on the IOW
Volunteer Database for all
things 'Volunteering'
www.iowvolunteer.org

Wroxall Parish Council

Storm Eunice brought down a tree across our new waste bin at the entrance to the recreation ground. Fortunately a local handyman was able to attend, cut up and take away, but that's £160 we didn't budget for!

Mike Taplin (Clerk)



Shalfleet Parish Council

We recently co-opted Cllr Alan Ingram to the Parish Council, so now have a full complement of Cllrs again.



Shalfleet Parish Council

Defibrillator: We have agreed to purchase another defibrillator - for Newbridge.

This will be situated at the Community Centre on an external wall. The PC will also pay for all of the electrical/installation costs.

Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee: Queen's Canopy - In celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee we have planted native trees on our land at Bouldnor Field. The young trees have been planted on the lower side of the field, and are protected by solid tree guards, to reduce danger of damage from strimmers.

Fascinating Facts about Shalfleet Parish - Jill Cowley has produced a superb book on 70 fascinating articles about the Parish of Shalfleet. The pupils at Shalfleet School will each receive a copy. Further details to follow.

Annual Parish Meeting: on 27th April at Newbridge Community Centre - our guest speaker is Mrs Karen Eeles, Fundraiser for Aspire, who will give a presentation and answer questions. Aspire covers the whole Island for those that find themselves in need of help in a variety of ways.

Fleetway Green Lease: We have finally reached agreement with IWC to lease Fleetway Green from them.

We are hoping to sign the actual agreement documents very shortly. Once we have signed the lease we are planning to install an outside gym and some swings.

Police Road Safety Unit: Our thanks to those concerned who have been involved in the increase of officers to be engaged in Traffic Policing on the Island.

Sally Woods (Clerk)

Lake Parish Council

Broadlea School in Lake will be 50 years old at the end of April, and the Parish Council has joined other donors in helping fund bookcases that will enable a school library to open for the first time.

Mike Taplin (Clerk)



Sandown Town Council



COUNCIL'S CONSERVATION - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Councillors from Sandown Town Council supported the public consultation on the management of the Sandown Conservation Area, with the event run by the IW Council and Murphy Associates, and part-funded by a grant.

Over 60 residents and stakeholders attended the drop-in event, to contribute to the discussion of architectural style, landmark buildings and cultural heritage, building conditions, topography and helping to shape the future of the conservation area.



Town Mayor, Paddy Lightfoot said, 'The Town Council have been representing the concerns of residents over the condition of derelict buildings in the town to the planning authority, and this consultation is welcome and provides a further opportunity for residents and stakeholders to speak directly to the Isle of Wight Council to help secure the urgent action we have all been asking for.'

The Town Council has requested a meeting with the Leader of the Isle of Wight Council, to see first-hand the issues facing the town and its residents, and have also supported the imposition of enforcement notices to secure the action being demanded by residents.

Cllr Lightfoot added, 'The Town Council has recognised the challenges and, with prudent use of our limited resources, have invested in the re-provision of public assets at St John's, Sandham Grounds, and Eastern Gardens, and will take forward similar initiatives in future years after consultation with the public'.

Paddy concluded, 'The Town Council will continue to campaign for developers to honour commitments to develop derelict sites in keeping with our cultural heritage, and I thank all involved with the consultation for their contribution in making the regeneration of Sandown and the Bay a priority for the Local Authority.'

LIGHT-HEARTED LINE-DANCE LAUNCH

Line-dancers at Sandown's Broadway Centre helped launch projects to celebrate the programme of Platinum Jubilee events being planned for the Town, with a lighthearted line-dance on Valentine's Day, involving the Sandown Mayor, Paddy Lightfoot, Christchurch's Rev Mark Williams, and line-dancers wearing heart-themed costumes and hats.

Events being planned include a Jubilee Jive, a Thank You for Volunteers in the town, a Church Service, events involving local school children and the school, a project with the Historical Association, a Tree Planting with Green Town Volunteers, and support to the Sunday Lunch.

Mayor Paddy Lightfoot said, 'The Town Council recently approved the Budget and allocations have been made for a comprehensive package of projects embracing the whole community, and we are looking for match-funding to increase the range of activities for the Jubilee.'

Rev Williams added, 'It was good to launch the Jubilee Project on a day associated with relationships and kindness, as well as the environment and health, with St Valentine being associated with bees, travel and other concerns'.



A special competition was organised for the best dressed dancer and the Mayor and Rev Williams presented a certificate and bottle of wine to winner Mary Birch, with chocolates for all involved.

Katrina Kelly, of Line Dance IOW, concluded, 'We've always supported local causes such as the Independent Lifeboat, and all of our members want to be involved in celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Queen's reign – it was heartening to see dancers rise to the occasion and move to the beat!'

Richard Priest (Clerk)

Brading Town Council

Prior to Christmas we set about producing our precept for the financial year beginning in April 2022.



We are extremely mindful of the hardships that many people will face in the coming months and years with big increases in energy costs, food and fuel costs, increasing interest and mortgage rates, together with rapidly rising inflation. Add into the mix an inevitable rise in Council Tax and other associated costs, police and fire service precepts and an eye-watering increase in green-waste collection (+32%). It is not a pretty picture; in this day and age nobody should have to choose between heating and eating.

I am delighted to announce that we have been able to hold the precept again at its current level. This is the sixth year running that the council has managed to achieve this. The budget was approved at the February Town Council meeting. We are looking carefully at every opportunity to reduce costs and to ensure that the money we spend benefits the majority of people. There are further significant savings that we can achieve but this will require the goodwill of other agencies in the town.

The Council is now up to full strength as we warmly welcomed Councillor Cathy Mills, who was in actual fact, a previous Clerk to our Council - very much a poacher turned gamekeeper, but she has quickly become a valued member of the Council.

I would also like to congratulate Sue and Emma at the Brading Centre who, in addition to doing an excellent job, have both passed the first part of their formal qualifications on the way to becoming qualified local council Clerks.

Cllr Richard Hudspith (Mayor of Brading)

Other News...

Information from the IWC

New government COVID funds to help small firms with business rates

Eligible businesses on the Island will be given additional help with business rates through the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF). The government has allocated £2.6m for businesses on the Island.

The COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund is intended to support those businesses which have been affected by the pandemic, but did not meet the criteria for the other COVID grants funded by government. This total will be split between all eligible businesses, and is in addition to existing discretionary business rates relief such as small business rates relief or mandatory charitable relief.

There is no need for businesses to apply - this relief will be applied automatically by the Isle of Wight Council. The amount of relief depends on the rateable value of the premises that the business is in, and for eligible businesses with a rateable value of £12,000 or less will be 100%.

Businesses will see the credit show up on 2021/22 business rate bills, and amended accounts for those businesses which are eligible will be sent out from 28 February onwards.

Councillor Chris Jarman said: "Over the course of the pandemic, we have distributed millions of pounds in financial support to Island businesses affected by COVID-19. Our Isle of Wight Council scheme has been established to distribute the CARF funds targeting the greatest support to the smaller businesses on the Island who continue to be adversely affected by the pandemic. This is great news for those eligible businesses occupying premises with a lower rateable value and will help them in remaining viable and securing employment. Smaller businesses tend to be sole traders and the lifeblood of our Island communities. We have established the most efficient process to ensure the funds are distributed without delay, crediting them directly and without businesses even needing to complete an application form. This relief goes directly to reducing the bills for business rates and will be welcomed enthusiastically across our Island economy"

First payments of latest COVID business grants are made

The first Island businesses are seeing payments of the government-funded omicron hospitality and leisure grant arrive in their bank accounts. But the Isle of Wight Council is warning business owners to check their eligibility and apply, or risk losing out.

The government-funded omicron hospitality and leisure grant scheme provides support to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses. This latest round of support was announced at the end of last year, with funds arriving on the Island in January. One-off grants of up to 6000 are on offer to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses which were operating from business-rated premises on 30 December 2021.

Applications must be made through the Isle of Wight Council's website, and the council is keen to ensure that no Island businesses fail to claim the money they are entitled to.

Councillor Julie Jones-Evans explained: "Now we are starting to make these one-off grant payments, it's clear the fund will be of genuine help to some businesses. We've had plenty of applications, but our own calculations tell us that there are still many eligible businesses who have not applied yet. So please, just check the information on our website, and if you think you are eligible, get your application in. Money is being given out right now, and your business could be entitled to a share. I don't want a single Island business to miss out."



Council to invest £40 million to help tackle the Island's urgent housing crisis

The planned investment in affordable housing aims to make the ambition of owning a home a reality for many Island families by making it realistic and affordable. The proposal also aims to ensure a supply of new homes for rent are built in the years ahead, so those on the lowest incomes can enjoy good quality secure rented homes, built and managed by reputable providers.

Councillor Ian Stephens, deputy leader and Cabinet member for homelessness and housing need, said: "Having a place you can call home is a fundamental right which many Islanders are finding increasingly difficult to achieve. One of the perverse impacts of the dreadful pandemic we've all experienced has been the affect on the Island's housing market. House prices have increased dramatically and private sector rented accommodation has reduced by up to 80 per cent. Families, including those with working parents, are presenting to the council as homeless. In these crisis circumstances, it is the council working with partners that the community relies on to act, as was the case in the height of the pandemic. However, with no offer of significant help from government and few capital resources of our own we are prepared to look to borrow money on a business case by business case basis so that we can start to make something happen for Islanders."

Councillor Stephens said the idea was not to make profit from property development, but to meet the desperate housing needs of Islanders, prioritising brownfield sites within the council's control for new homes. However, recognising that building takes time, he said the budget also made provision for high-quality relocatable housing that can be brought forward in the next few months. In addition, a budget of £750,000 continues to be set aside for the compulsory purchase of properties that blight the Island and where landlords seem incapable or unwilling to work in the best interests of all.

"As always, we will work closely with all stakeholders in the housing development sector and town and parish councils in addressing this challenge," added Councillor Stephens. "Our plans will be informed by a partnership based housing strategy, underpinned by a detailed understanding of need."

The proposals come as figures show a fall of more than 17 per cent in properties empty for six months or more on the Island between August 2019 and January 2022 — in contrast to national figures which have risen every year for the last four years. Council staff have been working with owners and landlords to bring their properties back into use, in a bid to increase the supply of quality affordable homes. The authority has also recently invested in five units of supported accommodation for local people at risk of rough sleeping.

Have you or friends or family faced homelessness?

With spiralling local rents and the increasing cost of living, are you concerned about how you or others can put a roof over your heads? Now is your chance to have your say on how the Isle of Wight Council plans to prevent and relieve homelessness over the next three years with the launch (March 1) of a public consultation.

The Island is currently in the midst of a housing crisis. A recent needs analysis highlights an 82 per cent reduction in the number of private properties available to rent on the Island. In 2019, the council launched its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy with a bold ambition to end homelessness on the Island. It includes a range of commitments, intended both to help those who are sleeping on our streets or currently at risk of doing so, and to lay the foundations for a system focused on prevention, early intervention, and a rapid rehousing approach to recovery.

While good progress has been made with a number of successful schemes and projects making a real difference to people's lives, the council says more needs to be achieved to ensure everyone on the Island has a suitable, safe and stable place they can call home. Working closely with partners, the council has developed a new delivery plan for 2022-2024 — a document outlining actions to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping on the Island, focusing on prevention, intervention and recovery.

Proposals include:

- improving early intervention and targeted prevention measures to identify households at risk much earlier while also ensuring suitable support is put in place;
- introducing a variety of new packages to assist residents seeking to access the private rented market;

- supporting those in temporary accommodation and rough sleeping to enable faster identification of suitable private rented and social housing option;
- working with landlords and housing providers to maximise the range of affordable and sustainable accommodation available for those who are or become homeless;
- assisting households within social homes to RightSize to homes that better meet their needs to address under occupation and overcrowding;
- using all available powers to bring empty properties back into use.

The council is encouraging people to have their say on the aims, principles and actions of the delivery plan by taking part in a public consultation which runs until Wednesday, 23 March 2022. Full details can be found on the council's website here-

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Care-Support-and-Housing/Housing/Homeless-Section/Homelessness-Strategy>

Councillor Ian Stephens, deputy leader and Cabinet member for housing needs, said: "Your views really matter. By taking part in this consultation you can help to inform us of potential changes that may be required to ensure we are able to combat homelessness and rough sleeping well into the future."

A Cabinet paper on the homelessness strategy and delivery plan is due to go before councillors in the summer.

More Scams from Trading Standards.

We have received reports of doorstep traders being prevalent on the Island at the moment, no surprise that they're offering roofing work following the storms of a few weeks ago. These rogue traders will take the opportunity to take advantage of vulnerable residents at a time when they are worried about the safety of their property and it might be difficult to engage with a reputable trader due to high demand. No matter how desperate you might be please do not engage with anyone who knocks your door and offers to do work for you. They will over charge, increase their price during the job, generally not be qualified and do a very poor job. Please be wary of any fliers that might come through your door also, although this gives an air of a professional organisation remember anyone can get a flier printed quite cheaply and easily and these traders use this to make them seem genuine and local. If you need work done follow recommendations from friends and family or use a trader on our Trader Approval Scheme.



Scammers appear to be using the Isle of Wight Council to trick businesses into advertising in newsletters. This is a common scam to target businesses where they will offer you advertising space in a non-existent leaflet or newsletter. Local traders have been harassed for future payments and intimidated into paying – please don't engage with anyone approaching you over the phone like this. Do your due diligence and make sure that you don't get scammed.

The HMRC scam appears to be back – an automated voice telling you that you have unpaid taxes and threatening you with action if you don't comply – The HMRC will NEVER contact you in this way – Just hang up.

Remember if you are in receipt of large numbers of scam calls – even if you are confident that you won't fall for them they can be tiresome and come in at all times of the day or night – look into the option of call blocking. This can be done through some call providers for free – Sky, Talk Talk and Wightfibre all offer this service. Otherwise call blocking phones can be purchased for a reasonable price and can reduce scam calls by up to 98%.

Sally Ash (Fair Trading Officer)



Community Action's Resilience Project

Community Action's Resilience Project continues to work with local councils across the Island with a special focus on Ryde, Cowes/East Cowes area, the Bay area, Newport and Freshwater.



**Community
Action**
Isle of Wight
at the Riverside

The project team has helped councillors to review and extend emergency plans, building on the lessons learned, and still being learned, from the pandemic and its impact on community and personal well-being.

The creation and development of strong local partnerships, especially between civic, voluntary and funding organizations, is at the heart of the Resilience movement, and collaborations with social prescribers, youth services, public health teams and external funders such as Sport England and The Princes Trust, are already bringing benefits to the Island.

Work is happening to bring the Resilience Forum part of the Cowes and Northwood Place Plan to life and generating new opportunities for sharing activity, premises and local resources; finding ways to work between both sides of the Medina is still an emerging focus.

In Ryde, the very busy team at Aspire is running multiple volunteering and community services as well as providing practical advice and local support not only in the town, but in the surrounding communities east and west, including St. Helens, Fishbourne and Wootton.

In the Bay, it's all about youth engagement, working to build up new sport and social opportunities, with the high school, councils and funders as well as taking a space on Sandown High Street.

In Newport, the focus is on using the weekly market in the town centre, helping voluntary organizations to meet the public, talk about what they do and sign up new people to their cause.

In Freshwater and West Wight, local volunteers are being supported to combine public planting projects with local food growing - finding new ways to promote healthy living.

If you would like to know more about the Resilience programme, you can contact me at IBoyd@actioniw.org.uk

Ian Boyd

News from the NHS

The NHS, GPs, Health Commissioners, the IW Council and the community and voluntary sector are working together to improve health and social care services to help people lead healthy, independent lives.

In 2019 they produced the first Isle of Wight Health and Care Plan.

They are now updating the Plan and would like your views. To find out more about the Plan and how you can express your views, go to:

<https://iowhealthandcare.co.uk/about-island-health-and-wellbeing/conversations>

The consultation ends on 20 March.



Monthly Report from MP Bob Seely (March 2)

IW Roads Policing Team

Following requests to increase the number of police officers tackling crime on our roads, I am pleased to say that the Island will once again have a dedicated roads policing team.

Police & Crime Commissioner Donna Jones has agreed to recruit two dedicated roads policing officers and also three armed response/roads policing officers. An uplift of five officers to the nine already in post in the unit will make a significant difference to roads policing on the Island.

I have been assured that this is just the start and that the numbers will be reviewed at a later date to see if we need more.

Thank you to everyone who shared their views with me on this issue. As soon as these officers are in post I will meet with them to share details about some of the hotspot areas they need to be focusing on.

Southern Water

In more good news, Southern Water has confirmed to me that they will repair the main Seaview Outfall (CSO) that lies East of The Old Fort which has been responsible for sewage onto the beach on occasions. The work will take place over April low tide.

Thank you to those residents in Seaview who pressed Southern Water on this. Southern Water bosses have assured me they will also deal with potential issues with pipes in Sandy Cove and the Salterns.

Dentistry

The Government has set aside £50 million to create more dental appointments. The Island can bid for part of a £7 million funding pot allocated to the Southeast region to help services get back to pre-pandemic levels and give people access to the care they need.

I have written to the Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group encouraging them to submit a bid for a share of the funding pot on behalf of the Isle of Wight. I have also written to the Health Secretary in pre-emptive support of an Isle of Wight bid.

Local Government Funding Settlement

Recently, Government announced it will give the Isle of Wight Council £1m in recognition of the unique circumstances facing the Island.

The council continues to face significant financial pressures. We showed those pressures in our evidence. This is some money, but not enough.

However, this is the first time money has been awarded explicitly on the basis of our unique circumstances. It sets a precedent which we can use as part of the full Fair Funding Review to make the case for additional funds to increase the council's base budget.

I will continue to work with council officers to make the case that the council needs additional support to deliver the services to Islanders.

Coastal Defence Projects

Four major coastal defence projects on the Island are set to receive funding from the Government totalling £7m.

The projects include Embankment Road in Bembridge, Yaverland, Shanklin and Ventnor.

The current coastal defences are ageing at these locations and investigations are being undertaken to see how these could be replaced.

These projects will reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion protecting more than 3,700 homes and businesses on the Island.



Support for Domestic Abuse Victims

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has confirmed the Isle of Wight Council will receive nearly £300,000 to help domestic abuse victims rebuild their lives.

The money will arrive as an un-ringfenced grant, meaning the council will be responsible for making decisions on how the funding is spent to benefit those in need.

Education Investment Area

The Island has been designated by government as an Education Investment Area. This is good news for our young people and important for the Island.

The Island has historically suffered from a lack of investment. That is now changing. Whilst we are technically part of the prosperous South East, our need, frankly, is greater. A critical part of our future success story will be rising educational achievement.

UK Islands Forum

I am pleased that senior Minister Michael Gove has adopted my suggestion for a national forum for UK islands as part of the Levelling Up agenda.

This forum will enable the Isle of Wight, working with other islands, to have a collective voice with Government.

Those goals must be around education, training and skills, high-quality jobs, improvement to towns, transport as well as the protection of the landscape and seascape for some of the most precious parts of the United Kingdom.

Bob Seely

Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

THE ISLE OF WIGHT LOTTERY - A WIN FOR EVERYONE!

By providing interest free loans to businesses, the Isle of Wight Lottery and the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce offers a unique helping hand to local businesses. The Isle of Wight Lottery was incorporated in 2000 and continues to be based in Newport. The lottery fund has provided interest free loans to more than 100 Isle of Wight businesses and created or sustained hundreds of jobs.

In excess of £2.5 million has been paid out in prize money to date! To play it is just £1 per number per week. By playing the Isle of Wight Lottery you are helping to support Island businesses, protecting local jobs and helping to create new opportunities and employment.

Find out more via <https://isleofwightlottery.com/loans>

Emma Spinelli



Rural Funding Digest

Are you looking for funding for a local project?

If so, you will find details of many grants schemes in the Rural Funding Digest, a monthly online resource published by the Rural Services Network.

For details, go to <https://rsnonline.org.uk/rural-funding-digest-march-2022>.



Citizens Advice IW

The charity has been looking at the issues Islanders are coming to us with. We are seeing more requests for help with PIP applications and Mandatory Reconsiderations. This may be due to the Government's recent policy of reviewing applications made during the pandemic.

In employment - pay and entitlements has overtaken dismissals as the main bone of contention. Employers seem confused as to a person's statutory rights regarding holiday pay, etc..

On debt -DRO requests and council tax arrears are now the biggest issues presenting.

We've seen a huge increase in the numbers of people coming to us for help with separation and divorce, and access to children.

We've also seen an increase in the number of immigration cases and we suspect that is because local solicitors are not taking on immigration cases, and CAIW is top of the list for the Isle of Wight.

In housing, the biggest area is around Private Landlords. The lack of housing on the island is causing both clients and services a great deal of stress. Due to the lack of private/social housing, people being evicted and being placed into emergency accommodation are finding their stay in emergency accommodation is for a longer time, due to the fact there is no available accommodation for them to be moved onto.

Private rented accommodation prices have rocketed causing issues for people securing private rented accommodation. People are going into properties they cannot afford and creating an increase in debts. People are living in private rented properties with a state of disrepair as they are afraid to approach their landlord in case they are faced with a retaliatory eviction.

Overall, this is causing an increase of people suffering with mental health issues.

Some good news is that we have funds until the end of March to help families with fuel bills. Please get anyone in need to call us on 01983 823859 or visit Islehelp.co.uk. Also our Advice First Aiders are continuing to signpost people to quality sources of advice and we welcome anyone who would like to become an AFA alongside other local councillors and clerks.

Paul Savill BSc (Chief Officer Citizens Advice)



This month we are in need of:

- Tinned Soup
- Tinned Potatoes
- Tinned Fruit
- Squash
- Sponge Puddings
- Tinned Spaghetti
- Long Grain Rice (1kg)

A massive thank you to the wonderful Island community for continuing to place these items in your local supermarket collection basket every month.

We're including this for a second month, as there has been a very positive response ... if you haven't responded yet, please do so.



Isle of Wight NHS Trust Ambulance Service seeks views

Have you recently been conveyed by the Isle of Wight NHS Trust Ambulance Service? If so, Louise Walker, Ambulance Education, Training & Engagement Lead would like to know about your experience.

What was good? What could be improved?

*'Our Patient Engagement Strategy has been built on the foundation of our NHS Trust's values; **Compassionate, Accountable, Respect and Everyone counts.** Our aim is to improve care for people on the Isle of Wight, ensuring they get the right help, at the right time in the right place.*

We want to work with our patients to help improve our services, therefore we would really value your feedback and would like to hear about your experience.'

The Ambulance Service has just one question they'd like to ask patients, but would welcome more information/feedback if given.

Please give us your feedback-

We would like to ask you for your feedback on your experience of our service.

Date of Visit-

Thinking about our recent visit, overall, how was your experience of our service?

Very Good	Good	Neither Good nor Bad	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
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Please spare a few minutes and use the online form to answer-

[Isle of Wight NHS Trust - Ambulance Service Feedback \(iow.nhs.uk\)](https://www.iow.nhs.uk/Trust-Ambulance-Service-Feedback)

...or ring Louise Walker on 534155 or 07920 087733 – Thank you.



Age Friendly Island Pop Up Online Forum



Older and Greener: Climate Change and older people

**Tuesday 15th March
10:30-11:30**

This forum is a conversation around how older people can shape local decisions about climate change. What would you like to see? How can the impact of climate change on older people be better understood? How can people feel empowered to participate?

This forum is hosted by Age Friendly Island Older Person's Steering Group. Places are limited to enable as much discussion as possible.

Please call Age UKIW on 01983 525282 or email helen.lewis@ageukiw.org.uk to book a place and receive the link.

Digital Support Workshops



Learn new skills, gain confidence and meet new friends at our digital support workshops. Sessions are gently paced and led by our dedicated Digital Facilitation Officer.

Spaces are limited so please contact us to book by calling (01983) 525282 or email digital@ageukiw.org.uk

Date	Time	Venue	Topic
Tues 1st March	10.30-12.30	Sandown Library	Intro to email
Weds 2nd March	10.30-12.30	Ryde Library	Intro to email
Tues 8th March	10.30-12.30	Our Place Freshwater	Digital Drop in
Thurs 10th March	10.30-12.30	Newport Library	Intro to email
Mon 14th March	11.00-12.00	Zoom	Social meet and greet
Tues 15th March	10.30-12.30	Sandown Library	Socialising online
Weds 16th March	10.30-12.30	Ryde Library	Socialising online
Mon 21st March	11.00-12.00	Zoom	Online scams (IWASP guest speaker)
Tues 22nd March	10.30-12.30	Cowes Library	Digital Drop in
Thurs 24th March	10.30-12.30	Newport Library	Socialising online
Mon 28th March	11.00-12.00	Zoom	Shopping Online
Tues 29th March	10.30-12.30	Sandown Library	Online Safety
Weds 30th March	10.30-12.30	Ryde Library	Online Safety

Mental Health Alliance

On the Island, we are so pleased to announce a second opportunity to access this free training offer to Barbers, Hairdressers and Beauticians. Are you interested in learning more about the skills and tools to support the mental health of your clients and provide a non-judgmental safe space, this training is for you:

Recognising that professionals in the barbering and hair & beauty industry are often a trusted confidant and friendly ear to their customers, Tom Chapman founded the charity 'The Lions Barber Collective' after the death of his friend Alex, in 2015, with a mission to create non-clinical, non-judgmental safe spaces where people feel comfortable to talk about their mental health and to signpost them to support and information. Tom collaborated with experts to develop the clinically backed, BarberTalk and Hair&BeautyTalk training course for professionals to support their clients and communities.

This virtual 4 hour training session is coming to the Isle of Wight and is offered free:

- 28th March 2022 10:00 – 14:00
- Materials and certificate sent following completion of training and network of trained professionals to be established
- If you are interested in this opportunity please search: 'Lions Collective' on 'Eventbrite.co.uk'
- With some compensation available for loss of earnings
- For more information contact publichealth@iow.gov.uk
- Also see: BBC3 link: The barber tackling men's mental health one haircut at a time - BBC Three

Abigail Wilkinson (Senior Public Health Practitioner)

The poster features a blue and red background. At the top left, it says '28th March 2022'. In the center, there is a logo for 'BarberTalk' with a striped ribbon and 'Hair&BeautyTalk' below it. To the right is the 'THE LIONS Barber COLLECTIVE' logo. Below the main text, it says 'FREE ONLINE mental health training for barbering and hair and beauty professionals'. A large red section contains the text '*Isle of Wight' and 'To book, search 'Lions Barber Collective' on 'Eventbrite''. There are also logos for 'Mental Health Alliance Isle of Wight', 'ISLE of WIGHT COUNCIL', and 'habia'. A yellow circle on the right says 'Book your FREE place now!'. Small text at the bottom reads: '*Please see event details for eligibility criteria. For any further information please contact: publichealth@iow.gov.uk'.

Federation of Small Businesses News for IWALC

FSB offers our members a wide range of vital business services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in government. Our mission is to help smaller businesses achieve their ambitions.



We are a not-for-profit organisation, led by a team of our members, which exists to serve the small business community on the Isle of Wight.

We have a fantastic range of resources and virtual events and webinars which are free for all small business owners. Why not have a look at our library of recorded webinars in FSB On Demand.

Here is a roundup of what's going on locally with FSB Hampshire & Isle of Wight in March.

If you'd like to connect with FSB, please email Nicola.kildunne@fsb.org.uk

Norman Arnold (FSB Lead Member – Isle of Wight)



Introducing...

skillslabs

innovate / collaborate / evolve

Exciting news for
local employers!
Find out more on:

Eventbrite

On Thursday 3rd March, the Isle of Wight College hosted three industry events promoting two new skillslabs business centres, which will be based in Fareham and the Isle of Wight.

The college is looking to engage with businesses in the **Marine Technology, Net Zero and Digital Futures** sectors to support the Skills Accelerator program from the Department for Education.

In January 2021, the Government published a White Paper entitled: "[Skills for jobs; lifelong learning for opportunity and growth](#)". As a result, the Skills Accelerator Fund was created. Education then had to bid for funding and we are 1 of 14 groups within the UK who were successful. The Isle of Wight College is working in collaboration with 7 further education colleges and professional partners across the Solent region, creating skills training for all ages and abilities. Currently this training will focus on the future of Marine Technology, Net Zero and Digital Futures.

There are two parts to our program which are both due for completion during Spring 2022. Firstly, we wish to link with businesses to inform education in our three key sectors, and secondly the creation of business centres in Fareham and the Isle of Wight.

If you would like to find out more about the skillslabs either visit the [website](#) or email us at contact@skillslabs.co.uk

Marine Technology

Net Zero

Digital Futures



Debbie Lavin, Principal, The Isle of Wight College

Island Roads



Understanding more about our work

We have created a series of factsheets about the various services that we undertake as part of our work on the Island's highway network, from work to keep the Island clean and tidy, to road and footway improvements, helping to reduce flooding, our winter service, and looking after the environment. These are being sent directly to members as they are produced, and you can also find these on our website here <https://islandroads.com/factsheets/> We are continuing to produce more of these, so let us know if there are any topics you would particularly like us to cover at info@islandroads.com



Find out about roadworks in your area

Details of our roadworks are published in notice form in the County Press each Friday. We also update the 'Current Works' section of our website with details of our surfacing programme and other works and road closures each week, you can find those details here <https://islandroads.com/current-works/> If you want to see Island roadworks at a glance you can also use the One.Network map here <https://one.network/custom/isleofwight/>. This is also accessible from the current works page of our website.

How to make an enquiry

We have a member of staff who is responsible for handling and coordinating responses to councillor enquiries. If you have an enquiry, please email Samantha O'Rourke via info@islandroads.com Please note, we cannot respond to enquiries received via Twitter or any other social media platform. We have strict requirements within our contract regarding the handling of enquiries, and therefore these must be logged through our central system so that we can ensure we can track your query and our response.

Keeping up with our news

You can keep up with all our news on our website <https://islandroads.com/news/>

Follow us on Twitter

We are increasingly using Twitter as an additional means of getting information to the public. This information ranges from the latest updates on our work programme to general news about the business. If you do not already, then please follow us @IslandRoads and we would be grateful if you could encourage others to do so.

Samantha O'Rourke (Councillor Enquiry, Communication & Development Officer)



Wightlink

The Island certainly hit the headlines last month when Storm Eunice blew through on Friday 18 February reaching 124 mph at The Needles and making front page news in the County Press.



Conditions at high tide (peaking at 12:34) forced us to suspend all services for a couple of hours until the powerful south-westerly winds lessened. You may have heard St Faith heading to Portsmouth was forced to shelter in the lee of the Gosport peninsular for four hours because gusts reaching Hurricane Force 12 made

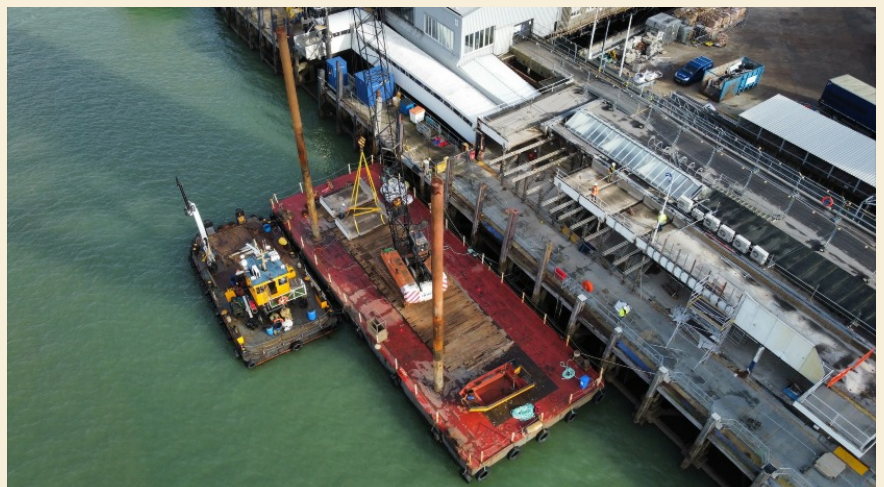


it difficult for the Master to enter Portsmouth Harbour. Passengers were kept supplied with teas, coffees and, eventually, sandwiches.

Wightlink Masters are all experienced seafarers and make the decisions on when it's safe to sail in adverse weather. Thankfully, storms like Eunice are very rare but when they are forecast, we are always prepared.

During the day, the sea swept into Yarmouth and flooded our terminal for a while, forcing staff to work in wellies.

Work is going well at our Portsmouth Harbour FastCat terminal which is undergoing major repairs and maintenance. Our photo, taken from a drone, shows a harbour crane removing a section of the roof which is going to be rebuilt. During the construction, we are sorry customers have to take an alternative outdoor route to board our vessels, which involves stairs, and are advising anyone with mobility issues or prams to travel by car ferry or Hovertravel instead for the next few weeks.



It's the end of an era. We carried the last of the old Island Line trains across to the mainland last month and also the last of the new trains to run on the improved tracks. It has been a pleasure to play our part in upgrading Island Line and, doubtless, they will be popular with visitors this summer.

Karen Woods (Communications & PR)

Hovertravel



The ongoing building works at our Ryde terminal are progressing on time, and although they are still several weeks from completion, the additional space and enhanced facilities will be of benefit to all customers. Our Southsea terminal will also be undergoing some building work over the next month, along with fixing some minor storm damage to the roof, so please watch out for updates on our social media. The passenger flow through this terminal and on to the craft may be altered temporarily to accommodate these enhancements.

Also Hovertravel will be continuing with our current hygiene regime which includes cleaning the terminals regularly and the craft handrails after each flight, alongside keeping the terminal windows open for ventilation and our hand sanitiser stations stocked for passengers' use. Please wear a face covering if you wish.

Finally we are delighted to be in the finals for the Beautiful South Awards. Hovertravel has been shortlisted in the 2020 Beautiful South Awards' Resilience & Innovation category for its Island Rescue initiative. This award recognises businesses within the tourism industry who have demonstrated innovation, resilience and adaptation, along with support for their local communities, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The winners will be announced on 25th April 2022.

Loretta Lale, Head of Commercial at Hovertravel, said: "The Beautiful South Awards celebrate the best of the best and we are incredibly proud to be in the final for our work with the NHS which started during pandemic and continues today. With tourism hit hard by falling numbers in the past two years, we knew we needed to innovate to offer support to our local communities. Our rapid stretcher patient transfer utilised our unique speed to deliver major benefits and demonstrated the company's resilience."

Hovertravel's Island Rescue is an innovative partnership with the Isle of Wight Ambulance Service and the Isle of Wight NHS Trust. This service transfers stretcher patients across the Solent to Portsmouth; improving patient care, saving time and money for the NHS and boosting positive medical outcomes.

Stephen Forster