



The IWALC Bulletin

March 2021

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

Your IWALC Matters!!

What's On, When & Where??

Training Group Meeting

Friday March 12th at 10.30am

Executive Meeting

Please note the due to the May 6 Elections, the IWALC Executive meeting has been rescheduled and will now be held via Zoom on

Thursday March 18th at 7pm

Bob Seely, MP

Bob continues to hold fortnightly Zoom meetings with Town and Parish Councillors. However, as the dates and times are subject to his diary/workload, confirmation will come from his office.

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Website - www.iwalc.org



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

Deadline for the April issue is March 31st

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the second issue of the new-look IWALC Bulletin. The first issue was well received, both locally and at higher levels of the local government hierarchy. We even had a complimentary comment from Jonathan Owen, the Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)!

February was a busy month for IWALC. On Saturday 6 February we held a very constructive online workshop to discuss the way forward for our organisation. It was facilitated by two consultants from the Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC). Later in the month, we held two training sessions on the environmental aspects of planning, very kindly provided by Ollie Boulter, the Isle of Wight Council's Strategic Manager for Planning and Infrastructure Delivery, and his staff. These provided an opportunity for councillors and officers not only to learn more about the planning system, but also to ask questions about issues of concern in their parishes. Finally, on 25 February, we held a two-part Topic Meeting. In the first part we had a briefing on the forthcoming elections by Clive Joynes, the Isle of Wight Council's Electoral Services Manager, and in the second part we looked at verge cutting, with contributions from Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council, Island Roads and the Isle of Wight Council. You will find reports on all these events later in this issue.

The next three months is a critical time for local government on the Island because elections for both the Isle of Wight Council and parish and town councils will take place on 6 May. They will be held under difficult circumstances, since Covid-19 restrictions will limit the way in which both the campaign and the elections themselves are conducted. They are also being held at a time when parish and town councils are, for both good and bad reasons, more in the spotlight than usual. On the positive side, they have rightly been praised, locally and nationally, for the way in which they have supported their communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Rather less positive, however, were the goings-on in Handforth Parish Council, which hit the headlines last month!

Meanwhile, the Covid situation on the island is improving, with cases declining and the vaccination programme well underway - and hopefully spring is not too far away! *Diana Conyers*

WE WANT TO KNOW.....

Did you take part in the Workshop? Do you think it worked? Do you think it achieved what it set out to? What changes would you suggest for future such events?

What about the Planning Training? Successful? Did it address your concerns and answer your questions?

What about The Bulletin? What do you think is interesting? What would you like to read more about? What don't you want to read about? Is it helpful?

Let us know - email jwebster.iwalc@outlook.com



ZOOM....R.I.P?

Hopefully, before too much longer, we will all be able to meet face-to-face again for our Town & Parish Council Meetings. Is this the end for Zoom meetings?

Is your Council keen to continue using Zoom? Or have hybrid meetings? Or get back to face-to-face as quickly as possible?

Let us know!!





News from our Member Councils...

FISHBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

With elections coming up in May, there is a need to encourage members of the public, especially younger people, to stand for election. Fishbourne PC has one of the Island's youngest councillors, so the Bulletin decided to interview her, to find out about her experience as a councillor.



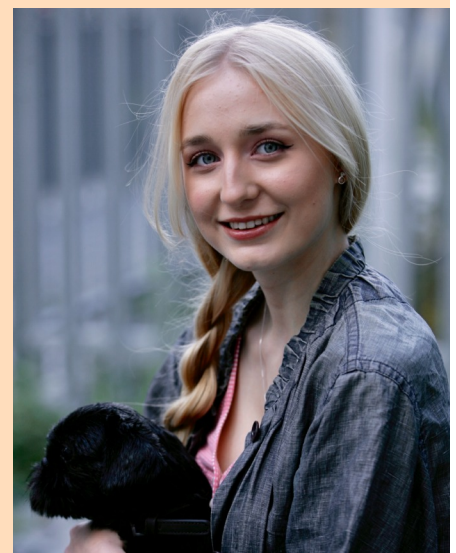
Hello, my name is Weronika and I am a parish councillor for Fishbourne. Apart from being on the parish council I am also in my second year at the London School of Economics - albeit studying virtually.

Being back on the island made me realise how lucky I am to have grown up here and what a truly beautiful and peaceful place it is (especially compared to London!). When I saw that Fishbourne was advertising a councillor vacancy I thought it would be the perfect opportunity to get involved in my local area.

Among other things I am passionate about preserving nature, maintaining biodiversity, sustainable living and being mindful of the effects that we have on plants and animals. What may seem trivial can in fact have far reaching consequences and significantly affect nature and biodiversity; such as how often and when hedges are cut as just one example. My aims are to help make these many small changes which collectively will have a huge positive impact. There are many other things which are important to me and I do not have the time to talk about them all!

I have found the parish council as welcoming and inclusive. There is a lot more going on on the local level than I imagined and I am really enjoying being able to know about all these things and discuss them. Being on the parish council is certainly not just all talk though - we all work hard to make real changes and a real difference, both as individual parishes and collectively in collaboration with others. Personally, I am very glad that I decided to become a parish councillor!

Cllr Weronika Nowak.



RYDE TOWN COUNCIL

RYDE TOWN COUNCIL ACTS TO SAVE ITS HERITAGE BUILDINGS



Ryde is known for its rich architectural heritage. Over the last two years the Town Council has taken significant steps to preserve this heritage.

In 2019 we applied for and won an award from Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) fund. This four-year project, which began in March 2020, will help to preserve the architecture, improve the appearance and diversify the use of the town's High Street.

Meanwhile, we have been seeking ways of bringing back into community use three of the town's most iconic public buildings that had been sold to the private sector. In November last year we purchased Vectis Hall, one of the oldest buildings in the town and its first free school, and in February this year we finalised the purchase of St Thomas' Church. We are exploring various possible uses for these buildings. However, the Church will be used primarily as a home for the Council's youth service, Network Ryde. Their purchase was funded with loans from the Public Works Loan Board and grant funding from the Historic England and the Architectural Heritage Fund will help with their restoration.

The third iconic building is the Town Hall, more recently known as Ryde Theatre. This is our biggest challenge. It is a large building and, having been empty for many years and frequently vandalised, is in a poor state of repair. However, we are working with Historic England and the Isle of Wight Council's Conservation Officer to find a sustainable way forward.

Cllr Diana Conyers

BRIGHSTONE PARISH COUNCIL



At the most recent Parish Council meeting Brighstone Parish Council were made aware by the leader of the Isle of Wight Council, Dave Stewart, that there was now another race organiser from the Island planning to bring another motorcycle event to the Island and Brighstone Parish.

This will run through the village of Brook, with the intent of the event going ahead this coming October. The original race organiser, Diamond Races, which had proposed to hold an event running through the parishes of Chale, Shorwell and Brighstone, have announced that that event is to be postponed to 2022 because of the Covid situation.

That announcement was welcomed by the Parish Council and will allow time for a full consultation. Councillors are unsure who is behind the proposal of the new event, only knowing that they are from the Island and that the race will travel through Brook, Chessell, the middle road, Freshwater Bay and along the Military Road.

Councillors were very surprised to learn that a new event is planned again for this year with still a certain level of uncertainty and very little time to allow for a full consultation with the affected parishes until restrictions are lifted and the risks decrease.

We understand a meeting is to be arranged with West Wight councils by Zoom to discuss the proposal of this event.

Brighstone Parish Council will still go ahead with their consultation with every household in the parish to gauge the level of support or no support for both the events when Covid restrictions allow.

John Cirrone (Chair)

ST HELEN'S PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH PROJECT PROMOTES PEOPLE, PAST AND PLATFORM

St Helens Heritage Trail project, funded by Down to the Coast, nears completion following delays caused by the Pandemic, and includes details of historic events, famous residents and local characters, and remembers the part the local railway played in the village.

Parish Chairman, John Coleman said, 'We were working with the local school, church and Historical Association, when the pandemic frustrated plans, but hopefully we can launch the initiative in the coming months'.

Deputy Chairman, Joost Spit, added, 'The Brading-Bembridge Branch line had major influences on the local area, and also linked with the Duver, and the marine industry, especially during the war'.

The project also includes reference to the local fort, local sports, such as the Golf Course, and the episodes of Dr Who filmed nearby.

Cllr Coleman concluded, 'We appreciate the support given by Down to the Coast, and the local residents who have helped with the project'.
Richard Priest (Clerk)



CHILLERTON & GATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

The primary school in Chillerton is currently subject to a consultation on a merger with the school in Godshill where teaching would take place in future.

On 16th February the Parish Council held an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting to enable residents, and especially parents, to tell the Council and each other what they think of the proposal and what may be done if it does close.

After the meeting an organisation, Save our School, was formed to contest any proposed closure of the school at its present site. *Nigel Phillips (Chair)*



Chillerton & Gatcombe
Parish Council

EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL

The Community Voluntary Support Hub for East Cowes and Whippingham continues to do great work supporting residents with shopping and medicine deliveries as well as organising transport to ensure vulnerable residents have been able to attend vaccination appointments.



The Council was also successful in applying for the Connect4Communities grant which has ensured local families and individuals in need because of the pandemic, have received additional support with food, utility bills and essential items.

Despite the pandemic the Community Hub and Library to be built adjacent to the Town Hall has progressed to the tendering stage with work on site expected to go ahead during May. This will provide enormous scope for future community projects and activities for the town.

The Council has been pleased to provide a grant of £5000 to a pro-active community group to purchase gabion baskets to address the landslip on the Esplanade. Following taking a lease from the Isle of Wight Council of the green areas on the landward side of the Esplanade, the Council is currently looking at how the facilities can be improved whilst the character of this area can be preserved.

A skeleton staff based at the Town Hall continues to clean, inspect and maintain all facilities and other staff are working at home for the time being.

Claire Gale, Assistant Clerk)



COWES TOWN COUNCIL

We kick off March with another Zoom Town Council meeting. They are very much now 'the norm' and we have an excellent level of attendance by Councillors, who have embraced virtual meetings to keep the business of the Town Council running smoothly.



We'll be celebrating Commonwealth Day on Monday 8th March by raising the Commonwealth Flag at our flagpole on Cowes seafront. This year's theme is 'Delivering a common future'. The Mayor will read the Affirmation which, weather permitting, will be recorded for sharing via social media. We will not be publicising the event due to Covid restrictions.

With Census Day approaching (Sunday 21st March), Clerks and Councillors have attended webinar training to ensure we are able to assist our residents with any Census-related questions, or point them in the right direction.

The Clerks have attended various webinar training sessions to keep their knowledge up to date.

March also sees the Town Clerk preparing the end of year accounts and preparations are underway for the May elections, with the formal pre-election period 'purdah' commencing on Monday 22nd March.

At the time of writing, spring is awakening the seasonal bulbs. Our woodland areas are bursting into colour with snowdrops and daffodils. As we undertake our daily exercise, we have the time to enjoy and appreciate the nature on our doorsteps and hopefully look ahead to life outside of Lockdown.

Kate Gibbs (Asst Town Clerk)



NEWPORT & CARISBROOKE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The biggest news in Newport is that Post Office Lane toilets are finally open! The area is much more inviting now with planting, new surfacing and brand new Danfo toilets. Here are photographs of a before, during and after.

We are working with a company called Maybe Tech to create a scheme in Newport which encourages shoppers into town and supports businesses. This digital scheme using QR codes and Facebook Messenger which gives 'rewards' to customers that can be spent in participating shops.

We have been suffering occasional instances of vandalism in our toilets recently which have been handled with by our toilet cleaning contractor and maintenance team. Sadly, it does seem that this type of activity is on the rise across the island.

Finally, we are going out to tender for new Christmas lights and we hope that this year's decorations and light switch on event will be extra special after what has been a tough couple of years for everyone.

Lucinda Molyneux (Deputy Clerk)



SHALFLEET PARISH COUNCIL

One hundred and thirty three well-being hampers will have been delivered through Shalfleet Parish to cheer people up.



Shalfleet Parish Council

The goodies were given in a sparkly bag and contained Easter cakes, chocolate and savoury biscuits, an IW tea towel, small bottle of wine or bottle of beer, chocolate, jar of jam, jar of chutney, tin of soup, a potted polyanthus and a card (front designed by a local artist Sally Whibley) with the words 'Looking Forward to Spring' on the front. The 200 small cakes were baked by Jane Brett.

The Parish Council funded the project in the main but donations were received from local businesses: Roger Handley Fencing, Wight Materials Handling, Souther Co-op Freshwater and an anonymous one of £100.

Volunteers delivered the hampers the first week in March. Many messages of thanks from delighted residents have been received.

Sally Woods (Clerk)

Looking Forward to Spring



With Sincere Good Wishes

Steve Lowley

Chair

Shalfleet Parish Council

Cllr Ian Broad, Cllr Alex Burt,
Cllr Gill Head, Cllr Helena Hewston,
Cllr Shirley Stables,

To contact the Parish Clerk, Mrs Sally Woods,
please call 01983 531491
or email clerk@shalfleetiow.org.uk

IWALC News...

IWALC WORKSHOP

On Saturday 6 February, IWALC held an online Workshop. The purpose of the Workshop was to review IWALC's past performance and achievements and map the way forward. It was facilitated by two experienced local government consultants from the Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC), Trevor Leggo and David Carden.



There were 21 participants, including representatives from 16 member councils, the Treasurer and County Officer, the two facilitators and Jonathan Owen, the Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). We were particularly honoured to have the presence of Jonathan, who updated participants on current issues at the national level and provided valuable contributions to the discussions.

After brief updates on the local and national situations, participants broke into two discussion groups, one facilitated by Trevor and the other by David. Both groups discussed a set of questions, designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of IWALC's past performance and to consider the way forward.

At the subsequent feedback session, it was agreed that IWALC has achieved a great deal in the past. Specific mention was made of its training programme, its relationship with the Isle of Wight Council and other external bodies and, most recently, its role in supporting parish and town councils and local community hubs during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it was also agreed that the organisation needed to rethink its future role and mode of operation, in order to adapt to recent changes, including the challenges of Covid recovery and changes in the Isle of Wight Council's constitution.

A number of recommendations emerged from the discussions. It was, in particular, recommended that IWALC should:

1. Host a major event after the May elections, possibly focusing on the lessons learned from the Covid pandemic in terms of the potential for partnership working and its role in building community resilience.
2. Develop a communications strategy in order to 'market' itself more effectively.
3. Expand and strengthen its relationship with other organisations.
4. Expand its training programme to address the varied needs of all local Island councils.

These recommendations will be discussed at the next meeting of the IWALC Executive, which will be held on 18 March.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants for a lively and constructive discussion and, in particular, to thank our facilitators, Trevor and David, and NALC's Chief Executive, Jonathan Owen, for their invaluable role and support.

Diana Conyers

ADVANCED PLANNING TRAINING SESSIONS

IWALC recently requested staff of the IWC's Planning Services Department to provide some advanced planning training for parish and town councils. We asked them to focus on the environmental aspects of planning and in particular to address the question: When making decisions on planning applications, how does the IWC reconcile the need for new residential and other developments with the need to conserve the Island's environment and preserve its green spaces?



The training, which was open to councillors and staff of all local councils on the Island, was offered twice: on 10 and 17 February. Approximately 40 participants from 15 councils attended the sessions.

Both sessions consisted of a brief overview of key issues by the Planning staff, followed by a question-and-answer discussion. There was some variation in content between the two sessions, particularly in the questions and answers. However, a number of key points emerged, notably:

1. Island Planning Strategy: The Department's intention is to publish the final draft of the Strategy in June/July this year. After consultation and further revision, it will hopefully be sent to the government early next year.

2. Housing targets: The Island's Planning Authority is currently required to deliver an average of 688 homes a year. Since it has delivered less than 75% of this, it is subject to the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This means that, irrespective of any local planning policies, it has to approve any applications for development unless they would be contrary to NPPF policies designed to protect 'areas or assets of particular importance' or the adverse effects of such developments 'would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits'.

3. Affordable housing: The Department acknowledges that the main 'need' on the Island is for 'affordable' housing, and in particular for social rented housing. However, under present government policy, the main way of getting significant numbers of such homes is through large-scale developments, which have to include 35% of 'affordable' homes, 70% of which have to be for rent. In other words, one has to have the private commercial housing to get the social housing.

4. Location of development: Since much of the Island is protected from development (e.g. designated as AONB) or unsuitable for development (e.g. flood zones), 'developable' sites tend to be concentrated in relatively few areas.

5. Brownfield sites: The Department has launched a consultation on brownfield sites as part of the preparation of the new Island Strategy. Local councils and the general public are invited to notify them of possible brownfield sites that could be developed.

6. Environmental assessments: All applicants are required to assess the impact of their plans on 'biodiversity' and applicants for developments in protected areas have to prepare a more detailed 'environment statement'.

7. Enforcement: The Department does not have sufficient capacity to deal with the number of enforcement cases they receive, which increased by 32% in 2020.

8. Notification of applications: The Department is required, in addition to publication in the press and on its website, either to put up site notices or to write to neighbours. When the Covid-19 pandemic began, they decided to write letters instead of put up notices, primarily because it involved a lot of officer travel and there was a prohibition on all but essential travel. However, they will reconsider this policy when there is a long-term easing of lockdown restrictions.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ollie Boulter and his staff for giving up their time to provide these two very useful sessions.

Diana Conyers

TOPIC MEETING - FEBRUARY 25TH

There was a very good turn-out for this meeting, with numbers fluctuating around 24 or 25, to hear the unfazeable Clive Joynes give the latest and up to date information surrounding the May 6th elections and how the 39 electoral divisions across the Island will be affected as they hold elections during the Covid restrictions.



There have been changes made to ease the holding of the elections including reducing the number of seconders for a candidate from ten, down to two. On the day itself, voters are requested to obviously wear a mask or face covering and to take their own pen or pencils in order to safely cast their votes. However 44,000 pens (Argos will have a shortage for some time to come!) have also been ordered.

In response to a question on whether postal ballots could be included when Council Tax bills are sent out, Clive said this really wasn't feasible as people may not realize that a postal vote was included, and that if there were several potential voters in a house, the envelopes could become very bulky.

- Costs for printing Polling Cards are £45,000.
- Hopefully no schools will be used as polling stations this time... back in 2002 there were fifteen used.
- Going to vote IS classed a 'lawful reason to leave your house.'
- There will be no test & trace requirements.
- Candidate expenses can be claimed at £806 plus 7p per elector.

The count will take place at Medina Leisure Centre where counters will be masked and seated at double-spaced.

- All boxes will be locked away overnight.
- The Isle of Wight Council votes will be the first ones to be counted followed by Town and Parish Councils.
- The Police and Crime Commissioners vote will not be counted until Monday.
- Each candidate will be allowed to have a maximum of four people in attendance for their count.
- The notice of uncontested elections will be made on the same night.

Questions followed including several concerning door-to-door campaigning. An update on this is to be found in Returning Officer, Claire Shand's report in this issue.

Clive was thanked by Diana for giving such an interesting and informative report. This was followed by Gillian Belben (Chillerton & Gatcombe Parish Council), Dave Wallis (Island Roads) and Stewart Chandler (Isle of Wight Council) who tackled the subject of verge cutting across the Island and the effects of flowers and wildlife.

Island Roads are responsible for the cutting of

- 115,785 sqm of Rural Verges
- 61,597 sqm of Bends & Visibility
- 40,027 sqm of Special Verges

Measures to combine sensitive and timely cutting strategies with safety and practicality were discussed in depth, including detailed questions regarding the cutting of a Brighstone verge, along with whether cuttings should be left on verges. Resources to cut verges has been reduced from two tractors to one resulting in it taking four months to complete the rural verge cut. IR undertake two of these per year. Bends and visibility areas are cut 5 times per year.

Gillian, Dave and Stewart were again, warmly thanked by Diana.



Other News...

THE FUTURE OF OUR POST OFFICES

Recently the MP, Bob Seely, organised a zoom meeting regarding post office services on the Island, which many of you attended. Following this meeting, Bob Seely and Mike Bulpitt, the chief executive of Community Action, sent the following letter to all parish and town councils.

Maintaining post office service delivery is a big challenge across the board, but especially so in rural parts of the Island. Local charity Community Action Isle of Wight is already running Godshill Post Office and shop, and the outreach services at Totland, Whippingham and Brading through its trading arm, Island Community Ventures Ltd (ICV). Please note that at this time the Brading and Whippingham services are currently closed due to staffing capacity problems.

Unfortunately, the ICV has been losing money on delivering these services for a number of years and has been subsidising its existence through other trading activity. Though both Godshill Parish Council and Totland Parish Council have agreed to financially support the ICV should further operational losses be incurred moving forward, there are many challenges we must overcome. To ensure a continued service, issues such as difficulties with old equipment, poor wifi connections, slow post office processes and reporting systems, need to be dealt with as they make the efficient delivery of this service difficult.

However, there is potential for ICV to take on delivery of further rural outreach services if other parish councils are also prepared to support.

We can either accept that a Post Office service is simply unviable in many rural villages, or parish councils can work to enable outreach services to be maintained. We hope for the later to be the case.

The two key elements that should be considered are, cost and location.

In all cases we need a free space from which to deliver. The main necessities are, an office space from which to work with stable internet connection and a small amount of storage space on site.

With regards to cost in terms of staffing for set up, shut down time and travel between locations, we estimate that in order for an outreach service to re-start we would have to ask the relevant Parish Council whether they are prepared to subsidise the provision.

The following is what Post Office Ltd would allow in terms of opening hours of an outreach service along with the extra subsidy that would be needed to enable it to happen. For every hour of Post Office service, the Parish Councils will be asked for £19.23 per week. So:

- Wellow 1 x 1 hour session - £1000 extra needed per year, so £19.23 per week.
- Shorwell 1 x 1 hour session - £1000 extra needed per year
- Chale Green 1 x 1 hour session - £1000 extra needed per year
- Brook 1 x 1 hour session - £1000 extra needed per year
- Freshwater Bay 1 x 1 hour session - £1000 extra needed per year
- Shalfleet 2 x 2 hour sessions - £2000 extra needed per year

If you think your parish council can identify a potential delivery site with reasonable internet connection/wifi, and could provide the suggested subsidy, please email mbulpitt@actioniw.org.uk and copy in bob.seely.mp@parliament.uk.

We hope to work together with you to ensure a sustainable postal service across the Isle of Wight.

Yours sincerely, *Bob Seely MP & Michael Bulpitt (Isle of Wight Chief Executive Action IW)*

Census 2021 – Ensuring the big decisions are made on the best information Census 2021 will be key to making sure the big decisions on the future of our hospitals, schools, transport and other public services, following the pandemic and EU exit, are based on the best information possible. Run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the census – taking place on March 21 - is the once-in-a-decade survey that gives the most accurate estimate of all people and households in England and Wales.

The digital-first census will not only provide a fresh picture of the size of all communities, it will also shed light on the health, social and economic changes to our lives.

“After years of planning, the census is almost upon us,” census director of operations Pete Benton said. “In the coming days and weeks you will be hearing more and more about why the census is so important, why you must take part and, crucially, how you can take part. Every household will soon receive a postcard, explaining what a census is, and in early March letters will arrive in the post inviting people to take part in the digital-first census.

“In light of the coronavirus pandemic, we need this up-to-date information to help shape vital services for the years to come more urgently than ever before and we are making sure everyone can be safely counted in line with all government guidance. We have made it simple, straightforward and safe to take part. It takes just 10 minutes per person to fill out your form and if you can’t get online, there are paper forms available for those who need them, as well as lots of support. Now is the time to make your mark on history. Running the census in times of a pandemic has naturally thrown up some challenges and the ONS’ focus is ensuring the safety of the public. We want everyone to be safely counted and we’re making sure our plans are always in line with the latest government guidelines,” Pete said. “Census field officers will only follow up with households after Census Day on March 21 if householders have not yet completed their questionnaire. They will never enter a household, they will always be socially distanced, be equipped with PPE and work in line with all government guidance.”

Some questions also have updated guidance to reflect our changed living and working circumstances.

Pete added: “For those on furlough, we have updated guidance on how to answer questions on work. All students need to be included in the census, and they should complete it for their usual term-time address. If they’re currently living at their home address, they will need to be included in the census for that household too.”

For the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity. First results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

For more information, visit census.gov.uk.



The census
is coming
Sunday **21 March**

it's about us
census 2021



How do I **take part**
in the census?

it's about us
census 2021



You can trust
the census to keep
your data safe

it's about us
census 2021

ELECTION 2021

Updated-

The key points that need attention drawing to:-

- All those involved in the electoral process must also ensure that public health is protected. It is essential that political campaigners continue to show social responsibility, and parties, agents and candidates ensure that their campaigners understand the rules.
- The relaxation applies only to people who are campaigning for the upcoming polls.
- All activity will still need to adhere to rules regarding social distancing and limits on gatherings.



From 8 March:

- Those who are campaigning in support of the electoral success, will be allowed to deliver leaflets and canvass electors in relation to the elections.
- Campaigners should not enter a private home. Campaigners may speak to electors on their doorsteps, maintaining at least 2 metres distance at all times.
- Campaigners should only enter premises, such as a shared hallway in a block of flats, where absolutely necessary to reach individual homes served by communal areas. Unless it is unsafe to do so, canvassing from within shared internal areas should be carried out by a single campaigner.
- Hustings and public meetings must take place remotely.
- Prior to any campaigning, participants should undertake a risk assessment. All campaigners should:
 - ensure that they are well; if they have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive, they must stay at home
 - make sure that they wash their hands more often and for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitiser regularly
 - wear a face covering when meeting anybody they do not live with, whether electors or other campaigners
 - maintain effective social distancing when talking to people, staying 2 metres apart at all times

From 29 March:

- The provision for six people or two households to meet outdoors may support campaign activity and the holding of meetings outdoors. There will be no change to the rules on meeting others indoors. This means that the rules on doorstep campaigning will not change.
- All campaigning activity will need to follow the relevant rules on gatherings and social distancing.

For elections, campaigners should not transport electors in private vehicles in order to access polling stations given the risk to public health. This means you should not offer lifts or facilitate car sharing. This is because car sharing has been identified as a particular risk of transmission.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-approach-to-elections-and-referendums-during-covid-19/the-governments-approach-to-elections-and-referendums-during-covid-19>

Kind regards *Claire Shand* (Returning Officer)

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

Apply now for community grants to support families in need. Time is running out for community groups and charities to apply for 'connect4communities' funding.



Since its launch last December, the programme has awarded community grants to projects across the Island, supporting hundreds of local families facing hardship due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The grants, which are funded as part of the Covid Winter Grant Scheme, are specifically intended to fund organisations to help families in need with food, energy and water bills. They can also be used for essential items such as warm clothing and bedding.

More than 20 grants have so far been handed out totalling over £100,000, including awards to Ryde Aspire, the West Wight Sports Centre, The Footprint Trust, Free Food Sandown, Pan Together and the CAB.

Councillor Paul Brading, Cabinet member for children's services, education and skills, said: "I am very pleased that we have been able to fund voluntary, charity and community groups to provide valuable help for vulnerable families and individuals in need, especially during these winter months.

"The purpose of our connect4communities programme is to address this need by enabling local organisations to provide practical help in their area. I urge other such groups, all across the Island, to do what they can to this end and to build resilience in their communities by applying for a community grant."

The scheme will close to new applications later in March so organisations are being encouraged to apply now.

Islanders can now book themselves free COVID-19 tests and play their part in helping to reduce the spread of the virus. People who have a legitimate need to be out and about because they cannot work from home are being offered regular testing to help detect cases of COVID-19 in those who are not showing any symptoms.

Around one in three people who have coronavirus show no symptoms and could be spreading the virus without knowing. The tests are aimed at those who have to leave home to attend work, such as taxi and bus drivers, childcare and retail workers, building or maintenance workers.

They are also for people who are in contact with others who are vulnerable, such as carers, and are not covered by other programmes.

Testing is available at the following locations with further sites due to be announced in due course:

- County Hall, High Street, Newport.
- The Heights Leisure Centre, Broadway, Sandown.
- The Learning and Development Centre, Westridge, Brading Road, Ryde.

The testing centres are open Monday to Friday, 7am until 7pm, and between 7am and 1pm on Saturdays. A pre-booking system is in operation and people are advised to book at least 24 hours in advance at www.keeptheislandsafe.org/communitytesting or by calling (01983) 823660.

REPORT FROM COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT

You may remember how our Community Resilience Project was introduced to you in the October 2020 issue of this bulletin.

Well, time has flown by very quickly and we are now approaching the finishing date of the project – 20 March 2021.

Our team worked with community hubs, community groups, organisations, schools and other stakeholders to help them access grant funding for their work. We shared useful updates and supported a variety of local projects and initiatives. During the Christmas and New Year breaks, our Community Resilience Coordinators helped to deliver medication and food parcels to vulnerable people.

Work is currently underway with those parish and town councils which have chosen to take up our offer to help them create their local community resilience plans.

By 10 March, we will have completed the delivery of the online training programme to the Island's volunteers and staff of non-profit organisations which included:

- Advice First Aider Volunteer (4 intakes)
- Active Listening and Supporting People with Emotional Difficulties (2 intakes)
- Mental Health Aware (3 intakes)
- Resilience During Challenging Times (5 intakes)

Our training programme received a lot of positive feedback from the attendees who were able to use what they had learned in their work in the community straight away.

Since the national vaccination programme roll out began in December 2020, one of our Community Coordinators, Kay Smith, was instrumental in expanding the Optio Voluntary Car Scheme which is now able to provide free transportation to vaccination sites for vulnerable residents who can not to get there by public transport, can't afford taxis and have no other means to travel to access vaccination (referrals to this scheme are made through community hubs and GP surgeries).

On behalf of our project team, I would like to thank all partners, organisations and volunteers who have worked with us over the past few month – your support has been very much appreciated.

Zoryna O'Donnell

LOCAL AUTHORITIES Q&A FOR ENERGY COMPANIES' PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER

What does this scheme mean for CEVs? (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable)

- Energy suppliers are required by the regulator, Ofgem, to hold a register of customers who may need additional support called a Priority Service Register.
- If you are clinically extremely vulnerable you fall within Ofgem's definition of a customer in a vulnerable circumstance and therefore you should speak to your supplier if you would like to be added to this register. You will not need to provide evidence that you are clinically extremely vulnerable.
- The additional services provided to you will include accessible billing, safety measures when someone from the energy supplier needs to enter your home, being able to nominate someone to manage communications on your account and whether a prepayment meter is appropriate for your situation.
- Suppliers have also agreed to provide additional support to consumers in financial difficulty during the pandemic, which could include pausing debt repayments, stopping disconnections, sending you prepayment top ups if you cannot leave the house and referring you to independent debt advisors for support.
- Please contact your energy supplier for more information or visit: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/consumers/household-gas-and-electricity-guide/extra-help-energy-services/priority-services-register>

Will CEVs be required to provide evidence that they are vulnerable to receive help?

- No. Energy companies do not usually require evidence when adding vulnerable consumers to the PSR, as this is usually done on the basis of a conversation between the consumer and the supplier. Therefore, we do not expect that suppliers will ask for proof of CEV status.

Is this scheme only available to CEVs?

- No. The Priority Services Register is available to all vulnerable consumers. For more information on the definition of who is classed as vulnerable, please see link here <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/consumers/household-gas-and-electricity-guide/extra-help-energy-services/priority-services-register>

**Objections to Greenfield Housing**

This month I have objected to three housing developments planned on greenfield land. These include Place Road, Cowes (14 homes), Gunville, Carisbrooke (149 homes) and Hollis Drive, Brighstone (5 homes).

In all cases these developments are not being built for Islanders, they will put unnecessary pressure on local services and infrastructure, increase traffic and there is not enough affordable housing.

We should prioritise the construction of new homes on brownfield sites. I am pleased therefore to see that the council is looking at brownfield sites for development across the Island. If you know of any potential sites please do let either me or the council know. You can read more about my objections to each proposal on my website.

Bounce Back Loans

The Chancellor has set out new flexible repayment options for businesses due to pay back government-backed Bounce Back Loans. More details on the website.

Greater flexibility over payback arrangements is something that I, and others, have been pushing the Treasury and the rest of government for, and I am pleased that the government has listened. We have many small businesses on the Island that will benefit. We need to trade our way out of this situation which means supporting businesses to not only survive, but also to grow.

That's why I am continuing to press the government, at every opportunity, for an extension to the current 5% VAT rate for tourism and hospitality businesses beyond 31 March. Now is not the time to let up on support.

Government Support to Investigate Unique Costs faced by IW

I am extremely pleased that the government has allocated £50,000 to be used for research to be conducted by Whitehall and the Isle of Wight Council to further investigate the true additional costs of providing public services on the Island.

The government must be sure that they are spending taxpayers' money wisely, therefore it is right and proper that they commission this additional work. We want to work with them to achieve the best possible result we can for the Island.

We need our additional costs and unique geography to be formally addressed by the government. This has not been done before, but we are working hard to make sure it happens now.

We want to achieve a better deal for the Island which means we put ourselves at the front of the queue for funding and new opportunities that benefit the Island and increase prosperity here.

We will continue our discussions with the government over the coming months to ensure they really understand the problems we face and the opportunities we can offer too. We are winning our case one step at a time. More details on the website.

Solent Freeport Bid

I fully support the bid put forward by the Solent LEP for 'Freeport status' in the Solent area which, if successful, will help to create jobs, drive investment and regenerate communities.

What we have worked really hard on is to pull the 'bubble' around the Freeport as far south as possible to make sure it covers as much of the Island as possible. It was really important to me that as part of the bid as much of the Isle of Wight was included as possible.

Almost all of the Island has now been incorporated including the major shipbuilding centres on the Isle of Wight which is something I was keen to achieve. A Freeport would attract jobs throughout the Island but especially in the Medina Valley area. The benefits would most certainly be felt in IW shipbuilding and in our green industry and composite sectors as well. More details on the website.

Roadmap out of Lockdown

I welcome the Prime Minister's statement on the route out of lockdown: a gradual easing is better than a big bang re-opening. On education, it is important to get children back into classrooms, not only for the critical value of education but also to support parents.

We also need to allow, as soon as safe to do so, elderly folk in care and nursing homes to be able to see loved ones. A number of Islanders have written to me about this. I understand their anguish at not seeing their parents and grandparents for such a long time. It has been painful.

We should remain cautious and base decisions on data. The important thing is that we reopen in a timely way whilst ensuring that the vaccinations continue as speedily as possible. We need to remember that all, especially the young, need to be able to get on with their lives again.

Bob Seely

NEWS FROM THE ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE



Throughout lockdown #3 it has been 'business as usual' at The Isle of Wight College. The majority of teaching and support staff have been working from home since the beginning of January, with online classes being delivered in line with the scheduled timetables.

The teaching staff have been creative in finding different ways to keep students engaged and the assessors have found innovative routes to enable their apprentices to progress.



Example 1: In order to keep the Level 2 & 3 Professional Cookery students engaged in practical sessions during lockdown, the tutor has been running live practical sessions online. Firstly, the tutor runs through the theory aspects of a particular recipe, following which the students are given a list of ingredients to buy (together with a supermarket voucher), a list of equipment and utensils that will be required and a recipe. The following week, the tutor runs a live tutorial lesson on



Microsoft Teams, when all of the students cook the dish at home in real time. So far this term they have cooked Salmon en Papillote and Vanilla & Raspberry Soufflé:

Example 2: The engineering team at CECAMM have been working closely with their awarding organisation to come up with innovative ways to capture evidence from their apprentices during the lockdown periods, where assessors are unable to complete observations in person in the workplace. The assessors are working with their apprentices and employers to create videos of the tasks which are required for the apprenticeship. The awarding organisation, EAL, has given approval to use the videos as evidence, which has allowed the apprentices to complete their training.



For anyone interested in finding out "How to build a Spitfire" here is the link to watch on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDIFUENkwgE&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=Slack%27sShack

Free training for adults

The Isle of Wight College resumes onsite teaching from Monday 8th March 2021.

For anyone unemployed or earning less than £17,004 per year, The Isle of Wight College can provide **free training** in the following subjects:

- Accounting and business
- Construction
- Digital technologies
- Engineering
- English and maths
- Health and social care
- Leadership and management

Employers: we can help you too!

If your workforce are interested in upskilling in the subjects listed above, please contact us. For information please email AEB@iwcollege.ac.uk or phone 01983 526631 quoting 'AEB'.

Debbie Lavin, Principal

REPORT FROM SHANKLIN HOTEL AND ACCOMMODATION ASSOCIATION



I would like to take this opportunity of introducing Shanklin Hotel and Accommodation Association, generally known as SHAA. Our Association was formed in February 1935 and now remains the only accommodation association on the Island. The Association is comprised of tourism accommodation providers, who make up the general membership. They are supported and represented by a Chairman and a committee of volunteers elected from the members.

The objectives of SHAA are to provide support to its members, by protecting their interests and putting forward their combined views and wishes within the Island Tourism Sector through representation and to support the Island Tourism by promoting the Island and Shanklin as a leading tourist destination and working in partnership with Visit Isle of Wight.

The Association is also a source of news, information and advice, and can provide help to members in a variety of ways. The membership has a wide range of experience in the tourist industry, which they will gladly share with those who are new to the field of tourism. In 2005, we purchased our domain name and produced the website www.visitshanklin.co.uk, which has been redeveloped many times and is in the process of being upgraded once again.

Even though SHAA is now 86 years old, we strive to be up to date with what our town and what members can offer and will continue to do so for the future. At this unprecedented time we can only hope that the struggles are now coming to an end and our lovely Island can again benefit from the tourism industry that it has so sorely missed....

Going forward, I think that there has been more bookings received since the "roadmap" was announced, but as EHO are still advising that all Covid-19 measures are to remain in place, this will have an affect.

I don't think any hotels or B&Bs will be full as there is social distancing in the dining rooms - for example, my place has seven rooms but I can only cater for four tables, hence I will be running on four rooms which is the same as last year. That's a huge difference on income.

I think its going to be a while for businesses to recover from this completely.

*Mrs Sally Beston, Chairman,
Shanklin Hotel and Accommodation Association.*



Pancake Day may be behind us, but if you need a reason to smile today, check out the fifth...

Annual Pancake Flipping Competition

Starring

Ryde Mayor, Michael Lilley
Cllr Wayne Whittle
Trevor Nicholas (Aspire)
Bex Swann (Network Ryde)

Donate to the appeal via <https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/pancake>

<https://youtube/Na7502KAfh4>

NEWS FROM ASPIRE RYDE

Aspire Ryde is a community charity based at the former Holy Trinity Church on Dover Street in Ryde. Formed six years ago to serve the local community and act as a focal point in bringing people together, it has grown rapidly to provide a diverse range of facilities and services including a community café and softplay, wood workshops, recording studio, free food stand, kitchens and gardening.

The centre provides a twice weekly information point and computer access for the local community along with many other groups and activities across all age ranges. In 2017 the charity was awarded the queens award for voluntary service and in 2020 expanded it's operations to include a new hub on Ryde High street. This now hosts projects such as Bike repair and refurbishment and paint recycling, along with space for community groups and a retail area for fundraising.

During the Coronavirus pandemic the charity has worked closely with Ryde Town Council to manage and develop the emergency response service in the town. It continues to co-ordinate volunteers to help with peoples shopping, deliver emergency food supplies, cooked meals and prescriptions and has set up a phone befriending service to help those who have been isolated by the pandemic.

The Aspire Ryde Telephone Support Service offers free friendly telephone calls providing regular contact, support and signposting to vulnerable people who may feel isolated, alone or unwell physically or mentally. Not having someone to talk to regularly can be lonely, particularly if you're used to sharing your home and time with others. A friendly, 30-minute chat on the phone every week can make all the difference. The service is going from strength to strength with 20 volunteers supporting over 25 people within our community. Such a fantastic service well done everyone.

Thanks to our amazing volunteers we have been able to continue collecting and giving out free food during a really difficult year. Our free food stand is situated in the porch at central and helps support some of the most vulnerable within our community as well as preventing unnecessary food waste. Our volunteer coordinate and collect unused food from shops and supermarkets island wide to be sorted and displayed for people to come along and help themselves. It does however take a lot of work behind the scenes to organise, collect, deliver, stack and monitor all of the food that goes out. So here is a massive thank you to the team of unsung hero's who keep the food stand stocked up, looking great and accessible to all.

Aspire Ryde can be contacted on 01983 716020 or email info@aspireryde.org.uk

Trevor Nicholas (Chief Executive Officer)



NEWS FROM WIGHTLINK



Around a half a kilometre of rope is now providing creature comforts for two Isle of Wight wildlife projects thanks to Wightlink. The ferry company has donated huge coils of rope to both the Isle of Wight Zoo at Sandown and the Wight Squirrel Project. The rope has been lying idle at Wightlink's stores but will now be used to provide scratching posts and other amusement to big cats and primates at the zoo and by the squirrel project to provide rope 'walkways' along which squirrels can safely travel.

The ropes were originally used for securing the Victoria of Wight to her berth during construction. They came with the ship when delivered but are too big for our day-to-day operation. We always try to find a use for surplus material rather than send it away as waste. I have visited the zoo a number of times and seen the ropes are used frequently by the animals so we called them up and asked if they would like it. A colleague suggested we also ask the squirrel project and they too were delighted to receive a share. It's great that we can help two Island projects in their work to conserve wildlife.

Emma Godsell, senior animal carer at the Zoo, says: "Wightlink is a good friend to us and once again we are really pleased to receive their support. There are all kinds of uses for rope of this quality which is very expensive to buy so we are thrilled to have such a good amount to keep us going."



Helen Butler MBE, Chair of The Isle of Wight Red Squirrel Trust, says: "It's good to have rope in stock in case we have an urgent need in areas with high numbers of red squirrel traffic accidents. At the moment, we use it on unadopted roads or private estates due to insurance restrictions. Thank you to Wightlink for thinking of us, it's great to have support from local businesses."

Karen Woods

NEWS FROM THE FEDERATION OF SMALL BUSINESSES



We're holding a series of online workshops to aid small businesses. Recently we held one offering help and advice on 'Financial support for Isle of Wight small businesses.' All small businesses were welcome and we talked about financial help as well as help and advice to navigate businesses through the Coronavirus pandemic. We also talked about Covid safety and community testing of workers.

Our second workshop was on 'Hampshire and Isle of Wight Virtual Networking.' All small businesses were welcome and between breakout sessions, we had a short break from networking with a 'talk from Jonny Bliss about -The Growth Ecosystem'.

Still to come - South Central Women in Enterprise Networking
Tuesday 9 March 9.15am for a 9.30am start to 10.30am

All small businesses welcome - At our inaugural event our guest presenter is Myers Briggs practitioner Tamsin Regnes who will explain how we can understand what makes us 'tick' whilst understanding that others may 'tock' as well as making connections in breakout rooms. [Book here](#)

Do you or one of your business acquaintances need someone to talk to?

Solent LEP is partnering with FSB to extend the FSB Care benefit to business owners who need someone to talk to across the Solent. Times are tough and if you're struggling with your physical or mental health, getting help quickly can make a big difference to your business as well as your personal life. If you need help as a member, please do go directly to FSB Care. If you know someone who would benefit from help, but is not an FSB member, please tell them about Solent Business Wellbeing Scheme.

Nicola Bailey.

NEWS FROM HOVERTRAVEL

Dedicated school flights announced by Hovertravel

Following the Government's announcement regarding the first stage of their roadmap and after discussions with schools on both sides of the Solent, Hovertravel is announcing extra dedicated flights to help ferry children back to school.

Julie Horrocks, Head of Ground Operations at Hovertravel, explains: "We are monitoring our passenger demand on a daily basis and as we follow the Government's roadmap over the next few months, we will adjust our timetable accordingly. Supporting the priority rightly given to getting children back to school, we are adding extra services in the morning and the afternoon to ensure we have capacity to match this increased demand. These flights will be for school children primarily, with other customers able to board if there is availability. This is a special adjustment to our timetable to specifically assist and support the first step of the Government's roadmap and we will review the additional flights during the Easter holidays, updating our customers after that time."

From Monday 8th March until Friday 26th March on weekdays only there will be four additional flights in the morning: from Ryde – 0730 & 0800 and from Southsea 0745 & 0815. There will also be two flights added in the afternoon: from Ryde 1545 & from Southsea 1600.

The two flights departing from Ryde in the morning and the one departing from Southsea in the afternoon have been introduced for children going to and returning from school, and pupils will be given priority. If there is any surplus space available after the five minutes before departure deadline has passed, Hovertravel staff will load other customers.

These new flights are in place until the start of the Easter holidays, so will not run after Friday 26th March and all customers are reminded that they should be at the terminal and have scanned their ticket at least five minutes before their chosen departure time.



Julie continues: "By providing dedicated school flights we can give confidence to children, parents and schools that we are doing all we can to make returning to school by Hovertravel as easy as possible."

Stephen Forster (Creative Director - SRF (Integrated Communications) Ltd



CAN YOU HELP?

ISLE OF WIGHT FOODBANK

Thank you so much for your ongoing support in helping us continue our work here at the Foodbank.

Hannah Wood



SPONGE PUDDINGS

BUBBLEBATH

TAMPONS

PAR-BAKED BREAD
AT LEAST 2 WEEKS SHELF LIFE

TOOTHBRUSHES - SINGLE

WASHING CAPSULES/POWDER

FEMALE & MALE DEODORANT

FINANCIAL DONATION



INFORMATION FROM THE ISLE OF WIGHT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The IW Chamber aid the Island's business community with applications for the Kickstart Programme, as a Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) Intermediary.

The Kickstart Scheme creates new six-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. These placements will support the participants to gain the skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme. Funding is available for 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. The Government is also making £1,500 per job placement available for training courses, setup costs and support.

Any Isle of Wight Company can now bid for a Kickstart employee through the IW Chamber and take advantage of the full benefits of the scheme. We strongly urge companies to take full advantage and to contact us as soon as possible via chamber@iwchamber.co.uk. More details can also be found via <https://www.iwchamber.co.uk/business-support/kickstart-scheme/>

Emma Spinelli



KICKSTART JOB PLACEMENT SCHEME

The IW Chamber is working as an intermediary to help businesses access the scheme and the Government funding supporting it.

You can benefit from a FREE 6 month work placement from a 16-24 year old.

Funding available for each job covers:
100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week
Associated employer National Insurance contributions
Employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions

Please email chamber@iwchamber.co.uk to register your interest

KICKSTART SCHEME [gov.uk/kickstart](https://www.gov.uk/kickstart)

AN UPDATE FROM SOUTHERN WATER

APPLEY SINK HOLE UPDATE

Our workers have worked around the clock to build an above-ground pumping system to help us control wastewater flows at Appley beach. This is now in place and in operation next to the bandstand, and is being thoroughly tested to ensure that the flow is effectively controlled.

We've placed a 'bung' (inflatable expanding stopper) into the pipe to allow us to divert flows away from the main sewer line. This will enable us to continue our investigations into the cause of the sewer collapse and resulting sinkhole. Temporary pumps and all tankers have now been stood down. Geotechnical surveys, looking at ground stability, groundwater levels and the overall structure of the site, are ongoing to assess the full damage to the ground and pipe before permanent repairs can begin.

We've made temporary improvements to the access road and the road will be reinstated after our works have been completed. We continue to liaise with local business owners and thank everyone for all their patience as we continue with these critical works.

Laura Moran (External Liaison Co-ordinator (Isle of Wight))

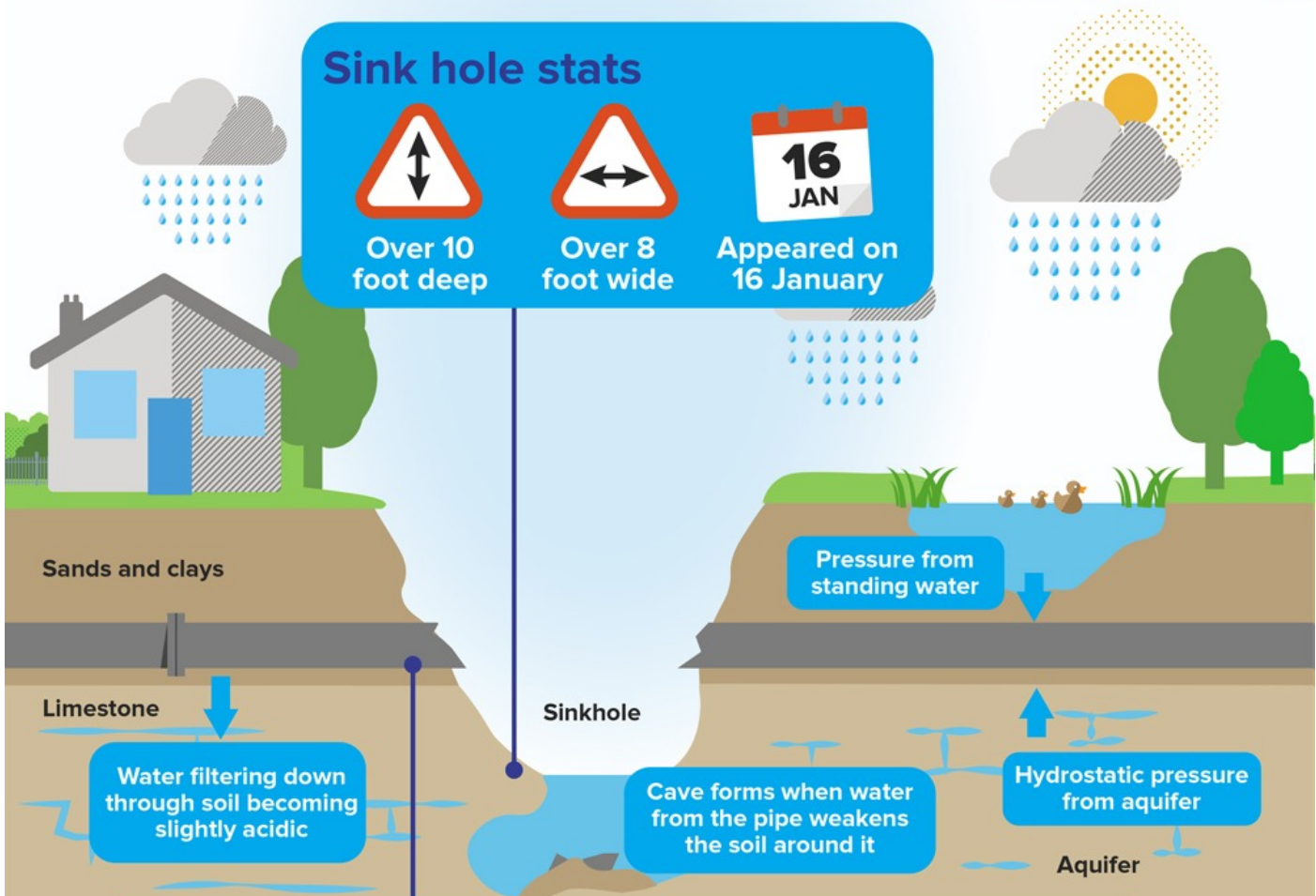


Appley sink hole



Sink hole stats

- Over 10 foot deep
- Over 8 foot wide
- Appeared on 16 January



Sewer pipe stats

- HOLLYWO**
It's **1m wide** and buried **15m deep** – which is the height of the letters in the Hollywood sign!
- It carries **1000 litres of waste per second** – enough to fill a tanker truck in less than a minute!
- It removes waste for the whole of Ryde – that's approximately **25,000 people!**

WARNINGS FROM TRADING STANDARDS



More scams from Trading Standards -

- Lots of reports from residents about text messages purporting to be from different banks. They will ask you to click on a link and if you don't have accounts with the bank they name this is easy to spot as a scam however the scammers may choose to use the name of the bank you use so just remember that Banks will NEVER contact you in this way. These texts can be forwarded to 7726 where they will be used to gather intelligence in the fight against scams
- Again more reports this week of emails from various different organisations saying that your information is wrong, or has expired and telling you to click on a link to update – DON'T this is a scam. Scam emails can be forwarded to report@phishing.gov.uk where it will be used to gather intelligence
- A resident reported a very worrying call from a someone claiming to be a police officer at a London police station. They went on to say that her relative – name given – had been arrested and they needed money to help them. Luckily this lady knew that she didn't have anyone in London of that name in her family and hung up however this could be very worrying and convincing for anyone with relatives on the mainland and who might be feeling vulnerable at the minute.
- Increasing reports around domestic/white goods insurances. These appear to be very prevalent at the minute, and will call you to say that you need this insurance or your insurance has expired and you must make the payments. These companies are growing in number and the insurances are worthless. One customer who had taken the insurance out needed to use it as her washing machine had broken she is met with a wall of silence/excuses. These are not genuine – Do Not be bullied into taking them out.
- Reports of phishing emails from the banks, TV Licensing and Netflix have come through. This is a common theme in that your details are invalid, there is a problem with your account, click the link to put in the correct details – DON'T - if you do, the scammers will have access to your bank account.
- Lastly a worrying report from a resident that she received the Amazon scam call but it came from a local IOW number. This number will have been spoofed by the scammers but we are far more likely to answer if we think it's a local number – Be Careful



Lastly if you are reading this but have a vulnerable relative friend or neighbour that you think might benefit from this information, please share it with them – it could save them from falling victim to one of these, or any other, scams.
Sally Ash

And this warning from Sherlie Burridge.. This morning I received a very aggressive phone call (recorded voice) telling me that I was being investigated for HMRC fraud. If I did not 'select 1' to respond to the call the police would be coming to my home to arrest me!!

I realise this was of course a scam but It concerns me greatly that someone not so savvy or someone more elderly and nervous could be very intimidated by this call. It was from a Huddersfield number - 01484 436861.