



The IWALC Bulletin

July 2021

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

Your IWALC Matters!!

Message from the Chair

It's a while since I have been able to write a message for the Bulletin. I was unable to do so in the April issue because of pre-election 'purdah' restrictions and in the May and June issues because I lost my seat on Ryde Town Council in the election and so was no longer a councillor. However, having been co-opted onto Fishbourne Council last month, I am now able to resume my role.

It has been a turbulent time for local governments on the Island. At the local level, we have many new parish, town and community councillors and at the county level a new Isle of Wight Council administration. These changes augur well for local councils. The findings of a survey of new local councillors, published in this issue, suggest that they are a diverse group and that they have a wide range of skills and experience that could be of great value to their councils. And at the county level, I am encouraged to hear that the new Alliance administration has pledged to respect the role of local councils and work in partnership with us.

Meanwhile, IWALC activities continue, with the AGM at the end of this month, a post-election programme of councillor training already well underway, and preparations beginning for a workshop on Community Resilience in September. See below for further details of these activities.

I would also like to draw your attention to two important public consultations: one on the proposed changes in the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies, which closes on 2 August, and the other on a new draft of the Island Planning Strategy, which will run from 30 July to the end of September.

We have decided not to publish an issue of the Bulletin in August. It is the holiday season and Jill, our hard-working editor, is going to take a well-earned rest. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jill for all the effort she has made in producing the Bulletin over the last six months.

Diana Conyers

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

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

The Bulletin - Jill Webster - jwebster.iwalc@outlook.com - 01983 721483

A quick thank you to everybody for your submissions, in particular, those who have pulled out all the stops to give us as much up-to-date information as possible, as we approach July 19th.

Apologies to those of you who have high security/anti virus software on your IT systems if you could not open the June Bulletin. Apparently it was because of a suspect link! You can, however, read the Bulletin on our website.

The deadline for the September issue is August 31st - thank you!

DISCLAIMER.

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

We reserve the right not to print submitted articles.

IWALC News...

Survey of New Councillors

Since there are a large number of new local councillors on the Island following the May elections, IWALC decided to try to find out more about them. We emailed a questionnaire to clerks, asking them to forward it to their new councillors. The questionnaire included questions on their personal characteristics (age, gender, disability), how they became a councillor (elected unopposed, elected in the May poll or co-opted), whether they had ever been a councillor before, what made them want to be a councillor, and what skills they could offer their councils. Only IWALC member councils were included in the survey.

Unfortunately, the response rate was somewhat disappointing. Responses were only received from 27 councillors, which we estimate to be about a third of the total number. Nevertheless, the results, which are summarised below, are interesting.

Mode of election and previous experience: 38% of respondents were elected unopposed, 38% were elected on 6 May, and 23% were co-opted. Only four (15%) had previous experience as a councillor. (Existing councillors who had moved from one council to another were not included in the survey.)

Reasons for wanting to be a councillor: Five possible reasons were suggested on the questionnaire. Respondents were invited to tick any that applied and add any other reasons. 82% said they wanted to 'help or improve their local community'; 48% wanted to 'have a say in local affairs'; 67% said they 'believed in the importance of local democracy'; 22% were 'dissatisfied with the way in which the council was being run'; 30% were concerned about particular issues; and 26% gave 'other reasons'. The particular issues mentioned were wide-ranging. They included the environment, planning, regeneration, highway concerns, education, concern about the young and the elderly, and the need for 'fairness' and 'creativity'. 'Other reasons' mentioned included the wish to broaden representation and increase public engagement or in general, a belief that they have the right background, attitude or experience, and (in one case) the assertion that one should not 'just moan' but do something.

Skills: 92% of respondents said that they have some skills to offer their councils. The range of skills mentioned is wide-ranging and impressive. It includes: knowledge of their communities; business and marketing experience; IT, communication and project management skills; experience of working with particular groups of people; art and cultural skills; and experience in local government and other voluntary organisations, and in organising events.

If there are any new councillors reading this who didn't complete the survey and would be willing to do so, please contact me on conyersdiana@gmail.com and I will send you a copy of the questionnaire. If we get enough additional responses, we will update the findings.

Diana Conyers

IWALC Annual General Meeting

IWALC's AGM will be held on Thursday 29 July at 7 pm. At the meeting members will elect the chair, vice-chair, treasurer and representatives on various outside organisations for the forthcoming year (2021/22). The meeting is open to all councillors from the 26 member councils. However, each council will have only one vote. Because of uncertainty regarding the relaxation of Covid restrictions at the time it was planned, it will be an online meeting. The new Leader of the Isle of Wight Council, Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox, has very kindly agreed to attend the meeting to tell members about the Council's plans and their vision of their relationship with parish, town and community councils.

Meetings on Draft *Island Planning Strategy*

The long-awaited second draft of the Isle of Wight Council's Island Planning Strategy is about to be published. It will be open for public consultation from 30 July to 2 October. Planning staff briefed members of parish, town and community councils on key elements of the Strategy in an online meeting on Monday 12 July. As the press has already revealed, a key element of the new draft is a reduction in the target number of houses to be built on the Island from 641 to 486 a year over the next 15 years. The Council hopes to convince the government that this is the maximum number they can realistically achieve.

IWALC will hold a special 'topic meeting' at 7 pm on Thursday 26 August to discuss the new draft Strategy. This meeting will be open to all councillors and staff of member councils. Further details will be issued in due course.

Training

A comprehensive programme of IWALC training is now underway. A two-session course on Basic Councillor Skills, designed primarily for new councillors, was held on 23 and 30 June, and a two-session course on Chairmanship Skills on 7 and 14 July. Both courses were taught by Sue Chilton, an experienced local government practitioner and trainer, and currently Town Clerk for East Cowes Town Council. They were held in the Council Chamber at County Hall. We would like to thank Sue for her input and the Isle of Wight Council for allowing us to use the Council Chamber free of charge.

Because social distancing regulations required us to limit the number of participants in the Basic Skills course, we were unable to accommodate all those wishing to attend. We are therefore offering a second course, the dates of which have now been changed to Wednesdays July 28 and August 4. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Heather, the County Officer, at heatheriwalc@gmail.com, either directly or through their Clerk. The course is open to all local councillors. It is free to IWALC members; non-members will be charged a £50 fee.

There will also be an informal online session for IWALC member councillors at 7 pm on Thursday 22 July. Participants will be able to ask questions about IWALC or other council-related issues. Although designed primarily for new councillors, any councillor is welcome to attend. For details, contact your clerk or email Heather.

The next course will be an introductory course on Planning in September, followed by courses on Finance and Code of Conduct in the autumn. Further details will be issued in due course.

Community Resilience Workshop

IWALC is planning to hold a one-day workshop on Community Resilience, provisionally scheduled for Saturday 25 September. The purpose of the workshop is to look at the lessons learned from the successful 'partnership' working during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, (including the partnerships both within local communities and between local communities), the Isle of Wight Council and Island-wide voluntary organisations, with a view to maintaining and strengthening such links in the future. The event has the support of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and will be planned in consultation with the Isle of Wight Council and Community Action Isle of Wight. Watch this space for further details!

NALC National Assembly

An eventful meeting of the National Assembly of NALC took place on Tuesday 13th July. A full report will be given to the IWALC Executive and I am setting out below the important points discussed at the meeting.



1. Civility and respect in public life

A working group has been set up involving NALC and partners aimed at promoting and supporting civility and respect in public life between councillors, clerks and the public. The partners include SLCC and the LGA.

We had a presentation by Jess Norman, Policy Adviser at the LGA. Jess set out details of progress made in dealing with intimidation of councillors and officers, and referred to the new model code of conduct drawn up by LGA in 2020 and adopted by NALC earlier this year. Jess advised that it was intended that the template be adopted by councils at all tiers, interestingly with, or without, amendment.

Separate to the model code, standalone guidance has been produced. This, it is understood, deals with handling intimidation, personal safety, use of social media, and when to involve the Police. Rules of online debate, which can include robust differences of opinion, obviously should not be abusive or discriminatory. Finally, Jess pointed out that councils have a duty of care to both councillors and employees.

2. NALC Strategic Direction

A discussion took place around a slide presentation on the way forward for NALC following Covid 19. It is an ambition to see the whole of England parished. The Island is unusual amongst county associations in being 100% parished.

This will have greater relevance as more parts of the country move to unitary governance. Policy objectives include empowering communities, building capacity and support, more devolution and engagement, and flexible and diverse funding. Whilst it was reported that during the pandemic staff had worked effectively from home, working arrangements will not return to the way they were before the first lockdown last year. Staff have indicated a preference for a hybrid home/office working arrangement. Long-term office arrangements will need to be assessed, as will the future of 109, Great Russell Street.

During the pandemic remote meetings have worked well, including regular video calls between NALC staff and county officers, which will continue. There will also be the opportunity for more remote network meetings. Online training events will also continue. In terms of member services, there is a shift towards externally provided services; Covid 19 risk assessments provided by NALC's insurance partner BHIB being an example.

3. Financial Update

We were given a financial update which showed NALC to be £17K better off than this time last year even allowing for a number of CALCs not having paid the first instalment of their subscriptions, and money being set aside for the civility and respect project and a new website.

The September meeting will decide the level of subscriptions for 2022/23. The three-year financial plan envisaged 3% increases for the next three years. In line with the steer at the last IWALC meeting I will, if still the national rep, press for a subscription freeze next year. Discussions at today's meeting indicate little appetite for a 3% increase and my gut feeling is that a 1% increase is a more likely outcome.

Cllr Bob Blezzard

Zoom Meetings with MP Bob Seely

These fortnightly online meetings have proved to be extremely popular with Town and Parish Councillors and are open to all Councillors and Clerks - please contact your Clerk if you would like more information and details of how to be part of these meetings.

Brief Notes from the Town and Parish Council Meeting with MP Bob Seely (Zoom 7.07.2021).

- Mr Seely reported back on recent activities. He said that he was looking forward to working with the new IW Council for the benefit of Islanders.
- Secretary of State, Oliver Dowden visited IW recently focusing on Cowes 5G plans, Wight Fibre and Tapnell Farm.
- The IW railway branch line review is now with the government. The costings are expensive and further progress depends on funding being given to IW by the Government.
- Talks had taken place with Southern Water regarding sewage discharges.
- Dave Adams asked about money given to the IW NHS and how much actually came to the IW. Mr Seely thought it was about 38 million out of a total of 48 million.
- Mike Hailstone asked about the possibility of the V&A or Tate coming to the IW. No current plans.
- Alison Childs reported that large lorries and coaches were causing problems in Godshill. Mr Seely said that there was no way to regulate lorries on A roads.
- Malcolm Hector asked about the profits made by ferry companies (£10 million this year). Mr Seely thought that the ferry companies needed a new business model.
- Mike Locke asked about training for IW firefighters being moved to Hampshire.

Also, The Island Plan, SSSI and farming on IW, the possibility of a mobile abattoir, and Green Energy were mentioned.

Rail review-

- Val Taylor asked about the Shanklin to Ventnor rail link.
- Dave Adams commented that the current plan was a waste of money which could be better spent on improving bus services.

Notes by Cllr Mick Lyons (Havenstreet & Ashley PC)

Forthcoming Training - STOP PRESS!!



Already highlighted earlier in the Bulletin, and due to popular demand, a further two week course in **Basic Skills for New Councillors** had been arranged for Wednesdays July 21 and 28.

However, due to a 'meetings clash' and subsequent shortage of appropriate venues, this training will now be held on **Wednesdays July 28 and August 4 starting at 6.30pm** in one of County Hall's committee rooms instead.

Of course, all Councillors, who had registered with Heather, will be contacted to confirm these changes. Thank you.

News from Member Councils

Yarmouth Town Council

Yarmouth Town is terribly busy with visitors in the Town. The pubs and restaurants are slowly reopening, some after big investment, but some constrained by lack of staff.



We have had great compliments about our new loos at Bridge Road and on the Common. The cash and contactless payment reflects on the visitor numbers. Brian, our Clerk, has purchased a coin counting machine and seems to find it satisfying totalling the payments which justify our significant investment. We have also installed CCTV in the hope visitors continue to respect the facilities for the benefit of all.



Meanwhile, plans are going ahead at Yarmouth 'Rec' with our landlords, Yarmouth Town Trust, to improve the drainage, both with land drains and ditch cleaning. The Rec Committee are also planning other improvements, which may include making one section a Wildflower Meadow, creating a Petanque court, and providing adult gym equipment. The Town Trust have demolished the old dilapidated changing-rooms, and are now looking at a replacement shelter.

The Council is frustrated by the lack of responses from Island Roads over several issues - particularly the lack of repair of the Yarmouth to Freshwater cycle path, and damage caused by storm surges and the land slip on Yarmouth Common two years ago, where no one wants to take responsibility.

The Council is meeting face-to-face now, but will consider, (nearer the time, and taking account of Covid infection rates), whether to continue face-to-face at the September meeting.

Steve Cowley (Yarmouth Mayor)

Havenstreet & Ashey Parish Council

Road Safety in Havenstreet.

A recent Parish meeting in Havenstreet and Ashey was attended by a large number of Havenstreet residents concerned about road safety in the village. This came about after a car travelling through the village ended up on its roof outside the White Hart Pub. Fortunately no one was about at the time. Residents also reported damage to parked cars by fast-moving traffic, dangerous conditions for pedestrians where there are no pavements, restricted visibility at junctions and parked cars causing a hazard.

It was also noted that the nearest bus stop, half a mile away, is inaccessible except by walking in a road with fast-moving traffic. There is also no provision for cyclists.

The Parish Council has contacted IW Councillor Claire Mosdell (who has promised to help) and the police officer responsible for Road Safety.

I have noticed in my travels that many of the towns and villages nearby have 20mph speed limits and traffic calming measures. Havenstreet is only a small village, but seems to be increasingly used as a rat run between Ryde and Newport and has been neglected by the IW Council and Island Roads.

The Parish Council would welcome any advice from other Parishes on how we can get improvements made to road safety in our village. Contact me or the Parish Clerk (clerk@havenstreetandasheypc.co.uk).

Cllr Mick Lyons (mealyons2@gmail.com)



East Cowes Town Council

Starting again

This is the start of a new beginning for East Cowes, after the covid pandemic. We now have a chance to bring the town back to life. This is where the gateway to the Island starts, for all the communities, for their essential goods through our port.



There was a major break in the smooth flow of our roads being worked on by Island Roads. Blaming the weather, when it was a digger hitting a water main, and waiting for Southern Water to come to repair it, the hole filled up with water. It took days to dry out enough to be able to start work again.

Clarence Road had a burst water main in two places due to heavy diverted traffic. Signage was put in place by Southern Water contractors in the wrong places - Island Roads were not allowed to move them to the right position. And consequently, buses stopped running into town and were finishing at Osborne House.

Red Funnel had a medical emergency which held up all sailings. Traffic had only one way in and out which was Old Road. This came to a standstill as the road is just not suitable due to children going to school and there being no footpath. The only thing missing this day, was a plague of locusts and the umbrella tree being stuck by lightning!

We are now working on a plan to never let this happen again. We are now starting to move on.

Cllr Michael Pater (Mayor)

Shalfleet Parish Council

As a Council we were in the 'Zoom', but July will see us in the 'Face-to-Face' Zone. Changing arrangements is fraught with concerns, especially when the Government make changes ignoring local time constraints.



Shalfleet Parish Council

A possible housing scheme came up for local initial consultation. This sensible gathering of people in the open air was an eye-opener for the developer as it revealed the extent of Southern Water's non-commitment to improving the present situation for dealing with sewage. The locals do not like it.

As a Council we would like to install outdoor activity facilities in Shalfleet and so starts the long process of negotiation with the Island Council. We had a surprise when we discovered that a wall repair, that was arranged, now has a further financial commitment being imposed by the Highways Dept. They have changed their fee structure retrospectively and, what was a contract undertaken in good faith, now has a change being imposed.

Margins of verges being cut is happening in some places. It will be good to know if other parishes are actually undertaking negotiations with Highways and Island Roads.

Cllr Helena Hewston

Fishbourne Parish Council

How much do you know about Wightlink?

The performance of the ferries affects everyone on the Island one way or another. But some communities, such as East Cowes and



Fishbourne, are particularly affected, because the ferries dominate the locality and disruptions to their services, such as those that occurred recently, cause chaos, particularly on the roads.

It was not until I joined Fishbourne Parish Council in June that I realised the implications of this for the local councils of these areas. I also realised how little I knew about the history and detailed operations of the ferry companies. I was therefore very interested to find that in March this year the Parish Council published a special issue of its parish magazine entitled 'The ferry service at Fishbourne'. It describes the history of the service, the origins and evolution of Wightlink as a company, the complexity of the existing company structure and its financial position.

I was interested to learn, among many other things, that the ferry service began in 1926, that from 1948 to 1984 it was owned by the government, and that since its privatisation it has changed hands many times. I also learned that (as the editor of The Observer pointed out in the issue dated 25 June) the service makes a substantial profit but this is used to service debts incurred by other subsidiaries of the holding company to which it belongs.

This special issue of the parish newsletter was written by Nigel Talbot, a Fishbourne resident and husband of parish councillor, Sarah Talbot, who edits the newsletter. If you want to read it yourself, go to: <https://www.fishbourneiow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Special-Edition-Fishbourne-PC-Newsletter.pdf>. And while you are visiting the site, you may like to take a look at some of the other issues of the newsletter.

Cllr Diana Conyers

Cowes Town Council

At the time of writing it is already July and we have the all too familiar Wimbledon weather!

Our High Street is buzzing with visitors and residents returning to our shops and restaurants, and the sounds of friends and family chatting over a meal and a drink or two.



Although the move to Step 4 of the Roadmap has been delayed, we don't feel as restricted now that the evenings are lighter and the temperature warmer. The return to eating indoors has been welcomed, judging by the numbers in our restaurants, and is vital for the survival of local businesses.

We welcome new shops to the town and have a great mix of independent shops and national retailers. I look forward to sampling the new products on offer. The recent wet weather has awoken the plant life and the town's planters and hanging baskets are blooming, bringing a mixture of welcome colour.

The Town Council's public meetings continue in the former stable block at Northwood House, providing space for social distancing.

Preparations are underway for a busy summer season and Cowes Week is just around the corner. We have installed a new flagpole and are awaiting new Town Council flags, which will be flown at our flagpoles at Francki Place and on Princes Green. The Mayor is very active and is frequently heard saying "I've just had a meeting with ..." Many meetings!

Image of our High Street, displaying brightly coloured flags, banners and bunting provided by Cowes Business Association, local businesses and Cowes Town Council

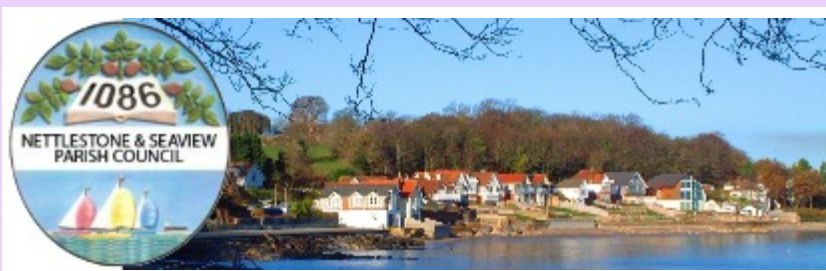
Kate Gibbs (Assistant Town Clerk)



Nettlestone & Seaview Parish Council

New Councillors

The Parish Council is back up to a full cohort of ten, six of whom are new members this year including: Cllr Mark Rogers, Cllr Melanie Jenkins, Cllr Stuart Marlton, Cllr Patricia Redpath, Cllr Mark Geernaert-Davies and Cllr David Barry. Cllr Rogers previously sat on the parish council's first administration and Cllr Redpath brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from her time on Woodstock Town Council. The ten councillors have a vibrant mix of skills and experience and look set to represent the community with enthusiasm and commitment.



New Approach to Grounds Maintenance

Cllr Hardie has been working with the Nettlestone and Seaview Community Partnership and Brighstone Landscaping Ltd to explore how the council's green spaces can be cultivated to allow natural flowers to flourish throughout the Spring and Summer whilst not reducing the utility of the spaces to the public. This will be most visible for the rest of the Summer on 'Sophie Watson's Garden' in Seaview, where a distinct pattern of mowing will be taking place. It is hoped that a mix of usable mown grass will blend in with the areas where the natural flora will be allowed to re-establish itself.

Brian Jennings (Clerk)

Brading Town Council

I have heard from the IW Council about the WC rebate - they have agreed to pay us from 1 April 2020 - and I looked up the Legislation and I now think that's the correct date it applies from. They have sent through the paperwork - but no money!!



We held a very successful litter pick on Saturday 12 June and along with our regular locals - and some new ones - the Ryde Army Cadets provided 16 of their members to help us.

That's about all I have today - I don't like to blow our own trumpets much, but on this occasion, it's the participants who deserve praise.

Linda Allen (Clerk)



Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council

We did some weeding recently for the British Heart Foundation and sanded down and gave all the benches a lick of paint! Here are the before and after photos!

We are in the process of exploring suitable additional play/sports equipment for Downside and organising monthly litter picks throughout Newport.

Lucy Molyneux (Deputy Clerk)



Other News...

Community Action - Isle of Wight

Community Resilience information from Zoryna O'Donnell

ASDA Bringing Communities Back Together Fund <https://www.asdafoundation.org/how-to-apply>

To reunite communities, celebrate togetherness, and support groups as Coronavirus restrictions begin to ease across the UK during July, August and September.

Grants of between £250 and £1,000 to either get activities back on track such as gardening clubs, lunch clubs and recreational activities; hold a get-together event such as a welcome back party or community celebration; or a combination of the two.

Closing date 16 August 2021

1. Mental health and wellbeing support

All residents of the Isle of Wight can access (as self-referrals) the Isle Talk IAPT Services (<https://www.iow.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health-services/isle-talk.htm>).

The Isle of Wight Community Mental Health website (<https://www.iwmentalhealth.co.uk/>) contains information about different sources of mental health support locally, as well as about some national helplines.

If volunteers are operating under the auspices of commissioned Health and Social Care services, they also have the following self-referral options:

- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Staff Support Hub: www.hiowstaff.nhs.uk Email: hello@hiowstaff.nhs.uk
- Isle Talk IAPT Services (local primary care service): Isle of Wight NHS Trust - Isle Talk: 01983 532860

2. Requests for support:

- IW Safe Places Scheme, a partnership scheme with Healthwatch, People Matter, Inclusion Outright and the IOW Safeguarding Adults Board (funded by IOW Council) is looking for volunteer businesses willing to offer a Safe Place.

You can find more about this scheme here: www.safeplacesiow.com and <http://www.facebook.com/safeplacesiow>

New members of the team...

Introducing Adam Tucker - Community Connector & Community Resilience Coordinator for West Wight

I'm Adam Tucker. I've lived and worked in West Wight since 2014 and have felt very privileged to have worked alongside the community since then, firstly as a Local Area Coordinator, then in my currently role as Community Connector and now, in addition, as part of the Community Resilience Project.

The bulk of my Community Connector work is helping to reduce isolation by working alongside people of all ages overcome challenges in their lives and find ways they can improve their lives and share their skills and abilities. I regularly attend Our Place, a community café drop-in set up at the West Wight Sports and Community Centre through volunteers in conjunction with a number of organisations from the local area and across the Island to offer support and opportunities to develop new ideas.



Prior to living on the Island, I worked for a local authority housing department as a support worker for people with diagnosed and undiagnosed mental illness. This past year has had a major impact on all of us, physically, mentally and emotionally; many of us have been tested in ways we have not had to experience before. Out here in West Wight, the community stepped up to form the West Wight Help Hub that offered support to those most vulnerable in the community throughout the pandemic. Our work now needs to focus on what comes next. I am keen to working alongside anyone from the West Wight communities (and in partnership across the Island) and I'm looking forward to how we can build back even stronger communities and offer opportunities to each other to learn, train, volunteer, work and share our skills.

Outside of my community work, I have set up and run a B&B with my partner since 2015 and have a son who loves that we live so close to the beach. It is great to be able to offer help both local residents and visitors in different ways to discover what is great about our local area and community. Get in touch with me via adam.tucker@westwight.org.uk or phone / message 07498496719 or visit <https://westwight.org.uk/community-connector> to find out more.

Adam Tucker

Introducing Kay Smith - Community Resilience Coordinator for the Cowes area

My name is Kay Smith. Originally from the North East, I have lived on the Island for the past 18 years. My working life started out as a pharmacy assistant in an NHS lab, moving on to community arts projects in a variety of settings, including some of the first children's centres and teaching therapeutic horticulture in 3 specialists units across Northumberland. I also took part in setting up the first sustainable veg box scheme in the region, which involved giving new life to once industrial land, and a new nature space to enjoy in the community where we were based. I am very happy that is still going strong all these years later.



After moving to the island, I became involved in community development work with a focus on supporting parents, families, young people and communities in both, statutory organisations and in the voluntary sector. With the emergence of the Extended Schools agenda, I moved into working directly with schools. First, as an Extended Schools Officer working to deliver and manage that programme across 5 primary schools and then developing that programme further, in one school and community, as a Family Services and Community Partnership Leader. I have also worked on many health related projects and currently I support the Isle of Wight Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IW ASBAH).

I am passionate about people, the power and potential of what communities bring to the places in which they live. I look forward to working alongside the East Cowes, Whippingham, Gurnard, Northwood and Cowes communities over the coming 18 months. You can get in touch with me by email KSmith@actioniw.org.uk

Kay Smith

Grab your COVID jab!

Anyone over the age of 18 - you can now walk-in to the local large-scale Solent NHS Trust run vaccination centre at Riverside Vaccination Centre, Newport, PO30 2QR for a first or second COVID-19 vaccination.

Both Pfizer and the AstraZeneca Vaccines are offered on a first come, first served basis and there may be a short wait for people to receive their vaccine. People should bring their NHS number if they have it.

Second vaccinations are available at the walk-ins if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Vaccine Opening times:

Friday 16 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Saturday 17 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Sunday 18 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Monday 19 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Tuesday 20 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Wednesday 21 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Thursday 22 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Friday 23 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Saturday 24 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Sunday 25 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Monday 26 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Tuesday 27 July 2021

AstraZeneca 8am to 7.30pm. Walk-in for anyone aged 40 over over for AstraZeneca first or second dose. If you have a booked appointment for today then please keep it and attend at the time you have been given.

Wednesday 28 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Thursday 29 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Friday 30 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Saturday 31 July 2021

AstraZeneca walk-in - 8am to 12.30pm, open for anyone aged 40 or over for first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

Pfizer walk-in - 4pm to 7.30pm. Open to anyone aged 18 or over for a first dose, or second dose if it has been at least eight weeks since the first dose.

NHS staff are pulling out all the stops to vaccinate as many people as possible. Four in five adults have now received their first dose of the jab, and with three in five already fully vaccinated after receiving two doses.

Having a COVID-19 vaccine is the best and safest way to protect yourself and those around you against a devastating disease.

Pre-booked appointments continue to be offered at all the large-scale vaccination centres by visiting www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or by calling 119, free of charge.



The Latest News from Age UK

The Age Friendly Island Partnership have launched the printed paper version of their Digital Survey, which was previously only available online. They would like to understand the needs and preferences of all older Islanders so that they can provide support to become more digitally connected, enabling the use of online services and participation in online activities. They had a great response to the first survey and they are hoping for an even better one from the second survey.

The deadline is Friday 13th August and they encourage everyone to complete the survey and help the Age Friendly Island Partnership to shape the future of digital support services across the Island.

To request your copy or if you can distribute copies call 01983 525282.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/isleofwight/about-us/latest-news/articles/2021/digital-survey--paper-copies-now-available/>

Age Friendly Island Charter

The AFI team at Age UK IW will be approaching all organisations who signed up to the AFI Charter to discuss and review their original pledge. Together they will evaluate what impact signing the Charter has had on each organisation, refresh the content if appropriate, and update to our new design, which includes an additional digital inclusion pledge.

Repledging to the Charter was initiated by the AFI Steering Group as a way to ensure legacy and ongoing cultural change when the funded project finishes next year.

The team will be in contact with IWALC members who have already signed up soon, and do get in touch if you would haven't already signed the Charter – agefriendlyisland@ageukiw.org.uk

Digital Friendly Island

The Digital Friendly Island scheme is led by Age Friendly Island at Age UK Isle of Wight, working with partners to make the Isle of Wight digitally inclusive for everyone, especially older Islanders. The scheme is in its infancy, but organisations across the Island are already starting to sign up to offer digital friendly services that are relevant to their business.

- We have created an online directory of Digital Friendly Island organisations, which we are currently adding to. This is part of the main Age UK IW website under the Digital Inclusion pages.
- We are working, with partner organisations and in consultation with older people to build our Digital Inclusion web content to ensure it is engaging and accessible. Our focus is on providing information from trusted and local organisations and people, not just links to national information. We will endeavour to make it as relevant to Islanders as possible.
- Organisations are signing up to the Digital Friendly Island Pledge, which sits alongside the Age Friendly Island Charter.
- We are officially launching the scheme in October to coincide with the Celebrating Age Festival and the annual Get Online Week.

You don't need to be offering courses to support, it can be something as simple as ensuring your website is as age-friendly as possible, for example. If you would like to get involved please contact Nell Riches – nell.riches@ageukiw.org.uk

Pavements for People

A new resource for Islanders to find out who is responsible for pavement accessibility issues and how to report it. It is currently online, but will soon be available as a printed copy. This is a hot topic and regularly came up at Age UK Public Forums, so the AFI team was pleased to work closely with the Older Person's Steering Group and Island Roads to develop this resource. Pavements For People. (ageuk.org.uk)

This week also sees the launch of the Living Streets Cut The Clutter campaign, so the timing is perfect! Cut the Clutter | Living Streets

Nell Riches (AFI Project Development Officer)
and Helen Lewis (AFI Officer (Engagement))

Could you spare a few hours per week? If so, volunteer for us!

Volunteering for Age UK Isle of Wight will make a difference to you and someone in need.

You will gain a real sense of achievement, knowing that you are helping people to retain their independence and reduce feelings of isolation, exclusion and loneliness. As well as it being an opportunity to make new friends.

We are looking for volunteers to support the Good Neighbour Scheme with befriending, shopping, transport, digital inclusion and information and advice. If you can donate your time to make a difference, we would love to hear from you.



Call 525282 asking for GNS or email gns@ageukiw.org.uk

SQUASH
RAZORS
HAND WASH
SHAVING FOAM/GEL
WASHING UP LIQUID
SHOWER GEL
SHAMPOO



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

SWEETCORN
BAKED BEANS
CEREAL
TINNED SOUP
SANITARY ITEMS



More News and Warnings from Trading Standards

Trading Standards have been told about more attempted scams this week so please be careful and look out for the following scams –



A phone call purporting to be Western Union and telling you that you have made a transfer and do you want to cancel it? They then proceed to try to access your laptop/tablet etc – this is a SCAM and it will end in you giving over banking details which they will then have access to and they won't be refunding anything!

Continued reports of emails advising you that systems you use or your security need updating or are expiring and telling you to click on a link to update details – DON'T this is a SCAM – forward the email to report@phishing.gov.uk and then delete it

There have been reports of the Amazon scam being made from an Island 01983 number – don't assume just because the number is 01983 it is a genuine call – scammers can purchase numbers very easily

We have been made aware of a Covid Vaccine Passport scam email going around that purports to be from the NHS and informs recipients that they can apply for their "Digital Coronavirus Passports" Clicking on the link within the email, takes you to a convincing but fake NHS website that asks for personal and payment details. (for an admin fee)

Just to reiterate, your vaccination status is obtained FREE through the NHS App, website or by calling the NHS on 119.

Following on from my previous message about Solar Panel scams we have been contacted by a local business who has said "There is very little maintenance to do to a solar PV system beyond cleaning the panels – what this company in fact do is to sign up to the automated monitoring emails which come as standard with EnPhase Energy PV and forward them as letters to elderly customers who do not know how to sign in to the online account. Should any have any concerns about their EnPhase energy solar PV system they can call the manufacturer EnPhase themselves and they will be able to check their system remotely – free of charge" The company appear to be quite relentless with their phone calls and we have been told that they have visited 63 Island homes in the past few weeks. Remember if you sign up to anything then you should have a 14 day cooling off period and you can cancel.

A new Royal Mail scam which involves a text that states your parcel delivery has failed and has been returned to a Post Office depot, it contains a link to a fake website which copies the official PO site. The website asks the recipient to enter all of their information which scammers will use fraudulently. – these texts can be forwarded to 7726 – DON'T click on links in texts

Emails out of the blue telling you that money has been taken and advising you how to obtain a refund are likely to be a scam – by following the process you are providing the scammer with your banking details which will enable them to debit your account not refund it. Always contact your bank if you are concerned that money may have been taken that you haven't given permission for.

We have recently partnered (through Age UK Age Friendly Island) with Barclays Digital Wings.

This is an online support centre aimed at supporting anyone with a wide range of online services, not just banking but skills for life. Ranging from online education to keeping yourself safe online there are a wide range of online courses and virtual sessions to improve our digital use.

This is a free service to anyone, not just Barclays customers. You just need to create a log in and use the company code IWASP.

If any of your service users are struggling to access your services online this could be a valuable resource to share with them to increase their digital confidence and encourage them to access more online.

<https://digital.wings.uk.barclays/>

Company Code – IWASP



My colleague at Barclays Digital Wings, Kirsty, would like to deliver a zoom session around how to use Digital Wings to get the best out of it and perhaps a fraud and scams session, so I would like to ask if any of you would be interested in participating in either of these sessions?

Please email to let me know if this is something that you would be interested in. (Sally.ash@iow.gov.uk)

Sally Ash (Fair Trading Officer)

Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

Island Business Magazine

Island Business, published by the IW Chamber, is the Isle of Wight's only business-to-business magazine.

Every month Island Business magazine spotlights the businesses and business people that are making the news in the Island's economy. With exclusive interviews and editorial, we focus on businesses large and small. Our news pages keep readers updated on the business stories that matter to them, including member stories, updates and offers.



Click here to read the latest edition <https://issuu.com/iwchamber>.

If you would like to start receiving a copy of Island Business Magazine in the post (FREE), please complete the form via <https://www.iwchamber.co.uk/membership/island-business/>

Emma Spinelli

Latest Information from Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice IW has had another busy month reaching record numbers of contacts with 180 in one week alone. The most common issues have been around benefits and Universal Credit, with housing issues following closely behind. We are very lucky to have staff who specialise in these areas, with others covering tax, money and issues for residents living with cancer.



Our freephone number is 0800 144 8848 and this is answered by assessors, who can be trained volunteers or staff, to ensure a call back later is provided by the best adviser. Islanders can also look at finding help themselves on IsleHelp.me

As you can imagine, the charity is hard-pressed to keep the resources available for all the callers and whilst we have been able to secure funding from IWC and other public bodies, we also rely on donations and fundraising activities. Seven members of staff challenged themselves to walk 10km last week and, of course, the British summer weather did its worst, making an already steep climb up and down around St Catherine's monument and Hoy's monument, very very wet. We have raised around £700 so far which is great news and will help purchase new IT equipment for a volunteer adviser. *Paul Savill (Chief Officer)*



News from the Isle of Wight Council

www.keeptheislandsafe.org

Covid updates - Keep the Island safe by being cautious with our behaviour.

Restrictions on social distancing, group sizes, working from home, face covering, attending weddings, funerals and other life events will all be removed from July 19.



Vaccinations

Please book via the NHS UK website or by calling 119. Please rearrange your vaccination appointment if you can't make it. This will allow the dose to be used for someone else. If you had your first vaccine at a walk-in centre, you can book your second dose online for 8-12 weeks after your first dose.

Before you go to get your vaccine, please make sure that you've recently had a drink and something to eat. It is not too late for older people to get their first dose. Please encourage friends, family and colleagues to get vaccinated.

Vaccines have been shown to be effective against all variants. It is important to have both doses for full protection.

There are some things we can all do to help stop the virus spreading:

- Meet outdoors where possible and let fresh air into homes or other enclosed spaces.
- Limit close contact with people you don't usually live with, and increase close contact slowly.
- Think about other people and consider wearing a face covering in crowded or enclosed spaces such as public transport.
- Take a gradual return to work.
- Get two doses of the vaccine. You can make appointments or go to a walk-in clinic.
- Keep taking regular rapid response LFT tests.
- Self-isolate and take a PCR test when you get symptoms.
- Self-isolate when asked to do so by NHS Test and Trace

With COVID-19 still circulating in the community, Simon Bryant, Director of Public Health on the Island, said it was important to remember the actions we can all take to keep ourselves and others safe. He said: "The pandemic is not over and the disease carries risks for all of us, but particularly the most vulnerable members of our Island community. We know getting vaccinated helps protect ourselves and others. Reduced transmission of the virus minimises the development of new variants. My two key messages are please take a cautious approach and get vaccinated. Doing both of these will really help stop the spread and protect the NHS as cases rise and hospitalisations increase."

Councillor Karl Love, Cabinet lead for Public Health, urged Islanders to get vaccinated to help protect the community. He said: "It's especially important that all our young people are now vaccinated to complete the loop and prevent further spread of the virus. As lockdown restrictions are lifted, it's still wise to continue wearing your face covering. I also encourage those who travel backwards and forwards across the Solent to keep testing, using the free lateral flow kits obtained at local pharmacies."

COVID cases and vaccination data

Weekly data is published on Isle of Wight Council's Facebook page on a Tuesday. Testing is still vital. If you don't have COVID-19 symptoms please take a twice weekly rapid response Lateral Flow Test (LFT). Tests are free and can be taken in store or collected from pharmacies. Use your postcode and this map to find your nearest participating pharmacy. Please report test results whether negative or positive. It is especially important to consider Lateral Flow Testing before travelling on or off the Island. If you have symptoms you must self-isolate and book a PCR test.

Self-isolation

If you're worried about money because you've been asked to self-isolate, or you need to look after a child who is self-isolating, financial support is available via the Isle of Wight Council website.

Self-isolation can be very difficult especially if you have financial, work, family or mental health worries. Help is available via the Isle of Wight COVID-19 helpline on 01983 823600 or by emailing contactcentre@iow.gov.uk

Self-isolation is a legal requirement if you test positive for coronavirus or have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace. More online information about self-isolation is available.

Easy to share social media

Please share these social media messages on your own Facebook pages:

Do you know when to self-isolate? <https://www.facebook.com/isleofwightcouncil/posts/4106470092741857>

Top tips for staying safe from local GP Dr Simon Giles:

<https://www.facebook.com/isleofwightcouncil/posts/4033497720039095>

Support if you're self-isolating: <https://www.facebook.com/isleofwightcouncil/posts/4056768887711978>

Thank you for all you do to #KeepTheIslandSafe keeptheislandsafe.org

For more local information on COVID-19, visit keeptheislandsafe.org

Welcome Back to your Local Library

Isle of Wight Council libraries will appear a bit more like their old selves from Monday (19 July).

Opening hours are going to be extended and there will no longer be limits on the number of people who can be in the building at any one time. Other changes will see the return of comfortable seating in the adult and children's libraries, study tables will be available and people will be able to read the day's newspapers.

Computers will be available for free use and Islanders can once again look forward to the start of library events and activities for groups, families and children later in the year.

Councillor Jonathan Bacon, Cabinet lead for libraries, said: "When you visit your local library, please follow a few sensible COVID-19 precautions to keep yourself and other customers safe. Sanitise your hands on arrival, zap the NHS Test and Trace app or fill in a very small contact details form, and please continue to wear a face covering for your own safety and the safety of people around you."

The council is reintroducing the 60p reservation charge on books from 19 July, but is extending the fines amnesty until the autumn.

Bus Back Better

Ambitious steps to enhance public transport across the Island have been approved by Cabinet members. The government's £3 billion Bus Back Better scheme aims to improve services and create greener, more flexible travel options for communities. As part of the scheme, councils must commit to enter 'Enhanced Partnerships' with local bus operators by the end of March 2022.

The Isle of Wight Council will now work to produce a Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP), with the aim of having it in place by the end of October. Councillor Phil Jordan, Cabinet member for infrastructure and transport, said: "This decision could mean simpler and cheaper ticketing for users across a more integrated travel network on the Island. "I welcome the opportunity to work with our local bus operators, local businesses and residents to achieve this aim of a greener, more flexible transport options to meet the needs of our local communities."

It is hoped that the plan will also deliver more carbon-friendly buses, simpler pricing and a more joined-up network so passengers can easily switch between different types of transport. Under the scheme, the council will work with local bus operators to improve routes and flexible passenger experiences — encouraging and enabling more sustainable travel choices and fewer car trips.

The BSIP will also identify where bus priority measures are needed on the Island and aim to meet carbon reduction targets.

MP Bob Seely

Monthly Report for IWALC Bulletin 05.07.21

Housing

I am firmly opposed to the proposal to construct 70 houses on greenfield land behind Burt Close in Shalfleet. This is yet more, low density, greenfield development which is bad for the Island. I hope the IW Council will see the poor development for what it is.

Also, I have objected to the proposed construction of eight houses on land at Seagrove Farm in Seaview. Developing this land will close the gap between the two villages and yet more green space will be lost forever. We need to protect our villages from this type of infill that removes their unique character and distinguishability.

I look forward to the speedy completion of the Island Plan to ensure that we can block these developments, in favour of development in towns, for local families, preferably supported by Island housing associations.

Local people need to have a say over where houses are built in their communities. The Government's standard methodology for housing does not work for the Isle of Wight and I am pushing hard for it to be changed.

I have put some ideas forward to the Government which includes a tax on greenfield sites and legal priority for brownfield sites. I also want to see changes that do more to prevent land banking and I want councils to have more powers for compulsory purchase.

There are 600 long-term empty homes on the Island. I want Government to give the Island power to use these homes for the public good. I will also support moves to block people from buying properties that are main residences and then using them for holiday homes or holiday rentals.

Levelling Up

The Isle of Wight Council, and I, have put in what we believe is a strong bid for a development in East Cowes. The East Cowes Marine hub scheme has been chosen because first, it is important in its own right, and second, it is time-sensitive and projects must be deliverable within a time frame, so planning permission must have already been sought.

The purpose of the bid is to grow the number of high-paid jobs in marine, but also in the tidal, wind and offshore renewable sectors. Our bid will enable us to develop that cluster of excellence further and ensure that East Cowes continues to grow as a shipbuilding composite and green tech hub for the United Kingdom as a whole. I have written to the Government in support of the bid.

I made clear to the Government that our regeneration approach, especially after covid, will be focused primarily on Newport. The town centre has a lot of empty shops and Newport harbour is ripe for development as a regeneration hub. As part of that, we want high-quality new house building for Islanders in sensitive numbers to drive regeneration. We need to

bring back young people and housing into the town centre to drive economic growth and to provide employment, for start-up companies, for leisure and for higher education facilities. We need space for start-ups and, potentially, a new railway station, depending on how the rejuvenation of the branch-line project goes.

I have called on Government departments to work together to assist the Island with a strategic roadmap for the next 50 years that has more to offer the Island than we have had in the past 50 years.



Police & Crime Commissioner

Last month I met with the new Police & Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, to discuss my concerns about petty crime, domestic violence, hate crimes, drugs and speeding across the Island. I was interested to hear about Donna's initial plans to improve the safety of Island residents and I look forward to working with her in the weeks and months ahead to take our ideas forward.

Donna has launched a consultation on a name change from 'Hampshire Constabulary' to 'Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary'. To have your say please add your comments via the consultation link <https://www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/consultations/force-name-change>

New Measures to Protect Mobile Homeowners

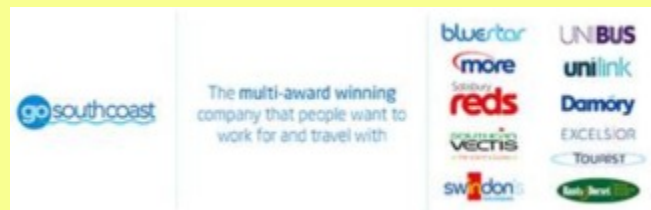
You may be interested to know that the Government has introduced new measures that will better protect mobile home residents from rogue caravan park owners.

Councils will be given greater powers to tackle bad practice and exploitation of residents, and managers or owners of mobile home sites will have to pass a new 'fit and proper person' test to prove they are suitable for the job. I welcome this.

Bob Seely

The Latest Information from Southern Vectis

As for some time now, we continue to operate at pre-pandemic levels of service, and we've seen 75% of customers return to using the bus and now hope to welcome the other 25% back. We have followed the official guidance at all times, and below is an update on key messages to our customers.



Face Coverings

The government has now put the onus on individuals to decide for themselves if they want to wear a face covering, where it had previously been mandated by law. Our message to customers from 19th July is therefore that we strongly advise them to wear a face covering when travelling with us to help protect them and fellow passengers. It will, however, not be compulsory.

Social Distancing Onboard Buses

You will know that buses in England changed some time ago to allow all forward-facing seats to be used. The current requirement for social distancing ends on 19th July and as such, our current temporary vehicle capacities will be withdrawn, with all buses and coaches reverting to their normal carrying capacities, including 'standing passengers' at busy times.

Hand sanitiser

Hand sanitiser will continue to be provided through the on-bus dispensers.

Covid-screens

Given the uncertainty regarding how Covid may or may not develop over the winter, we have taken the view to keep the temporary Covid cab screens in place until Easter 2022 when we will review the situation. As we have been clear all along, these screens will be removed, but only when the time is right, as they remain a barrier to communication.

Ventilation

The signs asking customers to keep the first and last hopper window open on the first and last windows on each side of the bus will remain in place until the autumn when their continued need will be reviewed.

Bus cleaning

The current considerable amount of additional cleaning of buses will continue until the end of August 2021 and reviewed thereafter.

Richard Tyldsley (General Manager)

university centre ISLE OF WIGHT

The Department for Education has granted the title of “University Centre, Isle of Wight” in support of the college’s successful history of delivering higher education courses over the past 15 years in collaboration with local university partners, particularly the University of Portsmouth.

As we approach the end of the academic year, we are delighted to learn that one of our college students on the HND Business course, run in partnership with the University of Portsmouth, has won an award for ‘Outstanding Achievement’ for gaining the highest overall grade across the university’s HND Business provision, passing with distinction.

Outstanding craftsmanship in the Boat Building department

Months in the making ... watching the progress of this build has been amazing. Under the experienced guidance of tutor Ben Coombes, our boat building students have now painted the vessel and are ready to test this stunning example of high-end craftsmanship on the water.



Painting their way across the Island

Our creative tutors have ensured that our painting and decorating students are getting real-life ‘on the job’ experience, with working visits to the Isle of Wight Zoo, Osborne House and Robin Hill to name but a few.



Alice in Wonderland ... at Ventnor Botanic Garden



The performing arts students delighted audiences with two interactive performances of their adaptation of Lewis Carroll’s classic stories “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” and “Alice Through the Looking Glass” on 29th and 30th June.

The beautiful Ventnor Botanic Garden, with its exotic plants and winding paths, provided the perfect backdrop for the magical, theatrical performances.

Latest News from Aspire Ryde

We are about to launch our new and exciting 'escape room' feature which will engage more people and raise funds for other projects - I will have much more information about this for the next Bulletin.

Trevor Nicholas (Chief Executive Officer)



Wightlink & Aspire Ryde Team up.

Community herb garden created at Ryde Pier

A herb garden is now flourishing at the end of Ryde Pier, thanks to volunteers from Aspire Ryde. Disused planters have been brought back into life by the charity to brighten up the Pier and support biodiversity. It is part of Wightlink's Green Agenda, which incorporates wide-ranging initiatives to protect the environment.



Members of Aspire's gardening team repaired and painted 16 planters at the Pier Head and filled them with a variety of herbs including oregano, mint, parsley, thyme and rosemary. To add a little extra colour, attract pollinators and deter white fly, marigolds were mixed in too. Once the herb garden is established, commuters will be welcome to pick a few herbs on their way home to use when preparing meals.

Graham Gillham, gardening co-ordinator at Aspire Ryde, says: "We are really excited to work with Wightlink to provide a community herb garden at the end of Ryde Pier. Our volunteers thoroughly enjoyed transforming the planters to create a new habitat for insects, which not only looks great but will provide free herbs to the community too."



Keith Greenfield, Wightlink Chief Executive, adds: "We are really impressed with Aspire's work having partnered with them to create a wildlife garden at our Fishbourne terminal. It's great to join forces with them again to create a community herb garden on the Pier. The volunteers have done a fantastic job and we look forward to seeing the new herb garden flourish. The Green Agenda is hugely important to us. While we have invested heavily in major changes to the way we run our business – such as the introduction of our hybrid energy flagship Victoria of Wight – smaller community schemes such as this herb garden and the greening of Fishbourne all contribute to our goal of working in harmony with the environment."

Aspire Ryde's gardening team operates through the charity's 'Growing Great Things' initiative, funded by the People's Health Trust. It aims to improve mental and physical wellbeing, reduce isolation and provide an opportunity for individuals to have fun and get to know new people. Groups are led by a horticultural therapist and volunteer and include a wide range of gardening activities from seed sowing and taking cuttings to making raised beds and pruning shrubs.

Karen Woods (Duty Media Officer)

Photo - Graham Gillham from Aspire Ryde with Tamsin Glover from Wightlink's Ryde Pier team

Wightlink's coronavirus advice after Monday 19 July

The Government has announced the easing of some Covid-19 restrictions from Monday 19 July 2021.

Wightlink will continue its policy of requiring customers to wear a face covering indoors on ships and FastCats and at ports, unless they are exempt. Everyone is asked to respect social distancing. Wightlink will maintain its high standards of hygiene on its ferries and at ports by frequent cleaning and the use of onboard fogging machines, that swiftly clean large areas. Hand sanitisers will be available and screens will remain in place at cafés.

Wightlink's Fleet and Operations Director, John Burrows says: "Although increasing numbers of people are now fully vaccinated, the pandemic is still not over. We all need to take sensible precautions to stop the spread of coronavirus, despite the easing of regulations and that means everyone still needs to wear a face covering indoors, unless they are exempt. We will keep this policy under review. Fresh air is all important as it helps stop the spread of coronavirus. Wightlink's passenger lounges are spacious and well-ventilated and customers can enjoy plenty of sea breezes on the outside decks. All customers, including foot passengers, should book in advance to be sure of travelling on the sailing of their choice, as we expect the summer to be busy."

Lou Neville (Duty Media Officer) www.wightlink.co.uk

An Update from Red Funnel

Currently, our biggest focus is on recruitment – it's been really hard to get people, as it is across all sectors of leisure and hospitality, and it's not helped by the number of track and trace pings that come through!



That's affecting our punctuality and reliability, so it's a vicious circle, but we are doing our utmost to improve the situation.

Fran Collins (Chief Executive Officer)

Message from Neil Chapman, Managing Director, Hovertravel

With the Government removing the final set of restrictions next week, I wanted to assure you that Hovertravel's first priority will always be to protect the safety of its passengers and staff. Our Health & Safety team has conducted risk assessments on all aspects of the Hovertravel journey and I wanted to explain our cautious approach to what will, and will not, change after Monday.



Our hand sanitisers, both onboard and in the terminals, will remain so that customers can clean their hands during their journey. Similarly we will continue to use our low-touch processes, such as scanning your tickets and our enhanced cleaning regime for all touchpoints. Our terminals will return to full capacity, matching the ability to fill our craft and allowing us to keep a faster flow of passengers across the entire Hovertravel experience. Whilst we recognise the law has changed, we, along with the other ferry operators and the Isle of Wight Council, will continue to ask for face coverings to be worn during your journey. We believe that this measure is an important step in safeguarding our passengers and our people.

We have several new tickets which are designed to suit the changing nature of commuting and regular travel, plus our online Manage My Booking account facility allows customers to manage their own changes, even at the last minute. We are also extending our Hover Flexibility until 31st October 2021, giving customers the opportunity to re-book their travel to a later date, without penalty.

Throughout the pandemic our customer community has been very supportive and all of us at Hovertravel are grateful. Now, as together we learn to live with the virus, we appreciate that some of you may have questions or need a little extra help, so please ask any member of staff for assistance at any time during your journey.

The entire Hovertravel team has worked tirelessly throughout this pandemic, dedicating themselves to providing an essential link across the Solent. They understand their work contributes to the wider community, such as helping 10,000 journeys for Wessex Cancer Trust patients over the last year, and their commitment has been unwavering. I am sure you all join in me in thanking them.

We have to be personally responsible and consider the risks to both ourselves and others. As people start to travel more, and some may have not travelled for over a year, customers will make different choices. Please respect that and give your fellow passengers the space and time to travel in their own way, at their own pace. And, as always, be kind.

Neil