



# NEWSLETTER

Spring Edition 2015

from Cllr. Geoff Banks – Cowes Town Mayor

## YOUR NEWSLETTER

Since the Cowes Town Council decided to communicate with the residents of Cowes by way of its Newsletters, it has been the prerogative of the Town Mayor to produce these. There has, of course, been invaluable input from many local outside agencies which have been encouraged to put articles about their organisations in the newsletters. Initially, these newsletters were of four pages, without colour or photographs. Since those early days we have progressed to an eight page newsletter on semi-gloss paper, with colour and photographs. As a Town Council with 'Quality Council' status we are obliged to communicate with the electorate as a minimum four times a year, hence such being seasonal. Our newsletters have to set out some of those various decisions made at council level without any added prejudicial comment or without being judgemental. Such has not always been easy. In an attempt to move away from the boring business part of a Town Council's deliberations it was thought, by the writer, to add, "Need to Know?" hopefully some light relief. The articles chosen for the newsletter where relating to Town Council business are, therefore, concerning items which it is felt the residents ought to know and, in particular, be able to comment on. Unfortunately, there has always been very little response to questions asked through the newsletters. Whether this indicates complete disinterest in what happens in our town or whether the newsletter is boring, ignored or immediately 'binned' it would equally be good to know. This is the present Town Mayor's last newsletter and, as from the election of a new mayor in May, it will be the incumbent mayor to put his/her own mark on its contents.

## A NEW MAYOR

The Cowes Town Mayors can hold that post for the maximum of two years. This regulation is part of this Council's Standing Orders which regulate and control the actions of your Council. The new mayor is elected by his/her fellow councillors. This takes place at the Council's Annual Council Meeting to be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May. Besides the election of the new mayor the Deputy Mayor also stands down after his two year term in office. Again, the councillors vote for the new Deputy Mayor. The same meeting decides on which councillors sit on the various internal sub-committees and outside organisations.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING MAYOR – COUNCILLOR GEOFF BANKS

"I have been privileged to serve and represent the community of Cowes for these past two years. Having joined Cowes Town Council in July 1987 I have seen many changes affecting Parish and Town Councils whereby the demands on members has become ever more onerous and demanding. In those earlier days the town's precept, (that sum taken from Cowes' householders to pay for the Town Council), was circa £8,000 p.a. and now is at the all-time high of circa £177,000 p.a. With the formation of Cowes Town Council in 1985 half the then precept costs were to pay for a Town Clerk. In 1992 the precept had reached £14,000 p.a. with the Clerk's salary at £4,500. There was little surplus to do anything meaningful in those days. As regularly reported in these Newsletters our business is now quite diverse and looks at all aspects of the welfare of Cowes from commenting on

Planning Applications to providing public facilities as well as being that permanent watchdog ensuring that Cowes residents' concerns are dealt with wherever possible. As Town Mayor, as with all other members of the Town Council, the posts are unpaid, unlike those who are our Isle of Wight Councillors. Pleasingly, not a single Town Councillor claims expenses, underlying the true voluntary aspect of their commitment. In my two years in office I have sent or received over 7,000 emails and attended 136 meetings, in the past year, on behalf of the council. However, the post, which I have been honoured to hold for twelve years during my councillorship, has allowed me to meet royalty and leaders from across the world and, of the greatest importance, Her Majesty the Queen. Only Cowes, of all the Island towns, is that mecca. I'm hopeful that our new mayor will be able to enjoy that period of tenure and embrace such as I have been so privileged to do. May I close by giving my thanks to all those councillors, past and present, and those townspeople who have given me their support throughout."

### **A CHANGE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR**

Following the resignation of former Town Councillor and past mayor, David Walters, your council has recently co-opted a new councillor following a selection process. David Walters was a valued Town Councillor since he joined the council in June 2009. He added much to the debates and worked tirelessly for the town. His Cowes North Ward position sees the appointment of Joe Oliver. Joe aged 22, lives in Park Road and was head boy at Cowes High School and works at the Traveller's Joy, Northwood. He aims to bring to the council his youthful experience and those many challenges on behalf of his peer group. Joe is the youngest ever such appointee and a most welcome addition to our ageing membership. It's hoped that with Joe joining the Town Council that this will encourage other young and eager youths to be part of that team that does its best in providing for Cowes.

### **ISLANDWIDE HEALTH CARE INITIATIVES**

A presentation was made at our March meeting by Anita Cameron-Smith, Head of Public Health Strategy for the IW Council, and Bryan Hurley, Health Improvement Manager on Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). ABCD is a strategy for sustainable community-driven development; communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing assets, talents and skills and thereby respond to local needs within the community. Talents and assets held within the community can be used to ensure that the community stays strong. People can stay independent and feel that they can contribute to the community for longer. An asset register will be developed to identify what people have got to give to their community. A 'Vanguard Bid' has been made which could access a large amount of funding for the Isle of Wight and it was agreed that Cowes Town Council would write a letter of support for this bid. However, not all projects have a cost associated to them and many community projects can be developed without the need for financial support.

A presentation was made by Paul Savill, Voluntary Sector Locality Link Officer, Community Action Isle of Wight, at our April meeting, on the project 'My Life A Full Life'. Mr Savill explained that the project is the driving force for bringing people and organisations together to deliver a programme which can change cultures, attitudes and behaviours and redesign services to focus on person centred community responses and to ensure people receive co-ordinated care and support. The project is a collaboration between the Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Isle of Wight NHS Trust and the Isle of Wight Council. The Island is being split into three localities: West & South (of which Cowes is included); South Wight & North East Wight. Each locality will have a multi-disciplinary team which will look at needs as a whole; and an operational team which will provide the required service. Care passports are being created which will give the whole picture of a person including their personal details, care and support needs and medical conditions. This will allow all persons involved with the individual to understand that person's needs and requirements. The aim is to deliver truly integrated care and support on the Isle of Wight and to allow as many people as possible to stay independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.

A number of questions were raised and discussed including who is taking the lead on this and other projects and at what cost? There was also concern as to the apparent number of health care initiatives which were being promoted on the Island. It was stated, by the latest presenter, that the Health & Wellbeing Board are taking the lead over their project and money will be saved through health care savings. It was noted that communication and signposting was key to delivering their project not just through the use of IT but by engaging and meeting with local groups. The speaker was asked that these various organisations worked together to provide the best possible provision for the community and that the public were better informed as to their more collective remits.

### **SKIP IN ST. MARY'S ROAD/CROSS STREET CAR PARK**

The Town Council, as of 16th March, has placed a service skip in the central car park. This is for general waste and not for waste which can be recycled; such is catered for by the adjacent bins. The intention is to provide a convenient means of depositing general household waste in particular for those weekend homes and visitors. The Town Council had endeavoured to have general waste collections on a Monday to alleviate the ever growing amount of general domestic waste deposited in the waste collection area for days. The skip is not for fly-tipping and a CCTV camera monitors the site.



However, residents are still depositing their household

rubbish in the recycling area whereas the skip is there for that purpose. The upper photograph shows deposited rubbish at a time when the skip was empty, awaiting such deposits. There are others who contravene the "NO FLY TIPPING" signage displayed. Only a week later the same skip contained mattresses as shown in the lower photograph. The Town Council intends providing



additional/altered signage to best inform users as to the use of this skip. The skips will remain there and be regularly serviced over a three month trial period.

### **WOODSMAN SAVE THAT TREE**

Those travelling along Newport Road will see, at its junction with Arctic Road where adjunct to the cemetery, this splendidly carved tree trunk, all that remains of a much decayed tree which was destined to be felled. The carving, undertaken by the Island's highly reputed carver, Paul Sivell, pays tribute to those who worked in Cowes' boat and ship building industry. Cowes Town Council stepped in to make this lost tree a visual edifice for decades to come. Following receipt of sponsorship monies, the cost to the Town Council is £2,330. However, the tree, at the behest of the County Council, has to be insured against possible injury to the public and included on the Town Council's insurance asset list, whereby the public liability cover is £10M. Added to this, the Town Council will also have to enter into a licence with the IW Council assuring its upkeep.



### **ISLE DRIVE SAFE – REMEMBER EVEY**

This is the name of a new Isle Of Wight Road Safety Charity co-founded by Neal Staley, Father of Evey who was killed on the outskirts of Northwood aged 10 by a drunk, drugged and speeding driver in August 2012. This had a devastating impact on his family and the wider circle involved in an incident like that. The family has been involved in various campaigns over the last 18 months, namely the Purple Ribbon anti drink drive campaign run at Christmas 2013 by Hants and IOW Constabulary, Thames Valley Police and to a lesser extent North Yorks Police. Evey's story has also been used by BRAKE, the national road safety charity as a case study for their 2014 summer drink drive campaign and RAF Brize Norton to the 6000 personnel as part of their Christmas campaign. The aim is to raise road safety awareness through different initiatives on the Island. All monies raised will stay on the Island.

They are currently working in close partnership with the Emergency Services, IW Radio, County Press, Specsavers, Southern Vectis, Andrew Turner and various driving schools to name but a few. Besides drunk drivers, all aspects of road safety will be looked at. Their first initiative is to try to reduce speeds of vehicles on our roads. The idea is simple and effective. They have purchased a large amount of SPEED LIMIT stickers which are stuck onto the sides of wheelie bins. When the bins are out there is a constant reminder to those using that road, of the speed limit. If readers would like more information or would like to donate to the charity in exchange for some stickers please contact them on the email address [isledrivesafe@gmail.com](mailto:isledrivesafe@gmail.com) or call 01983 526216. All money raised will be used for future projects. They have also produced car bumper and window stickers which can currently be found at the following places: Ryde and Newport Specsavers, Morrisons' Garage Newport, The Innovation Centre Dodnor, Rashley's Cowes, The Ocean Deck Sandown, Cowes Primary School, Cowes Sports FC Clubhouse, Sandown Garage & HSS Hunnyhill.

### **SPEED LIMITS IN COWES**

Discussion took place as regards to introducing possible 20mph speed limits in Cowes following consultation with residents via our Winter Newsletter. Two responses from residents in Market Hill & Union Road had been received. Cowes Town Council needs to give due consideration as to whether certain roads should be speed regulated to 20mph, councillors having been made aware of the campaign following Evey's tragic loss. However, due to a large amount of on-going business, councillors agreed to re-visit this subject in six months' time.

### **MORNINGTON WOODS**

Concerns arose relating to a bonfire at Mornington Woods. The volunteer group managing the area informs us that this was part of a measure to control a highly invasive introduced plant, Japanese Knotweed. The plant was treated by a registered contractor last autumn by injecting and spraying with herbicide. Following this treatment the Japanese Knotweed was left to die. After die back it was burnt on site in a carefully controlled manner as it cannot be removed due to its highly invasive nature. The fire brigade was informed before any burning took place and once it was extinguished. Although all precautionary measures were taken there were later smoke emissions which caused a nuisance to neighbours. The Mornington Woods Volunteer Group, which manages the area, apologise for the nuisance caused. Their good works continue and the Town Council, which manages their purse strings, thanks them for their dedication and hard work.

### **WREATHS AT THE WAR MEMORIAL**

Following an item in the last Newsletter there was only one comment received on how long the wreaths should remain on the war memorial following their laying on Remembrance Sunday. Should they remain till the end of October or be removed prior to Christmas? People using the park were asked their opinions and, following a debate in the Council Chamber, it was resolved to retain the wreaths until the end of October, prior to Remembrance Day in November. The Town Clerks, whose office is nearby, ensure that the wreaths are regularly inspected and councillors considered that their longevity and appearance, being of synthetic material, was not an issue. The photographs show the memorial wreaths some five months after placing there.



### **RODNEYS RETIREMENT**

Rodney Williams, who has been employed by the Town Council since August 2001, retired at the end of March. Rodney initially cleaned and maintained the skateboard park following its provision by Cowes Town Council. Following the construction of the Town Council's play-park in 2005 Rodney's work load extended yet further to be followed by cleaning the MUGA, (Multi-Use-Games-Area) and eventually the toilet block in 2014 when managed by this council. Rodney's years of service have been exemplary and certainly most dedicated whereby he has opened and closed the toilets seven days a week. Rodney was presented with a barometer on his retirement and the photograph shows Rodney receiving thanks for his long term service from the mayor and deputy mayor.



### **SOLENT GATEWAY PROJECT**

A presentation was made at our February meeting by Mr Murray Carter (Red Funnel) and Mr John Roseveare of Parose Projects with Mr Duncan Stuart of Parose Projects in attendance. Mr Murray Carter began the presentation with an overview of the Solent Gateway project. On the Southampton side, planning permission was being applied for with the aim of providing a new terminal building and marshalling yard by March 2017. Red Funnel has committed £15 million to the project on both sides of the Solent. On the East Cowes side, they are currently consulting with stakeholders and hope to apply for planning permission in July this year. If these plans are approved by the end of the year, they are hopeful of moving into the new terminal building and marshalling yard in 2018. Mr John Roseveare of Parose projects then advised with regards to the match funding from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership. The business case is no longer in a competitive bid for funding and although the money has not been allocated it is hoped that such should be confirmed shortly. This public money is pledged to provide the infrastructure for the commercial development for the Floating Bridge, parking and highways. The East Cowes master plan, started in 2007, has not been changed. The rumour of the Red Jet leaving Cowes was stated as not happening, they may extend the service to include East Cowes if this is commercially viable. Red Funnel would be interested in partnership working to improve Fountain Yard, (The Gateway to Cowes).

## **COWES – A GATEWAY TO THE ISLAND AND THE EFFECT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

An internal report was circulated to all Councillors to raise awareness of existing and future developments within the Medina basin area and the environs of Cowes and the effect of such on the town's future having regards to its importance as a gateway to the Island. It also raised the issue as to how best to sustain its position as an internationally acclaimed yachting mecca and major gateway to and from the mainland. It was agreed that Cowes Town Council should take a proactive role in developing a future strategy for Cowes and that Cowes Town Council invite stakeholders of and about the Fountain Yard area to a meeting to discuss / clarify the future of Cowes as a gateway to the Island.

## **GRANTS**

Grants have been awarded to the following organisations:

**Alzheimer's Café-Cowes £500** - *towards the cost of refreshments for their monthly meetings.*

**Community First Responder Scheme £1,450** - *being an amount to support the purchase of a First Responder kit at the cost of £1450 per kit.*

**Armed Forces Day (IOW) £100** - *towards the cost of Armed Forces Day on 20/6/15*

**Cowes Good Companions Club £450** - *towards the cost of Cowes Active Networks Club.*

**Panto Players £250** - *towards the cost of a stage.*

## **NEED TO KNOW?**

### ***Noisy neighbours***

It's always best to talk to your neighbours. One in three people have found that this has solved the problem immediately. Often, people don't realise they are being annoying. It's better to catch them in a public area and talking to them there, or over the garden fence, instead of awkwardly knocking on their door. You need to tell them how you would like the problem solved. If unsuccessful, you might consider getting the local authority involved but be aware that this will raise tensions and the dispute might get out of proportion because your neighbours could ultimately end up in court. Also be aware that any official noisy neighbour complaints will go on record and may make it harder for you to sell your house. The council will send your neighbour a letter telling them that people have complained but not say who has complained. They'll ask you to fill out a "noise diary" which logs the time and place you heard the noise and from where it came from. Most importantly, the council wants to see how the noise is affecting you. They might install noise monitoring equipment and if the noise does not stop after they have warned your neighbours, then the council might suggest mediation. If the council agrees that the noise is a "statutory nuisance" they can issue an "abatement notice" which tells your neighbour that unless they stop they will be prosecuted and might end up with a fine of £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for industrial or commercial premises.

### ***Over Hanging Branches***

If branches from your garden overhang your neighbours' land you are trespassing on their air space. Your neighbours can cut back the branches to the boundary but they have to return the lopped branches to you along with any fruit that might have been on them. If they lop beyond their boundary then it is a trespass. However, it's always best that neighbours first discuss the issue but there is no need to obtain any permission to lop overhanging branches so long as they are returned.

### ***High Hedges***

The Isle of Wight Council has, by a Government Bill, the power to control evergreen or semi-evergreen hedge heights. A residential occupier can complain to his Local Authority, if a hedge is of this type, and it's over 2m (6'–6"), in height and considered as "unreasonably restricting" light to the property. The Local Authority can issue a "remedial notice" on the owner to reduce its height. Failure to take action can result in a fine of up to £1000 and daily fines for so long as the failure continues. Do not hold your breath! How strapped for cash are our Local Authority?

## SPRING NEWS FROM COWES HARBOUR OFFICES

2015 promises to be another exciting year for Cowes Harbour Commission (CHC), not only is there a superb range of events to look forward to with highlights including the Royal Yacht Squadron's Bicentenary celebrations, but this will be a landmark year too for the new Cowes Breakwater with the final stages of works commencing in June and construction completed by October.



CHC's contractors Boskalis Westminster will firstly re-dress and reshape the Breakwater gravel core before placing the rock armour protection. Finally, permanent navigation aids, fixed beacons and buoys will then be placed on the Breakwater before a monitoring and handover period this autumn.

The result will be a 350 metre long, detached rock armoured Breakwater that transforms Cowes into a true sheltered harbour, thereby protecting existing homes, jobs, and businesses and creating a catalyst for further investment.

Whilst there are some encouraging signs of an upturn in the UK economy, CHC is still mindful that the local economy remains fragile and therefore we recognise the importance of working to maintain and increase the numbers of yachtsmen and visitors coming to Cowes, including taking advantage of the breakwater's protection to extend the events season. Protecting marine employment sites is also an issue high on the Commission's agenda.

Over the winter the Harbour Commission carried out a far-reaching review of CHC's current Strategic Framework document, objectives and policies and consulted widely with stakeholders asking, "What do we want Cowes Harbour to look like in 2020?"

We are now in the final stages of developing a new CHC strategy to cover the period 2015 to 2020; this will be promoted at the next CHC Annual Public Meeting on 21st May at the Island Sailing Club. I do hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend.



Stuart McIntosh  
Harbour Master / Chief Executive

## TOWN COUNCILLORS ELECTED TO COWES TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES & OTHER OUTSIDE BODIES

Cowes Town Council, under its Quality Town Council status, has to publish details quarterly of current councillors and as to those offices held; these are as set out below:

Geoff Bank (Town Mayor)	Cowes West	Tel 295425	<b>All Council Committees + HPF1D1 +WW1 All Council Committees + HPF1D1, WW1, IWSCAG (Deputy), IWBSB.WIBSG FC, PC, TIC, NRG, AC, CDTA, IWSCAG, TW FC, AC, CHCAG, SDC. PC, IWALCEC, (Deputy). FC, NRG, AC, SCCWL (Deputy), SDC NRG, IWALCEC</b>
David Jones (Deputy Town Mayor)	Cowes Medina	298445	
Linda Brown	Cowes South	295222	
John Corby	Cowes North	07798753962	
Veronica Cowan	Cowes West	200415	
Stuart Ellis	Cowes Medina	246352	
Paul Fuller*	Cowes North	289595	

Lynn Hammond	Cowes Medina	282308	<b>FC, AC, GNVG (Deputy), TW, SDC.</b>
Jon Matthews	Cowes Medina	247498	<b>GNVG, MATCA. ,WW1</b>
Mark McNeill	Cowes North	07790777101	<b>PC, AC, CBA, CHCAG (Dpty), SCCWL, SDC.</b>
John Nicholson*	Cowes South	619130	<b>PC, TIC, NRG, AC.</b>
Lora Peacey-Wilcox*	Cowes Medina	247177	<b>FC, TIC.,</b>
Bob Robinson	Cowes West	294234	<b>PC, TIC, CDTA (Deputy). WIBSG.</b>
Jacqui Spalding	Cowes South	291877	<b>WW1, TIC, CBA (Deputy) 29</b>
Joe Oliver	Cowes North	291179**	
Wendy Wardrop	Cowes North	298687	<b>PC, AC.</b>

\* Also Isle of Wight Councillors

\*\* To be appointed to committees and outside bodies as at the Annual Town Meeting

### **CONTACTING YOUR WARD TOWN COUNCILLOR**

*Any written communications to councillors to be sent via the Cowes Town Council offices and any email communications to councillors to be copy emailed to Cowes Town Council offices please for record purposes.*

*Email addresses of councillors can be found on the Town Council website, [www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk](http://www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk).*

Against the listing of Councillors above, there are notations indicating on which committees those councillors sit on as well as those outside bodies where they have Town Council has representation.

*The legend being:*

FC– Finance Committee. PC– Planning Committee. TIC – Town Improvements Committee. NRG – Northwood Recreation Ground Committee. AC- Acquisitions Committee. CBA - Cowes Business Association. CDTA - Cowes Deauville Twinning Association. CHCAG - Cowes Harbour Commission Advisory Group. GNVG - Good Neighbour Volunteer Group. CPALG - Cowes Police Local Action Group. HPF1D1 - Highways P.F.1. District One. IWSCAG - Island Waste Services Community Advisory Group. IWALCEC - Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils' Executive Committee. MATCA - Member Auditor- Town Council Accounts. SCCWL - Shoreside Committee Cowes Week Ltd. TW- Tree Wardens. WIBSG - Wight in Bloom Steering Group. WW1 – World War 1 Centenary Commemoration Working Group. SDC – Staffing & Development Committee.

### **MEETINGS**

Our next full council meeting is at 7pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April which the *Annual Town Meeting* followed by the 21st May being the *Annual Council Meeting* at which the new mayor and deputy will be elected.

Meetings are in the Drawing Room at Northwood House. All are most welcome to attend.

The Notice of these Meetings and Agendas are posted on the notice board outside of W H Hurst and can be viewed in the Cowes Public Library and are available on the Council's website as given below.

**Office & Communications** –Ms. D. Faulkner, Town Clerk, Cowes Town Council,  
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Tel. 209022, email [town.clerk@cowestowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:town.clerk@cowestowncouncil.org.uk)

Opening hours generally Mon. – Fri 9.30 to 12.00 (except Bank Holidays). Why not visit our website at [www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk](http://www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk) for updated news, minutes of meetings and an introduction to your Town Council.