



Spring Edition 2016 from Councillor David Jones – Cowes Town Mayor



On March 14th in order to celebrate Commonwealth Day I was pleased to raise this flag on the Town Council flagpole in Franki Place. I was ably assisted by the Town Clerks; Debbie and Sue.

At the Annual Town Council meeting on 10th May I was honoured to accept the nomination as the Mayor of Cowes for a second term. It is a great honour to be Mayor of this wonderful town. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Mayor Cllr Mark McNeill and the other Councillors for their support

and contribution to Council business during the past year. Town and Parish Councillors are all volunteers giving their time freely.

I would also like to thank the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk; Debbie & Sue. Always helpful and friendly, they are central to the smooth running of your local Council. As the Town Council takes on more services which the unitary authority has devolved to Town and Parishes the Clerk's workload has increased.

Since the last newsletter your Town Council has met in March and April and most recently on May 10th. It would be nice to welcome more members of the public at our meetings, so please come along; there is always a chance to ask a question. The dates of our all our meetings including, sub-committees, can be found on our website or from the Clerks, whose contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

At the March meeting the resignation of Councillor Bob Robinson was announced. Bob was a valued member of the Town Council and I thank him and wish him and his wife Pat all the best. His replacement Cllr. David Doyle was co-opted and welcomed to his first meeting in May.

At the same meeting it was agreed to mount a Deauville Twinning Association plaque on the Bandstand wall, the Town Council is in discussion with the Twinning Association regarding the format, wording and siting of the plaque. Permission has also been given to mount a plaque commemorating the role played by the Merchant Navy during World War II, a third plaque shortly to be mounted is at the request of the Royal Yacht Squadron.



Faced with something of an ultimatum from the Unitary Authority that unless Town & Parish Councils pay the cost of cleaning and upkeep of public toilets they would close on 1st April 2016. Cowes Town Council agreed to take over day to day maintenance and cleaning of the four toilet blocks in the town. We have instructed the local company (All Round Cleaners) who were awarded the cleaning contract, to give all the toilets an extra clean during Cowes Week. In addition to the town toilets the Town Council has agreed to clean the toilets in Northwood Park and we will continue to manage the toilets at Northwood Recreation Ground. As part of Cowes Town Council's commitment to keeping the public toilets open Tenancy of Wills were signed, this will allow discussions to take place this year over the long term future of the town's four toilets. The toilets at Mornington Green (pictured) and Northwood Park will be closed in the winter, the others stay open all year round.

Councillors continue to have concerns regarding both the safety and legality of the pedestrian crossing opposite the Duke of York in Mill Hill Rd. The Town Clerk has been asked to write again regarding the legality of these lights. Given the current economic climate and the fact that to date no fatalities have occurred there is little chance that anything will change.

During the April meeting the following actions were resolved. In response to concerns voiced by many local residents about the amount of dog poo fouling our pavements it was agreed that Cowes Town Council buys into the Environment Officer Service for the year commencing 1st April 2016 for 5 hours a week at a total cost of £2,600. As part of this agreement a weekly report will be available including details of any offenders and/or any fixed penalty notices issued.

In support of on-shore activities, for this year's Cowes Classic Powerboat Race 2016 a grant of £2,000



was agreed which will go towards the cost of a giant screen strategically placed to bring the excitement of the racing closer to spectators on shore. This is a prestigious event which councillors are happy to support. Events such as this attract visitors which can only be good for the town.

The erection of a shelter on Prince's Esplanade, approximately half way between

Cowes and Gurnard, has been delayed but we hope it will be providing welcome shelter later in the year.

Those of you who have attended the annual Remembrance Service at the War Memorial in Northwood Park might have noted how muddy the area is in November. As the first attempt to remedy this it was decided to drill filtration holes and fill with gravel.

Other decisions taken at the April meeting were to purchase 2,000 maps for local distribution at a cost of £635.00. Councillors supported the installation of a Merchant Navy plaque on the Bandstand at no cost to the council. It was also agreed that the cost of £1,000 for the erection, maintenance and removal of free bunting in the High St was good use of public money. Another extra cost agreed was £60 for an additional dog waste bin in Northwood Recreation Ground plus £4.60 per week for twice weekly emptying.

On May 10th the two statutory meetings, rather confusingly being the Annual Town Meeting and Annual Meeting of Cowes Town Council, were held. Starting at 6.15pm the Annual Town Meeting was an informal event with Councillors and members of the public sitting together to receive a report on the business of the Council and a financial report for the year 2015/16. Also received were annual reports from all four local Isle of Wight Councillors.

The first business of the Annual Meeting of the Council was the election of the Mayor, following which I made my declaration of acceptance of office and chaired the meeting. Cllr Mark McNeill was re-elected as Deputy Mayor. Representatives to outside bodies such as the Community Waste Forum and Cowes Business Association were appointed, followed by the necessary Annual Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Councillors' Code of Conduct and the various policies and procedures which govern the running of the Council. Members of the three sub-committees were appointed during the meeting.

From the Projects sub-committee held on April 19th the following actions, information and resolutions were received: Further Town Maps have been ordered; they should be ready for distribution in June. The arm of the crane outside the Harbour Office on Town Quay has finally been freed allowing it to be swung over the land for painting which should take place this month.

Defibrillators were again on the agenda, the importance of posters at strategic points in the town was discussed and it was agreed to purchase 50 posters from the NHS Trust. Further it was agreed that before any further units are purchased, all existing locations of defibrillators are marked onto a map of Cowes and the NHS Trust are asked about the best location for future units. This continues to be an important Council initiative and I would urge people to note the location of these potentially life-saving devices.

The iconic Benzie's clock has caused a good deal of discussion in the past and continues to be a regular Project committee agenda item. There is a desire among Councillors to see it working again. To this end talks have taken place with the owners about its future. The company that repaired the town clock has quoted to convert the clock from mechanical to mains electricity. We are hopeful that this highly visible High Street feature will shortly be restored and fully working. This photo was taken at 2.00pm, the other side read 10.50am.



You might have noticed on Shooters Hill that the town clock is now working with both faces telling the same time thanks to a decision to replace the old inadequate battery operated mechanism with an electronic one.

Solar powered, rubbish compacting "Big Belly" waste bins were discussed and the Assistant Town Clerk has been charged with finding the result of a trial by Island Roads as well as seeking the experience of other local authorities that have installed them.

The following resolutions from the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee were approved. That a grant of £300 be given to Cowes Short Mat Bowling Club for two second hand replacement mats. It was also agreed that a grant of £400 is given to Cowes Open Bowls Committee towards the cost of Cowes 62nd Open Bowls Tournament 2016. An application from Hampshire Constabulary for a contribution towards the cost of Speedwatch equipment for volunteer use and ancillary safety equipment unfortunately did not meet the criteria / guidelines set for considering grants and therefore could not be approved. The Town Clerk will write to Hampshire Constabulary to request further information to support the application, as detailed in the criteria / guidelines, the grant application can then be reconsidered.

As from September 2016 the Local Authority will no longer be funding a school crossing patrol service on Park Road. This service is used by students at Cowes Primary School and Cowes Enterprise College. Both schools have written to the Town Council expressing concerns. Cowes Primary School have asked Cowes Town Council if they can either consider funding the crossing patrol service for their school or add support to a request for a Pelican crossing. Members of the Finance Committee asked the Town Clerk to ascertain from the IW Council how many areas in Cowes are currently covered by the school crossing patrol service and have they identified alternative solutions to replace the service when it ceases at the end of the summer term. The Town Clerk will also write to Island Roads requesting that the provision of a pelican crossing on Park Road is identified as a high priority safety issue and request that the installation be made as a matter of urgency.



Two unexpected additional costs, not flagged up when Cowes Town Council were faced with keeping the toilets open, were considered. It was resolved that Cowes Town Council enters into a one year contract for the provision of 32 sanitary bins in Cowes for the annual sum of £965.12. It was also agreed that Cowes Town Council enters into a one year, Island wide contract, managed by Ventnor Town Council, for the servicing of the Wallgate hand washing and drying units for the annual sum of £3625.00.

In response to the announced retirement of Mrs Susan Waters, our able Assistant Town Clerk, at the end of September 2016, it was agreed that we advertise for a replacement in the County Press for two weeks - 20 May 2016 & 27 May 2016. Details will also be posted on the Town Council website, noticeboard and Facebook. The closing date is 17th June. I would like to use this space to ask anyone that is interested in this 15 hour employment opportunity to contact our office. Sue is retiring in order to spend more time with her family, she will continue as the Clerk for Gurnard Parish Council. Thank you Sue for your help and contribution to the smooth running of the Town Council; you will be missed.

Her Majesty The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration.

June promises to be a very interesting month in Cowes. On 12th June there is an all day event to celebrate HM The Queen's official 90th birthday. Assembling at Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club at 10.30am, a marching band procession will pass through the High Street arriving at the Parade for the official church service from 11.00am to 11.45am. The focus then moves to Northwood Park where everyone is welcome to a free fun event.



Described as a Lunch Picnic Party, this is an event for the residents of Cowes, East Cowes, Northwood and Gurnard, residents from elsewhere are of course welcome but it has been devised as a free event for all local people, young & old. Bring a picnic, have a cream tea or sample a BBQ and other food from the stalls, which are all local. Punch & Judy will be there and there will be a Prince & Princess fancy-dress competition.

Cowes Town Council is pleased to be a sponsor of this event together with Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd, The Island Sailing Club, the Royal Yacht Squadron, the Royal London Yacht Club, Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club and the Royal Ocean Racing Club.

The World's Top Annual Solo Sailing Race is coming to Cowes.

Over the weekend 22nd to 25th June, the weekend before the annual Round the Island Race, Cowes will host the UK leg of *la Solitaire Bompard le Figaro* solo yacht race. Cowes is extremely fortunate to have attracted this race to Cowes. The investment by Cowes Town Council of £10,000 to support the onshore activities was a major factor in Cowes being chosen.

Cowes Yacht Haven will be the centre for onshore events plus a chance to see the boats and sailors (many who are British) up close.

Events will include family entertainment, a Victorian funfair, live music, food & drink outlets and other stalls. There will be an opportunity to try sailing and an Air Display is planned. This is a one off event, free and open to all; so please come along and enjoy the unique atmosphere of a race village.



The 74th Anniversary of the Defence of Cowes by the Cowes built Polish Destroyer ORP Blyskawica.

The celebration of the 74th Anniversary of the events of 4th/5th May 1942 took place on the



Bandstand on 1st May. These pictures capture a noticeable feature of this year's event; the participation of young people. Pictured centre of the back row is President of the Friends of the ORP Blyskawica Society, Michael Aiken, MBE, flanked by Polish guests wearing uniforms including original World War II uniforms. Front row are two young guests from a Polish school in Southampton, Major Otton Hulacki, (seated) Vice President who, in 1997, was co-founder of the society together with Geoff Banks, standing right who organised the event.

Over 200 people gathered to attend this public open air event. Besides members of the public, those attending from overseas included senior officers from ORP Blyskawica in Gdynia, Poland, where she presently lays as a floating museum ship. Also in attendance from Canada was the son of one of ORP Blyskawica's crew members who had served on her during the blitz. A large number attending were of Polish descendency or Polish nationality. Among such were children from the Polish language school, Frederick Chopin, in Southampton. Many children attending were in national costume.

A very pleasurable finale was the display by children of ten prize winning paintings (pictured right) which depicted the ORP Blyskawica's defence of Cowes. This had been a competition organised by SOS Polonia in Southampton, for which they had received 144 entrants from around the UK.



Next year promises to be a special event, being the 75th anniversary of the defence of Cowes. A three day event is planned and I am pleased, together with Cllr Paul Fuller, to be Cowes Town Council's representatives on the Steering Committee. It was great to hear Captain, Gustaw Michalec PhD., representing the Polish Navy, indicate that a Polish naval ship will be in attendance at the 75th anniversary, fingers crossed there might also be a Royal Navy ship moored off of Cowes for the event.

Blessing of Sailing Season- Sunday 1st May 2016.

Following the celebration of the 74th Anniversary of the defence of Cowes I was very pleased to represent the town at a very pleasant outside service by the entrance to Trinity Landing on the Parade. This is a new idea where the town, the lifeboat and sailing craft were blessed. This has been introduced by Rev. Andrew Poppe; hopefully it will become a regular annual event.

A new pond at Lanesend Primary School.

One of the perks of being Mayor of Cowes is receiving invitations to local events. One of the nicest was cutting the ribbon to officially open a large, newly constructed pond at Lanesend Primary School. This is a brilliant new facility, which is already being used for outdoor learning.



Cowes Town Council was pleased to financially support this project which will benefit generations of children now and in the future. I was particularly pleased to play a small part in this project, being a great fan of ponds as havens for nature.

I understand work has started on a chicken run in the area close to the pond enclosure; another great initiative.

The head teacher Mrs Caroline Sice gave me a guided tour around the school after the event and I have to say I was impressed by the children's obvious desire to learn, and the

teacher's and assistants skill in imparting knowledge, kindness and care for others.

The Cowes Alzheimer Cafe.

Pictured here are the group of volunteers who make the Cowes Alzheimer Cafe such a welcoming and friendly venue. These smiling ladies are, from the left: Liz Swinny, Joyce Potts, Pauline Norton, Sue Jones, Bunt Lee & Marion Butt. I have taken the liberty of copying the information below from the Alzheimer Cafe IOW website.

We opened our first Alzheimer's cafe in Cowes a year ago (July 2014) - we meet on the second Wednesday of each month from 2- 4.30 pm, eleven months of the year (no cafe January) and it's FREE!

We either have a guest speaker or a fun meeting followed by a delicious homemade afternoon tea, a natter and great background music!

Anyone coping with this illness or who has friends or relatives who are will find a warm and supportive welcome - WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU.

The Cowes Alzheimer Cafe is held at The Masonic Lodge, Castle Road, Cowes, PO31 7QY.



Northwood Cemetery: the local cemetery for Cowes and District.



Another joyful event this quarter involving **Lanesend Primary School** was a visit by 40 pupils together with teachers, teaching assistants and parents to the Cemetery on a rather cool, overcast April afternoon. As part of the **Heritage Lottery Fund** Project the development of a **Natural Burial Ground**, with a gazebo for shelter, has meant that the far left hand side of the Northwood Cemetery has been transformed. It was to this area that the children were invited so that they could help enhance a natural

environment by planting native species bulbs and plants. The area which at present looks rather bare will naturally evolve, aided by sensitive planting.

The gazebo (picture above) is a fine structure offering shelter for those attending natural burials or just a quiet spot to sit and reflect - surrounded by nature. It was so nice that schoolchildren should be the first to make use of the shelter. It is a great opportunity for outdoor learning into which the children entered with great excitement; learning can be fun!

With great enthusiasm the children set to work on the task that they were there to do. Directed by Paul White (picture with the children right) and his team from **Groundsells Contracting** planting got underway. Here a word of thanks is due to Paul. Groundsells were the company chosen for the development of the Natural Burial Ground; not only have they done a first class job but they voluntarily have added to the Project. The provision of bulbs, preparation of somewhat heavy soil and direction of keen young people is just one example of their contribution.



Elsewhere in the Cemetery visitors will notice work is well underway on the underpinning and restoration of the twin Chapels. Pictured below are the **Friends of Northwood Cemetery** Chairman, Jon Matthews and Jill Banks,



Director of **G J Banks (IW) Ltd**, the company awarded the contract for restoring the two Chapels and the Grade 2 Listed wall of the Cemetery. It is already clear that working with a local firm makes life easier; cooperation is the name of the game.

Visitors, especially in cars might find the work on the two chapels restrictive; access through the main drive is still possible with limited parking on the top roundabout. Work will take approximately a year by which time much of the lottery funded project will be complete. Grateful thanks are due to the **Heritage Lottery Fund** without whose financial help this would not have been possible.

COUNCILLORS ELECTED TO COWES TOWN COUNCIL and COMMITTEES

David Jones	(Town Mayor)	Cowes Medina	298445
Mark McNeill	(Deputy Town Mayor)	Cowes North	0779 0777101
Geoff Banks		Cowes West	295425
Jean Bartrum		Cowes Medina	717210
Linda Brown		Cowes South	295222
John Corby		Cowes North	07798753962
Veronica Cowan		Cowes West	200415
David Doyle		Cowes West	07974108467
Stuart Ellis		Cowes Medina	246352
Paul Fuller*		Cowes North	289595
Lynn Hammond		Cowes Medina	282308
John Nicholson*		Cowes South	619130
Lora Peacey-Wilcox*		Cowes Medina	247177
Vanessa Slade		Cowes North	297791
Jacqui Spalding		Cowes South	291877
Wendy Wardrop		Cowes North	298687

*** Also Isle of Wight Councillors**

Sub-committee members:

Planning and Licensing: Councillors Banks, Brown, Doyle, Nicholson, Slade & Wardrop.

Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing: Councillors Banks, Bartrum, Brown, Corby, Cowan & Ellis.

Projects: Councillors Banks, Bartrum, Doyle, Nicholson & Spalding.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are members of all sub-committees.

Details of when these committees meet are on the Town Council website and are posted on the notice board at least a week prior to the meeting.

CONTACTING YOUR WARD TOWN COUNCILLOR

Any written communications to Councillors should be sent via the Cowes Town Council offices and any email communications to Councillors should 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.

MEETINGS

Our next full council meetings are at 7pm on Thursday 2nd June & Thursday 21st July. Meetings are in the Library 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 Hurst's shop, they can be viewed in the Cowes Public Library and are available on the Town Council's website as given below.

Office & Communications –Ms Debbie Faulkner, Town Clerk, Cowes Town Council, Northwood House, Ward Avenue, Cowes PO31 8AZ. Tel. 209022, email 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 for updated news, minutes of meetings and an introduction to your Town Council.