



quarterly  
newsletter

# Christmas 2023

## Cowes Mayor's Summary

### Great Wight Bite

Being Mayor has been a busy time for my grandchildren who accompany and help me (cutting the ribbon) at events where I have the honour of opening, and the Great Wight Bite, on that scorching September Saturday, was one.

If you missed the event, you missed a treat. It was a phenomenal success for the organisers, stall holders and visitors alike. Well organised and featuring many local businesses, it was also supported by others who go wherever the organisers are exhibiting, giving a real cosmopolitan array of food and drink.



The event was notable for its cheery atmosphere, and no one was forgotten; there was even a tent hosting fun cookery classes for children with the affable Hugh Fernly-Whittingstall. I went round speaking to all stall holders and feedback was tremendous. The organisers tell me that they are so taken with Cowes, our businesses and people, that they will certainly be building on this year's success.

### Maryland

Not many people know the significance that Cowes holds for the people of Maryland, USA, but, on 22 November 1633, it was the departure point for the Ark and the Dove on the founding voyage to what was to become known as Maryland. We fly the Maryland flag (*pictured right*) on the anniversary of the ships setting sail from Cowes.



In July, we met with a cordial contingent from Chesapeake Yacht Club, Maryland, visiting Cowes, accompanied by members of the Royal Lympington Yacht Club. In Maryland, their heritage is widely celebrated to the extent that they have numerous societies and a recreation of the Dove for people to visit. Cowes Town Council is commissioning a storyboard plaque to be sited on the Parade on the history of the Ark and the Dove.

### Healthier & Safer Streets Audit

Working with the IW Council, Island Roads' parent company, Hampshire Constabulary, Public Health and supported by Southampton University, we are planning to undertake an audit of the streets in the Cowes area, using the Link and Place model. Link defines the connectivity value, and Place the environmental setting. The reason for doing this is to see what changes can be made to improve health, make our environment safer, enhance connectivity and improve people's wellbeing. There is a science associated with this, called Neuroaesthetics, where layout and design influences how people engage with the built environment.

## View From Cowes Harbour

Firstly, thank you to our Town Mayor Councillor John Nicholson for inviting Cowes Harbour Commission (CHC) to contribute to the town newsletter. I'd like to take this opportunity to bring you up to speed on some of the work we have been undertaking in addition to our statutory harbour authority duties which has benefited the town.

One of our key focuses this year has been to work more closely with retailers and other businesses on the High Street and further afield in Cowes. Earlier this year, we launched a new website for Cowes Harbour and alongside that a brand-new web app which includes a Town Directory. The app ([app.cowes.co.uk](http://app.cowes.co.uk)) lists all the businesses in and around Cowes, so it is a great way to find a local business, pub or restaurant, whether you are a local resident or a visitor to the town.

Looking to the future, CHC aspires to bring 30 cruise ships per year to Cowes. This year, 11 cruise ships called, bringing almost 3,000 passengers ashore and we're working to ensure they're given time to spend in Cowes, enjoying everything the town has to offer. CHC has made investments too, in training and providing local young people with the opportunity to experience what a career in the marine sector might look like. Working in partnership with Isle of Wight College, we appointed our first apprentice on a workboat apprenticeship scheme and through our partnership with Cowes Enterprise College, we funded a group of their students to head out on the sail Training Ship *Prolific* with the Ocean Youth Trust South, where they enjoyed a week-long voyage around the Solent, learning a multitude of new skills.

Finally, as part of our commitment to support our local community, CHC has, this year, sponsored two of the town's Christmas trees. All that is left for me to do now is to wish everyone in our community a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous 2024.

Phil Hagen, Chair, Cowes Harbour Commission.



## A Take from Cowes Traders

Cowes High Street is vibrant and bustling, serving visitors, residents and the community. Just under half a mile long, it has independent shops, galleries, bakeries, eateries, chandleries and a variety of other traders lining the High Street. It has become a destination that attracts people from across the Island, as well as visitors from the mainland and abroad.

Cowes is a significant gateway to the rest of the Island, with visitors arriving by ferry or by private boat, and the marinas of Cowes Yacht Haven and Shepards Wharf offer easy access to the High Street. "Millions of people travel through Cowes Harbour every year," says Gary Hall, CEO Cowes Harbour Commission. "With a variety of welcoming marinas and water-sport activities as well as the vibrant High Street, there is something for everyone. As a Harbour Commission we are proud to work with the many local businesses on and off the water to ensure Cowes is a destination of choice."

Cowes was built around the marine industry, in time becoming a world-renowned boat-building centre. Cowes has been home for international yacht racing since the founding of the Royal Yacht Squadron in 1815. The town gives its name to the world's oldest annual regatta, Cowes Week. 2026 will see Cowes Week celebrate its 200th anniversary.





However, it is not just about Cowes Week. The Solent racing scene runs from April to October with many first-class, national and international regattas hosted by the Cowes yacht clubs. In addition to the sailing scene, Cowes is also home to an increasing number of events, such as, the Isle of Wight Literary Festival, Cowes Fringe and the new food festival, the Great Wight Bite.

“The success of Cowes High Street is built on its diversity,” says Emma Davies, Chair of the Cowes Traders. “If you come to Cowes you are spoilt for choice in places to eat and shop, as well as providing the services a local community needs.

Community support is a key touchstone for the Cowes Traders. We are very fortunate with the number of visitors that pass through our town and we strive to serve our community not just by providing a great High Street experience but by supporting good causes, activities for children and adults, and keeping the High Street safe, clean and attractive,” asserts Emma.

An example in supporting local good causes, Pocketful of Pebbles supports the Island Christmas Toy Appeal, as a drop off point, offering a 20% discount and donating toys. **We are organising another Spot The Window Competition for children that will run the whole of December with some great prizes on offer.**

On 16th November and 7th December the High Street was open for late night Christmas shopping, offering discounts, festive treats and entertainment. This year Cowes Harbour Commission has generously funded the installation of two Christmas trees – one outside Rosalie’s and the other in The Cut; with the Town Council funded Christmas lights we will ensure the High Street has a festive feel.



The Cowes Traders group was formed in April and has over 70 businesses that rely on the High Street for their business. Cowes Traders are working with the Town Council across many different areas, as well as with the Harbour Commission and other organisations with a focus on increasing footfall, improving community and the environment.

“Cowes is a desirable location for both existing Islanders and those new to the Isle of Wight,” says Emma Bradley, Director of Spence Willard. “By the water, the High Street is seen as a true asset by prospective purchasers; offering all they need right on their doorstep.”

Cowes is a seasonal destination with visitor numbers peaking in July and August as the tourists flock to the Island. Rachel Appleby, Owner, Roly’s Fudge says: "This is our second year in Cowes, and we love how busy and vibrant it is during the summer. The visitors create a real buzz in the town and flock to our windows to watch us make fudge!"

As a testament to Cowes High Street success, every viable premises is occupied. “We were searching for the right spot on the High Street but empty shops rarely become available,” commented

Bekah Terrell, owner of SALT, a shop that opened this summer. “So when this opportunity arose we grabbed it. SALT will bring a new flavour to the scene with some amazing lifestyle brands and a delicious take out menu.”

If you’re planning a visit to Cowes, find out more here <https://www.cowes.co.uk>

Late Night Christmas shopping <https://www.cowes.co.uk/news/late-night-christmas-shopping-in-cowes/>

(Photo courtesy of Michael Paler)



## USEFUL NUMBERS

Name	Cowes Town Council Councillors - Tel No./ Mobile/ Email	Ward
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Linda Brown	01983 295222; 07443 335107; <a href="mailto:lindylou47@gmail.com">lindylou47@gmail.com</a>	West
Alison Carter	07714 721885; <a href="mailto:alisoncarter474@gmail.com">alisoncarter474@gmail.com</a>	West
Stuart Dodwell	07749 254076; <a href="mailto:gsi-co@hotmail.co.uk">gsi-co@hotmail.co.uk</a>	Medina
Stuart Ellis <b>(Deputy Town Mayor)</b>	01983 246352; 07721 606934; <a href="mailto:bigstu2006@hotmail.co.uk">bigstu2006@hotmail.co.uk</a>	Medina
Paul A Fuller <b>(Town &amp; IW Councillor)</b>	01983 289595; 07935 090835; <a href="mailto:paulfulleriw@gmail.com">paulfulleriw@gmail.com</a>	North
Richard E Hollis	01983 200986; 07375 221971; <a href="mailto:richardehollis@yahoo.co.uk">richardehollis@yahoo.co.uk</a>	North
John U A Nicholson <b>(Town Mayor &amp; IW Councillor)</b>	07918 757843; <a href="mailto:cllr.john.nicholson@outlook.com">cllr.john.nicholson@outlook.com</a>	South
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Wendy Wardrop	01983 298687	North
Vacancy		Medina
Vacancy		North
Richard Quigley <b>(IW Councillor only)</b>	07966 076064; <a href="mailto:richard.quigley@iow.gov.uk">richard.quigley@iow.gov.uk</a>	Cowes North

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**Deputy Town Clerk:** Mrs Kate Scragg, Town Council Office, Northwood House, Ward Avenue, Cowes PO31 8AZ  
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**Cowes Town Council Emergency Out Of Hours Number:** 07502 444883

**Website:** <https://www.cowestowncouncil.org.uk/>

Useful Numbers	Tel. Number	Useful Numbers	Tel. Number
St Mary's Hospital	01983 822099	Isle of Wight Council	01983 821000
Cowes Medical Centre	01983 295251	Member of Parliament (Bob Seely)	01983 220220
Emergency Services (all)	999	Age UK (IW) (Advice on benefits/ grants and handyman service)	01983 525282
Police (non-emergency)	101	Citizens Advice Bureau	0344 411 1444
Medical Advice (non-emergency)	111	Cowes Library	01983 293341
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111	<b>Schools:</b>	
Environment Agency	0800 807 060	Cowes Primary School	01983 293261
Floodline	0345 988 118	Lanesend Primary School	01983 293233
Gas Leaks	0800 111 999	Gurnard Primary School	01983 295713
Electricity Emergency	0800 072 7282	Northwood Primary School	01983 293392
Southern Water	0330 303 0368	Cowes Enterprise College	01983 203103
Island Roads (24hrs.)	01983 822440	Rail Enquiries	03457 484950
Homestart - Support for families with young children	01983 533357	Foodbank	01983 292040
IW Fire Service - Free home fire safety check <a href="mailto:fire.communitysafety@iow.gov.uk">fire.communitysafety@iow.gov.uk</a>	01983 407075	Red Funnel Ferries	02380 019192
Jigsaw Family Support – support for those affected by family separation <a href="http://www.jigsawfamilysupport.com">www.jigsawfamilysupport.com</a>	01983 639 793	Samaritans Isle of Wight	01983 521234
Pension Service (Pension Credit entitlement check)	0800 99 1234	Social Services (Adult)	01983 814980
The Footprint Trust	01983 822282	Social Services (Children)	0300 300 0117
		Storeroom (Furniture project)	01983 298679

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