



Isle of Wight Councillors Report: June 2026.

# Paul Fuller

**Independent Isle of Wight Councillor  
for Cowes West and Gurnard.**

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## Surgeries.

4:30-5pm, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June: Cowes Library, Beckford Road, Cowes  
5:30-6pm, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, Isle of Wight Community Club, Park Road, Cowes.  
10:30-11am, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June, Gurnard Press Bistro, Worsley Road, Gurnard.  
5:30-6pm, Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June, The Portland, Worsley Road, Gurnard.  
11:30-12:15pm, Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June, The Phoenix Café, Gurnard Pines, Gurnard.  
5:30-6pm, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, The Portland, Worsley Road, Gurnard.  
10:30-11:30am, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June, Eegon's Café, High Street, Cowes. (With Cllr. Gordon Adam)

Extra surgeries take place from next month following requests to hold drop-in's at Briary Court and Bucklers View. In addition there are to be some surgeries taking place with Cllr Gordon Adam, Councillor for Cowes South & Northwood.

## Local Elections.



Thank you to everybody who provided me with support, ideas, feedback, suggestions and cake during the election campaign. It is very much appreciated and will be a privilege to continue to serve our community for the next three years! What makes me extra happy is that since 2009 each local election in Cowes West & Gurnard has seen our local turnout increasing most recently from 2021 49.1% to 52.5%. The results were:

PAUL FULLER	(INDEPENDENT)	1,173 votes
SUE WOODHOUSE	(REFORM UK)	275 votes
PHIL SANDERS	(CONSERVATIVE)	106 votes.

A big thank you to both Sue and Phil, for their positive campaigning, and who I look forward to working alongside. Having digested the results, it may prove challenging to see how the new IW Council will work with its 19 Reform, 11 various Independents, 4 Liberal Democrats, 2 Conservative, 2 Green and 1 Labour Councillors.

As set out within my campaign, I've committed to working with all groups, now comprising of 60% new Councillors.

Other Cowes Results were:

**Cowes Medina: L. Peacey Wilcox** (Ind) 499; J. Hall (Ref) 318; D. Jefferies-Revert (Grn) 214, O Biskit (Con) 66, R. Thacker (Ind) 20.

**Cowes North: J. Rafferty** (Lab) 439; R.Hollis (Ind) 364; S.Barney (Con) 223; I. Arnold (Ref) 206.

**Cowes South & Northwood. G.Adam** (Ref) 393; J.Nicholson (Con) 363; M.Gallop (Ind) 292; W.Doidge (Lab) 121; B.Packham (LD) 106.

Individually, I've supported Cllr. Jock Rafferty, new Labour Councillor for Cowes North. I also look forward to working with Cllr Adam (Reform) who defeated outgoing Councillor John Nicholson to become new Councillor for Cowes South and Northwood. .

## Residents Priorities.

Whilst it is always a challenge to knock at every door during election times, I did manage to speak to over 300 residents on the doorstep. The key priorities, which came forward were:

- Anti-social Parking. 27 requests
- Neighbourhood Disputes 21 requests (inc. Bonfires 7; Dogs Barking 5;)
- Roadworks. 17 requests
- Bathing Water Quality: 16 requests
- Road Resurfacing & Repairs: 16 requests (inc. Worsley Rd. 9, Crossfield Avenue 4)
- Speeding Traffic 15 requests
- Ferries. 14
- Gurnard's SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space 11
- Dog Mess 11
- Need for Councillors to stop bickering and work alongside each other 10
- Play Areas 8
- Floating Bridge Replacement 8
- Beach Hut Issues 8



These requests and priorities will be presented to meetings of Gurnard Parish Council and Cowes Town Council, as well as other agencies to take up the challenge and show support over concerns raised.

### A load of Rubbish.



During the late Spring Holiday, I received a number of calls concerning overflowing bins on Gurnard Seafront. As is often the case, not all bins are filled - so should one be filled, please use another nearby. Please note that at Gurnard, bins are visited after dark by badgers and foxes who have mastered the art of retrieving rubbish once bins are close to being overfilled.

Failing this, please take your rubbish home with you!

### A load more Rubbish.

Another issue residents frequently raise are the dog bins in Northwood Recreation Ground. Again, once these bins are filled individuals have been witnessed depositing dog poo bags at the bins base. To note dog poo **does not** need to be left in dog bins, as bags can be left in general rubbish bins. For the IW Council (or us as taxpayers!) it is less costly to dispose when less concentrated from general waste.

### Renters Rights Act.

New legislation was introduced for (mostly private) landlords and tenants. Headlines of new changes include:

- Landlords now need a good reason to evict tenants with a Section 8 notice.
- Landlords can only take up to 1 month's rent in advance.
- Landlords must give at least 2 months' notice of a rent increase and must use a Section 13 notice.
- Landlords cannot increase rent with a rent review clause, even if a tenancy agreement says it can.
- Landlords cannot increase rent more than once a year.
- Tenants need to give 2 months notice to end an assured tenancy, unless a shorter notice is agreed in writing.
- Tenants will now have a rolling periodic tenancy, making it easier to leave by giving notice.
- Tenants can ask to keep a pet. Landlords can only say no if they have good reason.

### Grow Gurnard May Day Celebration.

I was proud to be one of over 500 people who attended Grow Gurnard's May Day Celebration held at the former Gurnard School Playing Field site, Old School Meadow.

A huge thank you to the volunteers who worked tirelessly to resurrect the May Day Celebration, which we hope will grow in momentum in future years. Clearly for future events, volunteers are essential, if you wish to join in the fun please contact Grow Gurnard direct at: <https://growgurnard.org/> or let me know and I can pass on details.



### 100 years old, and still free!



This summer see's the anniversary of the opening of Princes and Egypt Esplanade on Cowes/ Gurnard Seafront.

The Esplanade was built following the First World War, providing labour to many of the folk from Cowes after the war when money was tight. My grandad, great grandad and uncles were all labourers involved and why I affection for the road. Having now fought the IW Council who see the road as a potential cash cow for car parking, I remain committed to ensure this road is free for the public to use knowing what my family would have to say, if they were still alive!

### Vandalism/ Graffiti/ Anti-Social Behaviour, Gurnard and Cowes Seafront.

Instances of anti-social behaviour which has taken place both on public and privately owned land (thought to have been undertaken by youngsters) have been reported to the Police.

With respect to this mindless behaviour, including ongoing damage to steps leading to Gurnard's 'Secret Beach', I will be pushing for full compensation from those responsible given distress caused. Please report further instances to the police (copying me in with an incident number, so that I can follow up incidents)

### Gurnard Pines: Roller Rink, now open!

Gurnard Pines' opened its Roller Rink on 25<sup>th</sup> May. Whilst I missed the opportunity to join the event hosted at the Phoenix lido, I do look forward to donning my rollerblades and lycra wear at the next chance offered!

### Bathing Water Quality.

I continue to chase Southern Water concerning further breaches of leaks from outfalls at East Cowes, Cowes and Gurnard. For me, it is important that Southern Water are held to account as for several years bathing water still too often falls below acceptable standards.

With summer upon us we all expect better, particularly given increases to our water bills. I am in the meantime talking to agencies like Surfers Against Sewage to support this cause.



## Flytipping.

I understand that both the IW Council and the police are aware of footage showing neighbours flytipping household waste on private land on Cowes/ Gurnard Seafront. Please note, this was an issue that was prevalent years ago, which led to SGN selling their land nearby on Princes Esplanade.

I am also advised of a kayak that has appeared near Gurnard Sailing Club.

In the meantime following feedback from neighbours, flytipping was removed from the Crossfield Estate. I understand given suitable evidence that the IW Council will prosecute offenders.

## Highway Matters.

I am unsure whether it is just me, but for the last few weeks there seems to be fewer roadworks. This allowed me ten minutes to discuss a number of Highway Concerns with the IW Council's Head of the Contract Management Team, that I continue to have, which is awaiting 'action' from Island Roads. These being:

- **Signage:** Four years on from an original request, I am still awaiting a 'cyclists dismount' sign for when the shared cycle/ footway leaves the path outside The Cabin on the Green in Cowes. Signage also proved an issue for Southern Vectis when introducing their new services between Cowes and Newport. To note new buses (as well as old ones) weigh more than the specified 17 tonnes, as outlined on signs, and as Town Gate Bridge has a 60 tonne capacity the signs were outdated. Rather than removing the defunct signs Island Roads chose to spray paint over the signs!? My final issue with redundant signage is the Brown Tourist Signs still depicting Colemans Farm which closed in October 2015...



Whether there is an issue with appointing a signage facilitator, I am not sure but I suspect these issues are not unique to Cowes! If there is anything that I have missed concerning surplus signage please let me know.

- **Road Closures:** Signage excepted, Island Roads proved really helpful once I raised concerns over a perceived conflict between utility companies and Island Roads closing Rew Street and Cockleton Lane.

Details of Local and Islandwide road works can be found here: <https://one.network/>

- **Parking Permits:** Please ensure that once the Council reminds you to renew your parking permit, you contact the Council as soon as you can to renew. A resident contacted me concerning this, who had missed their reminder, and had to pay extra. Thankfully this matter was resolved swiftly by parking services.
- **Fix my street:** Is often the quickest way to report highways matters, allowing residents to address issues and receive updated feedback direct from Island Roads. Recent examples that I can give where Fix My Street has helped me includes blocked drains, overgrown hedgerows, abandoned vehicles, potholes uneven road surfaces and flytipping. For further information please visit: <https://fms.islandroads.com/>
- **Rural Roads Meeting:** In my capacity as Chair of the IW Local Access Forum, I have arranged for a Rural Roads Meeting to discuss safety concerns for users of rural roads. This takes place at 2pm, Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June at the IW Community Club, Cowes.
- **Speedwatch, Gurnard:** I have received a number of requests to seek volunteers from Gurnard to monitor speeding traffic in the village. This follows concerns over traffic speeds in Church Road. Please let me know if you are interested in both volunteering, and consider there is an issue with vehicle speed in your area.



## Full Council.

Councillors in general supported cross-chamber working with, experienced councillors working alongside new faces for the coming year. From my perspective, I was appointed to serve as Chair of the IWC Planning Committee and am looking forward to providing support to IW Council Colleagues, as well as Town and Parish Councillors.



Within outside agencies, I was reappointed to the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and am awaiting formal reappointment to Southern IFCA (which I hope to Chair) once Full Council reconvenes on the 16<sup>th</sup> July.

During the meeting, I took the decision to oppose the new Isle of Wight Council constitution. The reason for this is due to powers of Town and Parish Councils being diluted. Such powers include removing involvement in Council Committees, which is in my mind is important given the volume of services are expected local councils take on.

## E-Scooters.

The Government has announced that its 'licensed E-scooter pilot' has been extended (again) to Voi until 2028.

Following this extension, I have already raised concerns over a new bay, which has been suggested for outside the entrance to Gurnard Primary School in Baring Road. Because the area is difficult for pedestrians at school drop off/ collection times I have (alongside a number of residents) requested for a rethink at this location.

In the meantime, still on the subject of E-Scooters, should you wish to report any misplaced bikes or scooters, please contact Keert at 01983 898055 or email: [hello@keert.uk](mailto:hello@keert.uk)



## Supporting the Daisy Ring Bus, supporting cancer treatment in Southampton and Portsmouth.

The Daisy Ring Bus CIC is now firmly established as a vital Island lifeline — and what began as a community response has rapidly grown into a major transport operation supporting cancer patients every single day.

Thanks to extraordinary community backing, the service has been running successfully and now carries around **2,000 passengers** every month, ensuring Islanders can access essential hospital treatment with reliability, dignity, and care.



For over 20 years, the Daisy Bus has represented far more than transport. When previous funding came to an end, the community rallied to protect this vital lifeline. The response has been nothing short of remarkable. With early support from Xelabus and continued generosity from the public, Daisy Ring Buses are now fully operational and firmly on the road. Day after day, it supports hundreds of Islanders travelling to Southampton and Portsmouth for treatment — offering reassurance, kindness, and a familiar face at a time when it matters most. For further details please visit: <https://www.daisyringbus.org/>

## A bit of Art, A bit of Fun or a bit of 'how's your father'? Let me know your thoughts!

I've received complaints concerning the Postbox topper located outside the Woodvale, Princes Esplanade, Gurnard. Because of the nudity content, a number of residents have raised their eyebrows concerning this and have requested the couple depicted in this topper should consider 'cover themselves up'

Whilst in the Art World, I imagine that both Botticelli received similar criticism for The Birth of Venus, as did Michelangelo did for David, this I guess is nothing new.. As the jury's out on this, please let me know your thoughts..?



## Hedgehog Corner: Planting for Hedgehogs.

A hedgehog's diet primarily consists of beetles, caterpillars and worms. The best plants for hedgehogs are those that encourage either these ground invertebrates that are at a hedgehog's level, or caterpillars, which often pupate at the surface of the soil. Try to create dense, insect-friendly vegetation, including a mixture of caterpillar food plants and plants that provide habitat for ground invertebrates.

Plant a mixture of native and non-native plants – having both can provide a greater benefit than just one or the other. It's not so critical exactly what the plants are – what's more important is the vegetation architecture and the conditions that creates. As well as creating a good environment for a range of invertebrates, and shelter for the hogs themselves, it's about finding the right plant for the garden – which provides for wildlife, but is also able to thrive and stay healthy in the long term to be able to carry out that role well.

Anything with copious autumn **leaf fall** is great for hedgehogs. Try to create direct connections between areas with **deciduous trees and shrubs**. You want dense but not impenetrable vegetation, using plants that form thick growth low down. A bed with a few of those forms a ground-level jungle for hedgehogs to move through.

Leave space in the border to provide **direct access to soil**, and have a few beds that are nicely mulched with homemade **compost or have leaf litter**. This helps encourages earthworms. Try to include **hedges**, and **short to mid-length grass** to support all kinds of invertebrates; even lawn leatherjackets are a hedgehog food item.



Examples of plants include:

- Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)
- Hardy Geraniums. (*Geranium* sp.)
- Ornamental Grasses including Penisetum or Calamagrostis
- Japanese Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)
- Other Deciduous Trees/ shrubs inc. Crab apple; flowering cherries (small gardens) oak; birch (large gardens).

## Also this month:

- Much of this month has been dealt with recovering from the election, and once elected meeting new Councillors and undertaking mandatory Training. This is key for the Planning and Licensing Committee.
- I have supported a resident in crisis, providing support to a resident wanting to end their life.
- I am on a purge against illegally parked trailers on the highway. Whilst they may take away much needed parking, it remains important for all road users that these are safely parked for all road users.
- In May, the Floating Bridge had its annual service and refit. I am anticipating future discussions with our new Council leaders on whether the crossing will be replaced (the option preferred by then Councillors), or repaired (the option preferred by officers)
- I have approached Cowes Town Council to follow up installation of Resident Only parking in Battery Road.
- I approached a number of parents outside Gurnard School on parking safely. From feedback received, the mums and dads seemed unaware of alternatives. This is a matter I look forward to taking up with the school.
- I continue to reach out to Flood Officers concerning schemes earmarked locally.
- I have been asked to chase up what constitutes permitted development rights for mobile homes.