

Connecting Coves Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

18-May-2026

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jasmine Hayden opened the meeting on Monday 18/05/2026 and welcomed attendees, noting this was her first meeting as Chair of Connecting Coves.

Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations, including representatives from:

- Connecting Coves
- Coves Town Council
- Northwood Parish Council
- Isle of Wight Council
- University of Southampton
- Community organisations and youth groups

Ross Edmonds was thanked for his ongoing work in establishing and supporting the group.

2. Connecting Coves Branding and Logo

The Chair presented several draft logo concepts for Connecting Coves.

Discussion points included:

- Preference for the **bottom middle design**, balancing simplicity and colour.
- Inclusion of recognisable local features such as:
 - Northwood House
 - The Hammerhead Crane
 - The Isle of Wight hovercraft
- Refinements required:
 - Slight increase in colour
 - Stronger, clearer text
 - Accurate depiction of local landmarks

Outcome:

Agreement to refine the preferred design for further development.

Actions:

- Jasmine Hayden to develop the preferred logo concept.
 - Sarah Preston / Cowes Town Council to support branding and communications.
 - Northwood Parish Council to consider how content will appear on its website.
 - Updated designs to be circulated by Jasmine Hayden.
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3. Website and Public Communications

An update was provided on the new Cowes Town Council website.

Key points:

- A dedicated **Connecting Cowes webpage** will be created.
- The page will include:
 - Overview of the group
 - Project summaries
 - Aims and objectives

The importance of improving public awareness and visibility was emphasised.

Actions:

- Connecting Cowes to prepare:
 - Project summaries
 - "About Connecting Cowes" content
 - Sarah Preston to continue coordinating website integration.
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4. Youth Voice & Northwood Recreation Ground

An update was provided on youth engagement work, including plans to revisit Cowes Enterprise College to provide feedback.

A detailed discussion followed regarding **Northwood Recreation Ground**:

Key themes:

- Opportunities for funding bids
- Need for further community engagement
- Use of existing youth consultation data
- Potential pilot projects and events
- Previous interest from local organisations

University Partnership:

- Potential support from the University of Southampton was discussed, including securing assistance for funding bids and research.
- It was noted that engagement should be coordinated through appropriate university channels.

Proposed working group contacts:

- Fiona Middleton
- Nora Reedy
- John Cattle
- Stuart (Cowes Town Council)
- Jasmine Hayden

Actions:

- Jasmine Hayden to:
 - Liaise with Fiona Middleton
 - Clarify available university support
 - Progress discussions on a funding/initiative subgroup
 - Initial discussions to commence on progressing the Northwood Recreation Ground project.
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5. Isle of Wight Planning Policy Update

An update was provided on the **Isle of Wight Planning Strategy (IPS)**.

Key points:

- IPS is expected to go to Full Council in **September** for adoption.
- National planning reforms are changing the local plan-making process.
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are being replaced by **Supplementary Plans**, which require formal examination.

Implications for Connecting Cowes:

- The SPD route for adopting the Place Plan Implementation Strategy is no longer straightforward.
- A pragmatic approach is to:
 - Retain the existing Place Plan
 - Append implementation activity to it

- Alignment with IPS policies remains important for future planning considerations.
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6. General Discussion

Broad discussion covered:

- Place-based governance
- Community engagement
- Funding opportunities
- Ensuring delivery of projects rather than static planning

The group emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum and delivering tangible outcomes.

7. Meeting Close

The meeting concluded with agreement to continue progressing:

- Branding and communications work
- Northwood Recreation Ground initiatives
- Collaboration with university and planning partners