

Election

I must have been the only candidate that did not/ could not campaign, as I was unable to walk any distance or without support and my energy levels too restrictive to allow concentration for any long period of time. Accepting these circumstances, my vote was not bad at all, but there is only one prize.

People on the Island overwhelmingly voted for change. The message, loud and clear, is that they are fed-up with main stream politics. They don’t trust the Tories in government because of how they messed up and now Labour are delivering the opposite of what they say they aspire to. The Lib Dems are too wishy washy, so the only alternative is to go out on a radical limb and support the popularist hope that Mr Farage so eloquently preaches on.

To be fair, most of the new IW Reform candidates only want to make a difference, but that is not how politics works; it is far more complex than that, but we shall see. The main thing is that we have to respect the democratic process and the will of the people in wanting a change. It is disappointing, in that regard, to see some of the old guard try to usurp that in forming a group that had no manifesto or mandate. Let’s hope that fizzles out and democracy prevails.

Health Update

It is funny that I do not really view myself as being ill. People and the hospital tell me I am ill and have been very ill, but I think they must be talking about someone else. It is true that I had a serious infection, and was lucky that it did not kill me. It is true that there were complications due to my kidney failure and being on haemodialysis, but those are temporary states, I still have my mind and purposes, and I am recovering my physical ability more rapidly as time goes on. I am putting in a regular few hours to my work, and am increasingly able to participate at home and in my contributions to Town and Parish Councils.

Council Contributions

I am very pleased at the way Cowes Town Council has developed and the increased potential and understanding of Place that the new Council holds. I wish to pay tribute in recognition of the role and input that Councillors had in this achievement, their contributions big and small, but, nonetheless, significantly important, and I include former Councillors in this work.

Having got the Place Plan established and formally adopted as a principal document at Cowes and a more descriptive name in purpose agreed – Connecting Cowes, we have a document that assesses and records the status of the environment (natural and man-made) that we sit in, and, whilst we can address certain elements directly, the correct thing to do is to set a list of objectives, where we want to get to, and develop a series of policies, strategies and plans on how we aspire to get there – much as any business would do.

But, in doing so, we must recognise that we are not on our own, nor do we have control, or full control of, everything that we handle. We are largely governed by the IW Council, as are all the other Towns and Parishes on the Island. For that Place Plan network to make maximum sense and deliver the strength that a coordinated view of the Island would, it would be beneficial for the IW to have an over-arching Place Plan that aligned with the relevant British Standards (PAS184, ISO37601 & 37101). It then has a base, a hub, from which to link all its policies, strategies and plans in a joined up manner (rather than isolated and potentially self-serving or contradictory). Town and Parishes can then replicate these documents at local level, in a fractal manner, to be reviewed and approved a supplementary documents. Imagine what confidence it would bring if we had a local area economic strategy and prospectus, agreed by local stakeholders and the IW Council as a supplementary document to the IW economic strategy.

This Place Based Fractal Governance framework is not too different to how business works, brings efficiency, focus, direction and a sense of purpose. It has excited Southampton University under their Future Towns initiative, falls in-line with what is expected in the new devolved area (putting us a head of that game) and is seen by senior officers of the IW Council as a logical path that could lead us away from the ruin that we otherwise face. As is often said by those considering this system – why would we not want to do this!