



Isle of Wight Councillors Report: July 2026.

Paul Fuller

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for Cowes West and Gurnard.**

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Surgeries.

4:30-5pm, Monday 6th July: Cowes Library, Beckford Road, Cowes.

5:30-6pm, Monday 6th July: Isle of Wight Community Club, Park Road, Cowes.

7-7:30pm, Monday 6th July, Horseshoe Inn, Newport Road, Northwood with Cllr Gordon Adam (Cowes South & Northwood)

5:30-6pm, Wednesday 8th July: The Portland, Worsley Road, Gurnard.

10:30-11am, Wednesday 15th July, Benches adj. Watersedge Kiosk, Shore Road, Gurnard.

11-11:30am, Wednesday 15th July, The Woodvale, Princes Esplanade, Gurnard.

11:30-12:15pm, Thursday 16th July: The Phoenix Café, Gurnard Pines, Gurnard.

11:30-12:30pm, Thursday 30th July; Eegon's Café, High Street, Cowes.

In addition to usual surgeries over the summer break, I'm looking forward to holding a satellite surgery at Briary Court, Cowes from this month. I am also speaking to managers to do similar at Bucklers View in Gurnard.

Fire Training Facility, Cockleton Lane Update

Following confirmation that the original proposal had been modified to operate in a self-contained unit, and given assurance from Environmental Health and Planners regarding any impact upon neighbours the call-in was formally withdrawn, following addressing the twenty or so concerns raised by myself and local residents. My thanks to the applicant for negotiating a, greener and updated solution.



Southern Water: Bathing Water Quality.

With the summer now here, I continue to receive calls from residents asking for me to put additional pressure upon Southern Water to improve bathing water quality. As a consequence, following a request from Appley Councillor Michael Lilley, the company's Chief Executive met privately with Isle of Wight Councillors.

There is also a petition calling for the IW Council to have no confidence following discharges. For details, visit: <https://www.change.org/p/isle-of-wight-council-must-declare-no-confidence-in-southern-water?signed=true> This call, which I am supportive of will be discussed by Full Council



Last month, I also contacted Southern Water following complaints over dirty water seen at Woodvale. In response, Southern Water advised that photo's showed 'natural sediment movement'.

Southern Water are sealing 450m of sewer between Deauville Avenue and Tuttons Hill. This work originally was set for late June and then delayed due to the heatwave. Visit: <https://one.network/> for all road work updates.

SANG Update, Meadow View.

Last month, I met developers at the new housing site off Place Road to discuss the new Green Space located between the new development, Hilton Road and Cockleton Lane.

Whilst the developers priorities are to get new homes built and sold, there is scope for more community involvement in accelerating the new SANG open space.

Following residents' support, my priority is working with the IW Council to see pedestrian access opened up and enhanced giving the village its connectivity from Meadow View. It is hoped that with the ongoing support of Grow Gurnard, through to the Parish Council's Public Access Working Party and with the support via our LCWIP that improved access and support is less likely to be an issue.



In the meantime, I understand that discussions to get the open space right are ongoing between planners, Environment/ Heritage Groups, Highways and developers. Because of positive dialogue by all parties, I am confident that agreement can be found.

Gurnard Pines: Roller Rink, now open!

Gurnard Pines' opened its Roller Rink in May. Whilst I missed the opportunity to join the event hosted at the Phoenix lido to don my rollerblades and lycra wear, I look forward to the next opportunity!

Northwood Village Family Fun Day.

Will take place from **12-4pm, Sunday 5th July** at **Venner Avenue Park.**

This year's event is scheduled to have free entertainment, food, activities and local stalls.

Banking Hub with Post Office Services, coming to Cowes.

Cash Access UK's conversion for the former Poundland Store at 6 High Street has been granted consent by Planners. The proposals include a new external ATM for the Town.



Opportunist Burglaries.

The police ask residents to be vigilant by locking sheds and ensure doors to properties are locked. This is requested as unwanted intruders and opportunist burglaries occur during the summer.

Safer Rural Roads.

Within the auspices of the Isle of Wight Local Access Forum, I have set up a small group to look into safety issues on rural roads. The intention is to work with enforcement agencies, residents groups, horses and the IW Council on opportunities to improve road safety.

The Working Party's objectives are to address concerns over highway safety on rural roads within the Island.

- Work with residents groups and individuals with a specific interest in road safety in rural areas. Whilst the perceived speed of traffic was of concern, routing of diversions/ traffic restrictions and highway conditions during inclement weather and highway/ vegetation maintenance were seen as potential issues.
- Local parish/ town/ community councils
- Local Interest Groups/ Individuals to include: cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders, runners.
- Enforcement Agencies including the Hampshire and IW Constabulary and Safer Neighbourhood Team.
- To monitor good practice locally and elsewhere.
- To report back to the IW Local Access Forum who would consider any recommendations.



Action Points raised at the meeting included:

- Requesting an update on the West Wight Green Link?
- Requesting how Local Cycle, Walking Infrastructure Plans could feed into the West Wight Green Link?
- An update from the IW Safer Neighbourhoods Team concerning Rural Roads.
- What lessons had been learnt since the adoption of the Brading Green Lanes scheme?
- Liaison and Membership with rural road 'champions' and groups such as Community Speedwatch, Cyclewright, the IW Bridleway Group, IW Ramblers

Pension Age to Increase...!



The lovely Department of Work and Pensions have confirmed that notification letters are to be sent out advising that the State Pension Age is increasing from 66 to 67.

Letters for those born between 6 April 1960 and 5 March 1961 are to be sent out advising that pension age will start somewhere between 66 and 1 month and 66 and 11 months.

If you are born between 6th March 1961 and 5 April 1977, Pension Age will shift to 67, and if born after 6th April 1977 your retirement age will start at 68.

Police Surgeries.

Beat Surgeries are taking place this month in the following locations:

- 2:30-3:30pm, Thursday 9th July at Sounds and Grounds Café/ Record Shop, Birmingham Road, Cowes.
- 10:30-11:30am, Wednesday 15th July at Marseks, High Street, Cowes.
- 3-4pm, Monday 27th July, Cowes Police Station, High Street, Cowes.



Isle of Wight Guru.

From a couple of years ago, I've borrowed Summer Activity info. etc from the IW Guru, as although unofficial the advice is sound, properly researched and useful to know. Whether you are seeking tips on beaches, summer events, cheap parking or ferry travel visit: <https://www.isleofwightguru.co.uk/>

Barky Dog Appeal.

Please ensure furry friends are kept cool and watered, as each year I receive distress calls from neighbours regarding barky dogs being left at home by 'mums and dads'.

10 Ways to keep Cool during Extreme Hot Weather.

- **Keep windows closed**

It might feel natural to fling open every window when it's hot — but that can make things worse. If it's hotter outside than in, you're just letting warm air in. Keep windows and curtains closed during the day, and only open them when the temperature drops in the evening or early morning.

- **Hot drinks can cool you down.**

It may not seem logical, but drinking something hot actually helps your body cool off — by making you sweat more. As your sweat evaporates, it takes heat with it. This works best in dry air and breezy conditions



- **Should you sleep naked?**

Going to bed in your birthday suit *can* help — if your room is cool and your bedding is breathable. But when it's hot and humid, light cotton pyjamas are often better. They can absorb sweat, allowing it to evaporate and cool you down more efficiently than bare skin under sticky sheets.

- **Freeze your pillow (or your PJs)**

Stick your pillowcase, pyjamas or even a hot water bottle filled with cold water in the freezer 20 minutes before bed. This simple trick offers an instant cooling hit that can help you get to sleep faster — especially during those muggy tropical nights where temperatures don't drop below 20°C.

- **Fan + damp cloth = DIY air conditioning**

No air con? No problem. Place a damp towel or bedsheet in front of a fan. As the air blows through, it creates an evaporative cooling effect — similar to an air conditioner, but far cheaper. Or try a bowl of ice in front of the fan for extra cooling.

- **Eat spicy food**

Believe it or not, spicy food helps you cool down. Capsaicin (the compound in chilli peppers) increases sweating — and when that sweat evaporates, it lowers your body temperature. There's a reason why many hot countries have hot food! But bear in mind this won't work if it's very humid, as your sweat can't evaporate.



- **Dress light and loose**

Stick to light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes made of breathable materials like cotton or linen. Avoid dark colours, which absorb heat, and synthetic fabrics, which trap sweat. Think airy, not clingy.

- **Switch off electronics**

Electronics give off heat — especially chargers, TVs and laptops. Turn off any unnecessary devices and try using LED bulbs, which emit far less heat than traditional ones. It's a small change that makes a big difference in a stuffy room.



- **Cool your pulse points**

Running cold water over your wrists, neck or ankles can help reduce your body temperature slightly. It's not a cure-all, but it's a quick, easy and refreshing way to cool down when you're overheating. A cool shower is more effective.

- **Hydrate hydrate hydrate!**

Drink plenty of water throughout the day, not just when you're thirsty. If you're sweating a lot, consider adding a pinch of salt or sipping a rehydration drink to replace lost electrolytes. But remember to cut back on caffeine and alcohol, as they can dehydrate you.

Isle of Wight Biosphere Festival 27th June- 5th July.

The Isle of Wight Biosphere Festival continues with a packed programme of free Environmental, Heritage and Cultural events this summer. To find out more visit: <https://iwbiosphere.org/festival-programme-2026>

Cowes Week, 200th Anniversary.

With confirmation of a new sponsor, North Sails for the next three years, Cowes Week will launch its 200th anniversary which takes place from 1-7th August. This year will see the return of fireworks on Friday evening. For further details please visit: <https://www.cowesweek.co.uk>



A load of Rubbish.

I continue to receive calls concerning overflowing bins. As is often the case, not all bins are filled with rubbish- so should one be filled, please use another nearby. Please note that at Gurnard, bins are visited after dark by badgers and foxes who all seem to master the art of retrieving rubbish once close to being overfilled.

Failing this, help us, help our environment by taking your rubbish home with you!

Anti-Social Behaviour.

In the last month there has been further incidents of criminal damage occurring locally.

I have been advised that the taps in Northwood Recreation Ground are due to be repaired by Cowes Town Council after these were vandalised. At Gurnard, vandalism also occurred resulting in damage to the toilet following a concrete block being used to keep the door open.

In response, myself and other Parish councillors are looking at footage in the hope that those responsible will foot the bill, rather than local tax payers.

Elsewhere, there has been ongoing incidents of graffiti that has required removal. The police have been asked to monitor the area.

Disposable barbecues.

Please avoid disposable barbecues. In the past these have caused fires when not properly disposed of/ left unsupervised. In my opinion, following the number of bye-laws in place, and having heard several horror stories I believe it is only a question of time before Government will legislate an outright ban.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.

I chaired what might prove to be my last SIFCA meeting. Later this month, I will hear whether the IW Council will reappoint me as its nominated Councillor at Full Council. After this, the Authority holds its AGM in September.

In the meantime, it was reported that following our Fishing Communities Drop-In's across 14 ports in the region, 112 issues were raised and 85 stakeholders were met. As a result a number of outcomes were followed up, this included increasing the size of captured lobsters at the request of fishermen. This was implemented as a quick win to allow more lobsters to breed.

There are early signs that scallop fisheries are improving following tests that took place in April.



Nationally, concerns were raised by the Association of IFCA's following considerable damage being caused by super trawlers to war graves, protected under the Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Following damage to war graves and wrecks which acts as breeding grounds, it seems likely that Marine Conservation Zones are extended

Early this month, I have been asked to attend AIFCA's conference to share local experiences on consultation.

Full Council.



At Full Council Cllr. Jonathan Bacon was elected as Council Leader, as Cllr. Ian Dore was reappointed as Chair. Whilst Ian and Jonathan are both Independent neither are part of any formal 'political group'.

I, on the other hand am part of the Island First Network, which comprises of the largest group of six Independents within the Council. Within our group it is intended for our leader to rotate on a rolling six monthly basis. Whilst Cllr Lora Peacey Wilcox is our current group leader, I am deputy. In addition, I was appointed at Full Council to chair the Planning Committee.

At Full Council, Cllr Bill Nigh (Reform UK) was appointed as Deputy Leader, whilst Cllr Tony Barry (Reform UK) was appointed as Deputy Chair.

Parish/ Town Councillor Vacancies.



Two vacancies have arisen on Northwood Parish Council and Cowes Town Council following Cllrs. Mark Coventry and Stuart Dodwell stepping down. From my perspective both Councillors were brilliant and acted as many volunteers do, above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you both for your enthusiasm and commitment!

To find out more, let Clerks, Katie Riley (clerk@northwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk) or Patrick Jolin know: townclerk@cowestowncouncil.org.uk Whilst vacancies exist at Cowes, a contested election between Mark Reen and Louise Southwell takes place from 7am - 10pm on Thursday 9 July for the Cowes West vacancy.

Joyride Festival, Northwood Park.

Residents approached me concerning the Joyride 'wellness/ cycle' Festival that took place last month at Northwood House. Issues I have been requested to seek clarity on are as follows:

1. Whilst the event was for three days, why was public access to the Park restricted for over a week? Residents from Crossfield Avenue and Park Court raised concerns that pedestrian access home was impaired.
2. Concerns being raised regarding security guards.
3. Why the lack of engagement with local residents and businesses. As volunteers help fund and take care of Northwood Park, is it likely there will be a community gain/ share of profits to the Cowes Community?
4. What steps have been agreed to repair damage caused by this event?
5. Concerns were raised regarding the understanding that some of the land was is common land, therefore are there restrictions in place for a week long takeover?
6. What permissions/ licences were in place to use the park for this specific event, which returns in 2027?



This will be discussed by Cowes Town Council. In the meantime, I'm chasing up a response to concerns raised.

Transport Matters.

- I continue to receive complaints concerning Worsley Road being blocked, with the bus being unable to pass in locations. Particularly outside Gurnard Village Hall and Gurnard Press. Please if you are visiting either of these venues, can I ask that you park close to the pavement?
- A request has been made to again revisit the Access Protection Bar opposite the Premier Shop in Worsley Road. This follows the road being obstructed and residents not being able to get in and out of their road!
- I am still seeking volunteers to join a Speedwatch Group that we are setting up in Gurnard to monitor traffic speed and work with the police to enforce. If you are interested, please let me know.



- Following perseverance from residents a number of 'abandoned vehicles' which include boat trailers have now been removed. Whilst inevitably more appear, with other Councillors we are working to see action taken
- I've been approached to do more to improve pedestrian access on spinal pavements entering Cowes. Please let me know of any local suggestions to see kerbs dropped etc. I can then request additional works to be funded via various contributions.
- With summer here, so remains the thorny issue (pun intended) of overgrown hedges. I've asked Island Roads to contend with hedges in **Tuttons Hill, Place Road and Baring Road**. Please continue to keep me updated!

Councillor Briefing Paper from Friends of the Earth: Environmental Data for Cowes West and Gurnard.

I received the following information from Friends of the Earth. In snapshot form, data raised shows the following:

- 59% of homes are poorly insulated.
- Tree Cover is 19%, against a recommended minimum of 20%
- In 2025 the two sewage outfalls spilled pollution 26 times and for 138.3 hours
- The level of air pollution reaches 9.5 ug/m3 for nitrogen dioxide (The World Health Organisation designation is 10). The level for particulates is 6.4 ug/m3 compared to the WHO target of 5.
- 65% of people are within a 15 minute walk of Green Space. Government targets suggests everyone should be within a 15 minute walk.



For further details, visit: <https://groups.friendsoftheearth.uk/ward-reports/june-2026>

Sunnycott, Caravan Park.

I have been supporting a number of residents to get rehoused following the IW Council ending its contract with Sunnycott Caravan Park to supply temporary housing. Please let me know, should further support be needed.

Jet Ski (Personal Watercraft): Legislation.

Legislation has been introduced to prevent dangerous misuse of watercraft such as jet skis. New Powers mean that:

- Anyone riding a jet ski recklessly or causing harm to others now face up to 2 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine.
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency to be granted more powers to prosecute.
- In addition the Maritime Police Unit also has powers under local the local bye-law.



Hedgehog Corner: Caring for Hedgehogs in a Heatwave.



Most hedgehogs are born in June and July and we've been hearing from our hedgehog champions that hoglets are appearing in back gardens all over Britain.

Young hedgehogs typically spend a few weeks at the nest and then ten days learning to forage with mum. After that, they will wander off on their own to hunt, forage and explore their surroundings.

Although insects like earwigs and beetles thrive in summer and provide a feast for foraging hoglets, slugs and earthworms are in short supply during dry spells. Water sources also dry up and, without access to fresh water, the little hogs have little chance of surviving their first few weeks of life.

Even those with the smallest garden can help keep a hedgehog hydrated! Just place a bowl or saucer of fresh water out every evening to be visited by thirsty hedgehogs. It's also a good idea to put out some wet cat or dog food to compensate for the lack of natural food available.

If you have more space in your garden, why not also build a pond? A pond provides hedgehogs with a year-round water supply and an abundance of insects and amphibians. Hedgehogs also love swimming and a pond makes the perfect summer pool. Just make sure they can come and go as they please by creating a gently sloping edge or ramp.



Also this month.

- I am hoping to provide support from a resident with an absent neighbour, who has allowed their garden to turn into a jungle.
- I am working with officers to attempt to cut back more overhanging vegetation at the former reservoir site in Churchill Road.
- Visits have taken place to support residents impacted by neighbouring planning applications.
- Since being re-elected, I have participated in more than a dozen training sessions. As Chair of the Planning Committee there are plenty more to come, however these sessions are essential to provide support to the many new Councillors being elected.
- I intend supporting the IW Association of Local Councils following the loss of representation since the implementation of the IW Council's new constitution.
- There is no news yet, as to when the Planning Hearing for McDonalds will be heard.
- I attended (by accident) a meeting of the Local Fuel Resilience Forum. Despite the ongoing conflict within the Middle East fuel supply for the Island remains stable.
- I attended the Island Rivers Group meeting, where restoration of the River Medina was discussed. It is intended that by modifying/ removal of weirs on the Medina passage for fisheries upstream will improve. This is important given the River Medina's status as an exceptionally rare chalk stream.
- The Island Planning Strategy continues the next leg of its consultation. This continues until Monday 20th July. For details, visit: <https://www.iow.gov.uk/article/3754/Main-Modifications-Consultation-June-and-July-2026>
- Later this month, I will be updating my IW Council Register of Interest.
- As Chair of the Planning Committee, and in light of changes being imposed by Government I intend to look with more scrutiny at the Call-In Process for Planning Applications. At the moment 99.3% of applications are considered by officers (in the hope that ward Councillors are kept updated). However Government's aim is that 96% of applications are left to officers... To note, in one area the figure is as low as 60%. My intention is to get ensure local ward councillors feel more involved.
- I supporting three separate ongoing neighbourhood dispute. One involves issues relating to privacy, noise nuisance and security lighting. Both the police and environmental health have assisted in support.
- I continue to lobby for my cyclists dismount signage. Reminders keep being sent and fingers crossed.