



IWALC
Serving Town, Parish
and Community Councils
October 2024 Newsletter

Beginning October with a busy Youth Council meeting, we were fortunate to meet Councillor Julie Hutchison. Julie is the County Officer for the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils and a Ventnor Town Councillor. Introducing the members to the role of Town and Parish councillors, she informed us that the parish councillor role is voluntary. Julie explained that she became a councillor to act on the climate crisis, and speak and act on the behalf of Ventnor residents. She told us her role as County Officer consisted of organising, taking minutes, preparing agendas and publishing their newsletter - a way she exemplifies youth voice.

Eager to spread the word about what we do, our monthly column takes the first article in the IWALC Bulletin. She was very kind towards our work, expressing that she notices that many young people are often disillusioned by politics these days. This is an issue because within community representatives, we agreed that we need diversity. She emphasised the importance of diversity as it is important to represent the Island's population and make change. This includes young people! Furthermore, she encouraged young people to become councillors and spoke of the benefits of being part of IWALC.

Presenting us with Ventnor's town manifesto, I thought was incredible! Honing her passion for textiles, it is a patchwork piece that displays the communities' values. A wonderful way to get young people, as well as the whole community, a voice through creativity, she hoped to encourage other parishes to start similar projects.

Afterwards, Barbra Okra delivered a presentation about social media. She taught us about the power of social media and on how to stay safe online. She even gave us an engagement plan, which is immensely useful. Although we are not as active as we could be on social media, we know it is great for accurately understanding young people's views.

Lastly, I gave an update on 'Youth Council On The Road' (YCOTR). YCOTR is an initiative where the Youth Council visits schools and youth groups to hold a mock Youth Council meeting. We are quite close to finalising our plans for the debut event at Sandown High School. If you are a teacher, school or youth group representative, please do not hesitate to email me at

lianne.p.iwyc@gmail.com.

Focus on Youth



Ashley Whittaker

In July 2024 the Isle of Wight Council published [a draft strategy to improve education outcomes for all children](#) on the Island between now and 2030. A key part of this is the need to realign the number of primary school places on the Island with the number of children growing up here. Significant change is needed as the number of children being born here has decreased to such an extent that whilst in 2018 more than 1400 children started primary school on the Island, by 2027 this is forecast to be less than 900. In September the Council's Cabinet agreed to consult on a number of proposals, including to close six primary schools at Arreton, Brading, Cowes, Godshell, Oakfield and Wroxall. The expansion of specialist education places for children with special educational needs and disabilities is also part of this consultation, as the number of children with additional needs, including emotional wellbeing and mental health needs, has increased significantly over recent years. Please help us shape a better future by taking part in the consultation and having your say before Friday November the 1st. Please click [here](#) or collect a paper copy from County Hall, Newport or your local library.





County Officer

Julie Hutchison

I was warmly invited to meet with the Isle of Wight Youth Council on 1st October in County Hall. I introduced the work of IWALC, and about the importance of diversity in our councils. The Youth Council have always had the first spot in the regular IWALC Newsletter. When our councils are diverse, then we can serve our residents equally.

For our forthcoming IWALC Topic meeting on 31st October, we are very pleased to welcome Sally Ash from Trading Standards to deliver a presentation about scams, and Ian Boyd will be speaking about the Government's Local Nature Recovery Strategy. IWALC member councils are welcome to join, please email me to attend.

The next Training session will be on Finance and is being held on 14th November in the evening. Training is open to all IWALC councillors and staff for free, and we welcome non-member councils as well (the cost for training for a non-member council is £75 per delegate). There is a £50 fee for non-attendance and limited capacity. If you wish to join us, please email me.

The Training group met this month to discuss upcoming training. Training for next year will be scheduled monthly to start from June, to account for the forthcoming Council elections held in May 2025, preparing new councillors for their terms. Details will be going out soon.

My contact is countyofficer@iwalc.org

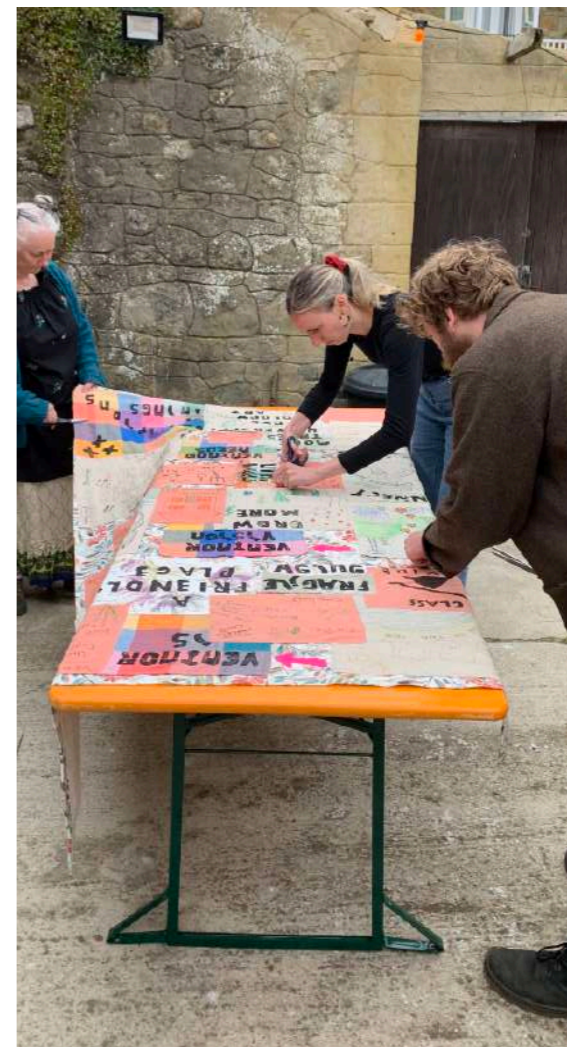
In May of this year, I was asked to lead workshops to create a Community Manifesto in Ventnor as part of the Peoples Palace of Possibility. This was a visioning exercise, to bring our community together to talk about the challenges that lay ahead of all of us in the future, a space for utopian thinking. There is a part of the brain called the Hippocampus that finds it more difficult to use our imaginations when we are stressed. The purpose of the workshops is to create a relaxed environment to listen, talk, ask questions, make friends and think about what the future could look like when we think about it together as a community.

We started by asking us to identify who we are, what makes our community unique, and then to bring forward our ideas for the future, and then to ask the question what do we need to get us there? It was run over 2 x 2 hours sessions, we had speakers coming in and attendees were fed.

I brought the Manifesto to the May IWALC meeting where members were invited to look at it. There was a good deal of enthusiasm for the project. I took it to the Youth Council, who said that they would like to make their own.

Attendees were taught how to print, and fabric pens were used to draw out visions. In some places, poetry was used. Attendees felt positive that their contributions were valued and listened to.

If your council would like for this to be made, please email me to register your interest. I am looking to apply for grant funding to make this happen, but need to know numbers first.



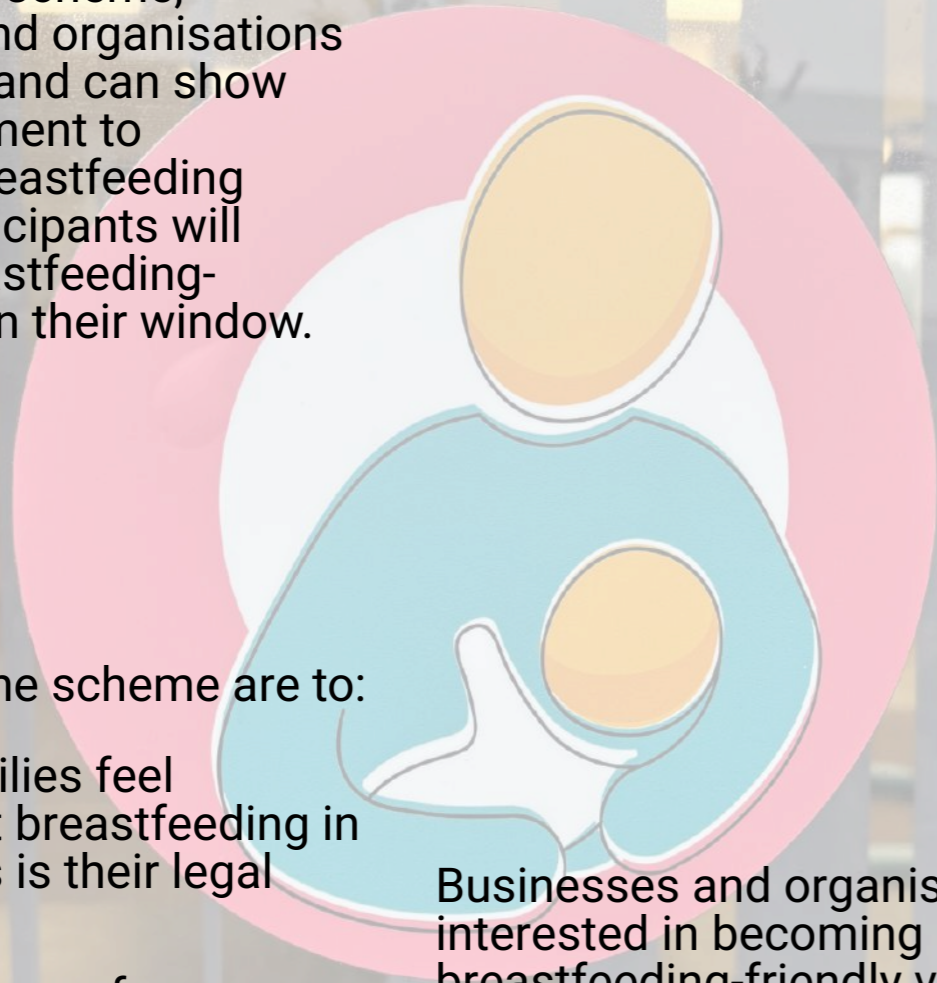
The Isle of Wight Breastfeeding Friendly Scheme has been launched to support breastfeeding families. This initiative aims to support breastfeeding mothers by encouraging businesses, organisations, and venues to create a welcoming environment for breastfeeding.

By joining the scheme, businesses and organisations across the Island can show their commitment to supporting breastfeeding families. Participants will display a breastfeeding-friendly logo in their window.

The aims of the scheme are to:

- Help families feel confident breastfeeding in public, as is their legal right.
- Provide a way for businesses to demonstrate their commitment to welcoming and supporting breastfeeding.
- Highlight the benefits of breastfeeding and the challenges parents may face.

- Emphasise the importance of mental health support during the perinatal period (the period of time from pregnancy up to a year after birth).
- Encourage businesses and organisations to meet their statutory duties regarding breastfeeding employees.



Businesses and organisations interested in becoming breastfeeding-friendly venues can pledge their support and sign up for free. You can sign up even if you do not have any specific facilities. Upon joining, a manager or representative will be contacted for training to help implement the scheme. To register, complete the form available on our [Family Information Hub website](#).



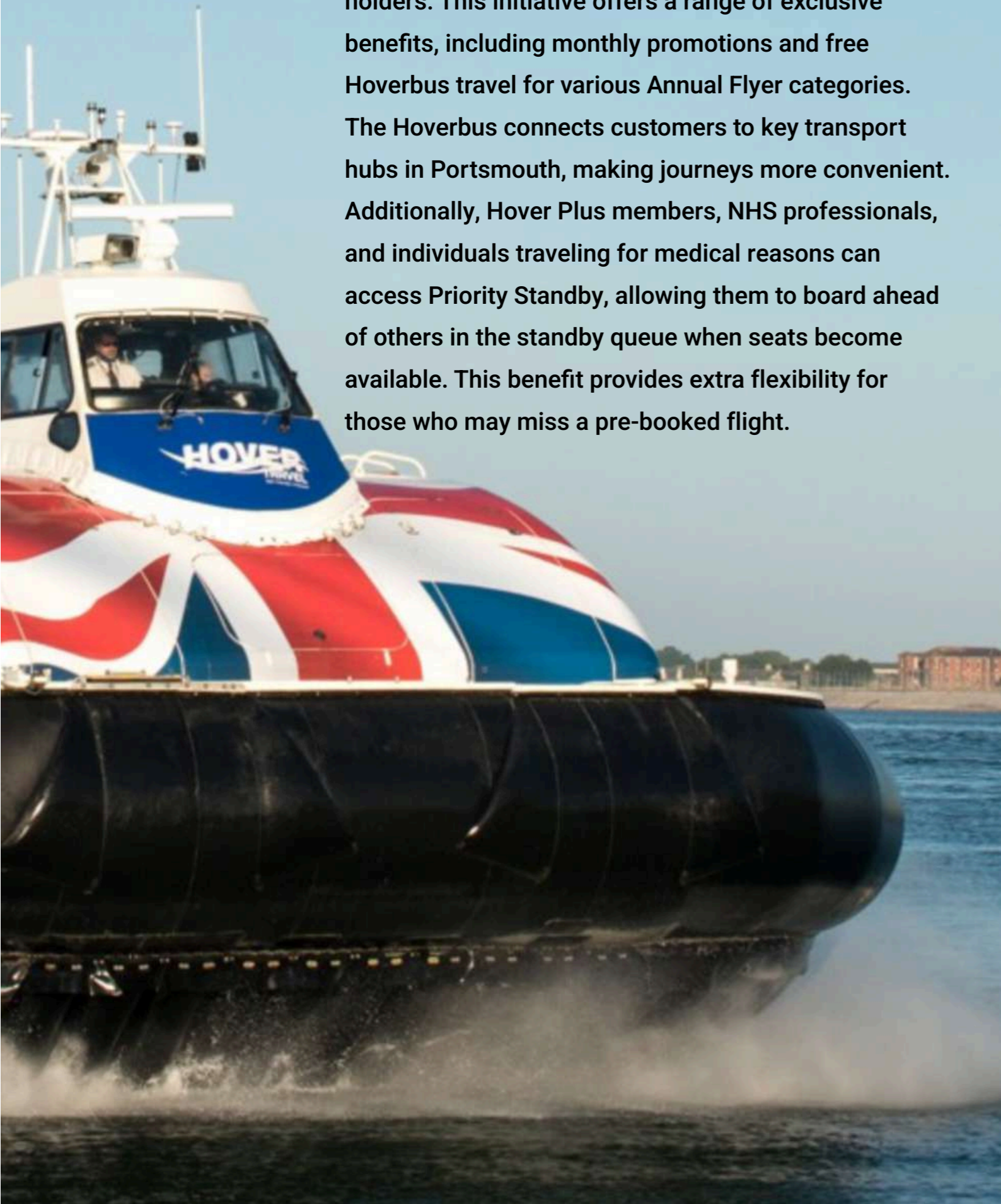
Public Health are working in collaboration with the Isle of Wight libraries to launch the [Blood pressure monitor loan scheme](#). This scheme is available to members of the local [Isle of Wight Council libraries](#) but it is open to members of the public wishing to access the library offer. The scheme offers the chance to **borrow a blood pressure monitor for free** and test their blood pressure at home. The purpose of the scheme is to support to those who may need to home monitor their blood pressure.

The Campaign was launched as part of the "[Know your numbers week](#)" campaign.

If anyone requires further information then please email publichealth@iow.gov.uk

HoverPlus

Hovertravel has introduced **Hover Plus**, a new loyalty scheme aimed at Frequent Flyer and Flexi Flyer ticket holders. This initiative offers a range of exclusive benefits, including monthly promotions and free Hoverbus travel for various Annual Flyer categories. The Hoverbus connects customers to key transport hubs in Portsmouth, making journeys more convenient. Additionally, Hover Plus members, NHS professionals, and individuals traveling for medical reasons can access Priority Standby, allowing them to board ahead of others in the standby queue when seats become available. This benefit provides extra flexibility for those who may miss a pre-booked flight.



Joe Robertson

In my first few weeks as MP, I made my first contribution in the House of Commons about encouraging newly qualified dentists to take on NHS appointments and relocate to rural areas like the Island. I'm also pushing for ferry regulation to be included in upcoming legislation on integrated transport and have already met with the Transport Secretary, Wightlink's CEO, and the Wightlink Users Group to discuss how we can improve services.

I spoke against the Government's plan to cut winter fuel payments for 35,000 Island pensioners, some earning as little as £13,000 a year. Unfortunately, the vote passed, so I have asked the Isle of Wight Council what plans they have to support those facing a heating crisis this winter.

I've joined the APPG for Hospitality and Tourism to fight for fairer taxes for the sector and met with the Isle of Wight Youth Trust to discuss their work supporting young people's mental health and employment opportunities.

Over the past couple of months, I've visited many businesses, events, and resident groups, and met with Council leaders to discuss issues like school closures and overdue flood reports, which should have been published 10 months ago.

Please contact me at joe.robertson.mp@parliament.uk if you need assistance.

Local News

Wootton Bridge Parish Council were thrilled to not only win Best Kept Extra Large Village but also the overall title of Best Kept Village on the Isle of Wight 2024. It has been 11 years since we won anything in the Best Kept Village Awards. It is great to see that the money we have spent on new benches, notice boards and the upkeep of the village recreation ground have been noticed, as well as the Big Tidy up we do each year. We are looking at obtaining our own litter pickers and hoops so that we can litter pick throughout the year.

On another note, Councillor Redrup has organised a speed watch group and they are now monitoring several of the roads within the village and The Real Junk Food Project in The Old School, New Road every Thursday at 1.15pm giving out food



Rookley

Mountbatten Light up a Life campaign - arrangements are well underway for an event to be held on Rookley Village Green on **Monday, 9th December 2024 at 6.30 pm.**

Rev. Izzard will be taking the service and the local guitar group providing the music.

Mulled wine (non-alcoholic), juice, mince pies (including GF), biscuits and carol sheets available.

Ryde Information and Support Service (RISS)

Ryde Town Council (RTC), in conjunction with the Isle of Wight Council (IWC), is about to launch an Information and Support Service in Ryde Library. The Library is already an important community hub, providing a range of support services, including the IWC's Help Centre (part funded by RTC), a Citizens Advice outreach service, a Living Well and Early Help service coffee morning, computer facilities and a 'warm space'.

RISS will provide additional staff to strengthen and support the existing services. Experience has indicated a significant need for a regular drop-in service to help residents access the various national and local information and support services available and to claim the financial benefits to which they are entitled. There is, in particular, a need to help people access services and claim benefits online. The need for this type of service is noted in the IWC's draft Poverty Reduction Strategy.

This will be a pilot project, designed to determine the demand for such a service, the best way of providing and funding it, and its relevance to other parts of the Island. RTC has agreed to provide some funds for the first six months, and the IWC has agreed to provide match-funding from its Community Resilience Fund. If the need is confirmed and the model proves to be viable, further funding will be sought to enable it to continue.

RISS will operate from the IWC's Help Centre and work closely with it. Like the Help Centre, it will serve residents not only from Ryde but from at least nine other parish and town councils in the eastern part of the Island (Brading, Sandown, Lake, Shanklin, Seaview, St Helens, Bembridge, Fishbourne and Wootton Bridge). RTC may, therefore, be approaching other councils to ask if they are able to contribute something towards the cost of the service in the 2025/26 financial year!

Diana Conyers

Community Cookery Sessions

Ryde Town Council are delighted to announce that we have been awarded funding by the South Western Railway Customer and Communities Investment Fund (CCIF) and SNG to deliver a series of community cookery sessions. These sessions are designed to bring people together, promote healthy eating, and provide essential cooking skills for families and individuals within our community.

Events

Over the end of August, we have helped host Ryde Carnival & Ryde illuminated Ryde Carnival which were both very successful events. Ryde Town Council were able to support by providing an Accessible Viewing Platform for both Carnivals which was a great success, which had lots of positive feedback from spectators.

In September we had the Classic Car show and the Steampunk festival which were both very busy and excellent events.

Uniform swap shop

We have teamed up with Aspire Ryde and Messy Mums Baby Bank for a uniform swap shop to be held at the Former Natwest Building in St Thomas' Square in Ryde which in the end was held every Friday for the summer holiday which went really well

Fishbourne Parish Council

The Parish Council has welcomed the news that **Wootton Surgery will remain open**. We have written to thank Cllr Sarah Redrup for the work that she did to achieve this.

Our coffee mornings, which are held on the first Thursday of the month, continue to be popular. We don't usually plan any specific activities or topics of discussion, but we always find something to talk about. This month we found ourselves sharing our experiences of sea journeys. Many of us had interesting stories to tell, but the most incredible was that told by Graham and Anne Lascelles, who sailed round the world in 2000, accompanied by their four young adult children. Graham, who has a lifetime of experience at sea, built the yacht himself. He has written a book about the experience and the lessons learned from this and his other sailing exploits. The book is called All I Ask is a Tall Ship. It is available on Amazon - see <https://www.amazon.co.uk/All-I-Ask-Tall-Ship/dp/B0BCZSPK6Y>. You never know what experiences and talents your neighbours have!

Diana Conyers

Ventnor Youth Club are offering Dance classes, Taster sessions & Workshops, to local children, aged 9 & over.

Let's Dance sessions will run weekly on Tuesdays, in Upper Ventnor at St Margaret's Hall.

Children will learn styles & choreography, from; Hip-Hop, Classical, Tap, Contemporary, Jazz & more.

The classes will be led by a Qualified & fully insured Dance Teacher & Performer: UKA, NVQ & BA DANCE.

The provision of a UKA dance teacher provides Achievement Awards for all ages if, the participants are interested.

There will be a related event happening in the year, that will give young people aged 16 & over, the opportunity to receive an accredited qualification in Dance & leading classes & workshops. The training will also feature, Just Jhoom (wellbeing, movement & physical exercise).

The Qualification will provide: volunteers; young people; youth & community workers; sports coaches & leaders interested in Dance & activity provision, with ideas for basic dance moves & fun ways, to introduce Dance to young people, within their community.

Aims of the Qualification Workshop:

- To understand basic dance movements needed to participate
- Explore the basic elements of Street Dance, cheerleading and Just Jhoom (wellbeing, movement & physical exercise)
- Deliver basic dance activities to groups of young people and understand adaptations & developments that can be made to develop dance & or, activities.
- After the course, participants will be able to introduce dance activities to young people in a community setting or Doorstep Sport Club.

Who is it for:

Young people aged 16+ interested in leading Sport, Community Sport project leaders, Youth Work & Leadership, coaches & volunteers.

Ventnor Youth Club, Let's Dance

Tuesdays

Group 1: Ages 9 to 12 5.15-6.15pm

Group 2: 12 & over 6.15-7.15pm