



The purpose of this report is to record the latest developments in the consultation on the future of Salisbury Gardens and ask Members to advise on any future actions related to it.

No. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) The consultation was launched at the annual community event of 30 January attended by over 80 people involved in the town's voluntary and community sector in a presentation by the Town Clerk that is attached here for the record.
 - b) The consultation process consists of the distribution to the town's 3,500 households of a 4-page newsletter providing full details of the discussions to date between the site's owners, the Isle of Wight Council who intend to sell it and Ventnor Town Council who want to retain it for the town's use.
 - c) The Newsletter included a reply-paid post card to record responses.
 - d) The opportunity to respond to the consultation is available on the Town Council's web site and a petition is also in circulation.
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2) AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

- a) The receipt of the Town Council's Nomination for the site as an Asset of Community Value has been confirmed in a letter from its Strategic Manager Assets, Barry Cooke who has also confirmed that the decision as to the acceptance or rejection of the nomination will be notified to the Town Council by 4 March 2013.
 - b) If the nomination is accepted, Salisbury Gardens will be put on the Isle of Wight Council's List of Assets of Community Value. Assets on the list cannot be sold, other than to the nominating body, for up to six months if the nominating body indicates its interest in bidding for it.
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3) NEWSLETTER BANNED FROM LIBRARY

- a) Copies of the Newsletter on the future of Salisbury Gardens that provided the information for the consultation were ordered to be removed from Ventnor Library last week.
 - b) An email to the Head of the Library Service Rob Jones to ask why that had been done elicited a reply on his behalf from Andrew Walker, Development Librarian, Operations stating the reason it could not be on display in the Library as: *the document is in direct contravention of the Libraries policy on the display of leaflets in that it only covers one side of an issue and because it also contains a number of misleading comments.*
 - c) A request for the policy referred to produced a less than impressive document headed Version 1, dated 8 December 2008 with no indication of its governance status
 - d) The section *Are there any leaflets which MUST NOT be displayed* includes the category under which the ban has been applied: *Campaigning leaflets expressing opinions which form only one side of an argument.*
 - e) However, the section *What types of leaflet may be displayed* includes the category: *Leaflets of a cultural, community or official nature* which, given that the Newsletter is published by Ventnor Town Council and deal with matters of community and cultural interest to the town, could surely cover this.
 - f) An email from County Councillor Chris Welsford to Director of Environment and Economy Stuart Love culminated in a response from Deputy Director of Resources (Corporate Governance) Davina Fiore that revealed how far up the organisation the matter had gone: *The decision not to display this was referred up to managers and ultimately to Directors Team*
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and is in accordance with the policy. Her email goes on to assert that the Newsletter is not objective, could be interpreted as political and contains a number of inaccuracies and misleading statements.

4) CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- a) In the first week following the launch over 250 of the reply paid cards arrived with a total of over 500 names and addresses of people rejecting the Isle of Wight Council's decision to sell the site to the highest bidder and supporting its ownership by Ventnor Town Council for the benefit of the town.
 - b) Those names and addresses represent 10% of the town's electorate.
 - c) There have also been 19 contributions to the consultation opportunity on the Town Council's web site. A sample of the responses follows:
 - Historically the building belongs to Ventnor and going forward should be brought back under the control of Ventnor Town Council and used to serve the community. David Pugh's plan to flog it off so that some developers can make a load of cash and the main council chiefs can bolster their coffers is nothing less than revolting.
 - I believe the coastal centre should be made available for community use and the educational element of the building maintained. It is an important part of tourism to show issues relating to coastal management and is also a way of attracting research from all over the world.
 - If a local council has the political will, drive, funds, skills and expertise to take on a building to turn it into a thriving community hub, then it should do so and be given all the support possible from the principal authority. If other buildings in the town can be sold for £1 to make them into thriving businesses then the same should apply to the coastal centre. Salisbury Gardens belongs to Ventnor, please make sure it continues to do so.
 - I have received the Consultation Document produced by Ventnor Town Council. There appear to be a number of options available to increase the usage of the building and these should be tried before any sale. Previous generations on Ventnor UDC bought the building and I think we owe it to the to try and find a good Community use for it now.
 - We have got to start taking control of our local facilities and not let the Isle of Wight Council sell anything they can get their hands on ... I am fully behind the Town Council's efforts to try and acquire this building for the local people of Ventnor.
 - My family and I are firm supporters of the idea of Salisbury Gardens being a civic hub for Ventnor and agree with all the town council's suggestions about it various uses.
 - We believe that Salisbury Gardens should be kept for the use of the people of Ventnor. It is a lovely building in a great position, and should not be given up without a fight, especially as the people of Ventnor were the last ones to purchase the property!
 - I would like to support the retention of Salisbury Gardens as a community hub and resource especially in regard to the housing and support to business start-ups - vital to the Town's regeneration.
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Coastal Centre



For Sale

By the
Isle of
Wight
Council

Salisbury Gardens, aka Coastal Centre



Reception



Meeting Rooms



Offices

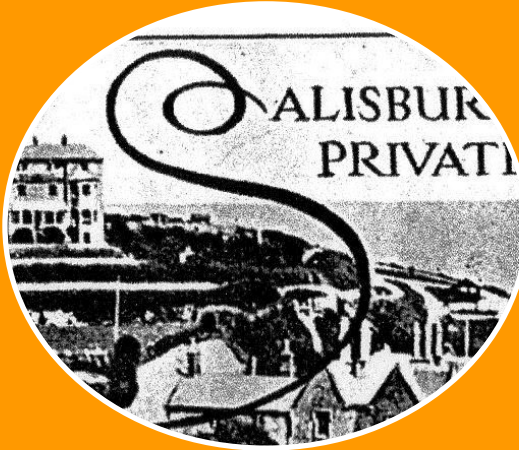
Workrooms



But it's Ventnor's...isn't it?



Built 1870s
by Ventnor
for Ventnor



Bought by
Ventnor in
1945 for
=£395,000

140 Years



THE COASTAL CENTRE
DUDLEY ROAD, VENTNOR

AN ENTERPRISE HUB : BUSINESS P



Ventnor
needs it

Time to ask the town...



The Isle of Wight Council's political leaders are determined to sell this building and its green.

The Isle of Wight Council's political leaders are determined to sell this building and its green that have been at the heart of the town for 140 years.

Ventnor Town Council is committed to retaining the building as a hub for the town's life and its green as a unique community resource.

Here we set out the background to this important decision and invite you to have your say about it.

Salisbury Gardens has been one of the town's most visible buildings for a very long time (page 2) and Ventnor residents were the last people to buy it (page 2).

The Town Council has developed two options for it that both preserve the building for the town and contribute to Ventnor's economic and community life (page 3).

The proposals have attracted strong support from all the relevant Island Agencies (page 4) and there are options available to the Isle of Wight Council to make the building available to the Town Council (page 4).

However, the Isle of Wight Council Leader, David Pugh, has declared that the building will now be sold as soon as possible on the open market in order to use the £400,000 the Valuers have said it might raise for capital projects elsewhere on the Island (page 4). While there is still time for that decision to be changed, Ventnor Town Council is determined that every resident in the town should have the opportunity to influence it (page 4). Please do.

SEE BACK PAGE FOR DETAILS OF HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

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Ventnor Town Council's main office



Freeport Plus RTCJ-HAJC-EYLU
Ventnor Town Council
The Coastal Centre
Dudley Road
VENTNOR
PO38 1EJ



Ventnor Town Council is committed to retaining the building as a hub for the town's life and its green as a unique community resource.

Ventnor Town Council wants to retain Salisbury Gardens as a hub for the town's life and its green as a unique community resource. The Isle of Wight Council wants to sell it to the highest bidder.

I SUPPORT VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL'S PLANS TO RETAIN IT FOR THE TOWN

NAME	ADDRESS
NAME	ADDRESS
NAME	ADDRESS

PLEASE POST THIS CARD AS SOON AS YOU ARE ABLE: THERE IS NO NEED FOR A STAMP
YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS WILL NOT BE SHARED WITH ANYONE OR PUBLISHED ANYWHERE



January, 2013

Right to Bid...?

Nominate

Listed

Moratorium

...or Right to Have?

Special
Purchase

Long lease
@ £1pa

Freehold
Transfer
@£1



Theirs...

...or...

...Yours?

