



# VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

THE CLERK'S COLUMN

EDITION 69

MONDAY 2 AUGUST 2021

Welcome to edition 69 of our Clerk's Column circulated as usual to the 490 residents on our Residents' Forum email list and through the Chronicle's page 4.

## SPRING HILL GARDENS BUSKERS

Starting on Saturday, local musicians will provide two hours of their music from 11am to 1pm each Saturday across the summer to the end of September, arranged by our Deputy Mayor Steph Toogood. The programme launches at 11am this coming Saturday by Ventnor's singing Window-cleaner Lucan Hickmott as Locousitic Music followed at 12 noon by The Pact.

## UPPER VENTNOR LAND DEVELOPMENT

The land behind and around the Free School on Upper Ventnor's Newport Road is the town's last remaining area for development with the potential to create local employment opportunities. As it is in the Island Plan as part of one of its Smaller Regeneration Areas the Isle of Wight Council is keen to work with us on its development. I joined Councillor James Toogood and our Architect Andrew Hitt had a site meeting on Thursday with the Isle of Wight Council's Senior Estates Surveyor Claire Elderfield to agree the next steps in progressing the site's development with a number of 750sq metre light industrial units. We already have the benefit of some studies of the site from last year's Feasibility Study that we agreed to complement with a Topographic Study.

## HIGH SHERIFF CAME TO TOWN

The Island's current High Sheriff, James Attrill joined our Community Development Officer Tony McCarthy and Assistant Town Clerk Alison Killick in our Green Room for a positive discussion of our community work that is also at the centre of his commitment to the role with a particular interest in mental health. He also took the opportunity to meet with the Ventnor Food Bank volunteers.

## ROAD CLOSURES

Island Roads have told us that as part of their programme of inspections of retaining walls in the town they will need to close *Bonchurch Shute* today (Monday) and tomorrow and East Street from 6am to 6pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week.

## ASSETS & SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Tuesday's meeting of the Group dealt with a range of issues affecting our *Salisbury Gardens* building from repairs to the water damage and adjustments to its roof. *Car park* management came next along with updates on a recent meeting with the Isle of Wight Council on that subject and its proposed charge for the four bays need to install the *new Public Toilet*. Repairs to the *Putting Green Kiosk* and the *Gardener's Hut* in the Park followed as well as the renewed planting of the *Planters* in the Central Car Park.

## SUSTAINABILITY & BIODIVERSITY GROUP

This new Group had its first meeting on Wednesday evening led by Julie Hutchison with Brian Lucas, Mark Jefferies, Steve Cooper and John Watkins as the other Councillor Members and me. It began with a round-the-screen invitation to members to identify their main interests in these areas and led to an open session of Members' ideas for future projects the Town Council might be in a position to progress. The Group plans to meet on the last Wednesday of each month.

## CONNECT4COMMUNITIES FUNDING

We're delighted that our application to this Isle of Wight Council Fund for a further £5,000 to assist local residents identified through the Foodbank and Babybox with food for them and their families through the summer has been successful.

## TOWN COUNCIL SURGERIES

Our Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be available and ready to meet residents for discussion of,



or to hear concerns about, local issues at 6pm this Wednesday in



our Green Room at Salisbury Gardens.

Attendance at the first of these sessions last month was encouraging.

## VIA MY TWITTER FEED LAST WEEK

- A new Report by the [Centre for Social Justice](#) notes 'the first year of the pandemic saw the number of people in 'severe' forms of problem debt rise by over 600,000 to 2.4 million!'
- Today's Report from the [Living Wage Foundation](#) - The Insecurity Complex - finds 'A fifth (21 per cent) of workers in the UK experience work insecurity - that's 6.6m workers.'