



Here's edition 148 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.

ASSETS & SERVICES WORKING GROUP

The monthly meeting of the Town Council's Group took place on Tuesday starting with essential maintenance to Salisbury Gardens with up to £2k



being needed to spend on repairs to this elevation and missing roof slates to be replaced. Next was the upgrade

of its Green Room kitchen in response to its increased use. The addition of WiFi to Boniface Fields was progressed followed by agreement to recommend to the 13 March Town Council meeting an increase in the charges for our four car parks for the first time since we took them on 8 years ago. We agreed to discuss with the Isle of Wight Council the Electrical Certificate for the Park and the need for repairs to the gardeners' compound gates.

VENTNOR'S FEBRUARY WEATHER

Chris Watts summarises the town's weather last month as *the driest February for 30 years, when 5.4mm was measured in 1993.*

Rainfall (mm):		Date
Total amount	6.9	
% of average	12	
No. of dry days	21	
Highest	2.4	21st
Temperatures (deg C):		
Mean	7.7	
Difference from average	+1.7	
Highest	13.5	13th
Lowest	0.6	24th
Coldest day	7.7	5th

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Of the nine applications on the Committee's Tuesday Agenda, three simply had to be noted as condition compliances. Three more were supported and one was assessed as presenting no reason to object. The Committee strongly objected to: the proposed two



storey extension to east elevation... single storey extension to west elevation and relocation of swimming pool at the Dolphins, Shore Road,

Bonchurch. The Committee judging *that it is inappropriate in a Conservation Area, requires more detailed ground stability investigation and would be damaging to be character of the area.*

It also had concerns about the retrospective application for changes to the former Smuggling Museum at the Botanic Gardens.

WELLBEING CAFÉ DOES GHOST WALK



On a cold evening last week over 30 members of the Well-Being Café braved the notorious 'Ghost Walk' at the Ventnor Botanic Gardens. Our host for the evening Mark Tucky spookily set the scene with the history of the site and its reports of ghostly happenings spanning many decades, regaling stories of sightings, builders fleeing the site during its demolition, small children running around in Victorian clothing, workers and patients from the original hospitals roaming around the site. The stories got more intense of ghostly apparitions and entities, and on cue a dark clad figure jumped out of the undergrowth and succeeded in giving everyone a great fright.



Access to the famous cliff tunnel was one of the highlights and the early 1900's graffiti carved into the stonework reminded us of the history of the old hospital grounds. This was a great evening for the group and thanks must go to Terri the Group's Co-ordinator who organised the walk, Mark who was our superb host for the evening and whose hauntingly dulcet tones rang out eerily around the gardens, and to the fabulous team who gave us such frights all around the site.

SHUTE SHUTS

Island Roads needs to close Bonchurch Shute from this morning until Friday. It will be closed both day and night to enable the next planned programme of carriageway surfacing works to be completed.

FROM MY TWITTER FEED THIS WEEK

- [Research](#) has shown that 'the 2023 standard (universal credit) allowance will fall at least £66 short per week for an adult couple ... and £121 short if that couple has deductions applied to their benefits.'
- A [National Housing Federation](#) Press Release today: 'stats reveal an 83% increase in children living in [#temporaryaccommodation](#) since 2011 - close to a record high.'