



Here's edition 149 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.

## FEBRUARY FINANCIALS

At 28 February the balance of the Town Council's funds was £158,883. Expenditure during the month of February totalled £44,365 including Salisbury Gardens' costs of £9,675. The largest cost was the half yearly loan repayment to the Public Works Loan Board of £4,753 for Salisbury Gardens.

Receipts during February came to £12,600 of which £5,373 came from Salisbury Gardens' rents.

The total spent on Precept funded items during the first ten months of the current financial year was £39,603 more than budgeted for while receipts in the same period were £16,906 above budget.

## MARCH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tonight's Town Council meeting has another four items on its Agenda after the Finance Report: a new HR Committee (to replace the Staffing Committee), Car Park Charges (time for an increase?), No Mow May (no mowing of grassed areas in May) and Coronation Mugs (enough for one for each of the town's children).

## WATER MAIN REPAIR AT BONIFACE FIELDS

Any damage to plant life is understood and regretted by the Town Council. Here the problem was the need for an urgent repair of a significant water leak requiring below-ground works.

There were no plants in view for the digger operator at this time of year, just a bare patch of apparently uncultivated ground. It is expected that much of the plant life will return and if more is needed to restore the site to the standard the Town's Flower Fairy established before she retired from that role the Council will fund the work and the Friends of the Botanic Gardens have offered to take over its care.

## ROOF REPAIRS REQUIRED?

With some slates missing and the gully at risk of becoming blocked our Assets & Services Group has arranged for a professional assessment of necessary actions and likely cost.



## OUR YOUTH CLUB & FAIR TRADE WEEK

To celebrate & increase awareness of Fairtrade,



children took part in a range of activities, across Fairtrade Fortnight. Samantha Pidgeon, Ventnor's Coop Co-ordinator visited & delighted the

children with the surprise of making Fairtrade fruit kebabs, with a drizzle of chocolate added, for good measure! The children explored a variety of Fairtrade fruits including; bananas, strawberries, kiwis, oranges, grapes, melons & watermelons & played Fairtrade bingo as well as, a version of Snakes & Ladders that mimics the lives of the Plantation workers.

## GREEN ROOM KITCHEN UPGRADE

With the increased use of the Green Room has come a need to upgrade its kitchen facilities, so we've been looking for, and found, the required funding: our thanks to all who made it possible: *High Sheriff's Fund* a grant of £500 for the purchase of a new larder refrigerator.

*Isle of Wight Council's connect4communities fund*: a grant of £700 for a new cooker.

*Howdens, Lake*: for offering free of charge 6 double kitchen wall units, complete with doors and handles and fitting kits.

## PLAQUE UNVEILED

We were visited by the Friends of the Botanic Gardens for the unveiling of the plaque on the West elevation of Salisbury Gardens



marking all of the hard work they undertook in restoring the flower beds outside the Council building. The big tidy last year to bring the beds back up to scratch was a mammoth task, but the results have been astounding.



- [Citizens Advice](#) says today 'More than 50% of people coming to us are in a negative budget. This means there's nothing that can be done to balance their income and outgoings so they'll fall into debt.'
- New [Shelter](#) report: 'Three-quarters (75%) of households in temporary accommodation live in poor conditions, including 21% with a safety hazard... More than 68% have inadequate access to basic facilities - such as cooking or laundry facilities.'