

Arreton Parish Council Newsletter

September 2020

Welcome to the latest issue of our Newsletter after the summer break. Councils traditionally go quiet in August with few, if any, scheduled meetings and we are no exception. However, being quiet does not mean not doing anything and we have been ticking over quietly in the background. Councillors have been attending various meetings on your behalf and with the start of the new term (so to speak) some councillors will be attending training sessions in the near future.

We have been doing some work in the Cemetery, particularly the large front hedge which was given a short back and sides by three of our councillors for which they were duly thanked. We are also arranging for some of the potentially precarious tombstones in the Churchyard to be made safer. You may have noticed that the bus stop outside Arreton Barns was forcibly removed one afternoon, along with one of our planters. Once the bus shelter has been replaced, we will move one of our existing planters from elsewhere in the village to complete the matching set. We will then decide what to do with the newly-created space.

This could be tempting fate but the UKOG application has also gone quiet. This may be because the case officer is still working his way through all the comments that were received. Fortunately for us, the few applications that we have received since then have all been on a much smaller scale and considerably less contentious.

VJ Day

As with VE Day, large scale events were out of the question but at least this time, there was scope for smaller groups to get together. The IW branch of the Burma Star Association held their annual service in St George's Church, Arreton on August 15th. There was a good attendance, all correctly socially-distanced of course, and the Chairman of the Parish Council laid a wreath to commemorate the 75th anniversary. The Kohima Epitaph was read by the last surviving member of the Association, Harry Aitken. Unfortunately, the annual lunch could not take place but tea was served in Haseley Manor Barn after the service. This was a last-minute change in plan due to the uncertain weather. The members of the Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Rosemary Thirkettle for making their wreath.



Island Roads

Work is scheduled to take place on the Horringford Crossing on Wednesday, 23rd September.

Scams

As always, there are scams out there.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards have received lots of reports about a scam letter purporting to be from the Postcode Lottery. The letters are identical but have been sent to a range of different postcodes across the Island!

If you receive one of these letters – this is a SCAM. Do not phone the number on the letter.

If you play the Postcode Lottery and are worried that you might be missing out on winnings, find the number for the organisation independently and contact them. They are aware that scam letters are being sent out in their name and will be able to confirm whether this is one of them.

Trading Standards would like to remind residents to be wary of emails purporting to come from legitimate organisations. It appears that the following scams are once again doing the rounds

- Claims to be from TV Licensing advising that your licence is due to expire and that you will need to click on a link to renew
- Claims to be from HMRC saying that you are owed a refund and to click on a link to claim
- Claims to be from Council Tax advising that you are entitled to a Council Tax reduction and you just need to click on a link to claim it

In each case the link will take you to a copycat website where the scammers will be able to obtain your banking information. A good way to check the validity of an email if you are unsure is look at the sender's actual email address – it won't be genuine. Remember, legitimate organisations would NEVER contact you in this way.

Trading Standards are receiving reports of Doorstep traders currently operating on the Island and would like to remind residents that a trader that knocks your door and tries to convince you to have work carried out is highly likely to be a rogue trader who will probably do a poor job and over charge you for the little work that is done.

Recent reports include

- Offers to power wash your drive – they may even use our fears over Coronavirus to encourage you to have this done, saying that it will kill virus' and bacteria
- Roofers have been spotted, quoting £150 to fix a loose tile

If you have a door chain – use it. No Cold Calling stickers can be obtained from trading.standards@iow.gov.uk and remember **If You Aren't Sure Don't Open The Door!**

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 Trading Standards are becoming increasingly aware of scams on social media, particularly Facebook, where accounts are cloned and requests are sent to all of the friends of that account asking for money or advising of a financial opportunity. It is easy to believe that this is from someone we know and trust however it is more likely to be a scammer who has cloned the account and is relying on our faith in our friend to follow the action/advice given. These scams take many forms so the best advice that we can give is if a message from a friend relates to any kind of financial activity, treat it with caution, give your friend a ring or a text and check if the message really comes from them. If not, their account has been cloned and they should report it to the relevant site.

Trading Standards are receiving an increasing number of reports about a scam message purporting to be from the DVLA. It is advising that there are irregularities in your current profile and asks you to click on a link to update your details. This is a SCAM – Do Not click on the link – delete the email straight away.

Trading Standards have received lots of reports of an email purporting to be from the HM Courts and Tribunals Service charging you £25 for a Penalty Charge for parking – this will be increased to £100 if not paid within 28 days. This is a SCAM – it asks you to click on a link to pay. Remember - legitimate organisations will NEVER contact you in this way

- NEVER click on links in emails and texts
- Scam emails can be forwarded to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service on report@phishing.gov.uk

It has come to the attention of a member of the Parish Council that a resident was recently taken to a cashpoint by a trader in order to withdraw money to pay for work that had been carried out. This was rather against the wishes of the resident and whilst this was not necessarily a scam and the work may well have been genuine, it is not acceptable behaviour on the part of the trader.

News from the IW Council

Protect our Island bees from the Asian hornets

Now is the time to look out for the invasive Asian hornet, according to Island beekeepers. The species has spread rapidly in Europe, where it preys on honeybees and other insects.

It is known to cause significant damage to commercial beehives and so local beekeepers are particularly concerned by the prospect of this insect becoming established.

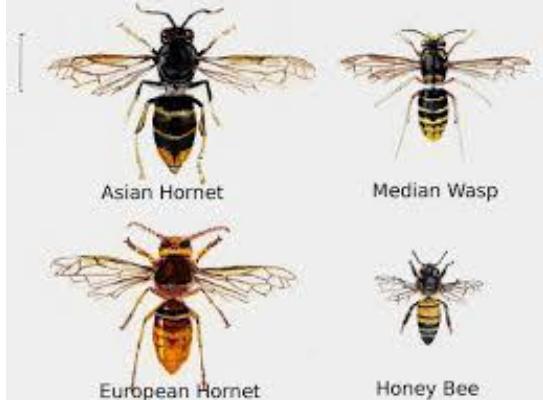
The hornet was first sighted in the UK in 2016, and although none have been found on the Isle of Wight so far, one of the locations it was found was in Dorset, meaning that the Isle of Wight is particularly at risk.

The Asian hornet is active mainly between April and November, with a peak in August and September and is inactive over the winter. So now is the time to keep an eye out for these big insects.

Chris van Wyk, owner of Isle of Wight honey producers Bunbury Bees, said: “Asian hornets are not just bad for honeybees, they can have a devastating effect on other local invertebrates. “It’s also very difficult to correctly eradicate a nest when found as the queen tends to abandon the nest if she detects interference, so it’s critical to report it to the proper

bodies so that they can have qualified people come and destroy it cleanly and thoroughly.” But it’s important not to confuse the dark Asian hornet with the lighter-colour and slightly larger native hornet.

Chris added: “Native hornets are beneficial insects that help gardeners with pest control and rarely bother humans or pets – they are much more placid than the common yellowjacket wasp. I actually enjoy seeing them.”



Recycling centres to start accepting general waste

Isle of Wight Council tips will be accepting kerbside general waste from Tuesday (15 September). The relaxation is the latest step in the managed re-opening of the Island's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) at Lynbottom and Afton Marsh, following the easing of lockdown restrictions. The council said the booking system would remain in place to maintain effective social distancing measures to protect staff and visitors. Bookings can be made online at: www.iwight.com/hwrcbooking

Residents are being reminded that most items can be recycled rather than putting them in general waste. A study last year revealed that more than half of general waste dumped at the tip could have been recycled. Residents are urged to avoid placing hazardous waste such as batteries and household chemicals in their general waste — as this causes damage and fires at the new mechanical treatment plant.



To help tackle this, from November people using the recycling centres will be asked to place their general waste in clear or white sacks so the content is visible. This does not apply to kerbside collections.

Natasha Dix, the council's strategic waste manager, said: "The Island community has been brilliant during lockdown recycling 27 per cent more at the kerbside and embracing the booking system at the recycling centres.

"We are now reintroducing general waste to the recycling centres to help residents clear any backlog from lockdown clear-outs."

Councillor Steve Hastings, Cabinet member for waste management, said: "As an Island we are doing really well with recycling, and thanks to the completion of the new recycling plant at Forest Road, Newport, the council now diverts 98 per cent of general waste from landfill making it one of the top recycling authorities in the country."

Badminton is back!

Badminton courts at the Island's 1Leisure Medina, Newport, are to reopen today (Monday). It is the first step in a phased reopening of the popular courts, with new measures in place to keep players and staff safe. Initially courts will open for socially distanced games and practises as set out by Badminton England.



Groups of up to six players from different households can play full court singles and full court doubles with social distancing in place. Four players can be on court while two players will be able to safely social distance on allocated benches courtside.

Players are required to book their court online, bring their own rackets and shuttles and disinfect them regularly. The guidance is that players are to take their belongings onto the courts as lockers and changing facilities are closed.

Squash courts also move into the next phase of reopening now allowing 'squash bubbles' of up to six players. Stuart Babington, facility manager, said: "We have tried and tested the courts to ensure the measures put in place keep players and staff safe and are the current government guidance."

Councillor Wayne Whittle, Cabinet member for regeneration, business development and leisure centres, said: "We are looking forward to welcoming our valued customers back to our badminton courts once more. The staff at 1Leisure have worked incredibly hard to ensure they are keeping everyone safe."

Gift card scheme proposed as part of recovery blueprint

A new gift card scheme is set to launch on the Isle of Wight as part of a raft of wide-ranging measures to help get the local economy back on its feet. Residents will be able to spend in local shops, restaurants, cafes, bars and leisure venues using the special pre-paid 'Island Card' — helping to support independent retailers and reboot the high streets. Working in the same way as a shopping centre or department store gift card, purchasers will be able to choose how much they want to pre-load onto the card.

The Isle of Wight Council is looking to team up with local business associations, alongside town and parish councils, to develop pilot schemes in Newport and Ryde. By encouraging consumers to shop local, Councillor Wayne Whittle, Cabinet member for regeneration and business development, said similar projects in other parts of the country had brought a welcome boost to the local economy. "The high street and our town centres are an integral part of post-Covid recovery," he said. "Now more than ever, we really need Islanders to shop local. If people don't come into our town centres and support our businesses, we really will lose them. This would be a fantastic way to keep spending right at the heart of the local economy."

The development of an Island gift card is just one way the council aims to work with its partners to help the Island's economy bounce back from the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Published for the first time today (Wednesday), the authority's Covid-19 recovery plan — A Better Island — forms the blueprint to get the Island on the road to recovery. Based on the 'three pillars of recovery' — community, economic and place — the proposals focus on the next 18 months: keeping Covid-19 infection under control, supporting people and businesses through the recession, and working with partners to do both while under huge financial pressure.

Council leader Dave Stewart said: "The coronavirus pandemic has hit our island extremely hard, and we now need to ensure that we prioritise helping our businesses and residents by giving them as much support as we can so they can recover from this unprecedented situation. The underpinning of our recovery plan is that it keeps people safe as well as helping to bring our economy alive with innovative schemes such as the proposed Island Card, pop-up business school to assist people to start their own business and a youth employment support hub. The crisis has shown us how we can all pull together, and why we need to continue with that community spirit. This plan will focus on the most vulnerable but also aims to ensure that no one on our Island is left behind."

Sorry that scams and the IW Council news has taken up so much space but, as you can no doubt imagine, we have had a lot of information from them since the last newsletter.

Other news

Hedges – fortunately the growing season is almost over but brambles do seem to have a mind of their own and appear to grow overnight. Now that the children are back at school and walking along the pavements, please could we ask that those of you who live on the Main Road keep an eye on those pesky prickles and nip them off when necessary, as I am sure that most of you do.

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