Clerk's Report 23rd September 2026

Event/Project updates:

Bembridge in Bloom 2026

Well hopefully by now you all know how we did in the Best Kept Village Awards held on the 17th September.

We will also be attending the South-east in Bloom Awards on Friday 25th September, so fingers crossed.

Community Grant Awards

These will be taking place again in October. Date, time and location tba but we will attempt to hold at the BYCC as usual. Full details will follow, so look out for posters online and in noticeboards.

Pickleball Open Day:

We held the first Pickleball Open Day on 22nd August, and it was an incredible success. Cllr Brabazon will be able to update on the latest progress at agenda item 9.







Lengthsmen's Jobs:

Mostly their task over the past few months has been not to succumb to heatstroke!!
But they have found time to fix a trip hazard in the park, repaint the goalposts and trim back St Lukes. In addition, they have also carried out works to clear Lincoln Way Pond and now that the rains have returned grass cutting is back on the agenda.





Items on the Agenda:

Agenda item 7: Bembridge Point Beach Bathing Water Application

The Swim at the Point Group have spent the Summer gathering data to submit for an application for bathing water status at the Point. I believe they have over 400 surveys completed, all showing support. The final element that they need is a letter of support from the IoWC, before they can apply to DEFRA. If successful, the Environment Agency will need to carry out regular checks of the water quality, and any deficiencies will need to be investigated and communicated to the public.
The sticking point has been the IoWC. I contacted the service director who, following review by beaches and coastal dept, stated that 'support for the application would create ongoing operational and financial commitments for the Council, including signage, public information, pollution incident management and associated maintenance responsibilities. Initial costs are estimated at £1,500 - £2,000, with further costs incurred if pollution incidents occur'. As a result, she felt that she couldn't provide support under delegated powers and the issue would need to be discussed by members.
I asked for this to be put on the 24th Sept ECP Committee Agenda but received no reply in time for this to happen. The Chair, Cllr Lucioni has since replied informing me that a members' question would be the most appropriate route and she will have 'a response ready on a way forward'.

Parish Council will need to discuss the level of support that it wishes to provide to the campaign.

Agenda item 8: Isle of Wight Council Planning Compliance (Enforcement) for 2027/28 onwards

The Parish Council have been contacted by IoW Planning with the following proposal:

'The Isle of Wight Council's Planning Enforcement Strategy, adopted in 2023, sets out our approach towards planning compliance (enforcement). It recognises the discretionary nature of ensuring compliance with planning controls and our limited capacity to undertake it.

Since 2023 parish, town and community councils have had the opportunity to fund additional capacity within the Planning Compliance Team, to specifically tackle locally identified planning compliance priorities.

This partnership approach has worked especially successfully for Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council, Ryde Town Council and Sandown Town Council, and has delivered clear and demonstrable improvements for residents and visitors alike.

The evidence from the last three years is clear that with greater capacity the Planning Compliance Team can do more. It can be proactive on the issues and sites that mean the most to you and your community. Without that capacity we will still of course react to any alleged breaches of planning controls that we receive, but these will be dealt with in a hierarchy based on Island-wide compliance priorities and within the available capacity.

I recognise there is no one-size fits all approach to this and different areas will have different needs and available budget, so if your Council, either by itself or in partnership with others, is interested in funding Planning Compliance capacity for 2027/28 onwards and setting local compliance priorities, please do let me know.

To help your council consider its approach, the following are the estimated costs

The estimated costs for 2027/28 are budgeted to be:

	Planning Officer (Compliance)	Senior Planning Officer (Compliance)
1 day a week	£12,000	£14,000
2 days	£23,000	£28,000
3 days	£34,000	£41,000
4 days	£45,000	£55,000
5 days	£56,000	£67,000

These costs are based on the current pay grades for Isle of Wight Council staff and include the below the line costs (such as National Insurance contributions and pension).

I do hope that this will be of interest to your council and I look forward to hearing from you.'

The Parish Council will need to discuss and agree its response.

Agenda item 10: Isle of Wight Council Engagement Event.

The Parish Council have received the following invite:

'Further to our previous correspondence regarding the Isle of Wight Council's proposed engagement event with Town and Parish Councils, we are now able to confirm that the event will take place on **Wednesday 14 October 2026**, from **6.00 pm to 8.00 pm**, in the **Conference Room at Westridge, Ryde**.

The event will provide an opportunity for constructive discussion between representatives of the Isle of Wight Council and the Island's Town and Parish Councils on how we can work together more effectively to support our communities.

To ensure that all local councils have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion, we would welcome **one representative from each Town and Parish Council** attending the event. We would be grateful if councils could consider who they wish to nominate to represent them and let me know their nominated representative at their earliest convenience.

We hope that you will be able to participate in this important discussion and look forward to working together to strengthen partnership working across the Island.'

Parish Council will need to decide on a representative to attend the event.

Agenda item 11: Lane End Mural

At the last Full Council, a discussion was held on options for a new mural at Lane End. Council agreed to provide funding of £2,272.50 to add to the £3,000 donated by Southern Water and provide for 2 walls to be painted by Community Murals IoW.

However, before moving forward Cllr G Stoddart-Stones notified the Council of a potential artist in Bristol who may be able to carry out the project at a reduced cost.

Cllr Stoddart-Stones contacted the artist, and the response was as follows:

"The wall is pretty large - is it just the main wall to paint? I'd recommend starting with just the one and then the other bits can be done over time.

For us, we did a wall like this, it took us 3-4 weekends. It was 3 sided and we had a different design for each side.
You also need a session to come up with the design for the community or in school to decide what to have on the wall mural.

Because you want to do the fossils which is linked to the local geology I believe on the Jurassic coast but if have to revise that. And of course you have the black sand beaches. We could link this into a geology interactive moment and inspire the community to connect to their local heritage.

I personally am fully booked entirely for the summer holidays and would not have any capacity for this.
Personally, with such an amazing opportunity like this one with this wall and you having the permission, I would say not to rush into it.

However, if you did want to do it this holiday - I could give you advice for free I'd be very happy to that.

Alternatively, you could do it in term time, say we did a week long for the project. Get different schools to come down and visit and help and we can do the education for them in sessions. Then on the weekend / evenings get the whole community involved and we could get it done in that week.

Open to discussion on this and help in any way I can.'

Pictures of the wall in Bristol:





A mural project designed by the community and painted via volunteers is a great idea, but I fear will require too much office time to co-ordinate, as a result Cllr G Stoddart-Stones has kindly offered to manage if the Parish Council decided to go down this route.

Alternatively, I have contacted Emma and Hollie of Community Murals IoW and enquired over their availability and the potential of including the community in a more hands on approach (they will of course create options for designs that the council/public will be able to decide upon).
Their reply:
'Regarding involving local children: we'd be delighted to do this. Both of us are former teachers, so we're well-versed in leading sessions with young people and would be more than happy to have local youngsters come down and help paint part of the mural.
As for the timeframe from commission to the first day of painting, it largely depends on the time of year, weather conditions, and our current schedule. Right now, we only have a couple of smaller private projects booked in, so we have plenty of availability to fit this in smoothly once a decision is made'.

They also emailed this link to Solent Seascape Project's Instagram, offering free marine field trips with Theo Vickers to Island youth, including discovering marine wildlife at Bembridge ledge, which could fit in with involvement of local children in the long term too:

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DdQ-pkKjzbf/?stkn=a2RzcHEweHJhdGQ=

If you'd like to find out more about Hollie and Emma, you can follow this link to their website:
About | Community Murals

I had also enquired with Arts Council England for a further grant to include the third wall. The idea for the project (whichever artist we go with) would start with providing education around the Sealife and fauna in the waters that the mural faces by including them within the mural and encouraging the public to find them and learn more about them.
Personally, I have experience of a mural in a local park in London which included wings of butterflies and birds that could be seen in the park. This encouraged children (and dogs see below) to pose for photos in front of them, which was incredibly popular. On the third wall we could potentially have a similar interactive element with the crab claws of a Velvet Swimming Crab or Shore Crab (?).
Sadly, Arts Council England have recently come back rejecting the grant application. ☹️

Ideas for wall:







The Community Murals option would mean commissioning them to carry out the work and therefore require less input from the Parish Office. It would of course cost more. However, as pointed out at the last meeting, £3,000 is being supplied by Southern Water, and the Parish Council have now received the £4,000 windfall from the sale of an old asset (ball stop nets) and so the two walls (and actually, even all three) would not require any funding from the current 2026/27 revenue budget.

The Parish Council needs to discuss options and decide next steps.

Agenda item 12 – Village Hall floor

An update on current position can be provided by Cllr G Brasington and Cllr H Brabazon.

The Parish Council will need to discuss what the next steps will need to be, including possibility of project costing estimates and tender process.

Thank you

Mark Rochell

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