

**GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
27th APRIL 2010**

a. Parish Council Meetings

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting the Parish Council has met formally for a total of 11 full Council meetings. It has continued to act on behalf of the local community on many wide and varied issues, and also responds as a Stakeholder Consultee for the IW Council, Central Government and other Bodies on several wider local government issues.

The Planning Committee has also met regularly during the year, on 10 occasions in fact, in order to respond to planning and licensing applications within the deadlines set by Development Control and Licensing. Up to the end of March a total of 54 planning applications have been considered and commented upon during the year, which amounts to a reduction on last year of 3.6%. The Parish Council has continued to attend selected Planning Inspectorate appeal site inspections.

The Community Projects Committee, which started work in December 2006, has met 3 times since the last APM and continues to work through the Parish Plan Action Plan.

The Parish Council thanks Ward Councillor Paul Fuller for his support and the regular reporting on events at County Hall as they affect Gurnard during his 1st year in office, and is particularly grateful for his obvious enthusiasm for the role he undertakes in our community.

A strong and positive relationship has also been maintained with the Cowes Safer Neighbourhood Officers (Police) and the IW Council's Neighbourhoods and Environment Officer (Rural Area Managers), and the Parish Council is indebted to Police Constable Mark Thomas and PCSO Steve Oatley together with Jacqui Darby for their enthusiasm shown by attendance at Parish Council meetings to give reports.

b. Gurnard-in-Bloom Jubilee Fund

This organisation continues to serve the Village well and I'm quite sure everyone can see the fruit of their labours. The Parish Council is hugely grateful to the small band of people who create such colour in the Village, and it has been a pleasure to continue to support their work. Whilst there were no grants accessed on their behalf by the Parish Council as in 2008/9, financial and other support was given during the year. The team is extremely concerned and frustrated by what they see as prolific parking on grass verges, which undermines their work

c. Waste Management

A wheelie bin has been supplied for the tourist season for the past 5 years, and is in place again now on the Esplanade and will remain there until the autumn half term holiday. There are 16 dog bins in the village, 11 of which the Parish Council funded and continues to service – this is an addition of 2 since last year (Esplanade and the Marsh). The Parish Council took part in a Beachwatch litter pick and survey exercise in September 2009 and a more general clean-up campaign is planned for 8th May this year on both the beach (10am) and in the village. (more volunteers please – many hands make light work?)

- d. **IW Walking Festival**
Gurnard didn't feature in the walks programme last year, but our Walk Coordinator Jo Moore has a walk included in the 2010 programme that will take place on Sunday 9th May starting from the Outlook Café on the Marsh at 12.30pm walking the 3½ miles to Thorness and back.
- e. **Parish Councillors, Committee Members & Youth Advisors**
2009 saw Parish elections taking place, but only 7 nominations for the 9 seats were received. The only route to filling these vacancies so soon after an election was to co-opt, and 3 applications were received leading to Nigel Harley and Ben Hollis being co-opted on 14th July. There was one resignation in August, which attracted 3 nominations and was eventually filled by Tony Hathaway through co-option on 10th November. No training has been undertaken by any Councillor this year. There are or have been Parish Council representatives on the IW Assn of Local Councils, Cowes Youth Club Management Committee, Island Waste Advisory Group, Marsh Road Residents Association, the May Queen Committee and the IW County Training Partnership, and all of these have involved outside meetings and other activities from time to time. One Parish Councillor also serves as a Parish Tree Warden alongside Richard Bolwell. Attendance by Parish Councillors at Full Council meetings from April 2009 to March 2010 has dropped from 89% last year to 82% this year. The Community Projects Committee lost one member during the year, but Councillor Paul Fuller has been co-opted as a replacement. With effect from July 2008 the Parish Council has benefited from the input to 2 committees and 1 working party from a total of 6 youth advisors - 4 from Cowes High School and 2 from Solent Middle School – there have been some changes during this year and one youth advisor is now invited to attend Full Council meetings too.
- f. **Grants**
The Grants programme runs during March and April, and the Parish Council approved grants totalling £700 on 13th April 2010. Full details of all grants paid last year (2009) are in the financial statement.
- g. **Grass Cutting.**
In addition to the verge cutting undertaken by the IW Council, the Parish Council has continued to fund the maintenance of the grassed areas at Pond Green and Gurnard Heights. The local contractor appointed in 2009 continues for this year. Some major shrub and tree pruning work was also undertaken during the year again at Pond Green.
- h. **Website**
The website has continued to be regularly updated, and is increasingly being used by both residents and people from outside the Village as well as some from many Countries across the world – there are between 300 and 500 visits per month, which is an increase on last year. The forum is not a success story, though, as it is not used much which is shame as it could be a great consultation tool.
- i. **Traffic Management Plan**
The Parish Council's Traffic Management Plan Working Party which consists of 10 members including 3 Councillors, has met 3 times in total during the past year with the next meeting scheduled for next month. Issues dealt with during the year include speeding, signage, parking & school run traffic and safety problems, and it has also carried out a residents' survey follow-up exercise in Hilton Road. There is currently one vacancy on this working party if any resident wishes to help out.

j. Village Hall
The Parish Council continues to be indebted to the Hall Management Committee for all its hard work. The Parish Council was unable to financially support the work there this past year, but some administrative support was given to assist the committee in gaining additional Hallmark 2 & 3 accolades, which opened up access to about £4000 worth of funding which is being used for upgrading heating and insulation projects.

k. Projects
The main project this past year has continued to be the Play Area on the Village Green, both in terms of raising the funds needed and the project management. Without doubt this has been the largest and, fortunately, the most successful project ever undertaken by the Parish Council and this not only included the play equipment but also seating, fencing, gating and signage as well as arranging on-going management and maintenance regimes. The young people had access to the scheme from early autumn 2009 and Gurnard Primary School attended en mass on 16th November to formally open the scheme. Just short of £75,000 was raised from outside sources to fund the project and, due to there being some funding remaining, an additional item of equipment was ordered and is now in place (should be!!). Seating has taken a while due to weather constraints, but 4 seats are now also in place all of which are dedicated.

Some initial work has started on considering what to do with the primary school site after the school moves to the Solent Middle site. A working party was formed with the prime aim initially being to ascertain if there is a desire in the village community to do anything with it or to leave it to the IW Council to decide. This is still on-going and the Community Projects Committee is likely to get involved with this project very soon.

The Parish Council's Gurnard Community Association project came to fruition during the year but it hasn't undertaken any project work yet. This will primarily be used to draw down funding for projects that the Parish Council is unable to apply for, but where voluntary groups can. There is still one vacancy on this group so if this interests you please do make contact with the Parish Clerk.

The Parish Council is currently working alongside the Sailing Club on a project to reintroduce the Gurnard Regatta, and this 1st such event for some years now will take place on 14th August. If anyone wants to help out with anything on the day do contact the Parish Clerk.

For about 4 years now the Parish Council has taken on a project to attract some maintenance and ownership of the footpath behind the Gurnard Heights houses. This is almost complete now with the land due to be dedicated to the IW Council very shortly - Rights of Way will then look after it. Thanks go to those residents who took the trouble to respond to the questionnaires, which were needed as evidence.

l. May Queen
One Councillor continues to serve on the May Queen committee and the Parish Council will be attending the fete officially for the 2nd time on 8th May and this year's event will be used to consult on 4 issues, so do come along and say hello.

- m. **Affordable Housing**
This project moved one step closer during the year in that a possible site was identified, but unfortunately it proved not to be suitable so the project is on hold again pending a new site being found. Working with Northwood Parish Council on this is also an option.
- n. **Victorian Water Fountain at Woodvale**
Complete refurbishment of this is almost completed and, whilst this is an IW Council project, the Parish Council has assisted with covering about 30% of the cost.
- o. **Statement of Accounts 2009/2010:**

RECEIPTS		EXPENDITURE	
Balance b/fwd	26329.15		
Precept	28000.00	Staffing & associated costs	17286.63
VAT	9381.15	Hall hire	40.00
Dividends	0.00	Insurance	575.89
Interest	93.79	Chairman's Allowance	105.19
Grants	65159.00	Subscriptions	494.52
Garden bags	22.00	Audit	407.75
Inland Revenue	75.00	Waste bin emptying	2692.39
Refunds	89.25	Garden & Dog Bags	0.00
		Data Protection Notification	35.00
		Members' Allowances	4.00
		Training/conference	453.50
		IT & Office	1079.78
		Grass cutting etc	269.00
		Street furniture/signs	524.20
		Buildings fund	0.00
		Contingency (N/Hood Watch Signs)	50.00
		Village Grants	1200.00
		Playground maintenance	1500.00
		Playground equipment	71019.48
		Petty Cash	140.00
		Total expenditure	97877.33
		ADD	
		Halifax a/c balance	19095.48
Total receipts	102820.19	HSBC Business a/c	2296.66
Balance b/fwd	26329.15	HSBC current a/c	9879.87
Total	129149.34	Total	129149.34