

# G U R N A R D **PARISH PLAN**

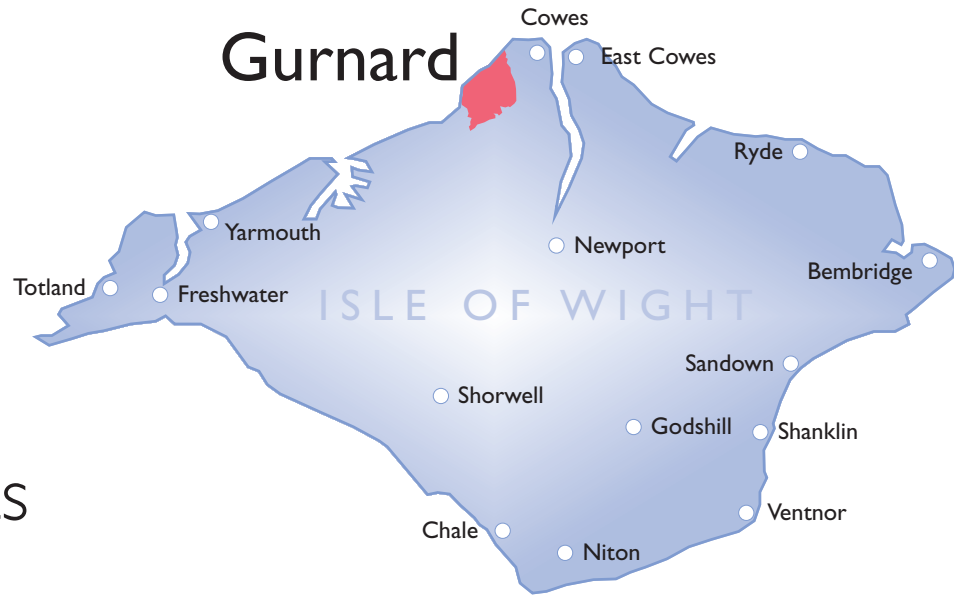


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## Foreword

The Countryside Agency, as part of its Vital Villages Programme, is supporting communities across the country to produce local plans.

The Gurnard Parish Plan is the result of extensive consultation amongst local residents to identify local problems and priorities. It sets out an achievable and long term vision for the future of Gurnard and includes a detailed action plan to achieve this vision.

Work on the Parish Plan started in May 2003 when Gurnard Parish Council agreed to form a Parish Plan Steering Group. A letter was sent to 32 local voluntary and commercial organisations and community groups (Appendix 1), and a notice was placed on the village notice board inviting residents to an open meeting with the aim of forming a Steering Group.

This plan has been prepared by the Gurnard Parish Plan Steering Group. It is based on the consultation which we carried out with all local residents, including school age children. The

various forms of research undertaken, and their results, are described in this document.

We have aimed to portray the unique qualities of Gurnard which make it such an attractive place in which to live. The document then goes on to describe different aspects of community life and the local environment and how residents have indicated that these should be preserved, changed or improved. This led us to develop a series of key aims which reflect the aspirations of our community at the present time. An action plan sets out how we propose to achieve each of these aims.

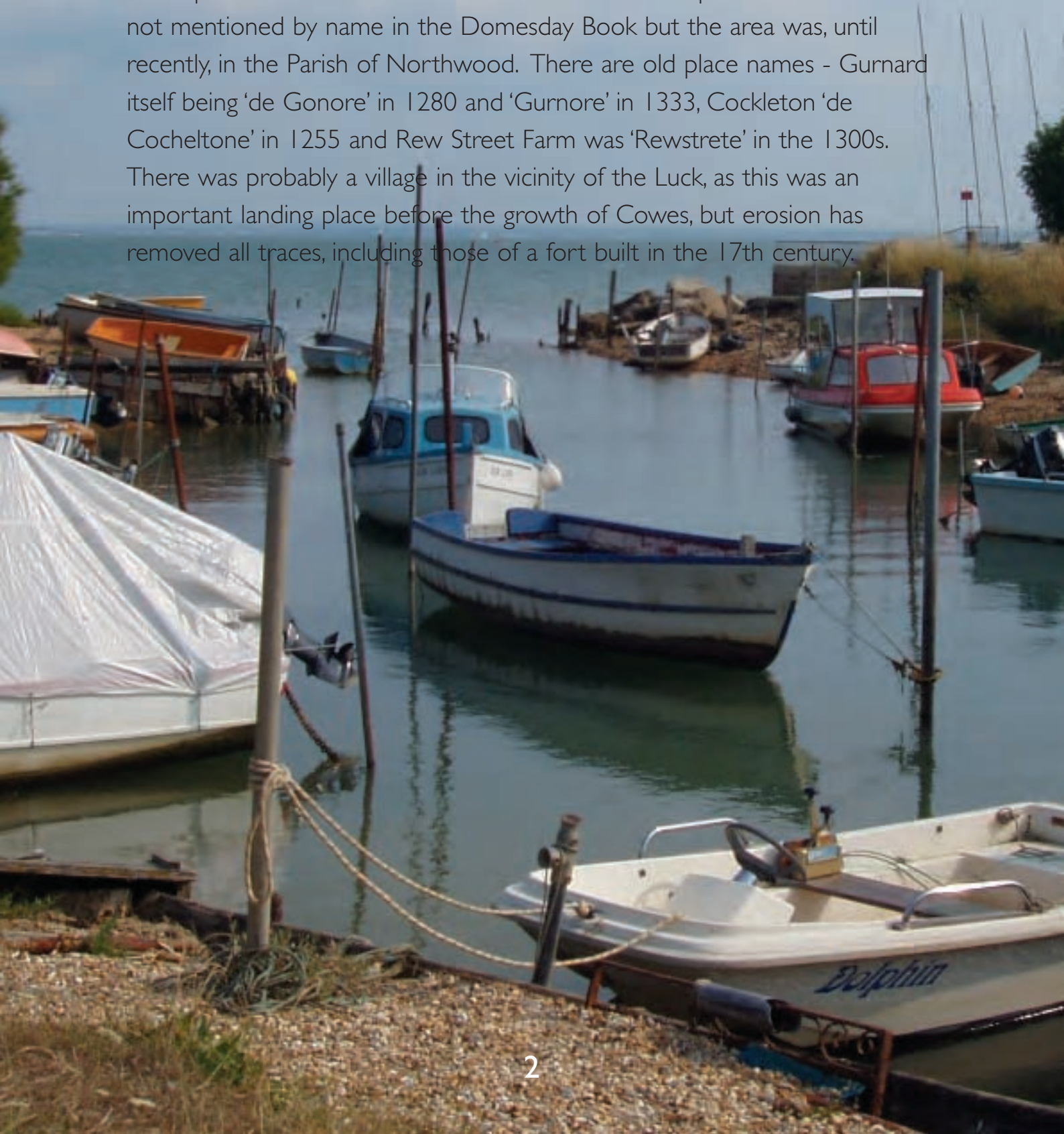
The action plan will be reviewed regularly by the Parish Council and residents will be kept informed about progress made in pursuing these actions.

We anticipate that this document will be updated over the coming years to reflect changes in our community and the area in which we live, so that it continues to offer relevant guidance to the Parish Council and the Isle of Wight Council as well as to local community and commercial organisations.

*The Parish Plan Steering Group*

# Historical background

The earliest evidence of a settlement in the Gurnard area was Roman. A villa was discovered in 1864 by Edwin Smith, but two years later it had disappeared as coastal erosion took its toll. Little more is known about subsequent settlements in the area until the Victorian period. Gurnard is not mentioned by name in the Domesday Book but the area was, until recently, in the Parish of Northwood. There are old place names - Gurnard itself being 'de Gonore' in 1280 and 'Gurnore' in 1333, Cockleton 'de Cochelton' in 1255 and Rew Street Farm was 'Rewstrete' in the 1300s. There was probably a village in the vicinity of the Luck, as this was an important landing place before the growth of Cowes, but erosion has removed all traces, including those of a fort built in the 17th century.



The 'new' village of Gurnard began to take shape in the 1850s. Captain James Wilkinson, R.N. retired to Gurnard Farm, where he died in 1851. He appears never to have married and had no heirs. Shortly after he died, some of his land was put up for sale as building plots along what are now Worsley and Solent View roads. Most of these plots were intended for villas and so were presumably meant to attract retired service personnel who were coming to the Island in large numbers owing to the presence of Queen Victoria at Osborne House. Edmund Pritchett, whose family were well-known local brickmakers, took the first plot and established a brickworks behind his house, Elim Villa (now the Portland Inn).

Another early building was the Gurnard Hotel (Bucklers View now stands on the site) which predated the first church! This latter was built in 1863 on a site halfway down what was then Gurnard Lane but is now Church Road. The village grew so rapidly that the chapel was soon too small and the present church was built in 1892/3 on land donated by Captain Thomas Hudson, R.N. of The Dell (now Gurnard Pines). The old church had been used as a school since 1871 and continued to be used as such until the present school was opened in 1906 after reports of 'serious overcrowding' in the old building. By the start of the twentieth century the Village

had a church, a pub, a school, a grocer, a Post Office, a dairy, a baker, a bootmaker and a reading room. The Coastguard Cottages had been built in Solent View Road in the 1870s and shortly before World War I a police constable was installed in Church Road. The War brought changes and losses but even after the War, the Village continued to grow.

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The social centre was the Marsh where the Regatta was held before the War as were fairs. Refreshment rooms were built in the 1920s. A gravel spit formed a natural lagoon which became a popular boating lake until it's equally natural disappearance.

The 1930s saw further developments, many instigated by the Westbrook family. Builders by trade, they bought up quite a few plots in the Village. They were instrumental in the founding of Gurnard Sailing Club in 1931, the first clubhouse being built on land which they owned. They were also involved in the founding of the Women's Institute in 1936 and the W.I. Hall was built on land donated by the family. Captain Hudson died in 1936 and The Dell was sold to a syndicate and became Gurnard Pines Holiday Camp just before World War II.

After the disruption of wartime, life eventually returned to normal and the Village continued to expand. Woodvale Road had been laid out in 1935 but was not developed until after the War. The only factory in the area was built by Readers (Isle of Wight) Limited in 1960. Gurnard Heights was built on the site of Bayview Caravan Park in the late 1970s but the biggest development was the building of houses on the 'barley field' (between Albert Road and Lower Church Road) in the 1960s which, with a few recent additions, brought the Village to the form that we see today.



# Gurnard today

Gurnard is now a large rural Parish bordering the Solent which has changed little in appearance since the 1970s. There have been no major developments, just gardens disappearing as houses have been built to in fill the gaps. The population has stayed very much the same.

The village has lost several shops including the butcher and, recently, the Post Office. We still have a newsagent and a village general store. In the 1980s the Gurnard Hotel was demolished and replaced by Bucklers View, a sheltered housing scheme owned by Isle of Wight Housing Association, which comprises warden assisted flats for rent by the elderly.

The Parish has a thriving C.of E. Church, a Methodist Chapel, a Primary School and a Middle School, all of which are heavily involved with the community. The Primary School has been enlarged over the last 20 years, and now has an orchard, an environmental area, a large playing field and an indoor learner swimming pool, funded entirely by the PTA. This can be hired out. Both the Middle and High schools are within easy walking distance of Gurnard. The Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides and Brownies have their own building. There is also a W.I. hall. Both of these are used by many other

organisations for social events. The Methodist Chapel has its school room which is used for smaller gatherings. We also have junior football and netball teams, all such an important part of village life.

The Parish Council has various functions, all closely related to village life and interests. It grew out of the Residents Association which came into being many years ago, primarily to look after village interests.

Over the past few years many trees and daffodils have been planted in Worsley Road as it has such wide verges. Planters have been situated throughout the Village and, to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, two sections of Worsley Road verges were replaced by raised beds and planted up with more exotic items and bedding plants. These beds are maintained by village volunteers.