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## Mayor's Quarterly Report

Welcome to this quarter's Town Crier. It does seem a very long time since we all met, and this is certainly true for the Town Councillors. As stated on our website, following government advice, monthly council meetings have been cancelled and, to date, we have no indication of when that situation will change. We will make sure the very latest news about council activity is on the front page of the website for everyone.

On behalf of the Town Council I wish to thank you so much in keeping to the Governments advice in social distancing when out and about. I have passed many of you on my different walks over the course of the last three months. The smiles, politeness and friendly banter has been wonderful.

The Polish ship ORP Blyskawica was remembered on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at East Cowes Cemetery, with thanks for their outstanding gallantry saving lives in East Cowes. Due to the ban on public gatherings, sadly this could not be publicised.

VE Weekend. Where do I start... what a weekend and what gorgeous weather we had. I know the town was expecting to do so much more to celebrate this auspicious occasion, and I am sure many will have been disappointed, but you all did so well in making the most of it. The Council's VE Day competition for best dressed house,

window and garden had several entries which were brilliant.

We saw some wonderful displays. I, together with the Deputy Mayor and Cllr Love judged the entries. We were so impressed with the original ideas and out of the box displays. Thank you all so much for making the town look so festive. Very well done! We have posted photographs on social media and in the newsletter for you to enjoy, as we are only too aware many of our residents are still self-isolating at home.



Sincere thanks must go to the VE Day Crafters, who were marvellous in decorating the town, a year's worth of working together to bring such delightful displays to cheer us all. I hope you all saw the press release about this on the County Press website with photos of the displays around the town.

On behalf of the Town Council and the East Cowes community, VE Day wreaths were placed at the War Memorial and Memorial seat by the Town Hall, in memory of all the lives lost to bring us all the peace we have today.



A BIG thank you must be extended to Cllr Michael Paler and Cllr Karl Love, for their sterling efforts organising and managing the volunteer support scheme. They have both worked so hard to ensure that those who requiring support receive the help they need, only made possible by the wonderful 40 volunteers who are shopping, collecting prescriptions and phoning those who are lonely.

A HUGE THANK YOU to them all, Words are just not enough.

When will our lives return to "normal", no one knows! We must look forward though and ensure we keep ourselves safe and well. I feel very proud of our Town's residents, who have stepped up to the plate, kept to the rules and are helping those in need. You all deserve a much-rewarded pat on the back.

Thank you.

*Jane Rann, Mayor*



## VE Day Competition Winners

The Mayor, Cllr Jane Rann and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Michael Paler, accompanied by Cllr Karl Love, used their daily permitted exercise to walk around the town and judge the entries for the Best dressed House Front, Window and Front Garden. They each won a £50 Waitrose Voucher with the runners up receiving a £10 voucher. Everyone who entered received a Certificate. Thank you to all who took part and helped to make the town look its best for the commemoration. The VE Day spirit and sense of occasion really came through.



## VE Day 75th Anniversary Marked in East Cowes

Here are a few photos taken around East Cowes showing the decorations and wreath laying to commemorate V.E. Day 75th Anniversary.



The decorations were all handmade by East Cowes V.E. Celebration Crafters and displayed around the Town to mark the occasion on Friday 8th May. Mayor Jane Rann commented, "The VE Day decorations will spread some cheer in these unsettling times we are experiencing." Cllr Michael Paler has worked closely with the East Cowes V.E. Celebration Crafters on this project. Together Town Councillors and residents have been working very



## Community Hub

The Public Works Loan Application required to provide funds for the majority of the cost of undertaking this project is currently under consideration by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government. We hope to hear back soon.



hard, for over a year, on plans to celebrate this special day in our calendar.



Further celebrations will take place in 2021 due to the current situation. The council also ran competition. See the winners on page 3.

## East Cowes and Whippingham Volunteer Community Support Hub

The East Cowes and Whippingham Volunteer Support Hub goes from strength to strength with 40 local volunteers supporting the communities of East Cowes and Whippingham. They have been working alongside Town Councillor Michael Paler and Councillor Karl Love; collecting and delivering prescriptions and shopping. Other volunteers are phoning those in need of a friendly voice. Medication has been collected locally, as well as from Ryde and Newport and even from the mainland. Councillor Paler takes part in a weekly Zoom meeting with other volunteer project co-ordinators from across the island.

MediShield, a company in Lee-on-Solent, generously made, delivered and donated £700 worth of face shields. The Managing Director, Andrew Barnett, made the delivery by rib to East Cowes Marina with the help of the Cowes Harbour Commission. These vital pieces of PPE will be very welcome by our NHS and front line carers.

Information on how to access support is available on the East Cowes Town Council website [www.eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk) or you can call the IW Council Helpline on 823600 from 9 – 5 Monday to Sunday.



Many charities and their beneficiaries are under additional pressure at this time. £1200 has been donated to the Isle of Wight Branch of the Wessex Cancer Trust to assist with their work during the pandemic. The Footprint Trust has also received £2000 to help it continue to deliver its “Warmer Homes” energy saving guidance service throughout the year.

## Getting to know your Town Councillors

**Margaret Webster**



**Peter Lloyd**



This edition brings two faces very familiar to residents of East Cowes. Margaret represents North Ward and Peter represents Osborne Ward.

## Supporting the People of East Cowes

The Town Council has made available from its budget a fund of £5000 for community support, with a further £5000 if required.

We are working in conjunction with Community Action and Community Spirited during the crisis to supply the needs of people in East Cowes. So far Foodbanks in Ryde and Cowes have each received a donation of £1000 and £500 has been donated to the Waitrose Essential Shopping Scheme to date.

The Foodbank in Cowes responded with the following message.

“Thank you very much for your wonderful donation. The Isle of Wight Foodbank has seen a 50% increase of people needing to use the Foodbank. As our food donations have decreased and we become busier, we have needed to use monetary donations to purchase the food we need and to cover the cost of our increased van usage. We are incredibly thankful to all who give to us, may it be food, money, time or resources. With such generosity, we are able to continue helping local people in crisis”.

A representative of the Waitrose scheme commented “The Waitrose team would like to thank East Cowes Town Council for choosing us to help with your donations, and hope that all those sent out within our community so far have provided support, security and comfort - even if just for a few days. The bags have been made up to provide staples for the cupboard and enable meals to be made for individuals, families and the vulnerable. We have delivered to those who have needed a friendly face and a simple reminder that we are here if they need help. We serve the community the best we can proudly and hope to continue this support through the uncertain months ahead.”

## Anyone for Tennis?

Following the easing of government lockdown restrictions East Cowes Town Council have reopened the tennis court on the Esplanade. It will be open from 8am to 7pm each day. The court is restricted to 4 people at a time. Please ensure that you wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before entering, respect social distancing and keep the area tidy and free from litter for the enjoyment of everyone who wants to use it.



## BUSINESS NOT QUITE AS USUAL DURING LOCKDOWN!

The Town Council has continued to make essential decisions virtually during lockdown. The Clerk has set up a system enabling the Council to continue to make these decisions and comment on planning applications by email. All these decisions can be viewed on the Meetings page of the website.

Since the closure of the Town Hall the Clerk and Assistant Clerk are working from home. Other staff, who are able to, have continued to work when safe to do so; respecting social distancing at all times. With all facilities closed some staff have volunteered to assist with supporting the Volunteer Community Support Hub delivering essential shopping and medicines to the community in East Cowes and Whippingham.

The public toilets, playparks, paddling pool and other recreational facilities remain closed pending further government guidance.

## Have you spotted them?



New signs are now displayed on the Esplanade to remind everyone not to feed the seagulls. In accordance with advice from the RSPB please **DO NOT FEED THE SEAGULLS** as it encourages them to steal food and results in litter on the Seafront. Let's keep the town looking clean and tidy!

## HOW TO CONTACT THE TOWN COUNCIL

**The Clerks Office  
East Cowes Town Hall  
York Avenue  
East Cowes  
Isle of Wight  
PO32 6RU**

**Tel: 01983 299082**

**Email: [clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk)**

**Website: [www.eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk)**

Contributions to this newsletter from the community are welcome. If you are involved with a local group, project or event please email an article and a photo to: [assistantclerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:assistantclerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk)

Copies of the newsletter are usually available from the Town Hall lobby, retail outlets in the town, Queensgate Primary School, Holy Cross Primary School as well as on the Town Council website and Facebook.

**DISCLAIMER: This newsletter is produced by East Cowes Town Council. All articles are taken in good faith. We cannot take any legal queries resulting from these. Submitted articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Town Council. We reserve the right not to print submitted articles.**