

## **Councillor Reports March 2022**

### **Cllr Tracy Reardon - Mayor's report**

It's been a busy month of benches, markets, storms and war!

On the 15<sup>th</sup> February I visited the Lifeboat restaurant to accept a picnic bench they had donated to replace the one that was set on fire at the skateboard park.

It is with many thanks that they have shown a great community spirit in wanting to help make our town a brighter place.

We were lucky enough to proudly receive a Netflix bench donated in connection with the tv series "After life" and is a bench of hope. We placed the bench on Victoria recreation ground and hope that not only will it be a place for reflection but that it will offer the community a place to just sit and have a chat.

Next came a storm that really battered our seafront and works are ongoing to get the paddling pool back up and running, damage to the pump house was to quite an extent and residents at the coastguard cottages were badly affected, we will be looking at the plans for flood resilience going into the future.

22<sup>nd</sup> February I was asked to do a radio interview for BBC radio Solent about our bench of hope.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> a further opportunity to make comments on the LCWIP was offered in the town hall.

1<sup>st</sup> March we had an exciting meeting with Claire from market days, our plans to start a monthly community market for our town is gathering momentum and is looking like the first market will be on Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup> in the town hall. Hopefully we can build on this as the market progresses and create a vibrant feel in

the town centre, this will help to encourage footfall to all the local shops and showcase small independent traders.

I also met with Graham Barneston from Red Funnel to see how we could work together to improve our town, this meeting proved invaluable as just the next day I had to ask for his help when I received a desperate phone call from Victoria and Lisa at Madaid.

The horrific war in the Ukraine was escalating at such a speed that donations from people wanting to help were piling into them at a rate of knots and more space was needed to sort them out.

We managed to secure that space at 11 York Avenue very kindly with the help of the IWC and a huge thanks go to them.

Red Funnel offered free travel for the trucks to take the donations on their way to Moldova and onwards over the border to the people of the Ukraine.

It is with huge thanks that with this help from IWC and Red Funnel that Madaid have been able to coordinate such a massive task. I have felt so humble at seeing the amount of kind donations that our Island has sent and the selfless time that the wonderful volunteers have put in to get these donations sorted and packed, it really has been a massive team effort and I want to thank all of you so very much.

After packing the first truck we realised that we needed more help and the IW College answered our call by supplying students from the military and public services course which proved invaluable, once again a massive thanks go to them.

We have been supported by local businesses with lunches and refreshments to keep the volunteers going, kettles of water, cardboard boxes, packing tape, cups of tea and even a window

clean have all helped the operation along with numerous van drivers picking up and dropping off the collections.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the knowledge from 10 years of taking medical aid to Moldova by Victoria at Madaid and her team, it has been truly inspirational and our Island has stepped up to show the wonderful community spirit that makes us all proud to live here. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to everyone and all that have made this possible, our thoughts are with all those suffering the atrocities of war!

### **Cllr Cameron Palin - March Report**

Barratt Homes

I have recently received an email from Barratt Homes which states the following:

*“we will be shutting the footpath linking cadets walk-Saunders Way on 14/03 for 6 weeks, for reference that is the section of footpath adjacent to where somebody fly-tipped a fridge last year”*

I have since been down the incomplete Saunders Way road to see much clearance has been done so I am hopeful the work will commence on March 14th.

Ukraine Donations

Over the last 2 weeks I have been supporting the efforts at 11 York Avenue, where we have been collecting, sorting, packing and loading the aid into artic lorries set for Moldova. It has been an honour to work with the amazing team from MAD-AID based at 10 York Avenue, as well as the awesome volunteers. I've also been supporting MAD-AID in getting funding for these artic lorries, including managing to get a huge £3,500 donation from the Isle of Wight Round Table. MAD-AID have now sent 3 artic lorries from the Isle of Wight with another expecting to leave Friday (18th March). Well done and thank you everyone.

East Cowes Tree Plan

At this months Facilities, Projects and Events committee the town council supposed my proposal to begin a town tree plan. Since then I have hit the ground running drafting this plan, my next step will be to consult with my fellow Town Councillors and Council staff before bringing it back to a vote for implementation.

Then plan consists of all council land which includes: Victoria Grove Recreational Ground, Jubilee Recreational Ground and the esplanade. The plan is to establish greater planting of trees, hedge rows and flower underplanting. Watch this space...

### Esplanade Project

During storm Eunice the Esplanade took a real beating, with lots of debris coming over the seawall, stones covering the road, benches and bins displaced and lots of branches down in the forest. Myself, local residents and fellow councillors joined together to help clear the stones off of the bench, replace benches and bins as well as assessing the damage to town council facilities such as the paddling pool and park.

I'd like to thank Cllr Sharon Lake who has led the esplanade project which is now underway.

### Walking and Cycling Plan

During the month I attended the walking and cycling consultation ran by Daniel James in the town hall. This is to be fed back to the town council as part of the LCWIP ( Local Cycling & Walking Implementation Plan). It was great to see there are many possibilities and once Saunders Way is complete this could massively help with that plan.

### Community Action Isle of Wight

At the end of last month I met with Kay Smith from Community Action Isle of Wight where we spoke about youth provision across the town, what can be done and how we can get the youth club thriving again as well as looking at providing things such as flower planting classes and much more.