

IOW Councillor Report May 2019 for Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council



Visit By Dr Sterling

It was a great pleasure to welcome Dr Sterling to the Island in April.

Following on from our visit to Dorset to learn about the cut and collect method for wild verges used in Dorset.

I was pleased to invite Dr Sterling to present his method to the April Environmental Forum at County Hall, which was very well received and really helpful to all present.

Dr Sterling was very pleased with the progress he saw and was especially excited about the Parish in Shorwell taking the initiative with the adopted verges programme instigated by Lydia Fulleylove and supported by Shorwell Parish Council, Isle of Wight Council and Island Roads.

Island Roads have been asked not to cut these verges and volunteers cut them twice a year and rake clear, this reduces fertility which slows grass growth, then allows wild flowers to grow which looks better and is better for wildlife with habitats for Butterflies, Bees etc.

This is good news for Dr Sterling as he is now working with Butterfly Conservation and hopes to see the Glanville Flitillary whilst here, as it is prevalent on the Island and Dr Sterling became a tourist on the Island following the Forum.

Lock it or lose it

At a recent Parish Council meeting in Newport members had an update from the Police on a number of matters from Anti Social Behaviour to theft, I asked a question regarding the spate of thefts from sheds and garages in the Central Wight area. I was informed that they had made some progress and arrests, however there were still reports of theft from sheds and garages coming in, so I just wanted to put out a timely reminder to residents to make sure you secure your sheds and garages and make sure you lock it and not lose it.

Speed limit review

Residents might be interested to know that at the scrutiny committee that I Chair at County Hall, I asked for the Police and Public Health England to attend for a discussion around speed and especially within villages.

The outcome of a very passionate discussion was that members have decided to have a review of Speed Limits Island wide and we will set up a task and finish group to bring a report back to the committee with outcomes and recommendations to Cabinet on what changes might be needed to policy.

A recent Public Health report showed the accident rate on the Island was in the red and needs to be addressed to bring numbers down to a green showing. It is not fair to residents or visitors to the Island to leave our roads unsafe due to speed limits not suitable to the road conditions.

In my opinion the Forest Road should have a reduced speed limit in order to avoid a repeat of the very sad fatal accident there recently, Islanders have known that this road and especially at the Whitehouse Road/Betty Haunt Lane cross roads where vehicles can still travel at 60mph across it.

I hope this review brings forward some more sensible speed limits to many roads across the Island.

We will be looking at quiet lanes also as part of this review where some of our very narrow lanes with pedestrians, cyclists and equestrian use could be calmed to make them safer for the users.

I will keep members updated as we go along and any input and thoughts on this subject please send me an email or letter accordingly.

Isle of Wight Council AGM

We are now rapidly approaching the AGM of the Isle of Wight Council which is on the 15th May at which time we choose a new Chairman and Vice Chairman for the coming municipal year.

The Chairs of committee's will also be chosen and we all find out what we are to be involved in for the next year.

The administration will decide who will form the Cabinet for the next year and I will update members and residents in due course after the meeting.

Councillor activity for 2018/19

Since being elected in the Central Wight by-election in January 2018 I have been very busy as I was asked to join the main Scrutiny committee followed by the Health Scrutiny, then the Children's Services Scrutiny followed by Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny which I Chair. I have also now joined the Licensing Committee and have been drafted in to almost all the year's Planning Committee meetings.

We have produced two reports from the committee that I Chair, one on affordable housing and one on wild verges both of which have been adopted by Cabinet and are in process.

I have not missed any IWCC meetings that I should be attending.

With best wishes to you all,

Steve

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