

**ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9  
OF  
CHALE PARISH COUNCIL**

Business as usual

1. Councillor changes  
Resignation of former Chairman, Cllr Peter Atkinson for business reasons. Peter continues to support the council, not least in managing our website. New Councillor, Karen Le Brecht, elected unopposed.
2. Precept  
Cutbacks in support by the Isle of Wight Council combined with continuing increases in costs have led to the first significant increase in percentage terms for a number of years. The council seeks to add financial value to its efforts for the community by raising grants on a regular basis. These generally raise additional sums equal to the precept.
3. Policies and procedures  
These are kept fully up to date with best practice and Councillors undertake a significant amount of training between them during the year.
4. Consultations on a wide range of issues  
Not a month goes by e.g. bus timetables, planning enforcement, Rural Sustainability Matrix, Revised Code of Conduct for Councillors.
5. Representation on other bodies
  - a. IWALC – the island wide body for town and parish councils. We have resigned with effect from 1 April 2009 as following attendance by different members of the council over several months; we were not convinced that membership was providing value for the community.
  - b. Recreation Ground Association; Churchyard Committee; Chale Village Partnership; Island Waste Services Community Advisory Group; Brighstone & District Newsletter Committee; Chale School and Village Community Association
6. Planning
  - a. Applications – Isle of Wight Council do take comments into account and now publish the officers' reports on line so we are able to understand how our comments are considered. The Chale Village Design Statement provides a foundation for our comments.
  - b. Enforcement – a number of issues have been raised with the council during the year and these have generally been taken forward and pursued with the Isle of Wight Council following discussion. Some have been resolved with others of a more persistent nature yet to be concluded.
7. Looking after the village
  - a. Tree planting with £2500 of Million Blooms grant from the Isle of Wight Council – replacing trees lost to disease over the years along the Green and Chale Street. Grateful thanks are due to our Honorary Parish Tree Warden, David Whitehurst, for his skills in planning this and we hope that the trees will survive. Whilst we will be watering them during dry weather, anyone who lives near any of the planting is encouraged to put a couple of gallons of water round the base from time to time.
  - b. Maintaining the Green – various documents regarding the regulations over the use and maintenance of the Green have been unearthed. It would appear that the responsibility for cutting the grass lies with the

Isle of Wight Council. As that council has indicated major reduction in their grant contribution for grass cutting, the council has advised them it no longer intends to cut the grass at our community's expense. A response has yet to be received but we hope to be able to use any grass cutting grant that we do obtain to support the maintenance of the churchyard.

- c. Seats – repaired and repainted
  - d. Hoy Monument – some conservation works completed to the base.
- Thanks are due to Mr Terry Wren for his guidance.

### Additional Activities

1. Communication – ensuring villagers are aware
  - a. The council would like more people to come and listen to our meetings
    - Our new Standing Orders seem to work well with people taking the opportunity to address the council (mainly on planning matters).
    - Agendas and Minutes are put up (meetings are in public and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday except August at 19.30, here in the WI Hall)
  - b. Reports of council meetings are written and regularly published in – Chale Mail, South Wight Beacon, Village Talk in IW County Press
2. Descriptive and Illustrated panels for the village

Rupert Besley, the County Press cartoonist presented his first outline designs for the new panels to be installed at each end of the village. These are expected to be finalised next month and installed at the beginning of the summer. Grant monies are paying for them.
3. School

A frustrating year where the council has had meetings and correspondence with officers and the leader of the Isle of Wight Council as well as the Chief Executive of the Rural Community Council. In addition, the council nominated one of its members to the Chale School and Village Community association (established as a cross community body to fight the Isle of Wight Council's closure plan).

The council made a formal complaint to the Isle of Wight Council about the way its submissions had not been addressed, particularly the issue of federation. This complaint has been considered as unfounded and the council has now decided to ask for their complaint to be considered at the highest level by officers of the council as this is the final step in the process and needs to be completed if the matter remains unresolved and is to be taken further.
4. Housing – village homes for village people

Low cost shared ownership – a handful of houses (up to 4) – the council is working with the Rural Housing Enabler – complex issues need to be resolved in order to ensure they are affordable by villagers – possible sites are still being investigated but not pursued vigorously given the current state of both the housing and funding markets.
5. Speeding

A case has been made to the Isle of Wight Council for a 20 mph zone in Spanners Close and The Glebe as well as for a 50 mph limit in Blythe Shute and the Military Road past the Recreation Ground. This case is supported by the speed readings taken by the Isle of Wight Council that currently refuses to take any action pending the introduction of a new island wide speeding strategy.

## 6. Village Design Statement

Completed within budget and a copy delivered to every house in the village. This community-based document provides a fundamental component in the way planning matters for Chale are now considered. Once the new Island Plan reaches the appropriate stage, we will be seeking its formal adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document and in the meantime, it is being used as informal guidance by planning officers.

## 7. New Grants

- a. Minibus trips for Older People – have been regularly arranged thanks to Isobel Thorp, our Older Persons Champion. This grant will run out shortly.
- b. Smuggling Pageant – activities were arranged in conjunction with the Carnival Centre at Spring Half Term last year with more in the summer holidays. The programme culminated in the Pieces of Eight Event on the Green last August. An event by the village and for the village supported by Chale Farm ice creams and Benedicts Pizzas with music provided by villagers (Kerouac and the Lowe family and friends).

## 8. Eco Island

No progress has been made with this project, as the promised resources for the pilot project have not been forthcoming from the Isle of Wight Council.

## 9. Christmas

The Honorary Parish Tree Warden kindly co-ordinated the usual tree on the Green and a successful carol singing evening under the tree was also arranged by the council in conjunction with the Rev. Dru Dennis.

## 10. Footpaths and Car Parks

- a. Whale Chine – continuing slow progress as we await the appearance of a consultant's report commissioned by the Isle of Wight Council
- b. The council plan to undertake a review of all road and path signage in the village during the summer. All volunteers are welcome and can either contact the chairman or the clerk.
- c. Footpath from one end of the village to the other. This remains a village priority as evidenced in the research for the Village Design Statement. A council working party has been looking at the options again and established three options, none of these are desirable or achievable in the current financial climate. The council continues to remain open to suggestions on new ideas to resolve this long standing community concern.

## 11. Big Tidy Up

A successful tidy up day in the Green and Spanners Close area was undertaken with the support of our Environment and Neighbourhood Officer, Harry Dea, during the Easter holiday.

## 12. Chaler of the Year Award 2008

The first and very deserving winner was Mrs Wendy Hardy, a stalwart volunteer of our community.

## 13. Isle of Wight Councillor.

The council continues to benefit from the regular attendance of the Isle of Wight Council member for Chale, Niton and Whitwell, Mrs Wendy Arnold, at our meetings.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The External Auditor approved the Annual Audit for the year 2007/08 on 29 November 2008.

The balances held in the bank accounts as at the end of the financial year, ending 31 March 2008, were as follows

Lloyds Account	£5,411.97
Halifax Treasurers Account	£2,028.09
Halifax Guaranteed Reserve (Ring Fenced for the Hoy Monument)	<u>£7,876.13</u>
	£15,316.19

The carried forward figures to 2009/10 are comparable to those from 2007/08. At the end of 2008/09 the sum of £5,100 had been committed for the following projects

£2,500 – Million Blooms

£2,050 – Descriptive Panels

£ 470 – Trips for older people

£ 80 - Chaler of the Year

The Precept has been increased to £8,800 for the current year, 2009-10.

### **COUNCILLORS :**

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