

# **NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL**

## **ANNUAL REPORT TO THE ELECTORS 2012/13**

### **PLAY EQUIPMENT**

Repair and refurbishment of the skateboard half pipe was completed in summer 2012 by means of both voluntary and invoiced labour. The Parish Council is indebted to Wight Maintenance, SP Carpentry and Daniel Stotesbury for the fantastic new equipment, which is in almost constant use. Costs have met by a generous grant of £1,450 from Niton Youth Club and a grant of £1,000 from the Isle of Wight Economic Improvement Fund, with a further £899 to follow in 2013/14.

The search for land suitable as a playground site for young children in Whitwell continues.

### **NITON YOUTH CLUB**

Following the closure of Niton Youth Club in July 2012, the Parish Council is committed to supporting the retention of the Youth Club building for the local community. In January 2013, a grant of £500 was given to Niton Methodist Church to acknowledge and support the work being done with local young people by Mr Dan Wells in the absence of Isle of Wight Council funded youth provision.

### **PUBLIC TOILETS**

A formal long-term lease is now in place. The Parish Council is indebted to local volunteers who clean the toilets on a daily basis and to Norris Stores which supplies cleaning materials free of charge. Electricity costs are currently being met from a £500 donation received from grateful visitors to Niton.

### **NITON TUNNELS FOOTPATH NT30**

Work to re-open the Niton Tunnels footpath had to be delayed due to exceptionally wet weather during summer 2012. In October, a team of volunteers from the Isle of Wight Ramblers Association, led by Councillor Charlie Peach and ably assisted by the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way Department, carried out the necessary repair work. The cost of materials was met by a grant from the Isle of Wight Council Economic Improvement Fund. The project has been very warmly received by the local community and visitors to the area, being of considerable local benefit and representing a huge saving on repair costs for the Isle of Wight Council; the Parish Council was delighted to receive a donation of £250 from local residents in appreciation.

### **ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT FUND**

The Parish Council successfully bid for grants of £1943 and £500 towards the Niton Primary School community minibus and the Whitwell Village Jubilee Street Party respectively.

### **LEASE FOR A PAD-MOUNTED SUBSTATION IN DOCK LANE, NITON**

A 99-year lease has been agreed with Scottish and Southern Electric (SSE) for a small area of Parish Council-owned land at the bottom of Dock Lane on which a pad-mounted electrical substation is to be erected. SSE made a one-off payment of £1,500 for the lease and covered all of the Parish Council's legal costs. Work is in progress to expedite the eradication of the recurrent electrical faults. SSE has kindly agreed to form 2 concrete steps at the bottom of Dock Lane

footpath while installing the substation as a gesture of goodwill; this should improve pedestrian access.

## **PARKING**

Alongside Councillor Dave Stewart, the Isle of Wight Ward Councillor, the Parish Council has been actively seeking solutions to parking problems in Niton. The needs of local residents, service users and businesses are being considered. Work continues.

## **MAINTENANCE OF BERT SPRAKE MEMORIAL GARDEN AND PARISH SEATS**

Responsibility for maintenance of grass in the garden and Parish seats near the highway has now passed to Ringway Island Roads under the PFI contract. The Parish Council has recently awarded a contract for maintenance of the planted area in the garden to a local resident.

## **PLANNING**

The Council commented on 45 out of 53 planning applications in the Parish. During the year, 8 planning applications were granted by the Isle of Wight Council against the recommendation of the Parish Council.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Under the Freedom of Information Act Model Publication Scheme, a list of all documents available to the Public is posted on the website. Copies of the list are held by the Clerk and at Niton library. Notices and agendas are placed on the village notice boards. A file is currently available in Niton Library with information about the Parish Council including the annual report, minutes and agendas, and will continue to be available for the foreseeable future. This information is also available from the Council website at:

[https://secureservices.iow.gov.uk/council/parish\\_councils/nitonwhitwell/](https://secureservices.iow.gov.uk/council/parish_councils/nitonwhitwell/)

Following the launch of the new Isle of Wight Council website, this website is no longer supported and the Parish Council is looking to develop its own independent site in the very near future.

Written reports are provided monthly for the Connections magazine.

## **UPDATED PARISH PLAN**

A steering group, chaired by Mr Peter Marsden and including local residents and Councillors, has been meeting since September 2011. The group has used data from a specially-designed questionnaire to produce a draft updated Parish Plan. The Council has received a Big Lottery 'Awards For All' grant of £2,500 to cover the cost of analysing all the data and producing the new Parish Plan, which should be available in early summer 2013.

## **PRECEPT**

Reluctantly, in order to maintain its reserves at a minimal £3,000, the Council resolved to increase the Parish precept, raising it from £14,200 to £14,500 for 2013/14. At £14.76 per annum per Band D household, the Parish precept is still one of the lowest on the Island.

## **MEETINGS**

The Parish Council meets on the fourth Monday in the month (except August and December), with the venue alternating between Niton Primary School/Niton Youth Club building and Whitwell Village Hall. In addition there is a Planning Committee meeting on the second Monday in each month if any planning applications have been received. The press and public are welcome to attend and there is a public question time before the formal business commences.

J A Stotesbury  
Chairman of the Parish Council

V J Ford  
Clerk to the Parish Council