



Shanklin Town Council

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Town Mayor's address

Councillor Chris Quirk, Shanklin Town Mayor

Precept and Council Tax

Currently there is significant pressure on household

budgets from inflation running at 5.5%, an increase of 5% on Council Tax, and further increases in energy costs predicted. Against this background Shanklin Town Councillors voted unanimously for a zero increase in the town's precept (the part of your Council Tax bill that is passed on to the town).

Central Government is aware of the pressure on household budgets and is arranging for a Council Tax refund of £150 to most households in bands A to D. This payment will be made directly to all households paying by direct debit; if you do not currently use direct debit now might be a good time to consider transferring to this method of payment.

Shanklin Esplanade & Beach

Last year we lost the flagpole on the Esplanade due to rot at the base and a replacement flagpole is on order and should be erected within the next couple of weeks. The new pole is made of powder coated aluminium and allows for the flag to be

raised and lowered without the need to use a ladder.

The IW Council has invited developers to tender for redevelopment of the Spa car park site, formerly the location of the Shanklin Spa Hotel. The negotiations are at an early stage and submission for planning permission is still some way off. Designs currently under discussion include retaining a significant number of public parking spaces.

The Town Council has submitted planning permission for a small toilet unit close the existing Art Deco toilet building at Chine Bluff; irrespective of what happens with the existing toilets this is required as it is impossible to provide disabled access to the existing building. The toilet building and the internal facilities are in need of serious refurbishment, and the Town Council is undertaking a full structural survey of the building before deciding if it might be economically viable to re-open them.

The council has also refurbished the toilets at the bottom of Hope Hill. Shanklin continues to win awards for its Gold Standard Beach Water Quality.

I recently attended a visit to the Sandown sewage works with Bob Seely our MP; Southern water are often accused of pumping raw sewage from the works, and having seen the way the plant operates it is clear that this is not strictly true although at times of very heavy rainfall they do pump filtered and partially treated, but very diluted, effluent to an outfall two kilometres off the beach. If you see solid items that appear to be sewage linked such items cannot have come from the sewage work, the effluent is entirely liquid. However pumping any untreated sewage into the sea is unacceptable in this day and age, and Southern Water are proposing significant investment to work towards reducing and eliminating such effluent discharges in the future.

Green Towns

I would like to go on record to thank our Green Towns Group for their work in planting and maintaining a number of areas around the town and organising regular litter picking events.

I remind dog owners of the legal obligation to clean up after your dog if it does a poo in a public place. Environmental Officers can issue on the spot fines, but the way to remove the blight of dog poo on our streets is for every dog owner to act responsibly. My thanks to the vast majority who do!