

Introduction to the Community Plan by Mrs Pat Dawson, Chairman, Yarmouth and Thorley Community Plan Steering Committee

The production of this Plan has given the people of Yarmouth and Thorley the opportunity to give their views on the future of the area for the next 10 – 15 years. The Plan describes our community, its local distinctiveness and place within the Island context; how people were consulted; summaries of the findings and a rolling plan of delivery in the Action Plans.

A Steering Committee of 10 people was formed in April 2008 and has met regularly since. We successfully applied to Awards for All for a lottery grant, for which many thanks. We consulted the community with flyers, questionnaires and meetings, analysed the results and produced this document. We were helped along the way by many others.

From the start the Town Council supported the venture and gave a small grant to get things started. Estelle Thomas of the Rural Community Council gave guidance and practical advice. We have worked closely with officers from many Isle of Wight Council departments and have acted upon their comments where appropriate. George Cameron agreed to be our independent referee for our Awards for All lottery grant, and has advised and supported the project.

16 extra people joined members of the Steering Committee on five Working Groups to help with the production of the questionnaires and the preparation of the action plans. A big team of volunteers delivered and collected notices, flyers and questionnaires. Schools and Youth organisations helped in the distribution and collection of the Youth Questionnaire. The children at Yarmouth Primary School made a model of Yarmouth for the plan and joined in a lively, informal discussion with the Mayor to give their views of our community. Local businesses have contributed their ideas, displayed notices and acted as collection points for the questionnaires. Many people provided photographs. Dick Dawson prepared the questionnaires and produced the analyses and John Brownscombe edited and designed this document.

Thanks must go to all these people who have given freely of their time and skills and to the community at large who gave their views through the flyers, questionnaires and meetings. Comment is often made about the apathy shown by communities in general but the production of this Plan has shown that the residents of Yarmouth and Thorley are clearly an exception. In particular thanks must go to my colleagues on the Steering Committee for all their efforts, especially our secretary Sylvia Mence, who has steered us through all the stages of the development of this plan. Her hard work, attention to detail and skills have contributed greatly to the success of this project.

The Steering Committee has appreciated the support and encouragement of the Town Council throughout the production of this Community Plan and hand it over to the Council, confident that it will be a living document for the good of our community.