

Yarmouth Times

The newsletter of Yarmouth Town Council

Annual Town Meeting 2018

Yes, it's that time of year again, your chance to meet Yarmouth Town Councillors, ask them questions and generally have your say about what goes on in Yarmouth and Thorley.

Local organisations will also each give a talk about what they've been up to throughout the last year, and what they plan to do in the coming one. This year, there'll be a chance to hear **The Pier's Tale**, a new project which will restore Yarmouth Pier, and will delve into tales of its life, both above and beneath the waves, and it also has its own Facebook Page. If you'd like to find out a bit more about it, have a look at the article below.

So make a date for 6:30pm on Tuesday April 24th at CHOYD in St James Street. See you there!

Yarmouth Pier

Yarmouth Pier is the responsibility of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and is a Grade II listed structure. It was built in 1876 to allow not only ferries from Lymington to dock, but also to be a landing stage for steamers from other ports and piers on both the Isle of Wight and the mainland (also known as the North Island by locals!). In the nineteenth century it was quicker to travel by steamer from Yarmouth to Cowes than to go by carriage. These days we have few vessels using the pier, notably the steamship 'Waverley' last September, and 'Balmoral' earlier in the year, as well as ferries from Poole, Swanage, Weymouth, Portsmouth and Christchurch occasionally during the summer. It is also used for promenading and fishing. The pier has changed slightly in length and shape over the years but still looks largely the same as when it was first constructed. It is reputedly the longest wooden pier in the UK.

The upkeep of the pier is an ongoing issue. The piles, despite being green-heart hardwood, only last 15-20 years. Restoration is never ending. In early 2008 54 of the wooden piles along the length of the pier were replaced; these had been eaten away by gribbleworm. YHC were lucky enough to win a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £350,500, and a Pier Appeal Fund headed by Alan Titchmarsh raised over £40,000 towards the refurbishment. The total project cost was £450,000 and included a gribble seat which is situated near the RNLI lifeboat, an interactive seat sited at the entrance to the pier, and a pier archive.

It's now necessary to replace 54 wooden piles at a cost of £800,000. The work will involve restoring the piles supporting the pier head roundhouse, which will need to be dismantled for the work to be carried out.



A matter of convenience

Play Area

With the help of lot of fund raising by dedicated Yarmouth residents and organisations, Yarmouth Town Council built the new Play Area at the Town Green Recreation Ground, and it's now been up and running for some 18 months. It seems to have been well received, judging by its popularity with local children!

There have been a few problems. The ground had to be levelled in places because the surface hadn't been dressed properly, and there were a number of large elm suckers which had to be removed from the back of the area. Also, someone removed the hanging strap from the Board Rider, which has made it unusable. This was a deliberate act of sabotage, as the strap was unbolted from the top of the frame, and would have taken some effort to remove.

The upshot of this is that it will cost YTC, and hence council taxpayers, nearly £300 to restore this equipment to usability, all because of someone's selfish and anti-social actions. It's particularly ironic because Councillors had decided to replace the Board Rider, which has never proved popular with local children, with a swings unit, but, of course, had to restore the equipment so that it could be sold.

Anyone want to buy a Board Rider, good condition, new strap?!

In April 2016, Yarmouth Town Council took over running the two public toilets in the town from the Isle of Wight Council, to avoid the closure of a very necessary facility for both residents and visitors. Sadly, after years of underfunding and neglect, this proved to be something of an inconvenience, as the two blocks were in a parlous state. Since then, it's been a constant battle against blockages, mould, leaks and graffiti, all of which have literally been a drain on Council resources.

A lot has already been done to make a visit to the loos a pleasanter experience. Rotting woodwork has been replaced, mould has been dealt with, drains have been video-checked and supercleaned, and a further £5,000 has been set aside in this year's budget to carry out more improvements. Fortunately, both blocks are structurally sound. However, £5,000 doesn't go a long way, so priorities have to be decided, and it's likely that the gents in Bridge Road will be addressed first. Councillors have identified the work which needs to be done to improve the drains (a considerable sum has already been spent in resolving the constant blockages resulting from this aging system), and then they'll be turning their attention to decorating and permanently eradicating the unacceptable graffiti which certain dysfunctional and disturbed users keep leaving behind them.

If you'd like to have your say about how the Council should be tackling this issue, please come along to the Annual Town Meeting at CHOYD on April 24th at 6:30pm.

Hey, good looking...

At the same time as the toilets, the Isle of Wight Council handed over the responsibility to Yarmouth Town Council for maintaining the grass areas and flowerbeds in Yarmouth, and local councillors have been doing all they can to bring the appearance of the town up to a fitting standard for a gateway to the Island. There's a long way to go, but, with the kind help of some public-spirited local volunteers, the grass has been kept cut, the flower beds have been tidied up, and the buoy outside the school has been painted.

The aim is to carry out some further replanting of the flower beds in the spring, and already local councillors have planted daffodil bulbs in Thorley.

YTC will also continue the programme of maintaining or replacing public benches and picnic tables.

Sea Lanes

Residents of Yarmouth are proud of the little sea lanes that run down to the shore from the High Street, and, like the Town Council, are anxious to preserve them. So, full marks to Councillor Rod Corbett, who's been collecting user evidence statements from local townfolk since a temporary barrier was erected across Friars Lane, the most easterly of the sea lanes.

Those statements have been used to support a Modification Order submitted to the Isle of Wight Council to make part, or all, of the Lane into a public footpath. The problem with all the sea lanes is that, apart from a few sections covered by Land Registry documents, they're unadopted, have no specific ownership, and don't appear on the IWC definitive map of footpaths.

So, watch this space – Yarmouth Council is still waiting to hear the decision on the Modification Order. In the meantime, the good news is that the barrier has now been removed, and the Lane is fully open to the public.

New Office

After a gap of nearly 2 years following redevelopment of the old police station, Yarmouth Town Council has a new permanent office at CHOYD in St James Street. It's open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-12:30, apart from Council meeting days, when it will open from 3pm to 6pm

yt1135@gmail.com
www.yarmouthtowncouncil.co.uk
01983 527093/ 0771465433

