

## Celebrating 100 years of the Fishbourne to Portsmouth ferry route

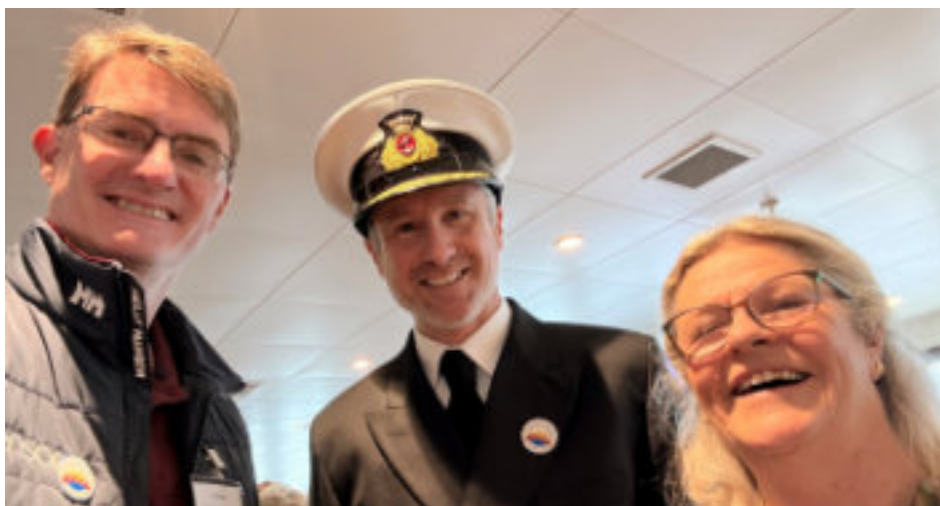
Friday 20th March saw an event to mark 100 years of the Fishbourne to Portsmouth ferry crossing (some called it the Portsmouth to Fishbourne route, but I think we all know that is back to front).

Cllr Carolyn Dugdale and I attended the event, held on the Victoria of Wight, to represent Fishbourne Parish Council. We were joined by invited guests from across the Island and from the mainland, including retired Wightlink seafarers who had worked on the route over the years.

A speech was made by Katy Taylor, Wightlink's current CEO, about the honour she felt at being a custodian of a company with such a long history, and Cllr Dugdale and I were able to speak to the crew and members of Wightlink's operational teams.

We were given a tour of the bridge and spoke at length to Captain Tom Vincent, the Night Master of Victoria of Wight, about stormy weather and bringing passengers across the Solent safely.

We also spoke to Gavin Marshall, Wightlink's new Operations Director, and



took the opportunity to thank him for recent improvements which the company has made whilst also flagging ongoing concerns around traffic build up at the Fishbourne terminal, along with various other matters.

As Cllr Dugdale and I left the event, I reflected upon the genuine dedication and

professionalism that every Wightlink employee we spoke to demonstrated. Several of them have made their homes on the Island, and I would like to thank them all for their hard work and commitment to providing the lifeline service which a ferry company represents to Islanders.

*Ed Hopper*

## Editorial

### Don't Forget to Vote on May 7th!

Very soon after this Newsletter comes through your door the important Council elections will be upon us. With all the upheaval and distress here and overseas it is more important than ever to exercise our hard fought for democratic right to vote. We are fortunate to have the Polling Station pretty close to all of us at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, and with plenty of parking.

As gardens and hedgerows spring into life we have so much to look forward to in the coming months, including the many local events documented within these pages.

From the beginning of May, the Best Kept Village judges will be out and about! The Spruce Up Day' on the 25th April will have made a big difference to how our parish looks and I'm sure we will all be doing our best to keep it looking its best for as long as possible. Who knows, we could do even better this time round!

From our walking and book groups, activities in 'The Old School' in Wootton, 'The Women's Guild', volunteering opportunities (e.g. Home Start), to The Village Summer Party, Councillors very much hope no one in our community will be bored or lonely over the coming months.

The Parish Council are once again involved in the Biosphere Festival, thanks to Quarr Abbey. The guided tour will start at 10am in the Quarr car park, on Saturday 4th July. The walk will be via the Abbey church through woodland and on to the Old Abbey ruins with the very knowledgeable chairman of the "Friends of Quarr". The guide (on private Quarr land) will take you around the ancient ruins and describe the workings of a medieval monastery, you are very welcome to ask questions! Please book with the Parish clerk – this event is free but spaces are limited. For all the activities (many of them free) on offer during the festival, 27th June to 5th July, visit [www.iwbiosphere.org](http://www.iwbiosphere.org)

Congratulations to Lucy Scholes for being selected to represent England and then becoming a 'European Champion' earlier this year. A fantastic achievement for her and the rest of the team.

Our Little Library, mid-way along Fishbourne lane, is extremely popular and in constant use, which is brilliant. We are always in need of books, so if you have any to donate, we would be delighted to take them off your hands. They can either be dropped off with David Mountford (our wonderful library 'monitor') at 35 Fishbourne Lane, or Tel: 01983 882255 if you need them to be collected.

Please note that due to the RVYC being used as the Polling Station on May 7th, our monthly Coffee morning will be held at The Fishbourne Inn, at 10.30 on that day.

Your Parish councillors very much hope the next few months will be good ones for all in our wonderful community, and that we will see many of you at our Annual Parish meeting next month.

*Sarah Talbot*

## People you may need to contact on the Parish Council

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### Christine Woollin

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### Vince Carter (Tree Warden)

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### Katie Riley (Clerk)

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### Ian Dore IOW Councillor

Email: ian.Dore@iow.gov.uk



Charity Event on Saturday the 6th June. The 2026 Brain Tumour Research Ride For Hope will end at the Fishbourne with a BBQ between 4pm – 6pm. 20% of the proceeds will be donated to the charity. More details on the britishcycling.org.uk website. Come and support this event.

Summer Sunday Afternoons. There will be live music and a BBQ between 2pm and 4pm on the patio featuring local musicians from the 26th July throughout the summer holidays.

For further details contact the website: [www.thefishbourne.co.uk](http://www.thefishbourne.co.uk)

## ‘Pachinko’

by Min Jin Lee

This is a novel which spans eighty years and three generations of the same family. Beginning in Korea in 1911, the teenaged daughter of a disabled fisherman, falls in love with a rich yakuza. Their affair results in a pregnancy and when she realises that he is married, she refuses to be kept by him. To avoid penury, she marries a minister passing through on his way to Japan and so follows him to a strange country where she is an outsider. The great shocks of history such as The Depression, World War Two and the Korean conflict, reverberate throughout the story and make compelling reading, as we see how ensuing generations cope with the consequences.

The book is richly detailed and powerfully moving and gives a comprehensive history of a Korean family living in Japan. And the title? It refers to a Japanese form of pinball which is a focus for a shady world of gambling, and represents one of the few ways in which Koreans could earn a living in Japan.

Cheryl Fontana



**Save the Date!!!**

for the

**Fishbourne Summer Village Picnic**

on the

**Oak Tree Green**

**Saturday 1st August from 2pm**

Bring food to share if you wish, connect with neighbours new & old and enjoy live music. Celebrate Fishbourne together.



“You may be aware that 7 of our rare, endangered and delightful red squirrels have been run over on Fishbourne Lane or Kite Hill in the last 4 or 5 weeks!! This is desperately sad.

Please take extra care driving in this area and slow down. We must do all we can to protect them. Thank you.”

## Dates for your diary

### Parish Council Meetings

May 12th 18.30 at RVYC

June 9th 18.30 at RVYC

July 14th 18.30 at RVYC

### Parish Surgeries

May 26th 09.30 at RVYC

June 23rd 09.30 at RVYC

July 28th 09.30 at RVYC

### Coffee Mornings

May 7th 10.30 – 12 at Fishbourne Inn

June 9th 10.30 – 12 at RVYC

July 14th 10.30 – 12 at RVYC

### SUMMER SPRUCE UP DAY

July 4th, Meet in Quarr Car park 10.00 (Book with Parish Clerk)

## Clerks Corner

This year's Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club on Tuesday 12th May 2026 to which all residents of Fishbourne Parish are cordially invited. The meeting starts at 7pm with refreshments available from 6.30pm. Please do come along, there will be a presentation from Mr. Vince Carter who is our new Volunteer Tree Warden and has a wealth of experience working with trees with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, several local authorities and the Forestry Commission.

There will also be a presentation of the Parish Award, now in its third year, is recognition of an individual's contribution to the Fishbourne community. Previous recipients have been Mr Dave Mountford for looking after the "Little library" and Mr Tony Hart for all his technical wizardry with the newsletter and we feel it is a nice way for the Parish Council to show their recognition and say thank you.

The Annual Parish Meeting serves as a platform for local residents to discuss issues affecting their community. It is not a meeting of the parish council but rather a forum for electors to express their views, ask questions, and make suggestions regarding parish matters. One issue we are keen to seek your views about is whether or not we should continue to hold a Parish Surgery. For many years now councillors have made themselves available on an informal basis once a month at the club for residents to drop in and raise any enquiry they might have. Although we are happy to continue to hold a monthly surgery, we've not received any attendees or enquiries for over a year now and it seems that with other methods of communication available it may no longer be a good use of time. Please let us know what you think. The Coffee Morning on the other hand, which is held on the first Thursday of every month, has gone from strength to strength which we are delighted about.

Following last year's success we are organising another "Old Quarr" walk on Saturday 4th July as part of the Biosphere Festival. It will be led by the Chairman of the Friends of Quarr with rare access to the ancient ruins. The event is free but any donations to Quarr Abbey would be gratefully received. To book a place please contact the Clerk at [clerk@fishbourneiow.org.uk](mailto:clerk@fishbourneiow.org.uk)

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who came to help out at the Spruce Up event in April. We are now in the period of

**Copy for the next issue of the Newsletter by 15th July 2026 at the latest. Please send to [sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk](mailto:sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk)**

judging for the Best Kept Village Awards. Last year we entered for the first time and came 3rd in the "medium sized village" category so hopefully we can do even better this time!

We were delighted to see the Bedfords at April's meeting and hear that they would like to organise a mid-summer party at Oak Tree Green on Saturday 1st August! No theme, just an opportunity to get together and have some fun. Bring a picnic from 2pm onwards, everyone is welcome, there will be live music. If past events are anything to go by this will be a lovely opportunity for members of the community to get together and socialise.

Congratulations to Cllr Sarah Talbot who was successfully nominated on behalf of Fishbourne Parish Council to attend the King's Royal Garden Party event taking place on 6th May 2026 at Buckingham Palace which she will attend with her husband Nigel. Nominated guests for this event are drawn from a diverse range of individuals and organisations recognising excellent contributions in their field, and in public service, voluntary or community work, and Sarah couldn't be more deserving.

We are still seeking to fill our remaining vacancy on the Parish Council. Please drop me a line at [clerk@fishbourneiow.org.uk](mailto:clerk@fishbourneiow.org.uk) to express an interest, this is all that is required to apply, we are just one member short of the six seats available.

Please get in touch directly with one of the Parish Councillors or with myself if there is anything you'd like to raise – we are always grateful for you bringing things to our attention.

*Katie Riley*

*Vince Carter (Tree Warden)*



## Your Favourite Fishbourne Trees

We residents of Fishbourne are truly lucky to live in an area with so many trees and woodlands. They frame our views, provide shade and shelter, and are home to a very wide variety of wildlife. If you have a favourite tree within our beautiful landscape you can now nominate it for inclusion in a proposed compendium of FAVOURITE FISHBOURNE TREES.

It might be your favourite because of its age, size, shape, historical importance, its foliage or flowers, its rarity etc. The list of favourite trees will just be used to illustrate how beautiful and varied our local landscape is and to help promote the parish to locals, visitors, and people not so fortunate as those of us who live here.

To nominate your favourite tree please email Katie to tell us where it is and why you like it so much. Someone will then be in touch to make sure we know which tree you mean. Many thanks.

## Fishbourne Walking Group

The newly formed Fishbourne Walking group walked from Quarr Abbey to the Church of The Holy Cross in Binstead and enjoyed a visit to the historic building. Binstead was a manor in Saxon times and the present church is a Norman construction, probably founded by one of the early Norman bishops of Winchester.

The next walk is on Wednesday 13th May and walkers will meet at 10.30am at the bus station in Ryde, ready to walk to Seaview and back. The group welcomes new members and if you would like to join us for a walk, chat and cup of tea, please contact Carolyn on 07771767897 or [carolyn.dugdale@iow.org.uk](mailto:carolyn.dugdale@iow.org.uk) or Ann on 07779349228 or [anniemhodes@gmail.com](mailto:anniemhodes@gmail.com) for further details.



# Sixth Sense

*Confessions of a Cat-sitter series, from a local author, columnist...and cat-sitter.*

Whilst I get on well with most of the cats I visit on my cat-sitting rounds (I'm very polite around cats), there's always the odd one who'll go out of their way to make absolutely sure there'll be no contact, and most certainly NO bonding. To those particular felines, our relationship is strictly master and servant — I'm a visiting feeder and tray-cleaner and I should just get on with my job, keeping my sweet-talk and strokes to myself. Obviously, when it's made clear to me that friendship isn't an option, I try to make friends, whether they like it or not.

The most recent example of this sort of thing involved Dillon, a scruffy tabby. I only knew Dillon was a rough-around-the-edges alley-cat type through seeing him in

photos, because whenever I walked in the front door, he'd exit by the rear cat-flap.

What confused me though, is how Dillon always knew who was walking into the house — that it was me, and not just his owners. This isn't just a Dillon-thing either, but true of many cats. Just how do they know? They can be totally unsighted in a far room, upstairs asleep, or on urgent litter tray business, but they instantly know who's walked in. Is it some sort of sixth sense, I wondered, or just their incredible sense of smell (could I really smell that bad)? I decided to do some research on that . . . the cat senses thing . . . not how bad I smell. The answer appears to be a combination of factors — sense of smell yes, acute hearing, a clever reading of air movements, and even noting the unique static electricity you create, all combine to tell cats exactly who's coming through the door. They can even predict earthquakes with this amazing sensual array, so simply detecting me plodding heavily down the path must actually be a doddle. Or a type of earthquake.

Anyway, all very interesting, but how to make friends with a cat you can't see? How to make friends with Dillon? Firstly, I needed half a chance, so Dillon's owners agreed to keep him indoors for my latest booking, just for the first visit. When I arrived, Dillon gave me the warmest of welcomes — retreating under a bed with a low growl. It was time to put my tried and tested unfriendly-cat technique into effect. I sat in the corner of the bedroom, away from the door, so Dillon wouldn't feel cornered, then unfolded a newspaper onto the floor and pretended to be studiously reading it, while telling Dillon what a marvelous lad I thought he was...or might be. After ten minutes, I was running out of sycophantic compliments, but then, I heard faint purring, and out of the corner of my eye, I saw a scruffy head appear from under the bed. He was looking straight at me and still happy — which is not the effect I have on most people. Five minutes later, Dillon was sitting slap bang in the middle of the sports pages. — Success, for once! It also looks like I won't be needing to change my shower-gel...



Stopping scam calls coming through is almost impossible, the scammers always seem to be one step ahead.

What we can do is protect ourselves by using the technology available to us.

Trading Standards have done some research and have a few options that could help you stay scam call free!

- If you are a WightFibre, Sky or TalkTalk customer they all offer a free call blocking service — To set this up:

Wightfibre — dial 1490

Talk Talk — dial 1472

Sky — through your online account or call them

- You can purchase phones that block scam calls and allow through calls from friends and family that are stored in the memory. There are a variety of phones and the following comparison has been taken from the internet and may help to clarify which one suits you best.

## BT Premium Phone

*Individual numbers blocked, 1000*

*Blocks which calls? All but those in address book, selected*

*Address book, 200*

*Answerphone capacity 60 minutes*

## Panasonic KX-TGH260

*Individual numbers blocked, 50*

*Blocks which calls? Anonymous, number withheld, groups, selected*

*Address book, Up to 3,000*

*Answerphone capacity 30 minutes*

## BT Halo

*Individual numbers blocked, 1000*

*Blocks which calls? All but those in address book, selected*

*Address book, 2,000*

*Answerphone capacity 60 minutes*

## Siemens Gigaset C620A

*Individual numbers blocked, 15*

*Blocks which calls? Selected, anonymous silencing*

*Address book, 250*

*Answerphone capacity 55 minutes*

## Panasonic KX-PRW120

*Individual numbers blocked, 100*

*Blocks which calls? Withheld, selected*

*Address book, 500*

*Answerphone capacity 40 minutes*

Trading Standards do not recommend any particular phone or call blocker however they do endorse TrueCall technology

- Call Blocking Units and phones can be purchased online or from reputable traders. Always ensure that if purchasing one of these that you use a trusted online site as scammers are starting to realise that we block their calls and can pose as call blocking companies to try to scam you this way.

Do some research and find which option suits you best.

## Screening Calls on a mobile

### iPhone

*To screen or silence numbers on your iPhone*

- Go to your Settings menu

- Select Apps > Phone

- Choose between Ask Reason for Calling (calls from unknown numbers are asked for more information before your iPhone rings or Silence (these will be silenced, sent to voicemail and still appear in your Recents list.

## Android

*To screen calls on Android —*

- Go to the Phone App and select Settings

- Select Call Screen or Caller ID & Spam depending on your phone

- Turn on call screening or spam protection for unknown callers

## Other top tips for dealing with scam calls

- If you have caller display on your phone and you don't recognise the number — don't answer it — let it go to answerphone or just ignore it.

- Any unexpected/out of the blue phone call is likely to be a scam

- Never give bank or personal information over the phone to somebody you don't know.

- Never be rushed into making a decision — scammers don't like to give you time to think.

- If something sounds too good to be true — it probably is.

If you receive a call purporting to be your bank — hang up and wait 15 minutes or use a different phone to call your bank. If you don't have a number handy call 159 then select the number associated with your bank. This can be done from your landline or mobile and will take you straight through to your bank to check if the call was genuine.

## How to check or report

Citizens Advice Scam Line — 0808 223 1133 (this is a free phone number)

Trading Standards — 01983 823371 [trading\\_standards@iow.gov.uk](mailto:trading_standards@iow.gov.uk)

Report Fraud — 03001232040 — [www.reportfraud.police.uk](http://www.reportfraud.police.uk)



Photo: Hillary Martin

## Royal Victoria Yacht Club

It's been a busy few months since the AGM and I am just about getting used to being addressed as Commodore.

My first thanks and congratulations must go to all fellow officers and committee members who have been re-elected to serve in posts for 2026. We are very fortunate to have an incredible skill set and diversity of roles on management, sailing and house committees

After our AGM, the clubhouse opened for social functions and we have been treated to talks, quizzes, Sunday lunches, and games afternoons, not to forget bar banter on Fridays. We host Parish Council

meetings, surgeries and coffee mornings, WCFA monthly meetings, plus rallies. Early season visitors from other sailing clubs also receive a warm welcome.

On the water, our Cadets have registered and 29 of them attended their Fitting Out Supper in late March. Our Adult Sailors have also been keen to support the 2026 programme – with over 35 on the books I believe at last count. Both groups with their volunteer instructors will get afloat from mid-April.

Training is already underway, with the first two RYA Power Boat 2 courses, Adult and Cadet, completed. Radio controlled (RC)

racing has continued through the winter with very competitive (and sometimes cold) operators on the pontoon. A little early for some of the paddle-boarding group to be out on the water perhaps, but I'm sure they will be as soon as the weather warms up!

Our Commissioning Cup was on Easter Sunday and our regular race calendar will run until December 13th. My huge thanks to our sponsors Richardsons Yacht Services; Williams Estate Agency; Westridge Golf Centre; JazzIT, HT Advisory and Odessa Boatyard Services, for their support of our club racing.

We're hosting three open events in 2026 – the WASZP GP in mid-May; MOCRA Nationals return to the Solent in early July and the annual Youth Championships in September.

Some other notable dates in 2026 are the Open Day for new members on Saturday 2 May to showcase our lovely club facilities and our annual Open Day for People with Disabilities on Saturday 18 July.

Pop in anytime to see what facilities we have at RVYC, or visit the RVYC website. ([rvyc.org.uk](http://rvyc.org.uk))

*Jane Barrett Bellingham (Commodore)*  
[commodore@rvyc.org.uk](mailto:commodore@rvyc.org.uk)

## European Deaf Futsal Championships 2026

*Porec, Croatia – England crowned winners!*

Massive congratulations to Lucy Scholes who was selected by head coach Steve Daley to be part of the England Deaf Futsal women's team. The England team travelled to Croatia to compete in the European Deaf Futsal Championships from March 9-22nd at Zatika Arena.

The England team started strong, beating Poland 4-2. Their next match in their

group saw another great win against Italy 5-2. The England team then sealed their place at top of group B with a win against France 4-2! England were through to the semi finals, setting up a match against rivals and runners up of Group A – Ireland. This was a tense game from the start as Ireland beat England in the World Championships June 2025 quarter finals last year in Montesilvano! This time, England held strong and executed their game plan beating Ireland 3-1 and booking their spot in the finals against Poland!

On March 21, finals day, England showed skill, determination, teamwork and resilience and became European Champions, beating Poland 2-0! Unbeaten and triumphant! What an achievement!! All the hard work paid off! Well done team!

This was more than just a win. This was visibility, representation and a powerful reminder of the talent within the deaf community up and down the country. Moments like this challenge assumptions, inspire the next generation and highlight why access to sport and communication is so important.

For Lucy, all the mainland travel to training camps, the sacrifices and the commitment

to training over this past year has certainly paid off! Proud memorable moments wearing the England shirt, being selected as part of this great team and representing your country. What a fantastic experience! Well done Lucy!!

(Thanks go to Isle of Wight Council talented athlete scheme, Wightlink for help with discounted ferry travel and One Leisure for gym membership. Thanks to family and friends for all the support. Thanks also to BAE for their continued support with this football and futsal journey).



## Wootton Bridge Townswomen's Guild

We hold our meetings on the 3rd Friday of the month (not August),

Start 2pm at the Methodist Church, Station Road.

Free parking in the Steam Railway Car Park.

If you would like to get together with a friendly group to try

new things, for friendship food and fun, come to our next meeting.

For more information contact Lesley:  
[lesley@kithillfarm.co.uk](mailto:lesley@kithillfarm.co.uk)

# The Parish Church of the Holy Cross Binstead

*(in plurality with St Peter's Havenstreet, All Saints' Ryde and St John's Ryde)*

On Easter day, the church was decorated with dozens of daffodils augmented by bright yellow origami paper chicks made by pupils in Year 5 at Binstead School during their annual visit to Holy Cross. At the back of the church, since Easter Day, there has been an Easter garden created by a member of the choir. Easter gardens traditionally include three crosses set on a hill (top right in the picture), a reminder of the events of Good Friday; an open cave-like tomb (bottom left), reminding us of what Jesus's followers found early on Easter morning; and a rocky surface with fresh primroses bursting through it (foreground), symbols of the new life and hope that Easter brings for all humankind.

All our Easter services were well attended, starting with a service on Palm Sunday in All Saints', Ryde for the whole plurality, which also marked the re-opening of the church after all the work that has been done there to re-equip it for a more varied range of worship. If you haven't seen it yet, it is worth a visit because, like the Minster in Newport, the transformation has been very well carried out, retaining the grandeur of the east end whilst freeing up the body of the church for a greater variety of uses.

The Venerable Barry Dugmore has been appointed to be the new Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight. Bishop Jonathan will license him during a service at Portsmouth Cathedral on Sunday, May 31, 2026, at 5.30pm and subsequently there will be a service here on the Island to greet him. He succeeds the Ven Stephen Daughtery, who stepped down from the role in April, 2025. The Archdeacon, who is the senior Church of England cleric on the Island, and his family will be living in Fishbourne, where I am sure that they will receive a very warm welcome.

Meantime, at Holy Cross we are starting to get excited about one of the most regular and most intrepid members of our congregation who, God willing, will celebrate her one hundredth birthday in June. In her mid-nineties she gained national notoriety by making her first parachute jump! Let's hope that she isn't planning anything similarly adventurous for her birthday celebrations!

Please do check the weekly pew sheet on the website ([www.holycrossbinstead.org.uk](http://www.holycrossbinstead.org.uk)) to keep in touch with all the services and events that are happening. Additionally, remember that Holy Cross



Church and its churchyard are open every day for visitors and for those who are seeking a quiet place in which to reflect or pray – or, indeed, just to pop in and read

the notices about what's happening in the church.

*Rodney Fox (Reader in the parishes of Binstead, Havenstreet and Ryde)*

A vibrant red advertisement for Home Start Isle of Wight. At the top, the text 'VOLUNTEERS NEEDED' is written in large, bold, white letters. Below this, a question asks 'Could you make a difference to local families?'. A smiling woman with blonde hair, wearing a purple t-shirt with the Home Start logo and the slogan 'I'M CHANGING A CHILD'S FUTURE', is featured in the center. To her right, text describes the volunteer opportunities: 'Home Start Isle of Wight are looking for volunteers in Fishbourne and the surrounding area.', 'With just a little of your time each week, you can offer emotional and practical support to local families with young children who are going through a difficult time.', and 'Full training and ongoing support are provided, and volunteering with us is incredibly rewarding.' Below this, it says 'If you'd like to help strengthen families in your community, we'd love to hear from you.' At the bottom, there are two QR codes: one for 'Scan to support with a donation:' and another for 'Scan to find out more:'. The Home Start logo and 'Isle of Wight' are prominently displayed at the bottom right, along with the contact number '01983 533357', the email 'admin@homestartiw.org', and the website 'homestartisleofwight.org.uk'.



# Quarr Abbey

## Ruins and Memory

Every year Quarr Abbey Art Gallery hosts an exhibition organized by the Friends of Quarr and our Archivists: it is devoted to the history of monastic life at Quarr. The exhibition is accompanied by guided tours of the medieval ruins and these are always popular. We would love to open the ruins field to the general public, but this, alas!, is unfeasible: the ground is uneven and unsafe and there is risk of damage to fragile historic remains. Not so long ago, a portion of wall collapsed during a storm at night. The resultant crash so disturbed a small herd of cows that they panicked and forced their way through a thickish hedge to join the sheep in a neighbouring field.

But what remains is still interesting. The ruins of the medieval infirmary chapel stand near the stream which crosses the site. And the twisted limbs of Quarr Abbey Oak (a strange fusion of three originally separate trees) embrace its crumbling stones. A well-preserved serving hatch joining kitchen to refectory attracts the eye next and then an archway leads the visitor through the laundry room and out of a back door to look upon the north enclosure wall. This wall boasts of the two earliest gun-ports in the country, dating from the fourteenth century. I was puzzled by the lack of sighting arrangements, until I was told they were unnecessary. An iron barrel was loaded with scrap metal, the touch paper was lit, and you prayed to survive.

Many visitors take photographs of the modern Abbey bell tower through a hole in one of the medieval walls. This is a very monastic instinct. Monks are made by their history and must not forget it. Each year we read the life of our founder Saint Benedict. Each year, on the anniversary-April 27- we read the Foundation Charter

of medieval Quarr Abbey. And regularly we read from the Necrology, and recall our brethren who lie buried in the cemetery. All we have we have received through their hands. How can we forget them?!

They remind us that we did not make ourselves, that we are part of a story which is bigger than all our thoughts and imaginings. And here the story of Quarr is taken up into an even larger narrative, that of salvation history. Each year, at the Easter Vigil we listen to a recital of God's mighty works, in creating the world in the beginning, in redeeming a fallen world in the fullness of time. We hear of the Son of God, suffering, dying and rising again for us. All we think and say and do becomes part of a play on the biggest stage of all.

*Br Duncan Smith*

## Quarr Abbey Art Gallery Exhibitions April to July

### April 2026

30 April – 6 May, **Sophia Fower**

### May 2026

7 May – 13 May, **Five Bells**

14 May – 20 May **Nicola Callaghan**

21 May – 27 May, **Kathy Pilcher**

28 May – 3 June, **Maria Ward**

### June 2026

4 June – 10 June, **Dee Hope**

11 June – 17 June, **Caroline Knox**

18 June – 24 June, **Pat Clarke**

25 June – 1 July, **Daphne Ellman**

### July 2026

2 July – 8 July, **Helen Goodman**

9 July – 15 July, **Anya Stickland**

16 July – 22 July, **Andrew Dowden**

23 July – 29 July, **Christian Beasley**

30 July – 4 August, **I Love Wight**



New Road, Wootton Bridge PO33 4HX

The Old School Centre offers a wide variety of activities and events to suit all ages and interests. A good place to start is in the Buzzy-Bean Café, which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am - 3pm and offers a low-cost menu in relaxing surroundings.

### Other activities include:

Sarah's Crafty Café – Tuesdays 10am – 12pm £3 inc. materials

Quiz & board games – Tuesdays from 1.30pm – free

Move and stretch with Suki – Thursdays 11am – 12pm – free/donations welcome

Knit and Knatter with Kate – Thursdays 1pm – 3pm, bring your own projects or knit items to support Ukrainian communities. Everyone is welcome – free / donations welcome

Wootton History Group – first Friday of every month – doors open at around 2pm for 2.30pm – 3.30pm. There is a different professional talk each month – £4 entry

Wootton Crafters - 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month – this is a relaxed crafting group – £7 per class

This is just a small selection of the activities on offer and full details of the timetable of groups and events can be found on the website at: [www.theoldschoolcentre.org](http://www.theoldschoolcentre.org)

If you are looking to hire a venue, booking request forms are also available on the website.

E mail: [hello@theoldschoolcentre.org](mailto:hello@theoldschoolcentre.org) or ring: 01983 882820

## This is your Newsletter!

Are you happy with the content? Do you find the articles interesting or informative? Please let us know what you would like to see in the Newsletter. Contact: [sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk](mailto:sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk)

## Nature Notes from Natural Links



*Barn Swallow*

### Swallows and Martins

Of all the spring migrants to return to the UK, the Swallow is one of the most iconic. In the south of England, first arrivals can occur in late March, usually males, but the main influx is usually from mid-April. They can overwinter as far away as South Africa with a journey of over 6,000 miles to reach our shores. The full name of the species that breeds in the UK is the Barn Swallow, reflecting their habit of nesting inside buildings such as barns, sheds and other outbuildings. They are the most widespread of all Swallow species in the world. The nest is constructed from mud pellets which form a 'concrete' bowl when dry and then lined with grasses and feathers.



*Barn Swallow at nest*

Martins are very closely related to Swallows, within the same bird family, and together they are referred to as 'Hirundines'. Sand Martins are the earliest to arrive back in the UK, often in mid-March and as their name suggests they



*Sand Martin*

nest within sandy banks or other sheer slopes of soil such as riverbanks. Depending on the substrate the nest tunnels can be only a few inches long or up to a metre. House Martins arrive back in the UK around the same time as Barn Swallows and are very much associated with human habitations and buildings. Similar to the Swallow, the nest is made from mud, but is usually on the outside of buildings under eaves and forms a complete structure apart from a small entrance hole at the top of the nest.



*House Martins*

### Under the 'Fortress'

April is the start of the breeding season for the European Mole. Using their acute sense of smell and sound, males extend their burrows into the territories of neighbouring females. There is a single litter of 4 to 5 young, born in a nest often under a larger molehill, known as a 'Fortress'.

The young are born naked and blind and do not start to grow their characteristic fur until 2 weeks old, but remarkably after another month they have grown large enough to leave the nest and travel overground to seek out new territories.



*Mole*



*Green-veined White*

### A Sight of White on the Wing

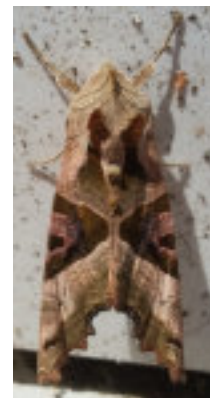
One of the first of the White butterflies to emerge in spring is the Green-veined White, so called because of the distinct green stripes on the underside of the wings. They are widespread but prefer damp habitats, and often use cuckooflower and hedge mustard as the host plant for their eggs and caterpillars. They are quick to create new generations, evolving from eggs to adults in as little as 2 months.



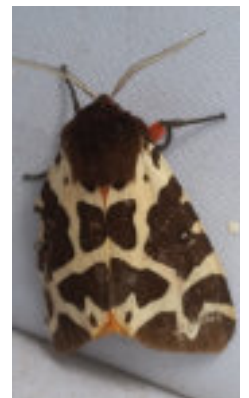
*Carder bee*

### Dead-nettle Nectar

It is important for early spring 'long-tongued' insects to have sources of nectar and pollen, particularly bumblebees. Both Red and White Dead Nettles provide dense clusters of 'hooded' flowers along roadside verges, in gardens and other disturbed ground. Both varieties do not sting, hence the Dead Nettle name and will bloom from March often into December. They are important for some moth caterpillars including Garden Tiger and Angle Shades.



*Angle Shades*



*Garden tiger*