

WIGHTLINK

FREE GUIDE

Wightlife

ISSUE 1: 2026

TM

RELAX &
RECHARGE
WELLBEING
WIGHT

INTIMATE
ESCAPES
PLACES TO STAY

LOCAL GUIDE
WHAT'S ON
AND WHERE
TO GO

Wightlink's essential guide to the Isle of Wight

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Your Island escape starts here

Welcome to the winter edition of Wightlife, packed with ideas and inspiration for your visit to the Isle of Wight.

Winter is a wonderful time to explore the Island – enjoy bracing coastal walks, cosy cafés, and the chance to uncover hidden gems without the summer crowds. Inside this edition, you'll find plenty of suggestions for seasonal adventures, local events and places to relax and recharge.

I've loved spending time on the Island recently – from tasty lunches at Caffè Isola in Newport and an escape room in Ryde, to a stroll along the seafront at Cowes and a drink at the Royal Yacht Squadron, where I learned about their work supporting young people who aspire to maritime careers. I was also captivated by the majestic Quarr Abbey and its delightful tearoom (I do love a scone!).

We've been busy making improvements for you. Our entire fleet has received upgrades during the autumn and winter and our ships on the Lymington – Yarmouth route (Wight Sky, Wight Light and Wight Sun) now feature stylish new seating, carpets and an expanded café space. This means we can offer fresh barista coffees and more hot food during those sailings.



We've listened to customer feedback and made several improvements across our fleet. Plus, we've reduced the Sunset Flyer fare for Islanders from £45 to £40 per crossing and extended the hours during which the offer is available, giving you even more flexibility. We continue to improve our communications during disruption and we appreciate your patience during the recent works at both Ryde Pier Head and Portsmouth Harbour in the autumn.

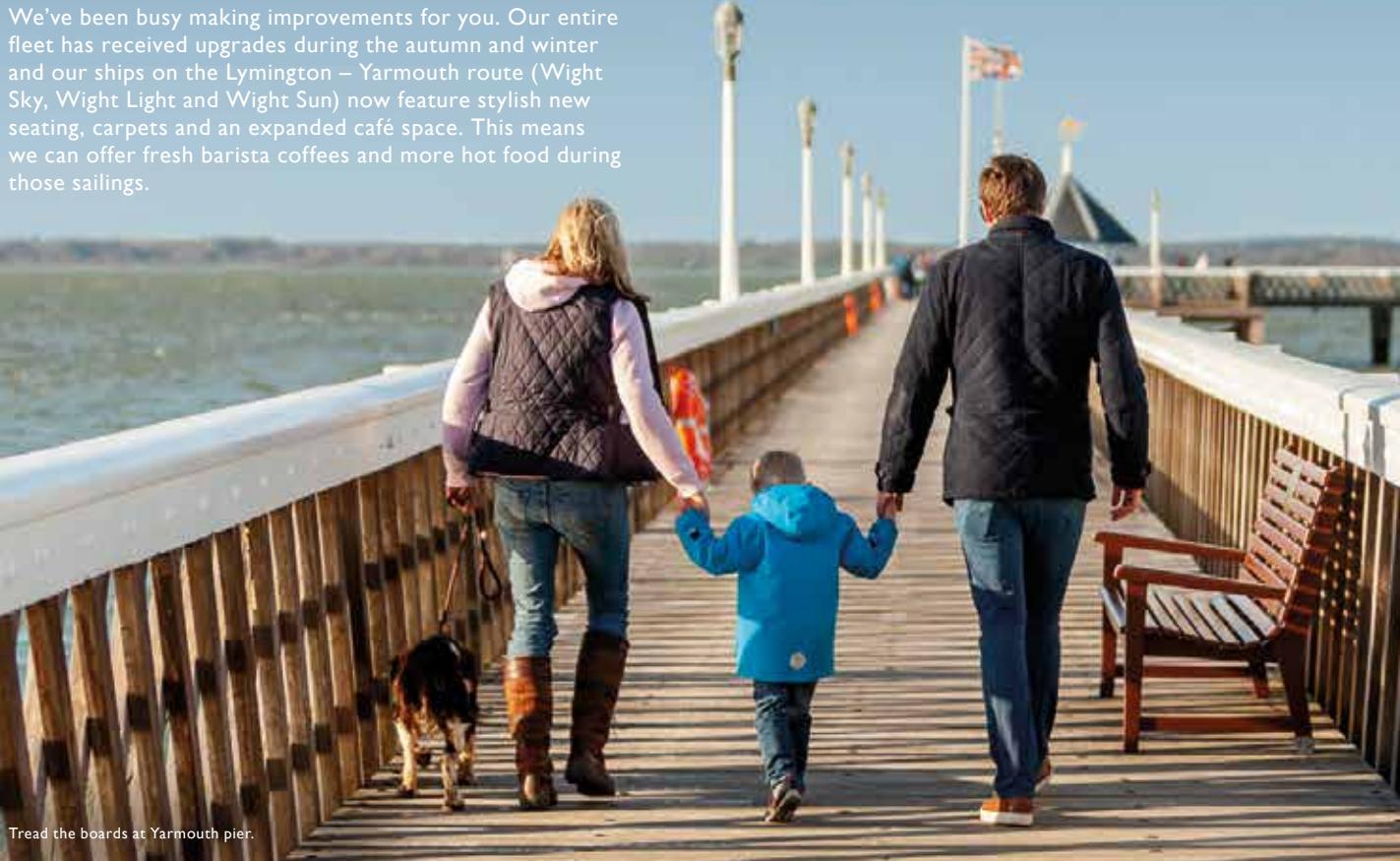
Thank you for choosing Wightlink. We're here to make your journey easy and enjoyable, so please don't hesitate to ask for help and share your ideas and feedback at feedback@wightlink.co.uk.

Enjoy your trip, and I might even see you on board!

Katy

Katy Taylor
Chief Executive

 WIGHTLINK



Tread the boards at Yarmouth pier.

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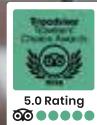
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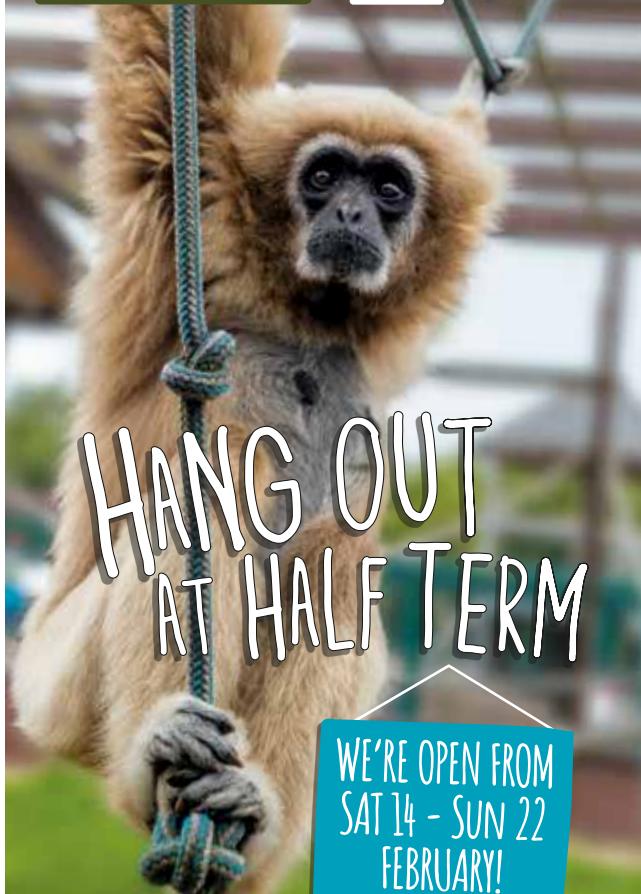


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WIGHTLINK

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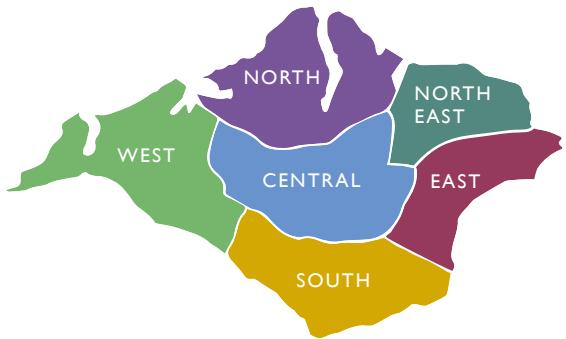


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The Guide

The who, the what, the where on the Isle of Wight...



Recent developments at Wightlink

Here are some changes that we've implemented within the past year. Many in response to customer feedback including our engagement with Island residents.

- Added a Multilink pass (an Island resident/homeowner pass available in quantities of 10, 20, 40 or 60) for blue badge holders.
- You can now register a second and third person living at the same household on your Multilink vehicle pass.
- On Multilink foot passenger adult passes you can name an extra family member, and on a child pass an additional child family member.
- Extended the discounted fares scheme to recipients of Universal Credit.
- Introduced two free foot passenger crossings for 16 and 17 year olds.
- Introduced the Sunset Flyer fixed price fare, exclusively for Isle of Wight residents.
- Collaborated with Isle of Wight MPs on free foot passenger crossings for 18 year olds on their birthday.
- Added NHS dental appointments to the NHS discount scheme which gives Islanders 50% discount.
- Introduced a mid-week travel offer giving vehicle passengers 20% off.
- Updated the Multilink webpage with details of where/when capacity on Multilinks is increased. This is updated three times every week.
- Added retail offers to our Solent Savers discount booklet for Island residents.
- Developed our customer dashboard showing statistics on punctuality and reliability, customer satisfaction, safety and community support.
- Held regular meetings with Solent Transport User Group (formerly WUG) and Isle of Wight Councillors to better understand the needs of Islanders.
- Quarterly Meet the Team events on the Island to meet with customers directly.

You can find details of our upcoming Meet the Team events, as well as read previous feedback and our responses at wightlink.meet-the-team

Investing in our fleet

The annual maintenance programme for our eight-strong fleet is set to wrap up by Easter.

Wightlink's annual maintenance programme ensures our ships remain in peak condition to deliver safe, reliable and comfortable journeys across the Solent. This essential work includes dry docking, hull inspections and upgrades to passenger areas, all planned months in advance to minimise disruption.

We're proud to have kept much of the planned works close to home. The annual refits are vital to ensure we stay shipshape and ready to transport around 4 million of you every year.



KIDS GO FREE DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Travelling with little ones? You can take the kids to the Island or mainland for free during the school holidays with Wightlink.

Under 5s always travel free with us, but when the schools break up you can take up to two children (aged 5–15) for free with every paying adult or senior foot passenger day return.

Make the most of this deal throughout 2026, with the offer covering the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays as well as the February, May and October half terms.

For full offer terms and conditions and to book, visit wightlink.co.uk/kgf



Win a break at Norton Grange, worth up to £900!

Enter our competition and you could win an accommodation voucher for Norton Grange – a Warner Village worth up to £600 plus £300 of Wightlink ferry travel included.

A coastal gem with rich history

Enjoy uninterrupted views of the Solent and watch yachts sail by on an unforgettable break at picturesque Norton Grange. It was built as a country house called Norton Lodge in 1760 and owned by the family of Rear Admiral Graham Hamond in the 19th and 20th centuries. Norton Grange offers a warm welcome, a delicious menu of homemade classics and fun-filled nightly entertainment. Stay in well-appointed chalets set amongst award-winning gardens, check out the pool and gym or explore nearby attractions like the maritime museum and planetarium.

About Warner Hotels

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For more details...

Please visit warnerhotels.co.uk or follow f: @warnerhotels

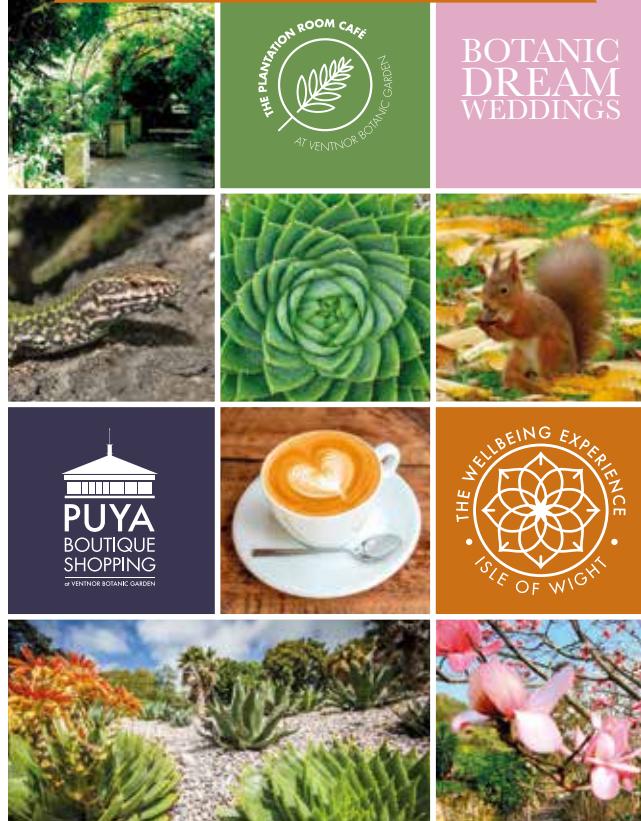


For your chance to win, visit wight.link/norton-grange and use the form to enter by 31 March 2026.

This prize draw is open for entries from 1 January 2026. Entries must be received by 23:59 on 31 March 2026. Entrants must be 18+. Cannot be transferred, refunded or exchanged for cash. The winner will receive an accommodation voucher to Norton Grange to the value of £600, redeemable against your booking, based on two people sharing standard accommodation with breakfast and dinner. Supplements and upgrades are available at an extra cost. Travel is not included except for £300 Wightlink ferry vouchers. Entertainment, pool access and selected activities included. Drinks and other food excluded. Excludes Christmas and New Year breaks, June to August breaks, Starbreaks, Drinks Inclusive breaks, By Invitation only breaks and other selected dates based on promotional availability. Break must be taken in 2026. Over 18s only. For full terms and conditions, visit wight.link/norton-grange



A BOTANIC GARDEN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Wellbeing Wight

With its rolling hills and glorious coastal scenes, restorative retreats and back-to-nature experiences, the Isle of Wight is a natural setting for a wellbeing boost. Whether you prefer to take a break from it all and be pampered, get moving with some vigorous exercise or take the plunge into cold-water therapy, the Island offers a tonic to help you feel your best.



The UK's original floating sauna returns to Tapnell Farm for the SloMo Winter Warmer.

A FEEL-GOOD DESTINATION

The Isle of Wight has long been considered a place to relax, rest and play with the added benefit of fresh sea air. It was a popular destination for wealthy Victorians, who were enamoured with its golden beaches, dramatic cliffs and rolling countryside. While Queen Victoria and Prince Albert enjoyed seaside holidays at the Osborne estate with their own private beach, wheeled bathing machines appeared on Ventnor beach and ladies strolled the esplanade, parasols in hand. Artists and writers took up residence in Freshwater, Bonchurch and Sandown, inspired by the Island's sublime landscapes.



After sweating it out in the sauna you can take a dip in the lake at Tapnell Farm.

Now, the Island remains a destination for escapes, retreats and activities that enhance wellbeing. It's recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, a place where there is a balanced relationship between people and nature. Rest and play come together here, with landscapes and activities that help you to feel good.

RESTORATIVE RETREATS

Set amongst rolling hills with a sea view, Tapnell Farm's self-catering cottages and glamping options offer places to unwind, with saunas and sunsets included. It's the ideal spot to relax outdoors, whether in a hot tub or taking in a glorious view.



The Freshwater landscape and fresh sea air has inspired many, including Balance+Glo founders Jenny and Evelyn.

ARRETON BARNs

THE ISLAND'S LARGEST ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTRE...

Nestled in the heart of the Arreton Valley, visit some of the Isle of Wight's most talented artists and artisans alongside boutique shops.

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Balance+Glo Weekend Wellness Retreats include energising yoga flows and strength classes.

Head to Slomo Sauna for a winter warmer at their floating sauna, conveniently located on site, where you're invited to take the plunge into the lake or ice bath and feel the benefit of contrast therapy. A wellbeing schedule is on offer, featuring yoga, meditation and breathwork and there's a cosy massage hut so you can relax and really make the most of your wellness break.

Nourish your body through movement and wholesome food at a yoga and fitness retreat with Balance+Glo. Enjoy energising yoga flows and strength classes, beautiful coastal walks and nutritious, plant-based meals to boost your sense of wellbeing. Guests are invited to spend time by the sea and unwind, so they can return from the retreat feeling replenished and refreshed.



The Chapel Studio is a light and airy space offering yoga, pilates and wellbeing workshops.

MINDFUL MOMENTS

Relax and indulge in some much-needed 'me time' with The Island Body Ritual Set from Duxmore Botanics. Sustainably sourced ingredients make up this luxury Island collection of fragrances and body care, designed to deliver an aromatherapeutic, wellbeing boost. Indulge in their luxury signature scent with a body scrub, hand wash and lotion set, to leave you feeling nourished, revived and refreshed. They also stock gorgeous soy wax melts and candles, so you can experience that blissed-out spa experience in your own sanctuary.



Right: The Duxmore Botanics Island Body Ritual set is the perfect way to relax from the comfort of your own sanctuary. Right: Indulge your senses at the scented shop in Ryde.

For a moment of stillness, book into The Chapel Studio at Niton. With yoga, pilates and workshops on offer, experienced teachers will guide you through self-nurturing practice in a peaceful setting. Enjoy mindful moments to leave you feeling restored and replenished.

If you're feeling in need of a pamper, head to Lakeside Hotel & Spa for a spa break or just a restful day to yourself. Enjoy a luxurious massage or treatment, relax in their pool, jacuzzi and sauna, then treat yourself to a delicious Afternoon Tea while gazing out over the lake – bliss!

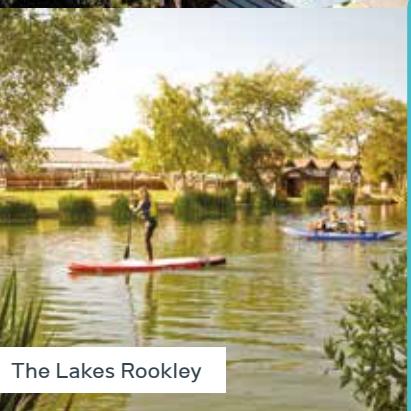
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*Price based on a 2-night stay in Superior accommodation at Whitecliff Bay in May 2026. Correct at time of print.



On warmer days, the thermal spa garden at the Lakeside Hotel & Spa is a real sun trap.

BACK TO NATURE

Luxury yurts and cosy cottages beckon, all set in picturesque organic farmland. The Garlic Farm, near Newchurch, is the perfect spot for exploring all the Island has to offer, with cycle tracks close by and splendid countryside to ramble in from this central location. Relax in a hot tub at the end of the day or book a session in the wood-fired barrel sauna, set in a glade under a canopy of leaves. The farm offers a schedule of events and activities, so you can get hands-on with a meditative food or craft workshop, enjoy music in their cosy restaurant or take a tour to learn more about the countryside around you.



Book a session in the wood-fired barrel sauna at The Garlic Farm, nestled under the trees.

Head to Ventnor Botanic Garden for a mindful stroll around the gardens, taking in the exotic flora that blooms on the south side of the Island. Explore tranquil garden trails or join a guided tour and hear from the experts who nurture this unique space. Check out their events and classes for arts and wellness activities that are sure to lift the spirits.



Left: Ventnor Botanic Garden is a hidden gem with a timetable of weekly wellness activities.
Right: Take a mindful stroll around the gardens with the echiums towering above.



You don't need to head far off the beaten track to find relaxation in nature on the Island. Take a stroll along one of the Island's many walking routes to discover extraordinary scenery or simply sit on the beach and enjoy the calming sounds of the sea. Whatever you do, enjoy a peaceful Island moment for yourself.

For more ideas on things to do, turn to pages 50–71 or visit wight.link/explorer

Ginnie Taylor



〔 A LITTLE LUXURY BESIDE THE SEA 〕

Experience the perfect blend of comfort and coastal charm and relax in our fully air-conditioned rooms, each thoughtfully designed to provide a restful retreat.

From our premium Victoria and Albert suites to beach deluxe and dog-friendly rooms, each has been designed with your relaxation in mind.

Our hotel restaurant, The Rock, has a perfectly appointed terrace with stunning views of Stag Rock and sweeping Freshwater Bay and is the perfect spot to enjoy delicious dishes made with locally sourced produce whether you're joining us for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

And, as we're right beside the sea you can enjoy coastal walks, windsurfing, and paddle boarding all just steps away.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR STAY

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01983 755 755

You can't leave the Island without...

#1 A BIT OF BIRDWATCHING

The waters around the Island are a popular stop-off for wading birds and ducks at this time of year. Head to a nature reserve, such as Newtown or Brading Marshes or get your binoculars out on board to see what you can spot.

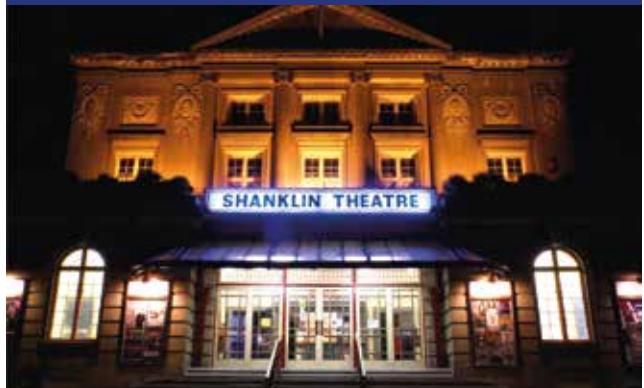


#2 GOING ON AN EGG HUNT

Get in the Easter spirit and keep the little ones amused this Easter by going on an egg hunt. Whether you're looking for a traditional day out, a historical quest or even an animal adventure, you'll find ideas for 'egg-straordinary' expeditions in our feature on pages 18–22.

#3 SEEING A SHOW

Shanklin Theatre hosts a diverse selection of acts, from theatre and musicals to comedians and tribute acts. You will also find big names such as *The Supervet* Professor Noel Fitzpatrick, *Flog It* presenter Paul Martin and G4. Discover our What's On Guide on pages 76–80.



#4 COSYING UP

Indulge yourselves this Valentine's Day and enjoy an intimate Island escape by booking a cosy break just for two. From countryside cabins and yurts with sea views, to pubs with rooms and heavenly hotels, we've got plenty of ideas for you on pages 44–48.

#5 TICKLING YOUR TASTE BUDS

If you made a New Year's resolution to get outside and get fit, redress the balance and reward yourself after a bracing walk with a coffee and a slab of cake at an independent café or a pint at a local pub. You'll find our best places for food for the soul on pages 38–42.





#6 MAKING TIME FOR MUM

Whether it's a locally-made gift, afternoon tea at one of the Island's cafés and restaurants or even a train ride together, say 'thank you' to the special lady in your life this Mother's Day on Sunday, 15 March.

#7 EXPLORING THE GREAT INDOORS

You might think the Island's attractions shut up shop during the colder months, but there's still plenty to do. Escape the weather and have a great day 'in' rather than out at Shanklin Seafront's Caddy Shack indoor mini golf or Amazon World's Monkey Madness soft play.

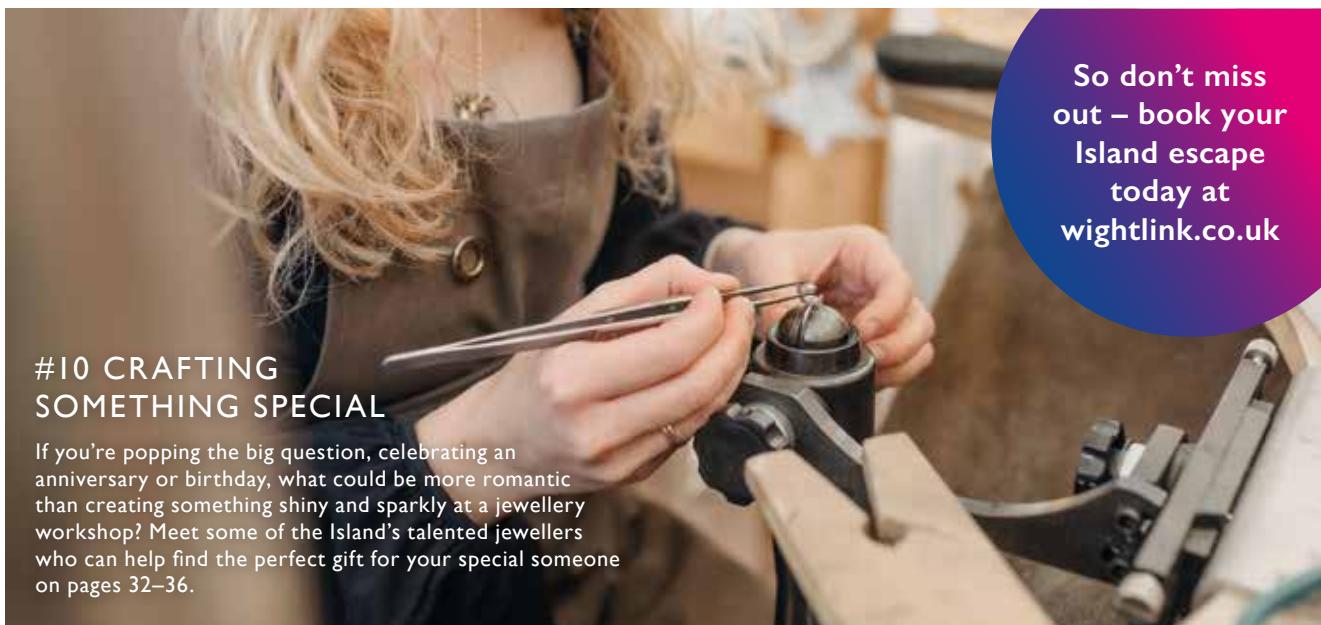


#8 PLANNING YOUR NEXT VISIT

The summer ahead looks set to be a bumper season for events, with everything from country shows, comedy and concerts, to festivals, fun runs and yacht regattas. There really is something for everyone! Plan your next Island escape with our What's On Guide on pages 76–80.

#9 RECHARGING YOUR BATTERIES

With breathtaking beaches and tranquil countryside, the Isle of Wight is the perfect place to kick back and unwind. Whether you're looking for a yoga retreat, a session in a floating sauna or even to just chill out at home, make time for you with our relaxation guide on pages 10–14.



#10 CRAFTING SOMETHING SPECIAL

If you're popping the big question, celebrating an anniversary or birthday, what could be more romantic than creating something shiny and sparkly at a jewellery workshop? Meet some of the Island's talented jewellers who can help find the perfect gift for your special someone on pages 32–36.

So don't miss out – book your Island escape today at wightlink.co.uk

Hoppy days out this spring

The ground may still be thawing from another chilly Island winter, but with longer days and the first signs of spring life appearing, Easter is within hopping distance. We've left no stone unturned to bring you a list of family-friendly days out – perfect for a season of memory-making and blooming good fun for you and the whole family!

EGGS-CITING ESCAPADES

With bouncing bunnies, historic hunts and Easter Eggstravaganzas across the Island, there's no shortage of ways to let the little ones run riot and enjoy the season's wonders.

Family favourite Robin Hill opens its doors this spring for another year of events and adventure. Following a triumphant 2025 reopening, the park promises more thrilling additions and seasonal activities. The Easter Egg Dash is perfect for little ones looking to mix nature-filled exploration with a hunt for chocolatey treasures – promising to leave them well and truly tuckered out. Sounds ideal, right?

Step back in time this Easter as Brading Roman Villa brings history to life. With its stunning mosaic floors and impressive collection of Roman artefacts, the Villa offers a captivating glimpse into ancient life in Britain. Young explorers can hunt high and low through the villa and gardens for clues, as well as enjoy character appearances, stalls, crafts, amusements and delicious food throughout the day – all in aid of local charity Daisy Chains IW.

Arreton Barns, the Island's favourite arts and crafts village, comes to life in spring. Wander the picturesque grounds as you follow the Easter Bunny Trail, collecting letters and solving the mystery words to claim the special prize! Explore the artisans studios and shops, the medieval church and tranquil duck pond, then round it off with a hearty meal and refreshing drink at the award-winning Dairyman's Daughter.



Meet the newborn lambs at Tapnell Farm this Easter.

For a touch of subtropical serenity, Ventnor Botanic Garden is the Island's very own spring paradise. Stroll in the colourful grounds, discover the rich history and solve clues and puzzles to claim an elusive chocolate treat at the 2026 Easter Hunt, taking place on 3–5 April.



Solve the clues hidden amongst the serene surroundings of Ventnor Botanic Garden and claim a prize.

ALL-WEATHER ADVENTURES

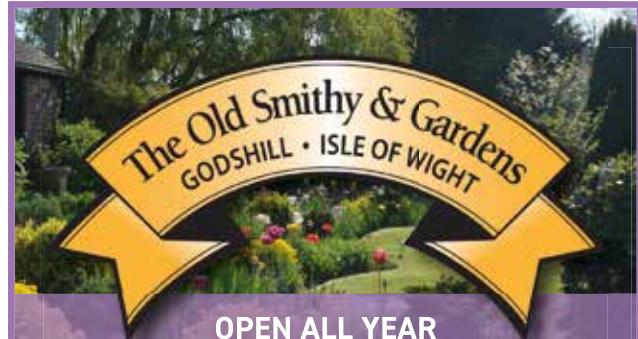
Despite being the sunniest place in the UK, the Island still has its fair share of unpredictable weather (we are still in Blighty, after all). So, with that in mind, it's wise to have a few all-weather options up your sleeve for those surprisingly soggy days.

Fortunately, Wight Karting in Ryde delivers high-speed, all-weather fun, all year round. Slip into your overalls, don your helmet and rev up for a thrilling experience suitable for all ages. Whether you're a first-time driver or a seasoned karting veteran, the friendly team ensures every session is one to remember.

Looking for a day of charm, nostalgia and beautiful scenery? We'd recommend you choo-choo-choose a day at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. Open from March, ride classic steam trains through springtime woodlands and Island countryside, explore the heritage museum to learn about these marvellous machines and enjoy year-round events – from Mother's Day Specials and Easter egg hunts, to real ale festivals and vintage fairs for all the family.



Steam through the spring countryside with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.



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Wight Karting promises fast-paced fun whatever the weather!

The Island is renowned for its prehistoric importance, and for dino-enthusiasts, Dinosaur Isle in Sandown is a must-visit. Due to reopen in early 2026 following an extensive refurbishment, the museum is home to the second most important collection of dinosaurs in the UK (according to Professor P. Barrett of the Natural History Museum). It offers interactive indoor exhibits, educational fun and the chance to hunt for your own prehistoric treasures along the expansive Island coastline.

FUR-TASTIC FUN

If this is your first visit to the Island in springtime, you'll experience the beauty of sunrises, rolling fog on the hills and glowing sunsets that truly signal the arrival of warmer days. Spring chickens, leaping lambs and adventurous alpacas are just a few of the wonderful seasonal sights on offer.

Home to some of the nation's favourite celebrities, the Island is no stranger to fame, but the latest residents at Wildheart Animal Sanctuary could be the most revered yet. The arrival of Benji and Balu, two European brown bears, has quickly made them the stars of the show, so come along this half term, meet the new faces and enjoy keeper talks, educational workshops and family-friendly Easter activities.



Left: Get up close with the Isle of Wight's newest celebrities, Benji and Balu at the Wildheart Animal Sanctuary. Right: You can also meet the lemurs in their walk-through dome.

Get within spitting distance (seriously, watch yourself) of the long-legged locals at West Wight Alpacas and Llamas. Enjoy the scenery as you take these calm and friendly creatures for a leisurely stroll around the beautiful farmland, visit the fantastic gift shop and then unwind in the cosy café for a well-earned hot drink.

Also in West Wight, Tapnell Farm offers a full day of family fun in one place. Lambing season will be in full swing this Easter, with visitors even having the chance to witness a live birth! Meet the newborns and gain behind-the-scenes insight into farm life with fascinating talks from the Tapnell keepers – a truly heartwarming experience for children and adults alike.



Make a new furry friend at West Wight Alpacas.

GREAT DAYS OUT FOR GROWN-UPS

The Island is well known for its family-friendly fun, but you can be sure there's no shortage of activities for adults. We've hand-picked some must-see and must-do experiences that'll make your Island escape one to remember.

Shake off winter with a heart-warming day at the Sanctuary!

As the days slowly grow brighter, our rescued residents — from cheeky meerkats to our beloved bears — are venturing into the new season with fresh energy.

Explore peaceful pathways, enjoy uplifting encounters, and feel the first signs of spring all around you.

And this year, we're excited to introduce our **new Bear Experiences**, starting in April as the season blossoms.

We're **open all year round**, so start your year with a visit that's full of warmth, wonder, and wildlife.

BEAR EXPERIENCES

Join us for a once in a lifetime experience and get to meet Benji & Balu up close. **Available April to October 2026. Booking now open!**



Book your tickets online

SCAN ME!

Open all year.



Yaverland Road, Sandown, PO36 8QB

wildheartanimalsanctuary.org



wildheart
animal
sanctuary
isle of wight



What could be more fun than feeding the friendly pigs at Quarr Abbey?

The UK's oldest continually active vineyard, Adgestone Vineyard, offers the perfect opportunity for would-be sommeliers to tour the grounds, understand the incredible grape-to-glass craft and sample the latest batches with your newly learned tasting techniques. Finish off your trip with a bottle of the signature Adgestone 'Something Blue' wine – a perfect gift from you, to you!

Walk the tranquil grounds of Quarr Abbey and witness the monks at work. Explore the medieval ruins, feed the friendly pigs, browse the farm shop and pop-up art exhibitions, then stop for tea and cake in the charming tearoom. If you're feeling the need for an extra leg stretch, wander down to the Fishbourne Inn for a pub pit-stop and watch the world go by as boats sail in and out of the creek.



Try a taste of the Wight and sample Adgestone Vineyard's unique 'Something Blue' wine.

Maybe the thrill of the chill is more your thing, in which case, why not dip your toe into the adrenaline-fuelled excitement of Tackt-Isle Adventures? Paddleboarding, windsurfing, kayaking and more await those brave enough to embrace the brisk spring waters and invigorating Island air.



Get out on the water with Tackt-Isle Adventures.

As the Isle of Wight begins to thaw from its winter slumber, it comes alive once more – bursting with colour, energy and excitement for another beautiful season on the Diamond Isle. With a wealth of indoor and outdoor adventures to enjoy, whatever the weather, it's the perfect place for an Easter escape that the whole family will remember.

For more ideas for places to visit, turn to pages 50–71 or visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer

Brad Stockdale



BRADING ROMAN VILLA

Let us take you on a discovery of Roman life on the Isle of Wight over 1800 years ago. The Romans were famous for their mosaics and our museum has some of the best in Great Britain!

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Find us



Wightlink in the Community

*Mandy Fuller and Kellie Lawrence,
Fundraising Managers, Daisy Chains IW*

There are many wonderful groups providing support to less fortunate people on the Isle of Wight and Wightlink support many of these organisations. One of them is the children's charity Daisy Chains IW, which was founded in 2012 by a group of Island parents whose children have been affected by long-term or life-limiting illnesses or disabilities.

After years of travelling to the mainland for hospital appointments with their own children, the founders strongly felt there was a need for something to be available on the Isle of Wight to help other parents. Those who have to travel sometimes daily to access the care, equipment and therapies needed to help their children progress and get better.

Over the years, the main focus of the charity has become the travel needs of these families, especially those needing to get to mainland hospitals for urgent and sometimes life-changing treatment. There is no funding for these families to make those journeys to the mainland for care and treatment, unless they are receiving some very specific benefits.

Daisy Chains IW supports children with all kinds of health needs, including every premature baby that is transferred to the mainland and most children who need care off the Island. The charity is currently supporting over 90 Island families who have a poorly child and Wightlink helps with assisted travel for the families affected.



**WIGHTLINK
IN THE COMMUNITY**

SUPPORTING THE ISLAND SINCE 1987

We caught up with Mandy Fuller and Kellie Lawrence, the charity's fundraising managers, who told us about what makes the Isle of Wight special for them.

Mandy said: "Living on the Isle of Wight has so many advantages, stunning natural beauty, a relaxed pace of life and a strong sense of community. It is such a friendly place to live and has been such a nice place to bring up our children. Kellie and I have seven children between us and have spent many a summer at the lovely beaches and also enjoyed many a visit to the summer attractions we have here."

It's a great place to work with the charity as people are so generous towards our cause and have really supported the events that we put on, such as Festival of Heroes, Easter Egg Hunts and many more. Islanders really understand how travel to and from the mainland with a poorly child can be tricky and really get behind all we do.

In terms of favourite places, we both love Lake Beach as it holds many memories of good family time for both of us. It's never too busy and always clean. Colwell is also a lovely place to go if looking to go further afield."

Kellie said: "A favourite walk for me has to be a brisk stroll across the seafront from Lake to Shanklin, taking in the sea air and clearing the mind."

Mandy added: "I love a dog walk through Parkhurst Forest as squirrel spotting is always fun for the kids, or a walk up to the monument in Chale. Picnics up on the downs with family is one of my favourite things to do on a summer evening or we love a visit to Snacks and Ladders Board Games Café in Newport for games when the weather is bad. Both are super accessible venues for my daughter, who uses a wheelchair."

Kellie: "I love to pop to Shanklin for a lovely ice cream at Toppings on the seafront and meet up with friends at Coffee Chameleon in Sandown, a small family-run cafe with the best vegan cakes."

The support we receive from Wightlink really is amazing. Without the travel deals, we would have found supporting our families more difficult to sustain. They have also supported us with days out for some of the most-affected families, as well as providing raffle prizes to help with fundraising.

Getting our families over to mainland hospitals is an Island-specific issue we deal with every day and without their support, we couldn't manage to do this."

To find out more about our sponsorships, visit wightlink.co.uk/community or stay updated at facebook.com/wightlinkinthecommunity.

Meet more of our Wightlink in the Community heroes on pages 37, 49 and 64.



wightkarting.co.uk

RYDE, PO33 1QS
01983 565366



Culture buff

With a best-selling Victorian novelist, BAFTA-winning film director and Grammy Award-winning indie rock band all having called the Isle of Wight home, it's no wonder we punch well above our weight when it comes to arts, culture and creativity. So, follow us as we venture amongst the Island's current crop of creatives to see what's going on in 2026.

VENTNOR EXCHANGE & VENTNOR FRINGE

Powering creativity from the Island's rocky southern shoreline is Ventnor Exchange, a venue, bar and record store all rolled into one. Here, the team hosts fortnightly spoken word sessions, alongside improvised comedy workshops and even stained glass-making tutorials. They're also the masterminds behind the Ventnor Fringe festival, an eclectic mix of theatre, music and stand-up performed across the town every July from cliff-top circus tents to industrial warehouses. While it attracts many big-name comedians (often testing out material for the Edinburgh Fringe), the event also gives space to local performers, such as Ozzy Algar, whose comedy folk-horror last year took inspiration from local Island legends and Ventnor's very own launderette. Selling a record 13,000 tickets in 2025, the Fringe is only set to get bigger and bigger, especially with a new arts centre at Ingram's Yard now in the making.



Ventnor Fringe sees an eclectic mix of entertainment including theatre, music, circus and comedy performed across the town and surrounding area.

QUAY ARTS

When it comes to fine arts, the cluster of riverside warehouses in Newport now known as Quay Arts (once part of Mew, Langton & Co. Brewery) should definitely be your destination. Across an array of galleries, they showcase local and international art, featuring everything from photography and sculpture to painting and ceramics.



Quay Arts not only showcases art, but also holds a diverse range of workshops and classes, including life drawing, where you can get creative.

Recent highlights have included 'It's No Ordinary Town' – a community-driven exhibition to reimagine the future of Sandown, a much-loved (but much-overlooked) settlement on the Island's east coast. Pieces included original artworks, prints, a giant puppet and a deck of 24 Sandown-inspired tarot cards, with illustrations by Tommy Brentnall and tales by short story specialist Anmarie Bowler. On the opposite bank of the River Medina, you'll also find Quay Arts' Jubilee Stores, home to seven Island artists, which opens every May for Isle of Wight Open Studios.

ISLE OF WIGHT LITERARY FESTIVAL

The Isle of Wight certainly has a way with words, having offered creative inspiration to countless local and visiting writers (Charles Dickens, John Keats and Thomas Hardy, to name just three). Since 2012, the main event in the local literary calendar has been the Isle of Wight Literary Festival, held every October at Northwood House.



The Isle of Wight Literary Festival takes place at Northwood House in Cowes.

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For a small venue tucked away down Newport's Bowling Green Lane, Strings has had a big impact on local talent.

This late-Georgian manor house's opulent interiors have seen everyone from Prue Leith to Sue Barker and Gyles Brandreth take a seat to discuss their newly-penned publications. However, local authors share the spotlight too through the festival's 'Write on Wight' events. Islanders appearing in last year's schedule included Dr Brian Hinton, a poet, Tennyson researcher and the founder of Dimbola Museum and Galleries in Freshwater, who discussed keeping poetry alive in unexpected places.

STRINGS BAR AND VENUE & CHALKPIT CASSETTE CLUB

While the Isle of Wight might be known to many for the famous music festival of 1970 headlined by Jimi Hendrix (yes, that Jimi Hendrix), it's the local talent you need to keep an eye on. Tucked away down Newport's Bowling Green Lane, Strings Bar & Venue has played a pretty important role in promoting homegrown musical talent. Its stage has seen Isle of Wight success stories Lauran Hibberd, Coach Party and Wet Leg plug in and take to the mic, with all of them now seeing success across the UK and abroad.



Left: Strings owners Andy Booth and Claydon Connor. Right: Chalkpit Cassette Club has played a pivotal role in preserving and nurturing cassette culture.



Talking of Wet Leg and Coach Party, you can now play their albums from the nostalgic format of cassette tapes, thanks to Chalkpit Cassette Club. Founded by Islander Silas Gregory, the club keeps cassette culture alive by manufacturing characterful, special edition cassettes in-house for artists looking to make a deeper connection with their fans. Alongside Isle of Wight talent, Silas has also made cassettes for R&B icon Jorja Smith and Irish indie pop singer CMAT.

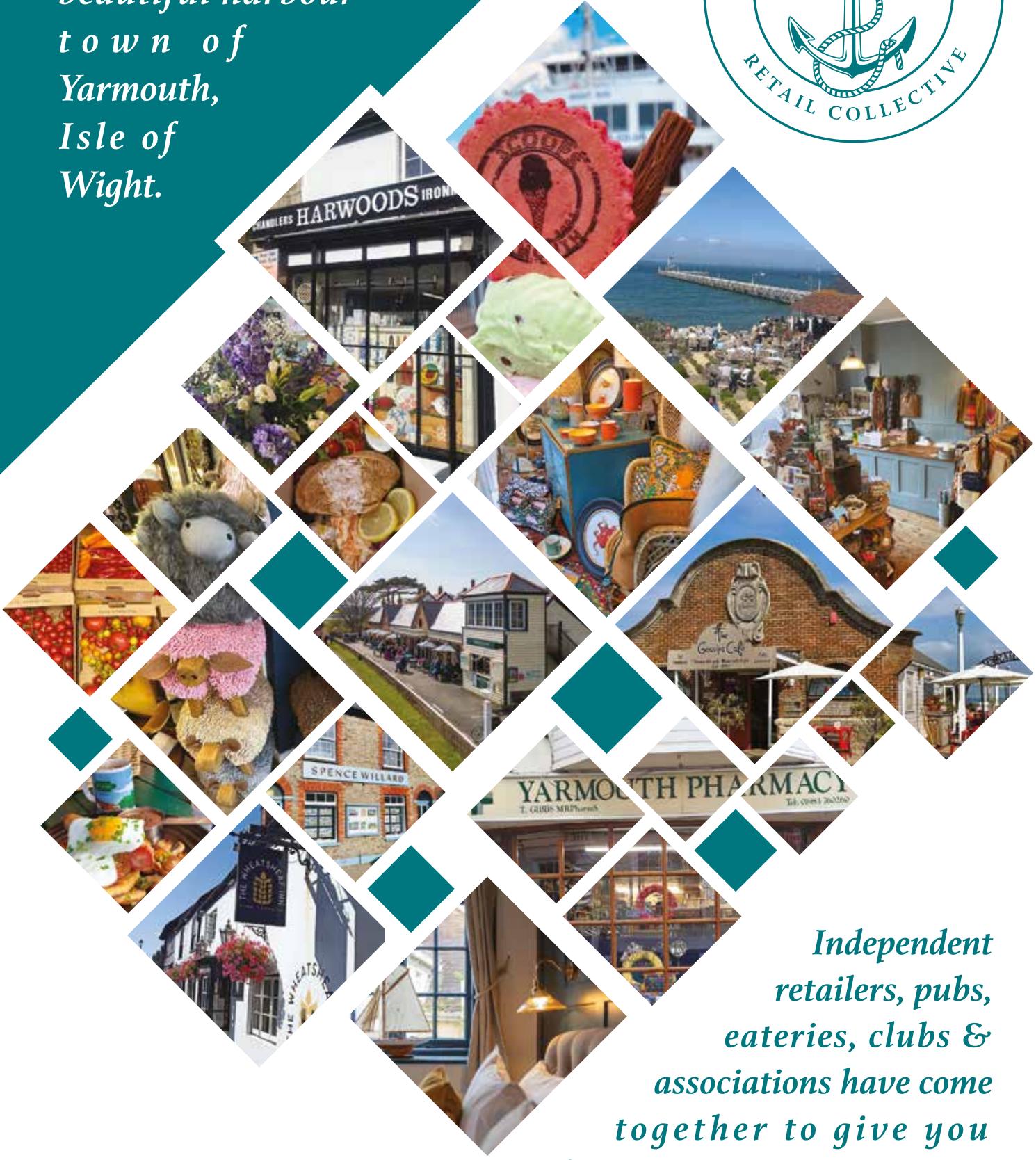


Ventnor Film Society show a sophisticated selection of films served with gently chilled wines and expertly shaken cocktails from their base at Ventnor Arts Club.

VENTNOR FILM SOCIETY

Meanwhile, fans of the silver screen shouldn't feel left out. Film cameras have been setting up to shoot scenes across the Island for decades, from the 1930s thriller 'I Met A Murderer' to more recent productions, including a lively Bollywood epic and a chilling Spanish-British horror story. Keeping the local cinematic tradition alive is Ventnor Film Society, now in its 20th year.

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As the name suggests, Department was once a department store, but now combines performance, art and heritage in one vibrant space.

From the comfy interior of their converted 1920s bank in Ventnor High Street, they show a sophisticated selection of hand-picked and award-winning foreign language films, with a bar on standby to serve gently chilled wines and expertly shaken cocktails. Recent screenings have provided locals with the chance to see an Iranian political thriller, a Chinese crime thriller and the 2024 Brazilian drama 'I'm Still Here.' Alternatively, seek out the Cowes Film Club, based at Trinity Theatre.

DEPARTMENT

The latest addition to the Isle of Wight's cultural scene can be found in Cross Street, Ryde, housed behind the facade of an iconic former department store. Since first opening their intricate metalwork gates in March 2025, Department has offered a mix of performance, art and heritage, creating a new cultural focal point for the Island's largest town.



Department is also home to Shademakers UK, who produce elaborate costumes.

At street level, you'll find art installations, a recording booth and event stages, while the upper floors contain specialist studios and a space dedicated to sewing workshops: The Stitch Department. It's also the home of Shademakers UK (one of Wightlink's sponsored community groups), who piece together dancing sculptures and elaborate costumes featured in Ryde's annual carnivals. In just the past few months, events from Department's packed calendar have included jazz evenings, original plays by Horse Box Theatre CIC and a musical-inspired comedy production by Quivers - the Island's most famous drag performer.



You'll find thought-provoking installations and much more at Department.

For more ideas on places to visit, turn to pages 50–71 or visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer. You'll find our what's on guide on pages 76–80.

James Rayner



WELLINGTON
HOTEL

www.thewellington.co.uk

Wake Up to the Sea at The Wellington Hotel, Ventnor

Perched above Ventnor's stunning coastline, The Wellington Hotel invites you to experience the Isle of Wight at its most breathtaking. Every room offers a spectacular, uninterrupted sea view—a front-row seat to sunrise, ocean breezes, and the soothing rhythm of the waves.

Begin each day with our mouth-watering, locally sourced breakfast, crafted using the finest Isle of Wight produce. Fresh, seasonal, vibrant—just the way coastal mornings should be.

Why Choose The Wellington Hotel?

- ◆ All rooms feature panoramic sea views—no exceptions, no upgrades needed.
- ◆ Delicious locally sourced breakfast, showcasing the island's best produce.
- ◆ Private, elevated seafront location with sweeping views over Ventnor Bay.
- ◆ Comfortable, stylish rooms designed for relaxation and coastal calm.
- ◆ Sun terrace and outdoor seating to enjoy golden hours above the waves.



Why Ventnor?

- ◆ A charming Victorian seaside resort with a relaxed, sunny micro-climate.
- ◆ Award-winning restaurants, cafés, and wine bars just minutes' walk from the hotel.
- ◆ The beautiful Ventnor Beach & Esplanade right on your doorstep.
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- ◆ A vibrant local food scene celebrating the island's artisan producers

Book your seafront escape today.



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01983 856 600



The Wellington Hotel, Belgrave Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, PO38 1JH.

Put a ring on it

Sparkly, unique and infinitely wearable, you can't go wrong with a bit of locally-made jewellery. And with so many talented silversmiths and goldsmiths tapping away across the Island, you're spoilt for choice – whether you fancy a one-to-one workshop or a special custom-made piece in time for the most romantic day of the year.

BE CHARLO

Becca Charlo is a talented jewellery designer dedicated to sharing her knowledge and skills with others. From her sunlit studio, tucked down a tranquil rural lane at Billingham, she offers a range of experiences, from bespoke commissions to teaching sessions, classes and immersive workshops for individuals and groups.

Not so confident in your creative abilities? Fear not. Becca has spent many years turning hundreds of hastily drawn client sketches into unique wearable one-offs. Previous commissions have included bangles inset with local sea glass, Shetland pony silver brooches and special paw print pendants and depending on the waiting list, commissions can be fulfilled in as little as a week. Whether you opt for something simple and silver, fancy adding some precious stones into your 18-carat design, or are looking to learn the craft yourself, Becca's got you covered.

**BeCHARLO, Roslin Lane,
Billingham, Near Chillerton
becharlo.co.uk**

The Isle of Wight has a wealth of talented silversmiths and goldsmiths tapping and filing away. Pictured: Becca of BeCharlo.

THE JEWELLERY CABIN

If you recently popped that all-important question (and hopefully received a “yes” in response), you might be looking for a pair of unique and personalised wedding rings. For an extra special touch, consider sitting down at a workbench and hammering away at your very own creations at The Jewellery Cabin. From their compact studio at Sheat Manor Farm (set amongst the lush green countryside near Gatcombe), tutors Kelly, Jodie, Suzy or Shannon will guide you and your partner through the entire process, from sketching out a design to buffing those sparkly finished rings.



Pick up some new skills and make a ring at The Jewellery Cabin.

Every workshop begins with a consultation ahead of time, to pin down ideas, decide on which precious metal to plump for and obtain ring sizes. Then, on workshop day, you'll have the studio to yourselves, as you pick up your tools and become a jeweller (for around four hours). At the end of the session, your rings will be ready and you might have just made some lifelong memories in the process.

As well as wedding ring workshops, The Jewellery Cabin also offers an extensive programme of classes where you can create everything from bangles, pendants and earrings, to learning techniques such as stone setting and wax casting.

thejewellerycabin.com



Gather your best friends and enjoy an afternoon together under the expert tutition of the team at The Jewellery Cabin.

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LITTLE JOY JEWELLERY

Meanwhile, over in Bembridge, in a restful harbour-side studio, you'll find Lauren Griffiths, an award-winning jewellery designer and the founder of Little Joy Jewellery. After learning her craft in Birmingham's renowned Jewellery Quarter, Lauren now makes minimal, mindful and artisanal items using Fairtrade metals, recycled packaging and wooden ring boxes carved out of a furniture maker's offcuts. Unique wedding ring workshop experiences are available for couples, or you can choose from her classy collection of hand-hammered jewellery. From a limited edition Celtic-inspired silver pendant (for husbands with style) to rose quartz crystal earrings (where the stone of love takes centre stage), there's something for every romantic set-up possible.

littlejoyjewellery.com



Pop the big question with something sparkly from Little Joy Jewellery and the create your own wedding rings in a couples workshop afterwards.

Treat yourself to a trio of stacking rings set with semi-precious stones from Be Charlo.

THOMAS P COCHRAN

If your special someone is a fan of all things nautical, then Thomas P Cochran is the jeweller for you. Located amongst the cluster of wooden workshops at Arreton Barns, they produce ocean-inspired pieces from solid sterling silver, sometimes using real sea urchins or conch shells to cast from. Head of the family, Thomas, originally studied silversmithing in South Africa before setting up his first shop in Mauritius in 2015.



Thomas P Cochran produce ocean inspired pieces, including these whale tail bracelets.

Now based on the Isle of Wight, his son (also called Thomas) has taken the reins, with more marine-inspired pieces on offer than ever before. The ready-to-wear manta ray pendant could be ideal for any seafaring boyfriends, while the urchin mini ring could be just the thing for a beachside proposal. Ring and bangle making sessions are also on offer, with Thomas (the younger) ready and waiting to instruct.

Thomas P Cochran, Arreton Barns, Arreton
thomaspcochran.com

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The Orchards Holiday Park, Newbridge, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, PO41 0TS

 the
Orchards



The Only Through Shadows elegant creations feature elements from nature including the night sky, leaves and moths.

HONEYBOURNE JEWELLERY

If the thought of clamps, ring mandrels and attempting to fashion your own jewellery at a workshop seems a little stressful, then consider a commission at Honeybourne Jewellery. Located on Church Street in Ventnor, this dazzling emporium of silver, gold and enamel is the work of Sophie Honeybourne, her partner Raff, assistant Emily and dog Syd.

While it might be the season of proposals and special anniversaries, not all neatly-wrapped gifts of jewellery have to be for the one who sets your heart aflame. For special friends and much-loved members of the family, consider a meaningful present from Honeybourne Jewellery (remember, Mother's Day is just around the corner too).



Honeybourne Jewellery create everything from stunning bespoke engagement rings to unique and personal charm bracelets at their shop in Ventnor.

They've made a name for themselves not only for creating gorgeous engagement rings, but also custom-made jewellery inspired by family pets or treasured memories. Of the many heartfelt options on offer, you could commission a few 'favourite things' silver pendants, which can feature everything from cups of tea to pizza slices.

Honeybourne Jewellery, 3 Church Street, Ventnor
honeybournejewellery.com

ONLY THROUGH SHADOWS

Close to the lapping waves and chalky cliffs of Freshwater Bay, Artemis Russell turns recycled precious metals and ethical gems into stunning pieces, often inspired by folklore and natural history. Her elegant creations feature seaweed, grasses, birds and even moths, with each one retaining the natural texture created when pieces are worked entirely by hand.



Artemis Russell turns recycled precious metals and ethical gems into stunning pieces.

Formerly a creative specialising in photography and video installations, Artemis fell into jewellery by chance, before pursuing her craft amongst the jewellery manufacturing studios of Hatton Garden in London. Now working from the Isle of Wight, each style of ring, necklace, earring and bracelet is made in small batches, so you can be sure your Valentine will be receiving something extra special.

onlythroughshadows.com

For more ideas on things to do and shops to visit, turn to pages 50–71

James Rayner

Wightlink in the Community: Jo Dare, CEO, Isle of Wight Youth Trust

Here at Wightlink, we support many good causes on the Isle of Wight. One organisation that has made a huge difference to the young people of the Island is the Isle of Wight Youth Trust. For more than 40 years, it has provided support, counselling and guidance to children and young adults, particularly around their mental health.

Over the years, a number of talented people have taken on the challenging role as CEO of the Isle of Wight Youth Trust and the current head is Jo Dare, who has been well known in the Island's voluntary sector for the last 20 years.

We spoke to Jo about her favourite Island places and experiences and began by asking what it was about the Island that appealed to her as a place to live and work?

"It's that feeling I get as I get on a ferry after a meeting in London. I can feel myself relaxing and breathing more deeply. It's not that I don't sometimes love travelling off the Island, whether for work or leisure, but I have a sense of peace here that would be hard to beat. I've been working in the Voluntary Sector, as a CEO, for 20 years now. I love the sense of community the Island still has – most people genuinely care about others.

I also love our local environment. Few areas would have such diversity of environment over such a small area, whether that's getting up high on the downs, or walking on the beach.

For Ren, my Cavapoo, I would have to say that her favourite beach is any one that has some soft sand because it's her happy place, where she most loves to run around. For me, I like something on the wilder side, and love the south coast beaches, especially when it's blowing a gale, the surf's up and you can lean into the wind.

I love getting up high, too. There's something special about seeing both sides of the Island at the same time. For that reason, I'd have to say Mottistone Down is probably my favourite place to go for a walk. The views are spectacular.

I've moved a few times since 2019, so my favourite place has to be home, wherever that is on the Island. I lived in Newport and Carisbrooke for many years, and because I like to walk, I loved being central so that everywhere was in easy reach. I now live in Ryde, and love its strong identity, its events and independent shops. Ryde is also good for that occasional day out on the mainland.

The support from Wightlink is invaluable to the Isle of Wight Youth Trust. We love the positive way that they have responded to the concerns raised by young people about the cost of ferry travel. As a result, Wightlink has offered

a number of benefits, including 2 x free foot passenger returns for 16 and 17 year olds on the Island, support for young people travelling to counselling on the mainland and discounts for young people travelling to the mainland for job interviews and university open days.

Knowing that some young people have never travelled on the ferry, and certainly not alone, Youth Taskforce members were recently invited to spend some time on the bridge, speaking with staff and making a video so that young people who may be a bit anxious can see what it will be like before they travel."

To find out more about our sponsorships, visit wightlink.co.uk/community or stay updated at facebook.com/wightlinkinthecommunity. Meet more of our Wightlink in the Community heroes on pages 24–25, 49 and 64.



Food for the soul



With fresh seafood and farm-to-table dining, charming cafés and al fresco experiences, the Isle of Wight is a favourite destination for foodies. From seafront restaurants to cosy bakeries and country pubs, the Island's eateries offer dishes to delight the senses and nourish the soul.

Breakfast at The Garlic Farm is a wholesome and hearty affair, and a great way to start the day.

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Cook & Baker, Godshill

Set in the historic village of Godshill, Cook & Baker serve up totally scrumptious breakfasts. Their eclectic menu includes both classics for traditionalists and something a little different for those who are feeling adventurous. Delicious Korean-style eggs are presented on brioche with melted cheese, topped with fresh coleslaw, fragrant coriander and spicy chillies, while the Bubble & Squeak is a modern take on a comforting, nostalgic brekkie. This café is great whatever the weather – the wood burner is lit on cold days, while the terrace and garden open for customers to soak up the rays when the sun shines.



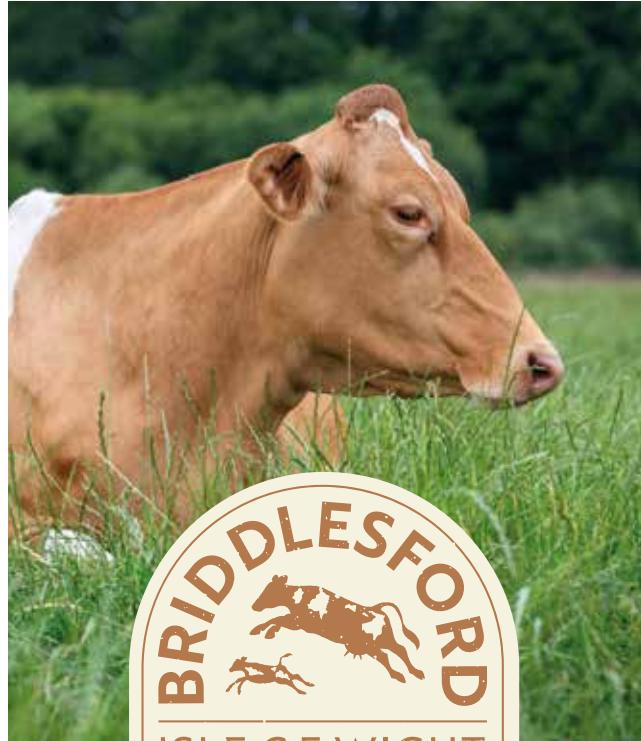
The food at Cook & Baker is a feast for the eyes as well as the tastebuds.

The Garlic Farm, Newchurch

The Garlic Farm breakfast is not to be missed. Think wholesome and hearty plates, with locally sourced eggs, tasty vegetables and succulent black garlic sausages. Their classic English breakfasts are popular, served with a garlicky twist and the chance of spotting red squirrels through the window. Local, ethical sourcing is the priority here, with the restaurant aiming for zero waste, in line with the farm's sustainable credentials. Try the garlic mushrooms on sourdough with Isle of Wight tomatoes if you fancy something lighter than a full English, enjoy local teas and coffees, and then take a stroll around the organic farmland to see home-reared cows and goats, and spot the garlic growing (when it's in season).



Left: Don't forget to take some garlicky goodness home with you.
Right: The Garlic Farm Restaurant is tucked at the heart of the farm.



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briddlesford.co.uk



LUNCH & LIGHT BITES

The Mermaid Bar at The Isle of Wight Distillery, Seaview

If you're looking for a leisurely lunch with a cocktail or two, head to the home of Mermaid. Situated on the outskirts of Ryde in picturesque countryside, it's a great place to stop off while exploring the beautiful coastline and nature reserves on the north-east of the Island. Relax on the outdoor terrace when in the sunshine or cosy up by the wood-burning stove on colder days. Choose from freshly prepared salads, pizzas, burgers or light bites and treat yourself to a signature Mermaid & Tonic or a cocktail designed by their resident mixologists.

Briddlesford Café at Briddlesford Farm, Wootton

Enjoy light lunches and seasonal specials at this dairy farm, where their own veal and dairy products take pride of place on the menu. Try the Briddlesford burger with farm-fresh toppings and homemade cheese for a totally

The Mermaid Bar is a chic yet comfortable place for a spot of lunch and a gin or two!

indulgent lunch. With its warm, welcoming atmosphere and the chance to meet the resident herd, this charming café celebrates local produce in a relaxed setting. It can get busy at lunchtimes, so it's best to book ahead to reserve a table.



Stripped Brasserie offers comfort food at its finest in a cosy, intimate setting.

SOUL-FOOD SUPPERS

Stripped Brasserie, Ventnor

Set in an old bank in Ventnor town and run by a welcoming husband-and-wife team, Stripped Brasserie offers Mediterranean cuisine in a cosy, intimate setting. Succulent, flavoursome cuts of meat, fresh salads and homemade mezze are presented with care and attention to detail. Chunky bread is served for mopping up the juices of your starters – the Gambas Pil Pil and Braised Chorizo are an absolute delight – and generous servings are guaranteed. Stripped is a place with heart, where care is taken to prepare every meal made by head chef Ramona Dobre. Try her signature dish, Kleftiko: lamb roasted long and slow, seasoned and served with potatoes and vegetables. Settle in and enjoy comfort food at its finest.



The Briddlesford burger comes with farm-fresh toppings and homemade cheese.

Largest Exotic Animal Collection on the Island !

SOFT PLAY



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All weather
attraction

MUSEUM



ANIMAL
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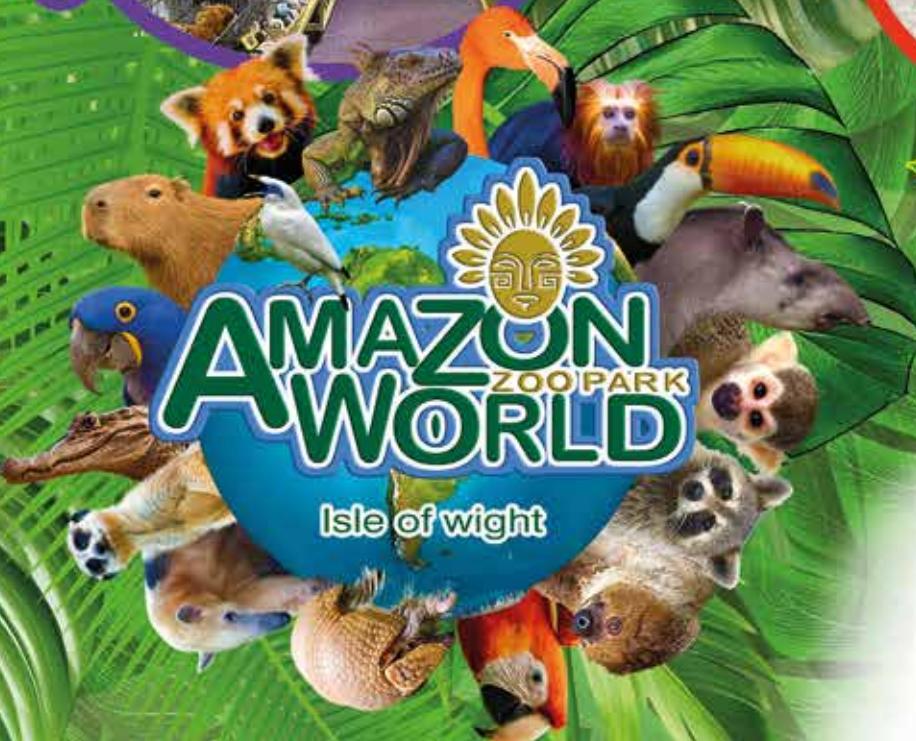
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Isle of wight



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01983 867122



ARCC
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CONSERVATION CENTRE

REGISTERED CHARITY NO.
1205255



Expect food made with heart and packed full of flavour at Stripped Brasserie.

The Steamer Inn, Shanklin

There's something rather special about supper by the seaside. Soak up the panoramic views over the English Channel at The Steamer Inn, a cosy pub with a nautical vibe, just a stone's throw from the golden beach. Try the popular Seafood Chowder for a comforting, wholesome meal of poached fish, mussels and prawns in a creamy garlic sauce, served with crusty bread and butter. This is a great spot for families and groups to hunker down after a walk in the fresh sea air.



The Steamer Inn on Shanklin Esplanade is great for families and groups.

ON THE GO AROUND THE ISLAND

Pop into French Franks in Ryde or Newport to grab a bite from their mouth-watering menu featuring local produce. Choose from freshly made sandwiches, baguettes, wraps and bagels, stuffed with delicious fillings. If you're near Bembridge, Hotbox Bakery is well worth a visit. Enjoy the laid-back atmosphere or grab something to go from their ever-changing selection of huge pastries, freshly baked bread and tasty pies, all made in-house. For those exploring the south side of the Island, a stop off at Mill Bay is sure to be memorable - fish and chips to take away pairs perfectly with the view over the bay.



Left: The huge croissants at Hotbox Bakery. Right: Grab a sandwich to go at French Franks.

For more ideas for places to eat, turn to pages 50–71 or visit wight.link/where-to-eat

Ginnie Taylor

SPACES AVAILABLE

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01983 862937 07951673469

Abbeyfield-Shanklin@abbeyfield.com

14 Queens Road, Shanklin, Isle of Wight, PO37 6AN

Intimate escapes

Imagine your perfect getaway with your beloved. Do you picture yourselves nestled among a tree-lined canopy overlooking frosty landscapes? Perhaps you're curled up by the fire as the sound of winter waves echoes in the distance. Maybe your idea of an intimate escape is pure indulgence – five-star service, with food and drink to match.

Whatever your vision, the Isle of Wight offers a unique collection of romantic retreats, perfect for a Valentine's getaway or a cosy break at any time of year. Here are eight must-visit destinations that promise to leave you and your partner with a renewed sense of warmth and wonder – away from the hustle and bustle and immersed in the peace and beauty the Island is famed for.

ROMANTIC RAMBLERS

With 70 miles of coastal path, ancient woodland trails and heritage routes that weave through history and nature, the Island is a paradise for couples who love to wander hand-in-hand.

Stargazers' Retreat promises an experience unlike any other. Overlooking Ventnor Bay and beyond, this hand-crafted yurt combines rustic romance with modern indulgence – complete with a hot tub, outdoor bathing, covered BBQ and even a private massage hut for that all-important pamper session. Just a short stroll from Castlehaven Beach, Puckaster Cove and three charming village pubs, it's a haven of comfort and coastal beauty.

uniquehideaways.com

Slip into the warm water and enjoy outdoor bathing by the fire pit at Stargazers' Retreat.

Nestled in the sleepy village of Chale, The Wight Mouse Inn embodies the charm of slow living. Step outside and you're met with the drama of the south-west coast – the Island's famed cliffs, St Catherine's Lighthouse and sweeping sea views that stretch for miles. After a day exploring, unwind by the fire with hearty pub classics and local ales before retreating to the comfort and character of your en-suite room for a well-earned night's rest.

wightmouse.co.uk



Retire to the Wight Mouse Inn and tuck into a hearty menu of pub classics.

Over in Totland, one of the Island's designated National Scenic Areas, you'll find the welcoming Hightown Inn. This traditional country pub offers charming rooms and access to breathtaking walks across Tennyson Down, with the historic Needles and the Old Battery just a brisk and beautiful stroll away. Known for its fresh seafood and friendly, local atmosphere, it's the perfect sanctuary after a day exploring the Island's stunning terrain.

hightowninn.com



The Hightown Inn is known for its fresh seafood and friendly local welcome.

COSY COMFORT

There's something timelessly romantic about sharing a bottle of wine while dinner roasts in the oven, the fire crackles in the background and the weather lashes gently at the windows. Now imagine that moment tucked away in your own private hideaway, surrounded by the wild of the Wight – a true escape from the everyday.



Over 30 years of stunning views, great food, real ales and live music



thespyglass.com | 01983 855338 | PO38 1JX

VENTNOR SEAFRONT

Stay a stone's throw away from the beach!



ventnorseafront.co.uk | 07484 174872 | PO38 1JP



Set on Ventnor Seafront, enjoy tasty tapas, fine wines and spectacular cocktails all while enjoying the stunning sea views



themetwinebar.co.uk | 01983 853544 | PO38 1JP



The cabins at Tiny Homes Holidays are surrounded by wildflowers and woodland.

Set in tranquil woodland near Cowes, Tiny Homes Holidays offers six architect-designed eco-cabins, each with its own wood-burning stove, snug mezzanine and access to a communal outdoor kitchen, sauna and hot tub. Immersed in wildflowers and woodland, these off-grid cabins provide a serene retreat for couples who crave peace, sustainability and simple luxury.

tinyhomesholidays.com

BLOW THE BUDGET

If ever there's a time to splurge, Valentine's Day is it. But who says luxury should only come once a year? These handpicked boltholes offer the perfect excuse to unwind, recharge and spoil the one you love, any time of the year.

Set against a fairytale backdrop of natural beauty and whimsy, The Enchanted Manor is a stunning adults-only boutique B&B that feels like it was lifted from the pages of a storybook. Once a 19th-century home, it's now a haven



From the flower-filled greenhouse to the uniquely decorated suites, the eclectic Enchanted Manor promises an unforgettable stay.

for dreamers – complete with eclectic décor, enchanting gardens and its own 'Enchanted Realm' café serving coffee, cakes and local treats. Available to book from April 2026, it's often named the Isle of Wight's most romantic destination, it's an unforgettable place to reconnect and unwind.

enchantedmanor.co.uk



Helicopter parking is available on the lower lawn at Haven Hall in Shanklin.

For those seeking elegance and grandeur, Haven Hall in Shanklin delivers five-star luxury with sea views to match. Open from May until September, the hotel's manicured gardens overlook the English Channel, offering idyllic spaces to dine al fresco, enjoy a game of tennis or take a dip in the heated outdoor pool. Just minutes from Shanklin Old Village and its boutique shops and restaurants, it's an exceptional blend of sophistication and coastal charm.

havenhallhotel.com



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hello@uniquehideaways.com



Limestone Chine Holidays

Book your amazing Isle of Wight holiday at Limestone Chine!

Self Catering Holiday Accommodation at Colwell Bay, Freshwater in the West Wight area on the Isle of Wight.

With fantastic sea views of the Needles and Hurst Castle, fresh air and amazing sunsets.



Fancy owning your own slice of the Isle of Wight?

Limestone Chine have a number of holiday bungalows for sale. With prices from between £70,000 - £170,000 for 2 bed bungalows.

Set in 37 acres of unspoilt coastal countryside. The Island's best kept secret!



For current offers and to book visit limestone-chine.co.uk



The Enchanted Manor is considered to be the Isle of Wight's most romantic place to stay.

GOURMET GETAWAYS

No matter where you stay, you're never far from a five-star dining experience on the Isle of Wight. The Island's vibrant food scene offers everything from award-winning fine dining to hidden gems bursting with local flavour – a paradise for couples who love to eat, drink and indulge. Perched on the cliffs of Ventnor with panoramic sea views, The Hambrough pairs coastal comfort with exceptional cuisine. You could easily spend an entire weekend dining on-site, but its true charm lies in its proximity to some of the Island's best restaurants, including The Smoking Lobster, Stripped Brasserie, True Food Kitchen, Cantina and Shell's Café, all within walking distance of your stylish suite.

thehambrough.com



Did someone say gastro break? Breakfast at The Hambrough is a truly special experience.

If you prefer to base yourself in the Island's heart, One Holyrood in Newport offers a cosy and characterful stay surrounded by incredible dining options. Within a few steps, you can savour meals at Burrs or Hewitt's or pop into one of the plethora of cafés, while being no more than a 30-minute drive from the Island's farthest corners, perfect for food lovers eager to sample it all.

oneholyrood.co.uk



One Holyrood in the centre of Newport is cosy and characterful.

From seaside luxury to woodland hideaways, wherever you choose to stay, one thing is certain: the Isle of Wight has everything you need to rekindle connection, savour local flavours and create memories that linger long after the ferry ride home.

For more places to stay, turn to pages 50–71 or visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer

Brad Stockdale

Wightlink in the Community: Alan Taylor, Isle of Wight Prostate Cancer Support Group

Wightlink supports lots of important causes and one group that has made a huge difference to the Island's male population is the Isle of Wight Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in the UK, accounting for 14 per cent of cancer cases each year. The Isle of Wight Prostate Cancer Support Group was set up in 2011 and organises regular PSA testing events, support groups and places information and awareness stands at Island events. Incredibly the group recently conducted its 10,000th PSA test.

The group works closely with Wightlink, which provides support for transporting test samples to Portsmouth's Queen Alexandra Hospital, and recently implemented the Ask Alan service on its vessels, which allows men to discreetly ask for incontinence pads and disposal bags.

The PSA Test Events Organiser is Alan Taylor, who lives with prostate cancer himself and is passionate about informing men of the symptoms and persuading them to get themselves tested regularly. We spoke to Alan about his life on the Isle of Wight.

“The Island is a great place to live and work. My family lives here, so it is easy to stay in contact with them. The local communities are friendly and welcoming, and interested in the work that we are doing. The weather here tends to be more temperate than on the mainland, with the summers more accessible for walking and cycling.

I live in the Bay Area and Sandown Bay is my favourite beach. The beautiful sandy shores and imposing cliffs at either end make it a wonderful place. The twin towns of Sandown and Shanklin provide a lot of vibrancy to the beaches, too.

There are two different levels to enjoy the beauty of The Bay; I either like to walk along the cliff path at the top of the cliffs or along the revetment at the bottom, seeing the people taking a stroll between Sandown and Shanklin.

I would have to say the town of Shanklin itself is my favourite place on the Island. It has good connections with trains and buses, an excellent beach, the amazing Shanklin Theatre and a level shopping precinct, which still has a vibrancy not always seen elsewhere.

The support the IWPCSG receives from Wightlink is essential in the running of our PSA test events on the Isle of Wight, enabling us to deliver the blood samples to Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth free of charge. Also, the Wightlink Ask Alan initiative has encouraged many of our members to travel on the ferries.”

To find out more visit wightlink.co.uk/community or stay updated at facebook.com/wightlinkinthecommunity. Meet more of our Wightlink in the Community heroes on pages 24–25, 37 and 64.



ISLE OF WIGHT MERMAID BOTTLE LIGHTS

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1x Bottle Light
£14

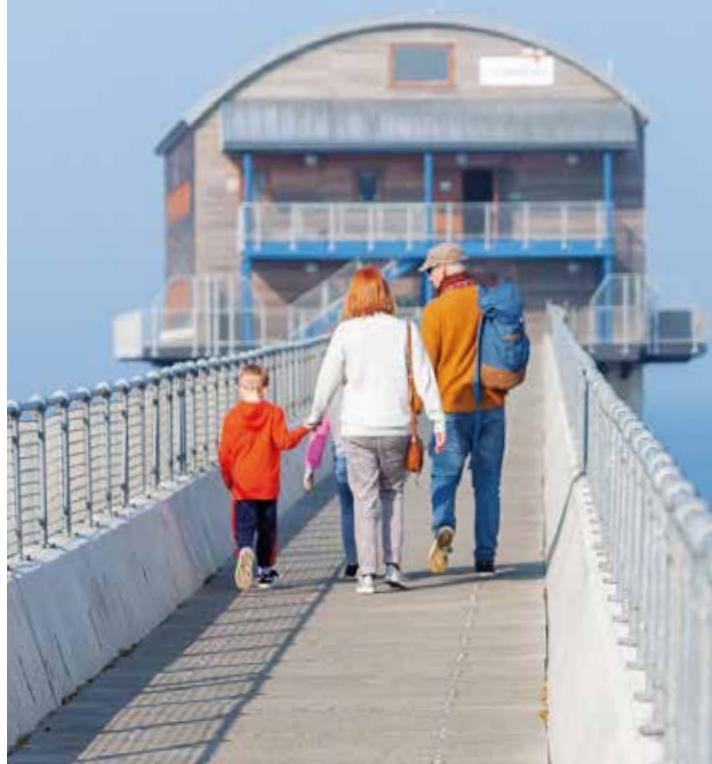
2x Bottle Lights
£26

Postage is £5.50 and is available to all of the UK.
FREE delivery to your accommodation
on the Isle of Wight.

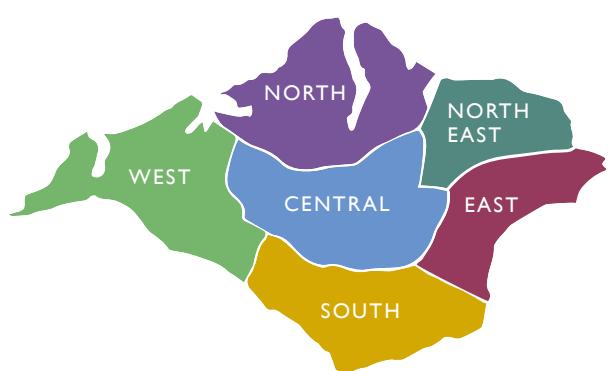
£3 from each bottle sold is donated to Mountbatten

For all enquiries please contact David
mermaidlightsiw@gmail.com
Call or Text: 07885 720503

Island destinations



Let us take you on a journey through the Island's towns and villages, as our destination guides paint a picture of the Isle of Wight, ready for you to explore. Broken down into North, North East, East, South, West and Central, it is full of things to see and do...



This handy guide will become your companion for your holiday. Enjoy!

LISTINGS KEY

-  B&B / Guesthouse
-  Café / Tea room
-  Camping / Glamping
-  Dog friendly
-  Fine dining
-  Caravan site
-  Hotel
-  Pub / Bar
-  Rainy day activity
-  Restaurant
-  Self-catering
-  Shop
-  WiFi

Bembridge's impressive lifeboat station overlooks two of the busiest ports in the UK.

54 NORTH

Including Cowes, East Cowes and Northwood, looking out towards the busy shipping lanes of the Solent.

56 NORTH EAST

Coastal villages from Fishbourne and Wootton, around to Ryde, Seaview and St Helens.

58 EAST

The beautiful beaches of Sandown Bay from Shanklin through to Bembridge and including the town of Brading.

62 SOUTH

'Back of the Wight' following the rugged southern coastline from Luccombe and Bonchurch to Ventnor and Niton.

66 WEST

The western peninsula running from Brightstone via The Needles to Yarmouth and Newtown Creek.

68 CENTRAL

Covering Newport and the surrounding villages of Carisbrooke, Calbourne, Arreton, Godshill and Rookley.



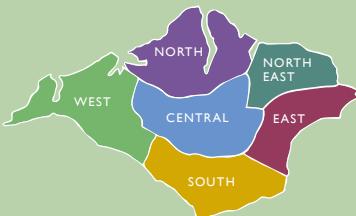
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AlphaIOW.co.uk
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Lymington

For more things to do visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer

Lymington to Yarmouth
car/passenger ferry
40 mins



Sconce Point

Yarmouth

Colwell Bay

Totland Bay

Totland

Alum Bay

The Needles

Scratchell's Bay

Tennyson Down

Freshwater Bay

Compton



Freshwater

Freshwater Bay

Brook

Brook Bay



Chessell

Newtown Bay

Hamstead

Cranmore

Ningwood

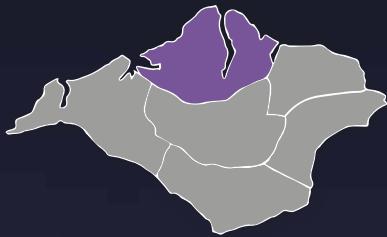
Wellow

Newbridge

Shalfleet



North



Known as the sailing mecca of the world, Cowes is home to the famous regatta at the beginning of August, but come the winter months, it still has a lot to offer 'off-peak' visitors.

The main high street is lined with bespoke, bijou shops alongside nationally known brands. Once you've shopped until you're ready to drop, pop into one of the many cafés, restaurants or pubs and enjoy a warming cup of locally roasted coffee or a pint from an Island brewer alongside a dish created using some of the best Island produce.

A wander along the Esplanade towards the neighbouring village of Gurnard is rewarded with amazing views across the Solent and on clear days, is quite possibly the best place on the Island to watch the sunset.

"It is impossible to imagine a prettier spot."

— Queen Victoria

On the other side of Cowes, across the River Medina and a short trip on board the floating bridge, you will find yourself in East Cowes. Take in a piece of English royal history with a visit to Osborne – the palatial holiday home of Queen Victoria, her beloved Prince Albert and her family. Marvel at the gilded decor before wandering through the pretty terraced gardens down to the Queen's private beach.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer



The pretty beach huts at Gurnard are especially stunning at sunset.



ATTRACTI0NS



Osborne



Once Queen Victoria's seaside holiday home, the house was designed by her beloved husband, Prince Albert. There is so much to see, from the royal rooms, to the magnificent walled garden, extensive grounds and beach where the royal children once played. Book online now and save.

York Avenue, East Cowes, PO32 6JX
0370 333 1181
english-heritage.org.uk

Wight Military & Heritage Museum



Come and enjoy the military exhibits in the museum halls. Relax in Churchills, a licensed in-house tea room (gluten free options available) decorated with memorabilia and enjoy a coffee and a selection of light snacks. Phone for details of vehicle rides.

490 Newport Road, Cowes, PO31 8QU
01983 305555
wmahm.org.uk



FOOD & DRINK

Churchills



Enjoy a light lunch, snacks, cakes or a cream tea at Churchills, the in-house tea room at the Wight Military and Heritage Museum. Entry to the museum is not necessary to enjoy the atmosphere at Churchills.

490 Newport Road, Cowes, PO31 8QU
01983 305555
wmahm.org.uk

NUMBER 1
BUS PASSES
RIGHT OUTSIDE
THE DOOR

W.M.A.H.M

WIGHT MILITARY AND HERITAGE MUSEUM



Enjoy a wide range of exhibits on display from the Crimean War to the Falklands conflict, including our 1940s street scene and many military vehicles. Have your photograph taken in a tank or try your skill in our air rifle range.



Churchills Licensed Tea Room is open daily, where you can enjoy light refreshments or one of our delicious homemade meals, along with a selection of hot and cold drinks. Every Wednesday is mid-week roast day and every Thursday is pensioner discount day.



Open Monday to Saturday all year from 9:45am until 3:45pm.

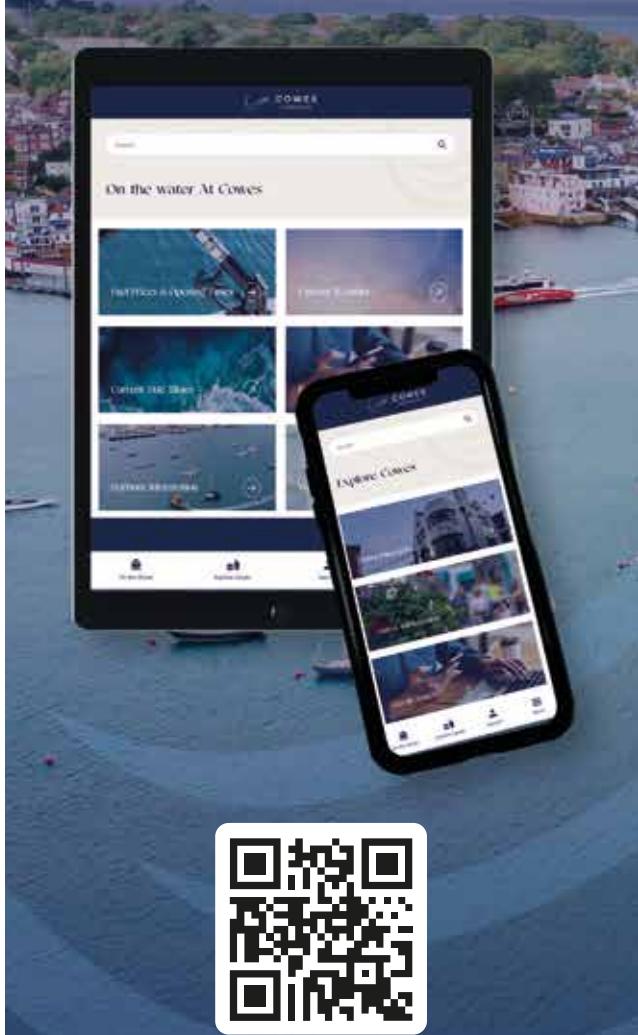
W.M.A.H.M, Northwood Camp,
490 Newport Road, Cowes, PO31 8QU
wmahm.org.uk | 01983 305555
enquiries@wmahm.org.uk

Registered charity 1159529



Cowes Web App

Explore the best of Cowes



app.cowes.co.uk

Explore local businesses in the Town Directory and find all the information and insights you need to enhance your experience on the water.

North East



When arriving on the Island on board our FastCat or our Portsmouth car ferry, you will disembark on this side of the Island.

Just a few minutes from our Fishbourne port is Quarr Abbey, a working Benedictine Monastery. Explore the woodland walk around the abbey, visit the on-site chapel and stock up on local produce – much of the farm shop is stocked with items grown or produced by the Monks themselves.

Ryde is where you find our FastCat port in which passengers will travel down the UK's oldest pleasure pier. Ryde Pier was built in 1814 and here at Wightlink, we continue to invest in maintaining this piece of UK history.

The miles of sandy beach are dog friendly at this time of year and there are plenty of cafés and eateries to pop into and warm up on your bracing, wintery walk.

*“There was a Young Lady of Ryde,
Whose shoe-strings were seldom untied.
She purchased some clogs,
And some small spotted dogs,
And frequently walked about Ryde.”*

— Edward Lear

Carry on round to the quaint fishing village of Seaview, it may be quieter at this time of year, but many locals can be found hunkering down and warming up in the beachside restaurants.

If you're looking to sample some of the best in Island produce, the Isle of Wight Distillery, producers of the world-famous Mermaid Gin, is located in Pondwell and offers a perfect taste of the Wight.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer



Seagrove Bay's shoreline is perfect for rockpooling or a stroll along the sand.



ATTRACTI0NS

Oasis



Looking for different, unique and exciting home gifts and furniture? Shop Oasis! This large shopping emporium has carefully chosen items from around the world, combining quality and design at direct 'import prices'. With a myriad of rooms and walkways to explore all on one level, you will discover a selection of beautifully displayed and carefully chosen products. There's also a coffee shop and large free car park.

Carpenters Road, Brading,
PO36 0QA
01983 613760
oasis-iow.co.uk



Wight Karting



Fun for all generations! Open all year round and each weekday in school holidays. Book in advance online for small groups and individuals aged 8-88+ or for larger stag and hen groups please call. Young drivers can also join in Junior Track Days.

Westridge, Brading Road,
Ryde, PO33 1QS
01983 565366
wightkarting.co.uk



SHOPPING

The Goose



The Isle of Wight's bookshop on the green, The Goose, has been based in St Helens for over 40 years, selling second hand and antiquarian books. The shop is a real hidden gem, stocking rare hard-to-find titles and treasured classics, alongside a wide selection of books for both adults and children.

Newlands House, Lower Green Road, PO33 1TS
01983 874063
thegoosebooks.com



ACCOMMODATION

St Helens

Coastal Resort



Escape to the beautiful St Helens Coastal Resort on the north east of the Island. Just a short walk from a sandy beach, this secluded retreat offers luxury lodge and caravan accommodation in a tranquil setting. The little ones will love the adventure playground and outdoor swimming pool and love the lodges with private hot tubs.

Field Lane, St Helens,
PO33 1UX
0330 053 7000
awayresorts.co.uk



FOOD & DRINK

Oasis Coffee Shop



Enjoy refreshments in the friendly coffee shop which adjoins Oasis. Serving quality coffees and speciality teas, cakes, pastries and so much more. Delicious homemade food using only the freshest and finest ingredients. Large free car park.

Carpenters Road, Brading,
PO36 0QA
01983 613760
oasis-iow.co.uk

The Mermaid Bar at the Isle of Wight Distillery



Located in the pretty village of Pondwell, just outside Ryde. Discover the pub and visitor centre. View the stills in action and taste the Island-inspired spirits. Visit website for seasonal opening hours.

Pondwell Hill, Ryde,
PO33 1PX
01983 613653
isleofwightdistillery.com



Duxmore Botanics

We create premium quality home fragrance and body care products, using the finest botanical ingredients and 100% natural fragrance.

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Visit our flagship store
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The Isle of Wight's bookshop on The Green.

Here for the love of reading for over 40 years.

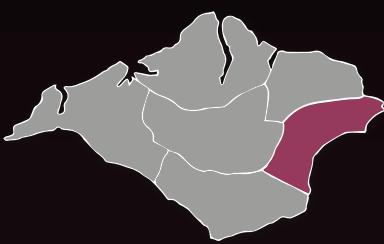


THE GOOSE

NEWLANDS HOUSE, LOWER GREEN ROAD
ST HELENS, RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT, PO33 1TS

thegoosebooks.com | [@thegoosebooks](https://twitter.com/thegoosebooks) | +44(0)1983 874063

East



If quintessential, postcard seaside holidays are your memories of the Isle of Wight, then you probably visited the towns of Shanklin and Sandown. Famed for their amusement arcades, they are a hub of activity all year round but especially in the colder months thanks to there being plenty to do to keep the whole family occupied.

Shanklin is split into a lower and upper level. Up top, you will find chocolate box-style thatched buildings and cosy olde-worlde pubs alongside a plethora of shops - from national brands to independently run stores. Make your way down to the Esplanade and discover a collection of wonderful pubs to enjoy a bite to eat, as well as Shanklin Arcade, complete with an 18-hole indoor crazy golf course, traditional 2p machines and everyone's favourite 'grab a teddy' games.

From Shanklin, you can see the iconic Sandown Pier. When you step inside, you're transported back to the holidays of yesteryear. Traditional family fun and wafts of candyfloss are what you can expect.

"She thinks of nothing but the Isle of Wight, and she calls it The Island, as if there were no other island in the world."

— Jane Austen, Mansfield Park

Try your hand at go-karting or dino crazy golf at Sandham Gardens, just a few minutes walk along the seafront. Then let us hear you 'ROAR!' as you enter the Wildheart Animal Sanctuary, home to tigers, lions, bears, meerkats, lemurs and more.

Just a ten-minute drive away is Bembridge. Home to one of the Isle of Wight's RNLI stations, it also has a selection of wonderfully quaint houseboats, one of which has been converted into a floating café.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer



Admire the stars from the Shanklin to Sandown coastal path
— picturesque even after dark.



ATTRACTI0NS

Brading Roman Villa



One of the finest Roman sites in the UK. The award-winning visitor centre and museum offer a unique insight into Roman life in Britain, from beautifully preserved mosaic floors to an extensive collection of Roman archaeology. Visit the on-site licensed café and shop. Don't miss the nature trail, which is open all year and changes with the seasons.

**Morton Old Road, Brading, PO36 0PH (SatNav PO36 0EN)
01983 406223
bradingromanvilla.org.uk**



Shanklin Theatre



Shanklin Theatre is open all year round offering great entertainment from a diverse selection of acts, including theatre, musicals, comedians and tribute acts. You will also find big names such as *The Supervet* Professor Noel Fitzpatrick, *Flog It* presenter Paul Martin and G4.

**Prospect Road, Shanklin, PO37 6AJ
01983 868000
shanklintheatre.com**



The Wildheart Animal Sanctuary



Situated opposite the glorious sandy beaches of Sandown Bay, the Wildheart Animal Sanctuary gives a forever home to rescued exotic animals from all over Europe including lions, tigers, monkeys and more. Enjoy daily talks from the Animal Carers, explore the Primate domes and wander through the Sanctuary at your own pace. Don't miss the play areas for children and the dog friendly, plant-based Wildheart Café.

**Yaverland Road, Sandown, PO36 8QB
01983 403883
wildheartanimalsanctuary.org**



ACCOMMODATION

Life on the Beach



Stay in a stylish apartment set within a beautifully restored 1860 Victorian bank. Full of character and charm, it offers a memorable base for exploring Sandown and the Isle of Wight, with Wightlink ferry discounts to enhance your seaside getaway.

**I4 High Street, Sandown, PO36 8DA
07951 673469**



Brading Roman Villa has some of the finest mosaics discovered in Britain, including one depicting the snake-haired mythical figure Medusa.

Fisherman's Wharf, Embankment Road, Bembridge, PO35 5NS



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BEMBRIDGE PO35 5NR**

Contact Us:



01983 872742

theharbourviewbembridge@gmail.com

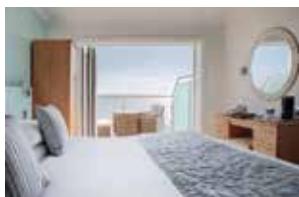


Luccombe Hall Hotel



Perched on the breathtaking cliffs of Shanklin, this multi-award-winning family-run hotel offers a truly unforgettable escape. Providing unrivalled sea views and a diverse range of luxurious bedrooms including balcony rooms and private garden rooms with hot tubs. Plus, with an array of exceptional facilities, from a tropical indoor pool experience to free-to-play retro gaming and outdoor pool and activities, every stay is designed to delight.

Luccombe Road, Shanklin,
PO37 6RL
01983 869000
luccombehall.co.uk



The Steamer Inn



A traditional seaside pub sitting opposite the beautiful sandy beach of Shanklin, offering the ideal spot for a family break. The Steamer Inn is a great base for your holiday and has five en suite bed and breakfast rooms.

Shanklin Esplanade, Shanklin,
PO37 6BS
01983 862641
theseamer.co.uk



Vectis Holiday Homes



The Seascape is a ground floor luxury apartment, located in exclusive Luccombe in Shanklin. With sweeping views over Sandown Bay, this spacious self catering three bedroom holiday accommodation is as tranquil as it gets.

Seascape, Luccombe Road,
Shanklin, PO37 6RR
07775 764246
theseascape.co.uk



FOOD & DRINK



The Best Dressed Crab



Situated in Bembridge, The Best Dressed Crab in Town prepare the most delicious crab and lobster direct from the fishing boat. Enjoy dressed crab, tubs of crab, whole crabs and lobsters, prepared lobsters, giant crab claws and spider crab claws. Come and eat in this lovely floating café and enjoy the fantastic views of Bembridge Harbour. Open from February onwards.

Embankment Road, Bembridge,
PO35 5NS
01983 874758
thebestdressedcrabintown.co.uk

Whitecliff Bay Holiday Park



Perfectly situated by its own stunning secluded beach, Whitecliff Bay makes for the ideal holiday base to explore the Island. This park offers superb family facilities including indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Choose from a range of self-catering options from classic caravans to their exclusive luxury accommodation. There's something for everyone to enjoy.

Hillway Road, Bembridge,
PO35 5PL
0330 053 7000
awayresorts.co.uk



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Luccombe Hall Hotel

01983 869 000

luccombehall.co.uk

The Forum Café



The Romans were renowned for their love of fine food and feasting so there is nowhere more perfect to eat. The Forum Café at Brading Roman Villa is privy to some stunning panoramic views over Sandown Bay and serves up a great range of lunches, snacks, cakes and drinks including daily specials. Entry to the café is free.

Morton Old Road, Brading,
PO36 0PH (SatNav PO36 0EN)
01983 406223
bradingromanvilla.org.uk

The Harbour View



The Harbour View is a beachside café with stunning views of Bembridge Harbour, serving breakfast and lunch as well as a great selection of chef's daily specials. The café is also fully licensed, so pop along and enjoy some great food and drink while watching the boats sail on by.

Embankment Road, Bembridge,
PO35 5NR
01983 872742

The Steamer Inn



Situated on Shanklin seafront, The Steamer Inn enjoys some of the best views on the Island. On warmer days, you can relax on the terrace gazing out across the English Channel or stay warm and enjoy a drink at the bar, admiring the nautical memorabilia that adorn the walls. Family-friendly and renowned for home-made food (especially the famous Steamer Seafood Chowder), muddy boots and well-behaved dogs are welcome.

Shanklin Esplanade, Shanklin,
PO37 6BS
01983 862641
thesteamer.co.uk



For more ideas visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer



Bembridge's pebbly beach is a great place for a family walk in the colder months and offers views of the iconic lifeboat station.



The Seaside

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- SEA VIEWS
- 80M LANDSCAPE GARDEN
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- EV CHARGING



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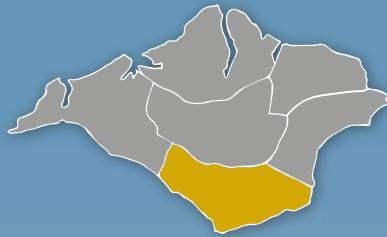
LIFE ON THE BEACH

Sandown 07951 673469



A stylish, unique apartment sets the stage for a memorable visit. Your future holiday apartment is in a Victorian bank. Built in 1860 this majestic property was a bank for 150 years. The charming rooms have a characterful story. Guests enjoy Sandown & the Isle of Wight with Wightlink ferry discounts. We look forward to welcoming you.

South



Said to be one of the warmest places in the UK, the south side of the Island, Ventnor in particular, benefits from a unique microclimate thanks to the shelter it receives from the surrounding cliffs.

Ventnor has a distinctly artsy vibe and is home to a Fringe Festival come summer, but in the winter, that fun, fresh feeling is still present in the quirky shops, cool bars and modern dining venues that line the streets and continue down to the Esplanade.

If you're looking for a bracing walk, trek past the Spyglass pub and make your way to Steephill Cove. Only accessible by foot, it's an Island gem at any time of the year and from the coast path, you'll also take in the iconic Ventnor sign and pretty Flowers Brook.

"This island is a little paradise."

—
Karl Marx

The Isle of Wight's most southerly village, Niton, is home to one of the Island's two working lighthouses. It was built in response to the ship, The Clarendon, hitting the rocks around the southern tip of the Island in 1836. Steeped in history, it's also home to a ghost tale or two. For a small village, there are plenty of places to eat, including The Buddle Smugglers Inn, which has been recently refurbished and sits at the heart of Niton Undercliff.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer



St. Catherine's Down is one of the highest parts of the Isle of Wight and offers panoramic views of the Island.



ATTRACTI0NS

Ventnor Botanic Garden



Explore 22 acres of sub-tropical gardens, with over 6,000 species of rare and exotic plants, shrubs and champion trees. Visit the Heritage Centre, plus enjoy delicious cuisine. Look out for kids' activities, hidden gardens and tours of the secret tunnel.

Undercliff Drive, Ventnor,
PO38 1JX
01983 855397
botanic.co.uk



The Spyglass Inn



Offering accommodation in four characterful self-contained apartments, composed of double bedrooms with en suite facilities, a lounge and balcony/terrace all with views overlooking Ventnor Bay.

The Esplanade, Ventnor,
PO38 1JX
01983 855338
thespyglass.com



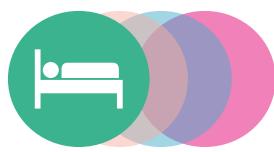
SHOPPING

Mermaid Lights



Beautiful Italian Murano glass Isle of Wight Mermaid Gin bottles cleaned and crafted into stunning table lights. The perfect present for anytime of the year. The bottle lights come in five colours – original turquoise, coral pink, zest green, ice white and rum. Postage available to all of the UK or delivery to your accommodation on the Isle of Wight.

07885 720503



ACCOMMODATION

A Suite by the Sea



This bright first-floor one-bedroom apartment sits moments from Ventnor's bustling seafront. A spacious open-plan kitchen, living and dining area creates a sociable modern space, complemented by a generous sun-filled double bedroom and contemporary shower room for a relaxing coastal stay.

Flat A, 7B Pier Street, Ventnor,
PO38 1ST
07951 673469

For more inspiration visit
wightlink.co.uk/explorer

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Church Place, Chale, PO38 2HA
wightmouse.co.uk

Wightlink in the Community: Christopher Hayton

Christopher Hayton has become a recognised community champion on the Isle of Wight, dedicating himself to a wide range of charitable efforts. In recent years, he has hand-built and decorated around 2,000 planters – which Christopher calls ‘trofts’ – re-purposed from pallets to raise awareness around mental health and support community wellbeing.

He has received countless awards for his hard work, honoured in 2025 by Ryde Town Council with a Certificate of Recognition for his outstanding contributions to the local community, winning Inspiring Person of the Year at The Ocean View Awards Night and earlier this year named as a runner-up in ITV’s Pride of Britain Awards.

“I live in Ryde, and I really enjoy being part of the local community here. I often walk to Appley Park, where I’ve donated some of my garden trofts. I like stopping for a coffee at Costa in Ryde or grabbing something from the pie shop opposite. I also spend a lot of time at Aspire, which is a great community hub.

I’d say that Cowes is my favourite beach on the Island because you can look across the Solent towards Southampton and watch all the boats go by – especially when it’s not raining!

I love walking through Appley Park from Ryde. It’s such a peaceful place, full of nature, and it really helps calm me down when I’m struggling with my mental health.



Newport is my favourite place to visit because it has so many shops to explore and always plenty to see. It’s really easy to get to by bus, and I love how the Island’s bus network makes it simple to get out and about.”

To find out more about our sponsorships, visit wightlink.co.uk/community or stay updated at facebook.com/wightlinkinthecommunity. Meet more of our Wightlink in the Community heroes on pages 24–25, 37 and 49.



FOOD & DRINK



edulis Restaurant



Meaning edible in Latin, *edulis* is a relaxing space boasting huge picture windows that bring the lovely surroundings of Ventnor Botanic Garden's Mediterranean garden and fountain court inside. The chefs create ultra-fresh cuisine sourced locally and picked fresh from the garden.

Undercliff Drive, Ventnor,
PO38 1UL
01983 855397
botanic.co.uk



The Met



Set right on the seafront on Ventnor Esplanade, The Met serves fresh coffee, tasty tapas and fine wines. Enjoy the distinct Mediterranean feel and soak up the sunshine in this natural sun trap. The perfect hot-spot for whiling away an afternoon.

The Esplanade, Ventnor,
PO38 1JP
01983 853544
themetwinebar.co.uk

The Plantation Room Café



Open daily from 09:00. Located on the top level of Ventnor Botanic Garden, this cosy café has a sheltered outdoor terrace which overlooks the historical Palm Garden. With free parking, the café provides a retreat for visitors who want to relax, read or are looking for a hot drink, a glass of wine or a light lunch and a catch up with friends.

Undercliff Drive, Ventnor,
PO38 1UL
01983 855397
botanic.co.uk



The Spyglass Inn



The Spyglass Inn sits right above the sea on Ventnor Esplanade. The location is second to none, with spectacular views across the English Channel and Ventnor Bay. The pub is bursting with character with authentic seafaring memorabilia adorning the walls. Its well-deserved reputation is founded on good grub, great beer and a fantastic atmosphere.

The Esplanade, Ventnor,
PO38 1JX
01983 855338
thespyglass.com

The Wellington Bar & Kitchen



Looking for the perfect Sunday lunch spot? The Wellington Bar & Kitchen are open to both hotel guests and non-residents. Offering the comforting flavours of a home-cooked meal without the hassle, the menu always features the finest locally sourced meats served with a bounty of vegetables, roast potatoes and finished with a rich gravy. On sunny days, enjoy your roast out on the terrace, with panoramic views over Ventnor Bay, or if the weather turns, the cosy restaurant offers relaxed dining by the log fire.

Belgrave Road, Ventnor,
PO38 1JH
01983 856600
thewellington.co.uk



The Wight Mouse Inn



A family run freehouse enjoying spectacular views out to The Needles, Tennyson Down and beyond on the south coast of the Island. The menu includes home-cooked pub classics and local ales – but don't miss the specials board! A large south facing garden, with children's indoor and outdoor play areas.

Church Place, Chale, PO38 2HA
01983 730431
wightmouse.co.uk

The Bridge

The latest addition to The Spyglass Inn, The Bridge offers a comfortable and stylish coastal retreat on Ventnor seafront, accommodating up to eight guests.

Spectacular Views!

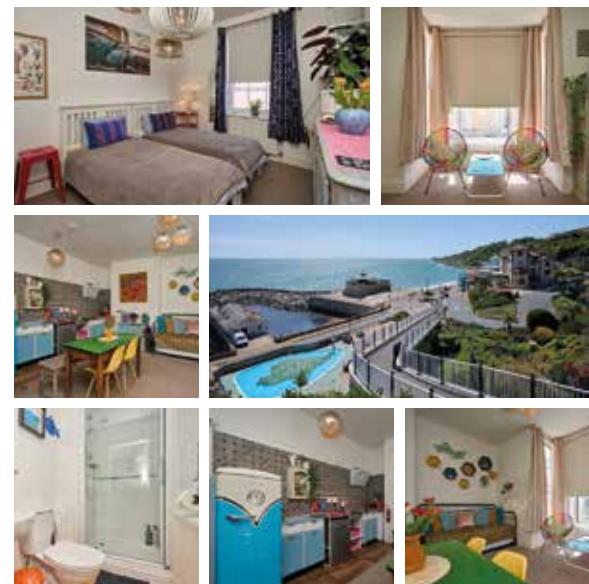


Esplanade, Ventnor PO38 1JX | thespyglass.com | 07484 174 872

A SUITE BY THE SEA

Ventnor

07951 673469



Just moments from Ventnor seafront is a well-designed one-bedroom first floor apartment, offering bright and practical living space in the heart of this popular coastal town. There's a spacious open-plan kitchen/living/dining area, providing a sociable and comfortable environment ideal for modern living. The double bedroom is generously sized and offers good natural light, while the contemporary shower room is located off the hallway.

West



The saying ‘west is best’ is true for many things, including sunsets and the most perfect countryside and seascape vistas.

Our most scenic ferry crossing lies in the west Wight, thanks partly to the drive through the New Forest and the journey along the Lymington estuary – which is complete with mudflats and salt marshes dotted with many species of water birds. Wightlink's ferry docks in the historic market town of Yarmouth. This quaint town is a hub of activity and a draw for foodies and boutique shoppers alike, with its excellent restaurants and pubs alongside the cobbled streets lined with independent shops.

The rugged coastline along the iconic Military Road is home to some of the best fossil-hunting beaches in the UK. With over 25 species of dinosaurs discovered to have lived on the Island, Brook Beach is a must for any budding or established palaeontologist. At this time of year, with the rougher seas, you have a good chance of discovering a fossil or two. Plus, the Iguanodon foot casts along the mud flats are a fascinating find.

*“...come to the Isle of Wight: Where,
far from the noise and smoke of town
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order’d garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.”*

—
Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Further along the road towards Freshwater is Farringford, the former home of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate. If you're feeling energetic, the steep walk up Tennyson Down to the monument is rewarded by panoramic views across the Channel and over the iconic Needles. The white chalk stacks, with the red and white lighthouse, are instantly recognisable as the Isle of Wight, thanks to being adorned on many holiday postcards. Take the steps down to Alum Bay, past the coloured, sandy cliffs, at The Needles Landmark Attraction, which promises a day full of family fun all year round.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer

You can't leave the Island without visiting the iconic Needles rocks and lighthouse!



ATTRACTI0NS

Isle of Wight Pearl



The Brightstone venue is home to a vast collection of beautiful pearl jewellery, a popular indoor and outdoor café with spectacular cliff-top views over the English Channel, pearl masterclass and family fun Pick-a-Pearl experience for a day like no other. Plus, don't forget to grab a bite to eat at The Pearl Café, which champions small-scale local producers. It's the perfect spot to enjoy great quality Island delicacies.

Chilton Chine, Military Road, Brightstone, PO30 4DD
01983 740352
iowpearl.co.uk



ACCOMMODATION

Linstone Chine Holiday Village



Come and escape to your very own Jewel of the South and stay in a holiday chalet by the beach. With fantastic sea views of the Needles and Hurst Castle, fresh air, amazing sunsets and two sites to choose from, Linstone Chine Holiday Village is the best-kept secret on the Island.

Monks Lane, Freshwater, PO40 9SU
01983 755933
linstone-chine.co.uk

The Albion Hotel



Nestled in Freshwater Bay, The Albion Hotel invites you to indulge in the art of simplicity, where every detail is thoughtfully crafted to ensure your stay is as effortless as it is enjoyable. The fully air-conditioned rooms, elegantly designed with your comfort in mind, offer a cosy retreat where you can unwind and savour the view. Whether enjoying a meal whilst watching the waves, or relaxing in your room, your time at The Albion is guaranteed to be memorable, comfortable, and effortless.

Freshwater Bay, Freshwater, PO40 9RA
01983 755755
albionhotel.co.uk

The Bay Colwell



Stunning hot tub cottages and laidback beach houses are waiting for you and the family too at The Bay Colwell. Just a stroll away from the sandy beach, this sunny resort features an indoor heated swimming pool, licensed coffee house and children's soft play area.

Fort Warden Road, Freshwater, Totland Bay, PO39 0DA
0330 053 7000
awayresorts.co.uk

The Orchards Holiday Park



Set amongst rolling countryside and with stunning panoramic views, The Orchards is a special place to make memories, relax and explore. Choose from a holiday caravan, touring and camping pitches or self-catering accommodation. There are two swimming pools to enjoy and a poolside coffee shop – as well as holiday homes for sale.

Main Road, Newbridge, Yarmouth, PO41 0TS
01983 531331
orchardsholidaypark.co.uk



FOOD & DRINK

The Pearl Café



Settle down in the comfortable café serving a wide range of dishes and light bites and take in the stunning panoramic views across the English Channel. It's the perfect spot to enjoy great quality Island delicacies.

Military Road, Brightstone, PO30 4DD
01983 740352
iowpearl.co.uk

The Rock at The Albion Hotel



The Rock at The Albion Hotel is a 100-seater restaurant with the most spectacular views, just yards from the waves lapping against the shore. The menu is as inviting as the view and there is something for everyone. You can kick back, enjoy your favourite food and one of the best views this idyllic island has to offer.

Freshwater Bay, Freshwater, PO40 9RA
01983 755755
albionhotel.co.uk

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iowpearl.com

Central



Steeped in history and heritage, the central villages and towns of the Island all have a unique and interesting story to tell.

At the heart is the county town of Newport. A traditional market town centred around two squares with St Thomas' Church at the centre. Also known as the Minster, it is the final resting place of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I. Within the church, a monument to the princess, commissioned by Queen Victoria, is carved in white marble.

Carisbrooke, on the outskirts of Newport, is famed for its castle, which was most notably the prison of King Charles I during the Civil War.

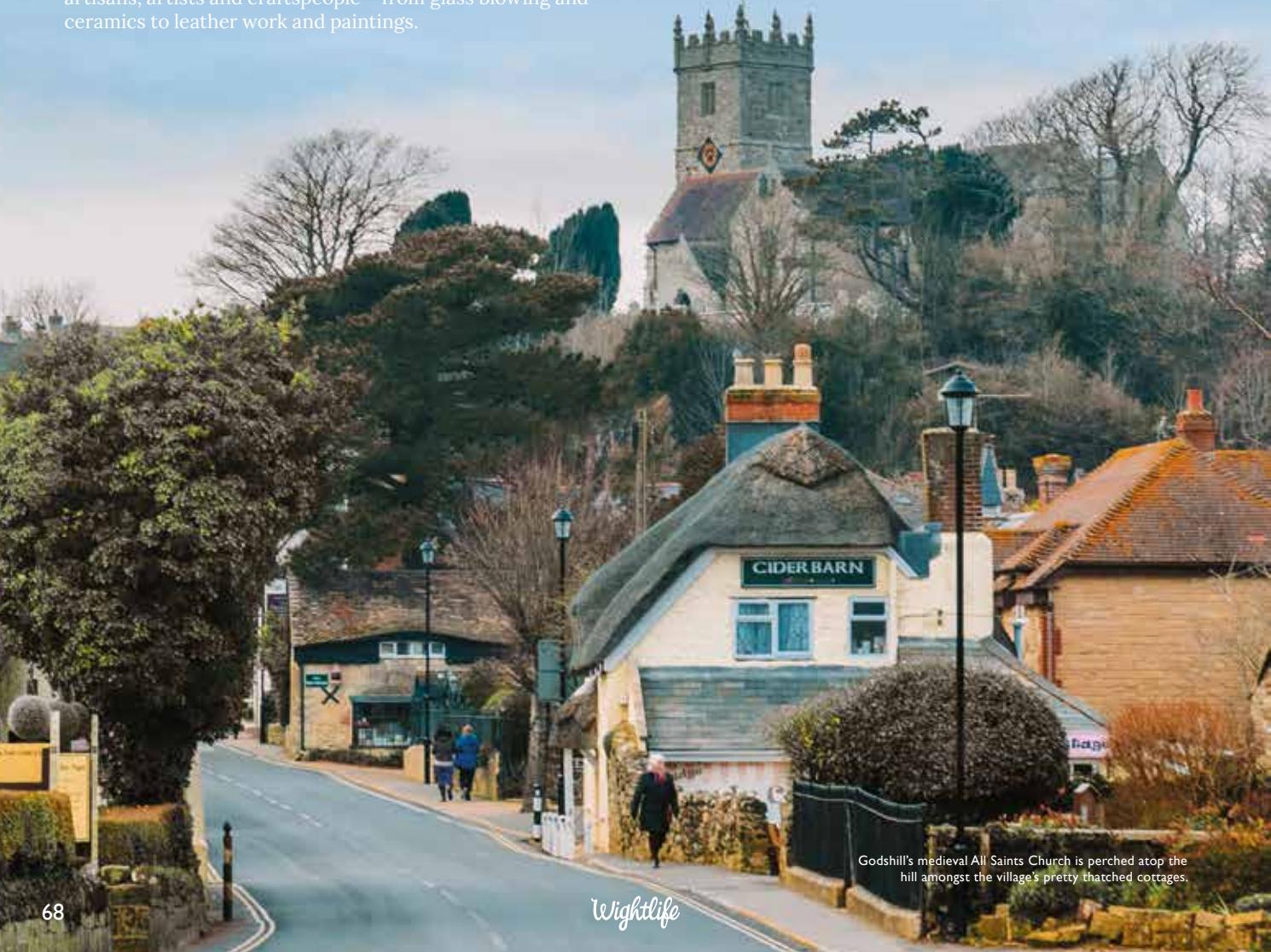
For a local shopping experience, nestled within the rolling fields of the village of Arreton is Arreton Barns. The Island's largest arts and crafts centre showcases the best in local artisans, artists and craftspeople – from glass blowing and ceramics to leather work and paintings.

"I think it is the prettiest place I ever saw in my life."

— Charles Dickens

A short drive from Newport and you'll think you've stepped into the cover of a chocolate box. Godshill is complete with thatched cottage-style buildings, quirky, independent shops, tearooms and a couple of pubs. It was also the original home of the Isle of Wight Festival back in 1968. Wander around The Model Village, the 1/10th scale 'Island in miniature' depicting Godshill and other Island landmarks, including Shanklin Old Village and the Chine.

Discover more things to do at wightlink.co.uk/explorer



Godshill's medieval All Saints Church is perched atop the hill amongst the village's pretty thatched cottages.



ATTRACTI0NS

Amazon World**Zoo Park**

Home to the Island's largest collection of exotic animals, including; mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, insects, fauna and flora. This multi-award-winning zoo offers you more than just animals, it includes a large Jurassic playground, museum, dino dig and the Monkey Madness indoor soft play area. A great day out rain or shine, the café and snack shack have ample seating, and there is a large gift and souvenir shop to buy some memories.

Watery Lane, Nr Arreton,
PO36 0LX
01983 867122
amazonworld.co.uk

Arreton Barns

Set in the stunning Arreton countryside, Arreton Barns is the Island's largest arts and crafts centre, showcasing the best in local artisans. Open seven days a week, with free parking. Find unique gifts then enjoy delicious food, fine wines and real ales at The Dairyman's Daughter pub.

Main Road, Arreton, PO30 3AA
01983 539365
arretonbarns.co.uk

**Carisbrooke Castle**

Steeped in history, once the prison of Charles I and the official residence of the Island's Governor, now a fascinating historical attraction. Experience vast panoramic Island views from the castle's high walls, and meet the charming resident donkeys. Book online now and save.

Castle Hill, Newport,
PO30 1XY
0370 333 1181
english-heritage.org.uk

**Monkey Haven –
The Leaf Foundation**

Swing on by the award-winning primate rescue centre making animals happy – and people happy! Meet rescued gibbons, monkeys, meerkats, birds of prey and reptiles. Lots of fun for everyone, including wonderful keeper talks, children's trail, tea room, gift shop and free return within a week. Open from 13 February 2026. See website for opening times.

Five Acres Farm, Staplers
Road, Newport, PO30 2NB
01983 530885
monkeyhaven.org

The Garlic Farm

Get the full garlic experience at this unique, idyllic farm set in beautiful Newchurch. Free entry and parking. The farm shop overflows with garlic of all varieties, along with mayonnaises, chutneys, beer, vodka and even garlic ice cream! Discover everything you want to know about garlic and enjoy great food in the restaurant.

Mersley Lane, Newchurch,
PO36 0NR
01983 865378
thegarlicfarm.co.uk

**The Old Smithy**

Boasting a variety of well-stocked gift shops, including fashion brands and home interiors. Browse in the Old Forge and cottage, stroll through the landscaped garden with pixie and fairy grottos. Then relax and enjoy lunch and cakes in the coffee shop.

High Street, Godshill,
PO38 3HZ
01983 840364
theoldsmithy.com



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wightlink.co.uk/explorer



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01983 716710



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SHOPPING

Briddlesford Farm Shop



Visiting the Briddlesford Farm Shop is like stepping straight into the Island's very own larder. Stocking products from over 50 local producers as well as the full range of the farm's own products, including milk from the award-winning Guernsey herd, luxurious clotted cream and butter, a range of farmhouse cheeses and Briddlesford Veal. There's also Briddlesford Café, the heritage centre, milk processing factory and cheese room.

Briddlesford Road, Wootton,
PO33 4RY
01983 884650
briddlesford.co.uk



The Lakes Rookley



Choose The Lakes Rookley for your self-catering holiday and stay in a stunning cottage, lakehouse or caravan holiday home – some even have hot tubs for something extra special. Set in leafy parkland at the heart of the Isle of Wight with swimming pools, bar and eatery, plus activities for the whole family to enjoy, it's the perfect base to explore. Plus, half the Island's beaches are within 20 minutes drive.

Main Road, Rookley, PO38 3LU
0330 053 7000
awayresorts.co.uk



ACCOMMODATION

The Garlic Farm Self Catering Cottages and Luxury Yurts



Stay in a beautifully converted country cottage or luxury yurt at The Garlic Farm – a unique setting in organic farmland, with award-winning restaurant and shop on site. Choose from a range of accommodation options, including some with hot tubs and wood burning stoves. Relax in the wood-fired barrel sauna, or make use of the tennis court, football pitch and games room. A great choice for families, couples and groups.

Mersley Lane, Newchurch,
PO36 0NR
01983 898477
thegarlicfarm.co.uk



FOOD & DRINK

Briddlesford Café



Serving breakfast, light lunches, daily specials and delicious home-made cakes, the Briddlesford Café menu is focused on quality, fresh seasonal food from the Island's farmers and growers, expertly prepared by the team of talented chefs. Briddlesford rose veal and dairy products feature in a number of signature dishes, including the home-made pies, burgers and 'Briddlesford mess' dessert.

Briddlesford Road, Wootton,
PO33 4RY
01983 882885
briddlesford.co.uk

Newclose County Cricket Ground



Situated on the outskirts of Newport amongst beautiful unspoilt countryside, Newclose is the perfect backdrop to any event. From corporate meetings in The Pavilion to grand weddings in the Marquee, with catering provided by the award-winning Seaview Hotel, you're guaranteed an event to remember.

Blackwater Road, Newport,
PO30 3BE
01983 824570
newclose.org

Snacks & Ladders Board Game Café



Snacks & Ladders is a little oasis where you can escape the real world and lose yourself in the world of games. Along with the huge menu of 1,000+ games, there is a full restaurant menu, as well as barista coffees, house cocktails and luxury milkshakes. Enjoy a freshly made panini, pizza, burger or pancakes. Booking advisable.

70 Upper St James Street,
Newport, PO30 1LQ
01983 716710
snacksandladders.co.uk

The Bargeman's Rest



Set on Little London Quay, The Bargeman's Rest is located close to Newport town centre and is the perfect pitstop on a walk along the River Medina. Experience the cosy atmosphere and nautical charm as you sample the extensive menu. Serving all day breakfasts and light bites as well as pub favourites and speciality burgers.

Little London Quay, Newport,
PO30 5BS
01983 525828
bargemansrest.co.uk

The Dairyman's Daughter



The Dairyman's Daughter is a bustling freehouse pub nestled at the centre of Arreton Barns. A traditional pub serving home-cooked food from an extensive menu, using local produce and ingredients where possible. Enjoy a wide selection of fine wines and real ales, including some local brews.

Arreton Barns, Main Road,
Arreton, PO30 3AA
01983 539361
dairymansdaughter.co.uk

The Garlic Farm Restaurant



At The Garlic Farm Restaurant you can sample the best garlicky food in beautiful farm surroundings with friendly service, fully licensed bar and excellent views across the valley. Open daily for breakfast and lunch, the menu and specials board make the most of locally sourced Island ingredients. Free entry and parking.

Mersley Farm, Mersley Lane,
Newchurch, PO36 0NR
01983 865378
thegarlicfarm.co.uk


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ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT
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www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk

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Portsmouth

2026 promises to be a huge year for Portsmouth, as the city celebrates its centenary with a year-round programme of events and installations.

It was in 1926 that the government of the time bowed to overwhelming pressure and conferred city status upon Portsmouth. Now, a whole year of activities is being lined up to mark the 100th anniversary. As well as many of the city's regular events having a centenary theme, there will be new additions to the calendar – perhaps most notably a lion sculpture trail coming later this year.

2026 also brings with it a number of other big anniversaries – Portsmouth International Port turns 50, and it'll be 18 years of the Love Southsea Markets.

Portsmouth BookFest returns for a three-week citywide celebration of books, ideas and imagination. It again includes a children's week, packed with activities for youngsters that takes place over the half-term holidays. Then, for grown-ups, there will be talks covering everything from punk music (exploring the genre's rebellious energy on its 50th anniversary year) to Peter Sellers (looking at the iconic comic actor who was born in Portsmouth in 1925) and local history (offering engaging insights on Portsmouth and its surrounds).

Another literary great to have called Portsmouth home is Charles Dickens. His birthday, on 7 February, is marked with a small service, readings and free entry to the Charles Dickens' Birthplace Museum on Old Commercial Road.

Elsewhere, some big hitters from the world of music and TV head to the city's venues, among them Diversity, Sue Perkins, Suede and Giles Brandreth.

All this means that 2026 really is the time to plan a day trip or even a longer stay in Portsmouth. For full details on all these events, head to visitportsmouth.co.uk, or you can find out about the centenary celebrations at portsmouth100.co.uk.

For more ideas on things to do, visit wightlink.co.uk/explorer

David Howells

With a plethora of centenary celebrations and some new additions to the events calendar, 2026 promises to be a big year for the Great Waterfront City.

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Lymington & the New Forest

Start the new year in the most magical way with a trip to the New Forest – just a short ferry ride from the Isle of Wight. Think peaceful winter walks at Keyhaven Marshes, where migratory birds rest on the salt marsh or spotting ponies and deer as you explore ancient woodland.

The New Forest's towns and villages each offer something special. If you're visiting from the Island, Lymington is the easiest to reach – perfect for a day trip. Wander along the bustling high street, follow the cobbled lanes to the quayside and settle in at a cosy pub for a fireside lunch.

In Lyndhurst, the capital of the New Forest, you'll find plenty to explore. Visit the New Forest Heritage Centre to discover fascinating stories of the New Forest's past, take a walk up to Bolton's Bench then enjoy a coffee on the high street as the world goes by.

For a more unique experience, join a Haunted New Forest ghost walk – offering spine-tingling tales set among the New Forest's historic towns and villages.

Planning your February half-term? Beaulieu is a firm family favourite, or head to Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, where all the bikes are in working condition. On brighter days, try a family paddle on the Beaulieu River with New Forest Activities – fun, fresh air and smiles guaranteed.

If you're staying over, New Park Manor Hotel has recently undergone a beautiful refurbishment, with stylish family rooms, a kids' cinema, a playroom and plenty of child-friendly touches.



Recently refurbished New Park Manor is the perfect place to kick back and relax.

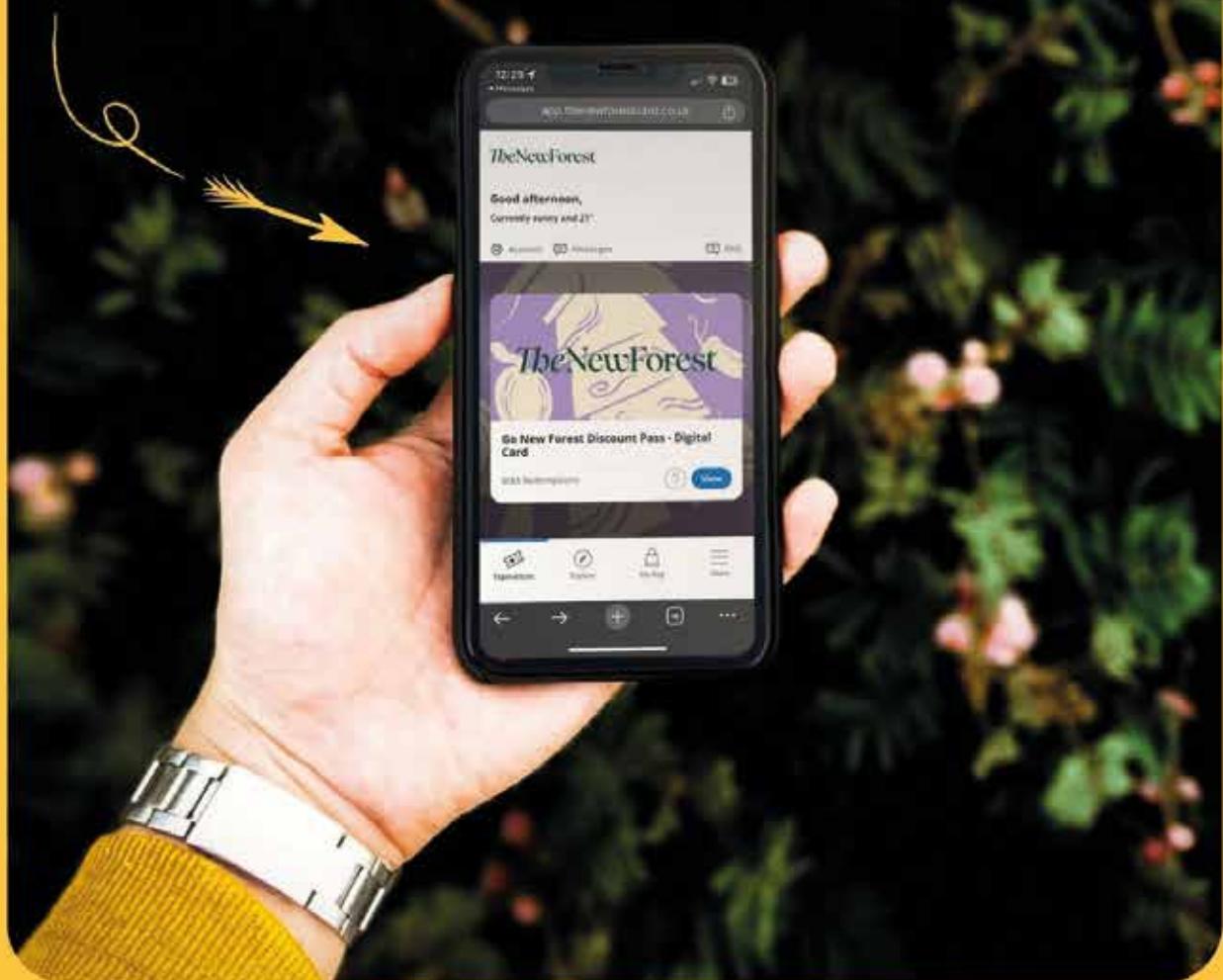
For those seeking some winter calm, the New Forest's peaceful spas are calling. Whether you're marking Valentine's Day, Mother's Day or simply looking to unwind, it's the perfect excuse for a little time out in nature.

For more seasonal ideas, events, walking routes, itineraries and places to stay, visit thenewforest.co.uk and wightlink.co.uk/explorer

Go New Forest

Keep your eyes peeled and you may spot some deer amongst the New Forest's ancient woodlands.

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theneuforest.co.uk/new-forest-card/digital-card



What's on...

The Island's events calendar is bursting at the seams and there's always so much to see and do, you will be spoilt for choice. Here is our pick of what not to miss in 2026...

Ventnor Fringe.

JANUARY

Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra: Mishka Rushdie Momen

17 January, Medina Theatre (IW)

An evening of exceptional music by pioneering female composers under the baton of guest conductor, James Bowen-Thomas. Opening with Elizabeth Macony's evocative Overture – *Proud Thames*, followed by Ethel Smyth's *Two Interlinked French Melodies*. Distinguished international pianist Mishka Rushdie Momen brings Clara Schumann's Piano Concerto to life, before concluding with Florence Price's powerful *Symphony No. 1*.

THIS EVENT IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY WIGHTLINK

iwso.co.uk



Burns Night

23 January,
The Wellington Hotel (IW)

Head to The Wellington Hotel for a heartfelt celebration of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns – best known for penning *Auld Lang Syne*. With a proud Scottish owner and family at the helm, this special evening promises an authentic and spirited tribute. Enjoy a traditional Burns Night Supper, complete with pipes, poems, hearty food and dancing that'll keep your spirits high all night.

thewellington.co.uk



Dodgy

31 January, Strings
Bar & Venue (IW)

Legends of the UK live scene, Dodgy, will be appearing at Strings. There aren't many festivals or indeed towns that these boys haven't played in the 34 years they've been together. In that time, they have released five albums, sold over 2 million records and enjoyed 12 Top 40 singles, including the massive hit 'Good Enough' – officially one of the most played tracks on British radio in the last 30 years!

stringsbarandvenue.com



FEBRUARY

Daytime Bash with Bez!

7 February, Strings
Bar & Venue (IW)

Bez is best known as the maraca player, dancer and de facto mascot of rock band Happy Mondays, having been invited by lead singer Shaun Ryder shortly after the band was formed. He is chiefly remembered for his bizarre style of dancing and use of maracas. Don't miss a day of 90s and 00s bangers with Bez at the helm spinning the tracks!

stringsbarandvenue.com



Under the Bed Sale

11-16 February,
Quay Arts (IW)

The Under the Bed Sale returns to Quay Arts. Featuring works from over 50 Isle of Wight artists, including original artwork painting, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics, the sale is the perfect accessible and affordable opportunity for people to start or continue their art collections.

quayarts.org



Portsmouth Book Fest

15 February–8 March,
Portsmouth (Mainland)

Portsmouth BookFest returns for 2026 with three weeks of inspiring events in venues across the city. Featuring interactive events, workshops and appearances from top names in the literary world, week one features half-term magic for kids, with weeks two and three providing stories for every taste. This year, the event is turning a page on history as part of Portsmouth 100, marking a century since Portsmouth became a city. And that's not all – the Central Library turns 50!

visitportsmouth.co.uk



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Wightlink Isle of Wight International Chess Tournament



16–22 February, Ryde School (IW)

This spring, the Island will once again host elite chess players from across the globe in a seven-day, nine-round tournament at Ryde School, which also features a weekend Congress and multiple side events. The tournament is open to all players with a FIDE Classical rating of 1,600+ and a strong field is expected once again, with several Grandmasters already confirmed, and FIDE norm opportunities available.

iowchess.com

Isle of Wight Story Festival



19–21 February, Quay Arts (IW)

The Isle of Wight Story Festival is a magic mix of storytelling, workshops performance, dress up play, haunted history, puppeteers and competitions. Offering both free and ticketed events featuring a number of popular children's authors, there really is something for youngsters of all ages!

iwestoryfestival.com



MARCH



A Night of a Thousand Freddies



7 March, Shanklin Theatre (IW)

Back by popular demand for the fourth year running, experience a truly memorable re-enactment of Queen live on stage. Featuring full staging, lighting, backdrops and pyrotechnics, this special extended set from renowned tribute act, The Bohemians, combines the showmanship, musicianship, costumes and majestic magnificence of Queen.

shanklintheatre.com

Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra: Aaron Azunda Akugbo

14 March, Medina Theatre (IW)

A magical programme evoking elegance and virtuosity. Rimsky-Korsakov's Suite – The Snow Maiden sets the scene, followed by charismatic Aaron Azunda Akugbo performing Hummel's Trumpet Concerto. Sparks fly in Dvořák's Symphony No. 7 in D Minor, filled with Czech spirit and deep emotion.



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iwsso.co.uk

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Jack Up the 60s with The Zoots

11 April, Shanklin Theatre (IW)



Isle of Wight Walking Festival

9–17 May, Various locations (IW)



Isle of Wight Festival

18–21 June, Seaclose Park (IW)



Round the Island Race

11 July, Islandwide (IW)



Chale Show

1–2 August, Chale (IW)

Please note: all event details were correct at time of going to press but may be subject to change. Please check online and book in advance where possible.

APRIL

The Island Savoyards Present: The Great British Bake Off Musical

2–5 April, Shanklin Theatre (IW)

Everyone's favourite baking show rises to new heights in The Great British Bake Off Musical – a joyous, feel-good celebration of baking, friendship, and community, served with a generous helping of British humour and charm. With catchy original songs, larger-than-life characters, and plenty of laughter, this delicious musical is a treat for fans of the show and theatre lovers alike. Follow a group of amateur bakers as they whisk, knead, and bake their way through the tent, facing technical challenges, showstoppers, and the occasional baking disaster – all under the watchful eyes of the judges and hosts.

shanklintheatre.com



Isle of Wight Spring Art & Garden Fair

3–4 April, Northwood House (IW)

Following the tremendous success of previous years, the fair promises to be bigger and more popular than ever before. Combining plants, shrubs, garden machinery, tools and landscaping products with a fantastic Island artist showcase, this is an event not to be missed.

northwoodhouse.org



Easter Egg Hunt

3–5 April, Ventnor Botanic Garden (IW)

Looking for something to do with the little ones this Easter? Hop on over to Ventnor Botanic Garden for a family friendly Easter egg hunt. Solve the clues and puzzles as you stroll around the garden. Get them right and the children can claim a chocolate treat at the end of their walk.

botanic.co.uk



Jack Up the 60s with The Zoots

11 April, Shanklin Theatre (IW)

Jack Up Events are bringing back the good times with a very special 'Jack Up The 60s' evening at Shanklin Theatre. Multi-talented five-piece band The Zoots will bring the unforgettable sounds of the iconic decade to life, taking audiences on both a visual and musical journey. This is THE 60s show that's been wowing audiences around the world!

shanklintheatre.com

Ferry offer



MAY

Ferry offer



Isle of Wight Walking Festival

9–17 May, Various locations (IW)



The Spring Isle of Wight Walking Festival takes place in May, offering a sunny adventure through the Island's unique landscape. Walkers can expect routes through the countryside and along the coast, each vista as breath-taking as the next and home to thriving wildlife and colourful springtime flora and fauna. This will also include the popular 'Walk the Wight' fundraising event in support of local hospice, Mountbatten.

isleofwightwalkingfestival.co.uk

Riverfest

9 May, Newport Quay (IW)



This fun, free event in the heart of the Island, is organised by the Newport Carnival & Community Events Association. It has the feel of a traditional village fete and offers a whole host of free activities for children. Local charities attend promoting the work they do in the community, helping people and the surrounding environment.

riverfest.org.uk



Walk the Wight 2026

10 May, Islandwide (IW)



Raising funds for Mountbatten, Walk the Wight boasts four routes – including the full 26.5 mile walk from Bembridge to The Needles – and free bus travel to and from every designated walk. All abilities catered for, and people of all ages welcomed. A fantastic way to experience the Isle of Wight's gorgeous landscape.

mountbatten.org.uk

Isle of Wight Open Studios

15–25 May, Islandwide (IW)



Embark on a journey of artistic discovery within a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve! During the annual Open Studios event, you can wander through studios, local venues, pop-up exhibitions and galleries, where you'll encounter a rich tapestry of artistic expression. From contemporary marvels to traditional treasures, there's something for everyone. Best of all, admission is free at all venues. Immerse yourself in the world of painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, textiles, jewellery and ceramics, and meet the makers behind the art.

isleofwightopenstudios.co.uk





Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra: Charlie Lovell-Jones

16 May, Medina Theatre (IW)

A concert of passion and lyricism. Berlioz's fiery *Carnival Romain Overture* opens the night followed by the delicate beauty of Finzi's *Nocturne*. Spellbinding violinist Charlie Lovell-Jones makes a welcome return to the Island, showcasing the brilliance of Bruch's beloved *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor*, which leads us on to the majestic landscapes of Sibelius's *Symphony No. 1 in E Minor*.

THIS EVENT IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY WIGHTLINK

iwso.co.uk



Legend – The Music of Bob Marley Live

16 May, Shanklin Theatre (IW)



When you think reggae, there is only one name that comes to mind. Enjoy an unforgettable evening celebrating this musical icon as a talented cast recreate the timeless hits *Could You Be Loved*, *Is This Love*, *One Love*, *No Woman No Cry*, *Jammin'* and many more reggae classics in a two-hour spectacular show.

jackupevents.co.uk



JUNE

Cowes Classics Week



4–7 June, Cowes (IW)

Come to Cowes and experience Classics Week, focusing on traditional yachts and celebrating with fantastic social events ashore. All types and models of traditional crafts are welcome to negotiate a wide range of Solent courses. The week features daily prize giving events, furnished with complimentary tea and cake, alongside a special gala awards ceremony for the yacht sailors and crew.

cowesclassicsweek.org

Yarmouth Gaffers Regatta



22–25 May, Yarmouth (IW)

All gaff-rigged, yawl and sprit-rigged boats, enthusiasts and supporters are invited to celebrate 30 years of Yarmouth Gaffers Regatta (formerly known as the Yarmouth Old Gaffers Festival) this May Bank Holiday. There will be races, pontoon parties and prize giving, as well as live music and lots to do at sea and on land!

solentgaffers.org



Yarmouth Sea Songs and Shanties

22–25 May, Yarmouth (IW)

Enjoy a festival of sea songs, shanties and traditional jigs performed live on the Green at Yarmouth. With a great line up featuring Island talent as well as acts from the mainland, there's plenty to watch and opportunities to join in.

yarmouth-harbour.co.uk

Shorwell Midsummer Fair



13 June, Wolverton Manor (IW)

This traditional village fair is one of the last surviving 'original' fairs on the Island, providing family entertainment and a memorable afternoon for all. Alongside attractions and stalls, there is a tea tent, arena displays and live music – and new for 2026 the Shorwell 10k, organised by the Isle of Wight Road Runners. Free parking.

facebook.com/ShorwellMidsummerFair



Isle of Wight Festival

18–21 June, Seaclose Park (IW)



Always the first major music festival in the summer calendar and with Lewis Capaldi, Calvin Harris and The Cure already confirmed for 2026, it's a fantastic experience for music lovers of all ages, including family-friendly areas and a huge range of accommodation options and VIP packages. Four days of great music, arts and culture that mark the start of the UK's festival season.

isleofwightfestival.com

JULY

Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra: Independence Day Spectacular



4 July, Medina Theatre (IW)

From the stirring Copland *Fanfare for the Common Man* to Britten's *An American Overture*, this concert presents the exuberance and cinematic magic of American music. West End and international soprano Kelly Glyptis enchants with Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and favourites from the Great American Songbook. We are swept up by Max Steiner's *Suite from Gone with the Wind* and John Williams's *Flying Theme from E.T.* Sousa's *Washington Post March* and Gershwin's *An American in Paris* set the party tone for the evening, plus a dazzling surprise finale!



THIS EVENT IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY WIGHTLINK

iwso.co.uk

Isle of Wight Mardi Gras



4 July, Ryde (IW)

A collaboration between The New Carnival Company and local schools, the Isle of Wight Mardi Gras procession takes inspiration from New Orleans Mardi Gras as well as Latin and Caribbean carnivals. With samba bands and other arts organisations along with some visiting carnival groups, it's a fantastic spectacle of colour and sound!

thenewcarnivalcompany.com



Lymington Seafood Festival

10–12 July, Bath Road Park, Lymington (Mainland)

This unique culinary celebration showcases the best in the New Forest and south coast artisan food and drink. Sample local seafood and fish produce, find inspiration as chefs prepare food in the demonstration kitchens, sip craft beer, sparkling wines, boutique gin and enjoy music from the live bands.

lymingtonseafoodfestival.co.uk



Round the Island Race

11 July, Islandwide (IW)

Attracting over 1,200 boats and 10,000 individual sailors, this one day yacht race is one of the largest international races of its kind. See sailing teams from across the world negotiate the 50 nautical mile course around the Isle of Wight, starting off and ending at the Royal Yacht Squadron line in Cowes.

roundtheisland.org.uk



Royal Isle of Wight County Show

11–12 July, Isle of Wight County Showground (IW)

Celebrate the best of Island life at the Royal Isle of Wight County Show. See prize-winning animals and livestock, sample delicious local produce, experience displays of show jumping, sheep shearing, tractor rides, clay pigeon shoots, 4x4 driving and arts and crafts. There'll be a chance to talk to the experts about their skills and gain their advice. Great outdoor fun for all the family.

iwcountyshow.co.uk



Ventnor Fringe Festival

17–26 July, Ventnor (IW)

Ventnor Fringe brings together a rich, varied and eclectic blend of arts and culture. Launched back in 2010, the festival has developed into one of the Island's cultural highlights, presenting a programme of live acts and performances spanning theatre, comedy, cabaret, music and special one-off screenings. The festival remains proudly independent and accessible to all, with a vibrant programme of events this summer.

vfringe.co.uk



AUGUST

Chale Show

1–2 August, Chale (IW)

Grown from a small scale village fair, this traditional country show now attracts thousands of visitors and guests. Enjoy a wide selection of delicious local produce, displays and presentations from monster truck stunts and dog agility displays, to live bands and vintage vehicles, as well as stalls and fairground rides. The show also boasts the Isle of Wight's largest Horticultural Marquee.



Cowes Week

1–7 August, Cowes (IW)

Playing a key role in the British sporting calendar and one the UK's longest running and successful events of its kind, Cowes Week now boasts up to 40 daily races for 1,000 boats and is one of the largest sailing regattas in the world. With 8,500 sailing competitors of all levels, a unique atmosphere and a huge range of entertainment shoredive, there's plenty for spectators to enjoy.

cowesweek.co.uk



Isle of Wight Garlic Festival

15–16 August, Fighting Cocks Crossroad (IW)

The renowned Isle of Wight Garlic Festival returns with live music, children's activities and lots of garlic! Playing host to star chefs, musicians, local charities and businesses and more from far and wide, the festival is a celebration of wonderful local produce. Sample garlicky goodies such as ice cream and garlic beer and get culinary inspiration in the Theatre Kitchen.

garlicfestival.co.uk



Isle of Wight Scooter Rally

28–31 August, Various locations (IW)

The world famous Isle of Wight Scooter Rally hosts up to 5,000 riders of classic scooters, heading mostly to the coastal towns of Ryde and Sandown. There is an Island-wide 'ride out' on the Sunday and the 'Best of British' evening entertainment features live music from a range of acts playing classic Britpop, ska and two tone, as well as mod, soul and punk music.

visualimpact.co.uk



Victorius Festival

28–30 August, Southsea (Mainland)

Based on the coast in beautiful sunny Southsea, Victorious is a great family friendly music festival by the sea. Now well-established and always boasting a top line up of acts, which this year includes Richard Ashcroft, The Black Keys and Kasabian, as well as a range of comedy headliners. There's also a whole host of food and drink, and retail stalls onsite, all in a stunning setting by the Solent.

victoriusfestival.co.uk



SEPTEMBER

Isle of Wight Randonnee



6 September, Islandwide (IW)

Take to two wheels and cycle clockwise around the Isle of Wight. First established in 1985, from 2026, Mountbatten Isle of Wight will take over the running of The Randonnee and the next exciting phase of this enduring and hugely successful annual cycling challenge. The first of the changes will be that instead of its usual weekend in May, this year's Randonnee will be held on 6 September. Pick from the 100km or 55km routes and witness the whole of the Island's stunning scenery.

mountbatten.org.uk



Isle of Wight Classic Motor Show

12–13 September, Newport Quay (Saturday) and Ryde Esplanade (Sunday) (IW)

Get ready to step back in time and experience the nostalgia of classic automobiles! This beloved event promises a weekend filled with vintage charm and roaring engines. From sleek motorbikes to elegant cars and sturdy lorries, the show boasts an impressive array of vehicles from the golden years of motoring. Whether you're a passionate enthusiast or simply appreciate the beauty of classic design, there's something for everyone.

iwmotorshow.co.uk



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Don't forget, booking and amendments are free to make yourself online.

If you need to speak to us on the phone about your vehicle or foot passenger booking, our Contact Centre team will be happy to help.

If you give us a call and need to make a booking or make amendments to your ticket, you'll be charged a booking fee.

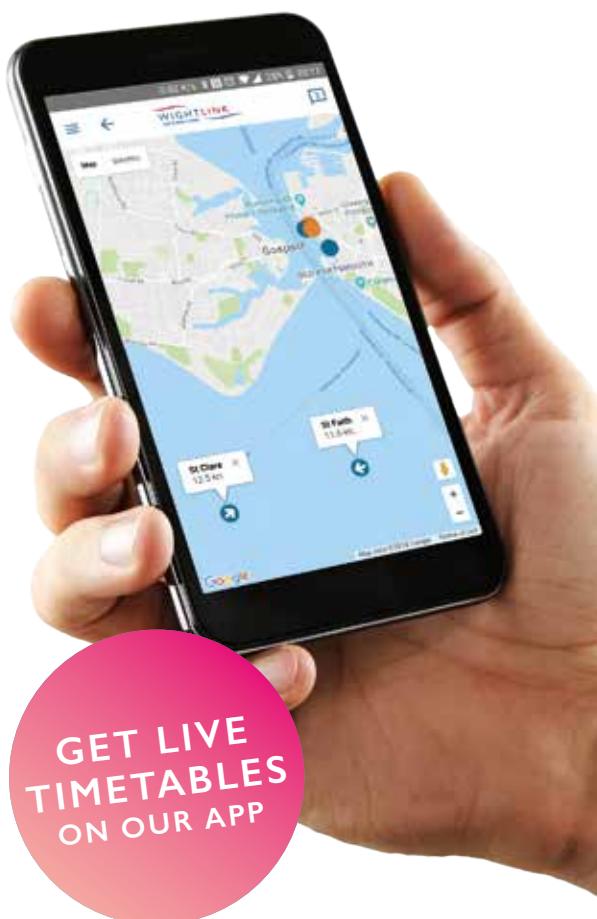
Visit wightlink.co.uk/contactus or call the Contact Centre on 0333 999 7333

Our lines are open Monday to Friday, 09:00–18:00 and Saturday and Sunday, 09:00–17:00.

During bank holidays, school holidays and festival periods, our Contact Centre can experience a high volume of calls.

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St Mary's Hospital

01983 822099

iow.nhs.uk

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wightlink.co.uk

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southwesternrailway.com

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0330 0539 182

islandbuses.info

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LEISURE CENTRES

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The Heights, Lake
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01983 823883

ILeisure.co.uk

West Wight
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Freshwater
01983 752168
westwight.org.uk

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Stag Lane Motors

01983 522443

staglane-motors.co.uk

Bartletts Service Station
01983 865338
bartlettsservicestation.co.uk

James Garage Services
01983 521010
jamesgarageservices.co.uk

Visitor information

Isle of
Wight

Visitor Information Centres can be found in the following locations across the Island.

For more details and opening times please visit: visitisleofwight.co.uk or [f/IWTravelAmbassadors](https://www.facebook.com/IWTravelAmbassadors)

NORTH

East Cowes
Community Library
York Avenue,
East Cowes, PO32 6RU

NORTH EAST

Bembridge
Community Library
Church Road,
Bembridge, PO35 5NA

Isle of Wight
Steam Railway
Havenstreet, PO33 4DS

Ryde Bus Station
Ryde Esplanade,
Ryde, PO33 2HE

EAST

Brading Railway Station
Station Road,
Brading, PO36 0DY

The Holiday Shop
37 High Street,
Sandown, PO36 8DE

Vernon Cottage
1 Eastcliff Road,
Shanklin, PO37 6AA

SOUTH

Ventnor Exchange
11 Church Street,
Ventnor, PO38 1SW

WEST

Brightstone Village Shop
Main Road,
Brightstone, PO30 4AH

Dimbola Museum
& Galleries
Terrace Lane,
Freshwater Bay, PO40 9QE

Yarmouth Harbour Office
The Quay,
Yarmouth, PO41 0NT

CENTRAL

Godshill Village Store
High Street,
Godshill, PO38 3HH

Newport Bus Station
South Street,
Newport, PO30 1LL



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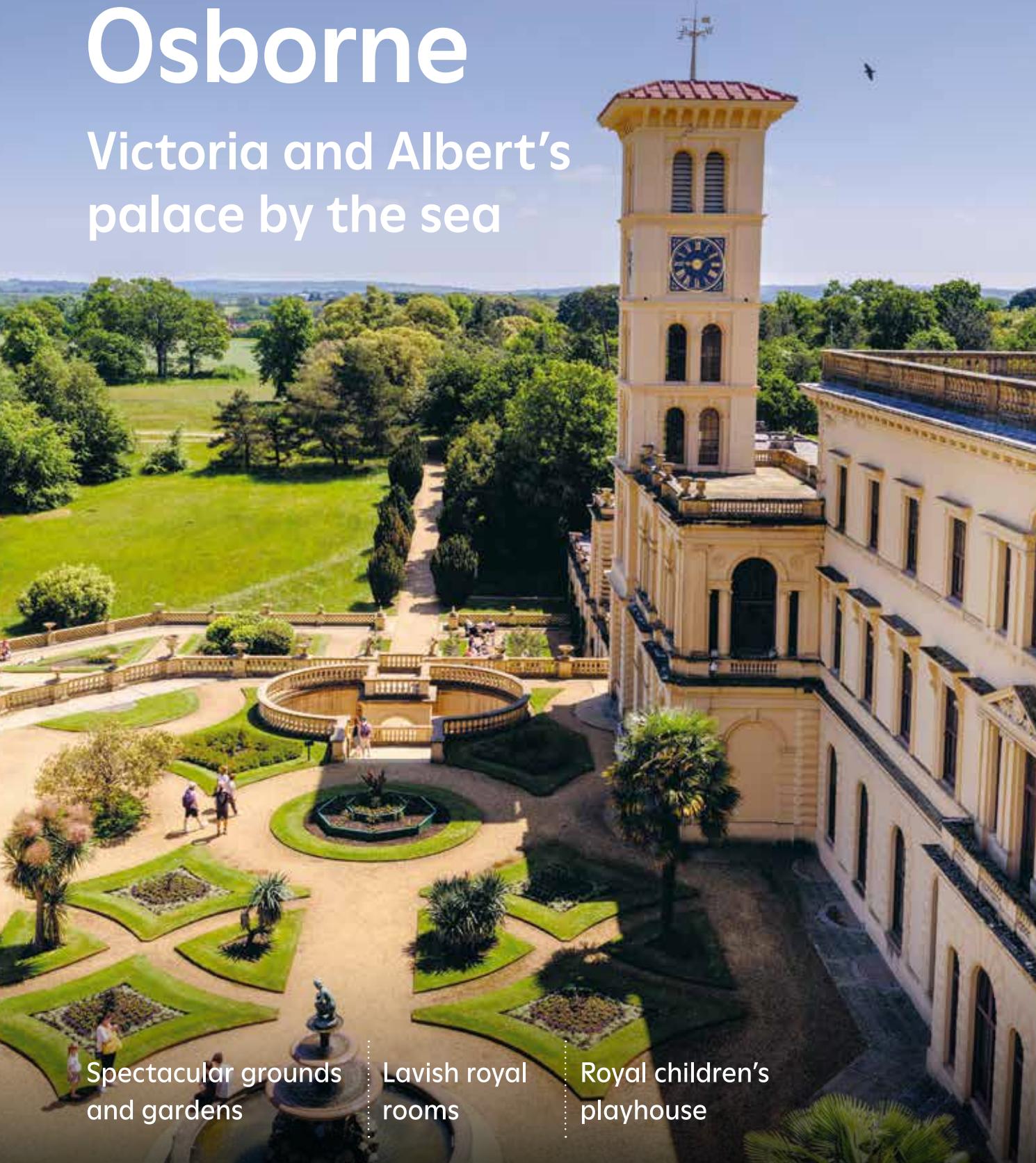
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