

£75,000 awarded to West Wight projects

Thirteen local groups are to share £75,000 of grant awarded by the WWLP in the final round of its phenomenally successful Landscape Heritage Grant programme.

Existing and future users of the Island's Rights of Way network will be particular winners as more than half those projects receiving support involve works to improve access to the West Wight's countryside and beaches. The Isle of Wight Ramblers will be leading on several projects. They include the construction of new steps at Shippards Chine to make it easier for visitors to get to the beach at Compton Bay and enhancing access to Mill Copse for people with limited mobility. Elsewhere Brighstone Parish Council will be improving a local footpath as part of a project to regenerate Ashley Way Copse and the Wildlife Trust and National Trust will be delivering double dividends by addressing issues of erosion and access on sections of the Coastal Path.



Habitats and headstones will be conserved at Yarmouth Town Cemetery
Projects to conserve Yarmouth's town hall, church clock and cemetery have also been awarded a grant as Yarmouth and Thorley Voices, a wonderful project that seeks to record the stories and reminiscences of older members of the community.

Diary dates 2013

Here at the WWLP we are always keen to help people get out and about in the fresh air. All the better when these activities offer participants the opportunity to learn new skills. So for those looking for some active and informative fun here's a couple of dates for your new diaries.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop
Saturday 9 February 10-12noon
Carisbrooke Priory

30 places are available so booking is essential on a first come first serve basis. Email orchards@wwlp.co.uk to reserve your place.



Hedgelaying in the IW style
IW Hedgelaying Competition
Saturday 23 February 10-15.30
Bathingbourne Lane, Nr Arreton

Entry is free for competitors and observers; spectators are welcome. Visit www.iwhg.org/competition for more details.

Fort Victoria Country Park - Project Update

Despite the best efforts of the weather and the discovery of 19th century archaeology to slow the pace of work down, the regeneration of Fort Victoria remains on course for completion in good time for the Easter break.

Works to refurbish the 'Corner Room' as a flexible space and the Rangers' and Information areas are well underway and work has now started on the potentially gargantuan task of raking out brickwork for repointing with lime mortar.



Preparing to repoint historic brickwork (Photo by Paul Blackley)

The refurbishment of the public toilets is almost complete and in what is one of the most exciting aspects of the project, we are shortly to take delivery of hand crafted replica gun carriage onto which one of the Fort's original cannons will be mounted.



Improving cohesion of the historic fort (Photo by Paul Blackley)

Can you make a wooden carriage to carry a 3tonne 19th century cannon?

No, we didn't know how to either, which is why we asked the innovative chaps at Eccleston George if they could help.

True to form they were soon sourcing 19th century gun carriage blueprints from as far afield as Malaysia and visiting the Royal Armouries at Fort Nelson in their pursuit of expert advice.



Carriage almost complete (Eccleston George)

What they created over the next 6 months can only be described as a true piece of craftsmanship with rivets and axles forged in their own yard and each layer of timber sawn by hand. The carriage will soon be on display with cannon at Fort Victoria.