

Farewell to Irene Fletcher

At the end of August we will be bidding a fond farewell to Irene Fletcher, WWLP's Learning Programme Manager who leaves us to embark on new adventures on the Island.

Irene joined the WWLP in March 2009 bringing to the team her vast and varied expertise and experience in horticulture, education, town planning and conservation.



Irene with a team of volunteers ready to do battle!

Irene's impact was immediate and the pace and enthusiasm with which she set about her role will be appreciated by all those who have worked alongside her. This edition of our newsletter highlights some of Irene's most memorable accomplishments with the WWLP. It begins however with a snapshot of the volume and range of activity that Irene has achieved over the past 3^{1/2} years:

- 2,160 people accessing historic landscape learning events;
- 2,110 local pupils attending landscape learning sessions;
- 500+ new volunteers engaged in conservation/education work
- 477 people attending traditional skills training sessions
- 110 free landscape-focused community events and activities
- 108 free school trips to explore local heritage and nature
- 6 environmental learning resources installed at local schools
- 2 weekend long festivals of traditional skills

Bringing Landscapes to Life @ Brighstone School

From the outset Irene set the standards high at the WWLP with one of her many ambitious projects.

In June 2009 Irene cajoled and persuaded Brighstone Primary School pupils, teachers, parents and local business to donate their time and resources to help transform the school grounds.



Irene taking 5 on site

Blessed with glorious early summer weather, Irene's team set about bringing the character of the local landscape to the school grounds. The result was a mini version of the local landscape complete with a dinosaur coast, woodlands, downland and a Longstone. Moreover, it continues to be used as an invigorating resource for learning and enjoyment.

The Pebble family picnic at Freshwater Bay

Summer madness overtook the WWLP in July 2010 when Irene orchestrated a monumental community arts project that involved pupils from 4 local schools, tens of volunteers the artistic skills of Penny Rushton to create a family of pebble people.

The completion of this ephemeral sculpture was celebrated with a community picnic on the beach at Freshwater Bay and an opportunity to enter a photo competition with prizes of National Trust and Wildlife Trust membership for the best snaps of the Pebble family.



The Pebble family of Freshwater Bay

The Pebble family remained in residence to the enjoyment and bemusement of visitors until well into the holiday season. Eventually however, time and tide inevitably took its toll and the pebbles were released from their frames to retake their place on being rolled up and down the beach by the waves. The Pebble family has a virtual life however and you can still catch up with them by searching You Tube under Pebble People Picnic.

Hop Fayre & Festival of Traditional Skills

Irene hit on the magical combination of beer, music and the opportunity for people to learn about traditional crafts such as basket weaving, wood working and spinning to draw the crowds to Ventnor Botanic Gardens in September 2010.

In what proved to be the WWLP's most popular event to date more than 1,500 people joined us for a celebration of local culture across a glorious late summer weekend. With free buses laid on by the WWLP for those wishing to attend from West Wight the Hop Fayre proved a big hit with participants and visitors alike. Moreover, with an eye on sustainability this inaugural event has provided the blueprint for what is becoming established as an annual feature in the calendar.

Cheers Irene!