

# The Island Conversation



Developing a shared vision for the future of our Island

A consultation document from The Isle of Wight Council Conservative Group

## Why are we consulting?

### We want our Island to be the best place in the country to live and work.

The Isle of Wight Council has been run by a group of “Independent” councillors since the last local government elections in May 2013. Nearly three years into their term of office the Council is:

- bottom of national league tables for adult care
- bottom of South East Region school league tables
- failing to secure grant funding from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership
- slashing services
- closing more toilets
- abolishing free parking periods
- making front line and backroom staff redundant
- out of its depth in managing the important contract with Island Roads
- failing to engage with the business community
- lacking vision and innovation in economic development
- squandering cash reserves

Many so-called “Independent” councillors were elected on the “Framework for Change” Manifesto making many promises. That Manifesto is now in tatters with almost all its pledges abandoned. Three councillors have left the “Independent” Group, disillusioned with its failures.

### The current Leadership lacks strategic vision. It is rudderless and is failing.

We take no delight in this situation; we too live on the Island with our families and friends. We share the deep concern of Island residents about the direction of travel under the current Council Leadership.

The next elections are in May 2017. The Conservative Group of Councillors are determined to provide clear leadership unlike the current dysfunctional administration at County Hall.

We want a real conversation with Island residents. That conversation is not about us telling you what we will do if we are elected at the next election. It is about asking you what your priorities are, how we can help individuals and businesses on the Island achieve their full potential; what we can do, together, to grow the economy and create jobs, to help make the Island a better place to live and work.

We will not make promises we cannot deliver. We will stand by our commitments. We will work together for the common good of the Island.

This document is the start of our Island Conversation. Please tell us what you think.

## Our promise

We've seen what's happened to the reputation of the current Administration and their undeliverable promises.

### We promise that:

- ✓ we will consult the people, businesses and organisations of the Island and listen to what they say
- ✓ we will be clear about what we're going to do and why we're going to do it
- ✓ when we make a commitment, we'll do all in our power to deliver it

## Our approach

We cannot simply moan about how tight finances are as a result of the recession; we need to change the way the Isle of Wight Council sees itself and the way it works.

We want the Council to be a champion for our community: challenging all service providers, whether public sector or private, to improve their standards.

We will deliver a change in attitudes so that the Council stops telling people what it cannot do, and instead works to achieve the Island's aspirations.

We will actively engage with all the agencies and service providers that impact upon the Island, working with them to innovate and find new ways of operating. We will increasingly become more of a commissioner rather than a provider of services so we can deliver modern, flexible solutions to the challenges we face.

We will work to restore efficiency, accountability and professionalism to the Council and ensure the quality and integrity of service provision.

**Our priorities:**

- ✓ protecting our community
- ✓ preserving the environment
- ✓ growing our economy
- ✓ supporting our residents
- ✓ creating opportunity for all

But we want to know your views on these priorities so that we have a shared vision.

## Our plans

In focusing on these priorities, we need to be clear how we'll work.

**We will protect our community by:**

- ✓ ensuring that our health and social services are the best they can be
- ✓ maintaining and supporting our police
- ✓ focusing on community safety

**We will preserve our environment by:**

- ✓ protecting and nurturing the Island's beauty
- ✓ maintaining access for all
- ✓ planning sensitively for the future

**We will grow our economy by:**

- ✓ developing strategies for targeted growth
- ✓ engaging with our business community and our tourism sector
- ✓ harnessing the wealth of experience and knowledge on our Island
- ✓ working to improve our infrastructure, public transport and mainland connections

**We will support our residents by:**

- ✓ listening to your views
- ✓ meeting your needs
- ✓ keeping you safe
- ✓ creating opportunities for all

**We will create opportunities for all by:**

- ✓ delivering high standards of education and training for our young people
- ✓ working to deliver full employment, especially for our young people
- ✓ ensuring all residents benefit from our economic success
- ✓ making the Island the best place in the country to live, grow up, work and retire

## Our questions

If we are to realise our shared vision, we need your help in answering some key questions so that we know what you really think.

Our questions are set out on the next two pages of this document. Please do answer them. Together we can make a difference.

## Your answers

You can respond to these questions by sending your answers to:

Island Conservatives  
58 The Mall, Carisbrooke Road  
Newport, PO30 1BW

Or you can visit The Island Conversation page of our website to complete them online:

[www.islandconservatives.com/TheIslandConversation](http://www.islandconservatives.com/TheIslandConversation)

Or contact us by email: [isleofwight@tory.org](mailto:isleofwight@tory.org)

## The next steps

We want to work together with Island residents, businesses and organisations to shape and deliver our shared vision for the future of the Island. So, once we have your responses to our questions, we will consider most carefully what you have told us. We will be holding meetings on key policy areas including the economy, education and training. We'll be organizing forums for town and parish councils, service providers and a wide range of stakeholders.

We want this consultation to be genuine, to be deep and to be effective in helping us determine the right policies for the future of our Island. We will draw upon your feedback to set out clearly in our Manifesto for 2017 precisely what we want to achieve and how we intend to achieve it.

# Our questions, your answers

We need your help in answering some key questions. Please do answer them. Together we can make a difference.

**Q1. Are our priorities outlined in this leaflet correct?  
(As an Island resident what is most important to you?)**

**Q2. What are the things the Isle of Wight Council does well?**

**Q3. What are the things in which the Isle of Wight Council performs badly, that it needs to improve or which it doesn't do at all, but should do?**

**Q4. What do you think we need to focus on in the future to deliver the kind of Council and services you want?**

**Q5. What should we be doing to deliver economic development for the Island?**

**Q6. How best can we boost tourism on the Island?**

**Q7. What is the best way to ensure we see appropriate housing development on the Island?**

**Q8. What do you not want to see happen on the Island?**

**Q9. Would you be prepared to contribute to the development of our Island and if so how?**

**Q10. How can we improve our education and training on the Island so that it's the best it can be?**

**Q11. How can we improve our social services and health services so that they really meet the Island's needs?**

**Q12. Are there any other suggestions you would like to make to help us improve the council and life on the Island?**

If you would like to offer your contact details please complete the box below. You do not have to give us your information, but if you choose to do so it will enable us to analyse the views in different areas, to share your response with your local Conservative representative, and to keep you updated in future.

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other  Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone  Email