



Vectis

Housing News
Spring 2019



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019



More inside:

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- Vectis Big Day Out
 - Happy Easter
- Arc Woodland Safari

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MARTYN'S COLUMN



As you receive this, we are almost a quarter of the way into 2019. It's an old cliché, but time does seem to fly by incredibly quickly.

Increasingly, the world seems a more unsettled place. Whatever your views about Brexit, the uncertainty does not help anyone and the indications are for an initial possibility of price increases as a result of whatever changes occur. There are also likely to be further increases in utility costs after April. For those who are struggling to keep their heads above water at the moment, any cost-of-living increases are unwelcome.

We are also increasingly aware of the number of you who are being moved onto Universal Credit and the potential problems that can cause. We recognise that life can be challenging sometimes and while we have

to insist that your rent is paid regularly, we are always happy to sit down with you and discuss how this can be achieved in a realistic way. Please do get in touch rather than hoping things will just sort themselves out.

We have now completed our second HOLD property (shared ownership for people with long-term disabilities) and have started on site with 31 units of new housing in Yarmouth and Gunville. These will provide much-needed new homes for rent and shared ownership over the next 18 months.

Finally, we hope we can build on the very successful recent Residents' Panel held in Newport, so please keep an eye out for future dates, plus details of exciting future events offered by our Communities Team.

Martyn Pearl
Chief Executive, Vectis Housing



SERVICE CHARGES 2019/2020

WHAT ARE SERVICE CHARGES?

Service charges cover the cost of managing, maintaining, repairing, insuring and providing services to residents beyond the benefit of occupying their own home. These include items such as cleaning, grounds maintenance, communal repair costs, fire equipment servicing, management costs and any other running expenses to the area in which you live. Services will vary according to where you live. You will only be charged if your home benefits from that service. Leaseholders also pay their share of building insurance and the maintenance of the building through the service charge.

We aim to:

- Deliver value for money on your services
- Consult you about any significant changes to your services
- Give you clear information about how your services are managed

HOW ARE SERVICE CHARGES CALCULATED?

Charges normally change in April and we will give you a month's notice of any changes. Estimates are based on spending in previous years, adding projected increases for inflation, plus any changes in spending that we know about for the coming year.

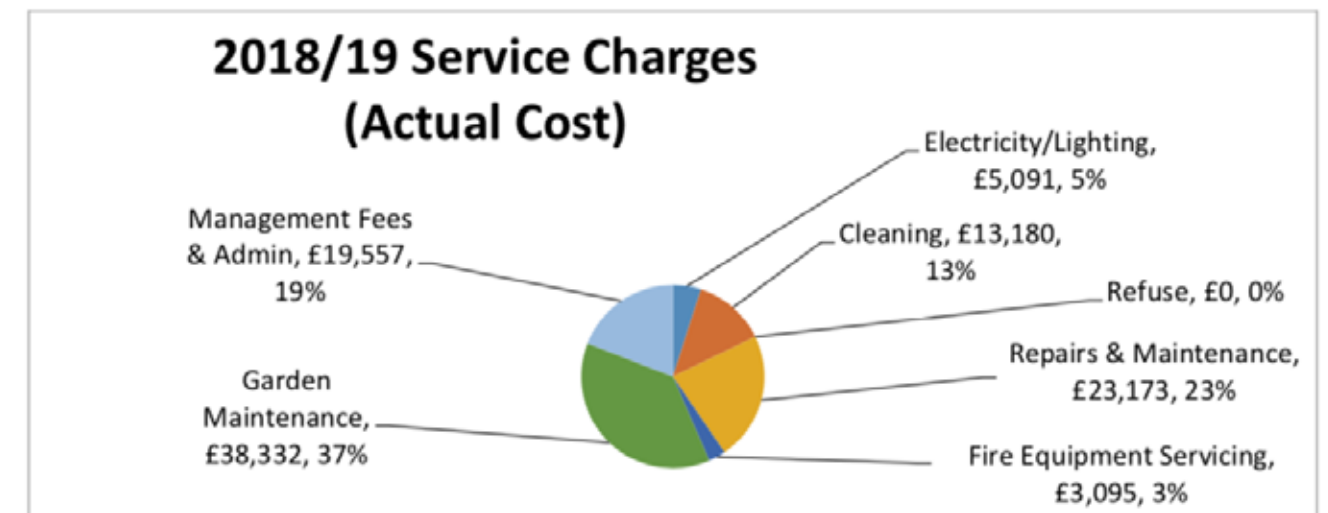
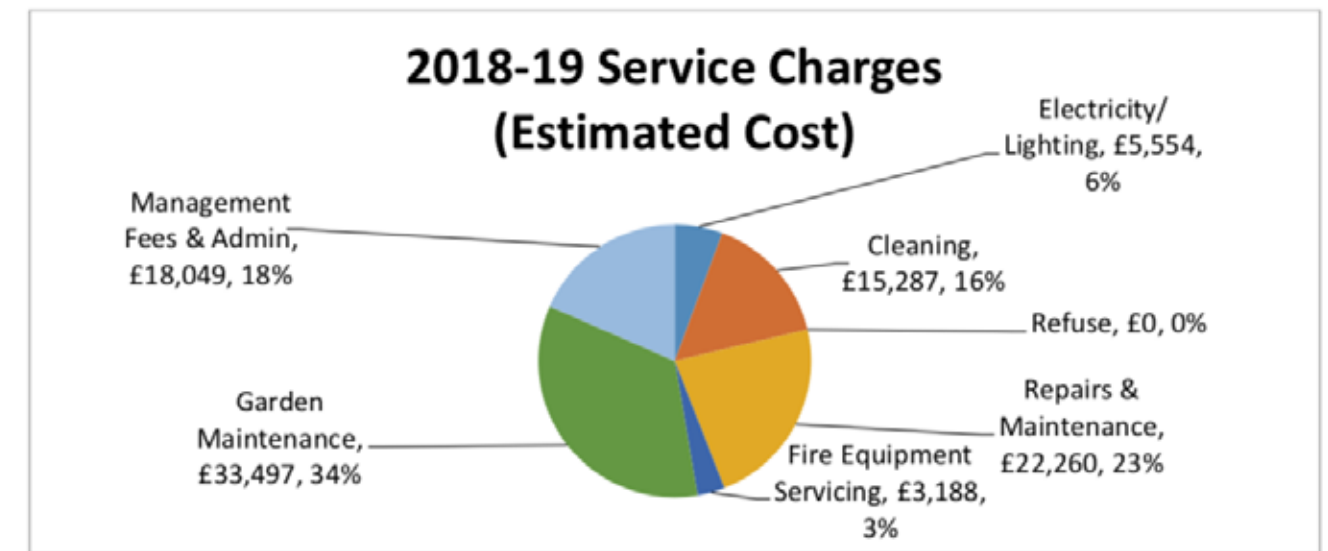
Any surplus or deficit at the end of the year is carried forward and included in the service charge for the following year.

For 2018/19 the actual costs for the year were higher than estimated, causing a deficit. This was due to a combination of higher than anticipated responsive repairs and an increase to the grounds maintenance contract (increased litter picking, weeding and removal of dog fouling) in communal areas, following tenant consultation. Vectis has again absorbed (not passed on to tenants) a proportion of the repair costs in order to minimise service charge increases in 2019/20. The differences on costs are shown on the following charts.

MONITORING SERVICES PROVIDED

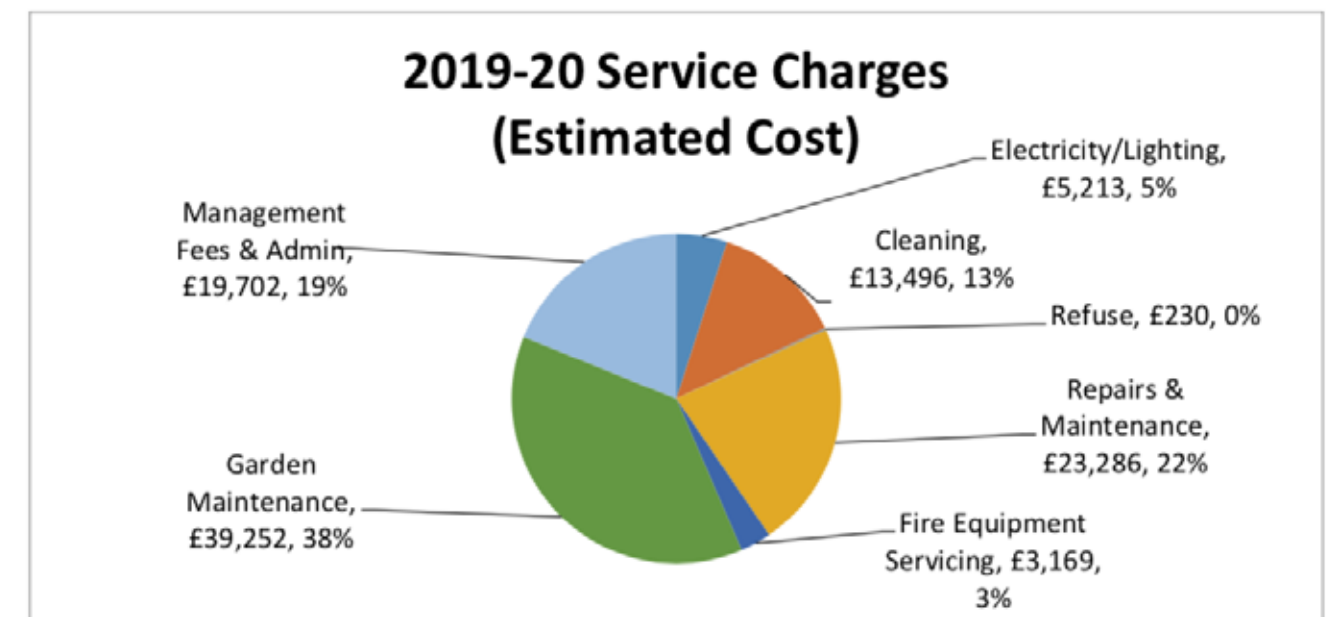
The contractors we use to undertake the work are actively managed by our Property Services team and undergo rigorous checking procedures both in terms of cost and level of service.

We are continuing to improve the way we manage service charges and ensure that they offer value for money. We hope you've already noticed some improvements over the past couple of years and we will continue to implement improvements at every opportunity.



SERVICE CHARGE PROJECTIONS 2019/20

You will be receiving a more detailed breakdown of your service charge along with your rent review letter.



UNIVERSAL CREDIT – WILL IT AFFECT YOU?

UNIVERSAL CREDIT REPLACES:

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Working Tax Credit



If you are already claiming these benefits or tax credits you don't need to do anything now. The Department for Work and Pensions will get in touch with you before there are any changes to your benefits or tax credits.

WHO CAN GET UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

You can apply for Universal Credit if you are on a low income or unemployed. You will usually only be able to claim Universal Credit if you are aged 18 or over, but some people aged 16 or 17 can get it, depending on their circumstances. You usually won't be able to claim Universal Credit if you're in full-time education or training, but people with certain circumstances can still apply. You also can't claim Universal Credit if you are getting the severe disability premium, or if you received it within the last month and are still eligible for it.

HOW IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT PAID?

Universal Credit is a single payment that is paid monthly (normally paid directly into an account in your name) although you may have to wait for around 5 weeks for your first payment. You may be able to get a Universal Credit advance if you are unable to manage during this period.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND YOUR RENT

Please remember that once on Universal Credit you will no longer receive Housing Benefit and will be responsible for paying your full rent from your monthly Universal Credit payment. You also need to tell the Department for Work and Pensions about any changes to your rent when rents change each April.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HAVING A PROBLEM

If you are having trouble managing your money, if you are worried about paying your rent or if you have applied for Universal Credit please get in touch with us at Vectis Housing. We are able to offer confidential help and advice.



VECTIS TENANTS' PROJECT FUND

Vectis Tenants' Project Fund - funds and delivers small-scale projects that make a lasting and noticeable improvement to your scheme.

At Vectis, we are committed to improving not just the homes of our tenants, but also their quality of life. The Tenants' Project Fund supports and funds projects and improvement works that genuinely make a difference to the lives of our tenants, and the neighbourhoods or schemes in which they live.

Any funding awarded is approved by the Vectis Residents' Panel, which is made up of residents supported by the Vectis Management Team.

Neighbours living in any scheme or neighbourhood can apply to the Tenants' Project Fund if they have a project in mind, which meets any of the following criteria:



Life Skills - example: better access to training and development

Health & Wellbeing - promoting community/leisure activities that bring neighbours together and decrease isolation

Stronger Communities - communities working together to tackle issues in their community such as anti-social behaviour through community events and small-scale interventions such as new fencing or improving security and lighting etc.

Improving our Neighbourhood Environments - improving our environments such as community gardens, installing benches or improving seating areas

For more information on the process and how to apply, please contact Yasmin White, Housing Services Manager at Yasmin@vectishousing.co.uk or by calling Vectis reception on **01983 525985**.



NEW HOMES UPDATE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

NEW HOUSING CURRENTLY BEING BUILT IN NEWPORT AND BOULDNOR

A key aim of Vectis Housing's Business Strategy is to increase the number of properties it owns or manages, to help satisfy the growing demand for affordable housing on the Isle of Wight. Working closely with a number of developers and builders, we have a potential development pipeline of around 250 new homes that could be built over the next five years. As a result of factors that are beyond our control, including Brexit and the overall housing market, not all of these may be built, however, we are aiming to increase the number of houses we manage by at least 50%.

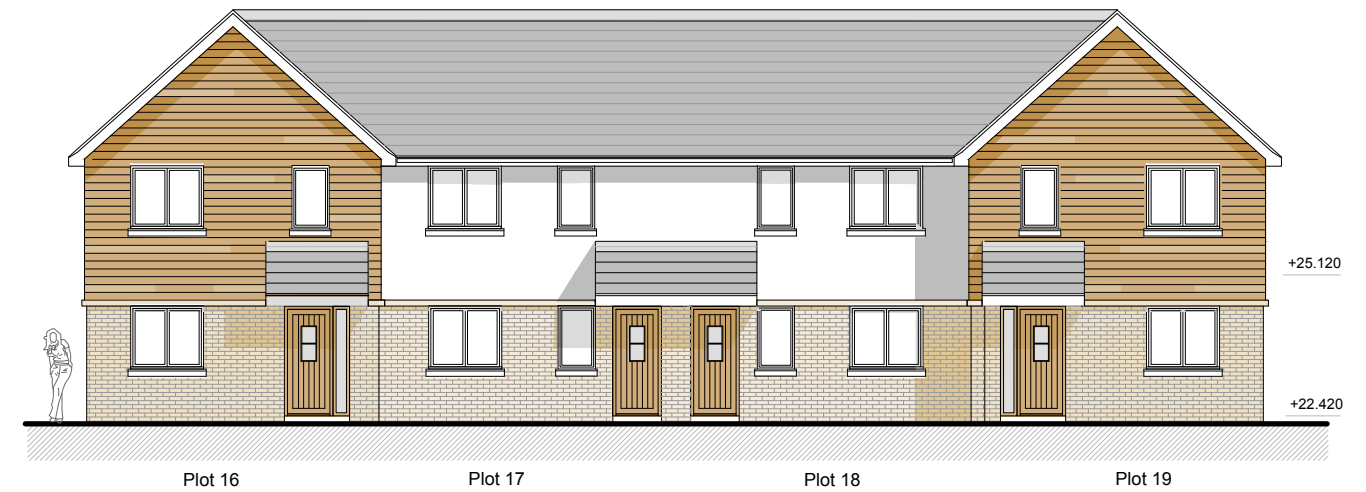
Currently, we are "on site" with 31 new homes being built across two sites; one in Newport and the other near Yarmouth. These will deliver a mix of one, two and three bedroom houses and flats for rent and shared ownership.

Subject to programme, these are due to be completed towards the end of 2019 and early 2020 and will provide much needed energy efficient homes that have been built to the latest standards.

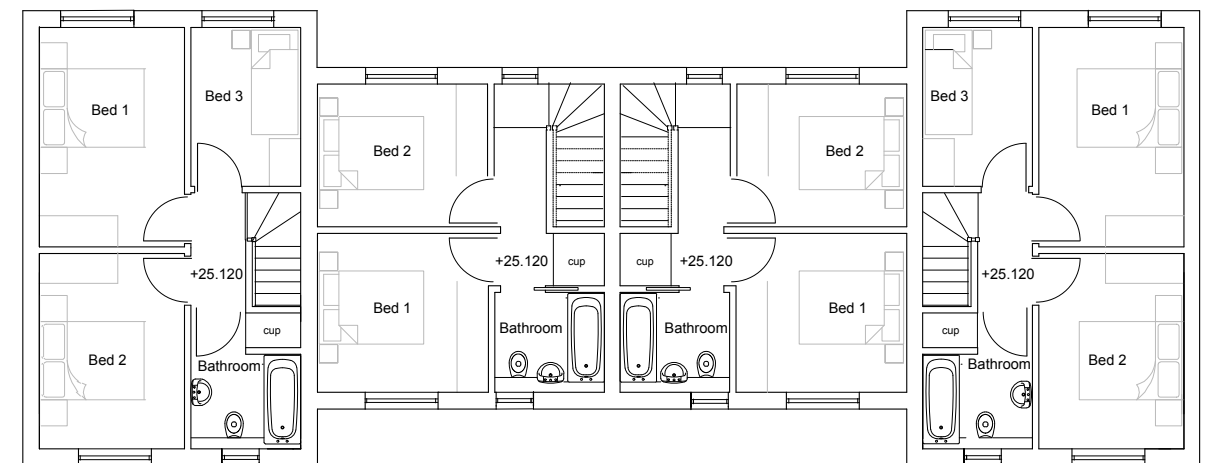
As construction progresses, we will provide further details.



18 new homes at Ash Lane, Newport (in yellow)



East Elevation (Front)
Scale 1:100



First Floor Plan
Scale 1:100

2 and 3 bedroom homes at Ash Lane, Newport



New homes being constructed at Bouldnor, near Yarmouth



VECTIS BIG DAY OUT, SANDOWN



SATURDAY, 6TH APRIL 2019, 11AM-3PM

- Including FREE entry to the Isle of Wight Zoo or a FREE round of pitch & putt at Browns Golf Course.
- Collect your FREE hot drink, soft drink or ice cream from Browns Café during the day.
- FREE Wild Walk led by local nature expert, Explore the natural beauty of the beach and clifftops of Yaverland.
- FREE Artecology workshop – make a bio-tile to improve the biodiversity of the Island's sea defences.
- Discover the PLUTO Pavilion and meet the Men In Sheds helping to restore its engines.



Vectis are delighted to be hosting their first ever Big Day Out for all our residents on Saturday 6th April 2019. We aim to get as many residents as possible along to the event where free activities will be on offer to all participants. This event is being run as part of the Vectis Housing Wild About Wight project, which is funded by Heritage Lottery.

Free activities will be available during the day, but some of these must be booked by participants before the event.

Each participant will be given a voucher that can be redeemed for a free hot drink, soft drink or ice-cream at Browns Café.



To register your interest in this event and to pre-book your free trip to the zoo OR free round of pitch and putt at Browns, please contact Vectis Housing reception on **01983 525985** stating your chosen activity, how many people will be coming from your household, and whether you need us to provide you with transport to and from the event. We will be providing minibus and coach transport to and from the event where required. The activities and visits are free, but booking is essential.

If you are coming by car, then free parking will be provided for the day at the zoo car park.

You can either bring a picnic to eat on the beach or in our designated picnic area at the back of Browns Café, or you can buy a delicious lunch at Browns Cafe or the Zoo.



**PHONE 01983 525985 BY 29TH MARCH
TO BOOK YOUR PLACE ON THIS FREE DAY OUT**



HAPPY EASTER



Most of us associate Easter with a nice Bank Holiday and plenty of chocolate eggs, however Easter is an important event in the Christian calendar.

Holy Week is the annual Christian observance commemorating Jesus' last week on earth and the events leading up to his resurrection on Easter Sunday. It is also the final week of Lent. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter for Christians. It is a time of self-examination and reflection where people focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others.



The dates of Holy Week are defined by the date of Easter Sunday and therefore it falls on different dates from year to year. Holy Week commences on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Sunday. It includes the Christian observances and solemn holidays of Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday) and Holy Friday (Good Friday).

EGGS AND CHICKS

Turning to the tradition of eating Easter Eggs - these are now often the main thing that people think of if you say Easter. Having eggs to eat at Easter, comes from the middle ages in Europe. During Lent, in the 40 days before Easter, most people took part in a fast and didn't eat certain foods, including dairy items like milk and eggs. Therefore, eggs would have been a real treat to eat at Easter when the fast was over.



Eggs were also used by the ancient Persians and Egyptians to celebrate New Year, which happened for them in spring time. The eggs were coloured and eaten during the celebrations.

In Europe since the 13th century, coloured eggs have been used to celebrate Easter as house decorations.

In Eastern European countries, wooden eggs are beautifully painted in lots of different patterns. The patterns often have special names and meanings and help to tell the Easter Story.



WILD ABOUT WIGHT

WILD ABOUT WIGHT EXHIBITION

Quay Arts, West Gallery

Saturday 16 February - Saturday 20 April 2019

The Wild About Wight project recently launched their art exhibition at Quay Arts in Newport; a community show celebrating a whole year of art workshops exploring the Island's natural & built world, from landscapes and wildlife to streetscapes and architecture.

Wild About Wight is a Vectis Housing community project funded by Heritage Lottery, exploring the natural and built heritage of East Wight. Each month throughout 2018, a team of artists, Hannah George, Babs Gowan, Carol Jaye, Caroline Underwood and Ian Whitmore have introduced people to our landscapes, streetscapes, wildlife and architecture through art sessions, workshops and walks. Between them, they've brought a fantastic array of art techniques to outdoor and indoor pop-up studios



The free exhibition runs until Saturday 20th April in the West Gallery upstairs at Quay Arts.



ranging from woodlands and beaches to bird hides, barns and heritage buildings. The results are a season by season celebration of place by all sorts of people, through art, words and sound!



Wild About Wight Art Workshop
Quay Arts & Daisie Rich Trust -
Saturday 13 April, 10am-1pm

Join Ian Whitmore, one of the Wild About Wight lead artists, for a FREE family art workshop at Quay Arts in Newport. Explore and respond to the Wild About Wight Exhibition being shown in the West Gallery.

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.



ARC WOODLAND SAFARI & CELEBRATION

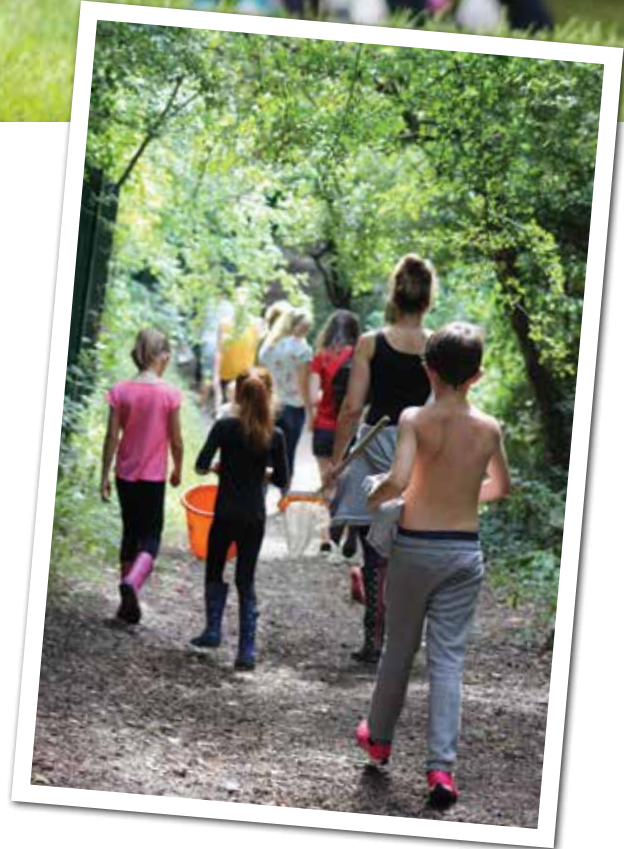


Friday 31st May 2019, 1pm – 3pm

Join Wild About Wight and Artecology for a nature and art safari celebrating 100 million years of wildlife in the newly improved Arc Woodland & beyond! Meet the ammonites and search for solitary bees on your new Biototem Trail! Plus:

- River-dipping!
- Insect-exploring!
- Nature-painting!
- Clay-stamping! and more to be revealed....

**Arc Playground, Slade Road, Oakfield,
Ryde PO33 1HA**



Don't forget to wear comfy shoes or wellies & children must be accompanied by an adult.

For further info, contact: claire@vectishousing.co.uk

Find us on Facebook: **Natural Wight**
& Instagram: **wild_about_wight**



WOODLAND WALKS SCHEDULE

APRIL - JUNE 2019



SPRING WORKSHOPS AT QUARR WITH COMMUNITY GROUP Maximum 10 participants	
WORKSHOP 1	1 APRIL, 10.30 TO 12.30
WORKSHOP 2	15 APRIL, 10.30 TO 12.30

SUMMER WORKSHOPS AT QUARR	
WORKSHOP 3	20 MAY, 10.30 TO 12.30
WORKSHOP 4	10 JUNE, 10.30 TO 12.30

The final workshop may take place at a base at Healing Arts, St Marys, depending on facilities needed for working on writing/art.



Held at
Quarr Abbey

April to June 2019

If you would like to join us, please contact Lydia for further Information and to enrol.

No experience needed.

Led by writer Lydia Fulleylove with visual artist Liz Tate.

For more Information, contact Lydia:

lydia.fulleylove@gmail.com 01983 534353 healingarts@iow.nhs.uk

GREEN ARMY

Wild About Wight's nature conservation group, Green Army is busy with its 2019 programme. Our first days out this January and February have been helping manage the Wildlife Trust's Ningwood Common nature reserve for nightingales and elusive moths, and restoring the rare peatland habitat, Bohemia Bog with The Common Space. Next up, we'll be creating new paths at Quarr Abbey, a first time working for us in this fascinating spot.

In other news, we're delighted to hear that volunteering with Green Army is supporting Foyer residents secure Duke of Edinburgh awards... and we have a new Green Army leaflet too especially designed for us! So if you're aged 16-25 and are interested in helping wildlife, getting outdoors and learning new skills, pick up a copy from Vectis HQ or contact the Communities team direct on claire@vectishousing.co.uk to find out more.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY FREE EVENTS COMING UP THIS SPRING

BEACH, BUGS & BONES - THE COMMON SPACE

Sunday 28th April 11am – 1pm

The fifth annual beach and beyond celebration from The Common Space in Sandown. Explore all things wildlife, from the prehistoric to the full of life, in beautiful Sandown Bay! Join us for fossil hunting, the beach gallery, bug-hoovering, soil-sieving, willow-walking, the hydrophone, and lots, lots more!

Find us on the **Science Beach, the seafront opposite Browns Golf Course, Culver Parade, Sandown PO36 8QA.**



No need to book – just turn up! Wellies recommended.

Facebook: **Shaping The Bay** @shapingthebay & **The Common Space** @thebaytcs

Contact: claire@arc-consulting.co.uk, 07710 363446.





HULLABALOO 2019 - SHADEMAKERS UK

Saturday 12th & Sunday 13th May

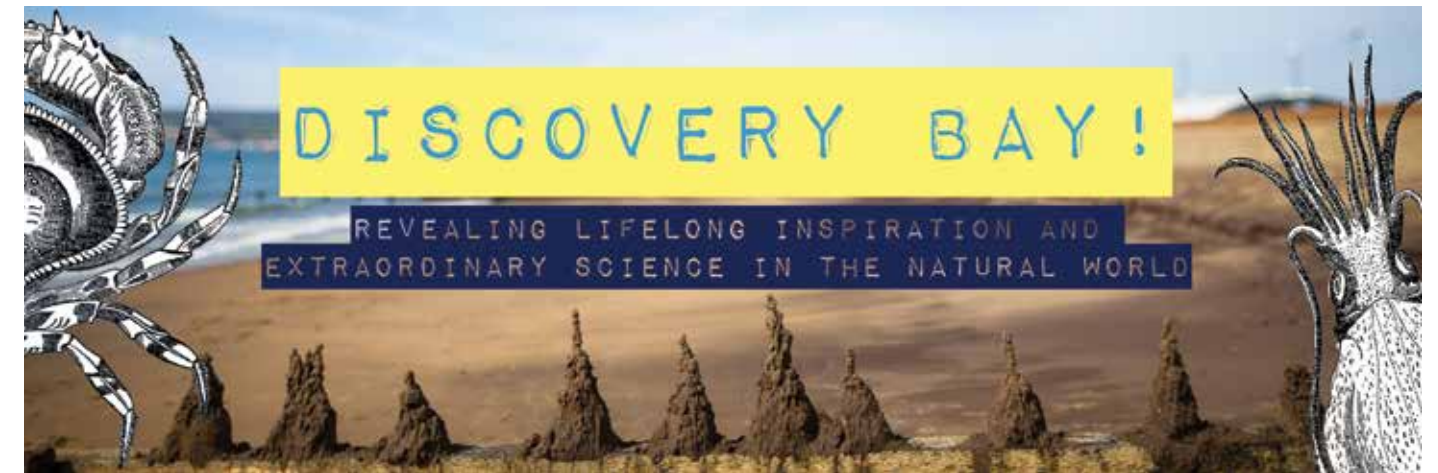
Yaverland, Sandown Bay

Hullabaloo is a FREE two-day unmissable extravaganza brought to you by Shademakers UK with support from The Common Space, featuring kite-flying, parades, art, music, making and science.



This two day event is now in its third year, focusing on the arts, community, health and the environment by combining carnival antics with a number of hands-on activities. With spectacular shows, pop-up labs and displays, Hullabaloo 2019 will be bringing awe, wonderment and more to Sandown Bay in 2019.

For more details as they unfold, visit **Hullabaloo** and follow **The Common Space** on Facebook.



DAWN CHORUS MAGIC - THE COMMON SPACE

Sunday 19th May 4.45am

This wildlife spectacular returns to get you up before sunrise! So set your alarm and come and join us for one of nature's great treats. We'll hear from a host of resident and migrant songbirds (and there's always the chance of a nightingale!).

Meeting at **Longwood Lane, outside the Southern Water Treatment Works, Sandown PO36 9PR**

Approximately 2 hour walk. Wear comfy shoes.

Facebook: **Shaping The Bay @shapingthebay & The Common Space @thebaytcs**

Contact: claire@arc-consulting.co.uk, 07710 363446.



Home Swapper

The mutual exchange solutions for tenants and landlords

Want to Move Home?

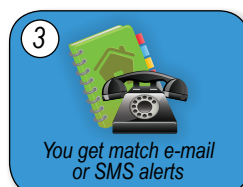
HomeSwapper.co.uk's local & national service means mutual exchange is better than ever. It's the UK's largest community of social housing tenants looking to swap homes.

• Tenants from over 1,000 landlords are registered

• 2 out of 3 matched to potential swaps in 24 hours

• hundreds of households move every month

How it works:



HOME SWAPPER

If you have an assured tenancy with Vectis you have free access to the services offered by HomeSwapper. The system is easy to use and has already helped many residents find a new home better suited to their needs.

VISIT US:

www.facebook.com/VectisHousing
www.vectishousing.co.uk

CONTACT US:

Emergency Repairs
Phone Vectis Repair Line:
01983 520353



Please call this number to report emergency repairs. Inappropriate use may result in any additional costs being re-charged to you.

Please do not use the text service for emergencies, especially over bank holidays as we will not receive them out of hours.

*Please phone these through on the maintenance line **01983 520353**.*

SORRY WE ARE CLOSED

For the following:

- **Good Friday 19th April**
- **Easter Monday 22 April**
- **May Day 6th May**
- **May Bank Holiday 27th May**

All other enquiries: **01983 525985**
enquiries@vectishousing.co.uk