



VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

DESTINATION VENTNOR

MEETING NOTES

In the widely circulated document *Destination Ventnor* the Town Council explored the possibilities for the pedestrianisation of the High Street.

Eight meetings with Residents and Businesses were held between 8 May and 18 May to discuss the future of the High Street.

Notes were taken by the Clerk at each of those meetings are reproduced unedited in this file.

In all cases, entries starting with Q are questions/comments from the audiences and those starting with R are responses, usually from Jason unless otherwise indicated.

It is important for readers of them to be aware that while every effort was made to include all the points raised, the noise levels at some times in some meetings made that difficult.

The notes also retain the grammatical, syntactical and typographical weaknesses of contemporary recording!

A copy of *Destination Ventnor* is available by clicking [this link](#).



Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6PM 8 MAY 2018

ST LAWRENCE

- 40 residents present
 - Jason opened the meeting with a welcome and explained the programme
 - Nick introduced the questionnaire as copies were distributed and anonymity assured.
 - Q: How does pedestrianisation help traders?
 - R: JM: Focus on what it would mean for St Lawrence
 - Q: Worked well in all the places I've lived in and I support it strongly. But it needs to be looked at in the round: not simply about traders, health & safety issues, dangerous, car parking cost increase.
 - R: we don't manage Central but are looking to take over the other 4 car parks. Testing the air and doing disability audit.
 - Q: traffic question about needing to go down to the Esplanade. The problem is going from East to West.
 - Q: You're only pedestrianising a quarter of the trading area and ruining the residential streets – Victoria St & Dudley Road – to benefit just a small area of the town.
 - R: NC – more work is needed on the traffic plan.
 - Q: I've lived here all my life and only go to town for doctor & pharmacist, I want the free and convenient parking.
 - R: if this isn't the answer, what is?
 - Q: Two way traffic not possible without traffic lights and that would cause queues.
 - Q: Coaches won't get through to St Lawrence – hotels etc. Reversing Hamborough Road might work.
 - R: alternative routes worked during 3-day closure before Christmas.
 - Q: Landlords would/could put their prices up and it isn't working for businesses in Southsea.
 - Q: I've been in business on the Island for years and just given up lease of premises in pedestrianised area of Ryde and moved to Union Street and
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business doubled. Money should be spent re-opening Undercliff. Disgraceful that we're talking about this when the traffic plan hasn't been sorted out.

- Q: You're doing a lot of good work. Is there a compromise such as just removing the parking.
 - Q: Good idea because waiting for people to back in spaces. Let's have some free parking. Let's look at all the options.
 - Q: We could at least remove the bottleneck opposite Boots. Stop the pigeons. Let's sort the little things first.
 - Q: How many accidents in this area – I worked in Boots for 25 years and there was no fatality or serious accident.
 - Q: Why not the Esplanade?
 - R: One way doesn't work because of Bath Road.
 - Q: Best option is to ban parking and drop the kerbs leaving clear passage.
 - Q: Good that VTC is looking at options but isn't the problem the IOWC increasing parking charges and allowing more out-of-town stores.
 - R: We're working with IOWC in a number of areas: Boniface Fields, old Industrial Park.
 - Q: I really like the idea of making the town centre a nicer place especially for visitors who as it stands don't rate the town centre as a place to spend time in.
 - Q: We have many people whose mobility is limited – especially given our demographic. We also need a convenient convenience.
 - Q: No pedestrianisation in Britany's small towns – but there is free parking.
 - Q: What about the Bus Garage
 - R: Section 215
 - Q: Is the proposal 24/7 or destricted hours
 - Q: Would the Dotto train work in Ventnor
 - R: Sold to Blackpool! We're looking at other forms of internal transport
 - Q: Consultation is good! Can't expect a perfect plan at the start of a process that will continue.
 - Q: Ventnor not built for vehicles of current size. Could we limit the size of vehicles allowed access.
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6PM 9 MAY 2018

LOWTHERVILLE

- 26 residents present
 - Jason welcomed and introduced, outlining the purpose of the event, the stage the process is at and the programme for this evening.
 - The questionnaires were completed and collected.
 - Q: Has the pedestrianisation of the Esplanade been discarded?
 - R: No
 - Q: Impact on parking spaces too much and I need the facility the town centre ones provide – I wouldn't go to town if it wasn't available.
 - R: Control of car parks explained and intention to take on the others outlined
 - Q: How does two way traffic work in Pier Street or Victoria Street
 - R: Traffic light controls
 - Q: How do you get to St Lawrence?
 - R: By not going through the town.
 - Q: What about the No. 6 service
 - R: We're talking to Southern Vectis and will continue to do so about moving the Boots bus stop to Central. Car Park
 - Q: What about disabled access?
 - R: Audit commissioned.
 - Q: Parking a major issue – would rather go to Shanklin or Lake where parking is free.
 - R: Controlled by IoWC as revenue budget contribution.
 - R: High Street shops under pressure from on-line, likely increase in applications for transfer to residential
 - Q: What about cost, you've not said anything about that.
 - R: IoWC Director of Regeneration in contact and the 'new' Regeneration Plan for the Island. We have a good relationship with him.
 - Q: Definitely a good idea if the issues can be resolved.
 - Q: Problem of emissions
 - NC: 3.5 day closure for electrical works. We have a problem of emissions
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- Q: Isn't the Esplanade more significant?
 - R: It's not gone away but there are serious problems
 - JM: list of town council services taken on when cut by IOWC
 - Q: What about the landlords?
 - R: We've written to them all to get their views.
 - JM: With UVCA we're looking at redevelopment of land behind Free School, possibly as partnership project with Isle of Wight Council
 - Boniface Fields Allotments taken us from 3 to 27, Spring Hill
 - We need to do it together.
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6PM 10 MAY 2018

BONCHURCH

- 38 residents were present
 - Jason welcomed everyone, outlined the programme for the evening and explained that the traffic diagram was a schematic and not a final solution.
 - Nick introduced the survey and answered questions about its completion.
 - Q: Can you explain the map please as the double arrows are confusing
 - R: NC explained that was the current status of discussions with IR and loWC
 - Q: I'm an environmental consultant and we can't agree until we have an exact plan to assess.
 - R: JM responded that discussions were continuing.
 - Q: I'm aware of places where its killed the businesses
 - R: Its been talked about before and the High Street is suffering in the national pattern under the pressure of on-line shopping and out-of-town stores.
 - Q: The town is suffering from the closure of Undercliff and doesn't have enough parking.
 - R; We've taken over 4 car parks and plan to take on the other 4 as we recognise the importance of parking.
 - Q: The removal of on-street parking would be damaging and why can't we have free parking like Godshell.
 - R: That's why we want to take over the other parks and manage them in a way that provides some free parking times.
 - Q: Repeat of concern about the loss of on street parking. And reply cards should not have been open for others to see. Lots of people didn't get copies of Destination Ventnor.
 - Q: What about my taxis
 - R: Discussions are ongoing and will include taxi and deliveries.
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- Q: Why bother with the town when the greatest attraction Ventnor has is the Esplanade where apart from anything else the Gaiety issue needs resolving.
 - R: VTC is continuing to look at the Esplanade but problems with Bath Road and the need to provide turning Ventnors.
 - Q: Why was Ventnor labelled dirty and dangerous. Why has the destruction of Spring Hill Garden been allowed and the pigeons not sorted out.
 - R: LG explained the development of the Garden and Jason referred to the future development of the 31 Bus.
 - Q: Where is the evidence of danger and poor air quality and nitrous oxide should be nitrous dioxide.
 - Q: I'm not persuaded by this scheme but a town council looking at improving the town is to be congratulated. There are some areas on the mainland where small scale towns introducing pedestrianisation hasn't worked. We've seen areas where shared space works well.
 - Q: When I first heard about the possibility I welcomed it because it would provide a pleasanter space to be in. It's worked well in Cowes.
 - Q: those who are upset by the proposal come to the meetings and those that would welcome it don't. I'm one of those: if it can be made workable I would welcome it.
 - Q: You should have the answers first before you have meetings like this.
 - Q: What can you do about landlords and the rents they charge.
 - R: We have contacted all the landlords to ask for their views.
 - Q: Concerns about both Madeira Road traffic lights and the Bus Garage
 - R: We've got the IOWC to issue a section 215 notice on the Bus Garage You can come to VTC meetings or watch them live.
 - Q: Why can't we have a free half hour parking as in other towns.
 - R: Isle of Wight Council sets the charges
 - Q: Loading Bays will still have to remain. Have we consulted with Wroxall and Whitwell?
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- *Q: Although I've negative about this scheme I want to congratulate the Town Council on the work they're doing.*
 - *Q: I feel I've wasted an hour as this is not a proper consultation document.*
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6PM 11 MAY 2018

VENTNOR E&W

- Over 100 residents were present
 - Jason welcomed everyone, outlined the programme for the evening and explained that the traffic in Destination Ventnor had been progressed since publication.
 - Jason introduced the survey and the forms were distributed with pens supplied where needed.
 - Q: Proposals interesting but Dudley Road is narrow and coaches/lorries can't turn at the end of it.
 - R: We've noted the concerns about the traffic plan and there will be more decisions with Highways on the details.
 - Q: These are not 'details' it is central when it closes the main traffic route through the town. These changes would cause traffic chaos.
 - R: I didn't mean it didn't matter and we take the speaker's point. Any final judgement will rest with the Highways authority. We want to find out whether the town would welcome it or not before we commit more resources to taking it any further.
 - Q: Leave our town centre alone!
 - Q: A query about the traffic plan and the bottom of Marlborough Road.
 - Q: There will be problems for buses, lorries and taxis.
 - R: There would have to be access for residents and businesses. The real question here is about how we use that space more creatively. What would you like to see in that area.
 - Q: Leave it alone!
 - R: We have made good use of the 4 car parks we've taken over and we're looking to take over the other 4.
 - Q: Are you all cheesed off. I am because its a farce. People won't go there if can't park.
 - Q: I've lived in the town for 15 years and I find the High Street an unpleasant place.
 - R: This is about how people feel when they are in that space.
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- Q: The Island is a very special place and pedestrianisation would ruin Ventnor and remove one of the reasons people come to the Island.
 - Q: We shouldn't plan for the benefit of visitors and this town is too small for pedestrianisation.
 - Q: Are you going to test the feeling in the surrounding villages.
 - R: We may well do that as the same question was asked last night.
 - Q: If you can't drive through the town you won't stop in it.
 - R: We can't just stand still given the changes in shopping habits. We've taken on lots of services that have been cut by the Isle of Wight Councillor. The toilets aren't ideal but we're looking to provide a new central facility.
 - Q: The loss of the Market Street toilet is a serious problem for disabled people and visitors.
 - R: We're aware of that and have commissioned a disability access toilet.
 - Q: Can I congratulate VTC for promoting this discussion but I am opposed Traders should wash their shop fronts.
 - Q: We seriously need inward investment.
 - Q: Free flowing traffic creates less pollution and the proposed changes would produce blockages in many places with stationary traffic. It would also increase the time for emergency vehicles to access the town's centre. The current high street parking allows 200 customers a day to shop easily.
 - Q: This is clearly unpopular so can I have the Mayor's assurance that if this borne out elsewhere the proposal will be dropped?
 - R: I've always said that if the town doesn't want it we will move on.
 - Q: How much is it going to cost. Grove Road car park used to be full of coaches, now they all drive through.
 - R: Somewhere around half a million and it might be possible to re-allocate the funding IR are due to use for upgrading the inner core and accessing development funding.
 - Q: Would be excellent if the town was in the South of France but not in our climate. Why don't we do the simple things like removing some of the parking spaces?
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- R: We have other development plans for the town – already made progress with Boniface Fields and work going on with Upper Ventnor Land and Ventnor Central.
 - Q: We have wonderful assets such as the Park, but the road to it is dreadful.
 - R: We run the 31 Bus but it's a limited service and we're looking at taking it in-house and shifting to electrical vehicles.
 - R: TM: Job of Town Council to think strategically over the longer term, eg Salisbury Gardens.
 - Q: Thank the Town Council for arranging these meetings and the most important outcome is the suggestions that have been made for making the town a better place to be.
 - Q What about the Esplanade?
 - R: That needs more work before proposals are possible.
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6.30PM 15 MAY 2018

RETAILERS

- 43 retailers were present
 - Jason welcomed everyone, outlined the programme for the evening and invited questions or comments.
 - Q: Thanks you for organising this. I went to the residents meeting and we were told the traffic plan on Destination Ventnor was out of date so why is there not a new one.
 - R: The traffic plan will be signed off by the IOWC in due course
 - Q: We're going to lose a lot more than the 12 parking spaces in the High Street.
 - R: The consultation will take up to a year and in that we're in discussions with the IOWC re the other 4 car parks
 - Q: You'll just be moving traffic elsewhere moving the fumes with it.
 - R: We're monitoring traffic quality with Environmental Health.
 - Q: The current traffic flow is a roundabout and you can't put two way traffic on a roundabout and if you proceed with this the town won't work.
 - R: We said we would give everyone the chance to talk and that's what we're doing.
 - Q: Is the pedestrianisation of the Esplanade on the table
 - R: Yes, but later.
 - Q: I'm a member of a Charity and I will sue you if you proceed as you have a duty of care.
 - R: We do and we know that and we've commissioned a disability audit.
 - Q: How are you as a town council going to keep going if you've caused so much damage to the town.
 - R: The VTC delivers a range of important services.
 - Q: The 'dirty' and 'dangerous' areas need addressing. You need to talk to IIsand Roads and get the landlords the keep their buildings in good order.
 - Q: We responded to the Alexandra House collapse by putting out tables in Pier Street and the atmosphere changed completely as people felt safe
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and comfortable and stayed longer: there are many successful pedestrianised areas in the country and I want to see it done properly here.

- Q: the bottom of Tulse Hill is a problem with no right turn and if that is changed the road will become a rat run.
 - Q: You will have to let some traffic through the High Street
 - R: The High Street is under threat from on-line shopping so we need an innovative response.
 - Q: Why does your brochure show tables and chairs when you can't have them.
 - Q: Can't see the pedestrianisation of such a short area as dealing with the pollution problem. Why don't we just have a 20mph speed limit and resolve the problem of the Boots corner by removing the motor cycle parking. And pigeons are a problem and will remain so.
 - R: We need to find positive responses and we're open to hearing them now.
 - Q: Why did you put the Precept up this year.
 - R: To keep the youth service running; Tony Mcarthy added some of the detail.
 - Q: Sad that Café 34 has closed down.
 - Q: Hursts will leave up to 40 jobs if this scheme goes ahead.
 - Q: Why don't you lower the car park charges?
 - R: The lowWC controls the main car parks.
 - Q: The number one priority for the Town Council should be to restore the Undercliff.
 - R: We wrote to the Minister to ask for the needed funding and she refused.
 - Q: I'm wondering if it's worthwhile my being on the High Street given pressures of On-line shopping and now you're proposing to threaten my deliveries and make parking more difficult or expensive.
 - Q: Making Pier Street two-way would remove another 7 parking spaces and make deliveries more difficult.
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- Q: If pedestrianised I've been told by Valuation office that if you don't have a road going past your premises you're not eligible for non-domestic rates.
 - Q: the sea front is Ventnor's greatest attraction so why are you ignoring that.
 - Q: Why are you wasting everybody's time with something that is neither possible nor wanted.
 - Q: Not many owner occupiers live in the High Street. Why are you making everyone in Dudley Road suffer when they are all owner occupiers and pay the highest rates.
 - Q: Can you explain the process from here.
 - Q: One of the councillors delivering leaflets was very rude when told by a resident that they hadn't received a copy of the leaflet.
Q: A lot of older people just come to Boots and the Post Office and can't be expected to walk the greater distance to the car park or a relocated bus stop.
 - Q: There are lots of ways of going forward without touching the High Street which works well as it is.
 - Q: Make car parks free for an hour as a positive contribution.
 - Q: Why can't we restore half day free parking in Central?
 - R: We got the four we now operate on a lease basis have not increased charges but we do need to pay the rent.
 - Q: Some of the empty properties in the town could be used for additional car parking.
 - Q: Madeira Road traffic lights need sorting.
 - Q: Can we ask for an indication of views by asking people to put their hands up?
 - R: We can!
 - Q: The scheme is not mandatory to be imposed as the Town Council is looking at the wider context of regeneration and this is one possibility within that.
 - *NB: The notes of the last section of the meeting are not complete as a consequence of people shouting over each other and the heightened noise level. [DB]
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

6.30PM 17 MAY 2018

SERVICES

Only three people attended this meeting and a relaxed discussion of the future of the town took place without specific questions on responses.



Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

8.30AM 16 MAY 2018

ESPLANADE

- There were 16 business people present
 - Jason introduced the discussion and invited questions and comments
 - Q: Larry opened up saying that the plans would wreck the town. We all care about the town and will welcome enhancements. Quoted CP article.
 - R: That was about the town central area only and the CP didn't ask us for a comment.
 - Q: You've had a letter from lawyers. Hope to see the end of this after tomorrow as we don't have time for this.
 - Q: Catalogue of lies throughout from the visual illustration onwards, The publication is an excellent marketing publication and very dangerous to the town because of it.
 - Q: Why haven't you countered the publicity by responding to it.
 - Q: Why didn't you ask us before talking about pedestrianisation.
 - R: If not pedestrianisation, then what? Some traders want to talk with us about what improvements can be made.
 - Q: Measures to slow traffic down would be welcome including the possibility of pedestrian crossings.
 - Q: We'd all like to move forward with this once pedestrianisation is no longer on the table.
 - R: One of the purposes of this initiative was to settle the issue.
 - Q: You should recognise that the businesses have now come together and that's a strength you should look to build on.
 - Q: Pedestrianisation doesn't bring back the banks.
 - R: We need to collate all the material we've collected.
 - We don't want pedestrianisation on the Esplanade.
 - Q: What is the meeting tomorrow for given that we're all here. Why have you split the businesses into different groups.
 - R: The reason was to hear the specific concerns/interests of the different providers.
 - Q: Where would the money come from.
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- R: *Public sector funding*
 - Q: *I will miss you with your chain around your neck!*
 - R: *I'll still be here*
 - Q: *Can the restoration of the Undercliff be included in the regeneration scheme.*
 - R: *Dave Stewart is taking that on.*
 - Q: *Can we stop putting things on glossy paper?*
 - Q: *How many people here are members of the VBA?*
 - R; *None. If you want one voice then joining would be sensible.*
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Ventnor Town Council

CONSULTATION MEETING

5PM 18 MAY 2018

HOSPITALITY

- There were 12 providers present
 - Jason welcomed people to the meeting and invited questions and comments.
 - Q: Most people didn't know there was a 'voting' card in the back so is there going to be a formal vote at some stage.
 - R: We are first going to assess the information received through this stage of the consultation process.
 - Q: Every journey seems to be longer so will there be estimates of the environmental impact of moving the traffic elsewhere.
 - R: There are already some arrangements in place for measuring the level of various gases in the atmosphere.
 - Q: There will be a lot of people drinking in the street if this goes ahead.
 - Q: Why do you want to do this, where has this come from.
 - R: Arisen through a series of meetings oveeerrr recent years.
 - Q: Instead of focusing on the detail of traffic perhaps we should ask why people come to Ventnor rather than other places on the Island and so concentrate on improving the environment gradually. And traffic may well follow on from that. Retail is clearly fading anyway, nationally as well as localy.
 - Q: We need good shops – and we haven't got them – and we need some free car parking.
 - R: We have four car parks already and we're looking to take on the others so we have the freedom to decide on the provision of free time.
 - R: We're aware of the need to bring other people into the town as for example with Salisbury Gardens.
 - Q: What we need most of all is increased footfall in the town.
 - Q: I haven't spoken to anyone in the High Street who thinks it's a good idea so are you really interested in changing the mix of the shops.
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- R: No, we're looking for new thinking and we are talking about improvements that can be made whether pedestrianisation happens or not.
 - Q: This sounds to me like another Harbour, promising regeneration but delivering the opposite.
 - Q: Have you had discussions with Southern Vectis about where there buses go.
 - R: NC: Yes we have. Background discussions outlined. SV reactions including their concerns about the No 6.
 - Q: Danger of people leaving the Winter Gardens late at night having to move through the whole High Street to get to the relocated Bus Stop at Central Car Park.
 - R: NC: Would you support a dropping of the pavements
 - Q: Haven't people noticed the dirt and the overflowing rubbish?
 - R: The Town Council would like to take street cleaning back in house.
 - Q: Landlords should be made to tidy up empty shops.
 - Q: Is anything being done about the bus garage?
 - Q: The loWC has agreed to issue a Section 215 Notice on the Landlord.
 - Q: Various comments about the need to improve the town including CCTV.
 - R: We've had to put a CCTV system into Boniface Fields that will give us some ideas about a wider installation.
 - Q: Could more be done to help young people start their own businesses?
 - R: We're looking at developing units in the area behind the new Free School.
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