

1. Vision Statement

“Northwood Parish: The Green Gateway to Cowes — a resilient, connected, and thriving community that supports the Island’s marine economy, celebrates its heritage, and nurtures sustainable growth for future generations.”

2. Strategic Fit

This prospectus is designed to **sit inside and complement:**

- **Isle of Wight Council’s Economic Strategy (2025–2035)** – delivering local contributions to Island-wide priorities: sustainable growth, skills, digital connectivity, tourism, and the marine economy.
 - **Cowes & Northwood Place Plan** – embedding parish-level projects into the wider Cowes–Medina Valley regeneration framework.
 - **Cowes Planning & Harbour Strategy** – supporting the marine cluster, port infrastructure, and shoreline resilience.
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3. Local Economic Context

- **Population:** ~2,400 residents.
 - **Assets:** 13 listed buildings, ancient woodland, shoreline access, proximity to Cowes Harbour.
 - **Strengths:** Skilled workforce, strong community identity, green and heritage assets.
 - **Challenges:** Limited commercial land, ageing population, housing affordability, reliance on commuting.
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4. Strategic Themes & Contributions

Isle of Wight Council Theme	Northwood Parish Contribution
Marine & Maritime Economy	Provide workforce, housing, and supply-chain support for Cowes Harbour and Medina Valley industries.
Tourism & Place-making	Develop eco-heritage trails, parish-led events, and woodland-based cultural tourism.
Skills & Employment	Partner with Cowes schools/colleges for apprenticeships in marine, construction, and green skills.
Digital & Innovation	Advocate for full-fibre rollout; support home-based enterprises and digital freelancers.
Sustainable Growth	Encourage farm diversification, renewable energy, and eco-hospitality while protecting rural character.

5. Priority Projects

1. Community Enterprise Hub

- Flexible co-working, training, and incubation space.
- Supports micro-businesses, digital workers, and apprenticeships.

2. Green Mobility Links

- Parish-level walking/cycling routes connecting to Cowes transport hubs.
- Promotes sustainable commuting and tourism.

3. Heritage & Woodland Economy

- Eco-tourism trails linking listed buildings, woodlands, and shoreline.
- Educational and cultural events celebrating parish identity.

4. Housing & Workforce Balance

- Advocate for affordable housing aligned with Island Planning Strategy.
- Ensure young families and key workers can remain in the parish.

5. Digital Parish Initiative

- Pilot “smart parish” tools: community Wi-Fi, digital noticeboards, online services.
- Strengthens connectivity and civic participation.

6. Governance & Delivery

- **Lead Partners:** Northwood Parish Council, Cowes Town Council, Isle of Wight Council Regeneration Team.
- **Delivery Partners:** Cowes Harbour Commission, local businesses, schools, and community groups.
- **Funding Sources:** UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Solent LEP, council regeneration funds, parish precept, community investment.
- **Monitoring:** Annual review aligned with Isle of Wight Council’s monitoring framework; transparent reporting to residents.

7. Narrative & Identity

Northwood Parish is positioned as:

- **The Green Gateway to Cowes** – blending woodland, heritage, and shoreline with innovation.
 - **A Supportive Hinterland** – providing workforce, housing, and community infrastructure for Cowes’ marine economy.
 - **A Resilient Parish** – contributing to Island-wide sustainability, wellbeing, and inclusive growth.
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