



Press Release: 20 October 2021

Crossing the Bar full of colour and carnival spirit!

(Crossing the Bar success: 15th, 16th, 17th October 2021)

The New Carnival Company was delighted with its first Crossing the Bar three-day event last weekend. Walking, art Installations, performance and community participation all came together under blue skies in a joyous celebration of the Island's rich and diverse coastal landscapes.

The event was the first of a 3-year programme leading to 2023, designated 'Year of the Coast' and introducing the England Coast Path, our new National Trail. When completed, the Trail, at just under 3000 miles, will form the longest single waymarked foot path anywhere in the world.

New Carnival Company (NCC) artists and volunteers led 13 walks around selected coastal locations, as part of the IW Walking Festival. The walks linked specially commissioned creative interventions with other points of interest in the natural or built environment. 276 people joined the walks which ranged from 2miles to 8.5miles in length. The walks took place around Wootton, Bembridge, Niton, Brighstone, Totland and along the Medina Estuary.

In the run up to the event, children in six local schools* worked with NCC artists to design and make about 200 handheld flags for the project – all inspired by the nature and heritage around them. Over 75 performers from Isle of Wight College, Samphire Dance group, TheatreTrain, FaT Samba and Wootton Primary School created site-specific entertainments. 15 adult volunteers made decorations and creative installations for along the way.

Frankie Goldspink, Creative Director of The New Carnival Company said:

'It's been great fun, but ultimately we want to make sure that the Isle of Wight is well placed on the national radar for Year of the Coast Festival 2023. We already enjoy special status as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and over half of the Island's coastline lies within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including two stretches of Heritage Coastline. We have an awful lot to shout about!'

The European Union Interreg Project - UNESCO Sites across the Channel, which IW AONB is a partner, is among the event supporters, as are the IW Ramblers and Visit Isle of Wight. Frankie added:

'It's been a great partnership; and we are grateful to the support from the European Union Interreg Programme to help make this event possible and we are looking forward to building on this engaging event over the next two years. Our goal for 2023 is to animate the whole coastline of the Island and to provide walking experiences ranging from 1mile to 85 miles! (the latter maybe not all in one day!). Please do get in touch if you would like to get involved'.

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Editorial Notes:

Crossing the Bar

is inspired by Tennyson's famous poem of the same name, written whilst travelling across the Solent to his home in Freshwater. Tennyson shared a passion for walking, and for the sea and was of course an extraordinarily creative man. All three of these themes lie at the heart of our own project.

The Bar in question refers to a natural sandbank, crossed at the entrance to a harbour. He used this an allegory for the fine line between life and death. Tennyson was over 80 when he wrote it. The poem contemplates his future, life after.

The New Carnival Company has used this theme to start conversations about the future of our world as we emerge from the pandemic, and by exploring the changing relationship with our environment in the face of climate change.

Participating Schools

*Flag making workshops took place at

St Saviours Primary School, Brighstone Primary School, Barton Primary School, Wootton Primary School, Niton Primary School and Bembridge Primary School.

About IW AONB

The AONB was designated in 1963 and covers 189 square kilometres, about half of the island, mostly near the south-west and north-west coasts but also including downland in the

east. It also covers about half the coastline, including both the Hamstead and Tennyson Heritage Coast areas.

in 2019 the Island became a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Add 500 miles of well-maintained and signposted footpaths make it the perfect destination for walkers

About IW Interreg PROJECT - UNESCO Sites across the Channel

The Interreg France (Channel) England Programme was set up to promote the economic development of the south of the United Kingdom and the northwest of France by funding innovative projects of sustainable and economic interest. It focuses on a series of specific objectives, including supporting innovation, improving the attractiveness of the FCE zone and developing low-carbon technologies.

UNESCO SITES ACROSS THE CHANNEL Total budget €1.211.240,00 European Union contribution (69%) €835.755,59

For full project information, please see the Infography attached.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund

For more general information on the National Trail, and the Ramblers - their role in campaigning for the new the England Coast Path see

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/england-coast-path.aspx>

For detail of the proposed stages of the IW stretch of the England coastal path see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-on-the-isle-of-wight-comment-on-proposals>

ENDS

SELECTED IMAGES



Chris Slann CEO of the New Carnival Company leading a short walk up Headon Warren



Walkers converging at St Catherine's Point, Niton



Children with hand-made flags at the Dragon Tree, Bighton



FaT Samba, leading walkers back to the Pier at Totland