



MEETING NOTES OF THE ARMADA 1588 HERITAGE TRAIL WORKING GROUP

SALISBURY GARDENS

19TH FEBRUARY 2025 9AM

Present:

Steve Cooper, Steph Toogood, David Baldwin, Morgan Williams, Catherine Hammond, Will Harvey (South Wight Chronicle)

1. No declarations of interest
2. Terms of Reference were agreed
3. Signs cost and design
 - Signpost Express – ball park figure A1 = £100
 - £500 total – David Baldwin offered to cover this cost
 - QR code will link to a larger archive of information.
 - 9xA4 will fit in 1xA1 board
 - Steph asked will 9xA4 pages of information be too much? However, Steve says he likes a lot of information as a history buff.
 - Steph to get a quote for larger board A0.
 - Will Harvey offered to help design the boards with David Baldwin.
 - Will has expertise from working on other trail signage such as the William Blake Trail in Bognor Regis.
 - Will and his partner Abby will work with David to design the boards with suitable typography, colours and layout to communicate the information to the best effect. “To make a journey across the page”.
 - Will offers to work on the designs next week and work alongside David.
 - Signage needs to be completed by the end of March before we are in purdah.
4. Maps/Routes and positioning of boards
 - Steve Cooper has used an IT expert to ‘clear up’ the routes.
 - Flat route – start at Monks Bay, along the seafront to St Lawrence Church.
 - Low level walk signs to be placed at each end of the walk and one on Ventnor seafront.
 - Bonchurch Norman Church wall – ask Archdeacon if this is a possible site for board.
 - St Lawrence board possible site: Binnel Bay/Woody Bay/Coastguard Cottages. Is this land owned by Twinings? Will to approach Sam Twining.
 - Morgan to investigate land ownership for all possible sites.
 - Higher level walk – sign at the trig point at Radar Station, Ventnor Downs – to ask National Trust for permission.
 - First Aid Hut and Spyglass were suggested for seafront board.
 - Steph suggested the seating area at La Falaise car park where there are other historical boards.
 - Higher route to have the same start and finish as the lower route and walk up to the top of the Downs. Here you can see towards the Needles where the Armada was spotted sailing to the island.

- David states that people parking at the Radar Station will be able to spot the board without being on the actual walk. Another way of people finding out about the Trail.
- Will suggested that it would be good to have small signs with pictures/logos along the walk to show they are on the correct route.
- Will/Steph(?) to obtain quotes for extra signs.
- It was discussed whether we could put signs on private land because Island Roads will charge a great deal. To be investigated further.

5. Flags

- Permission needed for the King of Spain to use his coat of arms.
- Steve and Katherine will write the letter to the King.
- David suggested to send a copy of his book and the letter in a Diplomatic bag to ensure it reaches the King directly.
- Flag poles needed and permission will be investigated by Morgan.
- Temporary flag poles might be required at the churches.
- Flag to be sited on the Seafront and/or at VTC Salisbury Gardens.
- Ask Blakes and/or Spyglass if they would like to fly a flag.
- Give one flag to the King of Spain.
- Give one flag to John Nicholson in Cowes.
- Each 6' x 4' flag will cost £80.
- Total of 6 large flags – David has offered to cover the cost of these.
- Suggestion that businesses could have smaller flags in shops and eateries. Possible sponsorship opportunity for local businesses?
- Investigate sponsorship with Signpost Express for extra flags.
- Suggestion of producing small flags for vehicles.

6. Bells

- Bells to be rung at the churches and on the seafront as the ship sails past.
- Steph is in contact with Kieran Downer to use his portable bell for the seafront.
- Ask PCCs for people to ring their church bells.

7. Beacons

- High Hat/Reservoir area/Niton Radio Site to be investigated

8. Flares and Gun Salutes

- Flare and gun salute will announce the arrival of the ship.
- Flares to be set off at Nansen Hill, Trig Point and one other?
- Binnel Bay/St Lawrence for the final gun salute.
- Portable Gun Saluting machinery needed – ask Royal Yacht Squadron.
- David to arrange gun salute at Cowes.
- Need to contact Civil Aviation Authority re flares and salutes.
- <https://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Airspace/Event-and-obstacle-notification/Other-notifications/Explosives/>
- Will Nixon to be asked to set off flares as his family lived in Niton at the time of the Armada and were involved in maintaining the beacon.
- However, Will Nixon might be needed as the Town Crier that day, so another person may need to set off flares.

9. Education

- David will be producing an exhibition on board the ship about the Armada and Ventnor.
- John Nicholson has contacted schools in Cowes with educational opportunities around the Covert Armada, Recalde 1575.
- Catherine will contact John to discuss his plans and see if we can use them for Ventnor. Catherine to liaise with all local schools including St Francis, Island Free School, Wroxall, St Catherine's, Niton Primary and Home-schooling groups.

10. Filming

- Morgan to carry out drone filming at the event.
- Morgan to check new drone and ensure there are 2 charged batteries for the day.
- Steve to contact IOW College photography department to ask for students to film at different points along the trail.
- Catherine to contact The Island Free School photography teacher and Island Innovation Sixth Form photography department.

11. Sporting and other local themed events

- Ventnor Bowling Club are organising an event - match against Cowes– the Recalde Cup (?) Will Spanish dress be worn?
- Working group to contact other local sports clubs and community groups for their ideas/plans.

12. Other ships

- Steph to contact Ventnor Bay Charters
- David to contact the Waverley (The Waverley sailings for the South Coast & Isle of Wight are now confirmed for September)

The group thanked David Baldwin for his very generous monetary contribution, hard work and immense knowledge in making this Armada Heritage Trail a success for the future and a valuable asset for Ventnor and the island.

Date of next meeting: 5th March 9am at Salisbury Gardens