Isle of Wight Council brand guidelines

Version 1

September 2023

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About this guide

Today it is generally accepted that all organisations need to present themselves in a consistent and professional manner, especially those that are publicly funded. The overall aim of this guide is to give clear guidance about how the council portrays itself visually.

The guide describes the brand of the Isle of Wight Council and how it should be applied – both to council products and partner organisations.

There may be some instances where the guidelines do not adequately cover a particular need. But this is a living document, and will be updated and amended as required.

If you need advice about the corporate identity or any other visual communications issues, please contact Steve Collins on 6249, or email Steven.Collins@iow.gov.uk. For general communications issues please call 6253.

We acknowledge the assistance of other sections of the council who have contributed to this guide.

The Isle of Wight Council brand

There is often confusion in understanding the difference between an organisation's visual identity and its brand.

The identity, usually a logo or strapline, is the visual expression, of the organisation in question. It is a symbol of the organisation's commitment to its customers. Visual identity is only one element that helps make up the brand of an organisation. Other elements include the understanding, ideas and experiences that inform what the public thinks about the services it provides. Any organisation can produce its own logo, but creating and maintaining a brand is a much more complicated process.

The visual identity of an organisation is crucial – many will defend their identities even to the extent of taking legal action against improper use. Research by MORI revealed that councils with low awareness ratings from the public do not apply their corporate identity consistently, with key services sometimes not being badged as council services at all.

The corporate identity is pivotal in our efforts to increase and enhance public awareness of the services we provide and to help instil a positive view of the council brand. This guide sets out how the identity should be deployed in many different situations covering printed communications, signage and vehicle livery. An underlying principle is that the guidelines will reinforce and protect the council's identity, avoiding a proliferation of other logos and symbols which are on the whole, meaningless and which simply confuse the public.
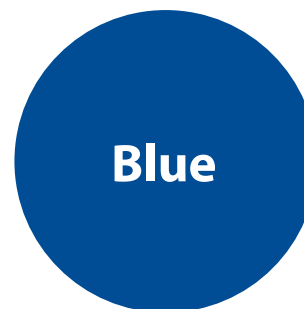
The council logo

Colours

The main logo uses a combination of blue and gold. When on a white or pale background this is the version you should use. This should also be the preferred version when used on official documents.

When presented on a coloured background, the black or white variations should be used.

The logo should always have at least a 3:1 contrast ratio against the colour it is presented on.

In some situations it may be appropriate to use a specific colour version. However permission should be sought from the council's communications and engagement team first.
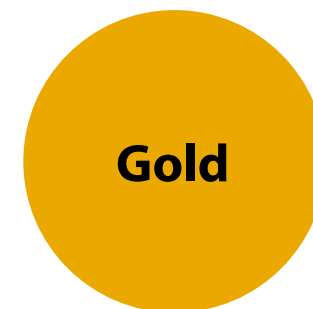
Isle of Wight Council

Isle of Wight Council

Isle of Wight Council

Blue

Gold

Pantone 2728

CMYK
C=99 M=72 Y=9 K=0

RGB
R=0 G=77 B=149

HEX
#004D95

Pantone 124

CMYK
C=6 M=30 Y=96 K=0

RGB
R=240 G=182 B=0

HEX
#F0B600

Size and positioning

The council logo has a minimum height of 12mm for print or 80 pixels for digital.

It should also be given clear space round the edge of the logo where no other elements should be placed. This can be calculated by using the capital 'I' of **Isle** in the logo as shown below.

When the Isle of Wight Council logo is shown alongside those of other organisations, it must have at least equal visual prominence.

If the council is the major sponsor of an event, the size and positioning of the logo should be dominant to reflect this.

12mm (print)
80 pixels (digital)

Applying the logo

The council logo should be placed in either one of the four corners of a document. Its size should ensure that it is clearly visible, and not lost among other elements.

If there are other logos on the page, then it should be at least the same size.
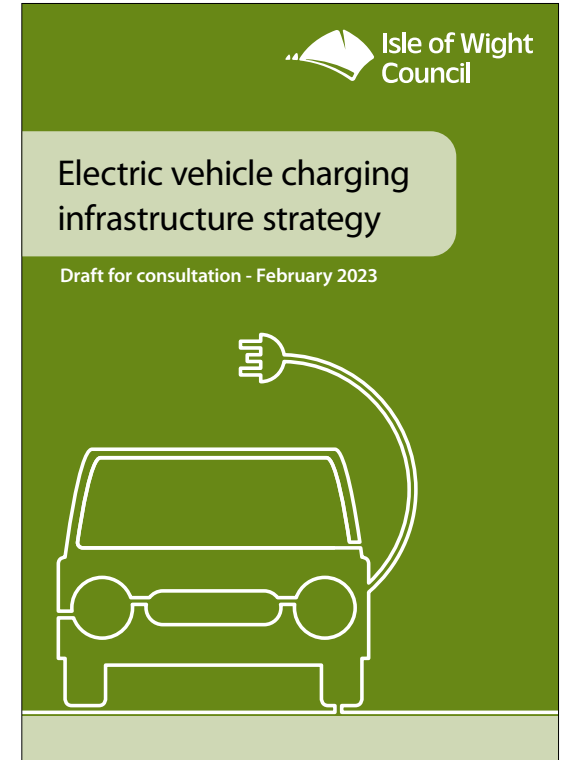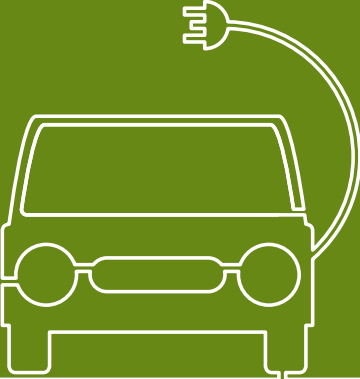
The Isle of Wight Crest

For civic and official events, the council's identity may be replaced by the Isle of Wight Crest, however this is not an alternative to the council logo and should not be used as such.

Permission must be sought from the publications team for any use of the crest other than for civic-related purposes.
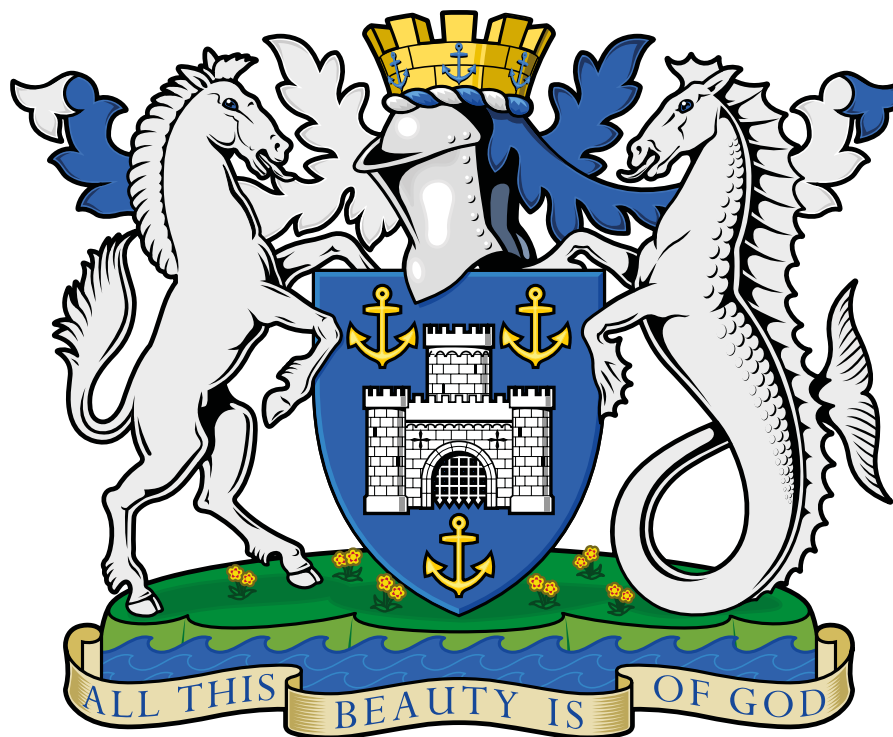
Fonts

Type is an important part of the council's corporate identity. Many PCs are supplied with an abundance of fonts ranging from the strictly utilitarian to highly decorative.

While it may be tempting to use a highly decorative or flowing font, it is important that the font you choose is good for accessibility. As such we recommend using Arial for council documents.

Communications that form part of an information, publicity or advertising campaign, and that are designed professionally, should use Myriad Pro.

These typefaces have been chosen because of good legibility and distinctiveness, as well as containing a wide range of weights.

Graphic designers who are commissioned by the council should have these fonts installed on their own computers. On no account should fonts be copied. This is strictly forbidden unless the license expressly permits it.

Myriad Pro

Light	AaBbCc123
Regular	AaBbCc123
Semibold	**AaBbCc123**
Bold	**AaBbCc123**
Black	**AaBbCc123**

Arial

Regular	AaBbCc123
Bold	**AaBbCc123**

Accessibility

Publications are all about communicating, and the Isle of Wight Council strives to ensure that anything it presents to a wider audience is as easy to read as possible. This section will provide tips to ensure that the council's publications are accessible for all.

This is not an exhaustive list, if you have any quastions about accessibility, please contact the comms and engagement team.

Fonts

The council's corporate font family of Myriad Pro and Arial were chosen because they conform to the RNIB's guidelines for legibility. We recommend using these fonts at no smaller than 12pt for body text, although if you are communicating with a group who are known to have visual impairments, consider using 14pt or even 18pt for added clarity.

If you wish to use another font, consider how the shape of the letters work together – If the letter-forms are overly complicated or similar to each other it becomes difficult for someone with a visual impairment to distinguish characters. A good example is Comic Sans (often a popular typeface for use in publications for young children, as it closely mirrors a 'blackboard' style of writing), where the 'a' and 'o' have a very similar shape which can cause confusion. Compare these letters to the same characters in Myriad Pro (the font used in this document):

Comic Sans: a o

Myriad Pro: a o

In Comic Sans these letters are almost identical, whereas Myriad Pro has a distinctive shape for each character which people with visual impairments find easier to read.

Be aware that font size is not standard, and type may be quite noticeably different between fonts (see the example below) – if you are using a small-sized font, you may want to consider increasing the point size to compensate.

Faceplate Sans 12pt   Myriad Pro 12pt

Always make sure headings that are the same level are consistently the same size, font and colour – for example, this document uses the following structure:

- ## Section headings
- **Sub headings**
- Paragraph styles

Inconsistent heading styles in a document can be confusing when trying to navigate a document document.

Justification

Often it can be quite tempting to force-justify text within a document. However because this puts varying amounts of space between the words, it causes problems for people with visual impairments who struggle to read with the same spacing between words. For this reason you should always left-justify your text.

Centre and right-justification should be used sparingly as it is difficult for visually impaired people to follow the line-breaks.

Capitals

Blocks of capitals should be restricted to short sentences or headings, as the lack of change in height make legibility difficult. Be aware that all-caps can be regarded as 'angry' affecting the tone of voice. Some people use capitals to spot sentence breaks as full-stops are harder to see, and a lot of capitalised words in a large paragraph will make it difficult to read.

Emphasis

CAPITALS, *italics* or underlined text can be difficult to read if you have poor eyesight. If you need to emphasise text, then we would recommend using a **different weight** (for example, bold in place of regular) to make important passages stand out.

Hyphenation

Hyphenation should be avoided, as splitting words across two lines can cause difficulties for some people as they struggle to read the break in flow.

Document structure

When constucting a report or document, it is important that you apply a page structure to your document. Most council documents templates are available in Word on request, these have style sheets that you can use to quickly apply both type styles and structures correctly.

An accessibile document should use the following structure tags:

Structure tag	Function
P	Paragraphs
H1	Document title
H2	Section heading
H3	Subheading
H4, H5, H6 etc.	Subsequent subheadings

Applying this function will allow people who use screen readers to navigate through the document. You should also include a contents page – Microsoft Word is able to automatically generate one by automatically detecting the paragraph structure. (you should not create one manually). You can find the controls in the **References** tab.

Images

All images in your document should be correctly formatted and have alt tags applied to them.

Images should be inserted inline, not with text wrapping. To check, click on the image and then select the icon – ⌐∩ – that appears on the top left.

All images should include 'alt text' to explain the image to those who have visual impairment to enrich their reading experience. However it is not necessary to add a description to every image in a document, only those that directly relate to the text should carry a full description. Images that are do not have any function in the document can be marked as 'decorative'. This can be found as a tick box in the **Edit Alt Text** diealogue box.

Teo apply this in Word, right click on the image and select **Edit Alt Text**. Alt text should be used to explain what you see as well as any important information that is relevant to the intent. For example as the image below has the alt text: **'Bembridge Windmill on a sunny day'**. But it may be that you want to draw focus to the tree in the foreground as it relates to the subject matter, in which case you might want to say: **'Oak tree near Bembridge Windmill'.**

Colour

Make sure the colours you use have a strong contrast. For body text a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 is recommended for small text and 3:1 for large text. You can check the contrast ratio at coolors.co/contrast-checker

Further support

While the above suggestions should cover most common issues, there will always be occasions where someone may need additional support. for this reason the following statement should be added to the document:

If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.

You should set this in at least 14 point, and ensure it is clear and visible on the page.

Easy-read documents

Some people with learning difficulties have trouble understanding reports or documents. If your target audience includes these people we would recommend creating an 'easy-read' version of your document. Easy-read versions distill the main points of the report into a summary containing short, simple sentences accompanied by an image that supports the concept or idea that you are communicating.

Writing an easy-read version

The Office for Disability Issues produced some helpful tips to consider when writing and easy-read version.

- Keep the number of pages to 24 or fewer. If there are more, break the text up into more than one publication.

- Keep sentences short. They should be no more than ten to 15 words.

- Each sentence should have just one idea and one verb.

- Use 14 point font size.

- Make sentences active not passive: "we are following up your complaint" (active tense) not "your complaint is being followed up" (passive tense).

- Take out words that are not needed. For example, say 'for 14 days' not 'for a period of 14 days'.

- Include a glossary explaining abbreviations and jargon, and an index, at the end of the document.

- Use full words not acronyms.

- If you need to use difficult words or ideas, say what they mean - do this in the next sentence, not as part of the same sentence.

- Use a different colour or bold type but keep a good contrast with the paper.

- Use pictures to support the meaning of your text.

Co-branding

Partners

Projects where the majority of funding comes from the council or where the council is the accountable body should use the corporate identity. If support from other organisations must be acknowledged use one of the following options:

1   Use a strapline to acknowledge a joint partner on the cover.

2   Include a section on the inside front cover where partners are listed and explain their involvement.

3   Place partner logos on the back cover of the document.

However, there will be cases where this is simply not feasible, such as where space is limited. If we are a partner but not the lead partner in a project and our logo is required to demonstrate our support, you should provide the 'supported by' logo.

Partnership logos

The creation and use of partnership logos is one that should be avoided where possible. Research shows that public sector organisation's identities have an intrinsic value when it comes to recognition and meaning. Because of this these should be favoured, where possible, to demonstrate accountability.

Council funding

Where the Isle of Wight Council funds or provides grants to groups or projects, the 'funded by' logo should feature (see below). The material should explain the funding agreement in the document's body text, not with a strap-line added to the logo itself.

Funded by

Isle of Wight Council

If there is no direct funding from the council, but the Isle of Wight Council supports the project in other ways, the 'supported by' logo should be used.

Supported by

Isle of Wight Council

Government funding

Government funded projects have special requirements depending on the level of funding. Guidance can be found here: gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Branding_ Funded_By_UKG-.pdf

Sponsors

Some projects or events are part-funded by sponsorship from private companies or other organisations. In this case their financial contribution needs to be publicly acknowledged as this is often the main reason a sponsor has decided to give their support. Before seeking sponsorship you must think through how you will approach the companies, what your proposal is – and be prepared to offer sponsorship packages – for example logos on printed materials.

How you acknowledge sponsorship should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. You should seek to minimise the display of multiple logos as much as possible. It is also important that we do not approach the same companies for sponsorship on a regular basis and that the appropriateness of the sponsor is carefully considered. If you are planning to seek sponsorship ask the resident information and consultation division for advice, email: communications@iow.gov.uk

Service excellence logos

The Isle of Wight Council logo is our promise of excellence and we prefer to use this single, unified approach to logos. However, if your service has received significant external recognition, such as beacon status, one additional logo on specialised material or recruitment literature is permitted where it is recognised by, or is important to, a particular audience.

Often these logos are recognised by a limited, but critical, audience and it is better to ensure they are aware of it rather than placing it on all literature where it will have less impact. You should seek your director's authorisation before using an additional logo.

Competitions

From time to time services invite ideas – particularly from schools – for mini-poster campaigns directed at young people. While this in itself can be a valuable learning exercise for children, it can also be problematical from a communications point of view. A decision should be made at an early stage whether the main purpose is to communicate a message or an idea, or if it is to provide pupils with a project – the two are very often mutually exclusive. The publications team can advise in these situations and should always be involved at an early stage.

Services may in certain circumstances invite logo ideas or designs from particular groups for very limited or one-off use, but **the communications team must be involved before the invitation is issued.** The council logo should always be primary, as discussed elsewhere in this guide.

Email signatures

How we present ourselves in electronic communication is another element of the corporate identity and a very important part of the way we communicate. All emails should be written using Arial font at 12pt as a minimum, and the colour of the message should be black. When writing emails, you should consider the intent, and ensure your email follows the accessibility guidance detailed earlier in this document.

There is a standard email sign-off which should be used on all emails, both internal and external.

If your service area has a silver number, please use this instead of the general contact number (01983 821000).

If your department's web page has a specific web link you may use this instead of the generic link.

Signature:

Ann Other, Manager
Environmental Health, Isle of Wight Council, County Hall, High Street, Newport,
Isle of Wight PO30 1UD
Tel: (01983) 821000 Ext: 1234
Email: ann.other@iow.gov.uk
Web: iow.gov.uk

Presentations

Isle of Wight Council report
Overview and impacts

There is a template for use when creating Powerpoint presentations which is available for download from the intranet. Each slide/frame follows a consistent visual style that allows for clarity and easy understanding of the messages you wish to convey.

Although the use of the template is recommended, especially where the presentation will be seen by non-council staff, there may be times when a non-standard presentation is required. For example, subject matter, target audience, or other circumstances may preclude the use of the standard council template, and if this is the case, you should contact publications for advice. In any event, the council logo should be used at the beginning and end of the presentation.

Powerpoint good practice

Here are some suggestions and guidelines for creating effective Powerpoint presentations.

Fonts

In keeping with the council's corporate identity, Arial should be the font used on all powerpoint templates, titles should be no smaller than 36 point, and the body of the slide should be no smaller than 24 point.

If you need to emphasise text, bold variations should be used, we do not recommend underlining text as this causes legibility issues for people with visual impairments.

Images

Before placing any images into a document, make sure you have permission to use the image first. Unauthorised use of an image may lead to an unbudgeted cost for use.

Make sure that the image you use is appropriate to the subject matter and audience. We do not recommend using clip-art or poor quality images, as they make the presentation look unprofessional.

Ensure that images are of a similar size before inserting, several pictures on a page of different size and shape can make the page look messy. When resizing images hold down the 'shift' key to ensure the aspect ratio is maintained.

Presenting the information

Powerpoint is a tool which is best used as a guide for you and your audience.

There can be a temptation to load your presentation with slides full of information. But if your audience is reading the slides, then they are not listening to you. A good slide should have only a few words or images that reinforce what you are saying, not add extra information – any information you place on a slide should be mentioned specifically during your presentation. We recommend that a slide should contain no more than four lines of text and no more than eight to ten words per line. Consider putting only one image or graph per slide unless you need to make a direct comparison.

If you need to provide supplementary information, then prepare a handout to be given out **after** the talk, allowing the audience to absorb this extra information at their leisure, and not distract them from what you are saying.

More information

If you have any questions or need help and advice about creating Powerpoint presentations please contact the publications team on 6249, who will be pleased to help you.

The communications briefing form

Before the communications and engagement team can work on any project, a communications briefing form will need to be completed. This form will ask a few simple questions to get an idea about the scope and purpose of the project, and what you expect to get out of it.

There are two forms available on the intranet in the Wightnet forms section:
• the communications briefing form; and
• the reprint briefing form.

The communciations briefing form is used to request new work and can be found here:
http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/wightForms/getform.aspx?pk=PCN

The reprint briefing form should be used to request reprints and minor updates and can be found here: http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/wightForms/getform.aspx?pk=PCNReprint

For existing publications that require a redesign you should fill out the briefing form, not the reprint form as this is considered a new job for publications purposes.

If you have any questions about the process, or wish to discuss any work you may be considering, please contact a member of the communications and engagement team.

Marketing plans

If you have a lot of work scheduled through the year, then we recommend you put together a marketing plan – this allows you to budget effectively, and allows the communications and engagement team to book your work into their own work plans.

The communications team has a template you can use which can be provided on request.

Digital projects

If you are starting a digital project, there is a digital framework pack available. This gives you the information needed to implement the brand correctly.

Please contact digitalcontent@iow.gov.uk if you have a project in mind and they will be happy to support you.

Contacting us

If you have any questions regarding these corporate identity guidelines, or any aspect of the council's brand and its usage, please contact Steve Collins, design, print and production manager on (01983) 821000 x6249, or email Steven.Collins@iow.gov.uk