

Kimmi the ‘Great Crested Newt’ Lights Up the Streets of Newport

Equals IW Friendship Group (Women Group) including husbands, children and friends represented Equals IW stepped out to build on their Mardi Gras success over a number of years to enter their first Island Illuminated Carnival, Newport's.

The team's entry in this year Newport Illuminated Carnival brought joy to those watching the very colourful carnival through the streets of Newport.

The costumes were based on woodlands, forest and wildlife associated with Bouldnor Forest, located near Yarmouth on the Island. The team's entry featured Kimmi the ‘Great Crested Newt’ and the team entry was complimented with a mobile music unit transformed into a mobile forest. The music unit woodlands themes were all hand painted by three artists. The unit was made possible by the Equals IW teams sponsor MCEnhancement.

Bouldnor Forest is an Idyllic nature reserve on the IW Heritage Coast, Hampstead, near Yarmouth and one of the Island's most important pond sites, its variety of habitats - pine forest, heathland, cliffs and sea grass beds, support diverse wildlife.

The team entered the theme into Newport's Illuminated Carnival judging competition and showcased the entire entry to the judges with colour, dance and music. The team members celebrated with amazement, excitement and pure joy when awarded with an Illuminated Carnival 1st prize for the entry. This was amazing outcome for the team's first ever Illuminated Carnival.



The carnival brought together hundreds of people who lined the streets of Newport to watch and enjoy the colourful, lighted parade and enjoy the music as the procession went past on Thursday 22nd August 2019, with costumes and floats. It was a delight to be right at the front of the Illuminated Carnival leading the procession right behind the Newport Carnival Queens Float.



Bouldnor Forest is an Idyllic nature reserve on the IW Heritage Coast, Hampstead, near Yarmouth and one of the Island's most important pond sites, its variety of habitats - pine forest, heathland, cliffs and sea grass beds, support diverse wildlife. Unusual birds as they flit between the trees such as Crossbills, Tree Creepers, Bullfinches and Goldcrests are abundant, and during the spring a host of heathland rarities brighten the restored clay

heaths – you can see Pale Dog-Violet, Heath Dog-Violet and Cyperus Sedge blooming along the coastal path.

Down on the beach you can uncover the Isle of Wight's prehistoric past – look closely and you may find small fossils among the pebbles. Once you've finished your archaeological activities, you can look out across the Solent and take in the stunning views of the New Forest coast.

Wander along the forest tracks between the Pine trees to look and listen for unusual birds such as Crossbill, Gold-crest and Raven. You may glimpse the iconic Red Squirrel leaping from branch to branch. With no introduced grey squirrels on the Island, their smaller cousin thrives here. In spring along the coast path, discover Heathland rarities that brighten the restored Clay Heaths, such as Pale Dog-Violet, Heath Dog-Violet and Cyperus Sedge.



By summer, Bell Heather is in its full glory including the strange parasitic Dodder – it has no leaves, only pink thread-like stems and dense heads of white and pink flowers.

The reserve is 38 hectares in size. The surfaced forestry tracks are usually dry. Unsurfaced public footpaths can be muddy when wet. The coastal path is on a gentle slope. There is one wide gate to enter the reserve and one within the reserve.



Bouldnor Forest on the Isle of Wight is an idyllic nature reserve and one of the most important flagship pond sites, because it is the only known site on the Isle of Wight for the delicate aquatic fern Pillwort *Pilularia Globulifera*. This small endangered fern loves the muddy edges of grazed ponds which dry down over the summer and fill in the winter. Unfortunately

the Pillwort fern has not been recorded on the site for some years and re-establishing and preserving what could potentially be the last stronghold for this plant on the island is of high importance.

The ponds at Bouldnor are also known to host other species of interest including protected Great Crested Newts *Triturus Cristatus*, Common Toads *Bufo Bufo* (numbers of which are thought to be declining across the UK) and several freshwater green algae known as Stoneworts.

A massive thanks to three artists who hand painted the woodland scenes to match the Equals IW team theme of 'Woodlands and Forest' representing Bouldnor Forest on the Isle of Wight. The unit was made possible by the Equals IW teams sponsor MCEnhancement. All the amazing flowers were arranged by Mary whilst



Shirley helped Mark to build the feature and the music system was organised by Sam all from MCEnhancement.



Also another massive thanks to support of Milton Keynes College Art Students and HMPPS IOW. The three artists spent two months hand painting all the woodland and wildlife scenes, birds and butterflies and wildlife facemasks to show case the wildlife associated with Bouldnor Forest on the Isle of Wight.

Equals IW Carnival Team members were also very excited and surprised to find themselves photographed on the front page of the Isle of Wight Observer Friday 23rd August edition of the Island only locally owned free newspaper.

MCEnhancement is delighted to have sponsored the amazing Equals IW Friendship Group and support team members at this year's Newport Illuminated Carnival and delighted to have worked in partnership with the Equals IW Illuminated Carnival Team and Newport Carnival Committee for the 2019 procession.

