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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

**ISLE OF WIGHT COMMUNITY FUND CELEBRATES
FIRST SUCCESSFUL YEAR**

More than 100 guests joined the Lord-Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight to celebrate the first year of the Isle of Wight Community Fund.

The Lord-Lieutenant, Major General Martin White, was joined by the High Sheriff Gay Edwards, business leaders, charitable groups and donors at a special reception at the Royal Yacht Squadron. As the IWCF's President, the Lord-Lieutenant said "the fund is managed by a strong team of local people, and any fears I had that control would be lost to Hampshire have been dispelled. Most importantly the fund is growing and it is helping a huge range of community groups, at a time when raising funds is proving more challenging than ever."

Addressing the guests chairman of the IWCF Chris Martin announced that since its launch in July of last year the IWCF had awarded nearly a quarter of million pounds to voluntary and community groups across the Island through the various grant programmes it manages. "In order to maintain this level of funding we need to continue to meet our targets for the Grassroots Endowment Challenge in which the government will match £1 for £1 all money we raise. We aim to build endowment funds of over £1 million by 2011."

The organisers of Cowes Week are the latest company to set-up a local fund. Working with this year's official charity, the RNLI, they have agreed that a proportion of the funds raised will go to their local Grassroots fund to support voluntary work across the Island. Sales and Marketing Director Michelle Warner



says “We want a way to ensure that local charities benefit from the fundraising activities during Cowes week and the Cowes Week Grassroots Community Fund gives us the perfect platform for doing just that.”

Guests to the event at the Royal Yacht Squadron were also able to hear first hand from groups who had received grants from the IWCF, including Fishbourne Sailability who used their grant to buy a boat “Dougal” which is especially adapted for wheelchair users. Lesley Bennett whose son suffered brain damages after a road traffic accident explained “It has been fantastic to use "Dougal", with its ramp access it’s perfect for even the most disabled people. Getting out on the sea has had the most amazing effect on my son. He certainly laughs, smiles and sleeps better after a trip out.”

Summing up Chairman Chris Martin added “I urge anyone who wants to support their community to get in touch with us. The Isle of Wight Community Fund is here to help local people support the local causes and charities that they care about.”

ENDS

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Notes to Editor

IWCF Info

The Isle of Wight Community Fund has been established by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation and the Isle of Wight Charitable Trust. IWCF raises funds and distributes grants across the Island for the benefit of local communities and works to encourage local giving for local needs.



HIWCF Info

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (HIWCF) is an independent charitable trust that manages charitable giving on behalf of individuals, businesses and other trusts; distributes small grants to voluntary and community groups and organisations across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and promotes the benefits of “Investing in our local Community”.

HIWCF is the Local Funder for the Grassroots Grants programme which is funded by the office of the Third Sector and delivered by the Community Development Foundation.