

South Wight Borough Council



South Wight was a non-metropolitan district with the status of a borough on the Isle of Wight in England from 1974 to 1995.

The district was formed by the Local Government Act 1972 and was a merger of Sandown-Shanklin and Ventnor urban districts and Isle of Wight Rural District. It was one of two districts on the island formed in 1974, the other was Medina.

Following a review by the Local Government Commission for England, the borough was abolished on 1 April 1995, when a single Isle of Wight Council replaced the island's county council and two district councils.

Isle of Wight Council



The Isle of Wight Council is a unitary authority covering the Isle of Wight near the South coast of England. It is currently made up of 39 seats. Since the 2021 election, there has been an 'Alliance' coalition administration of Independents, the Green Party, Island Independent Network, and Our Island councillors, who together with the Liberal Democrat and Vectis Party councillors voted to elect Independent Cllr Lora Peacey-Wilcox as leader of the council, with the Labour councillor being absent. The Conservative group is the principal opposition party, and the single councillors from Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Vectis Party also sit outside the Alliance group.

History

On 1 April 1995 the Isle of Wight Council was formed and became the first unitary authority in England. The new authority took control of district council functions, retaining the county council functions of the previous county council. The predecessor body to the Isle of Wight Council was the Isle of Wight County Council, which dated from January 1890.

Elections

Prior to 1998, the Liberals and then Liberal Democrats had dominated the council. Between 1998 and 2005, it was under no overall control, ruled by a coalition of LibDems and Independents.

Elections held in June 2005 led to significant change as the Conservatives took over from the Liberal Democrats as the largest group, winning seats primarily from the Lib Dems and Independents who had previously worked together.

In the 2009 elections the Conservatives managed to retain their majority by securing 24 of the revised 40 seats; however this was the only Conservative council in the UK that lost seats.

In 2013, the Island Independents gained 20 seats, one short of a majority, with the Conservatives only winning 15. As of January 2015, the Island Independents have lost four councillors through defections, and the Conservatives one. Leader Cllr. Ian Stephens stood down in January 2015, the next day announcing he was to stand to be the local MP. Cllr. Jonathan Bacon, representing Bembridge, Brading and St. Helens, was elected unopposed as the new Leader. He stood down, along with deputy leader Cllr Steve Stubbings, in January 2017 citing 'the unwillingness of government to lift a finger to help and the preference for too many elected members to act negatively rather than try to help.'

Following the resignations of the leader and deputy leader in January 2017, Conservative members assumed control of the administration, with Cllr Dave Stewart appointed as leader. A new ruling executive was formed, made up of five Conservatives, one UKIP member and three non-aligned members.

In 2021 the Conservatives lost their majority on the council, against the national trend for that party, and an 'Alliance' administration of independents and Greens took control, their leader elected as Leader of the council with support from the single councillors from the Liberal Democrats and Vectis Party.