

# Candidate Information Pack

## **ASSISTANT CORONER**

Isle of Wight

Relevant Authority:

Isle of Wight Council

March 2026

# **ASSISTANT CORONER FOR ISLE OF WIGHT INFORMATION PACK**

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This recruitment pack has been drafted in accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

## **1. ADVERT**

**Assistant Coroner for Isle of Wight**

**Salary – £519 per day.**

**Closing date: midnight 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

The Isle of Wight Council is seeking to appoint an Assistant Coroner to support the Senior Coroner across the full range of coroner duties in order to deliver a high-quality Coroner Service to the people of the Isle of Wight.

**Successful candidates, if not already an Assistant Coroner, will be required to attend a mandatory Assistant Coroner Induction training course 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2026.**

### **About the post:**

The Isle of Wight Council is looking for an exceptional candidate with excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills, as well as experience of exercising sound judgement and communicating effectively. You will work closely with the Senior Coroner to ensure the running of an efficient coroner service that puts the bereaved at the heart of its service.

The Senior Coroner will be responsible for the allocation of work to the Assistant Coroners.

It may be possible for the Assistant Coroner to work remotely if they are not required to be in Court.

You will be required to demonstrate knowledge and experience of coronial law and of basic medicine, have proven skills in conducting investigations and an understanding of court procedure. You will also need to demonstrate the excellent communication and interpersonal skills necessary to deal with sensitive situations.

The successful candidate will be required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Coroner as defined in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and associated Rules and Regulations and as further described in various guidance issued by the Chief Coroner.

These are fee-paid positions, although they are likely to involve a regular commitment, which is to be agreed between the Assistant Coroner, Senior Coroner, and the Local Authority. Assistant Coroners are required to sit a minimum of 20 days a year. You will be expected, on occasion, to be available to assist on an out-of-hours rota system.

### **Who can apply:**

The successful candidate will be a Barrister or a Solicitor or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition which means they will have 5 years of experience *whilst* holding that qualification. They will be under the age of 75 and be subject to the appointment and eligibility conditions within the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (s.23 and Schedule 3).

### **Statutory terms of the appointment:**

Once a Coroner is appointed, they are then a Judicial Office holder until they reach the age of 75 years (compulsory retirement age) unless they choose to resign or are removed by the Lord Chief Justice or Lord Chancellor prior to their 75th birthday.

### **How to apply:**

If you wish to have an informal discussion or arrange a visit, please contact His Majesty's Senior Coroner Mrs Caroline Sumeray, on 01983 823 010.

Suitably qualified applicants are requested to send their CV and supporting statement (which should include disclosure of any convictions or disciplinary proceedings) to [laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk](mailto:laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk)

## **Notification**

The vacancy for this post has been notified to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor (as required by statute).

## **2. CORONER SERVICE INFORMATION**

### **Area information**

The Isle of Wight Senior Coroner's area includes an area of 147 square miles with a current population of around 144,000. As of the 2021 Census, about 28.5% of the Isle of Wight's population is over the age of 65. This is significantly higher than the average for England, reflecting the Island's popularity as a retirement destination. This accounts for the higher-than-average per-head-of-population number of Care Homes on the Island compared with the rest of the country.

The Island has both areas of extreme deprivation with associated problems, as well as providing an attractive location for second-home owners.

The Solent separates the Isle of Wight from Southern England, with ferry travel being provided regularly to Southampton, Portsmouth, and Lymington. Ferry travel is the only public transport to and from the Island. The ferries accommodate both car and foot passengers.

The number of deaths registered annually is 1,500, with approximately 800 cases (53%) referred to the Senior Coroner. Post-mortem examinations are conducted at St Mary's Hospital by an appointed pathologist who travels to the Island. We have no scanning facilities on the Island – the nearest post-mortem scanning facility is in Oxford. Home Office Pathologists visit the Island as required. We have a fully functional Medical Examiners Service operating out of the Isle of Wight NHS Trust, which has been rolled out to include the community deaths. In 2023, 774 deaths were referred to the Senior Coroner, 467 post-mortem examinations (60%) were undertaken, and 174 inquests were opened (22%).

There are no motorways within the area, with the road network mainly consisting of main roads supported by country roads. The Isle of Wight does have a higher-than-average number of road traffic deaths. A small train service runs between Ryde and Shanklin, which is on the eastern side of the Island. There are also two small private airports. There are no commercial flights to the Island. The Island is policed by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary, and the Fire Service is also a joint county service.

The Island enjoys fully coastal borders, and therefore, maritime and other related deaths are a feature of this Area. There is an active Burials at Sea site just off The Needles, which occasionally historically has generated referrals to the Senior Coroner when remains wash up, but due to recent changes in the procedure for burying at sea with the taking of a DNA sample before burial, it is hoped that this should be less of an issue in the future.

There is one prison, HMP Isle of Wight, although this is an amalgamation of two older category B prisons (HMP Parkhurst and HMP Albany), which were contiguous. Approximately 1,100 inmates are housed over the two sites. The prison caters for mostly sex-offenders and those serving very long or life sentences, and accordingly, the prison population tends to be elderly.

There is just one community hospital and NHS Trust, St Mary's Hospital, situated in the County town of Newport. The hospital has 18 units and wards, 266 beds, and 6 operating theatres. Within the Hospital estate, there is a secure mental health unit, Sevenacres.

The Isle of Wight is a popular holiday destination, with the population on the Island doubling in size during the summer holiday season. The Island also has a busy events/festival season with events such as the Isle of Wight Music Festival and Cowes Week, amongst others.

## Daily Operations and Accommodation

The Coroner's Service is located in dedicated accommodation, including a newly developed Court in the Seaclose Offices in Newport and shares the same building with the Registration Service.

The Coroner's Officers are responsible for answering incoming calls from the public on weekdays 8:30am – 4:30pm (4pm on Fridays).

The Assistant Coroner will be supported by a team of five officers and a Coroner Services Manager.

### 3. JOB SUMMARY

#### The Role of the Coroner:

- Coroners are independent judicial officeholders. When made aware that a body or bodies of deceased persons lie within the Coroner's area, the Coroner is responsible for conducting investigations and holding inquests when required (with or without a jury) into deaths to determine **who** the deceased was, **when** and **where** the deceased came by his or her death and **how** that death occurred. A referral is made to the Coroner when there is reason to suspect that:
  - i. The deceased died a violent or unnatural death;
  - ii. The cause of death is unknown; or
  - iii. The deceased died while in custody or otherwise in state detention.
- Conducting investigations of this kind will include, where appropriate, directing pathologists and others to determine these answers. Coroners also have a duty to produce Prevention of Future Death reports should an investigation give rise to concerns about future deaths occurring from the circumstances that caused the death. Coroners also deal with claims for Treasure when required in accordance with statutory regulations and guidance.

#### The overview of the role of an Assistant Coroner:

- To support the Senior Coroner in providing a high-quality Coroner Service that puts the bereaved at the heart of the process. This includes preparing for any significant emergencies which may occur and, where appropriate, to be available to assist with 24-hour availability on a rota basis.

#### Assistant Coroner Role Responsibilities and Assessment Criteria

As with other Judicial roles the Judicial Skills and Abilities Framework 2025 [JSAF 2025 230725](#) outlines the essential skills and competencies expected of judicial office holders, aiming to enhance recruitment and development processes within the judiciary. It will be helpful to read the as the JSAF has been drafted by judges, for judges and prospective judges to enable them to evidence their experience and suitability for judicial office. The JSAF highlights the key skills that all judicial office holders or prospective judicial office holders should demonstrate across their application or career. The specific assessment criteria for Coroners is set out below:

#### Assimilating and clarifying information

As an Assistant Coroner you will be expected to be able to quickly assimilate information to identify essential issues, seeking clarification where necessary so a clear understanding of this information is gained. This will include possessing the ability to explain legal and medical terms to people from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds.

#### Assessment criteria

1. **Excellent analytical skills and a consistency of decision-making and administrative direction.**

2. **Experience of legal work in the coroner jurisdiction (e.g. representing clients at inquest or shadowing a Senior Coroner).**
3. **The ability to explain complex terms to those from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds.**

### **Managing work effectively**

A large amount of coronial work takes place outside of the court setting and therefore, Assistant Coroners are expected to work effectively both in the office and whilst conducting court hearings. They are required to run hearings efficiently to facilitate a fair conclusion, minimise delays and effectively deal with case management. Assistant Coroners must respond calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances and prioritise work effectively to make the most of available resources whilst taking into account any budgetary considerations as appropriate. Assistant Coroners are committed to ensuring that any expenditure is reasonable and controlled and work to monitor this regularly with the Senior Coroner.

#### **Assessment criteria:**

4. **An ability to prioritise work effectively to minimise delays.**
5. **Able to work at speed and under pressure.**
6. **Demonstrates resilience, responding calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances.**

### **Working with others**

An ability to work constructively with others whilst demonstrating an awareness of diversity and showing empathy and sensitivity in building relationships is required in this post. Assistant Coroners must work constructively with members of the coronial team and interact well with bereaved families and external stakeholders (e.g. relatives, police officers, medical personnel, mortuary staff, Registrars, witnesses and the media). Where necessary, they assist the Senior Coroner to engage with the local community, for example giving talks and seeking feedback and views.

#### **Assessment criteria:**

7. **Must have knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of Coronial law and practice.**
8. **An ability to drive the service and be receptive to new ideas, reforms and diverse needs.**
9. **An ability to treat people with respect and sensitivity and in a fair manner without discrimination; ensuring the requirements of those with differing needs are properly met.**

### **Communicating effectively**

Assistant Coroners must be excellent communicators. They must be sensitive and, as far as possible, responsive to the needs and requirements of those who engage with the Coroner Service and, also possess the awareness to manage their expectations of the process. Assistant Coroners must be IT literate and provide clear directions to staff on coronial investigations whilst creating a safe, harmonious and effective working environment through co-operative working.

#### **Assessment Criteria:**

10. **Excellent verbal and written communication skills.**
11. **Establishes authority and inspires respect and confidence.**
12. **Remains calm and authoritative even when challenged.**

## **Exercising judgement**

Assistant Coroners must demonstrate integrity and apply independence of mind to make incisive, fair and legally sound decisions.

### **Assessment criteria**

- 13. Able to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident/positive judgement.**
- 14. Experience of conducting investigative enquiries, including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation.**
- 15. Reaches clear, reasoned decisions objectively, based on relevant law and findings of fact.**

## **Possessing and Building Knowledge**

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Coroner to keep an up-to-date working knowledge of Coronial Law, Practice and Guidance. Coroners must also undertake compulsory Judicial College and Chief Coroner training as appropriate. Assistant Coroners should take part in any local training as appropriate. Assistant Coroners are expected to take part in the ongoing yearly Assistant Coroner appraisal scheme to build upon their knowledge and skills.

### **Assessment criteria:**

- 16. All applicants must be a Barrister or Solicitor or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition, which includes a requirement for the candidate to hold a relevant qualification, to have also gained experience in the law for a total period of at least 5 years *whilst holding that qualification* and be under the age of 75: paragraph 3 of Schedule 3.**
- 17. Thorough, up-to-date knowledge of legislation, case law and guidance relating to coroner's duties.**
- 18. Knowledge of structures and procedures of the police, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths.**
- 19. Knowledge of the organisational structures of Local Government, including an understanding of the challenges facing Local Government, both at present and in the future.**

**In relation to each competency, please provide specific, examples and instances which demonstrate the relevant competency. Generalised assertions, such as 'it is my practice to...' or 'I generally/always do x, y or z' or 'I have the following general skills' do not assist the sifting panel in determining if the competency has been met.**

### **Desirable criteria:**

- 20. Full current driving licence (unless disability precludes this) and use of a vehicle for work purposes.**

### **Other judicial Appointments:**

Please include details of any other judicial appointments held.

## **4. SUMMARY OF TERMS & CONDITIONS**

The conditions of service applicable to the post are those set out in Schedule 3, Coroners and Justice Act 2009. The Assistant Coroner holds office on whatever terms are from time to time agreed between the Coroner and the relevant Local Authority.

## **Fee**

The post is fee-paid, and the current fee is £519 per full day, in line with the JNC Coroners Circular 71. The Assistant Coroners will be responsible for their commuting costs (including ferry costs) to and from the Island. The successful candidates will benefit from the Isle of Wight Council discounted ferry costs. If any inquest requires a judicial sitting which exceeds one day, and the Coroner wishes to stay overnight either on the Island or elsewhere, they will be responsible for the cost.

## **Pension Scheme**

An Assistant Coroner may join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LPGS).

## **Hours of Work**

As these are fee-paid positions, the Assistant Coroner will work on days and times as agreed with the Senior Coroner.

You will be required to work on such days / times as agreed with HM Senior Coroner and to provide cover for such as full-time Coroner's annual leave, sickness absence, training, and where peaks in demand or workload require. A 'full day' is classed as a minimum of 7.5 hours and may be longer subject to service needs.

You may be asked to participate in an out-of-hours service by agreement with the Senior Coroner. Assistant Coroners should live within a reasonable commuting distance from the Court or Office they will be expected to attend.

## **Holiday entitlement**

None (fee-paid appointment) therefore no leave or holiday entitlement.

## **Payment of expenses**

Expenses will be paid in line with the Council's expenses policy. Reasonable expenses for attendance at Judicial Training (including travel expenses, accommodation, where necessary, and a normal sitting fee payable for each day of training) will be paid by the Local Authority.

## **Indemnity**

The Council will indemnify the Assistant Coroner for costs or damages in relation to legal proceedings in accordance with Regulation 17 of The Coroners (Allowances, Fees and Expenses) Regulations (2013).

## **Notice period**

The Assistant Coroner may resign from office by giving notice in writing to the relevant Authority, however the resignation does not take effect unless and until it is accepted by the Authority.

Assistant Coroners are, where possible and practical, asked to give reasonable notice of retirement, or resignation, to enable the relevant authority to manage daily operations, and to comply with the provisions of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 in filling the vacancy and finding a suitable replacement.

## **Politically restricted post**

This post is politically restricted under the terms of Schedule 3, paragraph 4 of the Coroners and Justice Act (2009).

## **The Guide to Judicial Conduct**

The Assistant Coroner will comply with the standards as set out in the Guide to Judicial Conduct and other associated guidance.

### **5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

#### **Applications**

To apply for this position, you are required to send your CV and supporting statement to [laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk](mailto:laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk)

To apply for this position, you are required to submit a CV, and a full supporting statement of **up to** two sides of A4 (no smaller than font 11). It is important that your supporting statement fully addresses the assessment criteria detailed in **bold** in the job summary section.

**In particular please demonstrate how you meet the following criteria:**

- 1. Assimilating and clarifying information**
- 2. Managing work efficiently**
- 3. Working with others**
- 4. Communicating effectively**
- 5. Exercising judgement**
- 6. Possessing and Building Knowledge**

Your application will be rejected if you do not complete a full supporting statement. Please ensure you include your work, home and mobile contact numbers, home address and e-mail addresses where applicable. Please note that correspondence will be via e-mail unless otherwise stated. All correspondence and details provided will remain confidential.

In relation to each competency, please provide specific, examples and instances which demonstrate the relevant competency. Generalised assertions, such as 'it is my practice to...' or 'I generally/always do x, y or z' or 'I have the following general skills' do not assist the sifting panel in determining if the competency has been met.

#### **Employment references**

Please include the name, address and contact details for two references. Candidates should also state their relationship to the referee and at least one should be your current/most recent employer/Head of Chambers/relevant Authority. References will be taken up for short-listed candidates.

#### **Evidence of qualifications**

Candidates will be required to bring evidence of their qualifications to the interview.

#### **Employment checks**

The successful candidate will be required to undergo the Council's pre-appointment medical screening.

#### **Eligibility to work in the UK**

Candidates must be eligible to work in the UK. The successful candidate will be required to provide original evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK.

## **Disciplinary proceedings and criminal convictions check**

Due to the nature of the post, it is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore, any conviction, whether spent or unspent, must be declared. All applicants will be required to complete a declaration form when they attend for interview.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo a DBS check.

Applicants must specify in their application if they are the subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which they belong (including personal conduct referred to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office). Applicants will also be asked in the interview to declare anything about themselves, including in their past, that might be an embarrassment to the Local Authority, the Chief Coroner or the Lord Chancellor particularly bearing in mind the basic set of guiding principles in the Guide to Judicial Conduct:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/guide-to-judicial-conduct-revised-july-2023/>

## **Interview**

The interview will take place in person at the Coroner's Office, Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Isle of Wight, PO30 2QS. You will be required to undertake a short presentation as part of the interview process. The Senior Coroner will decide on the subject of the presentation and will notify you of the subject in the correspondence inviting candidates who have been selected to attend for an Interview.

## **Chief Coroner's role in the process**

All appointments are subject to the consent of the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor.

Once appointed, a Coroner becomes and remains an independent judicial office holder.

## **6. RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE**

**Suitably qualified applicants are required to send their CV and supporting statement to [laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk](mailto:laura.gaudion@iow.gov.uk)**

**Closing date : midnight on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**Sift return date : Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Interview invitations will be sent out : w/c 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Interviews will be held on : 9<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**If you do not hear by 5<sup>th</sup> June 2026, please assume you have not been shortlisted.**

**The interview panel will be:**

<b>Mrs Caroline Sumeray</b>	<b>HM Senior Coroner</b>
<b>Mrs Wendy Perera</b>	<b>Chief Executive, Isle of Wight Council</b>
<b>Mrs Laura Gaudion</b>	<b>Strategic Director: Adult Social Care, Housing and the coroners Service, Isle of Wight Council</b>

**Successful candidates will be required to commence as soon as is practical.**

**Successful candidates will be required to attend a mandatory Assistant Coroner Induction training course on 1-2 December 2026 and a follow up course in June 2027 (date to be confirmed).**