

# Cloverfield & The Willows Residents Association

incorporating St Andrews

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2019

held at 8pm on Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019

at the Cloverfield Church and Community Centre

**Present:** The CAWRA Committee comprising of Rob Butler (Chairman), Chris Wallis (Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Rebecca Tate (Project Co-ordinator), Rex Ingle (Litter Pick Co-ordinator), Martin Fancourt (Gardening Group Co-ordinator), Robert Whittaker (Research Co-ordinator).

CAWRA Members; Felicity Gabriel, Keith Banyard, Bob Baldwin, Mike Holbrook, Dave Fulton, Ed O'Connor, Ian Richens, Natasha Salawu, Neil Glen, Janice Butler (also Thetford Town Councillor)

Invited Guests; Mayor Brenda Canham, Deputy Mayor Jenny Hollis, Chris Harvey (Barnham Cross and Redcastle Residents Associations) – all Thetford Town Councillors. Sgt Simon Jones of Breckland Police (and a CAWRA resident).

**Welcome:-** The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and the invited guests.

**Apologies** for absence were noted from Councillors' Jane James and Stuart Wright, Rev Helen Jary and Mrs Maggie Baldwin.

**Minutes** of both the previous (2018) AGM and the last General Meeting of April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 were adopted by the meeting, both having been made available on the CAWRA website and in print before this meeting.

**Annual Reports:-** There followed the Annual Reports by the officers of the committee as follows:

### **Treasurer's Report** (Chris Wallis)

At the end of May, we had £1,920.34 in the bank. The majority of these funds (£1,647.89) are ring-fenced for the Community Garden project, whilst £272.45 are general funds for the running of CAWRA.

Our general fund balance has remained stable over the course of the year, with income received from Our Breckland Lottery and the refreshments at the monthly meetings just covering our running costs. Our largest items of expenditure during the year were promotional costs - particularly the website and newsletter. We should try and maintain our general fund balance in the coming year, with the aim of matching income and expenditure.

As has been previously documented, the funds for the Community Garden came from a grant from Thetford Town Council (£1,500.00) and the carol singing (£147.89). We are still in discussions with Breckland Council regarding the licence for the Community Garden and already have some costings in place for the ground works and insurance. We have also identified some further funding opportunities, once the licence is finalised and we are 'ready to go'.

### **Membership Secretary's Report** (Chris Wallis)

The past 12 months have seen CAWRA cement its foundations in the local area and build upon these increasing our membership over the course of the year. We now reach well in excess of 200 members on Facebook and around 30 contacts on email.

We had a stall at the Fuzion event last summer and produced and delivered our first newsletter at the start of the year. The carol singing in December was also well received by the residents. My thanks to everyone who helped with all these activities. We had an uplift in CAWRA both at the meetings, and via Facebook and email after each of these activities.

The challenge for CAWRA is to keep our name out there and to reach out to everyone across our patch, remembering that not everyone is online! Plans for the coming 12 months are afoot, including possible attendance at Fuzion again this summer, a second newsletter, and our general visibility with the litter pick and gardening groups, as well as new activities such as CAWRA Kids and the community garden - more details in later reports.

2)

### **Project Co-ordinators Report** (Rebecca Tate)

Many new projects had come to fruition during the year, all assisting in promoting CAWRA to the residents. These included very successful community activities with carol singing in December, egg hunts at Easter and the 'Big Lunch' (Eden Community Project) amongst these.

The introduction of the 'CAWRA Kids' project over the next year will endeavour to attract younger generations to value the community in various activities. A new logo has been designed and approved to assist in the 'marketing' of this project. Marie Turner of Thetford Garden Centre had generously donated products to assist with the 'planting' project. The carol singing will take place again in December as it had proved so popular. Other projects will be added during the year including a 'lantern walk' event.

### **Litter Pick Co-ordinators Report** (Rex Ingle)

The two litter picks held every month throughout the year have all been very successful and well supported. All the many volunteers were thanked for their commitment and enthusiasm in keeping litter in the CAWRA area to a minimum. A list of all the CAWRA areas covered during last month's events was given. It was felt that the team had 'got on top' of the problem and were now keeping control of the litter situation. The Mayor, Councillor Brenda Canham, had specifically requested that representatives of the team attend as special guests at the Mayor-making evening in May in recognition of the teams' tremendous efforts. Councillor Roy Brame was thanked for assisting with providing additional equipment for the team. The report drew generous applause.

### **Gardening Group Co-ordinators Report** (Martin Fancourt)

Activities with this group had dwindled, mainly due to the co-ordinator having moved home (but still wishing to remain within the CAWRA membership). It was unfortunate that the previous heavy planting and clearing of the Bergamot Children's play area had been undone by Muntjac deer accessing the area through the fencing. This area would now be cleared again and planting with deer-proof plants considered. The group had cleared back grass besides the footpath adjacent to the grassed waste area opposite the Church and Community Centre. This coming year will see the re-emergence of the group. Any volunteers will be welcomed.

### **General Report by the Chairman** (Rob Butler)

The last year has seen CAWRA make many improvements to the area with the assistance of its sub-groups and the three area councils.

We have introduced the Gardening and Litter Pick Teams and plans for a new venture concerning the area's youngster's involvement in our community are being formulated ('CAWRA Kids'). The Litter Pick Team has built a strong reputation and has even been recognised in the new Mayor's inaugural speech. The gardening group has also done some excellent work.

To accommodate members requests to change the meeting days we moved these from Wednesday to Thursday. We also introduced a refreshment scheme with 50p donations to the CAWRA funds. This has proved to be very popular. We also introduced the half-hour before the main meeting opportunity for residents to meet with the ward Councillors and the CAWRA committee members to discuss any communal issues and gain advice. A new presenting format was also introduced last autumn whereby individual committee members reported to the membership. These initiatives have also been welcomed by all.

CAWRA's major project, the community garden area adjacent to the Community Centre, is taking time to come to fruition, mainly because of the licencing complications which are still being discussed. It is hoped that a final decision will soon be made by CAWRA and Breckland District Council.

During the year there have been some significant improvements made in our area with new fencing erected on Campion Road and the boundary outside the community centre – our thanks go to Breckland District Council – and new road signage is starting to appear on the main thoroughfares i.e, Rosecroft Way, Charlock Road and Mallow Road courtesy of Cllr Roy Brame and David Jacklin of Norfolk County Council's Highways Department. This is already starting to influence speeding from the Hurth Way entrance to our area.

Thetford Town Council have generously provided new signage for the Bergamot Children's Play Area together with daffodil bulbs and Thetford Rotary also proved 2,000 purple crocus bulbs.

3)

Policing in the area is currently very limited with little enforcement taking place. CAWRA has been reasonably successful in having obstructing or abandoned vehicles removed around the area. Parking issues continue to be a major concern as does vehicular speeding and poor driving throughout the area. Youth anti-social behaviour also continues to be a concern to residents especially those riding bicycles in a deliberately dangerous manner, 'accidents waiting to happen'. CAWRA is working with STAG, the Safer Thetford Action Group, as part of a town-wide 'Safe Wheels' survey and eventual campaign to obtain better policing and enforcement of ASB at all levels.

Our funds remain healthy and are supported by Thetford Town Council, the Breckland Lottery contributors, the meeting refreshment donations and the new carol-singing donations. Other areas of fundraising are being investigated.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Councillor John Newton on January 11th this year. John was a very strong supporter of CAWRA and often 'made things happen' working quietly and tirelessly in the background. He was a good friend to us, was hugely appreciated and is greatly missed. A future tribute to John is a probability in the new garden if it goes ahead.

In May we saw the Town and District Council elections and as a part of the Castle Ward we saw the re-election of Councillors Jane James, Roy Brame, Stuart Wright and the new election of Councillor Janice Butler. Before his time as Mayor expired Councillor Brame generously donated some additional litter pick equipment for which CAWRA is very grateful.

For the next year CAWRA will continue to listen to residents concerns regarding communal issues, assist to resolve them wherever practical and lobby all agencies and councils for further improvements to the area.

**Annual Reports:-** These were agreed and unanimously adopted.

**CAWRA Accounts:-** The spreadsheet of the Association's **accounts** was agreed and unanimously adopted.

**Elections:-** The Elections of the committee followed. All committee members agreed to remain in their roles and there were no challenges or nominations excepting that Mr Andy Temple had resigned as CAWRA Secretary for personal reasons (remaining as webmaster for the CAWRA website) in April. Mrs Natasha Salawu was nominated, seconded and voted to succeed Mr Temple for the role of secretary, which she agreed to occupy. The Chairman welcomed Natasha to the committee and thanked the other committee members for their outstanding commitment and efforts during the year.

**Councillors Reports:-**

In the absence of all other Castle Ward Town Councillors a report was made by

**Mrs Janice Butler**

'Firstly, I'd like to take this opportunity to put out a big 'thank you' to all the those who supported me, in my electoral campaign.

I would like to voice my thanks also, to the residents of Castle Ward who took the time and energy to go and vote for me in the local elections held way back at the beginning of May this year.

So, .... I've started my journey as a local councillor and already I've been intrigued, dismayed but mostly inspired by what I have seen, heard and learnt. I have no doubt that there will be challenges ahead but I take a pro-active stance in dealing with all enquiries and notified issues, whether in relation to Castle Ward (which includes CAWRA), or within the wider vicinity that is Thetford.

I have already succeeded in having the commercial wheelie bin removed on Castle Street and have held many meetings on other matters. One of these was a walkabout with Steve Hitchman of Breckland District Council and Councillor Jane James examining the over-growth of the undergrowth around the area, the poor weed situation and the fallen trees blocking the River Thet to gain assistance from Breckland DC to rectify these problems. There are several other matters which I am continuing to work on to assist residents.

I feel honoured to be a Castle Wards' representative and I aim to work hard to help provide a strong voice for the residents of this ward, which includes the CAWRA area, and our town'.

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I'll use social media to highlight anything I feel you may be interested in but .... please don't hesitate to contact me via email, 'phone, via Thetford Town Council or indeed, CAWRA, should you wish to raise any issue with me. Don't panic ... none of my 'Councillor' duties will encroach on my tea-making sessions for CAWRA, assisting the CAWRA litter pick or my other community volunteering!

The Chairman thanked Councillor Butler for her report.

#### **Police Report** (Sergeant Simon Jones)

The CAWRA area has seen mostly reductions in crimes and anti-social behaviour during the past year, although this could also be due to crimes not being reported. In 2017/2018 there were 72 reported crimes in the Cloverfield area compared with the latest figure of 67.

Crime figures can only be accurate if crimes are reported. Recent crimes noted by residents were bicycle thefts, light vandalism and damaged signs (at the Church) and ASB on Trafalgar Woods. Assaults are on the increase as are thefts from unsecured vehicles. Please keep cars locked and valuables out of sight. There were 5 burglaries in the area though only 1 within a property. The other 4 being unsecured. Keep doors locked! There was only 1 drugs offence in the area in the last year. ASB offences were down from 14 in 2017/18 to 12 this year. There is ongoing investigation and potential action being taken over various vehicular accidents during the past year.

Parking has been decriminalised and the Police rarely get involved but work with Breckland DC. PC Kirsty Clements is beginning to look at the parking situation as part of her training.

The new Police Newsletter is proving popular across communities, keeping everyone informed of their activities. Report any incidents to 101 or email, then the crimes can be logged and influence the figures.

Sgt Jones stated that in his personal opinion, the CAWRA area is a 'good, safe place to live'.

\* Sgt Jones kindly provided crime statistic sheets for the CAWRA area which can be viewed upon request.

The Chairman thanked Sgt Jones for his attendance and invited the Police presence at future CAWRA meetings.

**Motions before the Committee:-** None had been received.

#### **Any Other Business:-**

Member Mr Dave Fulton commented regarding damage to grass verges being caused by residents parking vehicles on them. There is very little that CAWRA can do about this unless the vehicles are causing an obstruction. Mr Fulton also reported that a fence was damaged and leaning across the public footpath on Thyme Close. Councillor Roy Brame had, at the previous meeting, promised to have this resolved. In his absence at this meeting no further information was available. This matter will be pursued.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was closed at @ 8.45pm.

The next General Meeting, Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019, same venue and times.

Please note:- There will be no meeting in August and the September meeting will commence at 8.15pm.

