

John Newton - A CAWRA Tribute

UKIP Councillor John Newton passed away on 11th of January 2019 aged just 68 after suffering a massive stroke. He had experienced heart attacks over the past few years, yet always battled on regardless. The Newton family have lost a loving husband, father and grandfather. To them we send our most heartfelt condolences. Those of us outside of the family have lost a true and valued friend.



With regards to John's public life, Breckland District and Thetford Town Councils have lost a hard-working, dedicated, respected and popular councillor who was never afraid to speak up and fight for the rights of the residents of Thetford, often despite opposition and being unfairly outnumbered by the two main political parties at both councils. As always, he was the resident's champion. John was a member of - and worked diligently for - the town's Allotments, Amenities, Road Safety, Cemetery, Finance and Planning committees, all for the benefit of the town's residents. He often came into conflict with many agencies on behalf of the residents but always stood his ground with his tenacity and pragmatism regularly leading to success.

John was not a 'camera-chaser' preferring to work quietly in the background carrying out his tasks, often far above and beyond the call of duty and at his personal expense. He voluntarily litter-picked Castle Park every morning without fail come rain, hail or shine and assisted many other residents associations in litter-picking around their areas too. John preferred to be proactive and was responsible for 'getting things done' around Thetford, far too many things to mention here, whilst others publicly and unfairly stole the end-credit. This didn't concern John too much, he just wanted the best for Thetford's residents, he wasn't in it for the personal glory. He would work tirelessly to successfully help residents even outside of the areas of his town councillor responsibilities when no other offers of help were forthcoming. He would shyly receive grateful thanks offered publicly to him by those he had unselfishly assisted. This was quite a regular occurrence.

John's whacky humour, wind-ups and gentle 'mickey-taking' was legendary to all who he met and this was often on show at the very many meetings he attended as well as in his daily life. You could always count on him to get the smiles and laughter going again, even during the most heated debates.

When no-one else would act, John initiated and led the recent Thetford town boundary change consultation fight, a historical and important fight for the town that proved to be long and hard but ultimately successful. For that alone, future generations of Thetford residents should remember him and be grateful for his forethought, his caring and his acute and constant wish for fairness.

For CAWRA, from our inception in March 2017 John worked hard and enthusiastically in the background, greatly assisting in the realisation of many of our projects by continually lobbying the town, district and county councils on our behalf. We couldn't have been so successful without him.

John was an honest, genuine, principled and trusted gentleman and all who knew him are devastated at his loss. His passing is a huge loss to not only CAWRA but the whole of Thetford and its residents.

We are fortunate that we can always fondly reflect on our memories of John and our gratitude for how he contributed so freely, generously and greatly to us. We have lost a great man and truly a best friend to us all.