

EASTGATE WARD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 22nd May 2014 7.00 p.m. at Garland Street Baptist Church

Apologies: Sarah Green, Brian and Diane Flack

The Chairman – Tim Page welcomed all to the AGM and introduced the EWCA committee:

- Rachel Shaw our Vice-chair
- Keith Fennelow our Treasurer
- Julie Webb our Secretary
- Richard Whalebelly our Web master
- Colin Payne
- Doug Conran

He went on to introduce our councillors:

- Trevor Beckwith - County
- Patsy Warby – Borough
- Apologies had been received from Peter Thompson – town

We also have Cllr David Nettleton who represents Risbygate and is a local resident with us.

CSOs Helen Morgan and Amanda Dodd did not attend.

Bringing the Magna Carta to Bury St Edmunds – Alan Baxter

The first item on the agenda - Bringing the Magna Carta to Bury St Edmunds. An original copy of the Lincoln Magna Carta is currently on display in the Cathedral Treasury. This priceless document contains the origins in law of many of the freedoms we enjoy today such as the right to a trial by a jury of our peers. Getting the Magna Carta to Bury St Edmunds was a joint undertaking between the Bury Society, the Borough Council and the Cathedral. Alan Baxter is one of three key people responsible for this huge logistical task.

Alan Baxter gave a presentation. He encouraged people to attend the FREE exhibition. All slots have been booked in advance. However up to 4 people fail to attend for their slot so it is worth going along to the cathedral on the hour and the half hour to see if a slot is available.

Information is available on the website –www.burymagnacarta.org There is also information available about the Magna Carta 800th Anniversay. www.magnacarta800th.com.

There is a facebook page – Bury Magna Carta 800 and a twitter link - @BuryMC800

Graffiti

There has been a town-wide campaign to clear up litter and graffiti in response to the increased incidence of this sort of anti-social behaviour.

In advance of this meeting Tim Page asked Mark Cordell of Our Bury St Edmunds (a driving force behind this campaign) to attend, but apparently we are outside of his area of interest.

Tim Page also asked Mark Walsh Head of Waste Management and Property Services at West Suffolk to send a representative. But no-one was available.

Helen Lindfield our Families and Communities Officer at West Suffolk is also unable to attend due to a bad back.

So it would appear we are left to our own resources this evening.

Tim Page advised that it was his understanding that the response to any graffiti should depend on where it is and who owns the property. It is the responsibility of the property owner to remove the graffiti. So if the property is council owned then Mark Walsh and his team at West Suffolk are the people to contact. If the property is a town centre commercial property the Mark Cordell of Our Bury St Edmunds can bring pressure on the owners and has funds available.

The problem we have in Eastgate Ward is that many of the properties affected are buy-2-lets and the owners are not inclined to spend the money to remove the graffiti. An example of this is the graffiti in Cadney Lane.

David Nettleton has taken an interest in this subject he advised that Richard Poole from Aubyn Davies also has a business removing graffiti and David had shadowed him at work removing graffiti and there is no damage to the wall following treatment. Previously St Edmundsbury have said that the removal of graffiti damages buildings and this is why they seek consent from homeowners. The current Borough Council Policy states that both racial and sexually explicit material used in graffiti will be removed. The offending graffiti in Cadney Lane does not meet this criteria. Contact is being made with the current owner to seek a way forward with removing the graffiti.

Concerned residents were advised to contact: mark.walsh@suffolk.gov.uk

Trevor Beckwith advised that Abdul Karim is now back working with the Council. This was felt to be positive.

Chairman's Report

It has been a year where some matters of interest to EWCA have been resolved whilst many more continue to rumble on:

First, the Swan Surgery pharmacy application was finally granted after they upset many local residents, attacked the EWCA for not supporting them and nearly cost themselves and council tax payers a fortune through an planning inspector's enquiry.

The Vision 2031 local plan consultation continues to be a roller-coaster for Eastgate Ward residents. The two areas of interest to EWCA are the Leg of Mutton and Ram Meadow.

On Ram Meadow it is proposed that a new access road will run from Etna Road to the new car park where the football stadium currently is. (The football stadium is planned to move to Moreton Hall....). Many Barwell Road and Cotton Lane residents fear that this will be changed to a relief road through to Eastgate Street and result in significantly more traffic than currently planned. Fears about the affect on wildlife and the River Lark floodplain have also been raised. EWCA has a dilemma this point because, whilst it would adversely effect some residents (Barwell Road and Cotton Lane), it would benefit others on Mustow and Northgate Street. However our Richard Whalebelly from Barwell Road has been an active campaigner on this issue.

The Leg of Mutton issue has been widely covered the local press and at last years AGM when a member of the Bury Water Meadows group gave a talk. Significant development of formal leisure facilities and supporting buildings such as a hotel are proposed. Members of the EWCA committee have been active on the Bury Water Meadows Group which is fighting to save this land as a green lung for the town.

Vision 2031 is currently being examined by a planning inspector. This spring we heard that the planning inspector has proposed modifications which would remove both these proposals and keep the Ram Meadow as a flood plain and the Leg of Mutton preserved for informal recreation only. The inspector is consulting on its modifications (a consultation on a consultation)! The consultation is online on the West Suffolk planning web site and is open until 30th May. The EWCA has responded to this consultation in support of the modifications proposed by the planning inspector and has emailed local residents about this issue.

However, we have since heard that the Council will object to the modifications, so it is now more important for local residents to make their views known.

Bury Water Meadows Group

Andrew Hinchcliffe from the Bury Water Meadows Group attended the meeting and provided an update. He has written to David Ruffley in respect of noise protection on the A14 the current scheme is for Motorways and does not extend to the A14. A bid has also been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The bid is called the "Lark Valley Project" and includes the area of the Leg of Mutton and Ram Meadow. A site visit has been arranged with the Environment Agency. It is proposed to develop a leaflet about the walks available on the sites of Ram Meadow and the Leg of Mutton.

Ram Meadow Relief Road

Trevor Beckwith updated the meeting in respect of the planned relief road that is proposed to be built across the flood plain at Ram Meadow and the fact that the Council have asked for clarification on the meaning of "no road" from the Inspectors who objected to the plans. Richard Whalebelly stated that even if the proposed road is not built the building will still go ahead on Ram Meadow on the site of the football ground and there will still be car parking. David Nettleton commented that funding the road would entail about six million pounds and he was doubtful developers would be able to fund this.

Travellers

In November our open meeting covered the thorny subject of anti-social behaviour from travellers camped around the ward, especially on Ram Meadow car park. I thought the talk given by Peter Daniel the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller co-ordinator for Norfolk and Suffolk was most useful (and it was a pity no councillors

were present to hear it). Since then this problem has been moved on and the family in question was provided with accommodation on Barton Road. I read with interest that this issue is close to a permanent solution.

Trevor Beckwith said that a formal complaint had been put forward by Sarah Brought the Councillor for Gt Barton. Concrete bollards that should have been installed when the travellers departed were not put in place. A pile of topsoil was dumped at the site. The travellers were therefore able to gain access. The travellers have now been issued with a tolerated provision and will be on site for a minimum of 16 weeks.

Beckwith Crossing

The Beckwith crossing on Eastgate St has been repaired following last year's crash damage. But one resident recently email me to say the line need repainting – a sure sign of success!

Yellow Lines

Cotton Lane and Barwell finally have double yellow lines and a recent campaign by the police has reduced the incidence of illegal parking. However, the traffic around Drive Vauxhall remains an issue.

Empty House

No 10 Well Street (which is social housing) has been empty for over a year. I know our ex-vice chair Lynda Seldis is battling Co-op Homes with the help of Cllr Patsy Warby. The Chair stated that it is a scandal that this house remains un-used when there is such a long waiting list for housing in the borough. Cllr Patsy Warby concurred with Tim Page and thought that his idea of writing to the Bury Free Press would raise the profile of the issue.

Hollow Road

Traffic lights and the railway bridge on Hollow Road continue to be a problem. Our Colin Payne is driving this issue with Trevor Beckwith and SCC. I understand the most recent issue is the sequencing of the lights? Colin Payne advised that the sequencing had now been re-synchronised and the issue has improved. Trevor Beckwith advised that he has once again raised the issue of pedestrians crossing the bridge with Graham Newman.

Thank You's

Tim Page proceeded to make thanks given that this was his last role as EWCA Chairman:

- First the committee for all their help in the last year, especially:
 - Keith our treasurer who keeps me in line and prompts me when stuff needs doing.
 - Julie our able secretary.
 - Richard who keeps the technology going
 - Colin who keeps everyone up to date with all things Hollow Road.
 - Rachel who has recently stepped up to be vice-chair.
 - Doug who has recently joined the committee.
 - Whilst she is not a committee member I would like to thank Hazel Jackman for all her help delivering leaflets both in November and this May.

- I would like to record our thanks to Peter Hardman, Diane Everitt and Linda Seldis who stepped down in the last year. Special thanks must go to our ex-vice chair Linda who has been our representative with the Bury Water Meadows Group.
- I thank all our councillors for their continued support and wisdom in helping us make Eastgate Ward a better place to live.
- Last I'd like to thank you all for turning up to support us at our open meeting. Without the residents there would be no EWCA.

Finally, as I said at last year's AGM, I will stand down as Chair and from the Committee at the end of this meeting. It has been a privilege to serve Eastward ward in this capacity. Through the EWCA I have met many lovely and interesting people. I've learned a lot about how the town works (and also how to keep committee meetings short)! I wish whoever succeeds me in the role all the best.

Treasurer's Report - Keith Fennelow gave details of the financial records.

Income has reduced from last year.

EWCA has £755.00

Petty Cash £46.00

Totalling: **£802.00** last year the balance was £983.00

Costs:

£176.00 for printing

£125.00 for room bookings

£20.00 for the website

Income:

£70.00 adverts

£70.00 donations.

Election of officers

David Nettleton proposed all six committee members and this was seconded by Mark Turner.

Tim Page appealed for more Committee members.

A.O.B.

- Bury in bloom – golden theme. Look out for the awards for effort in July ish
- **Rachel Shaw – Vice Chair gave a vote of thanks to Tim Page for the work that he had carried out during his time as EWCA Chair. Mark Turner seconded this and added that prior to his time as Chair Tim also had been a valued EWCA Committee member.**