

ROWLAND'S CASTLE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

24th FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM IN THE PARISH HALL

ATTENDEES: **Total**

Committee: Chris Stinton (Chair), Caroline Hadley (Treasurer), Pete Rhymes (Vice Chair), Dave King (Committee member), Debbie Carpenter (Committee member), Seth Carpenter (Committee member), Alan Eyers (President).

Residents: **Total**

Apologies: Julia Connolly (Secretary)

Minutes of previous AGM minutes: These were available to read on the RCA website and noticeboard. Approved and signed by the Chair.

Any matters Arising: None

Chairman's Report: Chris Stinton full report

Chair Report RCA AGM 2025

Hello every-body. Thank you for coming to support your Rowlands Castle Association AGM. As some of you will know the Association was founded just over fifty years ago when the village was a small community of under two and a half thousand people and approximately six hundred and fifty houses; very different in size to today. It started as a protest against the development of the Great Wellsworth Housing Estate on the field adjacent to the railway line and next to Finchdean Road when an informal action group organised a public meeting, petition and representation at the Public Enquiry to oppose the development which, had it gone ahead, would have turned our village into a town. Fortunately the appeal was successful and, after discussion at a public meeting in June 1972, the Association was formed. Its aims were, "to conserve the character of Rowlands Castle, to provide a channel of communication on matters of local interest and to enhance the life of the village." Those aims are what drives the activities of your Association today. Our Website, our Facebook page, the "Grapevine" and the thrice yearly "Village and Valley" magazine are the current channels of communication and the various events your Committee organises over the course of the year are designed to enhance the life of the village.

A year ago, when your present Committee was elected, we had a number of particular challenges. The superb editor of the magazine for the previous ten years, Kevin, was stepping down, a difficult position to fill, and the Committee numbers had dropped to just five; barely enough to organise events effectively. Fortunately Kitty Carruthers volunteered to take over Kevin's role and the quality

of the last four editions of the magazine have demonstrated just how splendidly she has not only maintained Kevin's high standards but has also introduced new regular features such as the "Village People" pieces. Our Committee member numbers too have swelled to eight members with the addition of Dave King and, most recently, Debbie and Seth Carpenter; very welcome recruits.

We have had a very successful year of events starting with a litter pick on April the first when sufficient volunteers came forward to don fluorescent jackets and brandish litter pickers to cover all the roads throughout the village and collect a creditable number of bulging plastic sacks worth of rubbish. Our thanks to all those who turned out on what was a cold, windy and damp day to play their part in keeping our village tidy.

The May Day Picnic too was a reasonable success although the weather was decidedly inclement with showers and rain forecast throughout the day. Early on was fairly fine whilst we erected the small marquee for the Blendworth Brass Band, Burnetts set up their fairground rides and the Scouts organised their BBQ equipment. The Evolution Twirlers, who were due to appear, cancelled because they judged the grass was too wet to perform safely and we had fewer veteran and vintage cars than usual in the circumstances. Never-the-less the Surrey Ice Cream van, the Candyfloss and Doughnuts concession and the mobile "My Little Coffee Shop" all appeared and surprisingly large numbers of people turned out to enjoy the fun despite the weather. Most of the sausages and burgers went and we were able to donate £150 to the scouts. £150 to the Blendworth Brass Band and make up the funds collected for Rowans on the day to £500. This was less than the amount raised in the previous year but still a reasonable sum. Thank-you to all those who helped on the day and braved the weather to attend.

Our next event was the ever-popular Quiz Night and Fish and Chips Supper on Saturday 21st September which this year raised money for Butser Homestart, a local charity that supports struggling young families with practical help, guidance and counselling. They not only gave a short presentation on their work but raised their own team for the event, the "Butser Belles and Beau". Our talented volunteer quizmasters Kerry and Ian had prepared a challenging and enjoyable programme and our raffle too, with prizes kindly donated by local shops. pubs and businesses were well received. We raised £934 for the charity. We have already booked Kerry and Ian, by popular request, for this highly enjoyable event in September 2025. Please look out for the advertising closer to the time; tickets sell quickly.

Treasurer's Report: Caroline Hadley's

As you may all remember 2023 was the second year in a row of a very, very wet fireworks display. This resulted in the event making just enough to cover the event and RCA running costs leaving the RCA with no surplus to donate to village causes in January 2024, as we have done every year before.

Because of this, the RCA agreed to a different approach of budgeting and donating by having managed budgets and allocated charities for each event with the income made from the event going to the charity with no extra cash given by the RCA to round donations up (as has been done in previous years). Each event's expenditure from previous years was reviewed and stripped back where possible. Ticket/sale prices were adjusted to ensure the maximum amount was raised for the designated charity without over pricing the items for sale.

The event with the most significant reduction in expenditure (and I want to highlight, with no detriment to the event itself) was the Quiz where expenditure was cut by just over £400 and was kept to just over £700, the majority being the cost of the fish and chips.

I would like to bring to your attention that it looks like expenditure for the Mayday picnic and Quiz have been cut by over a third between 2023 and 2024. This is not the case. The differences are down to a change in how donations from the events are recorded. The 2023 expenditure figures include the donations from these specific events and 2024 has the corresponding donations recorded on the Donations line below. The accounts also imply that the magazine has raised an excess of income. This is also not the case as the bulk of income for the 3 issues is paid in Spring and a third of expenditure will be paid in 2025. The magazine is looking to break even this year. The general running the RCA totalled £1,818 for 2024. This consisted of the usual running costs and the purchase of 2 varying in size gazebos as the existing gazebo was damaged beyond repair in the extremely windy Summer fair.

So for the highlights...

The RCA spent a total of £10,990 over the year generating £22,427 income leaving a net position of £7,687.

The 2 main contributing factors to the income figures are, a dry night for the fireworks resulting in every ticket being sold and used, resulting in an net income of £9,133 and the carefully managed budgets set for each event. Meaning this year, the RCA have funds to donate to good causes throughout the village for 2025.

Finally I come to the 2024 donations. The RCA donated a total of £1,867. The highlights are £934 was raised at the Quiz and donated to, Home Start Butser, £250 was donated to Blendworth brass Band for their entrainment at the Mayday picnic and Xmas Carols, £150 to the Scouts for manning the Mayday Picnic BBQ, £20 to the Mens Shed for

making Sign posts to help the RCA advertise their events, with the remaining going to Rowans.

Election of officers: Alan Eyers officiated but spoke first.

Caroline Hadley agreed to stay as treasurer. Chris Stinton agreed to stay as chair for 2025. Pete Rhymes agreed to be vice chair Confirmed that Julia Connolly is Stepping Down Opportunity given to contest any nominees; No objections made, all appointed.

6.Election of Officers

Chair - Chris Stinton. Nominated by Caroline Hadley, Seconded by Debbie Carpenter

Vice Chair - Peter Rhymes. Nominated by Caroline Hadley, Seconded by Chris Stinton.

Secretary - Position open.

Treasurer - Caroline Hadley. Nominated by Chris Stinton, Seconded by Dave King.

Advert Coordinator - Pete Rhymes. Nominated by Martha Dombey, Seconded by Seth Carpenter.

Grapevine and Social Media - Martha Dombey. Nominated by Debbie Carpenter, Seconded by Dave King

Committee Members -

Dave King. Nominated by Chris Stinton, Seconded by Debbie Carpenter

Debbie Carpenter. Nominated by Martha Dombey, Seconded by Caroline Hadley

Seth Carpenter - Nominated by Dave King, Seconded by Martha Dombey

All Approved

Alan Eyer thanked the RCA committee for all their hard work over the past year especially in view of the small committee numbers (currently 6 but should be 12). He made a 'call to arms' for new committee members and ad hoc volunteers saying that anyone interested should talk to any member of the RCA committee during the social part of the evening for more details.

AOB: Interactive Demonstration and

Talk by our village First Responder, Peter Morgenroth and his team of 3 First Responders, who will be demonstrating the use of defibrillators and other equipment that they use, whilst on call to attend persons

needing assistance. Everyone will be encouraged to learn and ask questions.

The RCA welcomes any comments and volunteers at any of the events we organise so please let us know if you are interested.

May Day Picnic, RCA Quiz Night, Fireworks Night, supporting the Carols on the Green, Annual AGM, Village and Valley Magazine, Village Grapevine. Rowlands Castle Website and Rowlands Castle Facebook page.

The meeting ended at 8pm.

Thanks to Martha Dombey and Caroline Hadley for the refreshments - excellent blinis made by Martha which were enjoyed along with wine.