



CHURCHGATE AREA ASSOCIATION

The Association caters for the interests of all resident, businesses and property owners, not only in Churchgate Street, but also within the entire medieval grid

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Chairman's Report for the Churchgate Area Association 2018/19

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 25 October 2019 at the Unitarian Meeting House at 19.00 to which all residents and businesses are welcome

Please let Cathy Friel (catherine.friel1@ntlworld.com) know if you would like your name to be put forward to join the CAA Committee and she will give you a nomination form

Peter Riddington, local resident and semi-retired architect with Donald Insall Associates, will talk on The Domestic Architecture of Bury St Edmunds

Peter will talk about the changing designs of residential buildings in the town from the earliest days to the 21st Century, explaining how changes in technology, fashion and societal needs have affected the way buildings look. He will explain how to identify the age of buildings from their forms and details.

Dear Friends,

Another year another report.....

I always think it would be good if we could all celebrate this fabulous district in which we live and work: our small but important area of Bury St. Edmunds known as The Grid. It has a great community feel; we all help each other; we are all there for each other; we all greet each other which makes for a delightful and cheerful part of town. We even say 'Good morning' to strangers in a most un-English way. I, like so many friends I have spoken to, just feel privileged to live in this beautiful environment and I cherish it.

I try and call on all the new residents who choose to come and live and work in the Grid and my apologies to any that I have inadvertently missed out. Please do be in touch so that I may meet and welcome you.

Traffic and Parking At last, at last! We can report some good news on the parking situation in The Grid after many years of trying to improve the situation. Suffolk Highways have produced a map showing where extra residents' parking bays can be located: 31 in total which we hope will make a difference. There will be 15 in Friars Lane and 16 in other roads in The Grid:

2 in Churchgate Street
2 in Whiting Street
3 in College Street
1 in Bridewell Lane
8 in Westgate Street

Permitted parking times will be changed to 8.00am to 8.00pm to make it easier for people coming home from work to find a space.

We walked round the Grid with Council officials in February 2019 and had their verbal agreement to the changes - now eight months ago.

Suffolk County Council reported the following on 27.09.19:

"We estimate that the process is going to be 6 weeks before we advertise the Traffic Regulation Order (end of October).

-The formal consultation is approximately 28 days (end of November).

-When this period ends we will analyse and prepare our report to be signed off by Mary Evans and Mark Stevens (end of December).

-Following this authorisation it is anticipated that we will place an order for the scheme to be implemented in February/March 2020."

This will be a year since the walk round the Grid.

Our Membership Secretary, Judy Broadway, sent in a Freedom of Information request to West Suffolk Council to discover the number of Zone D parking permits given out to residents outside the Grid. Much to our chagrin and disappointment she was informed that:

15 permits have been given to residents in Abbeygate Street

9 permits to residents in Angel Hill

4 permits to residents in The Traverse.

Although these three streets are clearly not within the Grid, we have been informed that the Council will not change the situation.

Civil Parking Enforcement Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) will be coming to Bury St. Edmunds at last after years of lobbying. The police have never had the time or manpower to censor those parking on double yellow lines but I regret to say that the timing of the legislation to see the power transferred from the police to the West Suffolk District Council has slipped again and CPE will not now come into force until April 2020. There will be 12 Civil Parking Enforcement officers for Bury town. The County Council has put aside £800,000 to upgrade all the double yellow lines in the county by the time decriminalisation comes into force.

[Did you know you can report a highways issue to Suffolk County Council?](#)

[You can report a highways problem in Suffolk quickly and easily online. ...](#)

[.....Suffolk Highways Reporting Tool allows you to report a new defect and monitor the status of the problem.](#)

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads.../report-a-highways-issue>

One thousand years of the Abbey As I am sure you have heard there will be great celebrations held in 2020 to commemorate the thousand years of the Abbey (founded by King Canute in 1020) with many events taking place during the year. One of the main celebrations (which you may like to put in your diaries) will be during the weekend of 10-12 July when there will be an Open Stage event and visits by **Very** Important Persons. No-one is allowed to say who this will be at present.

The Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership is making headway with the funding bids based on evidence gathered in two studies carried out last year.

The Partnership is seeking volunteers to become involved in specific roles. By the time you read this report an email will have been sent out to members listing the roles that the Partnership would be pleased to fill. Please contact me if you would be interested in taking part.

Pavements For three years now we have been asking West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council (SCC) to repair some of the pavements in the Grid which are in a very bad state. Cllr Jo Rayner has it on her agenda but it depends on the willingness of SCC to fund the scheme. Nothing has occurred which is a very disappointing result after all our efforts. We will not let the matter rest.

Graffiti We have reported the existence of graffiti on the BT box in Churchgate Street to Mark Cordell of Our Bury St Edmunds as it is his responsibility and his team have cleaned it.

We have also reported the graffiti on the BT box in Bridewell Lane to the Town Council but this has not yet been cleaned up. (This box is outside Our Bury St. Edmunds' area). The red marks on the BT box in Bridewell Lane are placed there by the County Lines drug dealers to indicate where drugs are being sold. Residents are advised to notify councillors or the police if they have any information regarding this marking. CCTV in Whiting St was cancelled because a resident objected but it could possibly be used for a temporary period of surveillance. A resident in Whiting Street has seen drug dealing taking place several times in the street.

Air Quality in our streets We are in touch with Matthew Axton, the Environment Officer at West Suffolk Council regarding the pollution in our streets. The Council placed a monitoring point opposite St. Edmunds Primary School in Westgate Street to monitor nitrogen dioxide for which the allowable limit is 40 micrograms per meter cubed. From January to June this year the monitor has recorded 22.8 micrograms per cubic metre.

Matthew has agreed to monitor air quality, with the new continuous air quality sensor, at locations identified by residents' associations. The CAA committee has chosen sites on the north side of Churchgate Street at the Bridewell Lane junction and either Whiting Street South or Guildhall Street South. These were chosen as they are known to be busier and used by through traffic.

The new continuous Zephyr monitor has not yet been deployed in the Churchgate area, but the Council have put up additional diffusion tubes which will be there until the end of the year. These, combined with the Zephyr data, will give them a mix of long term data and daily pattern. Diffusion tubes were deployed at the beginning of the August monitoring period in the suggested locations and the Council are still awaiting the first results.

Parking outside our primary schools with engines running. Many of our residents are concerned with the problems caused by parents parking outside our Primary Schools with their engines running and fumes going into nearby houses. We attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at West Suffolk House to press for action but were told that it was unlikely that the Council would approve the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices because of the requirement to have a Police officer of a certain rank present for monitoring, surveillance and to issue the notice. They also said it was unacceptable for residents to check up on drivers. The Committee will press for the issue to be back on the Council's agenda in one year's time.

After an MP asked a question in Parliament, Thérèse Coffey (Minister of State at DEFRA) replied that Local Authorities have the power to introduce a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) if required and air quality actions are delegated to them.

Cllr. Diane Hind and ex-Cllr. Julia Wakelam have been pressing the Council for some two years to declare clean air zones around all schools, old people's homes, medical centres, hospitals & similar as well as taking enforcement powers.

Lisa Ingwall-King, Green Party Councillor for West Suffolk District Council, has now taken up the challenge. Unfortunately, the decision was not to undertake the enforcement powers but to have a publicity campaign. No action has yet happened. To be fair there are some imaginative proposals such as an animated film to show to school pupils, etc. However, no action!

It may help that the Clean Air Bill had its second reading in Parliament on 15th March. The bill is 'to require the Secretary of State to set, measure, enforce and report on air quality targets; to make provision about mitigating air pollution, including clean air zones; to make provision about vehicle emissions testing; to restrict the approval and sale of vehicles with certain engine types; and for connected purposes.'

A Public Space Protection Order covering 200m around the schools was suggested by the CAA committee but there has been no action as yet.

Bury St Edmunds Masterplan update

The work on the Masterplan is being carried out in discussion with the Bury Town Centre Masterplan Stakeholder Advisory Group which includes Our Bury St Edmunds (which represents town centre businesses), the Bury Society, Bury Town Trust, the Town Council and SCC.

Work on an extended kiosk in the Abbey Gardens and the new tennis courts in Vinefields is progressing and should be complete in February.

A planning application has been submitted for the scheme for the old Post Office and will probably go before the Development Control Committee in December.

The pedestrianisation of the Butter Market is not achievable in the near future.

The vehicle management signs in Parkway are being replaced.

I am also in touch with West Suffolk Council, Boots the Chemist and Custodian Reit who own the passageway between The Works and WH Smith in Cornhill to request that they clean it up as it is often in a disgusting state.

Planning Issues The Feoffment Trust have applied to extend the Alms Houses on the east and west sides. They are planning to put gables on the extensions. The CAA had no objection to the plans.

Through the good offices of Judy Broadway who had contacted Historic England, the Magistrates Court has been listed as Grade II to prevent it being pulled down. It is being converted into 16 flats.

Weed killing Mark Walsh, Assistant Director (Operations) at West Suffolk Council, is a good friend of ours in The Grid and always helps us when he can. On my request he authorised his operatives to carry out one round of weedkilling; but, because the SCC has no money, Mark has no resources to weedkill twice more which is what normally occurs. He is exploring other ways to fund the weedkilling for next year and is currently in touch with Greg Luton, Clerk to Bury Town Council. Meanwhile the weeds continue to proliferate.

Several members expressed willingness to take on the weedkilling with equipment obtained from the Council, but Mark informed us that there is too much at risk to allow this to take place.

Awards We are very proud of Liz and Tony Fayers who are much missed after retiring from the Rose and Crown in Whiting Street after 34 years. The pub has been crowned Suffolk Pub of the Year by CAMRA (The Campaign for Real Ale). This title was voted for by the Rose and Crown regulars.

Liz and Tony also won the CAMRA trophy for being Bury St. Edmunds' best community pub of the year in 2016.

We welcome Gordon, the new tenant/landlord of the Rose and Crown, to the area.

We are also delighted that Simon Harding, who founded the Bury St Edmunds charity 'Church Walks Charities' in 1998 which has raised more than £115,000 for various organisations, was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for his voluntary service to the community. Simon said he would like to dedicate the award to his partner, Valerie Legg, who has helped him with the charity for 20 years.

Membership subscriptions You may know that there are 630 households in the Grid; therefore we are delighted to announce that we now have 324 members. This makes us a very strong Association with a very strong voice in the town if the need arises.

The membership subscription has remained at £3 per person since 2011. As the cost of the wine and nibbles that we buy for the Socials has increased, added to the fact that we wish to print the Christmas Newsletter in colour, and may, on occasion, have to pay for our speakers, the CAA committee are proposing that the subscription should be increased to £5 per person.

Clause 4 of the Constitution reads at present as follows:

"Annual membership, payable at the end of October, will be £3."

Resolution to be put to the AGM:

To amend Clause 4 of the Constitution to read:

"As from 1st October 2020 the annual subscription, payable in October, will be £5 per member."

Thank you to the CAA Committee who have worked tirelessly for us during the year and I do wish to express my sincere thanks to all the committee members who have supported the residents and businesses in The Grid in every way possible over the year. We owe you a huge debt of gratitude.

Vivien Gainsborough Foot, Chairman

October 2019