NEW MAYOR FOR BECCLES

It is a huge privilege to have been elected Mayor of Beccles by my fellow councillors following one of only two contested town and parish elections across the Waveney constituency (Beccles and Southwold), and I intend to do all that I can to live up to this great honour. I am very clear that, as well as chairing the Town Council for the coming year, my role is to represent the people of Beccles at civic functions and wherever and whenever I can to promote the interests of our fine town. ‘Inclusion’ will very much be a key theme of the next 12 months, as will the promotion of business, commerce, tourism and the needs of the young, more elderly and the infirm. I intend to work closely with my fellow councillors, our District councillors and our County councillors and will look to actively encourage interest in and good relations with Beccles by our neighbouring towns and villages. My Mayor’s Appeal for the year will be the Beccles Sports and Social Club to help it develop the facilities it offers widely across the community, and the Friends of St Michael’s to help with their fundraising to restore the South Porch of this iconic building at the very centre of the town. Finally, I would like to pay warm tribute to the work of my predecessor as Mayor, Caroline Topping, to say how much I welcome Councillor Graham Catchpole being Deputy Mayor, to wish all newly-elected town councillors well and to say how much we all appreciate the hard work and dedication of our Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk. Beccles is indeed a fine town and we will all work hard to keep it that way.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held on Thursday 16th April 2015

The Annual Town Meeting was attended by Town Councillors and five members of the public. The public were given time to read through the reports from the Mayor, Committee and Sub Committee Chairmen, Beccles & Parishes Neighbourhood Plan Operational Group, the Police, Waveney District and Suffolk County Councils and the Beccles Allotment & Gardens Association. A shortened version of each report follows:

Report from the MAYOR. Continues to represent the council by visiting local organisations and further afield when invited. Close contact with market town neighbours has been ongoing. Waveney District Council’s Waveney Plan needs better representation for Beccles. Monthly surgeries in Beccles Library have proved successful. The Council Chambers have undergone a major refurbishment. Regular litter picks in and around the town have been carried out. The Mayor thanked council staff, Beccles Library, the litter picking group, Crisp Builders and those who helped with the clearing and reinstatement of the Chamber.

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Report from Councillor G Catchpole, Chair of the Assets & Environment Committee. Work has been carried out over the past four years on the estate to maintain a natural environment. The Friday Market has been well supported. The Quay and moorings project is ongoing with Waveney District Council and other organisations over the next two to three years. The control of excess street furniture in the town centre and 20mph speed limits are being pursued.

The Chairman thanked Allan Clarke (town cleaner).
Report from Councillor D Peck, Chairman of the Pride in Beccles Sub-committee. There were fine floral displays in the flower towers, boxes and baskets around the town and at the War Memorial. New planters have been provided along with litter bins and grit bins. Memorial seating at the Quay have been installed. The Chairman thanked all those who help to make Pride in Beccles successful.

Report from Councillor B Woodruff, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. A review by the council in May 2014 saw a change of committee structure. The under-spent budgets from the 2013/14 financial year totaling £14,595 were discussed and consideration made of a proposal by Waveney District Council to take over, under licence, the Bell Tower. Repeal of two signatories on cheques by Government saw a change in the Financial Standing Orders for payments to be made via Bank Transfers and Standing Orders. The budget and precept remained at £107,000 for 2015/16 equating to £35.78 in respect of Band D properties. The splitting of the budget between the council and the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust meant that from 1 April 2015 some council assets are held on trust with separate accounting. A full review of the financial regulations was made. An annual review of standing orders, financial regulations, risk assessments, Internal Audit and Fidelity Insurance was carried out. New leases were implemented and quotations agreed upon. The 2014/15 accounts are being prepared and once drafted will be available for inspection.

Report from Councillor B Taylor, Chair of the Planning Committee. As a consultation body the Planning committee make informed decisions which are referred to Waveney District Council as the district planning authority. The committee listen carefully to applicants and hope that the decisions made will meet with the support of the people.

Report from Councillor H Taylor, Chair of the WW1 100th Anniversary Memorial Working Party. Members consist of representatives from local organisations who have agreed to proposed plans for a memorial in the grounds of the Museum in Ballygate, but confirmation is required for the final design. Once this is agreed, funding has to be sourced and a planning application submitted.

Report from Councillor D Richardson, Chair of the Operational Group for the Beccles Area Neighbourhood Development Plan. The group is made up of councillors from Beccles and its hinterland. Aims are to achieve for the area a planning strategy which meets the Independent Examination body requirements and will shape future development whilst safeguarding what is valuable. If the group is successful it will mean that these areas will have a statutory-backed role in the planning process and policies in the future.

Report from Inspector N Aitken, on behalf of Beccles Police. Crime has fallen overall with a reduction in burglaries. Violent crime increased slightly whilst vehicle crime is down. Serious sexual offences increased, but is in line with National trend. Focus for year is to centre on crime causing the most harm—violent crime, Burglary, Robbery, Serious Sexual Offences. The police continue to face significant financial challenges, needing to reduce their budget by £20.5m by 2020, and are working alongside Norfolk Constabulary.

Report from Councillor M Bee, Leader, Suffolk County Council. Many challenges over the past year, but continued reductions to local council funding with the need to find new way to provide services. Freezing of council tax for the fifth year in a row making savings of over £130m over four years. Education—Suffolk has climbed 12 places in the national league table for GCSE results from 137th to 125th out of 151 local authorities. Improvement of Key Stage 1 of three to seven year olds achieving expected levels of attainment. Extending of Broadband in progress. Drive to create 5,000 new apprenticeships. UKs first Youth Employment Centre in Suffolk. Suffolk receives waste to create energy as the landmark deal between Norfolk and Suffolk has been honoured. Blue-light partnership in Suffolk awarded nearly £5m. SCC award for the national Care2Work programme.

Report from Joan Cupples, Secretary, Beccles Allotment & Gardens Association (BAGA). Major work was undertaken to supply running water from existing supply points to the allotment sites 32, 51, 25 and 24 who had no access to stand pipes. This work was mostly done by volunteers from the Allotment Association. Through the BAGA, the committee arrange and carry out necessary works on allotment sites within their budget, working alongside the council with good communication which benefits all. Now the allotments (apart from South Road) come under the Fenland Charity Trust, more funding opportunities have arisen. A member of the Community Action Suffolk, valuable information is received through the e-letter. BAGA continues to engage the public and holds a regular event—Seed Sway Day in February with the Horticultural Society, as well as taking part in the Open Garden Weekend in July 2015. Leisure gardeners can join BAGA and 171 are currently on the books. Children and over 50’s are catered for on Marsh 10 in Common Lane, which has a toilet on site. More work is to be done to encourage families to enjoy this way of life.

Thanks were given to Claire Boyne, Julia Janney and Councillor Catchpole.
**OUR MARATHON MAN—DAVID SILK**  
www.waveneyenterprises.co.uk

On Saturday 26th April ran the 2015 London Marathon. Even though he was unwell during the two days before the event, he completed the course in 4:2 min and 53 seconds! That was incredible as he was also attached to his team mate, who is blind and also poorly on the day. Over £1,000 has so far been raised through donations, both cash and on the justgiving page for his chosen charity, Waveney Enterprises. David is passionate about this organisation for adults with mild to moderate learning disabilities and works hard to make sure they are happy. The service users work hard making various crafts to sell to the community, so a visit to their shop in Smallgate is a must, and to purchase something they have made. The users get expert supervision from the dedicated staff and also from volunteers who share their special talents with them. David is a very competent artist in his own right, so look at the displays in their windows at Christmas time. At the moment the medal won at the London Marathon is displayed in the window, and he would be delighted to talk to you about this as well as show you around the shop and work area.

If you wish to support Waveney Enterprises, they would be very grateful.

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**BECCLES HELPING HANDS**  
LIVING HISTORY/GHOST WALKS

**DATES AND TIMES:**

**HISTORY WALKS**  
June 6th, July 4th, August 1st and 22nd.

**GHOST WALKS**  
September 26th, October 24th, 30th and 31st.

All walks start at 7.30 pm from the Old Market. The Ghost Walks are unsuitable for wheelchair users.

For more information: Info@beccleshelpinghands.co.uk

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**LAUNCH OF BIKER DOWN SAFETY COURSE**

A brand new course providing potential lifesaving free advice for motorcyclists has been launched at Bury St Edmunds Fire Station. The Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service FireBike team took bikers through various accident scenarios, focusing specifically on three key areas—what to do when arriving first on the scene of a motorcycle crash, trauma care and the science of being seen. Mark Hardingham, Chief Fire Officer at Suffolk Fire and Rescue said—“With motorcyclists 55 times more likely than car drivers to be killed or seriously hurt on the road, it is clear that no rider is ever too good for the road. This training course will get motorcyclists thinking; helping bikers to pre-empt situations that could turn serious. I would encourage anyone who is a rider to get online and sign up”!

Additional events are planned as part of the Police-led Safe Rider course over 12th-14th June at Police HQ and at Lowestoft South Fire Station on September 5th.

Details of these courses can be found on line  

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**EAAAA—15 YEARS OF SAVING LIVES**

This year the East Anglian Air Ambulance are celebrating 15 years of Saving Lives, having carried out during that time more than 16,000 missions across East Anglia. Having achieved many great things, we wanted to celebrate with all our supporters, staff and volunteers who make it happen. We would love you to get involved in our celebration year and host a tea party at 15.00h and raise vital funds for EAAAA. It couldn’t be simpler, just gather together family, friends and colleagues, put the kettle on tuck into some tasty treats. EAAAA need more people than ever to make some time for what matters in life, whether you choose to hold a tea party or host an EAAAA Bake Off—everything little helps. Call your local fundraising team on 0845 086 9999 to get your Tea at 15.00 fundraising kit today.

Together we can Save Lives.

We would also love to receive your pictures and info from your tea, so please get in touch.

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**TWINNING NEWS**

Beccles Twinning Association have had successful Quiz and Cake afternoon during January and March at the Royal British Legion Hall. There are still places available for the planned visit to Petit Couronne on 24-27 October. A great opportunity to learn about French culture and traditions and to brush up on your French. Please contact Michell Golding 01502 470734 to find out more. The Association is joining with Halesworth and Lowestoft Twinners to hold a Brocante Stall at Halesworth Antiques Market on 30 August from 8am-4pm. Do go along to help raise funds for their activities.

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**NEW TWINNING WEBSITE**  
www.beccleswinningassoc.onesuffolk.net
William John Crowfoot (1789-1871) MD

William trained in Leiden, Holland, the best Medical School at the time. He returned to Beccles with an MD (Doctor of Medicine). He was Portreeve, Chairman of the Beccles Magistrates Court and held the office of Mayor three times. When he was 66, he married 23 year old Mary Sarah Batten in Hampshire, daughter of the Mayor of Rochester. They had no children.

In 1831, William applied to the Earl Marshal for a Grant of Arms and was given permission. The arms show a raven holding up its right claw. This would be a pun, on ‘crow foot’ (except there are no crows in heraldry and has been substituted with a raven. The staff with the snake entwined is the sign of Aesculapius, the God of healing. The motto ‘Cavendo Tutus’ (safe by being careful), is a reminder to doctors to look for symptoms and to patients to send for doctors in good time. He was a small man with grand ideas, and habitually drove through the town in a carriage with the arms he had obtained embazoned on the side, proceeded by two grooms.

William’s sister, Anna Maria, married the Rev John Waldron Crabbé, son of the poet.

In 1861 they were living in Saltgate. Sarah died in 1867 and William died on 26 July 1871 in Brighton, where he was living at that time.

New legislation from April this year is giving people greater access to their own pension funds, and therefore Suffolk Trading Standards (STS) team is urging you to be aware of pension scams. Now that you can withdraw money from your pension fund it has caused increases in scammers trying to entice you to part with your money, by saying free pension review, one-off investment, or legal loophole. A STS officer says—scammers don’t care, they flatter, tempt and pressure you to transfer your money. Don’t fall for it, seek professional advice and protect yourself. For all round protection, join the STS Consumer Champion Mailing List to help avoid being caught.