**MINUTES OF THE ROWLANDS CASTLE ASSOCIATION (RCA)**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held on Tuesday 14th March, 2017 in the Small Parish Hall

**Apologies for absence**

None received

Present: Committee Members: Fiona Charlesworth (Chair ), Martha Dombey(Treasurer), Sue Leonard (Secretary), Sue Morrison, Deborah Richards, Gordon Charlesworth, Helen Penfold, Joyce Jacobs. New member Rodney Duggua

President: Alan Drinkwater

Vice President: Alan Eyers

Guest Speakers: U3A Rowlands Castle

Members: 22

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 2016**

These were read by those in attendance and were agreed as a true representation of the meeting. The Minutes were signed by the Chair, Fiona Charlesworth.

**Matters arising**

**None**

**Chairs report**

The aims of the RCA are: 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.

**Our first aim - to conserve the character of Rowlands Castle**

The RCA fully supports the Neighbourhood Plan initiative and will probably have an RCA committee member on the steering group. Having a Neighbourhood Plan in place for Rowlands Castle will ensure that improvements to the village can be implemented, housing located in places that villagers consider appropriate and the character of Rowlands Castle can be preserved.

The RCA was involved in the nationwide Great British Spring Clean in Rowlands Castle and Finchdean. A number of villagers helped pick up large amounts of litter around Rowlands Castle and Finchdean 3-5 March.

The RCA have supported Markwells Wood Watch by providing man power and finance to oppose UKOG drilling for oil in the South Downs National Park. The oil drilling could contaminate our drinking water, spoil the beauty of the SDNP, clog rural roads with large lorries carrying hazardous waste and affect flora and fauna in the SDNP.

**Our second aim is to provide a channel of communication on matters of local interest**

We continue to publish the Village Magazine under Kevin Connell’s editorship. Thank you Kevin for all your hard work providing us with such an excellent magazine. It is wonderful how much copy is provided by villagers both on an individual basis and as representatives of village organisations.

I would like to thank the army of deliverers, without whom we would not get our magazine, organised by David Hooper. Gordon Charlesworth is about to take over this role from David. Thank you also to Prue Amner who manages all the advertisements.

We also have an RCA noticeboard outside the Londis shop, which advertises village events as well as RCA information which all are welcome to use.  Please give notices to Sue Leonard or myself to put up.

My thanks to our webmaster, Gillian Lovegrove, who does a first rate job of managing the Rowlandscastle.com website and the Grapevine email list.  Grapevine is run on behalf of the Village by the RCA, for everyone to use. It is moderated by Martha Dombey with myself as deputy.

The grapevine is continuing to grow and currently has over 400 subscribers, which means about one-third of the homes in the Village are now reached by Grapevine messages. In addition to running the Grapevine, we host mailing lists for other village organisations, like friends of St Johns Parents and Teachers and the Village Fair Committee.

**Our third aim is to enhance the life of the village.**

We enhance the life of the village through the events we organise.

**May Day Picnic on The Green:-**

This is held on the Monday bank holiday at the beginning of May to raise money for Rowan’s Hospice. (1 May this year) Everyone is invited to bring a picnic (or buy from our BBQ) Blendworth Brass Band entertain us with their music, Jan Halliwell organises the interesting display of vintage cars and Pat Carter and Rita Sandy sell plants. Tea on the Green café sell drinks and cakes. Many thanks to all who donated to the Rowans Hospice during the picnic, enabling us to give Rowans £1015.

**Fireworks:-** For many years we have run the bonfire and fireworks display in November. Running the fireworks night is quite a logistical feat and we are very grateful to Geoff Jacobs and Sue Morrison who did all the organising last year. I would like to thank all who make it possible, including Selstar for the fireworks, Bill Burnett for the fairground attractions, the Scouts and Guides for refreshments, St Johns Ambulance and the Police for keeping us safe. I’d also like to thank all the volunteers who get up early to clear up the morning after to make the pitches safe for the footballers.

The fireworks night was a great success last November, with a fantastic display from Selstar watched by a record crowd. We trialled the evening without a bonfire and had our highest support ever! We have decided to limit advertising to within the Village this year as there is only a small amount of parking available in the Golf Club and very little street parking.

**Children’s Christmas party**

We organise the children’s Christmas party each year. Many thanks to Anita King, who kindly arranges the party. Many thanks also to Alan Eyers for his appearance as Santa and Koko King for being such a lovely helper to Santa.

**RCA Quiz:-**For the last few years we have had a quiz night, which is now a regular part of the RCA calendar. Many thanks to Sue Connell for setting such excellent questions, Kevin for marking and Dave Richardson for acting as a superb quiz master. This year we donated our quiz profit to Friends of St Huberts Church to help with major repair work.

**Supporting other village groups**

We also enhance the life of the village supporting other village groups by making donations.

This year we have:-

❖ Bought a heated trolley for RVS luncheon group

❖ Helped pay for improvements to the Rowlands Castle allotment car park

❖ Bought tents for the Guides

❖ Donated to Friends of St Huberts Church repair fund

❖ Donated to Rowans Hospice

❖ Donated to Markwells Wood Watch

❖ Paid for the Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre advertisement and photographic competition prizes.

❖ Paid for the Children’s Christmas Party

We have a number of groups and societies that have requested funds for forthcoming projects’. These include:-

➢ St John’s School PTA for 2 outdoor table tennis tables and trim trail equipment.

➢ The Church on The Green for refurbishment of the Church and to increase the hall space.

➢ The Tennis Club to install floodlighting on their courts.

➢ Scouts to make major repairs to their hut.

➢ Castle United Football Club have requested a donation to fund new football kit.

**Closing remarks**

I’m happy to report that the RCA is in good shape both financially and in terms of the very able people who are currently running the Association on behalf of all of us. We would like to thank our President Alan Drinkwater and Vice President Alan Eyers for all their support throughout the year.

Two of the committee have stood down during the past year: David Hooper and Geoff Jacobs. I would like to thank them both for all their hard work and input into the RCA committee.

We would like to welcome Rodney Duggua who is joining the Committee, but we desperately need more new members on the Committee as the majority of the committee have done their allocated years according to the RCA constitution and are being reinstated each year at the AGM. If you would like to join (or know someone who would) do ask one of the committee after this meeting or drop me an email. It is fun, worthwhile and you get to know new faces.

Shirley Varnish thanked Fiona for her clear report on the RCA activities.

Andrew Callender thanked the RCA committee for their work and financial support for St Hubert's.

**Treasurer’s report**

The RCA financial year ended on 31st December 2016

The accounts were audited by Sandra Hodgetts

Receipts for the year £11,168.98

Payments for the year £7,412.71

Excess of Income over expenditure £3,756.27

The Bank Accounts stood at £ 19,107.66

Cash in Hand £100

Martha asked if anyone knew of any organisations who needed donations to contact her.

Collecting boxes are not going to be used anymore for door to door collecting. There will just be one in the Hardware Store.

**Confirmation of President and Vice President**

The RCA Committee unanimously confirmed Alan Drinkwater as President and Alan Eyers as Vice President.

Alan Drinkwater thanked the committee for their hard work over the year. He said it is not a static organisation and it has taken on many new initiatives such as the May Day picnic, The Great British Spring Clean, RCHC, and the U3A. He suggested that if people were interested in joining the committee then go to a committee meeting to see what it is like.

**Election of officers**

This part of the AGM was also presented by Alan Drinkwater and the election went as follows:

Chair – Fiona Charlesworth voted as Chair, unanimous

Treasurer – Martha Dombey voted as Treasurer, unanimous

Secretary – Sue Leonard voted as Secretary, unanimous

**Election of committee**

The remaining Committee members were announced by Alan Drinkwater, all of whom were also voted in unanimously –Sue Morrison, Deborah Richards, Joyce Jacobs, Helen Penfold and Gordon Charlesworth.

Rodney Duggua was voted in as new committee member. Kevin Connell will continue as Editor, and Gillian Lovegrove will continue as Webmaster.

Fiona Charlesworth closed this part of the proceedings and thanked Alan for his presentation.

**Any other business**

Alan Eyers asked about the music at the Firework night. MD responded that she had contacted EHDC and the TENs license doesn't apply. This was clarified by EHDC.

Directory. It is now up dated online by MD. There is no longer a hard copy. MD will send a Grapevine message about this and a notice put in the RCA notice board. In the magazine we will make it clear that it is online and if any amendments are needed to contact MD.

Fiona Charlesworth introduced Members of Rowlands Castle U3A who spoke to the meeting about the U3A. Shirley Varnish (U3A Secretary), June Halford (French), Dave Mitchell (Cycling), Joan Hooper (Play reading), Helen Penfold (Nature Walking).

Fiona thanked The U3A for their very interesting talks.

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The meeting closed at 7.50 pm and was followed by nibbles and drinks.