

CAISTER - ON - SEA

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MONDAY, 19 MAY 2025 - 6.30PM
THE COUNCIL HALL, 1 YARMOUTH ROAD, CAISTER

Meeting called by Cllr Kevin Wood – Chair, Caister Parish Council

Meeting notes collated by Karina Green – Clerk, Caister Parish Council

59 attendees present

1. Welcome

Cllr Wood welcomed all attendees to the Annual Parish Meeting. Thank you's were extended to Tesco, Caister for providing the refreshments and to Caister W.I. for serving refreshments to the attendees.

2. Report: Chair, Caister Parish Council

Good evening welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting and first ever Community Awards (not to be confused with the Annual Parish Council Meeting).

My name is Kevin Wood and I am currently the Chair of the Parish Council and giving this report on behalf of the Parish Council.

We have had some changes within the council over the past year with some councillors standing down and some new councillors taking their place. I would like to thank all councillors old and new for giving up their time for our village over the past 12 months.

We have also had a number of changes in our Parish Office with Karina taking over as our new clerk and Michele as our new Responsible Finance Officer and Burials Clerk. These changes have come around due to long serving staff retiring and will only serve to help the Council move forward in a progressive way and we are already seeing the benefits of these appointments. Council again pass on their thanks to Mrs Dyble and Zoe for their commitment to Council over the past number of years.

As a Council, we are very community focussed - and with children at the heart of every community, we feel that one of our greatest achievements of the past 12 months was getting the new play park installed at the playing field. At every stage we involved the children and the community and it was certainly one of my proudest days last year to see it opened by the children. People asked me if we were getting a celebrity to open the new park and my response was 'yes of course' - and we did, the children of Caister Junior school, who had worked with us on the design of the new play area - for the children by the children. I'm sure you will all agree that it is fantastic to see how much it gets used every day - even on cold winter days!

With community focus again at the forefront of everything we do, some Councillors are working closely with Caister playing field and East Coast College on Caister's first ever Sensory garden - another amazing local project. Peter Sleet, Chair of our Parish Council Finance Committee, has worked tirelessly to obtain grants and funding for this project - and I have worked tirelessly to spend them! The sensory garden will be an asset to this village for years to come. The group from the college will talk later in more detail and on behalf of Caister and the Parish Council, a huge thank you to everyone involved.

Other community events we have been involved in over the past 12 months include

the Village Festival which continues to grow from strength to strength thanks again to a small team of volunteers and 8 Parish councillors - this year's festival is not far away now and again, a big thank you goes to all those involved in making it happen.

As in previous years, we had a great turn out at the war memorial for Remembrance Sunday - an event that has grown since 2019 when we installed the war memorial - it's wonderful to see more and more young people attending every year too. Prior to this we also managed after some debate to get the path through the cemetery repaired too.

Despite the 'Great Street Light Debarcle' - nothing could dampen Caister's Christmas spirit and Light up Caister really showed what Caister is all about, with local businesses and homes, lighting up their windows along the centre of our village. Christmas lights every year are thanks to Rob Bachelor and his team who make sure that star shines bright on the church tower and the Council Hall is a real festive centrepiece to our village.

The Derek George Christmas carol service in the Lifeboat shed was a special afternoon and of course, we can't mention Christmas without mentioning Caister's very own Wonderland at the playing field - organised by Sinead (the festival Queen) and Karina (our new clerk) - the weather didn't put you off and you all came out for a real festive treat for all ages.

Most recently, we celebrated VEDAY, 80 years on with two events throughout the day. A church service followed by a proclamation at the war memorial and then a forties evening of celebration hosted jointly by the Parish Council and Caister Lifeboat. The evening culminated with the beacon lighting at 9.30pm in line with other locations across the Country. Thank you to Caister Scouts for lighting the beacon and to all involved in organising both events with a true community feel.

Something a little different but just as important - defibrillators. Some of you may be aware that nine years ago I lost my wife to a heart attack. At that time we had only one 24 hour defibrillator in Caister. Thanks to local support and with the help of Jane from Heart to Heart, we now have ten 24hour defibrillators in Caister - a great achievement I'm sure you'll agree. Caister Men's Shed installed the 10th one in place at the rear entrance to the playing field last year - well done to everyone who has helped add these invaluable assets to our village.

Another big achievement from earlier this year was seeing Caister's newest lifeboat launch into service - we should never underestimate the importance of our lifeboat and the fact it is the only independent all weather lifeboat in the UK - this alone is a great achievement for our village and something we should all be proud of! Once again, the lifeboat crew are all volunteers who give their time for our community.

We have some truly great people in our village who work hard and volunteer for their organisations - some real community minded unsung heroes. Some of which, will be celebrated here this evening with our new Annual Community Awards.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to someone I have known for a very long time and work very closely with on many projects across our village. A man I can truly call a friend who has the same goals as me for our community - Russell Ray, Chair of the Playing Field Management Committee - thank you for all you do for our village.

You will have noticed the word Community mentioned several times already this evening - it's not by accident. Community is at the centre of what we do here and in Caister, we have the best community there is!

One thing you can be sure of is that your Parish Council will always put our village first and fight for what we believe is right for Caister. This is why we will remain opposed to the further proposed overdevelopment on our boundary of an additional 1100 houses

which there is no doubt this will affect everyone's quality of life.

Still to come in 2025 we have the Village Festival, VJ Day, the Sensory Garden grand opening and Light up Caister. We are always working behind the scenes on future projects to benefit our village and our community.

Caister really is a great place to be.

3. Report: County Councillor (shared in paper form with attendees)

4. Reports: Local Community Groups/Organisation

- ❖ Caister W.I.
- ❖ Caister Flower Club
- ❖ Holy Trinity Church and Caister Community Larder
- ❖ Caister Lifeboat
- ❖ Caister in Bloom
- ❖ Caister Playing Field and Youth Club
- ❖ Men's Shed
- ❖ Sensory Garden
- ❖ Caister Ladies
- ❖ Caister Football Club
- ❖ Caister Community Association
- ❖ East Norfolk Scouts

All groups emphasised that members and volunteers are welcomed/needed. If you would like any more information on any of these groups or organisations, please contact the Parish Clerk who can connect you.

5. Parishioner Comments

No comments from parishioners

6. Community Awards

The first Annual Community Awards consisted of three categories:

- ❖ Community Hero (Under 18) - Sponsored by AJ Trade Plastics Ltd
- ❖ Community Hero (18 and Over) - Sponsored by Tesco, Caister
- ❖ Spirit of Caister – Sponsored by Batchelor Electrical Services

31 individual nominations were received, and all nominees were called up by Cllr Wood to receive their certificates.

The first trophy for Community Hero (Under 18) was presented by Martin Mitchell from award sponsor AJ Trade Plastics Ltd to **Holly and Elliot Clark** for their efforts across the village and beach litter picking to ensure Caister is always looking it's best.

Next up, Cllr Wood presented the trophy on behalf of Tesco, Caister to the Community Hero (18 and over) winner, **Gary**. Gary spends hours litter picking throughout the entire village and is always happy to stop and chat to passers by.

Finally, the Spirit of Caister Award was presented by Rob Batchelor of Batchelor Electrical Services to **Russell and Tanya Ray**. Russell and Tanya set up and run (with the help of a band of volunteers) the Rabbit Hutch Coffee Shop at Caister Playing Field. The Rabbit Hutch is not only a community hub but a real life line for so many residents – a truly deserving duo of Caister's first ever Community Spirit Award.