

THE CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB - SUFFOLK CENTRE
MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH 2025
HINTLESHAM VILLAGE HALL

Meeting opened at 7.48 p.m. Due to road issues several committee were delayed.

Those taking part in the committee meeting were:

Chairman	Ron King
Vice Chairman / Webmaster	Julian Fincham-Jacques
Secretary	Janet Dobson
Treasurer	Will James
Rally Secretary	Alan Dobson
Centre Equipment	Denise King
Committee	Martin Combes
Publicity	Dave Sanders

Item 1. Apologies for Absence – Chris Stammers.

Item 2. Corrections to Previous Minutes – None noted.

Item 3. Signing of Previous Minutes – Ron King, as Chairman, signed the minutes for July, Janet to place on file.

Item 4. Matters Arising on minutes from last Meeting – None noted.

Item 5. Chairmans Report – After the Sunsets at Leiston rally finished, Denise and I had a couple of weeks away from attending rallies. Still managed to get away in the caravan, going to Norwich for the Warners Motorhome Show. First time we have done this type of event. Plenty to do and spend money and the music entertainment was brilliant every night.

In my absence from the rally field, I give thanks to Janet Dobson for chairing Shotley Rose rally. Also, to Martin Combes for taking the Chair at short notice at the Wind Down at Woolverstone.

On the 30th of July 2025, Denise and I attended the funeral of Eric Gaffer. Several members past and present from Suffolk Centre attended to pay their respects to his passing. Eric, along with his wife Shirley was regularly seen supporting the centre on rallies over many years. It was mentioned at the service, that Eric lived to the age of ninety-five and had never been in hospital until his passing.

The next rally I attended was Ladies Day @ Rowley Mile racecourse, Newmarket. Saturday afternoon the ladies donned their suitable headwear, and we all enjoyed refreshments supplied by the Marshals. The Centre welcomed for the first time Rich and Haley Jackson who was doing their first ever rally. At Flagpole they received their special, first rally plaque.

After many years, I with Denise attended the Thorpeness Cliff Top Holiday rally. A lot of hard work goes into preparing the site ready for the rally to start, by volunteers who attend the

ten-day event. A full programme was laid on for everyone. Four nights of live music, which was first class, also Cinema Night, Quiz Night and a Bingo Night. One lucky winner won the last game of the night, with a payout of £300 for getting a full house. Also, a raffle took place, in aid of East Anglian Air Ambulance. A total of £400.62p was raised. Thank you to all who donated prizes and bought raffle tickets. Whilst at the rally, a couple joined Suffolk Centre and received their special, first rally plaque. Welcome Tony & Angela Newbold.

I Chaired the Dan's Meadow rally that was held over the weekend 12th-14th September 2025. Seventeen units attended the rally. The marshals had the use of the hall over the weekend. A social gathering on Friday night and on Saturday, after Flagpole a general knowledge quiz, followed by a karaoke evening. Well done to those who got up and gave renditions of songs they liked.

The Marshals raised a concern with me, reference a defaulter to the rally. As time went by on Friday, they decided to contact the people as to what time they would be arriving. To the Marshals amazement, the persons concerned said they were not coming. As in their words, the slip was an interest to come to the rally and not a booking. Also, the lady said that her husband had just had a knee replacement two weeks ago. The Marshals couldn't understand why they had not cancelled the rally as you are normally given a date for operations. Perhaps we as a centre, need to make things more definitively, if people think we put events on an interest and might come basis when booking.

Ron advised committee that he had been told a long-standing member, Dave Otto, is seriously unwell at the present time. Committee thoughts are with Dave and his family.

Item 6. Vice Chairmans Report – Julian had nothing to report.

Item 7. Other Rally Reports – Woolverstone Rally – Chaired by Martin Combes.

A good friendly atmosphere with between six and twelve children at any one time. Tea and Coffee on Friday night were well supported and appreciated with people staying to chat into the evening because of the lovely weather.

On Saturday, Paul and Diane organised a Boules Competition, which brought out the competitive side of everyone. They also organised a separate competition for the children, which they all enjoyed. Despite a heavy downpour in the afternoon, the final of the adults' competition took place after Saturday evening's Flagpole, with wine provided to aid the enjoyment of the event.

At flagpole, I announced that the Lessingham Rally has had to be cancelled and also pushed the Dan's Meadow, Thorpeness and AGM Rallies.

Sunday was a quiet, do as you please day,

There were no visitors or first time ralliers, but there were two previous Chairs there.

Shotley rose Rally – Chaired by Janet Dobson

A really good turnout on rally. Weather was a bit hit and miss, rain at times, but everyone seemed to be able to get to do what they wanted. Entertainment laid on in pub once again, seemed well attended. Unfortunate incident at end of rally between a vehicle/caravan

leaving the site and a still sited one. Damage to both caravans, help offered by numerous ralliers. Marshals offered rally again for 2026 but on a different weekend.

Item 8. Treasurers Report – Little to report beyond everything up to date apart from Thorpeness (still reconciling and making final payments).

Sum-up was used for Clare. In order to access our cash, they require confirmation of Directors and HO address; this is with Jon Laws for action. I chased a couple of weeks ago, I think Jon is off ill.

HSBC have stopped charging £5 for 'charity accounts' (including Suffolk Centre). They have just advised that some charges are increasing from December 2025.

Interim rally figures given to committee to update.

Meeting with Edward Baxter: I met with Edward and other Treasurers in the Division 30/07/25. Jon Laws was also meant to attend but he was taken ill on holiday.

An accounting system for Centres is being developed (to be written by CAMC IT). Roll out is planned for 2026. It is expected that saving on Audit Fees will pay for the system build.

Discussions have taken place on the Centre Grant. Only 12% fully spend their (banded) grant. Proposal is for the same grant for all centres (i.e. irrespective of the number of members). There will be a new template, e.g. to include website costs. If there is a legitimate overspend on the universal grant, extra money will be available.

I asked about other Centre's process for cancelled Rally bookings. Practice varies, generally charge for expense incurred. Mid Anglia Committee decides on whether to charge a 'fine'.

Topic of cash and lack of bank branches: per Centre Governance Handbook (page 39) – "The Club does not provide insurance to cover loss or theft of cash held by a Centre or Rally Officer. If large amounts of cash are held (£1,000 or greater), it would be advisable to procure insurance cover.

In the light of this and the lack of local bank branches, it is recommended that Centres off alternative payment options to members that do not involve cash."

Item 9. Secretary Report:

9.1. Membership – Janet reported that on Friday 1st August there were 986 members. For June renewals we had 68 non-renewals.

For Friday 22nd August there were 1,033 members. Reports for 29 August, 5th September and 12th September were done on Janet's return from holiday. Current information available is that we lost 85 members from July renewals, still to renew from August is 78. Total members now at 982. For some reason sudden increase in new members the last couple of weeks.

9.2. Correspondence received: Email from rally marshal over one non-arrival. From messages member appears to understand rally slip as "interest" not "booking". To discuss at meeting and follow up. Janet advised that the email address on the rally slip is one recognised but is not the one currently listed in the membership information from the Club.

Emails from Governance over online training for Secretary and Rally Secretary re Data Protection. To be done by the Friday before our AGM. Janet has asked club if relevant so

near to AGM and possible no re-election etc., but advice is they have to be done. Felt complete waste of time if re-elections don't happen. Further email from Club on relationship now between Centres and the newly re-organised Divisions. Further email on rally stats. One item which wasn't asked for at the beginning of this exercise was the total attendance – Janet explained had this been asked for then marshals could have been contacted. It was said that how many times are the one set of numbers on the rally slip and other numbers arrive – e.g. bringing grandchild on slip who then doesn't come. Request from Club for any "rallying" photos they could use in a display

Emails from members.

Figures given on handbook and posting figures. With number leaving the Centre this will change.

Question over marshals and carrying on booking if a new committee isn't formed, we will have to wait until nominations close

A.G.M. MEETING

List of members for AGM as yet not received. Apologies coming in. Janet requested reports from Chairman/Treasurer/Secretary and Rally Secretary. No Motions for the meeting have been received. Nominations close on Sunday 28th September at Noon. So far received one nomination for committee, 4 current committee are undecided, 4 stated they are not standing for re-election. Agreed Janet to write to all members with emails stating urgency of the situation in needing a committee for 2026.

9.3. Attendance – Done and up to date prior to holiday, Janet to follow up.

Item 10. Rally Secretary Report: Alan sent round the latest list to 25th August prior to holiday. Updates given at meeting: Possible date for Thorpeness, marshals requested form for rally information – further information date looks like 13 to 23 August moving away from Bank Holiday. Other dates given out on request, no bookings have come in. Alan had received (17 September) a list of invites from Mid Anglia – committee discussion on acceptance. Just prior to the meeting an email from North Essex Centre was received. Both lists discussed, all accepted, Alan to update form and send round committee.

Basic book design to follow on with last year's folder being done, but nothing more definite with future of both job role and Centre unknown.

Ron said he had a telephone conversation with Jasmine Kent from Division re a rally at Beccles if Suffolk Centre could run it? Alan to email Jasmine for further information/date etc. and explain also we are finding it hard to get marshals for our own events, let alone committee members.

Item 11. Publicity – Nothing to report. Ron King thanked Dave for his hard work (along with Angie) in the Publicity role this last year.

Item 12. Rally Equipment – All Centre equipment is now back in storage.

Item 13. Webmaster – There had been an issue with the website in moving to a new server. We are back with the old server at present, still work in progress.

Item 14. Newsletter – No further newsletters prior to AGM meeting. New committee to decide if to continue.

Item 15. Anglia Division Report (Ron King, Representative) – On the 3rd of September 2025, as Suffolk Centre Representative, I attended the Anglia Division meeting via Zoom.

The Centre Chairmen of the Division mainly agreed that numbers were down on rallies this year. Divisional Treasurer, Garry Pyett stated he had spent quite a bit of time on CAMC and private sites recently and found them to be very quiet during the week.

On the 30th of July 2025, Treasurers from the Divisional Centres held a meeting. From what was said, the Club wants all treasurers to use the same format throughout the club. No doubt our Treasurer will embellish at the next Suffolk Centre committee meeting.

Independent member said from her experience, the club sites in Europe were good. One site in France keeps coming up as a concern near Lyon. The security and the site, seems to fall short of club standards, but still appear in the brochure every year. It is an ideal overnight stop to and from Spain, as it's just off the motorway. The Chairman said he would raise the issue with CAMC, as to why it is still in the brochure.

The recent ClubFest seemed to be run a bit better than in other years. Sounded like Anglia Division got the short Straw again, on location at the venue.

The Divisional AGM and rally take place at Sedgefield Village Hall, Norfolk from 16th-20th October 2025. The AGM is on Sunday 19th October 2025 starting at 11am sharp. All Officer positions are up for nomination. At the meeting it was said the numbers are low, for those wishing to attend the rally.

There will be a short meeting after the Divisional AGM, for the new Officers and centre representatives. A Meeting and a Forum is to take place at The Holiday Inn, Impington, Cambridge on the 10th of January 2026

As I told the assembled at the Zoom meeting, I have enjoyed my last four years as Suffolk Centre representative and will miss the meetings with other divisional centre members and the work I did with the Anglia Region/Division. Yes, it has been trying at times, but I have worked with some great people at ClubFest and other Anglia events.

Item 16. Other Committee / Any Other Business –

Ron asked about a WhatsApp Group for the Centre, was this a possibility. Was something that would need to be monitored by Secretary so only registered members in it, same as Facebook. Would Club allow this under GDPR and the information that would be available to other members. Janet to enquire and get further information.

Rally plaques need to be looked at for the future due to issues in receiving them with the current postal delays.

Will to look at the Admin Fee for 2026 and put in Treasurers report for AGM so members are fully aware.

Will Thursby attending AGM, can act as Teller, any paper votes will be known once nominations close.

Ron asked if the Centre would fund the entertainment (or part of) for the AGM. Agreed to discuss with Will when better figures known, committee in agreement to make a donation. Centre funds hall for the AGM meeting over the rally weekend.

Agreed we need a meeting (Zoom) after nominations close to see where the Centre is going – agreed to set up for Tuesday 30 September at 7 p.m. Full information to be found out depending what route we are heading for.

Meeting closed at: 9.58 p.m.

DISCLAIMER: All those mentioned in this report have given their permission for their data to be used.