

Date: 17th May 2021

Dear Walberswick Parish Council

I am seeking help and advice concerning the possibility of organising a celebration of my brothers' life, for his friends and family, at Walberswick beach on 26th June 2021.

You may have heard that in February this year, we lost my brother (Andy) while he was kite surfing at Walberswick. Andy was an experienced and professional kitesurf instructor, and his death came as a terrible shock to us all. Following a lengthy investigation, the coroner concluded that Andy died of a heart attack, due to a congenital heart disorder that caused the blood flow to his heart to become restricted when his heart was working hard. Although losing Andy was heart breaking, we found some solace in the fact that his death was not specifically kitesurf related but could have happened anywhere, at any time when he was undertaking physical activity. Instead, it happened while he was doing something he truly loved.

Andys kitesurfing took him all over the world and he became a well know and well-loved member of the kitesurf community, both internationally and locally. Many of his friends contacted us with condolences following his death and their kind words and memories of Andy really helped us through the worst. Andy was cremated in March but, due to restriction related to the control of Covid-19, we were only able to have 30 people present and unable to have a wake. Many of his friends and family lined the route from Darsham Church to Ipswich crematorium and many requested that we consider arranging some form of celebration for Andy whenever we could.

Walberswick has always been dear to our family. We are a local (Darsham) and have owned a beach hut at Walberswick for as long as I can remember. Andy and I spent many happy hours swimming, building sandcastles, and crabbing with my cousins when we were growing up and, although Andys kitesurfing took him to many exotic locations, he always returned to his favourite kitesurfing spot at Walberswick.

Consequently, what we would love to do is to organise a celebration of Andys life for his friends and family at Walberswick beach. We also intend to use the occasion to raise more money, through donations, for the local coastal emergency services, including the Southwold Lifeboat station (the crew that attended Andy in February).

Below I have outlined a proposal for the celebration we would like to organise. I would be very grateful if you could let me know if holding such a celebration would be at all possible and, if it is, how I can work with you and the local community to make it happen.

Yours sincerely

Deb Smith
Bumblebee Cottage, Darsham.

Proposed beach celebration in memory of Andy Smith, local kitesurf instructor

Date: Saturday 26th June

Time: from 2pm to 10pm

Estimated number of attendees (spread throughout the day): 150

Where: Please see map below

Walberswick Caravan site Toilets Access road Party area? Car parking Water & Community beach hut



The ideal area for the party would be within the area indicated on the map above. This provides a relatively flat grassy area where people could congregate. It is also close to the beach, the communal beach hut (which we would seek to rent for the day and use as a central contact point), a fresh water supply, the car park (we have been given Victoria Cowley as a contact and would gladly work with her to ensure that this works smoothly), and public toilets. There is also an access road which serves Walberswick caravan site. We know that all enquiries for the site should be directed to Jon Winyard, and we have been told that Jon is chair of the Walberswick branch of the RNLI. Consequently, we are keen to speak to him regarding use of the road and campsite, and supporting Walberswick RNLI as part of our fundraising activities. We believe the land itself is owned by Mr Blois but we have been unable to contact him so far to ask about using it for the party. Any assistance in contacting Mr Blois would be very welcome.

We would propose that people bring their own chairs and blankets to sit and, and their own refreshments by way of picnics. We would also encourage people to purchase food and drink from the local cafes and pubs. We would like to know whether the use of small bar B Qs would also be acceptable.

Some of those attending may wish to spend more time in Walberswick and we would welcome a list of local accommodation options (B&B, Guesthouse, holiday cottages, camping & caravanning) to offer people.

We have been offered the facilities to play music, but this would be subject to your approval. As would accepting the offer of a firework display at the end of the evening.

We have also been approached by the local press, who covered Andys story back in February. They would like to cover the party and the presentation of a giant cheque to the local RNLI. Members of the Southwold crew have already said they would be pleased to attend, and we would also seek to invite Jon.

People would be encouraged to take ALL their rubbish home with them, but we would also ensure that the area was cleared after use.