

HOLT AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TRADE

Minutes of the Meeting held at Byfords Wine Bar on 3 December 2008 at 1800 hours.

Committee:	John Lintott (Chairman)	Hayes & Storr	712835
	Alan Godfrey (Treasurer)	Gresham's School	714503
	Chris Harrison	Bircham Gallery	713312
	Charles Butler	Butler's Pantry	711867
	Caroline Carter	The Holt Chronicle	712177
	Sandra Taylor-Meads	Budgens	713734
	Lynda Mossman	Past Caring	713771
	David Makinson	The Holt Bookshop	715858

PRESENT: John Lintott (Chairman), Alan Godfrey (Treasurer), Esme Bagnall-Oakeley, Duncan Baker, Rhu Bruce Lockhart, Charles Butler, Caroline Carter, David Makinson, Carol Pennington, Rodney Smith, Sarah Tribe, Nik Searle, Joshua Dyball and Lindsey Furness

APOLOGIES: Linda Mossman, Chris Harrison, Stephen Davies, Sandra Taylor-Meads.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: These were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING: None

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: John thanked Esme and her committee for their immense hard work for a very successful evening. Esme then gave a report. She said that there was no committee at all before August. She praised all her committee being Sarah, Duncan, Di Dann, Josh, Anna Magee, Anny Hare, Kevin Austin and Alison Rose. The electrical contractors C & O greatly appreciated the forward planning which enabled them to start putting up the lights in the summer which avoided the last minute rush which had happened in previous years. Because of this they made a £1,000 reduction in their bill which was very much appreciated. All the events in the programme had been very well received and all the Yards confirmed how much more successful it had been for them with entertainers visiting them. Sarah explained the reason for her sudden absence on the night. The members of the lights committee indicated that they would be happy to serve another year. They were thanked by all for their great effort. Esme gave a brief report about the finances. Alison still had to collect some pledges. It was expected that there would be sufficient funds to pay for the expenses but there were concerns about how much money could be carried over for next years event. Esme will meet Alison shortly to confirm the position. One or two improvements were suggested that the committee noted. It was put forward that the church bells could be rung next year and the possibility of a fanfare at the moment the lights are switched on. All ideas will be looked into at a review meeting later this month.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Alan produced up to date accounts. They indicated a deficit of income against outgoings during this financial year so far. Membership subscriptions were down. If the income did not improve significantly in the coming year, the Chamber would have to reduce its contribution to the Christmas Lights and also review the cost of the planters and other expenses. There was then a discussion about next years subscription. A number of proposals were put forward but eventually it was voted that the subscription remain at £40 a year.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Linda sent a written report confirming the position in relation to two subscriptions. Caroline mentioned that new traders were supporting the Chamber but unfortunately some businesses were closing. Rhu proposed that we send out the minutes to all business in Holt whether or not members. This was agreed. We would endeavour to obtain e-mail addresses.

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT: Howard Heathfield had announced at the last meeting that the Holt Museum Trust held £20,000 towards the acquisition of premises. The Museum wished to go into new premises on the former public toilets site in Church Street but the future of these remained unresolved.

The Town Council had been approved for Quality Status. This would mean that in the future more powers may be devolved to it presently exercised by the District Council.

HOLT TOWN GUIDE: John had heard from Sophie Jewry that the Guide was going to the printers this coming Monday with planned delivery to businesses just before Christmas. One or two Chamber members had received a copy of the plan from the Guide and were concerned that this only showed businesses who were advertising in it. It was agreed that it would be much more useful if all businesses were shown on the town map but it was acknowledged that it was an unsatisfactory situation that businesses who had chosen not to advertise to be on the map alongside those who had advertised. It was agreed that Josh would speak to Sophie about this. We were told that Di Dann had been involved in the preparation of the Guide.

THORNAGE ROAD CAR PARK: John had attended with Graham Chapman, Michael and Adrian Hill at a meeting at the NNDC offices on Tuesday morning with cabinet member Peter Moore, Deputy Chief Executive Sheila Oxtoby and Jill Fisher and Steve Hems who were involved with the local development frame work. They were told that the Council had no statutory duty to provide car parks contrary to Graham's understanding. Graham invited the Council to contribute towards the cost of the transport assessment because it benefited not only the proposed car park but also provided traffic information for the Holt area which would assist the planning department. The Council indicated that it was not its policy to assist with a traffic assessment which was a condition of a private individual's planning application. Graham then invited the Council to assist financially in the provision and management of the car park. The Council responded by stating that it would not consider the invitation without a detailed business plan. Graham responded stating that he could not obtain accurate information needed to prepare a business plan until planning permission was granted. The Council did not agree. Notwithstanding the Council's responses, the Council acknowledged the effect on Graham's application of an expensive transport assessment several months after he had satisfied what he understood to be the only outstanding conditions and they would consider financial assistance for the assessment and the provision of the car park. Following the meeting Graham had found an official Planning Guidance which indicated that local authorities should draw up a traffic management strategy and provide good quality parking and further support public/private partnerships both in the provision and management of car parks. He was writing to the Council pointing out this Guidance and requesting their response. The committee was extremely disappointed to hear about the Council's response to Graham's requests and that no support was given to his application despite the vital need. Rhu proposed that we contact Norman Lamb MP and other proposals were discussed.

HOLT FESTIVAL: Rhu had arranged a meeting to which Hilary Foulds was invited to meet Tony Brittan and Derek Purnell to explore whether she would like to set up and run the Festival Committee. After a detailed discussion it was agreed that Hilary and Tony would work together in preparing a draft business plan to produce hopefully at the January meeting with a view to the Festival proceeding in the summer of 2009.

HOLT TOWN CENTRE PLANNING GROUP: Rhu had called a meeting of representatives of all elements of the Holt community the previous evening with a view to forming a forum whose object was to improve the external appearance of business premises in Holt, signage throughout the town and the streets. It was proposed that the Group report to the Town Council. Di Dann agreed to work with Gary Grunwald in the preparation of a questionnaire to canvas the views of the town in response to Rhu's concerns with a view to obtaining funding for a feasibility study.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 7th January 2009 at Byfords Wine Bar at 1800 hours.