

**HOLT CHAMBER OF TRADE**  
 Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
 18.00 hours at The Lawns, Station Road, Holt

Ian Furniss	The Tannery	07818405564
Martin Sanders (Treasurer)	Larking Gowan	712017
Charles Butler	Butler's Pantry	711867
Duncan Baker	Bakers and Larners of Holt	712244
Len Casey	Guided Media	768156
Sandra Taylor-Meeds	Budgens	713734
David Makinson	The Holt Bookshop	715858

**Present:** Michael Hill (Chair), Martin Sanders, John Allison, Duncan Baker, Mary Bopst, Charles Butler, Len Casey, Ian Cook, Nigel Emmett, Teresa Hill, Chris Lambert, Lynda Morris, Linda Mossman, Rodney Smith, James Stronach and PCSO Gary Baxter co-ordinator Holt Shopwatch Scheme.

**Apologies:** Allison Cook, Ian Furniss, Lindsay Furniss, Adrian Hill, Leslie Howard, Ray Moore, Jim Pallister, Ashlea Smith, Sandra Taylor Meeds.

**2. Minutes of Last Meeting:** The minutes of the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> January 2014 were accepted as a true record.

**3. Speaker:** The Chair informed the meeting that due to operational duties Nick Smith, Holt Beat Manager was unable to attend but PCSO Gary Baxter had kindly agreed to attend in his place. PCSO Baxter confirmed that instances of anti-social behaviour in the Town had decreased considerably in recent weeks, in fact since the main protagonist had been behind bars. The group that had been associated with this person appeared to have dispersed since she was removed. However the next problem may occur when she will be released from custody, she had been on remand for some time and it was expected her sentence would not exceed her remand time meaning immediate release when the cases came to court.

PCSO Baxter is in the process of revising the Holt Shop-Watch Scheme. He found when visiting local traders that information was not always being shared and problems within the town maybe bigger than individuals realised. Small crimes such as petty shoplifting were not always being reported. By setting up the scheme other business and police could be informed of all incidences. Many incidents went unreported or unchallenged because staff in the shops were not aware of how to challenge suspicious persons. Members agreed they needed some form of refresher course in how to correctly approach suspicious persons. The advice given by PCSO Baxter was if people were acting suspiciously, to approach them and ask 'are you going to pay for that'. If an incident does occur report it as soon as possible and get as good a description of those concerned as you can. Due to changes in the work system there were likely to be more officers in the Town and they could respond more quickly, MH confirmed that following a recent incident the Police response had been very swift. PCSO Baxter concluded his report by advising that all individuals should report incidences therefore acting as group: this would give the police more information to be able to take action more quickly. The use of the Chamber of Trade e mail was offered to share information from Police to traders. Or PCSO Baxter can be contacted by e mail on [baxterg@norfolkpolice.pnn.co.uk](mailto:baxterg@norfolkpolice.pnn.co.uk) or via the Holt Safer Neighbourhood Team website.

The meeting was then opened to questions: Following the closure of Sheringham Police Station PCSO Baxter was asked about any threat to the Holt Police Station. He was unable to give any information other than he thought as there was a major incident suite attached to the Station this may help to keep it open.

Asked his opinion on CCTV he advised that this could provide undisputable proof of a presence and had been used to confirm the person with the CRASBO has been in the Town when she had denied it.

**4. The Website:** [www.thisisholt.com](http://www.thisisholt.com) Len Casey advised the meeting that he had details I from 12 businesses and he had put two of these, The Feathers and Osokozi onto the website. Both needed a little tidying up but the pages could be changed at any time. He had also received information from Gresham's regarding the 'Huge Holt Howl' which he had added to the events page. Plus historical information from Michael Hill. He was currently in need of information for the front pages such as photo's and events.

**5. The Royal Norfolk Show.** Len confirmed everything was in order but he had lost two exhibitors. This was not a problem as the costs would still be covered. There is now room for two more exhibitors to join the marquee or each exhibitor could have a little more space. He was working on who needed water and electricity and awaiting details of the car parking tickets. He had sent invoices to those who had booked a space and requested that these could be paid as soon as possible because he had to pay the organisers. He would like a meeting of all exhibitors in a few weeks to finalise details including whether stalls would like a behind the table set up or a walk into stall. Each exhibitor would have the width of their stall plus eight feet behind. It was confirmed that those who could not attend could provide flyers to be displayed on the Chamber table the theme being 'This is Holt, to link with the website. Mustard TV who broadcast on freeview TV channel 8 would be at the tent on the Wednesday and Anglia TV had also agreed to be there.

**5a. The Christmas Lights:** This was included as an additional agenda item and Chris Lambert reported back for the Lights Group. The Group had now had a second meeting and had approached Jake Humphries to switch on the lights. His work commitments meant Wednesday was not a good night but he could be more positive if the event was held on a Thursday. (20<sup>th</sup> Nov) Chris asked the meeting if they felt this would cause a problem. The response was that it had historically always been on a Wednesday to avoid clashing with other switch ons in the County. Although it would not affect the traders so much, had consideration been given to Gresham's and The Church who played a big part in the switch on night. It was also felt the Thursday would probably clash with the Norwich switch on. Although there was mixed feelings over whether this would greatly affect the numbers at the Holt event it was thought the Norwich event would grab all the publicity. This was an established calendar event and people travelled miles to see it, Hotels and B and B's in the Town were booked up well in advanced of the event. There was some discussion about whether Jake Humphries was the correct person to do this and did we want to risk changing the day for one person: alternative suggestions were Dr Who and the Daleks and a children's character such as Peppa Pig. The initial observations to go back to the Lights Group were that the change of day should be considered with caution. Teresa Hill raised a question regarding the lights trail of 2013 which was advertised as having children's prizes and complaints had been made that no children's prizes appear to have been awarded. Adult winners had been reported on the Chronicle Website. Chris explained that the trail had been mainly arranged by Ian Wilson so he had little information. It was decided that the Chair should go back to Ian Wilson to enquire about this.

**6. Treasurers Report:** The Treasurer produced copies of the Management Accounts for yr ended 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. He reported income was down about £1,000 due to the alignment of the membership. He had recently sent out 95 invoices for this years membership. Total expenditure had been a similar amount as last year.

**7. Report from Town Council.** The Town Council report was given by John Allison. He reported this had been a quiet meeting. The HO9 site was now going for outline planning permission. A bid to close Hempstead Road at Kongsilda had been overturned. There had been a problem with moles in the cemetery. A letter from a member of the public had expressed concern that schoolchildren were using the footpath along the bypass and this should be fenced. The Town Council had asked Norfolk County Council for updated information on the Public Right of Way near the Thornage Road car park but no response had been received. The Clerk had suggested a WW1 commemorative event, using pictures of the 65 who died during the war in shops to provide a trail round the Town. This would not be in the form of a competition. The response was that this would really not be appropriate. The idea of a display was good but this should be in one public are i.e. the library or Community Centre. Cllr Hill had also suggested any war graves in the cemetery or churchyard should be neat and tidy during the commemorations. A travelling circus was looking for a spot in Holt for a few days and had suggested Spout Hills. There would be small animals only and no cars allowed on site. It was thought this was a good idea. Regarding the Huge Holt Howl the police had requested a risk assessment which

the Town Council had passed on to Gresham's.

**8. National Grid Roadworks:** The meeting was in total agreement that this had been a travesty from the start. The road signs had been atrocious, Cllr Baker had written regarding this and other points and had been kind enough to share his correspondence with the Chamber, as a result the signs were changed to reflected that the car parks were accessible and businesses open. Local radio, on the first day, reported High Street, Market Street and Bull Street were closed, Cllr Hill phoned immediately and had this corrected. The roadworks were now complete but an article in the EDP had made the comment today, that White Lion Street was closed, this will be retracted tomorrow. The actual work being complete was sporadic and some days no work was completed at all. Contractors left site at 3.15, to allow time to return to Cambridge. Only one side of the road was dug up the other being used to park vans, this would have been more use for single lane controlled traffic. Cllr Allison felt this may have been a health and safety measure to keep the public away and avoid the risk of explosion. National Grid had to do this work, to replace gas mains it was part of a rolling programme to ensure all pipes were safe. They had said they were unsure of the amount of time it would take and advised 28 days the work was complete in 21 days. It could not be done on a Sunday because before any gas is switched off and on again all customers need to be on site for the switch on. Current situation is that there is still works outside Byfords.

The chair wished to thank Cllr Baker for his efficiency getting the signs corrected and keeping everyone informed via the secretary.

Traders were reporting takings were down on last year, even though there was snow at this time last year.

We must all now work to get people back into Holt and avoid any long term decrease in trade.

Action - it was agreed the Chamber Chair should write a 'heavyweight' letter to National Grid expressing all our concerns. Duncan Baker as our council representative should ask the Town Council to write to National Grid expressing the feelings of the Town over this matter.

**9. February 2014 NNDC Car Park Report.** Michael Hill had circulated a copy of a letter from the EDP regarding a report on costs from car parking fines in North Norfolk. The letter had been written by Cllr Jones who had sent a copy of the report to Michael Hill he had then had figures for Holt extrapolated. A copy of this is attached. The outcome being that Holt's PCN's are about 37% of the total number of PCN's issued throughout the district (1820/6717) and yet very little of the revenue generated from this is being returned to Holt to help with our car parking problems. It was asked why the District Council had not seen this as an initiative to help Holt with the car parking problems, it appeared if Holt had more car parking spaces even more income would be generated.

There was also concern that 25% of the total income came from notices issued between 6pm and 10pm, which was not encouraging people to come into the towns to use cinema's, theatres pubs and restaurants. It was asked if the figures for the time the roadworks had been in place could be obtained to confirm the drop in visitors.

**10. Businesses Opening and Closing.** None notified. Peadillos had moved from one end of Bull Street to the other.

**10 AOB:** Frequency of Meetings, the Chair was asking for opinions from the group regarding the frequency of meetings, some meetings recently, noticeably the January meeting, had been attended by only six people, three of whom were Town Councillors. There had also been a speaker at the meeting. Would fewer meetings mean better attendance? was the day/time wrong? What could be done to improve attendance. The Chair was looking for ideas and discussion not decisions. Duncan Baker felt by having meetings every two months we would be giving out the wrong message. Traders paid their subscription and should get monthly meetings. It was also felt that no meeting was held in August because of the holidays perhaps the same should be applied to January. It was also felt that recently members had not known where and when the meetings would be held perhaps it was time to return to the first Wednesday of every month and a set venue. Secretary to contact Byfords to see if they would allow us to return to their venue. The meeting time of 6pm meant members who finished at 5pm had to kill time before the meeting and perhaps it should be a 5.30 start. Those members not on e mail were not getting information, how could we rectify this - treasurer and secretary to check membership lists with e mail lists. We also needed to check to see if the right person was receiving the e mails. Meetings used to be advertised/reported in the Chronicle. It was agreed the next meeting would be

held as normal where the matter would be on the agenda and any changes made.

NNR 1940's weekend. Len Casey had been talking to traders in the Town and response had been generally good to opening on the Sunday (21<sup>st</sup> Sept). The yards had responded better than the front of Town who appeared to be waiting for Bakers and Larners to react. Duncan Baker suggested Len should, as a representative of NNR, make an appointment to see Michael Baker with regard to opening on this Sunday. The matter of transport from the station was again discussed, Len knows of a company who have a vintage bus and they could provide free rides from the station if the chamber were prepared to fund the running costs, estimated at about £200 per day. The bus would not be allowed to charge fares. It was agreed if Sunday was not considered a good idea all shops would be open on the Saturday and Holt should capitalise on this.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the Lawns for the use of the venue.

**Next Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014:**

**Venue: Byfords Cellar.**