

HOLT AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TRADE

Minutes of the Meeting held at Byfords Wine Bar on 7 January 2009 at 1800 hrs.

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	Bakers & Larners	713734
	Lynda Mossman	Past Caring	713771
	David Makinson	The Holt Bookshop	715858

PRESENT: Alan Godfrey (Treasurer) in the chair, Duncan Baker, Charles Butler, Caroline Carter, Alan Cook, Di Dann, Joshua Dyball, Rhu Bruce Lockhart, David Makinson, and Rodney Smith.

Alan Cook of Edward Jones, who was attending the meeting for the first time, was warmly welcomed.

APOLOGIES: Harriet Clayton-Gray, Stephen Davies, Lindsey Furness, Lynda Mossman, Carol Pennington, and Sandra Taylor-Meads.

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

MATTERS ARISING: None.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The income for the year to 5 January 2009 is £2,266.46 and expenditure is £3,420.21 which gives a deficit of £1,153.75. The closing bank balance is £1,707.42.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Several potential new members have been approached and outstanding subscriptions are being chased up.

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT:

Thornage Road Car Park - Unfortunately the District Council will not fund the necessary traffic survey and stated that the costs should be paid by the planning applicant. It was proposed that some of the initial work could be carried out by volunteers to cut down the costs (Total costs £15,000 - £20,000) as progress on the proposed car park is not possible without this survey. Several members indicated their willingness to help. Some discussion took place on the survey purpose and timing and it was pointed out that, if the findings indicated a need for alterations to the present roundabout, the cost would probably be prohibitive. The Council is still investigating alternative sites. Those present wished to express their thanks to Graham Chapman for sterling perseverance!

Church Street Toilets – The District Council have now given the Town Council 60 days to submit a Market offer for the Church Street Site. It is still hoped that it will be possible to keep the site for community use including a visitor and community information point and toilets.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: No financial information was available but it was suggested that collection buckets should be taken round in future, on the night, to help with funding.

HOLT FESTIVAL: Rhu Bruce Lockhart reported that a number of artists have accepted provisional bookings and it is proposed that a production manager is employed for the 10 weeks leading up to the Festival (Festival dates Monday 3 August – Saturday 8 August 2009). This will be essential to co-ordinate the requirements of visiting artists, car parking etc. Planned events include Opera on the Run (Town Centre), Jazz, Gilbert and Sullivan, Cinema, Dance, Choral Concerts, Music Hall, Stand-up Comics, etc. For the Festival to go ahead, however, it is essential to find a patron and several founding sponsors. In addition to Gresham's

School it is hoped to be able to use the Old School House, the Community Centre and to have some events that move around the town centre giving several short performances at different areas throughout the day.

HOLT TOWN GUIDE: Di Dann said that she would like to be able to include the town map in the new guide at the new information point in Holt which gives details of public transport, etc. Di would make direct contact with Sophie Jewry regarding this. It was pointed out that the map only made reference to its advertisers, not all the traders in Holt. Apparently Sophie had approached all the traders but some had not wished to be included. Overall, however, the response to the guide was positive.

HOLT TOWN CENTRE PLANNING GROUP – NEXT MEETING: The ideas discussed at the first meeting of the Planning Group were outlined in a handout and it was agreed that it was essential to involve the NNDC in the whole process as they would have the ultimate responsibility for implementing any initiatives. Although funding could be a problem for some of the proposals, it was still considered important to formulate forward planning for the next 20 years from within the community rather than continue to have them handed down piece-meal from above. A good starting point would need to be a consultation process to provide proof of need – probably through a questionnaire/survey. One area that needed immediate attention was the use of inconsistent signage as you approach Holt. Gary Grunwald had suggested some possible funding sources. It is also hoped that Antony Rifkin of Urban Practitioners may be able to give a presentation to the next meeting as he has considerable experience in the professional field of community planning. A date for the next meeting of the Planning Group has not been fixed but will probably be at the beginning of next month. Those present at the Chamber meeting expressed their support for the Group and its work.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: **Street Parking** - An email had been received from Andy Bullen of the Sheringham Chamber of Commerce pointing out that 'next year (2009) neither the Police nor the District/County Councils will be responsible for street parking which will undoubtedly lead to chaos in all our towns. The economic repercussions of this will be significant with visitors and local shoppers unable to park and it will also mean a loss of income to the NNDC as people will not use the pay car parks when they know they can park on street for as long as they like without fear of prosecution.' He urges us all to put pressure on the 'powers that be' to resolve this unacceptable situation. **Christmas Lights** – Joshua Dyball pointed out that the lights committee would make every effort to keep the momentum going and they will be giving immediate consideration to the subject of next year's celebrity for the switch on. Some discussion took place on possible candidates and any suggestions are welcome. One complaint from the public was received about the low level of activity on the night and both the possibility of an extra evening with commercial sites and the possibility of including more music and some extra entertainment for the children was discussed. There had, however, been a very positive response from the yards which had been visited by far more people this year. **Round Table** – Duncan Baker reported that efforts were being made to re-invigorate the Holt Round Table and they were hoping to be able to hold a Beer Festival in the Community Centre. **Day out in Norfolk** – Caroline Carter pointed out that no invitation had been received to this event as yet. Apparently it is being held at Gresham School this year under a new title and possibly different sponsors. Di Dann will see what she can find out. **The Beanery** – apparently the premises are to be taken over by Cockertons and some discussion took place regarding the change of use from A1 to A2 which goes against the recently published policy of restricting over-saturation of A2 businesses on the High Street. Although there was concern regarding this possible development, it was also pointed out that it was equally undesirable to have empty premises on the High Street. As yet it is unclear whether permission has been given for the change of use to A2. **Visitnorthnorfolk.com** – this site had contained a large number of inaccuracies regarding Holt. Since the meeting, however, the site has been corrected and up-dated. Thanks were given to Byfords for their hospitality.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 4 February 2009 at Byfords Wine Bar at 1800 hrs.