

HOLT AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TRADE

Minutes of the Meeting held at Byfords Wine Bar on 7 May 2008 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
	Heather Ward	Silk Connections	711444
	David Makinson	The Holt Bookshop	715858

PRESENT: John Lintott (Chairman), Esme Bagley-Oakley, Charles Butler, Di Dann, Stephen Davies, Chris Harrison, Howard Heathfield, David Makinson, Carol Pennington, Sarah Tribe.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Caroline Carter, Lindsay Furniss, Alan Godfrey, Lynda Mossman, Heather Ward.

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

MATTERS ARISING: No **Post Offices** in the immediate vicinity are under threat of closure. John will contact Derek Purnell re progress on the **Holt Arts Festival**. Di Dann will contact Steve Batch to see if he can attend an open meeting in July to discuss the feasibility/financial implications of installing CCTV in Holt.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Five members have indicated that they will not be renewing their membership but five new members have joined. The Chairman showed the committee a flyer giving details of what the Chamber does and members were encouraged to take copies when approaching potential new members.

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT: A questionnaire has been sent out to all traders so a feasibility report on the use of the **Church Street site** can be produced. All members are encouraged to respond within the time limit so that it will be possible to prove there is local support for community use. Members are also asked to continue to write letters objecting to each new **planning application** on the site as unfortunately previous objections will not count when a new or amended application is made.

Water accumulation – water continues to collect outside W H Brown and several areas of highway are now in a poor condition including the area outside The Lawns, and Shire Hall Plain. The Town Council has taken this up with NNDC but at present there is no money available to carry out the necessary repairs.

Planters cannot be watered every day by council employees so traders with planters near their premises are asked if they can help out when the weather is particularly hot.

The Great Fire – Everyone agreed this had been a great success. Thanks were given to Di Dann and her team, to the Holt Society, members of the church congregation and to all those who dressed up and helped to make the occasion such a success. John will write a letter of thanks to Fr Howard. The committee discussed the possibility of a similar occasion being incorporated into the Holt Arts Festival. Appreciation was also expressed for the excellent board on Shirehall Plain.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: A committee of three is now in place but it is essential that a fundraiser (or two) and then an events organiser are found. A recent full-page advertisement has not brought a response and it may be necessary to make either, or both, paid positions – possibly on a commission

bases for the fundraiser. Howard Heathfield will put out feelers to fundraising organisations and in the meanwhile an appeal will again be made to members to see if they know anyone who might be interested. Representatives will also be sought from different areas of the town to act as conduits between the committee and neighbouring traders.

Esme Bagley-Oakley presented the final accounts which showed sponsorship of £17,800 and income from stalls of £1,088. Expenditure was £17,932 and after carrying forward a surplus from the previous year, there is a balance of approximately £3000. It is not intended to have stalls this year but to put the emphasis on street entertainment. One of the greatest needs this year is to renew the lighting on the Methodist Church and Sarah Tribe has costings in place for both this and updating for traders. It would make sense for some of the work to be carried out in the summer but no commitment can be made until sufficient funding is in place.

It is intended to put collection tins for funding into local shops from August and Chris Harrison had some brackets for the erection of additional Christmas trees.

CORRESPONDENCE: The committee looked at a **guide** produced by S Jewry for Downham Market. She is keen to produce the same for Holt and will come to speak to the committee at the June meeting. The leaflet would be funded by advertising and any marketing would be carried out by Ms Jewry.

St Andrews PCC – John had been furnished with details of the proposed extension to the Church and it was agreed that Roger Percival should be invited to come to a future meeting to explain how the Chamber might be of assistance.

An email had been received from Roger Thompson pointing out that he was now doing most of his shopping on line as this was cheaper than shopping in Holt and avoided the problems of parking. John had replied pointing out the benefits of ‘personal service’ whilst acknowledging the points made. His letter did, however, prompt discussion on the importance of making the access from the new car park attractive and to encourage its use for long-term parking so that short-term spaces were freed up in the town itself. Events were considered a great way of attracting people into the town even when they were of a fairly modest nature like the Morris Dancing but the events need to be supported by publicity and there seems to be an intention by the EDP and its local papers to ignore all events in Holt! John will keep a watching brief so that he can produce evidence to the relevant editors.

Business Link had sent in several leaflets outlining its work as it felt that it would like to re-establish contact with Holt traders.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Aylsham is now a **plastic-bag free zone** and the committee discussed the possibility of following suit or introducing bio-degradable bags. This is an item for future discussion but it was pointed out that Government legislation may force action eventually.

Orbital Railway – there are no definite plans in place as yet and the major obstacle will be the need to cross the main road

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 4 June at Byfords at 1800 hrs.