

## Wadebridge and District chamber of Commerce

**President: Mr G Stanbury**

Chairman: Mr D Rowe

Vice Chairman: Mr D Walford

Hon. Secretary: Mr A M Gregan

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs A Jackson

### Minutes of the December Monthly Meeting of the Wadebridge and District Chamber of Commerce which took place on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December at The Churchill Bar, Wadebridge

**Present:** Darren Rowe (IFA, Riverside Financial Advice Centre), Harriet Wild (Elixir & minutes), Mel Hardie (ArtyCrafts), Sarah Hargreaves (The Bridge On Wool), Grenville and Susan Stanbury (Kittows), Steve Knightley (Mayor), Ann Jackson (Treasurer)

**Apologies:** Randi and Jason Henderson (Elixir), Robin Moorcroft, Phil Chanter and Helen Lentern (D & C Police)

#### **Matters Arising:**

**WREN:** There will be an open day launch in the Town Hall on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January. All are welcome to come down and have a chat about how renewable energy could benefit the town and listen to some guest speakers. As this is a community project, feedback is greatly encouraged! WREN is in the process of becoming constituted, which will give the group formal recognition and a clearer decision making process.

**Christmas lights:** Darren praised everyone who had a hand in putting up the Christmas lights. They went up and were switched on, on the same day, which is practically unheard of! The weather was fortunately on our side and it was a fun day overall. The Davey brothers were great as always. The police did a fantastic job and kept everything running smoothly. He especially mentioned the immense hospitality from the town for fuelling the helpers with food – mince pies from Barnecutts, snacks and hot drinks from The Swan and The Bridge On Wool among others. The fudge given by Bridge Bistro is highly recommended from Sarah! The lights are coming down on the 9<sup>th</sup> January – Darren hopes for the same warm generosity from the town in getting them down again. If volunteers would like to help, the afternoon shift is usually the one where help is most needed, but please let us know. Darren mentioned that as well as the usual volunteers there were many new faces that turned up to help, but as ever it was mainly the non-retail businesses that braved the cold!. Darren also wanted to thank Phillip Mutton for putting up lights around the Piazza, Darren stated that should funds become available to the Chamber he would like to see Phillips hard work rewarded by having the Chamber provide lights further down Eddystone Road. Darren also wanted to thank our policing team who are always a fantastic help with both the Christmas lights and the Late night shopping events.

The donations were very welcome this year for the lights, but Darren said we were down on last years contributions. So please – if you can't spare any time to help get the lights up and down or volunteer a few hours to help with the late night events, perhaps help with the cost of it. As Mel pointed out – the Christmas lights are put up for the whole community to enjoy. It's for the children coming home from school, puts a smile on the face of visitors and an all round joy.

**Late night opening:** Darren said that in all his years working in finance, organising the late night opening was a very most stressful day. But wasn't it a success! There have been plenty of positive comments - "best fireworks we've seen in years." The weather was again on our side so there were lots of numbers. Sarah said it was a fantastic social occasion and the Bridge-On-Wool had a great community atmosphere in there.

Special thanks go to the Rotary Club – especially Albert the “unassuming bucket shaker!” And also to Harriet for the tombola, The NCA, Grenville Stanbury, Tony & Ann Gregan, Yvonne Robinson, Peter Chapman, Gary Franks, Trelawney’s and Holly Day from Pirate FM. Darren also mentioned that Jan Howells was great at organising the shops in Pormola Walk. Darren was pleased to see two bands in attendance, but was disappointed that the band that was due to play in on the Platt decided to play just feet away from the singing group, the Shipwrecks in Molesworth street. Steve Knightly announced that the Town Council has officially waved the fee for the use of the Town Hall during late night opening for the grotto.

It was a pity that there weren’t more volunteers. Darren mentioned that volunteers were very sparse this year and there was a delay in the bucket collectors getting to the bridge. Darren had some chamber members complain about the lack of bucket collectors, and it was suggested by the members present that they should have perhaps helped instead of complaining. – the Chamber would really benefit in further events if there were a few more people to collect money at the fireworks.

We then discussed possibilities for future late night openings and raising money for lights:

- Rather than doing 2 late night shopping events, the town would have one late night on the Friday (with Santa and the fireworks) with the Saturday having singing, bands playing and some fun Christmas activities etc. This would hopefully encourage the public to spend more time in the town on the Saturday and shop etc rather than go to Plymouth or Truro.
- Agreed that it would be good to fire a warning shot 5 minutes before the fireworks begin to give people notice
- Re-invent the poster competition. Sarah suggested the winner could press the ‘plunger’ to launch the fireworks!
- Mel suggested that the school children could have a parade in their Christmas play costumes. This would help to include the children in the community more.
- Community groups could each make a Christmas tree decoration.
- Sarah suggested we have a Chamber Christmas bingo as St Breoke’s event raises good money by doing this.
- Steve Knightly was impressed with the Santa fun run in Oxford (and Padstow) that went on at the same time as a Christmas Fayre. There was a good turnout, a sociable atmosphere and money raised.

**Town Centre Manager position:** There was a discussion between Darren and the town councillors present about this topic. Although it was decided by the town council that this was not to be carried forward as a “Section 106” idea, the chamber of commerce felt that the TC have missed a real opportunity. Mel stated that to have had someone to put together useful databases of the businesses and to help with folk festivals etc would have been a real asset to the town. The TC feel that another committee could be formed for this, but as Harriet pointed out there are not enough volunteers as it is. Darren used the analogy that we have enough mid-fielders and no strikers! Darren feels that the town council have been very short-sighted. To have a person dedicated to liaise with the different organisations of the town and help promote it would have made a huge difference to the town ongoing success.

**Any other business:** Harriet said that a new shop had just opened up along Bradfords Quay Road. It’s called Millies Attic selling second hand furniture, collectables, soft furnishings and local crafts. Grenville also said about an Italian deli coming to the town and will be in the Wickers World Travel site.

**Action Points:**

**Those free to help taking the Christmas Lights down on the 9<sup>th</sup> January, please let Darren or Dominic know ASAP.**

**Still collecting for the Christmas lights fund – any donations to Darren or Dominic at Riverside Financial Advice Centre, 7 Molesworth St, Wadebridge, PL27 7DA**

***Next Meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> January at The Churchill Bars (upstairs) 5.45.***