



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 May Monthly Meeting of the Wadebridge and District Chamber of Commerce which took place on Wednesday 18th May at The Churchill Bar, Wadebridge

Present: Darren Rowe and Dominic Walford (Riverside Financial Planning), Stephen Frankel (Carhart Mill), Ann Jackson (Treasurer), Rachel Daniel (One Step Ahead), Rupert Wilson (Steins Seafood), Richard Alexander (Alexander Accountants), Harriet Wild (Elixir), Philip Mutton (Trebur Estates)

Apologies: Phil Chanter and Helen Lantern (Police), Andy and Fiona Jolley (NCA), Stephen Knightley (Mayor), Grenville and Susan Stanbury (Kittows), Sarah Prosser (Local-Eyes).

Matters Arising:

Mid Summer Madness walk: The organisers of the walk for Macmillian and Marie Curie have contacted the Chamber expressing concern about the low amounts of people signed up for the walk. They are really trying to encourage people to do it, whether you're a family or an individual. Dominic said that there is plenty of entertainment organised for the day from start to finish, so not only is it an enjoyable social occasion, but it will also benefit the town due to the amount of people taking part in Wadebridge. The event organisers are specifically requesting businesses to offer a percentage off sales as a reward to the walkers, which in turn encourage them to head into the town for some shopping. Any business that wants to get involved at all, please do contact the Chamber.

WREN: Darren said there will be an inaugural general meeting in the Town Hall at 6 o'clock for people to sign up as members, but the meeting kicks off at 7pm. Stephen Frankel explained that this is the meeting that WREN will be formally constituted, which is an important step in becoming totally democratic. This will allow full transparency for the financial side of the project, and in decision making. He asked shop keepers to please display the pamphlets that not only contain a membership form on the back, but also explain exactly what WREN does and how it will benefit every single resident in Wadebridge.

Stephen was pleased that WREN had so far signed up 200 roofs for free solar panels, 40 roofs for self-purchased solar panels, 2 schools, 25 potential industrial sites on farms and 6 self-purchased industrial sized roofs. And of course, these figures are growing all the time. This has led to considerable national publicity about the scale of this project, including a number of videos made about Wadebridge. There has also been increasing interest from elsewhere in the country wanting to replicate WREN. Darren said that this really is a boost for the town.

Stephen then went on to explain that it is possible to have an institution to join, as Wadebridge Town Council have done. He proposed that the Chamber joins as a member, which

would allow a voice in decision making. He said it's key for the businesses in Wadebridge to have a say in such a significant group.

Darren proposed that we voted on this motion, which was then carried. There will be a nomination next meeting for the person who will represent the Chamber at WREN meetings.

Supermarkets: Darren read out a letter from a planning officer for The Co-operative. They expressed their grave concerns about the future of their store in Wadebridge if Sainsburys were to submit their revised application. The revised plans would still threaten the health of Wadebridge town centre to a similar level to the previous plans and urged the Chamber to consider this impact very carefully. Dominic said that speaking with the manager of the Wadebridge Co-op, he understands that they mirror the feelings in this letter.

Philip said that the Co-op is more of a place for basket shopping, and the proposed supermarkets will not deduct from this type of shop. He said people will shop elsewhere, then continue to come to the Co-op to top-up throughout the week, therefore it will hardly be affected. He also pointed out that the Co-op car park was always full up, so people can't park to get in to do a weekly shop there.

Harriet said that she had not once had a problem parking at Co-op, although acknowledged that parking was a sore point for Wadebridge. She also said that aside from local shops, she refuses to shop elsewhere and can get everything necessary from Co-op. However, a change or reduction of stock would affect her shopping habits. Dominic added that Co-op is a lifeline to many older people too, who would find it difficult to get out of town.

Stephen said that objectively speaking, there isn't a problem with supermarkets coming into Wadebridge – it's just the fact that they're out of town, which statistically takes money away from the centre. If they were to apply for planning closer, we wouldn't be in this position.

Richard agreed with Philip with his previous Co-op points, and said that the infrastructure in Wadebridge is currently at bursting point and he didn't think the town could cope with the additional traffic from another supermarket in the centre.

Rachel considered the prime space that Lidl occupies and thought it a shame one of the supermarkets wanting to come into the town didn't take up that space.

Darren once again put out a plea to all businesses in Wadebridge – members or not, to express their opinions so he and Dominic can provide an accurate voice of the business community. This is the final chance for people raise their support or objections.

Royal Cornwall: The Chamber's section of the RCS is now fully subscribed – well done! There's a few outstanding bills to pay, which needs to be settled immediately so please cough up. The Chamber shouldn't need to chase up payments. Businesses taking part in this promotion do need to be paid up members of the Chamber of Commerce to benefit from the reduced price they've signed up for, so please get in touch to become a member and pay the annual subscription. It would be a shame to have to replace those businesses signed up.

Taxi Rank: The Chamber has received a letter requesting opinions about the proposed taxi rank for The Platt (outside Bet-Fred, Barnecutts and The Vine). It would be operating 0800 – 2000 Monday to Thursday, and 0800 – 0000 Friday – Sunday. Darren said it would be great for people to know there would be a designated place for taxis in the town, instead of booking a long time in advance. He hoped that taxi drivers would make good use of this rank, as the problem of convenience isn't solved if the rank isn't utilised. Dominic said that Bodmin has an excellent taxi service and their

rank really works.

Stephen said that he does currently use the bay for loading, as do others.

Darren said that taxis in Wadebridge are just as much of a business as shops, so they must represent and support them too. The Chamber welcomes opinions about this, so please do contact Darren or Dominic and let them know what you think.

No updates on the **activities committee** or **crime prevention** this month.

Treasurers Report: The chamber has many more new members, but compared to the amount of businesses in town, the amount of members could be seriously higher. The Chamber is down compared to previous years.

Rachel said it was a real shame that too few businesses in town are at least signed up members. She said it should be as second-nature as paying rent and rates. If they ignore the other benefits they receive from being a member, they could at the very least consider it a donation to the Christmas lights in the town and towards the activities the chamber organise. She said it's a small price to pay for the benefits, and of course shops don't have to come to meetings – just to take an interest in the place they run a business, of which £50 would be very well spent and make a difference. Darren agreed and said that if you can't subscribe £50 in cash, donate it in time. He said the £50 fee from **all** the shops in Wadebridge would make such a huge difference to the Chamber, which would then be used to boost the town as the Chamber could afford to market the town nationally and around Cornwall with flyers etc.

Harriet mentioned the new businesses in town could be sold the benefits of joining the Chamber, as we would also welcome their views. It was agreed that it is an interesting time for Wadebridge, as there are many new shops coming into Wadebridge.

Rupert suggested a jolly for all the business community in Wadebridge to come along on a social level. Although this was acknowledged as a good suggestion, Rachel explained that this has been done as recently as last summer before with a small turnout. Darren said that the Christmas jolly includes food and some drink, and only a few people come along to that.

Any Other Business

Darren praised the efforts of Wadebridge's new Big Issue vendor, Peter Dunn, on his work cleaning up Molesworth Street. Peter is taking out all the moss from between paving slabs, the side of the street and under benches. He mostly bought his own equipment and isn't asking for a penny. Darren said that his tireless work should be rewarded with at least a cup of coffee (black no sugar!) from local businesses, as he really is making such a difference to the street.

Harriet said that Peter really does have a big heart as he offered to clean up the street in preparation for the Wadebridge Big Lunch street party on June 5th. She totally agreed that Peter is doing a brilliant job and fully supports his efforts in taking pride in where he lives. However, she expressed her unease about the potential for paving slabs to become loose, as he doesn't have access to sand to fill in the gaps again, and they become disjointed and uneven. She said she's witnessed a few people trip on those newly cleaned slabs recently and is concerned that there could be a serious injury.

Dominic said that many slabs are already loose, mostly due to the heavy Lorries that drive up the street.

Padstow Area Tourism Information: Dominic put out a plea again for opinions from the wider business community about our Chamber working closely with PATA. He said that Jason Henderson e-mailed to say that although he supports the notion, he was concerned that our Chamber might get sidetracked from the issues that affect our community in Wadebridge. He said other towns may want in on it too, and that might dilute our focus. Dominic said that we will take a vote at the next meeting about getting involved with PATA.

Rupert said that it would be a good idea to invite Tina Evans – the Chair of PATA to our meeting to enlighten us about how they work, so we could hopefully get inspired and learn from their successful group. PATA provides a self-sufficient tourist information group, which Wadebridge desperately needs, so by piggybacking on them, we don't need to set up from fresh – we can learn from their good ideas and their not so successful ideas. It was agreed that this will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: 15th June at The Churchill Bars (upstairs) 5:45pm

Annual subscription payment – due now please.

Please accept the following cheque for £50 made payable to Wadebridge Chamber of Commerce

Business name: _____

Contact: _____

Email address: _____

Would you like to be included on the website: YES/NO

If so please provide us with the contact person and telephone number for Steve Coom of Razor Solutions to contact you

Name: _____

Tel: _____

**You do not have to attend the meetings to be a member. Thank you for your support.
The Chamber Committee.**