Wells Chamber of Commerce Meeting and AGM Minutes
Monday 6th July, Old Mill Board Room

Present

- Lewis Dyer
- Dean Mortlock
- Judith Ludovino
- Mike Tucker
- Beverley Smith

Apologies: Tom Wood, Gerald Creed, Robert Powell

1. Contacts with Membership and Membership Recruitment

Judith is working with Tom on memberships. We need some support from Ben at St Andrews to make the website easier to access. We need a photo and approximately 100 words about each member to upload and start creating momentum as people join.

In terms of membership recruitment, Tom and Judith have met and are working on a generic business plan and flyer with a QR code for use by members to help promote and connect while out representing the Chamber. This is currently in progress.

John Osmond is interested in co-hosting with Mogers Drewett and making the networking events stronger.

Judith has also had a conversation with Diana Ticknell.

Dean has spoken to a couple of people who may be interested. He will continue to keep an eye out for events and people who are witnessing the momentum of the Chamber becoming active again.

Sedgemoor Chamber provides a really good example. They have great messaging and a strong website, and they run many activities. They have grown from being very small to becoming a very strong Chamber. Judith is to meet with their Chair to discuss their path to success.

Over the years, the average Wells Chamber of Commerce membership has been around 40–50 members, which has been successful. We need to diversify the membership and build numbers back up.

We also need to make it easier to join. Judith and Tom advised that GoCardless is being implemented by the end of the month.

2. Contacts with Other Wells Influencers and Other Chambers – Spreading Information and Participation

A meeting has taken place with Dean from Wells Voice to discuss promotion, and Kelly Knight will be joining the Chamber from September.

Visit Wells has a fantastic strategy to get Wells on the map, which includes music and heritage. However, it currently misses the amazing shopping the city has to offer, the significant number of independent traders, the market, and all of the festivals.

Wells' commercial offering needs to become a key part of the Visit Wells offering. Judith is on one of the committees.

Once established, the Chamber can also become involved in supporting local traders in areas such as CCTV and promoting and using independent businesses.

3. Proposal for Meeting Planning/Structure – FY 2026/27

Judith proposed holding formal Steering Group meetings at The Old Mill, but not every month (probably four times a year), with the remaining meetings being informal social networking events.

Using local pubs would be a great idea, with different venues used each time. This would encourage shopkeepers and those finishing work to be able to pop in.

There is also potential to expand further afield and encourage the farming community to engage once the core Chamber has been established.

It would also be beneficial to include guest speakers, as people value talks.

4. Next Open Events

Judith proposed four "formal and structured" committee meetings a year for the Chamber, with other meetings to be "open" with the focus to be on new member recruitment, guest speakers, connections and socialising.

5. Proposed Structure for Open Meetings

Suggestions from members for open meetings included using Pressoir, Postino and the new Cornish Bakery. It was suggested where possible venues should be members.

A "golf evening" has already been suggested by Tom Wood for September or October

6. Steering Group Ideas and Inspirations

- Wells Voice article proposed when ready, with six independent businesses advertising alongside a page of editorial.
- Contact local businesses. A spreadsheet has been created with the help of AI to identify local businesses to connect with.
- September meeting to be organised. Suggested venues include The Pressoir, El Positino, and the new bakery, The Cornish Bakery.
- Dean suggested that an event could be a Foodie Trail around the city, which everyone thought was a great idea.

7. Any Other Business

None.

8. Future Meeting Dates

To be confirmed (TBC).