

Dear HTCDG Member.

Since our inaugural meeting on 5th September, much work has been undertaken behind the scenes on behalf of the Town Centres trading interests and the Harrogate Town Centre Development Group [HTCDG] Steering Committee [SC] wish you to note/consider the following bullets and actions (NB. Please check your diary and respond to point (5) below ASAP):

As a result of the numerous responses to our requests for feedback, SWOT analysis and ideas for prioritising HTCDG initiatives at the inaugural meeting, the SC have pleasure in reporting on the results of your feedback, listed below in order of YOUR priority the initiatives we are working on so far (There is more to come and with YOUR help and support for the SC, we'll be able to take on more in 'bite sized chunks!').

1. ***Parking Charges:*** As voted the most important issue by you, the SC has pledged its continued support to Harrogate Chamber and asked Brian Dunsby and Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce [HCTC] to continue to keep the pressure on Harrogate Borough Council [HBC] on this matter. Concrete evidence as to how parking charges affect YOUR business is vital and your views need submitting to myself (Project Leader: peter.jesper@jespers.co.uk) AND Maggie Hall (Chamber Secretary: info@harrogatechamber.org) ASAP.
2. ***Town Centre Signage:*** The lack of signage for our visitors and tourists seriously limits the flow of pedestrians throughout the town in all directions, so denying many traders exposure to extra potential customers. This initiative is rated 2nd highest by YOU and the SC is re-visiting a project originally undertaken by HCTC 3 years ago and endeavouring to re-kindle it as a joint project between HTCDG and HBC.
3. ***Tourist Information Services:*** The provision of a quality Tourist Information [TI] service for our visitors is critical and your votes have suggested that our Town's TI service in some ways falls short. The SC will shortly summarise what it thinks TI currently offers and will ask YOU for feedback as to what you feel TI needs to offer (and from where etc.).
4. ***'Buy Local' Campaign:*** Voted 4th most important issue for TC traders. Short term the SC is looking to create some PR through the press (Ackrills & Stray FM) in the run up to Christmas and to ultimately develop a successful 'Buy Local' initiative for the town (we are consulting with other Towns on this matter).

5. **Town Centre Development:** The SC is engaging with major developers and HBC to consult and have input with new developments for the TC. As previously emailed to you, we hope to see you all on Wednesday 9th November, 5.45pm – 6.00pm at Betty's Imperial Suite for the Lateral Group's presentation – Exclusively for HTCDG members only – so please register your attendance as previously requested.
6. **Tesco Planning:** The SC is supportive of HCTC's continued action opposing the Tesco planning application at New Park on Traffic, Health & Safety, Procedural and TC Trade impact issues.
7. **Seasonal Opening Hours:** The SC is collating a database of TC businesses opening hours for the run up to Christmas and over New Year. To a) guide store owners as to what trading hours would be appropriate to them and b) to provide a resource for our customers to see when our services are available to them over the seasonal period.
8. **Street & Farmers Markets:** There is much unrest and criticism of the way the street/farmers markets are organised and of the detrimental effect they can have on the revenues of the resident TC traders. The SC will explore the current set-up/rationale and lobby/act accordingly to protect the needs of the resident TC traders
9. **"What's On" In Town:** The SC is working to make regular updates available to TC businesses as to what/who/when is to occur in Harrogate. This will allow traders to be aware of up and coming exhibitions and plan suitable welcomes/responses as needed.
10. **ACTION All HTCDG Members:** a) Please review the above and feedback comments to myself (Project Leader: peter.jesper@jespers.co.uk) AND Maggie Hall (Chamber Secretary: info@harrogatechamber.org). The SC can then act/respond accordingly, b) please make a note of the diary date in point e) and please respond to future invites for contributions and attendance etc. And c) we have over 90 businesses registered as part of your group, but more is needed in order to extend our powers and influence. Please therefore involve your trading neighbours and gain their interest for the group (ask them to email MH Chamber Secretary: (info@harrogatechamber.org)) for inclusion in our circulation database (attendance to full HTCDG meetings is for registered members (and invited guests) only!

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I thank you for your consideration and continued interest and if you have an opinion, a new Town Centre concern, an offer of further help and resource, Please don't delay, contact us now (email Maggie and me ASAP).

Kindest regards



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