



# REVIEW

February  
2007

**MEETING  
DATES**

12 March

**Review of Chamber Meeting + News Update**

2 April \*

**NYCC BID TO TAKE OVER HARROGATE**

- NYCC bid for Unitary Status would mean the end of Harrogate Borough Council.
- Harrogate would have to be divided up into local Parishes, each with extra rates
- Harrogate Council Leaders feel this is detrimental to Harrogate's prosperity.
- Concern for welfare of Harrogate International Conference & Exhibition Centre.
- Harrogate District might be better off as part of the proposed Leeds City Region.

**Business  
Market 2007  
30 April**

**PROMOTING HARROGATE & THE DALES**

- New Head of Marketing, Alison Griffin, outlines her new strategy for tourism.
- Major campaign to promote the Conference Centre in a changing marketplace
- New "What's on Guide" launched to promote more entertainment events, etc.
- Tourism in the District attracts 3.27 million visitors spending £230 million p.a.
- New initiatives to fill gaps in calendar – e.g. Lifestyle Show & Christmas Fayre.
- HIC are keen to collaborate with local businesses – all ideas welcome!

14 May  
AGM

11 June

9 July

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

- Chamber is being consulted on several major Retail Development Proposals.
- Harrogate District Business Market – new brochure and tickets enclosed.
- Chamber web site updated – easier to navigate and search for suppliers etc.
- Business Promotion Focus Group formed to promote member's businesses.
- Benefits of Chamber membership updated – now including Leeds Chamber.

13 August

10 September

8 October

**Future Meetings**

12 November

**Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> March - How to make an exhibition of yourself!**  
*Practical hints, products and services to help you make the most of  
the Harrogate District Business Market and other trade shows*  
**at Cedar Court Hotel, Park Parade, Harrogate HG1 5AH (Tel: 858585)**

10 December

**Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Business Networking Safari + Buffet**  
*Chamber members only - limited capacity – pre-booking essential*  
**at White Hart Hotel, Cold Bath Road, Harrogate HG2 0NF (Tel: 505681)**

\* New date

**PROMOTING HARROGATE BUSINESS**

**Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB**

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: [info@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:info@harrogatechamber.org) Website: [harrogatechamber.org](http://harrogatechamber.org)

## ***Vice President takes the Chair***

Vice-President, Martin Wilks, stepped in to take the Chair for the February meeting as President, John Hart, was unfortunately unable to attend.

Martin introduced a full agenda with several guests and presentations for the evening. Leading in to Councillor Mike Gardner's slot, Martin expressed the **Chamber's concern** at the proposals for Unitary Status by North Yorkshire County Council, which would mean Harrogate would become part of an area extending from Settle to Scarborough. The Chamber feels this is **not in the best interests of Harrogate**, but if there has to be a Unitary Status within the area, it should be either Harrogate alone or Harrogate & Skipton, where Harrogate came first and where we could have a major input and control over the decision-making process.

As the leader of the Chamber's "Promoting Harrogate" Focus Group, Martin emphasised the importance of the "Promoting Harrogate & The Yorkshire Dales" campaign to the town, as without the business and leisure tourism, we would not be the town we are today. He hoped the work HIC were undertaking and their proposals for the future would lead to an exciting time with many **opportunities for businesses being developed**.

## ***NYCC Unitary Status proposals***

Councillor Dr Mike Gardner, Leader of Harrogate Borough Council and Chairman of the Board of Harrogate International Centre, outlined his views on the North Yorkshire County Council bid for Unitary Status.

Mike started by saying that the Government produced a White Paper which included an invitation for various proposals to change or reform local government, one of which was a Unitary Bid. The Government paper made it clear that it expects Shire areas to remain two-tier with enhanced joint working. Mike was surprised that NYCC made the Unitary Bid, which he feels is likely to fail.

**Mike said he did not feel the bid was in the interests of local tax payers and he is vehemently opposing it.**

North Yorkshire covers over 3,000 square miles with a population of 582,000. The proposed Council would be led by a Leader and Cabinet. It would be run by 144 Councillors, whom Mike feels would have to be professional Councillors to deal with such large areas.

NYCC is proposing to replace Districts with Committees and Forums, but the power and decision-making will lie with a Leader and Cabinet model, with maybe 10 people, probably based in Northallerton, making all the decisions for North Yorkshire. This is NOT in Harrogate's interests; it is in North Yorkshire's interests.

For example, could a Cabinet Member for Transport effectively cover the whole of North Yorkshire and adequately represent so many people's local interests?

There is emphasis in the bid on Parish Councils, but they have already said they cannot cope with the sort of power the Government would like to move into Parish Councils. The Parish Council representatives are usually

"amateurs", i.e. ordinary people trying to do a job on behalf of the community. They would not have the time or capability to actually carry out what may be expected.

Part of NYCC's bid would be to "Parish" Harrogate and all Harrogate residents would have to vote to have a precept for the Parish. Mike doesn't feel that residents would vote for this option and it is not a practical option.

Covering financial aspects, Mike said Harrogate Council estimated that the set-up cost of Unitary Status for North Yorkshire would be £40 million, as opposed to NYCC's estimate of £13.5 million. He feels it is impossible to set up Unitary Status for this small amount; it has to be self-funding as there is no incentive from the Government and local taxpayers cannot be levied for this.

Mike Gardner feels that the NYCC proposals are **detrimental to Harrogate's future prosperity**. A recent letter received from Yorkshire Forward indicated they are moving away from the four sub-regions (e.g. Humberside, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire) to City Regions and see the future being divided into the following City Regions - Leeds, Humberside, Sheffield and North Riding. This concurs with Harrogate Council's opinion, with **Harrogate being particularly closely linked with Leeds City Region**.

Current proposals have Harrogate, Craven and Selby as part of the Leeds City Region while the other four districts remain part of the old "North Yorkshire".

Mike is concerned for the welfare of Harrogate **Conference Centre**, as a Unitary County would not be uniquely responsible for Harrogate's interests, but for North Yorkshire as a whole. NYCC's current duties are statutory, as Government dictates where monies are spent; whereas District Councils have statutory and discretionary duties, e.g. the maintenance of open spaces and leisure facilities, etc., with Harrogate and Scarborough being the biggest spenders in the County.

Mike said Harrogate receives one of the lowest Grants in the country, for example, Islington in London receive a Government Grant of £126 per head; Bradford receive £75 per head; Leeds receives £60 per head; North Yorkshire receives £34 per head. So currently the county receives 8 grants - 7 Districts and 1 County. It is estimated that will reduce to £28 from the Government.

The savings will have to be made somewhere and most likely it will be on the discretionary services. It could also mean that Harrogate's Conference Centre would be affected, which is a great concern to Mike Gardner.

In answer to questions on timing and lack of consultation Mike said that Stage 1 ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March and it should be thrown out then. Government was expecting the bids to be widely supported, but all the seven Districts, who had not been consulted, **opposed the bid**. However the timescale did not allow them to put in their own unitary bid. Furthermore neither the Parish Councils nor the public have been consulted. Mike Gardner feels the vast majority of the public would also be against the bid.

The Government will expect the bid to be supported. A basic scrutiny of the financial case of the bid the County has made should mean it will be thrown out.

Past President, Brian Haines of eSource Group asked how opposition could be fed back to the Government. He agreed it made good sense for Harrogate to be more **closely aligned with Leeds**, particularly with regard to Conferences etc, which the local economy owed a lot to.

Mike confirmed the link with Leeds is essential and the City Region is the right option. Yorkshire Forward has already backed Harrogate as the established regional conference centre. It would be counter-productive to build a competitive centre in Leeds and they will not fund such a project. One of the prime motivations of the **Leeds City Region** is for different authorities with different interests all working together in a common interest and not competing with each other. A Board has been established for the LCR with one leader/one vote for each authority, ensuring it is the Region that benefits.

Stuart Pearson of Trinity Foundation asked if it was worth starting some proactive opposition now, for example providing more information on the Harrogate Council's website. Mike said he wouldn't discourage anyone from being proactive, but felt it would fall on deaf ears. However, he said we should be prepared to if the bid should progress to Stage 2 at the end of March.

Phillip Broadbank of Enid Taylor asked if it was correct that Harrogate as a town could not become one parish, but would have to be split into four separate Parishes.

Mike agreed that Harrogate would have to be divided into four, but residents would have to agree to a parish precept, and he felt the chances of that were very slim.

After Brian Dunsby read out the Chamber's proposed **letter of objection** to the Unitary Proposal, all members **agreed** with the content and that it should be sent to Government as the town's business community opinion.

## **Promoting Harrogate and the Yorkshire Dales**

Mike Gardner, as Chairman of the Board of Harrogate International Centre (HIC) introduced **Alison Griffin**, who was appointed **Head of Marketing & Deputy Director** at Harrogate International Centre in June 2006. Her role is to not only look after the current business, primarily conferences and exhibitions, but also to look at other opportunities like corporate business events. The Conference Centre also looks after Tourism for the whole of the Borough, which Alison also heads up.

Harrogate Borough Council run HIC at "arm's length" - i.e. politics do not interfere with it, but it is supported financially by the Council and recently Yorkshire Forward have helped financially and practically in supporting Harrogate as the regional conference centre.

Alison outlined her current **marketing & business development portfolio** covering:

- Conferences and exhibitions
- Entertainments
- Leisure tourism
- District Tourist Information Centre

**The vision of Harrogate International Centre is now:**

***"To be the UK destination of choice for visitors by providing a unique facility in a favoured location and successfully delivering an outstanding service."***

Alison then explained HIC's key strategic objectives, the changing marketplace, the opportunities and their marketing approach, which is to concentrate on unique selling points of the town and to offer an **overall destination experience**.

HIC Marketing initiatives: including a refreshed brand and corporate colours, a new website and brochure to be launched Spring 2007, new adverts, new direct mail campaign and filling short term gaps in the diary. The new **What's On Guide** was launched in October 2006 and now into its second edition has seen a marked increase in sales and interest from promoters.

HIC is responsible for the marketing and promotion of Harrogate & District leisure tourism, as part of the newly formed ATP (Area Tourism Partnership) – named the **Yorkshire Dales & Harrogate Tourism Partnership**. This is a Yorkshire Forward funded initiative to develop tourism in Harrogate & the Yorkshire Dales, encompassing Skipton, The National Park, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Richmond and Harrogate.

The first ATP conference explaining the purpose and direction of the partnership will be 20th March - email [hayley.gray@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:hayley.gray@harrogate.gov.uk) for information/places.

In terms of District Leisure Tourism, some interesting **facts & figures** for 2005 compared with previous year:

- Harrogate District attracted 3.27 million visitors
- Total direct visitor spend of £228.6 million
- TIC visitor enquiries were up by 33% or 49,000
- Footfall in the District TIC's increased 73% in total

The leisure tourism web site [www.enjoyharrogate.com](http://www.enjoyharrogate.com) embraces web and e-marketing with a new destination management system, a new online accommodation booking system, searchable attractions, restaurants and events and new e-newsletter software. Website Visitors were over 265,000 in 2006 - an increase of 39% on year.

Leisure Tourism Activity for 2007 includes a new Visitor Guide 2007, a day visitor guide, "Great Days Out", a 25 year souvenir programme, Services Directory – all with a stronger brand identity and marketing activity for Harrogate & The Yorkshire Dales via the ATP.

**HIC are keen to work collaboratively with local businesses including for example:**

- Christmas Fayre 2007
- Advertising opportunities
- Lifestyle Show and new public shows
- Promotions and incentives, linked offers
- Potential links to HIC website
- An "Open Door" policy

In conclusion Alison said that their marketing and business objectives are ambitious, but attainable, adding *"Please tell us, constructively, when we get things right and when we get things wrong! We are keen to work with all key players in the town and appreciate your ongoing support. We welcome all ideas for business and leisure tourism"*.

In answer to a question about **Community Tours**, Alison said it was part of the 25 year celebrations to reach out to different sectors that perhaps hadn't been to HIC, for example university, college and school students, voluntary groups or even the Chamber, if they want to look round. In terms of entertainment it could be Colleges who run entertainment courses who want to see the back operation for shows, etc.

Martin Wilks said the **Chamber welcomed** the new initiatives in the presentation, for example the Christmas Fair, Lifestyle Show and recent changes in policy, which are very encouraging. Referring to the Business Partners, he did express concern that there did not appear to be any **formal meeting process** whereby organisations could regularly meet with HIC. It is important for Harrogate that this forum is created for the benefit of business groups like the Taxi Drivers, Retailers, Night Club Owners, Restaurateurs, etc. so there is a means of communicating formally for mutual benefit and for the benefit of the many delegates that HIC brings into town.

Alison agreed it was essential and after the initial six months of "putting the house in order" and getting the marketing tools in place, she hoped something could be formulated in the short term.

Mike Gardner felt the points of Town Centre Manager and HIC communications were a Chamber responsibility to pull together. Communications were welcomed any time. Economic Development was a regular forum and the Conference Centre should be added to that. He said that **Christmas Lights** and **Town Centre Management** should not be the Council's sole responsibility; it is up to businesses, through the Chamber, to cooperate with the Council for mutual benefit. Brian Haines said these projects need finance and Harrogate Chamber can only do so much with their limited budget.

Mike said that Harrogate Borough Council covers the whole of Harrogate District, so whatever is done in Harrogate has a knock-on effect on the rest of the District. **He said Harrogate Chamber's united business voice should be used with the Council.**

Brian Dunsby said meetings had been held with HIC personnel at intervals in the past and Vice President, Granville Simpson, head of Town Centre Focus Group, had been trying to get **improved signage** from the station to the Conference Centre, Tourist Office and back. For two years meetings have been held, but no finance has been provided and little action been taken to move this forward. It is a vital contribution to the town centre to make visitors feel welcome.

Brian said Harrogate Chamber would continue to work closely with HIC and offer all the support we can. He in turn asked Alison to let us know when the gaps in their calendar are and we will endeavour to help to fill them.

**Further information from:**  
**Alison Griffin, Head of Marketing, HIC**

**Tel: 01423 537206**

**E-mail: [Alison.Griffin@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.Griffin@harrogate.gov.uk)**

**Website: [www.harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk](http://www.harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk)**

## **Crown Venue Catering**

Stephanie Duncan of Crown Venue Catering (CVC) gave a brief presentation of their services. They are the on-site contract caterers, and are the exclusive caterers to the Harrogate International Centre. They offer a tailor made service to suit each client's specific requirements.

In the Exhibition Centre and Queens Suite CVC provide on stand catering services, hospitality for exhibitors, as well as corporate breakfast meetings, lunches, award ceremonies, charity events and glittering gala dinners.

'**Catering Excellence with Care**' is their motto, starting with the creation of menus to the table presentation; the on-site caterers deliver an outstanding depth of specialist skills and knowledge.

She added that from contemporary modern menus to traditional Yorkshire menus, their team of World Master Chefs will exceed your wildest expectations. Catering for up to 1800 guests, HIC offers the perfect location for wining, dining and entertaining.

**For further information contact:**

**Stephanie Duncan**

**Business Development Executive**

**Crown Venue Catering, Harrogate International Centre, Kings Road, Harrogate, HG1 5LA**

**Tel: 01423 537331 Fax: 01423 503693**

**[stephanie.duncan@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.duncan@harrogate.gov.uk)**

**[www.crownvenuecatering.co.uk](http://www.crownvenuecatering.co.uk)**

## **HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS**

### **Asda Planning Application**

HBC have asked the Chamber for comments on Asda's Planning Application for the building of a **mezzanine floor** within their existing store. We have the opportunity to submit comments on any implications this could have for town centre retailers. If you have any comments on the proposals you would like to be submitted with the Chamber's reply, please e-mail them to [secretariat@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:secretariat@harrogatechamber.org) immediately.

### **New Tesco Store Proposals**

Harrogate Chamber was also invited to the launch of the Tesco plans for a **new store** on the old Gasworks site at New Park. So far we have not received any objections in principle from members; the only concern is that the proposed new entrances and exits would exacerbate traffic congestion on Ripon Road and Skipton Road.

We shall be meeting with Tesco Management shortly so would any Members with comments, please e-mail to [secretariat@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:secretariat@harrogatechamber.org) immediately.

### **Proposed Focus Food Store**

A further outline planning proposal has been received for comment on the expansion of the Focus store on Skipton Road to include a **food store** and expanding onto the car park and field adjoining the premises. This could again potentially cause further traffic congestion in this area. Members with any comments please e-mail to [secretariat@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:secretariat@harrogatechamber.org) immediately.

## EDU Business Plan 2007/08

The Chamber has been asked to comment on the Economic Development Unit's Business Plan for 2007/08. In summary it is **supporting business and encouraging business** to come to Harrogate and provide all the services necessary. We are being asked to grade which activities are most important.

Members interested in having sight of any of the above proposals should contact the Secretariat.

### Meeting with the Opposition Leaders

Following a useful meeting in 2006 with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning of Harrogate Borough Council, the Management Group will shortly meet with the **leaders of the Opposition** - the Liberal Democrat Leader on Harrogate Borough Council, Councillor Margaret-Ann de Courcey-Bayley and Leader of the Liberal Democrats on the County Council, Councillor Bill Hout. The meeting will be off-the-record so all present can talk freely. Harrogate Chamber remains non-political and keen to talk with all parties.

### HMRC to close Harrogate Tax Office

Staff at HM Revenue & Customs have written to the Chamber for support in keeping the Harrogate office open. The **Harrogate Tax Office has been earmarked for imminent closure** with the position of the Ripon Tax Office to be under review in 2008, with early indications that it too will close. The Harrogate staff are trying to build a case to keep a tenable Tax presence in the town.

The local campaign group say that not only will the closure have a negative impact on the staff, but also on our businesses and customers. They have asked for our support to keep the office open.

They expect the **centralised service to be in Leeds** or Bradford and enquirers will face a less personal service, mostly from a **call centre**. It is likely that payments would not be accepted and they may refuse to accept/acknowledge Tax Returns. HMRC would only keep a small point of presence in the town; they would not be able to give detailed advice to customers as no back-up would be available on site.

As far as the staff is aware, HMRC has **not consulted local businesses** in the area on the impact of the closure. They are concerned in the long term it may have a negative impact on the town's economy with the possible loss of 75 jobs.

They claim HMRC has not completed its research on the "Socio-economic" effects of closing an office like Harrogate or the knock-on effect that any such closure may have. Would members let us know what you think so we can reply on behalf of businesses in the town?

The Keep Harrogate Open campaign team have asked people to write a short letter to: Paul Gray, Chairman of HMRC, 100 Parliament Street, London, SW1A 2BQ with a copy marked 'Private & Confidential' to Val Rodgers/Martin Lofthouse, HMRC Harrogate, 2 Victoria Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 1TN. + a copy to Secretariat.

The consultation period ends on **14<sup>th</sup> March 2007**.

## Majestic Hotel Expansion

Harrogate Chamber Officers were invited to see the Majestic Hotel's plans to add a **new block** to the rear of the hotel with additional bedrooms and conference rooms. Again, if you have any comments please e-mail to [secretariat@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:secretariat@harrogatechamber.org)

### North Yorkshire Police

Following a consultation request from the North Yorkshire Police Authority on their proposed Police Budget and Precept, we suggested that not only should there not be a 5% increase; there **should be no increase** at all until they used up the surplus funds generated by their massive increase four years ago. The NYPA have since decided to ask for a 3% increase.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

### Harrogate District Business Market Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2007 - 14.00 to 19.00

Supplies of the enclosed **new brochure** and free entry tickets to promote the 2007 Harrogate District Business Market on 30<sup>th</sup> April were available at the meeting for members to take and distribute to all business contacts.

Members who would like a supply of brochures and/or tickets please contact the Secretariat who will despatch these to you - or bring them along to the March meeting.

This year, for the first time we have support from **Yorkshire Forward** as well as the regular supporters:

- **Ackrills Media Group**
- **Business Link York & North Yorkshire**
- **Harrogate Borough Council EDU**
- **Harrogate International Centre**
- **Pavilions of Harrogate**

As we have said before - *your* help can make this year's Business Market even bigger and better than 2006 by:

- Distributing brochures and/or tickets to contacts
- Include a link on your website (logo available)
- Booking your stand early!!

**The event is FREE to visitors – with four Business Seminars, a Business Clinic & FREE refreshments!**

Full details at [www.harrogatechamber.org/market.htm](http://www.harrogatechamber.org/market.htm)

Put the date in your diary and make sure you at least come along as a visitor to **Pavilions of Harrogate between 14.00 and 19.00 on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April**. There will be ample free parking, admission and refreshments.

### Shared District Mailing

The Harrogate District Business Market will be promoted to **4,500 businesses** across the whole of the Harrogate District and adjoining areas during March, carrying inserts from several members who will be exhibiting at the event. Please pass on your own copy to colleagues and ask for extra copies of the brochure and tickets - or just ask them to click on [www.harrogatechamber.org](http://www.harrogatechamber.org).

## How to make an exhibition of yourself

Next month's meeting on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March at Cedar Court Hotel will have the timely topic of **"How to make an exhibition of yourself"**, including practical hints, products and services to help you make the most of the Business Market and other trade shows.

The following Members will make short presentations:

- **Ackrill Media Group - advertising and PR**
- **Colour It In - digital print & display services**
- **Display Techniques Ltd - exhibition equipment**
- **Screenprint Digital - high quality printing**
- **Sign-A-Rama - exhibition signs and graphics**

## Harrogate Chamber Website Update

The Chamber website has recently been updated by the Chamber Administrator, Maggie Hall, to make it easier to navigate and to search. The Membership Directory is now a **fully searchable database** either alphabetically, by business sector or by keyword.

All Members' e-mails are now hidden to avoid internet robots trawling and then sending you spam, but visitors can still e-mail you direct by clicking a link. The resulting e-mail will indicate to you that it has been generated from the Harrogate Chamber website.

We can now **send out bulk e-mails** for you to all other members for a nominal charge of £20 - but these will be limited to a maximum of one a week to avoid overload!

Please visit the site and let us have your thoughts or suggestions for further improvement. In particular please **visit your own entry** to ensure your business activity includes all the relevant keywords for visitors to the site to find you easily! [www.harrogatechamber.org](http://www.harrogatechamber.org)

## Leeds Chamber Benefits

Members will shortly be receiving copies of the Leeds Business Update magazine by post and also a fortnightly 'E-Zine' by e-mail. If you wish to opt out of receiving these items please notify the Secretariat.

Other benefits now available are the **Chamber Connect card**, which entitles members to discounts on products and services from other Leeds Chamber members. The full list of benefits for Harrogate Chamber members is listed at [www.harrogatechamber.org/leeds.htm](http://www.harrogatechamber.org/leeds.htm)

To find out more visit [www.leedschamber.co.uk](http://www.leedschamber.co.uk)

## Harrogate Chamber Membership Benefits

An updated list of membership benefits for Harrogate Chamber has been published on the back of the new Business Market Brochure and is also available on the website at [www.harrogatechamber.org/membership.htm](http://www.harrogatechamber.org/membership.htm)

If there are any benefits you don't recognise or understand, or are not taking advantage of, please contact the Secretariat for more information.

For example, there is a special **Harrogate Chamber website logo** that you can include on your website with a link directly to the Chamber website - this shows all visitors of your website that you are a member of Harrogate Chamber - and it offers a link to our website!

## MEMBERS' FORUM & NEWS

### The Harewood Card - Special Offer

Elaine Speight told members of a special offer that Harewood House are offering to Harrogate Chamber members of a discount on the purchase of a Harewood Card as follows:

	Normal Prices:	Special Offer prices:
Individual	£43	£38
Couple	£75	£65
Family	£105	£85

The Harewood Card also offers 10% discount in the café and shops on most items and free or discounted entry to most daytime events.

As a member company, any of your employees are eligible to take advantage of this special offer, so please pass this around your colleagues!

**To receive the special offer call 0113 218 1000 and quote "Harrogate Chamber".**

Elaine announced that the first **Yorkshire Planetarium** is opening at Harewood from 16 March until 28 October.

For full details of this and more events at Harewood House visit [www.harewood.org](http://www.harewood.org)

### Changes at McCormick's Solicitors

Congratulations to Peter McCormick and his colleagues who have bought out the Harrogate Practice from the Leeds Practice and will now be trading independently.

### Acas Training Courses

Acas are offering several Employment Law courses amongst many other varied courses. For full details visit [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) or ring 08457 474747

### Waterstones Bookshop Move

Chamber members, Waterstones bookshop in James Street, moved from number 40 to number 15 James Street in February following the recent takeover of the former Ottakars bookshop by Waterstones.

Nicola Rust is the new Manager. Tel: 01423 531953 Fax: 529002. or click on [www.waterstones.co.uk](http://www.waterstones.co.uk)

### The Trinity Foundation - Special Offer

The Trinity Foundation are offering Harrogate Chamber members the following four Training Days in March, April and May at **half price** (£122.50 per person):

- *How to become a confident public speaker, presenter and a great communicator*
- *Leadership and how to build "Top teams"*
- *Coaching skills for Managers, a path to recognising talent in your organisation*
- *How to create clients, increase sales and profit without being a "Salesperson"*

For further details call Stuart Pearson on 01423 566522 or visit [www.thetrinityfoundation.co.uk](http://www.thetrinityfoundation.co.uk)

## Ackrill Media Group Business Awards Gala Dinner - 29<sup>th</sup> March

The Business Awards Gala Dinner will be taking place on 29<sup>th</sup> March at the Majestic Hotel when prizes will be presented in the many categories, including the **Best Small Company sponsored by Harrogate Chamber**.

For individual tickets call Ginny Long on 01423 707402 or e-mail [Virginia.long@ypn.co.uk](mailto:Virginia.long@ypn.co.uk). Places are £50 each.

Brian Haines is organising a **Chamber Table** at the Dinner - please contact him direct if you would like to participate. Tel: 01423 709092.

E-mail: [brian.haines@esourcemail.eu](mailto:brian.haines@esourcemail.eu)

## Ripley Training Workshop

Ripley Training is looking for Managers who have responsibility for a process in the workplace. Ripley Training are offering places on the **Six Sigma Quality Improvement Workshop** on the 14th March 2007 at the Holiday Inn at Garforth. The approach can be applied to all business sectors from engineering and manufacturing to service and commerce, from multi-nationals to SMEs.

For more information contact Mike Smith at Ripley Training on 0870 8504232 or [www.ripleytraining.co.uk](http://www.ripleytraining.co.uk)

## EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS' NEWS

### New Osteoporosis Society Charity

Stuart Pearson announced a new Osteoporosis Society Charity would be launching in Harrogate. Members who would like to find out more or become involved please contact Stuart on 01423 566522.

### The Lifestyle Show

The new Lifestyle Show takes place in the Harrogate International Centre on 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Members who are **retailers or manufacturers** and who wish to showcase their latest products to "a growing number of style conscious, adventurous and forward thinking people" may be interested in exhibiting. A leaflet was enclosed in January issue of REVIEW. For more details phone 01423 779967 or see: [www.thelifestyleshow.org](http://www.thelifestyleshow.org)

## FOCUS GROUPS

### Business Promotion Focus Group

The Business Promotion Group is the new name for the Business Market Development Group which will be led by Stuart Pearson of The Trinity Foundation.

The aims of this Group are to **promote business-to-business networking** and other low-cost promotion opportunities across the Harrogate District and adjacent areas. Current activities include the Business Market, regular direct mail insertion opportunities, bulk e-mailing to all members and FREE monthly evening meetings.

Focus Group "discussions" are usually by e-mail with occasional meetings following one of the monthly Members' Meetings. Any Members interested in becoming involved with this group should send an e-mail to [secretariat@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:secretariat@harrogatechamber.org)

## Town Centre Focus Group

Granville Simpson reported his disappointment that HIC have not yet responded to our repeated requests for detailed reports on **improved signage** in the town centre. Further meetings with HIC are being arranged to progress this important matter for our Visitors' benefit.

## Traffic & Transport News

Brian Dunsby reported that there is a reasonable chance of the **Metro Fare** scales being extended to Harrogate. This would help commuting to and from Leeds. Further information will be given as soon as it is available.

Brian also outlined Leeds Council's proposals for **Wetherby town centre improvements** incorporating several mini roundabouts to improve the traffic flow, adding that it was a pity Harrogate could not do likewise!

## Thanks to St George Hotel

To close the meeting, Martin Wilks thanked Val Calabrese and staff at the St George Hotel for their kind hospitality and use of their very large Swaledale Suite. If you would like to find out more about the hotel's facilities please call Val Calabrese on 01423 561431.

## NEW MEMBERS

### Cannons Health & Fitness (*Health & Fitness*)

Ceri Morgan, General Manager  
Hornbeam Park Road, Harrogate, HG2 8RA  
**Tel:** 810858 **Fax:** 810860  
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**Web site:** [www.cannons.co.uk](http://www.cannons.co.uk)

### Hodgson Smith Ltd (*Promotional Gifthouse*)

Robert Shuker, Director  
3 Roslyn Road, Harrogate, HG2 7SB  
**Tel:** 01423 880455 **Fax:** 01423 880488  
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**Web site:** [www.hodgsonsmith.co.uk](http://www.hodgsonsmith.co.uk)

### Susan Rumfitt Ltd (*Jewellery Valuation*)

Susan Rumfitt, Director  
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**E-mail:** [enquiries@susanrumfitt.com](mailto:enquiries@susanrumfitt.com)  
**Web site:** [www.susanrumfitt.com](http://www.susanrumfitt.com)

### The R&B Group (*Total Event Management*)

Nick Knott, Harrogate Branch Manager  
14 Cobblestone Court, Hoults Estate, Walker Road,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 1AB  
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### Thompsons Chartered Accountants (*Chartered Accountants*)

David Thompson, Proprietor  
19 East Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5LF  
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**E-mail:** [david@myaccountants.net](mailto:david@myaccountants.net)  
**Web site:** [www.myaccountants.net](http://www.myaccountants.net)

## BUSINESS BRIEFINGS

### **Businesses urged to deal with late payers**

Small businesses are being offered advice on dealing with late payers. More than three million enterprises suffer from tardy payers every year, according to invoicing group Fortis Commercial Finance. It is trying to persuade more businesses to sign up to **invoicing agreements** by exposing some commonly held myths about this method of **debt control**. The message to businesses is that customers view enterprises that are serious about getting paid as those which are most likely to survive.

Read more on 'Shattering invoice finance myths' at: [www.fortiscomfin.co.uk/nlapps/docs/default.asp?fid=28](http://www.fortiscomfin.co.uk/nlapps/docs/default.asp?fid=28)

### **Smoking ban action reminder**

Businesses are being reminded that they need to produce a policy to deal with the forthcoming smoking bans in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The bans on smoking in enclosed public places come into force in Wales on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Northern Ireland on 30<sup>th</sup> April and **England on 1<sup>st</sup> July**. Law firm Mace & Jones said employers must put together a 'No smoking' policy and ensure that staff know about it. It also advised businesses to take legal advice before setting up outdoor smoking areas. Read more at:

<http://194.131.210.216/eappub/MACEJONES/publish/1869/20070102150656PW/index.asp>

Further information can be obtained from: [www.smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk)

### **Free 'No Smoking' signs for pubs**

Pubs across England are being offered free 'No Smoking' signs ahead of this summer's ban on smoking in enclosed public places. The Department of Health and "**Smoke free England**" signs will be available to pubs from Easter. Under the regulations, all smoke-free premises must display a 'No Smoking' sign above the main entrance and also at staff entrances. The pub industry had been concerned that buying suitable signs could cost more than £2 million.

Read more at: [www.thepublican.com/story.asp?sectioncode=7&storycode=54123&c=1](http://www.thepublican.com/story.asp?sectioncode=7&storycode=54123&c=1)

### **Construction awareness campaign launch**

An Awareness-raising campaign has started to inform construction businesses about **Site Waste** Management Plans, which will become a legal requirement from Spring 2008. The campaign is being run by NetRegs, the Government's online guide to environmental regulations for businesses. It has put together a guide, which can be downloaded from the site, explaining the regulations and how businesses can develop their own plans.

More at: [www.trailermail.co.uk/swmp/?referrer=/netregs/](http://www.trailermail.co.uk/swmp/?referrer=/netregs/)

### **HMRC to crack down on dividend payments**

Reports that HM Revenue & Customs is planning a crackdown on dividend payments, with a particular focus on small, owner-managed companies, have been met with concern by accountancy professionals. The concerns follow claims that HMRC is planning to use employment securities legislation to **charge Income tax** (PAYE) and National Insurance (NI) **on dividends**, which are traditionally used by owner-managers as a tax-efficient way of taking money out of their enterprise.

See a summary at:

[www.dtegroup.com/display\\_article.asp?pageid=NEWSLATEST&pagekey=24&articlekey=355](http://www.dtegroup.com/display_article.asp?pageid=NEWSLATEST&pagekey=24&articlekey=355)

### **HMRC produced tax guide for e-traders**

HM Revenue & Customs has put together a new online guide to tax for eBay traders and people who sell goods via other websites. It explains the difference between those who may be **liable for tax** - if they trade online with the intention of making a profit - and those who are simply selling off unwanted items. E-traders who start a new business are required to inform HMRC within three months of starting to trade. More at:

[www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=262133&NewsAreaID=2](http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=262133&NewsAreaID=2)

See HMRC's guide at:

[www.workingforyourself.co.uk/etraders/default.htm](http://www.workingforyourself.co.uk/etraders/default.htm)

### **End of the line for the floppy disk**

Businesses that use floppy disks to back up their data are being warned they could soon be obsolete. PC World will not be stocking any more of the disks once its current supplies have run out. CDs, memory cards and sticks have replaced floppy disks, which were introduced 36 years ago. PC World says the floppy's hey-day was 1998, when two billion were sold worldwide.

Read more at:

[www.ananova.com/business/story/sm\\_2179168.html?menu=business.latestheadlines](http://www.ananova.com/business/story/sm_2179168.html?menu=business.latestheadlines)

### **Cyber crime-fighting website piloted**

A website is being piloted in Yorkshire to help small businesses protect themselves from cyber criminals. **Yorkshire-Safe** allows businesses to check how safe their systems are and provides advice on security in several languages. The project's partners include the four Yorkshire police forces, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Serious Organised Crime Agency. It will eventually be rolled out nationally before being launched in Europe.

More at: [www.theregister.co.uk/2007/02/08/yorkshire-safe\\_fights\\_cybercrime/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2007/02/08/yorkshire-safe_fights_cybercrime/)

Visit the site at: [www.yorkshire-safe.org](http://www.yorkshire-safe.org)

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