

## Q Guild - East Region

Minutes of the East Regional Meeting

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

At Walter Smith, Huntingdon Garden & Leisure

Commencing at 11.00am

**Present:** Robert Jones, Nigel Rose, Andrew Edmonds, Howell Jenkins, Julie Henshaw, Graham Hall, Edward Byford, Stuart & Kim Gooderham (prospective new members)

**Corporate:** Chris Ellis (Dalziel -D F D Dickens) Rebecca Buckles (Dalziel) David Smith (Dalziel), Roger Lathbury (South Coast Systems) Matthew Sorrell (Unbar Rothon) Andrew Williams MRC, Tim Cooper (A Cold) Simon Nicholson (Innovative Food Ingredients)

**Apologies:** Gordon Newlands, Andrew Belcher, Chi Johnson, Stuart Barker, James Archer, Matthew & Robert Morris, Jonathan Edge (C & K Meats) Paul Murthar (Bizerba)

### AGENDA:

1. We had a very warm welcome from Robert Jones (MD of Walter Smith) Nigel Rose (Area Manager for Walter Smith) Peter Lamburne the (Food Hall Manager)

2. Walter Smith have a concession in the huge Wyevale Garden & Leisure Centre, their Food Hall is within the main building adjacent to the checkouts. Their Food Hall is approximately 40'x 100'

Offering, Fresh & Cooked Meats, delicious Pies (made on the Premises) local artisan bread, Anthony Rowcliffe cheeses, different flavoured olive oil & balsamic vinegars, frozen ready meals, local honey, fresh fruit & Vegetables. The self-service wine department is sublet to a local merchant.

The displays were all stunning, with the variety of fresh & cooked meat ready prepared foods were exceptional. The quality of the butchery/display & fresh garnishing was a "work of art"

This Q Guild business is certainly in the "Premier Division" of the meat trade.

NB Tim Cooper's firm A Cold carried out the design and installation which took three weeks to complete, it looks fantastic too.

3. All attendee's were asked to tell the meeting their name and business name/type. At the end of the meeting butcher and corporate members in some cases engaged in conversation and M.S from Unbar Rothon gave away samples of his new sausage seasonings

4. Report from our visit to Midland's members. Andrew told members what an interesting and informative two days we had, visiting five excellent businesses. Every business was quite different with things to be learnt at everyone. Minutes of the trip have been circulated so Andrew did not spend too much time on this agenda item.

5. Robert Jones and Nigel Rose told us about their business model:

A. This Garden Centre/ food outlet has been open for just under one year. It is their sixth food hall within a garden centre.

B. Wyevale handle all the takings from the Food Hall via their checkouts and deduct a percentage to cover the cost of the rent. The scales in the Food Hall record the type and value all produce sold. Walter Smith do experience a level of theft, the cost of this theft is shared between Walter Smith and Wyevale.

C. Setting up cost of the Food Hall was shared between the two partners.

Walter Smith paying for staff, movable equipment, mincer, dishwasher, scales, ovens, sausage machine, trays and all sundry items etc.

Wyevale paid for the fitting out of the Food Hall which included the refrigeration.

D. The Food Hall opening hours are governed by when the Garden Centre is open. They are able to get access slightly before and after the opening times. However this is also governed by the management of the Garden Centre for overall security.

E. All the preparation of fresh & cooked meats, pastry products, sausage manufacturing etc are all done "front of house." this creates theatre for customers and also make it easier for management to control staff more effectively. The other important benefit is that they do not need to fit out/clean preparation areas at the "back of shop". The extra space available can be used as an additional sales area too.



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F. Marketing is heavily focused on giving away samples of cooked sausages, pies, steak and various other products they want to push on a given day.  
They do also have a planned promotions and a pricing policy.  
G. Walter Smith have their own Training Facility in the Midlands, this has an emphasis on craft skills and good customer care.  
Staff do also have to achieve a recognised level of training to N.V.Q Levels standards varying from level 2 and 3.

5. Q Guild Manager (Gordon Newland) report was read out by Edward, as unfortunately Gordon could not make the meeting due to his car breaking down on the Friday previous.  
A. In summary, his report stated the he had since joining the Q Guild in February 2015 he has visited 95 member shops and 10 Corporate members businesses.  
B. BBQ Conference: This was a great success with Walter Smith winning four of the top awards.  
C. Cy Chadwick presented a demonstration on how to video on ipads and iphones  
D. Keurslager Butchers from Holland demonstrated their operating system.  
E. Smithfield Awards: Three venues are currently being investigated.  
F. Social Media: Twitter and Facebook continue to grow in followers.  
G. British food Fortnight 19<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October, members are encouraged to get involved  
H. Keurslager: The Chairman Mark Turnbull and Gordon Newlands have had meetings with the MD and senior executives in Holland.  
I. Inspections: Various proposals were put forward as possible alternatives to the current system.

6. Inspections: The various proposals were put to the meeting. All Q Guild butcher members present agreed that the current inspections should be changed if it was the reason that good members had left the Guild. It was also agreed that the £400 per inspection could be better used to progress the aspirations of the membership.

Comments included

A.E There should be a full vigorous inspection for new members

J.H The Guild has always been one step ahead of the rest and that the inspections make us unique from other butchers.

H.J Merger of areas inspection and streamline the paper work

R.J He felt the Guild should stop the current method of inspections immediately if the Guild is losing members because of it and carefully look at other options.

He also felt prominent members working to a very high standards could leave if there was not some form of monitoring/ inspection.

The consensus of the members present felt that the Guild Manager could do a simplified type of inspection focused towards the general quality aspects of the business/food safety and less on the hygiene. Members felt that in general the Environment Health "scores on the doors system" was satisfactory.

## 7. AOB

A.E. Told us that he has a student butcher from Australia who has won a scholarship to travel and work in Europe for two years. He is going to spend a month working at Andrew's shop starting in July 2015. The business will have to provide accommodation, in Andrew case he is staying with A.E. Also, the trainee will be paid an allowance. A.E expects to be able to learn new ideas to help the business and gain some publicity too. After Andrew's, he is going to work at another Q Guild shop on the North of England.

SHOULD ANY OTHER MEMBER WISH TO HOST THIS YOUNG MAN, PLEASE CONTACT GORDON

The topic of the cost of disposing of fat& bones was raised. Robert Jones said they use a local firm called TENANTS who do not charge anything for collection

A.E Thanked our hosts Robert Jones, Nigel Rose, Peter Lamburne for their hospitality/ delicious buffet lunch. Robert & Peter were given two bottles of wine each as a token of our appreciation.

The meeting ended at 2.30 pm

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