

**Q Guild Management Committee
Meeting, Penrith
Wednesday 1st April 2015 at 10:30am**

Present: Mark Turnbull, Brindon Addy, David Lishman, Philip Cranston, Gordon Newlands (Guild Manager), Douglas Scott (Minutes)

Matters Arising

Q Guild will have no direct involvement in the 2015 Tri Nations. There will be no cost to the Guild but DL will be team co-manager and one of his employees will be in the team. Q Guild office and account will handle the finances for the GB 2015 Tri Nations team.

Membership Report

There are currently 105 members of the Guild (assuming everyone pays). 6 members have resigned from the Guild: Crombies, Riley's, John Saunderson, Andrew Ramsay and J Davidson (Dobbies Garden Centre) and Edwards of Conwy.

At the moment, we currently have 10 members of the 105 who have yet to rejoin the Guild. (Three subsequently paid but 7 still outstanding on 13/04/15 are: Fields of Anlaby, Aubrey Allen, Robinsons of Tettenhall, Royal Farms Windsor Farm Shop, Moody Sow Farm Shop, Etheringtons Farm Shop, H Weatherhead. The latter has been in contact regards payment). All of these members have received a letter to remind them that their membership fees are outstanding.

Honeywell Meats successfully passed their audit in December and became members.

Archers Butchers in Norwich and Joseph Morris Butchers in Rugby have successfully passed their pre-audit. Archers are booked for their full audit on Thursday 7th May and we are awaiting Joseph Morris to inform us of when they will be ready for their full audit. Rogers & Son in Carmarthen were sent out membership information again in February, but have yet to return their application form.

JE Baty, Peter Speight and Laverstoke Park Farm have all been written to in the last few weeks to see if they wish to progress with membership, but as yet no response has been received. Walter Smith have two more shops that they wish in the Guild but one will replace their Knowle shop. Application forms have been sent to them.

Corporate Membership: There are currently 34 Corporate members and as yet there have been no indication of any resignations. This includes Contract Natural Gas Ltd. who were granted Corporate member status after the 2014 Tri Nations. Of these members, we have 9 who have yet to renew their membership for 2015. These are: Anna's Happy Trotters, Avery Berkel, DB Foods, Hartshead Meats, Kiernans Food Ingredients, Lucas, PR Duff, Manchester Rusk Co, and Packington Free Range

Gordon Rhodes Ltd (Dalesman) have agreed to become Corporate members and this is currently progressing. Phoenix Retail, Smeva agents would be considered for membership. Tracklemans, Comark, Hawk Systems and Mrs Dartington could be pursued.

Carron Lodge, Cheesemaker were sent information again at the beginning of January regarding membership, but they have yet to respond.

Discussion followed on how discount / incentives could be built in to corporate members business with Q Guild. GN would investigate potential.



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Finance Report

DS presented up to date financial figures including budget figures for 2015. The current situation indicated an outcome of a surplus but this is very much dependent on all the outstanding member and corporate member fees being paid.

Guild Manager's Report

Since starting on 23rd February I have visited 35 shops, 4 corporate members and attended five regional meetings / barbecue heats. Views collected by me concerned the following:-

Inspections- Too many members are unhappy about the inspections. I feel that there is a need to find some middle ground or there might be less members next year if we don't. He felt that one inspection during the Chairman's three year term could be an alternative.

Labelling-

It is considered ludicrous that members are not allowed to place a sticker for a Smithfield Q Guild Award Winner 2015 on their products when supplying other companies.

To me this is a good way of marketing the actual Guild for free!!

I don't think we will ever be rid of the mutli-nationals, we have to use them to further our aims and needs. Recommendation to Executive:- Members should be allowed to use the "Smithfield" award logo on products when supplying other companies.

Website-

Every member that I have been to, criticises the website, informing me it is difficult to navigate. The biggest problem identified was the navigation to locate members. CODA to be asked if this can be improved.

I suggest a competition to promote visits to the website:-

- Competition- £50 meat pack on offer on website monthly. £30 of this would be redeemable from Q Guild
- We send 1 page of vouchers (5 to a page) to member shops.
- Members print of 100 vouchers and issue them to customers.
- Customers have to click on website and answer 3 questions on the Guild (Answers are in a short blog)
- Leave their contact details when entering competition.
- Monthly winner, which can be redeemed at any Q Guild Member
- Photo of winner on website each month.
- Q Guild redeem the winning voucher to the member.

Aim- Raise the profile of the Q Guild.

If every member printed 100 vouchers off, that would give us a database of potentially 10.000 customers that would have clicked on the website and discovered what the Guild is about.

Cloaked Website-

This should be the place we have all the members information. Members feel the cloaked website is too difficult to access. One generic password for all the members, for example - QGuild2015 - would be preferable. This will be actioned as soon as possible.

Recipe Sharing- I have asked 5 members to submit a recipe for April. I will collate and place on the cloaked website and place in a folder for only members to see. At end of year there will be 60 recipes. Year 2- 120 and so on. New members could be presented with this folder as a joining gift. I feel that it is crucial that the Guild gets back to the recipe sharing ethos.

'Things we do' was devised to do a similar thing in the past and it was suggested that if there was a copy of that it too should be on the cloaked website. The five recipes would be on the cloaked website by 11th April.

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The Guildsman should be on this website too. There was a discussion about potential savings of £4000 per annum if Guildsman was circulated electronically. Savings could go on to build a better website? The need for a physical copy was questioned but agreed that a physical version with an improved content should be tried first. Acknowledged that the Guildsman is an important vehicle for Corporate Members. Hot off the Block is an e-newsletter anyway. DL suggested viewing Australian Pork website for example of e-communication. BA requested that comparison surveys be included as a service to members either in the Guildsman or in Hot Off the Block.

Regions-

I feel that some of the regions are spread over a very large geographical area. My impression is that regions require re-organised; Wales should be a region in its own right. Martin Player is happy to take on the chairman's role and build this Welsh region. This would also leave the door open for the involvement of the Welsh Beef and Lamb body to sponsor Smithfield awards etc. Proposal to be made to Executive Committee. Cornwall members have intimated that they would be pleased to have meetings of their own and with GN's support they could meet two or three times yearly.

There may be a problem in South Region since it was noted that Katie Lally of James of Shepperton has intimated via a social media message that she was "officially out of the Guild." BA gave a detailed report of his phone conversation with her about their membership. This was discussed, GN had not yet visited the South Region but has done everything that he has been asked to do as set out by the Management Committee. GN has an appointment to see James of Shepperton on 29th April.

Exec Committee Meetings-

I feel that we should not have Executive Committee meetings in York all the time, could they be moved around the regions? Could they be timed to coincide with a Regional meeting in an area? Members seeing the Executive coming to them will make them feel more involved. Agreed that the July meeting should be held in Birmingham to coincide with MeatUp.

Smithfield Awards-

As per the labelling item above. I note the need to identify a celebrity to present the awards in 2015. Several members have high profile customers that could possibly serve this role without spending over the odds. James of Shepperton- Theo Paphitis; F. Godfrey- Nigel Slater; Frasers- Paddy McGuinness and Peter Kay. The list goes on, I am positive that there are customers / members' friends who could save the Guild money.

After discussion GN agreed to investigate potential venues for the Awards Lunch in the Windsor area.

Some members have complained about the cost of sending products to Glasgow. One member informed me it cost him more than £1200 from entering to awards day. I have defended the use of City of Glasgow College as Douglas and Bruce from SFMTA and the staff at the college have the cooking and organisation well set up and the judging is run very slickly indeed. To change the venue would upset the whole dynamics.

Marketing-

Can we create posters for special days in the calendar year? Mothers Day, Valentines etc? Can we make them all A4 posters and place them all on the cloaked website for members to download and print off or add their own company names to? I will investigate use of images available from Scobie & Junor. It was felt that a Q Guild Roasting Guide including what the Q Guild stands for should be a priority. Agreed

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that a PDF of the recipes of each regions winning products should be compiled to be given out at the National BBQ Finals.

Social Media-

Facebook- access has just been acquired. I have lots of ideas that we can utilise and link in with member shops own Facebook pages.

Twitter-

When I started there were 1475 followers on Twitter. To date we are 15 short of 2000. An extra 500 followers. Fantastic when only 10 of those are butchers, so potentially 490 people that could be Q Guild Butchers customers. I try to post updates during the day and after visiting member shops.

North/South Divide-

There is a strong perception in the Guild membership that it is a 'North East Roadshow'. Some members have been very critical of this issue. I think because all the Management Committee, and officials are from the North of England, members feel it is a closed shop. Questions that I have been asked-

- Who votes for Chairman?
- Who votes for Vice-Chairman?
- Members should all get votes?

Discussion pointed out that the AGM was held at the February Executive meeting and that the regional representatives at that meeting voted for the officials. It was noted that a page on the structure of the Guild and how it runs will be added to the Steps To Quality Manual.

Second Shop Fee-

Several shops have intimated that the second shop is too expensive to join at £700. The Management Committee asked that the financial impact of reducing the fee be examined and reported to the next Executive Committee meeting.

Guildsman

Publication target dates:

End of April

End of August

End of December

Version to be emailed as a PDF and on cloaked website

Hot off the Block

Target one or two per month

Regional BBQ Heats

All the regions with the exception of the North East have held their heats and established their six category winners going forward to the National BBQ finals. North East heat is scheduled for Tuesday 14th April. Robin Moule will be asked to prepare press releases for the winners and certificates will be printed and sent out.

National BBQ Final and Business Conference

This has been arranged for the Windmill Village Hotel, Coventry on Sunday 31st May and Monday 1st June. The BBQ final would be cooked by Richard Holden formerly of the Weber Grill Academy and corporate members would be invited to judge. While the finals are going on the Business Conference will commence with three prominent figures in Keurslager addressing the conference. Following this it is hoped that Cy Chadwick could run a practical session to create promotion videos on an iPad or iPhone.

A dinner and presentation of barbecue prizes will be held on the Sunday evening. On the Monday Keith Smith and Cathie George from Eastwoods of Berkhamstead will give a talk on the use of social media. Cy Chadwick will show video clips created the



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previous day and Mark Turnbull will conclude the proceedings with a 'State of the Nation' address. Corporate members would be given free exhibition space in the Windmill Suite. Close would be at lunchtime on Monday.

Calendar of Events

This has been kept updated and Corporate Members have received a copy this week.

Smithfield Awards

Greg Hull's proposal to give every member a free entry to this year's awards was viewed as a very positive move. MT felt that Smithfield Awards should be promoted in the same way as the Great Taste Awards. A star system could more promotable and more desirable. Winners' certificates should re-designed in a more modern style to incorporate a new Smithfield Award logo.

Diamond, Three star gold, Two star gold, one star gold to be suggested to Executive and awards would include counter ticket and a PDF of certificates as well as the physical certificate.

Technical Advisory Committee

Simon Osbourne and Kathryn Nicholson have joined the TAC after an appeal to the membership for volunteers. MT was concerned that HAS consider that the audits should be tougher with a maximum of one red for a pass. TAC does not think there is any suitable alternative to the hygiene audit. They also feel that there is not sufficient emphasis on quality. A quality self audit should be done by the member, in addition to monitoring by Guild Manager in a tacit inspection.

GN had reported finding widespread dissatisfaction with the need for hygiene inspections over and above local authority inspections and had gathered a feeling that the membership would prefer these to be reduced to every three years. Following discussion on audit frequency, BA proposed that we either keep the audit in its current 18 month cycle or do away with it altogether.

If we do away with it, all the standards in the Steps to Quality Manual would stay in place and savings made from having no audit inspections would be ploughed into marketing. To join the Guild would require a HAS audit and a visit from the General Manager. To remain in the Guild all members would be required to maintain a 4/5 star rating with the FSA Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. This to be monitored by Guild Office.

The Management Committee agreed that this proposal should be made to the Executive Committee. Members who wished to continue receiving audits would be offered the option to do so at an additional cost to the individual business.

Date of next meeting: Executive Committee, 1st July 2015
Birmingham

Meeting closed at 4.30pm.



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