

## **Q Guild Management Committee Meeting, Coventry Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015 at 1:30pm**

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

**Minutes** of Management meeting held in Penrith on 1st April were approved. There were no matters arising.

### **Membership Report**

There are currently 106 members of the Guild though one member has still to pay their outstanding fee (they have been reminded on numerous occasions). We have been advised that Laurie Wakeham will be resigning from the Guild as the shop is being sold and the new owner does not wish to become members of the Guild.

There are two new members, Archers Butchers, Norwich and Joseph Morris, Rugby. We also have 3 shops currently at the application stage: J E Baty, Walter Smith, Melbicks Garden Centre and Bridgemere Garden Centre. The Melbicks Garden Centre will replace the Knowle Garden Centre business.

Laverstoke Park Farm do not wish to progress their application of the Guild and we have had no response from Peter Speight, so assume that they do not wish to continue with their application.

There have been numerous enquiries from businesses regarding membership, but to date none of these have been firm enquiries.

### **Corporate Membership**

There are currently 36 Corporate members. We have had one resignation, Anna's Happy Trotters. Of the 36 members we have yet to receive membership fees from Avery Berkel, Kiernans, Lucas, MRC, Scobie Junor and PR Duff. We are actively chasing these companies for their fees. Lucas and MRC are in the pipeline for payment.

We have recently had 3 companies become Corporate members; Dalesman Group, Hawk Safety (St Albans) and Walters Turkeys.

### **Finance**

DS reported on the current state of the finances. Increased revenue from corporate members and reduced payments to Hygiene Audit Services had improved the look of the accounts. The outcome was still dependant on all corporate members paying up. It's noted that there were six listed above still to send remittance (most are still expected to pay).

### **Guild Manager's Report**

GN reported

It has been a really busy schedule since our last meeting in April and one that has had mixed responses.

To date-

- 82 member shops visited.
- 10 Corporate members visited.
- 6 potential members visited
- 3 lapsed members visited.



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### **Inspections.**

The issue of inspections have raised its head in just every business that I have visited. The members feel that the "scores on the doors" system under the local authority inspections should suffice and be used as the standard for the Q Guild audit. I would estimate that about 80% of the membership are against the Inspections.

### **Use of Q Guild Logo**

Again, the few Butchers that are utilising wholesale orders in their businesses are asking why the Q Guild logo or a "Smithfield" logo is not allowed on packaging? They all state the same reason- it is a route to get the Q guild and Smithfield logo highlighted to the general public. We have lost a very good member in Andrew Ramsay of Carluke for this very reason.

There followed a discussion on Guild members using the Guild's logo on products in outlets other than their own. The next Executive Committee will be given the opportunity to make the decision on the subject.

### **Website.**

I have had communication from Mike at Coda and met with him some 2 weeks ago. Mike is only contracted to 2 hours per month and is stating- the last few months there has been a huge amount of information requiring to be uploaded to the website and I just cannot do it for 2 hours per month. I have left this open with Mike and informed him that we will make a decision at the Executive meeting in July.

He has agreed to complete the Competition web/facebook promotion for 1 month only. Cost is a one off £260. Data capture will be held on a mail chimp software. If we continue to run with CODA he will charge £65 per month for the competitions to continue.

### **Cloaked Website.**

The cloaked website is getting more streamlined, however it still requires a lot of work to get where we want it to be. Again, this comes down to Mike. I am frustrated at the lack of communication from members. Price survey has had a poor rate of response. I have asked 7 members for a price survey each month which I got the first month. This month I do not think it will happen as I have only received 3 members prices.

The same for the recipe exchange folder. I have only received 3 this month and again asked 5 members.

### **Publications.**

I get the feeling from the membership that they do not read the Guildsman or hot of the blocks. Surely, this has to be looked at as the cost for publications is not cheap. This money could be also be used for marketing.

### **Regions**

I have proposed that the Welsh region is a stand alone region. Martin Player is happy to help build a region in Wales along with my assistance. This would gain the help of the Welsh Food Board.

Cornwall, Somerset and Devon require to be a region in its own right also. Logistically, this region is part of the South West and is just too large, with members stating it is too far to go to meetings. This week, the Cornwall, Somerset and Devon members are open to this suggestion. I plan to hold their first meeting in the first week in September. Probably in Taunton.

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## Smithfield

I have contacted Chris Murray at Windsor Farm Shop and asked if he knows of any venues suitable for hosting the 2015 Smithfield awards and Dinner. I have yet to hear back from Chris.

## Marketing.

The members are crying out for marketing material and the recent "Roasting Guide" has been well received. To me the members should have monthly recipe cards, point of sale material and poster for Mothers Day, Valentines etc

This all raises the profile of the Q Guild but more importantly allows the Butchers to potentially gain more customers into their shops.

## Social Media: To Date-

Twitter- 2148 followers. (increase of 200 since out last meeting).

Facebook-669 likes. ( Increase of 175 since last meeting)

Instagram- Just started Instagram. Another marketing route.

It all raises the profile of member shops and Q Guild branding.

## Fees.

There is a strong feeling with members with branch shops that the 2<sup>nd</sup> shop fee is too expensive. There is more shops to gain if we drop to say £550 and we gain more income and more Q Guild shops.

## Standard.

There are some shops in the Guild that should NOT be in the Q Guild. Old fashioned and tired. We need to look at how we can get them to improve their businesses and bring it up to Q Guild standard or ask them to leave the Q Guild. It brings the majority of the Q Guild shops down and is not a good image to portray to the consumer.

## Summary-

A really busy schedule and June will be in the same vein. I require to get round the remaining member shops before the July 1 Executive meeting and gain their views. This will give us a clear mandate as to what we can propose at the Executive meeting. Democratic and transparent is what the Q Guild should be about.

There is a huge sway of members that require the Guild to be modernised and brought up to modern day marketing standard. I feel that if we do not move as our members wish, we will be certainly less shops next year, and the Q Guild would lose credence in the Industry.

Members have been really open and honest and I appreciate them all giving me their time to air their views. Super shops with stunning displays and lovely people.

I have helped many in problems and have put members in touch with other members. Arranged a Butchery Tour from the New Zealand Butcher of the year who is coming to London in June to work at some of our Q Guild shops.

I issued an appeal to members from a member about help with a lamb recipe and pork sausage recipe- I did not get a single reply, so email may be better.

However, good shops visited and some 30 left to get round. National Chairman Mark Turnbull's, Alnwick shop will fittingly be the last visited where the final report will be issued.

## TAC

The one member with outstanding issues has still to resolve them.



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## Communications

A Guildsman and three Hot Off The Block. MT outlined the alternatives that make the Guildsman hard to compare with other industry publications.

## Marketing

The delivery from Keurslager was very impressive. They have a digital platform, including website and access to members own website. There is also an ecommerce and loyalty element controlled from the Keurslager hub. Every shop's individual products are listed, tickets, posters and promotions are accessible to all members. A newsletter can also be sent to all customers and targeted by region. Newscasting is included on the instore screens.

They said that if Q Guild was interested there would be a set up fee, annual rental, update on software done by Keurslager but it would required to be serviced by a person. Verstegen would be key to any UK system.

## Five Year Plan

In the light of comment from Business Conference, it was felt that the plan should be revisited since clearly national recognition was achievable through social media.

## Inspections

MT felt that the existing inspection audit has failing in that some members complied yet still do not portray the image or progressive look expected of a Q Guild shop. DL said that inspections provide his business with useful tools but understands the backlash against them. PC agreed reluctantly that they might have to go but felt that there should be some form of control. BA commended the Steps To Quality Manual. He is proud to get a good pass from his hygiene inspection and felt that maintaining standards was important. BA proposed suspending the hygiene audit and retaining the Steps To Quality Manual as a standard.

The Guild would continue to send out the self audit every nine months in order to maintain the standards. If required independent auditors could be employed if it was felt they were needed for either hygiene or quality standards. MT proposed that inspections cease and a requirement introduced to send in reports from local authority EHOs to the Q Guild office. A minimum four star standard would be required and Issues raised from EHO reports may be referred to the TAC. DL seconded that and added that a quality inspection by the Q Guild manager should be introduced. Standards as laid out in Steps To Quality would remain in place and must be met. Any new members wishing to join the Guild must undergo both a hygiene audit to hygiene standards, and a visit from the Guild Manager to assess quality standards. A budget would remain in place to pay for consultants to keep the standards up with any new legislation and also to audit any members with whom problems may exist and where we may need to send in an inspector. This was agreed by the Management Committee to take forward to the Executive Meeting.

Management Meeting ended at 3.00pm

## Date of next meeting

To be fixed after Executive Meeting on Wednesday 1st July



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