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April 2026

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1. From the President

What a fabulous Quiz Night we had last Saturday (25th April) with a packed room of quizzers all vying for the top spot, and as usual it went down to the wire. It was very gratifying to see the first event of the session so well supported. Full report below.

The next big social event will be the Race Night in September (12th) but in the meantime we are looking at some potential topics for business networking sessions over the next few months. Such meetings have not been particularly well attended over the past couple of years so the aim is to try and find topics that will attract more. Having said that, it's not just about the topics. The sessions provide an opportunity to come together to keep in touch, get to know others and share information, knowledge and expertise when appropriate. More information in due course.

We also report below a recent meeting with a representative from the North Yorkshire Council Communities Team regarding the development of a Town Investment Plan for Boroughbridge. This is a Mayoral initiative across the whole of the County. The Chamber will be only one of many local groups that will be invited to provide input for this initiative and we will share appropriate information with members as it becomes available.

2. Member News

After 23 years running **Boroughbridge Post Office** Karen and Nigel Hamilton-Evans have recently placed the business on the market. The Post Office has been a long-standing Chamber Member under the auspices of Karen and Nigel and we wish them nothing but the best for their next chapter in life. Nothing is changing day to day. For now the Post Office will continue to operate exactly as normal, with the usual opening hours and the same excellent service you can rely on.

Sadly, we say goodbye to **The Dining Room, Cabello** and **Blackshaw Howell Consultancy** who have decided not to renew their Chamber subscriptions for the current session.

3. Quiz Night Retrospective

What an excellent Quiz Night we had on Saturday 25th April at the Crown Hotel – probably the best yet. As usual, quizmaster Geoff Hustwit presented a varied and eclectic mix of brain teasers to keep everyone on their toes and needing to dig



A packed room eagerly awaits the next round

deep into their grey matter. The room was packed with around 80 quizzers all eager to demonstrate their knowledge with a total of 16 teams taking part – a record.

The result was close throughout the evening with several teams vying for the top spot, but in a thrilling finale “The Shiftas” prevailed with 98 points (out of a possible 120). Thanks are due to the Crown Hotel for looking after us so well, making the room available free of charge and providing delicious finger food in the interval. Huge thanks also to Geoff for yet another masterpiece of a Quiz and special thanks too to Barbara Hill for organising the whole event.



Heather Chester receives the spoils on behalf of ‘The Shiftas’ winning team from Chamber President Derek Hufton

4. Town Investment Plan

On 27th April the Chamber Committee met with Suzy Sweeting from North Yorkshire Council (NYC) Communities Team to hear about and discuss a proposed Boroughbridge Town Investment Plan as part of a Mayoral initiative. The Communities Team is keen to contact and get to know community and business groups across the region generally to promote and discuss Town Investment Plans. The plans are being developed to:

“...help guide future investment decisions, build communities and support the economic growth of our towns across North Yorkshire.”

The aim is to have a specific detailed and funded plan for each major centre in North Yorkshire, and that includes Boroughbridge. The plans will identify projects that promote social regeneration, well-being, and reduced inequalities, ensuring towns are well-connected, vibrant and fit for the future. General information about the whole initiative can be found on the North Yorkshire Council website – simply type “Town Investment Plan” into the search box to locate the details. The plans include these key themes:

Enabling Enterprise – digital infrastructure, provision of workspace, improving vitality of town centres, supporting local businesses, and a balanced mix of shops, homes, leisure, and commercial spaces in town centres.

A Sustainable Settlement – active travel options and infrastructure that improves climate resilience, creating sustainable places

Protecting Heritage and Promoting Growth – use of cultural and heritage assets, enhancement of public realm, protecting heritage and boosting growth: investing in cultural and historic assets, finding new uses for empty buildings, and improving public spaces to draw visitors and support town centre activity.

Resilient and Improving Social and Personal Well-being – reducing health inequalities and enabling people to have healthier lives, improving health and community well-being: helping reduce health inequalities and supporting healthier, more connected communities.

Suzy and her team are keen to meet with other groups in and around Boroughbridge as the Town Investment Plan develops further. It is hoped that the Chamber will be hosting a presentation and discussion session for local businesses sometime in the next few weeks, so watch out for details. A local Survey will be launched by NYC early-May to garner people's opinions of what is good and not so good and what Boroughbridge needs for the future across the above themes. The launch of the Survey will be announced across various platforms and the Chamber will specifically notify members when it is available.

5. Renters Rights Act 2025

A number of Chamber members are renting their premises or are landlords themselves. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has recently come into law, meaning landlords need to be prepared for the significant changes to come as the new measures are phased in. With enhanced rights for tenants and the responsibilities as a landlord changing, it is worth just clarifying the scope of the Act.

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 is primarily designed to overhaul the ***residential private rented sector*** in England and does not cover commercial rent agreements. Commercial tenancies remain governed by the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. However, separate proposed legislation aims to reform commercial rent reviews.

Residential Focus: The Renters' Rights Act brings in mandatory reforms for residential tenancies, including banning no-fault evictions, banning bidding wars, and eliminating fixed-term tenancies from 1st May 2026.

Commercial Distinctions: Commercial leases are governed by the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, which provides security of tenure and dictates lease renewal processes, distinct from residential protections.

Commercial Rent Reviews: A separate bill, the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, proposes banning "upwards-only" rent reviews in commercial leases.

Potential Overlap: While primarily residential, the Renters' Rights Act may impact developers converting commercial properties into residential units. Commercial tenants should continue to refer to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 for their rights regarding lease renewals and security of tenure.

Chamber Members, Hetherton's Solicitors, has produced a dedicated Renters' Rights Act guide for landlords available here:

https://www.hethertons.co.uk/pdf/Hethertons_Renters_Rights_Act_Guide.pdf

Note: (you will need to copy this link into your browser)

Amongst other things, the guide covers:

- Why the Renters' Rights Act has been introduced
- The important regulations that will come into effect
- What those changes do and how they impact the landlord's role
- The key terms you need to understand
- What you can do to prepare as the act is phased in

6. Snippets

Kez Thornton and partner Tom Garrod will be opening "**Beloved Books**" in the unit recently vacated by Coco & Bear, next to Sunflower Bakery on Horsefair. They will be selling general fiction and children's books rather than having a particular niche, with the aim of being a community bookshop.

They would like to hear from anyone with particular suggestions of what kind of books to stock.



... and keep up to date with the Chamber

News Items are regularly posted to the Chamber website (www.boroughbridgect.co.uk) and we post on Facebook (@BoroughbridgeCT) too.

Make sure you follow and check out these channels for regular updates, useful alerts and information.

Footnote: Please note that the various blue email and website links in this document are not live links – i.e. you cannot click on them. To use them simply copy the text and paste it into your browser or email client.