

Notes from meeting of Bromyard & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry,

Held at the Falcon Hotel, Bromyard on 7th February 2018

Guests – Alfie Best, Chris Knowles, Julie Knowles, David Masters, Cheryl Waring.

The meeting was well attended and David James (Chairman) asked everyone present to introduce themselves. We had people attending from local business people, event and festival organisers and it was good to see so many local organisations represented. He also welcomed Alfie Best, owner of Wyldecrest and representatives from his business.

Talk by Alfie Best of Wyldecrest

Alfie explained a bit about his background and how he first started investment in mobile home parks. Wyldecrest has now been running for 16 years and he was proud to say that Wyldecrest was the only park hire operator that was ISO900 accredited. Locally Wyldecrest owns both Saltmarsh Castle and Sapey Golf and Country Club. He had good teams in place at both enterprises and was continuing to invest in them.

He hoped to bring benefit to the local area, but investment must also be of benefit to Wyldecrest.

Alfie first came to Bromyard 5 years ago and stayed at the Falcon, this was shortly before the owner of Sapey Golf Club passed away. He felt that the club had become stagnated, but liked the beautiful area in which it was situated.

Questions

What areas does Wyldecrest now invest in?

As well as mobile and retirement accommodation, Wyldecrest now offered finance services for park residents and more recently golf courses. He was investing in lodges at Sapey, so that the club would offer golfing weekends, but would not be putting caravans on this site.

Where does Wyldecrest buy catering supplies from?

Products were sourced by his head office and he had a number of different suppliers, he was happy to use local suppliers, but had to consider pricing. Both Saltmarsh and Sapey were losing money when taken over, but the businesses were now stabilised and he would like to thank staff for their hard work in helping achieve this.

How can Chamber help Wyldecrest?

The Chamber was important to bring businesses together.

There is planning for new housing in the area and Chamber would always try and support any business that brings income to the area, but we need good infrastructure.

Alfie said that infrastructure was not something that he dealt with on a day to day basis, but he had noticed that whilst Bromyard was an attractive place, businesses on the High Street did not receive sufficient custom to grow. It also needed an industrial estate offering jobs to the local community. The internet was also a powerful tool for all businesses whatever their size. He offered to encourage park residents to use local businesses.

Alfie was keen to support local heritage and said it was a shame that Saltmarsh Castle had been taken down. He was interested to hear our claim that Bromyard was the town of Festivals, offering

events such as the Speed Festival, Hop Festival, Heritage Trail, Town Cryer Festival, British Legion (Armistice Day Centenary) Bromyard Gala, Folk Festival, Nozstock, Christmas Lights. He offered to give support to one of our local festivals. Roger Wilkins offered to send list of local festivals to Alfie.

David James thanked Alfie and representatives from Wyldecrest and Sapey Golf and Country Club for attending – it had been a brilliant evening.

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