

# HOLMFIRTH FORWARD

## Notes of a meeting held on 14 April 2026

### Present:

Josh Haslam, Matt Gledhall, Hilary Bower, Steve Ransby, Liz Heywood, Steve Davie, Lawrence Baylin, Vivien Aizelwood, Isobel Heeley, Alex Bywater

### Apologies

Mo Crook, Jane Rylah, Amanda Crawshaw, and Rachel Tunnacliffe

#### 1 Previous meeting

The notes of the meeting on 10 March 2026 were accepted as a correct record.

#### 2 Conflict of Interest

Matt's relationship to Redbak was noted.

#### 3 Town of Culture

Steve Ransby congratulated Alex on the quality of the submission. We do not expect to hear whether our expression of interest has been accepted until mid-Summer. If we are successful we will have five months in which to prepare the bid so Alex recommended we start to plan how we would carry out the work. We would need someone to act as the lead. Hilary offered to act in this capacity and Josh offered to help. Vivien said her husband is a qualified project manager and would help. We will need a communications plan and proper project management. Lines of accountability will also need to be clear. Alex, Bev and Margaret will meet to put together more detailed proposals.

**Action: Alex and Margaret**

#### 4 Pride

Grants are being obtained and plans are in place for 25 July. Jane Lund has worked hard and been successful so thanks are due to her. Also, to the rest of the team. It is not yet clear whether we will be able to use Riverside Square by that time. Plans are being made to use Victoria and the Memorial Gardens. Local businesses, groups and schools will be asked to donate, sponsor and support the event and a Spacehive account has been opened as this will give access to crowdfunding.

**Action: Hilary, Isobel and Margaret**

#### 5 Mural

An application for funds has been made Jerwood. A decision will be made in mid-May.

#### 6 Heritage Week

The theme is Hearth and Holme and a long list of activities has been drawn up. Work has started on making them happen. A SpaceHive account has been opened with the aim of raising awareness more than money. Kirklees Museum Service has a Community Engagement Officer who is being very helpful. Work on the web site has started.

Jonny Best is working on the Bamforth Film Collection and would like to support the work of the Heritage Group. He is to be invited to the group's next meeting. It is also noted that Bamforth material is held at the Heritage Quay.

The search for a location or locations for the Heritage Centre continues.

**Action: Steve D and Lawrence**

#### 7 MIYH

The visitors' map needs to be updated so businesses will be asked if they want to advertise again.

**Action: Matt**

The digital (information) map needs to be funded. We are still waiting to hear from Kirklees about the general Holmfirth campaign which includes doing the map. It was suggested this should include baby changing facilities and disabled access. Posters with the QR code will be produced if funds allow.

**Action: Matt**

The students' research project clearly indicated the importance of a digital hub. They also suggested having a Holmfirth Day event to celebrate the town, in whatever sense people wanted so they could Make it Your Holmfirth. The students may offer to help on a voluntary basis. Matt will share their report.

**Action: Matt**

## **8 Market**

Questions have again been raised about alternative locations for the Market. Margaret is to talk again to the Coop about moving it to the square next to the store.

Kirklees still is intransigent about onsite storage for the stalls and tables. Isobel thought, given the increased number of collections and the move to bags rather than bins, there could be space in the bin store under the ramp.

We are still waiting to hear about the possibility of charging for its loss of income from the ten car parking spaces we will use and the implications for raising the bollards. We agreed Holmfirth Forward did not want to be responsible for this and it should be the responsibility of the site's owner i.e. Kirklees.

There has been some negative comments from local businesses around the square regarding unfair competition and duplication of produce. We will do our best, within reason, not to compete directly with nearby businesses, but noted dealing with competition is part of being in business.

Some longstanding stall holders want to remain on School Street, even though they did not want to go there. We will not support two markets and were aware there may be difficulties in them obtaining permission to trade in that location. All stall holders will be asked whether they intent to move and if not replacement traders will be sought. The recruitment of new stall holders will start soon.

## **9 Holmfirth Business Together**

Isobel informed the meeting that HBT had been formally closed down. The company will be dissolved and bank account closed. The remaining funds will be transferred to Holmfirth Forward's account and be used to support Graham Galpin's research.

There was little Isobel could say about the Town Centre Access Plan. Hollowgate is now open but there is no indication of when the works will be finally completed.

The meeting thanked Isobel for all the very hard and difficult work she had done to support the town centre businesses and wider community during what had been a very trying period.

## **10 Graham Galpin**

Graham is a Fellow of the IPM and has worked as a place management consultant for many years specialising in town centres. He was part of the team which supported Sir John Timpson and the creation of the High Street Task Force. He was also one of the Task Force's experts and based on that experience developed an interest in how local authorities work in partnership with local communities. This is a growing part of the Government's embryonic high street strategy. Graham would like to use Holmfirth as a case study and will visit the town at the end of April.

## **11 Directors**

Members were asked to consider standing as Directors. Hilary offered to join the Board.

## **12 Any other business**

There was no other business.

## **15 Date of future meetings.**

12 May	8 September
9 June	13 October
14 July	10 November
11 August	8 December