



Annual Report

A very productive and busy year where we have sought to offer our members value and provide wider support to the business community and residents of Wayland. We do this through running events, producing the Annual Directory of Services, Marketing and Promotional activities, lobbying and representational roles, sponsorship and leading on major initiatives.

Events: In support of local employment the Chamber runs a highly successful annual Jobs Fair organised by Pat Warwick and plans are already in place for the 2024 event in June. We hold Business Talks events most notably this year as a means of engaging with Members to obtain views on priorities for our next 5-year plan.

Directory of Services: Issue number 42; 2024/25 edition - the efficiency and ease of data collation, formatting and production has markedly improved. The Chamber is grateful and thanks the Town Council for their contribution £1,750 to the collation of information for the community pages and production of those pages.

Marketing: the Chamber have rolled out our new logo on all materials, business cards and new window stickers, and appointed TCQC as our new web manager. In support of the Watton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, the Chamber produced and distributed a 'Yes Vote' leaflet and ran a one day open information forum for residents.

Lobbying and Representational Roles: The Chamber lobbies on behalf of its members and Wayland Businesses. The Chamber represents local business interests on the Watton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, engagement with Norfolk strategic Planning activities, and the Breckland Business Forum as well as giving talks about our activities to other community groups e.g. Watton Rotary Club.

Sponsorship: The Chamber sponsor the High Street Christmas Window Competition and the Wayland Academy Achievement Awards on 27th November

Digital and Creative Media Centre: Significant progress has been made in this flagship initiative and collaboration with the Wayland Partnership to replace Wayland House with a new iconic facility housing a cinema and gaming arena, podcast studios, art gallery, business incubator, meeting rooms and new facilities for the activities of the Partnership.

- £125,000 secured through the Norfolk Investment Fund (NIF) for a bankable business case.
- Review of candidates and appointment Deyton Bell to deliver business case by September 2024
- Presentations to Breckland and Norfolk Council representatives (Councillors and Officers)
- Tenancy Agreements discussions

Video Marketing Opportunity: The Chamber secured a grant from Breckland Council to run a pilot digital marketing scheme for 15 local businesses in order to assess interest for digital promotion and social media use.

Management: The Committee works hard on a voluntary basis to provide Wayland businesses with a voice and services to meet local business development, employment and commercial needs. The Committee run the Chamber in their spare time and are grateful for the interest and support provided by our partners, not least Wayland Partnership, Wayland Academy and Watton Town and the Parish Councils.