

The Norwich Traffic Club



2016-17 Newsletter – Issue 2

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A Serious Decline in Meeting Numbers – In recent years the number of attendees at monthly meetings has been in the mid-20s with the Xmas and Annual Dinners at 90+ and 130+ respectively. Whilst last year saw a slight reduction in numbers, it was extremely disappointing that bookings for the October 2016 and November 2016 meetings were just 18 and 19 respectively. Additionally as at 11th November, 2 days after the deadline for David Baxter to receive bookings, the number of diners booked for the Xmas Dinner was just 32, less than half the minimum number we are contracted to the hotel for in relation to that event.

Before the start of each season I have to negotiate and sign the contracts for each individual meeting. We do not hire a room as that would be too expensive. Instead the Hotel permits us to pay just for our meals pre allocating the size of room on the number of diners expected. Before the start of the season I am required to agree with the Hotel a minimum number of diners for each event. For the current season the minimums are set at 20 for a regular monthly meeting; 70 for the Xmas Dinner and 100 for the annual dinner. If we fail to achieve those numbers the Hotel is entitled to charge us for the minimum number and we run the event at a loss. Fortunately to date the Hotel have been very good to us and where we are only one or two short on number have not charged for the difference, this may not continue.

There is a 28 day notice cancellation clause in the contracts. Consequently, for our big events, I have to set very early booking deadlines. Given the extremely low level of Xmas Dinner bookings at the 16th November, the date at which the 28 day notice period is reached, we were in the situation of either having to cancel or accept a financial loss in the region of around £600 which would not be tenable. I met with the Events Manager immediately before the Committee meeting on the 16th and only because of our long standing relationship came away with the following concessions:

- A reduction of the minimum number to 50
- An extension of the notice period by one day to allow the Committee to make a decision on cancellation.

Fortunately, when the Committee met, David was able to confirm that in the last few days numbers had increase to 51. There was also the possibility of a further late booking. On that basis the Committee agreed the Xmas Dinner would go ahead. It was made very clear to me when I advised the Events Manager the following day that the situation has now stretched the goodwill on short numbers we can expect in the future. They would be unable, because all others were booked out, to move us to a smaller room and therefore suffer a significant income reduction.

In the circumstance please ensure for the future that you get all your bookings in by the deadline we have to set. Because of the low Xmas numbers, we are concerned that we could have a similar situation arise with the Annual Dinner. Consequently I am setting an early deadline, as given below, for all members, particularly those who want a corporate table to advise and confirm their intention.

We hope this recent trend of low attendance is just a blip and numbers increase from now on. You can all help to ensure a sustainable future for your Club by not only attending as many meetings as you can but also bringing along a guest.

November Meeting – Unfortunately for a number of reasons 3 of the 19 members booked in were unable to attend on the night. Those of us present were treated to an excellent address from Richard Pace, Managing Director, Norwich International Airport which gave us insight into the management and economics of a regional airport and information on current and future developments.

December XMAS Meeting - Wednesday 14th December 6.00pm for 6.30pm

Despite the significantly reduced numbers the Dinner will still be held in the Halifax Suite from 6.00pm for 6.30. Whilst the bar in the Halifax Suite will be open, the Hotel, because of the lower numbers against the cost of staffing the bar may well only have a single bar person available. I therefore suggest early arrival this year.

Guest Speaker – Derek George, Secretary, Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service.

Raffle - Please do not forget to bring your prize(s) for us to raffle.

Charity Donations - There will be a plate on each table inviting all present to donate to the Caister Volunteer Lifeboat Service. Please give generously to this fantastic organisation which is only funded by donation and provides such a vital service to residents and visitors to our county.

If you have not already let David have the names of all your guests please email these to me at thenorwichtrafficclub@gmail.com immediately.

January Meeting: –Wednesday 11th 6.00pm for 6.30pm

Guest Speaker – Trevor Eady, North Norfolk Railway.

Menu – £16.50 per head - Slow roasted pork shoulder, sage mash, roast root vegetables, broccoli and a rich pan gravy. Lemon meringue pie with raspberry coulis and cream. Cheese and biscuits as alternative to desert. First 5 ordered are free otherwise an additional £2.50 per serving.

Bookings by email to thenorwichtrafficclub@gmail.com or by phone call/text to 07789103154 no later than Friday 23rd December please. Please give full name of any guest plus any dietary requirement and/or cheese and biscuit requests.



Annual Dinner: - Friday 17th March 2017

We have now almost finalised arrangements for the Annual Dinner and the booking form is enclosed. This season, instead of an after dinner speaker we have engaged Ian Richards, a popular professional comedian to entertain you. As in the past the event will be held in the Lancaster Suite, Holiday Inn North, Norwich and the bar will be open from 6.00pm with the 4 course dinner served at circa 7.40pm. Regrettably, in order to cover the increasing cost of the meal and employing speakers/entertainers, the cost per head has had to be increased by £5.00 to £45.00 per head. We hope that this does not put members off from attending and bringing along guests.

In order to ensure that the Club does not end up running the event at a loss we need to know your intention to attend and the number of guests you will be bringing by Friday 6th January 2017 at the latest, If you can submit your completed booking form with fee by that date all the better. If you are unable to finalise your full guest list by the 6th January please submit your booking by that date and follow it up with the guest names by 8th February at the latest.

This earlier than previous date for notice of booking intentions will hopefully avoid the need for any short notice renegotiation of contract with the Hotel and risk of having to cancel the event. Emails of intent should be sent to Barry Parnell at thenorwichtrafficclub@gmail.com, text or phone call to 07789103154.



Annual Subscriptions:

Despite all the reminders and chase up of individual members last season there are still some 15 cases of non or under payment of this year’s subscriptions. As stated in the newsletter issued in September:

The annual subscriptions are due on 1st October as usual and remain at £25.00 or £12.50 if over 65 and no longer employed. Payment by standing order or online bank transfer are preferred, the former ensuring you do not always have to remember payment is due. Last year a large number of unpaid subscriptions had to be chased and a few were not paid before the following April despite in a few cases repeated reminders. Consequently, the Committee has decided to review payments in January and following a single reminder will, where necessary, apply Rule 11 i.e. “Any member who has not paid the appropriate fee by 31st December shall be deemed to have resigned”.

Please check with your bank that you have paid the correct amount and if not let the Treasurer, David Baxter have your cheque for the underpayment in the next couple of weeks. David’s address is Mill Road Farm House, Low Road, North Tuddenham, NR20 3AB. Alternatively you can make payment by online bank transfer to Barclays Bank – sorting code 20-62-53 account number 50682829 ensuring you quote your name and “2016/17 subs” in the reference.



2017 Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 11th January 2017 Wednesday 8th February 2017 Friday 17th March 2017
Wednesday 12th April 2017 Wednesday 10th May 2017 (including the Annual General Meeting)



<p>ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1ST OCTOBER 2016</p> <p>£25.00 per annum (£12.50 if over the age of 65 or no longer employed/earning).</p> <p>Payment by standing order or online transfer preferred -</p> <p>Barclays Bank, Sort Code 20-62-53 Acc No. 50682829</p>	<p>Officer Contact Numbers</p> <p>The President – -Maurice Morson Tel: 01603 744226</p> <p>Vice President —Janice Howell Tel: 07730 399731</p> <p>Hon. Treasurer —David Baxter Tel: 07770 343359</p> <p>Hon Secretary - Barry Parnell Tel: 07789 103154</p>
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