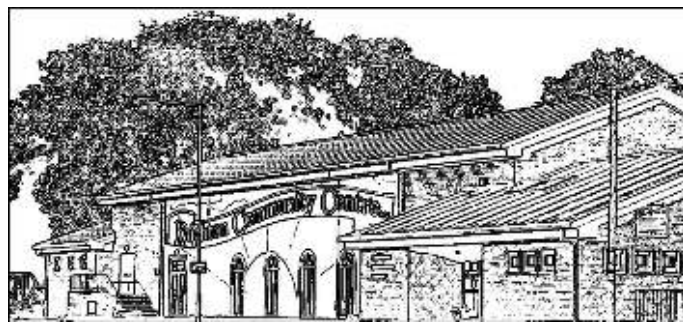




ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Chairperson's Report 2020

This is my second report as Chairman of the Community Centre, and I would like to thank all the volunteers, staff, Committee members and the Knighton Community for your support in what has been a rewarding but very challenging and difficult year, reflecting the problems of the pandemic and local flooding. We could not have achieved so much in the past 12 months without the unstinting support of our volunteers and staff, especially since lockdown. We are also very grateful for the help of our individual donors and organisations giving us grants or donations in kind. This has enabled us to carry on providing services during the pandemic. Our local donors have been very generous and include the Tower House Gallery, Knighton and District Rotary Club, Radnor Hills, Bill and Cally Ware, Tom Taylor and numerous anonymous donors.

We also thank PAVO and Powys County Council for their unstinting support especially Councillor Angelique Williams, Kay Thomas Principal Librarian and Dave Coffey, our Community Connector, who is also based at the Community Centre. We also most grateful for the support of the Knighton and East Radnor Food Bank, Churches Together, Reverend Petra Goodband, Wylcwm Street Surgery, the Little Black Sheep Café and Knighton and District Community Support in working together to provide services for people in Knighton.

Our paid staff have worked extremely hard to re-open the Community Centre which we achieved in August 2020. This was a complex task because of the rapidly changing guidance and regulations and the need to implement many changes including a track and trace system and an intensive cleaning schedule.

There have been some changes to our Committee. Constance Adams resigned in January 2020. Constance was a very helpful member of the Committee and contributed especially to developing a business plan and procedures and we are pleased that she has remained involved in the Flicks. Robert Clough has also resigned because he is moving to Nottingham to study for a post graduate course. Robert's contribution to the bar and events was appreciated. Our Committee now consists of:

Dave Alker	Chair
Michael Harding	Vice Chair
Bob Andrews	Treasurer
Ruth Forrester	Secretary
Fiona Roper	
Kevin Dare	Safeguarding Officer
Tom Clough	
Phil Grierson	Publicity Officer

This year, we have asked for individual reports from staff and volunteers, so I will let each report speak for itself.

Highlights of the past 12 months include:

- Literary Festival 2019 and work on the Festival for 2020 by Fiona Roper and others
- Establishment of Stay and Play as a Community Centre service by Chris Martin
- Appointment of Annie England as Hub Coordinator in January 2020



- Positive feedback from our hirers survey
- Welsh language events including a Cymanfa Ganu led by Kevin Dare and a St David's Day celebration
- Response to flooding led by Louise Hardwick
- Support by Committee members, staff and volunteers during the pandemic with extremely positive feedback through Surveys and Facebook postings
- Volunteer and hub development by Annie England
- Work undertaken by the Library and Community Centre to re-open
- Donations and grants raised during the pandemic.
- Exemplary management of the kitchen by Liz Reynolds
- Exceptional support from our Treasurer Bob Andrews
- Press releases organised by Phil Grierson

Unfortunately, many of the plans we had including a regular evening event on Sundays to be organised by Michael Harding have had to be postponed. The impact of the closure of the Community Centre on local groups and micro businesses has been severe and we have worked to re-open as soon as the Welsh Assembly regulations will permit. This is a rapidly changing situation, but our overall approach is to try and return to normal as quickly as possible. Although the financial situation of the Community Centre is stable due to grants, there is very little income being received and we will need to meet heavy fixed costs. The financial year 2021—22 will be very challenging unless there are rapid external changes.

Staff

Our paid staff have increased in the past 12 months and our staff team is:

Ceri	Brown	Centre Administrator	22	Comm
Helen	Cunnington	Cleaner		Comm
Annie	England	Hub Coordinator	30	Community Foundation Wales/Awards for All/ WCVA and Welsh Government
Louise	Hardwick	Volunteer Co-ordinator	13	PAVO
Michelle	Kuegler	Cleaner		Comm / PAVO C-SERT
Chris	Martin	Caretaker and Playleader	12	Comm and WCVA and Welsh Government
Diane	Watkins	Cleaner		Comm

Grants and Donations



The Community Centre has a new contract from April 2020 to continue to deliver volunteer services for Knighton. In addition grants have been received to support services during the pandemic from the Knighton and District Rotary Club, the Tower House Gallery, Tesco Bags of Help, Radnor Hills, Western Power, the Coop, the Community Foundation (Wales), the Lottery (Awards for All), PAVO, PAVO C-Sert Fund, Powys County Council, Heart of Wales and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Safeguarding

Over the past year we have drawn together several strands and put together a safeguarding policy that covers various safeguarding issues, including protection of staff, volunteers and users from harm or exploitation, and from bullying. These policies, though still a work in progress, are available on the Community Centre website and we would encourage you to read them. We have also begun to put in place procedures to deal with matters raised. Again, these are on the website so if you have an issue, concern or just a question, guidance on what to do should be readily available.

Please remember, safeguarding is everyone's concern. If you have a concern it is far better to speak to someone (informally, if you wish) than let matters slip than later regretting not doing something. Many thanks to all those who have worked on getting these policies and procedures in place.

If you would like further help, or have any comments on safeguarding issues, please contact the centre safeguarding officer.

Kevin Dare
Safeguarding Officer

Hirings

Since last years AGM we have had some great one-off events for all ages. Some were held by the centre and others were local fundraising events including coffee mornings, Kids Glow parties, Pink Night and an ABBA tribute night.

The centre took on the children's stay and play and Chris has made this session a fun and interactive group for the young children.

The 2019 Literary festival was a hit and included a market in the main hall most days! It was lovely to see the centre buzzing with so many people.

The Christmas shopping evening in November went well again despite the weather and the community spirit continued when the Friends of the School and the Community centre held afternoon tea with Santa for around 20 families.

During the beginning of the year we sent out a Hirer Survey, to our weekly and one-off hirers, to see how we were doing. I'm pleased to report people were very happy with the welcoming and ease of contact with the centre. We came back as value for money, easy to approach and friendly. Our bar had a great rating and people would recommend us to their friends and family. A great result.



Due to the pandemic, unfortunately the centre closed mid-March and all classes and bookings were cancelled / postponed. Our weekly hirers were great, and I would like to say thank you for sticking by the centre during this time. Due to this our hours of use dramatically dropped but in time we will rebuild and welcome everyone back.

When we were able to reopen, to certain groups, we held a zoom meeting and went through all the changes – we reopened 7th September with new exercise and children’s classes. Unfortunately, our Wellbeing Fayre had to be postponed but we will be looking to plan that for 2021.

Future plans are underway to start a children’s outside nature group and work on a garden.

Ceri Brown

Activity Types

Hours usage

	1 st September 2019 – 13th October 2020	1 st September 2018/ 31 st August 2019	1 st September 2017 – 31/8/2017
Adult Education:			
•Welsh, Driving, Craft, Computers	186		
•Sign Language, French, Writing Classes	26		
•All Day courses (Domestic Abuse Training, PAVO, Local Companies training)	48		
•TOTAL	260		
Artistic:			
• Amateur Dramatics - Teme Spirits, YFC	43		
• Live music	16		
• Flicks in the Sticks	45		
• Literary Festival	16		
•TOTAL	120		
Social:			

• Private parties, christenings & wedding receptions	115		
• WI Meetings	17		
• Shopping Events	4		
• Fundraising	36		
• Church	11		
• Communal meals & coffee mornings	15		
TOTAL	198		
Health and well-being:			
• Leg Club	73		
• MIND	18		
• Blood Donation days	16		
• Hearing Aid Clinics	10		
• Drop ins – Calon DVS, Housing Support, Job Centre / CREDU	100		
• Neuro Chat with Stroke Association	10		
• Bracken Trust	50		
• Community Connector	384		
• Simply Nails – Age Cymru	10		
• Flu Clinic	3		
• Volunteer Fayre	3		
TOTAL	427		
Sport & Fitness:			
• Karate	102		
• Yoga	94		
• Zumba	9		
• Line dance	7		

• Rallies, long distance walks etc	32		
• Family Fitness groups	21		
• Pilates	4		
• TOTAL	269		
Youth activities:			
• Army Cadets, Stay & play, Story time	123		
• Children's Dance	18		
• Kids at the Comm	10		
• TOTAL	151		
Others:			
• Community Markets	36		
• Auctions	5		
• Polling	16		
• Dog Training	6		
• Political surgeries	6		
• Conferences & meetings	40		
• Café	69		
• Refugee support groups	9		
• TOTAL	187		
Hours of activities	1,612	3167	1998

Ceri Brown

Building

There is still outstanding work to improve the exterior of the building (paved path at the rear) and to improve disability access within the building. There has been a huge effort to prepare the building to safely re-open fully after lockdown. A risk assessment had to be prepared and many changes have been implemented

Volunteer Hub

Since last year's AGM we have recruited 53 new volunteers - this includes millennials - aged between 14-25. We have a combined total of 6,312 logged volunteer hours recorded with 95 opportunities. The quick breakdown reflects 33.9% falling under Covid 19 related opportunities, 16.1% each for community and health and social care and 7.1% for arts and culture.

The Hub has been very busy every day with lots of enquiries from both potential volunteers and sometimes case workers or our community connectors. I am working closely with the areas groups and organisations, using the PAVO system alongside the dedicated Facebook page to promote opportunities.

In February of this year our town was hit by devastating floods several times – we managed to get the support of the local area and engaged lots of volunteers who helped with feeding displaced people, to cleaning out their properties, filling sandbags and generally assisting. It was wonderful to see so many people coming together. Our centre opened during the two subsequent weeks and was able to provide food and hot drinks plus a place of refuge. We were kindly supported by our local Co-op who covered the cost of the food we purchased.

Due to the pandemic we have had to close the Centre, but have continued to work and provide assistance remotely. Annie England has worked tirelessly as the Hub Coordinator and has successfully created a large volunteer bank which have helped with roles such as newsletter deliveries, shopping deliveries, picking up prescriptions, telephone befriending and other wonderful roles. We started a soup lunch initiative in April and every Thursday we have sent out free lunches, cooked on site and delivered by a group of 4 drivers to various households in the vicinity. At times we had close to 90 meals going out. Numbers are now just below 50 as some are finding they are able to get out and about.

I work 8 hours per week over Mondays, Tuesday and Wednesdays.

Louise Hardwick

Community Hub

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, all was progressing positively within my role & bringing new initiatives & processes to the Hub. Developing a Care Forum for practitioners from local organisations, charities and services was proceeding well, and there was an encouragingly positive response from external colleagues regarding this initiative, The idea of the care forum is something that professionals have really welcomed, and is something that will continue to occur.



A healthy lifestyle course program was due to commence in the spring, but it has been postponed until we can get back into a 'classroom' as we feel this type of course will be more meaningful if delivered within a group setting. My role as KDCC volunteer lead, was beginning to take on structure, and along with continuing to support library volunteers, I was also supporting KDCC volunteers and those who volunteered for the Drop-In at St. Edwards Church given the project is one of co-production. An objective that has been accomplished by our staff team is to have reached the production stage for the Knighton & District Directory to be printed. We are hesitant to proceed to publishing the document currently as we want to see how things move forward with regards availability of services etc. Prior to lockdown the ethos of the Hub was flourishing, the Tuesday Cafe was continuing to provide a 'space' for people to come down and access support, advice and signposting services. External professionals were utilizing the venue well, and encouragingly a high number of customers were able to access the information they needed expediently. On reopening we plan to further develop the opportunities for groups and services to access our facilities, we are especially keen to work with groups that may feel that KDCC does not meet their needs adequately and to look at ways that we can provide services that would encourage them to access the building. We are also going to be working with existing organisations such as Powys Befrienders, to establish a robust befriending / peer support network within arenas such as our Tuesday Cafe & the Soup from the Hub initiative.

Pandemic Response

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was the KDCC's staff and management team's vision to join forces with local groups, organisations and charities, to allow us the opportunity to collectively offer the community a very high standard of care and service delivery to citizens in need within Knighton and surrounding areas, for the most part we have achieved this goal. Over the last few months the KDCC Hub has developed into something that has taken on a vital role (along with other charities and organisations) in the delivery of services to those who have been shielding, are deemed as vulnerable or were adhering to Govt. guidelines and socially distancing.

A 'KDCC Coronavirus Support' Facebook page was established, this 'service' was intended as a virtual hub for the dissemination of important and relevant community information and was staffed daily by workers and volunteers, it was also hoped that it would become a 'tool' for people to contact us through if help was needed; this has in fact been the case and has worked very well. An updated list of local business, Cafes, Restaurants and shops is provided regularly on FB, and on three occasions we have with the help of volunteers delivered a social care newsletter to all households within Knighton. As well as our FB page being a source of help and information, we also introduced a KDCC referral form which is available for anyone requiring help and assistance. Referrals were managed by staff, and appropriate actions would be taken for each referral, whether that was an onward referral to Knighton Community support or Sister Margaret at the 'Meals on Wheels Lunch club'. Both initiatives have been hugely successful, we completed a survey in July 2020, and received very positive feedback on both the FB page and referral scheme. To date we have had approximately 128 referrals made to us. The referrals are processed by staff and then we either deal with the enquiry ourselves or refer on if appropriate. This initiative has led to us developing strong professional relationships with external charities, organisations and groups and has also (more importantly) allowed the 'customer' to get the best service possible. Our Soup from the Hub project was one that was created due to the closure of in-door services, and one that with the 'blessing' of St. Edwards Church. Again, this initiative has been hugely successful, during the peak of lockdown we were sending out over 88 light lunches. Plans are underway to develop a 'hybrid model' of the Soup from the Hub project, funding has been sourced to support this model up until April 2021. We are able to continue to provide a delivery service to those customers who are not wanting to enter into a space with other people, but for those customers who do want to engage in a more social and meaningful forum we will be able to provide this for them. Apart from providing a free light lunch, we have also been able to support local Cafes and our churches Together meals on Wheels lunch Club with identifying volunteers to support them, we have deployed volunteers within the Co-op on occasions and also our local food bank. Shopping and the collection of prescriptions although predominantly offered by our colleagues at Knighton & District Community Support, has been other activities that have kept our volunteers busy. The befriending service we established was not as we thought positively received, and in total we have offered 9 people befrienders. We recognised that a great deal of organisations, charities and groups were offering a like



for like service, and customer feedback confirmed this, as it was reported on more than one occasion “I get fed up having to reassure people from all different services, that I am doing ok, sometimes I get 5 different workers calling me every week to see how I am doing”. So possibly something to consider if as organisations we find ourselves in lockdown again, don’t reinvent the wheel and more open dialogue with each other. However, the 9 people that have accessed our service, have found it invaluable and have found great comfort in having someone giving them a call once or twice a week to check on how they are; so much so the service is continuing and one we hope to develop with the support of PAVO.

Volunteers, future plans

An idea that has been borne out of the recent challenges we as a community have faced, is the development of the Knighton Community Volunteer Bank. Two major events that have taken place this year have caused people within Knighton to need assistance from others. The first being the devastation caused to residents due to the extreme weather conditions and floods, and the second being Covid-19. On both occasions we have dealt with the situations admirably, and this has been mainly due to the outstanding support of our volunteers. At one point we had 62 people on our volunteer register wanting to help support others, some have got involved with weekly activities and some have offered us or other services the odd couple of hours monthly when the newsletter needed delivering. So, we have up to date evidence that the ‘bank’ ethos works, thus we are developing this model and making it more formal with recruitment, training and supervision being available.

Annie England

Community Market

The market has been very well attended by stall holders and customers alike. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic 14th March 2020 was our last indoor market. We started again on the 22nd August with an outdoor market and did the same the subsequent week. Both were extremely well attended, having the help of the local Rotary club to assist with the one way system and social distancing reminders.

I have now sourced 2 new meat vendors to come at alternate markets which have both been very popular. I am reviewing the current situation and working with EHO and trading standards to see when we can use the main hall again as the weather will force us to stop at some point soon.

I continue to advertise the event through social media, local newspapers, other online groups and publications, posters and signs plus I have a great team of helpers who assist with setting up and dismantling of the market. The café volunteers are successfully led by Liz Reynolds and they see a healthy income from the various vendors and customers alike.

Louise Hardwick



Flicks in the Sticks

In September 2019 the aisles rocked with the first film of the season, "Rocketman" the biopic of Elton John. We aim to suit all tastes with a variation of serious, mainstream and foreign films and luckily any losses were compensated by other successes. Aladdin was perhaps too close to Christmas but we will continue to show at least one film for children each year.

From Sept 2019 – March 2020 total profit was £994.94

The bar always does well and cash from teas etc goes in to the Sat cafe box.

The Spring season was curtailed by Covid 19 and we await the decision that we can safely show films again with all necessary precautions in place. Ticket prices may have to increase slightly but we will maintain affordability for our audience.

Thanks as ever for everyone who has helped and supported us especially Dave Alker who is always cheerfully on hand to assist and Carol, Penny and Chris our refreshment volunteers.

Sheila Taylor

Welsh Language

The Welsh Language classes at the Community Centre have continued to flourish and we are grateful to the support of Sarah Graham, Welsh teacher. We also organised a very well attended Cymanfa Ganu in November 2019. Sue Shaw organised a very successful St David's Day celebration in March 2020. Classes continue via video link and registrations seem to have increased in September

Ruth Forrester

Library

This year has been an exceptional one due to Covid 19. We were open as normal from October – March. Closed from March to July then gradually reopening for more limited services

Throughout this year as always, the Library has been wonderfully supported by Knighton Library Friends, volunteers, and the Comm.

Both the library and the Comm benefit from increased footfall due to activities in both eg the café staffed and run by volunteers on a Tuesday morning was used as a meeting point by Powys County Council Housing other agencies who also use the library , library computers and library corridor. The bounce and rhyme mums and tots use the café before and after the session.

October 2019:



The 2nd Knighton Library Literary Festival 2019 was a great success

Over the 4 days 1398 came through the doors with 400 attending author's talks or workshops. Visitors also enjoyed the market which had a range of interesting and enticing stalls and activities for children.

This was made possible by the generous help, commitment and support of 37 dedicated volunteers, who set up, baked cakes, ran the café, put up posters, organised, supported the authors on the day and made sure the days ran smoothly. Thanks is also due to the Powys Library Service, The Knighton Community Centre Committee, Everyone who donated to the Raffle, Hafren Vets for supporting the Children's competition, and of course the enthusiastic audience and visitors.

In total the Festival raised £812.13 from sales of library books, donations, market stalls, raffle and café.

The total sales authors sales was £870.50

Sadly after 2 years I am no longer able to carry on organising the festival- Happily a group of enthusiastic capable festival hardened volunteers led by Gillian Forrester will be running a virtual festival in 2020 which looks to be a great success.

From October19- March2020

The library continued running and developing its regular activities:

Bounce and Rhyme Term Time Every Tues 11-11.30 This has been a well attended and popular group.

Under 5s Knighton School The under 5s group on Tuesday or Thurs (tbc) pm for a story.

School Class visits For a story and choosing books

Welsh Rhymes and songs under 5s

Book Crawl Every new baby member is entered. After 6 visits they are given a free book to keep

Games every 2nd Saturday monthly Kevin Dare/Market

Lego club Term Time 4th Saturday monthly now in the library

WI Reading Group Last Thursday every other month

Prime Cymru 54+

Job Coach

November 2019: Keep Wales Tidy/Caru Cymru and the Waste Awareness Litter picking kits now stored and given out from the Library (closed during covid now up and running).

The library Corridor closed for browsing and meetings due to safety concerns about unsecured furniture. Library shelving and stocks were re configured to adjust.

December 2019: Powys County Council awards ceremony. The Library received a runners up for customer focus.



January 2020: Vicky Connaughton was recruited as new relief librarian.

February 2020: A new self-service machine installed so customers can issue and return their own books. This has been especially popular with children.

March – August 2020: Library premises closed due to Covid 19

During this period, I was assigned to phone lines as well as ringing round Library customers to check if all was well and if any support needed. Referring to Council depts agencies, and the wonderful services provided by volunteers from shopping to meals.

Borrow box proved a hit with a large increase in users downloading audio and e books.

The Order and Collect service began in July - thanks to volunteers Sheila and Annie liaising with Louise to allow customers to collect books or have them delivered with soup!

The Summer Reading Challenge for 4-12 yrs is online this year. However children can order books through the Order and Collect system too.

The library began a pilot with Accessibility Powys to lend tablets to socially and digitally isolated people.

Sadly Volunteers Joan, Susan, David and Michael made the decision that they were unable to continue due to health concerns

September 2020:

Bounce and Rhyme restarted outdoors on Tuesday mornings. This has proved very enjoyable, even with the vagaries of the weather

We re-started limited services: Carrying on phone lines with library open by appointment for computers and CS 1x per week Browsing 1x per week.

This has proved manageable and so the library will be operating a new timetable from October (attached)

Tuesday mornings ready for if the café starts up again.

Late every Thursday and early 1st,2nd,3rd,5th Fridays of the month allow access before and after work. The 4th Saturday morning of the month to support the market

Currently no volunteers can be in the library while customers are present which restricts opening on a Tuesday morning.

Annie has continued to manage volunteer shifts so that the library has enough cover to run smoothly. The volunteers work means that the library not only operates efficiently, but that the background admin and arranging events etc can be done. Volunteer recruitment and retention is a continuing process.

Book start- parents can ring to request a Bookstart pack by phone or online to pick up from the library

Prime Cymru is restarting with restrictions. They will take referrals through the library

Many thanks to the committee for all your continuing help and support-

Hannah Isaacson



Stay and Play @ the Comm

I took over the running of Stay and Play in December of last year and between then and the shut down there had been an average of 11.5 children attending each week. The fees that were paid minus snacks and craft items bought, plus 3 hours wages, netted a small loss of £27. 69 over 11 sessions.

During the lockdown Stay and Play continued to function albeit virtually. Each week I broadcast a live session in which I read a story and sing some songs. This has proved very popular with parents contacting me with requests and photos of their children joining in. Ideas for activities are posted on our group page by myself, Ceri and also Parents and it has been a great way for everybody to keep in touch.

Ceri and I were given £50 from the Community Centre and put together 30 craft packs as well as ideas for activities, for all the children that attended Stay and Play plus some other families suggested by the Health Visitor. In addition to the Craft Packs we were also given £100 by the Friends of Knighton Library to purchase Art/Writing packs for the older children in our community so they could record how they were feeling and coping with social isolation. 15 Art and 10 Writing packs were given out. When it is safe to do so we will have an exhibition of some of their work, and then it will be displayed in the Library as first hand accounts of living through a pandemic.

We also took part in Children's' Week run by Engage. Gillian Forrester helped Ceri and I in this and we both thank her enormously for her knowledge and expertise. For 3 weeks families took part in Scavenger Hunts, collecting natural objects and identifying and creating art from them. We had another kind donation of £100 to purchase extra Art Packs, Magnifying Glasses and Bug Pots for these activities. This was advertised on Face book and attracted families who had previously not been involved with the Community Centre. The enthusiasm was amazing, so much so, we have decided to start a Nature and Science group after school beginning after half term at the end of October (Covid 19 Permitting).

To buy the necessary equipment for the new Nature and Science group we applied for some funding from the Heart of Wales Resilience Fund and we have been awarded £410 to purchase the items. In addition, we have received a WCVA / Welsh Government grant of £800 to buy toys and creative materials for up to 30 families.

Stay and Play has re-opened and we have had 2 sessions. It is a very different group. There are no refreshments and masks have to be worn inside by adults. Social Distancing has been adhered to and information taken each session for track and tracing. So far we have been lucky with the weather and we have been able to use the outside space behind the Community. Even with all the new restrictions the children and their careers have had fun and are happy to be back.

Chris Martin

