



4 / 5 James St., Porthcawl, CF36 3BG
Tel. 01656 783962

E: info@sustainablewales.org.uk

www.sustainablewales.org.uk

twitter: @SusWales

www.facebook.com/sustainablewales

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmIFd3JhZon9p6GhdeW3Rkg>

Registered Charity 1065789/0 Unincorporated Charitable Trust

Sustainable Wales
Cymru Gynaliadwy



Sustainable Wales Annual Report 2017/18



<https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/who-we-are/>

Margaret Minhinnick Director

Trustees

Richard Thomas Chair

Peter Morgan

Melanie Johnson

Judith Cook

Luke Evans Treasurer

Advisors

Robert Minhinnick

Martin Little

Martin Fitton

Kris Evans

Rhodri Thomas, Cynnal Cymru

Community Energy Wales and Renew Wales staff

Other Volunteers include

Catrin Dalton

Saulat Abbasi

Gaynor and John Hanson

Hilary Williams

Jacqui Jenkins

Peter Adamson

Allison Felton

Numerous performers and speakers at the Green Room and those in SUSSED, Bridgend Fairtrade Partnership and the members of Bridgend Local Energy Group.

Our Mission

Our mission is to encourage solutions for the unsustainable way we live and to ignite passion for sustainable living practices.

Our Aims

- To be an organisation that helps revitalise the local economy, promotes social progress, and is enterprising, creative and internationally aware.
- We are committed to society, artistic creativity and the natural world. We work with communities, voluntary groups, businesses and government. We believe in this way we can foster a fairer, and an exciting future for Wales that doesn't cost us the Earth.

Our Purpose

Stated by its *charitable objects* (Charity No.1065789/0) are:

To advance the education of the public in subjects relating to sustainable development and the protection, enhancement and rehabilitation of the environment and to promote study and research in such subjects provided that the useful results of such study are disseminated to the public at large.

To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by:

- (a) the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources;
- b) the promotion of social and cultural welfare and wellbeing for the benefit of present and future generations;
- (c) the promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic improvement and regeneration.

Sustainable development (SD) means “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”, from the Brundtland Report, 1987 (Our Common Future).



Our Community & Strategic Engagement Themes

1. **Active Citizenship** - empowering communities, building capacity, increasing participation and sustainable outcomes including jobs and skills for local people.
2. **Healthy living and quality of life** - increasing well-being, creativity, diversity and reconnecting with nature, creating opportunities to improve life chances.
3. **Food and Drink** – supporting local sourcing of food, biodiversity, ethical purchasing, fair trade and food growing and producing, good diet, cooking and baking.
4. **Energy Concerns and Climate Change** - advocating and helping enable resilience to the impacts of climate change, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
5. **Waste and resource use** – encouraging circular economy, systems & design thinking and LCA, encouraging reduce, re-use, recycling and promotion of more durable goods.
6. **Support responsible business** – encourage a sharing economy, considerate consumerism, purchasing local, organic, ethical and fairly traded goods.

Chairman's Remarks 2017/18

Society seems to be ever more polarised in the debates that rage around the pull towards increasing globalisation on the one hand, and to local, regional and national control on the other. There are no simple answers to some of the problems like war, extreme weather, mass migration, complex supply chains, and global economics that engulf whole regions of the world. So, it is as important as ever to make sure the urgent message that we need to pursue a more sustainable way of living is not lost amongst the noise. The old mantra of *'Act local, think global'* is more relevant today than at any other time. For us in Wales, the *Well-being of Future Generations Act* gives us a political and legal framework to be proactive in taking this message into our local communities.

This year saw Sustainable Wales help to develop an exciting new low-carbon group, hoping to support local communities' contributions to renewable energy targets, raise awareness of climate change, energy use and energy efficiency amongst local residents. Community energy will democratize electricity supply, as shown by the charity's 'Shine a Light' campaign <https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/shine-light>.

Renewable electricity generation has seen a rapid uptake in recent years, though low-carbon transport is lagging behind, when transport accounted for 40% of the total energy consumption in the UK in 2016. The community group's first enthusiasm is to try to establish a community electric vehicle to operate locally and promote renewable energy. The advent of electric vehicles in the mainstream consciousness of society offers a new opportunity to act local and think global and to benefit local people who may struggle to access local services without some form of community transport.

Sustainable Wales remains a willing partner for any public body looking for local and sustainable solutions. A low-carbon community transport project would help to address the increasing impacts of austerity where local services, such as bus routes, are closing due to lack of public funding.

The Renew Wales contract enables the Director to support a few other community groups. Climate change threatens basic elements of life and the people most affected are already the most vulnerable here and around the world. Third sector organisations have wide influence. As such this is as much a social issue as an environmental one. The services they provide could also be impacted and so we all need to consider how to respond, minimise our impacts and look for new opportunities.

Sustainable Wales and sister organisation, SUSSED are proud to be a long-standing members of a network of fair trade groups in the UK that raises awareness of pressing sustainable development issues relating to international trade and the developing world. The First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM, agreed to Judge this year's Fairtrade 'Bake-Off' held in Bridgend. The tasting, I am told, he took very seriously.

Furthermore, we encourage both people and organisations to use the 'power of their purse' to help make a positive difference to the lives of the people that produce the

everyday goods they consume, right across the supply chain. SUSSED is not just a local shop supporting the local high street economy in Porthcawl, it has a developing online presence and we would welcome suggestions of ethical items that can be sold in the expansion of digital retail.

Sustainable Wales is proud of our contacts in the arts and educational worlds. Our 'Green Room' hosted a varied selection of events in this period ranging from poetry and music performances, film viewings and academic discussions and debates.

The initiative continues to develop and thrive and many of the performers and contributors from recent years came together for the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Sustainable Wales, held in November 2017 in Porthcawl's Grand Pavilion. The evening was a wonderful chance to embrace the breadth and diversity of talent that the charity is lucky to be in contact with. Those old and new friends who were there had the chance to think, to be challenged, to be amused, and to dance the charity into its third decade of work to find sustainable solutions for tomorrow.

While the work of the charity continues, as ever supported by the volunteers who give their precious time, efforts to secure funding for paid co-ordinator posts have continued to be difficult. Significant voluntary work has been put into funding applications which have had to compete with a myriad of other charities trying to secure limited resource for their causes. The challenge for sustainable development has always been its long-time horizon and sometimes less than obvious impacts in the short time that funded projects are given. Promoting low-carbon solutions does not show immediate local benefits, and ethical retail benefits people hidden in the supply chain. So as funding programmes focus on local poverty and local regeneration, it is increasingly difficult to secure funding for projects that look at the big picture issues.

As a result, staffing in the charity continues to rely on volunteers, most notably our Director who keeps the good ship afloat. All the volunteers who get involved have a critical part to play and whether they join in at our one-off street events, whether they bake Fairtrade cakes for the monthly café, or whether they are the regular troopers who work daily to keep the whole show going, my thanks go to them all. The trustees are volunteers too, and while we do not do anywhere near as much as the regulars, I would welcome anyone with an appetite for finding sustainable solutions to get in touch as every contribution to the cause is very welcome.

My final word is that the world is facing bigger challenges than ever before. Die-hard activists have been alert to the looming pressures for many years, but the sense that we as a human species need to wake up and smell the coffee has never been more urgent. This is a fight for the lives of our children and every local project that offers a part of the solution should be embraced.



Richard Thomas Chairperson

Treasurer's Report

Sustainable Wales hosted and contributed to a number of fundraisers and educational events, concerned with promoting and advancing our aims and objectives, such as encouraging community-based, renewable energy projects ("Shine a Light" film screening) and global citizenship (Bridgend Fairtrade Festival).

The "Green Room" continues to be a stable source of income, as space to be rented out to local groups, and a venue for live events including music, poetry and educational talks and discussion.

Lastly, Sustainable Wales continues to work with SUSSED Wales, a specialist retailer in ethical goods, our sister organisation. SUSSED helps the charity achieve its aim of encouraging sustainable lifestyles through its retail and educational activities, as well providing cost savings due to the office sharing agreement.

Director's Report

The impacts of climate change and unjust global economics on people and communities are central to the work of Sustainable Wales whilst encouraging cooperation, localisation, international thinking.

The charity engages in a wide range of activities supported by a loyal band of volunteers and Trustees and below is only a flavour of some of the main undertakings





Ethical Consumerism

The charity maintains management and IT support to its volunteer run social enterprise, [SUSSED Wales](#), promoting ethical shopping, retailing new local, fairly traded and green goods. SUSSED is a cooperative, located close to Porthcawl high street. It directly supports people who want to make ethical and environmental choices and adds to the range of independent shops in Porthcawl - vital to maintain a diverse high street and strengthen the local economy. The charity manages the project and supports its many volunteers ranging from 12 – 80 years old.

SUSSED however, in return supports the charity with office, event, meeting space, IT and administration costs. This allows us to operate with a 'pop-up' style - whether organising a small café, frock swap, debate, poetry, presentation or talk.

Trading has seen significant increases in 2017-18 but SUSSED does not yet make enough profit to employ a coordinator.

Bridgend Fairtrade Partnership



Throughout the year, the Fairtrade Partnership (of which Sustainable Wales is a member) hosts or supports a number of small events at local churches, schools and public spaces, which all contribute to the renewal of the Bridgend Borough's status as a certified "Fairtrade County" (a title we've retained since 2010).

Furthermore, we work with national organisations such as the umbrella body 'Fair Trade Wales'. Their National Coordinator, Aileen Burmeister, was a guest speaker helping to identify ways in which we can continue to push the agenda of creating a fairer model of trade, in our communities and further afield.

The Bridgend Partnership held another successful "Fairtrade Festival" in Carnegie House, Bridgend, which provided a free platform for local Fairtrade retailers to market their goods and provide information to a wider audience. The event included a "Bake-Off" using Fairtrade ingredients, in which First Minister Carwyn Jones judged the winners. The charity also organised children's story telling, public raffles, tombolas, cake tastes, coffees and teas - requesting donations.

Sustainable Wales continues to link into the Fairtrade Foundation, Fairtrade Wales, HubCymru Africa, Wales Coop Centre networks.



Chocoholics Party

The charity successfully entered Divine Chocolate's "What would you do if you had free Fairtrade chocolates samples" competition. We were able to create an evening social event: inviting people to try samples of Fairtrade chocolate; convey information; have fun with a word game describing the differing tastes of each; try a chocolate chilli and taste treats using a new fondue set. The photos and event details were distributed widely via social media.



Community Energy

Supported by 'Reach' (<https://www.bridgendreach.org.uk>) Bridgend Council Rural Development programme officer, Sustainable Wales organised a local energy workshop in late autumn with contributors providing an opportunity for people to hear about the activities underway in the Borough and consider the context in which to discuss local energy further. (Approx. 25 people attended). We were also able to produce 2 short films evidencing this. <https://youtu.be/DF1WjBYUgC0>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dG-OCpHIQgA>

Later the 'Sustainable Wales Bridgend Local Energy Group' was formed to explore options for developing local, community-based energy initiatives.



The new Energy Group's work focused on the idea of a 'green' energy efficient electric bus, powered with the 'free' support offered by a local supplier of renewable energy, Cenin at Parc Stormy, Porthcawl. <http://www.ceninrenewables.co.uk/>

This was after hearing about the potential changes to funding for public transport in Bridgend Borough, raising many local concerns about the loss of some bus routes particularly those that would service the new Porthcawl health centre and the Porthcawl Town Centre.

Graham Carter of Bridgend Community Transport was invited to explain their service to the group and help us review ways forward.

<https://www.bridgendcommunitytransport.co.uk/>

Letters were written to various 'stakeholders' within the community and a meeting was organised to request ideas and opinions.

With the help of a Reach, Bridgend Council rural development programme officer, the group have applied for two European grants. One to carry out a feasibility study, to identify the best technology to use and how it can be implemented and the second for the capital cost of an electric bus.



Sustainable Wales is a member of Community Energy Wales and representatives from the Bridgend low carbon group attend the workshops and training available.

More 'energy information/support materials' were also placed on our website

<https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/energy-links>



RENEW Wales contract

Sustainable Wales has a small contract with Renew Wales www.renewwales.org.uk to offer community groups support. The idea is to help them respond to the new Welsh Government's 'Well-being of Future Generations Act', considering how they currently work, and if their future plans need to become more environmentally and people friendly.

Renew supported the promotion and early development of the Sustainable Wales' Bridgend Local Energy Group – mentioned above and the Porthcawl Wilderness Allotment Eco-Friendly Disabled Toilet.

The Wilderness Allotments are the only site in Porthcawl (and only the second in Bridgend County) to have a dedicated plot for disabled users. An on-site facility is absolutely vital for the disabled gardeners. Going forwards, access to a toilet will help diversify the profile of the plot-holders by encouraging women and children to apply for plots.

The supporting activity included a site visit, attendance at Awards' Ceremonies to meet disabled gardeners and several discussions with the Project's Coordinator. The final document produced conveys some suggestions, design and strategic considerations to be undertaken to establish an eco-designed disabled-access toilet at the site in Porthcawl.



The Green Room – events and café

Sustainable Wales longstanding Green Room events were successfully held above SUSSED across the period, along with the regular monthly Fairtrade pop-up Café.

These events directly also raise funds for Sustainable Wales. Highlights were our ambitious 3 event series, '**Counterpoint**'; with **Professor Alan Williams – Marine Litter**, **Professor Merryn Hutchings**, "Are Schools Exam Factories?" and artist, **Kevin Sinnott** illustrated talk on his work.

Other events included

- *A reading/projection of the writings of Gerry Ray
- *A celebration of **Menna Elfyn's** new Welsh language poetry collection, 'Bondo', with readings from Carys Evans
- *A performance of **Peter Morgan** remixed version of 'Josephine's Rain' (music by Richard Thomas)
- * A reading from poet/guitarist **Paul Henry's** new book, 'The Glass Aisle'
- *Launches of new publications by **Chris Cornwell** and **Frances Presley**

Find out about future events here: <https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/events>
All of these events included Open Mics for local or young writers / performers.



Sustainable Wales AGM and 20th Anniversary Celebration, 16/11/2017 at the Stage Door, Grand Pavilion. A full programme of comment, contributions and birthday cake allowed the event to go with a swing.



Communications, Website and Social Media

Sustainable Wales main [website](#) continues to be the hub for project support, blog posts and event notices. New sections explaining fairtrade activities were created and the 'Shine A Light' community energy areas continue to be updated.



We have c. 4480 followers on our facebook page (which is now a verified Charity page). In terms of reach, facebook is now the main point of contact with Sustainable Wales online. Posts concerning current events and environmental issues will frequently reach 1000+ people and have corresponding shares and likes. Our weekly reach remains in the 1000+ people range. Our

twitter account (<https://twitter.com/suswales>) has increased to c.1682 followers and is active with stories from our Sustainable Connections news feed and posts daily across the week.

Our growing YouTube channel has potential, several new short films have been added to the channel over the year.

The fundraising Smile by Amazon account was launched enabling anyone to contribute to Sustainable Wales at no cost to them, when they shop at smile.amazon.co.uk and select our charity.

Sustainable Development Policy Statement

The charity operates an environmental and ethical management policy: keeping final waste disposal and energy use to a minimum, using recycled paper, purchasing renewable energy (we are powered by Good Energy), purchasing local goods and services when possible, banking with the Cooperative Bank at the local Post Office also selecting fairtrade and biodegradable products.

This policy is updated regularly as is the brief for Trustees and Advisors and reports are delivered to the Trustees.



Thanks!

Many people contribute over the year to support the work of this charity, my thanks go to them.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. Minhinnick".

Margaret Minhinnick, Director Sustainable Wales



Sustainable Wales
Cymru Gynaliadwy
20th Anniversary
1997-2017

Financial Statement and Accounts

The 2017/18 financial year marked a return to profit for Sustainable Wales (SW), as income increased by 32% YOY. This year is also notable for the fact Sustainable Wales is now operating fully without any restricted grant funding.

The ongoing contract with Renew Wales remains an important source of income, with Sustainable Wales personnel being contracted to coordinate and mentor a number of voluntary/ community groups, that wish to become more sustainable and reduce their carbon footprint. Likewise, SW's programme of one-off events and the regular "Green Room" evenings provide a reliable source of income (e.g. through ticket and raffle sales plus stalls). Furthermore, Sustainable Wales also receives charitable donations from the public. The board would particularly like to thank long-time friends of the organisation Tina Eynon and Merryn Hutchings for their support.

Another factor is that YOY expenditure decreased by 43% (or £5,000). This was largely due to the fact there were no staff or payroll costs this year as Sustainable Wales once again returned to be operated solely by volunteers, which reflects SW's ability to ensure overheads are kept at a bare minimum. This is largely thanks to the ongoing support of sister organisation/ethical retailer SUSSED Wales, which takes on the lion's share of overheads as part of an office-sharing agreement.

With around £23,000 in cash in bank/at hand and a net positive income, Sustainable Wales remains liquid with sufficient income to operate at current levels of expenditure, with room for investment in the year ahead. A key objective remains to increase the income generated to a level the organisation can fund (or match-fund) a coordination post and thus ensure the ongoing viability of the project.