Developing and Managing a Sustainable Focus for the Community

Rob Symberlist, Treasurer
Rhossili Village Hall Trustees
www.rhossili.org.uk
The *essential* Team

Community

• Village Hall Trustees - Building Sub-Committee
• Voluntary professional input from the community
• The Community must own the project
  – *Ask them what they want… then involve them in delivering it!*

Partners

• Community Council
• Gower Society
• National Trust
• City & County of Swansea
• Swansea Council for Voluntary Action
• Gorseinon College (Lifelong Learning)
The agreed Solution

Aim

• To develop a sustainable and maintainable welcoming venue, which acts as a focal point and meets the needs and aspirations of the wider community and those of future generations.

Objectives

• Retain and refurbish the existing hall (based on community survey)
• Add a new building linked to the existing hall to provide improved facilities (based on community survey)
• Meet legal requirements for accessibility

Added Value

• Hygiene Kitchen for preparing food for the public (Produce Market)
The early Concept
The *sustainable* Element

Innovation

- Bunkhouse style accommodation in roof space
  - Rhossili has 400,000 visitors a year (*now 750,000*)
  - The most searched for item at the Mumbles TIC is Rhossili accommodation
  - Cheap, clean, simple accommodation combined with a top quality kitchen
  - Aimed at groups of ‘outdoor people’
  - Community-run; Available to all
  - A first for a Community Hall in the UK
The final Proposal
The *inevitable* Struggle

Funding
- Rhossili isn’t in a “Communities First” area
- Tourism was the key to EU Objective 1 funding

People
- Reaching a consensus
- Keeping the Community and our Partners informed
- Taming the builders
- Voluntary work brought the community closer
## The *capital* Cost

### Phase 1 – Construction
- The Gower Society: £15,000
- Rhossili CC (over 3 years): £1,500
- Rhossili Village Hall: £21,303
- Rhossili Village Hall (*Bank Loan*): £20,000
- Swansea CC Sustainability Development Fund: £10,000
- Swansea CC Local Regeneration Fund: £80,000
- EU EAGGF Objective 1: £147,803

**Total Phase 1: £295,606**

### Phase 2 – Fitting Out
- WAG Community Facilities (CFAP): £75,890
- Awards for All Wales: £5,000

**Total Phase 2: £80,890**

### Phase 3 – Store Conversion
- Swansea CC Sustainability Development Fund: £11,750

**Total Phase 3: £388,246**
The new Building

Construction (£295,606)
• October 2005 to May 2006
  – AONB Visit by Their Royal Highnesses
  – The Prince of Wales & Duchess of Cornwall in July 2006

Fitting out (£80,890)
• October 2006 to March 2007
  – Official Opening by the First Minister,
    the Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM on 31 March 2007

First Bunkhouse guests in May 2007
• Kite Surfers from Southampton University
The potential Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum No. Guests per Night</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate per Person per Night</td>
<td>£15</td>
<td>£18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Income per Night</td>
<td>£270</td>
<td>£324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Income per Week</td>
<td>£1,890</td>
<td>£2,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Annual Income</td>
<td>£98,280</td>
<td>£117,936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22 guests can be accommodated if the lounge is used as a bedroom)

The Community comes First
Focus on June, July, August, plus weekends
(Two nights is the most popular length of stay.)
The monthly Occupancy

![Graph showing monthly occupancy from 2007-08 to 2010-11]
The *actual* Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events (net)</td>
<td>£4,076</td>
<td>£4,674</td>
<td>£2,213</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hall Hire</td>
<td>£1,357</td>
<td>£543</td>
<td>£3,432</td>
<td>£2,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>£1,653</td>
<td>£1,226</td>
<td>£4,723</td>
<td>£700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest (net)</td>
<td>£181</td>
<td>£104</td>
<td>£98</td>
<td>£0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (excl. BH)</strong></td>
<td><strong>£7,267</strong></td>
<td><strong>£6,547</strong></td>
<td><strong>£10,466</strong></td>
<td><strong>£4,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunkhouse (net)</td>
<td><strong>£1,412</strong></td>
<td><strong>£17,828</strong></td>
<td><strong>£27,275</strong></td>
<td><strong>£25,500</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£8,679</strong></td>
<td><strong>£24,375</strong></td>
<td><strong>£37,741</strong></td>
<td><strong>£29,500</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Rapid Growth in Income…

![Graph showing income growth over years]

- Rapid Growth in Income…

...and Running Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Running costs</th>
<th>2006-7</th>
<th>2007-8</th>
<th>2008-9</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilities (net)</td>
<td>£592</td>
<td>£3,830</td>
<td>£5,152</td>
<td>£3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleaning</td>
<td>£510</td>
<td>£1,201</td>
<td>£1,696</td>
<td>£1,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumables</td>
<td>£253</td>
<td>£1,065</td>
<td>£1,393</td>
<td>£1,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>£2,148</td>
<td>£1,950</td>
<td>£2,734</td>
<td>£2,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>£1,303</td>
<td>£2,604</td>
<td>£3,199</td>
<td>£3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank charges/Loan repayments</td>
<td>£881</td>
<td>£2,815</td>
<td>£2,328</td>
<td>£2,330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountant fees</td>
<td>£1,034</td>
<td>£1,116</td>
<td>£1,146</td>
<td>£1,120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licences (PRS etc)</td>
<td>£62</td>
<td>£63</td>
<td>£358</td>
<td>£550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Card Services (net)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>£51</td>
<td>£200</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (excl. Staff)</strong></td>
<td>£6,783</td>
<td>£14,644</td>
<td>£18,057</td>
<td>£16,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff &amp; Training</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>£5,523</td>
<td>£7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>£6,783</td>
<td>£14,644</td>
<td>£23,580</td>
<td>£23,000</td>
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</table>
Is this Sustainable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Estimated</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>£8,679</td>
<td>£24,375</td>
<td>£37,741</td>
<td>£29,500</td>
<td>£36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs</td>
<td>£6,783</td>
<td>£14,644</td>
<td>£23,580</td>
<td>£23,000</td>
<td>£24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income (net)</td>
<td>£1,896</td>
<td>£9,731</td>
<td>£14,161</td>
<td>£6,500</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures have been rounded/estimated and do not include capital grants or one-off fund-raising.

Annual accounts are available via the Charity Commission Web site.
The number of Guests

The chart shows the number of bookings for different years and months. Each color represents a different year:
- Blue: 2007-08
- Yellow: 2008-09
- Orange: 2009-10
- Red: 2010-11

The x-axis represents the number of bookings, and the y-axis represents the months from 1 to 22.
The number of Nights
Is this Manageable?

Initially ALL work done by volunteers
- 100% bookings via telephone, all processed by one committee member
- Referrals by Hardingsdown Bunkhouse and Gower Holidays
- Meeting & Greeting by committee rota

Web site launched in November 2007
- Promotion via Gower Holidays, plus referrals by Hardingsdown
- Online booking form – 100% booking enquiries are via the Web site
- Google Analytics – Web site visits: 50% direct; 25% by referral; 25% by search

Broadband connection installed in Office in January 2008

Hall Administrator appointed in May 2008
- Local, Part Time, Permanent post – based in the Hall Office (391509)
- Manages all bookings of the Bunkhouse, Hall and Meeting Room
- Personal contact with customers via telephone
- Coordination of Meeters & Greeters and Cleaner
A community Business!

Meeting & Greeting by local students from June 2008

Card payment facility available from December 2008
  • Many payments are now via Bank Transfer (BACS)
  • “Cheques will disappear within 5 years” (*Quote in mid-2008*)
  • Currently people like to pay by Cheque, BACS or Debit Card, in that order

Bond required from large groups from January 2009
  • Three groups caused moderate damage in 2008 (average value £300)
  • Bond is equivalent to one night’s stay (£300)
  • Applies to groups taking over the whole bunkhouse
  • Intended as a deterrent – refundable if no damage/extra cleaning
  • Just minor or superficial damage since introducing Bonds

Prospects for 2010-11
  • More promotion and marketing, including Visit Wales Grading
WWW Visits since Nov-07

94% from UK

16,322 visits came from 62 countries/territories
Realities of running the Business

As Income rises so do the Running Costs

Terms & Conditions and other documentation
- All bookers must accept our Terms & Conditions via the online form.

Rooms, Prices & Discounts
- Prices detailed in Terms & Conditions on web site.
- Deposit is 30% to confirm booking.
- Full payment due 8 weeks before stay.

Customer Service

Web site & Marketing
The *real* Benefits

The development project has...

- Rejuvenated the Community
  - Enabled members of the community to contribute and participate
- Generated opportunities for Local People
  - Administrator; Cleaner; “Meeters & Greeters”; Local businesses
  - *Organised Outdoor Activities based at the Hall (not been realised yet)*
- Encouraged new Community Groups to meet in the Hall
  - Women’s Institute; Christian Fellowship; Pilates Group
- Enabled the Hall Trustees to:
  - Sponsor Community events rather than be in permanent “fund-raising mode”
  - Offer Special local rates for Hall & Meeting Room Hire
  - Have funds for maintenance, improvements and new facilities
- Demonstrated a proven track record to future funders
  - Especially with respect to project delivery and sustainability
Rhossili Village Hall
A Sustainable Focus for the Community

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