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www.sussedwales.com

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Pinterest: <http://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/sussedporthcawl>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmlFd3JhZon9p6GhdeW3Rkg>

SUSSED ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Director's Report

SUSSED supports people who want to make ethical and environmental choices when they shop, helping use spending power to change the world for the better, whilst redefining values and offering an important additional way to exert influence.



The enterprise also adds to the range of independent shops in Porthcawl - vital to maintain a diverse, interesting high street and strengthen the local economy whilst offering a 'hub' for community activity.

British high streets are witnessing a decline in their ability to attract shoppers and visitors. Footfall has continued to shrink, with 3% fewer shoppers between March and May 2018 compared to the same period in 2017 (IPSOS 2018).

Porthcawl Chamber of Trade (SUSSED is a member) has been highlighting this to Bridgend Borough Council, stating how footfall has dropped drastically in Porthcawl. Yet SUSSED appears broadly immune to the trend, as our sales figures over the same period have increased year on year.

However, according to "The Ethical Consumer Report 2017" shopping locally has grown by 5.4% nationally. Overall, the value of UK ethical spending grew by 3.2% to £81.3 billion, its highest total so far with spending shown to be strengthening, at the same time as many of its conventional market counterparts have faltered.

<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/ec%20markets%20report%202017.pdf>

Stock

Our eclectic clothing selection remains popular, especially with women and now with a developing range for men. Classy 'Braintree' has been rebranded to even classier 'Thought' and ethnic style 'Namaste' both offer a wide selection of dresses, tops, trousers, T-shirts, jumpers and hats.



Folk Soap, made by Pauline from Port Talbot, are artisan soaps, gentle, cruelty-free, natural and handmade. They are also produced to be beneficial for a variety of skin conditions including, eczema, psoriasis, dermatitis, acne, spots, uneven skin tone and rosacea.

The selection of **Reusable Bamboo cups** helps to reduce the staggering 10,000 single-use cups thrown away every 2 minutes!





Of course, biodegradable washing up and laundry liquids have been available for refill for some time from SUSSED.

But amazing new products are continually emerging, such as outdoor and indoor rugs and also soft fluffy socks made from **recycled plastic bottles!**

<http://susedwales.squarespace.com/blog/plastic18>.

Our choice of goods like those above, along with publicity, hopes to tap into the public's heightened awareness around the overconsumption of plastics.

The food, drinks, chocolate, toiletries and eco-goods are all selected from wholefood cooperative **Suma Wholefoods**. It is a co-operative like SUSSED (a business that's run by its members), but obviously much, much bigger.



Suma has a very wide selection and our customers just need to ask if we are able to obtain something they need.

Some sales via our eBay store were made throughout the year, with the peak occurring at the pre-Christmas period. Further work will be required to expand online sales.

Premises etc

The lease is full-repairing and requires SUSSED to deal with any updating etc.

The shop front fascia board was damaged by a lorry early in the year and the company insurance claim was disappointingly slow. Some months passed before the damage was fixed.

However upstairs, the Green Room, has had new modern energy efficient lighting fitted by a local painter/decorator to refresh the space. SUSSED and Sustainable Wales both contributed to the cost of labour and materials.

Also our previous copier/printing contract was ended and a suitable energy efficient modern printer owned by SUSSED, replaced the previous leased machine, lowering our annual costs significantly.



“Welsh for Your Business” have offered some free, on-going business support for increasing use of Welsh language within our company, which includes translation for marketing or display material. We have created some bilingual signage as a result.

Social benefit includes

With the help of the Directors and some committed volunteers, together with charity Sustainable Wales, the project helps to create a small ‘hub’ of activity for the local area.

The cooperative also collaborates with charity Sustainable Wales, Bridgend Fairtrade Partnership, the developing Bridgend Local Energy Group, various cultural and training events in the Green Room and the ‘pop-up café’, check

<https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/>

The shop operates a drop-off point for ‘Tools For Self-Reliance’ and the volunteers help explain this project to customers who ask for information.

The Green Room is also available for hire and we often allow a new group free-access for the first couple of times. <https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/green-room>

SUSSED importantly also assists Sustainable Wales with office and administration costs as well at its local events (c12).

Bridgend Fairtrade Partnership

SUSSED is proud to be a long-standing member of a network of fair trade groups in the UK that raise awareness of pressing sustainable development issues relating to international trade and the developing world. Furthermore, we encourage both people and organisations to use the power of their purses to help make a positive difference to the lives of the people that produce the everyday goods they consume, right across the supply chain.



This year, the Bridgend Partnership held another successful “Fairtrade Festival” in Carnegie House, Bridgend, which provided a free platform for local Fairtrade retailers, including SUSSED, to market their goods and provide information to a wider audience. Events including as a “Bake-Off” style event using Fairtrade ingredients, in which First Minister Carwyn Jones judged the winners.

Throughout the year, the Fairtrade Partnership hosts or supports a number of smaller events at local churches, schools and public spaces, which all contributes to the renewal of our 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* 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.

Membership



People wishing to join can now do so online as well as in person at SUSSED, <http://www.sussedwales.com/membership/> Payment by Direct Debit is also available, introduced in 2017. New colourful information/joining form leaflets explaining SUSSED and the benefits of membership were created and distributed in the shop and at various events. Membership was re-branded with new membership cards produced.

Key other EVENTS include

2017 AGM BREXIT discussion was led by Green party candidate and Porthcawl Town Council member, Alex Harris

(Chocoholics Event) Absolutely Divine Chocolate Party with Late Night Xmas Shopping in SUSSED



Artist Kevin Sinnott's Green Room appearance (sales included Kevin's prints and our clothing ranges), plus late night shopping yielded strong sales on the night.

You can watch the talk here:
<https://youtu.be/bQaA3CZj9HU>

Also a 'Counterpoint' Series

- Marine Litter with Professor Allan Williams.
- "Are Schools Exam Factories?" with Professor Merryn Hutchins.

Poets, musicians and artists included "open mics" for local or young writers and new performers. These occur regularly on the last Friday of every month.

Events are announced at <https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/events> and on our facebook and twitter social media.

Grants

A BAVO grant agreed to fund £800 towards the production of a short film encouraging and involving volunteers. Plans began late May and the production was achieved later in summer/autumn. Community Foundation Wales allocated £1000 grant for volunteer and hospitality costs at the beginning of 2018 and this runs for the whole calendar year.



Volunteers

Volunteers (c25) <http://www.sussedwales.com/volunteer/> are crucial to our business model. The Directors are all volunteers.

Hilary, Jacqui, Gaynor, Emma, Laura, Adele, Saulat, Charlotte, Emily, Catrin, have been regular helpers. School girls, Lowri and Shauna have run a fairtrade stall each week in the Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

Annually we have a number of young adults/students who help for a few weeks to enable them to gain the Duke of Edinburgh scheme award, increase confidence and gain some work experience. (Jareth, Adam, Cian, Ewan, Daisy from Porthcawl Comprehensive School are 4th/5th and 6th formers).

Alix, who was on an exchange programme from France, worked daily for a couple weeks to encourage her English and Business Studies.

Saulat has replanted seasonally and maintained the 'boat garden' which is sited on the way into Porthcawl, below Danygraig hill. A banner was produced advertising SUSSED for the side of the boat.



Volunteer Roles also include

- **Managing** the retail area, customer services, stock ordering/control, stalls; developing IT sales, Coop membership, information/IT/communications; coordination, volunteer support, meetings, partnerships.
- **Servicing outreach** for school, group stalls and our own street activities which are all important for income but also to increase awareness of the ethical agenda.
- Porthcawl Comprehensive takes **stalls** very regularly and a selection of primary schools include them in their festivals and fairs (c25 events annually) to also secure their status as 'fairtrade schools'.
- **Offering the shop as** a daily public drop-off point for "Tools for Self-Reliance" – a local group whose aims are to relieve extreme poverty, by refurbishing hundreds of unused tools annually - shipping them off to workshops in Africa, to help create sustainable livelihoods for the recipients.

- **Establishing a space called ‘The Green Room’** This ‘space’ has provided an open opportunity for members of the public to join in, share, learn and enjoy or hire, offering catering facilities, HDTV/equipment display output etc. E.g. frock swaps, open mics, café experiences, performance, music, meetings, training and talks, integrating a cultural dimension involving professional and local artists.
<https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/green-room>
- **Hosting meetings (12) and as a contributing member of Bridgend Fairtrade Partnership**, planning activities aimed at advancing the Bridgend County Fairtrade Action Plan and retaining our Fairtrade County status. The partnership works with schools, churches, councils, and groups to increase awareness of Fairtrade and issues surrounding trade and social justice.
<https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/bridgend-fairtrade-partnership-1>
- **Offering Information** at the point of sale on the goods, in digital newsletters and online (1000’s)
- **Supporting people** like Porthcawl Comprehensive’s 5/6th formers needing work experience to add to cv’s (6), or Bridgend Council’s ‘Bridges into Work’ work placements for people trying to gain confidence to get back into work (4). SUSSED also offers summer internships (2)
- **Supporting** a growing list of local crafters and ‘upcyclers’ offering an ‘outlet’ for their goods.
- **Developing membership** of the community cooperative
<http://www.sussedwales.com/membership/>
- **Maintaining the website and regular communications** to members and other contacts. Including publicising many activities and events in the wider media and via social networks. www.sussedwales.com
- **Maintaining an eBay trading presence.**

Sustainable Development Policy Statement.

The cooperative 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 Advisors and reports are delivered to the Directors.

Forecast Summary

Look out for our first product – SUSSED Soaps!



Directors

Melanie Johnson, Peter Morgan, Luke Evans,
Margaret Minhinnick, Robert Minhinnick, Martin Little.

