

Dear Friend of the Centre,

I wish to extend a great many thanks to everyone who has given time to seeing this resource centre keep going - user groups, hirers, collaborators, members, visitors, trustees and committee members. It's all 100 percent voluntary and the place is yours!

We had trustee and management changes in 2019, and heartfully thank Hazel Kirk, Martina McKinnel and Margaret Turner for all their energy and enthusiasm and the hours they put in helping lay the foundation for your centre to have a future.

A couple of new committee members and trustees are in the wings, more needed!

Since our last AGM we have had both inspiring and challenging times.

Inspiringly, the many members who joined last year, over 130, gave financial input and showed invaluable commitment. The centre obtained charitable status in June 2019 which is further testament to the management team who have worked tirelessly to achieve this. One key tenet is to be completely transparent in all that happens at the centre and to keep you informed of any plans for the future.

D&G Council handed the centre over to the management committee on a two year lease in September 2019. The building had been given a new lease of life after significant refurbishment works.

We set up a website last year ([www.smccwhithorn.org](http://www.smccwhithorn.org)) which has details of all facilities and goings on at the centre with a direct facility for booking rooms. Our Facebook page has kept people informed up to the minute, and a newsletter printed and distributed to every letterbox in Whithorn and made available at outlets in the town and nearby villages. Notices are also displayed about town.

We've started a few projects and ideas and were very successful - with the community's support - in obtaining £5,000 funding from Calor, and amounts from Galloway Assoc of Glasgow, D&G Common Good Fund among others (thank you!) to enable us to convert the old school canteen room into the Living Room, a space for carers and those in need of support, to bring the Living Room alive.

We have entered into a partnership agreement with the Parent Council of the primary school (across the car park from the Centre) to support their successful application for a community minibus, that can be hired for local groups to get out into their community or to bring isolated people to events at the Centre. Since the start of Covid19 the minibus has been loaned to the Riverside Centre in Newton Stewart to help them with their very vital schedule of delivering food and essential items throughout the area.

We're looking at ways in which the centre could be used as a networking hub for those that can't travel to work and find it difficult to work from home, and we're open to suggestions and how we could meet your needs.

Challengingly, COVID19 came leaving the centre quiet since March 23rd.

Hand sanitizers have been installed by the entrances and we're formulating plans as to how we can support the groups and users of the centre as it gradually reopens, something we would really welcome your input on. We've applied to the Tudor Trust for funds to create a post for a cleaner. This role is a vital position to allow us to open the Centre again. We don't want to put anyone at risk, but we really want to get people back into their activities and classes as soon as Government guidelines allow us to do so.

With a focus on providing opportunities for health and wellbeing, the Management Committee are striving to make the centre inclusive, accessible and welcoming to the whole

community and the surrounding area. Support and encouragement will be given to small businesses, charitable groups, community drop-ins and local action groups as well as the many member groups which meet regularly at the centre.

The future of the South Machars, as with all communities, will be in the hands of those that live there. Its economy will be local, perhaps even financially so. Decision making will be locally made too, supporting the local economy and creating opportunities for the local population. The South Machars Community Centre, while starting off providing opportunities for members to focus on wellbeing and health, will develop into the hub of the community providing information and resources for a stronger, vibrant community. A thriving community centre supported by its members, small business, local action and agency presence. If managed professionally, caringly and with local focus, adapting to the needs of the community as it changes with the times, the centre can be a part of a fully autonomous, integrated and healthy region.

And in closing I leave you with our vision for the centre. Thank you.

Jon Joy