



Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism 24 years in summary

The Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism, from day one, expected the popular, successful Village events to move from their hands to others in the Community. The emergence of new groups in the Village demonstrates that this volunteering ethos is alive and well and the Chamber recognises that these groups working along with the existing established organisations are now best placed to run with the baton and continue to move the Village forward, maintaining the high standard that people now expect in Saundersfoot.

The Chamber has worked quietly in the Village collaborating with many organisations to deliver a vast range of events and support infrastructure.

Always working hard, always fun and always enjoyed by residents, visitors and community, delivering amongst other things:-

- Cawl Cooking Championship of the World and Elsewhere
- *Big Bang weekend*
- Spooky bat trail
- *Pumpkin carving competition*
- Coastal Christmas for the whole of December
- *Saundersfoot Village centre icicle lights*
- New Year's Eve fireworks
- *Proms in the Park*
- Daft raft race
- *Sealed Knot re-enactments on the beach*
- Fish week
- *Lantern parade*
- Saundersfoot Scene
- *Visitor location plan*
- On line Business Forum offering support through Covid lockdowns
- *Social Media, website developed, populated and maintained*
- Village Map - designed, developed, updated, published and distributed regularly
- *Advertising frames - sourced, erected and populated*
- Regular engagement with Local Press and radio
- *Featured in Wales Coastal Path App*
- Working in collaboration with other groups
 - Village Working Party - Land train
 - SBHRT - Actively developed the Heritage Booklet
 - Saundersfoot Harbour Advisory group
 - Contributed to the PCC Major Events Strategy

In conclusion, the Chamber wishes all the established and emerging groups well and hope that they will embrace and organise many of the popular, established events.

The Committee members are more than happy to share their gained experiences and lessons learned over the last 24 years.

Saundersfoot “*A Village for all seasons*” and “*A community with spirit*”

The evolution of Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism and the way ahead



Who in our Village could have imagined that a group of volunteers brought together to celebrate the Millennium both on New Year's Eve and a week of celebrations later in 2000, would generate a group of highly motivated individuals still creating Village Events some 24 years later.

The original group were provided with a budget of £2,000 by Saundersfoot Community Council for the NYE fireworks, all the remaining funding had to be raised by imaginative events most of which are still enjoyed by both residents and visitors alike.

Brainstorming evenings quickly established a programme including a St. Nicholas Christmas Market (which had not been seen west of Cardiff), Christmas trees and lights provided to businesses around the Village, Cawl Cooking Championship of the World (and elsewhere), the Trick or Treat Trail, a barn dance, 3-legged pub race and many others.

The die was cast, with most of the events still being delivered in 2022, the Christmas Market evolving from stalls, to a huge marquee and more recently the traditional wooden cabins. Celebrating a month long Coastal Christmas.

The Cawl cooking championship became the Cawl trail and has been supported recently by WRU world famous players, the celebration of St David's Day moved from just the local schools to the whole Village.

The original "Trick or Treat Trail" has morphed into the Big Bang weekend, which has smashed together Halloween and Bon Fire Night, with a scary bat trail, pumpkin carving, first class fair rides, double firework display and children's disco all part of the weekend, it is not unusual to see whole families in fancy dress taking part in the activities.

The original Christmas trees with lights soon became the year on year spectacle that was seen in 2022, the whole centre of the Village draped in icicle lights, which compliments the display in the Sensory Garden and provides a month long picture post card backdrop, enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

The New Year's Eve fireworks are a firm favourite with 2022 seeing the first local "pet friendly" display, visitors come from all over the area and many accommodation providers now remain open to cover the December events'.

Other events and support provided by the Chamber includes

- Proms in the Park
- Daft raft race
- Sealed Knot
- Fish week
- Lantern parade
- Saundersfoot Scene
- Visitor location plan
- On line Business Forum offering support throughout Covid lockdowns
- Social Media, website developed, promoted and maintained
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- Working contribution with other groups
 - Village Working Party - Land train
 - SBHRT - Actively developed the Heritage Booklet
 - Harbour Advisory group

Of the original committee, three are still active, they have been joined over the 20+ years by many other equally dedicated volunteers. The resulting events have been seen as sector leading and have been recognised by PLANED, Visit Pembrokeshire and included in the Pembrokeshire County Council Major Events Strategy.

The original aims of the group were soon established following a fact finding visit to Kinsale in Ireland. The goals were to extend the season in the Village creating a sustainable Village and an exemplar tourist destination. Shaking off the National Press observation of the “scruffy little town”.

The Chamber financial model saw each event needing to be successful, to fund the next one in the programme. As a not for profit, volunteer group, the committee recognised the support it has received from a number of organisations and public bodies, including SCC, PCC, Saundersfoot Harbour, PLANED, Valero and individuals.

The committee strongly believes that it hit its targets, in the process unifying many of the active groups in the Village. Working quietly behind the scenes, having fun and enjoying the range of events has been key to the Chambers success

“A Village for all seasons” and *“A community with spirit”* were ambitious mission statements, others will judge if they were achieved.

But without doubt the volunteering, community spirit in Saundersfoot, captured by the Chamber back in 1999 is recognised both locally and nationally. It has undoubtedly contributed to the investment by Welsh Government, Pembrokeshire County Council and private commercial enterprise in the Village.

The Chamber from day one, expected the popular, successful events to move from their hands to others in the Community. The emergence of new groups in the Village demonstrates that this volunteering ethos is alive and well. Chamber recognises that the existing established organisations along with these new groups are now best placed to take the baton and continue to move the Village forward, maintaining the high standard that people now expect in Saundersfoot.

In conclusion the Chamber wishes all the new groups well and are happy to share the gained experience and lessons learned over the last 24 years.

The Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism Committee

20th February 2023

Dilys Hackett
 Michael Slade
 Phil Baker
 Lindsey Evans

Holly Thompson
 Phil Odley
 Andrew Evans

**The evolution of Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism
and the way ahead**



Dear Member

20th February 2023

I am writing to inform you that after much discussion and reflection, the SCT Committee have decided that after 24 years of hard work along with the support of Chamber members and volunteers in successfully driving towards the ambitious target of making Saundersfoot "A Village for all seasons", now is the right time for change.

Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism have always expected that the legacy of successful Village events would be passed on to others best placed to deliver them. It is felt the already established organisations along with the emerging groups in Saundersfoot are now in a position to build on this legacy in continuing to move the Village forward.

Attached is the prepared statement by the Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism Committee together with a summary of the achievements made over the past quarter of a century.

We would like to take this opportunity to greatly thank all our members and supporters throughout the past 24 years without whom we could not have achieved many of the successes and built the admirable reputation Saundersfoot has received both locally and nationally.

We strongly encourage you to continue to support, in whatever way you can, the events and activities undertaken by the many groups who form part of this amazing "Community of Spirit" as we enter a new phase of opportunities and challenges that need to be met to continue Saundersfoot's success.

As an organisation that will no longer be organising events directly (though will be more than happy to share knowledge, experience and lessons learned with others), we shall ensure that all membership fees that have been paid this year will be refunded.

We wish you all well and the very best for the future.

Thank you.

Dilys Hackett (Chair)

On behalf of

Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism Committee