

Report For Board meeting 23rd August

The main focus of my 3 months at Hale CC has been to connect people within the Sandy Hill community and with the wider community.

This has been achieved through setting up a contact form whereby everyone who signs up can then receive emails and newsletters so that all the disparate projects and elements are connected. We now have around 100 contacts and both electronic and paper means to continue to grow this.

I made a cardboard cut out community cake to engage members of the cafe in conversation asking 'What are the ingredients of a good life?' which has then been used to evaluate the need of the community and create further projects and activities to have a positive impact on the community. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xYaJ7irZkOeO3zk_HT2sQE7aNjov2J6SFX0-PsxLlv0/edit

Specific activities have been women's self defence class pilot, a parent support group and the Craft Cafe (in conjunction with the Maltings). This has involved liaising with organisers, facilitators, volunteers and participants.

Another key outcome has been To provide an opportunity for Hale CC to evaluate what the community needs in order to provide ongoing support. Evaluations have been done for activities which essentially show that most people come to the centre for company rather than any need for acquiring specific skills. Photos have also been taken for promotional and engagement purposes.

I also engaged with the community through events like Music in the Meadows and St Mark's church, through promoting Farnham Town Council events and transport provision, by creating a newsletter and organising a Reptile encounter day, a beach trip and the upcoming community FunDay on Sandy Hill.

I participated in online groups such as Farnham Connects, VASWS and the Loneliness Steering Group in order to inform about what we are doing and to find out about and promote any initiatives which could benefit our community.

I also considered improvement of the space itself to be key part of engaging the community in the centre, so I applied for funding for a £5k grant for decorating and refurbishments, made design proposals and had initial discussions with designers and decorators. Focussing attention on what the centre does by clearly and vibrantly providing information on notice boards as wells providing interactive boards for evaluating engagement.

Ongoing work is underway for the Community Fun Day
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zuYUyu--cXmlofKMsX4XsTj4L66pbLcgbRSsPYkQLFs/edit#gid=0>

I have resigned from the post largely because I feel that the role is too large to be undertaken in 15 hours a week and that the main focus of the role, which seems to be monitoring in order to get funding, does not actually serve the community but continues a culture of dependency and working within a system that is broken. I think more organic engagement and a collaborative grassroots growing of activities is the way to reach out and engage the community.