



From your Chairman



Hello Everyone,

Well as roller coasters go 2020 has been frightening, and I for one will be glad to get off it.

The prospect of vaccinations becoming available for us all in the new year will, hopefully, mean business can resume

although with many changes to both sides of the counter.

Internet shopping grew exponentially, and much of the high street has been decimated by it and imposed shutdowns. As a new age dawns the major changes in how we sell and shop will open up opportunities for those who can manage that change and inevitable losses for those who cannot. The financial pages especially show how and where this is happening with many examples of growth from creative thinking, especially with smaller companies who are able to act quickly.

It's the age of the entrepreneur, and I am looking forward to seeing who in North Wales will be the success stories.

We did have a full programme of events planned for 2020, but with inevitable cancellations, we needed to quickly decide how we could remain in touch with Members and continue networking.

Dissemination of Government guidelines and financial aid appeared to be the first priority, so we emailed all Members with the many continuing updates and the valuable advice and guidance from our professional Members.

The NWBC Newsletter had recently been launched as a quarterly publication, and in March we decided to make it more frequent to better update you all on local and national Covid and business information and how our amazing Members were helping others.

We joined the Zoom phenomenon in September to enable live Members interaction, and with our Charity Quiz in jeopardy from Covid, it became the obvious choice to keep it alive. Our wonderful Editor Sophie Morris and her Worldspan Company team managed the evening and with over fifty quizzers our host Rupert Moon managed to keep us under control as we raised over £10,000 for St David's Hospice.

Zooming continues with informal and business interaction, and each month a Member is invited to present their company's activities. This always develops into much discussion and, we are told, business follows.

Membership subscriptions support our events programme as well as the Club's ongoing website and general management expenditure. With no events in the past ten months we considered it appropriate to use some of this money to help children's charities at Christmas time. We wanted to support two that helped children in North Wales particularly and decided upon: Ty Gobaith/Hope House, Children's Hospice based in Conwy and Oswestry and Superkids, based in Flint whose charitable activities supporting families with vulnerable children extend from Wrexham to Holyhead and everywhere else in North Wales.

With vaccinations are coming on stream from various sources we may hopefully get back to some form of normality in the spring. With this in mind, Jean has started to pick up the threads of our postponed events programme and I am very pleased to announce that there will be a lunch on the 18th June when Capt. Hugh Daghish, former Commander of Her Majesty's Yacht Britanna, will be our guest speaker. More about this elsewhere in this issue.

I have been your Chairman for two years now and have decided it is time to hand over the reins. At our recent Committee meeting, our Vice Chairman Jeremy Salisbury was elected as your new Chairman and he invited me to be Vice-Chairman which I willingly agreed to for one year after which a new Vice-Chairman will be appointed.

It has been a privilege to serve you all, and I thank you and the Committee for your wonderful support. Over the past two years, we have been fortunate to welcome four new Members onto the Committee and I know we have an excellent team to manage the North Wales Business Club into the future.

My very best wishes to you all for an enjoyable Festive Season and a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Mel

Mel Herman, Chairman

St David's Hospice: from survival to recovery and the Great Orme Goat



In the weeks following on from lockdown, we saw national and worldwide press surrounding the charity tee shirt with two appearances on BBC Breakfast and further appearances on BBC Radio Wales, HENO, the Telegraph and Japanese news channel, TV Asahi.

We went global! In just seven months, over 6,500 tee shirts have sold worldwide as far as Australia, America, Canada, Japan, China and across Europe. In total, they have raised more than £120,000, which we could never have expected in normal times.

During the most challenging period the hospice has ever faced, we were able to keep our clinical colleagues on the front line by tapping into current affairs and seizing an opportunity which was right in front of us – in the Hospice car park.

St David's Hospice, together with the rest of the planet, is living through extraordinary times. Back in March 2020, we had no choice but to close our twenty-six charity shops and two commercial cafés. We were forced to cancel our fundraising events and lottery cash collections. Even after the government's help, our worst fears were met since we estimated that we would face a shortfall of over £1 million by the end of 2020.

We fought desperately to keep our in-patient service open throughout the pandemic, to be able to care for some of the most vulnerable people in our local communities, living with a life-limiting illness. With social distancing restrictions, it was impossible to continue day therapy, and this soon became an 'at home' service to ensure that patients' needs could be met.

In a bid to recover our losses during the first lockdown, we launched a £1 million 'Recovery Fund' to the public. Almost immediately, support from the local community started to pour in, and people and businesses came together to help, which was quite incredible.

The actions of cheeky Great Orme Goats won't have escaped your attention during the first lockdown. After taking over the quiet streets of Llandudno in the absence of people, the goats soon became a viral sensation with videos and pictures being shared worldwide.

St David's Hospice is no stranger to these curious creatures, as they often wander down to the Hospice car park on Abbey Road in early spring.

Thinking on our feet to find innovative ideas to help raise funds quickly came the idea of the Great Orme goat charity tee shirt.

Drawing upon the hospice's location on Abbey Road, we came up with a design which channelled The Beatles' iconic Abbey Road album cover – but instead featuring the goats trotting across the zebra crossing!

Since the initial success, we have been developing the Great Orme Goat merchandise range to adapt to the growing e-commerce / online shopping community. Today, we have a huge range of 'not on the high street' products just in time for Christmas including a 'Mostyn' Great Orme soft toy, stylish hoodie, polo shirt, Abbey Road mug, pint glass, notebook, coaster and much, much more.

The St David's Hospice Great Orme Goat products are available to purchase now by visiting the hospice website:

www.stdavidshospice.org.uk/shop. Each sale will contribute to the long-term recovery of the hospice so that we are here in the future for local people who need our care. We are truly grateful for all the support we have received to date.



Venue Cymru Update



venue
cymru
LLANDUDNO

Swyddfa Docynnau / Box Office
01492 872000

www.venuecymru.co.uk

Llandudno's Venue Cymru, along with all other UK venues, closed its doors on 16th March 2020.

For a venue that bustles daily with shows, performances, workshops, exhibitions, conferences, events and a busy restaurant this came as a massive blow for the venue, which welcomes over 300,000 theatregoers through its doors each year. The last show staged before Lock Down was a sold-out 'We Will Rock You', and 2020 was set to be another impressive year with a full year of West End hits, legendary music acts, World-class Opera and much more. Not just a disappointment to audiences and staff of course – the venue contributes £33.5m to the wider local economy and is a vital asset to North Wales tourism.



Despite the temporary closure, Venue Cymru showed its versatility and has been re-facilitated to support the Betsi Cadwaldr Health Board providing an additional 350 beds and to act as an essential testing centre. Ysbyty Enfys, translating to 'Rainbow Hospital', is aptly named after the symbol of hope adopted during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Richard Jones, Marketing Manager for Venue Cymru, explained what has been happening at Venue Cymru during recent months:

'We've been proud to work with the Health Board and that our building can be used for such a vital purpose. Although very few of our Venue staff are now on-site, colleagues have been redeployed to help with other services run by the Local Authority, which have been set up to offer essential community support during the pandemic.

'Our shows, conferences and events have been rescheduling and relocating wherever possible. We've moved our Young Creatives programmes online as part of our digital programme. We're now looking at ways we can stream content to our customers, and other ways to keep the culture they're sure to be missing in their lives.

'Health and safety is paramount to all venues; this, coupled with potential restrictions on seating, makes for challenging times for theatres. As much as we all can't wait for the show to go on, we have to be realistic – and if we can only allow a small number of people into an auditorium to watch a show, then it will just not be financially viable. It is vital to follow guidelines, but it is also important to adapt by looking at options such as digital and an outdoor offer. It is great to see that new initiatives and creative partnerships are being formed to keep culture alive; this is a positive thing to see. However, a theatre is so much more than a building to see a show – theatres are vital community hubs where so much more goes on beyond watching a show.

'The impact of the pandemic has been tragic to the industry. In solidarity with other venues, many of whom have had to announce their closures, and creatives in our industry, we have lit our venue in red, twice. In July, #LightItInRed trended third on Twitter, by illuminating Venue Cymru, it showed we were standing by for when we can reopen. Again in August, we lit our building for #WeMakeEvents to raise awareness of the UK's industry professionals, who have not had work since March and are facing the prospect of no employment until next year. By turning on their red lights, the hope was to draw attention to the industry going into 'Red Alert'.

- Venue Cymru's furloughed technical team were redeployed to Gwrych Castle in September, and have worked for ITV in the lead up to and during 'I'm A Celebrity' filming.
- So far we have managed to reschedule 98% of our shows into 2021 and 2022.
- We've also held our first virtual conference from our new Hybrid Studio.

'We have recently reopened Venue Cymru's sister Theatre, Theatr Colwyn. We are opening gradually to allow the community to come out and enjoy a film. Of course, restrictions are in place – reduced capacity, social distancing and additional cleaning and safety measures, however, it is great to return slowly, and this is a massive positive to staff and customers.

'For Venue Cymru though, the reopening won't be happening just yet, as Ysbyty Enfys will remain into Spring 2021 we remain on standby to reopen in the hopefully not too distant future.'

Thank You from Hope House Children's Hospice



Dear NWBC Members,

We were truly grateful to receive your donation. Words cannot come close to expressing how important your support is to us in these unprecedented time. As you know, charities are facing an uncertain future as donations plummet and fundraising events are cancelled.

Sadly Hope House Children's Hospices are not immune to the impact of the pandemic and therefore to know that you have been think of us at a time when there are so many other concerns and worries has really touched our hearts. As a local charity who help children and families at the most distressing time of their lives and in order to ensure that we can be here for everyone who needs us it is vital that our local community help in whatever way they can.

I know that you will be reassured to know that in spite of our loss of income, our highly skilled nurses are continuing to provide end of life and critical care at both hospices. There is no doubt that the children and families need the support of Hope House and Ty Gobaith more than ever and thanks to your generosity, you are making it possible for us to continue with our vital work in the most difficult of times.

When I talk to the children and families, they say that knowing the fact that there are people like you who have never met but still means the world to them and they find it comforting.

We will never forget the kindness and please pass on our thanks to all at the North Wales Business Club.

Stay Safe and take care,

Beverley Bradley

Area Fundraiser

Law firm offers free legal advice to hospitality businesses hit by new Covid-19 restrictions in Wales



Aaron & Partners

Aaron & Partners is offering free one-hour legal advice for Welsh hospitality businesses affected by the latest restrictions.

Aaron & Partners' restructuring team is offering support to struggling businesses in Wales forced to reduce opening hours, stop selling alcohol, or close for the duration of the Welsh Government's new Covid-19 guidelines.

The Legal 500-listed solicitors will offer a free consultation of up to one hour, via video call or telephone, for business owners who may be worried about facing insolvency.

Mark Davies, Restructuring Partner at Aaron & Partners, said: 'Having lived in North Wales for 30 years and having brought up my family here, I am very concerned about the impact of the latest restrictions on Welsh hospitality businesses at what is traditionally their busiest time of the year.

'For business owners in particular, it can be difficult to know which way to turn. Anyone concerned about the financial position of their business is welcome to call us.

'We will do everything we can to help. The first hour is free of charge and often that can be enough to make a big difference- there is no obligation to use us or pay us after that and in many cases that won't be needed anyway.

'If the situation is more complex, then we are well placed to assist- we have decades of experience supporting businesses with legal matters, providing an independent view and helping to find practical solutions.

'Recent legislative changes mean that there are new restructuring options such as a moratorium- a breathing space for a business to get through temporary difficulties. The best tip is to seek help as early as possible before the options narrow.'

To arrange a free, one-hour appointment, contact enquiries@aaronandpartners.com or call 01244 405555 and quote '2020 Offer'.

Changes to the National Living Wage

In addition to offering free one-hour legal advice for Welsh hospitality businesses affected by the latest restrictions, Charlotte Weeden from Aaron and Partners shared details following the Chancellor's announcement of his spending review to Parliament. Full details of the spending review can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents>

Noteworthy measures for employers included a substantial change to the National Living Wage (NLW), National Minimum Wage (NMW) and Apprentice Rate, which will come into force from 1st April 2021.

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

The NLW will extend to all workers aged 23 and 24, and the amount will be increased by 2.2% to £8.91 taking effect from 1st April 2021.

Currently, only those aged 25 and over are eligible for the NLW so employers should be ready for implementing this change.

NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

The NMW will be increased as follows with effect from 1st April 2021:

21-22 year old rate (currently the 21 – 24 year old rate) – increase of 2% to £8.36

18 – 20 year old rate - increase of 1.7% to £6.56

16 -17 year old rate – increase of 1.1% to £4.64

APPRENTICE RATE

The Apprentice rate is seeing the largest increase of 3.6% to £4.30.

If you would like advice on the NLW or NMW or any other Employment Law related matter, please contact Debbie Coyne, Senior Associate – debbie.coyne@aaronandpartners.com or 01244 405 537.

Welsh Government Updates

WELSH GOVERNMENT CORONAVIRUS REGULATIONS

The Welsh Government have published Guidance on how you can keep safe during the outbreak and what rules are in place to protect people.

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are updated regularly and are relevant to the public and businesses

[Click here for the FAQs.](#)

BUSINESS FUNDING

Information about Welsh Government funding and how it can be accessed will be published and updated on the [Business Wales website](#).



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Forthcoming Events

NORTH WALES BUSINESS CLUB EVENTS

As Wales slowly opens up to events, and with the hope with the vaccine rollout that we will be able to restart our functions, please keep the following date free in your diary:

Date: Friday 18th June 2021

Location: Quay Hotel, Deganwy LL31 9DJ

Time: 12.15 for 1.00pm

Guest Speaker: Captain Hugh B Daghish, LVO JP DL RN, former Commander of Her Majesty's Yacht Britannia

All Members of the NWBC will be notified when tickets for a function become available.

The 2021 NWBC QUIZ NIGHT in aid of St David's Hospice

This very popular event is to be held on Thursday 16 September 2021 - hopefully live rather than virtual!

Date: 18 November 2021

Location: Quay Hotel, Deganwy

Guest Speaker: Major General (Retired) Nick Caplin CB, Chief Executive Officer Blind Veterans UK

MEMBERS EVENTS

ANGLESEY SEA ZOO

Anglesey Sea Zoo's Christmas Fair is going ahead as planned during the weekends of December, with all activities meeting the necessary government guidelines.

The event not only brings a bit of Christmas cheers for your young ones but also supports local businesses and charities including their Hope House & Tŷ Gobaith 'wishing tree' for donations!

There will be reindeer from North Hills Farm in Mold, to educate visitors about these fascinating animals on December 19-20th; Elsa from 'Frozen' will be making an appearance on Sundays from 12.30 - 2.30 pm, mingling with visitors and doing a singing & Storytime session; Santa and his elves will be there every day with afternoon visits to the grotto between 2.00 and 4.00 pm for drop-in visits. Tickets for the drop-in slots are available on the day in limited numbers for covid-safety reasons.

There will also be a Christmas local craft market, festive food and drink and lots of Christmas bling!

Entry is free for the fair itself, booking not required.

All events are outdoors undercover to keep things as Covid-safe as possible. We recommend visitors to wear masks and request that they stick to social distancing and all other Covid guidance during their visit.

For further details, please see www.angleseyseazoo.co.uk

NETWORK BREAKOUT

After very nearly eight months since our last social gathering, the committee decided to start a one-hour online networking session, every second Tuesday of the month, for all Club Members.

Starting in September, these have been held, via Zoom, and have been enjoyed by those participating.

The agenda is pretty informal, with an initial short presentation from a Club Member, followed by a question and answer session. This is then followed by breakout sessions, where Members join a chat room with 4 or 5 other Members for 5 minutes of informal networking. There is no agenda, and Members are allocated at random to encourage new conversations and new connections.

After 5 minutes, Members are returned to the main forum where there is a general discussion about what was discussed and some informal polls on serious and fun matters.

A further 2 or 3 breakout sessions take place with different Members in each room before the evening comes to an end.

Whilst attendance has been a little disappointing, participators have enjoyed these sessions, and there has been an opportunity to learn about other Members' businesses, either through the initial presentation or by informal chats in the breakout rooms.

So far presentations have been given by Colin Wickens, where the discussion descended to the price of toilet paper; Sophie Morris, where we discussed the importance and scale of the events industry to travel and tourism; and, Tristan Owen who answered questions on all manner of issues surrounding mortality – unfortunately not immortality!

We are keen to continue with these sessions and would love to see more people attend, for what is an enjoyable and informative hour or so, each month. It is free, just bring some wine and some nibbles and look forward to a really good chat!

Details are sent out early in the month, by the Club Secretary, so please look for the links in your inbox and just be careful in case they slide into your junk folder!

The next session will be on 9th February, as we will take a break in January, to allow for sore heads!

NWBC Quiz Night – 24 Sept 2020



By Peter Smith, General Secretary & Treasurer NWBC

The beauty about this year's quiz was you marked your own papers; I am not suggesting any impropriety whatsoever, but it did mean contestants like me could quietly withdraw without drawing attention to oneself, and I was rapidly heading for the wooden spoon prize. For the quiz round about film music I scored zero; about the only film scores I would recognise would be The Dam Busters or the Sound of Music! So as you can see, I am not a quiz person.

This year due to current circumstances we held a virtual quiz very ably managed on the evening by Committee Member and MD of Worldspan Sophie Morris. It was a relatively new platform they had constructed which worked superbly. Jean Barlow, as usual, drove all the preparations and enabled the quiz to happen. Rupert Moon again offered his services and acted as MC for the evening. The NWBC is extremely grateful to Jean, Rupert and Barclays, who contributed £3,000 to the evening, plus of course all the sponsors of the evening.

There were some 55 contestants online who took part in the quiz, and all were eligible for the raffle which was drawn by Rupert Moon. Thank you to everybody who donated raffle prizes. In the end, we raised £10,220 for St David's Hospice towards their recovery fund. This was a fantastic effort, and thank you to all concerned.

Club Member Clive Wolfendale of CIAS won the quiz, and from what we could see he did this single-handed. He would be a great guy to have on your team in future events – a stunning performance Clive!

We have already booked Venue Cymru on 16th September 2021 for our quiz night next year when hopefully we will all have been vaccinated and are able to mingle and socialise. The quiz will again be in aid of St David's Hospice when hopefully they will be clear of the recovery mode they are now in and will be able to continue with their more traditional fundraising activities. We very much look forward to seeing everybody there and once again thank you to everybody who contributed so much to make this a great fundraising event under these challenging circumstances we are having to live through.

NWBC Member Margaret Hollings, Interim Director of Transformation at St David's Hospice said:

'We have been totally overwhelmed by the response to the Corporate Quiz this year given the many challenges that all North Wales Businesses have faced.

'On behalf of all my hospice colleagues, I'd like to thank the North Wales Business Club Committee for their continued support through these desperate times, together with everyone who took part in the Quiz; as well as those who sponsored and donated.

'It's because of you and the generosity that others have shown that our doors are still open to patients and families who need us at the most vulnerable time of their life. For this, we cannot thank you enough.'



Presentation of cheque to St David's Hospice on 8th October 2020. Left to right: Jean E Barlow NWBC, Sophie Morris NWBC, Mel Herman Chairman of NWBC, Sue Jones Barclays, Merfyn Hughes Barclays and Trystian Pritchard Chief Executive of St David's Hospice.

A note from your editor



2020 is drawing to a close, and some may say - at last. It was a year that made enormous demands on all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic has gripped the world and stopped it in its tracks. Christmas is coming, and this year everything will be different – that much is certain. Christmas markets, Christmas parties with friends and

colleagues, long-awaited family get-togethers, heading to Europe or further afield for a skiing holiday or winter sun – all these things are very restricted this year.

But as I look back on the year, I think there are many things to be grateful for, not least the amazing work and care that so many have given to support their loved ones, neighbours, communities and the

wider population and as I look forward, I feel there is hope to what the new year might bring, not least the anticipation that the news of the vaccines will bring an end to the impact that pandemic has had and that it will help to keep our families, friends and community safe.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year and I very much look forward to the time we can all meet again in 2021.

Sophie

nwbcnews@gmail.com

Disclaimer: The details shared in this newsletter are contributions from our Members, and as such the NWBC Committee cannot guarantee accuracy.

