

SADCIC Marketing Plan (2021-2022)

for the new Fromus Centre and launch July 2021



Saxmundham & District

Community Interest Company

The purpose of this 2021-2022 document is to build up a logical and comprehensive marketing review & plan for SADCIC to action, and to share with stakeholders.

The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC)

Marketing Review & Plan for New Fromus Centre 2021

The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) was established in 2007, to help regenerate Saxmundham, with the aim to create assets and services for the local community.

In the long-term SADCIC would trade - initially with hiring spaces for community use - and eventually become self-sustainable. It will trade to make a surplus - but not for private gain. All profits would be ploughed back into community service.

All the SADCIC directors are unpaid volunteers, drawn from the local community.

SADCIC was formed with the encouragement, and seed corn funding, from Suffolk Coastal District Council (now the East Suffolk District Council), and local support from Saxmundham Town Council.

This document summarises the history of developments to date and provides a plan for working with brand new premises and more partners - to deliver a much greater and richer offering - to meet the diverse and growing wants and needs of all local residents and businesses.

Success to date

In 2011, SADCIC started working with Suffolk County Council (SCC) on a joint project to establish a community centre / hub for Saxmundham. And both parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to that end.

In preparation, SCC invited SADCIC to take over the existing, but greatly underutilised, 'Saxmundham Community Resource Centre', in Seaman Road, Saxmundham.

In the next 3 years, SADCIC refurbished and rebranded the building as the Fromus Centre (after the river running through the local area). Then SADCIC increased the number of hirers sevenfold, increased the hiring revenue tenfold and, by the end of the first three years, SADCIC realised savings of 30% on the previous SCC running costs. And the success of attracting new hirers and users has continued to grow steadily.

However, the 50-year old building has relatively high running costs and is now beyond economic repair. SCC wishes to demolish the building and develop the site for mixed housing.

In its place, SCC has offered space (on a free lease) to SADCIC in its planned gutted and refurbished Street Farm Road buildings, in the town centre. This is in support of this significant step-change in local amenity but SADCIC is to pay its proportion of the 'service charges' for the total building space.

The acquisition of a new Fromus Centre represents the successful culmination of 14 years of perseverance by SADCIC to deliver a *brand new* community centre for the local population. For the past 10 years SADCIC have made the most of the old, out-of-town, Suffolk County Council's old (1970's) Saxmundham Resource Centre.

Now SADCIC can move on and address the delivery further assets and services - to meet its broad remit covering education, training, health, social and leisure services.

SADCIC realises that it can bring about faster and broader changes by seeking to collaborate with others – both complementary providers as well as other space providers.

The SADCIC Mission

1. ‘To provide a thriving and vibrant Community Hub, for the local people of Saxmundham and its hinterland, through which individuals of all ages and backgrounds, local community groups and businesses, will all have access to meeting spaces and facilities, providing social, leisure, educational and training opportunities, as well as live events.
2. SADCIC aims to ensure the long term viability of this new Fromus Centre by balancing the trading finances with accessing community grants, as may be required from time to time, especially with new projects.
3. Recruit a mix of new volunteer directors to better reflect the local community demographics ie priority to attract female and younger candidates.
4. Partnering with other organisations to leverage the combined knowledge, experience and resources to enrich the new Fromus Centre service provision.
5. Provide new outreach services, especially for ‘housebound’ socially –isolated individuals, by use of new technology, social media and ‘field’ volunteers.

The Marketing Review & Plan

A marketing plan involves considering the mix of product, positioning, place, people, price and promotion – in the continuing cycle of research, then planning, followed by implementation and finally evaluation. It should be repeated and updated at least annually.

Needs Analysis

Following extensive, and continuing, research and consultation covering over 5,500 households in the IP17 post-code area, a Community Plan was created, in February 2009.

The overriding priority then was to establish a community centre for a rapidly growing population.

In 2016 further quantitative market research was conducted to better understand the current and latent demand for a new community hub facilities and services.

The responses relating to facilities that respondents wanted to see in a new building were as follows, in ranked order:

1. 94% wanted to see Meeting Rooms for hire (for up to 20 people)
2. 81% wanted to see On-site Parking
3. 79% wanted to see a Main Hall
4. 70% wanted to see Disabled Access & Toilets
5. 69% wanted to see a Modern Kitchen for Catering & Training
6. 65% wanted to see a Café
7. 65% wanted to see Stage / Lighting and sound systems / film screen projector - for performing arts (dance, drama & music), conferences & film shows / live broadcasts

8. 60% wanted to see a Keep Fit Room / Gym

NB.

The new Fromus centre will provide brand new facilities to meet the requirements of items 1-5.

Item 6 - a permanent café cannot be accommodated in the current offering, but a weekly pop-up café in the hall would be possible.

Item 7 could be accommodated at a later stage – subject to separate funding.

Item 8 a permanent keep fit room / gym cannot be accommodated in the current offering, but weekly keep fit sessions in the hall would be possible.

The responses relating to activities/ clubs that respondents most wanted to see in a new building were as follows, in ranked order:

1. 50% Adult Education & Training
2. 45% Exercise / Keep Fit Sessions
3. 42% Cafe
4. 40% Film Club / Cinema
5. 35% Dancing – ballet / tap / disco / Zumba
6. 33% Live Entertainment (eg drama / comedy / music / dance)
7. 31% Lunch Club for Senior Residents
8. 30% Cooking Courses
9. 28% Martial Arts / Tai Chi / Pilates / Yoga Classes
10. 26% Holiday Play Schemes

NB

Activities 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 & 9 have all taken place in the old Fromus Centre and could be replicated in the new Fromus Centre, subject to hirers taking up the opportunities.

Activity 4 could be introduced as the new Fromus Centre will include a ceiling mounted projector in the hall. Combined with a sound system and a wall-mounted flat-screen TV, this could also be employed for education, training and conference usage.

Activity 7 could be introduced as the hall will have an adjoining fully-fitted and equipped kitchen, subject to a hirer taking up the opportunity.

Activity 10 could be accommodated in the hall for groups of up to 30 children, subject to hirers taking up the opportunities.

The Marketing Mix and Actions

Product

For the past 14 years the SADCIC's main focus has been on establishing and developing the resources and usage of a community centre for Saxmundham and the surrounding villages of IP17. Income has been generated by hiring out a community hall, meeting rooms and a kitchen.

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The objective has been offer affordable value-for-money facilities and resources for general public use - with discounted hire prices for local community groups.

This brand new community centre / hub will comprise of a hall equipped with a wall-mounted flat TV screen (with HDMI cabling to connect to laptops), broadband for the building, the latest laser projection equipment for business use and film shows, a fully fitted out and equipped commercial kitchen, a conference room, and a self-contained adjoining Portakabin.

The Portakabin could be set up with laptops as a hot-desking facility & IT training facility.

These facilities will be offered out for hire and SADCIC's offering will expand, with partners, to include events to run in the new Fromus Centre eg lunch club, performing arts sessions, film shows and exhibitions etc.

The main areas of income could now include:

- ✚ Community space hire (including storage space)
- ✚ Pop-up cafes and bars.
- ✚ Hospitality and private events (e.g. birthday parties, weddings).
- ✚ Community events and fundraising
- ✚ Community cinema.
- ✚ Creative workspace / Hot-desking.
- ✚ Grants / Donations / Fundraising
- ✚ Technology and online gaming.
- ✚ Holiday clubs
- ✚ Boot sales / markets in the car park.

For long term effectiveness, SADCIC will need to monitor the changing needs and wants of stakeholders and adjust what is offered accordingly.

Most community hubs need a music licence which covers the using and playing music. A licence will be required for performances and / or selling alcohol.

Positioning

An overwhelming 90% of the relatively recent researched respondents wanted a new community centre for the rapidly growing Saxmundham population. Common reasons given were that Saxmundham has never had a modern community centre and existing local amenities, including the temporary Fromus Centre, were described as 'limited', 'outdated', 'grim', 'depressing' etc.

The new Fromus Centre sets out to remedy this lack of attractive modern amenity - and with the added bonus of increased onsite parking.

Enhancing this positioning is the fact that the SADCIC directors are all volunteers and come with a breadth and depth practice, experience and skills of the private sector, the public sector and the volunteer sector. And, in addition, they are all local and know Saxmundham. They are well connected, committed, respected and accessible within the community – and come with over 14 years success in meeting the needs and wants of the local community. The

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SADCIC management structure is flat, democratic and very flexible. The volunteer SADCIC management team remains accountable to the local community by regularly keeping them informed and explaining the decisions that SADCIC makes eg by means of its website.

SADCIC started with 8 volunteer directors but currently there are 5 directors:

- ✚ Colin Dennison
- ✚ Steve Palmer
- ✚ Phil Peeling (founding director)
- ✚ Jeremy Smith
- ✚ Don Tricker (founding director)

Place

The new Fromus Centre is central to Saxmundham and readily accessible by public transport (bus & train).

It sits within a Saxmundham cluster of buildings which function as a multi-agency, multi-use hub.

The new Fromus Centre will continue to be open 7 days a week.

Bookings can be made online or by phone, and multiple assistance is always close at hand (within 10 minutes).

People

Target groups for hire facilities and events include:-

- ✚ Pregnant mothers (and partners)
- ✚ Parents with toddlers
- ✚ Families with young children
- ✚ Teenagers
- ✚ Adults who need to get / stay physically fit
- ✚ Older people (living alone or as a couple) to socialise
- ✚ Carers for mutual support
- ✚ People with disability (physical and/or mental)
- ✚ Those disadvantaged on low incomes
- ✚ People with mental health issues
- ✚ People with low-skill levels who need training
- ✚ Those looking for adult education courses
- ✚ Those looking to book a hall for a celebration / party – with / without catering
- ✚ Businesses, and other bodies, seeking meeting rooms and conference / training facilities, with / without catering

Businesses will be able to hire the facilities, at competitive commercial rates - for training and meetings / conferences. This source of revenue will help subsidise the overall running costs,

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The overarching aim is to encourage and support a more coherent community by reducing social isolation, encouraging volunteering and support more of a self-help community.

Price

Pricing of the facilities, and events, will remain competitive but affordable – yet to be finalised.

SADCIC needs to set a pricing policy to demonstrate to customers that it's being fair to everyone. However, that does not mean that everyone pays the same. A room hire price list for different categories of user and different times (e.g. daytime, evening, weekends) and private hire (eg weddings, parties and social events) will need to be published.

Costs will be kept low, from the outset, by using local volunteers. The SADCIC directors are themselves all local volunteers.

The annual running costs need to be estimated and then the cost per square metre of *lettable* space will need to be calculated. This will provide the minimum annual revenue target just to break-even.

That figure will then need to be divided by the number of days that the centre is open in order to calculate the average earnings, every day, just to cover the building costs. Then some assumptions have to be made to balance average earnings per hour hire against the number of hours each day.

SADCIC will need to think 'greener' to save on annual building running costs.

In addition, grants, sponsorships and donations will help to cover costs incurred in supplying services or staging events.

Consideration should be given to offering a special offer to regular hirers, in transition to the new premises, of a free booking period until the end of August to help them re-start after a 12 month (pandemic) absence. Likewise, all new comers offered a free booking until the end of July, as a 'taster' offering.

Promotion

SADCIC needs to develop connections with all its stakeholders – the local community, current hirers, potential hirers, volunteers, local authorities, donors and funders. It needs to choose the appropriate message for the audience and then choose the appropriate communication channel to reach them. This could be by advertising, news releases to the local media (TV / radio / print), presentations, face-to-face meetings, exhibitions, flyers, direct mail, posters, noticeboards, website, e-newsletters, video meetings and a mix of social media, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter etc.

This will require budgeting in the Annual Business Plan and grant funding found for the one-off launch costs and promotional collateral to maintain awareness and understanding of the new facilities available.

New Fromus Launch Programme

This significant addition to local amenities needs to arrive with a ‘bang’ and a funded launch programme. There needs to be a *sustained step-change* to raise the potential income for this facility and cover the increased running costs. It cannot be business as usual.

Brand

This is an opportunity to consider whether SADCIC wish to retain the name ‘Fromus Centre’, as this is new start, with a new building at a new location. However, the name becomes more pertinent as the Fromus river runs right past the front door - and how much goodwill does the name come with, generated over 10 years at the old Fromus Centre building?

Suffolk County Council as owners of the building complex should help position the facilities by naming the new site as the ‘The Saxmundham Hub’, given the positive mix of public and social enterprise tenants on site. As a result, visitors may make several consecutive visits to different parts of the buildings, at one time. (Suffolk County Council named the old site as ‘The Saxmundham Resource Centre’.)

External / Internal Signage & ‘Kerb Appeal’ Enhancements

SCC directional signage will be required from the High Street and at the site entrance. The new Fromus Centre will require ‘kerb appeal’ ie do the premises come across as modern, attractive and welcoming? There may be a need for items such as flags, planters and greenery. Inside it will need to be warm, bright and welcoming.

As the new Fromus Centre is to the rear of the new Saxmundham Hub, there will be a need for strong external signage at the front of the main entrance and both back entrances to the Fromus Centre, with internal signage for usage and booking purposes – consideration also needs to be given to those with learning disabilities and sight impairment and wheel chair access.

Website

The old website was created, at no cost to SADCIC, by a student at the Alde Valley school, as a work experience project supported by mentoring from a SADCIC director, with an enhanced DBS clearance (Don Tricker). The cost of hosting the site, for the past 10 years, has been covered by Don Tricker, personally.

This simple site is now a little tired and is in need of a revamp to include more multimedia, a marketing database of stakeholders for use with online sales video, online space booking, e-newsletters, an online ticketing capability and payment system for booking rooms and attendance at events and programmes, an online survey capability and a means of self-managing content. Hosting can be transferred to a new server, under the direct control of SADCIC.

And possibly there is a need for more sophisticated contact management application rather than a simple database of contact details - to help targeting of online promotional messages.

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Importantly, the website is needed to attract customers not familiar with Saxmundham, including those from outside of the immediate area.

Third-Party Websites

This aspect would include mutual links with and placing content with, local authorities, local reference sites, interest groups etc.

Posters, Leaflets & Flyers

A mix of A3 and A4 posters - for distribution around local noticeboards and retail outlet windows - need to be created, with accompanying A4 (DL folded - for display units in buildings with tourist information leaflet dispensers and A5 flyers for general hand-outs. All these need to be designed to drive people to the website for more and continually updated information and provide other contact details for those without internet access, including a location map.

It may prove beneficial in the longer-term to acquire a graphic-design tool for a more professional and eye-catching appearance to print and online materials and possibly video-editing software.

Customer testimonials should be collected and used in marketing materials - over time - to boost credibility and help win new customers.

Social Media

A short 3 minute video should be created to be uploaded on to the website and YouTube, as an appetite-wetter as to what's on offer, culminating with all the contact details, including a live link to the website.

There is no need to have a SADCIC Facebook site but SADCIC can usefully make use local Facebook pages and local social networking channels, as a promotion tool – pointing to the SADCIC website.

However, a local SDCIC Twitter account would be useful for more immediate communication tool, to reach those registered as interested parties.

Other ever-changing fashionable online platforms – some more attractive to 'younger' users - should be addressed eg Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit etc.

Advertising

As SADCIC is never flush with large reserves of cash, advertising with local printer media can only be considered for special occasions ie launch of new community centre. eg an advertorial double-page centre-spread in Saxmundham News and a full-page in Community News - both making use of colour.

News Releases

News release will be required for pre / post the new building opening, new hirers, activities available and the official launch.

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Conference / Presentation / Open-day Exhibition

A Grand Opening week-end should be planned for July 16-18 – post-lockdown and vaccination programme. The building expected to become available in June (2021).

Presentation / Exhibition on Friday afternoon with speakers raise awareness and understanding of SADCIC (where it's coming from and heading to), what's on offer at the new Fromus Centre, call for volunteer directors to become more representative of the community, call for volunteers (friends of SADCIC) to support events, requests for new activities and clubs and to thank local authorities for their continuing support.

Saturday with regular hirers and exhibition – open day with free tea & coffee

Sunday brunch morning + live music - SMILE Café.

BBC Radio Suffolk should be invited to make a live outside broadcast from the new Fromus Centre – sometime over this weekend – as they did with the launch of the SMILE Café.

Public Events

Eg.

- ✚ Film shows
- ✚ Talks
- ✚ Quiz
- ✚ Arts & Crafts Show
- ✚ Live music weekend evenings /
- ✚ Talent show/ contest
- ✚ Jumble & book sale /
- ✚ Seasonal children's shows eg Easter Egg Hunt / Pantomime / Pumpkin Painting Puppets / Magic
- ✚ Heath & Wellbeing exhibition
- ✚ Bingo
- ✚ Amateur dramatics,

Partnerships & Joint Marketing

Eg.

- ✚ STC / ACCESS - co-ordinate activities between the three major town centre venues – to avoid clashing programmes and ensure a wider choice to the public.
- ✚ Rotary - for pop-up SMILE Café.
- ✚ WI / Church – lunch club?
- ✚ IP17GNS – wellbeing for vulnerable and disadvantaged adults / volunteer bureau
- ✚ Library – for IT training
- ✚ SMART – for music events
- ✚ The Art Project – for art exhibitions
- ✚ Schools – for activities driven by youngsters
- ✚ U3A– for talks
- ✚ Citizens Advice Bureau - General Presentations / Q&A

Launch & 2021-2022 Marketing Budgets

Quotes will need to be sought for all the marketing collateral – leading to an agreed consolidated budget for the launch of the new Fromus Centre and implementation of the programme.

Monitoring & Evaluation

To ensure that SADCIC is meeting the community needs and wants and measure its impact on the community that it exists to serve, it is vital that SADCIC (and its hirers and partners) regularly measures outputs and, more importantly the outcomes, arising from its outputs. These can be summarised as follows:

Outputs

Outputs will include the monitoring of quantity and quality of use of the project's facilities or services.

- ✚ Number & Type of Hirers
- ✚ Number & Type of Activities
- ✚ Number & Type of Users
- ✚ Rental Space Occupancy

Outcomes

However evaluation approaches are increasingly focused on measuring outcomes that reveal the extent and kinds of impact the project has on customers and users. Impact can be reported in the amount of change in behaviour, attitude, skills, knowledge or position of the project customers and users.

Indicators of change must be identified before implementing the project so that data can be collected at the outset and over time.

- ✚ Attitudes / Opinions
- ✚ Social Isolation
- ✚ Safer Community
- ✚ Health & wellbeing
- ✚ Educational Engagement & Employability
- ✚ Volunteering & Civic Participation
- ✚ Centre Efficiency & Sustainability

A report supported by images and short video clips of people using the community hub with case studies will be a great way to show the difference that it makes to the community.

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Marketing Action Plan (Pre-launch, Launch Weekend & Post-launch)

No.	Timing	Action	Lead	Notes
1	by March 31 st	Confirm name of new building - 'New Fromus Centre'?	All	
2	by April 2 nd .	Agree Marketing Plan	All	
3	by May 10th	Prepare and issue first two consecutive news releases	Don	All to agree
4	by April 9th	Reserve double-page centre spread advertorial for July issue of Saxmundham News and a full page in Community News for July	Don	
5	by April 23 rd	Estimate working Budget	Colin / Phil	All to support and agree
6	by May 14th	Write spec for new website and seek quotes (to be completed and live by end June)	Don	All to agree
7	start May 21st	Seeking grant funding for Market Plan 'work packages'	Jeremy	Don in support
8	by May 31st	Plan and organise Launch weekend (July 16, 17 and 18) – conference (and speakers), exhibition, catering, 'VIPs' show round, open to public, entertainment / displays	Steve	All to agree Plan
9	by June 26 th	Address 'kerb appeal' of 'New Fromus Centre' and arrange for SADCIC (inclusive) signage outside the building (including 2 entrances and Portakabin) and inside the building	Steve	
10	by July 5 th	Photograph and video the building – inside and out	Don	
11	by July 14 th	Prepare posters and leaflet- design and print	Steve	Don in support