

One Killay (International Day of Culture) Event: Reflections and Feedback

Killay Community Council Meeting - May 2025

One Killay was held on Saturday 17th May - immediately before World Culture Day on 21st May at St Hilary's Church Halls. The event was organised by a small planning group, in collaboration with St Hilary's Church who provided the venue (at a reduced fee).

KCC has limited capacity, however, it was hoped that by working in partnership and sharing skills, experience and resources the community council could deliver a vibrant, diverse and multi-faceted event. The group proposed offering a programme of experiences throughout the day for children and adults, which might include culturally diverse food, music and performances, games, storytelling, and more.

The group met early on with individuals to identify potential partners, funders and contributors – including representatives from Swansea Council, Sketty mosque, Swansea City of Sanctuary (SCoS) and St Hilary's church wardens. Members of the group also attended a SCoS organised 'Sanctuary Community Cohesion Event' workshop – this provided ideas and resources for organisers delivering events like One Killay to 'build a culture where all are welcomed'. SCoS identified that they had a small budget to support such events. Advice from the workshop suggested that activities at events should seek to engage the five senses.

The following are some short reflections on positives from the day, what we could do differently and any actions arising from the experience. Note that feedback received from participants is appended.

Budget

A budget of £750 was allocated by KCC for the event. Additionally, £750 funding was received from City Councillors, with £250 sponsorship from the local Coop stores from their community fund. Swansea City of Sanctuary also part subsidised the attendance of a dance group – so that the net cost to KCC was £60 rather than £120, and they paid travel expenses for the sizeable Latin American dance group that attended, many of whom were asylum seekers and refugees.

Total expenditure was less than anticipated at £934.50 as many groups did not charge for their time (when they usually would) nor claimed expenses. The main costs were entertainments (£380) and venue for the full day (£270) plus refreshments and sundries. See Appendix 2 for detail.

Decision: A decision will need to be made as to how to allocate funds received – clearly the Coop contribution must directly fund this event and cannot be otherwise allocated or 'vired'.

Food/Catering

This provoked considerable discussion as food is often central to cultural celebrations. However, due to the food hygiene complexities and risks of catering or allowing organisations to bring food to share, a decision was made to provide minimal, low-cost refreshments. A 'tuck

shop' offered hot drinks, soft drinks, shop bought cakes, biscuits and sweets. All performers were offered free refreshments – this felt important as many had not charged KCC for their attendance. In future vouchers could be handed out to those taking part for their refreshments. The Romanian community provided a stall with a generous array of pastries and decorated sourdough loaves – which literally went like hot cakes!

Note that as attendees were likely to wander about the event, hot drinks were provided in lidded cups for safety. A simple sign also warned about potential allergies in products served. This is something that KCC may wish to consider in the future at events.

St Hilary's require any organisations serving food to provide evidence of food hygiene certification. In preparing for this event the group did seek advice from the City Council on food safety - the legislation and guidance is complex but it is undoubtedly good practice for community organisations to ensure that volunteers are qualified in food hygiene if preparing or serving food at an event - as KCC sometimes do (e.g.: elders' tea parties).

Decision: There are currently no KCC councillors holding a suitable qualification – training is low cost and it is recommended that Level 2 training is provided to a number of councillors.

Venue

The whole community building at St Hilary's was hired comprising a large and small hall, with kitchen(s). The cultural programme was largely delivered from the main hall, with children's craft and other activities delivered from the small hall. The main hall has a small stage and an amplification system which was simple to use and worked well. The venue is spacious with a capacity in the main hall of up to 100 people at any one time. Church Wardens attended a planning meeting to offer advice on practicalities which was appreciated. Nabeel Masih also met with councillors prior to the event to demonstrate use of the PA system – which was also much appreciated.

Parking

There is limited parking at Saint Hilary's church hall. Killay surgery were therefore approached and had agreed to allow use of their parking for the event, and it was intended that organisations would drop off participants and equipment at the church and then re park at the surgery. However, on the day it was evident that construction work to the entrance to the car park was underway which precluded it's use. This meant that there was limited parking available throughout the day for attendees as all of the parking was utilised by performers and contributors.

Parking was cordoned off for dignitaries who attended and there was sufficient disabled parking available.

Programme

This was a major event requiring considerable organisation due to the length of the programme and the number of groups and individuals involved. The Planning Group do not consider that KCC has capacity to run an event of this scale annually – if that was desired.

The programme ran from 10.30 – 4.00pm and was lively and diverse, including speakers; Latin American, African, Indian dance demonstrations; a Salsa dance class; music from a Welsh Band – and spontaneously from the Romanian community; spoken word/poetry; children's crafts and Chinese costume try-on. One group had to cancel at very short notice but gaps were filled by other participants extending their slots with (rather joyful) public participation in dancing and folk singing.

In hindsight it would have been helpful to check how groups planned to play music well in advance of the event as there was some working through technicalities on the day.

Attendance

Attendance built through the morning and felt quite lively late morning into early afternoon but waned significantly mid-afternoon. The most disappointing facet of the day was how few local people attended. It was a gloriously sunny day and so the weather may have worked against families attending an indoor event. The event also clashed with Gay Pride in Swansea which is well supported.

Designed posters and a programme were printed and the former displayed in noticeboards and distributed to local shops and cafes with quite a few putting them up and generally people were very positive about the event. Posters were also dropped to local primary schools and shared with some class groups via social media. There were repeated posts with explanatory text and a 'sales pitch' to promote this fun community event on Facebook - across a number of local community groups covering and bordering Killay and Dunvant.

We need to consider timing of any new events which are an unknown for the local community and how we publicise. Other events that we run are well established and a 'known quantity'.

The event was managed with only four community councillors and Layfetta from St Hilary's on the day (with one KCC councillor and a city councillor coming for part of the day) and it was a complex, full day event with attendance levels unknown. Contributors also pitched in to help out. One member of the planning group was on leave abroad and one councillor resigned from KCC before the event.

Impact

'From the stirring rhythms of traditional dances, to heartfelt poems and delicious dishes, this was a beautiful reminder that our diversity is our power. Each person, each story, each culture added to the rich tapestry of who we are in Swansea. We are so much stronger when we learn from one another, stand beside one another, and celebrate each other.'

Those who attended reported enjoying the day enormously and clearly participants and attendees from a range of cultures felt valued and proud to take part in the day. The value of that cannot be underestimated. Feedback received was very positive (see Appendix 1 attached) describing the event as *a welcoming, joyful, and truly inspiring celebration*; *'an absolute blast'* and *'a fantastic example of what community cohesion can look like in action.'*

The event gave a positive impression of Killay as a place of welcome and of the Community Council as championing cultural exchange and inclusion.

The event was attended by the Lord Lieutenant - Mrs Louise Fleet, High Sheriff - Diana Stroia, and Swansea Council's Lord Mayor - Cllr Cheryl Philpott. They seemed to enjoy themselves, stayed a good while and their presence valued the participants who had given their time to contribute to the day. Their attendance was appreciated.

Clearly impact was limited by the low levels of attendance from the Killay community.

Resources - [Organising a voluntary event: a 'can do' guide - GOV.UK](#) - Useful Government checklist for all to review.

Appendix 1 - Feedback Received

Dr Nistor Becia, MBE

On behalf of the Romanian Community in Swansea

Thank you so much for your warm and thoughtful message, and for the opportunity to be part of the One Killay event last Saturday. On behalf of both myself and Madalina, as well as the wider Romanian community in Swansea, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to you and the Killay Community Council for organising such a welcoming, joyful, and truly inspiring celebration.

It was a wonderful occasion that brought together diverse communities in a spirit of friendship and cultural exchange. We felt deeply honoured to contribute, and we were particularly moved by how warmly our traditional dress, food, and music were received. Many of our community members expressed how proud they felt to share a part of their heritage with others in such a positive and inclusive setting.

The only feedback we would kindly offer is regarding promotion and visibility. While those who attended were delighted to take part, several members of our community only became aware of the event after we posted photographs on social media. Many said they would have loved to

attend, and we believe that with broader promotion, future events could engage an even wider audience.

That said, the impact of this event was deeply felt. Initiatives like One Killay are far more than community celebrations—they are preventative interventions that foster social cohesion, reduce isolation, and help build collective resilience. They forge meaningful links between neighbours, enable cultural understanding, and help communities to heal and thrive in the face of the wider challenges our society continues to face. It is through such efforts—not solely through enforcement or formal services—that we can build safer, more resilient, and inclusive communities.

I have copied Councillor Louise Gibbard in this message to ensure continued engagement. As you may know, I have recently stepped down from my role as Honorary Consul of Romania in Wales due to increased professional responsibilities within the NHS. Nevertheless, I remain committed to supporting the Romanian community locally and will continue to engage wholeheartedly wherever I can be of help.

Thank you again for your leadership in making this event possible. We look forward to future opportunities to come together in celebration, collaboration, and shared purpose.
Swansea City of Sanctuary – committee member

This is just a personal note from me. I was so pleased to read these emails and to see some photos of the event run by Killay Community Council to celebrate World Culture Day. I have been delighted to read the positive and uplifting comments and feedback by yourself and our committee members. Congratulations to you, Killay Community Council and St Hillary's Church, after all the careful planning, for all you have achieved.

Jose Cifuentes – speaker

*Thank you for inviting me.
Positive things : venue.
Could be improved: ways how to improve attendance.*

IberoLatinXpression

Thank you for making IberoLatinXpression part of your event. The dancers and all ILA-WALES members who attended, enjoyed it very much.

Message from a local resident, posted on Facebook:

“Today’s event to celebrate World Cultural Day in St Hilary’s Church Hall was an absolute blast! It was amazing to watch talented dancers from all over the world showcasing their unique styles. I thoroughly enjoyed every single performance and even got to jump in and try some salsa dancing myself.”

High Sheriff of West Glamorgan

Today, the Hall at St. Hilary's Church, Killay came alive with music, poetry, food, and friendship as we celebrated World Day for Cultural Diversity. Cllr Mary Jones brought our community together for a wonderful event full of colour, connection, and joy—proudly supported by Killay Community Council and the Dunvant and Killay City Councillors.

From the stirring rhythms of traditional dances, to heartfelt poems and delicious dishes, this was a beautiful reminder that our diversity is our power. Each person, each story, each culture added to the rich tapestry of who we are in Swansea. We are so much stronger when we learn from one another, stand beside one another, and celebrate each other.

I was especially touched to see my own Romanian heritage represented by the dedicated Romanian ladies who created an amazing display of bakes and sourdough breads. Their warmth and effort were truly heartwarming.

A special mention to our new Lord Mayor Cllr Cheryl Philpott, whose presence and dedication to our communities made this event even more meaningful. Her kindness and commitment to celebrating unity in diversity was felt by all.

Thank you to everyone who took part. Your kindness, your culture, your presence - made today unforgettable.

Swansea City of Sanctuary – blog extract

We were delighted to be invited by Killay Community Council to the One Killay community event, held on Saturday 17th May at St Hilary's Church Hall. The fun day of community unity celebrated cultures from around the world It was a fantastic example of what community cohesion can look like in action.

The event coincided with the lead-up to the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (May 21st), which highlights the vital role of cultural diversity in building sustainable development, peace, and social cohesion. It promotes intercultural dialogue, human rights, and greater understanding between communities as key to global stability and progress.

Thank you to the Killay Community Council for inviting us, and to the Coop and City Councillors for Dunvant and Killay for supporting this event.

This event is a perfect example of the kind of community cohesion we're encouraging in the city.

Indian Society

Thank you for inviting us to be part of a brilliant day, the hall looked very busy and more importantly those who were there thoroughly enjoyed the day – well done for organising the event.

Appendix 2 – Expenditure

<u>Final Expenditure</u>	
CIWA (crafts/costumes)	£200
Gwyr Y Stac	£100
Décor – flags etc	£76.06
Venue	£270
Food budget	£135.44
Latin American dance	£60
Polish community – travel expenses	£50
Photocopying	£23
Ethnic Youth Support Team materials expenses	£20
Total	<u>£934.50</u>
<u>Income Available</u>	
Co-op donation	£250
Cllrs MJ & JJ (£1,000 less £250 for VE Day)	£750
Income from refreshment sales	£27
PLUS Budget available from KCC	£750
<i>Allocations of funding to be determined and excess re-allocated</i>	

Appendix 3 – Programme

Main Hall

- 10:30 Jose Cifuentes – speaker: the story of a local Chilean refugee (suitable for children/young people 10+).
- 11:00 Norma Glass – speaker from the Jewish Community
- 11:30 C3 Centre Nganga Performing Arts: African dance
Chinyere Chukwudi-Okeh - Poem
- 12:00 Layfetta Masih – story of the Windrush generation
- 12:30 Jhilmil ('shimmer'): Indian dance performed by Akhila, Chaitra and Vaishali
Mel Storey - Poem
- 13:00 Jerry Lasala: Filipino tagalog song and guitar (accompanied by Arlene Arcenas Barona – president, Filipino Community in Wales) *cancelled*
- 13:30 Martha (Africa) and Aruni (Sri Lanka) – Poetry reading
- 14:00 Salsa dancing class (Gustavo and Amanda – El Salvador)
- 14:30 Latin American dancing demonstration – Iberians and Latin Americans in Wales
- 15:00 Polish culture – speaker Artur Kures, History Teacher, Swansea Polish School
- 15:30 Gwŷr y Stac: a local Welsh Folk/Blues band
- 16:00 Close

Children's activities will be in the small hall from 10.30 – 2.30 pm

- 10.30 Henna hand painting or cultural badge making and hair braiding **all day until 2.00pm**
(Ethnic Youth Support Team)
- 12.00 Chinese costume trying on (Chinese in Wales Association) - **until 1.00pm**
- 1.30 Dragon puppet making session 1 (15 children)
- 2.00 Dragon puppet making session 2 (15 children)

Information Stalls - the following organisations are also attending the event:

Swansea City of Sanctuary
Swansea Polish Community/School
Romania in Wales
FAN (Friends And Neighbours)

Guests: We are honoured that we will be joined for part of the day by the Lord Lieutenant - Mrs Louise Fleet, High Sheriff - Diana Stroia, and Swansea Council's Lord Mayor - Cllr Cheryl Philpott.

Killay Community Council are grateful to all of the performers and organisations attending and supporting the event, and to our **Dunvant and Killay city councillors**, the **Killay Co-op** and **Swansea City of Sanctuary** for their financial support.