

DALTON VILLAGE AND COMMUNITY HALL

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

The time has come to bring the project to a close and produce a final report under the terms of contract of the Rural Dumfries and Galloway Leader programme.

The Hall had only four very old wall mounted bar heaters and two LPG heaters which failed to heat the hall in cold periods and were costly to run and the hall had no roof insulation, it was cold and damp during the winter months.

The general fabric of the building was degrading and the hall was facing closure as locals and groups were unwilling to use this poor quality facility.

The committee considered that closure was not an option as the hall is an important facility for the Rural Community of Dalton. The Chairman and Vice Chair who both had an interest in renewable and sustainable energy, embarked on a strategy to save the Hall. Information gathering started in 2006 but the active pursuit of funding started in 2008. This proved to be a difficult process as no one funder was prepared to fund the whole package so partners had to be found. Agreement was reached after a long struggle but unfortunately one of the funders, Scottish Power Green Energy Fund and EON source fund dropped out at the last minute. This removed substantial funding and halted the project until a new funder was found. We were very lucky to have met Carola Menzel of the Energy Agency who became very interested in our project and assisted us in pulling the funding together.

Agreement was reached with:

1. The Sustainable Lighthouse.
2. Energy Agency who offered funds from the SCHR initiative, this project finance management changed to Community Energy Scotland.
3. Rural Dumfries and Galloway Leader Programme.

Carola made herself available to clear obstacles as they occurred and had it not been for her valuable support the project would have failed to get off the ground.

The Leader programme was the last funder to be put in place guaranteeing 25.83% of the project cost.

I was appointed project manager, my time allocated to the project was given as the Hall contribution to the project. I confirm that I did not receive any payment for the work in managing the project. This time allocation proved to be very much understated as the project progressed.

The project started in May 2009, progress was slow as additional work, (joinery and electrical) had to be carried out and the weather halted external work. We were fortunate that the local landowner, Anthony Steel, gave us permission to install the GSHP collectors in his field at no cost. The area chosen was perfect for our needs, it was wet and sandy and easy to install. A location map was provided by the contractor for Mr. Steel.

The choice of combining Solar with the GSHP was a wise choice and has been noted by other organisations who are considering similar projects. The solar panels provide free hot water for use in the kitchen

When drawing up the project plan the Energy Agency insisted on roof insulation, what a success this has been, it has made a dramatic effect on heat conservation.

We were lucky to find an excellent craftsman in Rob Wilson (Joiner), a number of people were not keen to see the roof space altered but the work was carried out to a high specification and people hardly notice the change. The doubt in the minds of individuals from other organisations is cleared when they visit our facility. Rob has had numerous requests to quote for other halls as word of his quality workmanship and keen pricing spreads.

We publicised our work through the Annandale and Eskdale Federation of Village Halls and the Dalton and Carrutherstown newsletters, but word of mouth advertising has been a great success. It is unfortunate that our energy awareness educational event and workshop will take place out with the project timescale, the associated costs have not been charged to the finance budget.

The extras incurred during the installation were approved and paid for by Community Energy Scotland, Leader was unable to amend the approved budget.

We feel that we have met all the criteria for this project. The hall is now used regularly and is now known as a quality facility which is warm and inviting

Since the installation we have:

1. Yoga and Tai Chi classes regularly.
2. Local Band Practice
3. Rural Touring Drama and Musical events
4. Ceileidhs which are very popular and draws good spread of the Community together, both young and old
5. We have the local Cricket Club who use the Hall for changing and refreshments.
6. Special events: Annual Burns supper, Harvest Supper, Carol singing.
7. M.P. and Councillor surgeries
8. A & E. Leisure dance classes, these were a great success, our hall had the highest turnout from all the halls who staged these classes. We have had a request to run Ballroom Dancing classes but we are struggling to find a teacher.
9. Meet and greet events to bring the Community together and introduce new people to our friendly community
10. A & E Young Farmers Club for competition evenings and drama practice.
11. Private Children's parties

12. Craft Workshops for all age group

We feel that we have exceeded all the targets set for group who are expected to benefit from the project, we will continue to expand and develop this.

The energy awareness event will be staged in August but we are recognised as a reference site by Community Energy, Scotland. We give advice and offer group visits to assist other organisations develop similar projects

The increase in demand for the Hall has forced us to consider further upgrading. We have excavated the grounds around the hall and laid tarmac to provide good parking and disability access. We intend building a new toilet block to include DDA requirements and storage for sport and recreational equipment. Plans are being drawn up at present.

We would like to thank all our funders and numerous people who helped us with this project which has been a major success for our community and is recognised as a good example of the Community in action

We are in discussion with CES and the local landowner for a Community Energy project which we hope to progress.

Rory MacKail

Chairman, DV&CH

Project Manager (Refurbishment Project)

Photographs attached :

1. The ground source heat pump being checked prior to installation
2. Solar control box, storage and expansion tanks
3. System control board
4. Excavation of field to install the collectors
5. Burying the collectors
6. Field collector manifold priming
7. Dalton Hall set out for the Burns Celebration Dinner