

Tynron Parish Hall Renovation Project

Our plan was for comprehensive renovation, and this is what we have achieved, on time and within budget.

The idea was developed over several years as the hall deteriorated. Specifically, we held an Ideas for the Hall Day in June 2010, attended by 27% of the local community, at which we invited ideas and generally had a brainstorming session. We rejected the idea of rebuild, and instead developed the following aims:

1. To **increase the appeal** of the hall and the possibility of **daytime activities** through better light and ambience, provided by new windows and heating: this has been done, and enthusiastic comments abound. A daytime Tai Chi taster session was well-attended: a class is now running. We have already had one private party and have bookings for two more. We are discussing the timing of a weekend photography workshop. The Community Council are participating in a bid for “Day of the Region” funding in partnership with Penpont and Keir – the Hall will be one of the locations used for events, and the renovation project will be showcased.
2. To provide **easy access facilities**: the needs of people with disabilities have been kept scrupulously in mind throughout the project. So far, we have had no wheelchair users, but there are not many in the neighbourhood. When the WRI has its next Open Evening, they will be able to welcome the Secretary of another local WRI who uses a wheelchair and has been unable to attend in the past.
3. To allow **greater flexibility** for events, by building an **extension** providing a **new room** for small meetings: the new room has provided a huge improvement in ease of catering. At two recent events (the Christmas Family Party and the Hogmanay Ceilidh) it was possible to have the hall clear for dancing and games while tables with refreshments and chairs for comfort could be in the new room. Catering, with access from the new room direct to the kitchen, is therefore much easier. Tynron WRI held its 90th Anniversary Party in the Hall and the caterers were able to use the room to layout food in preparation for service. The glazed doors of the new room (both interior and exterior) are particularly accommodating for this type of function and comments are that they look good and make the hall feel bigger.
4. We aimed to **enable better catering on a larger scale** by improving the kitchen: this has been done. The new cooker is a success and the kitchen conforms to current hygiene requirements. Thanks to expert shopping for paint, cupboards, worktops, splashbacks, taps, etc. and a lot of hard work (three times what was projected) by local residents, complete renovation for the kitchen has been achieved within budget. The standard of catering (always locally provided) was never in need of improvement, but our cooks and bottlers are delighted by the ease with which they can now operate, thus allowing for larger-scale events.
5. We aimed to **reduce the costs of heating**: the air-to-air heat pump units are working well, and electricity bills during the project were not as bad as feared. We have yet to obtain an accurate gauge of heating costs, but indications are that they will have reduced. The extra insulation will have helped this.
6. We also aimed to **reduce the need for maintenance**: it is too early to tell whether we have achieved this.
7. A further aim was to make the hall **self-sustaining**: it is too early to tell whether we have achieved this.
8. In an approved project change, we did not install two extra roof Veluxes. Despite this change, there is noticeable extra light in the hall through the glazed doors of the new room.
9. We extended insulation in the roof and exterior walls more than we had originally planned. For this we obtained extra funding, from Dumfries & Galloway’s Village Hall Improvement Scheme (VHIS) and LEADER.
10. We allowed for renewing wiring, but the existing wiring was found to be safe.
11. We replaced old lead pipework, to reduce health risks: for funding this we are grateful to the Tynron Community Council, as the cost exceeded what we had budgeted for.

The project was led by the Tynron Parish Hall Committee, with one person taking the post of Project Manager (the same person who wrote the applications for public funding).

The main work of the project took place between 4 September and 30 November 2012. Funding had been secured by the end of October 2011, and the first step was to install two air-to-air heat pump units to heat the main hall. The heaters did not work optimally because of the lack of insulation: at this point the project was modified to increase insulation. Dumfries & Galloway's LEADER programme was able to increase their proportion of funding to the project from 41.65% to 49.03% of the projected costs.

The main building work could not be started at that date because of winter weather, and was postponed until April 2012. At that point the builder who had won the contract had problems that meant he had to withdraw from the job, which went out to tender again. By the end of July we had engaged another builder, who was able to start work in September and completed at the end of November 2012.

Notice of the project was given via Community Council meetings, local groups, the community newsletter, the Moniaive website and the community email list. The local community was invited (by newsletter and community email list) to be involved in the project: especially, to contribute their time and effort in the refurbishment of the kitchen and redecoration of the hall. Notice of temporary obstructions was given via the local community email list, and by notices on the noticeboard and at local events. No complaints have been received.

LEADER funding was crucial to the project, **providing £32,138**. Our other most significant donor was VHIS, who contributed **£16,711**. We were fortunate also to be funded by the Robertson Trust (£4,000) and by the Hugh Fraser Foundation (£5,000). In addition, one local anonymous donor gave £1,100 towards the cost of a new range cooker; **and another provided £5,900, which has been invaluable as bridging funding between expenditure and reimbursement from funders**. The rest of the money came from vigorous and continuous fund-raising efforts by the local community. **The final cost of the project was £69,480, as opposed to the aim of £65,545. The excess was the result of changes needed to the Building Warrant and Planning Permission, extra insulation (partly funded by VHIS), and additional finishing touches.**

The builders kept within their budget. We commissioned extra work from them (replacement of a lead water pipe, repair to the septic tank, insulation on one wall of the hall, and exterior rendering) for which extra funding was secured from the VHIS and the Tynron Community Council.

The project was a learning experience for the Hall Project Task Group and for the builders, who had had no previous experience of working with a committee. Their firm is a "Design & Build" group who are at home when working with their own plans: they did not adhere to the plans or building specification fully, and this resulted in a need for an amendment to the building warrant, as well as some compromise to the useable space within the hall.

We encountered some of the foreseen risks:

- Our original contractor was unable to undertake the work. Our strategy to employ another builder was successful, but the change led to a six-month delay in starting the project.
- Unfortunately, one result of the delay was that the Bowling Group has not reconvened, as many of the bowlers have joined another group in the meantime. A bowling match is to be held in the hall shortly, and it is hoped that the venue will be so attractive that the group can be revived.
- Poor weather delayed building progress, but in the end the project was completed one month after the original end date (the end date was officially amended).
- There was some increase in the size of the job (extra insulation, extra refurbishment of the kitchen, and re-varnishing the hall floor), but not as a result of unforeseen conditions or occurrences. All action with regard to these was agreed by the Hall Committee. Much of the affordability of the extra work was due to volunteer zeal. We said we would contribute 247 hours of time volunteered: in the end more than 800 hours was recorded.

Project achievements: one participating community (Tynron Parish) was involved, and one community-led project (the Tynron Parish Hall Renovation Project), as planned. Goals concerning social cohesion, improved facilities, promotions, marketing and environmental sustainability are addressed below:

- **Innovation:** in its air-to-air heating system, and in various aspects that are new for the community; its easy-access public facilities; its extension with the new room; and its increased possibility for daytime use, educational and recreational classes etc. Simultaneously we have retained the unique and appealing character of the original hall.
- **Economic Growth:** it is too early to be able to tell whether the hall will achieve this.
- **Social Cohesion:** it cannot be said that there was no friction amongst those running the project, but none of it prevented progress. Animosity is probably now back to pre-project levels, and is far outweighed by the gains. It has been apparent, particularly in the volunteering sessions, how much the project has brought local people together. The Community Council and the Hall Committee have worked more closely on this and other matters than previously, which has resulted in the community being slightly more inclusive than it was, and going forward the two committees are likely to benefit from this project. The community have generally welcomed a change in the village in the shape of the Hall project. Ideas for projects that benefit the community receive a better welcome: in the past it was not always case. Those who take part in nothing else in the community came forward and contributed their help. People who have only a second home in the parish took a substantial part. Residents in the next glen, part of the parish but not core members of the community, were key workers in the redecoration. Even people who contributed no help at all are proud of the 'new hall'. Additional activities in the Hall such as the Tai Chi class are already attracting members of the Community who have not previously used the Hall facilities, and it is planned that we will follow up other suggestions for community usage made during the 'Ideas for the Hall' public consultation day.
- **Protection of the Environment:** the air-to-air heaters and the insulation (as comprehensive as current good practice allows) reflect our contribution to this.

Reports are coming in as to who benefitted from the project. Numbers, recorded from the Visitors' Book and from participants at local events, are as follows:

Group	Please indicate (x)	How many projected	How many recorded	% of target
Male age under 25	x	9	9	100%
Female age under 25	x	10	10	130%
Male age 25 and over	x	32	37	116%
Female age 25 and over	x	28	42	150%
Micro businesses			0	
Social enterprises	?		0	
Ethnic minorities			0	
Under employed	x		1	
Unemployed	x		0	
People on low income	x		0	
People with disabilities	x	4	3	75%
Migrant workers			0	
Over age 60	x	34	52	153%
Farming Community	x	25	25	100%

Concerning the Nithsdale Local Plan, so far our project appears to have contributed, in itself, towards healthy and happy lives through the volunteering of time for kitchen refurbishment and redecoration. In the same way it is deemed to have contributed towards making local residents feel safe and respected within the community. It is too early to say whether it has encouraged an innovative and prosperous economy or whether local residents are better equipped for a changing world or have improved life

chances, but all seem to enjoy the 'new hall.' Favourable comments are recorded from people in 10 neighbouring communities, showing that the benefit is spread beyond the local community.

All contracts of work (including recruitment) have followed standard compliant processes. The builder was selected on the basis of three quotations (in line with accepted practice). Building Standards regulations have been strictly adhered to, with the required inspections and a building completion certificate in place. Additionally, the building has been subjected to scrutiny by the Clerk of Works for the Village Hall Improvement Scheme. The Fire Service has been regularly consulted and has expressed itself happy about provisions for smoke alarms, heat detectors and emergency exits.

It is not anticipated that further funding will be needed for the hall after LEADER funding has ceased. It also seems likely that we shall achieve the aim of making the hall self-sustaining, through increased income from increased use; lower running costs because of cheaper heating; and lower maintenance costs, because of the reduction of damp (by providing cheap background heat when the hall is not being used) and the maintenance problems this causes.

In terms of publicity, we had prominent site signage (using LEADER's three logos) during works; and LEADER has been acknowledged in all press and media releases, in all project documentation, and on the website. A piece has been published in the local newspaper (attached). The hall will be showcased if Tynron participates in Day of the Region later this year. An account of the project will appear in the local newsletter to be published in April.

A high proportion of local residents were involved in the renovation project with 23% of residents volunteering to work on the redecoration and kitchen refurbishments - accumulating over 800 hours of labour. Three of the volunteers were professional tradesmen and were able to pass on some of their expertise to other people. Many other residents contributed their skills and knowledge during the planning and fund raising phase of the project or assisted by providing storage for Hall furniture during the renovations and lending equipment for the use of volunteers. A number of participants remarked on how being involved with the project had made them feel more integrated with the Community.



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