

St. GABRIEL'S HALL REFURBISHMENT

APPLICANT

St. Gabriel's Hall Management Committee

TOTAL PROJECT COST

£273,574.00

£89,684

£183,890

Tyne Esk LEADER

Match Funding

PROJECT AIMS

- Redevelop St Gabriel's Parish Community Hall into a modern fully accessible community hall, involving the community in its design.
- Increase use of the hall, particularly among local organisations, to make it more financially sustainable and bring the Prestonpans community together.
- Improve the outside aesthetic to make it more welcoming.
- Install solar panels and a new heating system to make it more environmentally friendly and reduce ongoing costs.
- Install a catering kitchen and audio equipment to make it a more attractive venue for larger events.

PROJECT DETAIL

Before LEADER St Gabriel's Hall, built in 1932, was in a state of disrepair. It had many issues, but in particular steep imposing steps at the main entrance made it difficult to access; its small, dated kitchen was not fit for catering of any scale; the toilet facilities badly needed upgraded; it lacked contemporary facilities and was costly to run. With the help of a LEADER grant, the hall has undergone a total renovation with a myriad of improvements. Access to the entrance has improved and can now accommodate wheelchairs, prams and buggies, and disabled access to the toilets has improved along with their general condition. The kitchen is now a larger catering kitchen, and a state of the art multimedia system has been installed. Solar photovoltaic panels and a new heating system have also been fitted to keep running costs down.



Photos ©St. Gabriel's Parish

RESULTS

The hall was renovated with the whole community in mind. The new and improved facilities enable St Gabriel's to accommodate a wider range of events than was previously on offer anywhere in Prestonpans. The multimedia installation has been a particular benefit as it allows the hall to be used for business meetings, conferences, weddings and more innovative events such as the community cinema. Through providing a low cost meeting place for businesses and social enterprises, St. Gabriel's Hall in its own way is contributing to the local economy.

LESSONS LEARNED

"What I've most certainly picked up in this experience is: allow far more time than you would dare as it's amazing what eats into the timescale for the job: holidays, sickness snags, weather; and smaller firms I now understand... do not stop all their other jobs for yours. They will have other contracts to fulfil and you could find yourself at the back of the queue.

Another major issue which is connected to the time scale issue is: trying to get all the different trades to dovetail their work either alongside or after one another. It is a job demanding a lot of energy and time; but at completion when you look back, all worth it."