

Bassenthwaite Parish Room Rebuild Project 2015 - 2017

From ...



To ...



Established in 1908 by Mr Hartley of Armathwaite Hall, Bassenthwaite Parish Room was over 100 years old. Long-standing residents had many nostalgic and happy memories of oversubscribed dances and other events until the mid-eighties but times had changed. The hall was still well-used for diverse social and recreational activities but despite some alterations over the years - e.g. adding a kitchen and basic sanitation! - it had started to show its age. Toilets and showers, in spite of assiduous cleaning and painting, had become woefully inadequate. There were new building standards and regulations to meet and the community also had different requirements e.g. for disabled access and facilities.

The Steering Group Committee

A Steering Group was established, comprising: Gillian Forsyth, Keith and Linda McMillan, Sylvia Burn, Helen Reb, Ken and Heather Armstrong, Guy Lee, Pam Scott and Mary Brewis.

The Steering Group initially investigated options for simply refurbishing the Parish Room. After taking advice, it became apparent that owing to the very restricted ground plan and drainage layout, demolition and rebuild would be a better option.

The Big Lottery Fund Bidding Process

To help create a new modern facility that would meet the requirements of the community now and well into the future a bid was put forwards to the Big Lottery Fund. The purpose of the Big Lottery Fund was to support the aspirations of people who wanted to make life better for communities. This was in line with the aims of Bassenthwaite Parish Room, which is a registered charity. As part of the Lottery bid, Bassenthwaite Parish Room committed to 'Build A Better Future' for the whole

community by organising activities and events at the new Parish Room to meet the social, recreational and personal welfare needs of residents.

The community were fully consulted throughout the process with a series of Open Meetings to collect comments on the proposed plans. Architects EcoArc from Kendal used their experience with other similar village projects to help shape plans that would satisfy the community's needs in an environmentally-friendly design.

Stage 2 Lottery Grant Application Approved

October 2015

Our stage 2 lottery grant application was approved and we were invited to make a stage 3 application. Stage 3 is the final application stage during which we develop our plans more fully, not only for the building itself but also the enhanced services which we intend to offer in a new improved hall.

Preparing the Stage 3 presentation involved a significant financial cost, for our architects for drawing up detailed plans and submitting for planning permission and with our quantity surveyors to prepare detailed costings. In addition, several surveys needed to be carried out concerning asbestos content, bat presence, land drainage and the condition of the septic tank. The Lottery provided a "Development Grant" of £38,754 in order that we could prepare stage 3. In addition to their grant there was an expectation that the village would secure monies from elsewhere, through donations and fundraising events.

A public meeting was arranged for 22nd October 2015 to show and discuss the proposed design with villagers and engage their commitment, before submission of final plans to the LDNPA planners, at the end of October 2015.

Submission of the building plans to the Lake District National Park Authority

November 2015

On 30th October 2015 plans for the new Parish Room were submitted to the Lake District National Park Authority by EcoArc, our architects. Obtaining planning permission was a key stage in allowing us to apply to the Big Lottery Fund for a stage 3 grant which, if successful, would enable us to appoint a main contractor and schedule the rebuild.

Stage 3 Lottery Application

February-July 2016

The Stage 3 application for the BIG Lottery Grant was submitted in February 2016. It received regional approval in April with the decision of the National BIG Lottery Committee anticipated by the end of July 2016

Lottery Success! £600,000 awarded for Parish Room rebuild

July 2016

Over £600,000 was awarded by the Big Lottery Fund to replace the old building with a modern, welcoming, energy-efficient and accessible new Parish Room. The intention was to achieve a building similar in external appearance to the old one but which would be superbly energy-efficient and fully compliant with modern and disability requirements. This would be achieved through the adoption of a 'Passive House' design, using an ultra-insulated timber frame for the construction and with heating provided from an air-source heat pump. This would have the twin benefit of maintaining a constant and comfortable temperature inside the building while reducing heating costs to a minimum. By re-using the roof slates and stone facing from the existing building we planned to reduce environmental impact and offer a welcome link to the original building.



Demolition Derby - The Rebuild Begins

Update: 30 Jan 2017

It's finally happened! The building firm Postlethwaite Construction Ltd from Longtown took possession of the Parish Room on Monday 23rd January 2017 with a 28 week plan.



Postlethwaite Construction already had great experience in this type of work having built both the new Threlkeld and Bothel village halls. Our Architect Lucy Nelson from the firm Ecoarc and our Quantity Surveyor Brian Mills from Bushell Raven had both worked with Postlethwaite in the past.

Preparing the Parish Room for the builders proved to be a real community event when on Sunday 8th January about 25 parishioners turned up and within a very short time packed up all the kitchen equipment, chairs and tables. These went into dry barns to be stored for the duration. This was followed by a bring-and-share lunch, much laughter and reminiscing happy times spent in the hall.



During the following week all the reclaimable items were gradually removed, including all the copper piping and the flooring which was made from Australian Oak. These items were sold to help offset the cost of the work.

Bassenthwaite Room Rebuild - near completion!

Update: 1 July 2017

We are pleased to report that rebuild works are currently on target and the estimated completion date is August 15th 2017.

A time capsule for 2017 has been buried under the entrance of the new Parish Room. In consultation with Bassenthwaite Primary School, the contents of the time capsule are:

The grand opening event!

Saturday 14th October 2017

On Saturday 14th October 2017, Bassenthwaite Parish Room celebrated the completion of the rebuild project with a Grand Opening Event. This project was supported by numerous national and local donors, including, but not limited to: the Big Lottery Fund; Cumbria Community Foundation; Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust; The Hadfield Trust; Cumbria County Council and the Garfield Weston Foundation. The Parish Room Steering Group, Trustees and the wider community are all grateful to those who donated funds to the rebuild project, and to those who committed time and effort to make the Grand Opening Event possible.

Beginning at 2pm, crowds from within the parish, and further afield, gathered together in the new community facility to celebrate the hard work and perseverance of the Steering Group over the last four years. Even with inclement weather, we were delighted to record over 150 people attending throughout the event! Displays were created by current and upcoming clubs and classes, informing visitors of their happenings; we hope those who attended found these interesting and enjoy pursuing their new activities here at the Parish Room!

Visitors were able to saunter through our fantastic new timber-framed building; even those who were unable to negotiate stairs were able to enjoy our first floor facilities using our new accessible lift. Within the Plant Room, our trustees explained our fantastic Passivhaus standard to visitors; this energy-efficient system vastly reduces our ecological footprint, and is integrated into the architectural design of our building, with meticulous attention to detail. The children in attendance had an opportunity to complete a Parish Room quiz sheet - taking them into all areas of the building! We would like to thank Cockermouth Ukuleles for their brilliant musical entertainment during the afternoon, the perfect accompaniment for relaxing with refreshments, cakes and tray bakes, all kindly donated from within the parish. Many in attendance were grateful to learn we have a hearing loop as part of our audio-visual system, allowing for an inclusive energetic ambience, enjoyable for all.

Excited crowds returned from 7pm, eager to participate in our evening ceilidh; we thank Travelling Light Ceilidh Band for providing a fantastic night of music and dancing finishing our Grand Opening Event in style! Money was raised during the evening for Travelling Light's supported charity, the Nepal Leprosy Trust. Gordie and Lucy Oliver cheerfully served real ale, cider, spirits, wines and soft drinks from the *Bassenthwaite Baaaah*, which kept the dancers revived throughout the evening.

The Rebuild gallery

There is a book of photographs taken throughout the Rebuild Project in the Parish Room.



Thanks to those involved in the construction

Listed here are the companies and activities to date which show the thoroughness with which this Parish Room Project has been addressed:-

Eco Arc - Architect/Lead Professional	West Coast Surveys Ltd - Asbestos Survey
Bushell Raven Ltd - Quantity Surveyor	Cass and Telford Roofing Services - Slate Roof Survey
PWC, Building Control Services Ltd - Building Control	Unblock Cumbria Ltd - Septic Tank/Drainage Survey
Howarth Associates - Survey Works	Lakeland Stone Craft Builders Ltd - Stone Facing Survey
M&E Services Consultancy - M&E Engineer	Whitbeck Electrical Contractors - Electrical Survey
Consulting Civil & Structural Engineers - Structural Engineer	Oglethorpe & Broatch - Solicitors
Soil Environment Services Ltd - Ground Condition	Bat Survey (to be repeated prior to rebuild)

Thanks to our donors

We thank all of the national and local donors who contributed to the rebuild project.



Thanks also go to the organisations and individuals who anonymously donated to the rebuild project.