

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



PROJECT EVALUATION



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



FROM THIS....

TO THIS....



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

Contents

Executive Summary	3
What We Wanted To Happen	5
What Actually Happened	9
Community Engagement, Outcomes and Outputs	9
Shelter Restoration	12
Story Boards	18
Project Management and Staffing	19
North Wales Engineering Solutions (NWES) and Pro-Build	19
Timetable	20
Approach to Ongoing Evaluation	21
Interviews	22
Review	24
What Worked Well and Why	24
RICS Awards Wales 2018	26
What Didn't Work Well and Why	27
Summary of Lessons Learnt	29
Acknowledgements	30

Executive Summary

This heritage restoration project was initiated to repair, restore and return to public use, a severely damaged Victorian beach shelter on Deganwy promenade. After securing grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and other sources, the engineering effort to repair and restore the shelter was contracted out to local steel fabricators and builders whilst the Beach Shelter Restoration Project Team engaged with local schools, community groups and other organisations.

We engaged with Ysgol Deganwy, one of our local junior schools. A presentation about the history of Deganwy and its heritage was given to older pupils at the school and they were asked to create designs for a new shelter as part of a competition.

We engaged with the History of Deganwy Group (HDG) and they provided us with a wealth of historical legacy data, using volunteers to research local archives. This data would be used on their website and on three Story Boards.

We engaged with the Conway Yacht Club with a view to its members providing a sail-by of 'Conwy One Design' (COD) yachts on the day of the planned Opening Ceremony.

We engaged with ladies from the Conwy Knitting Group and they agreed to knit multi-coloured bunting to 'yarn-bomb' the shelter on the day of the Opening Ceremony.

We engaged with the Editor of the HistoryPoints.org website, which was established in Conwy in January 2012 to provide a platform for societies, professional associations, public bodies, educational institutions and similar groups to inform the general public about local history.

We engaged with a local newspaper (The North Wales Pioneer) to promote the project through articles in the local news and we also engaged with Llandudno Museum, the "Alice in Wonderland Trail" and tourism bodies including Visit Wales.

The repair and restoration work involved removing most of the shelter structure for sandblasting and then rebuilding the shelter on site, building a new roof based on the earlier Victorian design, repairing the concrete base and repainting. We were aware of the sensitive coastal environment of the shelter location and we consulted with the Conservation Officer from CCBC for advice on how to resolve any issues that might arise.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

We created a dedicated Facebook Page – “Deganwy Beach Shelter Restoration” - to publicise and promote the project and to measure the level of engagement within the community.

We held 12 Committee Meetings during the course of the project. The meetings were held at the homes of committee members and were very well attended.

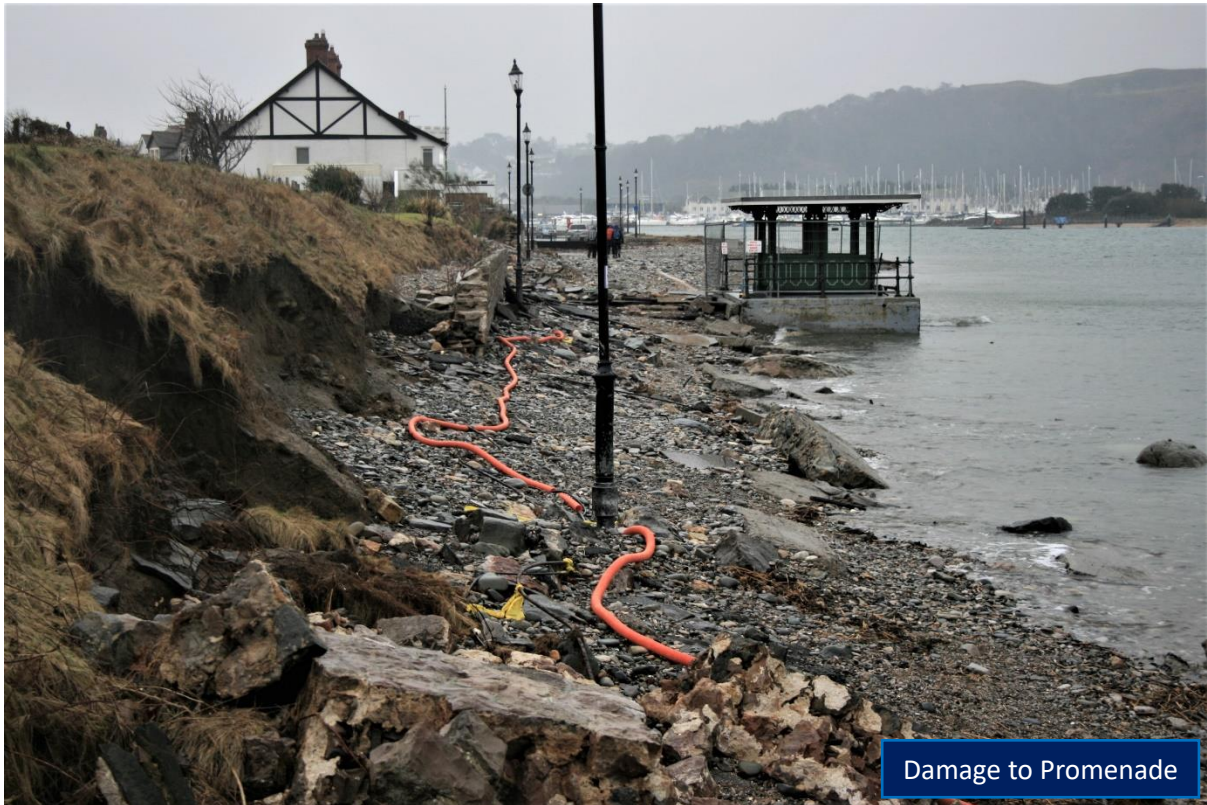
The project has had an impact on local engineering, building, roofing and graphic design and printing businesses. Several local groups became involved in the project by researching historical archives, preparing information for websites and Story Boards, creating QR codes and knitting bunting. Pupils at the local junior school became more aware of the history of Deganwy and became involved in a competition to design a new shelter. The project had an educational element which has increased public awareness of the historical importance of the Deganwy area as a thriving tourist resort early in the 20th Century, the historical legacy of the shelter and the area's links to the RMS Titanic and the construction of the Mulberry Harbours during World War Two. The refurbished shelter, combined with the reconstructed promenade, once again provides tourists, visitors and local residents access to this beautiful part of the North Wales coast.

What We Wanted To Happen

The Victorian beach shelter on Deganwy promenade was subjected to two severe storms in the winter of 2013/2014. The shelter is a prominent feature on the promenade and has served as a popular resting and meeting point for residents and visitors alike since 1904. It has been damaged by storms in previous decades but, due to the severity of the damage, Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC), the owners of the shelter, cordoned it off and declared it unfit for public use.



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



The promenade also suffered widespread damage in these storms, but, after site visits by Assembly Members, Natural Resources Wales and Local Authority Councillors, major repairs were carried out on the promenade, beach and sea defences but not on the shelter. After a period of further deterioration and neglect, which caused great concern amongst local residents and the wider community about the future of the shelter, CCBC commenced an initial grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding a project to restore it. CCBC then considered that this would be an ideal project for a local community group to get involved in.

Contacts were made with the Chairman of the Deganwy & District Residents' Association (DDRA) whose aims are to safeguard and promote the interests of residents and offer advice and support to members. It also exercises vigilance over public affairs and legislation affecting the interests of residents.

A member of the DDRA volunteered to expedite the Full Application for a HLF grant whilst at the same time seeking funds from other sources to offset the HLF grant. He secured grants totalling £12,000 from Conwy Town and County Councils, the DDRA donated £1008 and £500 was donated by HAFOD, a local fund-raising group.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

The Final Application was submitted to the HLF at the end of January 2016 and, some two months later, the HLF notified the DDRA that their application had been successful and that they had been awarded a grant of £65,600, 87% of the estimated restoration costs. If no grant had been received from the HLF it is very possible that the shelter would have deteriorated so much that it would have been completely demolished and removed from its site on the promenade, resulting in the loss of a very important heritage building to the local community, tourists and visitors.

We planned to fully repair and restore the shelter and its concrete base and replace the flat roof with one based on the original Victorian style. A volunteer sub-committee of the DDRA would be formed to create a Beach Shelter Restoration Project Team who would manage the project. The sub-committee would be organised within the constitution of the DDRA.

We also planned to engage with local schools, community groups and other organisations in assisting the Project Team in promoting the project within the community and help deliver the project on time and in budget. The importance of an early start on the project became imperative as the condition of the shelter was rapidly deteriorating and we were in the middle of a winter season with all its storms.

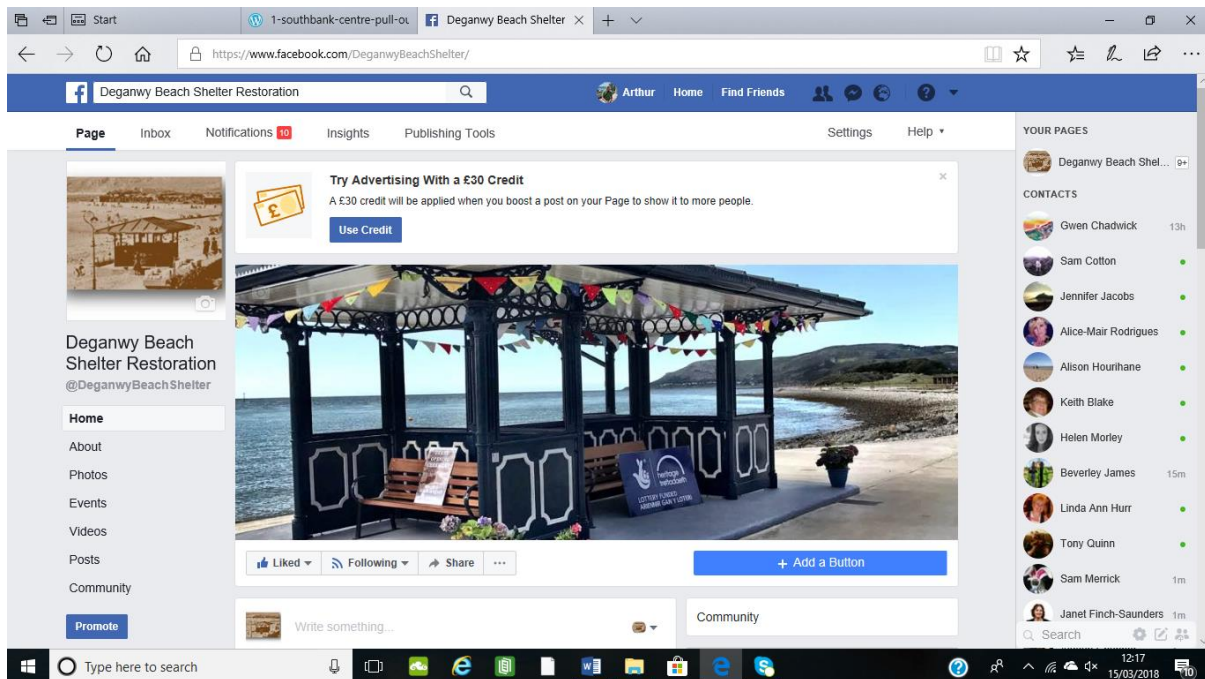
The main purpose of the project was to retain the shelter in its current location by a complete restoration rather than replace it with a modern version so losing the shelter's historical links. The shelter occupies a prominent position on the sweeping coastal promenade adjacent to the estuary of the River Conwy. The promenade is part of the Wales Coast Path and National Cycle Network which links the popular tourist destinations of Llandudno and Conwy; consequently, thousands of tourists, cyclists and local residents pass the beach shelter each year. The shelter provides a place of rest along the Coastal Path for its users whilst they enjoy the views across the Conwy Estuary towards the Snowdonia mountain range and northwards towards the Great Orme in Llandudno. Our project would repair, recondition and restore the shelter in order to maintain the continuity of these historical links and will give us the opportunity to introduce digital information and Story Boards to improve the overall visitor satisfaction when visiting Deganwy.

The project made a difference by raising funds, engaging with local schools and the community and gaining public support to restore the shelter and retain its status as an iconic landmark on Deganwy promenade and conserve it for future generations to use and enjoy.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

A logic model approach has NOT been used, so I am unable to provide any details. In terms of the scale of many restoration projects, ours would be considered very small. The number of active participants included 10 in the Project Team and 12 in the engineering and build teams; other contributors, partners and volunteers numbered about 35.

Counting the volume of engagement proved impossible as the shelter is a public asset and there would be no way of counting visitors through a ticketing system or manually. Conducting surveys would also be problematic. The only option left to us is to gather feedback on digital resources such as Page Views and Likes on Facebook, downloads and the analysis of website statistics. The baseline would be set at zero as all the digital resources would have been new creations, so that any increases would be easily measured.



Our “Deganwy Beach Shelter Restoration” Facebook Page was used extensively to record the progress of the project and had 120 followers. Viewers of the page posts varied from less than 100 to over 2,000, demonstrating the level of interest and engagement by the community. Over the course of the project, the Page had over 17,000 views.

I can also report that the feedback we received during restoration and after project completion was very positive. Residents and visitors congratulated the Project Team on their fundraising efforts and commitment in restoring it so giving everyone the opportunity to once again sit in the shelter.

What Actually Happened

Community Engagement, Outcomes and Outputs

After formation of the Project Team, letters were written to local residents living in the vicinity of the shelter and promenade inviting them to volunteer and help to support delivery of the project. It was apparent that any volunteers we recruited would be unable to work on the repair and restoration work being undertaken by the contractors, but ten people were recruited to form the Project Team. This outcome was disappointing but not unexpected due to the specialist engineering nature of the project, but more people joined us as the project progressed.



At the end of the presentation to the pupils in Ysgol Deganwy, they were asked to create their own designs for a new beach shelter in a competition. The outcome was shown by the interest the pupils demonstrated by the number and quality of their designs. This competition led to a prize giving ceremony where book tokens were presented by the Mayor of Conwy to three pupils for their winning designs.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

The Project Manager briefed the History of Deganwy Group (HDG) about the digital outputs that had been identified. This briefing led to a positive outcome as the HDG trained a small group of people and gave them the skills to browse the internet and search library archives to find information relevant to the history of Deganwy and the shelter. They provided us with a wealth of historical legacy information which was subsequently re-used as information on three Story Boards that formed part of the project deliverables.

The Conway Yacht Club (CYC) has had a long association with the River Conwy and the shelter for several decades. We approached the club early in the project to seek their assistance; this had a positive outcome as the members agreed to provide a sail-by of 'Conwy One Design' (COD) yachts during the Opening Ceremony. The COD, first built in 1928, was designed specifically to race in the waters of Conway Bay and many of the original 16 boats are still sailing today. Unfortunately, the day of the Opening Ceremony was also the final day of the River Conwy Festival, an annual sailing event, and all the available CODs were involved in this so the sail-by was cancelled. We were unable to influence this output but, on the day, the weather and tidal conditions were excellent and we were treated to the sight of dozens of other yachts sailing by the shelter.



Our engagement with the ladies from the Conwy Knitting Group led to another positive outcome as they agreed to knit multi-coloured bunting, which was festooned on the shelter on the day of the Opening Ceremony. This simple decoration added to the overall smart appearance of the shelter and it was admired by everyone at the ceremony, particularly when they were informed of its origin.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

Our engagement with the Editor of the HistoryPoints.org website lead to another positive outcome in that he agreed to design bespoke HistoryPoints QR code digital artwork for display on each of the three Story Boards and on the shelter. The boards will be located at key positions along the promenade. Residents and visitors can access the information on their smartphones or tablets through scanning the QR codes displayed on the boards at these locations. The information would also be available on the HistoryPoints.org website on desktop or laptop computers. QR codes are located at about 370 places along the entire Wales Coast Path. The relevant web pages are linked together in sequence, for people who are walking the path to see what featured location is next in their direction of travel. Once the Story Boards are in place, the four new Deganwy pages will be linked into the sequence, which will help more people to find the information they are interested in.

The Project Team agreed at the beginning of the project to invite the North Wales Pioneer, our local free newspaper, to be the sole provider of press releases and media reports about the project. They were very pleased to be invited and attended all the key events that took place at the shelter. They published some seven press releases and reports ranging from the announcement of the award of the HLF grant, to the Opening Ceremony.

Our Facebook Page was created to promote and publicise the project and provide a means of measuring the level of engagement with the community. The Page was also used to recruit volunteers to form the 'Friends of Deganwy Prom' volunteer group to assist in keeping the promenade, beach and shelter clean and tidy during regular clean-ups. Another outcome the Page achieved was the involvement of the branch of a major high street Building Society who agreed to donate £250 towards the cost of purchasing equipment to support the regular Deganwy beach and promenade clean-ups.

'Visit Wales' is the Welsh Government's tourism team within the Department for Heritage; the team promotes Welsh tourism and assists the tourism industry. We contacted them so that they could add details of the restored shelter and Story Boards to the website. They advised that they are currently working on revamping the Visit Wales website so are trying not to add too much new content at the moment. They are aware that the Llandudno/Conwy area information is overdue for updating and are planning to do this later this year so they can add information about the shelter in the new content. They are keeping our details on file so that they can contact us in the future.

Shelter Restoration

Having secured all the necessary grant funding, the DDRA interviewed a number of volunteers, resulting in the appointments of a Project Manager, Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary as Officers of the Project Team Committee. They contacted and secured the services a local Chartered Building Surveyor, who had previous experience in heritage restoration work, and appointed him as the Lead Consultant to manage all the restoration and engineering aspects of the project. The Project Team were then able to concentrate all their efforts in initiating public support and engaging with other groups and organisations within the community.

The Conwy Harbourmaster and members of the Environment, Roads & Facilities (ERF) Department in CCBC agreed to be our partners and support the Project Team during the restoration programme and after its completion.

It was recognised very early in the project that volunteers would be essential to achieve the final outcomes for the community and deliver the project within the agreed timescale and budget – this proved to be difficult at the early stages of the project but improved as time progressed.

The first action undertaken by the Lead Consultant was to submit a Planning Application to CCBC. Planning Permission for the restoration work was eventually granted by CCBC on 19th September 2016; the design for the new roof was also approved. The delay in granting planning permission resulted in the first slippage in the programme. The HLF were advised and they approved an extension of the grant expiry date to June 2017.

The Lead Consultant then prepared a 'Specification of Works' and, in early January 2017, a formal invitation to tender to compete for the work was sent to four companies. All four companies responded but their quotations exceeded our budget by varying amounts. After negotiations with our HLF Case Officer, it was agreed to transfer funds between Cost Headings but we still had a funding shortfall. A timely funding grant of £4000 from the Conwy Harbourmaster was key in reducing this shortfall. Further meetings were held with one of our prospective engineering partners and agreement was eventually reached on the final budget. The successful bidder selected to be the prime contractor was a local engineering company, with a proven track record in the restoration of Victorian buildings.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



A contract award ceremony was held at the shelter on 23rd March 2017, with the contract being handed over to the Managing Director of our engineering partner by the Mayor of Conwy. It had taken over two years of support from the HLF and steadfast commitment by the Project Team to achieve this major milestone.



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

The repair and restoration work commenced at the end of March 2017. It involved removing most of the shelter structure for sandblasting and then rebuilding it on site, building a new roof based on the earlier Victorian design, repairing the concrete base and repainting. The work was completed in mid-August.

The four shelter benches were found at the CCBC Mochdre depot having been taken there after the storms. They were all severely damaged and CCBC agreed to refurbish them at no cost to the project and they were relocated in the shelter two days before the opening ceremony. One of our residents made a generous donation so that a plaque in memory of her husband could be fixed to one of the benches.

The project was evaluated at all stages during the shelter repair and reconstruction work to ensure compliance with building standards and regulations. Very few problems were encountered during the restoration work, but any that did were dealt with in a very professional manner by the engineering teams, Lead Consultant and the Project Manager.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION



The restored shelter was returned to public use at a grand ‘Opening Ceremony’ on 26th August 2017. The weather on the day was dry and sunny and the estimated crowd of over 200 that turned up to view the ceremony far exceeded our expectations. A member of Conwy Town Orchestra played her harp providing us with atmospheric background music. The Mayor of Conwy used a pair of gold scissors that were used in July 1938 by the then Mayor of Conwy to cut a ribbon at the opening ceremony of an extension to the promenade. Refreshments were served after the ceremony at a Sue’s Beach Hut located close to the shelter.

The ‘Building Manual’, prepared by our Lead Consultant, was handed over to the Facilities Manager at CCBC on Tuesday 3rd October. The Manual included details of the shelter's construction such as materials, finishes, roof construction, and as-built drawings and specifications. This action formally returned ownership of the shelter back to CCBC. However, CCBC agreed to support to the ‘Friends of Deganwy Prom’ volunteer group and stated that they would respond positively to all requests for logistics assistance for future beach clean-ups.

Story Boards

In addition to restoration of the shelter, the other main project deliverables were three Story Boards. The design and manufacture of the boards was originally contracted to a company in Ebbw Vale, South Wales. After further consideration and discussions with the manufacturer, it was agreed to terminate our contract with them at zero cost to the project. This was mainly due to logistics issues. Extra time would now be needed to design and manufacture the Story Boards. This caused a further slip in the programme and the HLF agreed to a further extension of the Grant expiry date to April 30th 2018.

We quickly engaged the services of a local brand design agency who provided us with an estimate for the design and manufacture of the boards that was within our budget. The design agency was fully supported by a Project Team member who spent a considerable amount of her own time liaising with the HDG and local residents. She produced draft layouts showing graphics and information relating to the position that each Story Board will be positioned. The Project Team and HDG were fully involved in this task and reviewed and approved the design work at every stage. It then became apparent that we had not submitted a Planning Application to CCBC. On contacting the Planning Department, we were advised that the boards fell into the category of 'Advertisements' and, as they were to be located on Council-owned land, the application would have to be approved by the Planning Committee. The Planning Application (Code No: 0/44801) was submitted to CCBC on 8th January 2018 and approved by the Planning Committee on 14th March 2018. The boards will be designed by View Creative Agency and manufactured by MicroGraphics, both local businesses.

Project Management and Staffing

The Project was managed by the Deganwy Beach Shelter Restoration Project Team which was formed as a sub-committee of the Deganwy and District Residents' Association. In addition to the committee, a Lead Consultant was recruited to oversee the shelter repair and restoration work. Committee members were all volunteers and included Town Councillors, local business people, residents, ex-servicemen and retired pensioners. None of the committee, apart from the Lead Consultant, had any previous experience of working in a heritage restoration project.

The Final Application Form was completed and submitted by a former Technician in the Royal Air Force and he became the natural choice to become the Project Manager. Even though he was working outside his comfort zone, he was able to use his military experience to learn new management and negotiation skills during the course of the project. Other committee members had similar experiences and they too demonstrated new competencies and skills as the project progressed. The project was a valuable learning experience for many people and the satisfaction they felt on the day of the Opening Ceremony and since will be a lasting memory for them. Shortly after completion of the shelter restoration, the Project Manager arranged a 'Project Team Get Together' at a local restaurant to celebrate our success in completing the project.

North Wales Engineering Solutions (NWES) and Pro-Build

On completion of the tendering process, NWES was selected as the Prime Contractor for the repair and restoration of the shelter structure. The remaining building work on the new roof, concrete base and painting was sub-contracted to Pro-Build (Llandudno).

NWES is a local engineering company that has been operating for over 30 years. They specialise in engineering solutions from project work to the bespoke manufacture of component parts. Pro-Build (Llandudno) have a wealth of experience in renovating both modern and period properties in the North Wales area. The company have worked alongside Mostyn Estates, a local private limited company, and Cadw, the Welsh Government's historic environment service, in the repair and renovation of a number of Victorian buildings.

The employees of these two local companies showed exemplary professionalism and respect for the heritage that they were restoring during the course of the project.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

Timetable

- Winter of 2013/2014 – beach shelter closed off for public use after being severely damaged by the winter storms.
- 11th June 2014 – Project Enquiry Form received by HLF.
- 19th May 2015 – initial budget cost estimate produced for CCBC.
- 28th October 2015 - first meeting of DDRA sub-committee to discuss appointments of Project Team Officers and Committee Members.
- 29th January 2016 - HLF Final Application Form submitted.
- 31st March 2016 – Notification from HLF advising application had been successful.
- 5th May 2016 – ‘Permission to Start’ granted by HLF.
- 19th September 2016 – Planning Permission granted by CCBC.
- 4th January 2017 – Invitation to Tender documents issued.
- 8th March 2017 – HLF Grant expiry date extended to 25th August 2017 by Head of HLF in Wales due to contract negotiations.
- 23rd March 2017 – Contract awarded to NWES.
- 30th March 2017 – Restoration work commenced.
- 3rd July 2017 - HLF Grant expiry date extended by Head of HLF in Wales to 30th April 2018 due to slippage in the Story Board timescales.
- 22nd August 2017 – Second and penultimate grant payment awarded.
- 23rd August 2017 – Restoration work completed.
- 26th August 2017 – Grand Opening Ceremony held at shelter.
- 3rd October 2017 – Shelter ownership transferred to CCBC.
- 14th March 2018 – Planning Application for three Story Boards approved by CCBC.

Approach to Ongoing Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of the success of the project will be solely based on the gathering and analysis of data from the public's engagement with the HistoryPoints website. The three Story Boards, displaying QR codes, will also provide data on the public's digital engagement with the project. A QR Code plaque on the shelter will also provide digital data.

The shelter is located in an open and isolated position on Deganwy Promenade and it is impossible to compile accurate figures for the number of visitors who use the shelter. We anticipate that, now the shelter that has been restored to its previous grandeur, visitor numbers to Deganwy beach and promenade will increase and consequently there will be an increase in users of the shelter.

Feedback from visitors and local residents, using the HistoryPoints and HDG's websites, will provide the means to establish the success of the project and the usefulness of the Story Boards and QR Codes and that the information meets their needs.

Interviews

A member of the History of Deganwy Group was interviewed and he provided the following response:

“It was a pleasure to be involved as a volunteer with the Project Team and to be able to support the Team's efforts in highlighting points of interest in the village of Deganwy not only to visitors but also to residents. My particular involvement was the translation of the information on the Story Boards into Welsh and this emphasised another important aspect of the Project Team's aspirations, namely to exhibit the fact that Welsh is still a living language in our community. The Project Team's efforts will undoubtedly generate further interest in the history of the locality.”

The Editor of the HistoryPoints website provided the following statistics for the period 6 October 2017 to 6 March 2018:

- The new page about the Site of the Deganwy Bathing Pool (the ‘Lido’) was viewed 42 times, on 31 different devices.
- The page about Deganwy Off-shore Place-names was viewed 39 times, on 28 devices.
- The page about Deganwy Castle was viewed 31 times, on 23 devices.

He also gave the following response:

“This is a small but encouraging start to the public's digital engagement with the project, especially as the three Story Boards, displaying QR codes, have yet to be positioned along Deganwy promenade. Once these are in position, the digital engagement can only increase. We will continue to monitor these statistics.

Researching the information for the web pages involved several people, including members of the Welsh Place-Name Society and History of Deganwy Group.”

The Project Chairman gave the following response:

“I think the project was a complete success. The Shelter is now restored to its original look and will provide shelter and warmth on cold days and a sunny place to sit and watch the sea and the sunsets in the summer. Deganwy Promenade has been used since Victorian times and the shelter became part of its visual landscape. It's therefore wonderful to restore this. It will benefit the community all year round, with the young and the old taking different pleasures from it. I don't think anything didn't work, it is hugely popular and successful.”

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

Two of the Committee Members gave the following responses:

“The meetings I did attend seemed cohesive and productive and roles were undertaken seriously. The vision and duration of the project was maintained with admirable tenacity by everyone.”

“Once the complicated application forms had been finally agreed and submitted, the process seemed to take ages, and then when it was fully approved and the monies in place, it went amazingly well with regards to completion of the works.”

Review

What Worked Well and Why

The Project was conceived several months after the beach shelter was fenced off after being severely damaged in the winter storms of 2013/2014. The promenade also suffered extensive damage but was subjected to major repairs funded by the Welsh Government and others; the shelter was not repaired.

Initial fundraising activities were started by a Department of CCBC who submitted the Project Enquiry Form to the HLF. It was soon recognised that the task should be managed by a volunteer group who could engage fully with the local community and apply to the HLF for grant funding. The Deganwy & District Residents' Association (DDRA) came forward and made the initial contact with the HLF. The DDRA had no experience in a heritage project of this magnitude but realised the importance of restoring and retaining the beach shelter, otherwise it would have probably been demolished. Their determination to take on this task should be applauded.

The creation of a sub-committee/project team to manage the project worked well even though the members had little or no experience. Committee meetings were arranged, Officers and a Lead Consultant were appointed and they soon became a cohesive team intent on a successful outcome for the future of the shelter.

Eighteen months of dedicated hard work by the team followed, culminating in submission of the Final Application for grant funding to the HLF in January 2016. The HLF advised our application had been successful at the end of March and 'Permission to Start' was granted in early May 2016.

During the time that the tender documents were being prepared by the Lead Consultant, we successfully applied for Planning Permission from CCBC. The team also started to engage with the local community including Ysgol Deganwy, the History of Deganwy Group and HistoryPoints website editor, Conway Yacht Club, knitting clubs and a local newspaper. These activities worked well and all had positive outcomes as they all realised the importance of our project and the need to support us.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

'Invitation to Tender' documents were issued in early January 2017 and the contract was awarded to NWES at the end of March with restoration work commencing shortly after. Five months later the repair and restoration work was completed and the shelter was returned to public use at the end of August. This was another aspect of the project that worked well as the companies involved also realised the importance of restoring and retaining our Victorian buildings for future use.

The creation of a Facebook Page was another activity that proved successful for the project. We published Posts on the page to promote the project and it enabled us to measure the level of engagement within the community.

Another activity that worked very well was the Opening Ceremony, held on Saturday 26th August 2017. Some 200 people attended the event and we were blessed with a sunny day with light sea breezes. In addition to the Project Team, the event was attended by our Welsh Assembly member and Councillors from Conwy Town and County Councils. Staff from North Wales Engineering Solutions and Probuild, our main contractors, also attended.

After speeches from our Chairman, the TV presenter Arfon Haines-Davies, Dr Malcolm Smith (HLF representative) and our Project Manager, the Mayor of Conwy, Cllr Bill Chapman, cut the ribbon using a pair of gold scissors previously used at a similar ceremony in 1938. Following this, refreshments were enjoyed at Sue's Beach Hut. We received excellent feedback from members of the public about the event. The ceremony worked well due to the enthusiasm of the Project Team and the publicity given to it by displaying posters around the community, writing articles in the local press and posts on our Facebook page. It also gave us the opportunity to show the results of the investment by the HLF, Conwy Town and County Councils and National Lottery players in providing funds to repair and restore the shelter. The project did have its criticism – words like 'what a waste of time and money' and 'whose idea was this' were occasionally used against us but we were able to demonstrate to our detractors that it was money well spent.

Mention must be made of the excellent support we received from our HLF Case Officer who patiently dealt with the many requests we made to transfer funding between Approved Purposes during the early part of the project when we were in the middle of the tendering process. She also secured two extensions to the Grant Expiry Date because of issues with the budget, Planning Applications and Story Board design and manufacture.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

RICS Awards Wales 2018

At the time of writing this report, the shelter restoration project has been shortlisted for a prestigious award by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Wales 2018. It has been entered into three categories - Building Conservation, Community Benefit and Infrastructure.

We have been informed by RICS Wales that both the standard and volume of entrants were extremely high this year, and they have congratulated us on our success.

On Thursday 22nd February, two judges from RICS Wales paid a visit to the shelter. They spent an hour with us, asking a variety of questions regarding community and infrastructure benefits, involvement by local groups and how funding was raised and spent.

The category winners and Project of the Year winner will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on 23rd May 2018 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Cardiff.

Here is the article published in Wales Online:

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/projects-chosen-most-impressive-new-14305926>

Winning an award would be a fantastic achievement for everyone concerned with the project and would clearly justify the amount of funding invested in it - let's hope that our project is successful!

What Didn't Work Well and Why

One of the main aspects of the project that didn't work well was the time it took for the project to get off the ground. After the shelter was fenced off in December 2013, nearly two years elapsed before a Project Team was formed to manage the project. One probable cause of this was the lack of progress in completing the HLF Project Enquiry Form and then the Final Application Form. These tasks were transferred from one agency to another resulting in a break of continuity in compiling the forms. The author of this Evaluation Report volunteered to complete the Final Application Form and found it to be one of the most difficult tasks he had ever worked on. The detail of the information required, trying to understanding the complicated jargon and the complexities of the form fully tested the abilities of the person who filled in the forms. He is an experienced Senior Technical Author, but even he struggled at times to complete them. He received very helpful advice from a HLF Development Officer before submitting the Final Application on 29th January 2016. 'Permission to Start' was granted by the HLF at the beginning of May 2016.

Over the next seven months a Planning Application was submitted and permission granted by CCBC, and the Invitation to Tender documents were prepared and issued. Difficulties in funding the shelter restoration budget to match the winning quotation resulted in an extension to the grant expiry date; this was not to be the first extension. Our original estimate for the restoration budget was based on an initial budget cost estimate produced for CCBC in May 2015. This proved to be an underestimate. We were also seeking 100% grant funding from the HLF which would clearly count against us when our application was being assessed. We approached Conwy Town and County Councils for grant funding. This was successful and reduced the HLF Grant to 87% of the total costs. We also had to transfer funds between Cost Headings in order to match the shelter costs but, on completion of the restoration, the estimated costs and actual costs were in balance.

When planning for the Story Boards, our intention was to have them all in position at three strategic locations along Deganwy promenade by the day of the shelter opening ceremony. Disappointingly, this failed to happen for a number of reasons. Planning for the boards commenced in October 2015 but initial contact with designers and manufacturers to provide quotations wasn't made until August 2016. On the positive side, a member of the team was working alongside the History of Deganwy Group, researching and writing historical information, in order to ensure the accuracy of the subject matter for publication on the Story Boards. This was of great benefit to the project.

DEGANWY BEACH SHELTER RESTORATION

At a Project Team meeting held at the end of January 2017, drafts of the proposed layout of each of the boards showing graphics and text were reviewed and approved. A site visit was held in mid-April 2017 with a representative from our board manufacturer and it was at this meeting that it became apparent that we had not applied for planning permission from CCBC. Contacts were made with the Development and Building Control Manager at CCBC who advised that the boards would be considered as 'Advertisements' and a Planning Application must be submitted. We were further advised that the Planning Application would require full elevation drawings of the boards complete with digital images, text, dimensions and grid references. It now became apparent that extra time would be required to design and manufacture the Story Boards and, after a request to our HLF Case Officer, a grant extension to 30th April 2018 was granted.

By mid-August 2017, after further consideration and discussions with our chosen manufacturer, it was agreed to terminate our contract with them at zero cost to the project. This was mainly due to logistics issues. We quickly engaged the services of a local brand design agency who provided us with an estimate for the design and manufacture of the boards that was within our budget. The Final Grant payment has been set aside to pay for the Story Boards. Design work by the agency, supported by a team member, continued to progress culminating with approval of the final drafts by the HLF and submission of a Planning Application (Code No: 0/44801) to CCBC on 8th January 2018. The Application was approved by the Planning Committee on 14th March.

If the HLF had not approved our application for a heritage grant and the project had not been undertaken at all, it is very possible that the shelter would have deteriorated so much that it would have been totally demolished and removed from its site on the promenade resulting in the loss of a very important heritage building to both the local community, tourists and visitors.

Summary of Lessons Learnt

The key things that the Restoration Project Team learned during the project are:

- The lead-in time prior to starting the project was much too long
- Liaison with other stakeholders was inadequate at the beginning
- Insufficient knowledge of HLF procedures and associated Application Forms
- Lack of experience in heritage restoration
- Insufficient knowledge of Local Authority planning procedures.

Next time, we would:

- Form the Project Team much earlier in the project
- Contact other stakeholders at the start of the project
- Attend HLF training workshops to better understand the methodologies used by the HLF
- Recruit team members who have the necessary experience of heritage restoration
- Contact Local Authority Planning Department at an early stage to seek advice on any planning procedures.

Acknowledgements

Restoration Project Team:

Vicky Macdonald – Chairman
Arthur James - Project Manager
Jonathan Kearsley-Wooller FRICS - Lead Consultant
Sarah Moss - Treasurer
Beverley James - Secretary
Christine Gilligan
John Griffiths
Petra Haig
Alison Hourihane
Vikki Stanley

Contractors:

Dave Thomas – Managing Director, North Wales Engineering Solutions Ltd
Evan Thomas – Managing Director, Probuild (Llandudno)

Partners:

The Heritage Lottery Fund

Conwy County Borough Council:

- Steven Teale (ERF)
- Matthew Forbes (Harbourmaster)
- Owen Conry (ERF)

Conwy Town Council and the Mayor of Conwy, Cllr Bill Chapman JP

Deganwy and District Residents' Association

HAFOD

Pupils and Staff at Ysgol Deganwy

Conway Yacht Club

Myra Chapman and the Conwy Knitting & Arts Group

Jo Williams – View Creative Agency

MicroGraphics (Llandudno Junction)

North Wales Pioneer

Sue's Beach Hut

Contributors:

Rhodri Clark – HistoryPoints.org Editor

Ifor Griffiths – History of Deganwy Group

Project Evaluation written by Arthur James