

Area North Committee – 23rd July 2008

10. Community Grants – David Hall, South Petherton (Executive Decision)

Head of Service: Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North)
Lead Officer: Madelaine King-Oakley,
Assessing Officer for this Grant: Natalie House, Community Regeneration Officer
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Purpose of the Report

For members to consider the request for a grant towards Petherton Arts Trust in respect of the David Hall, South Petherton.

Recommendation(s)

- Members are asked to approve a contribution of £3,690 to the Petherton Arts Trust to support the completion of essential improvements to the David Hall, South Petherton, to be allocated from the Area North Capital Programme - “Improving Community Halls and Facilities”, subject to the standard terms and conditions for SSDC Community and Leisure Grants (see Appendix A), and the following additional terms and conditions:
 - Subject to appropriate planning consents.
 - Subject to confirmation of a contribution to the project from South Petherton Parish Council.

Application Details

Name of Applicant	Petherton Arts Trust, The David Hall, South Petherton
Project	Essential Building Refurbishment and Improvements to the David Hall
Project description	Essential work to weatherproof the main building and boiler house roofs, high-level lime re-pointing, cast iron guttering and down-pipes, replacement of arched dormer windows and associated external decoration.
Total project cost	£17,377.72
Amount requested	£7,977.72
Amount recommended	£3,690
Special conditions recommended	Subject to appropriate planning consents Subject to confirmation of a contribution to the project from South Petherton Parish Council
Application assessed by:	Natalie House, Community Regeneration Officer, in conjunction with Alison Henry <i>Historic Buildings Advisor</i> , and Pauline Burr, <i>Arts Development Officer</i>
Contact details:	01458 257487

Previous Support (3 years)

Funding received	Purpose	Amount	Date
Corporate Grants for arts organisation	Revenue support grant	£10,477	2005/6
	-	£7,500	2006/7
		£5,000	2007/8
		nil	2008/9
Environmental Enhancements budget	Reinstate railings	£3,700	2007/8
		£4,400	2008/9
Historic Buildings Repair Grant	Front steps	£557	2007/8

Community Grants Assessment score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications need to meet the minimum score of 20 for SSDC funding under the Community Grants Scheme to be considered.

Category	Score	Maximum
A Eligibility	Yes	
B Target Groups	3	6
C Project	5	5
D Capacity of Organisation	14	15
E Financial need	3	5
F Innovation	0	3
Total	25	34

Background Information

The David Hall is a building of local historic and architectural interest and importance to South Petherton. Built in 1863 this Grade II Listed, former Congregational Church, occupies a prominent position in the village. Named in memory of the son of the former owner who was tragically killed, the David Hall now provides the permanent home for the Petherton Arts Trust who acquired the premises in 1993 following a 15-year lease arrangement.

The Petherton Arts Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered charity, originally conceived in 1986 by a group of local people in the Somerset village of South Petherton, with a shared appreciation of the arts. Since its inception, Petherton Arts Trust has promoted many different forms of professional and amateur entertainment and has grown beyond the conservative hopes of its founders. In addition it has initiated and managed a varied mix of community outreach programmes, including StArt Summer and the Schools Performance Programme, a summer holiday scheme for young people. Meeting the challenges faced by small arts venues nationwide, it has an established reputation for providing quality arts entertainment that extends far and wide.

The David Hall as an Arts Venue and Community Building

The David Hall as an Arts Centre has a national reputation as a folk/roots music venue and has been visited by many well-known performers who much admire and appreciate the acoustic quality of the building. The David Hall presents an exciting programme of

professional and amateur drama and dance as well as hosting the thriving cinema club, the Petherton Picture Show, and a number of community dance, drama and adult education classes.

Online bookings for events during January – May 2008 showed the David Hall's Arts Programme to be of regional as well as local importance, with bookings by audience members travelling from Bristol, Plymouth, Salisbury and Ferndown, near Bournemouth.

Community Use

The David Hall is now used by a wide range of local community groups and currently accommodates the local Police Post and MP surgeries; from exercise classes to birthdays and wedding receptions; jumble sales to exhibitions and fund-raising events, the David Hall is much more than an Arts venue.

Current usage by the Community:

Group	Hours	Frequency
Tai chi	2 hours	Weekly
Line dancing	3.5 hours	Weekly
Belly dancing	1.5 hours	Weekly
Yoga	1.5 hours	Weekly
Coffee mornings	2 hours	Monthly
Private bookings, e.g. parties, film projections	Variable	Ad hoc, at least quarterly

The building in its current form is limited in the activities it can accommodate and many of its functions and activities are volunteer dependent.

Finance and Administration

Petherton Arts Trust has received no revenue funding from The Arts Council South West for many years, although communication has been open with South West Officers. Some funding was received in 2007 for a facilitator to run a Board Development Day and a number of subsequent meetings.

The Petherton Arts Trust has benefited from previous SSDC revenue support (see below) from the Corporate Grants Programme for arts organisations, to further its cultural objectives. It was decided that corporate level support was no longer sustainable in 2005, and a final 3 years of reducing subsidy was agreed, prompting the Trust to review their management structure and develop a more robust 3-year business plan 2005-2008.

Local community support for the David Hall has increased in recent years. An open gardens event was organised earlier this year, which raised over £1,000 for the Support the David Hall fund, and the 100 club has become the 150 club! The split between income from events and income from community use is approximately 50/50 and Petherton Arts Trust volunteers also now deliver the local TA13 parish magazine to raise £100 a quarter. In summary there is good evidence of the increasing contribution made by the Trust to ensure that the focus on Arts both supports and subsidises other social and recreational activities and uses.

A copy of the 2008/09 Budget can be found in Appendix B and shows that the annual running costs are supported by local fundraising activities, together with some cash reserves.

The Petherton Arts Trust management board currently has 9 board members. Responsibility for the development and viability of the centre is developed to a number of sub-committees, while the day-to-day management of the David Hall, is undertaken by the paid administrator, supported by a team of sixty volunteers. Each sub-committee contains at least two board members, which report back to the Board of Trustees on a monthly basis. A summary of the roles of each sub-committee and a management structure diagram is included in Appendix C.

Petherton Arts Trust (PAT) in 2008 finds itself facing new challenges. The withdrawal of repeated local authority subsidy clearly encouraged the management board to carry out significant restructuring and the adoption of a more business-minded approach to some of its core activities.

The following changes have been noted:

- Increased use by community groups.
- Hall audiences running at 66% of full capacity over past 12 months.
- Successful and robust negotiating with artists and agents to increase guaranteed income from events.
- Accounts show that a more organised system is in operation.
- Programme bookings and production are completed on a six monthly rather than quarterly basis, reducing administration time and costs.
- The appointment of a pro-active treasurer has ensured the financial viability of the Trust without further revenue grant support.
- The website has been upgraded
- Online bookings have increased significantly since 2006 (shown in Appendix D)

In 2003 a thorough condition survey of the building was conducted. A Conservation statement was written in January 2007, which highlighted the significant architectural value of the David Hall, but reported the building as being “severely compromised by lack of funds, which are needed for significant priority repairs”. The most pressing need at that time was for management board to form a clear view of how the building could be used and how revenue, with or without grant funding may be increased to pay for urgent repairs. The report stated that the building was considered to be in its best use however, without financial investment, was in danger of becoming a ‘building at risk’.

Since then a Buildings sub-group has been established to prioritise works and raise capital to complete them. While the Trust has aspirations to develop new activities and increase average audience numbers further, the conservation of the David Hall is of the utmost importance to ensure the future of the Trust and this significant local building it calls home.

SSDC’s Arts Development Officer has advised that the David Hall is one of the few venues in South Somerset consistently offering high quality, professional performances on a small scale. In addition to the varied programme of activity, the David Hall is also the focus of a very strong volunteer force of people, interested in local arts and culture. Since the tapered withdrawal of revenue funding from SSDC, the Trust has taken measures to restructure its Board, which has resulted in a renewed focus of the service the David Hall now offers the community, especially noticeable at a local level. They have turned the organisation around in the last few years and are now forward thinking and adaptable, using their own skills and abilities to the great advantage.

Recent and Future Projects

In addition to the projects listed above, recent achievements and future projects by Petherton Arts Trust also include:

Project	Status
Establishment of Police Post	Completed
Repairs to front steps	Completed
Replacement of security light over Gateway	Completed
Purchase of new seats and tables	Completed
Hearing Loop installation	Completed
New external notice-board	Completed
Kitchen and bar refurbishment	Completed
Toilet and artists dressing room re-decoration	Completed
Reinstatement of traditional railings	Near completion
Essential building refurbishment and improvements	Applying for funding
Conversion to the internal balcony for use as a community space and improved office for volunteers, internal decoration, rebuilding of the porch and volunteer training opportunities to learn and apply low-level lime re-pointing skills.	Applied to BIG Lottery Peoples Millions. Waiting for outcome of assessment August 2008.
Young Peoples' Stained Glass Window project	Project under-development

The Community Regeneration Officer has supported Petherton Arts Trust in a recent revision of their Business Plan and has liaised with the District Council's Historic Buildings Advisor and Arts Development Officer in developing this grant application with the Trust. The Business Plan includes the Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Trust, a SWOT and stakeholder analysis, financial plan and monitoring and evaluation framework to further develop the activities and management capabilities of the Trust during 2008-2011. The Board are soon to adopt this document.

About the project

The long term management and conservation of this historic building is now of greatest concern. The Trust's biggest asset is becoming its greatest liability. Despite enviable acoustic quality and an intimate ambience, much appreciated by audiences and performers alike, the present committee have inherited the challenges of managing the deteriorating fabric of the building, which has placed a significant strain on finances.

The Historic Buildings Advisor has advised that the David Hall would be a difficult building to find alternative uses for. Current uses and users are ideal, as the activities do not adversely affect the character of the building. Works are essential to prevent deterioration to the fabric of the building.

The main purpose of this project is to upgrade and preserve the external envelope of the building, making further internal work and development of both Arts and community activities feasible, practical and safe.

This project specifically includes:

- Roof refurbishment – To protect the Grade II Listed internal features, such as the arch and ensure the building remains wind and weatherproof.
- The upgrade of existing and inadequate rainwater goods – To reduce water penetration and damage to internal decoration.
- The replacement of dormer windows.
- High-level lime re-pointing. (The lower sections shall be completed by volunteers and an open training session arranged by SSDC Historic Building's advisor).

Costs and match funding

The cost of the work is estimated to be **£17,377.72** on the basis of quotes received, this includes the cost of scaffolding for an eight-week period as well as survey and project management costs. A full breakdown of project costs is shown in the table below.

Item	Amount
1.Scaffolding hire and cantilever lift (Eight weeks)	£4544.9
2.Main roof and boiler-house roof repairs	£2206.65
3.Rainwater goods	£2728.67
4.External decorations – Repair, re-puttying and re-painting	£2068
5.Survey costs and project management	£247
6.External stonework - high-level lime re-pointing 35m2	£2138.50
7.Dormer windows x 6	£3384
TOTAL (A)	17,377.72

At least a 20% contribution is to be made by the Petherton Arts Trust and 50% of the total funding needed for the project is already secured or agreed in principle. A full breakdown of the funding secured or agreed in principle for this project is detailed in the table below.

Funding sources are as follows:

SSDC Historic Buildings Grant	In principle £5,000 (up to 30% grant towards eligible costs)
South Petherton Parish Council	£200 (plus £400 towards general costs as payment for delivering parish newsletter)
Petherton Arts Trust	£4,200
Total	£9,800

The Historic Buildings Advisor has checked the quotes submitted with the grant application to ensure that the chosen contractors will carry out works appropriate to a Listed Building, using recognised Conservation methods. The work will be supervised by inspected by the service.”

Conclusion

The David Hall is an important community facility in South Petherton, providing a range of services and activities, which appear to have the potential to develop and grow to the benefit of the wider community. The information submitted with this application demonstrates a well-planned project and clear financial need. There is also a pressing need for this project to be completed, to reduce the level of risk currently experiences by Petherton Arts Trust for its future.

In the past 18 months a significant change has been noted in the approach and management of Petherton Arts Trust. Since the phased reduction of revenue support from SSDC, the value of the building as a community asset has been recognised and the current management committee have worked tirelessly to secure the future of the Trust's core activities as well as this valued local community building. The David Hall has grown into a thriving Arts venue, managed by a competent Board, with great hopes and aspirations for the future.

The works identified for funding in this project are part of a package of refurbishments and enhancements that will see this facility improved for the good of South Petherton. The Trust's organisation, enthusiasm and forward planning will ensure that the activities within the David Hall may continue in comfortable, safe and watertight accommodation!

With a contribution of up to £5,000 allocated to this project from another SSDC Service Team, it is recommended to approve a grant award of £3,690 from Area North's Capital Programme, to ensure the District Council does not exceed a 50% contribution, in accordance with the conditions of the Community Grant Scheme. This will leave Petherton Arts Trust to find a further £3,887.72 to complete the project.

It is also felt that the current level of contribution from South Petherton Parish Council is insufficient towards a project of this size and significance to the parish. Further information is being requested from the applicant and the parish council, and an update will be provided at the committee meeting.

The current shortfall is around £4000. Whilst there are a limited number of possible sources and the Area Development Team will continue to support the Trust to a successful conclusion.

Financial Implications

Area North Capital Programme (2007-10) allocation for "Improving Community Halls and Facilities" has £28,123 uncommitted. Awarding this grant of £3,690 will leave £24,433.

Corporate Priorities

8. Work in partnership with the public and private sector in developing and delivery of the Market Towns Vision.

Other implications

Area Development Plan

5. Support the development and enhancement of community managed **facilities, activities or services**

17. **Market Towns Vision:** – develop and deliver a programme which secures the long term success of our market towns [and rural centres], through the Market Towns Investment Group and others

South Petherton Parish Plan

Leisure and Culture: Ensure that all the Village Halls are endeavouring to provide a programme of events that match the needs of parishioners and visitors alike.

Background Papers: *Corporate Grants Committee 1st February 2007 – pages 55-59*