

Interviews & Research

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1. Christine McDerment – History of Education, Victorian School

(14 Nov 2019)

- Currently in a 1950s portacabin in Leith Walk Primary School. Not ideal. Want to move to a genuine Victorian building. A Victorian school is ideal. 2 permeant rooms - school room and museum room.
- 1st Floor, 2 rooms, NW part of the building. Corridor running between them. Access from outside. Mainly children they have to visit. Corridor with hooks for kids to hang up coats. Can be shut off from the rest of the building for security reasons when kids are there. Open when they're not - but there might be an issue with security if there were no volunteers manning the area, exhibits aren't behind glass.
- No accessible for wheelchairs in their current home. Would like a lift.
- Funding - currently they pay no rent or electricity. Income each year is £6-7k. Half of this goes on one part time employee and insurance and alarm system. 12 volunteers run the organisation. Small charity, no funds.
- Could contribute to shared expenses - e.g. their part-time employee could help run the building.
- 1600 children, 200 adults - footfall per year, booked visits. In the Vic school they could have more footfall.
- Doors open weekend - numbers around 1,000 per weekend.
- Edinburgh city council let them use the protacabin for free.
- Open to working with the Newhaven Heritage Centre, think the two would work well together (NHC see them as very separate)

Feedback from discussions about the idea of forming a consortium, from Christine McDerment (3 Jan 2020):

"The Trustees of HEC have had a very quick email exchange about this idea, obviously very basic, especially given the time of year, but we're broadly in favour of it.

We'd obviously need to know more details about its workings, further down the line, but would be happy to bring our expertise and ideas to the collaborative table.

Do keep me informed as to progress."

2. Jeff Liston – Newhaven Heritage Centre

(14 Nov 2019)

- Looking for a home since council closed the museum in 2008.
- Space and facilities - think these would be best met by the Anchor Building. Difficulties making the central core building suitable for display and storage of museum pieces. Anchor building more environmentally stable as well. Space of evening reception or art display. Of benefit to the central project of the core building, promoting football. Area and grounds to the North of it.
- Would look (HLF) to acquire funding to buy the building. Suggest the building is worth 25% of the total cost. Expressions of support from the community, particularly the major players. Asset transfer back to the community. Don't want an uncertain future with a lease. Autonomous.
- Local and regionally focused resource centre. See Victorian Classroom as a very separate project, that needs to be in the main building.
- Edinburgh city museum are storing their objects. Worked with them when they had the museum. Wouldn't charge to enter the museum but would have retail sales to get a reasonable income from. Museum staffed on a voluntary basis.
- Parking - sensitive issue in the local area.
- Annual footfall of 33,000 (in 2008) before any increased football from cruises and tramline. 33k is a reasonably significant impact on the space. Would be a waste of the space to convert the playground into a carpark, would be better used as a resource within the museum to keep as a space.
- Promotion of footfall within with main school building.
- Main building - it would be a second choice to have a site there. Don't think it could provide what they need, especially within the short term. Think it would take 2 years to convert the building into something they could use. Considerable amount of work adapting a number of spaces. Aware that the ground floor would be prime territory. They haven't work out what they would want in the main building.
- Museum space - used for flexible spaces for meetings and events e.g Natural History Museum, Dinosaur in the entrance hall.
- Offer space that can be hired out is a good income stream. Also offers space for other activities for the community. And additional displays.
- Can't give me a square footage for income - could talk to the national museum of Scotland.

Feedback from discussions about the idea of forming a consortium, from Jeff Liston, Chair of Newhaven Heritage (9 Jan 2020)

"The idea of being part of a Newhaven Heritage Consortium across the general site makes a lot of sense, as – although we will occupy two very different buildings - there may well be the opportunity to collaborate closely once Newhaven Heritage has moved into the Anchor Building. Indeed, we are aware that this would offer numerous advantages to Heart of Newhaven's bid, firstly in significantly reducing the purchase price that Heart of Newhaven would need to find for the site, secondly in offering a venue that they could hire part of in order to raise the profile of their plans for the old school building while their building work is ongoing, and thirdly in the strength that comes from the on-site community that will form between the owners of the different buildings. Therefore, presenting shared applications for funding for a common site would be a logical progression.

In fact, in reading your bullet-points, there was a great feeling of warm familiarity for the kind of activities that you were describing, as pan-generational and inclusive community projects are very much what Newhaven Heritage has been engaged in for more than ten years now in this community, and as such we can very much bring our expertise to bear in this regard.”

3. Laura – Head, Victoria Primary School

(7 Jan 2020)

- Wee Museum - display cabinets on loan from museum services, mix of their own things and Leith Museums. No problem extending it to be used in a community hub. Also asked to take a few things with them, to display in the new school.
- Building maintenance - Yes the building has been maintained. Sash windows not in good shape - at least one in each classroom works, but only one.
- Future visits to the old school – would like to keep an association with the old school building and able to come and use the building. Would love to still be part of it.
- Anchor building – would like to see adult day care in this building – keen to be involved.