

Elevating Greyhope Bay Centre: A Distinctive Community Hub

This case study showcases the remarkable project undertaken by Greyhope Bay, a charitable organisation, to establish the Greyhope Bay Centre—a distinguished community hub, education space, and café—at Torry Battery in Aberdeen. The project has successfully reached its completion, creating a mesmerising destination that captivates visitors.

Greyhope Bay embarked on an ambitious endeavour to enhance accessibility and unleash the full potential of Torry Battery. The initial phase involved an off-grid container conversion build, along with the development of decking, walkways, and outdoor seating, thereby elevating the site's appeal. This transformative development enabled visitors to immerse themselves in engaging heritage experiences while relishing the awe-inspiring panoramic views of Aberdeen's city and coast. The project obtained five-year planning permission and Scheduled Monument Consent, affirming the site as an extraordinary destination and paving the way for future development of this historic monument.

Beyond serving as a café and community hub, the Greyhope Bay Centre became a gateway to nature, inspiring visitors to connect with the environment and participate in educational and community-led programming. The centre emerged as a versatile venue for outdoor learning, festivals, and markets, firmly grounded in the values of community empowerment and environmental sustainability.

During the construction phase, the project prioritised sustainability and eco-friendliness. Innovative features such as a bespoke solar and battery system for power generation, waterless toilets, a circular rainwater collection/treatment system, and a wood-burning stove were seamlessly integrated. The café's operations were entrusted to The Liberty Kitchen, a local business committed to sourcing ingredients from the Greyhope Road allotments, offering an enticing array of locally produced delicacies.

The success of the Greyhope Bay Centre was made possible through fruitful collaboration with numerous organisations and community groups. The active involvement of local stakeholders, including archaeologists, artists, heritage groups, educational institutions, and the Aberdeen Harbour, enriched the project's development and programming. Their contributions ensured engaging online and onsite interpretive experiences, including a funded trail and captivating Greyhope Stories films. A strategic programme development group, established in partnership with Curated Place and Ten Feet Tall Theatre, continues to drive collaboration and community engagement.

Funding of £80,000 was awarded by the Place Based Investment Programme played a crucial role in the realisation of the Greyhope Bay Centre. The programme bolstered the project's financial backing, reducing the burden on Greyhope Bay's resources. This support from the Place Based Investment Programme ensured a strong footing for the centre's first year of operation, while demonstrating an operational model that reduced reliance on council funding.

Greyhope Bay's achievements have positioned the organisation as a beacon of success. By securing funding from the Place Based Investment Programme and showcasing operational independence, the Greyhope Bay Centre stands as a testament to the project's strength and ambition. This transformative initiative seamlessly aligns with place-based initiatives and surpasses place policy ambitions, firmly establishing Greyhope Bay as a preeminent and enduring community hub.