

SOME ECO-FACTS ABOUT THE NEW VICTORY HALL

Although we haven't formally researched it, the New Victory Hall must rank as one of the most eco-friendly village halls in Britain. It has been carefully designed and built to optimise natural elements to make it as sustainable as technically and economically feasible. Visitors frequently comment about how warm and welcoming it is compared to traditional village halls.

The building faces almost due south and has large windows and roof-lights to ensure that lighting requirements are minimised. All lights use low energy bulbs and the outside lights shine downwards to reduce light pollution in the night sky.

The building is timber framed and much of the framing used is of a relatively modern design that utilises a significant percentage of reclaimed timber. The frame incorporates approximately 350 locally-harvested straw bales (wheat) for insulation. The external walls of the main hall and the circular meeting room have been rendered by hand using lime render, which is as durable as cement but it is breathable and more eco-friendly in that it creates less CO_2 to produce and it also absorbs CO_2 as it hardens. The internal walls of the circular meeting room have been rendered with clay and painted with an eco-friendly porous paint.

The internal walls of the kitchen and toilet block use Warm Cell for insulation, which is shredded newspaper (treated to make it fire-retardant) and which has fantastic insulating properties.

Sedum has been planted on the main roof and over the foyer of the new hall and this has already become well established and harbours an increasing variety of insects, bees etc. The roof over the toilet block

is a 'brown roof' which is simply unplanted brick rubble which, over time, gets covered with weeds and other vegetation in a completely natural process.

The hall has an under-floor heating system which draws energy from a ground source heat pump system. The pipes for this are laid about 1.5m deep below the car park area and the rainwater soakaways are positioned over this so as to constantly replenish the heat in the soil. Very cold refrigerant is pumped around the external pipe-work and a heat exchanger then draws the energy out of the ground and pumps it into the heating coils under the hall floors, at about 40 degrees Centigrade. The system is working very effectively and we have a nice warm hall with relatively low heating costs for its size.

The gent's urinals are waterless to minimise water usage. Urine flows through an oil cartridge which acts a vapour barrier and prevents smells. The cartridges need to be replenished periodically but otherwise little maintenance is required and the system is, so far, working well! All hand dryers are also low energy.

The high quality topsoil for the grounds was reclaimed from locally processed sugar beet and was kindly donated by British Sugar.

The local community was, and continues to be, closely involved in the entire project, providing a willing and friendly source of help over a long period of time: there is therefore a strong sense of ownership of the building amongst local people.

The building won an award in 2009 from North Norfolk District Council for its eco-design; the Trustees are hopeful that other design awards will follow as it is, we believe, a very special building.