

Canolfan Soar (Soar Centre), Merthyr Tydfil



Canolfan Soar (Soar Centre formerly known as Zoar chapel and vestry) is one of the newest cultural venues in the valleys. Originally built in 1801, it has been remodelled many times over the years and in 2010 underwent an innovative and extensive renovation, transforming the historic buildings in the centre of Merthyr Tydfil into a high quality community arts and cultural facility.

The Grade II listed buildings now house a 250 seat theatre, dance studio, music rehearsal rooms, café bar, book shop, teaching rooms as well as meeting and conference facilities.

Canolfan a Menter Gymraeg Merthyr Tudful, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the use of the Welsh language at a community level were behind the transformation and during the first two years of operation had 55,489 visitors and worked with 105 different organisations.

Canolfan Soar is a growing social enterprise that has raised the profile of the Welsh language in Merthyr as well as widening the community of Welsh speakers and learners within the County of Merthyr Tydfil, Wales.



The Problem:

The organisation wished to incorporate renewable energy into their impressive project making it as sustainable as possible.

The buildings are set right in the heart of Merthyr Tydfil which made the use of technologies, such as biomass for heating an untenable solution.

The Solution:

WDS Green Energy installed a **Dimplex SI 30 TE ground source heat pump** in the chapel building and a **Dimplex SI 37 TE ground source heat pump** in the vestry building, both of which are coupled to under-floor heating systems and 'Smart-rad' fan convectors in the gallery above the stage area.

The high ceilings mean that fan convectors were needed to boost the heat in the main building. The dual ground source heat pump system and the 11 boreholes under the adjacent car park now provide the total heating requirement for both buildings.

The Benefits:

7.2 tonnes less carbon dioxide is pumped into the atmosphere every year using these heat pumps to heat the buildings; this is 50% less than the equivalent from gas and 70% less than oil.

WDS Green Energy helped Canolfan a Menter Gymraeg Merthyr Tudful obtain a Low Carbon Phase II grant for both the Soar Chapel and Soar vestry projects, saving them 50% of the cost of each system.

The heat pump installations not only help keep the running costs of heating these ancient building low, but also helps to keep the fabric of the building in optimum condition.

