

# Woolsery Sports & Community Hall

## Zero-carbon, multi-functional, community facility for future generations

Since its completion in 2001, the Woolsery Sports and Community Hall has become the focus of community life and the low energy design has enabled the community groups to thrive, because the running costs are less than £1 per day. The building is carbon neutral and receives an income from selling electricity back to the grid.

Since the completion of the super-insulated core building, renewable energies have been added including photovoltaics, wind turbine, ground source heat pump and passive ground cooled larder. An extension has also been built designed by Gale & Snowden, which is compatible with the original ethos of the project.

In 1997 Members of Woolsery parish were looking to the future with a new community hall that would reflect their desire to care for the natural environment as well as to provide state-of-the-art facilities for generations to come. Woolsery's new hall sets a precedent for community-based designs.

The Sports and Community Hall at Woolsery has been recognised as one of the best examples in the country of rural, community-initiated, sustainable public buildings. Woolsery Village Hall won the 2003 Civic Trust Awards special award in the Vital Villages section and was nominated in the sustainability section. The energy and water consumption of the hall has been monitored since it was completed in 2001, and uses 25% of the energy and water of consumed by a similar 'good' energy efficient building, built at that time.

This project involved community participative design using planning for real techniques and involving the community throughout the project. Over 30 different groups now regularly use the hall covering all age groups from toddlers to the over 60s. Sports activities have been developed with junior groups for football, netball, badminton and tennis and snooker. The hall will continue to be the focus of village developments and activity for the foreseeable future.

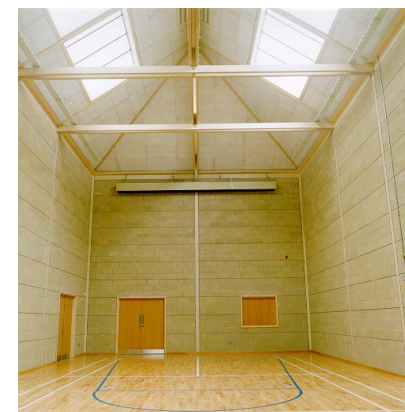
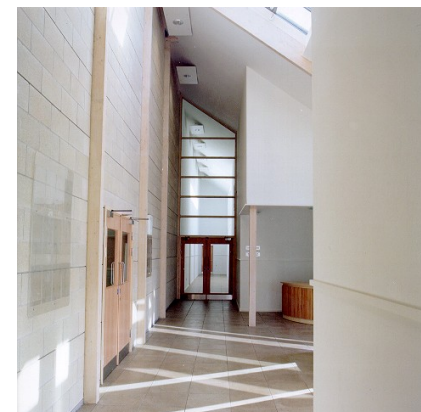
A proven commitment from the community together with this highly innovative and ecological design attracted substantial funding from Sport England who expressed special interest in the exemplary features of the design. Sport England Lottery Funding provided 84% of funds

for the project. The remainder was found from the Local Authority & Community Council of Devon, Football Association, Foundation for Sport & The Arts, Torridge Leader, charitable trusts and funds raised by the Parish Council and the community.

The flexible design incorporates multi-functional spaces such that the hall can be converted easily into a theatre, cinema and sports hall. A bowls alley, snooker room, meeting spaces, crèche, gym/fitness facilities, changing and storage areas are all included. The original design allowed for a future extension which was completed in 2011.

### Sustainable design features include:

- Maximisation of natural daylight
- Super-insulation and high performance, triple-glazed windows to minimise heat loss
- Thermal mass to reduce fluctuation of internal temperatures
- Building orientation to benefit from passive solar gain
- Careful detailing minimises thermal bridging and maximises airtightness
- Energy efficient lighting and appliances
- Passive ventilation systems including CO<sub>2</sub> activated controls to match occupancy levels in theatre and cinema
- Water efficiency measures including harvested rainwater for flushing WCs, and low water appliances
- Breathable construction
- Integrated Permaculture external landscape design including an earth amphitheatre for day/evening performances, which also serves to shelter the building from north winds



*"A magnificent achievement, successful architecturally and in meeting the community's objectives - it should serve as a source of inspiration to similar villages"*  
The Civic Trust



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