

Case study:
Enterprise Renewal
Business Grant

Region
Flintshire

Sector
Retail and Hospitality

Project value
£6,093 and £5,504

AFONWEN CRAFT AND ANTIQUE CENTRE AND EDENSHINE RESTAURANT

A renowned visitor destination is proving an historic building is no barrier to creating a sustainable future.



You can lose yourselves for many happy hours in Afonwen Craft and Antique Centre. Over the last 32 years this family business has become a must-see destination with its extensive collection of antiques and collectables, demonstrations and workshops from visiting artists, well-stocked gift shop and restaurant specialising in fresh local produce.

Its waterside location inside a converted textile mill is all part of the charm. But running a business from an historic building brings its own challenges, especially when you're looking to reduce running costs and burnish your eco-credentials. In winter the centre was hard to heat and was packed with inefficient strip lighting. An Enterprise Renewal grant allowed owners Janet Monshin Dallolio and husband Adrian to install a set of double-glazed entrance doors to stop frigid air rushing up the corridor. An electrician took on the massive task of replacing all the light bulbs and fittings with LED lights.



The result was a warmer, more welcoming building with better-lit displays – and a 14% reduction in electricity costs. "In this uncertain economic environment, it's important to concentrate on energy efficiency and the sustainability of the business," says Janet.

It's why they applied for a separate grant for their Edenshine Restaurant, where Janet and her team serve up freshly cooked dishes including their signature beef and ale pie. They upgraded four windows including two in the kitchen that didn't previously open, creating better heat retention in cold months and improved air flow in summer. An upright freezer and three microwaves were replaced with more energy-efficient models.



The grant also meant they could deploy a brand-new electronic point of sale (Epos) system with upgraded till and tablets for taking orders – that worked perfectly on outside tables even in the glare of the summer sun.

"Now we're seeing faster ordering, more efficient service from the front of house and kitchen, and smoother communication between all staff," explains Janet. "It makes for a better customer experience and reduced stress levels for our loyal team. Our Enterprise Renewal grants have enabled us to do all this work more quickly than we could otherwise have done – and see the improvements with instant effect. It's also given us the flexibility to consider investment in other sustainable projects."