

Library case study

Ebbw Vale Library, Wales

Contractor
Timescale
Architect

Blaenau Gwent Council
3 weeks on site
Blaenau Gwent Council



Ebbw Vale Library, part of Aneurin Leisure, is based in a classical, stone-built Bethcar Methodist Chapel. With funding secured from a Welsh Government Grant which aims to establish libraries as community hubs, Ebbw Vale Library is the last of the six Aneurin Leisure libraries in Blaenau Gwent to benefit from refurbishment works.



Brief

Blaenau Gwent Council sought to modernise the existing space without losing any of the traditional features of the historic building which is located in the heart of the town.

With PC's shoehorned into available spaces and outdated library shelving the existing layout no longer met the needs of the community. The council were looking to create a 'reader friendly' environment that is welcoming and inviting to different customer groups, from families to IT users and the elderly.

Innova secured a competitive tender with an innovative design and layout that addressed Ebbw Vale Library's aim to maximise space, increase overall usage and enable better performing stock.

“ The refurbishment will transform service delivery at Ebbw Vale, enabling greater community involvement, and improved IT facilities. ”

Anthony Hughes, Managing Director of Aneurin Leisure





Solution

By working with architects and librarians, the upgrade to the late Victorian building has seen cutting edge technology, IT systems and engaging, modern, bespoke furniture incorporated into the traditional space, whilst remaining sensitive to the building's history.

Beyond the mix of modern and traditional and the new digital services, the library can now accommodate community activities including art classes and events for children, thanks to its uncluttered, spacious layout.

Upon entry to the refurbished library – a central feature 'rotunda' entices visitors to browse, sit and read.

On the ground floor, technology has been integrated seamlessly with dual functioning units incorporating IT hot desks on one side with book shelving on the other. This maximises central space and replaces tightly packed and dated shelving units that left little room for browsers.

The mezzanine first floor now offers a traditional reading environment with ample study facilities and the flexibility for staff to reconfigure the space for events.

Ebbw Vale Library is now a valuable, multipurpose space that will engage the community and act as its hub long into the future.