

Speldiburn, Bressay

Speldiburn, the premises of a school that closed in 2014, is now home to the Speldiburn Café, the Good As New Shop and a Community Office, as well as rooms available for hire by organisations and individuals. In recent years, Bressay Development Limited, who occupy and care for the building, were able to harness the opportunity of the COVID lockdowns and have Speldiburn re-fitted with more energy efficient and climate-friendly systems. In 2021, air source heat pumps and solar panels were installed. Since their instalment, the buildings energy-related bills have dropped by 60% overall and the whole building is now significantly warmer. In the light summer months, it is expected that the building will, at times, be powered by solar power alone.

How does it all work?

The solar panels were fitted by Nordri Ltd and sit on top of the roof of the old school, and is Nordri Ltd's biggest solar installation to date. The 44 different 340w panels sit atop the old school building and capture UV light from the east and west facing sides of the roof.

Shetland Heatwise installed the air source heat pumps along the walls each room in place of the old radiators. These pumps take in air from outside the building and, using electricity, compresses it down so that when it is released into the building, there is more energy in the form of heat.

‘Energy bills went down by 60% and the building is now so much warmer’

How did they do it?

After initial suggestions from Energy Efficiency Scotland in 2018, organisers were able to get quotes in 2019 from both Nordri Ltd, for the solar panels, and Shetland Heatwise, for the air-source heat pumps. Efforts were then made to secure the relevant planning permission from the Shetland Islands Council, and applications were made for the funding which was provided by HIE and CARES. In March 2021, all systems were fitted and work was completed on the building.

