

East Lothian wedding venue expands

A venue on a historic East Lothian estate, once praised by Robert Burns as ‘the most romantic sweet place’ he’d ever seen, is celebrating its 10th anniversary with the launch of a brand-new wedding and event experience.

Dunglass Estate in Cockburnspath will open a new 200 capacity pavilion to its grounds at the end of November, with support from a £777,825 funding package from Bank of Scotland.

Forming part of the bank’s £1.8 billion lending commitment to Scottish businesses, the funding will also support the refurbishment of new guest accommodation. The luxury pavilion will boast underfloor heating and on-trend long tables.

Established in 2009 by Simon and Joyce Usher, the award-winning wedding venue at Dunglass Estate has become synonymous with its 15th century gothic church and spectacular views of the East Lothian countryside.

By 2021, the number of wedding bookings are set to double, with the company’s turnover on-track to reach £500,000.

Simon Usher, owner of Dunglass Estate, said: “Estates can’t just rely on agriculture anymore, they must try and diversify and help to support the rural economy. We are very lucky at Dunglass that we have been blessed with such a unique and magical setting that really is like nowhere else.

“The jewel in our crown is the church with picture-perfect views out to the sea. To enhance this, we are about to launch

a new event pavilion, which can hold up to 200 guests.

“This sort of expansion is worlds away from when we first started a decade ago. It was just myself and Joyce juggling a new business with two small children and covering a multitude of tasks.

“We only held six weddings in our first year. By 2021, we expect to be hosting 60.”

The expansion of the wedding venue will not only mark ten years of hosting nuptials. In November, the Usher family will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the family purchasing the wider Dunglass Estate from its former owners, the Halls.

The family is known locally for their charitable donations to the Usher Hall in Edinburgh, and historically for pioneering blended whisky in the early 1860's.

Simon said: “Without the support of Bank of Scotland we wouldn't have been able to achieve what we have; an extraordinary venue in a stunning location. Robert Burns said it was the ‘most romantic sweet place’ he'd ever seen, and you would know exactly what he meant if you chose to visit.

“We look forward to continuing our valued relationship with Bank of Scotland and for the bank to help us to continue offering unforgettable experiences at Dunglass.”

Daniel Burns, Relationship Manager at Bank of Scotland, said: “We've been working by the side of the Usher family for more than 50 years, so its pleasing to see that they are continuing to make history.

“The wedding sector is booming right now in Scotland. With more than 27,000 ceremonies taking place last year, Simon and Joyce's decision to expand their business could not have come at a better time.

“Championing ambitious businesses like Dunglass Estate is part of our mission to help Britain prosper. Our team at Bank of Scotland is on hand to support the growth of Scottish firms, regardless of their size.”

