

# **Duncan Place Community Hub transformed**

## **Innovative Scottish product brings a modern solution to a heritage building.**

Staff and users at the Duncan Place community centre have witnessed the historic but draughty building being transformed, thanks to an inventive Scottish firm.

Duncan Place in Leith provides a range of activities, classes and shared workspaces, but managers were concerned about the increasing costs of heating the B-Listed building, formerly part of Leith Academy.

Now the community and enterprise hub has been transformed thanks to an ingenious product invented by a former banker who was determined to develop an affordable solution for upgrading single-glazed windows.

A team from Gecko Glazing in Edinburgh have installed 63 Gecko Panes – secondary glazing panels – in the building, instantly making it cheaper to heat while also reducing both condensation and noise.

Nicola Lamberton, Development Manager at Duncan Place, told how the charity faced significant costs to refurbish the existing, heritage windows, because of strict planning regulations – until they discovered Gecko Glazing.

She added: “Getting the windows removed and restored was never going to be a viable option for us. Duncan Place Community Hub is a charity and it would not have been possible financially.

“We would also have needed permission to put up scaffolding for months and would have been left without any windows while they were being refurbished, which would have added the problem rather than helping.

“Gecko Glazing was a fantastic and cost-effective option, allowing secondary glazing to be installed without obstructing the existing windows – you can barely notice they are there.

“The process was quick and simple with virtually no disruption and Gecko Glazing were a brilliant firm to deal with, making it a seamless process. “

Easy-to-install Gecko Panes cut window heat loss by up to 50%, helping customers to dramatically reduce both bills and their carbon footprint. They are a fraction of the price of double glazing, while delivering 80% of the efficiencies.

Originally designed for use in homes, custom-sized Gecko Panes can be fitted with minimal disruption. Unlike costlier alternative solutions, such as sliding aluminium frames or magnetic inserts, they do not prevent windows from opening or interfere with shutters.

Gecko Glazing is the brainchild of former banker, Gareth Claase who gave up his financial career to pursue his passion for finding an effective and environmentally friendly solution to upgrading single-glazed windows.

Gareth, a dad of two, said: “Scotland is full of listed buildings like Duncan Place, where the owners or tenants struggle to keep the buildings warm because of old windows that haemorrhage heat.

“The cost of living crisis on top of the climate emergency has now made that situation untenable because of both the financial and environmental toll. People need simple, affordable solutions and that’s what I was determined to develop. It is brilliant to see that our panes have been such

a fantastic help for the team at Duncan Place.”

Since being launched In October 2021, Gecko Glazing has been widely praised in the booming retrofit sustainability sector. Unlike other methods of retrofit glazing, the Gecko Panes can be installed in minutes and cause no damage to existing windows or frames, making them ideal for tenants, owners and landlords of listed buildings.

Gareth added: “We’ve already proven how effective Gecko Panes are in people’s homes, but projects like Duncan Place show there is also huge potential in commercial properties. There are many museums, schools, hospitals and other community buildings across Scotland which could benefit in the same way.”

Duncan Place was owned by The City of Edinburgh Council, which closed it in 2014 and earmarked it for possible demolition. However, a vigorous community campaign was launched to save the building. The campaign secured £1.2 million of regeneration funding, the building was handed over the Duncan Place charity and reopened as a community hub in 2020.

Now the thriving centre offers a host of groups, classes and activities from yoga and art to Tai Chi and children’s Lego sessions.

Manager Nicola Lamberton added: “People are really noticing the difference in temperature since we got Gecko Glazing installed. The transformation has been brilliant.”

<https://geckoglazing.co.uk/>

