

# Porty Central reach their target to Open the Doors

Porty Central has announced that by the early hours of Sunday morning 561 people had donated to their Crowdfunder campaign, taking it just over the line to reach their target of £25,000.

They now have enough to open the doors and get things going at the Town Hall. The funding will allow them to employ a member of staff to reopen the hall this summer for parties, weddings and dances. But the “lift off fund” is also intended to provide a “cash flow cushion” so the Crowfunder page [remains open here.](#)

The comments on the Crowfunder are heartfelt:

- “Thank you for doing this for the community!”
- “Nearly there, many congrats to you all for all the hard work. This is a great vote of confidence in the project and your vision. Woohoo!”
- “Because it’s a magnificent building and the community needs it. Well done to the group of Porty locals who have worked so hard to get it this far.”
- “This would be wonderful. Especially a local cinema.”

The trustees began working on the project three years ago to take over the property which has now been renovated by the council with the help of a £350,000 grant from the Scottish

Government Place Based Investment Fund. The charity, funded by grants from the National Lottery and the Portobello & Craigmillar Community Fund as well as from sales of the Porty Food Map, will now take the hall over officially on a lease from the council as soon as the terms can be agreed.

The work now begins in earnest with a long list of stuff to do to get the hall shipshape for the first day when the doors will be opened to the public.



Jennifer Elliot Chair and Geoff Pearson Secretary of Portobello Central a charity which is leasing the Portobello Town Hall from the council on a 25 year lease to bring it back into community use and management PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter

Chair Jennifer Elliot explained: “We need to get in and do dull but important things like Legionella testing, checking that the fire systems are working and that there is adequate toilet provision. The drains still need to be looked at which is also important. Really we just have to make sure the building works. It was working, and we are confident it will,

but we will have to look after the day to day matters, not the council. So we have to take out insurance and think about the health and safety aspects. This is the bit of the building which will make it fun.”

The plan is to hire out the building and grounds to make the hall financially self sustaining and as well as one-off events the trustees are looking for regular bookings from clubs and other organisations. The expectation last year was that the hire income will cover operational costs of around £15,000 per month. The trustees also expect to raise funding for improvements to accessibility and energy efficiency – each of which may require around £500,000.



Chloe Shand, Hobby Artist, sketching Portobello Town Hall.  
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