

Carlisle Memorial Church

Acquired by the Belfast Buildings Trust in 2011, Carlisle Memorial Church is a central project on their heritage restoration programme. Initial emergency stabilisation work was completed on the building in 2012 and in 2015 the Trust completed phase 1 of capital works on the building. These works have delivered a permanently repaired roof and temporary internal services meaning that the building is now available for public use.

Moving forward the Trust is looking to realise a vision for the project based around heritage-led regeneration. They are also looking to promote job creation and spin off economic development opportunities for individuals and communities living in the wider North Belfast area.



What support has NBEI provided?

To help realise this vision, BBT approached NBEI to explore how the programme could help them deliver a sustainable landmark asset in the long term. NBEI felt that the project needed a strong commercial focus and would benefit from working with an individual with a sales and marketing background

NBEI provided the project with investment to fund the services of a business mentor who has worked with the project over the last year. The mentor has carried out market research to help develop sales channels for the project across a number of areas which include events and the creative industries

The mentor has also worked with the group to help raise the profile of the asset and advertise it to new audiences and potential users. Finally the mentor has provided guidance on pricing structures, branding and what type of promotional material might be most effective

How has NBEI support helped and who has benefited so far?

- The mentoring work provided by NBEI has helped Belfast Building's Trust better understand the market potential of the asset and has offered strategic support on how best the project can move forward in terms of generating sales and regular income streams;
- The appointed mentor has also developed links with interests linked to New York's film industry who are exploring the potential of Carlisle Memorial as a film location set. Some of these contacts are also interested in connecting with the wider local community and providing outreach opportunities to young people interested in drama and the creative arts.
- The mentoring has also helped to attract the musical Jesus Christ superstar who will use Carlisle Memorial as a performance venue over the Summer of 2018;
- In addition to the forthcoming musical, Carlisle Memorial events during 2018 which have included the University of Ulster fashion show, the Belfast Beer Festival and an event about the building itself, which included participation from the Ulster Orchestra and HR Prince Charles.