It is interesting when a project moves from one stage to the next. The Church heritage project recently received the “permission to start” from the Heritage Lottery Fund so we have now moved from “application” to “action”!

The application stage was largely taken up with forming an effective team to pull together information, identify potential funding sources, decide what to include in our application, complete some very long and complex forms and, finally, wait to hear if we had been successful. And successful we were!

We now have to move forward on at least three fronts. Firstly, the church must be made wind and watertight, secondly it has to be developed so that it is able to house the new heritage centre while ensuring that this does not detract from its main purpose as a place of worship. The final aspect is to gather the material to form the heritage displays. We have our work cut out.

We have already appointed an experienced conservation architect who will guide us through much of the project and she is already working with Fabric Convenor, Derek Macgregor, to make a start on the essential repairs and is preparing initial ideas on how to incorporate the heritage centre into the church.

At the same time, a team is being created to lead the heritage aspect of the project. Pam Mitchell and Sheila Anderson are gathering people with an interest in heritage from both the church and wider village community to work on this aspect. They will be starting to collect information, artifacts, stories, reminiscences and more before organising them into displays for the heritage centre. As part of our submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have committed to feature the heritage of the church through stories of local families and to include a Jane Haining display. The heritage team may, however, decide to include additional material about other aspects of the area which might include information on, for example, Covenanters, famous local people, former village tradespeople or some other aspects of the heritage of Dunscore.

If you have any information, records, artifacts or anything else that relates to the heritage of the church or village or if you might be able to help the project in any way, please contact Pam or Sheila.