



# Northumberland National Park

## Falstone Tearooms

### Background:

Falstone old school was built in 1870, and provided education for pupils from the village and outlying farmsteads for nearly 100 years.

Following its closure as a school the building was used as a village hall and in the 1990's as a tearoom. The tearoom closed in 2002, after proving uneconomically viable.

After community consultation which identified the need for a shop & relaxed meeting place, Northumberland National Park purchased the disused & crumbling building. It was decided to not only restore the important local landmark in keeping with its past, but to also build a facility fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century by incorporating energy efficient features.

### Before Restoration:



View when entering Falstone



Poor access



inside the schoolroom

### A Sustainable Development Project:

The school building now houses a shop and meeting place for the village, and a working example of energy efficiency. The new tearooms now has photovoltaic cells on the roof to convert daylight into electricity, the first of its kind in the National Park; a biomass wood pellet boiler to heat radiators and water, the only publicly viewable domestic boiler of its kind in the North East; and a tank to harness rainwater to use for flushing the toilets, another first for our National Park. The community benefits socially, environmentally and also economically as there are job opportunities and 1% of the business profits go to the parish council for community projects.



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### **Falstone Tea Rooms, after restoration showing its photovoltaic cells**

The Community Celebrates its past:

To help the National Park gain a better understanding of the community's feelings about the old school room we held a local history evening where we invited people to tell us of their memories. The evening was lively and enjoyable, and shaped the focus of Falstone Art Project, which is in the process of producing a sculpture to celebrate community heritage.