

Building Community for Over 100 Years: a fundraising update

By Charles Elderton and Carolyn Jenkins
Trustees of the 43rd Bristol Scout Group

The importance of replacing our dilapidated wooden Scout Hut with a new Scout Community Centre is about far more than just a new building.

The Past - Our history

It was in 1911 that the Curate of St Mary's Church, Canon Whytehead, formed the 43rd Bristol Scout Group, and since then the Scouts have been an integral part of the fabric of life in Stoke Bishop, Sneyd Park and beyond. The Group initially met in the basement of a house in Downleaze, moving to its current site off Kewstoke Road in the 1950s. The hut, which we still use today, is a second-hand wooden building, which was patched together in sections from war-era Stoke Bishop Primary School and, we believe, ex-military huts.

Since then, several generations of local children and parents have been involved with the Group in some way. We are so proud to hear the many stories of how being a part of the Group created friendships, gave confidence and provided much needed life skills.



The Present - Our Group today

Today the Group is thriving. We have around 80 to 100 local boys and girls attending Beaver, Cub and Scout sessions each week and we would like to expand. The Group is supported by over 40 adult volunteers, as well as young leaders and Duke of Edinburgh award participants. The Group is committed to providing these and future generations of young people with the chance to

become good citizens, to develop the skills they need for life and have fun.

Our dedicated Trustee Board, volunteer leaders and helpers are simply custodians of the Group. We want to pass it on in better shape and with solid foundations (excuse the pun!) to thrive and develop for the next 100+ years. Our existing hut is now beyond all reasonable repair, has no modern facilities and requires urgent replacement.

The Present - Fundraising past £300k

As a team we have been working towards this goal for nearly ten years. We have secured a 35 year lease and planning permission from Bristol City Council. We have recently reached a major fundraising milestone, having **now raised over £300,000 towards the project**. This has been the result of much (and ongoing) hard work and is in so many ways down to the amazing community support for the project. We are so very grateful to the many local residents, groups, businesses and grant funders who have supported our events, fundraised for and with us or provided grants.

Many of you will have attended our annual Christmas tree sale, quiz night or plant sale, and our monthly Saturday morning café is very popular!

The Future - Getting the build completed

This is a significant local community project and everyone who has been involved so far, in whatever capacity, should feel proud. Our new Scout Community Centre will be a warm and welcoming space that can be used by our Group and many local community groups and organisations, and we are keen to start the build in the next 12 months or so. To make this happen we will need to accelerate the funding

available – raising at least a further £100k through our own fundraising events, but also seeking donations, continuing to apply for grants, and/or with philanthropic loans.

To find out more about this community project or to donate, please visit www.43rdbristolscouts.org.uk or contact chairman@43rdbristolscouts.org.uk.

Thank you.

