



# the adventure

FEEDBACK REPORT – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Compiled on behalf of the 1<sup>st</sup> Pentwyn Scout Group

The following is an account of our experiences as a group whilst going through the process of acquiring a building from Cardiff City Council. The building had been designated as one to be handed over to an interested party with the view of taking over the management & maintenance of that building, in our case the Llanederyn Play Centre (know locally as the adventure).

The account is in no way damning of the process or individuals involved in the process but observations made during the process. The collective involved comprised of management (group & district levels), trustees (group executive committee), leaders, members & parents). The group would like to enforce from the outset their gratitude in acquiring this building which now provides the opportunity for the group to grow & develop, any negative feedback reported are only intended to enable the process to be enhanced in the future both for the Council & applicant.

- **The process was extremely long**
  - Initial enquiry submitted in Dec 2014 by the group had to be repeated at a later date on the group's behalf by Scout Wales.
- **Deadlines were tight**, given the overall length of the process some deadlines were short making it difficult for us as a volunteer organisation to complete on time and a process map would have made this easier for us to plan & manage.
- **Insufficient information**, regarding process flow, what would happen when & in what order. It was difficult to communicate to our interested parties how long the process would take to acquire use of the building.
  - Not officially confirmed at any stage that we would get the building, sometimes very cryptic, led to morale issues regarding whether it would actually happen.
- **Regular updates** after each process as to next step
  - However not aware at any given time where we were in the process chain.
- **Boundary error** on the original plan contained a significant error only highlighted at the end of the process. It was disappointing as we had "sold" it to the parent group as including these spaces with control to maintain & develop them for scouting activities.

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- This ultimately would not have affected our application although does change how we will develop these areas which we would have liked to manage & develop environmentally as well as structurally.
- **Unaware of the SATC** (Scout Association Trust Corporation), this body would have been best employed much earlier in the process, this is primarily our ignorance.
  - Future applicants from Scouting would benefit from being made aware of the SATC early in the process & from our perspective would advise contacting at the onset (the charge is fixed irrespective of time employed by SATC).
- **Good guidance with creating a business plan** & what was expected to be included.
- **Flexible meetings** outside of working hours were very helpful but when not possible the council accepted that Scout Wales & District Team would be able to represent us for those day time meetings.
  - Volunteers for the group all have jobs or are in full time education making 9-5pm meetings sometimes difficult to achieve, allowing Scout Wales & District Leaders to represent us was invaluable.
- **Assigning of a single point of contact**, although various Council contacts were used all the way through once Jane Clemence became a continual contact it coordinated well enabling us to ask any questions & flexible meetings with Jane was invaluable.
- **Community survey** was not given enough notice to organise properly
  - The survey was completed during a busy time in the scouts calendar however it was completed although an enhanced survey could have been completed if more notice to plan & conduct.
- **Requirement to survey the building** could have benefitted from more notice as this was not budgeted for being completed by us & difficult getting an engineer at short notice.
  - however the fee was waived on this occasion as a donation by the engineer acting on our behalf.
- **Good state of repair**, the building being brought up to a good standard by the Council at their cost was a welcome gesture & the building was cleared prior to our use. The building was handed over in a very good state of repair with not too many surprises.
- **Final signing of lease** process was unclear as to who needed to sign what & when, this was facilitated when SATC were involved.
- **Good final handover** of building & information provided regarding the building was good, the handover file provide by Louise Thomas was particularly useful.

**CONCLUSION**

This was a lengthy process with insufficient information at the beginning & no process map. Good communication provided when single point of contact was employed (for both parties). Guidance to what format was required & what information was needed for example the business plan & community survey was good. Advice of legal representation requirement was not specific & if scouting is the applicant in the future then providing advice to contact or at least explore the SATC as an option early on would be a good recommendation. Advice early in the process of the need to commission a building survey & to complete a community survey at some point would have been beneficial much earlier & any other costs that might be incurred during the process to enable the applicant to plan properly & manage resource to achieve in a timely manner when required. Once the building was made available sufficient checks should have been made as to the accuracy of what is being made available for instance in this case the lease boundary was incorrect throughout the process. The final information & support during & after the handover was good, the commitment from the Council to provide the site fit for purpose was reassuring.

The Group is extremely grateful for the opportunity to manage & develop this site not only for Scouting but for the local community.

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