

HISTORY OF OUR DEVELOPMENT

'Nurturing an inventive and curious mind is probably the most valuable gift we can give to our children'

The GRC was set up in 1985 by a local arts organisation, the Courtyard Arts Trust, in Gloucester Docks. Services included:

- The Scrapstore
- Play & Arts Equipment Hire
- The Playwagon – mobile soft play for under 5's
- Creative Workshops
- Advice & Information

The decision to set up a Resource Centre for the county had been prompted by the lack of support or association to represent children's play at that time, plus the example of the successful Bristol and Birmingham centres that demonstrated so well the advantages a resource centre could provide.

The Docks Development in the late 1980's meant we had to leave Gloucester and relocate to commercial premises in Cheltenham. Membership continued to grow and demand for services snowballed.

By 1994 we faced increasing difficulties in raising sufficient revenue funding to deliver our services which prompted us to take a significant and, at that time, bold decision to launch a capital fund raising campaign to buy our own building.

City Works, in the heart of the Barton area of Gloucester City presented a unique opportunity. A Victorian former textile factory that had been in operation from the late 1800's until 1993 when it had been closed down. City Works provided the space for us to grow and develop as we needed to, along with the capacity to develop other facilities to generate income and secure our future.

The City Works Project was underway!



City Works as it was in 1995 when we bought it

By 1995 the campaign had successfully attracted sufficient capital to purchase City Works and move the GRC in. Over the following six years we carried out a staged refurbishment as we raised the necessary funding. City Works was completed in 2000 and is now home to a number of community, arts and commercial enterprises alongside some of the best facilities for events and arts activities in the county. The entire development cost £710,000.

We've always placed great value on carrying out our activities in ways that impact as little as possible on the environment. The refurbishment was therefore carried out re-using as much of the building materials and fixtures as we could. This included radiators, light fittings, window frames, bricks, floorboards, granite sets and the well water system. Since completion City Works has been fully occupied and regularly booked for a wide range of activities and events.



To this our beautiful building completely restored and open for business in 2000!

In 2011 we are now embarking on the next phase of improvement that involves working with the Solar Co-Op to install the second largest community owned solar energy plant in the country. We have always wanted to install solar but capital costs have been prohibitive. Partnership with the Solar Co-Op means the project can be realised and in a way that will bring benefit to community organisations and individuals who take advantage of the opportunity to invest. With such a substantial roof this is an exciting and positive step for us not only because it will reduce running costs in the building but because we will also be helping to increase renewable energy production.