

Examples of successful ‘community asset transfers’

The following examples are of BCC-owned assets that have been leased to VCSE organisations on a concessionary basis, where the grant of a CAT lease has prevented the asset from closing down, or has enabled the tenant to attract substantial investment.

1. Redcatch Community Centre

Lease: 20 years, granted in 2015, at a peppercorn rent.

[Redcatch Community Centre](#) is a compact, single storey building on the edge of Redcatch Park. The building was first used as a day centre for older people, which closed after attendance figures dropped. It consists of a medium-sized hall, a stage, state-of-the-art AV equipment, a well-appointed kitchen, modern toilets, and a small garden. The property was saved from demolition when a lease was first granted to the newly formed Redcatch Community Association in 1992.

Its success is largely down to a group of dedicated, regular volunteers (no paid staff) who are experienced, pro-active and who work hard to keep this a well-maintained and attractive community venue. In 2009, it was voted the ‘Bristol Community Venue of the Year’ by Voscur.



The building is home to a wide range of regular events and activities, but is also available for one-off hire by individuals, local groups, and commercial hirers. Despite having one of the lowest hire rates in Bristol, the Centre generates enough income to cover all its costs – it does not rely on regular grants or BCC support.

The management committee has used its experience and contacts to attract corporate support, money from planning obligations, and some one-off grants. Over a 10-year period, the organisation has completely refurbished every space in the building and has invested in energy-saving lighting, doors, windows, and equipment.

2. Campus Pool

Lease: 25 years at a peppercorn rent, granted in 2015.



[Purpose-built indoor concrete skatepark](#) constructed in the disused Bishopsworth swimming pool with approx 1,000m² internal floorspace.

After the municipal swimming pool closed, the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership formed a steering group to explore the future of the site. Options included re-use as a community-managed pool, housing, a landscaped garden, and other community uses. The steering group prioritised the needs of young people and selected a proposal to convert the building into an indoor skate park. The immediate saving to BCC was £80K (the estimated cost of demolition).

The tenant, [Campus Skateparks CIC](#), has created a large, state-of-the art all-weather skate park, a community café, skate shop, and community meeting room facilities. The carpark and the grassed areas around the building have the potential to be used for a market, carparking, art installations, community food growing and a war memorial.

All surplus income is re-invested to constantly upgrade the facilities and to deliver a unique, much-loved youth service for children and young people from all over Bristol. Campus Pool runs a skate club, skateboard tuition, and the cafe is a favourite local meeting point and community engagement tool.

3. The Ardagh

Lease: 35 years, at a reduced rent, with profit share, granted in 2019.

The Ardagh is a unique space, accessible to the whole community, that brings much-needed regeneration to one of North Bristol's best loved facilities. It consists of a 14,000m² community-managed sports & leisure facility, set in the heart of Horfield Common, and provides tennis and multi-sports courts, a recently refurbished pavilion building with café and public toilets, public gardens, and employment and volunteering opportunities.

The Friends of Horfield Common originally set up a mobile café, which was an instant hit with the thousands of dog walkers, tennis players, and local residents visiting the Common for leisure and recreation each week. The Council-run pavilion building with changing rooms and toilets was in poor condition and urgently required substantial investment to make it fit-for-purpose and to save it for the next generation.

The grant of a long lease to the [Ardagh Community Trust](#) helped to lever in more than £300K of capital grants and loans. A large and very determined team of volunteers, led by a small, experienced team of trustees, refurbished the dilapidated pavilion and created a brand new café and community facility.

Since the Ardagh was handed over, the Trust has transformed it from a neglected, tired-looking site into a thriving community hub, growing most of its own plants, hiring out the sports courts, and hosting a range of different activities, including a forest school, a repair café, arts & crafts workshops, community meeting room, etc.

