

As part of this year's Takeover Day, organised by the charity Kids in Museums, museums, galleries and arts organisations up and down the country were taken over by children and teenagers. Cheltenham Science Group wants to open an interactive science centre in Cheltenham to enable the public to experience, investigate and enjoy hands-on science. Although we don't have a centre yet, we were taken over, too!



Caerwyn Parry, Ieuan Parry, Erykah Cameron, Isabel Lutter, Harry Doxey

Since becoming a not-for-profit Community Interest Company in June this year, Cheltenham Science Group has already been involved with the early years' discover zone at Cheltenham Science Festival, the Midsummer Fiesta, the summer "In the Making" exhibition at the Wilson and the Cheltenham Literature Festival.

Cheltenham Science Group are passionate about inspiring a new generation to love science, technology, engineering and maths and want children and teenagers to be at the heart of planning what we do in the future. For this reason, in partnership with the Aston Project, we took five kids to At-Bristol Science Centre on Saturday 21st November 2015 to see what they thought of science centres and whether they would like to see one in Cheltenham.

“It was an amazing experience. I liked being able to touch all the exhibits.”

Harry, aged 14



The Aston Project was set up in Cheltenham in 2011 in memory of Neighbourhood Officer PC Lynn Aston. The project aims to work with young people (aged 9-17) by identifying their interests and engaging them in constructive activity through which they build credits towards a reward activity. The credit scoring activities fall broadly into four categories; community based, discipline based, character/team building or vocational. Find out more at [www.theastonproject.co.uk](http://www.theastonproject.co.uk)

The kids, aged between 9 and 14, were given the task of being Science Centre Design Consultants for the day. They were asked what activities and exhibits would they include, how much they should charge and how they would encourage people to visit. The group most enjoyed the more physical and interactive exhibits, particularly when there was a competitive element, and thought we should include a wide variety of different topics. They were also keen to leave space for demonstrations and talks as we had all enjoyed listening to the “Destination Space” talk. As PCSO Trevor May said, “I have learnt lots of things today; like how to poo in space!”

Police Sergeant Nicola Nolan said, “There is a clear need for something similar in Cheltenham” which is why Cheltenham Science Group are hoping to set up a temporary science centre in Cheltenham during half term in February 2016. We will be guided by the advice put forward by the focus group on Saturday. We would also be interested to hear what other people think we should include, please take the time to complete this [online survey](#).

We are also looking for partners and sponsors to help us with things like:

- the cost of creating our own exhibits (this could be in the form of donated materials),
- advertising and publicity costs,
- hiring (or borrowing) a van to go and fetch any exhibits we are able to borrow from other museums,
- insurance costs.

Any companies that are able to support us will have their logo prominently displayed for the duration of the event and on our website. Key partners will also feature on any publicity and representatives will be invited to the evening event.