

Cabin Report 2021-2023

<https://www.andovertrees.org.uk/the-cabin>

It has been part of our vision for Harmony Woods, Andover from the outset to build an off- grid, sustainable, field-study base, and volunteer room, one that is sensitive to its surroundings and sits well in the landscape. We applied for this grant to help us build this space, to further the work we do and create more opportunities for the charity and its beneficiaries.

PHASE 1 Frame & Roof

June-August 2021

The cabin build project began with a collaboration between Andover Trees United and The Carpenters' Fellowship in 2021. They constructed the frame as a part-donation; this included processing the timber by hand using locally-felled (Harewood Forest) cedar and larch trees, which were purchased from nearby Middleton Estate. The construction involved several community events – axe-hewing, frame-making, the frame raising – where around 150 volunteers assisted, either by taking part alongside the carpenters under expert tuition or as the ground support and catering team.

Volunteers came from the local community and from across the UK to take part in these unique events. One volunteer even travelled from Spain.

Between June and August 2021 the build stages included:

- June: Axe hewing the main 6m long central support posts
- June/ July: Supporting a mobile mill onsite for a week to process the remaining timbers
- July: post hole digging and concrete pour
- July/ August: 5 weeks of framing (processing the timbers into jointed sections)
- August: frame raising

Phase 1 of the build showcased sustainable, low impact building techniques and offered a week's apprenticeship with one of the Carpenters as well as other opportunities for community involvement.

November 2021-January 2022

Following completion of the timber frame, a barn style roof was added, which will support solar panels.

ATU volunteers installed underground pipework to divert rainwater from the roof to the wildlife pond, removing the need to top it up with mains water in the ever-increasing spells of hot and dry weather.

PHASE 2 The Basic Build – External walls, windows, shutters, flooring

July 2022 – March 2023

A carpenter builder was appointed in July to continue the build into Phase 2 and complete the basic structure.

Volunteers, skilled and unskilled, were invited to support at all stages.

The aim of this phase was to achieve a weathertight and secure structure and complete the thermal envelope of the build. To this end, external walls, windows, shutters and flooring were completed.

PHASE 3 The internal fit-out:

- **internal flooring, walls and ceilings, insulation, doors, banisters and safety rails**
- **electrics and plumbing, installing a wood burner**
- **storage areas**
- **a workshop space, a volunteer rest area and a kitchen.**

July – October 2023

Due to the rapidly increasing cost of building materials, especially timber, the funds raised against a budget put together in 2019 were insufficient to complete the internal work, the budget for which having had to be spent to complete the main structure and instal a security system.

Although incomplete, the building has provided shelter against the elements over late winter and early spring 2023, enabling activities to proceed that would otherwise have been cancelled.

A further phase of fundraising is underway which will see the final phase of the building works resume in July 2023 and be completed by the end of October.



**Additional photographs, blogs and funders can be found here: <https://www.andovertrees.org.uk/the-cabin>
Fundraising reports can be found here: <https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/woodland-classroom/>**