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**DIY SOS starts Blackpool build for BBC Children in Need**

*BBC One programme takes on ambitious charity special*

Today (28th June 2016) BBC television’s most popular building series, DIY SOS, started work on one of its most ambitious and heartfelt projects to date to raise money for BBC Children in Need. Nick Knowles, DIY SOS presenter, and the ‘Purple Shirts’ team began transforming a Blackpool-based young carers centre from a run-down, neglected Victorian house, to a fun, safe and supportive environment where young carers are able to enjoy their childhood. The transformation will be documented in ‘DIY SOS: The Big Build BBC Children in Need special’ (working title) when the show airs in on BBC One in mid-November.

The DIY SOS crew will have just 10 days to turn the building around – but they are not alone. Joining the team for this special build is TV presenter, Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen, the homestyle consultant has designed the project, as well as over 250 local volunteers helping in any way they can. From bricklayers to plasterers, gardeners to tea-makers, the community has come together to donate their time, resources and materials for the good cause.

The property, BlenheimHouse, is owned by Blackpool Carers Centre, a charity which receives BBC Children in Need funding to provide out-of-school respite and training activities as well as peer support for over 100 children and young people with caring responsibilities. The DIY SOS team will renovate the Blackpool Carers Centre’s property transforming it from a run-down, neglected Victorian house to a fantastic, inspiring, safe and happy place to encourage the young carers to have fun, socialise, play, seek support and ultimately reach their full potential.

Nick Knowles, leading the team for BBC One’s DIY SOS, said: “We’re aware this build is one of our most ambitious to date but with the help over 250 locals joining us to help change the lives of young carers in Blackpool we’ve been overwhelmed with support and we look forward to providing a new centre that will bring joy to some of the most deserving children and young people in the community.”

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen, designer added: “I’m delighted to be part of this project. Making sure these selfless children and young people are provided with a safe space to embrace their childhood is such an important cause and I am excited to be getting stuck in!”

Michelle Smith, CEO at Blackpool Carers Centre added: “We were delighted when BBC Children in Need contacted us about potentially having our property renovated and ever since the DIY SOS team confirmed they would be coming to Blenheim House we haven’t been able to contain our excitement. Thank you to all of the locals who are helping with the build, their support has been incredible and we cannot wait for big reveal.”

‘DIY SOS: The Big Build BBC Children in Need special’ (working title) airs week commencing 14th November 2016.

**~ENDS~**

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**Image caption:**

*Nick Knowles, Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen and Pudsey begin transforming a young carers centre in Blackpool for the ‘DIY SOS: The Big Build BBC Children in Need special’ (working title) airing in November.*

**Notes to Editors:**

**BBC Children in Need**

BBC Children in Need now funds six projects in Blackpool with over £300,000 hard at work to benefit young lives in the region.

The BBC Children in Need Appeal is a charity registered in England and Wales (802052) and Scotland (SC039557) whose aim is to make a positive change to the lives of disadvantaged children and young people across the UK.

BBC Children in Need’s vision is that every child in the UK has a safe, happy and secure childhood and the chance to reach their potential.  The charity believes this will be realised by supporting, promoting and publicising work that addresses the challenges that children and young people face and work that builds their skills and resilience.

BBC Children in Need is currently supporting 2,400 projects that are working with children facing a range of disadvantages for example, poverty and deprivation; children who have been the victims of abuse or neglect or disabled young people.

More information on the charity is available via [bbc.co.uk/pudsey](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey).