



#### **Phase 4- First Floor Corridor Rother Community Grants Update September 2020**

The Pelham has continued to establish itself as a central part of the local community and seen ongoing growth as a charity. Our vision to enrich lives in practical and diverse ways has led us to establishing deeper relationships with our team, 'regulars', local residents and partner organisations. Our desire is to do this through connection, encouragement and opportunities in an era of isolation and great challenges, and we see the positive impacts of our charitable work on a daily basis. The variety of these 'Pelham' initiatives cover health & wellbeing, physical activity, mental health support, training, youth work, children's groups within the building and beyond in the local area.

#### **September to March**

- Over the last 2 years our weekly footfall has doubled, from 500 people in May 2018 to around 800 people in February 2020. The introduction of the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor has expanded and complemented the offering we already had. The number of active partnerships has also doubled to over 85 strategic and tangible relationships with other organisations. Based on a comparison of weekly activities in February 2019 & a year later in February 2020, there was an increase of 60% to 90+ hours of community activities, events and bookings per week (was 58 hours in Feb 2019).
- During this 6 month period, in 2020 we generated £18,000 compared to £11,000 in the same time period in 2019. This represents an increase of 66% and over the course of a full year, would have led to an increase of £14,000 on the previous year. The largest contributing factor for this was the completion of our Phase 4 project in September 2019, which was a total capital project expenditure of £125,000, including £30,000 from Rother District Council Community Grants Scheme. We now have 8 available rooms to hire of all sizes and functions and to meet the needs of local partners.

#### **April to August**

- Between the 17<sup>th</sup> March and the 30<sup>th</sup> June, The Pelham was closed due to the Covid-19 lockdown.
- In July & August The Pelham re-opened as a venue, albeit with only a couple of hirers starting then.
- The Pelham is a 'Covid-19 Secure' Community Venue.

#### **September onwards**

- In September The Pelham re-opened the Coffee Lounge and we re-launched our 'Pelham' run activities, along with many of our partners. We now have 60 hours of community activities, events and opportunities which is 2/3 of what we had available pre-lockdown. The biggest impact though is that the attendance and people coming along has reduced dramatically.
- We believe that The Pelham's role in the recovery and rebuild of our community is vital. Sustaining the growth we have achieved is imperative as we know that the impact they have will help people's health and wellbeing, as it has on so many occasions to date, so that the projects we are now able to deliver (when normal service resumes) can be effective and accessible to those who need them.

The Pelham CIO

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- We are hopeful that there will be gradual increase month on month and are seeing more regular groups to launch again with our support.
- By providing a 'Covid-19 Secure' venue, we have been able to reassure and show people that we are doing everything possible to minimise risk and ensure The Pelham is as safe as can be. By being open and available, we have seen a surprising amount of enquiries and at least 5 new organisations starting to lead to The Pelham from October. These include Alcoholic Anonymous, Bexhill Breathers, counselling, social work, Quilters group and a Baby Sensory group. From October we will be up to 80 hours of community activities and events again and now will be focusing on encouraging people to come back to the groups where possible.
- To complement the existing facilities we have also been successful with funding for a ceiling hoist, which is due to be installed imminently. This will enable changing facilities for people in wheelchairs and their carers and will help better look after existing guests at The Pelham.
- As we move through the phases of society finding 'new normal', we will continue to support those we have existing connection with and to meet the needs of community as they change, which will include extending and developing relationships we have built during lockdown as well as those that now are most vulnerable, isolated and disadvantaged. It will be another opportunity to live out our core values, which are to be "welcoming, relational, generous, authentic and ambitious". Our hope is that many will find The Pelham to be a home, refuge and launching pad for them as we have seen so much in the past.

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