

## The Marchwell Studios, Graylingwell Park

The Marchwell Stables form part of Graylingwell Farm and the larger site of Graylingwell Hospital (West Sussex Lunatic Asylum). Since the closure of the asylum, the site has been repurposed as mixed social and private housing managed by Linden Homes, and the buildings of significant interest are being given over to the care of CCDT to repurpose as community assets whilst retaining their heritage significance. Historic England, English Partnerships, Linden Homes & Downland Housing Association have carefully analysed Graylingwell buildings deserving retention; Marchwell Stables is included. These buildings of historical significance will be retained and their future secured through conversion and use as community assets. Graylingwell Hospital is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act, and the Grade II listing of the Farmhouse covers Marchwell Stables, as curtilage buildings.

The farmhouse was in the 1850s an early home of the author Anna Sewell, who later wrote *Black Beauty*. In 1894 the architect Arthur Blomfield designed the asylum in order to serve the pauper agricultural population of rural West Sussex. Blomfield produced a design to accommodate 450 patients in ward pavilions laid out in echelon arrangement to form a broad arrow plan and to support the inmates the 370-acre Graylingwell Farm estate was acquired c1894. Graylingwell Farmhouse (now standing disused to the northeast of the main hospital building), was reused for asylum purposes to house 16 male patients working on the hospital farm. The asylum farmyard, including the Marchwell Stables, were built in the late 1890s and lie north-west of Graylingwell Farmhouse comprising two L shaped buildings surrounding the yard. The farm stables and yard were in the 1950s extended and converted by the inmates into a social centre; as per 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Report *'The farm yard has been re-concreted by the patients and now forms an excellent games court. The conversion of the barn into a gymnasium with its own changing rooms and sanitary annexes is now complete and the result is that we have a gymnasium which any hospital would be proud to own.'*

The Stables like the farmhouse are currently in a state of disrepair and are not being used/ fit for use. The 2 L shaped buildings are single storey with pitched rooves - photographs can be seen here <http://chichestercdt.org.uk/venues-for-hire/the-studios/>. To ensure the future sustainability of the Stables as a community owned and managed facility, CCDT will take over the building in 2020 as a freehold asset as part of a section 106 planning agreement between CDC and the HCA who currently own the building; CCDT is the named future freeholder. Graylingwell has an engaged and vocal local community that are keen to be

involved in consultation, the planning and design process and through the establishment of a steering committee. We envisage the Stables being transformed into a community Makers Spaces; housing and supporting artists' studios, social entrepreneurs and third sector organisations in need of space, who can offer peer support and contribute to the aims and scope of CCDT's operations.

Housing development at Graylingwell is developing apace; 1500 homes are currently being built or are occupied, and another 2500 are planned within a 3 miles radius over the next 3 years. However, there is a lack of good quality studio and development space in the area. We see a great opportunity to meet this need at the same time as providing employment opportunities in the area, attracting businesses, individuals and third sector organisations who want to be sited together in a space that will provide peer support and will offer services that are consistent with CCDT values and will support its aims and scope. We would like to deliver more direct services to those most in need in our community, and the Stables (to be renamed the Studios) will generate income that will be able to fund projects delivered by CCDT that fulfil the needs of our most disadvantaged residents and increase their opportunities.

The Studios form part of the planning agreement signed in 2009 as a response to the lack of enterprise units in the district and city areas. The developers and CCDT worked closely with Chichester District Council regeneration and business teams to identify the spaces available and the need and demand. Since that time, although units have been created in the area; those that exist are not meeting the current demand and a gap in provision exists that offers affordable, practical and appropriate space for local makers. The project will reduce the strain on existing venues that are over capacity due to the new homes being built and planned in the North of the City. It will represent good value for money as it will be self-sustaining and will not require future dependency on grant provision. It will also provide economic benefits through employment opportunities and contracts with local organisations.

CCDT is a community led and based organisation, and consultation with the residents of our community is at the heart of everything we do. We identified the need for the Studios following research carried out by the community development team; through consultation with local groups via questionnaires, at events and task group meetings; and through research with local agencies and services. We have taken this feedback on board already in identifying the organisations whom we have approached regarding the Stables, and have shared the results of our consultation with them; resulting in a significant number of relevant and targeted groups with already having registered an interest in taking space in the Stables. In addition, Graylingwell already provides 'co-working' space for local freelancers in the area at the newly renovated and completed Water Tower; the interest expressed in discussions with local organisations as this space was developed has confirmed the market interest in the Studios and opened up discussions with interested organisations at an early stage.

The building in its current state is at risk and in a state of disrepair. It is currently owned by Homes England and is managed by Linden Homes; when the asset transfer happens Linden Homes are contract bound to hand it over to us shell and core and made safe and good as part of S106 when they have built 650 homes; this is currently estimated to be January 2021.

If we are not positioned to take the restoration and building project forward by this point in time then then the Stables will fall back into a state of disrepair. It is essential to carry out this early stage of development work now in order to properly assess the spec, the costings, how much CCDT will need to budget for and to plan for the remaining funding. We are ready now to take the project to the next stage in order to be in a position to begin work once the asset is transferred to CCDT.

CCDT will use core funds to subsidise community engagement, fundraising consultants and overheads; however due to the number of building projects and the sheer scale of the work needed at different locations on the site it is necessary for us to approach a range of funders in order to ensure the development is able to happen. Our community fully supports and already as members of CCDT they contribute to our funding and support the various fundraising events that the organisation holds.

The ultimate aim of the project for which the grant will support the development work is to transform the Stables into a business and development hub that will be named The Marchwell Studios. We have a clear vision for what we want to build here; these enterprise hubs totalling 10,000sqft will need to be multifunctional and accommodate all kinds of uses, providing a range of affordable commercial space with the aim of supporting the sustainable growth of young and small local businesses. This will include artists' studios, makers spaces, social enterprise start-ups, voluntary sector space and incubator start up support for new enterprises. The Studios will provide a step on the ladder for these organisations and businesses with flexible rent options, with tenants able to move into larger premises on site or nearby as their organisations grow and develop, making way for new enterprises to benefit. Industries will range from the arts, catering, transport, construction, training and more.

Artists' studios and makers spaces (approx. 20x 200sqft) will be designed to accommodate developing as well as established artists.

Social Enterprise units (approx. 5x 1000 sqft) will provide larger spaces for enterprise activity

Incubator units (approx. 4x 25-sqft) will provide a working environment within a shared office space (including a workstation, telephone, internet access, printer/ photocopier, breakout area and meeting room) and allow the formation and development of those businesses with growth potential.

The Studios will in effect provide opportunities for companies to benefit from early stage incubation services in an open plan environment, encouraging networking, collaboration and mutual support. Shared facilities and wraparound services such

as a regular coffee morning for networking opportunities will all help peer/ mutual development of tenants' businesses.

As an asset owned and managed by CCDT - a community membership model organisation run for the community and its benefit - the Enterprise Hub will be owned and managed by the community, for the community. It will provide a key source of revenue that will help secure the sustainability of CCDT's charitable operations within the community. As a community business itself, it will also provide a service that should allow other community businesses to launch, incubate and flourish.

This project will benefit local individual crafters, artists, startup businesses/ community businesses and social entrepreneurs and small businesses who need affordable premises offering shared facilities and the opportunity to collaborate, from which to operate. As a community business itself, it will also channel profits back into CCDT's charitable operations, thus benefitting the many disadvantaged residents living on site who use our services - including youth clubs and youth ambassador projects, a community garden club, holiday clubs, NEET work, amongst others.