



The Canning Circus Creative Hub
www.thecanningcircus.com
info@thecanningcircus.com
For correspondence: Michael Wynne, Coordinator,
The Canning Circus Creative Hub,
175 Wollaton Street, NOTTINGHAM NG1 5GE

Response from the council to our questions

We can't thank those who have supported us enough for the responses we've received to our petition. It means a great deal to us to know that people all around Nottingham, the UK and the world have taken the time to demonstrate their support for us.

We are very pleased to receive responses to the questions you all sent to the council. These are below for your information. You will see that a positive outcome has been reached for the future of the businesses at the Wollaton Street buildings.

Thanks again and very best wishes,
Mike Wynne,
Coordinator, The Canning Circus Creative Hub

1. Why was our longstanding expertise and pool of talent, existing without recourse to public funds, ignored during the set up of the Creative Quarter?

The Creative Quarter was established to create a platform for the success of all creative businesses across the city. In no way were existing creative hubs overlooked, but to be a successful economy the city needs more of them, and co-locating new businesses within an area of the city is a standard economic model that has been tried and tested in many cities, particularly in the US, and shown to be successful.

Importantly, the model is both geographic and sectoral. In terms of the project's geographic focus, the intention is to develop creative business capacity so that it can then spread out across the rest of the city. It is also very much a hub and spoke model, and therefore connection to hubs outside the Creative Quarter are a fundamental part of the model. The Creative Quarter Company had previously met with the Canning Circus businesses to that end, and it is hoped that relationship can now be developed further.

There are some misconceptions about the funding associated with the Creative Quarter. Nottingham's City Deal, of which the establishment of the Creative Quarter was only one part, set in motion a number of initiatives, ranging from the establishment of venture capital fund and grant technology fund, to public realm improvements, and support for the creation of apprenticeships.



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All of these initiatives are available to businesses located in a Canning Circus to the same extent they are available to businesses located in the Creative Quarter.

In terms of sectoral focus, it is important to remember that all creative businesses, wherever they are located in the city, can benefit from support and (as above) the Creative Quarter Company is now working actively with the Canning Circus creative businesses.

2. Do you have any concern for the livelihoods of the creative people housed in NCC-owned property in Canning Circus?

Yes, of course all councillors have concern for the livelihoods of local businesses, and this is why – having listened to the voices of those businesses, and understood the importance of the Hub to the city – the decision has been taken to allow the businesses to remain and to work with them to support them and ensure sustainability of the Hub. The business located at Wollaton Street will not be moving from their current location, and Nottingham City Council will work with them to support them in the future. The Creative Quarter Company, led by Kathy McArdle, has been instrumental in ensuring that decision was taken, and will work closely with the Canning Circus Creative Hub to help it ensure sustainability, develop its plans and develop the building in which it is based.

Cllr Collins and Cllr McDonald, who is responsible for growth and business support in the city, have discussed this issue at length and took the decision together to support these businesses in their current location.

3. Why did it take a social media campaign and MP involvement to get offers of ANY support?

We are very grateful that these businesses did raise this issue. It is unfortunately the case that sometimes with these issues, decision makers at the head of an organisation such as the City Council cannot be aware of the full details of every scheme. That is inevitable - the City Council is a billion-pound-turnover organisation that has responsibility for many different issues. Senior councillors and officers therefore hadn't been aware of the effect of this scheme upon the businesses that are part of the Canning Circus Creative Hub until they began their campaign. Once aware, Cllr McDonald discussed the issue with the Leader, brought relevant officers together to understand the issued, and acted quickly to resolve it. Kathy McArdle at the Creative Quarter Company also



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played a major role in supporting the Hub and lobbying on behalf of the businesses.

4. How is an apparently homogenised plan for student flats in the Canning Circus area justified against claims to support local independent SMEs? Precipitous turnover drops in the summer trading months are a real problem for independent businesses.

The original proposal to develop city centre flats on the upper floors of the Derby Road properties (as opposed to student flats, which was never the intention) was actually very much driven by traders on a Derby Road. Derby Road needs regeneration. The hope is that the scheme will make the street busier and more successful. However, having now taken the decision to leave the businesses in place, the scheme will progress without including these businesses. This decision has been discussed with the chair of the Derby Road traders association, who agrees it is the right outcome. The businesses will stay, and the Council and the Creative Quarter Company will work with the Hub to develop the building, assist with the Hub's plans, and support external funding bids, so that the Hub can remain sustainable and flourish in the future.