

By Email

Katy Grieves
Chair
Marble Hill Playcentres

7th March 2019

Dear Katy,

Thank you for the recent update regarding the proposed planning application for Marble Hill Play Centre. I know that planning proposals must be carefully considered but on behalf of Richmond CVS I support the plans for a number of reasons:

- Affordable office accommodation and suitable space to deliver their services has been an issue for the local voluntary sector for a number of years. Richmond CVS's recent work around accommodation there is evidence that more local accessible space and venues are needed.
- Your proposal seeks to help address the above issue and the fact that you would be able to offer space to other voluntary groups such as Me too & Co and Otakar Kraus Music Trust is particularly valuable. There is an extreme need in the borough for the services you all offer, particularly in relation to the growing funding gap in special needs education provision and low-income provision.
- The ongoing public funding crisis which we know will continue to affect services in Richmond, increases risks for all, particularly small charities which may not survive unless they adapt. One key way of doing this would be through partnership working and the sharing of space. In addition, a community hub model can have a transformational effect on the local area in terms of health, wellbeing and local services.
- I know several members of the team have supported Marble Hill Playcentres to recover and strengthen since its crisis point in 2017 through governance and funding advice as well as helping with Trustee recruitment. While your situation is much improved, we know that as a small charity, it remains precarious unless you are able to expand your business model and offer services all year round. We will continue to do all we can to support you as we fully comprehend what a terrible loss it would be to the community if the Playcentres are not able to continue.

We do wish you all the best with your application and please do contact the team if there is anything more we can do to support this exciting initiative.

Yours sincerely



Kathryn Williamson
Director