

Councillor Eileen Lintill
Leader of the Council
Chichester District Council
East Pallant House
Chichester
PO19 1TY

13 November 2020

Dear Cllr Lintill

Pallant House Gallery

As you are aware, Pallant House Gallery receives an annual grant of £130,000 from Chichester District Council under the terms set out in our monitoring agreement. One of these conditions is that the Gallery continues to receive Arts Council England [ACE] National Portfolio Organisation [NPO] funding (currently £89,000 p/a).

The Gallery's current four-year funding agreements with both CDC and ACE were due to come to an end in 2022. However, as part of their response to Covid-19, ACE have extending the NPO funding period by one year to March 2023. I am writing to request that CDC also consider a one-year extension in line with ACE.

This additional year would assist the Gallery with our operational and financial planning in the uncertain months ahead, ensuring that we can continue to deliver our high-quality exhibition and public programmes for the district and beyond. It would also demonstrate to ACE that we retain the support and commitment of CDC as we reapply for the National Portfolio.

Inevitably, Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Pallant House Gallery this year and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

The Gallery was forced to close on 17 March, just three days after our Spring Season opened, and the accompanying public programme of events, talks and courses was cancelled. A pre-agreed plan was followed for the Gallery to be safely closed down, with the collections, temporary loans and buildings made secure. Three quarters of Gallery staff were furloughed and the remaining staff worked from home, although regular onsite checks took place to monitor security and environmental conditions.

Director Simon Martin

Pallant House Gallery is a private company limited by guarantee under registered no. 5045130 (England and Wales) and a registered charity for England and Wales under no. 1102435. The Registered office is as shown above.



Pallant House Gallery

8-9 North Pallant
Chichester PO19 1TJ

+44 (0)1243 774 557
pallant.org.uk

The Gallery increased its communications activities significantly during lockdown, as our eBulletins, website and social media channels became our primary methods of engaging audiences and delivering our charitable aims.

The frequency of our blogs increased from monthly to at least fortnightly, and subsequently our audience for this content has increased by over 60% since the beginning of the year. We created a new section of the website offering creative activities for families while home-schooling; these were extremely popular and one activity – making a Pop-art inspired robot – was featured in national newspapers and magazines (**World of Interiors** and **i online**). **The Gallery's Instagram audience has** grown by over 20% since March (from 17,653 to 21,444 followers) and our weekly art quiz during lockdown regularly attracted 800+ responses (usual average audience for Instagram stories approx. 500).

Pallant Arts Award Club switched from onsite to online workshops, with all participants attaining their Arts Award qualifications. We have recently started another round of the Arts Award Club, with many of the children who took part previously continuing their Arts Award journey with us. Feedback from parents was very positive; *"The course gave my daughter structure to her natural interest in art and showed her different avenues to explore."* and *"The commitment of the teachers and organisers to keep this Club going in spite of lockdown has been absolutely inspiring."*

Continuing the Gallery's Community Programme in some form during lockdown was an immediate priority. It supports almost 200 adults with a range of support needs - many of whom already suffer social isolation - so it was important to keep participants connected to each other and the Gallery, and to help them sustain their creativity and individual art interests.

A 'Telephone Partners' scheme was set up based on our successful Partners in Art model and, through our close links with Chichester Social Prescribers, an additional four referrals were made in the first three months. A new Community Programme Facebook group (monitored and moderated by staff) was created for members to share artwork and ideas and over 100 packs of art materials were sent out to encourage creative activities. These were extremely well received, with feedback from recipients like the following *"I received your art pack yesterday and was so thrilled. It brightened up my whole life for the moment."*

As soon as the Gallery reopened, one to one visits were offered to Community Programme members and (subject to Government guidance) there are plans for small number of socially-distant workshops to restart on site in the new year.

Fortunately, the Gallery was able to re-open to the public on 5 August 2020. Health and safety and social distancing measures were implemented for both visitors and staff, which included timed-ticketing and limits on numbers, and we were awarded **Visit Britain's We're Good To Go** kitemark. With the support of institutional and private lenders, external loans for our Spring exhibitions were until extended until November, which allowed the Gallery to reopen with existing shows. They have proved hugely successful with both visitors, critics and the press. Total visitor numbers in the first three months were c13,000 and we received 5-star reviews from The Telegraph and The Independent, as well as extensive coverage in lifestyle and specialist publications. The Gallery extended its opening hours for the final week of the Barnett Freedman exhibition in order to meet demand for tickets.

Despite these successes however, the 2020-21 financial year and beyond will be extremely **challenging for the Gallery's finances.**

We anticipate a £300,000 reduction in income this year (due to a significant reduction in admission and events ticket sales, substantial number of refunds on event tickets bought, and rental holidays for our Bookshop and Café franchises) and our investment income is predicted to fall by over £100,000 in 2021/22. The Gallery made significant progress in its plans for a transformational Capital Project in 2019 but this has now been placed on indefinite hold.

The impact of the pandemic on Gallery finances has led us to review our future exhibition programme. It will be reduced by one Season per year for the next two years and two major exhibitions have been postponed; Ben Nicholson to late Spring 2021 and Glyn Philpot to 2022.

New exhibitions will be curated from works in the Gallery's permanent collection. Fewer large temporary exhibitions and fewer external loans will significantly cut costs and demands on staff. Smaller displays will be staggered throughout the year to attract repeat visitors and press coverage.

As ever, we are grateful to Chichester District Council for its continued support of Pallant House Gallery. We are committed to our roles as a key component **of Chichester's economic recovery** from the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, as a centre and focus for the community providing uplifting experiences and safe social engagement, and to attract tourism back to the local area to benefit all of the community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Simon Martin
Director