

Place:

Marine Studios, 17 Albert Terrace, Margate, Kent,

Type of Meanwhile project:

Design Studio

Meanwhile funding: £15,000

Stakeholders:

Derek Harding: Margate

Renewal Partnership

Kate Kneale: HKD Design

Michael Brothers: Building

Owner

Heather Sawney: Arts

Development Officer, Thanet

District Council

The Meanwhile project was taken forward by Derek Harding and the funding was managed by Margate Renewal Partnership through Thanet District Council.



Margate



Once a thriving seaside resort, Margate in Kent is now marred by an image of emptiness and neglect. According to recent data, 25% of Margate's shops are now empty, making it the town worst hit by the recession in Britain. Fortunately Margate has a strong local community which is proving to be the driving force behind the town's regeneration.

Project aims...

The purpose of the project was to create a design studio for a firm called HKD who wanted to relocate the business from London to central Margate. Alongside the studio space the project provided the potential for a creative space for community use.

Meanwhile Project provided a grant of £15,000 to assist with the conversion of a former casino into the design studio. The project involved a refurbishment including new flooring, decoration, upgrading of utilities (toilets and kitchen) and improved disabled access. The total cost of the works was between £40,000 - £50,000.

'The grant aid was the catalyst that made it possible.'

Michael Brothers

Project outcomes...

On the 11th July 2009 a proposal was established and by December 2009, the project had been realised...

The space comprises three flexible interconnected areas. The central space is the most public where community activities can take place. The second is a more closed area which can be used as a conference room and the third is HKD's office. The new lighting, white walls and free space, give all three rooms a very bright and spacious feel. They all have access to facilities such as the cloakroom, bathroom and kitchen and have fantastic sea views.



The casino before redevelopment



'We will use the studio to host community & school workshops support skill sharing on our projects & run a programme of talks & exhibitions. The new studio will also enable us to hold client workshops & in the long term we plan to offer residencies.'

Kate Kneal, HKD

'By 2015, Margate will become a dynamic, thriving and successful town. It will become a major hub and driving force of creativity and culture that excites and inspires residents and visitors alike. It will embrace its traditions as a place of relaxation, leisure and seaside fun.'

Jess Steele, DTA

Is it a success..?

For the building owners, bringing the building into use prevents long-term damage from disrepair, potentially increases its value and raises local awareness about the property.

For the community of Margate, this project could help reaffirm Margate as a cultural centre. Kate Kneale, Director of HKD hopes that this new space will become Margate's first creative hub. Alongside the redevelopment of the Dreamland theme park and the construction of the new Turner Contemporary gallery, "there are now three strong hubs to tie Margate together." This will generate revenue for the town, by creating jobs for inhabitants and attractions for both locals and visitors alike.