

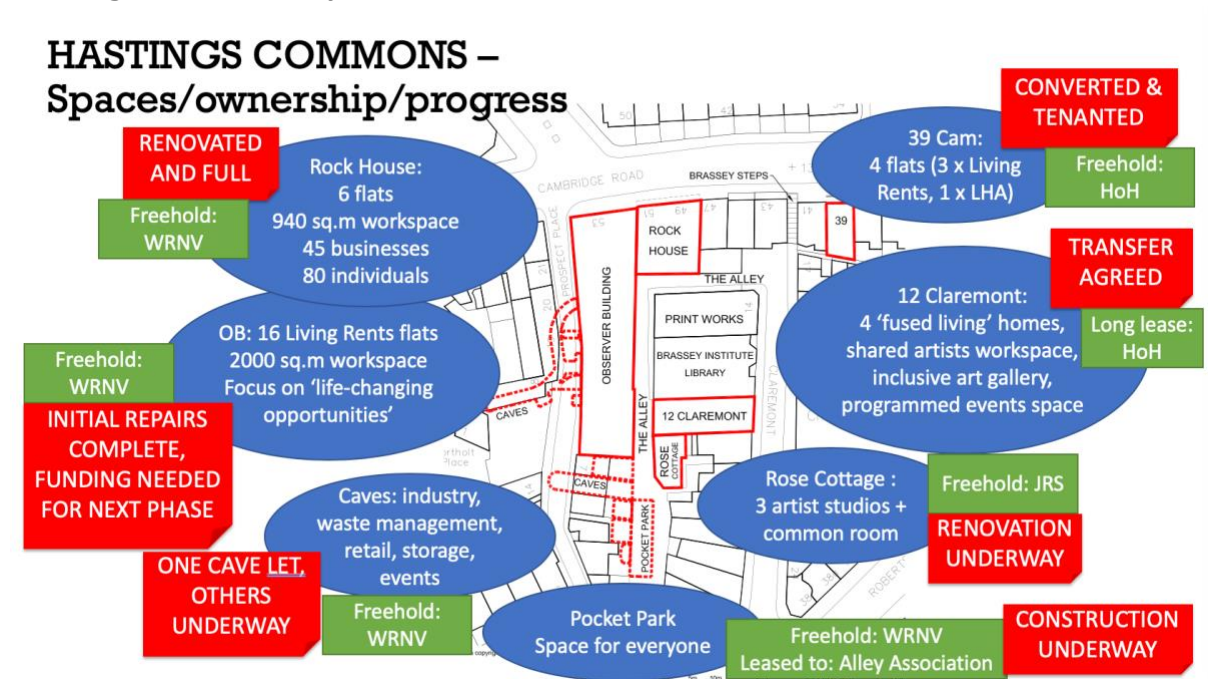
Community Business re COVID-19, Mutual Aid
 Theme - **Online social connection (services, information & entertainment)**
 Host - **Jess Steele, WRNV Ltd**
 7th April 2020



Isolation Station

Like everyone, we had plans before Covid-19...

Since 2014, we have been creating a new urban commons in the centre of Hastings, turning derelict buildings into positive affordable spaces for living, working, leisure, learning and community action.



This has all been undertaken by an ecosystem of interconnected local organisations with shared values, each playing an important role.



Season 2020 was due to be led by Leisure & Learning which would animate all the spaces of the Hastings Commons with a vibrant, multi-stranded programme of big events, workshops, food & drink, fun community engagement, and a souk – the densest of markets. All of it wiped out by Covid-19.

As an alternative, around 15th March we began to discuss building a ‘streaming studio’ in the Observer Building. A group of talented local people – VR specialist, film-maker, set designer, cultural producer, and the director of the council for voluntary services – visited on Friday 19th March but by the end of that day it was obvious that this would have to be not a studio but a TV channel, and one that must work entirely remotely.

Just 5 days later, on Wednesday 25th March, we launched a facebook channel to offer a platform to the local community during the nationwide lockdown. Isolation Station Hastings is working with local people and organisations to stream daily content from people’s homes and is calling out to the local community to contribute live streamed content.

The channel launched with a live irreverent chat show, hosted by local musicians Lily Kim & G-Mac, followed by a performance from internationally renowned jazz singer and Hastings resident Liane Carroll, and a DJ set from Kangbala. Scheduled content so far includes a raft of gigs, pub quizzes, arts classes, yoga workshops and local news, including information on local volunteering opportunities with HEART (Hastings Emergency Action Response Team) and the NHS. The team are working with local pubs, arts charities and projects.

The channel has three main purposes:

- Hastings is a very sociable and creative town. We want to sustain that by streaming Hastings culture and social life into people’s homes.
- Creative freelancers and project workers are suffering from loss of work due to the virus and the channel can help them ‘do their day job’ online.
- The Hastings Commons has emerged from 14 years of sustained community engagement by the various ecosystem partners. Isolation Station is the latest ‘tool in the box’ to keep that going.

We have three tech producers and three content producers with overall tech support provided by Ben Dawson of Melody VR using their [VMix](#) software which adds professionalism when streaming Zoom to Facebook Live.

The platform offers live-streamed facebook slots to artists, performers, creators, pubs, local businesses, organisations, teachers and anyone that has an idea for content that could be entertaining, informative or offer learning. Some slots are paid, some offer

funding opportunities through viewer donations and some will raise money for charity of the content provider's choice.

The Isolation Station is currently funded by Leisure & Learning (Hastings), the Common Treasury of Adaptable Ideas and Hastings Voluntary Action. We are seeking a further £15k funding to meet costs for the first 12 weeks.

Current Programme Overview

The channel is live with an ever-evolving schedule on:

<https://www.facebook.com/isolation.station.hastings>

Lily Kim and G-Mac present a nightly show giving everyone some light relief. They do lots of fun stuff, set each other challenges and have guests beaming in live from their living rooms.

The Community Show is hosted by community organiser Sam Kinch who is helping to organise a massive community operation with HEART which supports people in need out in the local community. Sam will be reporting on all the latest news from HEART and other community-led responses each evening at 6pm.

Lockdown Family Fitness is starting this Thursday at 4pm hosted by Paul Francis Saunders who has a family-friendly fitness routine that anyone can do at home. It's designed to get everyone up on their feet, doing some fun, simple exercises. Paul will also answer questions on any fitness or diet questions people may have.

Funk'd Up Yoga on Fridays at 4pm is presented by Becca Horn live from The Albion Pub where she lives with her partner. It's a fun, glammed-up session which finishes just in time for cocktail hour at 5pm.

Sue Tilley is hosting a life drawing class and a Poptastic Pub Quiz. We've got a Film Show on Monday evenings presented by Andrew Davies from Campaign Films.

Catherine Barnett is a local Qi Gong teacher and she'll be live streaming her regular Tuesday morning class on the channel.

For more information on Isolation Station contact: Jess Steele – jess@jerichoroad.co.uk