

# The Crew Club

Providing opportunity and a safe place for young people  
in Whitehawk



[www.crewclub.co.uk](http://www.crewclub.co.uk)

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30<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Dear Colleague

The Board and staff of the Crew Club are concerned about proposals for the closure of COMART. We recognise that the college and the LEA face considerable financial pressures and that ultimately, the inability to attract sufficient new students can not be allowed to go on indefinitely.

However, we believe that the closure of the college will be detrimental to Whitehawk and the broader East Brighton community. It will have a significant impact on the regeneration of the area and most importantly for the young people of East Brighton.

We believe that there has been a failure of strategy and performance. The college never effectively connected with the local community (in contrast to Falmer). Its continuing failure to significantly improve its performance on educational attainment was also damning. The emphasis and objectives of the college, focussing on media arts was not effectively promoted within Brighton & Hove and certainly not within the community of East Brighton. Despite these failures, the current consultation on the future of the Crew Club does present an opportunity to take a fresh and more relevant approach to future of the college.

We believe that the extended or full service school model presents a basis for a smaller but more appropriate college for the area. It will rely on a smaller intake but if it can link with other initiatives to draw in the local community it stands a much better chance of success. It should be more closely linked with the EB4U regeneration initiative and work by the LEA on parenting, young people and youth services etc. It should also connect with local health and employment agenda initiatives. There are a number of successful full service/extended schools around the country that could prove useful models for a revitalised and successful college for East Brighton.

If the LEA and local authority is sufficiently bold, it can, in partnership with the community, take a more radical look at how the delivery of local services could be based and connected with the governance of a new community college. This could free up some of the multiplicity of sites within Whitehawk

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for alternative regeneration use and lead to a much better co-ordination of local services. It could underpin a closer relationship between the community

and a re-launched college with library, health, regeneration as well as sports facilities on the site alongside the college.

To summarise, COMART as it stands has failed and we understand the reasons for the current consultation. It cannot survive with falling roles, nor with performance and ambitions that do not reflect what the local community and parents want. However, there is an opportunity for something better and more relevant to meet local needs.

We hope that the LEA, governors and staff of the COMART are ambitious. We know that there are huge challenges for all involved but for our part we would add our strong support and commitment to help if all concerned would seriously consider the option of a full service/extended school as a replacement for COMART.

## **Board and staff – CREW Club – June 2003**