

The Wee Hub opens at Ocean Terminal

At Ocean Terminal the former Debenhams store has been temporarily changed into a space welcoming community groups as a new social enterprise – The Wee Hub – brings life back to the empty unit as a “meanwhile” development.

The Wee Hub is part of the Living Memory Association and will be in place on the ground and first floors of the former shop.

The group will bring in a variety of arts, drama and sports organisations to make use of the space, and has constructed areas dedicated to dance and theatre, children’s play, crafts, a library and a ‘wee sit and knit’ to bring people of all ages together.



This will be the base for several community projects including the Wee Crowd of Folk with people dressing or decorating one of the mannequins, and the Wee Reekie which is a painting group.

The shopping centre is undergoing change and while planning consent is awaited the community groups can take advantage of the 90,000 empty store free of charge.

Some of the community groups to take advantage of the new Hub space include:

- **Sikh Sanjog** – local charity will host a mural project offering insight into the Sikh Community and a powerful response to the global pandemic along-with a celebration event
- **Salle Holyrood Fencing Club** – intend to introduce schools and other groups to the sport and have three

Team GB members in the team that will deliver group and individual lessons

- **Citadel Youth Centre** – offers a wide range of social, recreational, and educational activities for children and young people in Leith and plans to use space as a separate breakout area to its main location on Commercial Street
- **Thistle Model Makers** – a group of railway modellers based in Edinburgh will use part of the ground floor to display some of their exhibition layouts set in Britain, Europe and the US
- **Street Soccer** – already located within OT its facilities will extend to use the hub to continue its mission to inspire and empower young people through football starting with an Easter event bringing their Hexagol to the centre, a fully-inclusive mobile sports arena, allowing players of all ages to practice and play in a safe environment
- **Think Circus** – their talented team of performers and creators will hold a variety of engaging and entertaining workshops and performances to bring people together
- **Tinderbox** – will use the space to continue to support young people to gain new skills, confidence and a sense of possibility through music and arts.
- **Edinburgh Festival Carnival** – will display the vibrant carnival costumes for 2022 as well as use the hub as a making space for artists and community participants
- **Giraffes About Town** – The Wee Hub provides studio space for artists painting their giraffe sculptures for Edinburgh Zoo's sculpture trail due to hit the streets of Edinburgh this summer.



Miles Tubb – Photo Lesley Martin

Miles Tubb, project co-ordinator of The Living Memory Association said: “Our new community hub provides a much-needed lifeline to groups on the back of Covid that require additional and flexible space to support their needs. Whilst this is a temporary facility for us to use and enjoy, it is fantastic that Ocean Terminal has had the drive and determination to repurpose the unit for the community, rather than leaving it to stand empty.”

And Michelle Macleod, Centre Manager at Ocean Terminal added: “As a team we are excited to welcome this incredibly varied mix of sports and arts community groups to the centre. As our community opens up again post COVID, these organisations will bring new energy to the centre and create more reasons beyond our current retail and leisure offering for new and existing audiences to come to OT.”

A dedicated website for The Wee Hub will be launched shortly detailing the activity schedule for the groups, as well as upcoming special performances. The Hub is keen to hear from

organisations across the city who may want to use the space for one-off events and would welcome contact to comhist@googlemail.com