

A TRIBUTE TO THE PLUS X BRIGHTON COMMUNITY

# MOULSECOOMB STORIES



SCAN TO VISIT  
OUR WEBSITE



**WHERE PEOPLE CROSS PATHS  
AND IDEAS ARE EXCHANGED,  
GREAT THINGS HAPPEN.**







**Where once stood a derelict  
Ministry of Defence building on land  
forgotten and covered in rubble,  
now stands a legacy of innovation:  
the community of Plus X Brighton.**

Moulsecoomb Stories tells the narrative of the people, ideas, culture, and impact that has encapsulated Preston Barracks since its regeneration began. In these pages, you will discover Brighton's next-gen thinkers, ground-breaking inventors, scaling disruptors, and impact-led changemakers.

**Welcome to Moulsecoomb reimaged.**



# CONTENTS



## The Plus X Story

08 Connected Innovation

## Community

- 16 From FIELD to Plus X
- 20 Colours of Tranquillity
- 24 Tough Cookie
- 28 An Architect's Vision
- 32 Fab Academy

## Ideas

- 36 This is BRITE
- 46 A Business Ecosystem
- 48 Resident Disruptor

## Culture

- 54 Happy Go Souvlaki
- 60 The Art of Inclusion
- 66 The Power of Breath

## Impact

- 70 Better World Collective
- 72 The Healthiest Building on the South Coast
- 74 Café Domenica
- 80 Waste Not
- 82 Elevating Local Talent







Paul &amp; Mat

## MEET THE FOUNDERS

# CONNECTED INNOVATION

“When Mat and I are faced with a business problem, Mat will come at it from the East, and I’ll come at it from the West. We always arrive at a complementary conclusion.”

PAUL ROSTAS, PLUS X CO-CEO.

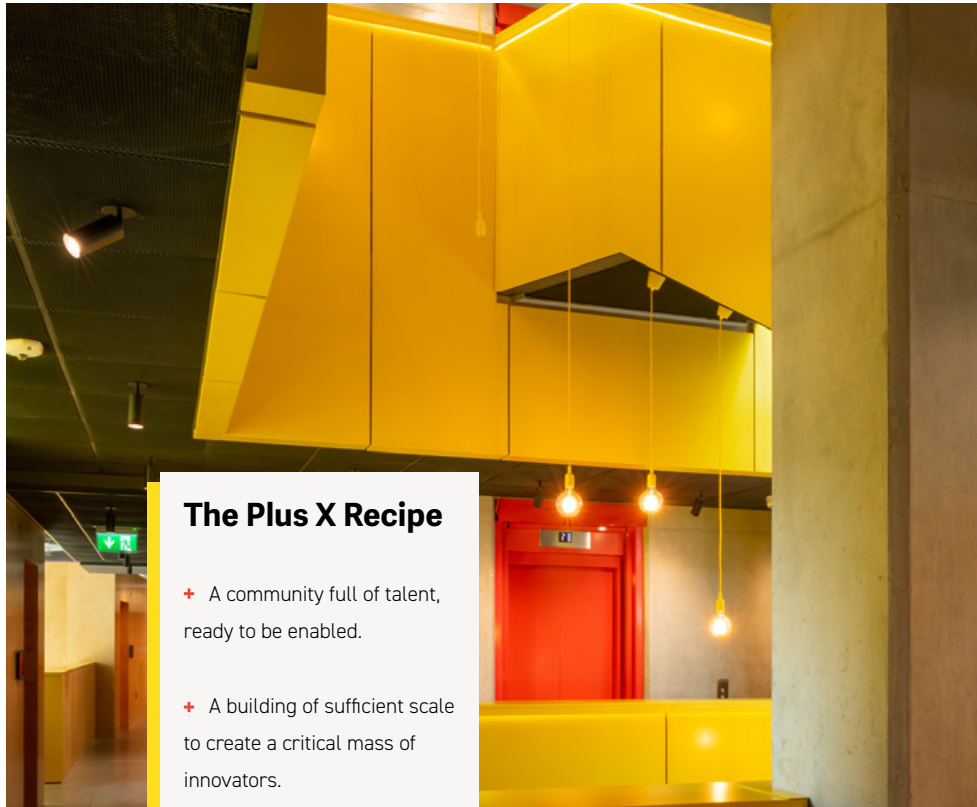
Plus X Co-CEO’s [Mat Hunter](#) and [Paul Rostas](#) come from different, yet complementary backgrounds. Mat worked as partner of world-renowned design agency, IDEO, before becoming Chief Design Officer at the Design Council. Paul started his career in marketing at Unilever for big household name brands before heading into investment banking with the likes of JP Morgan.

Despite the differences in background and experience, both Paul and Mat share an astounding passion for supporting businesses who want to tackle the challenges of our time. For Mat, this stems from a dedication of driving purposeful innovation and unlocking the potential of business founders. For Paul, this comes from understanding a founder’s pain points when running a business, especially when it comes to access to funding.

The pair aligned in 2017 at the Central Research Laboratory (CRL), a project initiated by regeneration developers, U+I. The CRL, built on a legacy of invention at the old EMI R&D site in West London, was created as a hardware-focused business incubator attracting some incredibly innovative businesses, from tackling food waste (Mimica Lab) to creating sustainable lithium batteries (Aceleron).

Working as Managing Director (Mat) and Consultant to U+I (Paul), they were invited to take this project with limited funding and turn it into a sustainable and scalable business. Together, they spent fifteen months collaborating and formulating a strategy for what would become Plus X.

**“We laid all the ingredients out on the table. Every component of what we wanted Plus X to be - an ecosystem of businesses small and large, innovation support, positive social impact... the smell coming up from the table was terrific. From this, we came up with the recipe for Plus X.” - Mat**



### The Plus X Recipe

- + A community full of talent, ready to be enabled.
- + A building of sufficient scale to create a critical mass of innovators.
- + A carefully managed blend of small, medium and large businesses.
- + Strong connections to local universities, businesses and community groups.
- + World-class innovation support programmes.



Photography by @chloeurbex



The Preston Barracks site before and after Plus X

They pitched their ideas to U+I who chose to invest in the new business proposition, with Mat and Paul as Co-Chief Executives.

U+I are place-makers. Taking places with unrecognised potential, they drive positive impact. They recognised that they didn't know enough about business and innovation support to execute a project like Plus X.

But, they did recognise the potential. So, they invested, became a strategic partner, and provided the first location - Preston Barracks in Moulsec00mb.



Scan to see more from **Plus X Brighton**





The hard hat tour before opening



Brighton's disruptive spirit made for the perfect location

Brighton's creative, forward-thinking, and disruptive spirit made for the perfect location to launch Plus X. Known to some as "Silicon Beach", the city has a rapidly growing number of scaling businesses and is climbing the ranks for investment (currently placed at 15 according to Tech Nation).

As momentum built around the launch, Mat and Paul's conversations with local business founders, entrepreneurs, universities, and council representatives confirmed that Plus X was just what the city needed.

Brighton's businesses were innovating and scaling fast. Still, they needed a more ambitious workspace and a business community that empowered them to thrive.

At the heart of the Plus X vision is the fostering of connection and collaboration. When people cross paths and ideas are exchanged, great things happen. Every day, Plus X Brighton validates this very philosophy.

**Read on to find out how.** ●

Since launching in July 2020, Plus X Brighton has created significant social impact

**138**

Businesses homed

**434**

Members homed

**76**

page 36

Scale-ups supported via **BRITE**

**20**

Plus X team members hired

**13**

Apprentices and interns placed



COMMUNITY

# WE ARE PEOPLE POWERED



Stories of the bold + fresh thinkers that make Plus X Brighton.





## FOUNDING MEMBERS

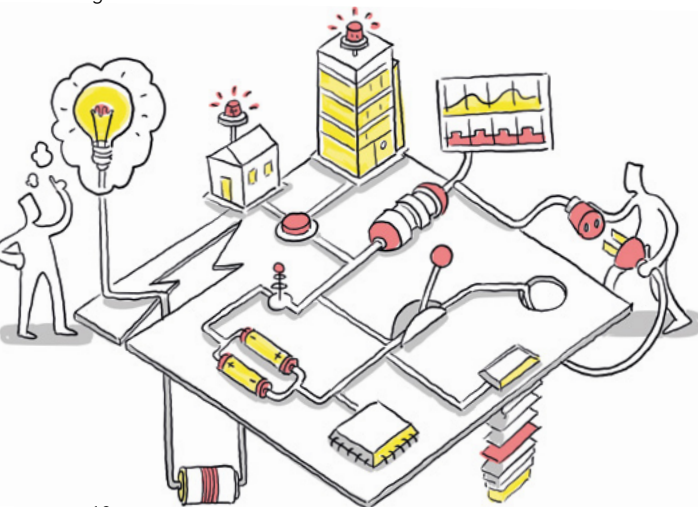
# FROM FIELD TO PLUS X

Dave Lock and Noel Sesto met at U+I's Worthwhile project based at Preston Barracks before the development for Plus X began. Now, members of Plus X Brighton, Dave and Noel have formed an instrumental friendship and collaborative partnership that is taking their businesses to higher heights.

Control Freq joined FIELD BTN as an e-commerce shop, but Noel had a bigger vision. He was working on his own hardware products – next-generation door entry systems. Noel approached Dave of Cast Iron CAD with ideas for collaboration, and in doing so, they formed an instrumental partnership that would see Control Freq evolve and grow beyond Noel's visions.

**“Dave is priceless. You give a design problem to Dave, and he solves it, which is perfect for me because I have loads of ideas and Dave's great at putting them in perspective.”**

Dave and Noel went from prototyping and developing their ideas at FIELD to moving into a three-person studio at Plus X Brighton. Soon after, they launched several products, utilising the specialist workshop and prototyping facilities on the ground floor.



Dave and Noel met at Plus X's predecessor: FIELD



**Dave Lock, Technical Director**

Dave is enthusiastic about helping companies explore their innovative product ideas, and engineering their designs into fully developed products.



**Noel Sesto, Director**

Noel is dedicated to solving technical challenges using customised mobile technology hardware and service-based software.

The BRITE project (**more about BRITE on page 36**) has been ground-breaking for Control Freq, helping them unlock potential in otherwise hidden areas.

**“When I joined BRITE, I was under the impression that innovation = product. The INSPIRE programme helped me to realise that innovation can also be a business model or a service. Now we have an operational service and a solution-based business with major growth plans.” - Noel.**

When asked what his favourite thing about being a member at Plus X Brighton was, Dave responded:

**“Besides the workshop facilities, it's got to be being able to collaborate with people in the same building as you, the variety of expertise and experience in the building is awesome.” •**

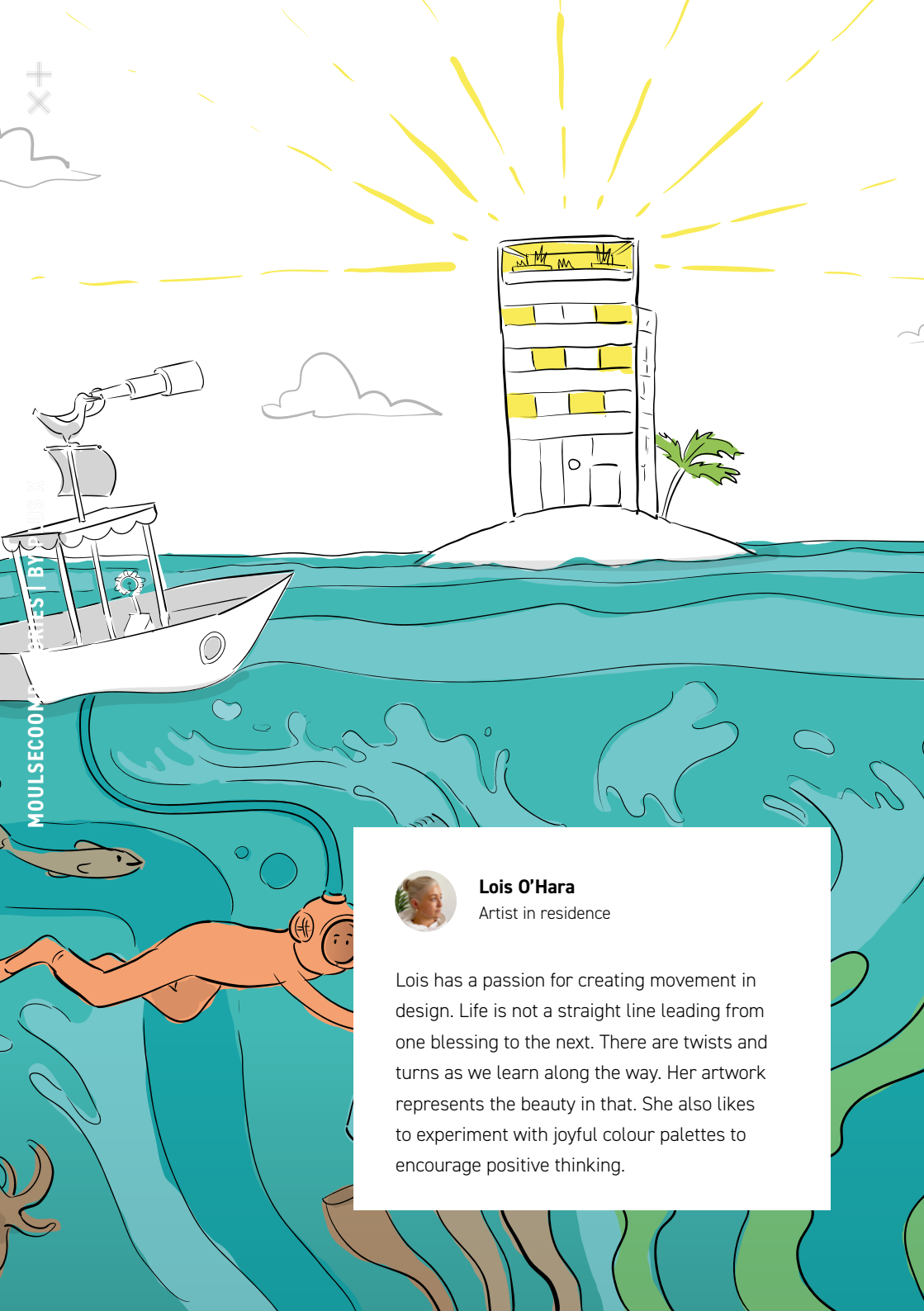


ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

# COLOURS OF *tranquility*

**You may have seen the colourful creations of Brighton artist, Lois O' Hara, speeding past you on a Brighton bus or brightening a window display on North Street.**





MOULSECOOMBS PARTNERS | BY LOIS O'HARA



**Lois O'Hara**  
Artist in residence

Lois has a passion for creating movement in design. Life is not a straight line leading from one blessing to the next. There are twists and turns as we learn along the way. Her artwork represents the beauty in that. She also likes to experiment with joyful colour palettes to encourage positive thinking.

Lois has been creating art since she was little and in 2019, she leapt into a career as a self-employed artist. Lois has created many stand-out pieces that bring people together. One of Lois's core values when creating is to have a positive social impact and ensures these projects bring colour and positivity to the local community.

Any Brighton dwellers may have noticed that Lois's pieces resemble the ebb and flow of the sea, that's no coincidence...

**"My style has naturally been inspired by the movement of the sea. I have always had a love for the mood enhancement of colour. So, with fluidity and the colours combined, my style started to "flow" over time."**

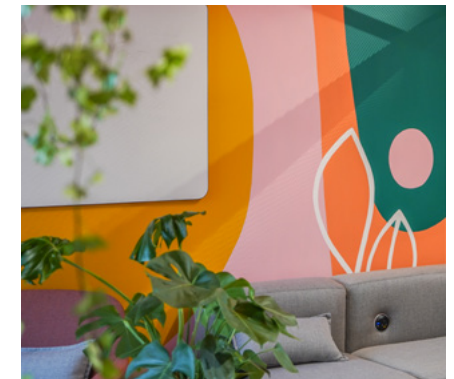
For the Plus X Brighton mural, Lois created a calm, warm space where people can take a moment to take time out and breathe.

**"I created a botanical-inspired colour palette to reflect the tranquillity of being surrounded by plants and nature."**

No stranger to the art of collaboration, Lois has partnered up on projects with Brighton based businesses such as Gomi Design and Lucy and Yak who both create sustainably made products.

Most recently, Lois has collaborated with Plus X Brighton based RVIS, an architectural visualisation studio to create a homeware range that is coming soon!

**"Plus X is such a happy and positive place to work! It's an honour to have my artwork in the building."**



COMMUNITY

► Come see Lois' Mural in the **Break out Space on Floor 4** of Plus X Brighton.





# TOUGH COOKIE

**Founded by Erin James, Tough Cookie is a magazine that amplifies marginalised voices and raises awareness on important issues. Using art as activism, the zine smashes stigma page by page.**

Erin came to the Plus X community through Lighthouse Young Creatives (LYC). This initiative supports young creative entrepreneurs to land opportunities that aren't always accessible (or visible) to young people from diverse backgrounds. Across six months, training is led by artists, musicians, and other creative professionals. It's an incredible project.

Dedicated to driving social impact, Plus X Brighton gifted the 2020 LYC graduates access to the space for six months. Erin used the space to work on both her freelance career and Tough Cookie magazine.

With topics ranging from anti-racism and LGBTQ+ issues to gaslighting and domestic abuse, Tough Cookie brings difficult (but necessary) conversations to light. The pages are curated of poetry, art, essays, and collaborations with creatives from Brighton and beyond.

We're big fans of Tough Cookie at Plus X Brighton and always have the latest issue placed around the building. So next time you're here, be sure to have a flick through!



**Erin James, Founder**  
Besides from running her own magazine, Erin is a photographer, videographer, event curator, radio host and DJ.

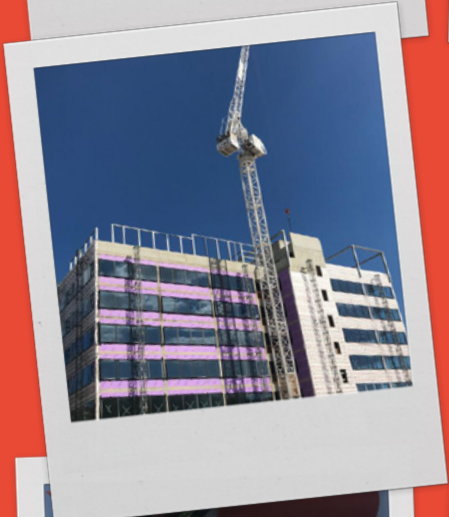
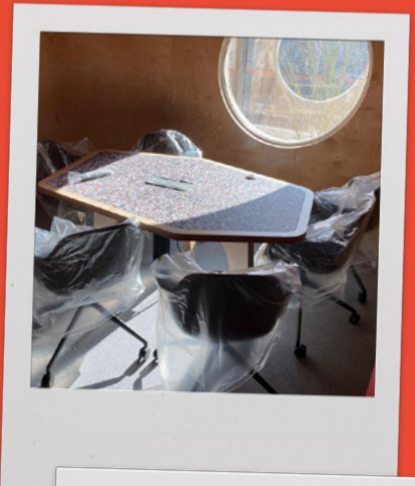
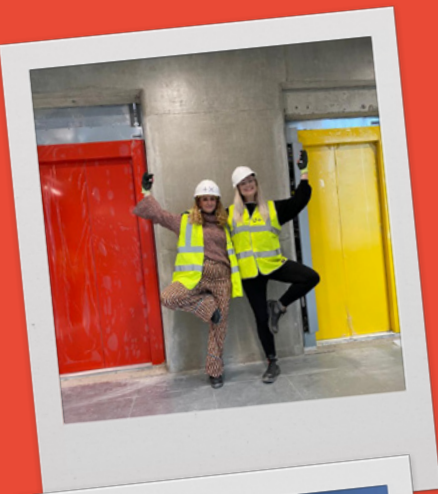
# BOLD THINKERS NEED A BOLD COMMUNITY.

MOULSECOOMB STORIES | BY PLUS X



COMMUNITY





# AN ARCHITECT'S VISION

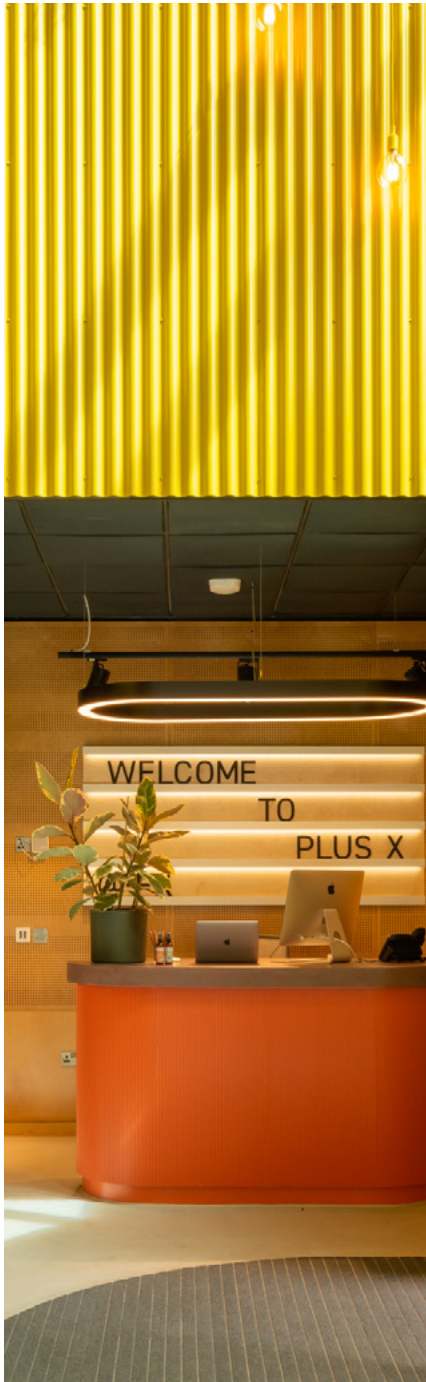
Plus X Brighton architect Lucas Lawrence returns to his student city with Studio Egret West to breathe vibrancy and connection to Lewes Road.

Lucas Lawrence, Company Director at [Studio Egret West](#) (architects and landscape architects for Plus X Brighton), studied in the early nineties at the [University of Brighton School of Architecture, Technology and Engineering](#) on the top floor of Mithras House. He recalls the contrast he experienced on his walk from Brighton city to the campus in Moulsecoomb.

He felt that the further along Lewes Road you went, the more disconnected you were from the city, even though it was just a fifteen-minute walk.

**"It wasn't part of the city; it was on the edge of the city... it felt like you were drifting out, there was little sense of place."**

When Lucas returned in 2015 to begin work on the Preston Barracks project, he was amazed to find that not much had changed. For him, going back and influencing how the place would evolve and turn into an area people would enjoy living in and studying in was profound.



**“When designing the Plus X building, we (Studio Egret West) wanted to create a fluid interaction between the wider Moulsecoomb community and the building. The ground floor with the public café and walk-through reception area was integral to that. We didn’t want there to be any barriers to entry.”**

Preston Barracks is changing. Led by U+I, in partnership with the [University of Brighton](#) and [Brighton and Hove City Council](#), the development is one of Brighton’s biggest ever regeneration projects. The development will deliver 369 new homes and 534 student bedrooms, significantly opening up the housing market in Brighton. Preston Barracks will also become home to a medical centre.

**“With the design of this building, we wanted to create an inspiring and creative central hub for this new community. My favourite part of the building is the yellow. It’s an instant mood booster!”** ●



**Lucas Lawrence,**  
**Studio Egret West, Director**

For Lucas, no challenge is too complex to tackle.





Learn to Make (almost) Anything

# FAB ACADEMY

**Fab Academy is a fast-paced rapid-prototyping course where students walk away with a personal portfolio of technical accomplishments. So, when the Plus X Brighton workshop team approached Katie Isard, Workshop Technician, with a fully-funded opportunity to join the course, she leapt at it.**

The Plus X Brighton workshop is part of a worldwide network of digital fabrication labs called [Fab Labs](#). Meaning there really couldn't be a better place to take part in this course. From 3D printers and laser cutters to milling machines and micro-electronics equipment – this workshop has it all.

**“Knowing that I could do it, that was the biggest thing I got out of it.”**

Katie took part in the six-month course alongside her full-time role. And so, we often saw her working away on her final project early in the mornings and into the evenings. It took a lot of dedication.

Her final project, Cascade, was a bottle opening game where you open a bottle at the top of the board, the bottle top then cascades down, setting off a pattern of lights. It's super cool!

**“It now lives in my kitchen; my housemates and I use it all the time!”**



The Plus X Brighton workshop is open **every day** from **9 - 5pm.**





IDEAS

# WE THINK BIG BOLD AND BRAVE



**The transformative, pioneering ideas and  
how they are made into a reality.**



# B+R+I+T+E

## Greater Brighton's most innovative scaling businesses



 Scan to get a taste of BRITE and meet the **2021 cohort** in this 12-minute video.

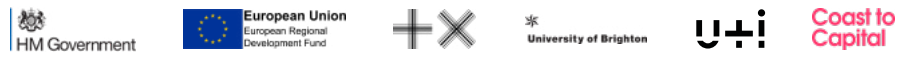
### THIS IS BRITE



IDEAS

**BRITE is the business programme for Greater Brighton's most innovative scaling businesses. The project is delivered in partnership with the University of Brighton, who are renowned for their innovation with SMEs. Over the coming pages, you will meet some of the innovators, inventors and next-gen entrepreneurs that are taking part in the programme.**

Part funded by





23D

## Creating content that connects

23D has been at Plus X from the get-go. They are obsessed with crafting high-impact films for forward-thinking and responsible organisations, transforming them into bold and arresting content.

Founded by [Marc Convey](#) and [James Beer](#), 23D is a diverse team of talented producers, technologists, filmmakers, storytellers, and strategists. They are also the most avid team of networkers in the Plus X Brighton building. You'll often see them connecting with other businesses to help them solve their problems.

Endeavouring to create content for a greener energy future has seen them land UK Power Networks and Britishvolt as clients.



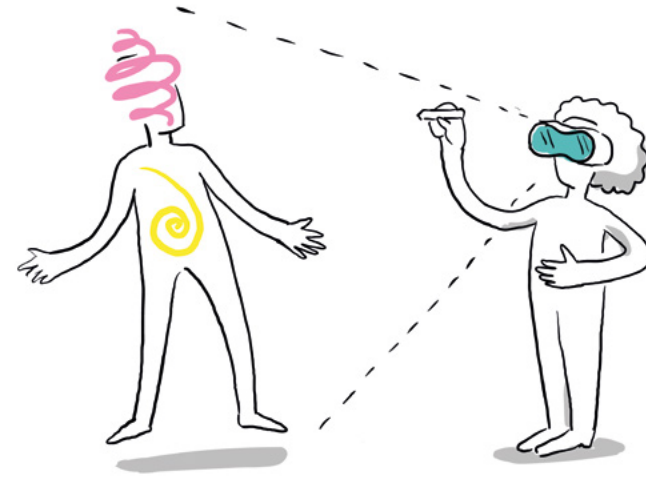
**Marc Convey, CEO**

Marc is a natural networker and loves nothing more than solution hunting for clients.



**James Beer, Creative Director**

James is obsessed with crafting high-impact films for forward-thinking and responsible organisations.



HATSUMI

## Changing the way we talk about pain and emotion

Founded by [Sarah Ticho](#), [Hatsumi](#) is changing the way we talk about pain and emotion. On average, we have 11 seconds to convey our condition to a doctor before we are interrupted. Hatsumi is developed to explore new ways to communicate and track the experience of pain and emotion - to share with others and help us understand our inner emotional and sensory landscapes.

Play and creativity are at the heart of the experience. You are invited to illustrate the embodied experience onto a 3D avatar in a virtual reality environment, using a range of animated 3D drawing tools.



**Sarah Ticho, Founder**

Sarah is a social entrepreneur and works with government and NHS representatives to support the ethical adoption of the immersive technology in healthcare.



# B+RITE



## MAKE REAL

### Transforming the way we work and play with VR + AR

Remember all the dry, boring training sessions you've ever sat through? Imagine how much cooler they would have been with VR. Make Real create immersive learning experiences that result in meaningful, validated outcomes. Their purpose is to inspire, immerse and enable people to grow – at work, at home and on the move.

They believe that immersive experiences are transforming the way we work, learn and play. So, they create collaborative serious games, VR and AR training experiences and other tools that support new ways of changing behaviours for the better.



**Sam Watts, Immersive Partnerships Director**

Sam has dedicated the last eight years to introducing people to experiences with things that aren't really there, but have real, lasting positive impacts upon their behaviours.



## VOTCH

### Cruelty-free watch straps



**Laura Way, Founder**

Laura is dedicated to cruelty-free and compassionate business, showing the world we no longer need to harm animals for fashion.



**Rolo, Founding Member**

Rolo is passionate about snacks and barking at the postman.

Votch is the phoenix to rise from the ashes of founder Laura's experience with Topical Steroid Withdrawal. This condition saw her skin fall from her body. Knowing how it felt to have your skin peel away, Laura decided that she would go vegan. However, a few months later, her watch strap broke, and it became clear that it was near impossible to find a cruelty-free leather alternative to replace it.

Fast track to 2021, and Votch have over six collections of watches in a variety of designs, which pair with an array of various straps in different colours, materials and sizes. Votch doesn't stop at being cruelty-free either. They also work with a range of sustainable materials and donate a percentage of their profits to a new charity every three months through their "giving back" initiative.

“ Being a part of the BRITE innovation programme at Plus X Brighton has been a key factor in our success.

**Jack Maddalena**  
Co-Founder, Naurt



**NAURT**

**Re-imagining what is possible with true location technology**

Have you ever had a maps app send you to the wrong place? GPS may have got us from A to B since 1983, but let's face it, modern-day tracking could do with a revamp.

Enter Naurt: The Brighton start-up recalculating location fixes to give you more precise location data. Naurt's vision is to empower every device that relies on location with the technology to break new boundaries. Founded by Jack Maddalena and Nicolas Slack this innovative technology works anywhere in the world and is easy for developers to integrate using a API plugin. Naurt has used the facilities at Plus X to collect data and improve its system.



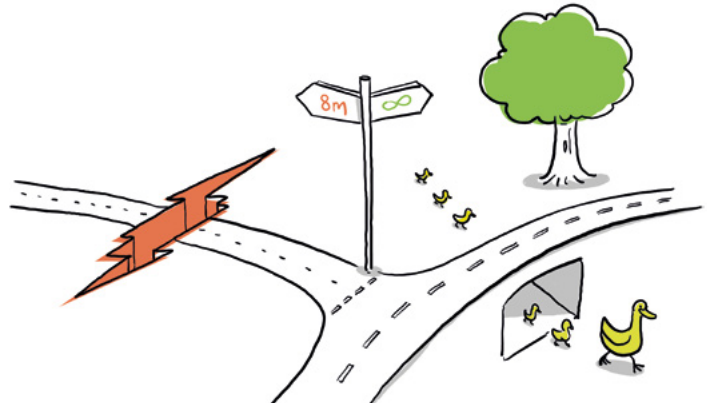
**Jack Maddalena, CEO**  
Jack is an entrepreneur and commercial specialist who grew up on the hill behind Plus X Brighton.



**Nicolas Slack, CTO**  
Nicolas' vision catalysed modern acoustic levitation and pivoted his attention to geo-location.



# B+RITE



## ROADWAYS

### Saving the planet one road at a time

Partners [James Bailey](#) and [Victoria Vasiliauskaite](#) bought [Roadways](#) in 2015. Together, they turned the traditionally cultured civil engineering and road asphalting company into the modern, ethically based organisation it is today. As key members of the UK's road-building community, Roadways keep the South East's highways flowing and safe.

Sustainability is at the heart of their mission and in 2020 they recycled 4000 tonnes of main roads. Roadways have joined BRITE to activate Research and Development towards innovating new solutions to create faster, cheaper, and longer-lasting road surfaces.



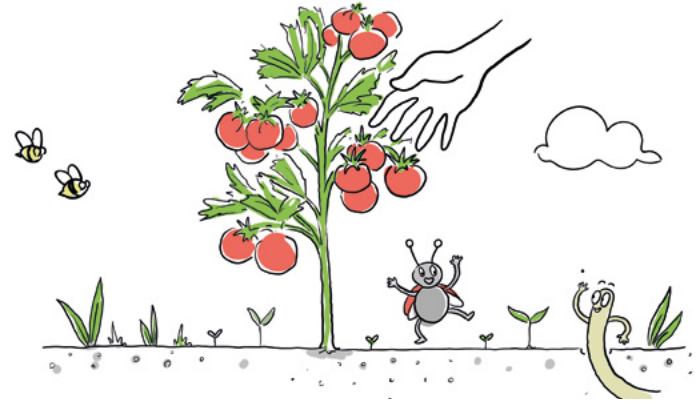
**James Bailey, Chief Executive**

James brings focus on business strategy, digital technology, sustainable innovation and collaborative client relationships.



**Victoria Vasiliauskaite, Head of Operations**

Victoria is passionate about developing local talent, investing in people and helping local communities.



## COMPOST CLUB

### Ending Brighton's food waste

[Compost Club](#) is a company with a purpose beyond profit, operating in Brighton & Hove and Lewes. Their mission is to divert local food waste from landfill or incineration and cycle these nutrients to create a compost full of the organisms that give life to the soil.

They then use this to green up local landscapes such as people's gardens, allotments and even bigger growing projects like community and market gardens. Ultimately, they see soil as the foundation of life on land, quite literally. They want healthy soil to produce healthy plants for healthy humans and all life on earth.



**Michael Kennard, Founder**

Michael is on a mission to ensure our landscapes are green as well as offer food waste collection to change the current system.

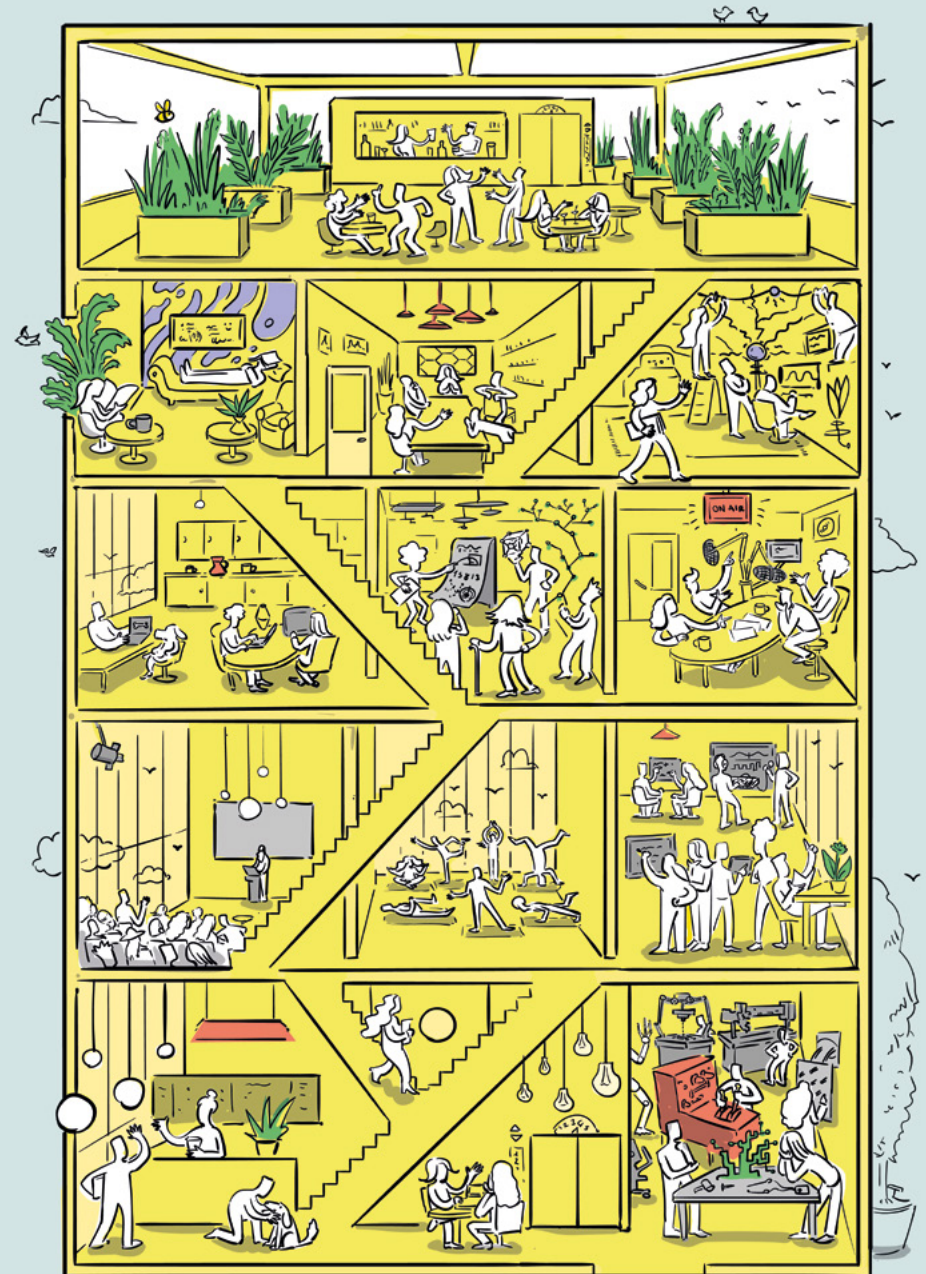
PLUS X BRIGHTON

# A BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

Plus X Brighton helps bold thinkers do their best work. Whether you're a large, established business or a growing start-up, our ecosystem is for people who are interested in making change, getting different perspectives, learning, growing, and finding answers to the biggest challenges of our time.



**enhancement.codes.lives** - our what3words!  
 what3words encodes geographic coordinates into three permanently fixed dictionary words.





# RESIDENT DISRUPTOR

MarinaTex founder Lucy Hughes is on a mission to ban plastic from the ocean.



DEAS



**Lucy Hughes, founder of MarinaTex, is the definition of a disruptor. In 2019, Lucy won the Plus X Disruptors competition with her sustainable alternative to plastic, winning a membership at Plus X Brighton. Lucy has truly become a Plus X ambassador and sustainability pioneer in the community.**



Made from waste from the fishing industry and red algae, MarinaTex is a planet conscious alternative to single-use plastic. The material is aimed at packaging solutions such as retail bags and food contact packaging (the film you get on a sandwich packet).

When Lucy entered the Disruptors competition, she had only just graduated from her studies in Product Design at Sussex University. MarinaTex was her final project. The idea had already received immense recognition, landing her the James Dyson award in 2019.

**“It was in quite juvenile stages as a business. It was just an idea and a material. Through my time at Plus X, it’s turned from a student project into a registered R&D company.”**

Besides winning the James Dyson award, the sustainable start-up has been exhibited at the Design Museum in London. In addition, Lucy has spoken at the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations) and the European Commission’s Blue Invest event.

**“Being a solo entrepreneur is hard – without any income, it’s even harder. Winning a membership through Disruptors was instrumental to getting MarinaTex off the ground.”**

Any business founder knows that the business world can be challenging. By being a part of an innovation ecosystem, you tap a network of people who have tried, failed, learnt, tried again, and succeeded – you can learn a lot.

**“My favourite thing about being at Plus X Brighton is having a mini family in the office and a beautiful space to be the best you and make the best connections.”**







Photography by Pete Webb

CULTURE

# WE ARE EMPOWERED



**The empowered minds creating a vibrant culture at Plus X Brighton**



# LOCKDOWN LUNCHING

Happy Go Souvlaki: keeping the bellies and hearts of Brighton full.

**During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, you would find Nick Costaras and his team outside of Plus X Brighton every week serving up delicious Greek street food. This was part of an initiative in partnership with Street Diner to support Brighton's small food businesses to survive during the pandemic.**



Though born in Brighton, Nick lived in Greece for most of his life before moving back with his wife Yana in 2012. They both knew they wanted to do something with food. So, when they saw an ad for a workshop on Street Food, they tucked right in.

Their first street food creation was a Paella stall, nodding to Yana's half-Spanish background. Then, when Nick's best friend George moved from Greece to Brighton in 2017 to join the business, they went full Greek, and Happy Go Souvlaki was born.





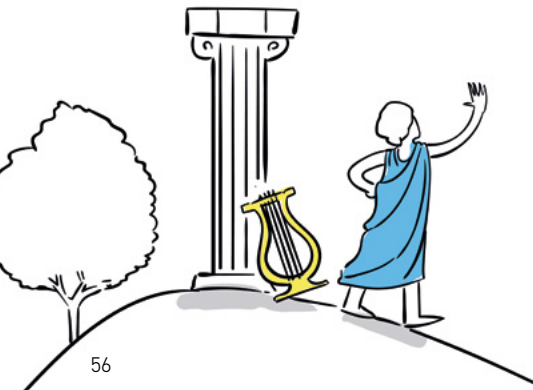
**“Our time at Plus X was vital, lockdown shocked us, and we didn’t know what to expect. Having that weekly revenue was so important for us. I had an office at Plus X Brighton, and it gave me a reason to get out of the house. I really felt connected to the community.”**

Even the construction workers nearby would come and get their weekly Souvlaki and tell the team stories about their holidays in Greece. ●

► Hungry for Greek street food? Find out where to find Happy Go Souvlaki next by scanning the code below.



@Happy Go Souvlaki







The world needs more **bold**, **fresh thinkers**. The ones moving things **forward**. The ones striving for better and **making a difference**. The **pioneers**.



# THE ART OF INCLUSION

We have been collaborating with urbanflo to bring a series of exhibitions themed around inclusivity to Plus X Brighton. Jenni Lewin-Turner, founder of urbanflo, is passionate about access to opportunity for all and excellence in the arts and culture.

urbanflo supports the development of individual artists, community groups and cultural agencies by delivering a rich portfolio of heritage projects, creative events, talent development, arts consultancy and international exchange - all embedded with inclusive practice.

Jenni: "I've really enjoyed collaborating with Plus X as it's such a creative hub and a brilliant space to champion local artists."

### about the artist



**Chris Jepson** - An award-winning professional portrait, lifestyle and documentary photographer who has photographed everyone, from top pop stars to religious leaders.



Photography by Chris Jepson





about the artist



**Tunde Atabi-Hundeyin** · A freelance documentary photographer and filmmaker. He teaches photography at University of Sussex.







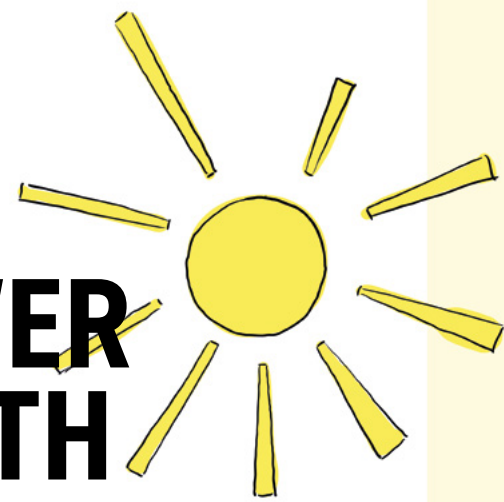
#### — about the artist —



**Manavi Singhal** • Manavi Singhal started RavisI to design art and creative branding projects. She combined her mission for the betterment of the LGBT+ community with Black Lives Matter, and wishes to provide support for the most marginalised, by creating visibility.



# THE POWER OF BREATH



Plus X Brighton's resident yoga teacher, Sal Jefferies, is a human behaviour specialist working with founders and freelancers who want to be a force for positive change in the world. He integrates psychology, human behaviour, body intelligence and breath work to create a unique and human-centric approach to coaching and training.

He helps clients develop a conscious, resilient and agile mindset so they can meet challenges and be creative in their work. Sal brings particular focus to wellbeing and how to manage difficult emotions and stress through the skills and tools from breath work and yoga.



► **Members!** Join Sal for breath workshops at 12:30pm on Wednesdays and yoga sessions at 8am on Thursdays.



**Start by sitting upright in a chair and rest hands on your belly**



**Breathe in through your nose and feel the lower belly gently expand**



**Breathe out through your nose and feel the lower belly gently release**



**Now start to breathe in for a count of 4 and breathe out for a count of 6**

(If this is difficult, then breathe in for a count of 3 and out for a count of 5)



**Every time you breathe out, relax your body a little more**




**Do this for around 2 mins. Practice daily or anytime you need to de-stress**





# WHAT MADE ME IN 2020



 @whatmademe\_art

IMPACT

# WE GIVE A DAMN



The trailblazers and changemakers  
creating a better tomorrow



MOULSECOMB STORIES | BY PLUS X



Chip[s]Board's Parblex material

As we were catapulted into global isolation in 2020, we were faced with news of bushfires enveloping Australia and floods devastating Indonesia. Then, in July 2021, the sea caught fire. In a time of limited distractions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the earth found its way to send us an unequivocal message – “help”.

Sustainability has always been at the core of Plus X and [Better World Collective](#), a material innovation programme facilitating collaboration between start-ups and corporates and is our response to the urgency of the global sustainability crisis.

We put our heads together and created a formula with outstanding potential. So many start-ups are innovating sustainable solutions, but they need corporate companies to scale their solutions to generate the impact the earth desperately needs. Better World Collective matchmakes start-ups with corporates through a solution-focused series of summits, empowering them to spark further collaboration projects in sustainable innovation.

# BETTER WORLD COLLECTIVE

**There has never been a more urgent time for sustainable innovation. We cannot turn back time, nor can we hit pause. Change must happen now, and it needs to be both fast-tracked and widely scaled.**

**The earth found its way to send us an unequivocal message – “help”.**

For example, [Chip\[s\] Board](#) creates “Parblex”, a material made from potato waste from McCain Foods. This material is now being used by eyewear brand Ace & Tate to prototype some cool glasses frames!

**BETTER ● WORLD  
COLLECTIVE**



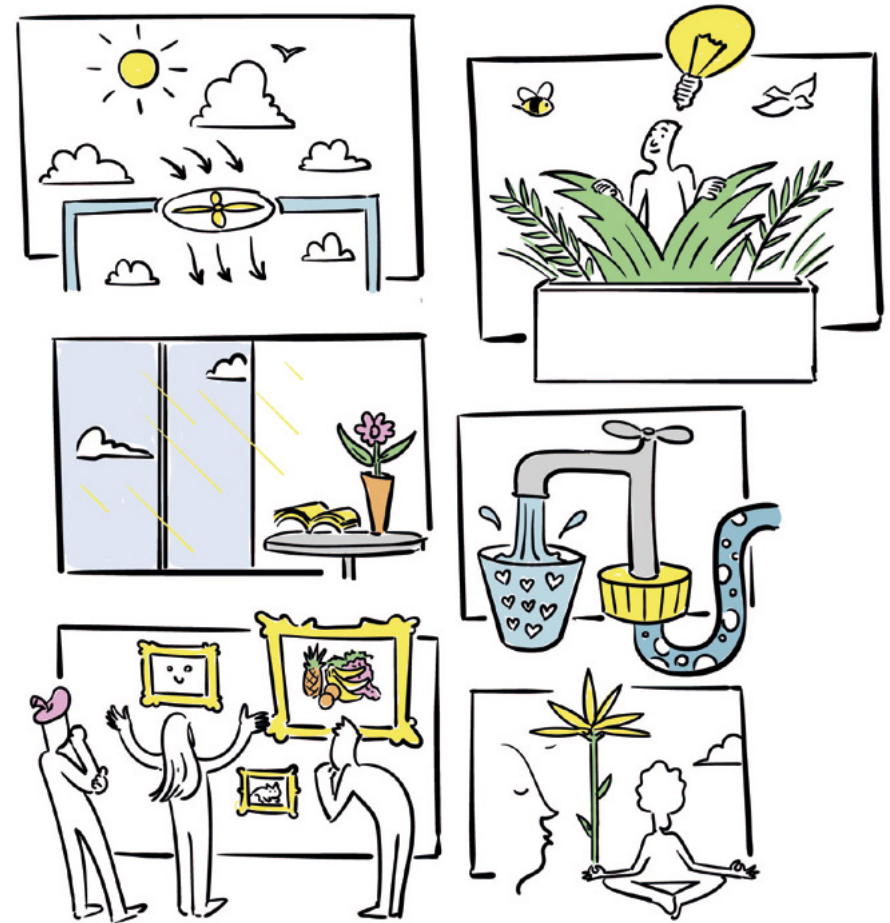
Better World Collective unlocks the potential to fast-track sustainable innovation. The programme connects organisations with leading start-ups to solve sustainable material innovation challenges.

IMPACT



# The *healthiest* building on the South Coast

When you feel incredible, you flourish, and your environment plays a fundamental part in this. That's why Plus X Brighton has been specifically designed to WELL Building Standard: Platinum. Everything at Plus X Brighton has human health and wellbeing at the forefront.



## The 11 WELL features are:

- Air
- Water
- Nourishment
- Sound
- Movement
- Thermal comfort
- Materials
- Mind
- Community
- Innovations
- Light

Learn more about WELL and what this means for our building in the **Plus X WELL Guide**.



Photography by Sally Durrant

# CAFÉ DOMENICA

**Plus X Brighton is home to a vibrant café. But this is not just any café. Café Domenica has a vision for people with learning disabilities to be valued in the workplace, to reach their full potential and feel included as members of society.**

Founder and Chairman Rosa Monckton, whose younger daughter, Domenica, has Down's Syndrome, set up the registered charity to help young people with learning disabilities find and retain meaningful employment.

Domenica was Princess Diana's last godchild, and Rosa passionately promotes the late Princess's belief that "everybody needs to be valued and everyone has the potential to give something back".

Café Domenica's unique approach includes a training centre, training cafés (Café Domenica) and an employment centre. With these tools, they provide employment programmes to young people with a wide range of abilities, referred to as their 'candidates' to accurately reflect and emphasise their role as people ready for employment.

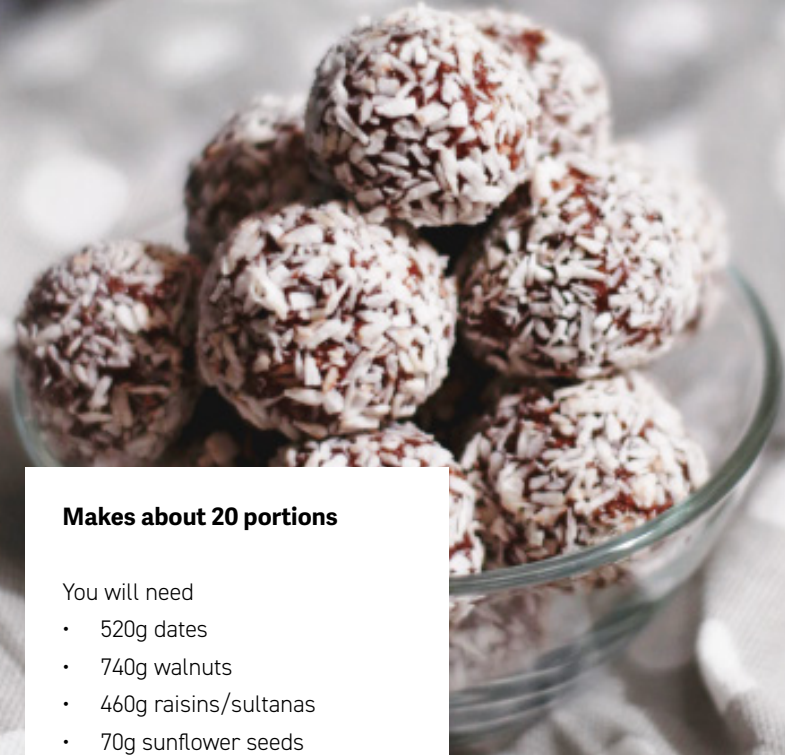
They have already achieved an outstanding 75% paid employment rate through their supported internships, more than 12 times higher than the national employment statistic (6%) for people with learning disabilities.

- .....
- ▶ **Come and visit!** Café Domenica is open to the public Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm.
  - ▶ Or find one of their recipes on **the next page!**



# VEGAN ENERGY BITES

A recipe by



**Makes about 20 portions**

You will need

- 520g dates
- 740g walnuts
- 460g raisins/sultanas
- 70g sunflower seeds
- 260g linseeds
- Desiccated coconut (for rolling)



1. Start by soaking the dates. Measure them out into a bowl and cover with boiling water. Cover and wait for 15 minutes. They should be nice and soft.



2. Whilst the dates are soaking, weigh out the other ingredients (except the coconut), and put in a blender.



3. Drain and add the dates to the blender. Blitz all the ingredients in the blender until the mixture is well chopped and mixed (the seeds don't always chop, but don't worry about this).



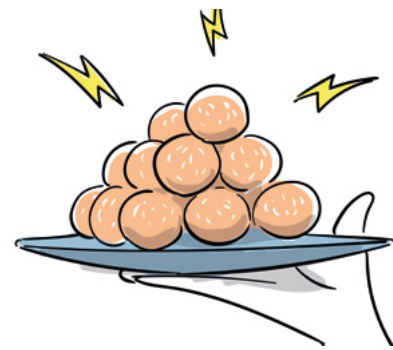
4. Scrape out the mixture and put into a large mixing bowl, mix with clean hands until a very sticky mixture is made.



5. Take out a small handful of the mixture and roll into even-sized balls. Place them on a tray or board whilst you are doing this.



6. Fill a small bowl with some desiccated coconut, roll each ball carefully in this so that it picks up enough coconut to cover it.



**Et voila! Your energy bites are ready to be enjoyed!**





WE GIVE PEOPLE THE TOOLS TO  
**COLLABORATE, BUILD, CREATE,**  
**TEST AND LEARN.**

TO MAKE THEIR IDEAS **REAL.**







Photography by [Gusto](#)

# ELEVATING LOCAL TALENT

At Plus X Brighton we believe in championing the local, talented minds of Brighton and Hove and so work closely with Creative Process, a specialist digital apprenticeship provider to help provide opportunities to inspire the future.



"Plus X have hired a number of digital apprentices who have successfully completed their training and had amazing work experience opportunities. They have also promoted our programmes across their membership base, opening up high value apprenticeship opportunities with some of the most exciting digital and tech businesses in the city."

**Philip Perryman**, Employment Partnerships Director  
[Creative Process](#)



Scan to learn more about **Creative Process**





# ZACHARY HYLAND

**“With the help from Creative Process and Plus X I learnt the vital skills needed to be a successful freelance filmmaker.”**



“I’ve been home-schooled my whole life and have been lucky enough to travel with my family experiencing different cultures and meeting new people. I got into filmmaking when I got a camera for my 15th Birthday and walked around Brighton trying to bag clients (big believer in fake it ‘til you make it). After making some short social media content for Greenpeace and Extinction Rebellion I joined a Young Creatives mentorship course called

Viral run by Lighthouse. There I made connections around Sussex and landed an Apprenticeship at Plus X Brighton. With the help from Creative Process and almost everyone in the Plus X building I learnt the vital skills needed to be a successful freelance filmmaker. Now I’m collaborating with a network of creatives around the UK and making short-form content for brands.”

# EMILY BRACKENFIELD

**"I am passionate about improving lives around me."**



"I come from an education centred around the holistic approach to individualism called Waldorf Steiner education. This inclusive education allowed me to find out exactly who I am from an early age! My life purpose is to be a change maker who never fails to lend a hand to someone who needs it. I am passionate about improving lives around me.

I am currently working full time on a digital marketing apprenticeship at Plus X Brighton, in partnership with Creative Process. Working for a company that is a pioneer for changing lives through focusing on local impact is a dream come true! My journey at Plus X is extremely exciting and I feel privileged to be at the heart of this fantastic opportunity."





# DROP BY

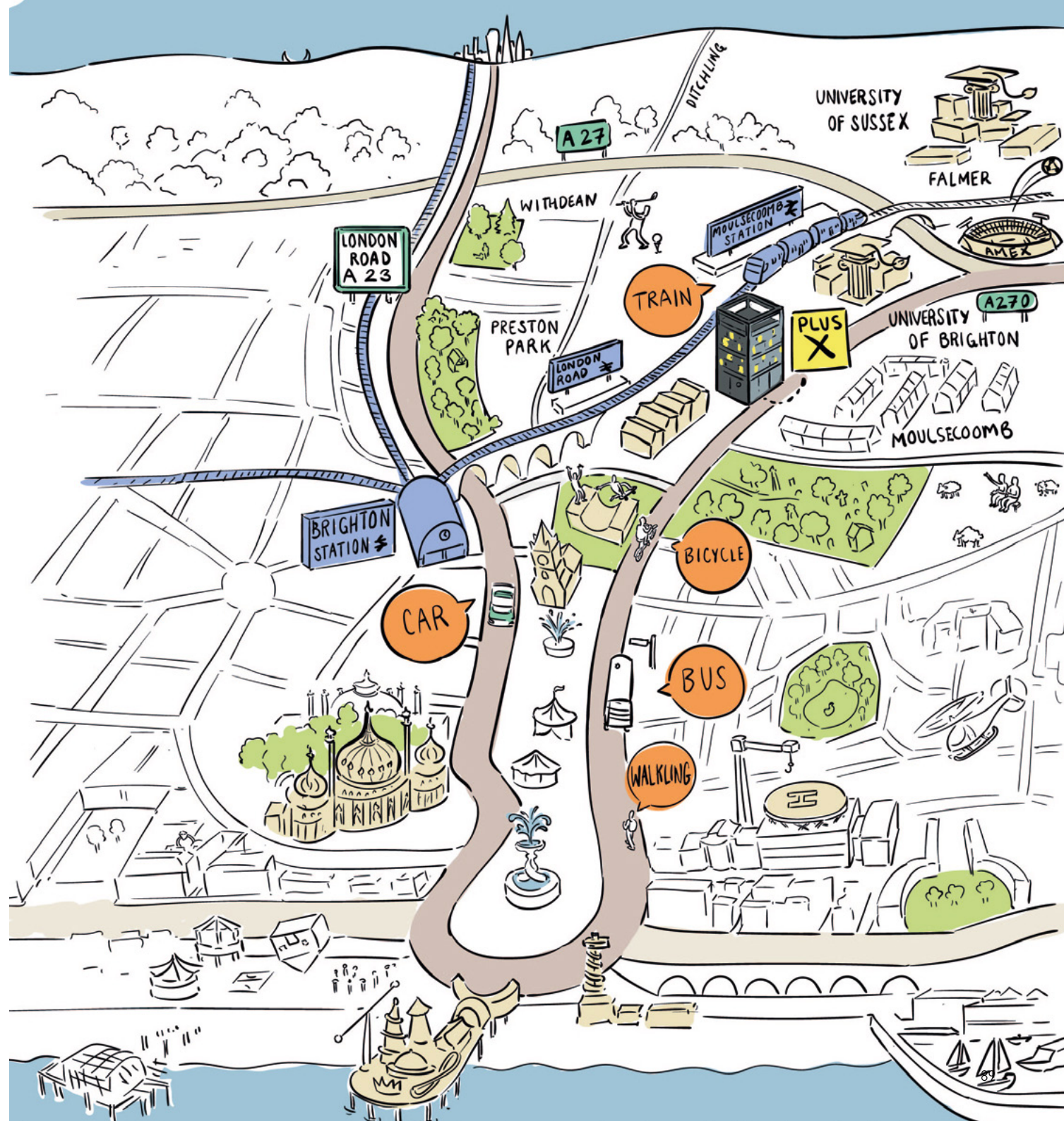
 Find us here

Plus X innovation hubs Lewes Rd  
Brighton BN2 4GL



Or scan to get directions

[www.plusx.space](http://www.plusx.space)





## Thank you!

Thank you for reading Moulsecoomb Stories. If you would like to get involved with the Plus X innovation hubs community then please don't hesitate to reach out to us at:

[hellobrighton@plusx.space](mailto:hellobrighton@plusx.space)



Scan to **book a tour of  
Plus X Brighton**

And a BIG thank you to all who contributed to this magazine: [Chloe Shearman](#); on words and project management, [Paulien van Rijkevorsel](#); on design, [Victor Hagger](#); on illustrations, [Zach Hyland](#); on photography (\*unless otherwise credited), [Alicia Sullivan](#); on final project management.

And of course, to our lovely community of members who have dedicated their time to help us create these stories.



