



## BACK TO BASICS

In the heart of neighbouring Brixton lies a Victorian warehouse, full of character and interest, known as the Piano House

Once upon a time, this building housed instruments, most especially pianos, hence its name. However, today it is home to place where collaborative working is the key. At the very heart of the Piano House lies a large warehouse/workspace, known as the Piano Club.

"Workplaces and the way we work have changed with the advancement of technology," says Richard Pearce, director of property company, TCN UK.

"More people are working from home, and workplace rules have changed. We wanted to offer local people a workspace that was realistic, and break away from the traditional drab office spaces and offer businesses something different."

Since it launched in 2011, the Piano Club has held down the forward button on the co-working culture. The warehouse space offers a distinctive setting, complete with piano and bar. Commercial tenants are also provided with kitchen facilities, meeting rooms, printing, internet and communication provisions, along with an on site caretaker. The building also includes parking, security gates and CCTV. The use of all facilities is included in the £295 monthly payment.

The open-plan workspace is stripped of the typical, fussy, office design and has a raw, natural feel. Ironwork doors complement the wooden floored design; exposed brickwork with high ceilings and large windows. The warehouse space offers a contemporary, relaxed, raw, cool feel, draped in natural light. The Piano Club appears to be setting the trend for the office space; going back to basics.

Richard says the design is far removed from traditional, carpeted, grey office space, and for him it was key to retain the building's character and original features. "Most importantly, the Piano House is all about collaborative working, this is very important to us. We had this empty space, filled with character, so instead of spending thousands turning into a boring, grey, traditional office building, we maintained the original rustic features and opened up the space to local businesses. Brixton is a real buzzing place and very lively, we wanted to reflect this in our building and attract a young, vibrant, business community, which enjoys co-working in a relaxed environment."

Suitable for one to four person businesses, Richard says the Piano Club is a fun and exciting, yet affordable place to

work. He also highlights it is good for companies that are based at home, but looking for their first work space, because of Piano Club's approach to collaborative working. "Working from home is okay when businesses start out; I have done it myself, but there comes a time when you need to branch out and develop your business identity. You cannot do that with your 'other half' in the background, shouting about the washing-up and you are on the phone trying to close a deal. We can offer you a professional image, which will boost your businesses credibility and impress clients."

Already home to companies such as: Livity youth communications agency, London Printworks Trust and Designers Collective, its trendy, very 'now' atmosphere is very popular with local residents. The building, with the exception of the Piano Club space, is 100% let, but there is still space available for those interested in joining the Piano Club.

This workspace has become so popular that one tenant even rents out cupboard space as an office. This popularity is showing little signs of waning, with a waiting list of new, young companies all wanting to get in on the act.

"We have created a buzz since we started, which other local businesses want to be part of," Richard explains. "This is simply because of our approach to working. People just want to work there because they feel like they are missing out on being part of a collaborative culture that is creative, different and happening now."

Richard also highlights that many start-ups do not want to pay the high rents which come with traditional office space. At the Piano Club there is no deposit or minimum stay, and you rent on a monthly basis. "The building and the type of businesses that are here, is what people are drawn to. It truly reflects the area's buzzing and eclectic character. You are certainly part of something creative, where you interact with other business and share your skills. You can have one person who specialises in tax, and another company that needs some tax advice, coming together to help each other, this is co-working at its best."

### **The Piano House**

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

### **The Piano Club**

[www.pianohousebrixton.co.uk/pianoclub](http://www.pianohousebrixton.co.uk/pianoclub)