

PRESS ADVISORY BEGINS  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Forest, 3 Bristo Place, Edinburgh**

<http://www.theforest.org.uk>

Harry Giles

Fundraising Officer / Media Contact

[fundraising@theforest.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@theforest.org.uk)

07766191817

Shannon Stephens

Trustee / Media Contact

[shannon@theforest.org.uk](mailto:shannon@theforest.org.uk)

07791702618

## **FIGHT TO SAVE HOME FOR EDINBURGH ARTS CHARITY**

The Forest arts and community centre is stepping up the campaign to save its home of 7 years amid the news that a buyer for its building has been found. The volunteer-run events and education charity, which also operates a thriving vegetarian café, is one of Edinburgh's last remaining open-access multi-arts venues, and its future is threatened by the potential sale of the building at 3 Bristo Place.

Following the bankruptcy of the Forest's former landlords, the Edinburgh University Settlement, in October, the charity has been running a high-profile fundraising campaign to buy its building, a former church. But now the building's estate agents, Graham & Sibbald, have informed the Forest that a buyer for the building has been found and that the sale is due to be completed over the next month.

“The buyers haven't been in touch with us themselves, so we don't know who they are or what their intentions for the Forest are – but if they're expecting us to pack up and leave quietly, they're mistaken,” said Sean Hammond, a long-time Forest volunteer. “Potential buyers should remember that last time we had a big scare, when Eidyn Architects wanted to turn the building into private flats, objection letters from around the world forced them to withdraw.”

“There's been a huge outpouring of public support for the campaign, including widespread media coverage, letters from MPs, and regular fundraising events run for us by local arts organisations,” Sean Hammond continued. “We've raised a massive £14,000 in just three months, and we know that there's a strong will in the local community for us to continue doing our work in this beautiful building.”

The Forest is calling on its supporters and community to rally behind the campaign and make it clear to the anonymous buyers that they want to stay in their current home. Supporters can sign an e-petition in support of the campaign at <http://www.gopetition.com/petition/43255.html>, and are able to donate to the charity through their website at [www.theforest.org.uk](http://www.theforest.org.uk).

“We're confident that we can win this,” said Shannon Stephens, one of Forest's trustees. “The Forest means a great deal to many people in Edinburgh and worldwide. Literally thousands of

volunteers have contributed to Forest in hundreds of different ways; many successful, musicians, performers and artists had their start here; and our work has a vital and unique place in the Edinburgh community that needs to be protected.”

## NOTES FOR JOURNALISTS

1. The Forest was established in August 2000 as a free and independent arts, events and education venue. As well as its café and events spaces, it currently operates a publishing house, a record label and an arts gallery, as well as studios and workshops for artists, and it houses a hair and massage salon, a library, and a shop for local artists. It is a registered charity (SC038234), and is run by volunteers, with an open access policy encouraging the local community to be involved in running the organisation and its resources. A detailed press pack about the Forest's work is available at <http://www.theforest.org.uk/forestpresspack.pdf>
2. Interviews are available on request from either of the media contacts listed above and below. A public meeting to discuss the campaign, share information and encourage support will be held on Saturday 5th March, 4.30-6.30pm, at the Forest Café. There will be an opportunity for journalists to meet campaigners and volunteers for interview both before and after this meeting.
3. Previous publicity and information about the campaign can be found at <http://blog.theforest.org.uk/savetheforest> Prominent articles include Rupert Thomson in the Scotsman (2/12/10 <http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/features/Saving-two-key-Edinburgh-arts.6646925.jp>) and Michael McLeod in the Guardian (1/12/10 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/edinburgh/2010/dec/01/edinburgh-forest-cafe-flats-plan-withdrawn-online-objections>)

### **The Forest, 3 Bristo Place, Edinburgh**

<http://www.theforest.org.uk>

Harry Giles

Fundraising Officer / Media Contact

[fundraising@theforest.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@theforest.org.uk)

07766191817

Shannon Stephens

Trustee / Media Contact

[shannon@theforest.org.uk](mailto:shannon@theforest.org.uk)

07791702618

PRESS ADVISORY ENDS