

Edinburgh still Occupied

✘ One week on from last Saturday's day of protest around 40 protesters are still camping in St Andrew Square.

Organisers from [Occupy Edinburgh](#) say that the protest has been peaceful, and that good relations have been maintained with the police as well as with local residents and businesses. The group currently aim to maintain a presence in the square until Christmas.

Those braving the elements for the anti-capitalist cause ✘ come from all over the globe. Mattia Lunia is a 19 year-old student at Edinburgh University and has been camping all week. Lunia comes from New York and it was the Occupy Wall Street campaign in his home city that inspired him. Lunia said:- "I heard what was going on in New York so I was very envious of all my friends there, and now I can bring it to Edinburgh."

On public reaction to the campaigners, Lunia feels that despite some negativity the general feedback has been positive. He commented:- "You sometimes get the feeling that what you are doing is pointless and that you are dirty hippies doing nothing, but the feedback has been mainly positive."

Lunia is particularly grateful for what he describes as "amazing" donations of food and warm clothes from members of the public. Edinburgh restaurants the Himalayas and the Mosque Kitchen have also donated hot food. Looking to the future the main aim is to get more people actively involved. Lunia says :- "We just need to get more people into the Square, because while people have been very supportive we need them to get down here and get mobilised – that's our new goal."

✘ In addition to those pitching their tents, a number of activists have been coming down daily to help. One such person is 65 year-old Edinburgh woman, Pat Smith. After

attending last Saturday's rally Smith felt motivated to come down every day to lend a hand. She said:- "It's been inspirational – personally, I certainly have been inspired. I have been out of politics for decades, but it is very instructive when you come down and see how these people are. They are very respectful of everyone and really welcoming."

Smith echoes others comments that the public have been very supportive of the protesters. She puts this down in part to the atmosphere generated in the square. She said:- "The camp is a small example of how you can live in a very different way – setting up camp in the heart of a big capitalist city."

With over 20 tents currently pitched there, the camp looks set to be a feature of Edinburgh for some time if the campaigners have their way.