

# Johnston Press fails to see the funny side

Media news website Hold the Front Page reports that 'three freelance cartoonists have been relieved of their roles with a group of [Johnston Press](#) titles as part of a cost-cutting exercise'.

And that group is in Edinburgh. All three are well known to Edinburgh residents. So what exactly is behind the latest in a round of redundancies which seems to be neverending?

Well the first thing to know is that when the current CEO, Ashley Highfield took over the group had debts of £360m. Last May the group asked its shareholders to approve a refinancing deal which cut the debts to less than £200m. They raised £220m through bonds issued and a further £140m by issuing and placing shares.

The Scotsman and Edinburgh Evening News have moved from their HQ next to Holyrood which we understand cost about £1m a year in rent to other premises on Orchard Brae. The editorial staff of both papers now work as one, and both newspapers share the same deadline and printing time all apparently in an effort to save money.

As well as reducing the number of staff employed there, the company has reduced its offices across the UK by selling some off, and although some titles have been moved online, [Highfield recently refuted any claim](#) that he had closed titles in recent times.

Iain Green, Brian Adcock and Frank Boyle have been let go by [The Scotsman](#), [Scotland on Sunday](#) or the [Edinburgh Evening News](#). All three have been employed there for long periods and have produced many chuckles for readers over the years.

A few weeks ago The Edinburgh Evening News got rid of its feature writers, and last year it was the photographers who were asked to take voluntary redundancy packages although some are employed on a freelance basis.

What do you think? Will you miss the cartoons?