

Leith Depot – one more time! Lease extended to January

Just yesterday Leith Depot announced on Facebook that they have been given more time to stay in their premises at Stead's Place by landlords Drum Property. They are now looking for bands to book the venue in November and December.

Leith Depot were supposed to leave the premises on 1 October but were given another month in September. Now their lease has been extended to 2 January 2020.

On the announcement of the reprieve just last month the Save Leith Walk campaign said : "While we welcome news that Leith Depot is being allowed to stay open for a month beyond its current lease, we are disappointed that the landlord didn't allow the other businesses, which were successfully trading in the red sandstone building, to remain open too.

"Nevertheless, we hope that the announcement is a sign of the developer's willingness to now work with the community and secure the long-term future of this building so it can continue to be a home for locally-owned, independent shops and businesses."



Save Leith Walk has campaigned vigorously to save the two storey red sandstone building for over a year now. They are collecting signatures as part of their community buy out plan. They want to get the rights to buy the building which Drum Property want to demolish and turn into student flats.

The community body plans to offer affordable, short and long-term rental space within the building for community groups, local businesses, creatives and pop-up facilities, through the purchase and re-use of Leith Walk Business Centre. The move would make a significant contribution to the local economy, support local entrepreneurs and respect the heritage and diverse cultural mix along Leith Walk.

The Scottish Land Reform Act 2003, empowers communities to register an interest in buying land or buildings to buy when they come up for sale. A local postal vote is required under Land Reform Scotland Act guidelines which requires 10% of a chosen community area to register their support for the plan.

The Save Leith Walk campaign is asking anyone living in the postcode area which starts EH6 5*** to sign a petition to show their support. Copies of the petition can be found at Leith Depot bar and music venue, Lovella and any of the regular Save Leith Walk street stalls. The postcode has an estimated population of 5,800 people.

Drum's plans, which were refused by City of Edinburgh Council in January 2019, are currently subject to an appeal being considered by The Scottish Government, and the decision on the planning appeal for the building is due any day.



In September they organised projections on the frontage of what is an empty block apart from Leith Depot to draw attention to their cause.

A spokesman for the Save Leith Walk campaign, said: "These projections show the amazing spirit of creativity that exists in Leith."

“The developer can kick out tenants, put people out of work, and board up our shops, but this community has a shared, positive vision for the Stead’s Place site.



“The message is clear: affordable spaces to support local independent shops and businesses are crucial to creating a bright future for the sandstone building, and our community wants ownership of that future. This is our Leith.

“To register an interest in buying the building with the intent to manage it and provide community benefits, we need signatures from people living in the EH6 5** postcode area. Please go to Leith Depot, Lovella, Destined for Home or one of our regular stalls on Leith Walk and add your name to help us secure a community buy-out. This can only be achieved with the support of local people.”

If you want to book a gig then get in touch with depotvenue@gmail.com



PHOTO Deborah Mullen