

# **Granton's Prentice Centre to close permanently**

**The Prentice Centre in Granton is to close, despite The City of Edinburgh Council approving a possible rescue package of £50,000 to help keep the facility open at a recent meeting.**

The West Granton Community Trust (WGCT) which employs three members of staff already advised in June that the centre would close and that the trust would be wound up after discussions. And it appears that the promised one-off grant from the council was apparently not enough to keep the trust going.



21st July 2022 Edinburgh – The Prentice Centre in Granton which is due to close in October due to a lack of funding. PHOTO Live Edinburgh News

In a statement the trust has advised that the Prentice Centre will be permanently closed saying: “It has been reported in the press that the City of Edinburgh Council were considering providing us with a one off grant of £50,000, however with no confirmation of the process to secure this funding nor the timescales involved, the Trust has been left with no alternative but to proceed with the winding up of the Trust.

“This is to ensure the orderly transfer of the premises to another charitable organisation and to meet our responsibilities to our tenants, staff and the community.

“Given our current financial situation and with no guarantee of long-term funding for staff and overheads, we can no longer operate as a Trust. Following the suspension of activities at the Prentice Centre on 1 July, there will be no further access for community use. Staff will remain on site until mid-October to care for the building and to manage the process of

winding up the Trust.”

Council Leader Cllr Cammy Day said: “I’m surprised to have heard of this news with only a few days notice. I understood the Prentice Centre had funding in place for the remainder of 2022. This isn’t a council-funded centre but we have agreed to offer a one off emergency grant of the organisation can be sustainable longer term. Prentice Centre is the heart of West Granton and I hope we can all work together to rebuild and continue its presence in the community.”

Cllr Vicky Nicolson said: “My feeling is that, like Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre for which I recently attended the Management Committee, local organisations like the Prentice Centre, which are not City of Edinburgh Council Community Centres, feel that having to struggle to find funds for running costs and wages takes its toll and even a reprieve of £50,000 feels like prolonging the inevitable as the same situation will arise again in the near future.

“I have agreed to make contact with council officers on behalf of Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre (DNC) to ask about how to proceed with both advice and about the funding. I will also meet with the management to help them look at how they can deliver a greater range of youth work as anti social behaviour from young people in Drylaw/Telford is presenting an issue locally. In addition, I enquired whether they will let DNC to Edinburgh Western SNP branch in August for our branch meeting to bring in some revenue and introduce new people to their facility.”

Cllr Stuart Dobbin said: “At the June Council meeting I was able to get an addendum passed to provide funding to the Prentice Centre, sufficient to take them through to the end of the year, subject to Council review.

“I am hugely disappointed that the timing didn’t work and in line with their fiduciary duty, the Trustees have confirmed

their decision of late June in line to close.

“However, I am relieved and encouraged that the building will remain as a community asset, one that I will continue to support. I will do everything I can as a ward councillor to support local efforts to establish a new organisation in the Centre to pick up the crucial work done here.

“Given the challenges and impact of the pandemic over the past two years and the current cost of living crisis, we cannot afford to lose Community facilities in the West Pilton and West Granton neighbourhood.”



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