

Save Gorgie Farm Forever ask for just a little more time

The Save Gorgie Farm Forever (SGFF) campaign which is run by volunteers is asking for a little more time so that they can firm up a proposal to save the urban farm which previous operators LOVE Learning closed on Monday.

The group says it met with local councillors and city council leader Cammy Day last Friday as part of urgent efforts to re-open the farm in the short-term, retain existing staff, and prevent the animals from being transferred to other locations.

But when the gates closed today at 3pm the word from Mark of LOVE Learning (who appeared to be the manager) was that the animals will start to move out on Tuesday.

LOVE Gorgie Farm is run by charity LOVE Learning, and as [The Edinburgh Reporter reported today](#) the charity is in breach of its financial reporting regulations to the charity regulator, OSCR. There are

also several other companies in the group all registered at Companies House.

The campaign to save Gorgie Farm continues. We visited at the very last moment as [@LoveLearningFam](#) shut the gates with a view to handing back the keys to Edinburgh council. We spoke to people who hope it can still be turned around and saved for the city pic.twitter.com/qy8Pi8n17w

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [January 16, 2023](#)

Sarah Boyack MSP was at the vigil held at the farm just before the gates closed. She told The Edinburgh Reporter: “It was three years ago that we thought we had Gorgie Farm saved. It’s upsetting to the staff, to the local community, people who have volunteered here over the years, and also the thought that the animals are going to be moved out this week.

“We are all going to go back and lobby the councillors because as I understand there is a special meeting tomorrow, and I hope there is an emergency motion at it because this is a community asset that we need to save. It is the green space Gorgie and we met with council leader Cammy Day and every party was represented – both councillors and MSPs. We were all as one – please save the farm. Give us the space, give us two months of keeping the farm open that we can get a community project, that we can pull people together and we can get somebody to take over the farm. The council owns the land, keep it going and support the community.”

Local councillor, Ross McKenzie, was also at the farm with the campaigners. He said: “I think what was agreed at the all party meeting on Wednesday – there was clear consensus that the council should step in and keep two or three staff in

place to try and keep the animals in place. And that was the steer that was given to officers that day.

“We heard on Friday that they were going to do that by trying to make LOVE stay in the lease. It would have taken some external funding to do that, but as far as I understand LOVE are not interested. The staff have until the end of Wednesday to stay in place.

“I would still call on the council and I hope there is something that the council can do at Policy and Sustainability on Tuesday to keep staff in place and animals on site, but we are really running out of time.”

It has been reported that several organisations are interested in operating the farm, including Edinburgh Zoo and SGFF is urging Love Learning not to walk away.

Martin Young, Chair of Save Gorgie Farm Forever, said: “At the moment we are really hoping to apply pressure to the council and LOVE group to come up with some sort of accommodation tomorrow to keep this place open for long enough on a reduced capacity but to keep it open for either ourselves or other interested parties to come in and take over the running of the operation.

“We realise the difficult position the council has been put in with a short notice period to find a new operator, but we are optimistic about the longer-term prospects of Gorgie Farm.

“So we are begging the current operators of Gorgie Farm to do the right thing and honour commitments to the staff at the farm and the people of Gorgie.

“All we and the council need is a little bit more time to bring in other operators that are keen to take over the operations.

“We are committed to assisting in any way we can to keep the farm intact and get things back up and running as quickly as possible.”

Simon Medcalf, vice chair of Save Gorgie Farm Forever, added: "I can't understate the importance of Gorgie farm to so many people in the community.

"While we have already had a great amount of engagement with Edinburgh City Council on this, it would be great if we could see a similar level of support from The Scottish Government.

"It's important to remember that Gorgie Farm is not just an asset for Edinburgh but for much of central Scotland as well.

"I am sure that if the city council and the Scottish Government came together, we could easily get a small amount of emergency funding in place to keep the farm going long enough for a new group to take over.

"It's vital that people understand the devastating consequences of even a short period of closure to the people who depend on this place."

A mother of a volunteer at the farm said: "My daughter had a breakdown two years ago and was given the opportunity to work with the animals at Gorgie Farm in order to aid her recovery.

"I can honestly say that this place has had a phenomenal impact on her recovery and quality of life and in turn, has helped my family and I through the roughest of patches and has given me my daughter back.

"The staff there are not only passionate about the animals they care for, but they are passionate about their volunteers.

"They were support workers providing emotional support, promoting independence and building confidence in the people that they valued so much.

"All of the amazing work and therapy that Gorgie Farm and their staff have done with my daughter over the last two years has been completely unravelled and I now live every moment with fear that she will have another breakdown."

Welcome to



Gorgie F



Remember to wash your hands!

**WE ARE NOW
CLOSED**

... that we
all know
... closing
3pm on
January

**PARKING
ONLY**

Disabled Parking only
beyond this point

... all so much for the
... ing the farm over
the last few year.
We all hope this is not the end of Gorgie Farm.
THANK YOU AGAIN
**CLOSING
DATE!**

