

PRESS RELEASE

Update on plans for the future of the Phoenix Cinema, East Finchley

2 November 2018

In September, the Phoenix Cinema Trust which runs the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley, announced that it was looking at a partnership with Curzon Cinemas to operate programming and other activities at the cinema on behalf of the trust.

The trust developed this plan in the face of several years of unprofitable trading at the Phoenix and a severe risk that it would become insolvent and have to close. If this happened, staff would have lost their jobs and East Finchley would have lost a local cinema.

The trust has consulted on this plan with staff and with the public. Staff in particular have strongly opposed any plan which means that the Phoenix is not operated independently. Their view is supported by many in the film industry, including some Phoenix patrons. Reactions within the local community have been more mixed with many people recognising that major changes may be necessary to keep the cinema open but many keen to see the Phoenix remain independent.

The trust has listened to what staff and others have said and has now reached agreement with the Phoenix management that we will not go ahead with the Curzon partnership at this time, but we will seek ways in which the cinema's operations can be transformed so that it can break even in financial terms while operating independently.

This will involve more fundraising, together with making sufficient changes in how the cinema is run so that its trading income can cover its running costs. We will seek to avoid job losses during this, but we have told staff that this cannot be guaranteed.

The trust very much hopes that staying independent will enable the Phoenix to stay open so that it can serve its public. We will monitor finances closely in the coming months and we will continue to consider a partnership with Curzon as an option, should operating independently prove not to work.

Alison Gold, trustee said: "The trust takes its responsibility to keep the cinema open very seriously and we have thought hard about the best way of doing that. We recognise the desire to keep the Phoenix independent and we will work with management and staff to achieve that goal. The Phoenix can only be saved by greater ongoing public support. We encourage all those who love the Phoenix to come to it, often."

The Phoenix Cinema's management said: "We are pleased with this decision by the Board and hope that it proves to be a turning point for the Phoenix Cinema's strategy, as well as how the board and staff work together. We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from the local community and would like to thank everyone. We will do our very best to ensure the Phoenix can have a sustainable future as an independent community cinema. We echo the board in encouraging all those who love the Phoenix to come to it often. And we welcome any donations to the cinema from those who are able to support us – please see [here](#) for details."

