

Friends of the Greys

www.savethegreys.co.uk

MEDIA RELEASE

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Save the Greys! Local community bids to purchase famous Brighton music venue

Pub-goers have launched a bid to take over one of the country's best-known and loved live music venues.

The Greys in Brighton has been put on the market by Ei Group after the industry giant failed to find the pub a permanent tenant.

Brighton & Hove Council has declared the pub an Asset of Community Value, and now local residents in the Hanover area of the city have banded together as Friends of the Greys to purchase the freehold and secure its survival.

Performers at the Greys over the last 30 years have included Damien Rice, Georgie Fame, Martin Carthy, Shirley Collins, Julie Felix, John Otway, John Cooper-Clarke, Kiki Dee, Lene Lovich and Phill Jupitus, and touring musicians from all over the world still look forward to stopping off and playing before an intimate and knowledgeable audience.

Despite being so small that past licensee Mike Lance, who first established it as a music venue, called it "a shoebox", the pub at times has also punched above its weight for food, with an Egon Ronay listing, and drink, boasting a selection of Belgian beers alongside its cask ales.

A crowdfunding campaign to raise up to £300,000, supported by the Plunkett Foundation, went live on Saturday, December 2, as locals packed the pub for a free evening of live music and poetry headlined by punk poet Attila the Stockbroker.

If the bid is successful, the Greys will become one of Britain's few community-owned urban pubs – Brighton already lays claim to the first community-owned housing estate pub, the Bevy in Bevendean.

Other Hanover pub operators have backed the share issue including Indigo Pubs, which has three outlets in the area, and Laine Pub Company, whose CEO Gavin George used to be a regular.

Brighton's Green Party MP Caroline Lucas has also given her support.

"Local pubs play such an important role in our communities, and with so many at risk of closure and redevelopment, I fully support the crowdfunder to purchase The Greys and keep it open for community use.

"It's a pub that's full of character, with potential to be an amazing community resource in residents' hands."

The share issue is now live on the Crowdfunder website:

<http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-the-greys>

- For more information, and to interview someone from Friends of the Greys, please contact Phil Mellows – philmellows@btinternet.com, 07940 968476