# Prince Charles Cinema operators optimistic after community support



The operators of the Prince Charles Cinema, a prominent independent cinema situated off Leicester Square in London, have expressed renewed optimism regarding their ongoing negotiations with their landlord, Zedwell LSQ Ltd. This follows a significant grassroots campaign aimed at preserving the cultural institution, which has recently seen financial strain and potential closure.

In August, the cinema launched an online petition appealing to the community for support, calling upon the landlord and its parent company, Criterion Capital, to retract a demand for a break clause in the lease renewal negotiations. The petition quickly gained traction, amassing over 160,000 signatures from supporters who wish to see the venue continue its operations without the threat of sudden displacement.

In a communication to supporters, the cinema operators remarked, “Wow, we have been completely bowled over by your amazing support over the last few weeks,” indicating that the overwhelming backing had prompted discussions with the landlord for the first time in a year and a half. They expressed a hopeful sentiment about reaching a settlement that would allow the cinema to secure a lease without the precarious break clause, emphasising their commitment to negotiating “reasonable market terms.”

The Prince Charles Cinema's current lease is set to expire in September 2025. The landlords have previously incorporated a clause that would allow them to terminate the lease with just six months' notice, posing a significant risk to the cinema’s future. Despite repeated requests for negotiation from the cinema's management, the landlords have reportedly been unyielding.

Criterion Capital, under the ownership of billionaire developer Asif Aziz, is known for holding various properties in the West End, including multiple hotels. The operators have voiced concerns that the landlord may also be seeking planning permission to redevelop the site currently occupied by the cinema.

Since its inception in 1962, the Prince Charles Cinema has become a staple of London’s cultural scene, attracting over 250,000 visitors annually. Renowned filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino have lauded the establishment for its contribution to the independent film landscape in the city. In their petition, the cinema's management underscored the venue’s significance, stating that its closure would not only diminish a beloved cultural landmark but could also disrupt the local economy by affecting the influx of visitors who come to enjoy films, dining, and shopping in the West End.

As negotiations continue, the operators remain hopeful that the strong community support will facilitate a positive outcome, allowing the cinema to sustain its legacy as a vital component of London's independent film culture.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://londonist.com/london/latest-news/prince-charles-cinema-leicester-square-petition-save-closing> - This article supports the claim that the Prince Charles Cinema is facing closure due to a dispute with its landlord, Zedwell LSQ Ltd, over a break clause in the lease renewal. It also mentions the online petition launched to save the cinema.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/films/news/prince-charles-cinema-leicester-square-b2687623.html> - This article corroborates the information about the Prince Charles Cinema's dispute with its landlord and the potential threat of redevelopment. It highlights the cinema's cultural significance and its annual visitor numbers.
* <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-the-prince-charles-cinema> - This URL is the actual petition page for saving the Prince Charles Cinema, which supports the claim about the community's support and the petition's goal to remove the break clause from the lease.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the source article itself, which provides an overview of the situation, including the optimism about negotiations and the significance of the cinema.
* <https://www.criterioncapital.com> - This would be the official website of Criterion Capital, which could provide information about their properties and business practices, supporting the claim about their ownership and interests.