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Stephens House & Gardens announces the Launch of:
EFO Artists @ Stephens House

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North London - Stephens House & Gardens is excited to announce the launch of EFO Artists @ Stephens House: a joint venture between East Finchley Open Artists and Stephens House & Gardens that will create an ongoing showcase for local artists in and around East Finchley. The official launch date for **EFO Artists @ Stephens House** is in 1st March 2016.

Stephens House & Gardens believes **EFO Artists @ Stephens House** will be a centre for the development of art and craft locally, providing a focal point for art appreciation and the fostering of new creative talents.

The launch itself will incorporate an opening exhibition of EFO Artists in the Stephens House & Gardens Gallery space, a launch party for art lovers from the local community, arts funding bodies, local education providers, local dignitaries and representatives from other London-based arts organizations.

As well as publicity in the local and regional press, local leafletting and a dedicated web site space, an extensive social media campaign will build engagement in the idea of a community of local artists benefiting from and contributing to the development of arts and crafts in the local area.

“This is the first time we’ve been able to have a dedicated long-term space to show our work and to encourage interest in art – it’s testament to the energy and enthusiasm of our members for making art local” ... Peter Hale, Chair of the EFO Artists group.

“I’m delighted to play a part in hosting the EFO Artists and others at this special venue – it’s an historic building and by creating this partnership, the Avenue House Estate Trust are showing long-term commitment to supporting the arts locally – watch this space!” ... Laura Fishman, Curator at Stephens House & Gardens

“Being the former home of a man that made his fortune inventing and selling inks and wood stains it is wholly appropriate that Avenue House at Stephens House & Gardens should have a strong link to art and artists. The Trust is excited by the potential that our relationship with East Finchley Open Artists can provide for the development and proliferation of art locally” ... Malcolm Godfrey, General Manager of Avenue House Estate Trust

Since retiring after 28 years' active military service in the Royal Navy in 1999, Malcolm Godfrey has managed some prestigious historic venues including the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich. Although his professional background is in hospitality and events he is also a keen historian, researcher and author. Malcolm has been with Avenue House Estate Trust since 2012 and in addition to developing the house as a successful events venue he is currently overseeing a major project to reinvigorate the gardens and visitor facilities.

Laura Fishman is a practicing Finchley artist, art curator at Stephens House & Gardens and their first Artist in Residence. Since her early devotion to painting, her primary motivation has been nature and the world around her. Laura gravitates toward the abstract in art because it allows her freedom to interpret the world she sees through her own creative lens. At Stephens House & Gardens there is a constant wealth of inspiration and ideas that feed into her creative spirit. Laura's work can be found in private and corporate collections in the UK, United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Middle East. To view some of Laura's work visit: www.laurafishmanart.com

East Finchley Open Artists – or EFO Artists for short – was launched in 2004. EFO Artists show work in a wide range of media: painting, ceramics, jewellery, photography, silk painting, sculpture, printmaking, calligraphy, textiles, basketry, glass, felt-making and woodworking. Their main annual events are the summer Artists' Open House Weekends and the winter Art Fair. EFO Artists also take an active interest in local affairs and respond with creative projects. They regularly donate to local charities and organize community art activities as opportunities present themselves. Some projects are collaborative, others educational. EFO Artists forge links with businesses, shops and schools in the area as well as the nearby Phoenix Cinema, reinforcing a positive perception of East Finchley's creative community. In 2013 EFO Artists celebrated their 10th anniversary for which they produced a book reviewing their activities and over 200 Members over the last ten years.

Peter Hale is a ceramicist and architect. As an architect his ceramics are influenced by an interest in space, form & function. Peter is a founding member of the EFO. Peter says: “Clay is one of the most tactile materials, a joy and a challenge to work with.” Peter is the current Chair of the EFO.