

Basketball hub at The Craggs

✘ The Craggs Sports Centre is set to become a basketball hub under new plans put forward by a consortium led by a local sports club.

Boroughmuir Blaze Basketball Club joined forces with national governing body basketballscotland to submit a bid for the Council-owned Bowmont Place facility.

The Craggs Sports Centre was formerly managed on the Council's behalf by Edinburgh Leisure until December 2010.

Under the new plans, which are being finalised by the Council's Estates section following a competitive application process, Boroughmuir Blaze will be the principal user of the centre, while providing opportunities to participate in basketball for many people in the immediate and surrounding areas.

basketballscotland will be another key user of the Craggs by locating city and regional leagues and training at the centre. The body's regional staff will also be based at the facility.

Meanwhile, local housing association Castle Rock Edinvar will provide property management and maintenance services to the centre.

Councillor Deidre Brock, Culture and Leisure Convener, said: "I'm delighted that the Craggs centre's future is now looking so rosy. Very importantly, the new operators will provide regular community access, with areas such as the Games Hall and Studio to be used on a daily basis by local schools, parent and toddler groups, Canongate Youth Project and NHS Lothian. This continued community use of the centre was a key criterion of the application process."

Kevin Pringle, CEO, basketballscotland, said: "Access to

facilities is a big challenge for clubs across Scotland so we're delighted that our joint bid has been chosen as the preferred bidder for The Craggs project. Working in partnership with clubs and local authorities in projects such as this could serve as a model for basketball across Scotland, so we're excited by the potential of this important project."

Bill McInnes OBE, Secretary of Boroughmuir Blaze Basketball Club, said: "Operating The Craggs Sports Centre is a huge opportunity for both basketball and the local community and we're delighted the council have chosen Blaze and Basketball Scotland to take the Centre forward. As we celebrate the 50th year of Boroughmuir Blaze Basketball Club, we couldn't have wished for a better anniversary gift.

"As a local sports club ourselves, we see community groups and schools as critical players in the success of The Craggs. The response from local groups to our submission was very encouraging and now we can't wait to start working with them."

The Craggs is scheduled to reopen later in the year, provided the lease agreement is approved by the Finance and Resources Committee in August.