

Craig Gowans Memorial Fund provide second charity minibus



Over the past few months, The Edinburgh Reporter has featured articles on the fundraising activities of the Craig Gowans' Memorial Fund. This week, the generosity of those taking part and the hard work of the organisers came to fruition when members of Craig's family handed over the keys to a specially adapted minibus to be used by the children of Calareidh, a community-based house situated in Bingham which provides long term care and respite breaks to children and young people with complex disabilities across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Calareidh, which means 'peaceful haven' in Gaelic, relies on donations to continue operating. The home is a nine-bedded bungalow, with single bedrooms, lounge, conservatory, dining kitchen, therapy rooms with special equipment, and special sensory gardens. The corridors are designed to be wider than normal to accommodate wheelchairs, while children and young people who need long-term care can decorate their own rooms. Young people and their families were involved in the design of the home.

Craig's parents, Sheila and John attended the ceremony along with his sister Lyndsay, and brothers Dean and Darren.

Former Hibs, Hearts and Scotland footballer, Darren Jackson, was amongst the many guests who attended the event which took place at Livingston.

The Memorial Fund was set up in the memory Craig, the young Falkirk footballer who was killed when a net catcher he was instructed to move during a training session struck an

overhead cable. The seventeen year-old was only two weeks into his professional contract with the Bairns when the tragedy occurred.

As well as being a talented footballer, Craig was a straight A pupil and talented artist at Stewart's-Melville College, where he won the School's Athletic Championship. He also had an unconditional offer to study Architecture at Edinburgh College of Art, but chose a career in football.



The fund provided half of the cost of the vehicle, as did the Friends of the Sick Kids Foundation, and last year the same charities purchased an identical vehicle which has been used by Sunndach, a similar respite house based in Livingston.

The money raised has come from various events including a charity football match between Hutchison Vale, Craig's former club and a Hibs/Hearts select played at Saughton Enclosure, various charity runs by members of Hutchison Vale and an unsupported bike ride across Australia by Andrew Dickson.

Chief Executive of the Foundation, Maureen Harrison, told The Edinburgh Reporter: -"We are very grateful to the Craig Gowans' Memorial Fund for providing half of the funding for this people carrier. Craig was an exceptional young man whose memory has inspired so many people to raise funds to help sick children and their families. I would like to thank the wonderful Gowans family, Darren Jackson, Hutchison Vale Football Club and everyone who helped their fundraising events, including Andrew Dickson, who has just completed an amazing solo cycle across Australia, for their tremendous gift to these very deserving children. Last year together we provided a similar vehicle for the other respite house, Sunndach, in Livingston. Both vehicles bear Craig's name in fond tribute to his memory and I would like to thank the generous supporters of the Craig Gowans' Memorial Fund along

with the Sick Kids Friends Foundation for making this gift possible.”

Anyone wishing to contribute to these amazing charities can do so at <http://www.justgiving.com/The-Craig-Gowans-Memorial-Fund>

or <http://www.edinburghsickkids.org/donate.html>