

# Momentous Day for Foundation of Hearts

A little over two months ago, Heart of Midlothian Football Club went into administration. Players and staff were made redundant, the club suffered a 15 point deduction at the start of this season and the very future of an Edinburgh, indeed Scottish football institution was under serious threat. Today, the seriously ill patient saw the first signs of recovery with the first direct debits made from more than 7,500 Hearts supporters who have pledged contributions to the Foundation of Hearts, the supporters led group aiming to take control of Edinburgh's oldest football club. The Foundation, the preferred bidder for the club, allows Edinburgh business to provide the up-front capital, through BIDCO, and then enter a binding contract with FANCO to sell the club, at no personal gain, in a controlled manner.

The long journey towards supporter ownership has begun in earnest, and today the Hearts manager Gary Locke, a life-long Hearts fan himself, recognised the enormous role fans will have to play in creating a long-term, sustainable Hearts.

At a press conference at the club's training centre at Riccarton, Locke thanked the thousands of supporters who participated in the first direct debit draw down to the Foundation of Hearts. 'It's fantastic, the support we've had the last couple of years has been unbelievable. To get 7,500 people pledging money to the club is nothing short of phenomenal. We can't thank the supporters enough. It just shows you what this club means to people. It's not a normal football club, it's a club with unbelievable tradition and history and the amount of people who are trying to save it is incredible. Everyone wants this club to survive, everyone wants us to do well and if you've got that you've got a chance.'

Locke also had a message for those supporters who were perhaps wary about pledging their financial support. 'Everyone knows where the money is going, it's to save the football club and the more people who can get involved the better. For those who are undecided, I'm just willing them to come on board.' The chairman of the Foundation of Hearts, Ian Murray, added :- 'Today is a momentous day, but it's still just the start. The supporters have played their own, massively significant part, in creating the first step towards the greatest supporter movement in Scottish football history. To everyone involved I extend our warmest thanks. It will take many years to get Hearts together, but with the ongoing commitment of thousands of supporters we can get there, and create a legacy for future generations of supporters that is every bit as special as our past.' For that reason, and as we prepare for next month's second direct debit draw down I want to stress that it is not too late to be part of this great Foundation of Hearts moment in time. Every pound genuinely counts.

Supporters who are able, are encouraged to set up their direct debit and help create history at [www.foundationofhearts.org](http://www.foundationofhearts.org) ahead of the next drawdown in October'.

If the loyalty, spirit and incredible generosity of the Hearts support is anything to by then, after a dark summer, the future of the club 'away up in Gorgie' is surely in safe hands.