

# New 3G pitch for Balerno

Balerno now has a new 3G sports pitch thanks to money gathered from criminals in the Cashback for Pitches programme. This scheme provided over £300,000 towards the cost of the new sports facility opened on Friday.

Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health was joined at the unveiling by Councillor Ricky Henderson, Health and Social Care Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council.

Also attending were Stewart Regan, Chief Executive of the Scottish Football Association, local school children from Currie RFC and Currie Star FC and community sports representatives.

The pitch, designed for both rugby and football, will primarily be used by Balerno High School, local primary schools, Currie RFC and Currie Star FC. Other sports clubs and activities will have access during the week through the Active Schools programme with community access at weekends and during the holidays.

Cllr Henderson said: "I'm delighted that the Council and partners have funded this pitch which will offer year-round opportunities for both adults and young people to take part in sport. Not only will it help to increase participation in football and outdoor sport, it will also help the development of grassroots football and rugby in the area.

"As a council, we are committed to encouraging and enabling everyone to become more physically active and enjoy the associated benefits. We want sport to be as accessible as possible for our residents and our investment in fit-for-purpose sports facilities is helping to ensure that as many

people as possible can get involved in sport throughout the year.”

Jamie Hepburn said: “I’m delighted to be unveiling this fantastic new 3G pitch at Balerno High School. Cashback for Pitches has been a hugely successful project, putting money seized from criminals under proceeds of crime to good use in communities up and down the country. I’m sure the local community will get many years of use from this great pitch.”

Stewart Harris, Chief Executive of [sportscotland](#) said “We are delighted to invest in this new 3G pitch at Balerno High School. We are building a world-class sporting system for everyone in Scotland and this new pitch is a great example as it will be used by school pupils, the local rugby and football clubs, along with other clubs through Active Schools.”

The funding for Malleny Park has been provided by Scottish Government Cashback for Pitches programme ([Cashback for Communities](#) £200,000, sportscotland £55,000 and [WREN](#) £50,000) with the rest paid by the City of Edinburgh Council.

The Scottish Government’s CashBack for Communities programme uses money recovered from criminals through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and invests them back into communities across Scotland.

Projects range from diversionary sporting activity to long-term potentially life-changing intervention projects, which aim to turn an individual’s life around and provide them the opportunity of a positive destination such as employment, education or volunteering.

Since 2008 the Scottish Government has committed £75 million to CashBack/Community Initiatives, funding community activities and facilities largely, but not exclusively, for young people.