

# Update On Hearts Stadium Plans



Hearts today announced that they hope to commence work on their new stand this autumn with the aim of having it completed early in season 2017/18. Chief Executive Ann Budge also announced plans to further develop the Wheatfield Stand as well as constructing a 3G pitch for community use in the area at the rear of the Wheatfield Stand.

Mrs Budge outlined the club's ambitious plans in an open letter to Hearts supporters on the official club website:

*Dear supporters*

*As promised, I am delighted to be able to provide you with an update on our plans to redevelop Tynecastle Stadium. As you know, this exciting project involves far more than just building a new stand...it is about revitalising the entire stadium and indeed regenerating the wider Gorgie/Dalry area. The centre piece will be a visually-dramatic new main stand that will replace our 101 year-old Archibald Leitch-designed stand and help create a totally new look to McLeod Street, which will blend in with the new Tynecastle High School.*

*Our wide-ranging plans also include developing the under-croft in the Wheatfield Stand and, in conjunction with NB Distillers, evaluating the construction of a new 3G pitch for community use behind the Wheatfield Stand. At the heart of it all will be a magnificent new main stand with a capacity of over 7000 seats, all of which will have a superb view of the pitch. The new stand will, of course, also incorporate new hospitality suites, office space, clubstore and ticket office...with space for much more. The result will be a modern stadium boasting a ground capacity in excess of 20,000.*

*As many of you will be aware, the land required for this re-development is currently owned by the City of Edinburgh Council. We*

are, therefore, working closely with the Council to help us deliver this exciting project. By working closely with the Council, we will completely change the face of the Tynecastle area, bringing benefits both to Hearts, the Council and the wider community.

Designs for the new Main Stand are close to completion and will be shared with you as soon as they are finalised. We will soon be submitting a "Pre Application Notice" to the Council's planning department. This formality is followed with a public consultation process and the eventual submission of a fully detailed planning application some 8 weeks later. All going well, preparatory work should start in Autumn of this year, with a view to having the new stand available for early in the 2017/18 season. Meanwhile, a separate planning application has already been submitted for the development of the under-croft in the Wheatfield Stand and work on this will hopefully start very soon. In the short term, this space will be developed to rehouse the shop, the ticket office and the admin offices, thereby enabling demolition works to take place. On completion of the new stand, this space will be given over to fans' facilities. We will also be developing changing facilities in the under-croft, which during the development of the main stand, will be utilised by the teams on a match day, but would ultimately be for the benefit of community use of the 3G pitch. This would incorporate a viewing terrace for watching the action on the community pitch.

This is an exciting time for all of us so please be patient while we move ahead with the plans. We will, of course, keep you regularly updated on progress and will do our best to minimise any inconvenience to supporters.

This is a very tight timescale but I am hopeful that with lots of hard work and co-operation this can be achieved.