

# More Families to Benefit From Big Hearts



Photo: Big Hearts



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Hearts

On Monday, Big Hearts Community Trust hosted its Annual General Meeting at Tynecastle Stadium, with the official charity of Heart of Midlothian, revealing that the charity has never been in a stronger position to support families in need across Edinburgh.

Heart of Midlothian supporters, Big Hearts' volunteers, other charity leaders and representatives of the Scottish Government were in attendance to hear Big Hearts General Manager, Caryn Kerr, explain the key highlights of 2016 for the charity and the plans for the next 12 months.

The key highlights were:

- Establishment and growth of the Kinship Care Programme which has seen unprecedented numbers of families engaged and strong outcomes for families receiving a range of direct and indirect support, depending on their needs.
- Growth and management of the Football Memories Programme – two groups now running at capacity, with a waiting list of new participants. New team of Big Hearts volunteers recruited and trained to support this increase in activity.
- Launch of the Big Hearts Supporter Movement and Volunteer Programme – over 1,100 Supporters signed up with over 80%

expressing an interest in volunteering. Over 100 volunteers over course of 2016.

It was revealed that with support from a 100% grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Big Hearts will engage with independent consultants to review its work to date and to help determine a process as to how we “identify need” in future. This will mean continuing to develop and expand existing programmes as well as looking at where the new strands of support for families in need will be established.

During the AGM, it was also revealed that Jim Panton has stepped down as Chairman and from the Big Hearts’ board, with existing Trustee and SAMH Chief Executive, Billy Watson appointed in his place.

Big Hearts General Manager Caryn Kerr said:

“It has been a fantastic 2016 for Big Hearts. We’ve engaged with more families in need than ever before and have received some great feedback across the last 12 months. The challenge for us now is to identify a clear model which we can use to identify need and this is key as we look to offer a new strand of support in 2017.”

More info can be found: [www.bighearts.org.uk](http://www.bighearts.org.uk)