

# Big Hearts Celebrates First Birthday



Photo: Big Hearts

Big Hearts Community Trust, the official charity of Heart of Midlothian, is proud to reveal that over 1,250 Hearts fans are now Big Hearts Supporters, one year after the launch of this unique supporter initiative at the first 'Big Hearts day' in February 2016.

Since then, over 10% of Big Hearts Supporters have now volunteered on a range of projects and initiatives based all across Edinburgh. In total, 1,600 hours of volunteering have been completed by supporters. This includes supporting key groups such as Parents with young children, Alzheimer's patients, Kinship Carers, homeless people and isolated people over 60s.

The success of Big Hearts Supporters means the charity is now in a better position to support all generations in need across Edinburgh and the charity believes this initiative, using the power of football fans, can continue to grow and help deliver further social change. A recent example of the potential of the initiative was the launch of 'Big Hearts Befrienders' which will see up to 15 Hearts fans get trained as Youth Befrienders for isolated young people.

This week ahead of the second 'Big Hearts Day' at Tynecastle on Saturday 18th February (match vs ICT), Big Hearts is delighted to be sharing some of the very personal stories behind the volunteering (see note 1). This demonstrates and opens new perspectives for football club charities in the way they engage with potentially their biggest assets, the supporters of their club. Celebrating this collective achievement will be the main focus at Big Hearts Day this Saturday. The day will consist of a range of fun activities for all fans to enjoy.

Big Hearts asks that all Hearts' fans join this fantastic movement by signing up to become a Big Hearts Supporter by visiting [www.bighearts.org.uk](http://www.bighearts.org.uk).

Ann Budge, Hearts FC Chairwoman and Big Hearts Trustee: ''We now have over 1250 Big Hearts Supporters – what a fantastic show of support! We are working hard to ensure that we put those offers of support to the very best use and already over 10% have actually volunteered through Big Hearts in support of a wide variety of projects across the whole of Edinburgh. This has made a real difference to the lives of so many individuals and families and we are truly grateful.''

Craig Wilson, Big Hearts Interim General Manager: ''We are delighted to celebrate Big Hearts Supporters one year on with so many Hearts supporters volunteering in the community. Our aim, of course, is to help even more families across Edinburgh and we will see new exciting roles and more training opportunities with Big Hearts throughout 2017''.