

Darren McGregor helps to deliver Christmas cheer to those in need



Hibs defender and GameChanger Ambassador Darren McGregor was at Tesco on Monday afternoon to help launch a Christmas Day event to help deliver Christmas cheer to those in need this festive season.

Both Hibs and Hearts with key partner NHS Lothian will be laying on specially organised events to feed up to 400 people at Tynecastle and Easter Road Stadiums on 25 December.

Tesco stores across Edinburgh have stepped forward to supply food for the lunches as part of the Edinburgh Cheer initiative.

Darren joined Tesco store manager Fraser Cromar and Hearts midfielder Malaury Martin to promote the Edinburgh Cheer Christmas Dinner.

Fraser said: "Our Christmas campaign – Everyone's Welcome at Tesco – celebrates the many ways we come together at Christmas, so when we heard about the Edinburgh Cheer initiative to make Edinburgh the city of kindness this Christmas we were only too pleased to be able to help out at this important time of year.

"Many people in the communities we serve will be facing the prospect of being alone this festive season, so we are very proud to play our part in helping them enjoy a Christmas meal together.

"Hibernian hosted an event last year and it is fantastic to see that Hearts were so inspired by the success of it that

they're on board this time around and together we're ready to kick off the Christmas meal on 25 December."

As well as delivering food for the lunch, the Edinburgh stores will also supply goodie bags.

Tesco's teams of Community Champions will also be helping to organise the events ensure it reaches those most in need.

Leeann Dempster, Hibernian FC Chief Executive said: "We're very happy to open up our club home at Christmas to welcome people along to enjoy Christmas Day with us again following on from the success of last year.

"We hope that up to 200 people of all ages, who might otherwise have less to look forward to at Christmas than the rest of us, can come together and have a wonderful lunch and a great time. Special thanks are due to Tesco, who are again providing us with a huge helping hand by providing the food, and thanks also to Central Taxis for their efforts in bringing people here."

Malaury Martin of Hearts said: "It's great to be launching this initiative which will help the most vulnerable from our community at Christmas time.

"It is clear that football can be used for social good and it is great to be supporting that aim today. As a squad of players we are always proud to get involved in charity initiatives and this is no different."

Tim Davison, Chief Executive of NHS Lothian, said: "We are delighted to be part of a campaign that is harnessing the power and influence of football to promote health and wellbeing. It is a great opportunity and we are confident that it will make a real and meaningful difference to those who really need help and support, especially at this time of year."

The event is being organised with help from the GameChanger Partnership and Hearts' Big Hearts Community Trust and FareShare as part of a wider Edinburgh Cheer campaign.

NHS Lothian and both clubs are hosting and supporting a number of events throughout December in an effort to harness the power of football to help create a kinder city.

Tesco are involved at a number of events including choir singing and a Christmas movie night.

Contact edinburghcheer@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk if you know groups or individuals who would like to come and enjoy a Christmas dinner at Tynecastle Park or Easter Road football stadiums.