

OPINION – Meadowbank will be a fantastic asset, so stop knocking it, says Edinburgh Leisure's boss

The new Meadowbank will be a place for participating rather than spectating, argues Edinburgh Leisure's CEO, June Peebles.

The claims by Save Meadowbank campaigners that Edinburgh Leisure has steamrollered Edinburgh Council for the sake of its own vanity project, and their implication that the destruction of over 60 trees on the site follows from the decision to house our office on the new site, is misleading and untrue.



New Meadowbank

Incorporating office space into the new Meadowbank was taken forward on the premise that there would be no compromise to the activity areas; the project architects incorporated an

office into what would otherwise be a 'dead space'. Given the high ceiling height required for indoor athletics, a mezzanine will be built between the changing rooms on the ground floor and level one. This area would have limited use for sports given its dimensions, so this is where the Edinburgh Leisure office will be contained.

What Save Meadowbank campaigners seem to be holding onto is a nostalgic vision of something that was, rather than looking forward to a place serving its community. It's not progressive to harp back on the glory days of the old Meadowbank and it also lacks the insight of usage and participation trends and the needs of customers now and in the future

The new building will be an inclusive, accessible venue with a fantastic range of state-of-the-art facilities, serving its community, and this will increase participation in physical activity and sport in Edinburgh.

Its usage will reflect the changes in sport and the physical activity landscape. Throughout each of the design stages, users, clubs, sports governing bodies and sportscotland, have been involved in the new facility mix for Meadowbank. The new venue has been designed on this feedback and the demand which exists in Edinburgh. It will offer enhanced access to quality facilities, which will be used more often, by greater numbers of people, and importantly by users of all different ages and abilities.

Save Meadowbank's argument seems to constantly undermine the positive benefits the new Meadowbank will bring to the community and the positive part Edinburgh Leisure plays in improving the health and wellbeing of the city.

With the completion of the new Meadowbank, we look forward to creating even more opportunities for people of all ages and stages to be active and healthy. The new Meadowbank will be a fantastic asset for our city.

In the words of George Bernard Shaw: “Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”



Meadowbank Demolition