

Hibs' fans' favourite Marvin Bartley signs a pre-contract with Livingston



Hibs' fans' favourite Marvin Bartley has signed a pre-contract agreement with Livingston and will complete his move to the Tony Macaroni Arena on a three-year deal at the end of the season.

The midfielder has made 123 appearances for the club in all competitions in the last four years after joining from Orient.

He was an unused substitute when Hibs won the Scottish Cup in May 2016 and played a major role in the Scottish Championship title win the following year.

Bartley left a poignant message on Instagram, thanking his team-mates, staff and supporters.

The 32-year-old said in the video: "You've all been a

massive support to me on and off the pitch. You've stuck up for me when I've needed you to stick up for me, you've cheered me when I've needed to be cheered and I owe you people an awful lot.

"It's been a great four years, I've met some friends for life, and I've met some fans that I can now call friends.

"It's going to be an emotional time on Sunday when I finally bow out as a Hibs player [against Aberdeen] but I'd like to think I've helped the club come on a bit. It's been an incredible journey.

"I want to thank all my team-mates – as everyone knows, I've been through a hard time off the pitch at times and they've been there for me, they've been friends and more importantly they've been family to me so, lads, I'd like to thank all of you for that, because I owe you an awful lot.

"You've been great team-mates, you've been great friends and I hope you know that if you ever need to call on me for anything I'll be on the other end of the phone."

"I want to thank all the staff here – obviously Graeme Mathie for bringing me here, because without him I would have never signed for the club, so I thank him.

"The current gaffer [Paul Heckingbottom] has been brilliant with me. Even in the short space of time he's been here I've learned a lot that I'll take on when I'm a coach or a manager one day, so thanks to him and Robbie.

“Calvin and his team have been brilliant, so thanks to them for the video stuff they’ve done for me – breaking down games, helping me improve as a player.

George [Craig, Head of Football Operations], Finlay [Stark, Academy Administration and Operations Manager], Leeann [Dempster, chief executive] – they’ve all been excellent in different ways for me.

It’s going to be an emotional day on Sunday but I’ve loved my time at Hibs.

“It’s time for me to move on but I’ll always be a Hibs supporter. I’ll bleed green from now on because this has been such a great time in my life and a special place in my heart always.”

A tribute on the club website said: “After arriving on a free transfer from Leyton Orient, Marvin became an instant favourite with supporters – whether it was for his all-action performances on the park or the strength of his personality off it.

Hugely respected by team-mates and staff alike, he became a key cog in the squad that would go on to win the Scottish Cup and secure a return to the Premiership.

His experience was then crucial in re-establishing the Hibs as a top-flight force.

It goes without saying that Marvin departs with our best wishes and there will always be a place for him at Easter Road.