

Ann Budge to receive Edinburgh Award

Ann Budge, the Edinburgh businesswoman who is both CEO and Chair of Heart of Midlothian FC, is the next recipient of the Edinburgh Award.

She is to be presented with an engraved Loving Cup by the Lord Provost later this year and is the 13th person who has received the award.



She will follow in the handprints of the likes of Ian Rankin, Tam Gilzean MBE, Sir Tom Farmer and Sir Peter Higgs.

Mrs Budge wins the award for her business success and community work as well as her work for sport in Edinburgh.

She was born in West Pilton and after rising to management with Scottish & Newcastle she co-founded Newell and Budge, a software company with its HQ in Edinburgh.

She bought Hearts FC when it had fallen into administration in 2014 and has turned it into a family and community friendly stadium. Revenue has doubled building up a sustainable future for the business.

Edinburgh's Lord Provost Frank Ross, said: "Not only has Ann Budge saved one of Edinburgh's main football clubs, giving it a chance to return to the Premiership, but she has drastically transformed Tynecastle into a place where the Gorgie and wider Edinburgh community can unite, learn and spend time together.

"Under her lead, Hearts became the first professional football club in the UK to introduce the living wage and working with Edinburgh institution Baillie Gifford she has introduced The Heart of Midlothian Innovation Centre. This works in partnership with learning providers, schools and local businesses motivates young people of all ages to acquire vital skills for Scotland's burgeoning digital economy.

"Ann Budge is an inspiring business woman, entrepreneur, philanthropist and community champion. She is a role model for girls everywhere and for putting fans first in football. No matter what colour scarf you wear, I think we can all agree that the Edinburgh Award is the ideal way for our city to recognise all that she has achieved."

Ann Budge said: "It's a real honour to be chosen for the Edinburgh Award and I owe a huge debt of gratitude to those who nominated me. What makes this award so special is that it's from my city, my hometown, and presented on behalf of the citizens of Edinburgh. As someone from a working class family from West Pilton, who still cherishes everything about this

city, the fans and the incredible people and the charities we work with, to be told I'll soon have my handprints set in stone in the heart of Edinburgh – that's a special moment indeed for me and my family."

