

# Hibs Historical Trust urges fans to establish authenticity of memorabilia bought online

**The Hibernian Historical Trust are urging fans to establish the authenticity of memorabilia purchased online following a rise match worn shirt sales.**

The Trust was established in 2004 with the goal of preserving and protecting the historical artefacts of the Club, as well as being a focal point for information and education about the Club's rich history.



They has been using the period of lockdown carry out an inventory of all the items it has in its possession. So far they have identified over 5,000 items that have been donated, loaned or purchased over 16 years.

Items range from trophies, medals, programmes, photographs and strips, and more beside. Indeed, the Trust has in its possession the complete set of match-worn original Scottish Cup final strips, tracksuits, balls and even the silver packing case in which they were transported to Hampden, kindly donated by the Club.

In collecting items, the Trust is careful to establish the authenticity of any item it receives including its provenance. It has been asked advice on many occasions to validate items that supporter's treasure as being genuine and will only do so if there is documentation that supports that opinion.

The Trust also recognises the genuine contribution that collectors make to ensuring the Club's memorabilia is preserved and has on occasion it will not be able to secure an item, particularly at auction.

In recent times the Club and the Trust has observed a significant increase in the sale of shirts. There is no doubt that there is a good market for these items and the Club does not want to interfere in the sale of items amongst supporters, however, care is needed in determining the authenticity, and thereby value, of such items, particularly those identified as having an origin at the Club.

Supporters are advised to take some simple steps to protect themselves. Look carefully at the wording of any offer to sell and then ask the vendor to clarify exactly what it is they are selling. Is it a match worn shirt or a signed replica? Are the sleeve patches genuine or copies?

If match worn, by whom and when exactly? Is there documentation to prove its provenance, either a letter from the player, the Club or indeed a photograph? What do the terms match prepared or prepared for issue actually mean and who prepared them and what is the evidence? Does the photograph help in assessing whether the item genuine or not?

The Trust is aware of some unhappy supporters following sales, however, In the end the old maxim that 'let the buyer beware' remains valid.