

# City's bid to end gambling advertising and sponsorship in football

**Edinburgh City have become the first Scottish club to support The Big Step's campaign to end all gambling advertising and sponsorship in football.**

Gambling advertising is rife in Scottish football, with many of the country's top teams sponsored by gambling companies and until recently, the Scottish League Cup and the Scottish Premiership were sponsored by William Hill and Ladbrokes respectively.



11th May 2021 Edinburgh – Action shots from the SPFL League 1 play off between Edinburgh City and Elgin City at Ainslie Park in Edinburgh. The game ended 2-2 but Edinburgh City won 3-2 on aggregate.

The Big Step is a grassroots project, part of the charity Gambling with Lives, that campaigns to 'kick gambling ads out of football' and their campaign has won the support of several MPs, including Ronnie Cowan of the Scottish National Party.

Tragically, there are an estimated 250–650 gambling-related suicides in the UK each year with gambling addicts up to 15 times more like to take their own lives than members of the general population. There are between 430,000 and 1.2 million people addicted to gambling the UK.

Jim Brown, chairman of Edinburgh City FC, said: “We decided it was time to adopt an ethical approach to all our partnerships; the pandemic has shown just how much football has the potential to be an immense power for good, so it makes sense to us to reinforce only positive messages both for physical and mental health. We are delighted to support The Big Step in their campaign as we share the same core value of trying to change the existing reliance on gambling in Scottish football.”

Our support comes at a time when pressure is mounting on the Government to make tangible changes to existing legislation during their current review of the 2005 Gambling Act. The results of the review are due by the end of the year.

James Grimes, Founder of The Big Step and formerly addicted to gambling said: “We are thrilled to have the support of Edinburgh City during a pivotal time for gambling reform in this county. For most of us involved with The Big Step, the harmful relationship between gambling and football was the gateway for years of addiction – if only our clubs had taken this stance, things may have been different for us.

“Football doesn’t promote tobacco because of the health risks – It’s now time more for more clubs to replicate ECFC commendable stance on advertising gambling, which is causing harm to millions of people.”



Scottish first division play off – Edinburgh City v Dumbarton.  
Ainslie Park, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

17/05/2021

Edinburgh City go down 3-1 to Dumbarton in the first leg of the first division play off.

Credit: Ian Jacobs