

# David is sportscotland Volunteer of the Year

## Inspirational Edinburgh football coach crowned sportscotland Volunteer of the Year

Lochend football coach David Pollacchi has been recognised as Volunteer of the Year at the 2022 **sportscotland** Coaching, Officiating and Volunteering (COV) Awards for his exceptional and selfless contribution to Lochend Football Academy.

The **sportscotland** COV Awards celebrate all those who break down barriers, inspire and enhance the lives of others through sport, and recognise the commitment of those who apply their own time and effort to make sport accessible to all.

David has become a role model for proactive volunteering in his area, transforming Lochend Football Academy, which sits in one of the most deprived areas of Scotland, into a club whose quality and dedication has been recognised by the Scottish Football Association.

Volunteering hundreds of hours of his time over the past six years, David has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for his club, allowing Lochend Football Academy to replace an old and unsafe surface with a new state of the art pitch.

The inspirational coach, who works closely with the local community, was commended for his drive to ensure local children can play football in a safe, fun and friendly environment for years to come.

Coaching multiple year groups seven days a week, David has specifically created a thriving girls' academy with 20 players

– but his contribution doesn't stop there. He sits on the club's Board and Committee and has used his professional background to undertake many of the academy's administrative duties, including fundraising management, PVG coordination, coach onboarding, insurance, and player registrations – all in a bid to ensure that the club can continue to grow and that all members are safe.

He has also diversified the club through inclusion and outreach to local schools, delivering free football sessions for primary school children with the aim of improving their physical and mental wellbeing. His work has created opportunities, driven participation and brought his community together.

David said: “I started coaching about six years ago, I brought my boys down to the academy and eventually became a volunteer coach, before doing my coaching badges. I've just loved it ever since – being able to make a difference and to help both boys and girls of the community on their football has been really exciting and something I've been passionate about. We started off with no girls at all, and we've managed to grow that into a thriving group. To be named Volunteer of the Year is an amazing feeling and something I dedicate to the club and all those I've coached and who have helped me along the way.”

Mel Young, Chair of **sportscotland**, said: “Our Coaching, Officiating and Volunteering Awards give us a chance to celebrate the great sporting achievements and moments that are taking place every day and congratulate those who are making an incredible commitment to Scottish sport.

“Across Scotland, there are thousands of sporting enthusiasts who recognise the impact that sport and teamwork can have on our lives. The people we are celebrating have taken that recognition and turned it into life-changing ambition and a force for good. Individuals like David have dedicated their time to helping others realise their sporting potential and

shown the far-reaching benefits of participation.”

This year sees the awards return for the first time since 2019, with **sportscotland** receiving 320 nominations covering 30 different sports across 31 local authorities. People keen to recognise the invaluable contributions of selfless coaches, officials and volunteers working across a range of sports the length and breadth of the country submitted their nominations earlier in the year.

The COV winners were invited to attend a presentation ceremony at Glasgow City Chambers as a thank you for their continued work and dedication.



David Pollacchi SportsScotland COV awards Held in the Glasgow City Chambers Pics by Alan Peebles