

Edinburgh football clubs charities launching new SPFL Trust funded programmes

The two charities behind the capital's teams Hearts and Hibs are launching a new programme from their stadium based community hubs.

The main target is to alleviate poverty in Scotland focussing on health and wellbeing, employability, inclusion or attainment all regarded as key to achieving better outcomes for people.

Big Hearts and Hibernian Community Foundation will use around £10,000 of funding from the SPFL Trust's new innovation fund and will test out new flexible ideas, following the lead from the SPFL Trust's Winter Support Fund which awarded grants to ten community trusts to run activities in the winter.

Big Hearts Chief Executive, Craig Wilson, is looking forward to supporting more young people through the new initiative.

He said: "We will be working with young people on volunteering journeys."

"Hopefully this will mean that some of the people we work with across our projects will be given some time back and will support some of our other projects, becoming leaders in groups, and beginning their journey towards employability.

"There's not always money to allow us to try things and see how it works out, but actually that's the kind of model that

will allow organisations like ours to learn, adapt and ultimately do more for the community.

“I think this type of funding can be really advantageous and we’re delighted to be part of it.”

Across the capital, Hibernian Community Foundation will be launching a new programme aimed at supporting Ukrainian refugees living in Edinburgh.

All Together Now is allowing the charity to employ a Ukrainian speaking activity worker to engage with Ukrainian people in the city and support the ‘New Scots’ initiative which helps people settle into life in Edinburgh.

Head of Community at Hibernian Community Foundation, Lewis Melee, says the programme will help to meet the needs of the New Scots community.

He said: “We’ve learned quickly from a lot of fantastic partners and through community consultation about the need that’s there, but also the outreach that we can be the driver for.

“It’s not about generating new football fans, it’s giving somebody access to a space where they feel safe, where they want to be.

“Here’s hoping the successful outcomes will allow us to continue these new projects and bring them to a place where they can be a mainstay in the community.”

SPFL Trust CEO, Nicky Reid, said: “We are delighted to be funding Big Hearts Journeys and All Together Now.

“Both programmes will really make a difference to the lives of people across Edinburgh, and I’m pleased to see both organisations putting fresh ideas forward as we continue to use football as a vehicle for positive change.

“Following the success of our Winter Support Fund, we wanted to continue to develop opportunities for community trusts to progress ideas and solutions that they believe will work locally.

The SPFL Trust Innovation Fund is about enabling creative thinking and innovation, so that community trusts can demonstrate impact, and show that their ideas can work. That should in turn allow them to look at longer term funding solutions.”



Big Hearts Chief Executive Craig Wilson



Head of Community at Hibernian Community Foundation, Lewis Melee



L-R Craig from Big Hearts and Lewis from Hibs Community Foundation