

Potential boost for Edinburgh Cup football festival

The founder of the prestigious Edinburgh Cup has vowed to make the annual international youth football festival even bigger and better on the back of potentially increased support from The City of Edinburgh Council.



To the Edinburgh Cup winners the spoils ... and a place on stage.



Fun is the name of the game at the Edinburgh Cup
The agenda for the last Council meeting of 2023 contained an item from Councillor Margaret Graham hailing the success of this year's tournament "which attracted over 10,000 attendees around the world including the US, Norway and India".

There was reference to possible assistance being given by council officials to a project in conjunction with the SFA "with the aim of providing referee training as well as enhancing other skills including communication, decision making, confidence, empathy, patience and leadership".

Concluding her call Ms Graham "Further requests that the Lord Provost celebrate this achievement in an appropriate manner".

It is understood a formal announcement will be made in the New Year with regard to the referee training aspect.

Scott Gibson, Operations and Events Director for the Edinburgh Cup as well as the tournament founder of an event which is being held from August 2-4, largely at Peffermill Recreation

Ground, said: "Any support would be welcome. A lot of work has to go into creating what is more than a football event as we want visitors to experience the vibe across the whole of Edinburgh during their stay."

Mr Gibson revealed he expects to meet with Council leader Cammy Day in January.

"This will be to find ways to support non-European teams with visa applications" said Mr Gibson.

With eight months until the kick off there have been applications from Canada, Ethiopia, Madagascar and an African project team as well as regular attendees.

Aware that not all will be able to afford Edinburgh accommodation and certainly not at Festival time efforts are being made to partner with a local farmer to provide 50-60 tents to house visitors.

"Any money we get is re-invested as the Sports Pathway Group are a social enterprise" said Gibson who believes that to fulfil the aim of expanding to become the equivalent of Sweden's Gothia Cup – one of the biggest youth football tournaments in the world – extra pitches are needed.

Because the official youth football season does not get underway until September there have been difficulties obtaining local authority controlled pitches which is where extra Council interest could be useful in 2024?

Scott Gibson added: "We are expecting 4,500 players from over 500 teams; over 1400 games will be played from tiny tots up to under-16's.

"A major step forward would be to have a stadium pitch granted to us for finals.

"But we couldn't have envisaged how much the Edinburgh Cup has grown from being played on three pitches at Meggetland in 2017

bearing in mind we had to negotiate a pandemic along the way.”



They come from around the world to the Edinburgh Cup