



CELTIC FOOTBALL CLUB

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SOCIAL MISSION STATEMENT

Introduction

Celtic Football Club is legendary and as with most legends as much myth as fact surrounds its history and what the Club stands for today. The Social Mission Statement aims to simply define what the Club stands for and seeks to promote within society.

History

Celtic Football Club was founded in 1888. Its principal founder was a Marist Brother named Walfrid. The Club had two principal aims: The first aim was to raise funds to provide food for the poor of the East End of Glasgow, an area of the City that was greatly impoverished and had a high rate of infant mortality. Within the East End was a large Irish community and friction was growing between the native Glaswegians and the new influx of Irish. Brother Walfrid saw the need for social integration and his vision was a football club that Scottish and Irish, Protestants and Catholics alike could support. A new football club would be a vehicle to bring the communities together and this was the second aim. The Marist brother sought for the Club to have both a Scottish and Irish identity and hence, the Club's name "Celtic" came about, representing a bridge of cultures across the Irish Sea.

Current Positioning of Celtic Football Club

Celtic Football Club is a Scottish football club with proud Irish links. The primary business of Celtic is as a football club. It is run on a professional business basis with no political agenda. However, the Club has a wider role and the responsibility of being a major Scottish social institution promoting healthy, well-being and social integration.

Who is Celtic Football Club for?

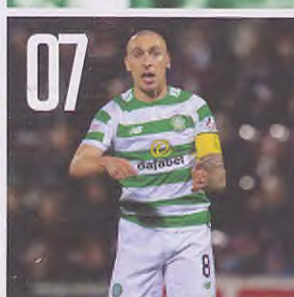
Celtic Football Club is for people who want to support a football club that strives for excellence in Scotland and in Europe, is proud of its history, supportive of its local community and seeks to support the following aims: "To maximise all opportunities to disassociate the Club from sectarianism and bigotry of any kind. To promote Celtic as a Club for all people, regardless of gender, age, religion, race or ability."

Summary

Celtic is a club for everyone who believes in football as a medium for healthy pleasure, entertainment and social integration. The Club always has been and always will simply aim to be the team of the people.

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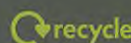


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'This team has an exceptional home record this season and we'll be looking to continue that with a win over Aberdeen'



IT'S been a while since I've written notes for a Celtic programme, and the first thing I want to say is that it's good to be home.

I said last week that I always hoped to return here at some point, and while it has perhaps come quicker than expected, I am delighted to be back here at a club which has always meant so much to me as a player and a manager.

I'm sure it will be an emotional day, particularly taking my place in the home dugout again, but I've stressed since I've come back that it's not about me. It's about the club and ensuring that the players continue to perform to the very high levels they have set in recent seasons.

They have certainly done so in our last two games, and we got two well-deserved victories at Tynecastle and Easter Road, two of the most difficult venues to play at.

That's credit to the players, who've shown their quality and character in

both of those fixtures to get a vital three points and also ensure progress to the semi-final of the Scottish Cup.

The players have been absolutely brilliant, both in the two games we've had and also on the training pitch every day, while I've also received great help from John Kennedy, Damien Duff and Stevie Woods, as well as everyone in the backroom staff since returning, something I really appreciate.

Games against Aberdeen are always tough, and today will be no different. Derek McInnes will bring his side here looking to take something from the game, and given Aberdeen's recent good away form, we'll have to be at our best this afternoon.

However, this team has an exceptional domestic home record this season and we'll be looking to continue that with a win over Aberdeen, which will also maintain our eight-point lead at the top of the Premiership.

We know that won't be easy, but the players are focused and determined to do everything they can in order to enjoy a successful 90 minutes.

I also want to thank our supporters for the welcome they've given me these past couple of weeks. It's no surprise really, because the Celtic fans have always given me great support, as a player and manager.

I appreciate the kind wishes you've sent to me, and the incredible backing you've given the team throughout the season and, in particular, in the last two games. Hopefully, we can continue our run of good form with another strong performance and result this afternoon. Enjoy the game.

Neil Lennon





new balance

AUDAZO

#RUNTHEGAME



RUN
THE
GAME





A word with our captain...

SCOTT BROWN



Aberdeen never make it easy for us, but we go into the game aiming for another three points

WE always look forward to playing at Celtic Park, and so we're delighted to be back in our own stadium today to take on Aberdeen.

The lads have been absolutely brilliant in the last two games, and we have thoroughly deserved both wins.

Tynecastle is always a tough place to go to, and that was certainly the case last week, but I thought we handled it very well and showed our character to keep going to the final whistle, getting the winning goal right at the death.

Saturday's match was a different challenge but, again, it was at a very difficult venue. We've not enjoyed the best of fortunes on recent visits to

Easter Road but we were excellent in beating Hibs to reach the semi-final of the Scottish Cup.

That's a competition we've had great success in over the past couple of seasons, and we're determined to do everything we can to keep hold of the trophy. It means we now have a semi-final at Hampden to look forward to next month, but for now, our full focus is on the league.

We've got an eight-point lead at the top of the table and that's something we want to maintain with a positive result today.

Aberdeen won't make it easy for us – they never do – and every game we play against them is always very competitive.

But the lads have shown tremendous focus throughout the season and, in particular over the last few weeks, so we go into the game full of confidence and aiming for another three points.

I've been fortunate enough to chip in with a few goals in recent weeks, which is always very pleasing, but as long as we get the right result today, it doesn't matter who gets the goals. Enjoy the game.



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GOLD CUP TAKES ITS BOW AT PARADISE COURTESY OF MAGNERS



TODAY'S half-time will feature a very special appearance, courtesy of Celtic sponsor Magners Irish Cider.

Magners is celebrating two of its most high-profile partnerships - Celtic Football Club and The FestivalTM Presented by Magners - by bringing the Magners Cheltenham Gold Cup to Scotland for the first time.

The Magners Cheltenham Gold Cup will be paraded at half time, by Cheltenham Gold Cup-winning jockey Andrew Thornton. Andrew, who won in 1998 with Irish gelding 'Cool Dawn', will also take part in a short Q&A.

George Kyle, Head of Sponsorship at C&C Group plc (owners of Magners) said: "As we mark our first year as Presenting Partner of the FestivalTM and exclusive sponsor of The Magners Cheltenham Gold Cup, it's fantastic to be able to bring the original trophy to Celtic Park.

"Road to Gold, our campaign around The FestivalTM,

celebrates the annual pilgrimage of over 260,000 fans, of which nearly one third travel from Ireland, to Cheltenham.

"This is a journey for everyone, a journey that features great craic with friends and family, huge excitement and anticipation, culminating in the greatest jump race in Europe - The Magners Cheltenham Gold Cup.

"We know that many Celtic supporters are huge fans of jump racing and The FestivalTM, so it has been great to offer the opportunity to win tickets to Cheltenham and celebrate the Road to Gold with us.

"For those heading along to Cheltenham, make sure to visit our bespoke Magners bar - Ciderland - located in the new 'Orchard' area in the Tented Village. I wish you a lucky, and enjoyable day at the races."

The FestivalTM Presented by Magners begins at Cheltenham this Tuesday, March 12, culminating in the Gold Cup on Friday, March 15.

