

NEWS RELEASE

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GLASGOW LIFE SET TO DELIVER A GOLD STANDARD GLASGOW WELCOME

Glasgow Life, the organisation responsible for sport and culture venues across the city of Glasgow, has completed a year-long programme of Glasgow Welcomes training to get their teams ready in time for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Almost 1,300 Glasgow Life employees - including all frontline teams at the Emirates Arena, Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and other sporting venues where the Games will be hosted - have completed the Glasgow Welcomes Service Excellence programme, a unique customer service programme designed to help Glasgow's hospitality, tourism and leisure staff deliver a memorable customer experience. Training has also been rolled out to staff at museums, libraries and other culture venues.

The Glasgow Welcomes training programme is an integral part of Glasgow Life's preparations for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. The organisation began implementing the programme in April 2013 and delivered it in phases through a network of six in-house licensed trainers.

Glasgow Life staff were recognised today (Friday 6 June) for their efforts in preparing for the Games at a special awards ceremony hosted by Glasgow Life and Glasgow Welcomes, the city's tourism service initiative. Glasgow Welcomes aims to help businesses deliver an outstanding visitor experience through customer service training and development opportunities for staff at all levels.

At the ceremony, Glasgow Life received the first Glasgow Welcomes business recognition certificates, which are awarded to organisations that are committed to implementing the programme and providing staff development opportunities that enhance customer experience.

Dr Bridget McConnell, Chief Executive of Glasgow Life, said: "Our staff are our biggest asset and along with the people of Glasgow, they will be the face of the Commonwealth Games. They will provide the warmest of welcomes to athletes and coaches and spectators and delegates – and just as important, they will continue to provide excellent customer service to everyone who uses our sport and cultural venues, before, during and long after the Games have gone.

"Glasgow Welcomes is an excellent initiative which will help our staff to improve their skills in a way that will benefit visitors for years to come."

Gordon McIntyre, Deputy Chair, Glasgow Welcomes said: “Staff and businesses in Glasgow’s tourism and hospitality industry have a major part to play in the success of the Games to ensure visitors enjoy a warm Glasgow welcome, boosting the city’s reputation as a top tourist destination.

“It’s fantastic that Glasgow Life has recognised the importance of ensuring their teams have the knowledge and skills to deliver great service to Games athletes, spectators and tourists. Their teams have worked really hard to implement a programme of training that will benefit venues and the wider city during the Games and beyond. There is a genuine enthusiasm and drive among Glasgow Life staff to help deliver the best Commonwealth Games ever.”

Victoria Rathmill, Glasgow Life leisure attendant at Castlemilk Sports Centre has excelled in delivering the highest standard of customer service as a result of participating in Glasgow Welcomes.

Victoria said: “I was arranging a gym induction appointment for a customer recently. The times we had available were not suitable for the customer due to travel difficulties, so I offered to come in on my day off. I wanted to make sure the customer was happy and make them feel they are number one. The customer was delighted and has recommended the sports centre to their friends and family, which made the extra effort worthwhile.

“We might see an increase in customers at the sports centre during the Games if a customer’s usual sports venue is being used for Games events, so the Glasgow Welcomes programme has helped me prepare for welcoming additional new customers.”

Anna Henderson, Learning Assistant at The Gallery of Modern Art, relishes the idea of delivering the ‘wow’ factor to customers.

She said: “The Glasgow Welcomes programme has encouraged me to think about new ways I can ‘wow’ the customer, even in small ways. I like to think I can do this in every workshop, event or activity.

“The gallery is in a prime city centre location and we are expecting an influx of visits from spectators and tourists during Games time, which we’re really excited about. The Glasgow Welcomes programme provides lots of information on what we can expect and how to embrace the opportunity to welcome tourists to the city by really engaging with them and offering them top tips on where to go and things to do in Glasgow.”

Gordon McIntyre, Glasgow Welcomes added: “There are less than seven weeks to go to the Games, but there’s still time for businesses to get ready. They need to act now to make sure they benefit from this massive opportunity.”

The Glasgow Welcomes initiative is an Official Legacy Project and is aiming to create a lasting legacy of excellent customer service standards across all touch points of the visitor experience in Glasgow.

The initiative is supported by the industry-led Glasgow Tourism & Events Leadership Group (which includes Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland), and is managed by VisitScotland on behalf of industry and partners. Principal funders are Scottish Enterprise, with additional funding provided by Skills Development Scotland and the Glasgow city partners.

To find out more about the Glasgow Welcomes programme go to www.glasgowwelcomes.com

Notes to editors:

- Issued by Golley Slater on behalf of Glasgow Welcomes, the city’s tourism service initiative. Contact Stella Callaghan 0141 566 4031 / stella.callaghan@visitscotland.com. For Glasgow Life enquiries contact Marc McLean 0141 287 6418.
- Glasgow Welcomes, the city’s tourism service initiative (previously Glasgow Service with Style) is a unique city-wide initiative designed to support the delivery of a world class visitor experience across the entire customer journey through training and development opportunities for tourism and hospitality businesses. It aims to further the development and regeneration of the city through the expansion of the tourism sector by raising service standards at every touch point of the visitor experience and improving bottom line benefits to businesses.
- The initiative is supported by the industry-led Glasgow Tourism & Events Leadership Group (which includes Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland), and is managed by VisitScotland on behalf of industry and partners. Principal funders are Scottish Enterprise, with additional funding provided by Skills Development Scotland and the Glasgow city partners.