

NEWS RELEASE
22 JULY 2014

VIRGIN TRAINS STAFF ON BOARD WITH GLASGOW WELCOMES

Virgin Trains has invested in a unique Glasgow training programme for staff on its Glasgow to London route to ensure visitors enjoy a world class visitor experience in the city.

Forty five members of staff, including 15 members of the boarding team at London Euston, have completed the Glasgow Welcomes Delivering Service Excellence programme after attending sessions hosted in Glasgow and London.

In addition, 20 members of staff have completed Glasgow Welcomes-Online, a unique online training module that has been specially tailored for 2014, with practical advice on how to deliver excellent customer service standards; information about Glasgow's top attractions so that frontline service staff can offer up-to-date advice on what there is to see and do in the city, and facts and figures on this year's major events, including the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, The Ryder Cup and Homecoming Scotland.

The Glasgow Welcomes programme, which is designed and delivered by the city's tourism service initiative, Glasgow Welcomes, is being used by Virgin Trains to complement its existing customer service training with destination-specific information.

Ewen Brand, Station Manager Glasgow & Edinburgh for Virgin Trains, explained: "We've changed our customer service approach from a 'platform to platform' mentality towards a more destination-focused model.

"We recognise that our passengers have a better experience if our staff can offer them more support across their entire trip, so it's essential our staff develop a real connection with destinations and have knowledge they can pass on to passengers. It means that our teams can help people to plan their visit in Glasgow from the moment they check-in 400 miles away at Euston.

"Glasgow Welcomes is a perfect addition to our programme because it provides a wealth of destination information on Glasgow and everything there is to see and do in Glasgow this summer."

To underline its focus on Glasgow as a destination, Virgin Trains has recently launched its new First Class Lounge at Glasgow Central Station, with support from Glasgow City Marketing Bureau (GCMB), which is responsible for the city's award-winning People Make Glasgow brand.

Councillor Gordon Matheson, Leader of Glasgow City Council and Chair of Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, said: "This is the most exciting, and high-profile, year in Glasgow's history as we prepare to host the best ever Commonwealth Games, which will bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city.

"We welcome Virgin Trains' commitment to Glasgow, through their new passenger facilities and staff training, which will ensure they can deliver first-class customer care and knowledge of the city and that visitors enjoy a positive and memorable experience."

Stella Callaghan, Project Manager, Glasgow Welcomes said: "Glasgow is expecting thousands of visitors this summer and it's important they receive a fantastic welcome at every arrival point in the city, including rail stations.

“Virgin Trains recognises the importance of delivering an outstanding experience across all touch points of a visitor’s journey, underlined by their commitment to training their London-based team. We’re delighted they have committed to the Glasgow Welcomes programme to equip their staff with the knowledge and skills they need to help people make the most of their visit to Glasgow.”

The Glasgow Welcomes initiative is an official Legacy 2014 project and is aiming to create a lasting legacy of excellent customer service standards across all touch points of the visitor experience in Glasgow.

Key funders of the Glasgow Welcomes initiative and online programme are Scottish Enterprise, with additional funding and support from Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, Skills Development Scotland, Visit Scotland and the tourism sector. The initiative is managed by VisitScotland on behalf of industry and partners.

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
- 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.