



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**4 April 2016**

# **High flier appointed as new Chair of Glasgow's tourism service initiative**

Glasgow Airport Head of HR, Craig Martin, has been appointed as the new Chair of Glasgow Welcomes, the city's tourism service initiative.

Craig, who has been Vice Chair of Glasgow Welcomes for the past two years, takes over the top role from well-known city restaurateur James Rusk. Owner of award-winning The Butchershop Bar & Grill in the west end and Hutcheson's on Ingram Street, James is stepping down from the Chair position after more than 18 months due to increased work commitments.

Craig takes on his new responsibilities as Glasgow Welcomes Chair with immediate effect. He has been a key member of Glasgow Airport's management team since January 2011 and has spent his entire career as a HR professional working across various industrial sectors including oil and gas, manufacturing and construction for companies such as the Weir Group and the McVitie's division of United Biscuits. Craig was born in Glasgow but moved to Perth at the age of 10, returning to study at Strathclyde University and has lived and worked in the city since then.

Launched in 2010, Glasgow Welcomes is an innovative industry-led partnership initiative supported by the Glasgow Tourism & Events Leadership Group - which comprises Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Enterprise, and national tourism organisation VisitScotland. Managed by VisitScotland on behalf of industry and partners, Glasgow Welcomes is funded principally by Scottish Enterprise, with Skills Development Scotland and the city partners providing additional funding.

With a focus on people, skills and service excellence, the initiative is an integral element of Glasgow's Tourism Strategy. Glasgow Welcomes was established to ensure that the city's vibrant tourism, hospitality, leisure and retail sectors – which are key to Glasgow's success as a world-class visitor destination – deliver an outstanding and consistent customer experience across the entire visitor journey.

A diverse range of industry participants - from hotels and B&Bs, restaurants and cafes, bars and night clubs, to visitor attractions, venues, shops and transport providers - have already benefitted from Glasgow Welcomes training, events and resources. In addition, a number of schools and colleges, as well as JobCentre Plus in Glasgow, have been taking advantage of the initiative to help students and job-seekers improve their employment prospects.

Over 10,500 people throughout the city – from school leavers and frontline service staff to business managers and leaders - have now participated in Glasgow Welcomes training and events. Of these, 5,000 have taken part in the last two years, demonstrating the growing demand for the opportunities offered by the Initiative.

As a Glasgow 2014 Legacy project, Glasgow Welcomes played a key role in the city's preparations for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games as thousands of city tourism workers, as well as around 2,500 Clydesider volunteers, engaged with the programme to help ensure Glasgow delivered what was officially hailed as 'the best ever Games'. Glasgow Welcomes is providing a lasting legacy from the Commonwealth Games by working with partners across Scotland to roll out this successful model to other key tourism locations.

**Craig Martin, Chair of Glasgow Welcomes, said:**

*"Ensuring customers consistently receive the highest possible standards of service and are guaranteed a first-class experience every step of the way is absolutely vital to the success and profitability of any business or organisation. Service excellence is even more crucial these days as customers are much more discerning and better travelled - so their expectations are even higher.*

*"To keep ahead of the competition as a world-class visitor destination and top tourism city, Glasgow needs to ensure every visitor is not just satisfied but totally impressed. Visitors often say that the thing they like most about Glasgow is our people and Glasgow Welcomes is directly aligned to the city's People Make Glasgow brand; it's something which we can all identify with.*

*"To ensure we maintain our reputation for delivering an outstanding visitor experience, we need to support our people and enable and encourage them to go that extra mile to delight their customers. It is vital to our city's economy to ensure that we not only attract visitors to come here to spend, but that we make certain they leave with brilliant memories so that they will come back again and recommend Glasgow to others.*

*"We congratulate James on his success in the recent Scottish Thistle Awards, and thank him for his support for the initiative. His wealth of experience in hospitality, passion for superb service and enthusiasm for the city of Glasgow – have been invaluable to Glasgow Welcomes. We're delighted he will remain fully involved with the initiative as Advisory Board member.*

*"Investing in people is the key to service excellence in the wealth of fantastic restaurants, hotels and visitor experiences across Glasgow and we look forward to continuing to support that through Glasgow Welcomes."*

ENDS

**Issued on behalf of Glasgow Welcomes by:**  
**Brian McClean**  
**Head of Communications, Glasgow Airport**  
**T: 0141 848 4558 / 0775 4390 160**  
**E: [brian.mcclean@glasgowairport.com](mailto:brian.mcclean@glasgowairport.com)**

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**Notes to editors:**

- 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 learning 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.
- To find out more about the Glasgow Welcomes Initiative go to [www.glasgowwelcomes.com](http://www.glasgowwelcomes.com)