

January 2009

Spectacular new event space opening in Scotland's capital this summer



Prestige Scotland is delighted to announce responsibility for the catering contract of the new John Hope Gateway visitor facility which opens in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) later this year. Prestige Scotland will add this fantastic new facility to their extensive portfolio which currently includes catering for both corporate and private events within the 70 acres of beautiful landscaped Garden.

Prestige Scotland will manage services at the new 120-seat day visitor restaurant and 40-seat VIP room opening this summer, part of a £15.7 million development project, which has been designed according to principles of green construction and sustainability. The John Hope Gateway will offer visitors a facility where they can discover the world of plants, explore the scientific work that takes place at the Garden through a unique set of interactive experiences and activities followed by refreshments and hospitality in the new restaurant facility. In the evening this exclusive venue will turn into a magnificent event space with outstanding views overlooking the spectacular Biodiversity Garden and beyond.

The Garden currently welcomes around 660,000 visitors each year and hosts over 700 annual events. The new restaurant facilities will provide a new exclusive and versatile corporate or private venue, perfect for weddings and conferences for up to 190 guests. The restaurant is situated on the upper floor, alongside an education room, bar and VIP room which form a suite of spaces running the entire length of the building, which spill onto a large roof terrace overlooking the spectacular Garden.

The name of the new John Hope Gateway facility commemorates RBGE's 18th century Regius Keeper, Professor John Hope, a leading botanist and teacher of his time who was also responsible for unifying the Garden at one site on Leith Walk. This pioneering and beautiful building will provide a host of new opportunities and attractions for people of all ages and abilities. With the materials used, the various energy saving measures and renewable energy production, The John Hope Gateway will be an excellent



demonstration site for promoting sustainability and design and will include many demonstrable features such as a biomass boiler, rain water harvesting, a wind turbine, solar collectors and photovoltaic solar panels.

As an integral part of the catering contract and commitment to embracing environmental best practise, Prestige Scotland will be implementing a variety of environmentally friendly and healthy eating initiatives at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. These include sourcing food locally where possible; ensuring the use of only biodegradable packaging; and organising educational programmes for children to teach them about the importance and benefits of a healthy, balanced diet. Bespoke chairs and tables have been designed for the restaurant with the timber for the tabletops coming from timber previously felled and seasoned from the four Gardens of RBGE – Edinburgh; Benmore, in Argyll; Logan, in Dumfries & Galloway and Dawyck, in the Scottish Borders.

Alyson Cawley, Managing Director of Prestige Scotland, said: "We are delighted to be working with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh at such an exciting time. This unique new venue gives us the opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of our catering and hospitality expertise from afternoon teas to fine dining events."

Prestige Scotland, which took over the catering contract at RBGE in March 2008, also manages The Caledonian Hall and The Terrace Café, which has views over the city's skyline and castle, with a marquee site available for private hire.

Ends

For more information, images, or interviews please contact

Ginny Lawson Tel: 0131 337 5269 / 07703 479 456 email: ginny@ginnylawsonpr.com

Notes to Editors

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE)

The history of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) dates back to 1670 when it began as Scotland's first physic garden on a modest patch of ground at Holyrood Park no bigger than a tennis court. It moved to Inverleith in 1820.

The John Hope Gateway

The new John Hope Gateway building is set to be a shining example of green construction and sustainability and will sit on the footprint of the former Botanics Shop. It will integrate into the special and sensitive landscape of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and will underpin the overall mission of the RBGE, "to explore and explain the world of plants". The John Hope Gateway will offer visitors an unrivalled facility where they can discover the world of plants and the scientific work of the Botanics through a unique set of interactive experiences and activities. The building will also house other top-class facilities including a day visitors' restaurant and evening events space, shop and education rooms. Prestige Scotland, which took over the catering contract at RBGE in March 2008, also currently manages The Caledonian Hall and The Terrace Café, which has views over the city's skyline and castle, with a marquee site available for private hire.

- The John Hope Gateway building will be a showcase for sustainable design and will include many demonstrable features such as a biomass boiler, rain water harvesting, a wind turbine, solar collectors and photovoltaic solar panels.
- As befits a building in the Botanic Garden, the John Hope Gateway has been made out of natural materials with low embodied energy, including a predominantly timber structure, demonstrating the uses and importance of wood and trees. The building has a roof garden planted with sedum, effectively increasing the area of green space in the Garden.
- The public areas including the restaurant, will have a solid timber floor that extends out into the landscape as the roof deck over the exhibition hall. Bespoke chairs and tables have been designed for the restaurant with the timber for the tabletops coming from timber previously felled and seasoned from the four Gardens of RBGE.



Prestige Scotland

Prestige Scotland is the dedicated Scottish catering services division of Sodexo Prestige, with its Head Office based in Edinburgh. They provide the highest level of catering and support services to some of the leading venues and events in Scotland, while continually pushing the boundaries of innovation. Prestige Scotland provides the highest level of catering and hospitality services to some of the leading venues and events in Scotland, while continually pushing the boundaries of innovation. Prestige Scotland is recognised as the market leader in the provision of private and corporate hospitality in Scotland. The services that it provides range from match day hospitality at Hampden Park and annual awards dinners at the National Museums of Scotland to intimate wedding receptions at historic venues such as Dundas Castle.

Sodexo Prestige

Sodexo Prestige is the UK's largest event caterer and provider of corporate hospitality packages. The company provides catering at prestigious events such as the Chelsea Flower Show and Royal Ascot. It also provides catering at permanent visitor attractions such as Blenheim Palace, Knebworth House and Epsom Downs Racecourse, as well as Murrayfield and Hampden Park stadia in Scotland.

Prestige Experience

Location is essential, and through Prestige Experience's collection of over 30 properties you can select venues throughout the UK that run the gamut from racecourses and castles to stadiums and ships.

The booking of an event is now made easy through our central sales team - a group of dedicated professionals who look after your individual event from start to finish. Our high-level organisational expertise, genuine hospitality and inspired catering all combine to ensure that an event at any of our venues is a success.

www.prestigeexperience.co.uk

The online service has a unique collection of venues ranging from Ascot Racecourse to Glamis Castle. Visit the site and take a 360o tour of the facilities on offer.

For more information call:
England and Wales 0870 421 4868
Scotland 0800 328 1373