

An e-zine bulletin for all partners and stakeholders in Glasgow's International Financial Services District

June 2006

Welcome to the IFSD News Update

This monthly e-zine is distributed to all partners and stakeholders and anyone with an interest in the progress of the IFSD in Glasgow. The purpose of the update is to reflect progress and summarise key events and happenings over the previous month. The e-zine will also highlight the latest independent research of value to local employers as well as communicating research which confirms Glasgow's position as a leading business location.

Scots Top Trust League for Financial Services

When it comes to talking about their money on the phone to a financial services, company more people would trust a Scottish accent than any other voice.

Scotland came top of the trust league with London second in a survey carried out by national pollsters, YouGov for IFSD, Glasgow. People across the UK were asked which accent did they feel most gave them the impression of trustworthiness and competence when discussing financial matters over the phone.

Of those who expressed a preference, 22% said the Scottish accent. In second place was London, with 17%, while 14% said the South-East of England and 12% said Yorkshire.

Jim Watson, project director for the IFSD, Glasgow said: "I am not surprised by this survey. We take a great deal of pride in the fact that many international insurance, savings and pensions companies have chosen to locate here.

"Glasgow has invested in special training opportunities for financial services employees to ensure we can deliver the quality of service people want."

Glasgow Tops for Broadband

Glasgow has overtaken London to become the UK's fastest city for broadband speeds.

iPing Research, the well known Netherlands based IT firm, measures broadband speeds across the UK from the end user perspective. Their latest research reveals that Glasgow has moved from second to top position in the UK, with an average broadband speed of 2395 kbps. That's a 57% improvement on last year's figure, putting Glasgow ahead of London which recorded 1943 kbps.

Commenting on the findings, Jim Watson, project director, IFSD, said, "This achievement underlines the huge investment Glasgow has made in broadband infrastructure in recent years in recognition that both inward investors and indigenous companies value high speed connectivity as an important business tool."

Mr Watson highlighted in particular the £50 million investment by BT in Glasgow's broadband network as a great example of how Glasgow is leading the way.

iPing Research CEO René Post said, "Although speed of broadband connections is on the rise in Europe, some cities are clearly benefiting more from this development than others."



Wilson Bowden Unveils Latest Plans at Atlantic Quay

Leading developer Wilson Bowden has unveiled plans for the latest phase of its ambitious development at Glasgow's Atlantic Quay.

Work has started on site at 4 Atlantic Quay, the newest addition to the IFSD, which will provide almost 74,000 square feet of Grade A office space on a prominent corner location at the waterfront. The new building is one of a portfolio of six being developed by Wilson Bowden in the area and dovetails with the ongoing regeneration of the city's waterfront.

The vision is to further develop the area as a modern business quarter, offering landmark office buildings and enhancing a mixed use location which also encompasses housing, retail and leisure.

Plans are now well advanced for luxury housing, shopping amenities and upmarket bars and restaurants with the whole scheme being drawn together by a high quality public realm.

Jim Fitzsimons, Development Director at Wilson Bowden, said: "Atlantic Quay is already playing a key role in shaping Glasgow and the IFSD's future business success."

"We are able to offer potential occupiers high specification standards and high quality space which has the flexibility to be tailored to suit a variety of requirements."

Another Award for IFSD

IFSD Glasgow has won a Highly Commended Award in the prestigious RICS Regeneration Awards.

These annual awards, organised by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors recognise improvements to the built or natural environment that make a long-term contribution to the viability and prosperity of an area.

Jim Watson, project director, IFSD Glasgow said, "This is the first time we have entered IFSD for this high profile awards scheme and we are absolutely delighted to win this UK wide recognition. It is the latest in a long line of top national and international awards won by IFSD and it is very satisfying to know that the great progress made by IFSD in recent years is being recognised around the globe."

In the last 12 months, IFSD has been voted the UK's Best Commercial Led Regeneration Project, won an award for Partnership from the Chicago based International Economic Development Council and won the title of Best European City for IT and Telecoms from Foreign Direct Investment magazine.



Glasgow Leads the Way with WiFi Technology

Glasgow is to integrate a seamless, fully-integrated, WiFi roaming service across its City Centre within the next 18 months. As reported elsewhere in this issue, the city already has one of the most sophisticated and competitive telecommunications environments in Europe. The new plan will further enhance Glasgow's reputation as not only a place to do business, but as centre for excellence, where information technology can bring benefits to all.

Baillie Alan Stewart, the city's spokesperson for Information & Communications Technology said, "Cities across the UK are vying to be the first to have a WiFi network which knits across business, leisure and commercial districts seamlessly.

"We're already working with our partners at BT and Cisco Systems to explore the ways in which Glasgow's network can be delivered – and we're determined it will be in place within the next 18 months."

Once established, the new WiFi network would allow laptop users to connect to their networks in almost any location – allowing business to be truly mobile within the city centre.

Calling Team Leaders

Team Leaders who participated in the First Line Management programme for the Call and Contact Centre industry graduated recently at a special ceremony.

Team Leaders from 8 companies received their Institute of Leadership and Management certificates from Gordon MacLennan, the senior director of business growth in Scottish Enterprise Glasgow. He said, "Their hard work has paid off and they are a credit, not only to their companies, but to the industry itself – and Glasgow too."

A number of 'Coaches' have also achieved the ILM Qualification in Coaching Skills – a first for this programme. SE Glasgow has agreed to provide funding support for the First Line Management programme for 3 years up to 2008.

The programme is an integral part of SE Glasgow's continued support which also includes the recent launch of a new Forum, which encourages HR managers to network with fellow HR practitioners, learn about new concepts which impact on HR management and share best practice with fellow Forum members. The first meeting attracted an inspirational guest speaker, Jackie Miles, HR Director at Admiral Insurance, who shared many excellent insights into the workings of HR in Admiral.

Tour Promotes Careers In Insurance

A recent tour of Glasgow promoted careers in the city's fast growing insurance sector. The tour, for careers advisers, raised awareness of the diverse range of career opportunities in insurance, especially in Glasgow's rapidly expanding IFSD. Hosts for the tour included representatives from Scottish Enterprise and the Chartered Insurance Institute. Around 30 careers advisers attended the event which incorporated visits to Esure and NFU Mutual.

Fraser Galbraith, Scottish Enterprise Glasgow said, The insurance sector offers many exciting, dynamic opportunities, with very real prospects. Alongside that, it is vitally important that we continue to support the growth of the sector by ensuring a high quality supply of labour. We recognise the important role of careers advisers in this whole process, as they are key influencers in shaping the workforce of the future.

"This tour has presented a valuable opportunity for careers advisers to increase knowledge of the sector generally and, more specifically, to learn about the job opportunities being created within Glasgow's IFSD."

Editorial Contributions

If you know of any items that should be covered in a future issue of IFSD News Update then please get in touch. The contact for this or any other query relating to the News Update is Elizabeth at Budge PR who can be contacted on 01698 540111 or elizabeth.steel@budgepr.com