

Olympic Rings formally launched today



The second set of giant Olympic Rings in Scotland have been formally launched on The Mound in Edinburgh. The Rings further show how Scotland is ready to welcome the world to the UK next month.

The Rings measure 18 metres by 8 metres and are made of aluminium and are coloured blue, yellow, black, green and red – representing the union of the five continents and the meeting of athletes from throughout the world at the Olympic Games. They have a silver reverse and weigh approximately 3,100kg.

The Rings spectacular has been installed in time for Edinburgh's celebrations when the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay – presented by Coca-Cola, Lloyds TSB and Samsung – visits the city this evening and tomorrow.

The Rings were launched at a special event at the National Gallery. Allan Wells MBE, a former Scottish athlete and 100 metres champion at the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games, was there to be interviewed before running with the Torch tomorrow.

The event was hosted by BBC Scotland presenter Cat Cubie and there were guest appearances from The Right Honourable Michael Moore MP Secretary of State for Scotland, Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport, The Right Honourable Donald Wilson Lord Provost of Edinburgh and LOCOG CEO Paul Deighton.

Entertainment was provided by local Inspire Mark projects, as well as traditional Clarsach and Bagpipe music.

The Secretary of State for Scotland Michael Moore said:- 'From the moment the Olympic Torch arrived in Scotland the reception it has received has been fantastic. In every village, town and city we have seen people lining the streets and really embracing the Olympic spirit and it keeps growing day by day.

'Now it is Edinburgh's turn to be at the heart of the celebrations and today has really shown the city at its best. These Olympic Rings look brilliant on The Mound and are a bold reminder that the Olympic Games are going to be a great event for the whole of the UK.'

Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport Shona Robison said: 'I am delighted that we are able to bring the symbol of the Olympic Games to our capital. As we have seen from the Torch celebrations around Scotland, our communities have welcomed the Olympic Flame, honoured our inspirational Torchbearers and celebrated a fantastic festival of sport and culture. With only 42 days until our first Olympic Football match at Hampden kicks off, this is a great opportunity to put Scotland on the world stage by celebrating sporting success, and presenting Scotland as a destination for tourism, culture and major events as we prepare to host the Commonwealth Games in 2014.'

The Rt. Hon. Donald Wilson, Lord Lieutenant and Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, said: 'The Olympic Rings have already created quite a stir in Edinburgh since they first started going up and it's entirely fitting that they are being officially launched on the day the Olympic Flame reaches Scotland's Capital. It's a great honour for the City to host this universal symbol of achievement set against such a stunning, historic backdrop.'

Paul Deighton, LOCOG CEO, said: 'The Olympic Rings are an iconic symbol, inspiring athletes and uniting people around the world. To athletes they represent the culmination of thousands of hours of training and reaching the highest level in sport. These rings will excite and inspire residents and

visitors to Edinburgh.'

Giant sets of Olympic Rings are being installed at iconic sites across the United Kingdom to excite and inspire people ahead of the Games and to demonstrate that we are ready to welcome the world.