

New soft play centre to open at Portobello – How to win a place at the VIP launch



Edinburgh Leisure has invested over £500,000 in a new state of the art gymnastics and soft play facility in Portobello creating 20 new jobs, after research showed a shortage in the city's gymnastics facilities and high demand for classes with over 200 children on waiting lists from the Edinburgh and Lothians region.

Tumbles at Portobello, which opens on Saturday 5 October on Portobello's promenade, will give thousands of children, from beginners to elite athletes and gymnastics clubs, the opportunity to access state-of-the-art gymnastics equipment and coaching.

Now you could be at the launch on 4 October along with all the other VIPs. Edinburgh Leisure are running a competition.

The competition is open to under 10s, we'd like children to demonstrate 'A day in Portobello'. This can be a drawing, painting, poem, photograph – how ever you interpret 'a day in Portobello'.

All entries will be put into a prize draw and the lucky winners will be invited (with their parents) to join us at our exclusive VIP launch event on Friday 4th October. Our event will be a fun filled afternoon with gymnastics displays, facepainting, special goodies as well as being one of the first to use our soft-play centre – not to mention sampling the treats from our new cafe.

Find out more about how to enter [here](#).

This new 1589 sq m facility, which has received funding from sportscotland, will provide full facilities to support the development of gymnasts from beginners to world-class level and will represent the only venue in Scotland to provide Freestyle gymnastics equipment and training. Plans for the large gymnastics arena include a sprung floor for the dance and acrobatic disciplines and freestyle provision. It will also provide parallel bars, trampolines, beams, vault and tumble area and vast foam pitted areas, which are key to safe skills development for aspiring gymnasts.

John Comiskey, Chief Executive, Edinburgh Leisure commented:

“This fantastic new facility at Portobello is being developed by Edinburgh Leisure in response to unmet demand for family activities in this area and specifically in response to the surge in popularity of gymnastics across Edinburgh.

“There are already over 200 children currently on waiting lists for Edinburgh Leisure gymnastics programmes, which we believe demonstrates just how popular this growing sport is becoming. By creating the City’s only purpose-built gymnastics facility, we believe we can tap into this demand and inspire thousands of children to take up this great sport.

“We are committed to providing the most accessible sport and leisure facilities in the City and with the financial support from sportscotland, we can now deliver the full range of gymnastics programmes catering for all ability levels that can be accessed by clubs, schools and individuals.

“We envisage that Tumbles at Portobello will not only help

Edinburgh Leisure to transform and grow our Gymnastics programme overall but create a thriving destination for families from Portobello and across Edinburgh to enjoy whilst inspiring a new generation of children to get fit, have fun and stay active.”

Chair of sportscotland Louise Martin CBE said:

“This collaboration between sportscotland and Edinburgh Leisure has resulted in an excellent gymnastics facility for the people of Portobello.

“Tumbles will provide the perfect home for young gymnasts to hone their skills and has the capacity to cater for those just starting out in the sport as well as those in performance sport.

“Glasgow 2014 is less than a year away, and facilities such as Tumbles are crucial so that we can capitalise on the surge of interest in sport and encourage people of all ages and abilities to take part in sport and physical activity across Scotland.”

Councillor Richard Lewis, Culture and Sport Convener, City of Edinburgh Council, said:

“Receiving this level of funding from sportscotland demonstrates their significant support for the plans for a new gymnastics facility at Portobello. It’s crucial that our

sporting infrastructure continues to develop to meet the demands of our residents and I've no doubt that the impact of this new facility on the development of gymnastics within Edinburgh will be great.

"Thousands of young people across the city are expected to benefit from this investment and I'm very much looking forward to seeing the new facility in October once it opens to the public."

Gymnastics is both an Olympic and Commonwealth Sport and has seen a boost in popularity since the London Olympics. The aim of the new facility is to harness the spark of inspiration provided by the likes of Beth Tweddle and Louis Smith by creating an opportunity for thousands of young people to actually take up the sport for themselves.

Gymnastics is renowned as one of the best sports for promoting all round fitness and core strength. Pre-school gymnastics provides a stimulating play environment that is the key to starting children on the sporting pathway and getting them active for life. Gymnastics is also shown to benefit those with a physical, sensory or learning disability and it has been shown that children who have a positive experience with sport and activity before the age of five are more likely to stay active. Plans for the centre have been developed in consultation with Scottish Gymnastics, who are very supportive of the new facility.

Scott Harper, President of Scottish Gymnastics, added:

"Edinburgh Leisure's investment in Tumbles Gymnastics Centre,

with support from sportscotland, will see the development of Edinburgh's first performance gymnastics centre. The new facility will play a central role in Edinburgh Leisure's gymnastics programme and positively impact the development of gymnastics across the city and the wider region.

"Scottish Gymnastics is committed to working with Edinburgh Leisure to develop a performance pathway for gymnastics in Edinburgh.

"Next year's Commonwealth Games and the 2015 Gymnastics World Championships, places Scotland at the centre of the gymnastics world. Tumbles will provide the opportunity for a lasting legacy in Edinburgh, not just for those already participating in the sport, but also for those who may be inspired by these events to take up gymnastics.

"The Centre will increase capacity, offering enhanced gymnastics provision from pre-school to performance level gymnastics, positively impacting on the development of both coaches and gymnasts."

A real family destination, Tumbles at Portobello will also house Edinburgh Leisure's largest open plan soft play centre (20m x 12m) with a 6m high play frame offering a variety of fun and exciting features, games and distinct zones for babies, toddlers and juniors.

Taking inspiration from the gymnastics facilities, the soft play zones will be sports-themed with facilities ranging from

large ball pools, spiders web, obstacle bags and medallists podium in the toddler area to a huge 4-lane astra slide with 6m drop, sky glide, cargo nets and zig-zag maze run and nerve-ending spiral slide in the junior zone.

The venue will also house Cafe Refresh, which will be open from 9.30am to 6pm daily, serving a wide selection of light healthy lunches, home-made sweet treats and coffee as well as a 'grab and go' service for those on the move with coffees, cold drinks and light snacks available on sale throughout the day.

Easily accessible from the city centre and city bypass, Tumbles at Portobello is located at 20 Westbank Street, Edinburgh, EH15 1DR with free parking on-site.

For more information, directions and news on the opening, visit the [Edinburgh Leisure website.](#)