

Call goes out to join Global 24-hour Commonwealth Ceilidh



Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop today invited people from across the world to join a 24-hour Commonwealth Ceilidh which aims to span the globe next summer as part of the Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme.

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS), which has been commissioned by Get Scotland Dancing to create the Commonwealth Ceilidh, will work with dance centres in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen to create new 'fusion' dances which will be performed along with existing dances in a worldwide event on Saturday 21 June 2014.

The Commonwealth Ceilidh will begin with events in New Zealand at 7.30pm local time; the next events will begin two hours later in Australia, then in Japan and onwards, with the dancing beginning at 7.30pm in Scotland, 12 hours after the Ceilidh started.

Along with Commonwealth Ceilidhs in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh it is hoped that Commonwealth Ceilidhs will take place in hundreds of locations across Scotland and the UK.

The Commonwealth Ceilidh then continues over to the Americas and organisers are aiming for the final event to take place in Hawaii 24 hours after the first ceilidh call was made.

Each Commonwealth Ceilidh will be unique to its location, with an interval in every event giving the chance for groups to showcase their national or local dance style.

Anyone can join in with the Commonwealth Ceilidh, whether they are new to dance or a life-long dancer.

Organisers are especially interested at present in hearing from people who would like to organise a Ceilidh in their own community.

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: "The Glasgow 2014 Cultural programme offers a wealth of opportunities for everyone to get involved in a number of inspiring cultural activities, connecting people and communities, to leave a lasting and positive Games legacy for Scotland.

"The Commonwealth Ceilidh is set to be the biggest celebration of Scottish Country Dancing the world has ever seen – It will be a fantastic way to celebrate, share and showcase our culture during 2014.

"As well as being celebrated throughout the Commonwealth, participants in Scotland will get the opportunity to go to a taster class in their community in the weeks following the Ceilidh. The fact is – Scottish Country Dancing is fun, social and good for our health. I expect that from John O'Groats to Jedburgh – Achiltibuie to Auchmithie – many participants across Scotland will keep dancing through the rest of 2014 and into the years beyond."

Elizabeth Foster, RSCDS Executive Officer said: "The RSCDS is delighted to be collaborating with Get Scotland Dancing on this exciting project. We are working in partnership with other dance groups to create an innovative dancing programme, blending tradition with the contemporary. We want to see as many people as possible participating in the mass ceilidh on 21st June and are providing on-line guidance from March 2014 on all you need to know to organise and run a Commonwealth Ceilidh wherever you may be, whatever your experience."

Eileen Gallagher, Independent Director on the Glasgow 2014 Board and Chair of the Ceremonies, Culture and Queen's Baton Relay Committee, said: "The Commonwealth Ceilidh will be a vibrant celebration of Scottish culture which everyone can get

involved in no matter where they are across the world. The chance to learn the three specially created new dances as part of the Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme will make the Commonwealth Ceilidh a unique and exciting opportunity for so many people who love Scottish country dancing.”

RSCDS is working in partnership with Citymoves in Aberdeen, Dance Base in Edinburgh and Dance House in Glasgow to create the three new dances. These will fuse Scottish country dancing with different dance and musical influences under themes inspired by the Commonwealth Games – Commonwealth Connections, Speed and Endurance, and Agility.

Citymoves is working with local hip-hop dancers and a young RSCDS choreographer to create the high energy and youthful Speed and Endurance themed dance. Dance Base is working with Indian classical dance company Dance Ihayami to create a fusion of dance and musical styles that represents a Commonwealth Connections theme. Dance House is working with older adults from their centre along with disabled dancers from Indepen-dance and blind and partially sighted dancers from Confidance to create the accessible Agility themed dance.