

Queen's Baton Relay – UK route to start in Edinburgh

Hundreds of villages, towns and cities are named on the Queen's Baton Relay route through Scotland and of course the route includes Edinburgh where the Baton will start off on 14 June. On 15 June the baton will go through South Queensferry before heading for Midlothian on 16 June before finally ending up in Glasgow for the opening ceremony on 23 July.

✘ Cllr Steve Cardownie, Edinburgh's Festivals and Events Champion, welcomes the announcement:

“Naturally, I am delighted that the baton's first port of call should be here in Edinburgh and you can be sure that it will receive a fitting welcome from Scotland's Capital City. We have a fantastic programme of events planned for the day, running from morning till night, giving Edinburgh residents of all ages the opportunity to show their support for Glasgow 2014.

“We know already from the response to events running in our schools that there is a real appetite to embrace the Games and get involved. As an example, close to 2,000 children have already signed up for a Triathlon event taking place in May, and we have much more to announce in the coming weeks and months.

“Edinburgh has such a rich Commonwealth Games heritage, having hosted the Games twice before, and are thoroughly looking forward to playing our part this year when we welcome the diving competitions to the Royal Commonwealth Pool. With Glasgow being only 40 miles away and I'm quite sure people will jump at chance to extend their trip to include our world famous summer festivals.

“We believe Glasgow 2014 represents a unique opportunity for

Scotland – and, of course, Edinburgh – and we will continue to work closely with the organising committee to ensure the success of the Games and to maximise the benefits for the people of this city.”

Glasgow 2014 today revealed the list of Scotland’s villages, towns and cities which will welcome the Queen’s Baton Relay.

The baton will visit over 400 communities, offering people across the nation a chance to be a part of the excitement, celebrations and countdown to Scotland’s biggest-ever sporting and cultural festival, the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, and show their support for the home team.

The relay will reflect the important role of sport by visiting schools, sporting facilities and leisure centres, encouraging communities to get behind Team Scotland, get involved with the Games and using its profile to get more people participating in sport.

From the spires of the capital to the peaks of the Highlands, from Scottish Borders’ woodlands to island beaches, the baton will travel across all 32 Local Authorities in the nation before it reaches Glasgow, its final destination.

Brae, in the Shetland Islands, is the farthest northern village on the baton’s journey, and Kirkcudbright, in Dumfries and Galloway, the southernmost point on the relay’s route.

Communities will be celebrating in extraordinary and unique ways. More than 60 schoolchildren will travel from the Island of Unst, a two-ferry journey to the Shetland mainland, to join the relay in the village of Brae. For the first time in the history of a relay, people across the length of the Outer Hebrides, from Castlebay in Barra to the most northerly point at Butt of Lewis lighthouse, will be able to join celebrations across five different events along the route.

The 40-day journey of the baton will cover 8,000 kilometres,

showcasing the nation's most-iconic landmarks and culture.

World-famous sights such as the Forth Bridge and Loch Ness feature on the baton's journey, as well as The Kelpies, Falkirk's 30 metre-high dazzling horse head sculptures.

Scotland's rich heritage takes centre stage when the baton visits Skara Brae in the Orkney Isles and travels along the Glenfinnan Viaduct in the Highlands.

Sporting highlights on the route include visits to Melrose, the home of Rugby Sevens, Knockhill's Racing Circuit, a visit to Team Scotland's training camp at the University of Stirling and a stop at St Andrew's Old Course, the home of golf.

The baton will take part in one of Scotland's favourite festivities, as it steps forward for a Ceilidh in Dundee.

Further highlights on the baton's journey through Scotland, as well as street level details and full programme of events, will be announced nearer the time.

On 31 March thousands of people will find out whether their nominations to become batonbearers have been successful.

When it arrives in Scotland on 14 June, the baton will have been on 248-day global epic journey through all other 69 nations and territories of the Commonwealth.

On 23 July, the message Her Majesty placed in the baton will be read at the Opening Ceremony.

The Queen's Baton Relay is the world's most engaging relay, a unique tradition of the Games that unites the two billion citizens of the Commonwealth in a celebration of sport, diversity and peace. It will travel over 190,000 kilometres through 70 nations and territories of the Commonwealth.

Announcing the full list of communities on the baton's journey, Commonwealth Games Scotland Chairman Michael Cavanagh

said:

“The Queen’s Baton Relay is the ultimate symbol of the Commonwealth Games and its arrival in Scotland will be an important signal to both the athletes and the public that the Games are just around the corner.

The baton’s journey through the country is the ideal opportunity for people to celebrate community sport and show support for their local athletes selected to represent Team Scotland at Glasgow 2014. We hope everyone the length and breadth of the country will get behind the team and play their part in what is going to be an amazing home Games!”

David Grevenberg, Chief Executive of Glasgow 2014, said:

“The Queen’s Baton Relay is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for people across Scotland to celebrate what’s extraordinary and unique about their communities, and honour those locals who make a difference to others. The baton is visiting hundreds of villages, towns and cities, with thousands taking part in the relay, and many more attending the vast programme of sports and cultural events along the route. With less than three months to go until the baton comes home to Scotland, the momentum is building up for the biggest festival of sport and culture this nation has ever hosted”.

Shona Robison, Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport, said:

“The Queen’s Baton Relay is a unique element of the Commonwealth Games which unites the two billion citizens of the Commonwealth in a celebration of sport, diversity and peace. Since its launch last October, the Queen’s Baton has already received a warm welcome across Asia, Oceania, Africa, the South Americas and the Caribbean as it visits all 70 nations and territories of the Commonwealth on its journey to the Opening Ceremony of the Games on 23 July.

It has provided a unique opportunity not only to showcase what Scotland and Glasgow have to offer the world, but has also been particularly successful in engaging children and young people in the Games.

I look forward to its return to Scotland on the 14 June when I am confident it will receive an equally enthusiastic welcome as it visits villages, towns and cities across all 32 Local Authorities. Whilst it will be an exciting and dramatic countdown to the Games, I also expect it to celebrate the range of legacy activity already happening across our communities and the local heroes within them who will carry the baton”.

Councilor Gordon Matheson, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said:

“The Queen’s Baton has been sharing the warmth and friendship of Glasgow and Scotland throughout the Commonwealth. When the Queen’s Baton Relay reaches its final destination, it will signify the last lap in our preparations for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Glasgow knows how to put on a party, and across every corner of the city communities will celebrate the Games finally being here”.