

‘More than just a driver’ courses for Lothian

LOTHIAN PARTNERS GUIDE DOGS SCOTLAND AND WHIZZ-KIDS

Lothian has today announced new partnerships with Guide Dogs Scotland and Whizz-Kidz as part of its annual compulsory Certificate of Professional Competence training for bus drivers.

The course, called ‘More than just a driver,’ offers insight beyond the driver’s cabin with content such as customer service, conflict management and disability awareness. Drivers are taught how to deal with incidents that can occur during a normal driving shift.

Richard Hall, Managing Director for Lothian said: “This year’s CPC course underpins Lothian’s continuing commitment to improving accessibility. Our main aim is to extend our appreciation of the challenges that some of our customers face on a daily basis when trying to go about their day-to-day lives and we are delighted to be working in partnership with Whizz-Kidz and Guide Dogs Scotland.

“We have worked closely with each of these organisations to design a bespoke CPC training course which allows our drivers to understand some of these challenges at first hand and to give them the necessary skills to ensure we can continue to deliver safe and comfortable travel for all of our customers.”



Lothian trainer Stacey Montgomery with Whizz-Kidz volunteer Davis Paton PHOTO © Wullie Marr Photography
Lothian held 'familiarisation days' with both Guide Dogs

Scotland and Whizz-Kidz in order to help those that require further assistance feel safer and more confident on buses prior to travelling. Both organisations have helped develop the course to enhance the drivers' understanding of the challenges facing those with visual and physical impairments.

Pamela Munro, Engagement Officer, Guide Dogs Scotland, said: "Guide Dogs Scotland welcomes the introduction of this training and we are pleased to have been involved in shaping its content. People with vision impairment should be able to feel confident in accessing transport, and drivers are a massively important part of that."

Jo Fashan, Associate Director of Young People's Services, Whizz-Kids said: "Whizz-Kidz is pleased to be working with Lothian to help their staff see through the eyes of disabled passengers, and to make their public transport more inclusive for all.

"Sometimes it is not just the lack of ramps or fully accessible vehicles that challenge wheelchair users, but people's attitudes. We are working to change that on the buses, as well as everywhere else."

Over 2,000 drivers, managers and supervisors will take part in the course across the next 12 months, which involves a full day of fun and interactive challenges at the company's Longstone Training Centre in Edinburgh.

For more information visit: www.lothianbuses.co.uk