

# **Edinburgh Leisure turns 25 – today**

**The charity Edinburgh Leisure, who manage over 50 of the city's sports and leisure venues, celebrates 25 years today, 1st April 2023. So Happy Birthday to Edinburgh Leisure.**

This body is dedicated to making a positive difference by creating opportunities for everyone to get active, stay active, and achieve more.

It has been in existence since 1 April 1998 when Tony Blair was Prime Minister, Bill Clinton was US President and Titanic was the top movie at the box office.

June Peebles, Edinburgh Leisure's CEO said: "I'm proud of all that Edinburgh Leisure has achieved over the last 25 years and although a lot has changed in the physical activity sector and indeed within our organisation, ultimately, our vision and mission has always been about providing quality services to support the people of Edinburgh to be active and healthy.

"Depending on where people live in the city, they're probably familiar with their local Edinburgh Leisure venue. But there's more to us than meets the eye, with 1 world-class climbing centre; 6 golf courses; 12 superb swimming pools; 17 state-of-the-art gyms; 3 soft plays; 32 tennis courts; 141 sports pitches; and 750+ fitness classes per week. We also manage community access to the sports facilities in the city's 23

High Schools.

“And, while our venues are well-known, many people are less familiar with our Active Communities programme, which currently supports over 10,000 people each year affected by health conditions, disabilities, inequalities, and poverty to be and stay active. We currently deliver 22 projects across the city, helping people to lead healthier, happier, and more active lives.”

## **MEADOWBANK REOPENING**

Over the years, there have been many highlights which include: the reopening of the new Meadowbank Sports Centre in July 2022; the refurbishment of the Royal Commonwealth Pool, reopening in 2012 in time to host the diving element of the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games; and soon Warrender Swim Centre, will reopen once again following a refurbishment.

Edinburgh Leisure’s employees are an important part of what makes Edinburgh Leisure special. When the charity formed in 1998, they ‘inherited’ 650 employees from the former Council’s Sport and Leisure Services department, and 58 of them still work for the charity today and have 25+ years’ service. They have many long-serving members of staff, with 59 staff having worked for Edinburgh Leisure for 15-20 years and 55 staff for 20-25 years.

Vicki Mercer, Leisure Attendant (Schools) at Holyrood High School, Edinburgh Leisure (and previously Booking Officer and Receptionist at the old Meadowbank) who celebrated 30 years with Edinburgh Leisure on 29th March said: “I feel very lucky that I have managed to blend my role with Edinburgh Leisure and family life throughout the years as many of my former colleagues who started their families did. The flexibility of hours and roles have been fantastic.

“Edinburgh Leisure has also played a big part in my family,

whether it was coaching classes, birthday parties and the many memorable and fun outings to the old Meadowbank Sports Centre's Fireworks Displays. Edinburgh Leisure has certainly grown over the years, just like my children."

Commenting on why Edinburgh Leisure retains staff for such a long time, June Peebles commented: "We work in the physical activity sector which is lots of fun and our staff have a passion for physical activity and the positive impact it has on people's lives.

"I always say it's the people that make Edinburgh Leisure. Our company values – welcoming, caring, passionate and proud – shape the culture of Edinburgh Leisure and how we behave to each other and our customers. Edinburgh Leisure is a great place to work, and I think this contributes to why we have managed to retain so many staff with so many years of long service years between them.

"We're operating in what continues to be uncertain and volatile times with challenging financial circumstances. Our vision remains the same as it always has been which is to provide quality services to support the people of Edinburgh to be active and healthy, and to improve the health of the city.

Wherever you're at on the map or in life, we've got something to get you moving, keep you moving and feeling good."

[www.edinburghleisure.co.uk](http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk)



Twenty-five years of making a positive impact on the wellbeing of the city

June Peebles, CEO celebrates Edinburgh Leisure turning 25 with some long- serving members of staff and some relatively new staff members

– From L to R: Cat Wilson – Active Communities Project Officer – Ageing Well (17 years); Stephen Hughes – Volunteers Manager (14 years); Craig Ireland – Welcome Host (39 years); Perrotine Orr – Operations Director (19 years); CEO, June Peebles (38 years); Mikey Meechan – Gym Supervisor (10 years) ; Mandy McBain – Payroll Manager (43 years); Argy Ross – Health Instructor – Get Fit for Surgery (2 years) ; Ross Collins – Gym Development Manager (21 years); Sharron Ridd – Welcome Host (6 months)