New 'app' for 2014 Commonwealth Games

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Engineering and computing academics and student mentors from Glasgow Caledonian University joined with children from schools in Glasgow's East End on 23 June 2010 to launch an initiative that documents the impact of the 2014 Commonwealth Games on the lives of young people using technology comprising a DVD, website and cutting-edge mobile phone application.

Lending his support to the launch at Celtic Park was Councillor Archie Graham, Deputy Leader of Glasgow City Council and Executive Member for the 2014 Commonwealth Games, who is also an alumnus of Glasgow Caledonian University.

The 2014 Commonwealth Games will transform Glasgow's East End beyond all recognition and while the city's progress towards the event is well documented there has never before been a free Layar for mobile phones that allows users to see visualisations of the venues on their handsets. In addition, the "app" allows users to explore buildings that are not yet built - such as the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome – and makes it possible to take physical part in some of the Glasgow Games sports "Wii-style".

Dr. Lynne Baillie of GCU's School of Engineering and Computing, who is leading the project, said: "Glasgow's hosting of the Commonwealth Games presented us with a fantastic opportunity to re-examine Glasgow's sporting heritage, but in a very high-tech way. The phone app in particular is utilising technology that has only been around since 2009 and what we have done has never been attempted before – not for Delhi, not for London and not for the World Cup!"

The Co-Guide has been produced in conjunction with pupils from both Haghill Park Primary and Smithycroft Secondary schools in Glasgow's East End. The Co-Guide features a photo diary of the project's development, as well as information on 2014 venues, sports and an overview of the Commonwealth Games movement.

A DVD has been produced for the launch that documents the project's progress, showing the pupils undertaking research before co-designing digital artefacts and going through the motions of participating in 2014 Games sports to assist in programming the phone app to respond in a realistic way.

Councillor Archie Graham, Deputy Leader of Glasgow City Council and Executive Member for the 2014 Commonwealth Games, commented: "It is tremendously exciting to see the new landscape in the East End taking shape and enormously satisfying to hear how communities right across Glasgow are engaging with the process. The work that Glasgow Caledonian University has being doing with East End school pupils is imaginative, innovative and a great way to help children understand the impact the 2014 Commonwealth Games will have on their lives. My congratulations go to everyone involved in this exceptional project."

The project is a work in progress and will allow the children to record their thoughts and hopes for the games over the next four years.

The project has attracted funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and is supported by Glasgow City Council. In addition,

Culture and Sport Glasgow have given a commitment to showcase elements of the Co-Guide at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in the run up to the 2014 Games.

Lori Kika, Development Officer at the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: “This brings heritage bang up-to-date making it both appealing and widely accessible to younger audiences. Glasgow has a rich sporting heritage that offers a fantastic resource for education and it is wonderful to see it being used in such an innovative way. By providing powerful and memorable experiences for the children, this project has not only made learning fun but has opened their eyes to the history which surrounds them. Young people are the future custodians of our heritage so their passion for it is vital if we are to keep it from being lost forever.”

More information about Layar.

Note to editors

Student mentors from Glasgow Caledonian University’s award-winning Caledonian Club have been vital in engaging the school children in this project. The Club, which was set up in 2008 to work with children and their families in five areas of Glasgow where traditionally few pupils have gone on to university, involves GCU staff and students coaching young people in learning and life skills, as well as university researchers undertaking a long-term study into how people learn through their lives.

The five areas involved are Barmulloch, Castlemilk, Dennistoun, Drumchapel and Springburn.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. To date it has invested over £500million in Scotland’s heritage.

Further information

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The university has particular teaching and research strengths in the fields of health, the environment and society. Glasgow Caledonian is rated among the top 10 in the UK for its allied health research and in the top 20 in the built and natural environment.

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