

It's best  
to be Blunt



James Blunt has walked away with his own personal gold - the Forth Award for best performance at the recent Radio Forth Awards gala lunch. How great to come first at not the fourth Forth Awards but the fifth Forth Awards! James won "our" award which is why we're shouting about it: the best performance award, sponsored by Heritage Portfolio. We were also delighted to provide the food and hospitality service once again at this annual fixture in the Edinburgh winter calendar. The glitzy award ceremony attracts a constellation of stars; this year famous names included Alesha Dixon, Jason Donovan, Stereophonics, Sharleen Spitteri, and Leon Jackson.

In the past 6 years the Radio Forth Awards has helped raise £80,000 for the Radio Forth Cash for Kids Charity. Commenting on his award, James Blunt said, "The background to the awards obviously is the celebration of music in Scotland and that's why I'm here, but if anything like the community element of it can be tied in, it's a very special thing."

Cash for Kids raises thousands of pounds to support local children who suffer abuse or neglect, are disabled and have special needs or who simply need extra care. We are delighted to lend our support through the Radio Forth Awards and support Cash for Kids in other ways during the year.

# A Taste of Winter

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## Victory for café contracts

We've news to share about an important new contract win - every bit as good as a gold medal position on the podium where business is concerned.

Under our Ruthvens brand, we will be running the newly opened café at the ScotlandsPeople Centre - a partnership between the General Register Office for Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland and the Court of the Lord Lyon. The café adds a new service at New Register House which is open to the public. With the Year of Homecoming 2009 encouraging visitors to delve into their Scottish past and find the hidden secrets of their family trees, we're looking forward to laying on the coffee and scones for hungry researchers.

Each of our cafés around Edinburgh has a unique approach, tailored to the atmosphere of the particular venue. The Ruthvens cafés in three of the city's art galleries are well known for excellent homemade soups, fresh salads, "The Best Scones in Scotland" as voted by the Herald and Emma's "World Famous" Chocolate Brownies, and this experience will definitely be influencing the new café. We understand that the audience at each venue is unique and we're already on the case to provide just the right mix for New Register House.

## Love Lennoxlove? You'll love the new website!

Stunning photography and comprehensive information lead the way on the New Lennoxlove website. Visit [www.lennoxlove.com](http://www.lennoxlove.com) for a digital preview of the historic East Lothian house: luxury accommodation, outstanding corporate hospitality, distinctive weddings, fine art collection and history dating to the 14th century. The new website shows all to advantage. [www.lennoxlove.com](http://www.lennoxlove.com).



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♻️ Printed on recycled paper. Heritage Portfolio has achieved 5 awards from the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS).



HERITAGE  
PORTFOLIO

## GOLD

Gold is a familiar concept in the culinary world. We love the association with winning and wealth but we are also taught to sauté until golden brown, bake to a golden hue and to use saffron to colour delicate soups and dressings for that perfect golden vibrancy (never yellow, you understand!).

In this winter edition of our seasonal newsletter we are celebrating all things perfect and golden (and green!) but most especially our latest success - the gold award we've achieved under the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

And of course it's not just the colour gold that is connected with cooking. Tiny flecks of real gold can look stunning set in a little fruit and champagne jelly or we might drop a couple of pieces into a langoustine consommé to add an unusual sparkle. It is, after all, the colour of success!

So as we share our passion for excellence and our belief in the gold standard, we hope you enjoy the added sparkle in this edition.



## Great Scott!

Scott Robertson has joined the team at Heritage Portfolio, and is already creating a bit of a buzz as our new Sales Director. As he steps into a vital new role in the organisation and heads out and about to meet partners and clients, we thought we'd let him speak for himself.

Actually, it all started a couple of years ago with a throw-away remark and the joking offer of a job as a van driver.

After six years with VisitScotland I knew it was time for a fresh challenge. I'd worked closely with Heritage Portfolio during this role and had always been impressed by their professional, innovative attitude, but the right opening just didn't seem to be there for me. Leaving van-driving to the professionals, I instead took on the role of Sales and Marketing Director at the five star Fairmont golf resort hotel in St Andrews, where I've been for the last 18 months.

However, the seed was sown and that chance conversation has eventually led me to the brand new role of Sales Director here. One of the things that has always made Heritage Portfolio stand out for me is the dynamic approach of the Directors - and I've already seen up close how their attitude actually permeates the whole organisation. At a time when other organisations are responding to the recession with depression I am excited to be working with such a creative group of individuals who respond to new challenges with clear thinking and innovative ideas.

Heritage Portfolio can offer such versatility and genuine innovation that I believe we have every reason to be confident, despite the backdrop of the economic downturn. The range of properties and the flexibility of our offering puts us in the enviable position of being able to respond to necessary change with thoughtfulness and creativity. Our experience tells us that people still need to do business, and hospitality remains an integral part of that in Scotland today. While the financial sectors are likely to be quieter than in the past there are plenty of opportunities elsewhere. The oil and gas industries continue to flourish and the strength of the Dollar and the Euro are already providing significant new opportunities.

Scotland's reputation as a conference destination continues to grow and our new offer in this area (read more on the inside - "Re-energising your conference delegates") is designed to lead the way with distinctive packages for this highly specialised market.

Strategic business development will allow the organisation to grow in a sustainable way, maintaining the very best relationships with our clients and enabling our partner heritage properties to develop their businesses too.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you and working together over the coming months.



Heard of the black gold? Well this is the green gold! Environmental awareness at our offices and kitchens in Leith has been rewarded with gold accreditation from the Green Tourism Business Scheme – the result of several years of dedicated application to the importance of green issues in the business. Yes, we know we are dedicated award seekers – but we are exceptionally pleased about this one, simply because it is a principle we really believe in and because these gold awards are rare and precious to come by! Currently we are one of only seven gold accredited companies in the corporate business category within the UK and the only caterer in Scotland to have achieved this standard.

As Environmental Co-ordinator for Heritage Portfolio, Kirsty Hepburn has been championing the green cause. "Cut us and we bleed green! This is no surface makeover, but a whole attitude that now pervades the way we work – the way we think even."

"In 2007 when our day visitor cafes were audited by GTBS, which is administered in Scotland by VisitScotland, we won four silvers and a bronze. This in itself was a huge achievement for our cafes at the Portrait Gallery, Dean Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art and the National Museum of Scotland. The gold award can only be achieved where there is a track record of excellent green practices, so the new award for our base in Leith demonstrates our hard work over several years to implement green practices in everything we do."

How did we make it all work? Staff engagement is absolutely vital to implementing this kind of policy so we've worked hard at getting buy-in from everyone in the organisation. Over last summer Rebecca James joined us on a graduate placement to work towards the GTBS award. One of her key activities was to create a staff questionnaire which resulted in some of the successful innovations, such as changes in recycling, and helped to ensure that everyone in the organisation was on board.

In order to make gold, we had to meet a wide range of environmental criteria. One of the outcomes was a reduction in CO2 emissions by 25%. We are now monitoring emissions weekly and the results are displayed on our new green notice board, so staff can see exactly what makes a difference. We've also installed smart meters to keep track of our energy use.

Another popular innovation is that staff in the office can now recycle without even getting up from their desks. We've organised the waste, so what you put in the bin beside your desk all gets recycled. We've increased our rate of recycling from 28% to 50% as a result. This is not about breeding office couch potatoes however! We've lots of initiatives in place to help staff towards healthier lifestyles, with an emphasis on physical exercise and leaving the car at home. A growing number of bicycles tied up outside are testament to the desire for healthy lives, a healthy working day and a healthy planet.

Kirsty adds, "When it comes to improving environmental practices we are not waiting around for the legislation to change, instead we are committed to leading the way. We believe it's good for business and saves money, but it is also, quite simply, just the right thing to do!"

Taking gold for going green

We've realised there is a science to it – the preparation, presentation, the speed of service, the taste, the look, the feel, the type of plate, the cutlery, and of course the cost. Every aspect of conference food is critical. So if it's a science, research is vital – and that is what we've been up to over the last year. We've looked at every aspect of how conference catering tends to be done. We've analysed, asked, tasted and explored. And now we've launched a distinctive and innovative offering for the day conference market.

## Re-energising your conference delegates

Our new conference packages are the result of extensive market research and based on an in-depth understanding of what actually happens at business meetings, conferences and events. We've established some real overarching priorities too. As well as looking and tasting great, we know that value for money is hugely important, and the food has to be quick to serve and must be easy to eat while networking!

The focus at every stage has been to respond to what delegates really want and need. Meetings and conferences are increasingly relaxed and people want to be able to pick up a cold drink or a refreshing snack throughout the day, so our range of options are designed to respond to the particular atmosphere of an event.

### Introducing "bowl food"...

Our new packages offer something that is just a little bit different, with plenty of hot food options, much of it served in bowls that are easy for delegates to pick up quickly, as they carry on mingling. There is no doubt that many people are focussed on the conversations they want to have over lunch, but they still need something tasty, healthy and filling which will revive enthusiasm for the afternoon sessions.

*"I think the bowl concept is a great idea – holding a bowl of food is very comforting! Clients will enjoy getting mugs of coffee instead of cups and saucers and are maybe less likely to need a refill. The station set up is tidy looking and very user friendly. It's great we have something else to offer clients for their day events."*  
Hazel Golon, Hospitality & Events Manager, National Museums Scotland

### Healthy options

As this is every-day food we've thought extremely hard about how to provide meals and snacks that are healthy, nutritious and full of the right kind of energy, with slow release carbohydrates that help to avoid the famous afternoon slump. We've used lots of fresh fruit, vegetables and pulses for fibre, as well as sea trout and fresh salmon with their heart protecting Omega 3 oils. We've even developed a homemade apple, sultana and oat bar as a really healthy alternative to the mid morning chocolate biscuit.

For more details about our new conference packages please contact the team at: [enquires@heritageportfolio.co.uk](mailto:enquires@heritageportfolio.co.uk) or 031 555 2229.



# Saluting the GREEN



What better place for us to put our environmental credentials into practice than the Green Energy Awards. This is one dinner where our ability to source local produce and keep track of carbon emissions is very much appreciated by the client.

Calum McCallum, Events and Initiatives Manager at Scottish Renewables said, "We've chosen to go back to Heritage Portfolio every year since the awards began because of the consistency of quality that they offer. I now know that I can trust them to deliver exactly what is required regardless of numbers." The Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh were lit and dressed to fabulous effect, with Scottish theming for the table settings and a menu that included wild mushroom soup and succulent British lamb.

We've seen the Green Energy Awards grow from an event with around 300 people seven years ago, when it started in the National Museum of Scotland, to 750 this year at the Assembly Rooms, where the Leader of the Labour Party in the Scottish Parliament Iain Gray MSP delivered the keynote speech.



Jason Ormiston, Chief Executive of Scottish Renewables: "The winners and finalists at the Green Energy Awards are all heroes, highlighting an excellent year for the renewable energy industry in Scotland."