

For Immediate Release:

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

### **Falkirk Wheel and A.G.Barr Announce New Partnership**

The Falkirk Wheel and A.G.Barr today (Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June) announced the re-opening of the attraction's family play park following an extensive refurbishment supported by AG Barr's community fund.

The park - which contains climbing frames, scramble nets and slides all built on a specialist safety playing surface - was originally built in 2003 with funding from AG Barr as part of the biggest ever community investment that the company has ever made in its support of the Falkirk Wheel project.

The newly refurbished park has been re-opened just in time for the summer holidays.

**Robin Barr former Chairman of A.G.Barr explains:** 'We have been associated with the Falkirk Wheel project since 2001 and it is a partnership of which we have always been proud. It is a way of supporting a great Scottish enterprise as well as the economy and local community of the Falkirk area where Barr Soft Drinks was founded by my great grandfather Robert Barr in 1875'.

The family play park was originally developed as part of a plan by The Falkirk Wheel to create an interactive and relaxed area for families enjoying their picnics and with Barr's financial contribution they were able to do so.

Barr have funded the cost of the refurbishment through the company community fund which exists to support their various community and charity support activities each year.

The Falkirk Wheel boat lift, the world's first and only rotating boat lift linking the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals has proved one of Scotland's most popular attractions since it was opened by the Queen in 2002.

**Alasdair Smart, Manager of the Falkirk Wheel commented:** 'Of course no trip to the Falkirk Wheel is complete without a boat trip on The Wheel itself but the family play park has always been a very popular and a well-used attraction here. It is great news, therefore, for both The Wheel and the local community that the family play park has been fully refurbished and will be available to be enjoyed by our visitors for many years to come. We are very appreciative of the financial support from AG Barr which has made this possible and will help us to ensure that The Falkirk Wheel remains one of Scotland's most popular family days out'.

The family play park will also be incorporated into a new nature trail activity planned at the attraction and is ideally situated next to the picnic area from which family's can enjoy their lunch whilst taking in the fantastic views of the wheel.

Also on offer for a family day out are the Audio Visual Boat Trip, Interactive Exhibition, Cafe, Gift and Souvenir Shop, Audio Walking Tour and a busy calendar of events throughout the year.

Ends

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**NOTES TO EDITORS.**

**The Falkirk Wheel.**

see: [www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk](http://www.thefalkirkwheel.co.uk) for further information.  
Opens: March to October 2010, 7 days a week: 10.00am till 17.30

**Background to the Falkirk Wheel Project.**

The Falkirk Wheel was the centrepiece of the £78 million Millennium Link project to re-open the canal network in Central Scotland. Both the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals are now linked by the boat lift 'The Falkirk Wheel' replacing the original 11 lock gates that had previously disappeared. The Wheel cost £17m and is considered an engineering triumph for Scotland. It was opened by the Queen on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2002.

The Wheel and Visitor Centre were planned to become a major draw to boost local tourism, the leisure market and economic regeneration in Falkirk and the surrounding area, an area that had lost over 3000 jobs in the previous 2 to 3 years - the area where Barr Soft Drinks was founded in 1875.

**Playdale Playgrounds.**

The originally constructed family Play Park and this refurbishment was carried out by specialist play area construction company Playdale Playgrounds Ltd based in Cumbria.

**AG Barr.**

Our business has been a soft drinks business since it was founded by Robert Barr in Falkirk in 1875 making, marketing and selling some of the UK's best loved soft drinks brands. We have an annual turnover of over £200m and 1000 staff located across 12 sites in the UK including our five manufacturing sites at Cumbernauld, Tredegar, Mansfield, Pitcox and Forfar. We are a national business with strong roots in Scotland and the north of England but with a growing consumer and customer base throughout the UK and further afield. Barr's now has one of the best supported and performing range of soft drinks brands in the market. Our biggest brand is IRN-BRU which is seen by many as part of the culture of the Scottish Nation and a brand that is performing well in England. As well as IRN-BRU our range of popular soft drinks brands includes Tizer, D'N'B, KA, Barr flavour range, Strathmore Spring Water - the No1 water brand in the UK on-trade - St Clements juice drinks, Simply juice drinks, TAUT sports drinks, Vitsmart enhanced waters and

Rubicon exotic juice drinks. Barr's are also the franchise partner of Schweppes International Limited in the UK, where we manufacture and sell Orangina under license and we also have a newly agreed 10 year partnership with Rockstar Inc. to sell and distribute the Rockstar energy drink brand in Ireland and the UK. Rockstar has sold over 30 million cans since we launched it in the UK in 2008. We were also the first new Scottish signatory to the 2010 WRAP Courtauld Commitment phase 2 which aims to reduce the carbon impact of grocery packaging, reduce household food and drink and packaging wastes and encourage recycling.