

# BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

APRIL 2011

Here is the latest update for Big It Up campaigners on major projects and good news stories for Leicester and Leicestershire, brought to you by Leicester Shire Promotions.

If you have any more Big It Up stories to tell of how you, your colleagues or organisation have championed the cause of Leicester and Leicestershire, please feed appropriate details through to Simon Gribbon at Leicester Shire Promotions on 0116 225 4001 or email [simon.gribbon@l-p-l.com](mailto:simon.gribbon@l-p-l.com)

## **Lord Coe first inductee to Loughborough Sporting Club**

One of Loughborough University's finest graduates, Lord Sebastian Coe, has hosted a unique event at the House of Lords to launch the Loughborough Sporting Club. Lord Coe, Chair of the London 2012 Organising Committee, has agreed to be the President of the Club. He is also one of the first 21 inductees to be selected into the Loughborough University Sport Hall of Fame. The launch event was attended by the cream of British sport, including a number of high profile Loughborough graduates and Sport Hall of Fame inductees, such as Sir Clive Woodward, Bob Wilson, David Moorcroft and Mary Nevill.

## **Value of tourism industry increases**

New figures have shown that the visitor economy in Leicester and Leicestershire has continued to grow and reached £1.321 billion in 2010. In 2009, the economic impact of tourism was £1.309 billion and according to the latest research, this contribution has increased by around one per cent since the previous year. This continues a steady growth of 10.22 per cent over the last five years from over £1.186 billion in 2006.

## **Maiyango wins silver in national tourism awards**

Hotel Maiyango and Restaurant in Leicester city centre has won a silver award in the Taste of England category of the prestigious National Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2011. Now in their 22nd year, the awards celebrate the finest tourism businesses in England. Judges, drawn from senior positions in the tourism industry, selected finalists that demonstrated excellence against strict criteria such as service and customer care from more than 130 entrants.

## **Grand plans for Community Media Centre in 2012**

In January 2012 the Community Media Centre will open at Phoenix Square in Leicester and start a nine month long series of events, workshops and seminars taking place for members of all communities across the city and county. During the duration of the Olympics and Paralympics, Phoenix Square will become the largest independent media centre operating in the UK. It will be run by many of the 2,012 Community Reporters being recruited across the city and county to report on their own communities and the activities taking place.

### **Law Undergraduates among top in the country**

Two University of Leicester Law undergraduates have been selected among the top 10 law students in the country. Katrina Thomson and Rob Mortell have been shortlisted for the TARGETjobs Law Undergraduate of the Year Award, sponsored by leading global law firm, Mayer Brown. Over 300 students from more than 60 universities have battled it out with the final ten coming from the University of Oxford, St John's and Queen Mary Colleges, London School of Economics, University of Leicester, University of Birmingham, King's College London and Durham University.

### **Zombies rise again in Leicester**

Creative Leicestershire have celebrated the end of their six-year bursary scheme for small creative businesses with a final award given to the business with the most potential to develop and history of innovation. The award of £1,500 went to Rhys Davies of Hive Films. Rhys' first feature film *Zombie Undead*, was set in and around Leicester with many of its key scenes filmed at De Montfort University. The film is getting a limited release at Apollo cinemas in the south of England and will then come out on DVD at the end of May.

### **All winners at Leicestershire Business Awards**

Quality ready meal maker Saladworks, a division of Samworth Brothers, won the prestigious title of Leicestershire Business of the Year 2011 at the Leicestershire Business Awards. Saladworks achieved a double victory on the night by winning the Sales and Marketing Award. Other major winners included: Lafarge Aggregates & Concrete Ltd; Sytner Leicester; Self Unlimited; NSC Creative; David Hayle of PJD Group Ltd; and The Attic Room.

### **Five-star accolade for house builder**

A house builder has been presented with a prestigious award. Barratt East Midlands of Bardonia has achieved the maximum five-star rating from the Home Builders Federation (HBF). It comes after more than 20,000 new home buyers across the country took part in this year's federation customer satisfaction survey. More than 90 per cent of the firm's customers said they would recommend a home built by the company to a friend.

### **Home to country's best animal charity**

Leicestershire's RSPCA centre has been named the charity's best in the country for finding new homes for animals. It comes after the Woodside Animal Centre in Scudamore Road, Leicester, matched up 2,672 animals with new homes last year - 563 more than the branch that came in second place. A further 681 pets were either reunited with their owners or transferred to other centres where more suitable homes could be found. The results, which were released yesterday, put Woodside top of a list of more than 170 branches across the country.

### **Space celebrations centre in Leicester**

National media flocked to the National Space Centre as the visitor attraction marked the 50th anniversary of the world's first manned space flight. Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space and the first person to orbit the Earth in the Vostok 1 spacecraft on April 12 1961. The National Space Centre joined in the worldwide celebrations of the anniversary by holding a mass rocket send-off at noon. National print and broadcast media including BBC 5 Live, BBC Radio 4, ITV's Daybreak, BBC National News and others filmed or recorded pieces with the National Space Centre throughout the day.

### **National rugby triumph for local student**

A member of the University of Leicester Women's Rugby Club, Fiona Fletcher, has captained her country for the England Women's U20 team's first ever game against Scotland. Fletcher has been playing rugby since the age of 7 and this is her first year as part of the England U20s programme.

### **Selling space overseas**

NSC Creative, based in Leicester's National Space Centre, increased its export sales by 50 per cent in 2010. The company specialises in large format, immersive experiences including planetariums, fulldome films and stereoscopic 3D. It recently secured deals in Tel Aviv, Egypt and Hong Kong, and overseas sales now account for more than half of all orders

### **Top tea at Miss B's**

Miss B's Tea Rooms in Melton Mowbray has been accepted as a member of the prestigious Tea Guild. This is an exclusive association and is recognised by the public, media and within the tea trade and catering industry as a mark of quality - the Michelin stars of the tea world. Membership of the Tea Guild is limited in number, by invitation and is only offered after being visited and checked out by incognito inspectors. Other Tea Guild members include Claridge's, The Ritz, The Wolseley and Bettys Tea Rooms.

### **British brand hoping for success at the 2012 Olympics**

A British high performance sports brand launched in 2009 aims to be the choice of many of the athletes racing in the 2012 Olympics. Elite triathlete James Lock developed the Zone3 brand whilst studying and training at Loughborough University. Having juggled product development and negotiations with Chinese manufacturers, James achieved a first in engineering and launched a brand that quickly earned the respect of a number of the world's top triathletes.

### **Designing for global music industry**

De Montfort University graduate Leanne Brooke, who finished Fashion and Contour Design in 2009 with a First-Class Honours degree, is rapidly becoming an established bodywear designer for the music industry. Leanne founded her luxury leather brand, Obey My Demand (OMD), in 2010 and the brand has already attracted a celebrity following. Lady Gaga wears an OMD leather bra for her new Born This Way video, and Alesha Dixon wore an OMD white leather corset for a performance at the last year's MOBOs. This is the second time one of Leanne's fashions have appeared in a music video. Whilst in her third year on the course, Leanne's lingerie collection featured in the 2009 music video, Tiny Dancer by DJ Ironik, featuring Chipmunk and Elton John.

### **Green credentials earn two national awards**

De Montfort University (DMU) has been recognised not once but twice at a prestigious national awards ceremony for its efforts to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions on campus. The university was rewarded for being an industry leader in tackling climate change following its work with global business consultancy, engineering and design firm Arup. DMU and Arup were presented with the Management Consultancies Association (MCA) Environment Award and also won the inaugural The Times newspaper MCA award for the best client and consultant relationship, in recognition of the excellent cooperation on the project which helped DMU identify savings of £350,000 and carbon emissions equivalent to 800 tonnes of CO2.

### **Leading the way on inclusivity among Britain's top universities**

Performance indicators have shown that the University of Leicester has maintained its position as the most socially inclusive of Britain's top-15 leading universities. The University has exceeded its benchmarks for attracting entrants from state schools (for the sixth year running), and admitting students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, according to figures released by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

### **Town's centre for arts gains national recognition**

A £7.5 million project to turn a Victorian factory into a centre for creative businesses has won national recognition. The Atkins Building in Hinckley has been refurbished by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council as one of a range of projects designed to regenerate the town. The refurbishment project reached the shortlist of the Local Government Chronicle awards for 2011, in the economic redevelopment and regeneration category.

### **Piece of cake**

Fiona Cairns, who runs her business in Fleckney, has been commissioned by Prince William and Kate Middleton to bake the royal wedding cake, which will be the centrepiece of the Buckingham Palace reception on Friday 29 April. Fiona, whose cakes are sold in Harrods, Selfridges and Waitrose, has been given detailed plans to create a multi-tiered traditional fruit cake after sending several samples for the couple to try.

### **British Waterways receives top award from the Transport Trust**

Foxton Locks, one of Leicestershire's top tourist attractions, is celebrating being awarded a 'Red Wheel' plaque from the Transport Trust in recognition of the historical interest of this well-known waterway landmark. The Red Wheel scheme is a programme, much like English Heritage's Blue Plaques, that commemorates transport sites of historical interest. The nationwide scheme was launched in 2009 to mark sites of historical interest with Red Wheel plaques. The Red Wheel programme recognises Britain's rich and globally important legacy in the development of transport and supplies explanatory markers for sites of significance - locations range from Roman roads and early tramways to seaplane and hovercraft bases.

### **Excellent for equalities**

Leicestershire has become the first county council to receive an excellent rating for its equalities policies. Six assessors from the Local Government Improvement and Development Organisation have ruled that the county council "walks the talk" when it comes to ensuring its policies and services are fair and inclusive. To achieve the excellent rating, councils must show they are making equalities a part of everything they do for staff and in terms of delivering services that meet the needs of local people.

### **Top theatre award for county actor**

Leicestershire actor Adrian Scarborough has received an accolade in the prestigious Olivier Awards. Adrian, who was born in Melton Mowbray, was presented with the award for best actor in a supporting role for his performance in Terrance Rattigan's *After the Dance*. Adrian is perhaps best-known in his role as Pete in the hit comedy series *Gavin and Stacey* and he played Mr Pritchard the butler in the recent mini-series *Upstairs, Downstairs*.

**Sales bucking trend at Highcross**

The Highcross shopping centre has reported better than average sales for March 2011. Compared with February 2010, last month's sales were up by 1.6 per cent. The national average increase for retail sales was only 1.1 per cent.

***And finally...***

The Big It Up Bulletin is produced in conjunction with Leicester Mercury's 'The Business' supplement. For the latest business news in Leicester and Leicestershire, visit [www.thisisbusiness-eastmidlands.co.uk/News/Leicestershire.aspx](http://www.thisisbusiness-eastmidlands.co.uk/News/Leicestershire.aspx)

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