

# BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

DECEMBER 2009

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)

## **Blaby residents have highest quality of life**

People living in Blaby and Rutland enjoy a higher quality of life than anywhere else in the East Midlands, according to new research. In a survey of 408 local authorities, Blaby came 23<sup>rd</sup> overall, with Rutland 20th. Blaby and Rutland are the only two areas not in the south of the country to make the top 30 of the Halifax Quality of Life survey. Local authority areas were rated on criteria, such as average weekly earnings, employment rate, number of burglaries, carbon emissions and life expectancy. Blaby had the joint fourth highest employment rate at 85.7 per cent and the second highest owner-occupation rate at 87 per cent.

## **Campaign gets local museums closer to prestigious national award**

Two Leicestershire museums have been included in the longlist for the prestigious Guardian Family-Friendly Museum Award 2009 as a result of a campaign led by Leicester Shire Promotions. Snibston in Coalville and Charnwood Museum in Loughborough, both run by Leicestershire County Council with Charnwood Museum managed in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council, have been selected for their 'pioneering work with families'.

## **Taxi initiative participant is recognised by the Prime Minister**

A Leicester taxi driver who recently completed an NVQ2 course in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving - a scheme initiated in Leicestershire by Leicester Shire Promotions - has won the prestigious N/SVQ Achiever of the Year award at the Go for Excellence Passenger Transport Awards and received a letter from Prime Minister Gordon Brown congratulating him on his achievement. Saeed Khan started the NVQ course in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving at Leicester College in September 2007 - the first time the course was offered in Leicestershire - and completed the class-based qualification in the summer of the same year whilst working full-time.

### **Sanjay Foods serves world-famous footballers**

A local caterer has served food to some of the world's most famous footballers. Sanjay Foods of Belgrave supplied the food at the SCORE4africa Awards at the Sheraton Park Lane, London, which boasted a glamorous 300-strong guest list including Chelsea and Ivory Coast star Didier Drogba and Chelsea's Ghanaian international Michael Essien.

### **Loughborough student receives top Asian referee award**

Loughborough University student Una Hong has been recognised as Asia's top female referee at the Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) annual awards ceremony hosted in Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur. The Korean national, who is studying for a PhD in Sport Policy at the University, beat fellow referees Jacqui Melksham of Australia and Thailand's Pannipar Kamnueng to the prestigious gong which is objectively awarded based on points achieved for performances at international matches over the last year.

### **Two nominations for Curve in stage awards**

Two Leicester Theatre Trust productions have been nominated in the tenth annual Whatsonstage.com Awards, The Theatregoers' Choice. The Light in the Piazza, which had its European Premiere at Curve in April 2009, has been nominated in the Best Regional Production category. Jaime Winstone has received a nomination for London Newcomer of the Year for her role as Sherbet Gravel in The Fastest Clock in the Universe, a co-production between Leicester Theatre Trust and Hampstead Theatre, London.

### **Prospect Leicestershire model introduced to economic development chiefs**

Prospect Leicestershire's groundbreaking sub-regional model has been successfully introduced to international economic development chiefs. Around 35 delegates from the directing committee of the Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) - a programme that identifies, analyses and disseminates innovative ideas for local development and the social economy - heard about the role of Prospect Leicestershire, which was made possible by a pioneering multi-area agreement between Government and the city and county councils with the support of all the district and borough councils in Leicestershire, and the private sector.

### **Disability aid wins couple national award**

A Leicester couple who came up with a product designed help wheelchair users eat meals comfortably from their lap when on the move is celebrating after winning two national awards and a £15,000 grant. Clare and Duncan Edwards, who have sold more than 400 of their Trabasack products since April, have scooped a Level 2 award from UnLtd, a charity which funds entrepreneurs with ideas that could help improve people's quality of life. The charity, which gave the couple a £15,000 grant to help them grow and expand the business, said the product could help many thousands of people.

### **Loughborough swim club named BBC team of the year**

The Loughborough University swimming club has been named BBC East Midlands team of the year at the region's annual sports awards. Head coach Ian Armiger was joined by a bevy of top Loughborough swimmers as he collected the award on behalf of a club that has achieved success across national and international competitions over the last year.

### **Local firm is world's leading ID card specialist**

A Leicester firm has become the world's number one supplier of hi-tech identity card systems after winning a large number of contracts. Bosses at Intercede of Lutterworth said the flurry of new work had seen it emerge as the sector's global leader against three competitors. Intercede has developed a sophisticated software system, known as MyID, which manages access to buildings by scanning data such as fingerprints.

#### **Major breakthrough in forensic crime detection recognised**

A major crime detection method developed by Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Leicester Forensic Research Centre and Scientific Support Manager at Northamptonshire Police, Dr John Bond, has been featured in BBC Focus magazine's 2009 awards for British innovations within the fields of science and technology. Dr Bond's pioneering method, developed in conjunction with scientists at the University of Leicester's Department of Chemistry, makes it possible to detect fingerprints even after they have been wiped off shell cases.

#### **Builder's award-winning 'Blok-Busta' invention**

A builder has won a national award after inventing a tool aimed at making life easier for construction workers. Travers Bryan of Wigston has spent five years and around £6,000 of his own money developing a manual mobile machine for cutting breeze blocks. His hard work has been recognised after he scooped the Charles Godfrey Award for Innovation from Professional Builder magazine.

#### **Snibston is top of the class for learning opportunities**

As a leading regional learning institution, Snibston Discovery Museum has scooped a national award for providing excellent educational experiences for schools that visit. The Leicestershire County Council attraction in Coalville has been awarded the nationally-recognised 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge'. It is the first recipient of the award in Leicestershire, and one of just two centres to receive the accolade across the whole region.

#### **University of Leicester's Vice-Chancellor knighted in New Year Honours**

The University of Leicester's Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess has been knighted in the 2010 New Year Honours List. He is the only Vice-Chancellor in the UK to receive the honour in the List and gains the award for services to local and national higher education. Under his leadership, the University has taken its place within the top 20 in the UK and, in 2008/09 was ranked as the University of the Year by the Times Higher Education magazine.

#### **Curry kits firm wins design award**

A firm which makes curry kits has picked up two design awards for product packaging. Spicentice, based in Lee Circle, Leicester, won silver in the annual Design Business Association's Design Effectiveness Awards. It also picked up the 'best re-packaging for a brand' prize in the UK Packaging Awards.

#### **Computer triumph for De Montfort University**

A model helicopter which uses sound to navigate has claimed first place in an artificial intelligence competition for a team from De Montfort University Leicester (DMU). This is the second year in a row that DMU has won the top prize in the annual Machine Intelligence Competition, run by the British Computer Society (BCS).

#### **First elected President of the International Federation for Emergency Medicine**

A Leicester doctor who was a pioneer in developing emergency medical care in Leicestershire and throughout the world has become the first elected President of the International Federation for Emergency Medicine. Dr Gautam Bodiwala, CBE, JP, DL, an honorary graduate, former member of Council, clinical teacher and examiner at the University of Leicester, founded the International Federation in 1990, to bring together nations where emergency medicine is a developed speciality and those wishing to develop emergency care. Its membership has grown from eight to more than forty national organisations since he became president.

#### **Home to best hairdresser in country**

A hairdresser from Leicester has been crowned the best in the country after winning a top TV competition. Chris Appleton, salon director at George's in Allandale Road, Stoneygate, proved he was a cut above the rest in BBC3's Young Hairdresser of the Year final. After beating hundreds of crimpers to make it through to the final five, the 26-year-old wowed expert judges by creating unique looks against the clock.

#### ***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)

