

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

JUNE 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

Campaign to bring World Cup to Leicester kicks off

The campaign to bring the FIFA World Cup to Leicester in 2018 got into full swing when voting for the public's preferred host cities officially opened. Although the public vote alone won't secure Leicester's place amongst the cities that will host World Cup games, local enthusiasm will be a major factor for the Football Association when it chooses its partner cities for England's bid. Local people can show their support for the city by logging on to www.england2018bid.com and selecting 'Leicester' as their preferred host city.

Leicester bids G'day to Australian cricket team

Leicester hit the national and international headlines after the Australian cricket team made an unscheduled, week-long visit to city when it was eliminated from the ICC World Twenty20 tournament. Prior to the team's exit, Captain Ricky Ponting was quoted as saying: "We'll have two weeks in Leicester if we have an early exit here - that won't be good for anybody". The comments triggered a major retaliation from local, regional and national British media, resulting in a huge show of support for Leicester in the light of this unwarranted criticism.

Loughborough University signs major Olympic agreement with Japan

Loughborough University and the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) have signed a major agreement that will see both organisations working together in preparation for the London 2012 Olympic Games. As well as basing themselves at Loughborough in the weeks immediately prior to the London Games, Japan's Olympic teams will also use the University's world class facilities for training camps and final preparations before competitions in Europe over the next three years, starting with the IAAF Athletics World Championships taking place in Berlin in August.

It was also recently announced that the university is to become a primary centre for athletics investment in the run up to the London Olympics after being named one of two new 2012 Performance Centres by UK Athletics (UKA).

New £15 million Students' Union to attract top bands to Leicester

A new £15 million Students' Union building is to be created at the heart of the University of Leicester campus, marking the latest chapter in its ambitious £1 billion Development Framework Plan. The centrepiece of the new building will be a spectacular central atrium and courtyard area providing a new social space. There will also be a 1,750-person capacity live music venue which will aim to attract leading bands to Leicester.

Major industry award for City Council

Leicester City Council has been awarded a top industry title in recognition of the recent work done to improve public spaces in the city centre to coincide with the opening of Highcross Leicester. The authority was given the Gold Standard in the British Council of Shopping Centres (BCSC) Town Centre Environment Award, which recognises dramatic improvements to public spaces in towns and cities.

Village named one of Britain's best

A village in Leicestershire that is the home to one of the country's oldest and quirkiest events has been named a must-see village in Britain. Hallaton, which has a population of less than 600 and home to the 1,000-year-old bottle kicking contest, was one of the top five villages named in Country Life magazine's guide to Britain's 110 best things to see and do.

Leicester's regeneration work applauded

Leicester City Council's regeneration work in Leicester has helped transform the city and bring in thousands of jobs for local people, according to a new report. The Audit Commission has published a report which applauded Leicester City Council and its partners for successes in a number of fields including physical regeneration, attracting external funding, economic improvements, providing strong leadership on regeneration projects across the region and work done to create to get 2,000 local people into jobs at Highcross Leicester.

More national recognition for Leicester regeneration

Regeneration in Leicester has received yet more recognition, after projects in the city were shortlisted for prestigious national awards. Leicester Regeneration Company, whose work was taken on by Prospect Leicestershire in April this year, has been shortlisted for Regeneration Partnership of the Year in the Regeneration and Renewal Awards. Highcross developer Hammerson has also been shortlisted for Developer of the Year for its £350 million shopping centre in the same awards.

Leicester's creative hub earns national recognition

A project housing creative businesses in Leicester's emerging Cultural Quarter has made it to the final four of a national award shortlist. Leicester Creative Business (LCB) Depot in the city was the only project in the East Midlands and one of only nationally to be shortlisted from 160 entries in the Government's Homes and Communities Places for All award. The award is given to places that help to strengthen communities through culture and heritage.

Leicester's James fights his way to the top

Leicester-born James Wilks hit the big time when he was crowned the winner of The Ultimate Fighter reality television show in America. James, who was brought up at Burton Lazars, near Melton, took the welterweight final of the show that brings together up-and-coming professional 'fighters' - experts in a mixture of martial arts, boxing and wrestling - from America and Britain.

Jobs created in Leicestershire from business relocations

More than 670 jobs will be created in the next three years as a result of companies setting up or expanding in the county, latest figures predict. East Midlands Development Agency (emda) said it had helped line up most of the posts by working with eight foreign-based firms in the past year. A further 800 jobs will be safeguarded after 25 businesses invested in the county in 2008/09. The businesses covered a range of sectors including healthcare, transport and finance. The number of jobs earmarked for Leicestershire, according to UK Trade and Investment figures, now stands at 676, up from 619 last year.

Awards success for Leicester's groundbreaking theatre

Leicester's Raphael Vinoly-designed Curve theatre in the city centre's new Cultural Quarter scooped the two awards at the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) East Midlands Quality Awards ceremony. The iconic building scooped the awards for Best Technical Design and Construction category, and also for the Best Large Commercial Development category. Curve will now go forward to the national finals of the contest.

Church project scoops top award

A church in Market Harborough has landed a major award after a much-needed revamp involving the repositioning of 40 graves. The extension of Grade II listed St Nicholas Church in Little Bowden has been named 'Best Commercial Project under £1m' at the Local Authority Building Control Built in Quality Regional Awards 2009.

£2 million space technology hub launched in Leicester

A major space technology hub has been launched to help attract cutting-edge businesses from around the world. Business experts and scientists at the University of Leicester have joined forces to create the service, called G-Step. They want to help investors and public sector organisations create new business opportunities with satellite technology based at the campus.

Local group travel operator wins tourism awards

Woods Coaches in Leicester was crowned Day Excursion Operator of the Year and was runner up in Coach Operator of the Year category at the Coach Tourism Awards 2009. Woods Coaches, which was established in 1950 by George Wood and operated with only one coach, runs a programme of day excursions, short breaks and holidays with its fleet of 30 coaches.

Trio of Leicestershire firms on list of big hitters

Three of the UK's top 100 privately-owned businesses are in Leicestershire, a survey has shown. The Sunday Times Deloitte Top Track 100 Castle ranked Donington airline BMI was at 39, Measham housebuilder Bloor Holdings, which also owns Triumph Motorcycles, at 82 and Melton food firm Samworth Brothers at 91.

Eminent Loughborough University professor earns OBE

Professor Clyde Williams at Loughborough University has been awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Professor Williams, who founded the university's Sports Science Research Group, has been recognised for his 31 years' of world-leading and pioneering work in sports science research at the university. The OBE comes just a month after the Princess Royal officially opened a new £8 million state-of-the-art building at the university which was named in his honour. We at Leicester Shire Promotions send our particular congratulations to Professor Williams as he's also the father of our own Head of Marketing, Janine Williams!

Leicester's renaissance showcased in new visitor guide

A new visitor guide has been produced to showcase Leicester's leisure and tourism renaissance to the thriving UK 'staycation' market. With research suggesting that more and more Brits are likely to take breaks within the UK this year rather than holiday abroad, the creators of the guide, Leicester Shire Promotions, aim to capitalise on the trend by pitching the city's newly revived short break offering via the freely-available visitor resource. Copies can also be requested online from www.goleicestershire.com and are also available at official TICs in the city and county.

Teaching excellence receives national recognition

Rose Griffiths, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Leicester has been named as a National Teaching Fellow by the Higher Education Academy.

Dr Richard Hall, E-Learning Co-ordinator and Dr Julia Pointon, Principal Lecturer of DMU Business School were DMU's recipients. The news confirms De Montfort's position as the leading institution in the East Midlands and the second in the UK for the number of staff given the accolades since the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme's (NTFS) launch in 2000.

Loughborough's leadership wins two national awards

The leadership and management of Loughborough University and that of its student accommodation team have been recognised as the best in the country in the first-ever Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards. Loughborough was the only university to win two awards including the main prize, the outstanding leadership and management team award.

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