

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

NOVEMBER 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

TIC ranked second in the country

Leicester Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Town Hall Square is now the second highest ranked facility in the country, according to recent official rankings by VisitEngland, the national tourism body. The Leicester TIC, which is operated by Leicester Shire Promotions, achieved a score of 94 per cent for its customer service following a rigorous annual mystery shopping exercise, conducted earlier this year by VisitEngland. The score places Leicester as the top facility in the East Midlands and second in the entire country for customer service.

Fourth 'greenest' city

Leicester has been named the fourth greenest city in Britain in a think tank's annual study. Forum for the Future's annual Sustainable Cities Index tracks progress on sustainability in Britain's 20 largest cities - highlighting their environmental performance, quality of life and their readiness for the challenges of the future. Leicester was ranked fourth, marking a strong rise from eighth place last year. The city also topped the study's future-proofing ranking - an indicator that captures how cities are making progress.

Unique digital media hub unveiled

Phoenix Square - Leicester's latest landmark development - has opened its doors to the public, revealing a unique building that combines the latest in digital technology and entertainment with state-of-the-art city living. As well as two cinema screens, a café bar and the DMU Cube - an interactive digital art gallery - the £21.5 million development includes 63 individually-designed new homes, seven two-storey office studios and eight incubation units. State-of-the-art facilities such as technology production studios, live links to De Montfort University and two dedicated 3D screens will help make the building a centre of excellence, not only in the East Midlands region, but nationwide.

Conference venue to host 2011 UK Corporate Games

Meeting and conference venue, imago at Loughborough University, is celebrating after successfully bidding to host the 2011 UK Corporate Games. The bid was successfully made through a partnership between Loughborough University, Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council. The UK Corporate Games is Europe's largest corporate multi-sports festival and brings business together to build employee confidence, loyalty and team spirit. The competition covers 23 different sports including volleyball, hockey, dragon boat racing and football.

Taxi initiative earns student place in national competition

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 been shortlisted for the prestigious N/SVQ Achiever of the Year award at the Go for Excellence Passenger Transport Awards. Saeed Khan started the NVQ course, which focuses on topics such as effective customer service and road safety, in September 2007 and completed the class-based qualification in the summer of the same year whilst working full time.

American TV show to feature forensic technique pioneered in Leicester

A researcher from the University of Leicester and Northamptonshire Police, whose work with the university's Department of Chemistry has led to a major breakthrough in forensic crime detection, is to feature on the US TV show America's Most Wanted. Dr John Bond, who is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Leicester Forensic Research Centre, is to appear on the show to speak about his latest forensic techniques. Dr Bond and colleagues' forensic technique on shell casing was described by Time Magazine as one of the top 50 inventions of 2008.

Lecturer wins prestigious international literary award

An author from De Montfort University (DMU) has won Canada's most prestigious fiction prize for her novel based on an English lady and her servant's voyage to Egypt. Kate Pullinger's *The Mistress of Nothing* was named winner ahead of five other titles in the English-language fiction category of Canada Council for the Arts' 2009 Governor General's Literary Awards.

Award-winning plan for social integration

Leicester College has been given an Association of Colleges Beacon Award for its 'striking' efforts to encourage social integration. The Awards, which is now in its 16th year, rewards outstanding teaching and learning in further education Colleges. Leicester College won the Churches' Award for Sustainable College Partnerships that Recognise Diversity and Develop People and Communities for its community cohesion action plan.

Top marks for local school

Leicester-based Beaumont Leys School has won two prizes in a prestigious national awards scheme. At this year's Excellence in BSF Awards, the school took the titles of Best BSF School and Grand Prix, which is awarded to organisations which show outstanding commitment to the BSF (Building Schools for the Future) programme. Beaumont Leys School has been recognised as a shining light since opening six weeks ahead of schedule in April 2009, as part of Leicester City's Wave 1 project.

Graduate's photo scoops two major awards

Ali Lomas, who graduated from Loughborough University this year, has won awards in the 2009 Godfrey Argent Award and the inaugural ELLE Commission, for a stunning photographic portrait taken from her series entitled To Feel Beautiful. Both awards are part of the prestigious Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize scheme, which celebrates the very best in contemporary portrait photography. Ali's portrait is now being exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery until 14 February 2010.

Major praise for University of Leicester historian

A University of Leicester lecturer has won a prestigious national prize for her first book. Dr Caroline Dodds Pennock won the Gladstone Book Prize for her book, Bonds of Blood: Gender, Lifecycle and Sacrifice in Aztec Culture. Dr Dodds Pennock is a Lecturer in the School of Historical Studies at the University of Leicester. The Gladstone Book Prize, funded by the Gladstone Memorial Trust and the Royal Historical Society, is awarded annually to a scholar for his or her first book on a historical topic outside the field of British history.

Leicester attraction hosts Children in Need event

On the evening of 20 November 2009 the National Space Centre became the home for one night only to the most loved bear in Britain, Pudsey. The iconic Rocket Tower was filled with music and fun, as the East Midlands pulled out all the stops to raise money for Children in Need. The event was televised live on BBC One and hosted by Anne Davies from BBC East Midlands Today, Barney Harwood from CBBC and Des Coleman.

T&K Balti is Curry Awards winner

A Leicester restaurant has been voted the best curry house in Leicestershire. T & K Balti, in Green Lane Road, Evington, gained the accolade at the Midlands Curry Awards 2009. The awards ceremony was held in Solihull and organised by the Bangladeshi Business League.

Twycross cleans up at zoo awards

Leicestershire's Twycross Zoo was celebrating after being presented with a total of three awards at the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) awards - an award scheme that recognise excellence in contributions to wildlife conservation, animal welfare, zoo veterinary medicine, animal husbandry, and landscaping. The awards won were in the Best Marketing category - for Twycross' 'Bring out the Child in You' marketing campaign, the Best Sustainable Zoo and Aquarium award for its achievement of recycling over one thousand tons of waste, and the Best New Zoo Enclosure category for zoo's innovative Mary Brancker Waterways and Borneo Longhouse project.

Loughborough Professor honoured by Energy Institute

Professor Tony Marmont from the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering at Loughborough University has been presented with the Individual Achievement Award by the Energy Institute, in recognition of his work to promote new non-polluting and sustainable ways of energy production. The award, which recognises three decades of dedication to averting man-made climate change, was presented to Professor Marmont at the Energy Institute Awards.

Leicester man's hair raising talent sets world record

Manjit Singh, a 59-year-old security consultant from Leicester, known locally as the 'Ironman', has set a world record by pulling a double-decker bus weighing more than eight metric tons over a distance of 21.2 meters with his hair. The new record was set in central London to coincide with the fifth annual Guinness World Records Day. For Singh, his latest achievement makes up for the disappointment of 2007, when he failed to break the record for the furthest distance to pull a double-decker bus with his ears.

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

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