

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

OCTOBER 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

Tourism businesses celebrate awards success

Leicester and Leicestershire's tourism businesses are celebrating after scooping a haul of 17 tourism awards at the East Midlands Enjoy England Excellence Awards - outweighing all other destinations in the region. The awards scheme recognises those businesses that have excelled in providing a first-class experience for visitors. Local winners of Gold awards included imago in the Access for All category; the National Space Centre in the Large Visitor Attraction category; Bosworth Battlefield in the Small Visitor Attraction category and Kilworth House Hotel in the Small Hotel category. All applications for the awards were supported and coordinated by Leicester Shire Promotions.

Historical findings of international significance

A relentless 500-year search for one of Britain's most important battlefields has come to an end with the discovery of the Battle of Bosworth location near Market Bosworth. Leicestershire County Council and the Battlefields Trust announced that the findings, which were the result of a three-year archaeological survey financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund, revealed an exciting collection of 22 primitive bullets in the area between the villages of Dadlington, Shenton, Upton and Stoke Golding. The conclusion of the survey attracted major national and international press coverage with an article in The Times stating that: "the scale of the ammunition haul transforms the battle of Bosworth's significance from a national landmark to international importance".

Tourism growth bucks regional trend

New figures have shown that the visitor economy in Leicester and Leicestershire has grown to over £1.3 billion and tourist numbers to the city and county now stand at over 32.5 million. The study, conducted during 2008 and funded by East Midlands Tourism, shows growth in the economic impact of tourism from £1.207 billion in the previous year to £1.3018 billion. In addition, visitor spend of staying visitors is up by 2.32 per cent at £454.57 million and the number of day visitor trips up by 3.32 per cent to 29.375 million. This modest increase bucks the regional trend with the rest of the East Midlands showing a downward trend in visitor numbers, according to the same STEAM reporting model.

Home to the 'big cheese'

Quenby Hall Stilton picked up the Supreme Champion title at the British Cheese Awards, despite being the smallest and newest producer of the famous blue-veined cheese. The awards saw Leicestershire dairies coming out on top, with Long Clawson Dairy's Red Leicester also celebrating victory in the Best English Cheese category. The Tuxford and Tebbutt creamery in Melton picked up a silver award for its Stilton. Food experts hailed the successes as further evidence of the county's dominance in the industry.

Rockers scoop major national music award

Leicester rock band Kasabian scooped a prestigious gong at this year's Q Awards - the annual music industry awards run by British music magazine, Q. The boys beat off internationally renowned music legends such as Arctic Monkeys, U2 and The Prodigy to land the Best Album award for their critically acclaimed West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum. The record spent two weeks at number one in the UK top 40 album charts in March this year.

New head of English tourism lauds Leicestershire

James Berresford, the recently-appointed Chief Executive of VisitEngland made a special visit to Leicester at the invitation of Leicester Shire Promotions and said the partnerships that Leicester Shire Promotions has with businesses "were a model of cooperation for others to follow". He added that: "Leicestershire tourism is up. It has done well to develop and showcase what it's got" and that this "reflects the energy, determination and long-term investment being put into tourism in the city and county".

Local tourism official's dedication commended at Number 10

A district tourism officer was recognised for her work at a reception hosted by the Prime Minister. Kathy Belfield, tourism co-ordinator for the district of North West Leicestershire, attended the Community Heroes reception at 10 Downing Street after being nominated by her MP David Taylor. A familiar face at Ashby Tourist Information Centre, where she has worked for the last 21 years, Mr Taylor said Kathy had played a key role in developing tourism in the area.

Big 'green' commitment commended

Leicester's popular Big Session Festival has received yet another accolade for its environmentally friendly practices. The annual three-day folk and roots music festival, which is held at De Montfort Halls and Gardens in the summer, has been given A Greener Festival Award from www.agreenerfestival.com. The award is given to those festivals that have demonstrated the ability to promote environmental efficiency and sustainability through coherent green policies. The festival is regularly applauded for its environmental ethics and took away the Greener Festival Award at the UK Festival Awards 2007.

imago Services' recycling measures recognised

imago Services, the leading hospitality provider at Loughborough University, was named winner in the category of Waste Management Initiative in the Commercial and Public Sector at the annual Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management. Recognised for introducing a recycling service in the halls of residence at Loughborough University, imago Services was commended for reducing waste to landfill by 355 tonnes and, with Charnwood Borough Council, collecting more than 1,000 bags of recyclables every fortnight from the student halls.

Consultant named region's best young director

A local management and training consultancy boss has been named the best young director in the region. Steve Walker, founder of SWA and managing director of Assessment UK in Birstall, won the top prize at this year's East Midlands Young Director of the Year prize from the Institute of Directors. It was the second year running the 31-year-old has been nominated.

Gandy appointed to UK Athletics endurance role

Loughborough University director of athletics George Gandy has been appointed National Event Coach for Endurance by UK Athletics. Since joining Loughborough in 1976 Gandy has played a central role in supporting the University's thriving athletics programme, steering the students to more than 100 national team titles and coaching over 75 athletes to international honours - including former Olympic champion Seb Coe. Many of the country's top endurance athletes have trained with Gandy at Loughborough, and his innovative coaching methods and continued success have helped Loughborough gain the reputation as one of the UK's best centres for endurance athletes. Earlier this year 18 of Gandy's athletes achieved qualification for the World Championship trials.

City selected for pioneering international health research

Leicester has been chosen to participate in a groundbreaking international public health research project to address chronic disease. Spearheaded globally by the Oxford Health Alliance (OxHA), Community Interventions for Health (CIH) is being carried out in Leicester by researchers at De Montfort University. They will be looking at interventions for three risk factors for chronic disease - poor diet, tobacco use and lack of physical activity - and will be collecting data from around 8,000 people to compare with different communities at other international research sites (Mexico, India, China, and the USA).

Blow your own trumpet and earn valuable exposure

Companies are being encouraged to make the most of their achievements in business and the community by entering the Leicestershire Business Awards 2010 - earning valuable and free publicity in the process. Entry is free and easy - visit www.bizawards.co.uk for details before the deadline for entries on 20 November 2009.

Leicester Conferences strikes gold at the 2009 MIMA Awards

Leicester Conferences at the University of Leicester scooped two prestigious international conference industry accolades at the MIMA Awards - an awards scheme that recognises marketing excellence within the international meetings industry. A gold award was given to Leicester Conferences for Best PR Campaign and a bronze award for Best Use of Budget.

National convention puts spotlight on Melton

The spotlight was on Melton as the town hosted the annual Action for Market Towns Convention - the biggest market towns and rural event of the year. More than 150 delegates from all over the country visited the town for the two-day convention. Guided tours were arranged for delegates around the town to showcase the regeneration work as well as key attractors such as the cattle markets and thriving town centre. Melton's strive for economic development recently earned it the regional East Midlands Market Town Award in the Partnership and Strategic Working Category for its Think Melton Shop Melton project led by the Melton Town Centre Partnership.

Acclaim for National Skills Academy

Leicester College has been awarded Founder College status of the National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural Skills (NSA) - a Government initiative set up to encourage the education sector to work with industry employers to reinforce skills needed for technical theatre and live music events. The status is in recognition for Leicester College's development work and national achievements in performing arts and music.

University building named one of UK's best

The University of Leicester's world-famous Engineering Building has been ranked among the best buildings in Britain's universities by The Architect's Journal. The 1963 Grade 2* Listed building by James Stirling and James Gowan was ranked fourth in the Journal's top 10 buildings, celebrating the best in British academic architecture. The celebrated Engineering Building was also cited earlier this year as one of the top 10 most inspiring buildings in the UK, alongside Hadrian's Wall and Stonehenge, by the same publication.

Melton chippy named one of the best in country

A Melton fish and chip shop has been named one of the best in the country for the second year running. Andy's Fish Bar came out on top ahead of four other rivals in the area heats to reach the next stage of the National Fish and Chip Shop of the Year Competition. The competition, run by Seafish, the authority on seafood, recognises the quality, value and choice offered by fish and chip shops across the UK.

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

