

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

OCTOBER 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

Melton is Top Three 'foodie' town in the UK

Melton Mowbray - 'the UK's Rural Capital of Food & Drink' - was voted joint third with Edinburgh in 'Food heaven and hell' feature in November's Olive magazine. By scoring UK towns on their culinary credentials, the national food & drink magazine voted Melton Mowbray into the UK Top Three, just behind Birmingham and Ludlow.

Leicester-born author wins prestigious prize

Author, Julian Barnes - born in Leicester but now resident in London - has won the Man Booker Prize for his novel, 'Sense of an Ending'.

East Midlands Airport wins two national awards

East Midlands Airport has recently won two major awards - Airport of the Year at the National Travel Trade Gazette (TTG) Awards and Star Regional UK Airport at the Travel Bulletin 2011 Star Awards. The TTG awards are voted for by travel agents and independent industry observers and EMA was named winner for the second consecutive year ahead of Bristol, Manchester and Bournemouth Airports. The Travel Bulletin Awards were voted for exclusively by UK travel agents and EMA was named winner for the fifth consecutive year ahead of Bristol, Liverpool, Luton and Southampton.

World exclusive as unique tree is found in Leicester

A unique willow tree has been discovered in a nature reserve in Leicester. Staff at the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust found the plant in Aylestone Meadows and after calling in expert advice, they discovered the tree was a mix of four different types of willow. This combination has never been seen before anywhere in the world.

Percy Gee Building wins Design Excellence Award

A stunning new £17 million development at the University of Leicester that has won a clutch of awards since it was formally opened this year has picked up another prestigious accolade. The Percy Gee Building, which houses the Students' Union as well as a number of University services, won the Insider Media's Design Excellence Awards to add to a RIBA commendation it received recently.

University student set to storm the charts

A De Montfort University student is being tipped to storm into the charts after being plucked from her performing arts course to sing lead vocals on a dance track. Charlotte Rose Harris, 19, whose stage name is Rose X, is a second year performing arts student at DMU and could be about to see her childhood dreams come true. She is singing lead vocals on the dance track, called 'Unstoppable', by Goldlock & Octagon ft Rose X which is available to pre-order on iTunes. It is officially released on 5 December. Industry insiders are confident 'Unstoppable' will be a huge hit this winter and push Charlotte into the big time.

Local hotel achieves PLUS status

The Mayor of Lutterworth has formally announced that the Best Western Ullesthorpe Court Hotel & Golf Club has been awarded the highly acclaimed 'PLUS' status from the Best Western group following its nationwide launch. The hotel is one of the first in the country to gain the new 'Best Western Plus' status from the Best Western group after it was launched to the nation just this morning. In fact, only 10 hotels have achieved such an accolade in Great Britain and just 121 globally.

University sculptor receives Chinese honour

Loughborough University sculptor John Atkin has been presented with a prestigious award in recognition of his work in China. John, who is based in the University's School of the Arts, has been made an Honorary Fellow of the Chinese Sculpture Academy. He received the award from Professor Wu Wei Shan, Chairman of the Chinese National Academy of Sculpture, who praised his role in developing cultural initiatives between the UK and China.

Thumbs-up for roads and transport in Leicestershire

Leicestershire's roads and transport have come out top in a national satisfaction survey. Results from the questionnaire published this week rank Leicestershire as the best county council and fifth overall. A total of 70 local authorities took part in the survey covering aspects including the condition of roads and pavements and quality of local bus services. The council was recently named the top local transport authority in the UK and praised for its money-saving approach and innovative work.

Innovation, by Royal appointment

An engineering firm has been presented with a Queen's Award for Innovation. Zeeko of Coalville won the award earlier this year for its optic fabrication centre, which allows optics to be made more accurately and quickly. Zeeko plans to move its factory from Hermitage Industrial Estate to Leicester Science Park by the end of 2012.

University swimming programme awarded by governing body

Loughborough has once again reached the gold standard for sport, after British Swimming recognised the University for its achievements in the Swimmer Friendly University programme. Loughborough is renowned for its world class facilities for a range of sports, including swimming. The British Swimming award specifically recognises the role that the University plays in providing valuable support to talented swimmers that come to study at Loughborough.

Fit for purpose

Ragdale Hall in Leicestershire has scooped another award for its renowned fitness offer. Readers of Spa Finder recently voted it amongst the top 10 spas in the world for fitness programmes, alongside a selection of the giants of the global spa industry.

Researchers celebrate 'double hat-trick' of awards

A University of Leicester researcher is celebrating a hat-trick of awards for the quality of his work. Dr Will Nicolson, Clinical Research Fellow at the Leicester Cardiovascular Biomedical Research Unit, won a prestigious Young Investigator Prize at the annual Heart Rhythm Congress 2011. This is a personal 'hat-trick' having won a Young Investigators' Award at CardioRhythm in Hong Kong in February and the East Midlands Engineering and Science Professionals Master's Prize in May. This is the third year in a row that a research fellow from the University's research group has won in the Young Investigator Prize competition at Heart Rhythm Congress - Dr Tuan (clinical) in 2009, Dr Brack (basic science) last year and Dr Nicolson (clinical) this year.

Calling Leicestershire's best businesses

The annual search for the most dynamic and innovative Leicestershire business has begun in earnest. The 2012 Awards marks the 19th year and introduction of two exciting new categories: Innovation and International Trade. These new categories recognise the efforts that Leicestershire businesses have made in developing new markets abroad, and the successes achieved through innovation in the challenging economic climate of the times. The application deadline for the awards is 25 November 2011 and the process is open to all Leicestershire organisations.

Police hail new fall in crime rate

Crime is falling faster in Leicestershire than most other areas of the country. In the 12 months to June this year, the force saw recorded offences fall by 13.3 per cent from the same period the previous year, new figures reveal. Senior officers said the reductions were the second highest in England and Wales. The force said there were more than 1,000 fewer victims of burglary, a drop of 20 per cent, and that there had been a 15 per cent reduction in 'violence against the person', equating to 2,681 less victims.

Universities minister hails pioneering collaboration with HP

Universities and science minister David Willetts has hailed the pioneering collaboration unveiled between De Montfort University and the world's largest technology company, HP, as an "excellent initiative" from which other universities and employers should learn.

Local law firm claims top prize

A Leicester law firm has been honoured at the annual Law Society Excellence Awards. Douglas Wemyss won the excellence in client service category against some of the biggest names in the industry. The firm was nominated in five categories, with chief executive Sameer Karim highly commended in the leader of the year category.

Housing association has 'best customer services team in Europe'

LHA-ASRA Group - which manages more than 12,000 homes in the Midlands & London - has won a top award at the customer service industry's equivalent to the Oscars. The group's customer contact centre, based in Leicester, won 'Best Back Office Team' at the European Call Centre and Customer Service Awards in London - beating many UK and international brands. More than 20,000 other European businesses put themselves forward for the award.

Top marks for educational visits

The University of Leicester Botanic Garden in Oadby has shown itself to be at the top of the class for educational visits by being awarded a Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge. Awarded by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, the LOtC Quality Badge combines for the first time learning and safety into one easily recognisable badge for all organisations providing learning outside the classroom experiences.

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.thisisleicestershire.co.uk/business

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