

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

SEPTEMBER 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

Flagship woodland to take root in Leicestershire

To celebrate the Queen's diamond jubilee, the Woodland Trust is planting 'diamond woods' nationwide and has announced that the largest site in the UK will be between Ashby and Ibstock in Leicestershire. The trust is aiming to plant six million trees across the UK and create 60 diamond woods to mark the monarch's milestone. The new 460-acre flagship woodland will be the largest in Leicestershire.

New Walk Museum sees record visitors

A Leicester museum has seen a record number of visitors through its doors after a new gallery opened. New Walk Museum & Art Gallery was visited by 5,244 people on 3-4 September, compared to an average of 760 during a weekend. A newly refurbished dinosaur gallery has been opened at the museum. The display features large dinosaur skeletons from the Jurassic period and 560 million-year-old fossils.

Green Tourism Silver status for Leicester TIC

The Leicester Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Town Hall Square has extended its environmental credentials by achieving Silver status in the latest Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) assessment. The GTBS covers the whole of the UK and is the largest and most established scheme of its type in the world. The TIC's first assessment in 2009 achieved a Bronze rating. Following a successful recent assessment, the TIC was commended on its progress in the past two years to develop green awareness and become more sustainable, with particular mention made of the green wall - promoting cycling and car free activities, etc - and the selling of local produce.

Record summer for family staycations

A record number of families have been flocking to Leicester and Leicestershire this summer for short break stays. New figures for Leicester Shire Promotions' Stay Play Explore family short break campaign showed an increase in accommodation bookings in the city and county of 92 per cent for July-August 2011, over the same period in 2010. These bookings contributed over £469,000 to the local visitor economy. The new figures show that overnight stays booked at local accommodation as part of the Stay Play Explore short break increased from 3,178 in summer 2010 (July and August) to 6,102 in the same period in 2011.

Stapleford Park wins Gourmet Britain award

Stapleford Park country house hotel has been declared best hotel in the nationwide Gourmet Britain 2011 awards. Gourmet Britain is fast becoming the leading online foodies resource at gourmetbritain.com, created in 2005 by Simon Scrutton, who previously worked with Egon Ronay. He and his team of gourmets work hard to experience the widest possible range of food places recommended by their readers.

Foxes triumph to scoop third national T20 title

Leicestershire Foxes continued their success in the Twenty20 cricket competition when they beat fellow finalists, Somerset to pick up the Friends Life t20 cup at Edgbaston after a nail-biting finals day. By winning this year's competition, Leicestershire Foxes became the first team to win a hat-trick of t20 titles.

University shortlisted for three national awards

The University of Leicester has been shortlisted for three *Times Higher Education* Awards for 2011, which celebrate the excellence within UK higher education institutions. Leicester's nominations are: Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology, Research Project of the Year, and Most Innovative Teacher of the Year.

Holywell Park achieves Gold standard

Holywell Park, the meetings and conference venue of Loughborough based imago, has been awarded the VenueVerdict Gold Standard Accreditation. The prestigious accreditation recognises the consistent delivery of excellent customer service. This is the second time that Holywell Park has received this respected stamp of customer approval.

Mark of Quality for Melton Mowbray Pork Pies

The Large Melton Mowbray Pork Pie made by Dickinson & Morris from Melton Mowbray has been shortlisted in the 'Pies, Pizzas and Pasties' category at the Quality Food Awards. These are the most prestigious awards for food and drink products on sale in UK grocery outlets, and the judging panels are comprised of chefs, chef lecturers, home economists, food photographers, food writers, food technologists and regional food groups.

Loughborough rises to 11th in The Sunday Times University Guide

Loughborough has leapt to 11th place in the latest edition of The Sunday Times University Guide, confirming its place among the UK's leading higher education institutions. The Guide is compiled using a number of criteria, including student satisfaction, teaching excellence, research quality, students' degree results and graduate employment levels.

High five for city solicitors

A solicitors firm in Leicester has been named as a finalist in five categories at The Law Society Excellence Awards 2011. Douglas Wemyss Solicitors is the only law firm nationally to have been shortlisted as finalists for the national Law Society's Excellence Awards 2011 in five separate categories.

Crowning glory for hair salon

Barrie Stephens Hair, which has salons in Anstey, Ashby, Narborough and Leicester city centre, was crowned retail salon of the year at the 13th annual British Hairdressing Business Awards.

Best regional modern buildings picked in vote

Local venues have been named among the best modern architecture in the East Midlands. More than 15,000 visitors to a regional roadshow were polled on their favourite new buildings from the past 50 years and Thornton Fishing Lodge and the John Lewis store both won in Leicester and Leicestershire. The roadshow was organised by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and visitors were asked to pick their favourite buildings from examples put forward by the organisation.

Graduates sweep the board at prestigious new lingerie awards

De Montfort University (DMU) graduates have swept the board at the new UK Lingerie Awards, which recognise outstanding examples of excellence in the market during the past year. The New Designer of the Year award went to Leanne Brooke, who graduated DMU's fashion contour degree in 2009. Leanne's lingerie label 'Obey My Demand' has been worn by celebrities including Lady Gaga. Chloe Hamblin, who runs Lascivious, won Independent Brand of the Year. Chloe graduated DMU in 2003. Niki McMorrhough, who established the Made by Niki label after studying the CertHE at DMU in 2008, won Best Shapewear Brand of the Year.

Finalist at World Food Awards

A food firm has been named as a finalist in a national business competition. Worldfoods Frozen and Chilled, part of Leicester Indian snack manufacturer Cofresh, is one of three finalists in the Morrisons Best Packaging of the Year category at this year's World Food Awards. The awards, in their third year, have been created by the World Foods Association and recognise the diversity of cultures and communities by which the industry is inspired.

Keeping it in the family

A food company has been named the best family-owned business of the year. Samworth Brothers, of Melton, which owns the Dickinson and Morris and Ginsters pie brands, has scooped the Family Business of the Year Award at the Private Business Awards. Samworth Brothers is a fourth generation family owned company which makes chilled foods for leading supermarkets, and is the county's largest manufacturing employer, with 4,500 staff across eight sites.

Nominated as top for travel

A travel agent has been nominated for one of the travel industry's most prestigious awards. Nathan Armson, of Midlands Co-op Travel Shop in Shepshed, has been shortlisted for the Agent of the Year prize in the TTG Travel Awards, run by trade newspaper Travel Trade Gazette.

Governor of Bank of England welcomed to Leicester

Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce welcomed the Governor of the Bank of England, Sir Mervyn King, at a lunch hosted with twelve of Leicestershire's leading business people to discuss the economy. The lunch, held at the Ramada Hotel in Leicester, was organised with the Bank of England's Agent for the East Midlands and forms part of a regular dialogue between the Bank of England and the local businesses community.

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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