

City Centre Director
April 2019 Update
Report

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Local Elections

Sir Peter Soulsby elected



Labour's Sir Peter Soulsby has been elected as Leicester's mayor for the third time. For a full list of results please visit:

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/elections-2019/>.

<http://www.labourinleicester.org.uk/vote/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Labour-in-Leicester-2019-Local-Election-Manifesto-2-2.pdf>

Regeneration News

Leicester Cathedral Revealed secures full grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Leicester Cathedral's ambitious £11.3m project to restore the city's historic cathedral and build a new heritage learning centre beside the main building has secured its full grant of £3.3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Heritage Learning Centre, on the site of the former Song School, will be a two-storey stone building with some terracotta and glass features. Planning approval was secured earlier this year from the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England and Leicester City Council, after taking advice from Historic England, the Leicester Conservation Advisory Panel and others.

The Dean of Leicester, the Very Revd David Monteith said: "*Leicester Cathedral Revealed* is very important because it will transform what we will be able to do. It will protect the historic setting of the Cathedral, free up the sacred spaces, provide inspirational interpretation and learning facilities, and be a safe place of hospitality and refuge for those in need. In every respect it will transform the individual experience of being inside the Cathedral. "Since the reinterment of King Richard III in 2015, our city has benefited from £8m additional income a year thanks to the extraordinary upsurge in cultural tourists. This project has the potential to double that for the city. "We are delighted and immensely grateful for the significant support we have received from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and from local individuals and organisations.



We have now raised £8m and have £3m left to secure. So there is still a job to be done. We will continue to fundraise throughout 2019 and with the help of everyone who believes this project matters to all our communities, we will get there." Work in Leicester is expected to begin on site in early 2020 and is anticipated to be completed by 2022.

How Leicester cathedral would look (Image: van Heyningen and Haward Architects)

Business News

King Richard III pub, Highcross Street

The Beautiful Pubs Collective is set to revive the King Richard III pub on Highcross Street. It is being taken over by the independent Beautiful Pubs Collective under the leadership of Sam Hagger, who was named Small Business Executive of the Year as well as overall Leicestershire Business Executive of the Year at the Leicester Mercury's 2018 Business Executive Awards 2018.

Works are already underway in a joint £110,000 redevelopment, with the investment being shared between the Beautiful Pubs Collective and the pub's freehold owner, Everards of Leicestershire. Sam Hagger said, "You can expect a stunning pub, offering multiple reasons to visit under one roof. Despite the current political and economic uncertainties there has never been a better time to invest in Leicester. I believe the King Richard III is the perfect opportunity for us to create a unique, exciting venue in the heart of the city, alongside our forward-thinking property partner."

The revival of the King Richard III will give existing members of the Beautiful Pub Collective new opportunities to flourish in their careers, as well as creating five full time and five part time jobs.

New prospectus launched for Leicestershire's £285m sporting economy

The new Premier Sporting Location Prospectus for Leicester and Leicestershire was officially launched in April at the Leicester Riders home game against London City Royals. The Prospectus showcases the extensive range of sporting venues in the city and county, the national and international sports events that have been hosted and the other events and conferences they are able to host. From motorsports, football, rugby, basketball and cricket to horse racing and all the opportunities available at the National Forest and Loughborough University; there is such an extensive offer available in Leicester and Leicestershire and it's time this secret is shared further afield. Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport, supported by partners are sharing this message to attract more events, conferences and visitors to the area.

Around 2 million visits are made to key sporting venues in the city and county each year and the sporting economy in Leicester and Leicestershire generates £285 million per year along with 8,405 jobs in the local economy. Leicester's incredible sporting journey over the last few years and the profile and events hosted, have developed significantly. Now through the Premier Sporting Location work and the development of the Sport Events Calendar, the team at Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport hope to drive this agenda to bring more events, visitors and conferences to the area. These resources have been welcomed by the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP).

Andy Reed OBE and Vice Chair of the LLEP said: "The sports sector in Leicester and Leicestershire has been recognised for some time for its contribution to the local economy. The visitors the area welcomes through sport, bring wider economic benefits across a range of sectors and help to raise the profile of Leicester and Leicestershire further afield. We look forward to supporting this work and seeing how it develops."

Ali Clements, Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport's Economy and Sport Growth Manager said: "There is such an incredible array of sporting venues available to host a whole variety of events, some of which many local residents may not have visited. The Premier Sporting Location branding and work is the start of showcasing Leicester and Leicestershire's offer and reaching out to attract more events, conferences and visitors to enjoy the unique offer available in Leicester and Leicestershire."

Openings and Closings

We wish all new businesses good trading and a warm welcome to Leicester City Centre!

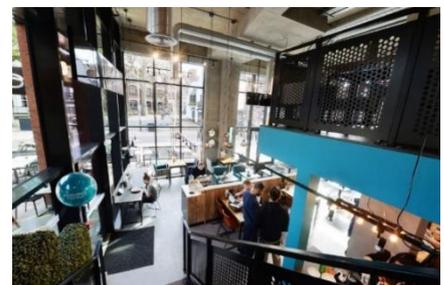
Open & Opening

Little Istanbul, Charles Street

Little Istanbul, a new Turkish fast food restaurant opened in February. It focuses on shawarma, a popular Turkish street food, made with meat cooked on a vertical rotisserie, similar to a doner kebab.

Esquires coffee shop, the circle, 5 New Walk Place

Esquires opened its new branch in New Walk Place on Saturday 30 March. Esquires describes itself as an 'ethical community coffee brand' and offers a range of Fairtrade, organic coffee, cold presses and fresh juices, as well as a selection of food for breakfast, lunch and brunch. Customers can enjoy much-loved classics, such as a Full English breakfast, as well as healthy, vegan and vegetarian dishes, including the Esquires Full Vegan, a vegan version of the Full English, both of which features on the all-day breakfast menu.



Costa, St George's Retail Park

Costa has launched its latest Leicester branch on Thursday 4 April. The branch has been described by Costa as one of its 'stores of the future'. The 60-seater coffee shop is the first food and drink offering to open at the shopping park since it underwent an expansion. A new building was created earlier this year, featuring retailers Wren Kitchens and Tapi Carpets. Costa is based in a small building, dubbed a 'pod', which is separate from the other units. As one of the chain's 'stores of the future', Costa has a new contemporary design, with more colours and patterns incorporated into the decor.



There are new stress-relieving seats, ideal for relaxing in after a hard day at work. Ready for the warmer months, Costa also has a large area of outdoor seating. Finishing touches inside the bright and spacious store include a display of cups suspended from the ceiling, and a picture of a coffee bean created from the names of the people who roast the coffee in Costa's Basildon roastery.

We Are, Humberstone Gate

'We Are' opened in the basement of 44 Humberstone Gate, a short distance from the city's Cultural Quarter, and sells art, craft and accessories which are handmade to a high quality by local artists. The community interest company aims to bridge the gap between artists starting out in their careers and becoming freelance artists as a profession, by offering a place to sell their work and have access to professionals working in the industry as well as sharing their talents with the community of Leicester.

We Are is the brainchild of jewellery designer and illustrator Kristen Rollinson, who works from StudioName, and has been selling her work in Leicester for the past eight years. Kristen said: "I have noticed that there is currently nowhere for independent artists and crafts people to sell their work collectively within the city. "With a growing number of artist studios opening, I want to create a place where we can all come together inclusively to sell our work and bring joy to the community by showcasing the talent Leicester has to offer."

We Are started out as a pop-up shop project, but according to Kristen, the idea quickly grew because of the amount of support and encouragement she received from a large number of people, who all shared the feeling that this is what is needed in Leicester's art community. "It's an exciting time in the city at the moment; there are a number of new independent shops opening, along with new studios and plenty of exhibitions," Kristen continued. "Leicester is making a very good name for itself and it's lovely to see that people are shopping more consciously and showing support for independent shops and individuals."



Jacob & Joe, Market Street

Jacob & Joe has opened on Market Street and aims to provide customers with a luxurious shopping experience. Described as the 'home of eyewear innovation', Jacob & Joe sells prescription glasses and sunglasses, many of which are currently only available in top London department stores. Brands sold at Jacob & Joe will include Dita, Gucci, Mykita, Linda Farrow and Vintage Frames. While this is the first retail store, the company, which aims to bridge the gap between optics and fashion has been running for five years, operating as a mobile optician service. Jacob & Joe was founded by optometrist Zainab Suleman.

Zainab said: "Going to the opticians is often viewed as a chore. "We want to change that perception so that our customers can visit at regular intervals and not only when the next eye test is due. "Our philosophy derives from enhancing the customer journey and experience and pushing social boundaries. "We aim to understand our customers as individuals and respond to their lifestyle needs with both practical and aesthetically-pleasing choices from eyewear stylists. "It's important for us to give a luxury experience to everyone irrespective to how much an individual spends." "We've created a store that is pleasing to all senses such as touch, feel and sight as it's important to capture this experience in this day and age. "We believe this will add to the revival of the high street, as we hope to encourage other independent businesses to open."

Marvellous Art Gallery, Belvoir Street

A new gallery has opened in Belvoir Street. Marvellous Art Gallery was previously a shipping company, Mail Boxes Etc. The city centre unit has now been transformed into a creative space to showcase the work of local artists. Marvellous is the brainchild of former ad broker Marvin Daika, who says he plans to bring exhibitions and events to the gallery. He is also in talks with De Montfort University to showcase student's artwork to give them a platform after graduation. Marvellous is currently displaying works from Leicester artist, Paul Wright.

The exhibition includes a large oil painting of the late Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha and of his son, Aiyawatt. The portraits were painted before Khun Vichai died, as part of a project about father and son relationships. They were displayed in New Walk Museum earlier this year alongside an exhibition of photos of Thailand.

Marvin said: "I've always wanted to open my own gallery, but I thought it would be impossible. "I used to run the shipping company, but I just got tired of it. I wanted to follow my passion." Marvin added: "I'm trying to use it to bring in local artists. "It's nice, small and simple for now. We want it so we can move things around, change it up every few weeks. "When people go to galleries they can be intimidated, so we wanted to do something fresh and different. "Leicester is a multicultural city, so I want to help bring people closer together. Anyone is welcome to come. "We've already had lots of people stopping and having a look, so hopefully people will keep showing their support."



The gallery currently displays works from local artist, Paul Wright (Image: Peter Fothergill)

Mother Hubbard's, London Road

Mother Hubbard's has opened on London Road, and is part of a national fish and chip shop chain started by two Coronation Street stars. The Leicester branch is the first Mother Hubbard's in the Midlands, and the 24-seater restaurant has created more than 20 jobs. The decor of the restaurant pays homage to the city of Leicester, with black and white photos of landmarks, such as the railway station circa 1890 and the Odeon cinema circa 1962, hung on the walls.

The first Mother Hubbard's was opened in Bradford in 1972, by Coronation Street stars Bernard



Mother Hubbard's fish and chip shop, London Road, Picture: Matt Short

Youens and Jean Alexander, who played long-serving characters Stan and Hilda Ogden. Now with new owners, the brand has more than 20 locations in the UK such as Bradford, Leeds, Batley, Sheffield, Halifax, Wakefield, Oldham and Blackburn. Mother Hubbard's was named Best Food Establishment in the 2018 English Asian Business Awards. There are plans for a further six branches to open in the south region this year.

Red's True Barbecue launching restaurant after trial at BrewDog

Barbecue food brand Red's True Barbecue has opened a 75-seater restaurant upstairs at Brewdog. Customers can enjoy Red's True Barbecue's low 'n' slow smoked meats and burgers alongside their favourite beers from BrewDogs.

The menu also suggests BrewDog beers which complement the food. The barbecue brand started out in Leeds in 2012 and has since opened six further restaurants in England. The brand made barbecue history last year, with a fourth-place finish at the 2018 World's Championship-Bar-B-Que Contest in Houston, the most successful non-US barbecue cook team in the event's 45-year history. BrewDog and Red's True Barbecue first established a relationship in 2016 with the smokehouse delivering dishes to the Scottish brewery's bars in Leeds via a 'barbecue phone'.

Matalan, Haymarket Shopping Centre

Fashion and homeware retailer Matalan is set to open a store in the Haymarket Shopping Centre. The Haymarket Shopping Centre is home to around 60 retailers, from big names such as H&M, Pandora, Primark and TK Maxx, to independent businesses including Bags of Luggage and Top Girl. Other recent additions to the shopping centre have included Funky Soap, which opened its first retail outlet selling soap and bath products in January this year, and discount store B&M, which opened in December 2018.



Kings coffee House, Upper King Street

Kings Coffee House (KCH) has been launched at Holy Trinity Church in Upper King Street. It is situated in a bright, modern extension which was added to the church as part of £1.5 million building works carried out over the past two years, to make the church better equipped to serve the community.



KCH aims to provide "coffee with a conscience". Every penny of profit generated by the coffee shop will be invested into programmes run by Holy Trinity Church that support the homeless and vulnerable adults in the city. The church's director of operations, Stephen Gorton, told LeicestershireLive: "This community of adults is sadly growing and the homeless problem in Leicester isn't going away. "A number of these people also suffer with mental health difficulties and so they need a helping hand in different ways. "At Holy Trinity, we have been running a Friday evening drop-in for 30 years now, that serves more than 3,000 meals a year.

"We run a food bank in association with the Trussell Trust, operate Trinity Money Advice Leicester (a free debt counselling service for anyone who find themselves in unmanageable debt), and are starting Leicester Community Mediation - a not-for-profit for Leicester. "All of these services run at a cost and those costs will be partially met through the proceeds of the coffee shop." As well as raising valuable funds, the team behind the coffee shop are keen to ensure that customers enjoy the best quality produce. As such, the coffee shop has partnered with some of the best suppliers in the region, including St Martins Coffee Roasters, and local independent bakers. There's comfy sofas, tables and chairs and benches, plus some impressive artwork, created by local artists Ian Mitchell and Sophie Oakley. Kings Coffee House is open weekdays from 8am until 4pm. Students can get 10 per cent off with a valid NUS card and loyalty cards are available for all customers.

Texas Steakhouse, Market Street

Leicestershire company Texas Steakhouse is set to open its flagship city centre restaurant later this month in the unit previously trading as Sanctuary. The Texas Steakhouse brand will be well known to many, having previously been located in Foxton. The original steakhouse was forced to close in 2017 after it was destroyed in a fire. It then opened briefly at The Black Horse pub in the village. Texas Steakhouse, at 17 to 19 Market Street, will be open Sunday to Wednesday 12pm until 10pm and Thursday to Saturday 12pm until 1am.

Funky Soap, Haymarket Shopping Centre

Funky Soap is re-locating to a larger unit in Haymarket shopping centre. It is moving to the upper floor, next door to long-running clothing store Top Girl. The Leicestershire-based company has been operating for around two years as an online store. After a successful experience trading at Leicester's Christmas market in 2017, owners Karen, Mike and Simon Cotton decided to take the plunge and open their first shop.

Turkish bakery chain Tegtat, Charles Street

A top Turkish bakery chain is opening in Leicester in a UK first. Tegtat claims to be one of the fastest growing companies in Turkey, with nearly 100 bakery-café's across the country and surrounding nations. The chain's first UK store is set to open in the former Schoolwear Centre in Charles Street, at its corner with Humberstone Gate. The city centre store will sell a range of freshly baked bread, pastries and cakes, and feature a café serving traditional Turkish coffee and tea.

Franchisee Yaseen Patel has over 15 years in the food industry, and says he has 'taken the next step' by bringing the franchise to the UK. Mr Patel said, "Our franchise is originally from Turkey. "We have now signed the master franchise for Tegtat in the UK. "We hope to set our first shop up and sell franchises all from our UK head office in Humberstone Gate." Tegtat is expected to open to customers in mid-July. It will open at 32 Charles Street with further stores to come in cities including London later this year.



How the store is expected to look

Closed & Closing

Love Aroma, Highcross

Love Aroma which specialised in home fragrance has closed.

Burton and Miss Selfridge, Highcross Shopping Centre

Burton and Miss Selfridge have closed their joint store in the shopping centre. The chains, both part of Arcadia Group, occupy different floors in the same unit. Burton is moving to the Dorothy Perkins store on Gallowtree Gate.

Benito's Hat, Highcross

Mexican restaurant Benito's Hat closed its Leicester branch on 31st March.

Wrapchic, Gallowtree Gate

The Leicester branch of Indian burrito company Wrapchic has closed.

Cafe Malveen, Halford Street

Cafe Malveen in Halford Street has shut after four-and-a-half years in the city. The cafe was opened in October 2014 by business owner Clair Heaney, who aimed to provide locally sourced, freshly prepared food for customers to eat in or take away. The closure of the cafe was due to the building being sold.

Waffle & Scoop up for sale, Belvoir Street

A dessert bar in Leicester has been listed for sale, Waffle & Scoop opened in Belvoir Street in May 2018. The business has a focus on premium desserts such as its own-recipe soft serve ice cream, and Belgian liege waffles. It has also gained attention from Instagrammers for unique dishes like ice cream covered in edible gold leaf or served with a candy floss 'halo'. Waffle & Scoop said it wanted to 'breathe new life into Belvoir Street and the surrounding area' when it opened.

The city centre shop was given an extensive refurbishment after replacing the former Denhams unit. However, the owner of Waffle & Scoop has now listed the shop for sale due to 'personal reasons'. An online listing for the business reads: "The owner is very passionate about the business and its potential, but due to personal reasons does not have the time to devote to the business and as a consequence is making a regrettable sale, borne out of circumstance. "The proprietor will provide training to the buyer, should this be required."

The Fish and The Chip, Jubilee Square

The Fish and The Chip has revealed that the eatery has closed for good. "There's not plenty more fish in the sea! "After our trip away we saw the impact pollution is having on the oceans and fish stocks and we are not comfortable running a restaurant that has such an impact on our environment. "As a result we realised our passion is not The Fish and The Chip and we have decided to close the restaurant. "But don't worry. We are still committed to creating gluten free, plant-based food and are really excited to share our new range very soon. "Until then, thank you to all our loyal customers that have supported us with the restaurant."

Refurbishments

Goldsmiths refurbishment, Highcross

Highcross retailer Goldsmiths has opened the doors to its newly refurbished showroom. The luxury high-street jewellers' 1829 sq. ft showroom features an updated interior as well as some of the UK's most luxurious jewellery brands. The refurbished store is the Goldsmiths (West) branch in the upper mall, next to L'Occitane. There is a second Goldsmiths (East) store which is in the upper mall, close to Debenhams.

Craig Bolton, Goldsmiths executive director, said: "We are delighted to be opening our new-look store in Leicester. "At Goldsmiths we are genuinely committed to establishing our reputation as the number one local destination for luxury jewellery and timepieces. "We aim to provide the finest selection of watches, gold and diamond jewellery for our customers, and are always looking to add



sought after brands to strengthen our customer offering." According to Goldsmiths, it is the UK's largest luxury high street jeweller, with more than 80 showrooms. It operates the largest distribution network for Rolex, OMEGA and TAG Heuer as well as other reputable brands.

The Olive, Belvoir Street



The Olive has re-opened with a new look. The Belvoir Street eatery closed for almost two weeks whilst refurbishment works were carried out. The interior of the café has been painted blue and white, the colours of the Greek flag. Customers can now see their food being made, thanks to a newly-installed window into the kitchen at the rear of the cafe. The Olive is a family-run business, which aims to offer food that is fast, fresh and healthy. As part of the changes, there are now gluten-free options and more vegetarian options on the menu.

Image: Matt Short Photography

Transport

Large part of Leicester's Haymarket car park will be closed for months

The city council has closed the upper floor of the 485-space Haymarket car park so it can start a £1.78 million revamp of the 1970s-built multi-storey. There are more than 170 spaces on the upper level that will be unavailable to shoppers until the first phase of the improvements scheme is complete by mid-August. The works are part of the city council's wider project for the Haymarket area which will create better access to the recently re-opened Haymarket Theatre.

Travelodge are also set to open a 67-room hotel in disused office space above the shopping centre. The council has apologised in advance for the inconvenience to shoppers who will have to find somewhere else to park if the lower level, which will remain open, fills up. When the upper deck revamp is completed it will re-open and work will shift to the covered level below, meaning some spaces on that floor will be unavailable while the repairs are carried out. The whole programme of works is expected to be completed by November 2019.

Abellio takes over running East Midlands Trains

A new company has been chosen to take over the Midlands Main Line, promising travellers greener trains and free Wi-fi. Abellio has been announced as the successful bidder to take over from East Midlands Trains in August this year, with their franchise set to continue until 2027. The Midlands Main Line runs from London St Pancras to Chesterfield via Leicester. Among the promises that secured the company the contract were 80 per cent more peak-time seats on new faster, more comfortable trains and a total investment of more than £600 million for stations and trains.

Free wi-fi and better value tickets are also among the improvements Midlands Main Line passengers can expect from Abellio. The company has also made a commitment to run trials of hydrogen fuel cells to power trains. Because there are no overhead power lines north of Market Harborough, the trains run on diesel, which causes pollution. Abellio also plans to try making stations zero-carbon through greener technologies, which means having no carbon dioxide emissions overall.

Meanwhile, the government will be investing nearly £1.5 billion over the next five years to modernise the Midland Main Line as part of a nationwide investment. It will be the biggest upgrade to the line since it was completed in 1870. Dominic Booth, managing director of Abellio UK, said: “We look forward to this franchise driving economic growth and delivering significant benefits for passengers. “Abellio will invest £600 million in improvements to trains and stations, maximising the effect of the government’s £1.5 billion upgrade of the Midland Main Line, to make journeys easier, more reliable and comfortable for our passengers.”

Abellio is also promising passengers a new express service from Corby to London, a better compensation system for people who are delayed and new “flexipass” tickets to provide better value fares. Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said: “Improving the experience for passengers is at the heart of this new franchise. Abellio will deliver state-of-the-art new trains, upgraded ticketing systems and improvements to stations. “Through zero-carbon pilot schemes, trialling hydrogen fuel cell trains and delivering more seats on modern, spacious trains, the new franchise will also play a major role in building a railway fit for the future.”

Leicester to Benefit from sustainable travel scheme

Following a unique partnership with the landowner, the Drummond Estate, Arriva has introduced ArrivaClick, its innovative demand responsive ride-sharing service to the residents of New Lubbethorpe. Marking the first time in the UK that funding from a Section 106 agreement has been used to fund a digitalised Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service.

Once in service, ArrivaClick will offer connections for New Lubbethorpe residents, but also for retail, leisure and workplaces in Leicester city centre, the city’s University campuses as well as railway and bus stations, Leicester Royal Infirmary, Fosse Shopping Park, Grove Park, Meridian Business Park, Meridian Leisure Park, Narborough Rail station, Leicester Tigers and Leicester City Football Club. The service will deliver shorter end-to-end journey times for customers. Booking by the ArrivaClick smartphone app, customers request an executive minibus from their pick-up point at a time they want and to a destination of their choosing, their journey is then matched with other people heading towards the same destination. Customers are then given a cost and pick-up time for the journey, and once the journey is accepted, are guaranteed a seat on the high-specification minibuses, which can accommodate up to 15 people (or 12 when including a wheelchair or pushchair using customer).

£1.4million York Road revamp

Leicester City Council has begun work on major improvements to York Road which connects Welford Road and Oxford Street to create a safer and more attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists. The road will be largely pedestrianised between its junction with Oxford Street and Newarke Street car park. The road will be remodeled so that motorists must turn left upon leaving the car park meaning the majority of York Road will be free from traffic.

Vehicle access along the main stretch of York Road will only be permitted for residents, blue badge holders and businesses in the area. Footpaths will be widened in some areas and reconstructed in high-quality blocks, similar in appearance to Silver Street and Guildhall Lane. The improvements will fill a missing link between the new £35million development on King Street, at the city centre end of New Walk, and De Montfort University's campus on Millstone Lane, which has also recently seen a multi-million-pound investment. It will also link to improvement work currently being carried out on nearby Grange Lane and Bonners Lane.

City Mayor Peter Soulsby said: "At the moment, York Road is shabby and crying out for improvement. We want to transform it into a safer and much more appealing route for pedestrians and cyclists. "It has the potential to be a really attractive and direct link between the recently redeveloped New Walk Centre site and the DMU campus, which has also benefited from a major programme of improvements. "At the same time, we are investing in our Newarke Street car park to help make life easier for the hundreds of motorists that use it every day." Work on the York Road improvement scheme is expected to take about six months.

Newarke Street car park upgrade completed

An extensive £170,000 improvement scheme to make Newarke Street car park safer and easier for motorists to use has been completed. Work began in March on installing new technology including Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, new payment machines and barriers in the Leicester City Council-run car park, to replace equipment and fittings which are nearing the end of their lives. An additional exit lane onto York Road has also been created which will tie in with wider road improvement works in the area. New CCTV cameras were also installed at the car park earlier in the year, and lighting has been improved throughout the building.

The works at Newarke Street Car Park are the first phase of planned investments over the next few years to see improvements and new technology rolled out to city council-owned car parks across the city. Leicester City Mayor Peter Soulsby said: "The work at Newarke Street Car Park will make this very busy car park much easier and safer for motorists to use. "The combination of updated technology, better payment machines and upgraded security ensures it will be far more secure, as well as making it simpler for people to use. "We aim to continue this programme of improvement works in the other city council-owned car parks across Leicester, to ensure all motorists get access to clean, safe city centre car parking."

Further proposals include introducing a smartphone app offering payment by phone, along with plans for cashless parking in future. For full details of all city council-operated cars parks in Leicester, visit: www.leicester.gov.uk/transport-and-streets.

Other News

New Lord Mayor of Leicester takes office



The new Lord Mayor of Leicester was officially inaugurated in a ceremony at the city's Town Hall on Thursday 16 May. Cllr Annette Byrne was handed the chains of office from outgoing Lord Mayor Ross Grant at the meeting of annual council. Councillor Byrne was born in Belgrave and has always lived in Leicester, currently residing in Mowacre. She was educated at Rushey Mead School for Girls and when she left school, she worked in the hosiery trade. She has been a strong Labour Party supporter since she was old enough to vote and stood for election at the city council elections in 2007, being duly elected in the Abbey Ward.

During her term of office, she has chosen to support two charities; the vet charity PDSA and The Air Ambulance Service. Both charities are non-government funded and rely heavily on public donations. The PDSA in Leicester sees around 125 pets each day providing a free service to injured and sick pets. The Air Ambulance Service operates two helicopters across Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Rutland, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, providing a rapid response to trauma and medical emergencies.

Cllr Byrne has one daughter, Tara, who will support her as Lady Mayoress during her year in office. She will also be supported by her Consort, Councillor Sue Hunter. Cllr Byrne said: "I am delighted to be taking on the role of Lord Mayor of Leicester and am very much looking forward to supporting the local people who add so much to our communities. "Leicester has always been my home and it is very important to me, so it is an absolute honour to have been elected as the Lord Mayor of Leicester and to have the opportunity to serve this wonderful city."

Calling all knitters - Keep those knitting needles clicking for the Big Knit!



The Big Knit campaign continues through 2019 and Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland is calling on Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to keep knitting or join in for the first time! Whether a knitting ninja, purling pro, crochet connoisseur or just keen to have a go it's time to get wild about wool and join the Big Knit. Now in its 15th year, the campaign needs to recruit more knitters to help create an impressive 1.6 million hats to adorn innocent smoothie bottles. For each be-hatted smoothie sold, Age UK receives 25p, and that money helps the Charity support older people who are facing later life alone. Tony Donovan, Executive Director of Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland said: "We need local people to join us and help knit as many miniature hats as possible to help us hit our huge 80,000 local target by July 2019. It's such a fun campaign to get behind and it does so much to help older people in our area.

"The money raised will make a big difference to the lives of older people by funding our hugely important services and classes. These services, which include Day Care, dementia support, Men in Sheds and befriending amongst so many others, give local older people the chance to come along and make friends, learn new skills and most importantly have fun." This year's hat knitting patterns are available to download - to find out more visit: www.ageuk.org.uk/bigknit or pop into any of our addresses to request a leaflet.



Leicester's Phoenix awarded £4 million towards expansion plan by Arts Council England

Phoenix cinema and art centre is delighted to have received confirmation that Arts Council England will invest £4 million of National Lottery money towards Phoenix 2020 - its plans to expand its current building and become a four-screen independent cinema by 2020. The plans will see a 1,200 square metre extension added to the existing building. This will make space for two further cinema screens; a larger and more prominent digital art gallery with an atrium; a bigger café bar; and new spaces for making and learning. Arts Council's investment brings Phoenix closer to the £7 million it requires to complete the full project by the end of 2020. Planning permission for the development has been awarded and Phoenix expects to have 83% of the funding in place by the end of April. The charity is working hard to raise at least £500,000 more in the coming months to enable building to start later this year.



John Rance, Chief Executive of Phoenix said: "This is a great opportunity for us to put digital art and film in more accessible and visible spaces for exhibition, learning and creativity. With Arts Council's generous support we have taken a major step towards realising our ambition to reach out to a much wider and diverse population in and around Leicester. "We are close to reaching our fundraising target and would welcome all the support we can get to help us reach the finish line."

Peter Knott, Area Director, Arts Council England said: 'This is fantastic news for Leicester. Arts and culture play a vital role in making the area a great place to live, work, study and visit, and we're pleased to be investing in a project which will benefit so many local people and their communities. By ensuring arts and cultural venues have the buildings and equipment they need, we are helping to ensure the region's creative economy will thrive. "It is also a great opportunity for Phoenix to do something really ambitious – to expand its space, work with technology in new ways and continue to connect with Leicester's growing population. Phoenix has firmly established itself as a centre for digital arts and independent cinema in one of the UK's most diverse cities and we look forward to seeing it mark its 30th anniversary as a charity in 2019."

Cllr Adam Clarke, deputy city mayor with responsibility for St George's Cultural Quarter said: "It's excellent news that the Arts Council has confirmed its funding for the expansion of Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre. "Since Phoenix moved into the Cultural Quarter nine years ago, it has more than doubled its visitor numbers and generates around £2.6m in visitor spending into Leicester's economy. Its expansion will help to attract more visitors to the area and boost Leicester's reputation as a centre for the arts and creative industries. "I'm delighted the city council's commitment made last year to invest £1m in the project has helped to secure the Arts Council funding and wish Phoenix luck in obtaining the remaining funds needed."

The £4 million grant is part of Arts Council's Capital funding programme. This money comes from the National Lottery and is designed to ensure companies and venues have the buildings and equipment they need to provide great artistic and cultural experiences to their local communities. One of just a few regional centres in the UK specialising in digital culture and creativity, Phoenix engages communities in diverse areas across Leicester and Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire, through digital arts, film making and community cinema. Leicester Arts Centre Limited (Phoenix) is also an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and over 2018-22 will receive £80,464 each year to support its digital art programme.

Barrie Stephen announced as Leicester charity's first-ever patron

Barrie Stephen – one of Leicestershire's best-known hairdressers – as become the first patron of a charity that once helped him on his way to business success. He is backing the Sir Thomas White Loan Charity, which provides interest-free loans to new business owners in Leicestershire and Rutland looking for a financial step-up. Over the years the city centre based charity has helped thousands of entrepreneurs aged 18 to 35 become self-employed. Barrie sought help from the charity 23 years ago to establish his first salon in Anstey. Now, more than two decades later he owns five salons across the county, as well as his dual-brand B-Styled salon.

Tesco calls for online sales tax to combat rising business rates

Tesco has urged the government to enforce a two per cent online sales tax to help fund the cut in business rates for shops. The Big 4 grocery leader said the current system was unjust and damaging to the UK's communities. Tesco, which currently pays around £700 million a year in business rates, provided detailed proposals of shaking-up the system in a written document to the Treasury select committee investigation. The supermarket giant said the government could raise £1.5 billion through a two per cent online sales tax on physical goods. It also said the government could use that revenue to support a 20 per cent cut in business rates for all bricks-and-mortar retailers.

“There is overwhelming evidence that the business rates system is not equitable and is damaging investment and growth,” Tesco said. “We believe action must be taken to avoid prolonging an anachronistic tax that has not materially changed since 1988 and is damaging communities across the UK.” Tesco chief executive Dave Lewis was among the first major retail leaders to call on the government for an “Amazon tax” last year.

In 2015, he also warned against a “lethal cocktail” of £14 billion in extra costs over five years from an increase in business rates. “The business rates system is increasingly outdated and in need of urgent reform,” Lewis said. “The burden of rates has become unsustainable in a retail sector that saw 7500 net store closures last year, but still employs three million people. “The introduction of an online sales levy would create a level playing field, incentivise investment and do so in a way which is revenue neutral for the government.”

Nevertheless, Sports Direct tycoon and House of Fraser owner Mike Ashley initially put the idea of an online sales levy forward. Ashley called for a tax on retailers that make more than a fifth of their sales online. Altus Group head of UK business rates Robert Hayton said: “There is now an overriding consensus of opinion that the tax playing field must be levelled, given the tax-to-turnover ratio disparity, whilst the proposal ensures additional revenue is ring-fenced for the good of the entire sector.”

Opinion: Boxpark boss Roger Wade: Retail 'on the edge of a precipice'

Boxpark boss Roger Wade has warned retail is “on the edge of a precipice” and urged the government to intervene to save Britain’s high streets. Wade, who founded the fashion brand Boxfresh in 1989 before becoming a landlord through his pop-up mall business, called for “a root and-branch review” of the retail sector. Speaking at the World Retail Congress, Wade called on the government to reform the “ridiculous” business rates system, urged retailers and landlords to end “us-and-them” relationships and took a swipe at retailers for “running away from their debt” by launching CVAs.

Wade said: “I think we are on the edge of a precipice. There are some fundamental changes that are happening out there. I don’t see it as a retail apocalypse, I see it as a process of fundamental change. “The government needs to get involved. The archaic concept of business rates only really applying to retailers on the high street and not applying to a pureplay retailer operating a big box in the countryside is ridiculous. It’s crazy. We need to have government involvement.” Although Wade urged ministers to play a part, he said retailers and landlords could also do more to help themselves. “Clearly the ways in which we did business in the past have changed and going forward, the idea of landlords and tenants being adversaries are over. We need to come together.

“So we need a root-and-branch review of what is happening with retail. We really need to start thinking what high streets are going to be like without any shops? What is going to happen to our communities? “We need to think about the repercussions of not having a community because shopping really is the heart and soul of our communities.”

The empty Leicester shops graffiti artists have transformed



Empty shops in the city centre are looking a lot more colourful after being transformed by street artists. A total of eight empty units have been given a make-over as part of a window dressing programme launched by BID Leicester and Bring The Paint festival. Shop fronts in locations across the city including St Martin's Square, Market Place, Belvoir Street and Market Street have been brought to life with window illustrations by world-class artists who are taking part in the Bring The Paint festival later this month.

Artists involved include Smug, Ruelo, Sam Grubb, Alex Rubes, Mono, Gent, Philth and 45 RPM. The scheme aims to improve the look of vacant units to create a positive effect for the surrounding business area, highlight commercial space for prospective tenants and give visitors and residents in the city centre a taste of what’s to come at Bring The Paint festival later this month. Simon Jenner, BID Leicester director, said: “We are delighted to have delivered this project with Bring The Paint, who have a track-record for working with world-class artists whose artwork captures the public imagination. “I hope that visitors to the city will take the opportunity to enjoy these artworks and Izzy Hoskins, Bring The Paint festival director, said: “We are really pleased to be working alongside BID Leicester in brightening up a number of vacant units in the city centre. We hope the artworks will encourage people to explore the city whilst feeling inspired.”

Visitors can download the LoyalFree app for free on their smartphone to access a digital trail of all the locations. Bring The Paint is taking place in Leicester city centre from May 20 to 26, with the main events happening on Saturday, May 25, in the Cultural Quarter and Sunday, May 26, at Frog Island. The festival is expected to attract 10,000 visitors to the city and will see giant murals painted on the city’s buildings as well as spectacular 3D floor art. There will be opportunities for children and families to get involved with workshops, music, food and drinks.



12 Market Place, before



12 Market Place, after its transformation by Smug



51-53 Belvoir Street, before



51-53 Belvoir Street, after its transformation by Gent



St Martin's Square unit, before



St Martin's Square unit after its transformation by Philth

Awards and Accolades

Leicester coffee shop has been named one of the best in England

An independent Leicester coffee shop has been named as one of the best in England. Leicester Coffee House Company, 110 Granby Street, was recognised by travel publication Big 7, in its list of the top 50 coffee shops across the country. The Leicester venue, which has only been open for six months, came in at number 22. The entry reads: "This hip store serves serve single origin coffee and offers a choice of their fresh beans roasted on site or a guest decaf. "As a micro roaster, they roast little and often to ensure that their coffee stays fresh and tastes great – and oh boy does it taste great."



Leicester Coffee House Company is run by Gail Brown and Aaron Keen, who've been roasting coffee in small batches from home since November 2016 and selling it via mail order as well as local pick up. Talking about Leicester Coffee House Company being named as one of the best in the country, Gail said: "We thank all our customers for their continued support and are really excited to see what the future holds for Leicester Coffee House Company."

Leicester Mercury Business Awards 2019

City architects rg+p have been named Company of the Year at the 2019 Leicester Mercury Business Awards. The firm picked up the top accolade at the black-tie ceremony, in front of 600 guests at Leicester's Maher Centre. Based in Waterloo House, near Leicester railway station, the 125-strong team at rg+p is overseen by owner-directors James Badley, Rob Woolston and Mitch Dale. It has built a solid reputation working on some huge schemes around the UK and is currently helping transform Leicester's former Fenwick store into 111 luxury serviced flats, complete with a rooftop bar.

The 2019 Leicester Mercury Business Awards winners were: -

- Company of the Year – rg+p Ltd
- SME Business of the Year – Baker St Cakes: The Macaron and Cake Boutique
- Employer of the Year – BHIB Insurance Brokers
- Start-Up Business of the Year – Alcuris
- Business Entrepreneur of the Year – Gary Iley, Sygnet Group
- Customer Service Excellence Award – G Seller & Co
- Excellence in Science and Technology Award – Smoke & Fire Curtains Limited
- Excellence in Manufacturing Award – JJ Churchill
- Professional Services Award – Shakespeare Martineau
- Excellence in Innovation Award – Spirit Health Group
- Family Business of the Year – Danaher & Walsh Group
- Leadership Team of the Year – College Court Conference Centre and Hotel
- Contribution to the Community Award – Highcross Leicester
- Not for Profit Organisation – Zinthyia Trust



Leicester Mercury Business Awards 2019 (Image: Matt Short Photography)

LeicestershireLive Innovation Awards 2019 winners revealed at the King Power Stadium

The first Leicester Mercury Innovation Awards have taken place at the King Power Stadium. More than 200 guests were present as the awards were announced by TV presenter Des Coleman. There were 10 categories – each reflecting the diversity and accomplishments of the city and county's top innovators.

- Digital Innovation of the Year – Meater: The world's first wireless smart meat thermometer.
- Innovation in Services – Draycir: Uses Intelligent Document Recognition, linked to cloud technologies, to speed up document throughput.
- Innovation in the Creative Sector – Art-AI Festival 2018: The event brought world-leading artists to the city last May to celebrate a new art-science form to highlight the various roles of artificial intelligence to the general public.
- Research Leadership Award – National Space Centre chief executive Chas Bishop
- Innovation in Technology – Bake in Space: Trying to recreate the complete production cycle of breadmaking in space.
- Innovation in Construction – Blueprint Interiors: Ashby specialist workplace design and fit-out contractor is focused on employee well-being.

- Young Innovator of the Year – Elliot Butler, Tap Dash: Loughborough University design and technology student designed an innovative fitness product for people who are visually impaired and physically disabled.
- Innovation in Manufacturing & Engineering – Fashion UK: The childrenswear brand has used innovation in its designs including sounds and lights, colour changing prints, reversible sequins, 3D glasses activated prints and functional chalkboard prints.
- Medical & Health Innovator of the Year – ChatHealth
- Innovation in Education and Training – MIRA Technology Institute: A collaboration between education and industry designed to address skills shortages in the new disruptive technologies surrounding connected and autonomous vehicles and electric cars.
- Lifetime Achievement Award – Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys
- Innovator of the Year – ChatHealth

Leicester Curry Awards Winners

Leicester is a great dining destination, with a brilliant selection of Indian restaurants - and now the best of those restaurants have been recognised. The third annual Leicester Curry Awards took place at Athena - where the winners in each of the six categories were revealed. Hosted by ITV Central News presenter, Sameena Ali-Khan, the ceremony was attended by more than 400 guests including local dignitaries Lord-Lieutenant, Mr Mike Kapur, Lord Mayor Ross Grant and Lord Willy Bach. The red-carpet event, which was sold out weeks in advance, featured performances from Leicester's Got Talent winner, Lauren Rose, and Leicester's DMU Gospel Choir.

Here's all of the winning eateries:

- Best Takeaway
Masalas, Uppingham Road, Leicester
- Best Pub Restaurant
Paddy's Marten Inn, Martin Street, Leicester
- Best Vegetarian Restaurant
Chai Paani, Belgrave Road, Leicester
- Best New Restaurant
Soi, Greenslade, Melton Mowbray
- Best Fine Dining Restaurant
Spice Bazaar, Welford Road, Leicester
- Restaurant of the Year
Mumbai Inn, De Montfort Street, Leicester



The team from 'Restaurant of the Year' Mumbai Inn (Image: Pukaar News)

In addition to the six winners, there were lifetime achievement awards for Mr Ahad Ali of Spice Bazaar in Welford Road and Mr Abdul Wahid of The Grand Durbar in Melton Road. Organiser and founder, Romail Gulzar, said: "I can't quite believe it's over but what a spectacular night! I love hosting this event because it really celebrates what the city and county is known for and that's a great curry." As well as raising the profile of the county's curry houses, the awards raised money for two charities - Emmaus and ABF The Soldiers' Charity. Each charity was presented with a cheque for £1,000 and will also receive three per cent revenue from individual ticket sales. This year's Associate Sponsor was SANS Catering Supplies. Other sponsors were Mattioli Woods PLC, SFB Group, St Martin's Lodge, Cobra Beer, Bond Adams Solicitors and Anand and Daewoo International.

ICSC Global Europe Awards, European Shopping Centre Awards 2019

Highcross has won the established centres (extra-large) category in the ICSC European Shopping Centre Awards. Every year since 1977, ICSC has recognised excellence in new and refurbished shopping centres throughout Europe with the presentation of the prestigious and highly sought-after European Shopping Centre Awards. In recent years, the programme has added awards for urban redevelopment and existing centres—ReSource, Regeneration, and Established Centre Awards, respectively.

2019 Midlands Food, Drink and Hospitality awards – Vote now!

A number of Leicestershire businesses are in the running for accolades at the 2019 Midlands Food Drink and Hospitality awards. Finalists have been announced for the fourth annual awards, which aim to recognise and reward the very best of food, drink and hospitality establishments in the Midlands. The Midlands Food, Drink and Hospitality (MDFH) Awards was borne out of the Birmingham Food, Drink and Hospitality Awards which, due to popular demand, was expanded to include the whole of the Midlands - which means Leicestershire businesses can now get involved. There are 31 categories, ranging from Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year, to Chef of the Year, and Leicestershire is represented in 10 of those categories.

Voting is now open via the MDFH Awards website: <https://www.mfdhawards.co.uk/vote-now/> so you can vote for your favourite. The awards ceremony will take place at the Aston Villa Stadium in Birmingham on Monday, June 24. Here are the Leicestershire businesses which have reached the finals:

- South Asian Restaurant of the Year
Lilu, Highcross Street, Leicester
- Steak House of the Year
Black Iron at Winstanley House, Hinckley Road, Leicester
- Italian Restaurant of the Year
I Due Vulcani, The Crescent, Hinckley
- Casual Dining Establishment of the Year
James Café Bistro, East Bond Street, Leicester
The Lansdowne, London Road, Leicester
- Desi Bar & Grill of the Year
Paddy's Marten Inn, Martin Street, Leicester
- Dessert Parlour of the Year
Gelato Village, St Martin's Square, Leicester
Haute Dolci, Granby Street, Leicester
- Food/Drink Festival/Operator of the Year
Canteen, which holds monthly events at Leicester Market
Food Gusto, which holds events at Ashby and Syston
- Cocktail Bar of the Year
Manhattan 34, Rutland Street, Leicester
- Boutique Hotel of the Year
Winstanley House, Hinckley Road, Leicester

Festivals and events

Worldwide graffiti artists Bring The Paint to city this month

World-renowned graffiti artists will be creating stunning murals and large-scale public artworks on some of Leicester's buildings for the second Bring The Paint event. The week-long international festival of street art, music and outdoor events will see artists from across the globe creating breathtaking graphic artworks on buildings in Leicester city centre and at Frog Island between May 20 and 26. The festival, which took place for the first time in 2017, transformed some of the city's public buildings with eye-catching, huge-scale artworks. They include both the front and rear courtyard of the LCB Depot and the exterior of The Soundhouse pub in Leicester's Cultural Quarter. Other stunning artworks appeared on buildings and walls throughout the city centre with the agreement of their owners.

In addition to being able to watch the painstakingly-detailed street art taking shape during the week, visitors will also be able to enjoy an art fair, exhibitions, live music, workshops, street food and a range of satellite events. The festival is being run by city-based street art organisation Graffwerk, based in Frog Island, and supported by Leicester City Council. Events will culminate on Bank Holiday weekend with a one-day art fair and sale on Saturday, May 25, in Queen Street in the city's Cultural Quarter, and the family-friendly Sunday Social at Graffwerk's base in The Mill, Frog Island, on May 26.

City Mayor Peter Soulsby said: "The first Bring the Paint event in 2017 brought a real creative buzz and vitality in the city and some breathtaking new landmarks to parts of the city centre. "It is very exciting to work with Graffwerk once again on this event, which attracts world-class street artists from around the globe to the city." Full details of Bring the Paint 2019 are available at: <https://www.bringthepaint.co.uk/> and at the group's Facebook pages. For more information see <https://www.visitleicester.info/whats-on/bring-the-paint-p771951>.

Leicester announces exciting Summer of Festivals

Visit www.visitleicester.info/ to download brochure

Leicester's festivals already draw thousands of people from around the country, and in the case of Diwali – the world. This year the city council is aiming to attract more visitors by highlighting the best of the events set to run from May to September in a new summer programme. The Summer of Festivals brings together 10 major events taking place across the city, ranging from live music to family-themed fun and breath-taking public art projects. Leicester's City Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby said: "We're already very proud of our diverse range of festivals which offer something for everyone, but this year we've got even more to offer with brand new events that we hope will also become part of our annual programme. "As there's so much going on we've picked out some of the key events to give everyone a flavour of what they can expect if they join us in Leicester this summer."



The programme begins with the return of **Bring The Paint**, which last year attracted the cream of graffiti artists from across the world to create stunning, large-scale public street art on public buildings. It takes place from May 20 to 26, and as well as the creation of giant murals will include

music, an art fair, street food, exhibitions and workshops. Leicester's ever-popular **Riverside Festival** will bring two days of family friendly fun and activities to the banks of the River Soar, bringing alive the Mile Straight, Bede Park, Castle Gardens and Western Boulevard. The free festival will include fun on and off the river, live music and street performances, art, dancing and activities for all ages on June 1 and 2.

Revive festival is a first for 2019: running over three weekends in June it celebrates the Mods of the 1960's and gives people a chance to experience the decade through vintage fairs, live music and events, and more scooters than on the set of Quadrophenia. Inspired by the **Mods: Shaping a Generation** and Modified exhibitions running at New Walk Museum and Soft Touch Arts, Revive will take place at various venues across the city from June 15 to 30.

Also unique to 2019 is **One Giant Leap** – a series of events marking the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landings. Running from July to October, activities range from a family astronomy session to a night in the museum, as well a whole series of events at the National Space Centre. Leicester's **Caribbean Carnival** has grown into one of the largest outside London since it was first held in 1985. This year's theme is 'The Windrush' with the focus on the Caribbean community's contribution to the UK. As well as a street parade of multi-coloured floats through the city centre there'll be a massive party with music and food on the city's Victoria Park, all on August 3.

New to Leicester this summer are the **Gigs in the Gardens** – a series of large-scale outdoor concerts in the beautiful surroundings of De Montfort Hall taking place between August and 26. Kaiser Chiefs, the Vaccines, Jax Jones and Busted are among the top acts performing there, as well as DJ sets from Groove Armada, Pete Tong and Danny Howard. The series will end on a classical note with a family performance from the Bardi Orchestra rounded off with a firework finale. The **Leicester Belgrave Mela** returns on Sunday 18 August, bringing a day of amazing street performances, mouth-watering South Asian cuisine and the Mela shopping bazaar. Visitors can enjoy awe-inspiring performances from the Grand Indian Circus and music from the Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band.

Leicester Pride is the city's annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) festival, a vibrant event celebrating diversity and freedom of expression. Join in and march with pride through the city centre on August 31, before enjoying music, a fun fair and great family entertainment on Victoria Park. Full details of the Summer of Festivals programme and other things to do in Leicester are available at visitleicester.info.

Mods on scooters turn out for Quadrophenia celebration at New Walk museum

Mods of all ages turned out to celebrate the 1960s subculture and all things Quadrophenia in Leicester. Many brought along their Vespas and Lambrettas, polished to the nines and many replete with the obligatory additional lights and mirrors. Among them was Mick Maidment, from Ratby, an original Mod who was on his 1966 Vespa SS180. The 70-year old said: "I bought this bike 12 years ago and it needed a lot of work doing to it. "I decided to get it because it was the same one I had when I was a young Mod in '66. "The Mod scene has evolved over the years and there seems to be a revival every decade. "It's gone on a lot longer than just the 1960s." The exhibition tells the story of the scene across Leicester and Nottingham. It opened yesterday, and runs until June 30. It includes clothes, stories and bikes from the 1960s and original props and clothing from the film Quadrophenia, based on The Who album of the same name.



Mick Cottam of Loughborough astride his Lambretta (Image: Leicester Mercury)

Belgrave Hall and Gardens open for summer season

Visitors can enjoy the first tastes of spring in the air at the Belgrave Hall's picturesque and historic walled gardens from this week. From April to September, the historic site opens its doors to visitors who want to explore the tranquility of the 18th century building's fascinating gardens. The gardens are open to the public every Wednesday from 11am to 4.30pm, as well as Saturday and Sunday on every first full weekend of the month, from 11am to 4.30pm. The Georgian-era gardens are an oasis of calm despite being a stone's throw from Belgrave's bustling Golden Mile, and feature formal gardens as well as herbaceous, woodland, rock and water garden areas.



NOW That's What I Call The 80s coming to Leicester with a live orchestra

NOW That's What I Call Music is the biggest selling compilation brand in the UK. Now 80s music fans can relive their favourite decade with a live performance of the iconic NOW That's What I Call The 80s album at De Montfort Hall in Leicester. During the show, the London Concert Orchestra will be performing tracks from the album that defined an era.

Audiences will hear chart-topping songs like Take On Me, Living On A Prayer, Red Red Wine, Come On Eileen and Girls Just Want To Have Fun. We expect there will be some some roof-raising sing alongs, especially to Toto's Africa, which will also be performed. The show comes to Leicester on Friday, 15 November, Ticket prices start from £39.20, plus transaction fee. For further information visit: https://www.seetickets.com/event/now-that-s-what-i-call-the-80s/de-montfort-hall-leicester/1361687?awc=7816_1555074196_fe5fd4dc650006a1523981e5a48771ca&AFF=aw.

Walk Leicester Festival 2019

To celebrate National Walking Month in May, the second Walk Leicester Festival is being held from 28th April - 31st May 2019. Walking is a great way to get around Leicester: its free, good for your health and can help you to relax. Walk Leicester Festival aims to show people how easy and enjoyable walking in the city can be through over 20 free themed led walks and events. Walks are happening in various locations across the city and with heritage, art, green spaces, wildlife, sport and family friendly walks there is something for everyone!

For the full programme of events and to find out more, please visit www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/walkleicester, call 0116 373 7589 or pick up a leaflet from the Visit Leicester Information Centre on Gallowtree Gate.



Get in the swing at this year's Riverside Festival, 1-2 June

Visitors to this year's Riverside Festival will be able to get into their groove in a programme of jazz and swing music taking place throughout the two-day event. Swing dancers, jazz performers and soul musicians will be taking to the stage in the Broken Records Swing Festival, which is taking place in Castle Gardens as part of the Riverside Festival, on June 1 and 2. A line-up of swing bands and big bands will provide the soundtrack for a programme of dance classes taking place around the Maypole in Castle Gardens throughout the weekend, where participants will be able to try out their new moves.

Saturday's sessions take place from 12pm to 6pm and will feature dance classes followed by live performances in the same style, including the Swingaree Dancers and Dance Leicester Lindy Hop, with music from KGB Jazz, The Citizens of Swing, Syston Swing Band and the DMU Jazz Band. On Sunday, the action takes place from 12pm to 5pm, and features performances from the Loughborough Swing Society, Leicester University Swing Society, RM Jazz, guitarist Gareth John and the best of soul from Groove and The Bathtub Pings, with a finale by the University of Leicester Big Band.

The event is part of a wide programme of activities and attractions aimed at all ages and tastes which forms the Riverside Festival – the city's biggest free family-friendly festival, and a key part of summer in Leicester. The Riverside Festival is run by Leicester City Council and brings alive Bede Park, the Mile Straight of the River Soar, Castle Park and Western Boulevard, with a combination of live street performances, fun on the river, a funfair, riverside art and a bustling street market. For more details of the Riverside Festival, visit Leicester.gov.uk/festivals or visitleicester.info.

May 2019 Listings

Every Wednesday	Canteen Weekly Wednesdays	New Market Square	12 - 8pm
Saturday 18 May	Leicester Tigers v Bath Rugby	Welford Road	4pm
Monday 20 May	Race Day	Leicester Racecourse	Evening Racing (First race 6.15pm, Last race 8:45pm)
Monday 20 – Sunday 26 May	Bring the Paint	Leicester City Centre	Various
Friday 24 – Saturday 25 May	Army Recruiting Event	Humberstone Gate	8 - 4pm
Monday 27 May	Cricket v Derbyshire	Grace Road	11am
Monday 27 May	Race Day	Leicester Racecourse	Afternoon Racing (First Race - 1.45, Last Race - 5.15)
Tuesday 28 May	Student Race Day	Leicester Racecourse	Afternoon Racing (First race 2:10pm, Last race 5:10pm)
Thursday 30 May – Saturday 1 June	Canteen	New Market Square	5 - 10pm

For more information on Festivals and Events please visit: <http://www.visitleicester.info>

Get in Touch

If you know someone who would like to receive this report, please send contact details to gitte.magielse@leicester.gov.uk.

If you have news about your own business or industry for inclusion in these reports, would like further information or if I can help you in anyway, then please do get in touch. My contact details are as follows:

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