



Big News
November 2006

THE BIG PICTURE

With around £5 billion being invested in a diverse range of regeneration projects over the next couple of years, Leicester city centre is being transformed.

THE BIG PICTURE is a completely joined-up map of the many exciting projects including the new Cultural Quarter, Leicester in Bloom and the £19 million Streets + Spaces scheme.

Over the coming months, you'll begin to see what the new city centre will look like for workers, residents, shoppers and visitors to Leicester, and how the exciting new projects are joining up to create **THE BIG PICTURE** for the city.

This newsletter provides you with an update on the key Leicester City Council projects in the city. For more details of any of these key projects or to see how **THE BIG PICTURE** is progressing, please visit www.leicester.gov.uk/bigpicture or call 0116 252 7000.

Gallowtree Gate ready for Christmas trading

Shops and traders in the city are bracing themselves for the traditional Christmas shopping spree over the next few weeks. In time for this major rush, we are delighted that the transformation of Gallowtree Gate will be completed for the Christmas light switch-on on Sunday 19 November.

The work on Gallowtree Gate and other elements of the Streets + Spaces project are part of Leicester City Council's £19 million investment in the regeneration of the city centre. This work is part of a major campaign to help Leicester regain its position as a major shopping destination and make sure that the whole city centre benefits from the enlarged Shires Shopping Centre.

The new lighting on Gallowtree Gate will be switched on after dusk on Wednesday 22 November, which will coincide with the first of the late night shopping evenings in Leicester. The work will be completed when we install new pink granite seating during the first week of December.

We would like to thank all of you for your patience and understanding over the last few months. The work has taken ten months to complete and has been very difficult to carry out whilst trying to maintain easy access for shoppers, pedestrians and visitors.

You will notice that there are areas near to the Clock Tower and close to Market Place Approach where the work appears to have stopped. This is because these areas and others, including High Street, parts of King Street and Belvoir Street, are currently being designed and will be completed to the same high standards by summer 2008. We will arrange consultation on these designs in the near future.

Halford Street works have also stopped temporarily during the run-up to Christmas but will begin again in the New Year. A temporary asphalt surface has been put in place to allow easier access to shops and businesses during this period.

We hope you will be impressed by the very high quality of work on Gallowtree Gate – work that has already attracted praise from national construction experts. It is our intention to provide trees in other areas of the city including High Street and Market Street Approach.

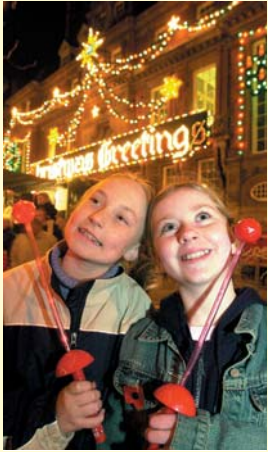
We will also be stopping work in Market Street from 19 November until 9 January 2007. The laying of the granite surface will start at the Horsefair Street end of Market Street shortly after this date. Similarly, work on Hotel Street will start early in January 2007.



Leicester
City Council

**Changing our city
for good**

The official start to Christmas in Leicester



Christmas comes alive in the city centre when the Christmas lights are switched on in Town Hall Square at 4.30pm on Sunday 19 November. Children's favourite characters, Noddy and Big Ears, will join the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress on stage at this much-anticipated annual event.

Throughout the event, the stage will host an exciting programme of live entertainment from local music groups and Leicester Sound will be providing compères to help the evening go with a swing. The square will take on an even more magical feel with stilt walkers roaming around as Jack Frost, the Ice Queen and a run-away Christmas Tree Fairy. There is also an outdoor performance area within a forest of Christmas trees with white twinkly lights, surrounded by an Arctic landscape.

In the performance area there will be live entertainment for all to enjoy. Performers will include pupils from local schools, local musicians and children's entertainers. The traditional nativity scene and a Noddy tableau will be on display for visitors to enjoy and there will also be an outdoor café selling hot food and drinks.

The activities in the square will run from 20 November until 24 December, beginning at 12 noon each day. For further details of these activities and

events, please contact the city council Festivals Unit on 0116 299 5982 or email festivals@leicester.gov.uk.

For more details on the 'Big Festive Season' in Leicester, visit www.leicester.gov.uk/bigpicture and follow the festive link.



Making Leicester a brighter place to live and work



Over spring and summer this year, you will have seen the results of the extensive work conducted by city council staff to spruce up the city's parks and streets. As well as improving the quality of life for people in the city and brightening up the urban environment, this dedication has also been recognised and rewarded with

Leicester winning a silver achievement award at the 2006 Britain in Bloom UK Finals.

The city took the award in the urban regeneration category of the contest, run by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) at a ceremony held in Perth, Scotland. We also won a silver gilt medal in the urban regeneration category of the regional East Midlands in Bloom contest, for the second year running.

Magnificent new home for theatre and performing arts



Construction of the iconic Performing Arts Centre started in June 2005 and when it opens in 2008, it will be one of the most exciting venues in the UK. To date, 71 construction weeks have been completed with a further 60 weeks remaining to complete construction of the building. Most of the structural elements of the building are now finished and glazing work to the Rutland Street elevation is due to start this month.

Public transport underpins regeneration programme

One essential requirement of the regeneration of Leicester is that the city's public transport system matches the expectations of residents, shoppers, workers and visitors. To support this drive for quality, St Margaret's Bus Station is also receiving a much-needed facelift.



The new-look bus station will have comfier seating, improved travel information and customer services. Work began on 16 January 2006 with the installation of new seats on Gravel Street. Further works will take place over the next few months.

Regeneration partner update

Highcross Quarter development continues at a pace

Highcross Quarter, Leicester's £350 million retail, residential, leisure and dining development, based around the existing Shires Shopping Centre, continues to rise out of the ground at a pace and is on schedule to open during the autumn of 2008.

Building activity increases in the city

Leicester's potential is being realised as building activity increases throughout the city. On-site work is well under way in four out of five key areas linked to Leicester Regeneration Company's masterplan. More than 20 sites are at the planning application stage or beyond, many of them with construction in progress bringing forward housing, leisure and job opportunities for the people of Leicester. For further information on the city's transformation, visit the Leicester Regeneration Company website at www.leicesterregeneration.co.uk.

For further details on THE BIG PICTURE, visit www.leicester.gov.uk/bigpicture or call 0116 252 7000

Printed on 100% post consumer waste recycled paper