

Recent Achievements and Current Activities: Place Marketing and Strategic Tourism

Paid District Activity

North West Leicestershire

The Visit Leicester team supported North West Leicestershire in a series of dedicated, targeted campaigns using UKSPF funding to develop a joined-up offer for the district and promote across the summer, autumn, and winter.

The summer campaign focused on attractions and experiences, then heritage to tie in with their Hello Heritage festival. This campaign **reached more than 473,000 people** and drove more than **31,500 quality views** of the target pages.

The autumn and winter campaigns covered the region's towns, Halloween events, and Christmas activities. These **reached more than 362,800 people**, with more than **15,000 quality views** of the target pages. All these phases of the campaign saw a cost per click which was lower than other similar campaigns.

Blaby District

Blaby District worked with the Visit Leicester team on two paid campaigns, firstly supporting the Victory Show with dedicated blogs, a paid social element and Influencer engagement from Cool As Leicester and Lauren in Leicester (combined reach of 31,900).

The paid element of the campaign **reached more than 112,000 people**, with **8,515 clicks to the Visit Leicester blog**. Thanks to extra organic promotion on the Visit Leicester Newsletter and website, the blog received 10,049 views and was the most popular page on the website during July and August.

The Show itself saw 18,000 visitors over the weekend and remains the UK's largest WWII recreation event.

Oadby & Wigston

The Visit Leicester team successfully bid for a UKSPF award from Oadby & Wigston District Council to support them with event promotion high streets and retail, plus a wrapped up marketing offer for the district.

A paid social media campaign was run throughout August to promote the Oadby Food Festival. This **reached 287,000 people resulting in 6,261 views of the target blog** on the Visit Leicester website. Thanks to extra promotion the blog received 7,021 views making it the second most popular page on the site, ranking above the Home Page and What's On page. The awareness campaign was incredibly successful with **the Oadby Food Festival registering 3,598 visitors with some businesses reporting a 3x increase in takings**.

During the 1.5 months of the campaign the increased focus helped to boost views of Oadby related pages on the Visit Leicester website by well over 250% on the previous 1.5 months.

A Second paid social campaign was run around Christmas events in the district, which reached more than 31,000 people. The Christmas events blog received 1,962 views.

Work with Oadby & Wigston on the Retail and green spaces element of their campaign continues into 2026.

Seasonal Campaigns and Content

For summer 2025 the Visit Leicester team created a sustained and successful campaign wrapping up key events across the county from June through to September. Summer in Leicestershire was a

fully organic campaign with no budget behind it. Idents were designed in house by the team, and all social media activity was organic.



- Key event pages on the website over the summer received more than 62,000 views.
- Facebook engagement over the summer was excellent with **organic views of 2.7 million** across July and August and a total of **20,336 content interactions** (likes, comments and shares), which included 13,633 from people who do not follow Visit Leicester
- Brand new 'what's on this weekend' Reels, mostly aimed at Instagram, but also used on other platforms were viewed by an average of 4,216 people per week, with the most popular being viewed more than 11,000 times.
- Posting on the [R/Leicester Reddit platform](#) gained great interaction and feedback from users of the platform with **average views of 6,525 people** per week

Autumn events were wrapped up similarly, with Halloween and Bonfire events a focus for the campaigns. The Leicestershire Fireworks blog received more than 16,000 views and Halloween events over 6,300 views.



Christmas activity

Wrap ups of key activities across the county and in the districts proved hugely successful



The top 5 blogs on the Visit Leicester website over the Christmas period were all Leicestershire focused, showing a real appetite for this type of content with nearly 33,000 views in total.

Most Viewed Blogs	
Blog Page	Views ▾
1. Meet Santa in Leicestershire - Visit Leicester	10,305
2. Christmas in Blaby District - Visit Leicester	9,246
3. Christmas in National Forest Leicestershire - Visit Leicester	7,519
4. A wonderful Christmas in Leicestershire - Visit Leicester	4,003
5. Christmas in Oadby & Wigston - Visit Leicester	1,812

Advertising was purchased in both the Guardian and Telegraph Christmas feature sections reaching a huge national audience and showcasing key attractions including the great Central Railway, Twycross Zoo and Belvoir Castle.

Date • Promotional Content Section title Newspaper Living360 1

Christmas magic in Leicestershire

This holiday season, prepare for a fantastic Christmas in a city and county brimming with festive cheer

Christmas in Leicester starts from 19 November, when the Christmas lights are turned on. You can get your skates on at the Real Ice Rink, see the city's sparkling Christmas lights from the Wheel of Light and explore the Christmas market. It's also a festive time on stage with an award-winning production of *The Sound of Music* at the Curve Theatre and *Dick Whittington* in panto at De Montfort Hall. With pop-up music performances and late-night shopping every Wednesday, Leicester should be on your destination list this Christmas.

The fun doesn't stop there, as a whole host of fantastic events and attractions get the festive season roaring in gear. And roars are the order of the day (or night) at Twycross Zoo, as the evenings will be illuminated by its Lanterns of the Wild event. Step into glowing animal worlds and habitats as you explore a mile of life-size animal lanterns and the world's first Gruffalo lantern experience.

Get in the mood at Belvoir Castle's Magical Night Before Christmas. The Regency castle, which doubled for Windsor Castle in Netflix's *The Crown*, will be transformed with stunning lights, beautifully decorated trees and themed decorations, alongside wonderful Christmas events and fun for all the family.

Hop onto the Santa Express at the Great Central Railway. Ride in a heritage steam train through the Leicestershire countryside for an enchanting meeting with Father Christmas and his elves. You can also enjoy a festive fine dining experience on the train to celebrate the season.

With a host of other experiences, including a Tudor Christmas at the 1620s House, a festive Tractor Run, Christmas fairs, concerts, pantos and a Winter Wonderland at the National Forest's Conkers attraction, Leicestershire should be your top choice for a Christmas break.

Head to visitleicester.info/christmas for all the info.





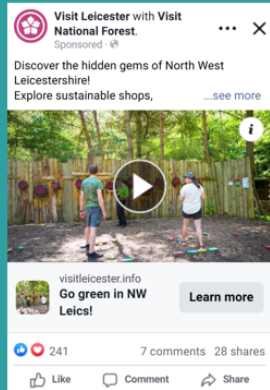
Regenerative Tourism Campaign

The Green Days, Green Ways, Green Stays campaign launched in Spring 2025, with 12 case studies across three districts. Paid social media campaigns were undertaken using UKSPF funding from Harborough, Blaby and North West Leicestershire district councils. The campaign **reached more than 678,000 people** through the paid campaigns, with **more than 21,200 quality views** of the Visit Leicester target webpages for the districts. Results are set out in the report screenshots below.

North West Leicestershire

North-West Leicestershire – UKSPF Sustainable Tourism Project

23 March – 21 April



Paid post utilised the North-West Leicestershire sustainable tourism video to maximise engagement.

All case study pages received increased viewership, with Field Sport UK and Cattows Farm performing best.

Campaign Stats:

Reach	Clicks
205,922	6,799
Impressions	Cost Per Click
443,702	£0.24

Landing Page Views

5,584

Post Reactions:

241 reactions

7 comments

28 shares

Meaningful Video Views (social media)

7,741

Views to Campaign Pages

7,922



Harborough

Harborough – UKSPF Regenerative Tourism Project

3 April – 3 May



Paid post utilised created assets in carousel post format.

All case study pages received increased viewership, with Cafe Ventoux page performing best.

Campaign Stats:

Reach	Clicks
203,669	9,555
Impressions	Cost Per Click
847,099	£0.17

Landing Page Views

8,653

Post Reactions:

241 reactions

7 comments

28 shares


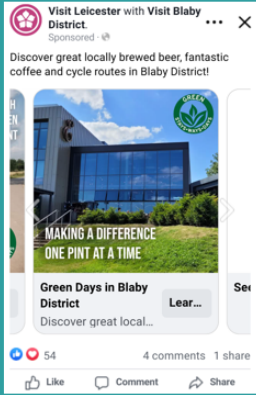
Views to Campaign Pages

12,815



Blaby

Blaby – UKSPF Regenerative Tourism Project 14 April – 10 May





Campaign Stats:

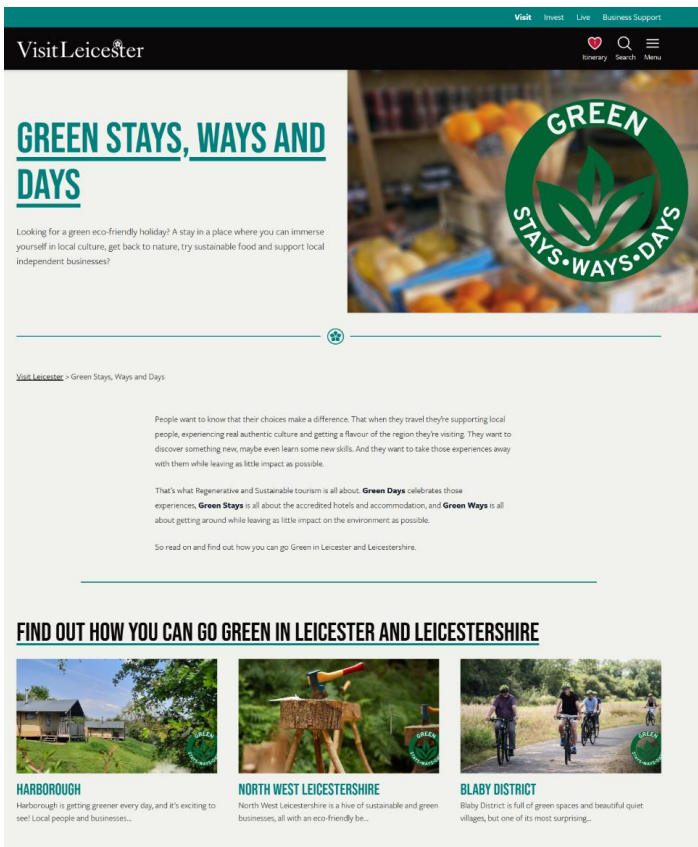
Reach	Clicks
268,734	7,681
Impressions	Cost Per Click
1,046,987	£0.21
Landing Page Views	
7,012	
Post Reactions:	
54 reactions	
4 comments	
1 shares	
Views to Campaign Pages	
7,810	

Paid post utilised created assets in carousel post format.

Both case study pages received increased viewership, with similar viewing and engagement time figures.



The content created for this campaign can be found on the Green Stays, Ways and Days section of the Visit Leicester website - <https://visitleicester.info/green/> Attached below is a screenshot of the page, to give an idea of the layout and campaign branding.



Commercial Activity

Following the initial year of commercial activity in 2024/5, the team refined the commercial packages based on performance and insights from potential and existing customers. While several agreements were secured, certain options were less desired, which led to a review of the packages. These insights informed a new set of packages for businesses, which were officially relaunched in November. These are publicly available to view on the Business Support page on Visit Leicester - <https://visitleicester.info/business-support/>

Visit Leicester offers four commercial packages that aim to enhance visibility for businesses. The Partnership Package (£1,500+) provides longer-term, high-impact digital promotion for major attractions and venues. The Event Support Package (£500) delivers targeted promotion through web listings, newsletters, and social media to drive ticket sales.

The Restaurant Promotion Package (£300) focuses on high-quality content creation, including professional reels and a search optimised web page. Finally, the Business Support Package (£500, with a £275 small business discount) offers organic social media features and permanent search-optimised web listings to boost the audience reach for these businesses.

Destination Management Website

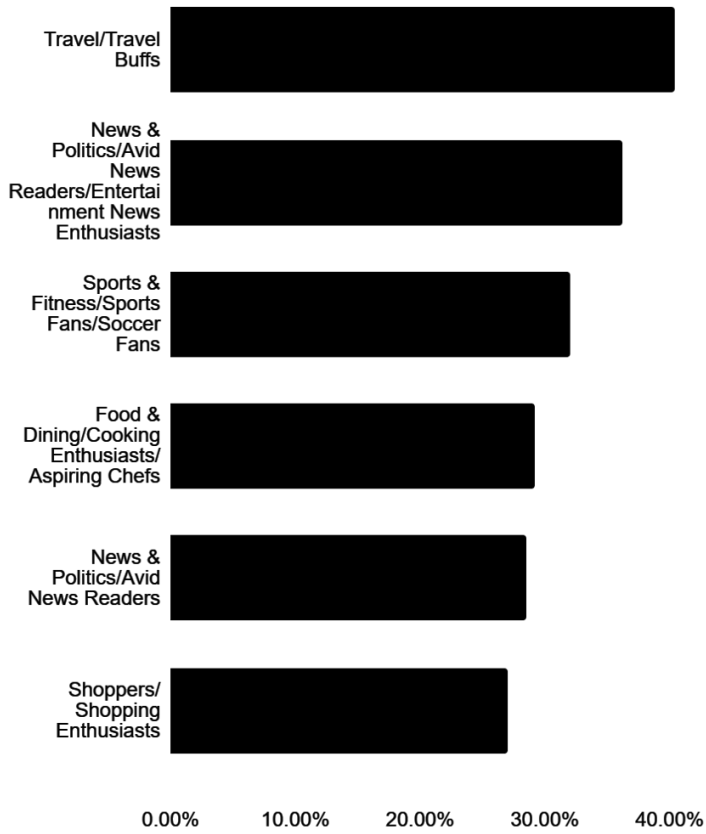
Following the website launch in May, a discrepancy in Google Analytics data occurred due to data not being collected on those who refused cookies, to comply with GDPR. Users who declined tracking cookies were not recorded, leading to a significant decrease in reported traffic compared to the previous site. This is a common challenge for modern websites that must prioritise privacy and user consent.

To address this gap, Google Analytics uses modelling that estimates missing data once certain thresholds are met. However, because these thresholds were not immediately active, user figures collected between 15 May, and 10 July were significantly under-reported. This period of measurement inaccuracy makes year-on-year performance comparisons difficult.

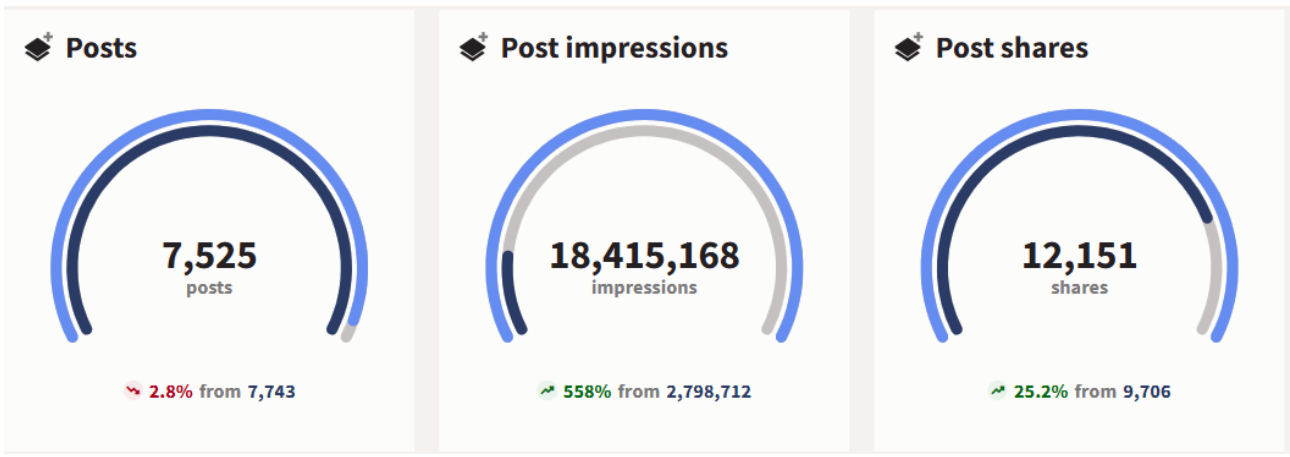
Despite the tracking discrepancies, the active user count remained consistent with previous performance levels. In 2023, the website recorded 731,506 users over the 12-month period. For the current year, the figure reached 719,685 users, demonstrating stable engagement even when accounting for the data collection gaps earlier in the year.

The Place Marketing Team uses Google Analytics to track geographical reach achieved across the country. The top ten locations for user engagement include Leicester, London, Birmingham, Bath, Norwich, Wolverhampton, Milton Keynes, Loughborough, Coventry, and Sheffield, in descending order of users.

New tracking tools within Google Analytics allow for a detailed analysis of user behaviour and audience demographics. As illustrated in the supporting data, the website is successfully attracting the intended target audience, specifically those interested in travel, entertainment, sport, food, and shopping. The team will continue to monitor these trends to ensure that content and marketing strategies are always aligned with these user interests.



Audience Growth on Social Media



Media & PR

Ten county related press releases were issued in 2025. Several journalist visits were arranged including features in the Guardian, Daily Express and Daily Mirror.



Jason Doyle and his family spent five days exploring Leicestershire and were amazed at the range on offer - from large-scale family attractions, to history and culture, and numerous free activities and events available throughout the summer.

VIEW By Jason Doyle

00, 23 Jun 2025 | UPDATED 13:20, 8 JUL 2025

The visits by influencers were a fantastic way to highlight Leicester and Leicestershire to a wider audience. Mr & Mrs Yorkshire's visit to Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe received 66,000 views on YouTube, with their visit to Twycross Zoo watched 11,000 times



I try a HUGE PORK PIE PLATTER!

Mr and Mrs Yorkshire 97.9K subscribers [Join](#) [3.5K](#) [Share](#) [Save](#) [Clip](#) [...](#)

Group Travel



For the third year running Leicester and Leicestershire were finalists as Best UK Destination for Groups at the Group Leisure and Travel Awards 2025.

We promoted Leicestershire and ran a competition in the Group Travel magazine and distributed a press release and online content to promote our status as finalists.

Leicester
visitleicester.info

PRESS RELEASE

13 March 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Leicester and Leicestershire shortlisted as best UK destination for groups

City and county voted by readers of Group Leisure & Travel magazine for major national group travel award

Please note this is an updated version of the story previously issued on 12.03.25

Visit Leicester, the organisation that promotes Leicester and Leicestershire as a tourism destination has been shortlisted as the 'Best UK Destination' in the Group Leisure & Travel Awards 2025. These are the only national awards for group travel that recognise the very best providers, attractions and destinations for groups.

Group Leisure & Travel magazine is the UK's number one magazine for group travel organisers and coach operators. The magazine's readers have been nominating the best attractions, destinations, suppliers and experiences for groups, and have shortlisted Leicester and Leicestershire as a finalist.



Leicester and Leicestershire are up against Bristol, County Durham, Isle of Wight, Liverpool, London and Wiltshire in the best UK Destination Category. The voting form is available from 5 March to 27 April for readers, group travel organisers and coach/tour operators to vote for their favourite destination at www.groupleisureandtravel.com/awards/vote

Belvoir Castle, near Melton Mowbray has also been shortlisted for Best Historic Attraction or Venue.

The results will be exclusively announced at the Group Leisure & Travel Awards black-tie dinner and ceremony on the evening of Thursday 26 June at the five-star Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, London.

Mike Denby, Director of Inward investment and Place Marketing at Visit Leicester, said: "We are thrilled to be shortlisted for this prestigious award for a third year. Our team has worked hard over the last few years to raise awareness amongst group travel organisers about the fantastic experiences that await them when travelling to Leicester and Leicestershire. The area is filled with award winning attractions and is easily accessed by road or rail.

"We would encourage group travel organisers to visit Leicester and Leicestershire where they can discover a wealth of experiences from food and wine tours, heritage and history, shopping, culture and arts and the great outdoors, with over 70 miles of waterways and the 200 square mile National Forest. Leicester is also a coach friendly city with a number of drop off and parking locations."

You can download a copy of the group travel guide for Leicester and Leicestershire, find more group travel information, suggested itineraries and coach parking information on the Visit Leicester website.

Full size image of Visit Leicester team available [here](#).



Excursions Show 1 February 2025



Group Travel Adverts

12
Leicestershire 13

Regions Leicestershire

This month we visit the group-friendly destinations of Leicestershire, Seaside Resorts, Wales, Yorkshire and Tunbridge Wells

Bring your group to the birthplace of UK tourism. Travel pioneer Thomas Cook ran his first railway excursion in Leicestershire and Leicestershire in 1841, positioning the destination as the birthplace of modern tourism.

The destination has continued to attract visitors from all over the UK and beyond. By bringing your group to Leicestershire and Leicestershire, you can uncover the story of a city and county with over 2,000 years of history, a traditional 'taste' of England and a landscape of woodland and waterways perfect for gentle adventures.

Leicester and Leicestershire tell some of England's most unique and unusual stories. The area is famous for being connected to one of the bloodiest battles in English history and for the gravesite where, over 500 years later, King Richard III's remains were discovered beneath a city car park.

Leicestershire also offers an authentic taste of England. The ancient market town of Melton Mowbray claims the title of Rural Capital of Food through its association with pork pie and Stilton cheese. Through tours and activities like traditional pork pie making, you can experience the best of the region's food and drink and discover a little of its fascinating history.

With over 70 miles of waterways and a vast National Forest to explore, there are plenty of opportunities for gentle adventures and fresh air. On the following pages, we bring you two group travel-trade-themed itineraries, perfect for your next group visit to this stunning area of the East Midlands. So sit back, relax, and get planning your next memorable Leicestershire tour.

Did you know?
Leicester market is the largest outdoor covered market in Europe

INFORMATION

Coach Parking: For coach operators visiting Leicester, visit www.visitleicester.info/visitor-information/coach-parking info. For more group-friendly ideas and inspiration including accommodation choices, go to www.visitleicester.info

To request a copy of the Group Travel Guide for Leicester and Leicestershire, contact the Visit Leicester Information Centre on 0116 299 4444 or email info@visitleicester.info



Article supplied by Visit Leicester
AERIAL VIEW OF LEICESTER CATHEDRAL IN LEICESTER, A CITY IN ENGLAND'S EAST MIDLANDS REGION, UK. IMAGE BY ALEXEY FLORENKO FROM SHUTTERSTOCK

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE

A DESTINATION OF DISCOVERY FOR GROUPS

DISCOVER AN AREA WITH OVER 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY THAT TELLS SOME OF ENGLAND'S MOST UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL STORIES



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LEICESTER GUILDHALL



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