

Diwali

L E I C E S T E R 2 0 2 1



Leicester
visitleicester.info

#DiwaliLeicester

Sponsored by



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER



We've always existed to improve lives, and our motto
ut vitam habeant (so that they may have life) drives us.

In our 100th year, we are delighted to sponsor
Leicester's Diwali celebrations and wish all celebrating love,
laughter and joy.

As Citizens of Change we believe in the transformative power
of communities coming together and are witness to how it
changes lives for the better.

www.le.ac.uk



@uniofleicester

Happy Diwali



Leicester is one of the most vibrant, culturally diverse and inclusive cities in the country and we take huge pride in hosting some of the best Diwali celebrations in the UK and one of the biggest events outside of India.

The outbreak of coronavirus unfortunately meant that Diwali was a very different experience last year with events marked virtually, but we were determined to bring the celebrations back to the streets of Leicester while also ensuring public safety - and it gives us great pleasure to be hosting one of the main attractions in the city's festival calendar once again.

Diwali is a time for people to come together in a spirit of friendship and greater understanding and we are delighted that the new format will enable people to gather with family and friends, from within and beyond Leicester, to enjoy the sights and sounds of our Diwali celebrations at any point without the need to congregate in one space.

We would like to thank all of those who have worked to ensure that our Diwali celebrations are a safe and successful event, particularly the Leicester Hindu Festival Council, Curve, the programming partners, Leicestershire Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Leicester Fire and Rescue Service, local ward councillors and city council departments involved.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Diwali.

Sir Peter Soulsby
City Mayor

Piara Singh Clair MBE
Deputy City Mayor

For further information on Diwali in Leicester:

W: visitleicester.info

E: info@visitleicester.info

T: 0116 299 4444



Leicester
City Council

What is Diwali

Diwali is an ancient festival celebrated by **Hindus, Sikhs** and **Jains** all over the world. It represents the universal messages of good over evil, of truth over falsehood and of light shining in the dark of the year. It is traditionally a time for exchanging gifts, friendship, peace, and goodwill to all.

For **Hindus**, Diwali represents the start of the New Year. It also marks the start of winter. Diwali honours **Lord Rama** and his wife **Sita** returning to their kingdom of Ayodhya, following Rama and **Hanuman's** victory over the demon King Ravana and rescue of Sita from his evil clutches.

Each day leading up to Diwali has a different meaning and these also vary between regions or communities.

The first day marks the start of Diwali. It is dedicated to the worship of the **Goddess Lakshmi** who provides prosperity. On the second, there is a focus on abolishing evil and the **Goddess Kali** is worshipped.

On the third, Diwali day, clay lamps (called **divas**) and candles are lit in temples and houses, and fireworks are let off, giving Diwali its name of **Festival of Lights**. People also clean and decorate their homes with Rangoli (traditional colourful folk patterns), buy new clothes, and give each other gifts and sweets.

On the fourth, it is the start of the New Year (**Nutan Varsh**) and businesses traditionally open new accounts. The fifth day is important to Hindus as it celebrates the relationship between brothers and sisters. People seek blessings at Diwali

from **Lakshmi**, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, and Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles.

For **Sikhs**, Diwali celebrates the release of the sixth guru, **Guru Hargobind Ji**, and 52 Hindu Rajas (kings) from imprisonment. Guru Hargobind Ji was held for 40 days at the Gwalior Fortress along with the Rajas, who had been deprived of their kingdoms and were badly treated. When the time came for the Guru's release, he refused to leave unless the Rajas were also set free.

The condition imposed on him was that only those Rajas that could hold onto the Guru's robe would be set free. Guru Hargobind Ji had a special robe made with 52 khalia (tapers) so that each of the Rajas could walk free with him. He was then given the name '**Bandhi Chhorr**', the deliverer of prisoners.

In India, Sikhs celebrate by lighting candles and divas (clay lamps) in houses and on the Sarowar – the sacred water which surrounds the Golden Temple, Amritsar. Sikhs in Leicester celebrate in Gurdwaras (temples).

For **Jains**, followers of one of India's most ancient religions, Diwali marks the anniversary of the attainment of **Moksha**, the final liberation of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth, by Lord **Mahavir**. On this day, Jains celebrate this permanent happiness of the soul and remember Lord Mahavir's last sermon, which was given on Diwali day, before his soul left his body and was liberated.

Diwali in Leicester

Wheel of Light

Friday 22 October –
Sunday 7 November

Diwali Lights Switch-On

Sunday 24 October
5.30pm – 8.30pm
Diwali Village 3pm – 9pm

Diwali Day

Thursday 4 November
5.30pm – 8.30pm
Diwali Village 3pm – 9pm

for giant puppets Hanuman and Ravana as they roam Belgrave Road in a battle over good and evil. On Diwali Day a Global Rainbow will beam light across the city and on both days Cossington Street Recreation Ground will host a Diwali Village featuring food, stalls and funfair rides.

This year sees the return of the Diwali Wheel of Light, located on Belgrave Road. There is also a fantastic selection of events taking place around the city during Diwali Leicester, find out more at visitleicester.info/diwali

Leicester's annual Diwali celebrations are returning to the city's streets this year, with a new approach that makes public safety a priority.

In a change to previous years, the main entertainment stage, usually sited near to the Belgrave roundabout, will be replaced by a giant screen showing a recorded cultural programme. A second giant screen will be located on the junction with Wand Street and a third screen will be located on Cossington Street Recreation Ground.

The cultural programme featuring dance, music and religious ceremony will be shown on the giant screens every hour from 5.30pm to 8.30pm, with the lights turned on at 6.30pm. Then watch as the lights of Diwali come to life with a trio of fire performers, Helter Skelter Arts.

This year, the annual firework displays will be replaced with a warm and light Fire Garden on Cossington Street Recreation Ground. During the switch-on look out



CORONAVIRUS IS STILL A DANGER

Most people seriously ill in hospital with Covid-19 haven't been vaccinated.

Don't put yourself at risk this winter.

Get your jabs now.

Book your jabs online at:
www.nhs.uk





Leicestershire Police wish you a happy and joyful Diwali.

Visit www.celebratesafely.com for advice and guidance about ways to stay safe during the celebrations.

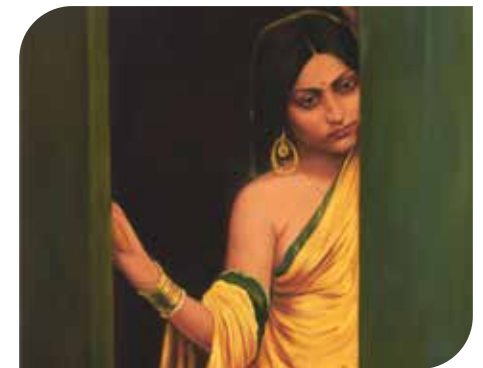


Leicestershire
Police
Protecting our communities

Painting Freedom

Indian Modernism and its three Rebels

On now until 21 November 2021
Leicester Museum & Art Gallery



The largest exhibition ever held in the United Kingdom of artworks from this defining period of Indian modern art, 1870 - 1950. With over 100 rarely seen works, including items displayed for the first time from private collections, and important loans from the British Museum, this is a must-see exhibition!

Painting Freedom takes the viewer on a journey covering early Bengal oils, Kalighat paintings, and the Bengal School, before presenting an extensive coverage of the three rebels who helped define this quest for cultural independence: Hemen Mazumdar, Jamini Roy and Rabindranath Tagore.

Free admission, the museum is open
Monday to Friday: 11am - 4.30pm,
Saturday and Sunday: 11am - 5pm.
leicestermuseums.org/paintingfreedom

There are plenty of other
events taking place across the
city during Diwali Leicester, for
further information please go
to visitleicester.info



Key Information

 Big Screen Locations



Fire Garden Display

Diwali Lights Switch On

Sunday 24 October, 5.30pm to 8.30pm

Diwali Day

Thursday 4 November, 5.30pm to 8.30pm

Pre-recorded cultural programme will be shown on the big screens every hour.

Diwali Village closes at 9.00pm

Please note that times are approximate and Leicester City Council reserves the right to cancel events due to health or safety reasons.

ABBEY PARK

Bandstand

Boating Lake

P

Mooring Point

GOLDEN MILE



Wheel of Light

GOLDEN MILE

Cossington Swimming Pool

Diwali Village /
Cossington
Recreation
Ground



Peepul Enterprise

Catherine Street

Uncover the Story of Leicester

Leicester is the perfect place for a day trip, with more and more people choosing to stay for a little longer and experience what our city and county have to offer. We're inviting visitors near and far to Uncover The Story of what makes Leicester special.

Stepping into Leicester for the first time, you're joining a 2,000 year history, starting when the Romans settled by the River Soar. Visitors continued to choose Leicester as a home, from the Saxons and Vikings through Normans, Tudors and Victorians, all the way to more recent arrivals from the Indian subcontinent and across Europe.

Each of these new arrivals brought their unique culture, art, food and personality, contributing to our diverse and vibrant city. Leicester today is a friendly place, bursting with heritage and culture, wonderful attractions, top restaurants and an impressive night life.

Packed with places to visit

While the remarkable discovery of King Richard III may be Leicester's best-known story, the city and county have many other best-kept secrets. Find out why we are known as Space City by visiting the award winning **National Space Centre**, discover a wealth of intriguing royal connections within the city at the **King Richard III Visitor Centre**, and out in our market towns such as **Melton Mowbray** where you can also sample incredible local cuisine.



The city has a selection of fantastic free museums, including **Leicester Museum and Art Gallery** which features dinosaurs, a significant Ancient Egyptian collection, the largest collection of German expressionist art in the UK and a collection of Picasso ceramics. A stone's throw away you'll find **Newarke Houses Museum** for a more hands-on experience recreating the social history of Leicester.

Out in Leicestershire find hidden treasures and great attractions that will leave you wanting more. Go ape at **Twycross Zoo**, experience the UK's national dive centre at **Stoney Cove** or visit pretty cottages like the **1620s House** or **Stoneywell** tucked away in the countryside.

The city is rightly famous for its sporting achievements, from the home of Premier League miracle workers and current FA Cup champions **Leicester City** to the most successful rugby club in English history,

Leicester Tigers. Leicestershire County Cricket Club is a short journey from the city centre and the **Leicester Riders** basketball team can be found at the Morningside Arena, which also host international darts and snooker tournaments.

Leicester's theatrical traditions are in evidence at **Curve, the Y and Little Theatre**. The famous **Golden Mile** is at the centre of the Diwali festivities and is a vibrant marketplace for Indian food, spices, fashion and jewellery.

Great places to stay

Book an overnight stay in this welcoming city, and you'll be sleeping in the place where Thomas Cook dreamt up the first package holiday. You're spoilt for choice with large hotels such as the **Novotel** near the **Highcross**, the **Premier Inn** next to the train station or the **Holiday Inn** in the city centre.

If you're after a more historic experience, then the **City Rooms** right near the **Leicester Market** is ideal, or located in Braunstone Park, **Winstanley House** offers top notch rooms in an old school building with the incredible **Black Iron restaurant** attached.

Back in the city, **St Martin's Lodge** is a fully renovated Grade II listed Georgian building with many original features or you could choose the **Belmont Hotel** on the leafy Victorian promenade New Walk. There are also the 4 star **Marriott Hotel** and **Hilton** near Junction 21 of the M1.

Head to visitleicester.info/uncoverthestory to start your journey

Look out for a Diwali competition for your chance to win amazing prizes! Want some inspiration for a Diwali gift for your loved ones? Then head to the Diwali gift ideas on visitleicester.info

Elephant Atta wishes Leicester a Very Happy Diwali

Official Sponsors of the Leicester Wheel of Light.
Come and visit us to sample our famous Chapizzas made with Vitamin D Atta!

Travel

Park & Ride

Back by popular demand, the Diwali Park & Ride service will be operating for both the Switch-On and Diwali Day. This will run from the Birstall Park & Ride site, located at LE4 4NN, and Abbey Park Road to enable visitors to attend the event without having to find a parking space.

For Diwali Lights Switch-On, Sunday 24 October and Diwali Day, Thursday 4 November services will run from Birstall Park & Ride site to Abbey Park Road from 4pm until 8pm. Return journeys will run from Abbey Park Road starting at 8.30pm, and the last bus will leave at 10pm.

The cost will be £4 per person for a return journey or £6 for a group of up to five people travelling in a car together. The cost for concessionary pass holders is £1 for a return journey. Park & Ride Season Tickets will not be valid.

Choose how you move

For the most up to date information on public transport, walking and cycling routes and car shares, please visit choosehowyoumove.co.uk Temporary bike park on site.



Car parking

Car parking spaces in and around the area will be limited during the event; therefore visitors are positively encouraged to use public transport to travel to and from the city centre. There will be limited spaces available for blue badge holders on a first come first served basis in the B&M car park access from Belgrave Circle.

A 24-hour NCP car park is situated in Abbey Street, which is approximately a three minute walk from bus stops and approximately a 15 minute walk from the event. 24-hour parking is also available at the Haymarket Centre, and also at Lee Circle, which are approximately a 15 minute walk from the event.

There are other car parks a little further out from the ones mentioned, These are Phoenix Square, Upper Brown Street Car Park, Dover Street and Newarke Street.

For more information about travelling by bus, contact Traveline **0871 200 2233** or traveline.info. For National Rail enquiries, telephone **08457 484 950**. Further information about travelling to Leicester is at visitleicester.info

Bus services

The bus services below are those that will travel, or have stops near to, Belgrave Road. Bus services will continue to operate normally on Abbey Park Road and Belgrave Gate to facilitate attendance at the events.

2	(Kinchbus)	Loughborough	Departs Gravel Street	Stand BP
4	(First)	Rushey Mead	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HR
5	(Arriva)	East Goscote	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HQ
6	(Arriva)	Syston	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HP
25	(First)	Beaumont Leys	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HT
26	(First)	Beaumont Leys	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HV
54	(First)	Beaumont Leys	Departs Haymarket Bus Station	Stand HY
126/7	(Arriva)	Shepshed/Loughborough	Departs Abbey Street	Stand BK

Bus Diversions

When Belgrave Road is closed to traffic bus services will divert as follows:

Services to **4** to Rushey Mead, **6** to Thurmaston and **5, 5A** to Melton will use Marfitt Street and Catherine Street. Services to **25/6** and **54** to Beaumont Leys/Mowmacre Hill and **2 & 126/7** to Loughborough will use Abbey Lane.

The nearest point that buses will be able to access Belgrave Road are Belgrave Roundabout and Melton Road at Marfitt Street.

I FEEL STRONGER IN MYSELF SINCE HAVING SUPPORT

#YouAreNotAlone

IF YOU ARE BEING HURT IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP CALL THE UAVA HELPLINE FOR SUPPORT IN YOUR LANGUAGE

0808 80 200 28

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 999

UNITED AGAINST VIOLENCE & ABUSE

Road Closures

**Diwali Lights Switch-On : Sunday 24 October and
Diwali Day : Thursday 4 November**

Phase 1

Belgrave Road will be partially closed between Belgrave Circle and Garfield Street from 2pm to enable the screens to be set up. Vehicles will still be able to access the rest of Belgrave Road from the Melton Road/Loughborough Road end until 5pm. Please be aware this will cause delays for vehicles getting into and exiting the area.

Phase 2

A full closure of Belgrave Road and the junctions with its side roads will be in place from 5pm until approximately 9.30pm, during which time vehicles will not have any access.

Please note that on both dates the Emergency Services and Leicester City Council will need to maintain two clear routes through the Belgrave area for emergency vehicles.

The routes are: Loughborough Road, Holden Street, Ross Walk, MacDonald Road, Hildyard Road, Marjorie Street, Abbey Park Street, Harrison Road, Surrey Street, Doncaster Road, Cossington Street, Rothley Street, Rendell Road and Portsmouth Road.

Any vehicles parked on these roads, which will be marked on both sides with 'No Waiting' cones, between 6am and 10pm on Sunday 24 October and Thursday 4 November will be ticketed and towed away. Doncaster Road will have the existing one-way order suspended for both Diwali events.

In addition, any vehicle causing an obstruction on any road in the Belgrave Area will also be ticketed and towed away. Any vehicle parked in contravention of a parking restriction, temporary parking restriction, causing obstruction or dangerously parked will be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice and will be towed away to a secure compound.

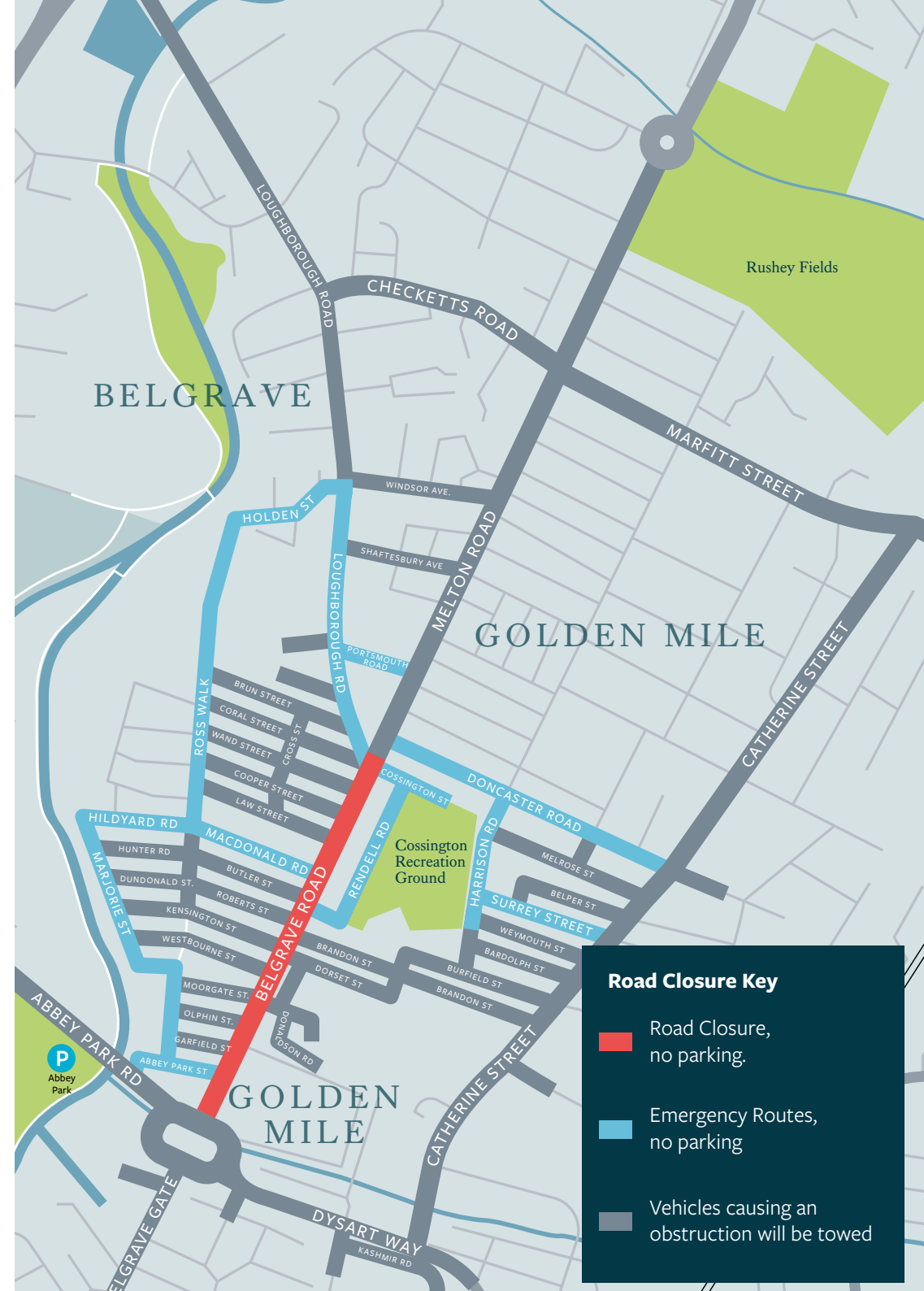
You will also incur costs for the vehicle being towed to the recovery company. It is important that you adhere to signs, lines and cones in place for this event to avoid any penalties.

Health and safety

In the interests of public safety, members of the public are asked not to bring fireworks to the celebrations. The use of fireworks in a public area will not be tolerated and will be reported to the police.

Leicestershire Police will have mobile awareness units at this year's events, highlighting the importance of safety during the festive period. The units will be at the Diwali Village on Cossington Street Recreation Ground for the public to pop along to. We would like to thank Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service and Leicestershire Police for their continued support of the Diwali celebrations.

For further information visit:
celebratesafely.com



Road Closure Key

- Road Closure, no parking.
- Emergency Routes, no parking
- Vehicles causing an obstruction will be towed

