



# What's On *festivals* Winter 2023

Leicester  
[visitleicester.info](https://www.visitleicester.info)





## Welcome to Leicester Festivals

Leicester is a unique city and a wonderful place to visit, with a superb range of visitor attractions and shopping that is second to none.

Throughout the year, our city buzzes with amazing festivals and fabulous events and this winter is no exception.

Be dazzled by the city's biggest bonfire and fireworks display at Abbey Park, take part in one of the largest Diwali celebrations outside of India and experience a magical outdoor light trail at Enlightened Leicester.

Explore the history of African and Caribbean communities during Black History Month, watch out for the invasion of giant creatures at Leicester Monsters and take time to reflect at the annual Remembrance Service.

Celebrate the festive season with Christmas in Leicester, make magical memories at Santa's grotto and get your skates on at Jubilee Square's real ice rink.

Laugh along with Leicester Comedy Festival including family fun at UK Kids' Comedy Festival and enjoy great craic at St. Patrick's Day parade...and much more!



**leicesterfestivals**



**leicesterfest**



# Festival highlight

## Abbey Park Bonfire & Firework Display

**Saturday 4 November**

**5pm – 9pm**

**Abbey Park**

Be dazzled by Leicester's biggest bonfire & firework display as Abbey Park once again hosts the city's official firework and bonfire night festivities. Enjoy a fun-packed programme of events for all ages, including live entertainment, music stage with guest appearance by GEM FM's Jo & Sparky, funfair, plenty of hot food stalls and new for 2023, the addition of a licensed bar.

Gates open at 5pm with live music and entertainment at 6pm, followed by the children's firework display and lighting of the bonfire at 6.45pm. The countdown to the main firework display starts at 8pm, with musical entertainment continuing until 9pm.

There will be no cash sales on the gate and all tickets should be purchased in advance. Firework fans are encouraged to buy their tickets early to take advantage of our early bird offers, the best-value way to enjoy the fun!

### **Early Bird Discount: ends 13 October:**

Adult £9

Family ticket (two adults, two children) £26

Group ticket (up to four people) £28

Concessions and under 16s £7.50

### **Advance Tickets: ends 3 November**

Adult £10

Family ticket (two adults, two children) £28

Group ticket (up to four people) £30

Concessions and under 16s £8

### **On the Day: ends 4 November, 2pm**

Adult £15

Family ticket (two adults, two children) £40

Group ticket (up to four people) £40

Concessions and under 16s £10

Children four and under free

Free bike parks on site.

Tickets available from  
**[visitleicester.info](https://visitleicester.info)**





## Black History Month Launch

**Sunday 1 October**

**5pm – 8pm**

**Leicester Guildhall**

Celebrate the launch of Black History Month 2023 with Rum Punch and Poets. Featuring local and international poets, Ty'rone Haughton, Carol Leeming and Cubs the Poet for an evening sharing their reflections, social commentary and creating space for Black joy. Browse artisan stalls, artwork and books celebrating creativity, connection and resilience, as well as a sensational performance by dancer Joseph Thomas showcasing Martin Luther King Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech.

**W: [serendipity-uk.com](https://www.serendipity-uk.com)**



## Black History Month

**October 2023**

**Various locations**

Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage and partners across Leicester host a range of performances, exhibitions, talks and workshops designed to educate, inspire and entertain people of all ages. 2023 is a particularly poignant year for Black history locally, nationally and internationally. It marks the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush and this year's theme of Resistance also strongly influences events throughout October acknowledging the 60th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech and ten years since the founding of the Black Lives Matter movement.

**W: [serendipity-uk.com](https://www.serendipity-uk.com)**



## Leicester Monsters

**Monday 16 – Tuesday 31 October**

**Leicester City Centre**

Prepare for a monstrosly good time, as this city-wide extravaganza transforms Leicester into a playground for giant inflatable glowing monsters! Imagine mesmerizing monsters reaching their claws over rooftops, tentacles bursting wildly through windows, and illuminated spooky sights that will leave you in awe.

Trace a path across the city centre using the map and encounter mischievous monsters at every turn!

**W: [bidleicester.co.uk/leicester-monsters](https://www.bidleicester.co.uk/leicester-monsters)**

# Diwali Wheel of Light

**Friday 13 October – Sunday 12 November**  
**Belgrave Road**

The 110-foot Ferris wheel returns for Diwali Leicester, providing amazing views across the Golden Mile and extra fun to this year's celebrations. Each ride lasts for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, in which you'll rise to a dizzying 110 feet.

## Diwali Lights Switch-On

**Sunday 29 October**

**3pm – 9pm**

**Cossington Street Recreation Ground and Belgrave Road**

Diwali Leicester festivities begin with the illumination of the Diwali lights along Belgrave Road, marking the 40th anniversary of the switch on event in Leicester.

Up to 40,000 people watch the lights switch-on with an evening of entertainment including a vibrant programme of music and dance on the Belgrave Road stage and a fantastic firework display. Don't miss the annual Rangoli exhibition at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre plus food, stalls and funfair rides in the Diwali Village on Cossington Recreation Ground. With thanks to our sponsors University of Leicester

## Diwali Day

**Sunday 12 November**

**3pm - 9pm**

**Cossington Street Recreation Ground and Belgrave Road**

40th Anniversary celebrations continue on the 'Golden Mile' for Diwali Day, where visitors can enjoy a programme of music and dance on Belgrave Road's main stage with an aerial fireworks display. Exciting new additions will be brought to the event by Inspirate with support from Arts Council England. Look out for Ancient Giants roaming the street, rickshaws, lantern processions and live entertainment from multiple stages.

Plus, the Diwali Village on Cossington Recreation Ground generously sponsored by Lidl GB will feature, food, stalls, funfair rides, an additional stage with laser show, fire garden display and amazing led light installation from the Canal and River Trust.

Further information on Diwali Leicester  
40th anniversary celebrations at  
**[visitleicester.info/diwali](http://visitleicester.info/diwali)**







## Enlightened Leicester

**Diwali: Thursday 9 – Tuesday 14 November**

**Christmas: Thursday 16 November – Sunday 24 December**

**5pm – 9pm**

**Abbey Park**

As part of the city's Diwali and Christmas celebrations, experience a magical outdoor light trail transforming Abbey Park in a truly new light. Follow the specially crafted route bursting with interactive and awe-inspiring installations, see curious creatures brought to life and wander under the night sky amongst the sparkling illuminations accompanied by a beautifully crafted soundscape that fills the night air.

**W: [enlightened-leicester.co.uk](http://enlightened-leicester.co.uk)**



## Billy Bates & Sons Funfair

**Saturday 11 November - Sunday 7 January**

**Humberstone Gate**

Billy Bates & Sons festive fairground will add to the magical atmosphere of Christmas in Leicester.

**W: [visitleicester.info](http://visitleicester.info)**



## Annual Remembrance Service & Parade

**Sunday 12 November**

**10.30am. Service commences at 10.55am**

**Arch of Remembrance, Victoria Park**

A parade of military personnel, including members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Cadets, will step off at around 10.40am from De Montfort Hall to the Arch of Remembrance. At 10.55am the Bishop of Leicester will lead the Service to remember those who have given their lives in the service of their country, in the cause of freedom, justice and peace.

**W: [visitleicester.info](http://visitleicester.info)**

# Christmas Wheel of Light

**Thursday 16 November – Sunday 7 January 2024**

## **Jubilee Square**

A magnificent Ferris wheel will bring extra fun to the festive time of year in Leicester.

# Christmas Lights Switch-On

**Wednesday 22 November**

**5pm – 8pm**

## **City Centre**

Celebrate the start of the festive season in the city with the official lights switch-on. An evening with plenty to enjoy for all ages as thousands of lights illuminate the streets and the Clock Tower tree, with the official countdown at 6.30pm.

New for 2023 Haymarket Shopping Centre, Highcross Leicester and St Martin's Square will be hosting their own events to mark the switch on that same evening. So don't miss the trail from one location to the next as Leicester lights up.

Enjoy traditional entertainment in Town Hall Square, festive acts throughout town, the Wheel of Light at Jubilee Square and Billy Bates funfair in Humberstone Gate. With much more to get you in the Christmas spirit, wrap up warm and celebrate in the city.

# Santa in the Square

**Saturday 2 – Saturday 23 December**

## **Town Hall Square**

Santa is returning to Leicester this December. On the run up to Christmas he will be stopping in Town Hall Square where magical memories are waiting to be made. Children of all ages can visit Santa and elf in his grotto for free. With a gift given in each visit, this is a truly memorable experience to add to your Christmas list.

### **Opening times:**

**Mon-Fri: 12noon – 2pm & 3pm – 6pm**

**Sat: 11am – 2pm & 3pm – 6pm**

**Sun: 11am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm**

\*Note that queues will be cut off up to 1 hour ahead of closing times.

Further information on Christmas in Leicester at **[christmasinleicester.co.uk](http://christmasinleicester.co.uk)**





## Jubilee Square Ice Rink

**Thursday 7 December 2023 -**

**Sunday 7 January 2024**

### **Jubilee Square**

Jubilee Square's real ice rink is back this year! Skaters can show off their best moves, come rain or shine under the roof covered rink making it the coolest place to be this season!

Whether you fancy a glide across the ice or a cosy visit to the rink's Alpine Bar, you can grab a festive treat whilst watching skaters take to the ice.

Super off peak pricing remains this year meaning there's the opportunity to skate for just £5 at specific times and special family offer from £40. Plus, for early birds who fancy a whizz around the ice first thing, there's the introduction of a new 9am session.

With a live DJ on Friday and Saturday nights blasting tunes from the centre of the ice and more special sessions to be announced they'll be plenty of fun to be had on the rink this Christmas.

If you are interested in arranging a group or school visit, please do please contact our friendly team on:

**[info@visitleicester.info](mailto:info@visitleicester.info)**

**Rink tickets available from £5 - £13.50 with group and concession discounts available.**

Tickets available from  
**[christmasinleicester.co.uk](http://christmasinleicester.co.uk)**





# Leicester Comedy Festival

**Wednesday 7 – Sunday 25 February 2024**

## Various venues

Leicester Comedy Festival returns for 19 days of laughter for your enjoyment and amusement. Once again, hundreds of comedians will descend on Leicester to perform in favourite venues, including familiar faces, fresh talent and comedy veterans. The programme promises to be jam packed with stand-up, sketches, podcasts, mixed bills and more! Confirmed acts include Ross Noble, Sophie McCartney, Daniel Sloss and Chloe Petts. To kick things off a Gala Preview Show will take place on Friday 12 January at De Montfort Hall. Leicester Comedy Festival is produced by registered charity, Big Difference Company.

**W: [comedy-festival.co.uk](http://comedy-festival.co.uk)**



Credit: Alex Hannam/BID Leicester

# The UK Kids' Comedy Festival

**Wednesday 7 – Sunday 25 February 2024**

## Various venues

Back for the 6th year, the only dedicated kids' comedy festival in the UK rolls back into town in February; with something to entertain the whole family from mixed bill comedy shows, game shows and even a dedicated comedy school for aspiring teenagers to develop their comedy skills!

For the first time ever, the UK Kids' Comedy Festival will give you sneak preview of the festival at the Kids Gala Preview Show which takes place on Sunday 3 December. The UK Kids' Comedy Festival is produced by registered charity, Big Difference Company.

**W: [ukkidscomedyfestival.co.uk](http://ukkidscomedyfestival.co.uk)**



# St Patrick's Day Celebration Parade

**Sunday 17 March 2024**

**Parade start location: New Walk  
(next to Holy Cross Church)**

It's an exciting one this year as celebrations take place on the big day itself. Let's turn Leicester's City Centre into a sea of green. Everyone welcome celebrating Irish music and Irish dancing.

**W: [visitleicester.info](http://visitleicester.info)**



Event	Date	Time	Venue
<b>October</b>			
Black History Month Launch	Sunday 1 October	5pm – 8pm	Leicester Guildhall
Black History Month	October	Various	City Wide
Diwali Wheel of Light	Friday 13 October – Sunday 12 November	Various	Belgrave Road
Billy Bates & Sons Funfair	Saturday 14 – Sunday 22 October	Various	Humberstone Gate West
Restaurant Week	Monday 16 – Saturday 28 October	Various	City Wide
Leicester Monsters	Monday 16 October – Tuesday 3 November	Various	City Wide
Bike Fest	Saturday 28 October	1pm – 4pm	Leicester Cycle Circuit
Diwali Lights Switch-On	Sunday 29 October	3pm - 9pm	Cossington Street Recreation Ground and Belgrave Road
<b>November</b>			
Abbey Park Bonfire & Fireworks Display	Saturday 4 November	5pm – 9pm	Abbey Park
Enlightened Leicester at Diwali	Thursday 9 – Tuesday 14 November	5pm – 9pm	Abbey Park
Billy Bates & Sons Christmas Funfair	Saturday 11 November – Sunday 7 January 2024	Various	Humberstone Gate West
Annual Remembrance Service & Parade	Sunday 12 November	10.30am	Arch of Remembrance, Victoria Park
Diwali Day	Sunday 12 November	3pm - 6pm	Belgrave Road and Cossington Street Recreation Ground
Enlightened Leicester at Christmas	Thursday 16 November – Sunday 24 December	5pm – 9pm	Abbey Park
Christmas Wheel of Light Jubilee Square	Thursday 16 November – Sunday 7 January 2024	Various	
Christmas Lights Switch-On	Wednesday 22 November	5pm – 8pm	City Centre

Event	Date	Time	Venue
<b>December</b>			
Santa in the Square	Saturday 2 – Saturday 23 December	<b>Mon-Fri:</b> 12noon – 2pm & 3pm – 6pm <b>Sat:</b> 11am – 2pm & 3pm – 6pm <b>Sun:</b> 11am – 1pm & 2pm – 4pm	Town Hall Square
Nagar Kirtan	Sunday 3 December	11am - 3pm	City Centre Parade
Clarendon Park Christmas Fair	Sunday 3 December	11am – 5pm	Queens Road
Leicester Comedy Festival Kids' Gala Preview Show	Sunday 3 December	4.30pm	The Y theatre
Jubilee Square Real Ice Rink	Thursday 7 December – Sunday 7 January 2024		Jubilee Square
Civic Lighting of Hanukah Lights	Thursday 14 December	7pm	Victoria Park
<b>January 2024</b>			
Leicester Comedy Festival Gala Preview Show	Friday 12 January	7.30pm	De Montfort Hall
<b>February 2024</b>			
Chinese New Year	Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 February	Various	City Wide
Leicester Comedy Festival	Wednesday 7 – Sunday 25 February 2024	Various	City Wide
UK Kids' Comedy Festival	Wednesday 7 – Sunday 25 February 2024	Various	City Wide
<b>March</b>			
St Patrick's Day Celebration Parade	Sunday 17 March 2024		Parade start: New Walk





Find out more about these exciting festivals and so much more happening in the city at Visit Leicester. The centre is the hub for information located at 4A St. Martins, Leicester LE1 5DB or call us on +44(0)116 299 4444.

Our friendly, helpful staff are on-hand to ensure you make the most of your time in the city.

Stop by the information centre for maps, travel information and a personalised service based on your interests.

Browse through the many brochures on display, giving you information about everything that's happening in the city.

**Find out more at: [visitleicester.info](https://visitleicester.info)**

  [visitleicester](https://www.facebook.com/visitleicester)  [visit\\_leicester](https://twitter.com/visit_leicester) [#leicesterfestivals](https://www.instagram.com/leicesterfestivals)