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Bristol is the most competitive large English city

Bristol City Council Press Release—28th April

Bristol has been identified as the most competitive large English city outside of London by a new economic study.

The UK Competitiveness Index 2010, which has been published by the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) ranks Bristol as the most competitive English large City, with Edinburgh taking the top spot across the UK.

The report defines competitiveness as ‘the ability for an economy to attract and maintain firms with stable or rising market shares in an activity, while maintaining stable or increasing standards of living for those who participate in it.’

The findings are excellent news for the city’s businesses and residents and confirm that Bristol is well placed to help drive the country and the region out of recession. Bristol is home to many renowned companies and more than a third of UK owned FTSE 100 companies have a significant presence in the Bristol area.

For Bristol City Council’s Chief Executive, Jan Ormondroyd, it’s evidence that “Bristol is a very exciting place to be these days. Employers are attracted here because they know the city attracts the skilled people they need to be competitive. It’s got the right ‘buzz’, quality of life and cultural offer for the young and ambitious, with many graduates of the local universities staying on and seeking a career here.

"But it’s not just about graduates and high-fliers. Many successful small businesses are thriving and expanding, often around the larger firms, providing a wide range of services from construction to catering. A buoyant economy means more jobs and better prospects for all Bristol residents. Home-grown Bristol enterprise is a big part of what makes our city so strong."

The Council’s Invest in Bristol team has been attracting a lot of interest from investors keen to locate here where they can draw on the talent and creativity of Bristol’s pool of highly qualified workers. The Invest in Bristol team and its partners have attracted international investors including Vestas Spare Parts and Repair, a world-leader in sustainable energy technology, despite strong competition. Investors such as Vestas are attracted by Bristol’s international reputation as a leading green city and its innovative and creative workforce.

From their first contact with Invest in Bristol, Vestas have benefited from the Council’s ‘red carpet’ Reception Service for Major Investors.

This support consisted of a bespoke proposition including business case justification, property search assistance, city orientation visits and key introductions to the local business community and higher education sector. Invest in Bristol continues to provide after-care support to Vestas including advice on building its relationship with the city, information on schools and housing, and support for future growth plans.

West firms among the top tourist sites in UK

Evening Post (extract) - 27th April

A trio of Bristol businesses has been honoured at an annual awards ceremony which recognises the country’s top tourist destinations.

Oakham Treasures, near Portbury, the ss Great Britain and the Bordeaux Quay restaurant in the Harbourside were recognised at the enjoyEngland’s National Awards for Excellence.

Bordeaux Quay won a silver award in the Sustainable Tourism category and the ss Great Britain won a silver award in the Business Tourism category.



Queen’s Award for Triodos Bank

Triodos Bank Press Release (extract) - 21st April

Triodos Bank has won the prestigious Queen’s Award for Enterprise. Triodos was awarded the Sustainable Development category for its unique approach to finance, which values people and the planet as well as profit.

Triodos Bank’s UK Managing Director, Charles Middleton says, “To be one of the Queen’s Award winners recognises Triodos Bank’s achievements in marrying commercial success with a truly sustainable approach to finance.

We’ve demonstrated that profit and principles need not be mutually exclusive – quite the opposite in fact. By working only with sustainable enterprises, we’ve continued to build our business during challenging times for the financial world, supporting more inspiring organisations than ever. Good news for our savers and investors, and for the planet.”

The Queen’s Award office said, “Working exclusively with organisations that seek to progress social, cultural and environmental sustainability, Triodos Bank is again awarded for its outstanding contribution to sustainability. Continuing to lead the field in terms of pioneering sustainable banking, Triodos serves as an outstanding example to its industry, demonstrating the commercial viability of ethical and sustainability led banking services through consistent year on year growth despite challenging economic conditions.”

Proud day as giant turbine passes the test

Evening Post—16th April

The first of the giant turbines which will be used to power the next generation of super aircraft carriers has been successfully tested in Bristol. The gas-powered turbines are being built at Rolls-Royce’s Defence and Aerospace factory in Filton.

The multimillion project to build the massive ships is made up of a consortium companies but the venture is being managed at the Ministry of Defence procurement cent at Abbey Wood in Bristol.

Tests have also been carried out on the first propeller for the Royal Navy’s new aircraft carriers – the Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

The propeller, which measures almost seven metres across and weighs 33 tonnes, has been put through a series of tests at a plant in Sweden.

In addition, the first of the four MT30s turbines needed to power the two 65,000-tonne vessels has also passed a series of stringent tests at the Rolls-Royce marine testing facility in Bristol.

Bristol’s Better Food Company wins National Best Independent Retailer Award

The Better Food Company Press Release—14th April

Bristol’s only organic shop, café and box schemes supplier has scooped Best Independent Retailer in the UK.

The award was given to general manager, Melanie Taylor and retail manager Amanda Pitt, at an exclusive ceremony held at the Natural and Organic Show in London’s Olympia exhibition centre, on April 11.

Better Food Company’s Managing Director, Phil Haughton, said: “We are delighted to win this national accolade in the face of strong competition from all over the UK.

“It shows it’s still possible, despite the recession, to excel in retailing organic food if you offer quality at the right price for customers.

“Our team has worked extremely hard to raise our already high standards at the Better Food Company and this award is testament to both our staff and loyal customers.”

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The St Werburghs-based company is the only large organic supermarket-style store and café in Bristol.

As well as selling a wide variety of locally-produced goods, including a substantial amount of own-grown organic vegetables it offers a box-scheme delivered to local homes.

Phil is the main grower of the supermarket's fresh vegetables on land near Chew Magna and has spent more than 25 years working with organic food and farming in the South West.

The Better Food Company has been runner-up for this national award for two years and accolades have been given by The Soil Association and in the Observer Ethical Food Award.

Cabot Circus helps drive sales despite hard times

Evening Post (extract) - 14th April

Bristol's Cabot Circus shopping centre is helping to push the city way ahead of its rivals despite the tough conditions on the High Street.

Sales at the £500 million development were more than double the national average last month and shoppers are continuing to flock to the centre 18 months after it first opened.

According to the British Retail Consortium takings in shops across the UK were up 6.6 per cent last month helped by the Easter holidays.

But bosses at Cabot Circus have revealed that sales in the centre rose by 13 per cent, and the number of visitors increased by 19 per cent compared with the same period last year.

Richard Belt, the boss of the shopping centre, said he was delighted with the figures but warned that there is still a long way to go before the economy fights its way back to full health.

He said: "Obviously we are really pleased to be bringing in double the national average in terms of sales but we cannot afford to be complacent in any way. It is going to be a long hard year and we are not expecting a full recovery in retail until the end of the year.

"We always promised to make Bristol one of the top shopping destinations and these figures are very encouraging. People are opting to come to Bristol and once they have visited they are sticking with us. The figures are particularly pleasing because we are operating in such a challenging environment."

Rolls-Royce wins multi-million-pound service contract

Evening Post (extract) - 8th April

Rolls-Royce has won a contract worth £690 million to service engines for Tornado fighter jets at its Patchway plant.

The 15-year deal extension will see Rolls maintain its RB199 engines, spares and ground support equipment.

The new agreement, which will sustain 50 Rolls jobs in Patchway, includes the development of engine health monitoring techniques.

New offices ready soon

Evening Post—7th April

Developer Aster Group has begun the final phase of work to build a £3.7 million scheme of five self-contained offices in Glenfrome Road, Eastville.

The project, due to be completed this spring, will comprise 4,000 sq ft of office space with five car parking spaces. Designed by Bristol architect Quattro, it features electronic gates, CCTV and on-site security. The mixed-use scheme also includes 20 new homes.

Wyn Bevan, Glenfrome Road project manager at Aster Group, said: "This location is the perfect



springboard for ambitious small businesses. Whilst designed as office space, the accommodation is eminently suitable for other uses such as retail or training, subject to planning consent. Glenfrome Road is a prominent location close to Junction 2 of the M32."

Williams Gunter Hardwick is the retained letting agent. Rent is £12.50 per sq ft per year.

It's a Grand Day Out as Bristol's Aardman Animations head to South Africa

Evening Post (extract) - 5th April

Bristol - based Aardman Animations has taken its skills to a South African township.

The company behind clay creations Wallace and Gromit is looking at how it can use its knowledge of the industry to help people in Khayelitsha township on the outskirts of Cape Town.

Aardman co-founder David Sproxton has been involved in a project to set-up an animation course in the township. The visit was a chance for the animation firm to see how they can use their experience to help people in Khayelitsha to make a career out of animation.

Arthur Sheriff, head of communications at Aardman Animations, told the Evening Post: "It is very exciting.

"There is a lot of animation in South Africa and people are taking the industry very seriously as a creator of jobs in South Africa.

"Most of the jobs are held by white middle class people, and they haven't reached the townships where the less fortunate people have not been given these opportunities."

An animation course has been set up in the township and its links with Aardman should help students gain a better understanding of how the industry works.

They moved to Bristol in 1976 where they created Morph for the children's programme Take Hart. Creator of Wallace and Gromit and Creature Comforts, Nick Park joined Aardman in 1985.

The firm has won a string of awards for its work and has also been involved in a host of popular adverts and music videos.

Bristol University Careers Service Graduate Internship

Bristol University Careers Service website—April 2010

Bristol University careers service is running an 8-10 week graduate internship, which are funded by the government for the following sectors:

- low-carbon products and services
- digital industry
- life sciences and pharmaceuticals
- advanced manufacturing
- professional and financial services
- engineering construction
- commercial opportunities presented by the ageing society
- small businesses (49 employees and under)

It is intended that the scheme will enable graduates to find placements with suitable organisations in ways which provide a meaningful experience for both the graduate and the employer.

For an initial discussion please contact Emily Austin – Head of Employer Services on: 0117 9288231 or email: Emily.Austin@bristol.ac.uk

