

Derby Tourism

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Derby's latest attraction draws on its railway heritage

Derby's latest attraction will keep the city on the right tracks as it continues to draw on the history and heritage of its past, in order to boost its tourism potential in the future.

A key component of the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site, Derby can lay claim not only to the world's first factory, but also to Britain's very first railway roundhouse – built in 1839.

Just a part of the explanation why Derby remains at the hub of the British rail network – with high speed links through to Europe, via its services into St Pancras Station in London – “The Roundhouse” has recently been the subject of a £48-million makeover which has breathed life and light into this previously derelict building, close to the city's famous railway station.

Now housing the vocational campus of Derby College with more than 2,500 students, the £48 million renovated Roundhouse and the buildings surrounding it are also very much on the new tourist trail in a city which has already been listed in the Top 10 of the “fastest growing tourist destinations in the UK”.

Helped greatly by an investment of well over £2.2-billion Derby has gone from zero to hero in the space of just five years to the point where it not only welcomes, but also greatly impresses, visitors from all parts of the globe.

Recent city centre developments, for example, include the creation of the £340 million Westfield Derby city centre shopping complex; a state-of-the art Cinema de Lux; a new city centre boutique hotel; and a new purpose built £10m centre for Arts and Media.

Elsewhere, the city's oldest and most historic hotel opposite the railway station entrance – Derby Hallmark - has recently undergone both a change of ownership and dramatic facelift; and both Ramada and Jurys Inn have also recently opened new hotels in the city.

A £3.8 million Cathedral Green improvement scheme has resulted in the appearance of an iconic swing-action Cathedral Green Bridge over the River Derwent – which is now being transformed by a 'Riverside Vision' highlighting both the historical assets and emerging developments running through the heart of the city centre.

And 2010 will also see the completion of Phase I of the new 'Riverlights' development – a £100 million investment, which will include two more new hotels - a Holiday Inn and a Hilton Hampton - along with a new bus station, shops, bars, restaurants and a casino.

Guided 'Roundhouse Tours' will start in July, and will be available on most Saturday mornings and afternoons, Sunday mornings and Monday evenings. The cost is £6 per person, or less for groups of 12 or more. The tour duration is just over an hour with time at the end for people to enjoy a tea/coffee in The Roundhouse.

For further details, visit www.visitderby.co.uk

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