



The Village Pub Belgrave Gate



The Village Management Team



BEST BARS ARE RECOGNISED

BY TOM MACK
20 June 2008



With drunken violence and binge-drinking rarely out of the news, the reputation of Leicester at night has taken a bit of a knock.

However, the pubs and bars who have strived to make the city a safer place for everyone have been recognised for their efforts.

Dozens of venues, from restaurants to gentlemen's clubs, were rewarded at the second annual Best Bar None event.

They were all awarded certificates for taking part in the Best Bar None scheme, which is designed to let the public know where the safest places to drink are.

Over the last six months, assessors have been visiting the pubs in the city centre and surrounding areas, and making sure they stick strictly to rules such as fire safety and food hygiene.

On Wednesday, a black-tie dinner and disco was held at the City Rooms, in Hotel Street, to award the best bars.

At the event 55 premises were given accreditation under the scheme, which is in its second year. In total, 72 premises had applied.

On the night, Village in Belgrave Gate was named the best pub, while Walkabout in Granby Street was named best bar and Liquid Envy was named best club. The Walkabout also won an online vote.

Craig Thorpe, of the Village, said: "We've only been open a year and a half so I think it's a great achievement. It shows we work hard and take health and safety seriously."

The overall winner was Liquid Envy, which won the title Best Bar None. Chris Beasley, general manager, said: "We're very happy and pleased. We're very grateful to all our staff and our customers."

This year saw the launch of the Leicester Mercury's own award, which went to the most family-friendly pub.

The winner was the Jungle Club, in Belgrave, and the award was handed over to the club's manager by Leicester Mercury deputy editor Richard Bettsworth.

The Jungle Club, in Belgrave, emerged with 37 per cent of a public vote held on the Mercury's website, Thisisleicestershire.co.uk. Seven venues competed for the award.

Owner Bally Chauhan said: "It was lovely to win and we're very pleased and happy. We've got a big kids area here, which can take up to 150 children.

"But we try to do everything we can to keep everyone happy and also have a big selection of beers for the drinkers and a restaurant."

The second place, was awarded to the Old Horse, in London Road, Evington. And the Slug and Lettuce in Market Street came third.

The Best Bar None scheme, sponsored by Freeth Cartwright solicitors, was launched in Leicester last year and 50 of the 85 premises which applied last year received the accreditation.

Pc Jon Webb, who helped carry out the assessments alongside fire chiefs and city council licensing staff, said: "People have learned from last year and the scores have been much higher generally. It's also getting more competitive.

"Those who needed to pull their socks up have done so."

During the event, which was hosted by city sporting legends Willie Thorne and Steve Walsh, senior city councillor Robert Wann spoke about the importance pubs and clubs will play in the growth of the city centre.

AWARD CATEGORY WINNERS

10:30 - 20 June 2008

Best Bar None: Liquid Envy, Churchgate. Runners up: Jungle Club; Village; Walkabout.

Best Bar: Walkabout, Granby Street. Runners up: Lloyds Number 1. Pi Bar.

Best Pub: Village. Runners up: Last Plantagenet; Soar Point.

Best Club: Liquid Envy, Churchgate. Runners up: Aviary, Abbey Street. Life, Humberstone Gate.

Online vote: Walkabout, Granby Street.

Family Friendly Award: Jungle Club, Checketts Road.

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