

PRESS RELEASE



Photo Pawel Libera

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New mobile welcome service on London's riverside gets extended due to popular demand

Visitors to the capital have been given a warm welcome this spring and summer thanks to a new initiative which provides tourist information and advice where it is needed most: on the streets.

Following a successful trial in 2008, visitor information specialists have been patrolling the South Bank, Bankside and London Bridge areas on InfoBikes since April, advising tourists and supporting local attractions and businesses at peak times.

The programme has been extended to 20 September in response to the demand from visitors that has seen around 2000 people using the service daily.

Known as InfoBikes, the three wheeled tourist information units are staffed by Londoners who are proud to share their local knowledge and help visitors make the most of their stay.

The fleet of three eye-catching InfoBikes are situated along the South Bank, Bankside and London Bridge riverpath, covering an area that boasts over 70 attractions and places of interest, from the London Eye to just past Tower Bridge.

Relying only on pedal power to get from A to B, the environmentally-friendly InfoBikes pitch up at key locations to offer on-the-spot advice, maps and recommendations to the huge numbers visiting the area's cultural venues, family attractions, outdoor events and festivals.

Kate Hoey, MP for Vauxhall, said of the InfoBikes; "This is a pioneering service which we are crying out for in the area. Tourism is crucial for the London economy and we all need to take responsibility for ensuring that visitors feel welcome".

Carolyn Smith, Director of International Promotion and Visitor Economy at the London Development Agency, added; "The LDA is part-funding this service as part of its commitment to build London's visitor welcome in the run up to 2012. The InfoBikes will contribute to a growing information network across that is designed to inspire visitors to get the most from their time in London."

The InfoBike initiative is supported and operated by a partnership of Visit London, LDA, South Bank Employers Group, Better Bankside, Team London Bridge, and Impact Print Distribution.

- Ends -

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- The three InfoBikes are being run over weekends and bank holidays from 4 April to 20 September 2009 and will each be staffed by two information specialists.
- The trial initiative in 2008 was nominated for a Visit London Award.
- The initial 2008 trial area of South Bank and Bankside has been extended to include London Bridge for 2009.
- The InfoBikes are three wheeled tricycles or 'cargo trikes'. It is the first time the 'cargo trikes' have been used to provide visitor information, generally they are used for courier services.
- The initiative is being led by South Bank Employers' Group, which runs a successful tourism consortium representing the area's many attractions and hotels, in partnership with the London Development Agency, Visit London, Better Bankside, Team London Bridge and Impact Print Distribution – experts in providing visitor information.
- To find out what's happening in South Bank, Bankside and London Bridge this summer, go to:
www.southbanklondon.com
www.visitbankside.com
www.discoverlondonbridge.com
- For more about the partners behind the InfoBikes, go to:
www.visitlondon.com – Visit London
www.southbanklondon.co.uk – South Bank Employers Group
www.betterbankside.co.uk – Better Bankside
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