



EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 on Wednesday 12th October 2011

LONDON'S VICTORIA AWARDED THE PURPLE STANDARD

More towns and cities wave Purple Flag's official seal of approval for a 'better night out'

LONDON, 12 OCTOBER, 2011

Victoria is one of 9 'town centres' and cities across the UK to have today been singled-out for helping people have a great night out, by being awarded Purple Flag status. This is also a first for Victoria – it is the first time the Purple Flag has been awarded to a Business Improvement District. The Victoria BID represents 250 local businesses in the SW1 area, with many of its members operating within the hospitality and leisure sectors. Making Victoria a safer, more enjoyable place for both local residents, visitors and tourists alike is a top priority with an increasingly active night time economy. Victoria Business Improvement District has spearheaded this successful bid for purple flag status.

Mike Noakes, Chairman of Victoria BID said: "We are delighted to be awarded Purple Flag as recognition for the great work undertaken to make this part of London a safe, but fun and lively place for all who live work or visit. Victoria is uniquely placed as a significant gateway to London and the world, which has created the bustling and vibrant day and night time economy that we have. Victoria Business Improvement District works in partnership with the Metropolitan and British Transport Police as well as Westminster City Council to provide a welcoming and safe vibrant location that people will want to experience again and again."

Other successful town centres and cities - Torquay, Belfast, Canterbury, Enniskillen, Aylesbury, Bangor, Stockton Heath (Warrington) and Derry - have all been recognised for showing evening visitors an entertaining, diverse, and safe night out.

Purple Flag is a town and city centre award - similar to the Blue Flag for beaches - backed by Government, police and business. To achieve Purple Flag status towns and cities must be welcoming to everyone, offer safe ways for visitors to travel home, provide a good mix of

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venues and be appealing after dark. Purple Flag towns and cities benefit from more visitors, lower crime and anti-social behaviour and improved perceptions of centres.

Today's newly awarded towns and cities join sixteen other Purple Flag holders across the UK, who've met and continue to maintain the high standards required, including; Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol, Preston, and Nottingham. They all deliver a range of activities, initiatives and services in their centres as part of a committed partnership.

The Purple Flag initiative is led by the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM), alongside supporters including Diageo, the Home Office, Association of Chief Police Officers, Local Government Regulation and many other high profile national bodies, displaying industry wide commitment to this important initiative.

Philip Kolvin QC, Chairman of the Purple Flag Board said: "Great leisure destinations do not happen by accident. Purple Flag defines what makes a safe, welcoming and diverse night-time economy for the benefit of all citizens, regardless of age, race, gender, needs or interest. And in a recession the need is greater than ever to create local destinations which provide delight, value for money, investment and jobs. Purple Flag should be seen, not just as a 'ministry of fun' but as a catalyst for the local economy."

Mark Baird, Head of Industry Affairs and Alcohol Policy, from Purple Flag sponsor Diageo said: "At Diageo we are proud to support Purple Flag and all that it stands for in our communities. It is fantastic to see that more town and city centres are raising the standards and broadening the appeal of their night life offering. Purple Flag is leading the way in helping to change the perceptions surrounding the evening economies which results in a better night out for everyone."

The nine newly accredited towns and cities will have their new Purple Flag status formally recognised at an awards ceremony taking place in Bournemouth on 23 November 2011.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Victoria Business Improvement District (Victoria BID)

Victoria BID provides a platform for businesses to work together to improve and enhance the urban context of Victoria. Guided by local businesses and organisations, the Victoria BID team help shape Victoria's future development. A full programme of initiatives, services and events will be delivered by the BID which will complement new proposals for regeneration that will help reposition and strengthen Victoria's offer as a central business district over the next decade.

Key initiatives within the Safe & Secure agenda will be delivered by The Victoria Safer Neighborhood Business Team – a team of police and community support officers (PSCOs) who patrol part of the Victoria district, responding to the needs of the local business, visitor and tourist community. A Business Crime Reduction Officer, **Karl Rogers**, is permanently based at BID HQ, driving strategic aspects of policing within the BID area. Karl's remit ranges from counter terrorism, to low level crime and anti-social behaviour. Collectively, the safer business team will broker corporate relations within the business community, developing and implementing crime reduction initiatives at a strategic and frontline level.

As the collective voice of local businesses, both large and small and across all sectors, we are now underway with a range of activities. Drawing on Victoria's rich and diverse cultural mix, delivering services and opportunities to businesses and organisations, helping to make it not only a better place to work and play but to enhance the SW1 area as a primary destination for visitors to London and as a location with everything needed to encourage growth of the local economy.

Further information can be found at www.inSW1.com



About Purple Flag

The Purple Flag programme was developed following the Civic Trust Night Vision report in 2006, and is now run by the Association of Town Centre Management, London.

Purple Flag is:

- An accreditation process similar to Green Flag Award for parks and Blue Flag for beaches. It leads to Purple Flag status for town centres that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in the evening and night-time economy.
- A comprehensive set of standards, management processes and good practice examples designed to help transform town and city centres at night.
- A research, training and development programme, to help towns and cities improve their evening and night-time economy.
- A positive initiative that indicates an entertaining, diverse, safe and enjoyable night out.

Current Towns with Purple Flag Status:

- Bath
- Birmingham
- Bournemouth
- Bristol
- Clerkenwell, Islington, London
- Covent Garden, Westminster
- Halifax
- High Wycombe
- Kingston upon Thames
- Leicester square, Westminster
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Nottingham
- Oxford
- Winchester
- Preston

For more information, please visit:

www.purpleflag.org.uk



About Purple Flag sponsors Diageo

Diageo is the world's leading premium drinks business with an outstanding collection of beverage alcohol brands across spirits, beer and wine. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Windsor, Buchanan's and Bushmills whiskies, Smirnoff, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Baileys, Captain Morgan, Jose Cuervo, Tanqueray and Guinness. Diageo is a global company, with its products sold in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the New York Stock Exchange (DEO) and the London Stock Exchange (DGE). For more information about Diageo, its people, brands, and performance, visit us at Diageo.com.

Visit www.drinkaware.co.uk and Diageo's own global resource www.DRINKiQ.com for information and guidance on responsible drinking. In Great Britain, Diageo is a member of The Portman Group and supports The Drinkaware Trust.

Celebrating life, every day, everywhere.

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