



# Making connections



## Hangzhou – Leeds 2007/2008

Leeds' partnership with the city of Hangzhou is an active and thriving collaboration in the fields of culture and business, and the breadth of activity in 2007 reflects this. 2008 will mark the 20th anniversary of the relationship, which will be celebrated widely and colourfully across the city, and as Beijing prepares to host the 2008 Olympic games China and Chinese culture will become the focus of international attention. As a result, the Leeds – Hangzhou partnership will receive special attention during 2008 with a 12 month programme of events focusing on cultural and business relations with the city.

Leeds pupils dress up to celebrate their link with Hangzhou partner school



# Hangzhou – Leeds

## 2007

### ■ Learning from each other

Interest in educational partnerships with China continues to grow, with some Leeds schools taking a very active approach to their relationships with Hangzhou institutions.

A good example is Prince Henry's Grammar School of Otley, which undertakes an annual reciprocal exchange with Xuejun High School in Hangzhou. The exchange involves both teachers and pupils and has now seen more than 25 Chinese teachers hosted at the Leeds school.

The partnership between the schools has been praised by Ofsted inspectors for making excellent use of global links to support the academic and personal development of pupils. The last visit to Hangzhou took place in October.

### ■ Leeds tourist attraction sets an example

In November a delegation from the Hangzhou tourist board visited Leeds to talk to potential investors about the large scale developments currently underway in the Chinese city, including a large shopping centre and lively retail zone.

During their visit the group also paid a visit to the Xscape activity centre in Castleford to learn about the construction of indoor ski slopes, which are currently very popular in Shanghai and Beijing.

### ■ High hopes for Hangzhou business

In October a small delegation of businesses from the Leeds region visited Hangzhou to attend the Industrial Investment and Trade Symposium, organised by the municipal government.

Leeds businesses were given preferential access to key decision makers and a busy programme of one to one meetings and site visits was arranged for them.

### ■ Northern Ballet tours China...again

Following the success of the previous year's tour Northern Ballet Theatre once again travelled to six different cities in China in December, and gave a key performance in Hangzhou.

Supported by Leeds City Council, Leeds Metropolitan University and Yorkshire Forward, the performance was preceded by a reception in Hangzhou in the name of Leeds, hosted by the Lord Mayor Cllr Brian Cleasby.

The reception formed part of continued efforts to raise Leeds' profile on the international stage and to strengthen established business, cultural and sporting links with Hangzhou.

### ■ Let's talk business

September saw local businesses meet at the offices of company DLA Piper to take part in an innovative group session on doing business in China.

The session was an interactive group discussion centred around a case study of a Yorkshire business operating in China for the first time. The event featured input and opinions from experienced businesses and intermediaries from our region, as well as representatives of China Business, a business incubator and representative office service based in Hangzhou and supported by Leeds.

### ■ New opportunities in Greater China

In February Leeds hosted a seminar session focusing on the emerging sectors of the Chinese market including property, environmental technologies and education training.

Organised by the China-Britain Business Council and UK Trade & Investment the session attracted over 50 local businesses who attended the event to listen to and take advice from a range of speakers experienced in the Chinese market.



2008



### ■ China in Yorkshire

Museums and galleries across Yorkshire will work together in 2008 to display some of their finest collections of Chinese work and artefacts as part of a six month Heritage Lottery funded project.

Leeds, with the largest collection of Chinese art in the region, will play a prominent role in the project. The focus of attention will be Lotherton Hall, where a large display of Chinese artefacts explores the theme of mythical beasts and legends and the ancient costumes and traditions of China.

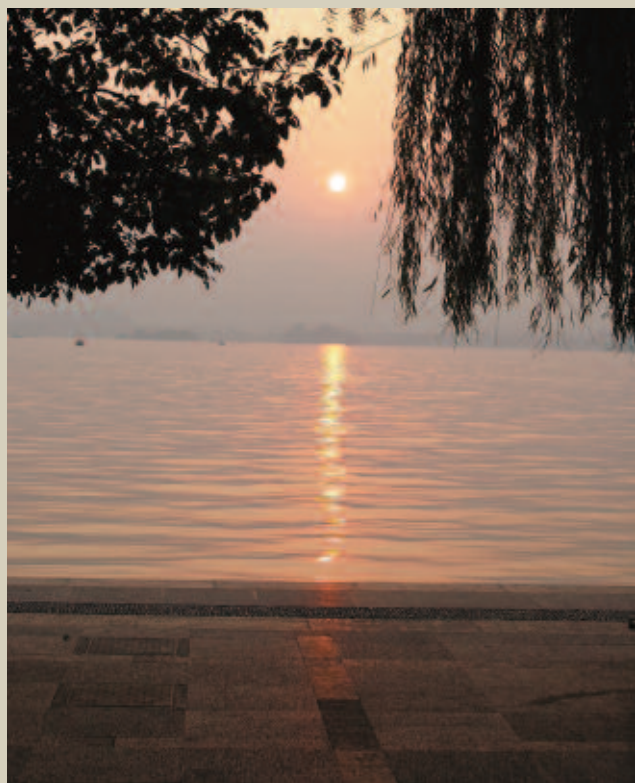
A smaller exhibition featuring interesting artefacts from the city of Hangzhou will run alongside this at the Central Library. The articles will be on display for 6 months during the summer of 2008.

### ■ Festival fever

Leeds is putting together plans to celebrate China and Chinese culture in style during a four day cultural festival next June.

Leeds will welcome experts from Hangzhou to deliver a series of workshops and performances around the theme of traditional Chinese arts and culture, and people will be able to experience activities such as Tai Chi and calligraphy.

The festival will also see a dragon boat race take place at Harewood House on 7 June, organised by local partners in conjunction with the Leeds Chinese Community Association.



From top, clockwise: traditional musicians, Hangzhou, Moon over West Lake, Hangzhou Grand Theatre.  
Page 2 opposite: Dragon Stadium

# Hangzhou

**Location and background:** Located in the south east of China and 180km from Shanghai, Hangzhou is the capital of the Zhejiang province.

**Population:** 6.5 million inhabitants.

**Economy overview:** Hangzhou is a city undergoing rapid development having previously played an important political, economic and cultural role in Chinese history. It has an industrial history based on textiles but has fast become the major service centre for Zhejiang province (of over 50 million people). Hangzhou is a popular tourist destination and welcomes over 20 million visitors a year to popular attractions such as the famous West Lake and the Grand Canal, the old transport network to Beijing. As the Chinese economy continues its rapid expansion Hangzhou has successfully secured a leading position in GDP per capita amongst the major cities.

**Local government:** The political leader of Hangzhou is Mayor Cai Qi.

**Partnership with Leeds:** Relations between Leeds and Hangzhou date back to 1988 when a twinning agreement was signed, committing the two cities to cooperation and friendship. The purpose of the link is to develop mutually beneficial relations and to co-operate in the interests of local businesses, young people, and educational and technological advancement.

Through the special relationship between the two cities Leeds businesses are able to gain a competitive advantage for our region and several joint ventures have been pursued. Each year local businesses take part in trade missions to Hangzhou and Leeds has also welcomed several inward delegations looking to invest in our region.



## Get involved!

If you would like more information on the Hangzhou - Leeds partnership or if you would like to get involved, please contact the international relations office on +44 (0)113 247 4484  
email: [international@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:international@leeds.gov.uk)