



VisitEngland™

Awards for Excellence 2024

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SINCE 1907

Rum Warehouse, Titanic Hotel Liverpool
5 June 2024

Menu

Canapés

**“Scouse” fritter with pickled beetroot
carpaccio and radish aioli**
(contains: celery, egg, sulphites, mustard)

**Titanic “fish and chips” chunky chip,
breaded cod goujon, minted pea purée**
(contains: celery, egg, fish)

Cheshire cheese and fresh pea tartlet, burnt onion
(contains: egg, milk, celery, sulphites)

.....

Main

**Roast breast of Cumbria chicken with pulled thigh and
tarragon pithivier, scorched broccoli, confit carrot, pea and
Worcestershire asparagus purée, wild garlic pressed Lancashire
potato and red wine sauce**
(contains: egg, gluten, celery, sulphites, milk)

Vegetarian

**Roast Devonshire butternut squash, spinach and sweet potato
wellington, scorched broccoli, wild garlic pressed Lancashire
potato and fire roasted red pepper coulis.**
(contains: sulphites, gluten, celery)

.....

Dessert

**Chocolate and berry tart with steeped cherry compote and
Cheshire farm ice cream**
(contains: milk, egg, gluten, soya, sulphites)

Vegetarian

**Vegan chocolate tart with steeped cherry compote
and vegan ice cream**
(contains: soya, sulphites)

**We welcome you to
the VisitEngland
Awards for Excellence,
hosted this year at
the wonderful Rum
Warehouse at Titanic
Hotel Liverpool**

 [@VisitEnglandBiz](https://twitter.com/VisitEnglandBiz)

 [VisitEngland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/visitengland)

 [VisitEnglandAwards.org](https://www.visitenglandawards.org)



Patricia Yates
CEO, VisitEngland

We are delighted to host you all this evening at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence. Welcoming our titans of industry to the Titanic Hotel Liverpool, last year's Gold-winning Large Hotel of the Year, seems very appropriate.

Each year we are astounded by the quality, dedication and excellence throughout English tourism but tonight we are here to celebrate the cream of the crop. The VisitEngland Awards for Excellence is a celebration, recognising and congratulating the finest businesses across the country.

Our industry continues to rebound after the years of turmoil brought about by COVID and the more recent challenges of the increased cost of living. The outstanding offer of our sector saw tourism spending reach 91% of 2019 levels.* We are expecting 2024 to be another great year, with initial predictions suggesting another positive year to come and we are excited to be a part of it.

Over the past year, our finalists have come through closely competed local competitions to deservedly earn a coveted slot at this year's national awards. The large number of applications received, and the depth of conversation and deliberation needed by our judges to finalise these awards, are a testament to how great the quality of the English tourism product is.

Whether it is delivering amazing experiences, running exciting attractions, offering fabulous places to stay and more, you, the finalists, are the 'best of the best', helping to raise the bar for our industry as a whole, and raising the profile of England as a world-class destination.

It takes a lot to be a finalist and there is outstanding competition in all the experiences, attractions and accommodation across England. So tonight, whether you win Bronze, Silver or Gold, you should be exceptionally proud of everything that you have achieved.

I warmly congratulate all the finalists and wish you all the very best of luck.

Order of events

Welcome

Alex Polizzi, Compere
Lady Victoria Borwick, Chairman of VisitEngland Advisory Board

.....

Dinner and speeches

Patricia Yates, CEO, VisitEngland
Harvey Alexander, Director of Marketing and Membership Services,
Caravan and Motorhome Club

.....

Awards ceremony part one

Tourism Superstar
B&B and Guest House of the Year
Small Hotel of the Year
Business Events Venue of the Year
Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award
Experience of the Year, sponsored by Caravan and Motorhome Club
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year, sponsored by Virgin Experience Days
Unsung Hero Award
New Tourism Business of the Year

.....

Break

Family Holiday Charity

.....

Awards ceremony part two

TXGB Trailblazer Award
Travel Content Award
Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award,
sponsored by Sykes Holiday Cottages
Self Catering Accommodation of the Year, sponsored by Sykes Holiday Cottages
Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park of the Year
Taste of England Award
Pub of the Year
Large Visitor Attraction of the Year
Large Hotel of the Year
Outstanding Contribution to Tourism Award

VisitEngland opening performance

Liverpool is a wonderful place. A city of music and laughter, of innovation and sanctuary. An international name which is rooted in its local community.

To kick start tonight, we wanted to give you a proper Liverpoolian welcome through some extraordinary local performers.

String quartet

All musicians from the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

Composer / Arrangements

John McHugh – Music in Mind

Musicians

Kate Richardson – Violin Rachel Jones – Viola
Kate Marsden – Violin Anna Stuart – Cello

Spoken word - Dorcas Seb

Dorcas Seb is a Christian Congolese producer, performer and writer based in Liverpool. Her recent writing credits include Vice Versa (commissioned by Eclipse Theatre and Home with development support from Unity Theatre), Buttercup directed by Julia Samuels (20 Stories High; BBC Arts; Tigerlily Productions), Big Up (Theatre-Rites and 20 Stories High) and Black Men Walking (Eclipse). She has supported urban music artists such as Akala, Lady Leshurr, Yasmin, Sway, Bashy, Lowkey and Cherri V Mz. Bratt.

Dance performance

Choreographer

Darren Suarez

Aerialists

Paul Curran
Katy Thompson

Dancers

Luke James Bromilow
Ryan Harrison
Jack Dyche
Lois Samphier Read
Izzy Bradbury
Chelsea Breeze

Soloist

Hayli Kincade

Music mix

Luke James Bromilow

**House of Suarez are an award-winning
Liverpool-based dance company led by Darren Suarez.**

Credits include The Netball World Cup 2019 opening ceremony for Sky Sports, work for Adidas, Stella McCartney, Yahoo UK, Zara Larsson and Eurovision 2023. They have produced TV work for BBC, ITV, Sky Arts and ITV2 and their annual touring Vogue Ball is a runway event bringing international artists to enter a dance/costume-based extravaganza!

Thank you to all our local competition partners



Tourism Superstar 2024

The annual Tourism Superstar competition sees 10 finalists put to the public vote to find one winner (individual or small team) who has gone above and beyond in their job to give their visitors the best experience.



This year the crown went to Pete Chambers (BEM), volunteer director of the Coventry Music Museum and a lifelong music enthusiast and journalist.

He established the museum a decade ago to commemorate and honour Coventry's music legacy. Operating four days a week, Pete manages most aspects of the museum including securing exhibits, handling finances and managing a team of volunteers. His passion attracts local artists to donate artifacts, like Jerry Dammers' organ from The Specials' "Ghost Town". Pete's exceptional hospitality includes personalised experiences, such as assembling a special package for an autistic fan of The Primitives. With over 40,000 visitors welcomed personally, the museum consistently ranks as Coventry's top attraction on TripAdvisor, a testament to Pete's dedication and generosity.

B&B and Guest House of the Year

Bossington Hall, Somerset

The rustic charm of Bossington Hall, set in the heart of Exmoor, offers guests glorious views of the Vale of Porlock and the rugged coast of Lynmouth.

The COVID pandemic led to the owners changing the whole-house-let to a B&B in 2021. The vast majority of guests are walkers, older or retired people, who enjoy the understated yet homely elegance of the Hall's interiors, as well as locally sourced breakfasts.

The business also offers a separately rented self-catering apartment, a wellness suite with massage treatments and a Swedish sauna.

bossingtonhall.co.uk



© Guy/Bossington Hall

MonkBridge House, North Yorkshire

With no prior hospitality experience, MonkBridge House was bought by its current owners in February 2020. The business received a five-star Gold rating from VisitEngland, and also won the York Design Awards for best commercial building and best conservation/restoration.

Situated close to York Minster, the elegant Victorian family-run guest house offers locally sourced produce, homemade items, EV chargers and more, and regularly receives top scores on review websites such as on TripAdvisor, Expedia and Google.

monkbridgehouseyork.com



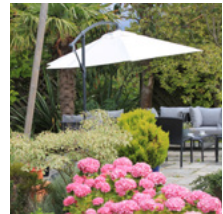
© Your Creative Sauce/
Monk Bridge House

The Bosham Boathouse B&B, West Sussex

Set in a stunning location near the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the South Downs National Park, The Bosham Boathouse offers four letting rooms with classic unfussy décor and luxurious bedding that warmly welcomes around 1,500 guests each year.

Sustainability is a key consideration for The Bosham Boathouse with built in solar panels, an EV charger, a vegetable garden and locally sourced produce for the delicious home cooked breakfasts the guests are greeted with each morning.

theboshamboathouse.co.uk



© J Young/The Bosham
Boathouse B&B

Small Hotel of the Year

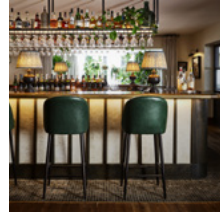
The Gallivant, East Sussex

Founded in 2009 by Harry Cragoe, The Gallivant is an independent boutique hotel with locally sourced art and décor curated by Harry's wife, Sigrid Cragoe, infused with a cool California aesthetic.

As well as offering luxurious bedrooms, the hotel focuses on wellness, with daily yoga, talks and workshops. The hotel has achieved remarkable growth, increasing occupancy by 50% and room rates by 300%.

Now employing over 40 staff, the hotel prioritises team happiness and plans further expansion, to position the brand as a top-tier small luxury wellness hotel group.

thegallivant.co.uk



© The Gallivant

THE PIG-at Harlyn Bay, Cornwall

THE PIG-at Harlyn Bay is a vibrant restaurant with rooms located near Harlyn and Constantine Bay beaches in Cornwall.

It opened in 2020, boasting charming interiors including scenic views from bedrooms overlooking Harlyn Bay.

Guests can enjoy fresh seafood at the outdoor Lobster Shed terrace and the business embodies a relaxed British kitchen garden concept and a commitment to regional flavours, utilising fresh produce grown in its walled kitchen garden, greenhouse and polytunnels and a 25-mile menu crafted with additional supplies from nearby farmers.

thepighotel.com/at-harlyn-bay



© Jake Eastham/THE PIG-at Harlyn Bay

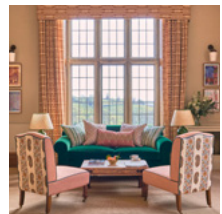
Wildhive Callow Hall, Derbyshire

Originally constructed as a private residence in 1852, Callow Hall was transformed into a boutique hotel in 1982. It was bought in June 2018 by Ed Burrows and Charles Randall of Wildhive, and opened as Wildhive Callow Hall in September 2021 following renovation.

Bringing guests closer to nature is the main aim of the 15-bedroom hotel. Its 35 acres of ancient woodland offer a relaxed setting, and is proving popular amongst both domestic and international visitors keen on exploring the Peak District.

As well as luxury bedrooms, there are 11 woodland 'hives' for guests to stay in, a Glass Garden Room restaurant highlighting local ingredients and seasonal cocktails, and The Coach House, a wellness centre with gym, sauna and spa treatments.

wildhive.uk



© Adam Lynik/Wildhive Callow Hall

Business Events Venue of the Year

Telford International Centre, Shropshire

The Telford International Centre has been servicing large corporate brands, professional associations and medium-to-large B2B trade exhibitions for over 40 years, with its 15,000m² of space, conference suites, interlinked exhibition halls and breakout rooms.

A testimony to its professional capabilities, the venue hosts around 150 leading annual events, all managed by its in-house team, adding an estimated £75 million to the local economy.

tictelford.com



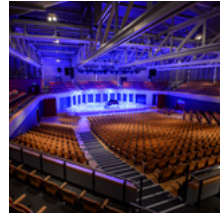
© Telford International Centre

Warwick Conferences, Warwickshire

Warwick Conferences provides innovative environments with excellent service, offering 300 event and meeting spaces across three venues.

With theatres, lecture rooms, outdoor creative spaces and more, the venue attracts a wide range of clients from corporate businesses to associations. The centre has held over 21,000 live events, with 226,000 delegates over the past year.

warwickconferences.com



© Butterworth Hall/Warwick Conferences

Winter Gardens Blackpool, Lancashire

This historic venue, which opened in 1878, has continued to be one of Lancashire's top versatile event spaces.

Spread over 4.9 acres, this sprawling metropolis of a venue includes 12 unique spaces, an Opera House, Empress Ballroom and the Olympia Exhibition Hall, and a new Conference and Exhibition Centre, as well as bars, restaurants and cafés.

Winter Gardens Blackpool attracts a diverse range of clients, from the biggest West End shows and industry events to unique festivals and attractions, contributing to over £80 million each year to the local economy.

wintergardensblackpool.co.uk



© WinterGardensBlackpool

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award

Colchester Castle, Essex

Colchester Castle's vision to "enrich people's lives with knowledge and imagination" is underpinned by a strong ethos of accessibility, providing a family-friendly experience for visitors with various opportunities to experience the exhibits, including object handling, audio descriptions and relaxed visits.

Dating back to 1076, the castle was built on the site of the Roman Temple of Claudius and is still the largest Norman Keep in Europe. It was opened as a museum in 1860 and extensively refurbished in 2013/14.

Creating exciting exhibitions that keep people coming back for more is a tactic that's been working successfully for the castle. Visitors are kept enthralled with a programme of permanent and temporary exhibitions.

colchester.cimuseums.org.uk/visit/colchester-castle



© Colchester & Ipswich Museums

Hoe Grange Holidays, Derbyshire

Accessibility and inclusion is at the heart of Hoe Grange Holidays, which is based on a working farm in the Peak District.

The business has been providing accessible facilities for a number of years, including wheelchair accessible luxury log cabins, off-road wheelchairs for hire and high-end glamping pods.

Run by David and Felicity, who are dedicated to providing a luxury holiday experience for everyone, guests receive personalised attention to understand their individual needs, whether they have severe mobility, visual or hearing impairments, non-visible disabilities or are simply unsteady on their feet, resolving any issues to ensure their stay is enjoyable and memorable.

The farm is not only inclusive of people but animals too, giving guests the option of bringing their dogs, and even their horses, on their stay!

hoegrangeholidays.co.uk



© Felicity Brown/Hoe Grange Holidays

ROARR! Norfolk

Improvements made since 2006 has meant that ROARR! offers an enhanced guest experience with dozens of rides, seasonal events, and lots of indoor and outdoor activities for children to play, splash, climb and explore, giving families an action-packed day out and a lifetime of memories.

Originally opened in 1984 as Dinosaur Park, before being rebranded as ROARR! in 2018, this popular Norfolk visitor attraction regularly draws guests from across the country, in part due to its accessibility and inclusion measures and a strong focus on fun!

roarr.co.uk



© ROARR!

Experience of the Year

Sponsored by



Mountain Bike Taster Day - Pure Outdoor, Derbyshire

Since it began in 2011, Pure Outdoor has been offering visitors exciting opportunities to experience the great outdoors in the magnificent Peak District.

With passionate instructors and excellent facilities, the centre provides access to activities including hill-walking, climbing, caving, mountain biking and group events, with a mission to inspire and educate through adventure.

Keeping accessibility and sustainability in mind, the centre has also committed to donating the equivalent of 5% of annual revenues to social and environmental causes through its 'Pure Outdoor Foundation'.

pureoutdoor.co.uk



© Pure Outdoor

Grey Seals & Seabird Cruise - Serenity Farne Island Boat Tours, Northumberland

Bringing smiles to their guests' faces is worth its weight in gold, say the staff at Serenity Farne Island Boat Tours, which has been taking visitors out to spot puffins and grey seals on the Island for the past 15 years.

The tours cater for wildlife lovers of all kinds, including bird watchers and keen photographers, providing exciting opportunities for visitors to get close to nature via purpose-built modern catamarans.

The business is also looking to the future, training young people to become wildlife guides and skippers to help the company grow.

farneislandstours.co.uk



© Andrew Douglas

York Ghost Walk - The Deathly Dark Tours, North Yorkshire

York's reputation as one of the most haunted cities in England is the inspiration for The Deathly Dark Tours, a unique, comedy horror storytelling experience that invites visitors to learn more about the city's grim history.

Operating since 2020, the walking tour company operates seven nights a week, and is aimed at families, couples and solo travellers, sharing deliciously dark tales of foul deeds and infamous hauntings around the city.

deathlydarktours.com



© Laura McKeller/The Deathly Dark Tours

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Member photo by Elaine Molloy

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Small Visitor Attraction of the Year

Sponsored by



Cotswolds Distillery, Warwickshire

The Cotswolds Distillery was established in 2014 by Dan Szor, a New York financier, following his relocation to the area. As a whisky fan, Dan was inspired by the abundance of golden barley in the area to set up the distillery and fulfil his dream of producing outstanding natural spirits.

In 2019, the distillery, now the largest producers of English whisky, opened a new visitor centre offering tours and tastings, as well as masterclasses on whisky, gin and cocktails.

The distillery now welcomes over 50,000 visitors a year, who can learn more about the craft processes, and visit the gift shop filled with the full range of spirits and souvenirs.

The visitor centre also features a beautiful, spacious café offering delicious food made with locally sourced ingredients.

[cotswoldsdistillery.com](https://www.cotswoldsdistillery.com)



© Cotswolds Distillery

Nothe Fort, Dorset

Nothe Fort was built in 1872 to protect Weymouth and Portland Harbour, and was also used to house a 'secret' nuclear bunker during the Cold War.

The Grade II listed building and Scheduled Monument was rescued from dereliction by the local community and turned into a museum and family heritage attraction, opening in 1980.

Currently owned by Dorset Council and leased by Weymouth Civic Society, the museum works with local stakeholders, prioritising accessibility for all.

The museum brings value through its fun programme of engaging events such as silent discos, open air plays, concerts, a Steam Punk Fair, family holiday activities, dog shows and Halloween experiences, helping to raise the profile of Weymouth regionally and nationally.

[nothefort.org.uk](https://www.nothefort.org.uk)



© Nothe Fort

The Battle of Britain Memorial, Kent

The National Memorial is a moving clifftop tribute to the RAF aircrew who defeated the Luftwaffe in 1940. It was inaugurated in 1993 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, celebrating its 30th anniversary last year.

The memorial includes reminders of the bravery and sacrifice of Churchill's 'Few' including a replica Hurricane and Spitfire and the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall. A remodelled visitor centre, in the shape of a Spitfire wing, now houses a café, shop, education centre and the high-tech Scramble Experience, to broaden its appeal to a younger audience.

[battleofbritainmemorial.org](https://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org)



© The Battle of Britain Memorial

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Unsung Hero Award

Brett Hawkes, Crowhurst Park, East Sussex

Known as a natural 'fixer,' Brett joined Crowhurst Park in 2019, bringing an infectious enthusiasm and a constant smile, and tackling challenges with dedication. Brett often goes the extra mile, even working on his days off to ensure tasks are completed. Notably, he once worked through a weekend and night to finish a difficult job. The Crowhurst Park team believes that if everyone were a bit more like Brett, the world would be a better place.

crowhurstpark.co.uk



© Crowhurst Park

Duncan Wise, Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland

For 23 years, Duncan has championed sustainable tourism in Northumberland National Park, balancing visitor exploration with ecosystem preservation. His strategic insight and collaborative efforts have developed innovative programs that educate, inspire and empower environmental stewardship. Notably, Duncan's Dark Skies initiative, now celebrating its 10th anniversary, has helped generate over £25 million for the local economy and extended the tourism season. Duncan has successfully facilitated economic growth while safeguarding the park's unique character.

northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk



© Alasdair MacKenzie - Northumberland National Park

Katie Calder, V-ATE Automotive Smokehouse and Bowl, Lincolnshire

Known for her exceptional customer service, Katie began her hospitality career at 16 and became an assistant manager within five years. When V-ATE Automotive Smokehouse launched in 2020, she was the natural choice for general manager. However in 2021 Katie faced a breast cancer diagnosis at 25 and underwent gruelling treatments. Despite this she continued working as Brand Manager, enhancing V-ATE's social media, customer interactions and internal communications. Now in remission, Katie serves on the senior management board, embodying the V-ATE brand with dedication and resilience, making her team incredibly proud.

v-ate.com



© V-ATE Automotive Smokehouse and Bowl

New Tourism Business of the Year

Boys Hall, Kent

Following a mammoth three-year restoration programme, the historic Jacobean Boys Hall in Kent has been successfully trading as a hotel and restaurant since September 2022.

Run by Brad and Kristie Lomas, the business employs 35 staff and offers 10 individual bedrooms, as well as an unforgettable dining experience in its oak-beamed dining hall with a menu that showcases fresh and seasonal Kent ingredients cooked over open fires.

Growth plans include the addition of a summer walled garden, an outdoor restaurant and boutique cabins.

[boys-hall.com](https://www.boys-hall.com)



© Helen Fairley/Boys Hall

Sleepy Owl Devon, Devon

Since opening in August 2023, Sleepy Owl Devon has already seen a 96% occupancy rate of bookings for its three treetop retreats. Nest Treehouse, Hideout Treehouse and Cosy Cowshed all offer guests a luxurious escape from everyday life.

With private courtyards, hot tubs, sun terraces and boutique style interiors, the treehouses offer tranquil nature staycations with the option to explore the nearby coast.

[sleepyowld Devon.co.uk](https://www.sleepyowld Devon.co.uk)



© Guy Harrop/Sleepy Owl Devon

The Wizard Walk of York, North Yorkshire

The Wizard Walk of York has been enchanting tourists since 2022.

Run by one wizard guide with a background in magical entertainment, the business was set up following a successful grant from York City Council, to provide a wonderful whimsical tour of York for families visiting the city.

Aimed at 5-10 year olds, the tour combines magic, comedy and education to showcase the very best of the city. Customers also have the option to purchase a handcrafted wand to learn magic tricks at home.

[wizardwalkofyork.com](https://www.wizardwalkofyork.com)



© The Wizard Walk of York/Devon

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TXGB Trailblazer Award



This award recognises businesses that work with TXGB and have led the way in pioneering new initiatives, increasing economic impact and driving awareness to connect with the TXGB platform. It is shortlisted and awarded directly by TXGB.

Past winners have included:

2023

Gold – Red Funnel, Isle of Wight

Silver – New Adventures, Tyne & Wear & Northumberland

Bronze – Cotswolds Tourism

2022

Gold – Rugby League World Cup 2021

Silver – Visit Gloucester

Bronze – Mike James, Savouring Bath

2020

Gold – Visit County Durham

Silver – Newcastle Gateshead Initiative

Bronze – Destination Bristol

Travel Content Award

Ben Aitken, The Guardian

'O'er vales and hills in a wheelchair: a new accessible trail in the Lake District'

[Read Ben Aitken's article](#)



© Ben Aitken

Travel writer and bestselling author Ben Aitken's Guardian piece exploring newly curated accessible trails in the Lake District captured the judge's attention and earned him a spot as one of the category finalists. Ben's narrative skilfully intertwines personal anecdotes with information on the Miles Without Stiles initiative, which aims to make the English countryside – in this case Cumbria's famed fells and lakes – inclusive for all visitors. Ben's heartfelt exploration of accessibility is captured through his storytelling, demonstrating the transformative power of accessible trails to enable people with limited mobility to experience the beauty of the Lake District and beyond. Ben's next book – to be published in 2025 – will shine some light on England's least visited cities.

Liz Edwards, The Times

'I went for a cross-country swim in the Thames, here's what happened'

[Read Liz Edwards' article](#)

As acting deputy travel editor at The Times and The Sunday Times, Liz Edwards has more than 20 years of travel writing and editing under her belt – along with several professional accolades. In her slow travel piece exploring cross-country swimming, Liz's narrative immerses readers in this unique outdoor adventure activity. Capturing the essence of the wild swimming experience, Liz describes the Thames and St Patrick's Stream scenery she navigated, encountering wildlife and impressive riverside properties along the way. Overall, the article stood out to judges for its compelling storytelling, practical wild swimming advice and the ability to transport readers to the heart of her adventure.

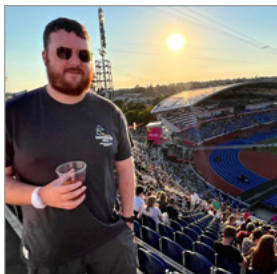


© Liz Edwards

Richard Franks, JRNY Magazine

'Greener Heartlands'

[Read Richard Franks' article](#)



© Richard Franks

A citizen of the city himself, travel writer Richard Franks produced a captivating portrayal of Birmingham's hidden gems and its transformation into a green city for JRNY Magazine – resulting in him being recognised as a category finalist by the judging panel. Through vivid descriptions and engaging storytelling, Richard takes readers on an unexpected journey along Birmingham's canals. He highlights the city's industrial past and revitalisation of spaces like the Roundhouse and the Jewellery Quarter alongside potential wildlife encounters with heron, otters and kingfishers. The article celebrates sustainability efforts, including urban farming and zero-waste initiatives, whilst also exploring Birmingham's rich cultural heritage and diverse culinary offering.

Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award



Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent

Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading conservation charity in Kent with over 30,000 members and more than 90 nature reserves. Its mission is to work with people to restore, save and enhance natural heritage and create a wilder Kent.

Striving to make nature accessible for all, the Trust runs a wide range of education programmes such as nature tots, forest school and sessions for home schooled children. In addition, it believes that wellbeing and wildlife go hand in hand and as such, it offers a wilder wellbeing programme which includes free yoga lessons and walks, to inspire people to act for wildlife.

kentwildlifetrust.org.uk



© Tom Cawdron / Kent Wildlife Trust

Mill Farm Eco Barns, Norfolk

Based on the Norfolk Coast, Mill Farm Eco Barns has been providing stylish and sustainable guest accommodation since 2013, with a mission to minimise its environmental impact.

Owners Neil and Emma Punchard converted Mill Farm Eco Barns into a sustainable paradise using 100% renewables and on-site energy generation.

The accommodation offers three 'eco' barns for guests to stay as well as allotments, free-range chickens, a wildlife pond, orchard and games barn.

Guests are welcomed with homegrown and homemade goodies and supplied with ideas for sustainable car-free days out.

millfarm-ecobarns.co.uk



© Mill Farm Eco Barns Trust

The Yan at Broadrayne, Cumbria

The Yan at Broadrayne is a family-run hospitality complex comprising of seven bedrooms, five cottages, two glamping pods and a bistro, offering guests a relaxing Cumbrian retreat by the lakes.

Sustainability is key to the success of the business, using biomass and air source heating and hydro electricity as well as promoting preordering to reduce food waste.

theyan.co.uk



© Stewart Smith / The Yan at Broadrayne

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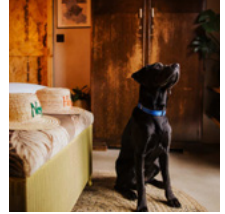
Bethnal&Bec, Hertfordshire

Bethnal&Bec offers luxurious adult-only accommodation for a relaxing getaway, emphasising inclusivity and acceptance for all guests.

Founded by Vicky and Chris in Cottered, Hertfordshire in 2017, they transformed stables into retreats with a third opening in 2021.

Their studios, Bethnal, Bec and The Foaling Box, provide stylish comfort in the Hertfordshire countryside, and have been featured in various publications. Each retreat offers lavish amenities such as king-sized beds, jacuzzi baths and scenic views, ensuring a serene escape for guests.

 bethnalandbec.com



© Bethnal&Bec

My Cottages in St Ives, Cornwall

Three centrally located luxury cottages make up My Cottages in St Ives, situated less than two minutes from a bustling harbour front and Porthmeor Beach.

Refurbished from dereliction in early 2018 into dream holiday lets, the family-run business used local talent and Cornish slate for the renovations. Each cottage features fully equipped kitchens, lavish bathrooms, underfloor heating and spacious open living areas with oak beams, plus a courtyard to enjoy the outdoors.

 mycottagesinstives.co.uk



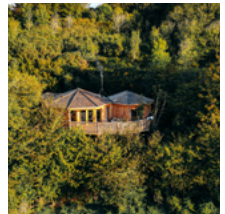
© My Cottages in St Ives

Sleepy Owl Devon, Devon

Since opening in August 2023, Sleepy Owl Devon has already achieved a 96% occupancy rate of bookings for its three treetop retreats.

Nest Treehouse, Hideout Treehouse and Cosy Cowshed all offer guests a luxurious escape from everyday life. With private courtyards, hot tubs, sun terraces and boutique style interiors, the treehouses offer tranquil nature staycations with the option to explore the nearby coast.

 sleepyowldevon.co.uk



© Sleepy Owl Devon

Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park of the Year

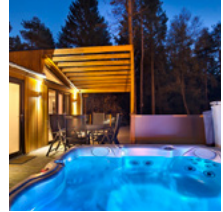
Darwin Forest Lodges, Derbyshire

Darwin Forest is a five-star lodge holiday park located near Matlock on the edge of the Peak District National Park.

Owned and operated by the Grayson family, the park has grown from a camping and caravanning site to one that offers 137 luxury lodges nestled within a stunning forest setting. Fantastic onsite facilities include a swimming pool, spa, gym, play centre, restaurant and an array of sporting activities.

Around 40,000 guests stay a year, in one of eight types of lodges designed around various budgets and requirements. The lodges are most popular amongst multi-generational families who get to enjoy the abundance of woodland walks and cycling trails nearby.

darwinforest.co.uk



© Matthew Jones/Darwin Forest Lodges

Kits Coty Glamping, Kent

Following a successful glamping trip to celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary, Mark and Ami opened their own glamorous glamping site in 2013, Kits Coty Glamping, in a field opposite their family home.

The site has been an instant success with increasing visitor numbers. Facilities include luxury self-catered accommodation in either African, Moroccan or festival themed tents, vintage shepherd's huts and fairy themed woodland retreats, which has been attracting a wide range of customers including families, couples and groups aged 25-50.

kitscotyglamping.co.uk



© Kits Coty Glamping

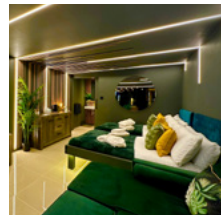
The Secret Garden Glamping, Lancashire

Offering a magical and unforgettable experience is the main aim of The Secret Garden Glamping site.

A luxurious and enchanting retreat nestled in a secluded natural setting, Secret Garden Glamping offers guests a unique and immersive experience for those seeking a blend of comfort, nature and tranquility.

The site emphasises sustainability, seeking to minimise its environmental impacts using renewable energy sources and eco-friendly practices.

thesecretgardenglamping.uk



© The Secret Garden Glamping

Taste of England Award

Allium at Askham Hall, Cumbria

The award-winning four AA rosette restaurant, Allium, is located in the 13th century Askham Hall hotel. Set in the Eden Valley, Askham Hall is a Grade 1 listed Pele Tower House that has been in the Lowther family for 200 years and was reimagined from a family home into a contemporary hotel in 2013.

As well as Allium, which received its first Michelin star in 2019, Askham Hall includes 19 luxurious bedrooms, charming original features, an outdoor pool and a stunning garden.

Allium boasts a well-stocked wine cellar and wild and home grown produce from the family estate which is a mainstay of the menu led by Head Chef Richard Swale.

askhamhall.co.uk



© Allium at Askham Hall

Blackfriars Restaurant, Tyne & Wear

Founded in 1239 as a Dominican friary, Blackfriars was transformed into its current form as a thriving restaurant and event venue in 2001 by local entrepreneurs Andy and Sam Hook.

Blackfriars epitomises a blend of heritage and modern hospitality, with a 'gutsy' traditional British menu. The restaurant prides itself on using local seasonal ingredients, often straight from local farms and markets, with everything produced from scratch, including stocks, sauces, ice cream, breads, sausages and black pudding.

In 2017 the business opened a banquet hall, a parlour bar, cookery school and tasting room, hosting popular events throughout the year.

blackfriarsrestaurant.co.uk



© Blackfriars Restaurant

La Locanda, Lancashire

La Locanda was opened in Gisburn in 2003 by Maurizio Bocchi, who dreamt of owning a restaurant that showcases the best culinary experience, while respecting the traditions of Italian cuisine, culture and heritage.

Originally from Lake Maggiore in northern Italy, Maurizio gained expertise in agriculture and the manufacture of butter, fresh aged cheeses and cured meats. His restaurant is proud to serve an outstanding menu of seasonal family recipes and handcrafted dishes of authentic flavours using locally sourced ingredients.

In 2022, Chef Maurizio Bocchi was named Marketing Lancashire's Taste Lancashire Ambassador.

lalocanda.co.uk



© Sarah Valentine/La Locanda

Pub of the Year

The Acorn Inn, Dorset

The Acorn Inn is a full-service rural village public house, with a skittle alley, function spaces, an award-winning restaurant and 10 bedrooms, set in the stunning Dorset countryside.

The six year old business is supported by enthusiastic staff including a Head Chef who is passionate about using local produce, foraged from fields and hedgerows.

Comfort is the other key ingredient, and the Inn creates a relaxing atmosphere with friendly service.

acorn-inn.co.uk



© Richard Legg/The Acorn Inn

The Peterville Inn, Cornwall

Tom and Lara Trubshaw set up The Peterville Inn in St Agnes village after spotting a gap in the market for a quality dining pub.

With a strong background in hospitality, journalism, marketing and PR, the couple's vision for the pub was to produce a high-quality menu celebrating local produce and seasonality, along with a strong bar offering.

The pub now offers three areas – an outdoor decked space, a cosy indoor bar with an all-day menu, as well as an evening restaurant offering à la carte options, topped off with an extensive hand-selected wine list, local ales, ciders and house-created cocktails.

thepetervilleinn.co.uk



© Frankie Thomas Photography/
The Peterville Inn

The Red Fox, Merseyside

Formally known as Westwood Grange, The Red Fox opened its doors in December 2014 under the new ownership of Brunning & Price.

An award-winning destination pub boasting real fires and a character feel, The Red Fox attracts a mix of people and families from across North-West England and North Wales.

The bar offers nine cask beers, many from local breweries, 100 gins, an award-winning whiskey bar, wines, craft beers and more.

Over the years the business has expanded, with a wedding venue, The Little Fox, opening in 2019 which hosted 72 weddings in 2023. In 2021 it opened Outfoxed, an outdoor space with a pizza oven, craft beer and live music.

brunningandprice.co.uk/redfox



© The Red Fox

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year

ROARR! Norfolk

Originally opened in 1984 as Dinosaur Park, before being rebranded as ROARR! in 2018, this popular Norfolk visitor attraction regularly draws guests from across the country, in part due to accessibility and inclusion measures and a strong focus on fun!

Improvements made since 2006 has meant that the attraction now offers an enhanced guest experience with dozens of rides, seasonal events and lots of indoor and outdoor activities for children to play, splash, climb and explore, giving families an action-packed day out and a lifetime of memories.

roarr.co.uk



© ROARR!

Warner Bros. Studio Tour London - The Making of Harry Potter, Hertfordshire

Over 17 million Harry Potter fans have experienced a magical day out at the Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – The Making of Harry Potter, since it opened in 2012.

The global film and book phenomenon needs little introduction to most and the hugely popular Watford-based visitor attraction has allowed visitors to explore the world behind the scenes of the blockbuster movies by stepping onto authentic film sets including Hogwarts' Great Hall, the Forbidden Forest, Platform 9¾, Diagon Alley and the Gryffindor Common Room.

The Studio Tour has since been firmly established as one of the top locations for 'set-jettlers' keen to visit favourite film and TV locations in Britain, with 27% repeat visitors.

wbstudiotour.co.uk



© The Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc

WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre, Gloucestershire

With 800 acres of wetlands, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) centre in Slimbridge offers visitors an intriguing bird's eye view of life on a marsh.

The centre, which was opened in 1946 by Sir Peter Scott, Olympic sailing medallist, painter and broadcaster, is home to ducks, swans, otters, rare geese, amphibians and flamingos.

Slimbridge was the first of nine centres run by WWT, which altogether receive one million visitors a year. Following WWT and Slimbridge's 75th anniversary in 2021, the centre opened groundbreaking new exhibits including nine immersive wildlife experiences and exciting activities, such as a Canoe Safari, to help visitors get closer to nature, experience the animals in their own habitats, and learn more about conservation and environmental science.

wwt.org.uk/slimbridge



© Ben Langdon/WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre

Large Hotel of the Year

Hope Street Hotel, Merseyside

Hope Street Hotel is Liverpool's original boutique hotel and it has been independently run since 2004.

Originally a dilapidated 1860s palazzo-style warehouse, it was bought in 2000 by Dave Brewitt who transformed it into a beautiful 48-bedroom boutique hotel and restaurant.

Over the years, the hotel has grown to include 149 bedrooms, two restaurants, an award-winning spa, a private cinema, nine event spaces and rooftop terraces offering panoramic city and river views.

Boasting Cheshire brick, glass, iron pillars and pitch pine beams with bespoke cherry, oak and walnut furniture, the hotel is a popular haunt of celebrities and offers guests a chic city getaway and a place to relax after exploring Merseyside.

[hopestreethotel.co.uk](https://www.hopestreethotel.co.uk)



© Hope Street Hotel

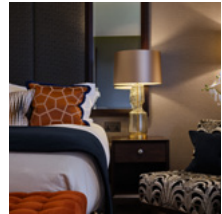
Rockliffe Hall Hotel, County Durham

Rockliffe Hall is an independent, privately owned hotel, golf and spa resort which opened in November 2009.

Set within a 375-acre estate just outside the village of Hurworth, County Durham, the AA-rated five-red-star leisure resort boasts 61 bedrooms and suites, four holiday homes, one of the largest spas in the country, an 18-hole championship golf course and three onsite restaurants; the flagship 3AA Orangery restaurant, The Clubhouse restaurant and Nu Sana.

The expansive grounds are also home to newly restored walled kitchen gardens, two tennis courts, an onsite helipad, nature trails, walking routes and fishing on the River Tees. Complimentary bike hire is also available for guests.

[rockliffehall.com](https://www.rockliffehall.com)



© Rockliffe Hall Hotel

The Grand York, North Yorkshire

Formerly the home of the North Eastern Railway Company, the stunning Grand York was restored to its Edwardian glory to provide guests with a sumptuous stay in the heart of York.

The AA-rated five-star hotel now offers 207 bedrooms, including palatial suites, a classically designed 1906 Bar, restaurants and a relaxing spa. And on top of that, a new cookery school offers a range of courses six days a week where guests can learn a variety of cooking methods including Indian, French, Japanese and more.

[thegrandyork.co.uk](https://www.thegrandyork.co.uk)



Outstanding Contribution to Tourism Award

The Outstanding Contribution to Tourism Award is a special award given every year by the VisitEngland Advisory Board to an individual, institution or collective that has contributed something special and unique to tourism in England.

Through their work during the previous year, recipients of this award have supported our work and have highlighted tourism's contribution and value to our nation's economy, employment, environment and quality of life.

Past winners:

2002	HM The Queen
2003	Harry Potter
2004	Judith Chalmers
2005	The Duchess of Northumberland for Alnwick Garden
2006	Sir Cameron Mackintosh for London's Theatreland
2007	Sir Paul McCartney and the City of Liverpool
2008	Michael Eavis CBE for Glastonbury Festival
2009	The English Pub
2010	The National Trust
2011	The Royal Shakespeare Company
2012	The English Garden
2013	The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Ambassadors
2014	The Travel Agent
2015	The Chefs of England
2016	BBC Countryfile
2017	The Premier League
2018	Historic Royal Palaces
2019	England's National Parks
2020	The business events industry, supporting England's Nightingale Hospitals
2022	The English Period Drama
2023	England's Coast

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Membership of the Club gives access to over 2,700 scenic campsites in the UK and across Europe, along with numerous membership benefits, services and products including, overseas travel bookings and advice and worldwide tours.

The Club is proud to support the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence and the Experience of the Year category.

 [camc.com](https://www.camc.com)



As one of the UK's leading and fastest-growing independent holiday let rental agencies, **Sykes Holiday Cottages** has been supporting holiday homeowners for over 30 years.

Sykes Holiday Cottages is one of the best-known travel brands in the UK, having won the British Travel Award for Best Large Holiday Cottage Booking Company for ten consecutive years. We are experts in our field, and we know holiday letting inside out.

Sykes Holiday Cottages are thrilled to sponsor the Self-Catering Accommodation Provider of the Year and the Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award categories at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence.

 [sykescottages.co.uk](https://www.sykescottages.co.uk)



Virgin Experience Days was founded by a pair of aviation enthusiasts, who decided to make flying a thing everyone could try. Fast-forward 30 years and we've got 4,000 experiences, with people putting more value on life-affirming days out and time together than ever before.

Virgin Experience Days are thrilled to be sponsoring the Small Visitor Attraction at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2024, kicking off what promises to be a fantastic celebration of the country's world-famous tourism industry.

As a company built on sharing experiences, Virgin Experience Days understand the hard work, passion and dedication that goes on behind the scenes of this industry and are looking forward to raising a glass as the teams and individuals that make England such an unforgettable country to visit are recognised.

 [virginexperiencedays.co.uk](https://www.virginexperiencedays.co.uk)

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