

NEWS RELEASE

21 October

**SOUTH EAST'S TOP TOURISM BUSINESSES WIN GOLD
AT REGIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

Nineteen South East tourism businesses have been awarded the region's highest accolade at the Beautiful South's Awards for Excellence held today at Mercedes-Benz World.

The annual Awards, organised by Tourism South East, are now in their 20th year and recognise exceptional levels of customer service and dedication to raising standards in the tourism industry. A record number of entries to the prestigious Awards led to an impressive shortlist with winners announced tonight by guest host Nicholas Owen and Tourism South East Chairman, John Williams. Finalists from across the region were guests at the celebratory evening.

'We offer our congratulations to all tonight's winners', said Mike Bedingfield, Chief Executive of Tourism South East. 'Our industry's commitment to providing the best possible customer service and to exceeding customer expectations is outstanding. The Award winners have shown that they are truly the best-in-class and we look forward to seeing them on the national stage at the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence next April.'

'The current economic climate continues to present many challenges for the tourism industry, however, the standards achieved by our Award winners this year show their determination to deliver the highest level of customer satisfaction,' added Bedingfield.

Innovative new Award categories this year were Destination Marketing (VisitBrighton), Digital Marketing (Howletts & Port Lympne Wild Animal Park & The Aspinall Foundation) and Outstanding Contribution to Tourism (Lord Montagu of Beaulieu).

ENDS

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More information about Tourism South East can be found at

www.tourismsoutheast.com

NOTE TO EDITORS:

For images, please visit: <https://tourismsoutheast.sharefile.com/>

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WINNERS AND FINALISTS BY CATEGORY:

Access for All

Gold: Gatcombe & Chillerton 2010 Scarecrow Festival, Isle of Wight

Silver: Crowne Plaza Marlow, Buckinghamshire

Silver: The Stables Theatre, Buckinghamshire

Highly Commended: Iwood Bed and Breakfast, East Sussex

Highly Commended: Sunnybay Apartments, Isle of Wight

Bed & Breakfast/Guest Accommodation of the Year

Gold: Hope House Bed and Breakfast, Oxfordshire

Silver: The Mill at Gordleton, Hampshire

Silver: The Nurse's Cottage Restaurant with Rooms, Hampshire

Highly Commended: The Guesthouse East, East Sussex

Highly Commended: Hastings House, East Sussex

Best Tourism Experience

Gold: Seaview Wildlife Encounter, Isle of Wight

Silver: Ascot Racecourse, Berkshire

Silver: Fishers Farm Park, West Sussex

Highly Commended: Isle of Wight Zoo, Isle of Wight

Highly Commended: Orb360, East Sussex

Business Tourism Award

Gold: Pennyhill Park Hotel and The Spa, Surrey

Silver: Aviator, Hampshire

Silver: Lingfield Park, Surrey

Highly Commended: Eastbourne Conference Bureau, East Sussex

Highly Commended: Port Lympne Wild Animal Park – Mansion & Gardens, Kent

Caravan/Holiday Park of the Year

Gold: Bunn Leisure, West Sussex

Silver: Shamba Holidays, Hampshire

Destination Marketing Award

Gold: VisitBrighton

Silver: Visit Kent

Highly Commended: Portsmouth

Highly Commended: Visit Eastbourne

Digital Marketing Award

Gold: Howletts & Port Lympne Wild Animal Park & The Aspinall Foundation, Kent

Silver: Insight Mobile Ltd, East Sussex

Silver: Visit Winchester, Hampshire

Highly Commended: Canterbury City Council, Kent

Highly Commended: VisitEastbourne.com, East Sussex

Flavour of the South East

Gold: Hampshire Fare, Hampshire

Silver: Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre, Kent

Silver: The Chapel Down Winery, Kent

Highly Commended: Brogdale Collections – Brogdale Farm, Kent

Highly Commended: The Big Bang, Oxfordshire

Large Hotel/Townhouse of the Year

Gold: Chewton Glen Hotel, Hampshire

Silver: Pennyhill Park Hotel and The Spa, Surrey

Highly Commended: Aviator, Hampshire

Highly Commended: Langham Hotel, East Sussex

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year

Gold: Drusillas Park, East Sussex

Silver: Beaulieu, Hampshire

Silver: Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

Silver: Leeds Castle, Kent

Highly Commended: The Ashmolean, Oxfordshire

Outstanding Contribution to Tourism

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu

Outstanding Customer Service

Gold: Tylney Hall Hotel, Hampshire

Silver: Katie Burns (Chewton Glen), Hampshire

Silver: Theatre Royal, Brighton, East Sussex

Highly Commended: Jim Loe (Isle of Wight Steam Railway), Isle of Wight

Highly Commended: Neil Kirby (Langham Hotel), East Sussex

Self Catering Holiday of the Year

Gold: Silk Cottage, Hampshire

Silver: Dines Barn, Hampshire

Highly Commended: The Chestnuts, Oxfordshire

Highly Commended: Undercastle Cottage, Hampshire

Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year

Gold: The Bay Tree Hotel, Oxfordshire

Silver: Hartwell House Hotel & Spa, Buckinghamshire

Highly Commended: The Lamb Inn, Oxfordshire

Highly Commended: The Lambert Arms, Oxfordshire

Highly Commended: The Shelleys, East Sussex

Small Visitor Attraction of the Year

Gold: Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre, Kent

Silver: Chiltern Open Air Museum, Buckinghamshire

Silver: Loseley Park, Surrey

Highly Commended: New Forest Museum, Hampshire

Highly Commended: Tonbridge Castle, Kent

Sport Tourism Award

Gold: M's Cycle Hire, East Sussex

Silver: Bike Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

Silver: NIVEA SUN Yellowwave Beach Sports Venue, East Sussex

Highly Commended: Blue Box Sailing, Hampshire
Highly Commended: Bunn Leisure, West Sussex
Highly Commended: The Grounded Events Company Ltd (Brighton Marathon),
East Sussex

Sustainable Tourism Award

Gold: The Chestnuts, Oxfordshire

Silver: Jurys Inn, Southampton, Hampshire

Silver: Portsmouth Marriott Hotel, Hampshire

Highly Commended: Uppark House, West Sussex

Tourist Information Service of the Year

Gold: Winchester Tourist Information Service, Hampshire

Silver: Rye Tourist Information Centre, East Sussex

Silver: Thanet Visitor Information Service, Kent

Highly Commended: Burford Visitor Information Centre, Oxfordshire

Tourist Event of the Year

Gold: Royal Ascot, Berkshire

Silver: Isle of Wight Walking Festival, Isle of Wight

Highly Commended: Hampshire Food Festival, Hampshire

Highly Commended: Canterbury Eurofair & Food Festival, Kent

WINNERS AND FINALISTS BY COUNTY:

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Silver

Access for All:

Crowne Plaza Marlow

Access for All:

The Stables Theatre

Highly Commended

Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:

Hartwell House Hotel & Spa

Small Visitor Attraction of the Year:

Chiltern Open Air Museum

BERKSHIRE

GOLD

Tourist Event of the Year:

Royal Ascot, Berkshire

Silver

Best Tourism Experience:

Ascot Racecourse

OXFORDSHIRE:

GOLD

Bed & Breakfast/

Guest Accommodation of the Year:

Hope House Bed and Breakfast

Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:

The Bay Tree Hotel

Sustainable Tourism Award:

The Chestnuts

Silver

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year:

Blenheim Palace

Sport Tourism Award:

Bike Blenheim Palace

Highly Commended

Flavour of the South East:

The Big Bang

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year:

The Ashmolean

Self Catering Holiday of the Year:

The Chestnuts

Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:

The Lamb Inn

Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:

The Lambert Arms

Tourist Information Service of the Year:

Burford Visitor Information Centre

HAMPSHIRE

GOLD

Flavour of the South East:

Hampshire Fare

Large Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:

Chewton Glen Hotel

Outstanding Contribution to Tourism:

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu

Outstanding Customer Service:

Tylney Hall Hotel

Self Catering Holiday of the Year:

Silk Cottage

Tourist Information Service of the Year:

Winchester Tourist Information Service

Silver

Bed & Breakfast/

Guest Accommodation of the Year:

The Mill at Gordleton

Bed & Breakfast/

Guest Accommodation of the Year:

The Nurse's Cottage
Restaurant with Rooms

Business Tourism Award:

Aviator

Caravan/Holiday Park of the Year:

Shamba Holidays

Digital Marketing Award:

Visit Winchester

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Beaulieu
Outstanding Customer Service:	Katie Burns (Chewton Glen)
Self Catering Holiday of the Year:	Dines Barn
Sustainable Tourism Award:	Jurys Inn, Southampton
Sustainable Tourism Award:	Portsmouth Marriott Hotel

Highly Commended

Destination Marketing Award:	Portsmouth
Large Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:	Aviator
Self Catering Holiday of the Year:	Undercastle Cottage
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year:	New Forest Museum
Sport Tourism Award:	Blue Box Sailing
Tourist Event of the Year:	Hampshire Food Festival

ISLE OF WIGHT

GOLD

Access for All:	Gatcombe & Chillerton 2010 Scarecrow Festival Seaview Wildlife Encounter
Best Tourism Experience:	

Silver

Tourist Event of the Year:	Isle of Wight Walking Festival
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Highly Commended

Access for All:	Sunnybay Apartments
Best Tourism Experience:	Isle of Wight Zoo
Outstanding Customer Service:	Jim Loe (Isle of Wight Steam Railway)

KENT

GOLD

Digital Marketing Award:	Howletts & Port Lympne Wild Animal Park & The Aspinal Foundation
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre

Silver

Destination Marketing Award:	Visit Kent
Flavour of the South East:	Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre
Flavour of the South East:	The Chapel Down Winery
Large Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Leeds Castle

Tourist Information Service of the Year:	Thanet Visitor Information Service
<u>Highly Commended</u>	
Business Tourism Award:	Port Lympne Wild Animal Park - Mansion & Gardens
Digital Marketing Award:	Canterbury City Council
Flavour of the South East:	Brogdale Collections – Brogdale Farm
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Tonbridge Castle
Tourist Event of the Year:	Canterbury Eurofair & Food Festival

SURREY

GOLD

Business Tourism Award:	Pennyhill Park Hotel and The Spa
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Silver

Business Tourism Award:	Lingfield Park
Large Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:	Pennyhill Park Hotel and The Spa
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Loseley Park

SUSSEX

GOLD

Caravan/Holiday Park of the Year:	Bunn Leisure
Destination Marketing Award:	VisitBrighton
Large Visitor Attraction of the Year:	Drusillas Park
Sport Tourism Award:	M's Cycle Hire

Silver

Best Tourism Experience:	Fishers Farm Park
Digital Marketing Award:	Insight Mobile Ltd
Outstanding Customer Service:	Theatre Royal, Brighton
Sport Tourism Award:	NIVEA SUN Yellowwave Beach Sports Venue

Highly Commended

Access for All: Bed & Breakfast/	Iwood Bed and Breakfast
Guest Accommodation of the Year: Bed & Breakfast/	Hastings House

Guest Accommodation of the Year:	The Guesthouse East
Best Tourism Experience:	Orb360
Business Tourism Award:	Eastbourne Conference Bureau
Destination Marketing Award:	Visit Eastbourne
Large Hotel/ Townhouse of the Year:	Langham Hotel
Digital Marketing Award:	VisitEastbourne.com
Outstanding Customer Service:	Neil Kirby (Langham Hotel)
Small Hotel/Townhouse of the Year:	The Shelleys
Sport Tourism Award:	Bunn Leisure
Sport Tourism Award:	The Grounded Events Company Ltd (Brighton Marathon)
Sustainable Tourism Award:	Uppark House
Tourist Information Service of the Year:	Rye Tourist Information Centre

Sponsors of the Awards for Excellence include:

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 Asperion Hotels
 AV Unit
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 Denbies Wine Estate
 EBXP
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 Tourist Network

Tourism South East

Tourism South East is the official tourist board for South East England, covering Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire and Surrey.

The South East is the largest region for tourism in Britain outside of London, worth in excess of £13 billion p.a. to the regional economy (7% of regional GVA) supporting over 300,000 jobs.