



## **VisitEngland's Accolades recognise quality experiences at England's Attractions**

**23 February 2016:** A host of attractions across England have received VisitEngland Accolades in recognition of the quality visitor experiences on offer. There are 61 accolades in this round, which sit alongside 17 from the first round announced in August last year. Highlighting those elements that matter most to visitors, including the warm welcome on arrival, the presentation of the collections, the story-telling and the quality of the tea and cake the accolades recognise those attractions going the extra mile to create an enjoyable and memorable visitor experience.

Introduced by VisitEngland in 2014, the accolades are available to attractions that are part of the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme and are allocated through a scoring system based on an annual unannounced assessment by VisitEngland. They include the Welcome accolade, Hidden Gem, Best Told Story, Quality Food & Drink and the Gold accolade for all-round top-scoring attractions.

**Sally Balcombe Chief Executive of VisitEngland** said: "These attractions have received an accolade either for their warm welcome, unique storytelling or high-quality food and drink; ensuring an all-round quality experience for visitors. The accolades reflect the wide variety of world-class attractions on offer in England and provide the perfect reason to book a visit."

Members of VisitEngland's Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme represent a wide range of tourism experiences across England, from museums and galleries, farm attractions, historic houses and gardens to churches, cathedrals and country parks. They are supported by a network of highly trained assessors who advise on improving and promoting the quality, accessibility and sustainability of their offer.

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**Full list of attractions receiving Accolades in this round:**

<b>Attraction</b>	<b>2015 accolade</b>
BBC Tours Bristol	Best Told Story
BBC Tours Newcastle	Best Told Story
Bodleian Library	Best Told Story
Canterbury Historic River Tours	Best Told Story
Framework Knitters' Museum	Best Told Story
Jersey Museum and Art Gallery	Best Told Story
Maritime Museum and Occupation Tapestry Gallery	Best Told Story
Museum of the Jewellery Quarter	Best Told Story
National Glass Centre	Best Told Story
RNLI Henry Blogg Museum	Best Told Story
Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre	Best Told Story
Valence House	Best Told Story
Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum & Tour	Best Told Story
Beaulieu	Gold
Blists Hill Victorian Town	Gold
Captain Cook Memorial Museum	Gold
Chelsea Football Club Stadium Tour & Museum	Gold
Chester Zoo	Gold
Corinium Museum	Gold
HM Tower of London	Gold
Paultons Park	Gold
River & Rowing Museum	Gold
Sandcastle Waterpark	Gold
Tate Liverpool	Gold
The Crystal	Gold
The Heights of Abraham	Gold
Trebah Garden	Gold
Trentham Gardens	Gold
Westonbirt Arboretum	Gold
World Museum	Gold
York Art Gallery	Gold
Yorkshire Wildlife Park	Gold
Bushey Museum & Art Gallery	Hidden Gem
Canterbury Punting Company	Hidden Gem
Charleston	Hidden Gem
Dr Jenner's House and Garden	Hidden Gem
Filey Bird Garden and Animal Park	Hidden Gem
Killhope, The North of England Lead Mining Museum	Hidden Gem

Leeds Discovery Centre	Hidden Gem
New Forest Museum	Hidden Gem
Pines Garden Museum and Tea Room	Hidden Gem
Staircase House and Stockport Story Museum	Hidden Gem
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery	Quality Food & Drink
People's History Museum	Quality Food & Drink
West Dean Gardens	Quality Food & Drink
DIG	Welcome
East Anglian Railway Museum	Welcome
Historic Dockyard Chatham	Welcome
Lichfield Cathedral	Welcome
Mary Arden's Farm	Welcome
Oriental Museum	Welcome
Redwings Ada Cole	Welcome
RSPB Dungeness Nature Reserve	Welcome
RSPB Lakenheath Fen Nature Reserve	Welcome
RSPB Saltholme Nature Reserve	Welcome
Thursford Collection	Welcome
Touchstones Rochdale	Welcome
Tower Bridge Exhibition	Welcome
Wadworth Brewery Visitor Centre	Welcome
Walby Farm Park	Welcome
Wilberforce House	Welcome

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### **About the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme**

- The Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme is managed by VisitEngland and, through its network of regional assessors, boasts an incredible reputation for instigating, modifying and shaping change to the customer experience at visitor attractions across England.
- Following successful trials in 1998 in the South West and then in the East of England, the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme was officially taken centrally by the National Tourist Board in 2007. The scheme encourages participants to make the Scheme work for them as a management tool.
- Industry support has been consistently strong with participants eager to take on board the recommendations of their local assessor.
- Any questions or queries regarding the scheme can be emailed to [attractions@visitengland.org](mailto:attractions@visitengland.org).
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### **About VisitEngland**

- VisitEngland's focus is on the development and delivery of the new Discover England fund for product development to ensure that bookable regional product is being sold in international markets. This activity will also benefit the domestic industry by building engagement and partnerships between and across regions and developing product that will be attractive to both domestic and international markets.
- Our work is underpinned by robust research and customer insights. You can access the latest in-depth market intelligence and statistics on [www.visitengland.org/insight-statistics](http://www.visitengland.org/insight-statistics)
- Tourism in England is worth £106 billion, and supports 2.6 million jobs.

For further information see [www.visitengland.org](http://www.visitengland.org)