



VisitEngland™

Achieving excellence – your tourism awards toolkit 2024/25

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What we will cover

- Why do businesses enter the awards?
- The tourism awards process
- Your application
- What are your next steps?



VisitEngland™

Why do businesses enter the awards?



VISIT
WORCESTERSHIRE

Excellence makes business sense

- Customers will pay more for excellence
- Recruit and retain better staff
- Profile and pride
- Profit!

Celebrating local excellence



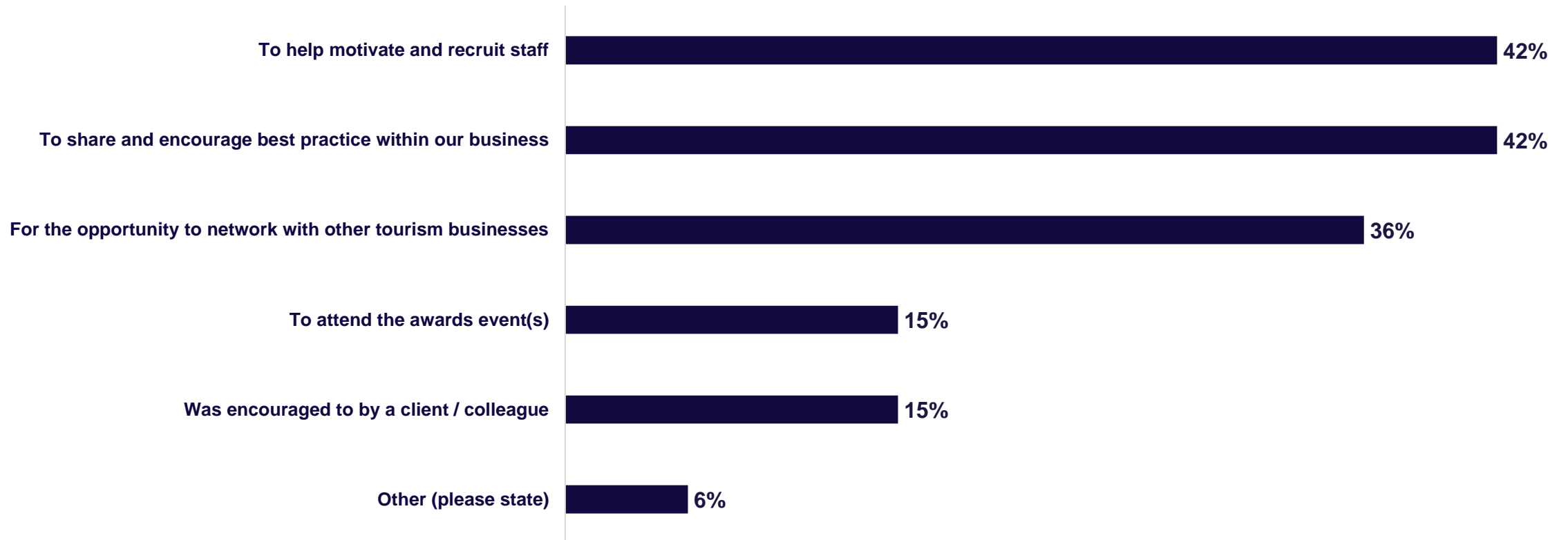
Top left – Eckington Manor. Top middle – Battle of Evesham. Top Right – Astley Vineyard

Bottom left – Morgan Motor Company. Bottom middle – Redhill Holidays. Bottom right – Cottage in the Wood Malvern

Why did you enter your local tourism awards competition in 2023? – top 5 reasons



Why did you enter your local tourism awards competition in 2023? – other reasons



Benefits of entering

- Receive a marque of quality assurance for use in marketing
- Increase your media coverage and PR opportunities
- Gain a competitive edge
- Chance to compete regionally and nationally
- Get free independent feedback
- Review your approach to excellence and drive best practice
- Network and celebrate with other businesses
- Recognition and/or influence with local partners
- Reward and motivate your team

Find out more about why you should enter:

visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence

visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#pr-toolkit



Congratulations on winning an award. As well as recognising the quality of your product, this triumph represents a valuable PR opportunity – read on to discover how to make the most of it.

This toolkit contains advice on how to:



Find contacts for the most useful editors, writers and influencers.



Identify the most effective publications, websites and podcasts.



Craft the perfect press release and print-worthy images.



Make your pitch stand out, and hit editors' inboxes at the ideal time.



The tourism awards process

Reaching the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence

Visit Worcestershire Tourism Awards

VisitEngland
Awards
for
Excellence

Award Categories

SET CATERGORIES

- Small Serviced Accommodation of the Year (combination of B&B and small hotels)
- Camping, Glamping & Holiday Park of the Year
- Experience of the Year
- Large Hotel of the Year
- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year
- New Tourism Business of the Year
- Pub of the Year
- Self Catering Accommodation of the Year
- Small Visitor Attraction of the Year
- Taste of England Award

OPTIONAL CATERGORIES THAT VW WILL DO IN ADDITION TO SET CATERGORIES:

- Tourism Hero of the Year Award
- Accessible & Inclusive Tourism
- Festival and Event of Year
- Ethical, Responsible & Sustainable Tourism Award
- Business Events Venue of the Year

OPTIONAL CATEGORIES THAT VW WILL NOT TAKE FORWARD FOR NEXT YEARS AWARDS:

- International Tourism Awards – not chosen

The application system

To apply today, select a category below to submit an application:

HOME MY ACCOUNT FIND OTHER COMPETITIONS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Login or Create an Account

Login

Email Address *

Password * [lost password?](#)

remember me

Login

Create a New Account

First Name * Last Name *

Job Title *

Phone Number * Email Address *

Business Name *

Give the official name as you wish it to appear in all publicity materials, on certificates, in presentations etc.

Business Street Address *

Please provide address details for the main administration office, if different, the address details relating to the specific business being entered for an award can be added within the application form.

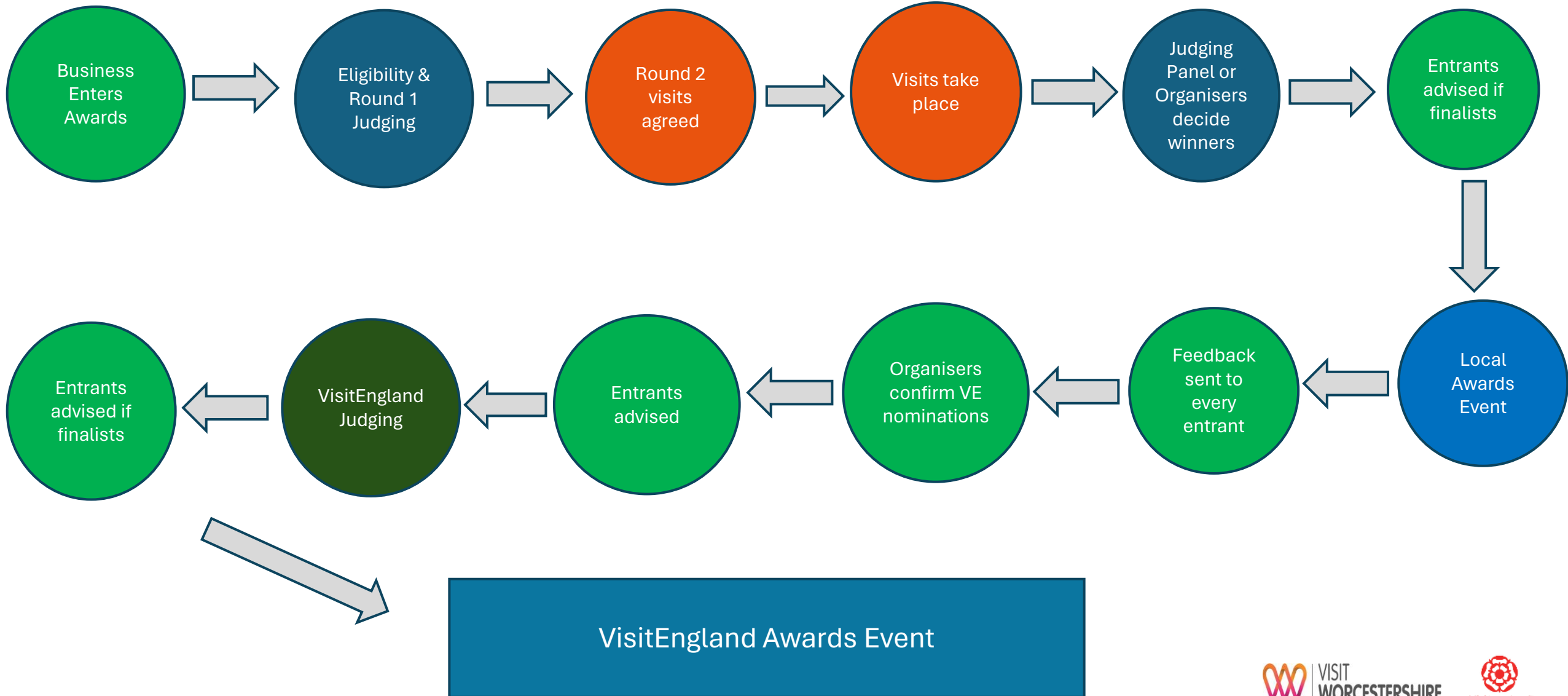
- Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award
- B&B and Guest House of the Year
- Business Events Venue of the Year
- Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park of the Year*
- Camping and Caravanning Park of the Year
- Glamping Business of the Year
- Holiday Park of the Year
- Dog Friendly Business of the Year
- Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award
- Experience of the Year*
- Experience of the Year (Active or Learning)
- Spa and Wellbeing Experience of the Year
- International Tourism Award
- Large Hotel of the Year
- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year
- New Tourism Business Award
- Pub of the Year
- Self Catering Accommodation of the Year
- Small Hotel of the Year
- Small Visitor Attraction of the Year
- Taste of England*
- Café & Tearoom of the Year
- Casual Dining Award
- Restaurant of the Year
- Tourism Event/Festival of the Year
- Unsung Hero Award
- Visitor Information Service of the Year
- Wedding Venue of the Year

Find out more about the categories:

[Tourism Awards | Visit Worcestershire](#)

[visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence/visitengland-awards-excellence-award-categories](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence/visitengland-awards-excellence-award-categories)

The Judging Process



Top tips 1



- Read the guidance
- Choose categories
- Check your eligibility
- Read through the questions



VisitEngland™

Your application



VISIT
WORCESTERSHIRE

Setting the scene



- Business details
- Promotional description
- Promotional images
- Background
- Awards and accolades
 - ✓ VE/AA rating
 - ✓ Do you have any other quality awards/ratings?

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year winner 23/24 – Attwell Farm Park

Supporting evidence



- Relevant links
- Evidence that supports the question
- Adds value, does not repeat

Festival and Event of the Year winner 23/24 – Battle of Evesham

Importance of online presence & reviews

- Provide relevant links
 - ✓ Review sites
 - ✓ Website
 - ✓ Social media platforms
 - ✓ Sustainability policy/ information
 - ✓ Accessibility guide/ information
- Evidence of engagement

Find out more about online marketing:

www.visitengland.org/onlinemarketing



Digital Marketing Toolkit

Learn how digital marketing can help even the smallest tourism business reach a global audience with our toolkit of resources.

Contents ▾

This Digital Marketing Toolkit for Small Medium Enterprises (SME) tourism businesses:

- ✓ Explains what you need to know about digital marketing strategy.
- ✓ Provides information on topics from building a website to maximising social media and content marketing.
- ✓ Includes helpful case studies of other businesses' digital strategies.

Chapters



Chapter 1: What is digital marketing?

Get to grips with the basics of digital marketing and learn how it encompasses everything you do to promote your tourism business online and effectively communicate to customers. Click through for useful case studies.



Chapter 2: How to create a website

What you need to consider when building a website for your tourism business.



Chapter 3: Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Understanding Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to increase the likelihood of your website being seen and indexed by search engines.

The four key questions

- Your top qualities
- Your recent improvements
- Your results
- Your future plans

Question 1: Your Top Qualities



Unique selling points, strengths and essence of your business:

- Quality of your core product and customer experience
- Added extras that delight your customers
- How you care for your team
- Use and promotion of local suppliers
- Innovative marketing and PR
- Facilities and welcome for people with accessibility requirements
- Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
- Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building

Experience of the Year winner 23/24 – Piston Distillery

Areas to Consider for Q1



Caring for your customers


- Always going the extra mile
- Staff training and development
e.g. Welcome to Excellence/In-House training
- Induction process for new staff
- Customer feedback initiatives/complaints process
- Attention to detail

Pub of the Year winner 23/24 – The Hadley Bowling Green

Areas to Consider for Q1


Innovative marketing /promotion

- Specific marketing and promotion carried out?
- Trying something different or out of the ordinary?
- Social networking sites
- Joint marketing with other tourism businesses
- Engaging with LVEP, DMO and VE/VB campaigns




Get your introduction to PR toolkit

Learn the basics of getting publicity with our free public relations guide. Our PR toolkit provides ideas on how to secure media coverage and publicity.



- ✓ Intended for managers or employees at English tourism businesses who are not marketing professionals, this toolkit gives you simple steps towards getting media coverage.
- ✓ You'll find helpful advice such as who to contact in the media and how to make your pitch.
- ✓ There is also guidance on writing press releases to liaising with journalists and working with social media and influencers.
- ✓ Find suggestions on how to measure your PR campaign.
- ✓ Included throughout are case studies from small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who have successfully scored media coverage without spending lots of time or money.

VisitEngland Introduction to PR Toolkit
Find out who to contact, what to say, how best to say it and when to make the most of media coverage.

Download (1.55 MB) 

Areas to Consider for Q1

Accessible and inclusive tourism

- Commitment to delivering excellence for guests with accessibility requirements
- Consider the needs of the widest range of people
- Information and promotion - Accessibility Guide, website
- Accessible facilities and services
- Employing disabled staff, staff disability and accessibility awareness

Find out more about accessibility:

www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible-and-inclusive/visitengland-accessible-and-inclusive

Visit England's Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Toolkit (inc. Top 20 Tips)

www.visitengland.org/access

Webinar on accessibility

www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/business-recovery-webinars



Small Visitor Attraction of the Year 23/24 –
Morgan Motor Company

Areas to Consider for Q1: Accessibility

Blogger and travel writer, Carrie-Ann Lightley, AccessAble, talks about why accessibility in tourism is vital, at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2020

Areas to Consider for Q1



Ethical, Responsible & Sustainable Tourism

- Include environmental, economic and social impacts
- Think about business operation, communications and influence on others
- Examples could include:
 - Energy
 - Water
 - Waste
 - Wildlife/ natural habitat enhancement
 - Transport/ travel
 - Procurement
 - Promotion of local products/ culture
 - Community engagement
 - Charity work
 - Ethical work practices

Find out more about sustainability: www.visitengland.org/green

Q2: Your Recent Improvements



Explain your reasons for making the improvements and indicate which parts of the business are impacted:

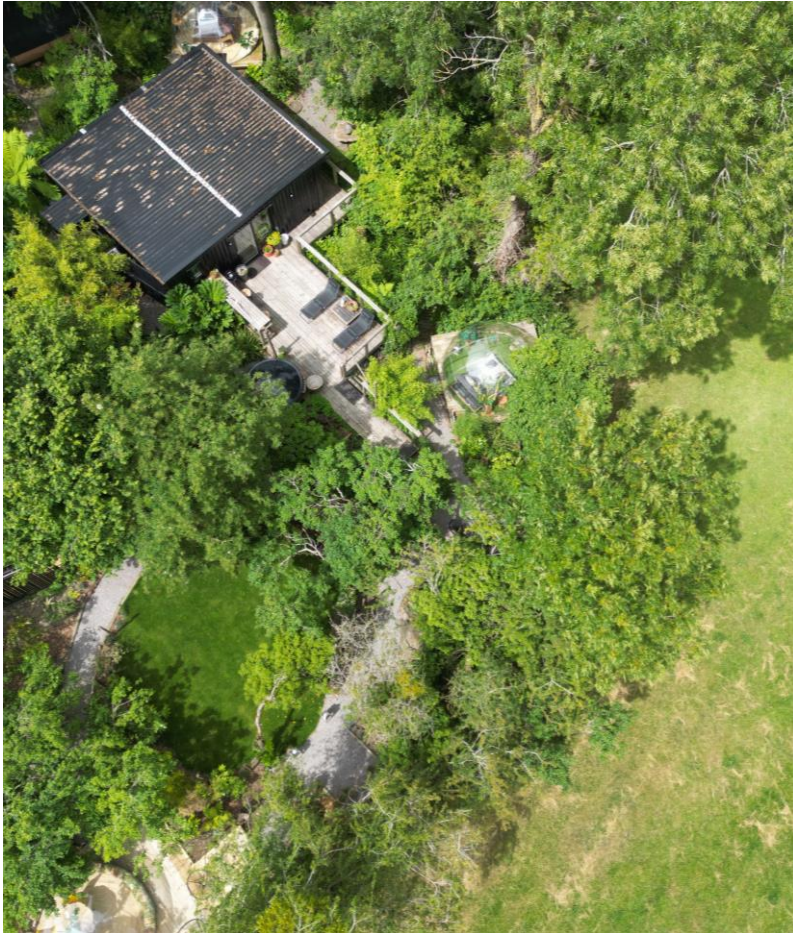
- Promotional initiatives
- Improving the skills of you and your team
- Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
- Facilities and welcome for people with accessibility requirements
- Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
- Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building
- Use of digital technologies
- Approximate date of improvement

Q3: Your Results



- Are you able to attribute success directly to any of the improvements that you've made (Question 2)?
- Don't be vague, use figures and specific examples i.e.
 - ✓ % increase in occupancy levels/visitor numbers, sales, customer satisfaction and wastage reduction
 - ✓ % increase in online bookings or repeat business
 - ✓ Business generated from marketing activity
 - ✓ Growth of social media following and engagement
- How significant has the impact been on your business?

Q4: Your Future Plans



- Continued innovation, adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building
- Facilities and welcome for people with accessibility requirements
- Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
- Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
- Improving the skills of you and your team
- Marketing and PR, including partnerships with other businesses
- Operational efficiency
- Use of digital technologies

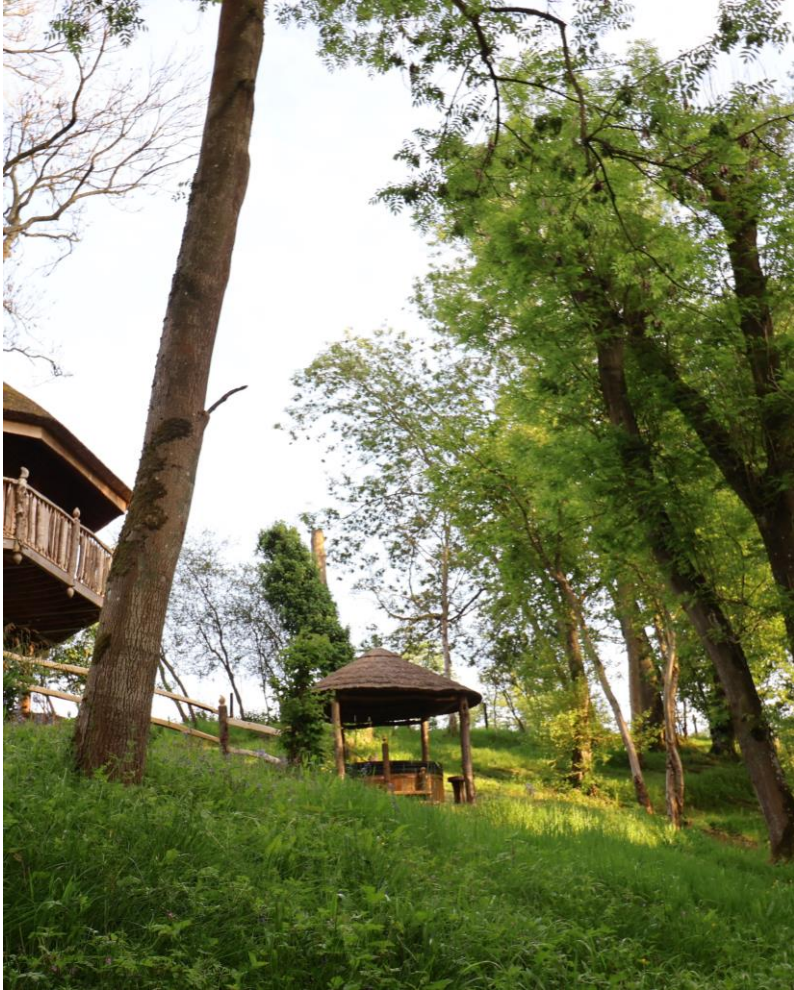
New Tourism Business of the Year winner 23/24 – Natures Edge Cabin

Top tips 2



- Refer to the relevant criteria
- Make sure you answer the question
- Tailor your answer
- Use facts - do not make ambiguous or inaccurate claims
- Support answers with evidence
- Don't assume the judges know your business!
- Use the word limit and give detailed answers
- Make every word count - don't waste word count with duplication
- Ensure all aspects of your business are covered

Top tips 3



- Start preparation early
- Highlight why you are different and what are your best qualities
- Don't over complicate
- Reflect your passion and personality
- Fully answer question, use prompts to help
- Include initiatives from across the business
- Show how you act on feedback (and mistakes!)
- Don't forget accessibility and sustainability
- Embrace review sites; they can be invaluable
- Read through the form twice – ask a colleague
- Review and submit on time



What are your next steps?

Timetable

Date	Activity
15 th April 2024	Awards open
26th May 2024	Awards deadline
November 2024	Announcement of finalists
March 2025	Awards ceremony
June 2025	VisitEngland Awards for Excellence event

Taste Winner 23/24 - Cottage in the Wood Malvern



Useful links

- Benefits of entering [visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#why-apply](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#why-apply)
- The national awards www.visitenglandawards.org
- Review the core entry forms in advance of entering [visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence/visitengland-awards-excellence-award-categories](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence/visitengland-awards-excellence-award-categories)
- Get free business advice [visitbritain.org/business-advice](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice)
- Sign-up to industry newsletter [visitbritain.org/subscribe-our-newsletters](https://www.visitbritain.org/subscribe-our-newsletters)
- Download free toolkits:
Award Winner's PR Toolkit [visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#pr-toolkit](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#pr-toolkit)
- Digital Marketing Toolkit www.visitengland.org/onlinemarketing
- Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Toolkit www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible-and-inclusive/visitengland-accessible-and-inclusive
- Watch webinar on accessibility www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/business-recovery-webinars
- Watch webinar on sustainability www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/business-recovery-webinars
- Improve your sustainability www.visitengland.org/green

Start your entry here - [Tourism Awards | Visit Worcestershire](https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence)

Any questions?

Contact Dom Bray or Natalie Bray

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#VEAwards2025