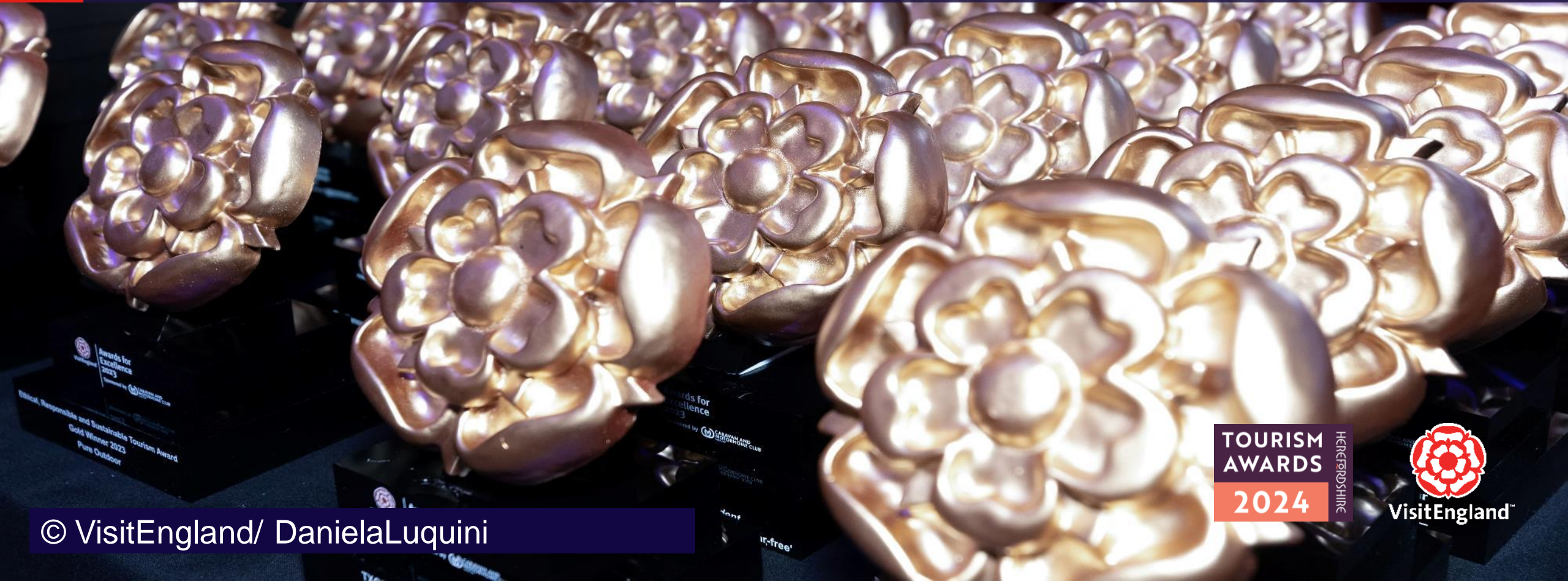


Achieving excellence – your tourism awards toolkit 2024/25



TOURISM
AWARDS
2024

HEREFORDSHIRE



VisitEngland™

What we will cover

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

Why do businesses enter the awards?

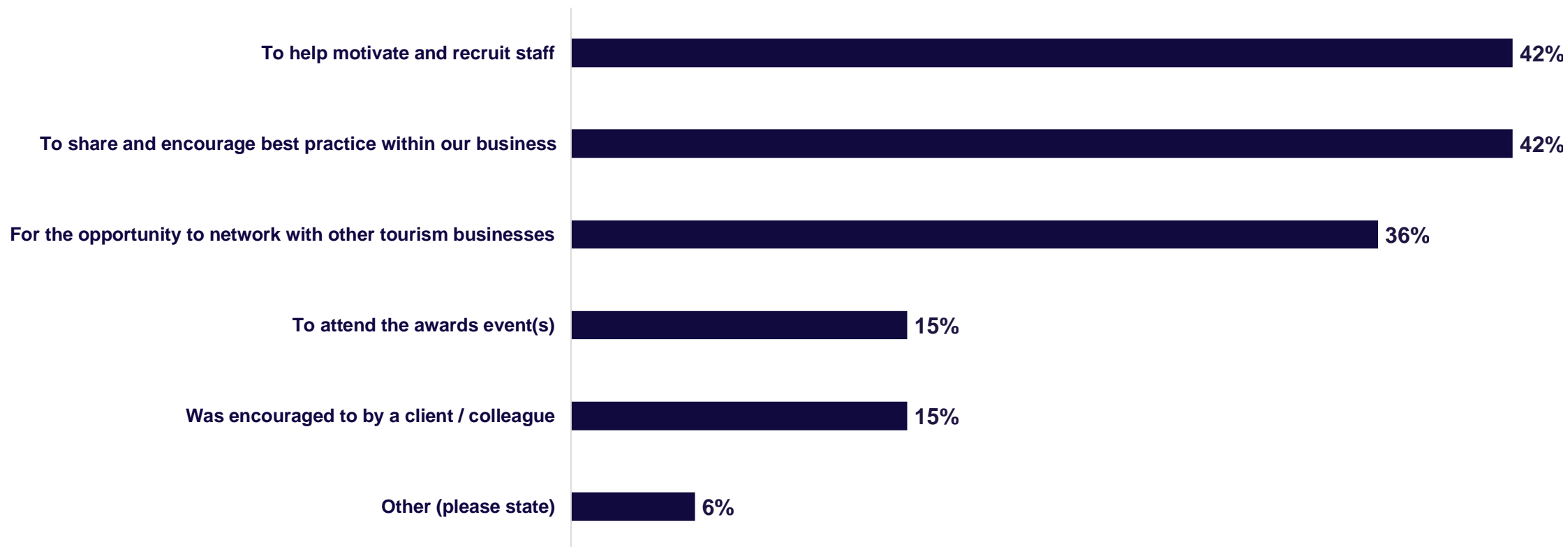
Excellence makes business sense

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

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



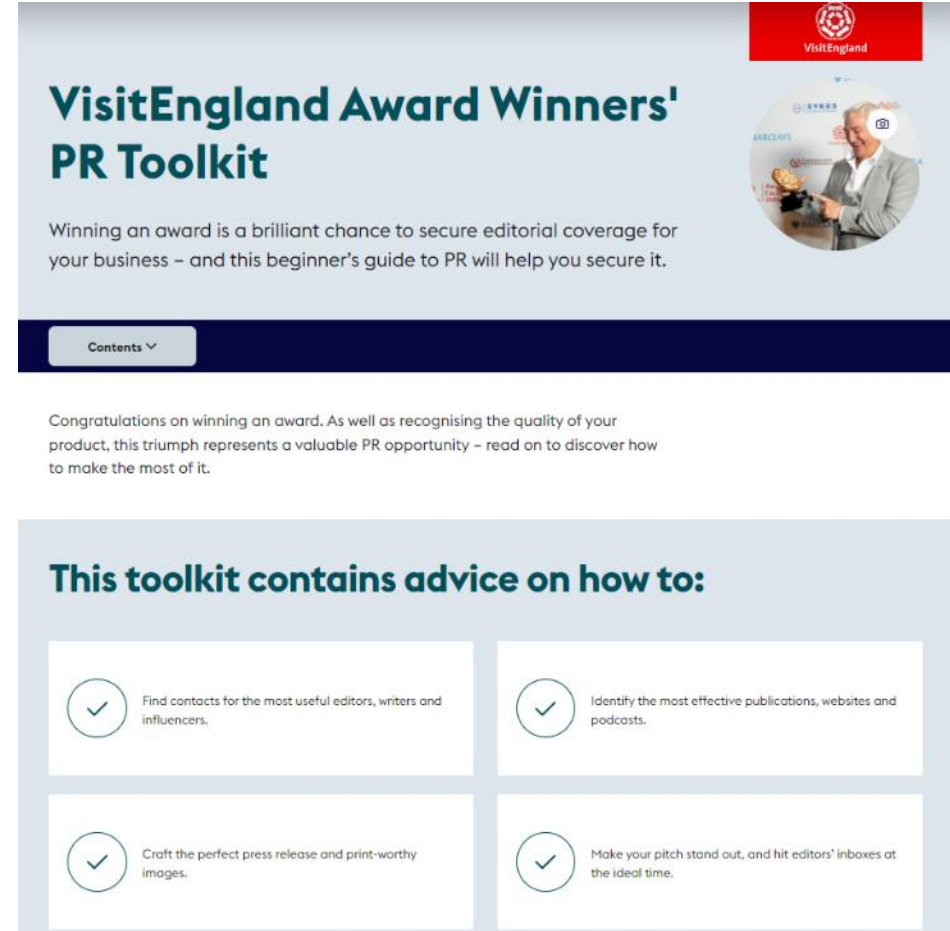
Benefits of entering

- 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



VisitEngland Award Winners' PR Toolkit

Winning an award is a brilliant chance to secure editorial coverage for your business – and this beginner's guide to PR will help you secure it.

Contents ▾

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.



VisitEngland™

The tourism awards process

TOURISM
AWARDS

2024

HEREFORDSHIRE

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

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.

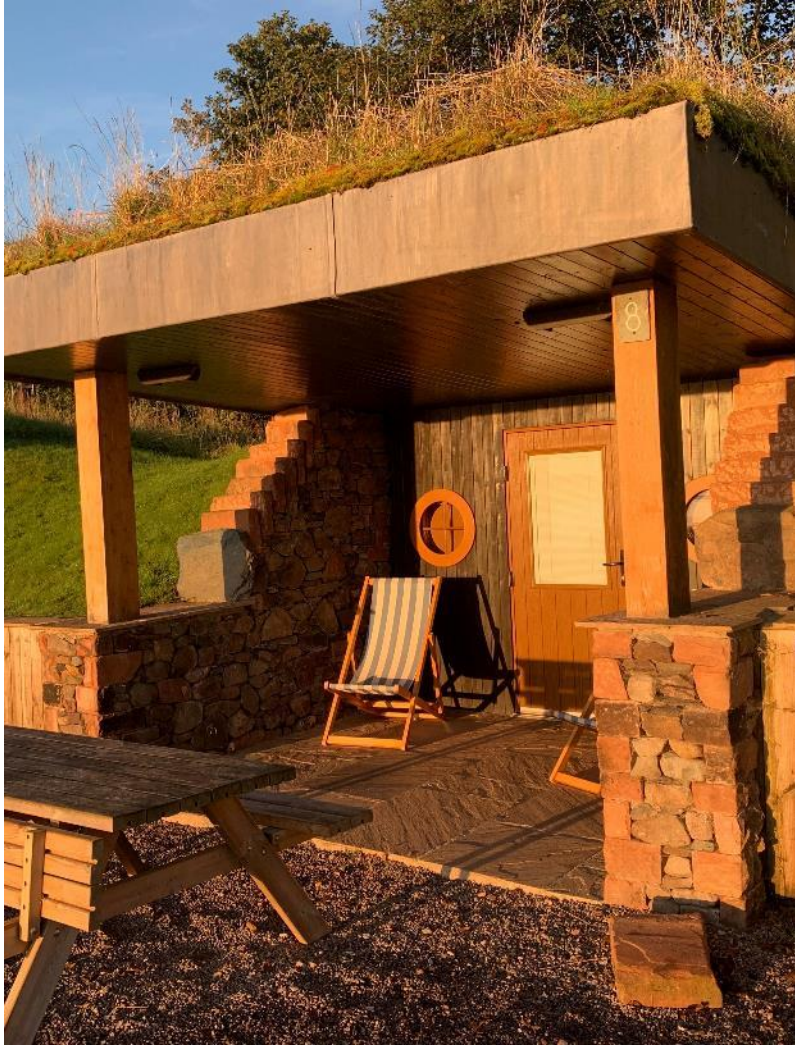
- Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award
- B&B and Guest House of the Year
- Business Events Venue of the Year
- Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park of the Year*
- Camping & Holiday Park of the Year
- Glamping Business of the Year
- Dog Friendly Business of the Year
- Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award
- Experience of the Year*
- Experience of the Year (Active or Learning)
- Spa and Wellbeing Experience of the Year
- Large Hotel of the Year
- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year
- New Tourism Business Award
- Pub of the Year
- Resilience and Innovation Award
- 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
- Restaurant/Bistro 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:

<https://www.herefordshirecountybid.co.uk/visit-herefordshire-tourism-awards/visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence/visitengland-awards-excellence-award-categories>

<https://visitengland-chapters.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/HER/home>

Top tips 1



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

Camping, Glamping & Holiday Park of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 – The Quiet Site, Cumbria © The Quiet Site



VisitEngland™

Your application



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, Silver, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 – Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire © Blenheim Palace

Supporting evidence



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

Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 – Pure Outdoor © Pure Outdoor

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

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.

Your top qualities



- Explain how you deliver memorable experiences
- Describe how you embed excellence across your whole operation
- Extras that delight customers
- Caring for your team
- Innovative marketing and PR
- Accessibility and sustainability
- Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building

Experience of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023
– Serenity Farne Island Boat Tours, Northumberland © Andrew Douglas

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

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 – Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Bristol © Noah's Ark Zoo Farm


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 \(1.55 MB\) ↓](#)

Accessibility and inclusivity

- 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
- Staff disability and accessibility awareness

Find out more about accessibility:

www.visitengland.org/access

Webinar on accessibility

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



Small Visitor Attraction of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 –
Watatunga Wildlife Reserve, Norfolk © Phil Stone

Ethical, responsible & sustainable



- 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

Resilience & Innovation Award, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 –
St Luke's Bombed Out Church C.I.C, Merseyside © David Munn

Your recent improvements



- Improvements and developments – big and small
- Commitment to re-investing back into the business
- Improvements made resulting from visitor feedback
- Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building
- Sustainability and accessibility improvements
- Improving the skills of you and your team

Small Hotel of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023
– Askham Hall, Cumbria © Askham Hall

Your results



- 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?

Business Events Venue of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023
– National Memorial Arboretum © National Memorial Arboretum

Your future plans



- Continued innovation, adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building
- Sustainability and accessibility improvements
- 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, such as automated services, robotics and artificial intelligence (AI)

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



- 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!
- Review and submit on time

Self Catering Accommodation of the Year, Gold, VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023 – Kidlandlee, Northumberland © Andy Craig Photography



VisitEngland™

What are your next steps?

**TOURISM
AWARDS**
2024

HEREFORDSHIRE

Timetable

Date	Activity
1 May 2024	Awards open
31 July 2024	Awards deadline
November 2024	Announcement of finalists
21 February 2025	Awards ceremony
June 25	VisitEngland Awards for Excellence event



Useful links

- Benefits of entering 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
- Get free business advice visitbritain.org/business-advice
- Sign-up to industry newsletter visitbritain.org/subscribe-our-newsletters
- Download free toolkits:
Award Winner's PR Toolkit visitbritain.org/business-advice/visitengland-awards-excellence#pr-toolkit
- Digital Marketing Toolkit www.visitengland.org/onlinemarketing
Accessibility Guide www.visitengland.org/access
- 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 <https://visitengland-chapters.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/HER/home>



VisitEngland™

And remember . . .





VisitEngland™

Excellence pays!

TOURISM
AWARDS
2024
HEREPROSHIRE

Any questions?

Diane Mansell – Diane@herefordshirecountybid.co.uk

[#VisitHerefordshireTourismAwards](#) [#VEAwards2023](#)