



## Go West! – Visitor attractions across the Western Lake District win top accolades

The high quality of visitor attractions across West Cumbria has been recognised with the area winning a host of top accolades in prestigious VisitEngland tourism awards.

Three venues have received VisitEngland Visitor Attraction Accolades - which celebrate excellence and recognise outstanding visitor experiences.



The winning attractions are:

- Muncaster Castle, Gardens, Hawk and Owl Centre at Ravenglass awarded a Best Told Story Accolade.
- The Beacon Museum at Whitehaven also receives a Best Told Story Accolade.
- The Lakes Distillery near Cockermouth wins a Gold Accolade for all round performance.

Nationally, 76 attractions are being recognised for the exceptional experiences they provide visitors. In the North West – four out of the eight winning attractions are in Cumbria. The Quaker Tapestry Museum in Kendal receives a Hidden Gem Accolade.

**But the strong performance by attractions in the Western Lake District and Coast area has delighted those who've worked incredibly hard to provide top class visitor attractions.**

**Peter Frost-Pennington, from Muncaster Castle**, says: "We are delighted that Muncaster Castle has been awarded a 'Best Told Story' Accolade from VisitEngland. It is a fabulous endorsement from expert tourism professionals and a huge pat on the back for all our loyal staff & volunteers.

"They have worked incredibly hard in difficult circumstances over these last two seasons disrupted by the covid pandemic. Despite this we have adapted and been open as much as the regulations

permitted and I think this is reflected in feedback from many thousands of happy visitors and, of course this wonderful accolade”.



**Heather Holmes, Customer and Visitor Experience Manager at The Beacon Museum in Whitehaven** says: “We were so thrilled when we received the news that we had been given this award. It is an accolade that belongs to every member of staff who helped make our digital vision a reality.

“We’ve worked hard to be creative in the way we tell the stories of our history so to be given this recognition is just fantastic. For those who haven’t seen the changes we have made yet come down and have a look.”

**Nigel Mills, Co-founder and CEO, at The Lakes Distillery** says: “We are delighted to have been recognised once again with the highest accolade in English tourism. During what has been a very challenging time, our team has continued to pull together and deliver a world-class experience, and this accolade is a fitting testament to their passion, commitment, and hard work. We’re incredibly proud of what they have achieved and will continue to strive toward giving distillery visitors the best possible experience.”

**VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes** says: “I’m so pleased to see our visitor attractions back in the spotlight with these accolades that recognise the amazing experiences available across the country. They also acknowledge the people who bring the attractions to life through their unparalleled customer service.”

He adds: “Now more than ever we need these attractions to encourage and remind us to get out and explore the amazing tourism on offer across England, driving recovery and economic benefits through the regions.”

**Introduced by VisitEngland in 2014, the Visitor Attraction Accolades are available to members of the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme who 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.**

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Notes for Editors

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