

Mid Wales Tourism Awards

Fforest Fields celebrates victory at Mid Wales Tourism Awards

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A family-run touring caravan and camping site based four miles from Builth Wells, which has seen a 20% increase in visitors in the past year, celebrated winning an award at the inaugural Mid Wales Tourism Awards.

Forest Fields at Hundred House won the Best Holiday Park, Camping or Touring Award, sponsored by Salop Leisure, at a glittering awards ceremony held at The Hafren, Newtown, which was attended by Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Lord Elis-Thomas. Compere was Welsh tourism personality Jonathan Jones, CBE.

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The business goes forward to represent Mid Wales at the National Tourism Awards for Wales In May, 2020.

Designed to celebrate and showcase the region's exceptional tourism industry, the biennial awards were organised and managed by MWT Cymru on behalf of Mid Wales Tourism Forum and supported by Visit Wales, the Welsh Government's tourism arm. A dedicated Tourism Awards Advisory Group was established specifically to assist with the awards.

Fforest Fields' directors George and Katie Barstow said: "We are totally delighted to win this award against very stiff competition. It's a huge accolade for the magnificent team we work with.

"We just love what we do, and it does give us delight to share Fforest Fields with our customers. People come and find peace and kids find confidence by roaming free."

Fforest Fields is rated five pennants by the AA, which also awarded it Campsite of The Year for Wales in 2016-17, whilst Visit Wales has awarded the site a five-star grading this year.

The Barstow family, who own the site, aims to work hard to set a new standard for five-star campsites, where the focus is on fantastic facilities alongside a genuine, caring and relaxed approach to site management.

The bee-friendly site has also held a David Bellamy Gold Award for more than 20-years and the Special Interest Award - the highest Bellamy accolade for special environmental concern - twice.

Regularly welcoming international visitors, the family focuses a portion of its marketing on the Dutch, German and Irish markets. Key target markets have been identified for social media and advertising.

A member of MWT Cymru, Fforest Fields is deeply committed to partnerships with other local businesses. The 120-pitch campsite is set in the middle of a 500-acre farm with walks and adventures in every direction and two lakes - one for swimming, kayaking and paddleboarding and the other for fishing.

“We want our visitors to lose themselves in the Fforest Fields experience, to step away from the problems and hassles of their everyday life and to remember to take pleasure in simple, basic things such as sleeping outdoors, sitting around a fire, spending time with family or swimming in open water with the sun or rain beating down on their backs,” said the Barstow family.

The family works with Anytime Booking to run its online booking system and the Barstows are focused on promoting the region to put Mid Wales on the map as a ‘go to’ destination.

Fforest Fields attracts up to 15,000 visitors to Mid Wales every year – visitors increased by more than 20% last year - with school holidays the peak periods and average stays increasing from two to three nights. There is now a focus to increase visitors in the shoulder and winter months.

Runners up for the award were Islawrffordd Caravan Park, Talybont, Barmouth and Maesmawr Farm Resort, Caersws.

Granted an Awards Trust Mark by the Independent Awards Standards Council, the awards were open to all businesses, organisations and individuals who contribute to tourism within Mid Wales.

MWT Cymru is the regional destination marketing and membership organisation for Powys, Ceredigion and Meirionnydd district of Southern Snowdonia. As a not-for-profit social enterprise company, MWT Cymru supports and represents more than 550 tourism businesses and organisations across the region.

Picture caption:

George and Katie Barstow from Fforest Fields, Hundred House, receive the Best Holiday Park, Camping and Touring Award from Dylan Roberts, managing director of sponsor Salop Leisure, at the Mid Wales Tourism Awards held at The Hafren, Newtown.

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