

Mid Wales Tourism Awards

Wonderwool Wales judged best event at Mid Wales Tourism Awards

Immediate: October 21, 2019

Wonderwool Wales, a weekend wool and natural fibre festival that attracts more than 6,000 visitors to the Royal Welsh Showground in Builth Wells every April, has won an award for staging the best event in Mid Wales.

The festival received the accolade at the inaugural Mid Wales Tourism Awards ceremony held at The Hafren, Newtown and now goes forward to represent Mid Wales at the National Tourism Awards for Wales in May 2020.

The awards ceremony was attended by Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Lord Elis-Thomas and the event compere was Welsh tourism personality Jonathan Jones, CBE.

Designed to celebrate and showcase the region's exceptional tourism industry, the biennial awards are organised by MWT Cymru with support from Mid Wales Regional Tourism Forum, a public and private sector partnership and Visit Wales, the Welsh Government's tourism arm. A dedicated Tourism Awards Advisory Group was established specifically to assist with the awards.

Wonderwool Wales' director Chrissie Menzies and Sarah Stacey said: "We are overwhelmed by the award because it means an awful lot to us. We work really hard and so do our standholders and others who come to the event. We work with a good team and this award is for them as well."

Wonderwool Wales attracts visitors from across Wales, the UK and overseas, all of whom are interested in either knitting, crochet, felting, weaving, spinning and dyeing. The festival, which has been running for 14 years and attracts more than 220 exhibitors, promotes Welsh and British wool and the vast array of fibre crafts that use it.

Exhibitors are selected on the quality of their products or work and workshops are run throughout the weekend, covering diverse topics such as spinning, knitting,

felted and crochet. Masterclasses have been added to the workshop itinerary, with internationally known tutors set to be invited to next year's event.

An online ticket booking system ensures visitors a smooth, speedy entry to the event, reducing queuing times for pay on the day tickets and giving the organisers an idea of the overall number of visitors and coach parties to expect.

Most of the visitors and all of the exhibitors and staff stay in local accommodation and eat locally during their stay. Local accommodation providers are listed on the event's website and tour groups are given a list of other destinations that may be of interest to include in their itinerary.

An annual bursary, run jointly with Coleg Sir Gar, awards a graduate from the BA Knitting and Textiles course £1,000 and a free stand at Wonderwool the following year.

Wonderwool Wales uses local tradesmen and suppliers and also supports several charities with free stands and money raising opportunities throughout the event.

Runners up for the award were Welshpool 1940s Weekend and Glanusk Estate Fayre and NGS Open Garden.

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:

Chrissie Menzies (centre) and Sarah Stacey, directors of Wonderwool Wales, receive the Best Event Award from Mid Wales Journal editor Peter Kitchen at the Mid Wales Tourism Awards held at The Hafren, Newtown.

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For more information, please contact Val Hawkins, MWT Cymru chief executive, on Tel: 01654 702653 or Duncan Foulkes, publicity adviser, on Tel: 01686 650818.