

Gold standard stays in Devon and Cornwall

CAMPING AND CARAVANNING PARK OF THE YEAR

Polmanter Touring Park picked up gold, pushing head of a fellow Cornish contender and two from Devon.

The site, overlooking St Ives, has been run by the Osborne family, for almost 50 years. "This experience, along with our own love of camping, means that we know about all those little touches that make a holiday extra enjoyable – and effortless," they say.

"Whether you've spent every summer under canvas, or are just gently introducing your young family to the fun of camping, you can create your ideal holiday at Polmanter."

The touring site's list of draws includes five-star facilities, a beautiful countryside location but views over the Atlantic coast and moors.

There is a large outdoor swimming pool, plus two playgrounds, indoor soft play, a games room, tennis courts, mini golf, and a playing fields. The dog-friendly facilities including a special shower for sandy and muddy mutts.

There is a regular shuttle bus into St Ives and a new shop selling camping essentials and Cornish produce, and a new spa, are additions this year.

The silver award in the Camping and Caravanning Park of the Year went to Dolbeare Park, Landrake, in south-east Cornwall. The family-owned camping, glamping and caravanning site is dog-friendly with an award-winning amenity block. Appledore Park on the North Devon coast and River Dart Country Park on the edge of Dartmoor each went home with a bronze each.

HOLIDAY PARK OF THE YEAR

Cornwall and Devon had strong representation among the finalists here.

Gwel an Mor Resort, Portreath, on the north coast of Cornwall, and Oakdown Holiday Park, near Sidmouth in East Devon, both won gold awards.

The details offered with Gwel an Mor's pine holiday lodges include private hot tubs and roaring log burners. There is also The Residence a new collection of designer eco-lodges.

Gwel an Mor has a wellbeing spa, heated indoor swimming pool, tennis court, fitness suite, golf course and fishing lake. The resort's wildlife centre, Feadon Farm, is the only one of its kind in Europe.

Oakdown which has luxury holiday homes, touring and camping pitches and glamping pods picked up gold last year.

The park has been carefully fashioned for more than 40 years by the Franks family.

"No straight lines here, just gentle curves, spacious groves, seclusion, privacy and peace and quiet," they say.

"We are the area's only AA 5 Pennant Park and were also crowned as the England and Overall Winner of the AA Campsite of the Year for 2015."

Cofton Holidays, Starcross, near Dawlish, and Pentewan Sands Holiday Park, on the south coast of Cornwall, both received bronzes.

Winner of Winners

Recognition for one of Europe's top craft fairs that pulls in 10,000 visitors

There are no set criteria for the Winner of Winners award, but judges are asked to identify an entrant which has shone out as an exemplar in its field.

"This year's panel had a tough call to make, as there are so many outstanding businesses here tonight," said Victoria Graham, who hosted the evening, "but they were unanimous in wishing to select a winner that shows all the attributes we like to commend in the awards: a commitment to excellence, to people,

to partnership, to local provenance, to supporting those who can't help themselves, to education and to constant improvement and development.

"This year's Winner of Winners is an event that in 15 years has grown from nothing to become one of Europe's top craft fairs, attracting thousands of people to the region."

The festival began when three Bovey Tracey craft businesses joined forces and formed a non-profit making company with the

aim to bring a large fair to the town.

The aim was to showcase the best in British craft and the create "a new, sustainable and strong market place for contemporary craft" as well as bringing greater prosperity to the town. The festival has grown from 4,000 to 10,000 visitors.

The festival has been led from the start by Sarah James.

She was originally employed as a freelance project manager to start event in 2003 and was made a company director in 2004.

Nina Fox joined the team in 2006, becoming project manager and has been a key element in the success and development of the festival.

Kate Martin joined in 2015 as the financial manager and Fran Moorhouse, the marketing and sponsorship assistant, completed the team when she arrived in May last year.

The fair also won the Tourism Event/Festival gold, while Glasdenbury Music and Arts Festival, Newton Abbot took a bronze.



The knitting tent at the Contemporary Craft Festival, Bovey Tracey (above) and Oakdown Holiday Park



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