

## MEDIA RELEASE

Three of south Warwickshire's tourism attractions are in the running to pick up national silverware after being named among the best in the West Midlands at a major awards ceremony.

Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, Shakespeare Distillery and Warwick Castle were named as winners in the West Midlands Tourism Awards 2024, which was held at The Bear Grylls Adventure at the National Exhibition Centre on Wednesday, March 20.

Small Visitor Attraction of the Year went to Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, while Shakespeare Distillery won Experience of the Year, and Warwick Castle was named Large Visitor Attraction of the Year.

Coventry-based Coombe Abbey Hotel also picked up Large Hotel of the Year, while other tourism businesses including St Mary's Guildhall, The Coach House and Cotswold Distillery were among the 35 finalists.

The West Midlands Tourism Awards saw 35 of the region's top tourism businesses competing across 14 categories, and the winners will now automatically feed into the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2024 for the chance to be recognised as a national winner.

All four winners are members of south Warwickshire's tourism body, Shakespeare's England, whose Operations and Marketing Director Darren Tosh said that the recognition highlighted the important role that the region plays in the growth of the wider West Midlands region.

Darren said: "These award wins are well deserved, and underline some of the great work that is going on in south Warwickshire and the surrounding areas to highlight our county's rich heritage and food and drink offering.

"Recent research has shown that overnight visitors to our region are now spending more in our towns compared to 2019 just before the pandemic, and having attractions such as Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, Shakespeare Distillery and Warwick Castle providing award-winning experiences for people is only going to help our county continue in that upward trajectory in terms of spend and visitor numbers - both domestically and overseas.

"It would be great to see some of our region's attractions winning on the national stage later this year at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, and we wish them all good luck."

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Photo caption: From left; Peter Monks and Sam Evans from Shakespeare Distillery who won Experience of the Year