

## MEDIA RELEASE

The MP for Warwick and Leamington has been raising a toast to the growth of a local gin distillery that has been attracting visitors from across the globe as it gears up for a record year of custom.

The Warwickshire Gin Company, which is based on Neilston Street in Leamington Spa town centre, is forecasting to welcome more than 4,000 customers through its doors in 2024 – doubling its numbers compared to last year.

The company's founder, Dave Blick, hosted MP Matt Western at the firm's distillery to mark English Tourism Week, which was arranged by south Warwickshire's tourism board Shakespeare's England.

English Tourism Week is a campaign led by the national tourist board, Visit England, to highlight the quality and value of English tourism.

The visit comes at a time when the events side of Warwickshire Gin Company is going from strength-to-strength, with nearly 1,000 customers having passed through the doors already since the New Year.

The firm's Gin Tasting Experience – which is the most popular event since the business formed five-and-a-half years ago – sees guests learning about historical events that inspired different gins – from Leamington on Parade which celebrates the elephants that were brought to the town in the 1800s, through to the Kingmaker in honour of the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Warwick, Richard Neville, who was instrumental in the deposition of two kings.

Two more experiences have recently been added to the event line-up – an Afternoon Gin & Tea, and Cocktails at the Distillery – all of which are being held in the business' distillery in Leamington town centre.

Dave said: "We have gone from welcoming 900 customers in 2021 to just over 2,000 customers in 2023, and we are looking at another record year for 2024.

"Selling a product isn't enough anymore, people want experiences – which we've been able to deliver on by providing couples, families and friends with an interactive experience in a unique distillery setting.

"Our gin, rum and vodka all have a story to tell – whether it's Coventry's Lady Godiva, Leamingtonian Randolph Turpin's great boxing success, or the birth of the first Lawn Tennis Club in Leamington – and people always come away feeling enlightened.

"Word of mouth has also played a big part in our success – as we've had customers from as far afield as New Zealand, Taiwan and America actively seeking us out whilst they are over in the UK – and when you hear this it makes it all worthwhile.

"It was great to welcome Matt to the distillery so he can see first hand how we are helping to put Leamington on the tourism map."

Matt's visit comes as Warwickshire Gin Company was recently named as 'the number one thing to do in Leamington Spa' on Trip Advisor – six years after Dave left behind a 28-year career in retail and logistics to start afresh.

Matt added: "It was great to visit Dave and the team at Warwickshire Gin Company and hear about how the business is continuing to go from strength to strength.

“Small businesses are an integral part of our town and are so valued by both local residents and people visiting the area.

“The visit was a brilliant chance to mark the start of English Tourism Week and highlighted how much our local tourism industry has to offer.”

Darren Tosh, Operations and Marketing Director at Shakespeare’s England, commented: “The Warwickshire Gin Distillery epitomises what English Tourism Week is aiming to highlight, which is about offering great quality and value to domestic and overseas visitors.

“Consumers are understandably looking for greater value for their money – so Dave’s determination to create a product that stands out in a great distillery setting is the perfect tonic.

“Our region has had a real boom in distilleries over the past decade or so with seven new openings, including The Warwickshire Gin Company, which is really exciting for the area as we continue to see a strong rise in visitor numbers since the pandemic.”

ENDS

Photo captions:

Warwickshire Gin Company 1 – From left; MP Matt Western, Dave Blick and Darren Tosh

Warwickshire Gin Company 2 – From left; Darren Tosh, Dave Blick and MP Matt Western