



**North East England  
Tourism Awards  
2020**



## **Applicant information & FAQ's**

Welcome to the North East England Tourism Awards 2020! The North East England Tourism Awards celebrate quality, innovation and best practice throughout the region, highlighting the North East's exciting visitor offering. We are delighted to announce that the awards will be delivered in association with the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence and have a new application process, judging format and new categories.

It's a great distinction to receive a North East England Tourism Award. They recognise, congratulate and celebrate businesses and individuals that deliver amazing experiences for visitors.

Here are just a few reasons why you should enter this year's awards:

- The Awards champion innovation in tourism and inspire business excellence.
- The modernised approach, introduced in March 2019, aligns local and regional competitions with the VisitEngland Awards, uniting them with an agreed collaborative purpose, application system and judging process.
- The application process is easier than ever before. Applicants are only required to complete one application, in one system.
- Application forms have been simplified and refocused on: Recent Improvements, Top Qualities, Results and Future Plans.
- All applicants need to progress through a local/regional competition to reach the national Awards.
- Eligible winners from North East England Tourism Awards 2020 will automatically feed into the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2020 for the chance to be recognised as a national winner.
- For more information on the national VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, visit <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/enter-awards-excellence> or email [VEAwards@VisitEngland.org](mailto:VEAwards@VisitEngland.org)

We want you to maximise your chances of winning by presenting the strongest possible entry. Please remember that judges might not know your business personally and will be shortlisting based exclusively on the materials you provide in your application. It is important, therefore, that your entry is clearly presented and easy to read, addresses the judging criteria, looks professional and conveys what it is that makes your business special.

This year for our 2020 Awards entrants must submit an application form via our online portal. The judging will be based on this entry form, your website (viewed on desktop, mobile and tablet) and any other online presence that you might have, including social media. The judges will also look at your online customer reviews.

We recommend you read through our [Terms and Conditions](#) before starting your application, and if you would like to check the requirements for each category before beginning your application you can download a blank from our website.

**Entry closes 9am on Monday 07 October 2019**

If you have any questions please contact the team on 0191 440 5722 or email [tourismawards@ngi.org.uk](mailto:tourismawards@ngi.org.uk)



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**Application Information and Frequently Asked Questions**

**How do I apply?**

- Visit our website <https://www.newcastlegateshead.com/tourism-awards/apply-now> and click on 'click here to apply'.
- Once you have chosen the category you wish to apply for you will need to create an account. This will enable you to login and update your application form in your own time. You will be able to save and go back to your application form as many times as you like before you submit your application.
- If you wish to preview the application questions beforehand, a Word copy of each application form is also available on our website for you to view, familiarise yourself with the questions and/or fill out offline before uploading your responses.

**How have the 2020 Awards changed this year?**

The format of the Awards has been updated to align local and regional competitions with the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, which last year celebrated their 30th year. Application forms have been simplified and refocused on: recent improvements, top qualities, results and future plans. And as the applications are aligned with the national awards businesses are only required to complete one application, in one system.

There are also new categories and a different judging system in which some categories will receive a mystery shopper visit. (If you are eligible for the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence you will not receive a second mystery shopper visit).

<b>Categories for 2020</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Type of visit</b>
B&B and Guest House of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge overnight stay for 2 people
Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit
Large Hotel of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge overnight stay for 2 people
Small Hotel of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge overnight stay for 2 people
Pub of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge meal and drink for 2 people
Self-Catering Accommodation of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit
Large Visitor Attraction of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge day visit for up to family of four
Small Visitor Attraction of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge day visit for up to family of four
Experience of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge day visit for up to family of four
New Tourism Business Award	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit

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Taste of England Award	Panel of 3 shortlist & mystery shopper visit	One judge meal and drink for 2 people
Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit
Business Events Venue of the Year	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit
International Tourism Award	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit
Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award	Panel of 3 shortlist & planned visit	Prearranged planned visit

### Which categories are new for 2020?

New categories introduced for tourism businesses to enter include Experience of the Year, International Tourism Award and New Tourism Business Award.

### Why don't you have an Award's Ceremony in 2019?

Our Awards will launch in June 2019, but our Award's Ceremony will be in March 2020, hence calling them the 2020 Awards. Feedback from previous winners was that they would like to receive the awards earlier in the year so that the title remains current for most of the year. The awards will also feed into the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence in June 2020, so winners of the 2020 regional awards will now be eligible for the 2020 national awards.

### Who can enter?

The North East England Tourism Awards are open to all tourism businesses which meet the published criteria for the category or categories they are entering. Entrants from Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Teesside and County Durham are eligible to apply. If you are unsure about your eligibility for any of our categories, please contact us at [tourismawards@ngi.org.uk](mailto:tourismawards@ngi.org.uk)

### Does it cost anything to enter?

No, there is no charge to enter the awards. However, you will be expected to cover the costs of pre-planned visits, or reimburse the costs accrued during mystery shopping.

### Can I enter more than one category?

Yes. We encourage businesses to enter as many categories as they wish as long as they meet the required criteria for each category. However, separate application forms must be submitted for each.

### Does my application have to be completed electronically or are hard copies acceptable?

All applications must be submitted electronically via our website. These are awards for excellence and we believe all entrants should be able to submit their entries in this way. Entrants must submit their application form through the online process.

The judging will be based on this entry form, your website (viewed on desktop, mobile and tablet), and any other online presence that you might have, including social media. The judges will also look at your online customer reviews.

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## North East England Tourism Awards 2020



If you are experiencing difficulties you can call us on **0191 440 5720** or you can email us at [tourismawards@ngi.org.uk](mailto:tourismawards@ngi.org.uk)

The closing date for receipt of applications is **9am on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019**.

### **Am I able to send any Supplementary Evidence?**

While in the past we have accepted Supplementary Evidence through a PDF attachment, the application process does not allow for it this year. Instead, applicants have the opportunity to attached up to 3 photos, along with any websites that you may wish to link in the online application form.

### **What happens when you receive my application?**

The closing date for receipt of applications is **9am on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019**. The Judges will assess each application and a shortlist will be identified. Applicants will be advised whether or not they have been short-listed by the end of October 2019.

### **Is the information I send to you kept private and confidential?**

Yes. Only the organisers, judges and judging panel will have access to your application form and any supporting documentation. However, you should be aware that the judges' comments about the quality of your business may be used as part of the script at the Awards Ceremony, if you become a finalist.

### **How is the judging carried out?**

Judging is carried out by a panel of 3 judges, overseen by a facilitator, however the visits will be judged differently depending on the category. The judges decide on a shortlist and these shortlisted applicants will then be visited either by the same judges and facilitator at a pre-arranged date and time or by an unannounced mystery shopper.

The pre-arranged judges visit will last 45 minutes which is your time to shine and really show the judges why you should win gold in your category. Shortlisted parties will have the chance to win Gold, Silver, Bronze or Highly Commended in each award category, however, please note, just because a business is shortlisted, it doesn't mean that it will win an award. Judging is carried out by professionals with extensive experience and knowledge of the tourism industry.

The categories that will be visited by a mystery shopper will last either for a night or a full experience, depending on the category, with the judges decision based on the application form and the visit. This will allow an authentic experience of the business as a visitor, with all shortlisted applicants being judged on the same criteria.

Shortlisting will be carried out from October with judges visits taking place from **1st November 2019 – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020**. **You must be open between these dates to allow your business to be visited.**

### **When are the winners announced?**

There will be no advance notification of the winners as these will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020** at Newcastle Civic Centre.

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**Can I get some feedback from the judges about my application?**

Yes. The judges consider feedback to be an essential part of the competition. All applicants who are not short-listed can request feedback after 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019, however those shortlisted will not receive feedback until after the Awards Ceremony. Feedback will be provided via a telephone call with the facilitator for your category.

**What should I do if I am having technical difficulties trying to complete my application?**

We have attempted to make the application process as user friendly as possible. If for any reason you are having problems you can contact us on **0191 440 5720** or you can email [tourismawards@ngi.org.uk](mailto:tourismawards@ngi.org.uk)

**Good Luck!**

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