



## Lake District Estates leading the way in sustainable tourism

A portfolio of tourism businesses putting sustainability and conservation at the heart of its operations is in the running for four noteworthy **Cumbria Tourism Awards**. **Lake District Estates** heritage fleet **Ullswater 'Steamers'** is shortlisted for the *Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award*, **Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway** in the *Large Visitor Attraction* category, **Waterfoot Park** for the *Camping, Glamping and Holiday Park Award* and staff member from the holiday park **Richard Monk-steel** is up for a *Sheila Hensman Award for Outstanding Contribution to excellence*.

Each of the three tourism businesses nominated for Awards has put in place initiatives to help increase the benefits and reduce the negative impacts caused by tourism, focussing on three main areas; protecting the natural environment and wildlife, providing authentic tourist experiences that conserve cultural heritage and creating socio-economic benefits for the local communities

Leading the way in sustainable tourism is Lake District Estates flagship Ullswater 'Steamers' which has been providing a transport service enabling passengers to hop on/off without using a car to explore the Ullswater Valley since 1859. Achieving **Green Tourism Business Scheme Gold accreditation** and **Gold Green at Heart** for best environmental practice, the 'Steamers' have won numerous awards for sustainable practices over the years, recognised internationally for previous **World Tourism Responsible Tourism Awards** in the sea and river cruise category.

These major accolades for the 'Steamers' reflect Lake District Estates commitment to sustainable practices, which are at the heart of their robust tourism strategy. Examples of this strategy in action across their attractions and holiday parks are;

- **Supporting conservation projects.** Since 1995 Ullswater 'Steamers' have worked with local conservation charity, Lake District Foundation (LDF) to raise awareness and monies for a series of projects in the valley. 10p fare donations have raised over £60,000 so far and Glenridding Pier House was recently chosen as the location for one of the first automated visitor donation contactless points raising monies for Lake District Foundation as part of the Smart Parks initiative.
- **Protecting biodiversity.** All four caravan parks Waterfoot, Hill of Oaks, Woodclose and Newby Bridge have achieved the Gold David Bellamy Conservation Award and Honey Bee Friendly Park Award. Each park has a dedicated environmental policy that can be found on their website.

- **Energy reduction.** There is a rolling replacement programme on-board the fleets LED lighting is throughout the attraction but on-board, due to the historic nature of the vessels, it has always been a bit more of a challenge. In 2018 started our replacement programme for LED alongside the engine replacement programme which replaces existing engines with more modern efficient engines. Engineers replaced propellers as part of a drive to improve efficiency and we saw a fuel reduction of 15%.
- **Water refill & plastic removal.** Since 2018 the attraction no longer stocks 500ml PET plastic bottles for Coca Cola, Diet Coke, Fanta or Sprite and they are working with water Caterite to stock an alternative to water in plastic bottles. In the interim two filtered water taps were installed at each main pier house which are easily accessible to customers and have signage provided by the innovative campaign Refill.org.uk. Refill.org.uk also have an app which shows where free refillable sources of water are available across the country.
- **Concentrated cleaning materials.** By replacing single use cleaning trigger bottles and opting for the refills at Ullswater 'Steamers' has removed the 400 plastic bottles previously used in the 2017 season
- **Cafés removes single use plastic.** In 2018 at Ullswater 'Steamers' and Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway single use plastics were removed from the waste stream and biodegradable disposable cups and lids manufactured by Ingeo were introduced. Straws are now either paper or compostable plastic and supplied by Thomas Graham. There is a recycling station at Glenridding and the 'Steamers' boat crew sort rubbish on-board and split recyclables at the end of each day with 94% of total waste is recycled, an average 10-40 grams per boat passenger. The positive green message is shared with passengers through signage in the picnic areas.
- **Locally sourced food and products.** Advocating for reduced environmental impact Lake District Estates pledges to use local produce where possible, liaising with local suppliers to improve the procurement chain introducing specials so the core café menus are enhanced with seasonal products with concepts such as "From the Coast to your Toast" at Ravenglass Station and the café has checked it's #egglegs finding they are laid only 12 miles away.
- **Staff Minibus Scheme.** Operating a collect and drop-off scheme to reduce the amount of cars being driven in the Ullswater Valley. This shared transport for the 'Steamers' staff runs from Penrith to/from the main Piers as designated places of work. It's estimated that this car share scheme reduces the carbon footprint from 27180 kgs CO2 to 1445 kgs CO2 p.a. Visitors arriving at the Pier by public transport is also encouraged with a discount available on 'Steamers' tickets.
- **Carbon Offsetting.** There is a comprehensive monitoring system measuring Ullswater 'Steamers' consumption. The office consumables are now carbon neutral with a corresponding number of trees being planted in the North West each year. Aim to minimise transport in the supply chain where possible, for example the Pier timbers are locally sourced from nearby Lowther Estates.

- **Environmental Champions.** Investing in staff training programmes across each of its heritage attractions and holiday parks Lake District Estates has a dedicated person who is passionate about encouraging and monitoring environmental practice within that company.

Rachel Bell, Head of Marketing and development says, *'By its very nature, tourism values the things that make Cumbria so very special; stunning landscape, wildlife, heritage, culture and people. As one of the leading tourism operators in the UK Lake District Estates have a responsibility to reduce any negative impact of our business operations, to fund conservation to protect key locations and to help guide our staff and visitors so they can leave less trace on the environment. We are delighted to be nominated in four Cumbria Tourism Award categories which celebrate the best Cumbria has to offer and recognises the huge importance of the £2.9 billion visitor economy.'*

The winners of the prestigious Cumbria Tourism Awards categories will be announced at a glittering black tie finale on Wednesday 19 June at Cartmel Racecourse.



Ullswater 'Steamers' in the heart of the UNESCO World Heritage Site the Lake District, Cumbria.



Family walking along the Ullswater Way.



Children enjoying a Red Squirrel nature talk at Ullswater 'Steamers'.

[ENDS]

**Press contact: Sorcha Hunter PR Executive | [shunter@cumbriatourism.org](mailto:shunter@cumbriatourism.org) | 07398 255654**

- Interviews with key representatives of the company can be arranged
- TV and Radio possible
- Press trips to experience Ullswater 'Steamers' and Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
- High resolution images

### **Editors notes**

**Lake District Estates** is a family owned business that owns and operates a selection of high quality and award-winning tourist attractions, caravan parks, marina holiday apartments and moorings, Peter Rabbit & Friends retail outlets and private and commercial letting properties. Heritage and preservation are at the heart of the business with two of the Lake Districts best-loved attractions Ravenglass & Eskdale Steam Railway and environmentally accredited Ullswater 'Steamers'.

[www.lakedistrictestates.com](http://www.lakedistrictestates.com)