

TOP QUALITY TRIPLE AS THREE PARKS CELEBRATE GREEN FLAG SUCCESS

Three open spaces in Teignbridge have today been confirmed as amongst the best quality in the country, scooping prestigious Green Flag Awards for 2011.

Teignmouth Den, Decoy Country Park and Courtenay Park, Newton Abbot all picked up the honour, which recognises parks and open spaces that meet tough quality standards.

The Green Flag is seen as the national benchmark for quality parks, and to win an award a place must perform well against eight set criteria:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Clean and well maintained
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

Only green spaces that are free to enter and open to the public are eligible to win an award through the scheme, which is run by environmental charities Keep Britain Tidy, BTCV and GreenSpace.

Flags have been awarded around the country since 1997, and Decoy Country Park became Teignbridge's flagship Green Flag site in 2006. It was joined by Teignmouth Den in 2008, and later by Courtenay Park in 2010. All of the sites have won Green Flags every year since their first Award. This is no mean feat, as parks must make fresh applications every year.

Cllr George Gribble, Teignbridge Executive Spokesperson for Communities, Recreation and Leisure said:

"This is great news for these green spaces, which once again have been recognised as amongst the best in the country. There are about 30,000 eligible places nationwide, and last year only 1,200 Flags were awarded. That gives you some idea just how lucky we are to have three such sites in Teignbridge.

"It's not all about awards though, it's about enjoyment. The Green Flag is a great reassurance of a top-quality park, but the real prize is seeing local people and visitors out enjoying them."

Cllr Sylvia Russell, Teignbridge Executive Spokesperson for Tourism, and local Ward Member for Teignmouth East said:

“As a ward councillor I’m delighted to see Teignmouth Den fly the flag once again, and of course winning the Award across three sites is a real boost for Teignbridge as a popular tourist destination.

“A lot of hard work goes in to these green spaces, much of which is from local volunteers as well as council workers. On behalf of the council I say thank you to all those who give their time to make their area better – these Green Flags are a shining example of just how much can be achieved together.”

Six time winner Decoy Country Park is one of the most popular open spaces in the district, offering beautiful walks, play facilities and water sports, and attracting over a quarter of a million visitors each year. It also provides a home to a BMX and skateboard concrete bowl skatepark, and a popular wet-play area for youngsters.

LOCAL QUOTE(S)

Teignmouth Den won the award for the fourth time this year, confirming its status as one of the South West’s best quality iconic seaside resorts. As well as offering open grassed areas, it features an award winning play area, traditional pier, adventure golf, a multi-use games area for sports including tennis, and a well-used skate park. In 2009 it featured on screens worldwide as hometown rockers Muse chose the site to launch their world tour with a weekend double-bill of concerts.

LOCAL QUOTE

Courtenay Park, seen by many as a gateway to Newton Abbot due to its prominent position opposite the train station, won the Green Flag for the second year. The traditional park is characterised by its bandstand, which hosts a variety of musical events from May to September. It also features a covered shelter for young people to meet at, and last year saw a £46k boost with a new train-themed play area installed, offering play equipment predominantly for toddlers.

LOCAL QUOTE(S)

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