Welsh wildlife charity voted UK’S best environment



They received over 10,000 votes to win the Best Environment project in this year’s National Lottery Awards - the annual search to find the UK’s favourite Lottery funded projects.

The observatory was the only Welsh project competing against six other projects from all over the UK to win this award. They win a £2,000 cash prize, an iconic National Lottery Awards trophy, and will attend a star-studded awards ceremony – The National Lottery Stars – broadcast on BBC One on 21 September.

The observatory sits in the middle of a remote Welsh wetland, on the Cors Dyfi nature reserve near Machynlleth, allowing people to get a unique view of a rich mix of wildlife – in particular the rare ospreys that nest less than 200m away.

Michaela Strachan said: "I'm really wild about this serene and unique project! When I visited the reserve four years ago they told me about their plans to build the observatory, so it’s great to come back to see the difference this funding has made.

“The observatory brings nature to life, allowing everyone to interact with ospreys and other wildlife up-close. This is not just for lucky visitors, but also for those around the world enjoying a nest-eye view through four high definition nest cameras. This year’s osprey fledglings have been caught on camera, from their parents’ courtship, to hatching, feeding,

fledging and, we hope, soon migrating.

“I loved seeing the new observatory and presenting the team with their hard-earned trophy. They’re deserving winners, and I was delighted to congratulate them on their important work.”

Emyr Evans, manager of the project, said: “It’s an honour that over 10,000 people voted to recognise us as the Best Environment project, and I’m proud we’ve gained this national recognition.

“It’s a testament to the hard work and belief of our staff, volunteers, and our many supporters that we have won this prestigious award.

“National Lottery funding allowed us to design and build an observatory for everyone, where families can come and ask questions, where teachers and pupils can learn about the environment, where older people can enjoy nature, and where the community can volunteer and help communicate with visitors - there isn’t a building anywhere in Britain like it.”

Notes to editors

More about the project

The 360 Observatory, which is run by Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, sits in the middle of wetland, allowing people to get a unique view of a rich mix of wildlife – in particular the rare ospreys that nest less than 200m away. The three-floor observatory overlooks the habitat of many rare plant and animal species. Inside, the site provides hi-tech equipment to take in the 360-degree view, with a state-of-the-art boardwalk enabling site access for all. Many rare birds can be seen, and with live nest-cams, the birth and the lives of osprey chicks have been shared with the world.

More about the National Lottery Awards

National Lottery players raise over £34million a week and that money goes to support people and projects across the UK. The awards are a great way to show National Lottery players where their funding has gone and the life-changing difference playing the Lottery every week is making to communities across the UK.

There are seven categories in the awards, reflecting the main areas of Lottery funding: arts, education, environment, health, heritage, sport, and voluntary/charity.

Further information

Jackie Aplin at The National Lottery Awards on 07917 791 873, email: jackie.aplin@lotterygoodcauses.org.uk, or her colleagues on 020 7211 3991.

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