



## FORDE ABBEY & GARDENS



### **Forde Abbey – in the National Spotlight!**

Forde Abbey, the 800-year old former Cistercian monastery and 30-acre garden on the Dorset/Somerset border near Chard, has just been named as a finalist in the National Enjoy England Awards for Excellence. Following their second win in two years in the regional competition this news has created a real buzz of excitement at the Abbey.

Owner Mrs Elizabeth Roper was particularly pleased with the news. “To be named as the best in the South West, a region that boasts some of the best attractions in the country was amazing, but to know that we are so highly rated nationally is a huge honour.”

The regional judges were impressed by the level of customer service and the great breadth of knowledge shown by the staff at the Abbey. They also praised the exceptional gardens and the dedication to improving both the standard of the planting and the accessibility of the grounds. No doubt it was these same qualities that caught the eye of the Enjoy England judges.

The winners of the national competition will be announced at an awards ceremony at St George’ Hall, Liverpool on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Forde Abbey will be represented by Mrs Roper’s daughter and son-in-law, Alice and Julian Kennard, who are particularly involved with the day-to-day management of Forde Abbey and its estate. Alice was a judge for the bed and breakfast category in the regional competition and knows how tough the judging is. “Having one aspect which is excellent and then achieving only mediocre results on the rest is not good enough. It is the overall experience that counts. To get this far we know that Forde Abbey delivers across the board. I can’t wait for Liverpool!”

End

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For Editors:

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### ***Forde Abbey***

*Established in 1141 as a Cistercian monastery, Forde Abbey became a private home following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. Passed around a series of absentee landlords for more than a century it was saved by Edmund Prideaux, Cromwell's Attorney General in 1649. Under his supervision Forde Abbey became a family home and remains so to this day. It has now been the home of the Roper family since 1905 and is at the heart of a 1600 acre estate.*

### ***South West Tourism's Small Visitor Attraction of the Year 2006 & 2007***

*Gardens Open daily throughout the year 10.00 am - 4.30pm*

*House Open 12 noon - 4pm Tues-Fri, Sun & Bank Hols 18<sup>th</sup> March - end Oct*

*Signposted from A358 Chard/Axminster, A3066 Bridport/Crewkerne, A30*

*Chard/Crewkerne*