



## NEWS

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### **Battlesteads in Northumberland takes top accolade at Considerate Hoteliers 'Hotel of the Year 2010/11' national awards**

**Special 'Considerate Good Egg of the Year Award 2010/11' presented to Vanessa Scott, Director of Strattons Hotel and Restaurant in Swaffham, Suffolk**

The 2010/11 winners of the seven categories of the prestigious annual Considerate Hoteliers Association (CHA) 'Hotel of the Year Awards' – celebrating the best in environmental, sustainable and socially responsible performance and open to all UK hotels and small accommodation operations – were announced today (23 May) by the CHA at its Annual Awards and Gala Lunch, held at The Savoy, London.

The **2010/11 winners** were as follows:

**1) CHA's top award – the overall 'Considerate Hotel of the Year Award 2010/11', sponsored by Gilchrist & Soames,** was presented to: the award-winning **Battlesteads hotel and restaurant** – owned by Richard and Dee Slade – at Wark-on-Tyne, near Hexham in Northumberland. Battlesteads received the CHA's highest accolade for being the best 'all-rounder' establishment to have been considered by the judges as having succeeded in a wide range of environmental and social initiatives. These ranged from energy and water conservation, waste reduction and support for sustainable food, to marketing and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). To mark the achievement, Battlesteads received an inscribed Dartington Crystal decanter.

The CHA judging panel were most impressed by the way sustainability is intrinsically woven into every aspect of the business – from the carbon neutral heating and hot water system serving the entire hotel, to the extensive gardens with two polytunnels

providing fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the year for the kitchen. One CHA judge commented: “Battlesteads provided an outstanding entry and is a very worthy winner. They have tackled difficult issues such as waste and energy use, and addressed many areas of their business in their mission to improve their sustainability. Their entry described some really innovative approaches – such as channelling waste heat into a polytunnel used to grow crops for the restaurant.

“Richard and Dee Slade investigate the sustainability of their suppliers and really promote to their guests what they’re doing by, for example, giving tours of the biomass boiler! They also spread the word to the wider community by, for instance, working with the local primary school on organic salad growing.”

Renowned hospitality industry environmental and food safety consultant, CHA Ambassador and the leading member of the 2010/11 CHA awards panel of judges (*see ‘Notes to Editors’*) – Professor John Forte OBE added: “Of the many worthy contenders for this title, we chose a business that has demonstrated over the past three years a steady progress on sustainable environmental improvements across the board. Richard and Dee Slade have recognised that there are many sustainable improvements that still need to be made and have a positive, realistic and achievable programme to work towards achieving their end goals. Personally, I was particularly taken with the element of fun that they have injected into their endeavours and their obvious enthusiasm for what they do and have achieved.”

**Battlesteads’** short-listed challengers for this category were: Combe House hotel and restaurant at Gittisham, near Honiton, Devon; The County Hotel, Chelmsford in Essex; Landmark London Hotel in the capital; Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons at Great Milton, Oxfordshire; Metropolitan London, Park Lane; Park Plaza County Hall London; Radisson Edwardian Leicester Square Hotel in London; The Green House in Bournemouth, Dorset; and Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham.

**2) ‘The Considerate Sustainable Food 2010/11 Award’, supported by Sustain (the alliance for better food and farming), went to Strattons Hotel and Restaurant in Swaffham, Suffolk.** The award – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is presented to the hotel or accommodation operation which, in the opinion of the judges, has gone ‘that extra mile’ in 2010 to support its local food producers; to produce and/or purchase ethically, seasonally and sustainably; and then to proudly demonstrate to their guests and restaurant users – through marketing

and via the menu, great food and hotel staff – why they are doing so. In winning the award, Strattons beat off the strong challenge of the following short-listed establishments: the Bingham at Richmond upon Thames, Surrey; Combe House hotel and restaurant at Gittisham, near Honiton, Devon; Nurse's Cottage Restaurant and Rooms at Sway, New Forest (National Park); Primrose Valley Hotel in St. Ives, Cornwall; and The Cavendish London.

**3) 'The Considerate Small Accommodation Provider of the Year 2010/11'**, newly introduced this year, was won by **Lasswade Country House and Restaurant** at Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys in Wales. The award – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is presented to the small accommodation operation (10 bedrooms or under such as B&Bs, guest-houses, or restaurants and inns with rooms) which is considered by the judges to have made the most significant achievements and proved most inspirational in terms of their green journey during 2010, without all the trappings and resources of big business. Short-listed for this category were: Bedknobs Bed & Breakfast at Bodmin, Cornwall; Nurse's Cottage Restaurant and Rooms at Sway, New Forest (National Park); and Wilton Court restaurant with rooms at Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

**4) 'The Considerate Green Team of the Year 2010/11'** was presented to the centrally based **Green Team at Firmdale Hotels for looking after the group's London establishments: Haymarket Hotel, The Soho Hotel; Covent Garden Hotel; Charlotte Street Hotel; Knightsbridge Hotel and Number Sixteen**. The award is presented to the establishment or accommodation operation that, in the opinion of the judges, has – by virtue of the work undertaken by their Green Team – made the most difference in 2010. **Firmdale Hotels** had stiff opposition for the award – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – from the following short-listed establishments in this category: Best Western Monkbar Hotel in York; Landmark London Hotel in the capital; and Metropolitan London, Park Lane.

**5) The winner of the 'Considerate Green Champion of 2010/11' award, sponsored by Vivreau advanced water systems, was Debra Patterson, the Green Ambassador for The Savoy, London**. The award – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is presented to the individual, nominated by fellow hoteliers and colleagues, who by sheer dedication has inspired others to raise the green standard in 2010. Those short-listed, who challenged Debra Patterson for the award, were: Gary Lohan, Chief Engineer at One Aldwych, London; Carl Mullen,

Maintenance Attendant at Best Western Premier Moor Hall Hotel & Spa, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands; Diane Stenning, Head of the Environmental Committee, Best Western The Old Tollgate Restaurant & Hotel, Bramber, West Sussex; and Emma Stevens, Proprietor, Lasswade Country House and Restaurant at Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys in Wales.

**6) ‘The Considerate Green Suppliers of the Year Award 2010/11’**, newly introduced this year and **sponsored by Beacon Purchasing** is presented to the national and local supplier, nominated by a hotelier or accommodation provider, who is considered by the judges to have best met the environmental needs and ethos of the nominating accommodation business in 2010.

- The first ever national recipient of this year’s **‘CHA National Supplier of the Year Award’** – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is **Suma** – the UK’s largest independent wholefood wholesaler/distributor, specialising in vegetarian, fairly traded, organic, ethical and natural products. **Suma** is a workers’ co-operative committed to ethical business.
- The first ever local recipient of this year’s **‘CHA Local Supplier of the Year Award’** – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is **Mrs Temple’s Cheese**, based at Wighton, Wells-Next-The Sea, in Norfolk. The cheeses are hand made from the milk of the company’s own cows. They are fully traceable from grass meadow to plate. The range of cheeses offered include: soft veined Binham blue, crumbly Walsingham, Melton Mozarella, creamy Wighton, and flavoured Gouda type Warhans.

Both winners were nominated by **Hannah Scott, a Director of Strattons Hotel and Restaurant in Swaffham, Suffolk**, who said: “Both companies are absolutely fantastic suppliers – offering great service, community involvement, supplier scrutiny, and bucket loads of integrity. Both Sam Bryant, our Head Chef at Strattons and Maggie Cooper, Manager of CoCoes Café Deli at Strattons, thoroughly endorse my choice for best regional and national suppliers.”

**7) ‘Best Green Marketing Initiative for 2010/11’**, a new category this year, has been won by **Combe House hotel and restaurant at Gittisham, near Honiton, Devon**. This award – an inscribed Dartington Crystal pedestal bowl – is presented to the hotel or accommodation operation which, in the eyes of the judges, has produced the most outstanding marketing initiative within the above CHA hotel/accommodation operation award category entries – namely **‘The Considerate Hotel of the Year 2010/11’**; **‘The Considerate Small Accommodation Provider of the Year Award**

**2010/11'; 'The Considerate Sustainable Food 2010/11 Award'; 'The Considerate Green Team of the Year 2010/11'; and 'The Considerate Green Champion of the Year 2010/11'.**

**Combe House** won the **'Best Green Marketing Initiative Award'** for its newly restored Victorian Kitchen Gardens which have proved to be the driver of the hotel's best marketing initiatives – both planned and unexpected – in 2010. The main benefits of the restoration have included more authentic and interesting menus, enhanced food provenance, a detailed food section on the hotel's website, and more interesting information for the Combe House's e-newsletter. The re-introduction of the 'Putt' apple and bringing back cider-making generated PR and press opportunities. The hotel also reached the semi-finals of *Country Life* magazine's 2010 'Restoration of the Century National Award', generating further media interest. By finishing the restoration of the gardens, it helped Ken and Ruth Hunt – who run Combe House – to complete the story of the property and publish a booklet entitled the *'History of Combe House and Gittisham 1066-2010'*. The publication includes not only the past history, but also 12 years of sustainable hospitality at Combe House from 1998 to 2010 – including descriptions of the yearly restoration projects that have been undertaken. The booklet has proved to be the best marketing tool the hotel has ever produced and is used by guests, journalists, influencers and staff alike, generating considerable media coverage and helping differentiate the hotel from its competitors.

Rounding off the 2010/11 Considerate Hotel of the Year Awards was the second ever presentation of the special **'Considerate Good Egg of the Year Award'**, which this year went to **Vanessa Scott, Director of Strattons Hotel and Restaurant in Swaffham, Suffolk**. The award – an emu egg mounted in a large locally hand-crafted English ash wooden egg cup – is intended to recognise those in the hospitality business who have inspired and encouraged others to embrace certain principles of life. As far as CHA is concerned, those principles involve a dedication and willingness to impart to others the absolute need: to always try their best; that good enough is not enough; and to be ultra considerate at all times. Additionally, if people give help to others to achieve excellence in what they do, then CHA believes that they are thoroughly deserving of the **'Good Egg Award'**.

Commenting on Vanessa Scott's award, CHA Director and Association Secretary John Firrell said: "With Raymond Blanc OBE having won the inaugural 'Good Egg

Award' for 2009/10, it was always going to be a hard act to follow. However, when it was decided to give this year's award to Vanessa Scott, it was a blinding glimpse of the obvious. She is a person that has led the way through the green minefield that has existed ever since the environment and social responsibility came to the fore many years ago. She has resolutely stuck to her ethos, even when others may have doubted the outcome. She is both a leader and a disciple, she inspires many, and will no doubt do so for many years to come."

Summing up the success of the '**Considerate Hotel of the Year Awards 2010/11**', John Firrell concluded: "Once again our responsible hotel fraternity have done the hospitality industry proud. With their lateral thinking on the environment and social responsibility – outside of the usual boxes of saving energy, water and waste which frankly all businesses ought naturally to be doing to save money – their standard of entries and presentation were peerless. The enthusiasm, verve and knowledge of their subject shown by the winning entries are humbling and one wonders what new initiatives they will come up next year – I can't wait!"

**-ends-**

### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **1) Considerate Hoteliers Association 'Hotel of the Year' awards 2010/11 Judges**

The CHA wish to publicly thank the 2010/11 CHA awards judges:

**Professor John Forte OBE, Considerate Hoteliers Association Ambassador and renowned hospitality industry environmental and food safety consultant; Emily Crawley, Ethical Eats Project Officer, Sustain (the alliance for better food and farming); Diana Mountain, Chair of the BAHA (British Association of Hospitality Accountants) Technical Committee; Diane Webster, Head of Sales & Marketing, Beacon Purchasing, and instigator of Green Hotel on the Beacon website; Emma Johnstone, Director of Marketing, Gilchrist & Soames Ltd; and Martin Barlow, Owner, Budock Vean Hotel at Mawnan Smith, near Falmouth, Cornwall – winner of the overall 'Considerate Hotel of the Year Award 2009/10'. Secretary to the panel of judges was John Firrell, Director of the Considerate Hoteliers Association.**

#### **2) CHA Awards Presentation Ceremony Sponsors**

**The CHA also wishes to publicly thank the sponsors of the 2010/11 Annual Awards – Gilchrist & Soames Ltd; Beacon Purchasing; Sustain (the alliance for better food and farming); and Vivreau advanced water systems. The CHA would also like to express its thanks to associate sponsors of the 2010/11 Gala Awards Presentation Lunch: Vintage Roots Ltd. who supplied the wines – 'Wild Thing' Sauvignon Blanc, La Mancha 2009/10 (every bottle purchased helps raise funds for the Born Free Foundation, founded by actress Virginia McKenna OBE and her late husband Bill Travers) and Navarra Fiesta,**

**Azul y Garanza 2009/10; Fou Furnishings Ltd.; Northern Environmental; and Nova Flo.**  
Our grateful thanks also to The Savoy, London for their support and assistance – without which this event would not have been possible,

**3) For Photographs of the winners and the event:**

Please contact Julian Demetriadi on 01725 552 835 or email  
[juliandemetriadi@communicationspoint.net](mailto:juliandemetriadi@communicationspoint.net)

**4) About the Considerate Hoteliers Association**

Considerate Hoteliers is an association of like-minded hoteliers, whose purpose it is to encourage, assist, cajole and motivate fellow hoteliers to adopt sustainable, environmentally friendly and socially responsible practices. A list of current members can be found at [www.consideratehoteliers.com](http://www.consideratehoteliers.com).