

**PRESS RELEASE**

**November 30, 2017**

**Simply the best! British Airways i360 wins double gold at Tourism South East's Beautiful South Awards**



The British Airways i360 team is celebrating today after winning **two** gold awards at the Beautiful South Awards last night [November 29] – for **Venue and Business Tourism** and **Café/Tearoom of the Year** for the West Pier Tea Room.

The awards are organised by Tourism South East and celebrate excellence in tourism. The ceremony took place at The Grand Hotel in Brighton and was hosted by Toby Anstis from Heart FM.

As winners, British Airways i360 and West Pier Tea Room will now be invited to represent the South East at the national VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, which will take place in early 2018.

British Airways i360 executive director Steve Bax said: “The whole team is incredibly proud that British Airways i360 and West Pier Tea Room have won these highly prestigious awards, against a hugely talented line-up of tourism businesses. We would like to thank the judges, and everyone involved in making British Airways i360 the success it is today.”

**Award 1: Gold Award for Venue and Business Tourism**

British Airways i360 is the world’s tallest moving observation tower, with a giant glass pod rising from ground level to 450ft above Brighton. It was conceived and designed by Marks Barfield Architects, creators of the London Eye.

It also has the most spectacular events spaces on the south coast. The pod is available for exclusive hire for up to 175 people and while on board, guests can enjoy a glass of award-winning English sparkling wine from the Nyetimber Sky Bar. At beach level there are nine flexible events spaces, most opening onto private beach terraces, which can host up to 1,100 people. There are high-tech facilities across the site and superb catering provided by our award-winning partner, Heritage Portfolio.

Steve Bax, executive director, said: “The British Airways i360 pod is a moving events space with a bar on board and unfolding, 360-degree views. There is literally nowhere else like this in the South East, and leading regional, national and international brands use our spaces for product launches, awards ceremonies and experiential activity.

“I would like to thank the judges for this fantastic award and congratulate our team for consistently delivering outstanding events for our clients.”

### **Award 2: Café/Tearoom of the Year for West Pier Tea Room**



The West Pier Tea Room is housed in a beautiful replica of an 1866 West Pier tollbooth; part of a pair which was returned to the seafront as part of the British Airways i360 project (the other tollbooth houses the ticket office).

This unique tea room is open to passing members of public as well as British Airways i360 customers, and serves delicious artisan coffee and tea, deli-style sandwiches and mouth-watering cakes, all made from scratch onsite using locally sourced ingredients where possible.

From the private sea-facing terrace, customers can enjoy spectacular views across the sea, the former West Pier and the British Airways i360 observation tower and pod, as well as Regency Square to the north. West Pier Tea Room is operated by award-winning caterer Heritage Portfolio and is available for private hire, including weddings and civil ceremonies.

Steve Bax, executive director, said: “West Pier Tea Room is housed in a lovingly reconstructed tollbooth from the original pier, and it’s a wonderful place to enjoy dramatic sea views and the best teas and coffees in the South East!

“I would like to thank the judges for this fantastic award and congratulate our catering partner Heritage Portfolio, who deliver such wonderful service to our customers at West Pier Tea Room.”

Nigel Smith, chief executive of Tourism South East, said: “Last night reminded me again of the sheer quality of tourism businesses in the South East. Never mind the UK, some easily stand up to comparison with the very best tourism businesses in the world. All the finalists can be very proud of what they have achieved through a commitment to reinvestment, training and a relentless drive to be the best. I hope their example will inspire others.”

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**Images (please credit British Airways i360):**

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qt8dao8g2ib9p5e/AACFcl8kKQgwyceBPQL1KI\\_Ba?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qt8dao8g2ib9p5e/AACFcl8kKQgwyceBPQL1KI_Ba?dl=0)

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## **Information for editors**

### **About British Airways i360**

British Airways i360 is conceived and designed by Marks Barfield Architects, creators of the London Eye.

With an overall height of 162m, and a glass observation pod that glides up from ground level to 138m above Brighton beach, British Airways i360 is the world’s tallest moving observation tower. Visitors enjoy unprecedented unfolding views across Brighton and Hove, the South Downs and the beautiful Sussex coast. ‘Flights’ carry up to 175 passengers and depart every 30 minutes. While on board, guests can enjoy a drink at the Nyetimber Sky Bar which serves a range of drinks from Sussex including Nyetimber, an award-winning sparkling wine.

At the base of the tower is the British Airways i360 beach building which houses a stylish new restaurant, West Beach Bar & Kitchen, with sea views and a large terrace. Dishes feature ingredients sourced from the local area. The beach building also has flexible beachside events spaces which can be hired for private functions and can accommodate up to 1,100 people. British Airways i360 is licensed for weddings and couples carry marry in the pod, saying ‘I do’ at 138m above Sussex.

British Airways i360 has worked with the West Pier Trust to reconstruct two of the original West Pier tollbooths using Victorian building techniques. The reconstructed buildings now grace the entrance to British Airways i360, and house the West Pier Tea Room and the British Airways i360 ticket office.

The British Airways i360 shop stocks gifts and souvenirs, many of which have been created by local Brighton artists.

British Airways i360 is owned and operated by Brighton i360 Ltd.

Website: [BritishAirwaysi360.com](http://BritishAirwaysi360.com)

Twitter: @BA\_i360

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### **About Marks Barfield Architects**

The late David Marks MBE was the architect-entrepreneur behind the creation of Brighton i360, together with his wife and business partner Julia Barfield MBE. They founded Brighton i360 Ltd in 2005. Previously David Marks and Julia Barfield performed a similar role creating the London Eye where they remained shareholders and directors until 2006. Together with a tight-knit group of extraordinary individuals, trusted consultants and companies, many of whom worked with David and Julia at the London Eye, they secured the planning permission, partners, land and funding for British Airways i360. Marks Barfield Architects is one of the UK's most versatile and innovative architecture practices, established in 1989. Julia Barfield now chairs the Brighton i360 board.

MarksBarfield.com

@marksbarfield

### **About British Airways**

British Airways is one of the world's leading global premium airlines and the UK's largest international scheduled airline, carrying approximately 35 million passengers worldwide annually, on around 800 daily flights. The airline employs around 40,000 people, the vast majority of these at its sites throughout the UK, and has an annual turnover of £8.5 billion. It employs 2,500 people in Sussex, several hundred of them in Brighton.

British Airways is the naming rights sponsor of British Airways i360. The attraction is owned and operated by Brighton i360 Ltd.

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