



## **Merlin Entertainments unveils accommodation openings at Warwick Castle**

**London, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016:** Merlin Entertainments, one of the world's leading visitor attraction operators, has opened the new Knight's Village at Warwick Castle. The £5 million investment in year-round accommodation, which opens its doors to the public today, incorporates 28 new year-round mediaeval-themed woodland lodges and 41 seasonal glamping tents.

Knight's Village, set within the Castle grounds by the River Avon in Warwickshire, comes three years after the first glamping accommodation opened, and two years after the launch of two year-round deluxe Tower Suites. Since summer 2013, the Castle has welcomed more than 50,000 overnight guests, and the new accommodation adds over 65% additional overnight capacity.

The opening follows Merlin's announcement in February 2016 which outlined its ambition to double the pace of accommodation roll out each year, as it develops its theme parks into destination resorts. Merlin plans to add 2,000 new rooms by the end of 2020, representing a capital investment of over £200m. To date in 2016, Merlin has opened new accommodations in LEGOLAND Deutschland's Holiday Village, the Gardaland Adventure Hotel in Italy and its first Explorer Glamping accommodation at Chessington World of Adventures in the UK. This builds on last year's key openings; a new 152 room hotel at LEGOLAND Florida and a 125 lodge holiday village at Alton Towers.

### **Justin Platt, Managing Director, Resort Theme Parks, said:**

“Our latest accommodation opening at Warwick Castle, coming shortly after the opening of the Gardaland Adventure Hotel and Explorer Glamping at Chessington World of Adventures, marks another milestone in our strategy to transform our attractions into short break destinations. We are continuing to deliver our strategy with a strong pipeline of hotel and other accommodation projects planned across our theme park estate.”

**Ends**

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**About Merlin Entertainments plc**

Merlin Entertainments plc is a global leader in location based, family entertainment. Europe's Number 1 and the world's second-largest visitor attraction operator, Merlin now operates over 100 attractions, 13 hotels and 4 holiday villages in 23 countries and across 4 continents. The company aims to deliver memorable experiences to its more than 60 million visitors worldwide, through its iconic global and local brands, and the commitment and passion of its c.27,000 employees.

Visit [www.merlinentertainments.biz](http://www.merlinentertainments.biz) for more information.

**About Warwick Castle**

Warwick Castle, set in 64 acres of grounds designed by Capability Brown, rests on the banks of the River Avon at the heart of historic Warwick. Knight's Village consists of 28 semi-detached lodges and 41 glamping tents, linked by over 1 kilometre of raised wooden boardwalk. Guests will enjoy hospitality and entertainment in the new 390m<sup>2</sup> Banquet Hall that also houses the village reception and bathroom facilities for glamping guests.

Fifty jobs will be created and the Castle expects to welcome over 20,000 overnight guests this year across its three accommodation types. Knight's Village adds over 10,000 room nights to Warwick and brings £2.1m economic benefit to the District annually.

Warwickshire was recently named as one of Lonely Planet's Top 10 destinations in Europe.

Visit <https://www.warwick-castle.com/> for more information.