

Wales

Castle Inn, Caldicot, Monmouthshire

Judith and Stephen Gribble have run the Castle Inn since February 2005, turning a sad pub into probably the only, true family-friendly outlet for miles around.

Stephen remarks: "When it came on the market, we saw its potential." Judith adds: "It is the only pub in Caldicot with an outside area big enough to accommodate families."

Thanks to the couple investing £100,000 in the Enterprise Inns outlet, it now boasts two distinct play areas for children of different ages, as well as a large grassed area with bench tables for general relaxation. Under-sevens have a fenced-out area with facilities such as swings and slides. For older and more adventurous children, there is a fort featuring aerial walkways and rope netting.

It took 10 skips to remove junk such as car parts and old washing machines, discovered when the head-high brambles were cut down. Judith says: "The outside area promotes itself. We encourage children and don't think of them as a nuisance, which is the case with many pubs."

Under Judith's guidance, the food offering has blossomed and now accounts for 60% of trade, with a special menu for younger customers.

Stephen's skills have helped the Castle win a gold award in the Beautiful Beer scheme.