

# TRAVEL



■ Former Changing Rooms presenter Anna Ryder Richardson owns a zoo where Cerys Caffery fed the wallabies



## Wild about TV Anna's £1 million makeover

**ADRIAN CAFFERY** goes walking with wallabies in south Wales

**T**HINK Anna Ryder Richardson and you'll probably recall the BBC's long-running DIY show Changing Rooms.

But there's another, perhaps surprising, string to the TV presenter and interior designer's bow – that of zoo keeper.

Six years ago, Anna forked out £1 million to buy the dilapidated Manor House Wildlife Park, near Tenby in Pembrokeshire.

The former I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out of Here contestant then spent another £1 million completely renovating the attraction over a seven month period.

South Wales-born Anna and her restaurateur husband Colin ploughed every penny of their savings into the building of new animal enclosures.

Looking back, she describes it as a "crazy midlife crisis" and recalls having to live in a tiny wooden hut in the zoo to save money.

On Changing Rooms, Anna's style didn't always find favour and on one occasion her makeover reduced the



■ Cerys Caffery meets Haven mascot Rory the tiger at Kiln Park, near Tenby

home-owners to tears.

But her transformation of the zoo, also known as Anna's Welsh Zoo, was given the thumbs up by my three-year-old daughter, Cerys.

She loved the wallaby walk-through where the friendly marsupials hopped over to eat specially-made pellets out of her hands.

While at feeding time in one of Europe's largest lemur walk-throughs, Cerys shared a bench with a colourful, sweet potato munching character.

The zoo's third walk-through has the look of a traditional African village where the residents are sheep, goats, chickens and a tortoise.

In 2012 the zoo welcomed the first rhino in Wales for 40,000 years, then another which was one of the first in Britain to be born through IVF.

We were on a short break at Kiln Park, a family-friendly Haven resort a couple of miles from the zoo.

The resort boasts a lake, playground, wildflower meadow,

amusements, bowling and indoor and outdoor pools with waterslides.

There's also an all-inclusive and extensive leisure and entertainment schedule organised by the yellow-jacketed Funstars.

They are ably assisted by the Seaside Squad – Rory the tiger, Bradley the bear, Greedy the monkey and Anxious the elephant, who, as the name suggests is of a nervous disposition.

Cerys enjoyed a keep fit class, dance lessons, arts and crafts, tennis and archery with sucker-tipped darts fired from lightweight crossbows.

Come the evenings, the Funstars took to the stage to reveal their hidden talents but with a three-year-old we were always back in our caravan by then.

Kiln Park has nine grades of caravan, ranging from 'standard' up to 'platinum', all with well equipped kitchens and gas fires in the lounge.

We stayed in a larger 'retreat'

caravan, one grade below platinum, which had the added benefits decking and central heating and double glazing throughout.

Next to the park is a Blue Flag beach which you can walk along to the pretty, walled town of Tenby, which is celebrating a couple of recent accolades.

It was one of only two British resorts to be ranked by a tourism website among the top 30 most beautiful small towns in the world.

While another website rated the town's Harbour Beach as the most beautiful in Europe, pipping well known resorts in Italy, Portugal and Croatia.

From Tenby's harbour you can take boats trips to the monastic settlement at Caldey Island, doing some seal spotting on the way.

The island's Cistercian monks hand make the most delicious chocolates – perfect (if short-lived) mementoes of a wild time in Wales.

### NEED TO KNOW

➤ Adrian Caffery was a guest of Haven, which has 35 holiday parks, most little more than a stone's throw from the coast. Its 2014 brochure prices for a week in a standard caravan at Kiln Park range from £329 to £1,175. Prices for short breaks range from £139 to £489. Kiln Park also has a touring area for 130 pitches. Some Haven sites offer chalets and apartments and glamping options. For the latest offers and to book go to [www.haven.com/kilnpark](http://www.haven.com/kilnpark)



### SO MUCH NEARBY

➤ Heatherton World of Activities (3 miles): Karting and treetops trail  
 ➤ Dinosaur Park (3 miles): Rides, playgrounds and, er, dinosaurs  
 ➤ Folly Farm (7 miles): Zoo, funfair and adventure playground  
 ➤ Pembroke Castle (10 miles): Well preserved Norman stronghold  
 ➤ Oakwood theme park (13 miles): Rides and rollercoasters