

Please read the Terms and Conditions as well – they are on the website.

Excellence in Customer Service

This award is open to businesses that can show flexibility, responsibility, and a clear focus on their customer service. They need to demonstrate a high level of customer satisfaction, setting the bar for their competitors to follow. Also, businesses should, if possible, give examples of any customer service training they have given to their team, whether on a one-to-one basis or group training.

Green Business of The Year

We are looking for local business entrants who show awareness of environmental issues and are working to be more environmentally friendly. Entrants will need to show they are focused on being ethical and socially responsible. The award is open to any local business, organisation, or individual that has included environmental improvements as part of their core business model and reducing waste.

New Business of the Year

Entries are invited from businesses less than three years old (as of September 2024) that have demonstrated enterprise, vision, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit when setting up a successful new business. Also, a clear vision as to how the business will develop in the future. We are looking for inspiring new businesses that will be seen as role models for other new businesses.

Independent/ Business of the Year

This category is open to local independent businesses with less than 10 employees that can demonstrate enterprise, vision, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit, which in turn is growing their business. Also, a strong record of serving local customers. The winning business will demonstrate excellence in all areas of the business and the business can be any size from a one-man band to large local employer.

Young Entrepreneur/Rising Star

This is a category where you can enter yourself or enter an employee and people can also nominate local businesspeople they feel meet the following criteria. The judges will be looking for a young person (35 or under) that can either be employed or runs their own business and they will be individuals who have demonstrated an exceptional contribution to the workplace or development of their own company. The judges will be looking for excellent performance, a real hands-on approach, initiative, and entrepreneurial spirit.

B2B Business of the Year

Open to any business supplying services to another business so that could be accountancy, HR, recruitment, insurance, legal, coaching, asset finance, website design, marketing, social media,

Open to any business that creates products and/or services for other businesses so that could include businesses that operate in accountancy, commercial legal work, IT and cyber security, car leasing, business funding, websites and marketing, sales training, hospitality supplies, security, insurance, telecommunications, HR etc. The entrants need to demonstrate how their services stand above their competitors, how they achieve excellent customer satisfaction and what makes them an award winner.

Best Café, Pub, Casual Dining.

This award is open to cafes, coffee shops, bars, informal restaurants pubs, etc - and any business that provides food and drink in a social area. Entrants should demonstrate excellence across every aspect of their business, outlining their long term aims to continue to improve their customer experience. They should detail any actions they have taken recently to cope with rising costs, staff shortages etc to remain successful and plans for the future.

Best Place to Work

This category is open to all businesses and organisations (public and private sector) that can demonstrate they have created an outstanding workplace based on a set of values that has led to a committed, effective, and motivated workforce. Tell us what sets the business apart and how that has benefited the business/organisation and its employees. With stresses in recent years from Covid to rising running costs tell us how the business has taken steps to take care of and help employees and customers.

Family Business of The Year

The winner of this award will have family members currently working in the business. The judges are looking for businesses who can articulate why that matters to the success of the business, while acknowledging the pros and cons of a family structure. Entrants will demonstrate what it means to be a family business and how (if applicable) non-family leaders are integrated. Businesses entering this award will need to specify the current family members leading the business.

Business Innovation

This category is open to all businesses that can demonstrate how the use of digital practises, AI ny other innovation i.e. machinery etc has enhanced their business and increased profit or brand awareness and helped save time and/or money. Digital to some companies is technology for others a new way of engaging with customers and a new way of doing business. The judges will be looking for facts and figures to justify your win.

Community Support

Open to any business, individual or organisation that can demonstrate commitment to the local community through services, fund raising or physical or mental support. In fact, any support or actions for their community's benefit that are legal. So it could be a business that organises regular events to fundraise for its community or local charity, or a parent fundraising for their child's school. It could be a church helping the homeless or a foodbank. The winner of this category will be a business, organisation or an individual that has consistently helped others with dedication and commitment. Entries should give examples of what has been done.

Small Business of the Year

Open to any business with less than ten employees that can demonstrate excellence across the board through ambition and innovation in their business sector. Details on how your business stands out from your competitors and achievements in the last year or so. Details on where you want to be in the next year. The judges will be looking for achievement in all aspects of the company, excellent leadership, a good sales and marketing strategy, commitment to staff development and training.

Restaurant of the Year

This will be more about fine dining than burgers and pizzas. The winner will demonstrate excellence across the business, and food and service must be top notch. The use of fresh ingredients from other local businesses will impress our judges as will 5 star reviews and customer testimonials. Excellence is what makes you ahead of your competitors.