

These awards are open to businesses in or around the Gillingham area (a guideline is a four-mile radius). Businesses may enter from outside the area providing the area in and around Gillingham is a major trading area of that business. Businesses can enter as many categories as they wish, but only one entry per category. Sponsors may not enter categories they are sponsoring.

Nominations need to have comments on why the company is being nominated so that the judges can appreciate why you have nominated them and gain an understanding of why they are worthy of the award. **It is not the number of nominations the judges will consider but the quality of the nomination.**

### **B2B Business of The Year**

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 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 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 you 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.

### **Independent/Small**

Tell us about your journey, your plans for the future. This category is open to all local companies with 20 or less employees that can demonstrate 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. **This category is also open to the self-employed/freelancers**

### **Community Support**

Open to any business or organisation that can demonstrate commitment to the local community through services, fund raising or physical or mental support. This award is open to businesses or individuals who have gone the extra mile supporting other businesses or individuals during the recent issues. The winner of this category will be a business or an individual that has consistently helped others with dedication and commitment. Entries should give examples of what has been done. Entries can be nominations from other businesses for a business or individual OR from a business for an individual within that business

**Best Café, Pub, Casual Dining.**

This award is open to cafes, coffee shops, bars, beachside bars, 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.

**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.

**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 and their roles.

**Business Man or Woman of the Year**

This is open to both self- employed and employed entrants and the winner will be a high achiever so tell us what makes you or the person you are nominating stand out from the crowd. What have they achieved in the last year or so that is exceptional? Have they launched their own business that has achieved amazing success or helped their employer with business growth. Have they been fast tracked to a directorship? Just tell us

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**New Business of the Year**

Entrants are invited from businesses less than three years old (as of December 2022), 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.

### **Young Entrepreneur/Rising Star**

Entrepreneur A young person is defined as under 35 – they can either be employed or run their own business. The judges will be looking for individuals who have demonstrated an exceptional contribution to the workplace or development of their own company showing excellent performance, a real hands-on approach, initiative, and entrepreneurial spirit.

In each category there are more chances to win with Gold and Silver Awards plus we also have an Outstanding Business of the Year award.

### **Green/Eco 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.

### **Business Innovation**

The judges will be looking for details on innovative practises that have helped your business grow and expand either since you launched it or in the last few years resulting in increased sales and profitability. 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 near future and how you plan to continue your expansion. These innovations could be digital, new machinery, AI, employee related (i.e. training) new processes, services or products

### **Restaurant of the Year**

This award is more about fine dining than a burger or pizza. Judges will be looking for restaurants that offer a memorable occasion, use fresh local ingredients and source other local products. It's about what makes you the place people aspire to visit. The entrant will need to demonstrate customer service at the highest level, a creative menu and give details of any awards, reviews, customer testimonials that back this up.

Entrants should demonstrate excellence across every aspect of their business, outlining their long term aims to continue to improve their customer experience.