

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

Nominations/Recommendations 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.

Business Innovation

The judges will be looking for businesses that can demonstrate that they have taken steps to introduce new processes (maybe using technology) new services, or products to affect a positive change in their business. This may have been because of outside factors such as the rise in energy prices, the Covid effect or Brexit effect and the judges would like to know if innovation has helped to change the way you market yourself, gain revenue or structure internal operations.

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.

Independent Business of the Year

This category is open to local independent businesses who 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.

New Business of the Year

Entrants are invited from businesses less than three years old (as of April 2023), 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 others.

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.

Restaurant of the Year

Entrants are invited from dining establishments that can demonstrate a consistently creative and well received menu plus great customer service and a welcoming ambience.

Serving delicious and tasty dishes they must have overall excellent feedback from diners. This is more about a fine dining experience rather than casual dining. Locally sourced produce and awards will impress our judges.

Community Support

This is open to businesses, individuals and organisations that can demonstrate their involvement and support for their community this could be 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.

Green/Eco

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 Person 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

Overall Winner

This is decided by the judges who are asked to vote for their 1st, 2nd and 3rd businesses and then the one that gets the most overall 1st votes is our winner.