



Headline Sponsors Pictons Host Launch of the 2015 Community Awards as Nominations Open

The importance of showcasing the wonderful contributions that local people make in their Luton communities was highlighted with the launch last week of the Community Awards 2015, now celebrating its sixth incredible year. For the fifth year running, award winning leading regional law firm Pictons, which recently won the FSB Bedfordshire Business Award for Community Business of the Year, are again the headline sponsors of this iconic event.

Everyone is encouraged to get nominating now. The comprehensive 18 award categories cover every aspect of community life and recognise the enormous contribution made by people and projects which deserve to receive that special acknowledgement. The categories this year range from Charity Champions; Young Hero; Concern Award/Improving Lives; Service With A Smile, Exceptional Achievement Award, Community Champion; Role Model of the Year; Parent in a Million; Teacher of the Year, Champion Carer; Bravery Award; Volunteer of the Year; Community Arts; Mayor's Award; Lifetime Achievement; Helping Hands; Community Project of the Year; Community Business of the Year.

As always, the fourteen judges will be faced with the almost impossible task of choosing who is the most deserving of the recognition for a Community Award. This year the judges include: Luton MPs Kelvin Hopkins and Gavin Shuker; Gary Sweet CEO of Luton Town Football Club; Colette Paul, retiring Bedfordshire Chief Constable; Robin Porter, Corporate Director Commercial and Transformation Services; Lynn Hughes of Johnson Press, editor of the Luton News, Herald & Post, Dunstable Gazette and Leighton Buzzard Observer; Gurch Randhawa Professor of Diversity in Public Health and Director of the Institute for Health Research at the University of Bedfordshire; Sian Timoney Deputy Leader of Luton Borough Council; Sandra Glenn Community Policing and Social Enterprise and Advocacy Support; Lynne Hammond Independent Community Judge; Helen Barrett CEO Active Luton; Chika Austin Engagement Officer London Luton Airport; David Fothergill Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Services; Jonathan Siegler Head of Diversity Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation.

Sukh Saini, Pictons Managing Partner says "Although this is our fifth year as Headline Sponsors we find that every single year we are almost overwhelmed by having to choose the winner in our sponsored category, appropriately this year Community Champion and also having to choose the overall Winner of Winners.

How do you choose the best of the best when faced with so many incredible people or community projects?

“I am really asking everyone in the town to think of someone who they would like to nominate for one of these awards, which recognise the vitally important contributions of our many ‘unsung heroes’. Just being nominated means so much to the people involved.

“At Pictons we have always been committed to supporting the communities where we have offices, in Herts Beds and Bucks. We were so proud when we recently won the FSB Bedfordshire Business Award for Community Business of the Year – for the first time we knew exactly how the Community Awards winners felt! The Community Awards ceremony is one of my favourite nights of the year because it gives us all a chance to thank everyone for making Luton such a special place to live and work.”

Every year the Community Awards gives a generous donation to a charity and this year the recipients will be Cancer Research. Community Magazine proprietor and Community Awards founder **Mostaque Koyes** says: “Last year we supported the Luton Food Bank and this year we have chosen Cancer Research as the beneficiary. Cancer is such a terrible disease which affects so many people and their families. Even when times are tough, local people and local companies are so generous.

“Every year the number of nominations exceeds my expectations and this year I’m hoping to get to 200 nominations. We are about to promote the awards throughout Luton, in shops, libraries, community centres and on Diverse FM radio. We want everyone to get nominating!”

The prizes will be awarded at a glamorous event on Friday 23rd October at Venue Central and will be attended by 600 people.

For more details, to nominate *your* local hero or to donate to Cancer Research: Relay for Life log on to www.communitycommunication.co.uk or pick up a nomination form at any Luton community centre or the local library. Entry closing date will be in September.