

BALLYMENA BOROUGH **BUSINESS EXCELLENCE**

AWARDS 2013



Organised by

Ballymena

Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Presented by



Ballymena - a great place to do business!



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Welcome to the

BALLYMENA BOROUGH **BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2013**

Message from

Thomas McKillen
President
Ballymena Borough
Chamber of Commerce & Industry



Ballymena - a great place to do business!

Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry is delighted to present the 2013 Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards. The awards seek to give recognition to the hard work and dedication of businesses in the Borough and enable us all to celebrate their success.

Ballymena is widely renowned as the premier shopping town in Northern Ireland, but it is sometimes overlooked that the Borough has a vibrant and successful industrial base as well. These awards help to celebrate the huge contribution made by our business community. The economic environment has been very tough in the last year, and these awards demonstrate the commitment of individuals and of the business excellence that exists in the Borough.

There are 21 awards this year so there is a category to suit everyone – large or small businesses, retail, hospitality or industrial and individual awards as well.

I would like to thank Ballymena Borough Council for agreeing to be our major sponsor once again this year. Council has always been a great supporter of both the awards and Chamber in general and the working relationship between Council and Chamber is stronger now than it has ever been.

I would like to thank all other businesses who have sponsored awards or taken an advertisement in the awards brochure.

The judging this year will again be carried out by Insight Mystery Shopping – it is entirely independent of Chamber thereby ensuring the integrity of the awards.

The Gala Awards Evening this year takes place on Thursday 10th October in Tullyglass House Hotel. This is now a major event in the Ballymena business and social calendar, so put the date in your diary now. We promise you an excellent evening, so come along, renew old acquaintances and make new ones but most important – help us celebrate and reward all that is best in business in the Borough.

I wish all entrants every success.

**NI Hospice Care is our
chosen charity for 2013**



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BALLYMENA BOROUGH COUNCIL



Mayor Cllr. Audrey Wales MBE
Ballymena Borough Council

Ballymena Borough Council is fully committed to our local commercial sector and recognises the significant economic benefits it brings to the area. As a Council we aim to lead the way by working together in partnership with our local businesses to bring mutual benefits to the Borough.

Ballymena Borough Council Corporate Plan 2012 – 2016, focuses on creating jobs, increasing skill and education, growing the local economy, improving health and wellbeing of our citizens, delivering quality and value for money services and continuing to invest in a strong and shared future for the people and place of Ballymena. This Corporate Plan clearly indicates the commitment and belief Council hold within the commercial sector.

The local economy is at the core of the wellbeing of the citizens and place of Ballymena. The likely challenges over the coming years, include pressures on retaining existing jobs, attracting new investment and supporting local enterprise.

We as a Council are fully committed to creating the environment that commerce can operate in. Ballymena can be a place for business excellence and we are proud to be a home to some great globally recognised organisations. The economic climate only makes us more determined to collaborate jointly and dovetail our strategies and plans together for the benefit of our local people. Such partnership working can assist and support the growth and prosperity, both now and in the future, for our people and our place – Ballymena.

We are delighted to sponsor the Commitment to Ballymena Award and to support our Chamber of Commerce and Industry whose dedication and hard work bring forward these awards.

BALLYMENA – GREAT PEOPLE – GREAT PLACE

2013 Awards

Customer Service Award Retail Sector (Independent Retailer)

Customer Service Award Retail Sector (Multiple Retailer)

Customer Service Award Convenience Store

Best Eating Establishment Award

Best Small Eatery/Coffee Shop Award

Customer Service Award Service Sector

Customer Service Award Hospitality Sector

Business Premises Award

Best Business Website Award

Excellence in Customer Service Award

Right Place to Work Award

Most Promising New Business Award

Best Small Business Award

Export Business of the Year Award

Innovation Award

Involvement in the Community Award

Entrepreneur of the Year Award

Apprentice of the Year Award

Employee of the Year Award

Business Growth Award

Commitment to Ballymena Award

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CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD RETAIL SECTOR (INDEPENDENT RETAILER)

Sponsored by First Trust Bank

Shoppers are increasingly looking for a unique shopping experience. This award recognises the independent retailer who can demonstrate individuality, quality service and innovative merchandising based on a keen understanding of their customer base. In particular it rewards excellent personable face to face customer service.

This category will be judged by Mystery Shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- Delivering excellent customer service
- Exceeding customer expectations
- Providing insight in product selection
- Exhibiting a strong visual impact
- Understanding of the local customer base

Independent retailers will be viewed as independent owners with three or less stores. Branded retailers, even if independently owned, will not be accepted in this category.

Customer Service is vital to First Trust Bank, it is a core element of all of our job descriptions, training and is a key criterion when we are recruiting. It is something that we continually monitor our staff on. For us, it involves putting systems in place to maximise our customers' satisfaction with our business. It should be a prime consideration for every business – in these difficult economic times your sales and profitability depend on keeping your customers happy.

We see the business benefits of good Customer Service in First Trust Bank that's why we want to recognise it with an award to the Retail sector.

To find out what we can do for your business locally please contact Kevin McWilliams at First Trust Bank, 78 Wellington St., Ballymena.

Good luck with your entry.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD RETAIL SECTOR (MULTIPLE RETAILER)

Sponsored by Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Shoppers are consistently demanding a higher level of service from their retailers and expect a sophisticated store environment. To win this award, multiple retailers must prove that they are focused on their customer's individual needs through their product offering, customer service and store environment.

This category will be judged by Mystery Shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- Excellent one on one service
- Exceeding customer expectations
- Exceptional design layout and shop format
- Innovative product range
- Advantageous store facilities and services

Applications are invited from multiple retailing companies. A multiple retailer will be viewed as a company with four or more branches throughout Northern Ireland.

When the Chamber was formed back in 1919 its objectives were to "uphold, protect and promote the general interests of manufacturers, merchants, traders, farmers, fruit growers, scotch mill owners, horse and cattle dealers of Ballymena and the surrounding areas". Whilst business life has changed dramatically the ideals of the Chamber remain as true today as they did over 90 years ago.

Ballymena is renowned for its excellent mix of independent and multiple retailers. Chamber is therefore delighted to sponsor the Customer Service Award Retail Sector (Multiple Retailer).

We wish all entrants every success and look forward to presenting the trophy to the winner at the gala evening.

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Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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McKillens

UK & IRELAND AWARD
WINNING FOOTWEAR RETAILER

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD CONVENIENCE STORE

Sponsored by McKillens Footwear

This category is open to all convenience and forecourt stores (< 6000 sq ft) in the Ballymena Borough area. This award recognises the stores that can deliver personalised friendly service and can demonstrate a variety of excellent brand values, product and store innovation and a breadth of services that suit the needs of the community.

This category will be judged by Mystery Shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- Delivering excellent customer service
- Maintaining the highest store standards
- Exceeding customer expectations
- Providing insight in product selection
- Providing additional services
- Exhibiting a strong visual impact
- Understanding of the local customer base

McKillens of Ballymena is delighted to once again sponsor an award. We strive to achieve a level of customer service that is second to none, and feel this is one of the key elements for a successful business.

We have enjoyed success at this esteemed annual awards ceremony in the past, in addition to other successes on a regional and national level, including being named UK & Ireland Family Footwear Retailer of the Year.

The Chamber of Commerce continues to do fine work by promoting business excellence and also rewarding it. The awards bring a great sense of achievement and provide extra incentives for all who work so hard to make Ballymena a great place to do business.

We wish all participants well with their entry and look forward to presenting the award at the Gala Evening.

BEST EATING ESTABLISHMENT AWARD

Sponsored by Marcon Fit-Out

The winning establishment will offer customers an enjoyable eating experience whether they are a restaurant, bistro, hotel or bar. Judges will be looking for an industry leader where service and culinary standards are inspiring.

This award will be judged by mystery shoppers who will be looking for the provision of:

- Excellent service and rapport with customers
- Tempting food offering
- Ambience and atmosphere
- Delicious food
- Exemplary housekeeping

Marcon is an award winning fit-out company that operates across the UK and Ireland within a range of market sectors, including commercial, heritage, hospitality and retail.

As well as having completed prestigious projects such as the world renowned Titanic Belfast® (Overall Winner at the recent UK NAS Design Partnership Awards 2013) and numerous schemes for blue-chip clients, namely Google, AOL, AON and Grant Thornton, Marcon prides itself on its client list of local independent businesses.

Within the hospitality sector, Marcon has an enviable reputation for fitting out high end bars, bistros and restaurants. Recently crowned McDonalds' UK Contractor of the Year, Marcon has a long-standing relationship with the global restaurant chain, which is testament to its ability to deliver projects over a wide geographic area to the highest standards of quality.

We are delighted to sponsor the Best Eating Establishment category in the Ballymena Business Excellence Awards and would like to take this opportunity to wish all the shortlisted entrants the very best of luck.

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BEST SMALL EATERY/COFFEE SHOP AWARD

Sponsored by firmus energy

This award is designed to attract applications from coffee shops, cafes, sandwich bars and fast food outlets from within the area.

The judges will be looking for a business that delivers excellent customer service and rapport with customers. They will also wish to see evidence of good atmosphere and ambience in attractive premises in addition to a tempting range of food suitable to the needs of its clientele.

This award will be judged by mystery shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- Excellent service and rapport with customers
- Tempting food and drink offering
- Ambience and atmosphere
- Delicious food
- Exemplary housekeeping and layout

firmus energy is bringing the cost, space and environmental benefits of natural gas to businesses and homes in Ballymena and is proud to sponsor this years 'Best Small Eatery/Coffee Shop Award'.

With almost 60,000 customers throughout Northern Ireland enjoying the convenience and stable pricing that firmus energy natural gas offers, it has never been a better time to switch. Natural gas is the most environmentally friendly of all fossil fuels, so you can be kinder to the environment as well as saving pounds in your pocket.

It's clean, versatile and responds instantly which gives the chef complete control. It's piped directly to your home or business, so you'll never have to worry about running out, re-fuelling or unsightly storage containers. With no storage tank you will have additional space for alfresco dining and the instant hot water makes washing up much easier too.

See www.firmusenergy.co.uk or call 08456 08 00 88 for more information – we're happy to help.

firmus
energy

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD SERVICE SECTOR

Sponsored by Riada Resourcing

This award will be presented to the business that has best demonstrated their commitment to delivering exemplary customer service that generates positive and additional business.

This award is open to all service businesses that are committed to offering the highest levels of customer care to each and every customer.

As a previous winner in the Customer Service category, Riada Resourcing believe in going the extra mile to maximise added value for our clients. It is for this reason that we are delighted to once again be associated with the Ballymena Business Excellence Awards.

Established in 2000, Riada Resourcing prides itself on commitment to quality and excellent customer service, which has been the key to our continued growth and sustained success.

In this competitive market it is important to have repeat business and this is achieved through consistent levels of excellence in

This category will be judged by Mystery Shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- A warm welcome
- Congenial, knowledgeable service
- An attractive environment
- Going the extra mile
- Friendly closure

customer service. Our local experience and expertise in sourcing permanent, contract and temporary staff, allied with our account management and personnel services, has enabled Riada to build valuable working relationships with prospective, existing and new clients.

We wish all entrants continued success and look forward to presenting the award on Ballymena Chamber's gala evening.

To find out what Riada Resourcing can do for your business please contact Paul Muir 028 2563 1555 or email paul@riadaresourcing.com

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CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Sponsored by Autoline Insurance Group

This award will be presented to a business that has best demonstrated their commitment to delivering exemplary customer service that generates positive and additional business.

This award is open to all hospitality businesses that are committed to offering the highest levels of customer care to each and every customer.

Autoline Insurance Group is one of the fastest growing financial services companies offering a broad range of insurance, mortgage and financial products to both personal and business clients across Northern Ireland. Autoline currently employ over 130 staff in 5 locations across Northern Ireland with offices based in Ballymena, Coleraine, Downpatrick, Enniskillen and Newry. As a service provider, Autoline understand the importance of excellent customer service and strive for the highest standard of service in every customer interaction.

Michael Blaney, Managing Director of Autoline Insurance Group said, "We are delighted to be supporting the Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards by sponsoring the Customer Service

This category will be judged by Mystery Shoppers who will be looking for evidence of:

- A warm welcome
- Congenial, knowledgeable service
- An attractive environment
- Going the extra mile
- Friendly closure

Award for the Hospitality Sector. Support from local customers is essential for business growth and we are really pleased to see large numbers of local customers enjoying the benefits of moving to Autoline. We are also proud to be part of the Ballymena Business community and have recently made a significant commitment to the area by relocating our Ballymena Office to the centre of the town, at Broadway Avenue. We look forward to being involved in recognising and celebrating the very best example of customer service in the hospitality sector in the Borough."

For more information about Autoline Insurance Group please contact 028 2565 2424 or email us at enquiries@autoline.co.uk

BUSINESS PREMISES AWARD

Sponsored by Fairhill Shopping Centre

The judges will be looking for a business premise design that is fit for purpose, exhibits all-round design and layout excellence and matches the requirements of its customers.

Business premises will be visited by appointment however plans and/or photographs would assist judges in their decision making process.

Fairhill Shopping Centre is delighted to sponsor the Business Premises Award at the 2013 Ballymena Business Awards. This award affords us the opportunity to recognise business premises, which demonstrate innovative design & quality finish to ensure shoppers are presented with a unique and enjoyable shopping experience every time.

Fairhill Shopping Centre, with its distinctive mix of high street names, is the ultimate shopping destination for people of all ages, tastes and budgets. It is always easy to find the freshest new looks with an inspirational selection of fashion brands to choose from, as well as a great choice of restaurants allowing you to take time out from shopping.

Judges will be looking for evidence of:

- Initial visual impact
- Use of space
- Fit for purpose
- Ease of access
- Innovation of design
- Quality of materials and finish
- Use of materials, textures and colour

The centre, offers all that is best about high street shopping with over 100,000 visitors per week. Open 7 Days a week, there is parking for over 1,000 cars in our multi-storey car park, with designated spaces for disabled car parking and parent/child parking.

We believe in going the extra mile to maximise added value for our customers and it is for this reason that we are delighted to be associated with the Best Business Premises Award. We wish all the contestants well and look forward to presenting the award on the evening.

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BEST BUSINESS WEBSITE AWARD

Sponsored by Danske Bank

This award is open to all businesses that have a website. Judges will be looking for a business website that will successfully engage and excite, yet usefully inform and possibly sell to customers.

Judging criteria will take into account ease of navigation, design, accessibility and effective use of modern media techniques.

Judges will be looking for:

- Accessibility and ease of use
- Good use of technology
- Content
- Design and graphics
- Engagement and overall appeal
- Use of modern media techniques

Danske Bank is pleased to support the Ballymena Borough Business awards. Recognising local success is so important in encouraging business confidence.

Danske Bank's team of highly experienced Business Banking managers and specialists supports local business through our Finance Centre in Ballymena.

The Best Business Website Award recognises the important role of technology in the modern business world, and so do we.

Alongside relationship banking, our market leading technology supports customers in running their business. Over 14,000 businesses are now actively using our Business eBanking service. Our Mobile Business App launched this year has been downloaded almost 3,000 times and growing weekly – demonstrating the needs of business managers in an increasingly digital world.

Congratulations to all of the shortlisted local businesses playing a vital part in our business community.

Graham Lapsley, Head of Ballymena Finance Centre, 07764 145966

Danske Bank



Policing & Community Safety Partnership

making Ballymena safer

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



Cllr James Currie MBE

Ballymena Policing and Community Safety Partnership members are striving to achieve a better quality of life for residents of the Borough of Ballymena. Although crime figures are at an all-time low, I would caution against complacency and urge every decent, law-abiding, upright citizen to pass on any information, no matter how minute in detail, to the PSNI to help them solve crimes.

In the current climate of economic recession every government department is faced with making financial cuts and there will be no exception for PCSPs or PSNI. However, I am confident that with the technological breakthroughs which have taken place, for example in relation to mobile CCTV, datatagging and property marking, and continuation of projects such as the Town Centre Wardens which offer valuable reassurance to the general public, we will be able not just to maintain a quality service for local people but offer a better service which will contribute to improved health and well-being of everyone.



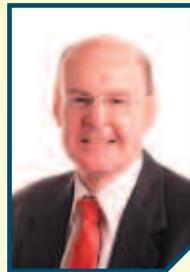
Ald Martin Clarke



Ald Sam Hanna



Cllr Beth Adger



Cllr Declan O'Loan



Cllr Audrey Wales MBE



Cllr Monica Digney



Cllr Paul Frew MLA



Cllr Roy Gillespie



Cllr William McNeilly



Mrs Marian Maguire



Miss Ashleigh Perry



Miss Elaine Black



Miss Wendy Kerr



Mr Eugene Reid



Mr Rodney Quigley



Mrs Jane Lamont



Mrs Mary Cruikshank



Mrs Ruth Orr



Mr Roy Hamill (NHSCT)



CI John Magill (PSNI)



Mr Chris Davies (PBNi)



Mr Eric Woods (NIHE)



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www.Ballymena.gov.uk/PCSP (live soon)



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BALLYMENA CORPORATE PLAN

Great People

Our Objectives

Helping to Grow the
Ballymena Economy

Protecting the People
and Place of Ballymena
and Supporting their
Health and Wellbeing

Delivering Quality,
Efficient Council Services

Developing a
Learning, Growing and
Caring Organisation





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Great Place

The name of Ballymena translates as, “middle townland” and the Borough has historically been, and still is, the market centre of County Antrim.

It is complemented by a strong administrative and industrial sector and thriving retail hinterland making it the pulse of mid-Antrim. Its eclectic mix of high street stores and traditional locally run outlets, is unique and makes Ballymena Northern Ireland’s number one retail town.

The Borough has a population of over 61,000 and its regional significance is demonstrated in Ballymena being identified as a key hub in the Regional Development Strategy.



Anne Donaghy

Town Clerk
and Chief Executive

‘I believe our Corporate Plan demonstrates the central and significant role of local government and civic leadership in working closely with our citizens and many partners to deliver on the local, regional and national economic, social, environmental and cultural strategies and plans, including the NI Executive’s Programme for Government.’





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EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Supported by JTI

This award recognises an organisation that can deliver outstanding levels of customer service and satisfaction in all aspects of sales and after care services. Entrants must demonstrate established and measurable systems for monitoring service standards.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Customer service objectives and strategies
- Customer service evaluation and feedback systems
- Customer service training

JTI is delighted to be supporting the "Excellent in Customer Service Award" category at the 2013 business awards.

JTI (Japan Tobacco International) acquired Gallaher Ltd in April 2007. JTI is the international division of Japan Tobacco Inc., the third largest tobacco company in the world. JTI is extremely proud of the long association of Gallaher in Northern Ireland, over 150 years.

- Delivery of personal service
- Evidence of customer loyalty as a result of excellent customer service

Customer testimonials are not a requirement but would be beneficial for the judging panel.

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

We continue to invest in the local community supporting local charitable causes and a number of initiatives to improve the skills, not only of our employees, but of the local people living in the area. JTI is one of the largest manufacturing companies in Northern Ireland. The majority of our UK cigarette and tobacco products are manufactured in Lisnafillan, with around a third of the products produced exported to Europe and further afield.

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RIGHT PLACE TO WORK AWARD

Sponsored by Black Advertising

Is your company a great place to work? Businesses have to fight hard to recruit and retain people and this award aims to highlight those businesses that have really put people at the heart of their overall strategy.

This award is open to all businesses, regardless of size or turnover, that are committed to supporting employees, enhancing employee satisfaction and have demonstrated an overall commitment to its employees at all levels.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Company culture and values
- What makes your organisation a better place to work
- Commitment to learning and development
- Structure for people management
- Recognition of skills and achievements
- Employee support

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

black
A D V E R T I S I N G

At Black Advertising we believe that the way a business projects itself is not merely based on a logo, a colour palette, a website or any other standard branding device. A business is also, and perhaps more significantly, defined by the ethics, values and qualities of the people who represent it and those of the business as a whole.

It gives us great pleasure to support the Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards, and in particular to recognise those companies who understand and prioritise these key aspects in the overall development of a positive working environment.

MOST PROMISING NEW BUSINESS AWARD

Sponsored by Into Business Magazine

Have you started your own business in the last three years? Is it exceeding expectations? And is it going to be around for a while? Well then why not enter this award and tell us about your success to date?

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Business profile and objectives
- Innovation & individuality
- Business structure and management
- Business performance to date
- Sustainability

INTO BUSINESS MAGAZINE is produced and published by
BALLYMENA BUSINESS CENTRE.

- Ballymena Distribution
- Online Readership
- Supporting Local Business
- Business Tips and Advice
- Local Business News
- Free Copies in all Major Outlets

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

Businesses must NOT have been in existence before 10th October 2010.

Businesses entering Best Small Business can NOT enter this category.

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For **EDITORIAL** contact
MELANIE on 02825658616 / melanie@ballymenabusiness.co.uk

Visit www.ballymenabusiness.co.uk

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BEST SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

Sponsored by Michelin Tyre PLC

This award celebrates the small business and its ability to exploit its size to its best advantage. The award will be presented to an organisation that demonstrates best practice but is also dynamic and individual.

Businesses should not employ more than 20 employees.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Business strategy
- Business and growth management

Michelin Ballymena, is proud to be associated with the Ballymena Business Awards and, particularly, to sponsor the category for the 'Best Small Business Award'.

In the current economic environment, when business is facing difficult and challenging times, it is important to support and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation as well as recognise and celebrate business achievement.

Michelin, through its subsidiary Michelin Development Ltd, is dedicated to helping SMEs by providing unsecured competitive loans and

- Innovation & individuality
- Business performance
- Sustainability

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

Businesses entering the New Business category can NOT enter this category.

business advice, aiming to help create new employment in the countries where Michelin has manufacturing operations. Over the past 10 years, Michelin Development (Ballymena) has provided financial support and expertise to more than 100 local businesses, helping to create over 350 jobs in the area.

Good luck to all the entrants in this year's awards and we look forward to presenting the Best Small Business Award at the Gala Evening.



EXPORT BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

Sponsored by Wrightbus

This award recognises the achievement, innovation and excellence of businesses, large and small, in reaching new markets.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Export/Marketing strategy
- Management excellence
- International trade growth achieved
- Sustainability

Wrightbus: Engineering excellence for the global bus market.

Making buses in N Ireland for customers around the world Wrightbus employs more than 1,600 people at its European manufacturing HQ in Ballymena.

The company has earned a reputation for innovative vehicle designs, a large and innovative product portfolio and investment in advanced engineering.

The term “export” will include all areas outside of Northern Ireland. UK and Republic of Ireland will be considered as export.

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

Our recent success is underlined by the contract win for the design and build of the prestigious New Bus for London and also considerable accomplishments in many export markets, including Dublin, Hong Kong, Singapore and Las Vegas.

Based on our experience we are keen to recognise local business who can demonstrate cutting-edge products and/or services recognised on the world stage and are pleased to sponsor the Export Business of the Year award.

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INNOVATION AWARD

Sponsored by Invest Northern Ireland

This Award will be presented to the organisation that can best demonstrate a proven ability to create, nurture, and develop innovations or processes that substantially improve the commercial performance of a company.

Tell us about any new product, initiative, service, facility or campaign that has improved your overall business performance. We want to hear about all innovations whether they are commercial, marketing, operational or environmental.

Invest Northern Ireland is delighted, to once again sponsor the Ballymena Business Awards. Invest NI's purpose is to improve the Northern Ireland economy through business development. Our Vision is to be a world leading business development agency which builds a local economy that has the capability to compete internationally.

In pursuit of this we support local companies to develop their business by improving their skills base and increasing their export sales. To help businesses innovate we offer significant support and advice in the areas of research & development and technical knowledge. We also promote employment opportunities across a wide range of sectors and will

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Development, planning & objectives
- Implementation
- Success of the innovation
- Uniqueness
- Evaluation

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

support local entrepreneurs and inward investors to create these jobs.

Invest NI provides tailored advice and programmes for local small and medium sized companies, from those just starting out to those already established.

The "Invest NI Innovation Award" celebrates the efforts of businesses that have been successful in developing new products or services that will help grow their business and enable them to compete internationally.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Sponsored by Diamond Recruitment

This award acknowledges individuals or businesses that have had an ongoing relationship with the community through their voluntary contribution.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Initiation and involvement with the local community
- Impact and benefits to the local community

Diamond Recruitment Group have regularly sponsored the Ballymena Borough Business Awards since they were established in 2003, and are delighted to sponsor this event for another year, demonstrating the continued importance we place on community involvement.

We pride ourselves on our long standing successful relationships with businesses, allowing us the privilege of providing local people with employment and local employers with the skills required to meet today's business needs. Through our sponsorship we are delighted to be part of various local events and projects, supporting the endeavours of those striving to improve our local community.

- Level of commitment of time and resources
- Strategy for ongoing involvement with the community

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

We would like to thank all participants in this award category for their invaluable contribution to the community and look forward to presenting this award to the winner. Good Luck!

For further information on Diamond Recruitment Group please contact Eunice Campbell, Area Manager, on 028 2563 2223 or visit www.diamonddrg.com

BALLYMENA BOROUGH BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2013



Diamond Recruitment Group
www.diamonddrg.com

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ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Sponsored by Bank of Ireland

This award will go to an exceptional individual with drive, vision and dynamism. The winner will have a proven record of financial success and commercial innovation within their own business. The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Track record in starting and running a business
- Financial and growth performance

- Innovative and lateral thinking
- Motivation and dynamism
- Vision and leadership
- Sustainability and plans for the future

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

Bank of Ireland UK is delighted to be working in partnership with Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry, contributing to the overall success of these Awards.

In supporting the "Entrepreneur of The Year" Award we understand the importance of the SME and the wider business market to the local economy, and the Awards will highlight and reward the quality of local businesses and the individuals who strive for excellence within this environment.

Our involvement in these awards reflects our drive and commitment for continuous improvement in setting new and higher standards in business, playing our part in the success of our local businesses. We take this opportunity to congratulate all those nominated for an Award and thank you for your contribution to the local community.

Bank of Ireland  UK

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Sponsored by Northern Regional College

This award celebrates those apprentices who have committed themselves to gaining qualifications that recognise their skills while in paid employment. The role of apprentices, who have taken the step to invest time and effort in their own training, is just as important now as it ever was for the Northern Ireland economy. (The judges will base their decision on the Apprentice's contribution to the company they work in, coupled with their dedication to exceed in achieving relevant qualifications).

The Award is open to anyone (no age restriction) currently undertaking a recognised apprenticeship or having

Northern Regional College is one of the largest recognised training organisations in Northern Ireland with 700 trainees and apprentices who enjoy courses delivered to the highest standards by highly qualified and skilled staff. NRC serves a wide geographical area across the North East of the Province and Mid Ulster and this ensures that it is a key driver of economic development in Northern Ireland.

completed it within the last 12 months.

The judging panel will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Commitment to their own personal development
- Excellent work skills and personal qualities
- Outstanding contribution to their work and workplace
- Training/Qualifications to date

Application forms will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

NRC believes that apprenticeships make a major contribution to the economy of Northern Ireland as they provide an opportunity for employees to gain valuable skills and qualifications while in the workplace.

For a full list of Apprenticeships on offer at NRC visit www.nrc.ac.uk

BALLYMENA BOROUGH **BUSINESS EXCELLENCE** AWARDS 2013

nrc
northern regional college

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EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Sponsored by Grafton Recruitment

The hardest award to win and also the hardest category to judge. Has someone gone beyond the call of duty to help the business? Have you observed someone excelling in her or his day-to-day duties? Has someone done something particularly noteworthy? These are just some of the reasons why you might want to nominate an employee for this award.

Judges will be looking for the following:

- How well they have performed at their role
- How they have made a difference to the business
- How they are perceived by management, colleagues and customers

Employees must have been in their current role for at least one year. Entrants must be nominated by their employer.

Application forms will be forwarded by email on receipt of entry.

Grafton Recruitment is delighted to sponsor the Employee of the Year category in the 2013 Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry Awards. Grafton Recruitment is proud to have served the town of Ballymena for over twenty years from our offices in Wellington Street.

Now more than ever it is paramount that you employ the best people to sustain your business whether it's permanent employees with specialised skillsets or temporary employees who allow you to manage unpredictable levels of supply and demand in an uncertain market.

Grafton Recruitment has been providing temporary and permanent recruitment solutions to Private and Public sector clients, for more than 30 years. We are here to respond quickly to your needs, to give you the best insight into the skills available in the market place and the cost of those skills. We manage the interface between you and the candidate and make your recruitment process as cost effective as possible.

If you'd like to more please visit us at www.grafonrecruitment.com or call 028 2564 2699.

BUSINESS GROWTH AWARD

Sponsored by Ulster Bank

Despite the current tough economic climate, is your business bucking the trend? Are sales up? Has turnover increased? Has profitability risen? Whether this is from new sales, new products or improved resource management we want to hear from you.

The judges are looking for evidence of:

- Business and marketing strategy
- Financial and growth performance
- Improved resource efficiency, reduced costs and minimised waste

Ulster Bank is committed to playing a central role in the local economy, and to supporting business growth. Through the Funding for Lending Scheme, Ulster Bank has already approved lending of more than £70 million to over 400 local businesses in Northern Ireland in 2013, and through both our Business Achievers Awards process and our partnership in Smallbusinesscan.com, we support and encourage local companies to achieve their full potential and grow in their chosen markets.

- Business and growth management
- Future Sustainability

All interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at the Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena. Appointment details will be forwarded on receipt of entry.

We have a 177 year history of serving Northern Ireland customers and our commitment to the local market was underlined recently with the appointment of Ellvena Graham as Ulster Bank's Head of Northern Ireland. Our principal sponsorship of the Balmoral Show and our close involvement with these important awards and with organisations such as the Ballymena Chamber of Commerce and Industry are also indicative of our commitment to the local business community.

BALLYMENA BOROUGH BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2013

 **Ulster Bank**

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COMMITMENT TO BALLYMENA AWARD

Sponsored by Ballymena Borough Council

The judging panel will be looking for an individual or individuals who, through continuing endeavour have proven themselves to be ambassadors for the entire Borough of Ballymena.

Assessment will be based on submission by the nominator, of specific actions or activities of the individual(s) nominated which clearly demonstrate their contribution.

The nominator will therefore be required to provide specific evidence to support their nomination.

No reference will be made to the nominating party although the judges, to substantiate any statements made within the submission, may contact them.

Ballymena Borough Council is delighted to sponsor this award. We work hard with our stakeholders to ensure we maximise the potential for Ballymena as being a great place to be.

There is no doubt that our commerce, through job creation, innovation, creativity, vision and a determination to succeed contributes to this ethos.

Ballymena has grown over the years to become a major contributor for the Northern Ireland economy. This growth has not just come about by chance but through drive and dedication of both individuals and their organisations.

It is therefore appropriate that we recognise this dedication and effort through the Commitment to Ballymena Award and we take this opportunity to publicly praise and reward their efforts. We wish all our commerce continued success.

ABOUT THE JUDGING PROCESS

The judging process is crucial to the awards program as it provides the independence that is necessary in the overall selection of the award recipients. **Insight Mystery Shopping** will facilitate the adjudication of the awards through mystery shopping visits, on-site visits, judging panels and face to face interview panels.

The judging panel is made up experienced and respected judges from a variety of industry sectors and disciplines. The panel is carefully selected to ensure the selection process is fair and objective and that each entry is judged on its merits.

The judges are bound by a strict confidentiality agreement and are required to declare any conflict of interest in entries over which they deliberate and to stand aside from deliberations concerning those entries.

The Interview Process:

A letter will be sent to all entrants on the first week of September detailing time, date and venue of their interview and/or on-site visit. **Interviews will be held on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013 at The Adair Arms Hotel Ballymena.**

A maximum of **two** people may represent your organisation at the interview panel. Interviews will last approximately **15 minutes** and it is suggested that you prepare responses to the listed criteria in each award category. During the interview the judges will ask you to describe your business and state why it should win the award. Although not essential it may also be beneficial to provide a PowerPoint presentation.

The panel of judges will collectively arrive at the decision on the winner of each category. The finalists from each category will be notified by **Tuesday 24th September 2013**. The judge's decision is final. The judging panel is not obliged to enter into communication with entrants.

Mystery Shopping:

All mystery shopping entries will receive two mystery visits by a team of highly trained and experienced mystery shoppers.

On-site Visits:

All businesses entering the Business Premises category will receive a visit from the judges. A date and time will be arranged in advance.

If you have any queries regarding the judging process please contact Catherine Scott, Insight Mystery Shopping at **catherine@insightmysteryshopping.com** or on 078 9427 4146.

THE AWARDS PROCESS

Step 1: Read the awards brochure and decide which categories you would like to enter. Insight Mystery Shopping is happy to assist you in this decision.

YOU MAY ENTER UP TO 2 CATEGORIES and the DEADLINE for Expression of Interest Forms is **Tuesday 20th August 2013**. Entries are welcomed from all businesses in the Borough and from Chamber members. **All entries are treated in the strictest confidence.**

In addition to the 2 categories you may also make nominations for the *Employee of the Year*, *Apprentice of the Year* and *Commitment to Ballymena* Awards.

Step 2: Complete the Expression of Interest Form and return it to **info@insightmysteryshopping.com** or: **Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards, C/o Insight Mystery Shopping, Mallusk Enterprise Park, 2 Mallusk Drive, Newtownabbey, BT36 4GN**

Step 3: If you have entered a MYSTERY SHOP category you do not need to do anything else. You will receive confirmation and a mystery visit will be conducted.

Step 4: If you have entered a JUDGING PANEL category, details of interview times will be forwarded. The judging panels will sit on **Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th September 2013**.

Step 5: If you have entered a NOMINATION category (Apprentice or Employee of the Year), a brief application form will be forwarded to you requesting details of the apprentice/employee and their contribution to the business.

Step 6: Don't forget to make nominations for the Commitment to Ballymena Award. A letter of endorsement will be required to assist judges in their decision.

Step 7: Results for all categories will be collated and finalists will be notified on or before **Tuesday 24th September 2013. The judges' decision is final.**

Thursday 10th October is the date to put in your diary NOW, as this is the date for the presentation of the 11th Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards.

A date for your diary



This glittering event will take place in the Conference & Banqueting Suite of the Tullyglass House Hotel, Ballymena commencing at 7.00pm.

We promise you a night to remember with good food and sparkling company; great entertainment and excitement; recognition and reward for all our award finalists; fun and networking!

The compere for the evening will be Pamela Ballantine.

Entertainment will be provided by The Bizz.

Dress: Formal

Tables of 10 and individual tickets can be obtained by contacting:

Chris Wales
Email: office@ballymenachamber.co.uk
Telephone: 07876 758797

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