**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.

**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.

**Best Café/Tearoom**

This award is open to cafes, coffee shops, tearooms etc - 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. What sets you apart

**Casual Dining Experience**

Open for entries and nominations from any business that offers food in a casual way rather than a white tablecloth/wine waiter/silver service experience. So that include pubs, wine bars, garden centre restaurants, burger bars etc. Use of local ingredients and freshly prepared dishes will impress our judges as well as 5\* reviews.

**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 ell 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.

**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.

**Independent Business of the Year**

Open to any business 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. Demonstrate enterprise, vision, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit that make you a leading independent business.

**B2B Business**

Open for entries and nominations for any business that offers another business professional service like HR, IT, recruitment, insurance, legal services, accountancy etc. Tell us why you are a cut above the competition. How you build trusted relationships with your business clients and details of any awards/reviews/testimonials.

**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.

**My Favourite Business**

**OPEN FOR NOMINATIONS ONLY – YOU CANNOT ENTER YOUR OWN BUSINESS**

This category is for local residents to nominate their favourite business(es) in town – the ones they just couldn’t do without. It could be because of what they offer, their customer service, their staff – just tell us why they stand out and you love them so much. Only one nomination per person per business please. You can of course ask clients/customers to put a nomination in for you.

**Retail Business of the Year**

This category is open to any retailer in the area that operates from premises, online or a combination of both. Tell us what you are doing to  **you are adapt and evolve in today’s challenging retail world.**

Tell us what makes you stand out - is it your customer service, the goods you offer, your prices We are looking for businesses that understand their customers’ requirements, provide diversity and variety to the high street, offer employment opportunities, support the local community, make use of technology to improve their business and enhance the customer experience.