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NORTH DORSET PEOPLE AND PLACES RECOGNISED IN AWARDS

INDIVIDUALS, organisations and places in North Dorset have been recognised for the contribution they make to the life of the District.

Winners of the first North Dorset People and Places Awards received certificates and engraved crystal-cut glasses at a ceremony held at Bryanston School on Saturday 26 November 2005.

Nominations for the awards, which recognise and reward community endeavour and celebrate the work of people in the District, were invited in the summer and judging took place in October.

Nearly 50 entrants were recognised for their efforts across six areas of work – Sports, Arts, Community & Business, the Environment, Conservation and Tourism.

Over 130 nominations were received from local people and visitors and the winners were chosen by a team of expert Councillors and officers based on set criteria.

A range of local businesses sponsored different awards including Blackmore Vale Magazine, Environment Agency, Hospital Metalcraft, Media 4 Graphix, Signpost Housing Group, Snibor, Western Design Architects.

Bryanston School provided the venue for free with catering from Olives et Al, who also sponsored an award.

Council Chairman Cllr Mike Oliver said: "These stories and the personalities behind them really are something to make North Dorset a place to be proud to live in. Some truly heart warming stories of giving and good practice over a wide range of areas have come forward. Clearly, there can only be one winner in each category, and in some cases this has been the cause of much debate."

Winners and those highly commended are listed on the attached sheet.

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Results information and photo captions on following sheets.

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For more information contact Pam Bacon, Rural Economy Manager, on (01258) 484005.

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PHOTO CAPTIONS

Sport person of the year

L-R Loraine Winton, Russell Docker (winner), Tim Skevington representing Karl King

Volunteer (aged 18 and under)

L-R Lucy Adams, Richard Mullins, Kayley Manns

Best Environmental Community Project

Alan Harrison, Butts Pond Project

NORTH DORSET PEOPLE AND PLACES RECOGNISED IN AWARDS – RESULTS

Please note, where only one entry was received in a category, no winner was announced but the entrant was Highly Commended.

Sportsperson of the Year

Winner: Russell Docker

Russell suffered a serious skiing accident in 1995 that left him partially paralysed from the chest down, spending nearly a year in Salisbury Hospital recovering. Despite the injury Russell has made it back to the slopes undaunted and has been selected to represent Great Britain in the 2006 Paralympics.

Highly commended: Karl King, Loraine Winton

Sports Team of the Year

Winner: Gillingham School Girls U15 Cricket team

Winners of the Dorset Indoor Cricket Tournament, the U15 Girls' Cricket Team qualified to represent Dorset at the South West Regional Finals at Taunton, where they beat Somerset, Cornish, Gloucester and Devon Champions to be crowned SW Regional Indoor Cricket Champions. They then qualified for the National Final at Lords (Top 4 sides in England) where they marginally lost in two crucial matches on last ball deciders, eventually finishing 4th on the day.

Highly Commended: Gillingham Turbos Swimming Club, Grosvenor Table Tennis Club

Contribution to Sport by a Volunteer

Winner: Bruce Cook

Bruce has been the voluntary groundsman at North Dorset Rugby Football Club for the past 23 years. He maintains twelve and a half acres of playing fields for rugby, plus provides a cricket pitch during the summer. He consistently delivers first class pitches for the club, County and local school matches and competitions.

The club are indebted to his tireless and unselfish dedication, requiring often daily work which goes unseen by many.

Volunteer of the Year (18 & under)

Winner: Richard Mullins

Richard is a hard-working member of the Shaftesbury St John Ambulance, giving up his time for first aid duties at weekends and evening events. He takes an active role in helping other cadets to achieve their awards and recently worked hard with them on a disability project, raising awareness of the problems experienced by disabled people. In addition to this voluntary work, Richard works in Somerfield's where he is recognised for his special contribution to quality customer care and service. Richard's commitment to his voluntary work is commendable and should be recognised.

Highly commended: Lucy Adams and Kayley Manns

Volunteer of the Year (over 18)

Winner: Vi Mowlem

During the past 20 years Vi has almost single-handedly and entirely voluntarily, organised fundraising events for the Stalbridge and Lydlinch communities. She does not target her fundraising efforts to support one particular charity, but distributes generously for the benefit of Cancer charities, Naomi Children's Hospice, Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and to help safeguard various local amenities. Until recently, she administered the running of the Dorset Country Cars, a volunteer transport service to benefit those with particular transport needs.

Highly commended: Sylvia Holdeman, Thelma White

Best Contribution to the Community by a Business or Organisation

Winner: S and N Household products Ltd

Mark O'Connor, the owner of the business, has kindly donated a large proportion of his business premises since January 2005 at a very low rent in order to house the North Dorset Furniture Recycling project, a registered charity. Since then, Mark has allowed a second charity to occupy the premises – Wessex Independent Self Help. The charities and S&N work closely together to recycle and sell wax candle products, offering sheltered work opportunities to people recovering from mental illness and learning disabilities.

Highly commended: Friends of Blandford Community Hospital, St John Ambulance badgers and Cadets

Business of the Year

Winner: Bijoux Beads

Bijoux Beads supply a vast range of beautiful glass beads from around the world. Dawn Small, the proprietor, began making jewellery in her living room 10 years ago and has invested her time and support to her employees over that time. She shares her enthusiasm and commitment with customers and staff, inspiring everyone to give the best possible service. She has supported her staff to increase their skills and knowledge through attendance on courses.

Highly Commended: Brewery Farm Shop, Hilton, The Cross Stores, Child Okeford.

Best Contribution to the Arts by an Organisation

Winner: Shaftesbury Arts Centre

Shaftesbury Arts Centre provides a wonderfully varied programme of drama, music, family shows, film and art for all ages and tastes. Central to the social fabric of the town, it also offers classes and workshops in art and youth theatre, to name but two. The Centre relies on several committees of volunteers who work front of house and back stage to run this much-loved local asset.

Highly Commended: The Springhead Trust

Best Individual Volunteer who has made a Significant Contribution to the Arts

Winner: Mark White

Mark has made an outstanding contribution to Gillingham, initially as Secretary of the Gillingham Imperial Silver Band, but more spectacularly, over the past two years, as Director of Gillingham Festival. Under his guidance the Festival has grown from a small local event into a two-week musical and community extravaganza, attracting international music stars and growing in reputation and profile. Much of the entertainment is free and the event now makes contributions to local charities. In addition, Mark organised, as part of this year's Festival, a day-long Tsunami benefit concert at Port Regis School, organised within two weeks with and raising £10,000.

Highly Commended: Brenda Bigg, Dot Swift.

Most Innovative Arts event or work

Winner: 'Walking in the Footsteps of our Ancestors' at Springhead

This was a programme of children's art workshops culminating in a festival, attended by more than 1,500 local people in June this year. Inspired by Springhead's history, six local professional artists ran art and drama workshops for seven- to eleven-year-olds on the theme of 'How an aspect in the local area has changed over a long period of time'. The event was much-praised and not only informed and educated local people, it helped to raise the profile of the artists involved, as well as the work of the Springhead Trust.

Highly Commended: the Blandford Free Expression Festival

Best Contribution to the Environment by a Resident

Winner: James Martin

James has been one of the hardest-working volunteers at the Butts Pond Meadows Project. He has worked with Yewstock School educating young people about wildlife and environmental conservation. Since James has been involved in the project his knowledge and confidence have grown considerably, and he now attends meetings regarding environmental matters on behalf of SturQuest.

Highly Commended: Jackie Kemp, Bradley Watts

Best Environmental Contribution by a Voluntary Group

Winner: Your Choice Furniture Recycling

This scheme collects unwanted furniture and household goods to clean, repair and sell on to the needy or disadvantaged. Run by volunteers, the project offers sheltered work placements for people with mental health problems, acquired brain injuries or learning difficulties. In 2005 over 1,200 tonnes of goods were diverted from landfill. The project also recycles textiles, cans, mobile phones, printer cartridges, metal and wood. Your Choice sponsors many charities including Royal British Legion, SSAFA and Mary's Cancer Wishes.

Highly Commended: Clean-Up Blandford Campaign, REAPinG, WISH

Best School Recycling Initiative

Highly Commended: Clayesmore Moo Company

A small group of students, the **Clayesmore Moo Company**, have been working on an educational anti-litter project in conjunction with the Clean Up Blandford Group. They have made a short humorous film about the problems of littering in Blandford which is aimed at Primary School children. They have also produced photos and worksheets for use by teachers. The film will be taken into all Primary Schools in North Dorset and it is hoped that it will educate younger children to help in the battle to keep our streets clean. The project was funded by Liveability and also by North Dorset District Council.

Best Contribution to Waste Minimisation by a Resident

Highly Commended: David Spencer

David is a local resident and Trustee/Treasurer of Your Choice Furniture Recycling and W.I.S.H. David's vision and energy has driven forward Your Choice Furniture Recycling Project into a thriving operation which makes a huge contribution to waste minimisation in North Dorset, through the diversion of material from landfill sites. The two projects also benefit the wider community by providing sheltered work placements for people with mental health problems, acquired brain injuries or learning disabilities. The projects also recycle textiles, cans, mobile phones, computer cartridges, metals and wood.

Best B&B

Winner: The Retreat

The Retreat, a 10-bedroom townhouse B&B in Shaftesbury, was praised by visitors for its exceptional décor and cleanliness, relaxing ambiance, and food 'second to none'. From wedding parties to American visitors, The Retreat welcomes all, many on repeat visits. Particularly praised for its tasteful and practical disabled accommodation, visitors also highlighted Bernard and Sheena's own enthusiasm for the job, 'reflected in the very friendly and first class customer service they provide'.

Highly Commended: Northwood Cottages, The Old Bakery

Best New Tourism Business

Winner: The Threshold Centre

The Threshold Centre is an innovative new eco-tourism development just outside Gillingham. Part of a wider not-for-profit project which also includes plans for a timber barn community space and affordable housing from converted farm buildings, the eco-B&B already in operation includes courses in holistic health, taize singing and circle dancing, and offers 'delicious' organic, vegetarian food. The Centre was particularly recommended for upholding its sustainable principles concerning visitor transport, offering a 10% discount to those arriving by public transport and a free pick-up service.

Highly Commended: The Olive Branch

Best Contribution to a Tourism Event

Highly Commended: David Cash

David was nominated for his outstanding contribution to the Blandford Charter 400 celebrations in 2005 in the form of his much-praised model railway exhibition based on the Somerset and Dorset Railway Line. Galvanising all sorts of fellow railway and model enthusiasts to donate or lend items for the exhibition, the display became one of the largest Somerset And Dorset collections ever seen, praised as 'one of the best specialised exhibitions in North Dorset for a very long time'.

Best New Housing – Group & individual

Winner: Morgan Carey Architects for Bryanston Hills

The unique detached dwelling at Bryanston Hills, by Morgan Carey Architects, provides a visual stop and contemporary feature to a main route into the new award winning development, further enhancing its quality. Built into the bank, the grass-roofed building takes advantage of the sloping nature of the site, creating a visually stimulating building of interest both inside and out. The original decision to provide a visual node has been respected with the construction of a cupola above the main roof.

Highly Commended: Western Design Architects for Box House and for Lime Kiln House

Best Environmental Community Project

Winner: Sturquest/Sturminster Newton Town Council for Butts Pond

Butts Pond, an area of open space within Sturminster Newton, was for many years threatened by development. However, negotiations with the land owners resulted in a land swap and the Town Council securing the land for the benefit of its residents, and a

combination of Town Council, Community Partnership and the North Dorset Countryside Rangers has since resulted in North Dorset's first Local Nature Reserve.

Highly Commended: Friends of St James, Milton Abbas

Best New Build (non-domestic)

Highly Commended: Neals Yard Remedies

Neal's Yard Remedies, by Folland Clegg Bradley Architects, is a bold new building on the northern edge of Gillingham, its simple form and striking colour scheme creating a visually striking building, contributing to improving the quality of industrial buildings within the district. Internally the space created is light and airy and of good quality.

Best Building Conservation Project

Highly Commended: The Mill, Okeford Fitzpaine

The Mill, Little Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine. After lying derelict for a number of years, the potential to create a valuable working space was realised by the applicants Mr Ruckert and Mr Wellbeloved. Dating back to the early 18th century and constructed from soft red brick, the restoration of the mill has paid due regard to the need to maintain its special architectural and historical interest. The result is a building that demonstrates that with care and imagination derelict buildings can be put back to a beneficial use.