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TO ENTER

# BA BEXLEY Business Excellence AWARDS 2019

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Welcome to



The Bexley Business Excellence Awards is the premier event on the borough's business calendar and a fantastic showcase for local enterprise.

Returning for a seventh great year, this prestigious awards programme will celebrate the successes and achievements of businesses across all sectors. With 13 categories to enter – all designed to reflect the dynamism, innovation and drive within the Bexley business community – the awards are a fantastic opportunity for companies to network and raise their profile.

They also offer a unique opportunity to align your brand with Bexley's blue chip awards programme. At a time of excellent business growth in the borough, there is no better opportunity to be associated with the Bexley business community.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

### RECOGNITION

*Winning or being shortlisted provides a fantastic seal of approval. It shows clients they are working with a business that's been recognised for its innovation and expertise.*

### MORALE BOOST

*Recognition for your team's contribution to the business is a brilliant way to celebrate achievements and bolster confidence.*

### GET NOTICED!

*Whether you're a finalist or a winner, being independently recognised for business excellence adds credibility to future PR and marketing activity and benchmarks you as a leader in your field.*

### TIME TO THINK

*Entering gives you a chance to think about your business – what it does, and why and how you stand out from the rest. It's a great way to stop and self-assess!*

### BRILLIANT NETWORKING

*You can substantially increase your network of influential business contacts – including the judges, sponsors and the press – as you progress through the awards process. The Gala Dinner and Charity Ball for 450 leading business owners and entrepreneurs is also a brilliant networking opportunity to make valuable new connections.*



## COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE

Tell us how you go the extra mile in this respect for your customers!

First class customer service is key to every successful business, regardless of its size, market, product or services it offers. Now in our modern digital age customers expect both instant results and quality of customer service. Your business' online reputation is one of your most valuable commercial assets and will be included in the overall assessment.

This award recognises the contribution that exceptional customer service makes in attracting customers and clients.

This award is open to businesses who have been trading for more than 18 months. All businesses regardless of size are encouraged to enter, and the award will go to the business who best demonstrates customer service excellence.

*\* Please note, as part of Round 2 judging process businesses may be visited by a mystery shopper. This visit would be planned after your business has been shortlisted for Round 2. Mystery shoppers will be following the judging criteria and no further details of their visit will be provided by the awards team. Following the Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony, businesses will receive their MS report from the events team.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Quality and consistency of customer service*
- *Detailed customer feedback and reviews (evidence of online feedback will be required\*).*
- *Employee training and development.*
- *New ideas to enhance the customer experience.*
- *Online feedback may include: Facebook reviews, TripAdvisor, Yelp, Google, 888.org and other interactive methods (note: Don't worry, you are not expected to be on them all!)*

## BEST NEW BUSINESS

New businesses keep our economy dynamic and successful, improving its diversity, and stimulating competition with new ideas, new jobs and new skills for the future.

This award celebrates new businesses. Bexley needs business growth; by celebrating new businesses we are fostering a culture in which entrepreneurship is celebrated in our borough.

*This award is only open to businesses who have been trading for less than 18 months.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Clear rationale for starting the business and details of market research/experience undertaken, together with the story about what motivated the company's beginnings.*
- *Strong commercial performance and demonstration of how you have overcome any commercial challenges.*
- *Strong financial performance results since trading and to demonstrate any challenges you have overcome.*
- *An explanation of your vision for your business' future and an understanding of its growth potential.*

## BUSINESS ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Entrepreneurs come from all backgrounds and launch businesses for a variety of reasons. They have many qualities in common, ranging from ambition, care, vision and tenacity to inspirational leadership, inventiveness and confidence.

This award celebrates an outstanding individual who, in addition to displaying those common entrepreneurial traits, can demonstrate all-round excellence. Please note this category is open to individuals only; if you are a successful partnership or team please enter the category for Best SME.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Brilliant, inspiring, business leadership.*
- *Someone who stands out from the crowd – an outstanding individual.*
- *Someone who has overcome barriers to success and obstacles to growth and shows grit and resilience.*
- *A great story about your entrepreneurial journey.*

## FOOD & BEVERAGE AWARD

This award celebrates the vital role the dynamic food and beverage industry plays in growing and sustaining our economy.

It recognises the industries influence in setting standards for food and drink, and customer service excellence. This award is open to cafes, pubs, restaurants, and food and drink outlets.

*\* Please note as part of Round 2 judging process businesses may be visited by a mystery shopper. This visit would be planned after your business has been shortlisted for Round 2. Mystery shoppers will be following the judging criteria and no further details of their visit will be provided by the awards team. Following the Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony, businesses will receive their MS report from the events team.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *First class customer service and amazing catering.*
- *Great ambience, with a safe, clean and healthy working environment.*
- *A sound approach to recruiting employees, training and development.*
- *Commitment to sourcing high-quality products and ingredients when appropriate.*
- *Standing out from the crowd – how your business is innovative and different.*





## LOVE YOUR LOCAL RETAIL BUSINESS

With consumer spending driving much of our economy, retail sales are a critical economic success factor. Independent retailers create a range of vibrant and distinctive shopping offers, making the customer experience unique and special.

Bexley recognises that local traders bring vibrancy and economic growth to the borough; we want to encourage our residents to shop local and support local traders. This award recognises the contribution made by independent retailers in growing and sustaining our local economy.

*\* Please note, if shortlisted in this category, Round 2 will consist of a public vote. This gives the public the opportunity to have their say on who is Bexley's most loved business!*

*\*\* Please note, as part of Round 2 judging process businesses may be visited by a mystery shopper. Please note this visit would be planned after your business has been shortlisted for Round 2. Mystery shoppers will be following the judging criteria and no further details of their visit will be provided by the awards team. Following the Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony, businesses will receive their MS report from the events team.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- First class customer service.
- Strong business performance and evidence of customer satisfaction.
- Innovation and market differentiation, with high quality products and services.
- A business that is loved by the community, as evidenced through the public vote.

## BEST SME

SMES make up a significant proportion of Bexley's commerce, and their success is a critical factor in our local and regional economy.

This award recognises the rich diversity of SMEs across all market sectors, and encourages their start up, growth and long-term sustainability.

This award is open to all companies with a current turnover of up to £10 million.

*Business must have less than 50 employees and a turnover of less than £10 million to enter this category.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- Strong leadership and a capable team.
- A robust business model, with evidence of business sustainability.
- Innovation and market differentiation.
- Strong financial performance results, growth forecast and good governance, and a plan/vision for business growth.
- A commitment to business excellence and adapting to customer trends to future proof your business.



## BEST EMPLOYER

*“Take care of your employees and they’ll take care of your business,” said Virgin’s Richard Branson.*

This principle - taking care of your people - is at the heart of creating a great place to work, where people are appreciated, engaged, productive and thriving.

We are looking for an employer with a strategic and committed approach towards employee investment, engagement, welfare, training, development and diversity, no matter the person’s gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social status.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *A highly visible strategic approach towards valuing employees and developing their potential.*
- *A commitment to diversity within the workforce, valuing every employee, no matter their gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social status.*
- *A planned programme of employee engagement and two-way communication; and the opportunity for employees to have their say.*
- *A comprehensive training and development programme, including performance planning and management.*
- *Best practice in employee welfare, equal opportunities, health, safety, security and well-being.*
- *Evidence to show the commercial benefits of the company’s ethos; including productivity, recruitment and employee retention.*

## BEST CHARITY OR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

This category is open to registered charities and social enterprises whose purpose is to create social value in order to benefit local people and the area.

This award celebrates the charity or social enterprise making the most significant positive difference to the area through its activities, and ability to generate and attract funding to meet defined social and environmental goals.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Strong leadership and a capable team.*
- *Evidence that the charity/social enterprise is sustainable.*
- *Clearly outlined social goals and objectives.*
- *Evidence of community benefit and impact made in the borough.*

## BUSINESS COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION & SKILLS

A highly skilled workforce is the key to economic prosperity. Supporting residents into employment is vital for the economic and social fabric of the borough.

This category recognises employers who go the extra mile to prepare the borough's residents for employment, through formal and informal employability and skills schemes, work experience, employment routes and apprenticeships.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *A long-term, planned approach to employing and developing a skilled workforce.*
- *Partnerships and collaboration, engaging with broader schemes to meet the borough's needs.*
- *Tangible support, including a range of activities such as school visits, mentoring, employability skills (CV writing, mock interviews), work experience and routes to employment.*
- *Evidence of engagement and impact, including diversity and inclusion.*
- *Businesses who can showcase the commercial benefits of their commitment e.g. through enhanced PR and Communications.*

## MADE OR ASSEMBLED IN BEXLEY

The Made or Assembled in Bexley category highlights the positive impact Bexley Businesses who manufacture or assemble are having on the local economy, and we want to showcase the innovation, quality and range of products made by local businesses.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Innovation and market differentiation, with high quality products.*
- *First class design and delivery process*
- *Strong business performance and significant current business growth achievements.*
- *Change agility, with the ability to adapt to consumer and commercial trends.*

## TECH INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

Awarded to the business achieving the most stand-out accomplishment of the year in new technology.

This could be for innovative new hardware or software products, or commercially available IT services which make the biggest contribution to business or life in general.

This award recognises achievement in the innovation, development, implementation and sales of new technologies.

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Innovation within the business and market differentiation of the product or service.*
- *Demonstrable commercial success of the product or service.*
- *Evidence of customer satisfaction.*
- *Clear benefits of product to end-user.*
- *Evidenced commercial benefit.*

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY

Does your business have a strong commitment to the Bexley community?

Businesses do not operate in isolation and recognise the potential to add commercial and social value to their local communities through practical support, collaboration and investment.

This award is open to businesses with a great approach to corporate social responsibility and can demonstrate they make a real tangible difference in their community.

*\* Please note, this category is not for charities or social enterprises but exclusively for businesses.*

### JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR:

- *Reasons why the business has developed a programme within the community.*
- *Evidence that it makes a real difference in the community, either through working in partnership with a charity/social enterprise/school/youth club, evidence of a great Corporate Social Responsibility programme.*
- *Evidence that employees are engaged in the community either through volunteering and/or in-kind contributions.*
- *Evidence of the clear benefits and impact the business has had on the community (financial or in-kind, through time and/or resources).*





## BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

The 2019 Bexley Business of the Year Award, sponsored by Ocado, is the ultimate business accolade. It is awarded to the most outstanding business from all the 2019 category winners.

Companies are not able to enter the category directly, as the Business of the Year is chosen by the judges from the award category winners –this has been an incredibly difficult decision in previous years, as the standard of entries have been exceptionally high. The judges look for an inspirational company that can demonstrate all-round business competence, as well as one that can become a champion for Bexley and the Bexley Business Excellence Awards.

## GALA DINNER AND CHARITY BALL

THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019  
HALL PLACE & GARDENS

*The highlight of the 2019 programme is the prestigious, black-tie awards ceremony. This prestigious event will be a glittering celebration of the business community's achievements, innovations and enterprise. It will include:*

- A celebrity compere.
- Drinks reception and dinner with entertainment and live music.
- Charity auction and raffle.

For further information please email  
[info@bexleyawards.co.uk](mailto:info@bexleyawards.co.uk) or call 0208 726 7968.

BOOK YOUR TICKETS:  
[www.bexleyawards.co.uk](http://www.bexleyawards.co.uk)



# TOP TIPS!

*How to create an award-winning entry:*

## 1. BE PREPARED

Give the job of entering to someone who will 'own' the application process. Someone who will champion the value of entering to motivate the whole team to get involved.

## 2. TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Start your entry as soon as you can to maximise time to gather evidence and data you need to substantiate your entry. Factor in time to proof read and double check your facts.

## 3. WRITE LIKE A WINNER

You know your business is a cut above so write your entry like a good story that hones in on key evidence that will make the judges sit up and take notice.

## 4. KNOW YOUR BUSINESS

Add credibility to your entry by sharing pertinent financials, data and customer feedback but don't forget your most important asset – your people. Use them to show how brilliant you are.

## 5. KEEP IT SIMPLE

Less is sometimes more so avoid jargon and flowery language and double check grammar and spelling.

# HOW TO ENTER?

## ENTER ONLINE

*The online entry process is FREE and easy-to-follow.  
Visit the website: [www.bexleyawards.co.uk](http://www.bexleyawards.co.uk)*

## REGISTRATION

*Choose the categories that best reflect your business, you can enter up to 3 categories. Click on the Enter Now buttons & fill out the registration form.*

## QUESTIONS

*Answer the questions outlined in each category.  
Keep your answers short, factual and positive.*

## GOOD LUCK!

*The closing date for all entries is 15th March 2019.  
The shortlist will be announced mid April 2019.*

*\* Please note if you entered and won a category last year, you are not eligible to enter the same category again.*



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