

# WEST KENT BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2011

## THE AWARDS CATEGORIES

- **Best Growing Business**  
Judged by NatWest
- **Best New Business**  
Judged by Genesa Ltd
- **Best Retailer**  
Judged by Henry Paul Funerals
- **Community Award**  
Judged by Town and Country Housing Group
- **Customer Care and service**  
Judged by Halliwells/Elizabeth Finn Homes
- **Employer of the Year**  
Judged by Loch Associates and enablese Ltd
- **Enterprising Business**  
Judged by Bridge Business Recovery
- **Excellence in Marketing**  
Judged by Deeks Evans
- **Innovation**  
Judged by West Kent Partnership
- **Outstanding Business Person**  
Judged by Synergie Ltd
- **Young Entrepreneur of the Year**  
Judged by Kent Trainers

# BUSINESS AWARDS: Is this charity building a bridge to success?



**GIVING SUPPORT:** John Handley of the Bridge Trust  
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## Trust has helped six thousand

THE Bridge Trust is a Tonbridge-based charity that supports single homeless people throughout the region. In its 20th year, Bridge has already helped an estimated 6,000 people.

John Handley, general manager, said: "We support single homeless people because they are deemed not to be a priority need and often find it difficult – in some cases impossible – to get help. "We work with people who have a connection with Kent, particularly West Kent, and our aim is to provide a much-needed service with as much compassion and understanding as possible."

The trust has five properties providing accommodation for up to 22 people at one time for up to two years and each resident is assigned a support housing officer who looks at other life issues.

# Going for an award: It's just good business sense



■ The awards are organised by the Courier Media Group in association with the West Kent Chamber of Commerce. We are also delighted to have the support of our ambassadors BSK-CIC and Heart Kent

By Keith Lewis  
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NOW in their third week, The West Kent Business Excellence Awards 2011 have already caught the attention of the local business community.

Although it is still early days, entries in the 11 categories are beginning to gather pace and we feature on this page one of the early entrants, The Bridge Trust, which has entered the competition for the Community Award. We will be featuring more entrants over the coming weeks.

The entire awards programme, now in its fourth year, is a celebration of the thriving business community in West Kent.

It provides a platform from which businesses, both large and small, and across all sectors, can broadcast their success to our readers, to their peers and to a far wider audience beyond in a very conspicuous and effective way.

Winning an award, making it to the finals or just taking part can bring significant benefits.

### Positive

Awards organiser Alan Pocock said: "As in all competitions, not everyone can walk away with a prize, but every entrant will take away something positive from the process."

"Entering the competition makes a confident statement about your company or enter-



**'POWERFUL MESSAGE':** Awards organiser Alan Pocock

prise not simply to your rivals or even to the business community at large – it also sends a powerful message to customers, suppliers and your own staff. There is no

downside."

If the standard of entrants in 2010 is any indication, we will be showcasing some very special companies and individuals along the way before the programme reaches its climax in November when top prizes are handed out at the Awards Ceremony at The Spa Hotel.

We expect around 40 businesses taken from the various categories to be selected as finalists so the chances of reaching the final stages are good.

### Category

To find out how to enter and to decide which category best suits your business visit [www.thiskent.co.uk/businessawards](http://www.thiskent.co.uk/businessawards)

## How to enter

It's really easy to enter – there are just five questions.

■ Register and enter online at [www.thiskent.co.uk/businessawards](http://www.thiskent.co.uk/businessawards)

■ To register and enter by post download the forms from the website (on the awards homepage under enter by post) or order forms from Jenny Walker on 01245 605301 or [jenny.walker@essexchronicle.co.uk](mailto:jenny.walker@essexchronicle.co.uk)

■ In case of any difficulties, contact programme organiser Alan Pocock on 01245 400877 or [alock@apteventspro.co.uk](mailto:alock@apteventspro.co.uk)



■ **Awards ambassador**  
With 389,000 listeners a week, Heart reaches the largest audience of any commercial station in Kent. Its involvement with the West Kent Business Excellence Awards for the second year running reflects the station's wish to demonstrate support for a wide range of businesses across the county.

Managing director Emma Liddiard said: "Heart Breakfast with James and Charlie is a great way to start the day and ensures our listeners get to school and work on time, while Neil Kefford sees them home safely.

"Either way, Heart reaches the maximum number of receptive, commercial listeners."



■ **Category sponsor**  
Chartered accountants Deeks Evans has a history of providing personal service to its clients stretching back 50 years. The awards represent an opportunity not only to meet other influential people in the local business community, but also to become involved in a process that helps encourage smaller firms to grow and develop. Deeks Evans has developed a wide range of specialisms, including will drafting, lasting powers of attorney and probate, which it regards as natural extensions of inheritance tax planning. Karen Braddel, the firm's private client partner, will be judging Excellence in Marketing entrants.



■ **Category sponsor**  
Tonbridge and Pontefract-based Genesa has three core business streams; it is a national internal cable installer for a major telecom provider, it distributes and supports IP security products for CCTV and access control, and develops bespoke software applications such as job order management, security pass solutions for airports and workflow management.

Its software development skills are a key part of the company as it has always developed database systems internally to manage its business. The IP security know-how was developed six years ago on the back of export projects.



■ **Category sponsor**  
Town & Country Housing Group, a previous winner, is one of the leading housing associations in the South East, providing more than 8,300 affordable homes. Given its own area of experience and commitment to the community, Town & Country feels that it is particularly appropriate to sponsor the Community Award category. It provides good-quality housing and excellent customer service. Its charity arm – Town & Country Foundation – works towards making a positive difference to community and family life. It runs initiatives on financial inclusion, learning and skills, health and well-being, neighbourhoods and community cohesion.



■ **Category sponsor**  
Henry Paul Funerals believes that championing and inspiring local companies during hard economic times enables everyone to share experiences and trade ideas for mutual benefit. Learning from others and expanding business networks leads to the formation of valuable alliances that help to create a thriving and prosperous local community, improving everyone's quality of life.

Based in Pembury, Henry Paul Funerals is an independent funeral director, providing bespoke commemoration to Tunbridge Wells and its surrounding communities. The ethos of the firm is to celebrate individuality in death as in life.



■ **Awards ambassador**  
BSK-CIC is a community interest company with a team of more than 50 people and an annual turnover in excess of £4 million. Their mission is to prepare businesses for the future and to equip them to succeed. They run the Innovation and Growth Team in Kent and deliver the Enterprise Europe Network in the South East, which has links to 44 countries. They continue to win European funding to support local small businesses and start-ups; they are currently operating 16 business support projects funded by the EU. Find out more by calling 08457 226655 or by visiting [www.bsk-cic.co.uk](http://www.bsk-cic.co.uk)

