


WILTSHIRE

AWARDS 2017

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across the county

24 March 2017, The Corn Exchange, Devizes



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Contents and introduction



Introduction Lady Ruth Hawley

It's 11 years since my late husband, Donald, and I took to the stage in the splendid setting of Wilton House near Salisbury, as the joint chairs of the inaugural Wiltshire Life Awards.

Since their launch in 2006 the Wiltshire Life Awards have grown in prestige and authority and are now a feature of the Wiltshire 'landscape'. This year we had a record number of applications and every one of our 13 categories has attracted support from one of our illustrious sponsors.

A key part of my strategy, as the chair of the judging panel, a role I took on after Donald died in 2008, is to celebrate the achievements of the county and its people in different parts of Wiltshire. In a small way, the Awards are a unifying force which help to create a sense of togetherness in what is a large and diverse county, separated as it is by Salisbury Plain.

From Wilton to Marlborough and now to Devizes, where we are making our second appearance, the Wiltshire Life Awards have been 'travelling' around the county. Next year they will be held for the first time on 23 March 2018, at the STEAM Museum in Swindon.

Judging the awards is a thoroughly humbling experience. We encounter so many acts of heroism and care, talent and enterprise. It makes all of us feel privileged to live in this special corner of rural England.

Our choices can be prescient. For example, at our first Awards in 2006 we applauded the triumphs of 14-year-old cricketer James Vince, from Steeple Ashton, who came second in the Wiltshire Sports Person category. In his Moonraker column following the Awards dinner (*Wiltshire Life*, May 2006) Mark Allen wrote: "James is a cricketer of outstanding potential and is destined perhaps one day to play for England." James has indeed played for England and is one of Hampshire's most prolific batsmen.

After so many years at the helm, I am stepping down as chair and my role will pass to Helen Birchenough. Helen is involved in many different activities in the county and her knowledge and dynamism make her an eminently suitable choice. However, I am delighted to support Helen as a member of the judging panel.

I would particularly like to thank my fellow judges, for all their commitment. I am also especially grateful to all our sponsors and, in particular, Smith & Williamson, for their brilliant support, without which it would be impossible to stage this event. Above all, I would like to praise all our magnificent Award winners.

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Meet the Judges



Chair Lady Ruth Hawley

Although brought up in the West Country, Lady Ruth Hawley spent many years overseas in HM Diplomatic Service. She lived and worked in Vietnam and Egypt, where she met her husband, and then lived in Nigeria, Iraq, Oman and Malaysia. They came to Wiltshire after her husband retired, and Lady Hawley became involved in many aspects of local life: health trusts, St John Ambulance and other charities, the Wiltshire Advisory Committee, church and local government bodies. In 1998 she was appointed High Sheriff of Wiltshire and since then has been a Deputy Lieutenant, Lay Canon of Salisbury Cathedral and a governor of Godolphin School.



Mark Allen

Mark is chairman of the Mark Allen Group, a very successful company employing 300 people in four locations, which he founded 31 years ago. It publishes 65 magazines, both paper and digital, in a broad range of markets, and organises events and exhibitions nationally and internationally. Before starting his company, Mark worked as a journalist on regional and national newspapers, transferring to magazines to become the editor of two award-winners. He has a passion for Wiltshire, opening his Wiltshire office in 1994, when he acquired *Wiltshire Life*. *Wiltshire Life* has thrived to become the longest-established monthly county magazine.



Claire Waring

As a child Claire spent two years travelling through Italy and the more remote outposts of Greece with her parents. It instilled in her a sense of exploration, still there today. Whether she's going underground in Box mine or bringing you the inside story on our heritage, she's still exploring, in Wiltshire, as editor of *Wiltshire Life*. She believes the county is endlessly fascinating. Her media career began at the University of Bristol on their graduate magazine (circ. 60,000). From there she went to the *Oxford Mail* and *Oxford Times*, followed by writing and editing roles on newspapers and magazines in Bristol, Devon and Wiltshire. She joined *Wiltshire Life* in 2005.



Helen Birchenough

Helen has lived and worked in Wiltshire for 20 years. She was a trustee of Salisbury Playhouse for nine years, chairing it for three years, and led the fundraising campaign to build a rehearsal room and community space there. She is chair of Salisbury Arts Festival and is working closely with the Playhouse and Arts Centre to merge the three organisations into one new multi-arts centre. She is a trustee of Wiltshire Community Foundation, chairing a grant-making panel that gives scholarships and financial help to those struggling to access education. Helen is chair of Wiltshire College and is also a Deputy Lieutenant of Wiltshire.



Rose Eva

Rose Eva is a sculptor and writer on the arts. She studied history of art at the internationally renowned Courtauld Institute of Art in London, and has since always worked in and around the subject. She was a specialist at Phillips Fine Art Auctioneers in London and the director of Phillips Germany. She has curated exhibitions and has written catalogues for both galleries and museums. Rose regularly writes on the arts for *Wiltshire Life*, and has published articles in the NADFAS magazine. As a sculptor she has won competitions and awards with her work, including the Discerning Eye Humphreys Prize in 2015.



John Bush

John Bush, CVO, OBE lives near Westbury where he has been involved in farming and other rural businesses. He was a magistrate and, in 1997, High Sheriff of Wiltshire. From 2004 to 2012 he was Lord-Lieutenant for Wiltshire, a role which took him round the county visiting a huge range of organisations and businesses which were displaying excellence in their field. Some of them won the Queen's Awards for Enterprise and for Voluntary Service. He is particularly aware of the contribution made by large numbers of Wiltshire people to voluntary organisations. He has long been a supporter of *Wiltshire Life* for its efforts to highlight everything that is best in the county.



Ian Larrard

Ian Larrard is director of Business West for Swindon and Wiltshire. The company is one of the largest business representative organisations in the country. Ian's role is to ensure their voice is heard by key decision makers. He was previously a senior corporate manager with HSBC, holding posts across the West, with a spell in London. He is married to Anita who runs her own interior design business, Bellinger Larrard Interiors. He is a governor at Swindon College, chair of inSwindon BID Company and president-elect of the Rotary Club of Swindon. His passion outside of work is athletics, and he has been fortunate to represent his country.



Nicholas Fogg

Nicholas Fogg, MBE, FRSA is a man of many parts. He is a fellow of Queen's University, and the most recent of his seven books, a biography of William Shakespeare, has gone into its sixth edition. Nick is a long-standing contributor to *Wiltshire Life*, and also writes regularly in the national press. He worked on the Middle East Peace Processes and is currently an adviser to the Council for ex-Heads of State and Government. Twice the mayor of Marlborough, he began the renowned Marlborough International Jazz Festival, its Literary Festival and the Open Studios event. As a supporter of Derby County, he jokes that he is injured to life's disappointments.



Charles Spencer

Born at St Martin's Farm, Zeals in the south-west corner of Wiltshire, close to the National Trust house and garden of Stourhead, Charles has spent the last 35 years managing the family farm. In addition to expanding the mixed farming business, he has gradually converted old buildings into business premises which have increased employment opportunities in the area. He is involved in the local community and sits on various committees, including chairing the parish council. Charles has recently hung up his rugby boots after playing for a local team for the last 20 years, but he continues to enjoy playing both tennis and cricket.



Lynsey Docherty

Lynsey Docherty is an opera singer, producer and vocal animateur. She has sung leading roles for soprano across the UK; she has created singing projects in prisons, orphanages in Tajikistan, for theatres and festivals nationwide, bringing opera and singing to school children and children with special needs. Lynsey is the founder and artistic director of Celebrate Voice, a festival of singing based in Salisbury, staging world-class opera, jazz, music theatre and folk events, alongside a celebrated community programme. In her spare time, Lynsey loves travel, long walks with her husband, young son and two pointers and is a whizz at table football.

The role of the judge



Being a judge of the Wiltshire Life Awards is a privilege and also enormous fun. There are two highlights in the year. The first is when a huge file of papers arrives with all the nominations. Far from being a chore, I find reading all the stories of endeavour commitment and talent most uplifting, often humbling and always a joy. Everyone on the judging team supplements their reading with 'secret shopper' visits and much Google and internet research.

When we meet for our long judging day, which always promises a great deal of passionate discussion and debate, we are sustained by delicious food and drink samples, marvellous feasts for the eye and tummy; and for the accountants among us, lots of statistics and numbers.

The second highlight is, of course, our extremely elegant awards dinner. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to meet many of the people we have read so much about and to hear their stories.

Wiltshire is a very special county and there are many extraordinarily good and talented people getting on with doing great things, often behind closed doors and little known about. This is a chance to celebrate the brilliant things that happen in Wiltshire and the amazing people that do them.

Helen Birchenough
Chair of the judging panel, 2018

Community Group of the Year



“Hometruths has saved my life and those of my children. It has opened my eyes and made me more confident”

Winner Hometruths

“Hometruths has saved my life and those of my children.” This powerful statement comes from a survivor of domestic abuse and there are many more thoughts like this one. It certainly made the Wiltshire Life Awards 2017 judges realise that this not-for-profit organisation, providing services direct to survivors of domestic abuse and stalking, was a worthy winner of Community Group of the Year.

Hometruths is something of a pioneer being the first co-operative in the UK to provide services direct to survivors of domestic abuse and stalking.

The charitable organisation covers Swindon and north Wiltshire. Did you know that 2,500 incidents of domestic abuse are reported in Swindon alone each year? National research suggests that only 20% of such incidents are reported; therefore a further 10,000 incidents across Swindon go unreported each year.

More than one-third of Hometruths’ referrals come from the community, an endorsement of their ability to engage with vulnerable people living in the area, many of whom have not disclosed abuse before or reported it to the police or social services.

Hometruths’ aim is to reduce the risk of serious harm and homicide for survivors of domestic abuse and their children and to promote safety. They provide one-to-one support along with group programmes, and work collaboratively with the police, social services, health visitors, midwives and other organisations.

Dealing with an average of more than 250 referrals each year, Hometruths says survivors experience extreme isolation, so bringing them together and creating new communities of women is a key area of their work. The Life in Harmony Project is a programme for pregnant women and mothers with children under 18 months, who are currently experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse. Domestic abuse often occurs for the first time, or else can escalate, during pregnancy.

The Freedom Programme brings women together and enables them to be heard, while a further two-year project supports women living in areas of high deprivation and disadvantage in Swindon. Called Reach-In Women Swindon, it is funded by the Health Lottery.

One in four women experiences domestic abuse in the UK and more than two women a week lose their life to a violent partner or ex-partner.

Hometruths is a sorely needed organisation doing excellent work: a worthy winner.

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Second place Salisbury Street Pastors

If your child, grandchild or other relative was out on the streets of Salisbury, a little the worse for wear after a night at the disco or at a pub, and separated from their friends, you would want them to meet one of the able and caring team that makes up Salisbury Street Pastors.

Street pastors are extensively trained volunteers from local churches who care about their community and form part of a national team first pioneered in 2003. They're usually on patrol from 10pm to 4am on Friday and Saturday nights to care for, listen to and help people, mostly young adults who may have had too much to drink.

In 2015 Salisbury Street Pastors clocked up more than 4,500 patrol hours, with a further 500 patrol hours in Amesbury. They had more than 4,200 conversations and attended many incidents. They picked up more than 1,000 bottles, gave away 40 blankets, 300 bottles of water and 300 pairs of flip-flops (high heels and alcohol don't mix).

Inspector Andy Noble has spoken about the link between the street pastors and a drop in crime in the city, while assessors of Salisbury's Purple Flag status (awarded to cities where you can have a safe night out) highlighted the work of the street pastors.

Third place WCR Community Radio

WCR Community Radio's logo has the maxim: keeping you in touch, but the station does so much more than providing company, entertainment, information and support. Nearly 21 years old, it holds a full broadcast licence to serve the community of Warminster and its surrounding villages, using volunteers aged from 14 to 90, some of whom may also be coping with autism and learning difficulties.

This wholly inclusive radio station has already won many awards, including Volunteer of the Year for founder and director Barry Mole, in the Community Radio Awards 2016, and previously, shortlisting for the national Jerusalem Awards for its production of *A Christmas Carol*, developed with the help of local writers and actors.

It provides PA services, CD recordings and DVD recordings for schools and the local council, and runs training courses in broadcasting. Also acting as a consultant to emerging community radio services, WCR is valued by Ofcom criteria at about £220,000 per year but costs in cash terms about £22,000. It's one of the lowest cost stations, but provides high value.

Highly commended

Community Transport South Wiltshire

Community Transport South Wiltshire is a Salisbury-based charity that focuses on providing door-to-door transport for people of limited mobility who would otherwise find it difficult to get out and about. The charity has been supporting mainly elderly, frail and disabled people with mobility issues in Salisbury and the surrounding area since 1996. It operates a car scheme and shopper and 'Hoppa' buses, as well as driver and self-drive hire.

Headway Salisbury and South Wiltshire

Headway Salisbury and South Wiltshire supports local people who have an acquired brain injury or ABI, and their families, ensuring they get the help they need to reach their maximum potential. They also promote awareness. At Fisherton House in Salisbury they run a group that helps ABI survivors move towards rehabilitation goals, and gives their carers much-needed four-hour periods of respite, twice a week.



Giving money and support where people in Wiltshire and Swindon need it most



In 2015/16 Wiltshire Community Foundation:



Gave out grants
of over
£1.03m



Supported
87,625
people across the county



Supported **149**
households living in
fuel poverty to stay
warm over winter



Helped **119** local
groups and charities
keep projects going in
their community



Enabled **38** young
people to access further
and higher education

Contact us now to find out how you can help your community

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Carer of the Year



Winner Neil Madigan

Neil Madigan's wife, Cristie, suffers from a range of health problems; most notably, Multiple Sclerosis (MS). They were married in August 2016 and Neil is Cristie's primary carer.

In January 2016 Neil applied for a commission in the RAF and was accepted on to the officer training programme. As an officer, Neil's increased salary will support the couple as Cristie is unable to work full-time. She has suffered from MS for 10 years.

"I have a further seven chronic conditions," writes Christie. "My MS was manageable until 2015; I went from having a few problems to being unable to walk or talk. Over the last couple of years, Neil has learnt about my health condition and has done everything for me, while holding down his job. My condition is back to being more manageable now, and I have been accepted for a transplant programme abroad, but need to raise £50,000."

Neil and Cristie had their first child, Roane, in December. "My son is the luckiest child in the world to have a father like Neil," smiles Cristie.

“We were married in 2016 and had our first baby in December. My son is the luckiest child in the world to have a father like Neil”

Second place Ms Pat Burgess

The nomination for Pat Burgess says, "she is unfailingly positive and generous, and radiates a joyful spirit". Pat is the woman largely responsible for developing Wilton Riding for the Disabled into one of the largest of its kind in the country over the last 40 years. There can be no doubt that much of the centre's success is down to her energising spirit and devotion. Even now, in her 80s, Pat continues to inspire disabled riders, whether children or adults, as well as the volunteer helpers, to attain and exceed their potential.

Third place Camilla Vickers

Caring for her terminally ill mother, Davina, for 18 months, predominantly on her own, provided the impetus for Camilla Vickers to raise £11,150 for charity. Davina's Fund was inspired by Davina's "stoicism, zest for life and concern for others" and was started a few months before her mother died, with her blessings. The fundraising Echoes of Italy concert and a long-distance drive in a cinquecento raised the total, which was divided between Salisbury Hospice, and Davina's Fund, which commissions arts pieces for health and care environments.

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Teacher of the Year



Winner Louise Kilminster

Stuart Porter, head of The Avenue Primary School in Warminster, says: "I became head teacher of the Avenue Primary School in 2013. The school had recently gone into special measures. Results placed the school in the bottom 5% in the country. I took the risky decision of moving Louise from reception class to Year 6. This proved to be the best decision I would ever make. Three years on, outcomes are now outstanding and the school is in the top 25% in the country. Louise has been pivotal to this success."

Louise is described as patient, committed, caring and driven. She has a real love of the school and nurtures each child so they can develop and grow. She is a great listener and is 'queen of the lists' when it comes to organisation, remaining calm in a time of crisis. Louise continues to develop the school's student leadership house system and keep it fresh.

One parent said: "We all recall the great teachers who influenced our careers and lives. We have no doubt Mrs Kilminster will remain in our son's memory bank as the best ever."

Second place Nic Allott

Nic Allott is described as having "exceptional teaching ability". In his early days he taught at Eton and has gone on to have a long career at Marlborough College, marked by "unselfish vocational giving to the young, particularly to the adolescent years". Nic has been head of physics, a housemaster and head of science. Countless Marlburians owe Nic a debt of gratitude for the influence and learning he has instilled in them. In recent years he has also played a significant part in Marlborough College's outreach work, teaching at Swindon Academy.

Third place Linda Stone

Linda Stone is an English teacher at Lydiard Park Academy in Swindon. As well as teaching able students, she runs an intervention group where she is making great strides. Children who only last year were in supported reading groups, are volunteering to read out paragraphs. Children who struggled to write are trying to come up with interesting sentences. Children who couldn't sit still are happy to give out books and then sit quietly to create exciting phrases. Everyone in this intervention class is making progress.

“We all recall our greatest teachers. We have no doubt that Louise will remain in our son's memory as his best-ever teacher”

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Greg Sellers



Rebecca Fournier D'Albe



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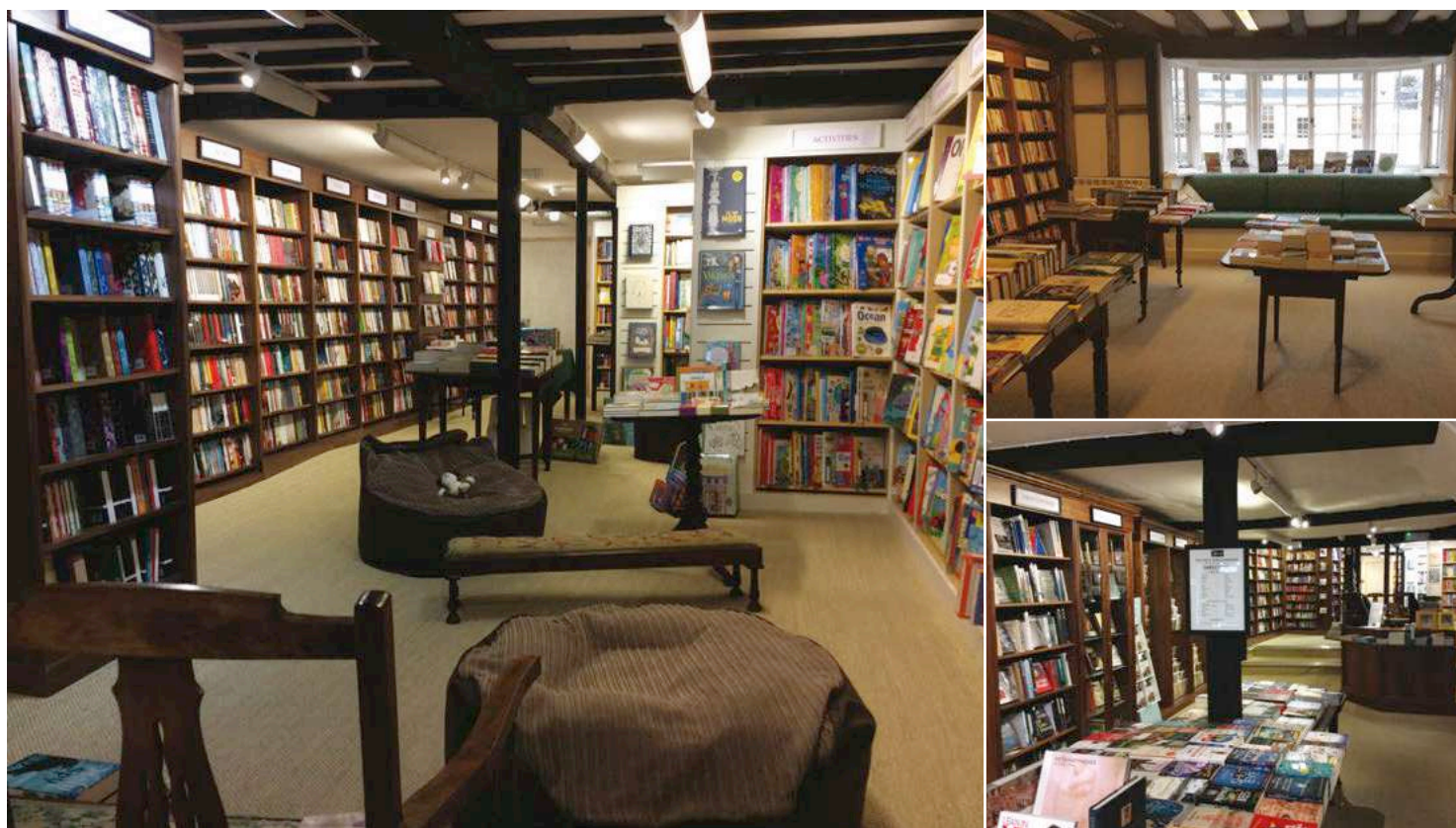
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Business of the Year



Winner White Horse Bookshop

In 2014, after buying, renovating and reopening the White Horse Bookshop in Marlborough, city grandee Robert Hiscox and entrepreneur Brian Kingham said they were “drawing a line in the sand” in response to falling book sales, the encroachment of digital and the decline in independent bookshops. Brian said: “Our aim is to defy gravity by making profits in book-selling.” In the first two years after reopening, book sales almost doubled; in 2015/2016, after completion of its expansion with the addition of a gallery, trade was up 20%.

The business is flourishing at a time when most independent bookshops are struggling to survive. Why? It could be the attention to all aspects of retail that has brought sustained growth. Or the extensive stock, the bright and inviting children’s area and the specialist art section. Perhaps it’s the friendly and knowledgeable staff.

It’s probably a combination of all these factors in a bookshop that also runs a host of regular events and art courses and has been on the High Street since 1950.

Second place Sarum PR

Sarum PR is a multi-award-winning information technology PR agency. It has recently celebrated its 20th year with a Top 100 Global Communications Award to add to its trophy cabinet. Well, there’s one more to add to the trophy cabinet now.

The business was founded by Carina Birt as a one-woman band from an office in a field behind her house in Cholderton. Today, Sarum PR is based at Fisherton Mill in Salisbury and has 14 people on the team, including nationally-renowned technology and business journalists.

Third place RTS Group

RTS Group is a learning and development agency in the automotive sector, whose clients include Mercedes-Benz and Jaguar Land Rover. Based in Notton, near Chippenham, it was founded 28 years ago by Richard Wells, who focused on traditional classroom-based training sessions. More recently they’ve developed a mobile app. Employing 30 people in Wiltshire, with 20 more employed across the UK, their staff strategy is ‘engage, develop and inspire’, which has resulted in a two-star accreditation in the Best Companies programme.

“Their aim was to defy gravity by making profits in book-selling. In the first two years book sales almost doubled”

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Independent Food/Drink Producer of the Year



Winner Henderson's Artisan Bakery and Café

Paul Henderson swapped a career in books for bakery when he opened Henderson's Artisan Bakery and Café in Salisbury in 2013. He "makes everything on-site from scratch" and was soon winning community awards. The range includes bread, cakes, pastries, savouries, light lunches and his own Fair Trade coffee blend.

With Shipton Mill Organic Flour he bakes a range of sourdough and traditional breads using long fermentation techniques. These are sold from the bakery, as well as to local restaurants and independent village shops. His special bread doughs, created from in-season wild garlic and nettles, have many fans among south Wiltshire's foodies.

"Our sausage rolls are made from sausage meat specially prepared for us by Pritchett's the Butcher, based in Salisbury, with our own puff pastry. We also make our own-recipe spinach, feta and pine nut vegetarian rolls," explains Paul. Adding a fresh dimension to the food scene, the proof of this delicious venture is in the eating.

Second place Buttle Farm

Buttle Farm is a small, family-run rare breed pig farm in Compton Bassett, which is home to six native British rare breeds, producing fresh pork and charcuterie for sale to select local restaurants and to private customers. Quality is their watchword: quality of animal welfare. The pigs live in an extensive free-range system, outdoors, in small groups, where they are able to exhibit their natural behaviour. Robert and Sara Buttle are enthusiasts who love spreading the word about supporting British rare breeds and promoting animal welfare.

Third place Helen Browning's Organic

"Live like you are going to die tomorrow and farm like you are going to live forever," says Helen Browning, chief executive of the Soil Association Charity and owner of Helen Browning's Organic. She farms about 1,400 organic acres across the North Wiltshire Downs and has about 3,000 organic pigs. "We're really proud of our Organic Hot Dogs," says Helen. They're made from 96% organic pork from free-ranging pigs on Helen's farm and five other organic, like-minded farmers she works with.

“Live like you
are going to die
tomorrow and farm
like you are going to
live forever”

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Conservation Project of the Year



Winner South Wiltshire Farmland Conservation Project

The original aims of the project were to reverse the decline in six critically endangered farmland bird species associated with arable land. On behalf of Cranborne Chase AONB, adviser Tracy Adams worked with farmers to provide habitats for nesting, and insect and winter seed food. The project has now been expanded to help farmers form 'clusters' of neighbouring farms to work collaboratively to do more for nature.

Tracy Adams has developed excellent relationships with the farming community. Her knowledge of both farming practice and ecology, as well as her diplomacy and enthusiasm, have made her the 'go-to' person. She has provided one-to-one advice for 132 farmers across an area of 22,000 hectares, creating 1,000 hectares of new farmland bird habitat.

The project was initially funded by Defra and Natural England, matched by project funds from Cranborne Chase AONB, but is now wholly funded by the private sector with in-kind support from the AONB. Its future is secured until 2020.

Second place Great Bustard Project

Have you seen a Great Bustard? The chances are you have, because Wiltshire's population of the world's heaviest flying bird has never been in better health. The charitable Great Bustard Group was formed in 1998, but for the last three years they have exported eggs from Spain, rather than Russia, with great success. The Russian birds were prone to migrate, whereas the Spanish birds are more at home on the Plain, with an established population of about 50. This project has restored the jewel in our crown, the Great Bustard on the county's coat of arms,

Third place Ravensroost Wildlife Reserve Volunteer Group

This group is made up of 'crack' volunteers, those who have undertaken training and have an impressive range of skills. These are the volunteers who are asked to undertake the more difficult tasks, who, in fact, seem to thrive as the tasks become more challenging. They might manage overgrown hedges, create a glade, or make log stools, rustic benches or willow tunnels. Their work stretches beyond the boundaries of this reserve, as they have helped on many projects, including River Ray restoration and developing Hagbourne Copse, in Swindon.

“The project has given one-to-one advice to farmers across 22,000 hectares, creating 1,000 hectares of new farmland bird habitat”

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BBC Wiltshire



Wiltshire's radio station is proud to support the Wiltshire Life Awards, and our own Sue Davies is delighted to host the event

For more than a quarter of a century BBC Wiltshire has been a key part of life in our beautiful county. We celebrate a unique and special part of England, and every day we tell the stories of Wiltshire people, across a patch that's as varied as the proverbial 'chalk and cheese'.

BBC Wiltshire launched in the days before internet and email; in 1989 digital radio didn't exist, and nor did social media. In those years we've changed a lot, and so has our county. Wiltshire and Swindon are now governed separately and Swindon itself has been one of the fastest-growing towns in Europe. Now there are new challenges, such as welcoming thousands more Army personnel moving to Salisbury Plain, and connecting all of Wiltshire and Swindon to the high-speed broadband that's so vital to modern life.

And as for Sue, she's been part of your radio station for almost the whole of its life. Born in Trowbridge, she first tiptoed into showbiz by winning a local talent contest aged seven. For the next four years she toured many Wiltshire social clubs with her sister in a group called The Folk Duo, often on the same bill as her parents' ventriloquist and mime act.

After working as a volunteer at hospital radio stations in Trowbridge, Chippenham and Devizes, Sue joined Wiltshire's own BBC in 1990. Nowadays you can hear her on weekend mornings from 9am, with lively coverage of what's going on across the county.

BBC Wiltshire will always be passionate about life here, and determined to hold to account those in authority on your behalf. In the turbulent last 12 months we held a lively debate at Wiltshire College Lackham ahead of the European Union Referendum, and since the Brexit decision we continue to hear views from across the county on what the result might mean. Away from politics, we broadcast the first-ever live radio programme from the 'ghost village' of Imber on Salisbury Plain; reunited Terry Waite with the former RAF Lyneham team who helped with his rehabilitation after captivity; and gave new life to the BBC radio series *Singing Together* with an original play featuring 400 Wiltshire school children.

This year finds us all living in fast-moving times, and BBC Wiltshire is now far more than just a radio station. Our online news service and social-media feeds bring text and pictures from right across the county. More than 15 million people saw our heart-warming video featuring the Wiltshire schoolboy with special needs whose friends held-back to let him win a school sports-day race. We also shared live coverage of the celebration at Bowood near Calne for the 300th anniversary of landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, and flashed pictures around the world as the sun rose over Stonehenge for the summer solstice.

We'll always celebrate the good things about life in Wiltshire: we were there live to cheer the cycling Tour of Britain through the county, and we're hugely proud that BBC Wiltshire listeners have packed Salisbury Cathedral for our Christmas carol concert for eight years in a row.

We know that our most memorable stories come from you. We're nothing without your support and your feedback. Please continue to contact us, whether there's something you think we should be investigating, or something more to celebrate about this dynamic county in which we live.

- You can hear BBC Wiltshire on 103.5, 103.6, 104.3 FM and 104.9 FM on digital and online. You can contact us on Facebook at facebook.com/BBCWiltshire, via Twitter @BBCWiltshire or you can email us at Wiltshire@bbc.co.uk

Left, clockwise from top: Ben Prater presenting the breakfast show; BBC Wiltshire's latest outside broadcast vehicle at Royal Wootton Bassett, which uses satellite technology to link to the studios; Broadcasting live from The Green in Devizes; Mel Kimmer, Rachel Lawson and Sue Davies get to grips with outside broadcast wiring; Right: Host of the Wiltshire Life Awards, Sue Davies

Meet the host:

Sue Davies

BBC Wiltshire Weekend Show presenter Sue Davies brings the county together with news of events, star guests and the chance to test your little grey cells too.

Born in Trowbridge, Sue began her tentative steps in the public limelight by winning a local talent contest aged seven. For the next four years she toured Wiltshire social clubs with her sister in their group The Folk Duo, often on the same bill as her parents' ventriloquist and miming act. She also played clarinet in Wiltshire Youth Concert Band and joined many Wiltshire amateur dramatic groups.

After getting her honours degree in North Yorkshire, Sue returned to Wiltshire where she worked as a radio jingles producer, while singing in a wide range of bands. After working as a volunteer at hospital radio stations, Sue joined what was then BBC Wiltshire Sound in 1990.

Her hobbies include music, films, collecting old radios, supporting Manchester United and eating chocolate, but not necessarily in that order.



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Pub of the Year



Winner The Swan, Enford

This is “not just a local pub, it is the beating heart of the community,” said one nomination. It has been a remarkable success story for tenants Peter and Emma Jefferies, who say: “In 2014 we bravely (stupidly?!) took on The Swan, having watched it go into decline. The cellar was mouldy, fridges stored 1970s cookbooks and the villagers had boycotted the pub, even though they own the building.”

Today it's a busy and thriving place; Peter's cooking can't be faulted; they've got a CAMRA award for stocking local ales; and their interaction with the community is praiseworthy. The village has no shop so the pub sells staples; they've developed a takeaway service; and although the village trades pictured on the walls are long gone, they've created jobs for 15 local people.

Horrified to hear of a woman who didn't see anyone between weekly meals-on-wheels deliveries, they created the 'hub in the pub', a cake, coffee and catch-up morning for £1, where toddlers and pensioners mix. “We provide far more than beer and banter,” say the couple.

Second place The George Inn

Entry into *The Good Beer Guide 2017* is no surprise for this pub which stocks four to five Wadworth real ales and two guest ales. The 14th century pub has a fascinating history too. On your first visit you might be surprised by the turnspit used to roast meat in the medieval fireplace which was, unusually, powered by a dog. On successive visits you'll be impressed by the food and community spirit. Chef Nicky Giddings has been there for 30 years, while events have included Macmillan coffee mornings and fundraising for a child with leukaemia.

Third place Black Swan Hotel

A friendly welcome awaits at The Black Swan Hotel in Devizes where, quite literally, everything is for sale. Florence and John Chapman became tenants in 2015. John practiced as a barrister before becoming an antiques dealer and also owns Devizes' Crowman antiques shop. Florence is a trained architect and talented artist. The combination of these interests has an enormous influence on the style and content of the Black Swan, which is jam-packed with antiques and curios that you can buy. Good food, wine and beer, make this *the* place to be in Devizes.

“The Swan is not just a local pub, it is the beating heart of the community”

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Young Entrepreneur of the Year



Winner Monty George

With a turnover of one million at the tender age of 19, Monty George is a serial entrepreneur with enough on his CV to completely fill most ordinary careers, and at an age when most of his contemporaries are at university, out clubbing or otherwise enjoying their youth.

He started off baking bread rolls for the village shop in Hindon, near Salisbury, and got quite a following. He progressed to selling electronics, clothes, pest control and dirt and quad bikes. Today though, he runs FurnitureBox which imports and retails flatpack furniture. At his website, www.furniturebox.co.uk, you'll find competitively priced offers, including dining tables and occasional furniture.

His success lies in his choice of product and its design, selling online and speedy despatch. The furniture is made from wood, chrome and tempered glass which means it shouldn't break easily and comes in a range of stylish options. The products all come from China, a country he has been dealing with since he was about 12.

Second place Ben Pinniger

Ben Pinniger set up BP Milling, a fish feed manufacturing business, in 2014, formulating a cost-effective feed that has minimal impact on water quality, unlike some other products. He left school at 16 to study fishery management at Sparsholt. At 19 he worked on developing fish ponds on his family's farm when it dawned on him that the cost of feed could prove prohibitive for such an enterprise. It became his lightbulb moment and he has now sold over 300 tonnes, supplying more than 120 fisheries in the UK and abroad.

Third place Carly McCarthy

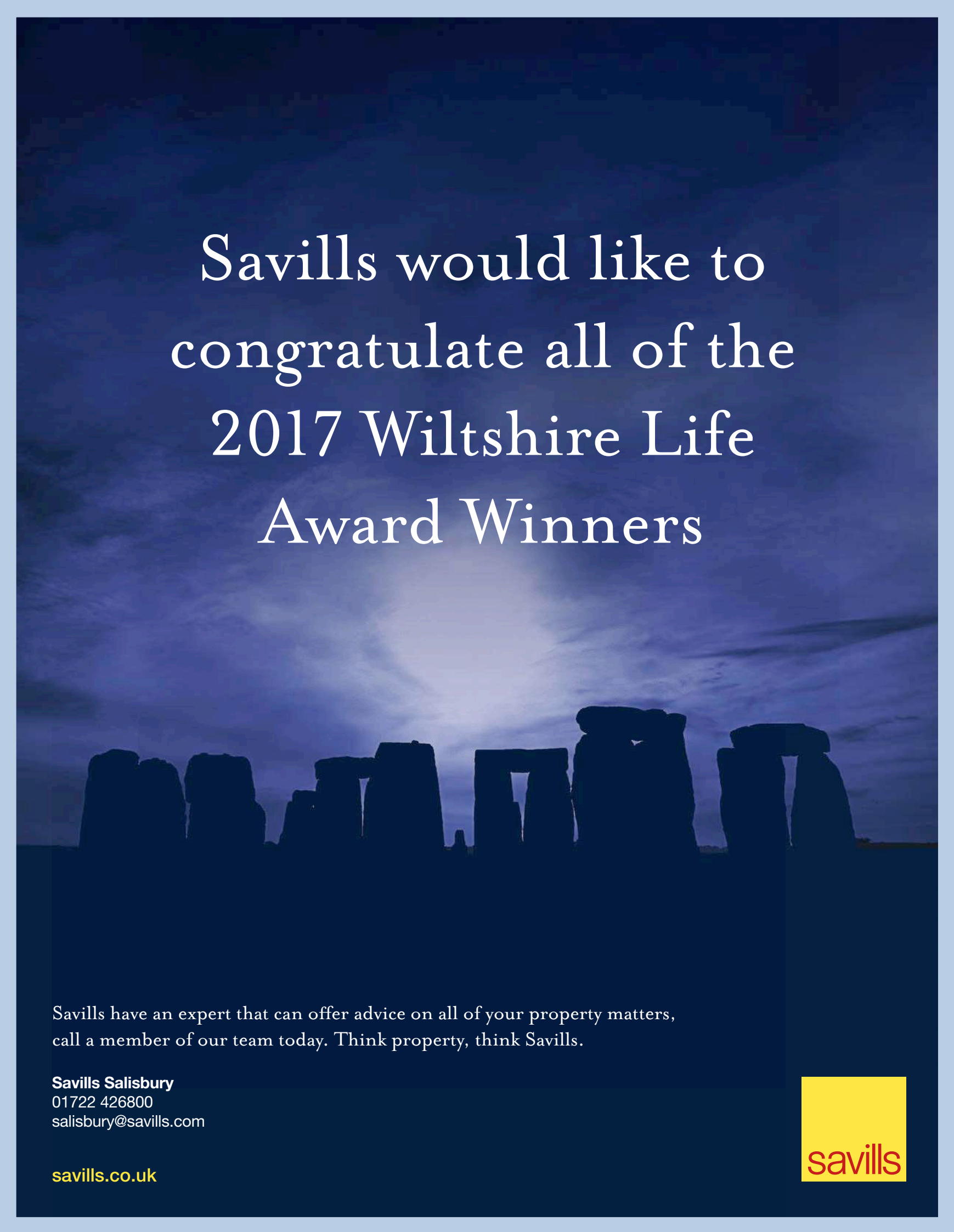
Carly McCarthy says she has always wanted to be self-employed and never stops thinking of new and creative ideas. Carly took on a hair salon at the age of 20, employing an apprentice and a fully-qualified stylist. After building up the business for two years, she felt she was ready for a new challenge and opened her second salon. When the gym where one of her salons was based went into liquidation, she moved her teams into a new, dedicated unit. She went on to win the Best Customer Service award in the South West at the British Hair and Beauty Awards.

“FurnitureBox has a turnover of one million. At the tender age of 19, Monty George is something of a serial entrepreneur”

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D O R S E T

The background of the entire page is a photograph of Stonehenge in Wiltshire, England. The monument is shown in silhouette against a dramatic sky at sunset or sunrise, with a bright sun low on the horizon creating a lens flare effect. The sky is a mix of deep blue and purple hues.

Savills would like to congratulate all of the 2017 Wiltshire Life Award Winners

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Farm/Village Shop of the Year



Winner Neston Farm Shop and Kitchen

The Bowles family are fifth generation farmers who have run their original farm shop in Winsley for eight years. Their ethos is to think local in all respects. In 2015 the Bowles family took over the running of Neston Farm Shop and Kitchen on the Neston estate, in Atworth near Melksham. Much of the produce sold through this shop is produced, reared or grown at one of their sites, from organic veg, cold-pressed honey and fresh bread to beef from their own herd.

They have excellent links with other producers too. The organic milk from their Jersey cows, which graze on the field behind the shop, is used by Ivy House Farm to produce some incredible dairy products, which are in turn used by the Bowles family. They also run a range of tasting events throughout the year to showcase suppliers' food and drink.

Regular events to involve the community include family activity days, farm tours, cookery demonstrations and supper clubs. They've recently teamed up with Cardiologist's Kitchen, a project aiming to help people improve their diet and their health.

Second place Allington Farm Shop

The Reynolds family have farmed at Allington Bar Farm, near Chippenham, as tenants for three generations. Their award-winning farm shop has been established more than 30 years. Throughout the seasons there is a fantastic selection of fresh vegetables, including potatoes, marrows, courgettes and squash, all grown on the farm, as well as a wide range of meat cuts from the in-house butchery. The deli has an array of local and artisan cheeses, and charcuterie, while grocery items include homemade cakes and pies, plus eggs from quail to goose.

Third place Edington Farm Shop

Located in a beautiful oak timber-frame structure, Edington Farm Shop is the perfect example of sustainability and provenance. It is packed with local produce. Farm to fork is key and the shop and café are located less than a mile from their own farm. Priory Farm has a dedicated team of vegetable enthusiasts, a happy brood of chickens, a swarm of bees, apple orchards and flower beds. Meanwhile, Daggers Ale pies, made from the beer brewed at the adjacent Three Daggers Brewery, are sold on the deli counter, while the beer is drunk in the nearby Three Daggers pub.

“At Neston Farm Shop and Kitchen, the Bowles family’s ethos is to think local in all respects”

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Young Sports Personality of the Year



Winner Cadan Murley

Cadan Murley's England Under 18 debut, in March, saw him score a brace of tries, helping England get off to a winning start to the season with a 43-14 victory over France. For three years he's also been part of the Harlequins Academy, going into their U18 squad a year early.

To ensure he stays on top of his game, Cadan travels to the Harlequins' training base in London on Monday evenings, returning to Salisbury around 1am. The next day though, he's ready for his studies – and more training.

Cadan's success is built on hours of practice back home in Salisbury, where he is Bishop Wordsworth's School's 1st XV captain. He's an ambitious student and wants to go to university to study sports science and continue his rugby career.

Cadan is a great leader too, taking rugby into primary schools and heading up Bishop Wordsworth's annual primary school tag rugby festival. "As a young man and role model, I can't think of many who are as dedicated or as respected by their peers," says the nomination.

Second place Beatrice Wood

Beatrice Wood is a 13-year-old athletics prodigy whose small size belies a huge talent which has already made her age-group number one in the country at her chosen running distance of 1200m. Her first competitive outing for the City of Salisbury Athletics and Running Club was in April 2016 at Oxford in the Young Athletes League at 1200m, which she won. In her final league race of the season she reduced her best time to 3min 46.2sec and shattered the league record. Described as quiet and unassuming, Beatrice Wood has a bright future.

Third place Shaun Prentice

Shaun Prentice started coaching football at 14, alongside playing for youth teams. He has achieved FA level 1 and 2 in coaching, FA level 1 and 2 in Futsal and FA level 1 in goalkeeping. Shaun has an excellent rapport with the children and is able to make training fun and enjoyable. He plays in the National Futsal League with FC Salisbury United, featuring in virtually every game. He is also in the top 10 goal scorers for the season's national league campaign. It helps that he can do all the flicks and tricks in the book!

“As a young man and role model, I can't think of many who are as dedicated or as respected by their peers”

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The Arts and Culture Award



“They combine their concert hall kudos with an equally impressive community participation programme”

Winner Wiltshire Music Centre

Expect the unexpected when you visit Wiltshire Music Centre. The chances are that the quality of the music will exceed anything you could have imagined, in its scope, timbre, vivacity, depth of sound (because of its superb acoustic) and performance value. ‘Good’ is not a word they know; music here has to be exceptional.

Founded 19 years ago by a group of visionary people who realised the need for top-quality performance and rehearsal facilities in the area, they present 120 concerts a year, from world-renowned performers in the classical, jazz and folk genres to BBC jazz favourite Clare Teal.

They combine their concert hall kudos with an equally impressive community participation programme. In 2015/2016 the centre took on the running of the West of England Youth Orchestra and Wiltshire Youth Jazz Orchestra, following the closure of Wiltshire County Music Service. They have new sponsors and welcome musicians from across the county.

Celebrating its 20th birthday in 2018, the centre also now promotes comedy and talks.

Second place Prime Theatre

Prime Theatre celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2017 as Wiltshire’s only professional theatre company for children and young people. A registered charity, it promotes artistic excellence and creates change through theatre for, with and by young people. Last year is remembered as their busiest ever. It started with a national tour of *The Macbeth Curse*, a new play by Horrible Histories author Terry Deary, and ended with the futuristic *2046*, performed in the Swindon Borough Council chamber, and featuring BAFTA-winning actor and writer Mark Gatiss.

Third place Wiltshire Museum

Wiltshire Museum was nominated for Wiltshire’s Story in 100 Objects, an exhibition initiated by this Devizes-based museum. The project saw some of the county’s 44 museums working closely together on the project. The 100 objects were carefully chosen to reflect the diversity of Wiltshire’s past; the exhibition was a cabinet of curiosities. The exhibition toured Wiltshire, but the highlight came when the medieval silver Lacock Cup, worth more than one million pounds, formed the centrepiece of the exhibition in Devizes.

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Individual Artist Award



Winner Nick Andrew

Based in an idyllic spot near the River Wylye, close to Warminster, artist Nick Andrew has become famous for his riverscapes.

He studied art under the tutelage of Len McCombe RA, graphic design and finally fine art at Oxford Brookes University, London College of Communication and Cheltenham, graduating with a BA in 1979. But it would probably be true to say that the River Wylye and the ever-changing seasons have taught him much too.

For years Nick has been predominantly inspired by the beautiful and varied landscape of the chalk stream, the surrounding water-meadows, lakes and forest close to his studio. He has interpreted this rich subject matter through his unique gestural and colourist approach.

"I'm drawn to secret and secluded places within my immediate landscape," says the artist. "I find the constantly changing life, light and weather moods captivating and exhilarating. I'm drawn to the powerful and the delicate, to movement and stillness, and to the purposefulness and the capriciousness of nature. I would like to think that I convey through my paintings a sense of my own 'solitary involvement' with this landscape."


Other elements of nature inspire him too. Each week since January 2016, Nick has been taking his sketchbook to a different public garden or park in central London, drawing, discovering, meeting park users and researching for his Sticks in the Smoke project.

These drawings, as well as studies he creates after each visit, will be exhibited at the Curwen Gallery, Windmill Street, London from April 5 to 29, with a follow-up exhibition in 2018. A proportion of the exhibition sales will go to support the Sensory Trust charity which aims to make the outdoors accessible and enjoyable for all people, regardless of age, ability or social circumstance. Their work benefits young and older people, and people living with ill health or disabilities, together with their families and carers.

"I am aiming to cover all of central London's 60 parks and gardens, from the huge acreage of Hyde Park to pocket handkerchief spaces. I find it exciting and compulsive," he says.

Nick is also well-known as the founder of the Wylye Valley Art Trail, a biennial visual arts festival covering south and west Wiltshire that began in 2001. He recently passed the baton on to new organiser, Mere-based landscape painter Laura Rich.





Congratulations to the winner of The Lifetime Achievement award.



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Lifetime Achievement Award



Winner Reverend John Proctor

Reverend John Proctor is a man apart. Alabaré was founded, in 1991, by Rev Proctor and his wife, Alicia, after they befriended and took into their home a series of people in crisis. They soon realised that the need was for greater than they alone could meet. In partnership with a Christian community, they founded a new charity, and after a year of fundraising their first home, Barnabas House, was opened.

Over the last 25 years Alabaré has grown to support more than 2,500 vulnerable people every year. John has been there every step of the way. In 2006 he spearheaded the development of a hostel for homeless people in Salisbury, which opened in 2011. Under his leadership a range of partners and funders came together to raise £5 million and build the outstanding success that Alabaré Place is today.

John also works tirelessly and energetically as a Roman Catholic non-stipendiary permanent deacon and received an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2016.

Second place Ram Thiagarajah

Ram is a leader of the Tamil community in Swindon but is involved in many other aspects of life in the town. Described as a "quiet, gentle man who believes wholeheartedly in joining and helping others", Ram helped form the South Asian Performing Arts Committee to encourage younger people to join in activities to keep their culture alive. He works hard to ensure the Broad Green Breakfast Club continues, which provides hot food, washing facilities and a range of other help. Ram has also been a member of the advisory group for magistrates in Swindon.

Third place Mike Marshman

In August 2016 Mike retired from his post as county local studies librarian, marking 50 years of working for Wiltshire Council. He amassed the largest collection of published Wiltshire material in the world. In 1998 Mike was awarded the Library Association Centenary Medal for his "outstanding contribution to library work". He has always been forward-thinking and creative; in 2002, recognising the growing impact of the internet, he set up the Wiltshire Community History website. He continues to write monthly Village Life articles for *Wiltshire Life*.

“Alabaré was founded by Reverend Proctor and his wife, Alicia, after they took into their home a series of people in crisis”

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Congratulations to all finalists of the Wiltshire Life Awards 2017

Pride of Wiltshire Award



Winner Celebrate Voice 2016

Since its launch in 2014, Celebrate Voice has attracted award-winning singers from all over the world to perform in the medieval city of Salisbury, celebrating world-class opera, jazz, folk, music theatre and *a cappella* singing, by programming the very best artists in nightly celebrity concerts. Alongside these events the festival creates opportunities to participate, with uplifting community singing activities, giving the chance for people to be part of the exploration of the human voice, and its unparalleled ability to communicate, share, express and create immediate bonds between people. From specially-commissioned concerts for babies and public 'flashmobs' in the city centre, to gala performances for elderly people in our community, the festival creates a joyous celebration for people of all ages and abilities.

The festival programmes performers who have sung at some of the world's leading venues, including the Royal Opera House, BBC Proms, Sydney Opera House, Metropolitan Opera, London's West End, BBC Folk Awards, London Palladium, Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club and Glastonbury Festival, to name just a few of the diverse stages graced by Celebrate Voice singers. Not only does the festival present world-class singers and celebrate many different genres of song, but they truly celebrate the community in which these performances happen.

Festival founder Lynsey Docherty is a dynamo. An opera singer, producer and vocal animateur, Lynsey has performed extensively in lead soprano roles in the UK and abroad; as an animateur she has created singing projects in schools, prisons and orphanages in the Far East; while as a producer she creates gala concerts for festivals. Lynsey told us: "Of all musical instruments, the voice has to be the most powerful, in terms of immediacy of connection, communication and emotion. It is no coincidence that so much primetime television programming is given to showcasing individual singing talent."

Initially Lynsey took control of everything, from artistic planning to marketing, raising money, artist liaison, social media and the website. To an extent she still watches over those things, but now has more than 60 volunteers. Managing and, more importantly, galvanising and enthusing people has become her niche. "The festival tends to attract an incredibly warm and friendly crowd – everyone remarks on it. I think it is important to nurture that and show gratitude to all those people who are prepared to give their time."

If you haven't attended a performance at Celebrate Voice, give it a try this autumn, from October 20-29, 2017. For more details visit www.celebratevoice.co.uk

“Of all musical instruments, the voice has to be the most powerful”

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WILTSHIRE



AWARDS 2018

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across the county

23 March 2018, STEAM, Swindon

Another year of accolades: Wiltshire Life Awards 2018

The Wiltshire Life Awards make a welcome return in 2018, as we once again scour the county for tales of creative endeavour, bravery, community spirit, business acumen and young entrepreneurship and sportsmanship. The county's residents aren't short on pluck and as they continue to work in ways that can only promote Wiltshire, we continue to champion them.

We'll be bringing you news of the finalised categories for 2018 in the June issue of *Wiltshire Life*, published on 4 May. We hope you will help spread the word, so that we can put this magnificent county even more firmly on the map. You can enter your nominations from 4 May at www.wiltshirelifeawards.com.

Opportunities for sponsorship are open now, so we call on the business community to support our endeavours to promote Wiltshire and its residents to all.

Helen takes over as chair of the judging panel

The Wiltshire Life Awards judges continue to be amazed by the talent and diversity of the county's artists, businessmen, carers and young people.

In 2016, the judging panel was chaired by Lady Ruth Hawley, who this year steps down as chair, but remains as a judge. She passes the baton to Helen Birchenough. Helen has lived and worked in Wiltshire for 20 years. As a trustee of Salisbury Playhouse she led a fundraising campaign to build a rehearsal room and community space there. Now, as chair of Salisbury Arts Festival, she is working to bring together Salisbury Playhouse, Salisbury Arts Centre and Salisbury Arts Festival. Helen is also a Deputy Lieutenant of Wiltshire.

Our heartfelt thanks go to outgoing chair Lady Ruth Hawley and warm words of encouragement go to our new chair, Helen Birchenough.



New venue for 2018: STEAM, Swindon

Wiltshire Life aims to provide broad coverage from around the county, connecting residents and visitors through their desire to learn about this diverse area. Similarly, we want to ensure our awards reach out to everyone, so having previously held our ceremony in Salisbury, Marlborough and Devizes, on 23 March 2018 we are moving it to STEAM, Swindon.

Housed in a restored railway building, in the heart of the former Swindon Railway Works, the museum will hold a lot of fascination for our evening guests, who can view exhibits in the Great Western Hall before and after dinner.

Locomotives include No. 6000 King George V, No. 3717 City of Truro and No. 4073 Caerphilly Castle, as well as a GWR Swindon buffet car. Book your tickets now!



To enter your nomination visit:
www.wiltshirelifeawards.com

WILTSHIRE 

AWARDS 2017

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