

Food Fest Local returns for “champion” second year

A second **Food Fest Local** was held on 24th and 25th May, with traders and visitors alike agreeing it was another huge success!

Launched in 2024, the event was the brainchild of Christchurch **BID**, a not for profit organisation who receives levies from Town Centre businesses, with a brief to promote and enhance the town.
www.christchurchbid.co.uk

Food Fest Local was designed to complement the Quay event and encourage visitors to enjoy the town centre eateries and retail offering. There had been a lot of feedback from Town Centre traders that the main Food Festival wasn't as local as it had been in the past, and that the High Street wasn't seeing enough benefit from the number of visitors that flock in.

With this in mind, organisers were determined that Town Centre traders would take priority, with levy payers being offered stalls first, and at preferential rates.

Joint BID Operations Manager, Louise Berkhauer, maintained a focus on ensuring the event site was well managed and remained pleasurable for all to enjoy over the weekend. Volunteers were tasked with litter picking, pedestrian safety and welcoming all visitors attending both events in the town and they all did a wonderful job of making this happen.

Chris Guest, Chair of Christchurch BID Board of Trustees, commented “I'd like to express thanks and appreciation to all who made FFL such a friendly, succesful and positive event. To use a sporting analogy, Lou and Ellie set it up and the whole team smashed it into the back of the net. Champion!”

Turn to the back page for more pictures of the fun..





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Dates for your diary

4th June	Proms on the Bandstand <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
7th June	Country on the Cliff <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
8th June	Avon Reach Summer BBQ <i>Avon Reach, Mudeford</i>
11th June	Proms on the Bandstand <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
17th June & 3rd July	Gong Bath & Breakfast <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
18th June	Proms on the Bandstand <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
18th June	Christchurch & District Chamber AGM <i>Captain's Club Hotel & Spa</i>
20th June	Celebrity Chef Lesley Waters Demonstration <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
21st June	Jazz on the Cliff <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
25th June	Proms on the Bandstand <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
27th June	Frankie Valli Tribute Night <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
4th July	Abba Tribute Night <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
11th July	Colten Care Business Breakfast <i>Avon Reach, Mudeford</i>
11th July	Take That Tribute Night <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
11th July	Chamber Boat Trip and BBQ <i>Tuckton Tea Gardens</i>
18th-20th July	XChurch Music Festival <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
25th July	Soul/ Motown Tribute Night <i>Cliffhanger Restaurant, Highcliffe</i>
2nd August	Stompin' On The Quomps <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
15th-17th Aug	Christchurch Carnival <i>Christchurch Quay</i>
16th August	Christchurch River Pageant <i>Christchurch Quay/ Tuckton Gardens</i>

...something missing? Tell us about your upcoming event and we'll add it to our listings for the next issue!

Wonderful windows for VE Day Commemoration

The Chamber was delighted to work with Christchurch BID and the Town Council, to encourage businesses in both Christchurch Town Centre as well as Highcliffe to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the freedom of Europe at the end of World War II.

The Chamber, the BID and the Council funded a stylish poster showing the ecstatic crowds celebrating the end of 6 years of fighting, together with a window sticker. So many shops and businesses displayed these with pride that it created a real sense of community celebration.

In addition, the Chamber organised a Window Competition and had over 20 entries in Christchurch, which were amazingly imaginative with so much research and effort put in. Many had either original newspapers and documents from the day, or had made props to set off their red, white and blue displays such as a knitted Victoria Sponge, as well as ration books, fashions of the day and quite a lot of tins of Spam!

The Chamber President, Tim Lloyd had such a tough job choosing the top four who won prizes donated by the Captain's Club Hotel as well as runner up prizes and certificates. Whilst Karen Goldingay, owner of the Cliffhanger Restaurant in Highcliffe and Chamber Executive member, chose the worthy winners in Highcliffe and they received vouchers for events at the Cliffhanger.



President's Notes

By Tim Lloyd
MD Captain's Club Hotel and
President Chamber of Trade



As we move toward what promises to be a joyful and event-filled summer, the Chamber is proud to reflect on a highly productive and collaborative period. Working closely with the Christchurch BID, Christchurch Town Council, and with valuable support from BCP Council, we've achieved a great deal for our community.

To mark the **VE Day 80th Anniversary**, the Chamber held a Window Display Competition that saw enthusiastic participation from businesses across Christchurch town centre and Highcliffe's Lymington Road. Winners, runners-up, and highly commended certificates were awarded, and I was delighted to present many of them in person.

In May, our Vice President, Richard, led the charge on **Project Bargates**, culminating in a successful spring clean on the 18th. Volunteers from across the community came together for weeding, litter picking, painting, washing down lamp posts, and even mowing lawns. The sense of teamwork and pride in our town was inspiring. A full report on the day can be found in the Chamber Chat.

Later in the month, I was honoured to represent the Chamber at the **Mayor Making** ceremony, where Cllr. Vivienne Charrett began her second term as Mayor, taking over from Cllr. Paul Hilliard. I had the privilege of saying a few words on behalf of the invited guests. With the sun shining, we enjoyed post-ceremony refreshments in the beautiful gardens of Christchurch Library. The Mayor has chosen the **Christchurch Carnival** as her charity for the year—an event she has long supported. She hopes this year's efforts will leave it financially strong for the years ahead.

The Mayor is also leading the "**Christchurch in Bloom**" initiative, and the Chamber is pleased to be involved. We'll be contributing to the planting of flowers and shrubs to bring vibrant colour to public spaces throughout the town and gardens.

Earlier this month, Christchurch played a key role in the **Julia's House Trail**, which spans Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole. Three local figures—Rhianon Stevinson (representing the Chamber), Paul Hilliard (then-Mayor), and Louise Berkenhauer (representing the BID)—took part in a race to visit every sculpture on the trail, all by bicycle. It was a fun and collaborative effort that highlighted the spirit of our community.

Over the spring period, we've also hosted a number of useful training sessions for Chamber members. These have covered topics such as tax, first aid, mental health first aid, social media, and HR. More details can be found in the Chamber Chat.

Finally, as summer approaches, don't forget to mark your calendars for some of Christchurch's most anticipated events, including the **Christchurch Music Festival**, the Carnival, the **River Pageant**, "**Stompin' on the Quomps**," and the **Highcliffe Cliff Top Music Festival**. Each one offers a fantastic opportunity to connect, and I do hope you get the chance to experience at least one.

Happy days!

Have you renewed your Chamber Membership?

The Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce is a non-profit organisation and relies on the subscription of its members, as well as sponsorships.

Joining the Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce is a great way to become part of the Christchurch business community. It will enable you to raise the profile of your business and network with like-minded business owners. You will be able to post your business details on this site, attend our events, contribute to our newsletter and become involved with the issues that affect us all in Christchurch.

Your subscription is likely to be tax-deductible – so what have you to lose?

**If you are BID levy payer, Chamber membership is covered as part of your annual levy. To opt in, simply email info@christchurchchamber.co.uk*



Membership rates

£35 for companies with up to 5 employees;
£65 for 6 to 25; £100 for 26 to 99 employees
and £250 for over 100 employees"

Payments

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Hello from Christchurch BID!

Could Christchurch be the most beautiful town centre to visit for spring and summer? We think so, and I'll tell you why...

We started with the Christchurch Big Spring Clean in May which saw a remarkable turnout as local residents, businesses, and community groups united in a shared effort to beautify the town. Organised by Christchurch & District Chamber of Commerce, Christchurch BID, and the Project Bargates Community Group, the event gathered volunteers of all ages for a dedicated day of litter picking and town sprucing. Ellie Howes, Christchurch BID Operations Manager, expressed her gratitude: "It was humbling to see so many local residents and businesses come together for a joint cause to keep Christchurch looking attractive and clean for everyone to enjoy."

The delightful colourful bunting has been installed by Christchurch BID on the High Street for another season, and the introduction of eye-catching lamppost banners welcoming visitors along Bargates. This has been made possible thanks to successful funding through BCP Council from the Town Centres Improvement Fund.

In addition, local businesses have installed their own annual flower baskets, organised on their behalf by Christchurch BID, creating a continuously colourful display that enhances the town's visual appeal.

Louise Berkhauer, Joint BID Operations Manager commented "We worked closely with Christchurch Town Council and BCP Council to get these projects off the ground so were delighted to successfully secure grant funding to enable improvements to the flower pedestals and install the vibrant banners along Bargates. Projects of this nature that involve improvement to public spaces are complex and require months of planning and organisation to gain permissions from multiple stakeholders. We think the new installations really lift the area and hope that our businesses, residents and visitors to the town agree".

Now Christchurch is looking blooming magnificent and vibrant. We would love for residents and visitors to share the love we have for our town far and wide. We are delighted to introduce for the first time our new Summer Whats On Guide for Christchurch. This will be distributed to businesses in Christchurch and neighbouring areas.

If you would love to have some of these publications, please let us know and we'll make sure you get some copies, they are very popular so grab them whilst they are available.. A digital version can be found on our website.

Experience an unforgettable summer in Christchurch! For all the details on these events and more, please visit

our events page :

<https://www.christchurchbid.co.uk/event/>



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Eloise



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Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival celebrates its 10th anniversary!

Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival has become a firm favourite on the calendar, and celebrates its 10th anniversary on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th June. It takes place throughout Highcliffe high street and on the The Green. You can enjoy around 160 hand-picked food, drink and craft stalls, as well as cookery demonstrations by TV and other top chefs and three stages of live music!

This year we have added an additional music stage in the High Street, called the 'Clock Stage'. All three stages will include top-quality live music. There will be free kids' entertainment, 60 stalls of local arts and crafts curated by The Little Craft Shack and around 100 food and drink stalls. It really is a feast for all the senses. You can choose from gifts, home décor, jewellery, artwork and artisan foods - all bound to be unique. Add in the cookery demonstrations, music and kids' activities and you have something for the whole family to enjoy.

This year we have a headline sponsor, The Colin Nash Restaurant. Colin has been involved in the festival for the past ten years and feels that it represents his ethos by its emphasis on local high-quality produce.

In honour of the founder Mary Reader, who has retired as a Director, the team have decided to rename the cookery theatre as 'Mary's Kitchen', and this will again be sponsored by Portman Stone. Mary has selected the chefs taking part and will be hosting over the weekend.

Appearing for the first time at the festival will be award-winning TV chef and cookery author Ching-He Huang MBE. Ching received an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2020 list, for services to The Culinary Arts.

Also with us for the first time is Christchurch resident Nelly Ghaffar. Nelly catapulted into the public eye after competing on the most recent season of The Great British Bake Off.

Returning once again to demonstrate will be the very popular duo James and Erica Golding, who run the Nomadic Sporadic Supper Clubs, both in the UK and in Tuscany. James is a regular on Channel Four's Sunday Brunch. Also returning after few years' break is Sarah Ali Choudhury, a well-known award-winning Indian food writer and influencer.

Our local chefs Alex Aitken from this renowned restaurant The Jetty, and the team from The Oaks pub and restaurant, will be giving you the secrets of their kitchens and latest menus. They will be joined by Patricia Nunes from Nature Synergies in Boscombe as well as Luke Phillips head chef of the Kitchen at Chewton Glen. Also new for this year will be Andrew Gault the former Executive Head Chef of the Captains Club and Balmar Lawn restaurants.

The Festival prides itself on being a free-to-enter family event and offers a wide range of activities for children including a circus school, treasure hunt and 'Grow your Own' run by Highcliffe in Bloom. Also back once again will be the very popular 'Chefs on Stilts' providing a rather different type of photo opportunity.

Returning over the weekend is the very popular Kids Kitchen in The Old School.

Several local groups will be performing on three music stages, placed at Tesco Express, The Clock Stage on Lymington Road, and the Green. These sessions are organised by the accomplished saxophonist Sarah Bolter, who will be there with her superb band 'Not Just Sax'. Always popular is Swing Unlimited Big Band with Pat Peiro as the host. Also performing will be Highcliffe School with various student ensembles, The Fifinellas vocal group, singer-songwriters, Susie Kimber and Tom Clements, together with Barton Court Studios, Tasmine and Tom, and Tom Clements, Soldoro, the Changing Colours Jazz band and many others.

For more information look out for our Facebook and Instagram posts and our website www.highcliffefoodandartsfestival.co.uk.



Shining Star Awards nominations now open

Christchurch Carnival is proud to announce the return of its Shining Star Awards – a celebration of exceptional young people who exemplify courage, creativity, compassion, and community spirit.

Nominations look to recognise the outstanding contributions of children aged 5 to 11 living in the BH23 and BH6 postcode areas, with applications open until June 6.

The awards honour the efforts of local youngsters who have gone above and beyond, whether through acts of kindness, sporting achievement, creative endeavours, or overcoming personal challenges.

Kelly Gee, leader of Christchurch Scout Active Support, said: "Within Scouts, we regularly see children who demonstrate remarkable resilience and compassion. Whether supporting peers or overcoming personal challenges, their stories deserve recognition."

"The Shining Star Awards provide a wonderful opportunity to spotlight their achievements and celebrate their contributions to our community."

Winners of the Shining Star Awards will enjoy a starring role in the Christchurch Carnival weekend, taking place from 15 to 17 August. Highlights include participation in the official award ceremony, leading the mayoral convoy in Sunday's street parade, and the honour of launching the fireworks alongside the Mayor.

The judging panel will be looking for children who have shown extraordinary commitment or achievement, particularly where they have done so while facing adversity. Formal and informal contributions to the local community will be considered, ensuring a broad recognition of effort and dedication.

Mayor of Christchurch, Councillor Viv Charrett, who will serve on the judging panel, added: "It is an honour to be part of this year's awards. The Shining Star initiative truly captures the spirit of our community, recognising the achievements of our young residents who inspire those around them through their actions and determination."

Nominations are now open and the process is completely free. To nominate a child, visit the Christchurch Carnival website at www.christchurchcarnival.co.uk/carnival-star where full details and the entry form are available.

The Christchurch Carnival Shining Star Awards are proudly sponsored by Muttleys Doggy Daycare and supported by Christchurch Town Council.

For more information, comments and pictures please contact Fi Herbage, Christchurch Carnival Volunteer Member on: fh.christchurchcarnival@gmail.com



Smiles all round as the Chamber cleans up

We have been working with local businesses and community groups to enhance and improve the thoroughfare of Bargates, and earlier in May we were able to replace two shop front signs with nice fresh new ones. Christchurch Support Kabin, or CSK as they are known, were donated a new sign whilst their near neighbours Southern Domestic Appliances were supplied a replacement which they will repay in full.

The Chamber applied for a Ward Improvement Grant earlier in the year to finance this, as well as other elements of the project. Huge thanks to Sue Harmon Smith, Chamber secretary for her diligent work and research here!

We also held a Big Clean Up day, not only in Bargates but through the town centre, together with the smashing people of the BID. This happened on a sunny May 18 and we were delighted to see so many people volunteer their services and talents. We painted benches, washed business signs and street signs, swept, litterpicked, weeded and even mowed lawns! As ever when things like this work it is a team effort. We owe a huge debt of thanks to the following;

Waitrose & Partners
Christchurch BID
Christchurch Town Council
We Love Group
Pro2col
Christchurch Baptist Church
Studio 56
A Hammond & Sons Ltd
Southern Domestic Appliances
Captain's Club Hotel and Spa
Matisse
Castles
Christchurch Support Kabin - CSK
CMD Window Cleaning
Hill Video



Before



Top tax tips tackled with tea and toast

27th March saw the second **Chamber Breakfast Club** meeting of the year, this time held at the Cliffhanger Restaurant in Highcliffe.

Members drank in the beautiful views of Highcliffe cliff top, before tucking into a delicious cooked breakfast courtesy of the Cliffhanger. There was plenty of opportunity to chat before and after the TaxTalk.

Over 30 members enjoyed the benefit of the expertise of **Lucy Filer**, Partner of TC Group, along with **Andy Barfield** of Gervis Accounting & Tax.

Lucy concentrated on Corporate Taxation, whilst Andy covered topics concerning personal tax.

After the fascinating talk, Andy and Lucy fielded questions from the audience. There were quite a diverse group of members present, from the charity sector, community groups, public sector, along with businesses large and small. Topics covered included inheritance tax, capital allowances, ISAs as well as more detailed advice on employee benefits and wage structure.

This was the second "Chamber Social" of the year, with many more in the pipeline. By the time you read this, we will have enjoyed a social evening at the Bear at Burton, then next on the calendar is our **Annual General Meeting** on 18 June, to be held at the Captain's Club Hotel & Spa from 5.30pm. We are delighted to have Simon Boyd, Managing Director of Reid Steel, join us as guest speaker, so be sure to put the date in your diary now!



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(August 2025) *Copy deadline 22 August*

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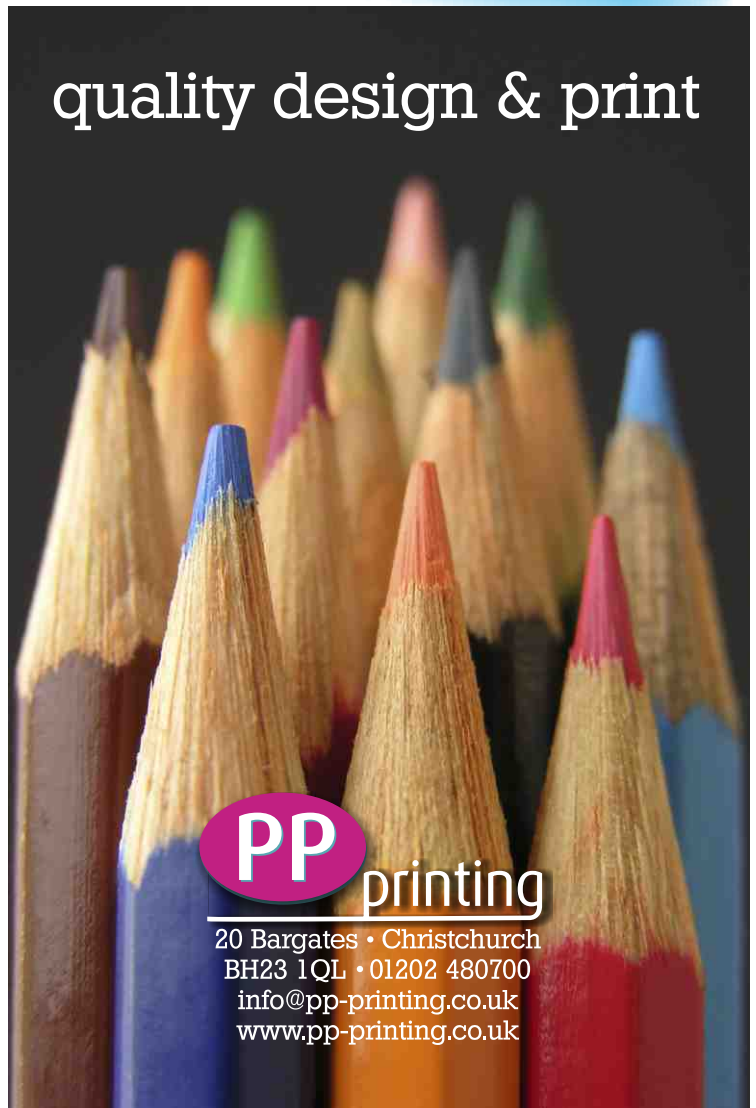
Tell us your news

Chamber Chat is all about Christchurch businesses small and large. If you are a Member of the Christchurch Chamber of Trade & Commerce and have news you are happy to share, please do tell us.

If you have a contribution you would like to make to the next edition, then contact us on richard@pp-printing.co.uk

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Our training courses giving excellent practical help once again!

The Chamber has been working with the Christchurch BID to provide a range of heavily subsidised courses identified as needed by our members. This meant that they were able to choose from a range of relevant, practical topics in the very comfortable surroundings of the Captains Club Hotel, with excellent professional tutors. And because the courses were subsidised by the Chamber, the cost was just £15 for a half day course and £30 for a full day including refreshments which was an amazing bargain for our members and BID levy payers!

The courses included a sell-out Social Media Marketing for smaller businesses, which was led by Claire Sutton who is a national trainer in this area and has much experience with large national companies as well as those like our delegates. Those attending had nothing but praise for Claire's training and one comment was "Really made me realise that there is so much more potential in social media which we should be exploring!"

The local highly qualified company – 1st Response Training – ran a First Aid for Mental Health, which is a regular course for the Chamber to offer. In these stressful days it is easy to overlook the importance of good mental health for employees to provide their best.

In addition, Jo Polden from 1st Response also ran the ever-popular Emergency First Aid at Work which provided the QA Level 3 Award covering every aspect of what might happen at work or elsewhere! As Jo says "We are pleased to teach all the important aspects of First Aid, such as CPR, treatment of injuries but it is good too to show everyone how to use a defibrillator which can be truly life-saving"

Yvonne Phillips of Olyvetree HR ran three courses on HR covering Contracts of Employment, Disciplinary Procedures and Managing Absences. These subjects can be especially complex for small businesses who don't have the benefit of their own HR department and can feel vulnerable in managing staff when things are not going so well.

So, if you are not a Chamber Member yet or you haven't opted in as a BID Levy-Payer then sign up and you can grab yourself a place on one of these excellent courses with great trainers at an incredibly great price when the Chamber runs the next tranche of them!



From Portakabins to the Captain's Club

Over the years, I've delivered training in a wide variety of settings – one particularly unforgettable day involved teaching in a Porta kabin on scaffolding in the pouring rain and howling wind! So, when I was recently invited to deliver a First Aid for Mental Health course and an Emergency First Aid at Work course for the Chamber at the beautiful Captains Club, I couldn't help but smile. What a contrast!

There are many reasons I love what I do, not least of which is that I get to talk all day *and* get paid for it – anyone who knows me will confirm, I do love a good chat! But more importantly, I get to share knowledge and skills in areas that truly matter.

During the Mental Health course, we explored how to identify and support individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, or simply finding life a little overwhelming. We focussed on stress, something we all experience from time to time, but which can have a serious impact on our health and wellbeing when it becomes long-term. The group of lovely ladies attending the course were fantastic – open, engaged, and ready to start meaningful conversations. I truly believe they left feeling more confident in their ability to not only support others but also improve their own work-life balance.

The First Aid course was also incredibly well attended. The life-saving skills we covered are essential, and I was delighted with the positive feedback from everyone involved. It's always rewarding to know more people are now equipped with the knowledge and confidence to step in during an emergency.

From muddy porta cabins to riverside venues, every training session has its own story – but this week was certainly one for the memory books.

Jo Polden, First Response Training

Gold for Bridge Health & Wellbeing at the Christchurch Business Awards

Family-run Bridge Health & Wellbeing in Christchurch, Dorset, is delighted to have won Gold in the Health, Beauty & Wellbeing category of the Christchurch Business Awards 2025.

Organised by Marketing West, the Christchurch Business Awards celebrate the best local businesses across Christchurch, supporting and encouraging the growth and development of SMEs that contribute to our vibrant local economy.

The Christchurch Awards first took place in 2022, with Bridge Health & Wellbeing winning New Business of the Year. In 2023, the company scooped the Outstanding Business of the Year award. In 2024, Bridge Health & Wellbeing won My Favourite Business Gold and Silver Family Business of the Year. Since 2022, the awards have received over 500 entries.

The awards ceremony, which took place on May 8th, was well attended by companies and organisations from across Christchurch. Judges praised Bridge Health & Wellbeing's impressive growth over the last few years, as well as their continued investment in the business, employment of local people, and involvement with local charities and events. This year, the company is supporting Chill Dorset, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing sea swimming courses for people over 18 with long-term health conditions.

"It is great to be back at the business awards," co-founder Louise O'Connell said in her acceptance speech. "Christchurch is a fantastic community, and you can see that, despite the challenges, Christchurch is thriving with so many small businesses winning awards today."

Thank you to our brilliant team and everyone who nominated and supported us. We love working with our clients and other businesses around Christchurch. The community has been so supportive since we opened our doors in 2019."

A sponsor of the awards, Bridge Health & Wellbeing proudly presented certificates to the Excellence in Customer Service winners – Guardhouse Sports, Bournemouth Airport Transfers, Christchurch Accounting and Reign Jewellers.

From their state-of-the-art clinic on Bridge Street, Christchurch, Bridge Health & Wellbeing provides physiotherapy, chiropractic, sports massage and rehabilitation services, and Pilates, yoga, and other wellbeing classes. To find out more or book your appointment, visit www.bridgehw.com, call 01202 473800, or email info@bridgehw.com.



And the winner is....

Hosted by Marketing West, Christchurch Business Awards recognises local businesses from cafes and tearooms to wellbeing and new companies making an impact.

The full list of winners can be seen below.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Reign Jeweller and Watches
Christchurch Accounting
Bournemouth Airport Transfers
Gold: Guardhouse Sports

CASUAL DINING

Gold: The Priory Restaurant-Café-Cocktail Bar
Gold: Bistro My Way

FAMILY BUSINESS

Meram Kitchen
Muir-Chapman Hairdressing
Tony Hair
Denisons Estate Agents

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

MoJo Chiropractor
Gold: Urban Health
Gold: Bridge Health & Wellbeing

MY FAVOURITE BUSINESS AWARD

Gold: Christchurch Derma Spa
Gold: MAW

GREEN – ECO

Christchurch Repair Café
Gold: Eco Sustainable

B2B

4 C Marketing
Autism Unlimited
Gold: Pro2col

NEW BUSINESS

Honey Cake Patisserie GOLD
Little Treasures Village GOLD

INDEPENDENT

Oakwood IMC
The Organised Zone
Gold: Fika – Skandi Coffee Co
Gold: Guardhouse Sports

INNOVATION

Gold: Aerial Ashes

COMMUNITY

Baby Mama No Drama
Gold: Christchurch Food Bank
Gold: Christchurch Carnival

BEST PLACE TO WORK

1ST Response Training
Gold: HG Walker
Gold: Christchurch Care

CAFE / TEAROOM

Tides Café
Cuckoo Coffee Bar
Gold: The Castle Pantry at Highcliffe Castle

Chamber hosts BCP Cabinet Member in frank and friendly discussion

As part of the Chamber's remit to lobby on behalf of its members, we invited Councillor Richard Herrett to our Executive Committee meeting in March. Cllr Herrett is BCP Council's Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations, a portfolio that encompasses parking and the High Street, amongst many other responsibilities.

Of course, parking is an ongoing issue in Christchurch. Cllr Herrett was questioned on the recent increases in charges, the availability of spaces, in particular long term parking which is so valuable for those of us who work in the town centre. Cllr Herrett explained that he was part of a BCP Council Team working on a long term strategy for parking. He also said that with a doubling of car ownership in 40 years, it was essential that we planned for alternative means of transport to take the pressure off the roads and car parking by cycling and public transport. The issue of the proposed changes to parking in Purewell, in particular, was discussed at length, with Chamber committee members voicing the concerns of Purewell businesses.

The meeting was timely as it co-incided with the recent raise in parking charges. Cllr Herrett was frank in his statement that "There is no such thing as free parking", and explained that the cost of providing and maintaining car parks took up a huge part of BCP Council budget. He was also quite frank about the state of BCP Council's financial position, which has made the news for quite some time.

Tourism was also discussed, Cllr Herrett emphasised that the BCP Council would continue to work with the Destination Management Board as well as the Christchurch BID and Christchurch Town Council. As tourism is so vital to Christchurch economy, the issue of parking availability for coaches has long been a cause close to the Chamber's heart and the possibility of Christchurch gaining "Coach Friendly Status" was discussed in detail, with Cllr Herrett assuring the Committee of his support and practical help.

As the meeting drew to a close, it was agreed that the Chamber would be consulted on these issues and more moving forward. President Tim Lloyd thanked Councillor Herrett for taking the time to discuss and explain BCP Council's position, and for listening to and discussing the concerns of our members.



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