



BEDFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2024

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December

*Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit*





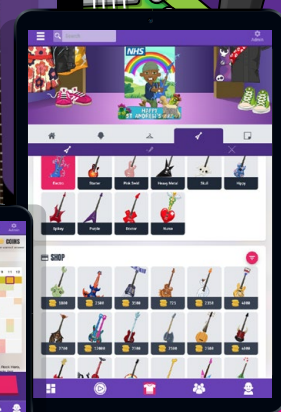
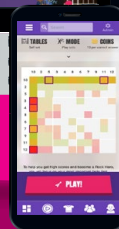
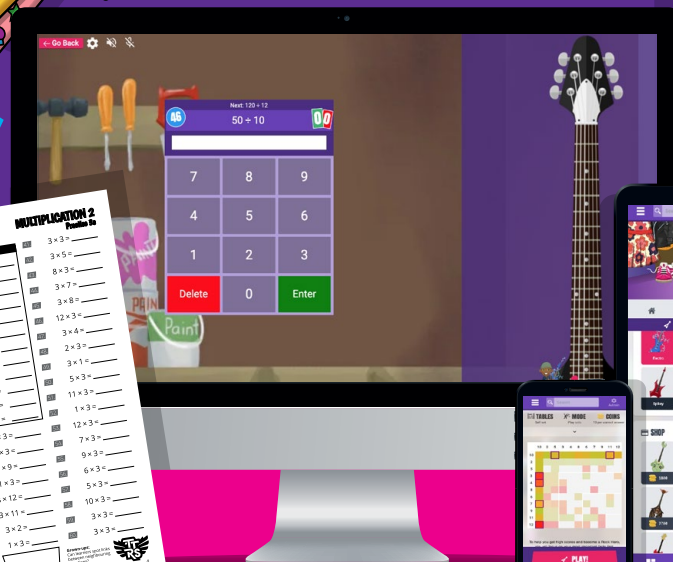
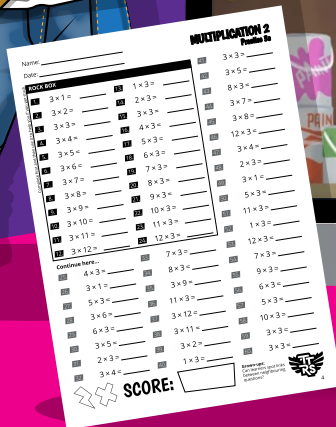
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# *Welcome to the* **BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2024**

These awards are presented by the Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit on behalf of Bedford Borough Council and are sponsored by many local companies and organisations.

They recognise the numerous and varied achievements of individuals and groups performing in local sports. They are not necessarily awarded for individual prowess, but also aim to reward the loyal, selfless work that enables others to experience enjoyment and fulfilment in sports and physical activity.

In recognition of the wide diversity in size, profile and resources available to many clubs, our stated aim is that individual differences shall be taken into account when judging the merit of each case, and that all nominations are afforded an equal chance of winning.

In order to recognise the wide range of talent and dedication to sport that we have here within the Borough, as many nominations as possible were invited from local clubs, schools, county governing bodies and members of the public. The merits of each individual or group application were judged according to the criteria listed under each category heading, and prizes awarded to each category winner.

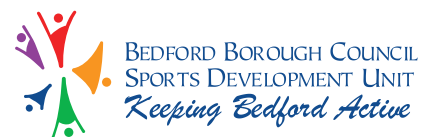
We sincerely hope that you have a pleasant evening and continue to enjoy your sporting experience within the Borough.

**Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit**

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## History of the Awards

The Bedford Sports Awards have been running now for 29 years. The awards were initiated in 1995 by Fred Wooding, the then President of the Bedford Local Sports Council, when Fred offered a Silver Cup as a perpetual Trophy for the awards.

The event was supported by the Local Sports Council, later to become “Active Bedford”, who have worked in partnership with the Borough Council Sports Development Team over the years on a wide range of local initiatives.

The awards have grown from a first attendance of 14 people and only one category to what they are today and are now an established and high-profile part of the Boroughs sporting calendar.

The many trophies now on offer are engraved with the names of all the previous winners and show the extraordinary level of talent we have in the Borough. It is interesting to see the names of some of the junior winners subsequently engraved on the senior awards cups as they progress!

Over the years, the awards have recognised the success of 1000s of local people from World and Olympic Champions like Paula Radcliffe, Tim Foster, Gail Emms and Etienne Stott to the equally inspirational community volunteers, coaches, clubs teams and schools, all of whom have inspired and supported the Bedford Borough community to increase their participation in sport and physical activity.

### CALLING BEDFORD ATHLETES, BE PART OF THE LARGEST INDEPENDENT ATHLETE SUPPORT SCHEME IN THE UK

The GLL Sport Foundation offers UK wide memberships and financial awards to talented athletes in Bedford, helping aspiring athletes to reach their goals and realise their sporting potential. To meet the minimum criteria, you should be a Nationally ranked athlete and member of a Regional squad or place in the Top 8 Regionally within your sport.



**APPLICATIONS OPEN:** 20 December 2024 –20 February 2025 visit [gllsportfoundation.org](https://gllsportfoundation.org) for more information.



## Meet the Judges

The judges are drawn from a range of local and County organisations associated with sport and physical activity together with representatives of our sponsors, partners and local coaches. Our intention has been to recruit a diverse selection of judges from several different areas of expertise in order to help us ensure that the process remains as representative as possible.

**Derek Batchelor**

President of Badminton England  
and President of the Bedfordshire  
County Badminton Association

**Lila Begum**

Senior Equality, Diversity  
and Inclusion Officer,  
Bedford Borough Council

**Tor Caldwell**

Creative Content Executive,  
Times Tables Rock Stars

**Howard Darbon**

Ex-Chair of Sports Bedford

**Andrew Holland**

General Manager at Kempston  
Pool, Better/GLL

**Richard Kerr**

Sport and Physical Activity Skills  
Hub Manager, CIMSPA

**Sarah Long**

Sales and Marketing Manager,  
Manor Hospital, part of the Circle  
Health Group.

**Aisleen McCaul**

Health Wise Coordinator,  
Healthwise Bedford, GLL

**Gill Morrow**

Senior Relationship Manager,  
Children & Young People  
Be Active

**Dr Robert Oakley OBE DL**

Past Chairman,  
Bedford Sports Foundation

**Tim O'Leary**

Treasurer, Rotary Club of  
Bedford Park

**Jen Pierce**

Community Engagement Lead,  
Times Tables Rock Stars

**Dave Randall**

Sports Tutor & Football Academy  
Head Coach, Bedford College

**Kelly Rolfe**

Partnership Development  
Manager, Bedford Borough School  
Sport Partnerships

**Johnathan Rudland**

Senior Relationship Manager -  
People, Be Active

**Jan Schofield**

President, Bedford Physical  
Education Old Students'  
Association

**Deborah Shrimpton**

Community Engagement and  
Social Action Support Officer,  
Bedford Borough Council

**Brian Stanbridge**

Ex-Chair of Bedfordshire  
Canoeists Association

**Richard Tapley**

Manager for Sports Development  
and Leisure Bedford Borough  
Council

**Mark Thompson**

Chair of Rotary Club of Bedford  
Park Youth Committee

**Laura Waller**

Public Health Principal, Healthy  
Weight, Bedford Borough Council

**Stuart Wilson**

Senior Lecturer in Sport  
Development and Management,  
University of Bedfordshire

## How does the Judging work?

The judges are aware that there is a very wide diversity in the size, profile and resources available to many local clubs, individuals and teams. All these differences are taken into account when the judging takes place. Nominations from all local clubs / teams and sports have an equal chance of winning!

It is essential for the credibility of the awards that the judging is as fair, neutral and transparent as possible. The judges looked at each award category in turn and marked each nominee against the specified criteria for that award. At the end of the marking for each category the total from each judge is added together and the nominee with the highest mark wins.

Judges who are members of, belong to, or have strong associations with any particular club/individual/school, are not able to vote for them and an average is taken from the remaining judges for their score.

## Support for Local Sports Clubs

Local Sports clubs and volunteers are vital to the provision of sport in Bedford Borough and in partnership with several local and national organisations we can support you in a number of ways.

### Looking for the latest safeguarding support for both adults and children.

Be Active are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and adults by working to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all in Bedfordshire. If you need guidance for best practice at your club or organisation find out more via the Be Active website and sign

up to our welfare newsletter here:



<https://www.beactivebeds.co.uk/sign-up-to-our-newsletter>

<https://www.beactivebeds.co.uk/safeguarding>

### Help sustain your sports club/organisation to thrive.

We understand that clubs and organisations need support in different ways. Be Active's universal offer could help your organisation or club improve your facilities, help with your governance or support with funding for new opportunities for people to be more active?



<https://www.beactivebeds.co.uk/universal-offer>

### Register your activity, session or club on the brand new Be Active Activity Finder.

Looking for a way to tell more people about your activity, session or club? Register your session on the new Be Active Activity Finder which will not only show on this website but lots of other activity finders on many other websites.



[www.beactivebeds.co.uk/activity-finder](http://www.beactivebeds.co.uk/activity-finder)

### Upskill your coaches and volunteers with the latest training including First Aid and Safeguarding.

Be Active offer a wide range of workshops and training opportunities for all in Bedfordshire. These include First Aid, Safeguarding, Club Welfare Officer training as well as other training courses around physical activity and Unconscious Bias training.



<https://www.beactivebeds.co.uk/courses>

### Need support and guidance around running a club or organisation.

Access a wide range of tools, guidance and resources that cover all aspects of running a sports club or group – Sport England's Buddle resources are free, bitesize and simple to use. They also offer training and workshops all free of charge too.



<https://buddle.co/>

### Does your sports club or organisation work with Young People?

Sported are the UK's largest network of community groups supporting half a million young people to overcome barriers to reach their full potential. Sported's role is to empower the local heroes running these groups by providing much-needed professional expertise,

resources and operational support, free of charge, to help their group survive and thrive.



<https://sported.org.uk>



## Award Categories

The judges have received a great amount of detail on each nominee, highlighting their significant efforts and achievements in a wide range of sports. This evening is about recognising these nominees and enabling us all to see the huge commitment, talent and dedication of our local sports people.

Over the course of the evening the sponsors of each category will read out a list of all the nominees before announcing the winners. A brief outline of just some of the key facts relating to all of our nominees is presented on the following pages in the category order that the awards will be announced this evening:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Club of the Year</b> Sponsored by Be Active</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Club / Group Award</b> Sponsored by Better and GLL Sports Foundation</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Primary School of the Year</b> Sponsored by Times Tables Rock Stars</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secondary School of the Year</b> Sponsored by Sports Development Unit</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Young Volunteer of the Year</b> Sponsored by Bedford Physical Education Old Students' Association</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Junior Disability Sports Personality of the Year</b> Sponsored by Gale Family Trust</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Junior Personality of the Year</b> Sponsored by Rotary Club of Bedford Park</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Team of the Year</b> Sponsored by University of Bedfordshire</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coach of the Year</b> Sponsored by the Bedford College Group</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Person Award</b> Sponsored by Bedford Sports Foundation</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unsung Hero</b> Sponsored by the Harpur Trust</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult Disability Sports Personality of the Year</b> Sponsored by Manor Hospital, part of Circle Health Care</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult Personality of the Year</b> Sponsored by Jewson Partnership Solutions</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Service to Sport</b> Sponsored by Bedford Borough Council</li> </ul>	

## Nominations for **Club of the Year**



### **Bedford Harriers Athletics Club**

Bedford Harriers has had many successes in local events such as the Three Counties Cross Country League, with third place for both the Overall Team and the Ladies Team. Nora Haggart is the 2024 World Champion Standard Distance Duathlete for the female 65-69 age group and also competed for Team GB in the Age Group Marathon World Championship in Sydney. Ed Castro took second place in the individual event at the 2024 World Triathlon Age Group Championships in Torremolinos in Spain, and third place in the mixed team relay. Ed also competed in the European Triathlon Championships in Vichy, France. The Club offers a range of programmes such as the Beginners Group for new runners and Couch to Sprint for those new to triathlon.



### **Bedford Hockey Club**

Bedford Hockey Club's strength is the range of hockey it offers, in terms of age and performance level. The juniors always put in impressive performances at local tournaments, entering multiple teams at U18, 10 and 12 with the U14, 16 and 18s entering the England Hockey Cup Competition. The Club continues to demonstrate success at all team levels, with most of the 14 adult squads, from development to national league, finishing mid or high table, the Men 7s Team finishing top. The Women's Over Team 55s finished Tier 2 Silver medallists in the English Hockey National Championship and twelve players received national Master's caps with individuals representing England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.



### **Bedford Park Rangers Football Club**

The Bedford Park Rangers under 15's Thunders Team were crowned champions of Division 3, the under 13's Thunder Team were crowned champions in Division 1 and the under 10's Storm Team won a Bedfordshire Mini-Soccer League Tournament. Bedford Park Rangers Football Club are based at Mowsbury Park and Mark Rutherford School and are constantly fundraising to make the club bigger and better for the children. They have hardship funds, so every child has the opportunity to play football locally.



### **Bedford Thunder Basketball Club**

Bedford Thunder Basketball Club Men's Basketball program competes in the National League (NBL) & Herts Basketball League (HBL). Training twice weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the season while hosting NBL home matches on Saturdays and HBL home matches on Tuesdays at Bedford Academy. Bedford Thunder Basketball Club remain undefeated in the National Basketball League Conference up until the 15 November. The Thunder and the Hoopers have already played in one local derby this season; the Thunder prevailing 89-68 in the National Cup, which was also first game of the season back in September. The Thunder were knocked out in the next round by Cambridge Cats.

### **Bedford Wheelchair Racing**

Bedford Wheelchair Racing has developed significantly during the past twelve months. Its membership has more than doubled, it has achieved great success in the summer track season, two members have been on the England Athletics talent development programme for future Paralympians, one member has been awarded a Greenwich Leisure Foundation award, and three members who race regularly have improved their personal best performances in several track events. Three members were selected to participate for their country to participate in the School Games held at Loughborough.



## Nominations for Club of the Year



### Bedfordshire Golf Club

Bedfordshire Golf Club host the County Junior Girls Academy program with over 20 children attending 8 one day coaching sessions followed by chips and drinks; Active Adults (promoted by the local authority) 8 week courses run regularly by our Head Pro and Girls Golf Rocks and Get into Golf programs which are successfully run by their team of pros.

Bedfordshire Golf Club also run Women on Par events (26 new players this year, doubling previous year playing a Texas scramble with experienced players on Academy course) followed up with free coaching clinic and discounted green fees. A Rookie Schools event hosted by the club attracted over 40 children playing on our Academy short course. Bedfordshire Golf Club are proud to have Junior golfers representing their Club, County and England Golf.



### Kempston Hammers Cricket Club

Kempston Hammers has 2 Adults Team; Kempston Hammers First XI who competed in Bedfordshire League 1 and finished as runners up and Kempston Hammers 2nd XI who won the League in the Bedfordshire Division 3. The club also run a number of junior initiatives including the All-Stars Program (for ages 3-5) and Dynamo Girls Cricket (for ages 7-10). Their Junior Cricket Under 9's participated in the Bedfordshire Youth Competitions - U9 Northwest 2024, Junior Under 11's participated in the Bedfordshire Youth Competitions - Development U11 Northwest 2024, Junior Under 13's were in the Bedfordshire Youth Competitions - Development U13 Northwest 2024 and the Kempston Hammers Junior Under 15's participated in Bedfordshire Youth Competitions - U15 Development Northwest Friendlies 2024. Finally, they have just relaunched Women's' Cricket with their Women's 1st XI.



### McGowan Muay Thai

McGowan Muay Thai offers junior classes from 6 years old and youth classes for teenagers. On top of their wide range of classes for adults from beginners to mixed ability they also offer sparring sessions. McGowan Muay Thai has multiple coaches with various accolades and success within the sport as well as a strength and conditioning coach and nutritionist who work closely with the members when needed. The club has had success with Liam Cunningham - Isla British title, diamond fight British title, World Boxing Council European title ranked 10th the world and Callum Marriott area title holder and Junior Champion. McGowan Muay Thai has successful inter-clubs links allowing children and beginners opportunity to gain confidence within the sport.



### Riverside Tennis Club

Winter 2023/24 and Summer 2024 season saw a record 21 teams represent Riverside Tennis Club in the Men's, Ladies, Mixed and Vets categories in the Bedfordshire County Tennis League. This participation level demonstrates the growth and development of Riverside Tennis Club, re-enforces their focus on "Inclusivity" and supports their claim to be "The Premier Club in Bedfordshire". Not only have they seen record participation levels, but they have also achieved some very significant team and individual success in the past 12 months at a county, regional, national and international level in junior, adult and disabled categories. The club's "No Limits" Disability Tennis Programme continues to champion access to tennis and supports their mission to be an Inclusive Club where all ages and abilities are welcome.



### Shortstown Rangers Football Club

There have been many achievements from the Shortstown Rangers FC this year, with 5 out of 9 teams winning or runners up at tournaments. U12's Dolphins won the League in their first season as a newly established team. U12's Sharks were runners up in the League Cup, with one of the team members winning the Player of the Match Award, as voted by cup officials. Having two teams finish top of the league and a cup runner up is a massive achievement, the club organised an open bus tour around the town, which was highly memorable for all involved. Shortstown Rangers FC also had the top three goal scorers in the League and ran a successful two-day tournament, attended by 1500 participants.

## Nominations for **Community Club / Group Award**



### **Bedford and Great Denham parkruns**

There are 4 parkruns within Bedford, having started with one and gradually grown to include Bedford Parkrun and Junior Parkrun and Great Denham Parkrun and Junior Parkrun. In total, 33,488 participants have completed one of the courses, with over 700 running every week. Every week, at least 10 new starters try out walking or running the course. The parkruns are for walkers, runners, joggers, couch-to-5k starters, New Years resolution starters, marathon runners and everyone in between. Some are over 70, some junior park runners are just 5 years old and running 2000 times their own body length! Parents take part, but so do volunteers who use the marshalling and organising to get out and mingle with their community.



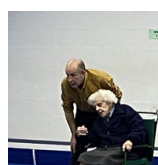
### **Bedford Blues Family - Rugby**

The Bedford Blues Family consists of the volunteers of Bedford Junior Blues, Friends of the Blues, Followers Association, Former Players, the charitable arm of the Blues Foundation and Bedford Blues Rugby Club. The various groups have created the Blues Family to ensure a joined-up approach to providing the best opportunities to engage the local population in either playing, learning through, taking part in and watching rugby. Bedford Junior Blues is the 5th largest youth Rugby Union Club in England and offers rugby for all school age children from U5 to U18 and Blues Foundation do fantastic work in the community with children from a variety of backgrounds.



### **Bedford Community Table Tennis Club**

Bedford Community Table Tennis Club has significantly enhanced sport and physical activity in the community by fostering inclusivity and promoting table tennis for all ages. With over 90 members aged 8 to 80, they run sessions at multiple venues, offering opportunities for casual play, structured coaching, and league participation. Their initiatives include tailored programs for juniors, inclusive sessions for seniors, and active outreach that welcomes newcomers. By creating a vibrant, supportive environment, Bedford Community Table Tennis Club has improved physical and mental wellbeing, built social connections, and nurtured talent, firmly embedding itself as a strong club of Bedford community's sporting life.



### **Bridgman Bowls Club**

Based in Harrold, Bridgman Bowls Club is open to the local community and surrounding areas seven days a week to all ages and all abilities with free coaching sessions for new players. The Club offers Indoor Bowls, October to April and Outdoor Bowls May to September. Two local care homes close to Bridgman Bowls Club attend every week free of charge to play bowls with tea and biscuits provided by two members who give up their free time to help them with wheelchair and mobility. Bridgman Bowls Club is very well supported by all members and they fundraise to help send their disabled bowlers overseas to play in World Championships.



### **Canoe Trail Adventure School – Water Sports and Adventurous Activities**

Canoe Trail's Adventure School offers high quality outdoor activities to over 5,000 young people from 5 to 18 years old each year. Participants enjoy and develop across sports including canoeing and kayaking, stand up paddleboarding (SUP), climbing, high ropes, raft building and are offering progressive sessions with NGB qualifications. Many of the participants access the sporting and physical activities through HAF (Holiday Activities and Food), after school clubs and school enrichment days, through local charities, Fun 4 Young People, Bedford Blues Foundation and Carers in Bedfordshire. Participants receive qualifications, certificates and the Adventure school record card helping to build life skills, confidence and self-belief.



## Nominations for **Community Club / Group Award**



### **Deaf Gentle Fit Club, Access Bedfordshire**

As a deaf charity, Access Bedfordshire made a significant impact by providing accessible fitness opportunities for the Deaf and hard of hearing community. Their weekly Deaf gentle fitness classes offer inclusive exercise and promote physical well-being for people of all levels of fitness and physical ability. They are breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of community through their classes. By offering accessible fitness options, Access Bedfordshire are empowering Deaf individuals to lead active and healthy lives. Their classes contribute to the overall health and mental well-being of the Deaf community.



### **Edusports – Multi Sports**

Edusports have helped to promote and increase multi sports participation at a community level. They have got record numbers within their paddle squad and are currently investigating and researching how to attract more children who can get involved in accessing these sporting opportunities. Two of their main programmes this term has seen a great increase in numbers – Adventure Xtreme and Paddle Squad. Additionally, the numbers of young people who have been joining across the school holidays have also risen as children have wanted to return regularly for more fun and games, whilst also getting great Instruction, from instructors who keep sessions safe, enjoyable & fun whilst ensuring learning all at the same time!



### **Embrace – Swimming**

The Embrace Charity delivers a range of services to people living with complex disabilities, finding ways to allow the whole family to enjoy living life their way. Their Family Swim sessions have fully accessible hydrotherapy pools with hoists in the pool and changing areas at both St John's School and Ridgeway Schools. The whole family is welcome (extended family too... they have had four generations in the pool together at one time!), as are carers if they are needed to support the family. Embrace staff are available to help with transitioning in and out of the pool if it is needed, and a lifeguard is always on duty.




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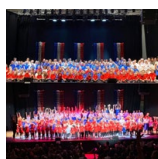
## Nominations for **Community Club / Group Award**



### **Hawaa Empower – Hiking and Bike Riding**

Since December 2023, Hawaa Empower have organised various fitness events to promote physical activity. Key events include the Barton Hills Hike (80 participants), Dunstable Downs & Ashridge Hike (£9,200 raised), Men's Kinder Scout Trek (67 men, £20,000 raised), and the Ready Steady Ride event, where 55 children took part in a bike/scooter ride.

Additionally, male and female-only archery sessions and a self-defence workshop have been arranged, empowering women and men through sport. These activities have promoted fitness, community engagement, and wellbeing, benefiting both men and women.



### **Inspire Performing Arts**

Since opening in 2017, Inspire Performing Arts now has over 300 children aged 3-17 plus adults attending weekly evening classes across four different locations in Bedford.

They also provide extracurricular clubs in local schools. Inspire Performing Arts Street Dance, Musical Theatre, Contemporary and Acro. Inspire Performing Arts run whole school workshops and teach dance in the curricular meaning children who may not be able to afford a class outside of school get the chance to dance. Inspire Performing Arts competition dancers have placed 1st in solos becoming the East Coast Champion of their age category. Inspire Performing Arts were also nominated for Best Dance School in the North and East at The National Entertainment Awards.



### **Meirinkan Bedford Kendo Club**

Meirinkan Bedford Kendo Club has been in operation for thirteen years in the Borough, led throughout that time by Matt Marley Sensei. In recent years the club has introduced Kendo Fitness as part of the Borough's Active Adults Programme and branched out to youth development with children as young as 12 taking up the art for first time. The club has

sent two Bedfordshire residents to train with Team GB and other representatives' teams to competitions across the UK, representing Bedfordshire against international players. Meirinkan Bedford Kendo Club work with other clubs across England to arrange joint training, share practice and socialise with a multicultural community.



### **No Barriers at Riverside Tennis Club**

The No Barriers Programme runs 15 sessions a week across a full range of disabilities for 90+ people including Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH), Visually Impaired, Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML), Wheelchair, Autism, Learning Disability and Down Syndrome sessions. They work with charities, day care centres,

schools, groups and individuals to provide the opportunity for people to learn, be active, socialise and have fun alongside a performance pathway for those who want to pursue the sport more.



### **Parkinson's UK Bedford and District Support Group**

Exercise is an important part of managing Parkinson's, an incurable, progressive neurological condition. Since the pandemic, Parkinson's UK in Bedford has evolved from a branch focusing heavily on fundraising, to a Support Group. This focuses on creating opportunities for local people with Parkinson's and their partners/carers to be more active

while having fun. Activities organised, funded and/or promoted by the Group specifically for local people with Parkinson's now include weekly table tennis sessions, boxercise classes, aquatic exercises, indoor bowls, Parkinson's exercise classes at the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre and free online exercise classes. The Group is an active, sociable, inclusive community.



## Nominations for **Community Club / Group Award**



### Priory Sailing Club

Priory Sailing Club provide opportunities for people in Bedford and surrounding areas to participate in water sports in a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment. Priory Sailing Club is a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) recognised Teaching Centre and was described as “inspiring” in their RYA inspection. Volunteer instructors provide weekly free training and advice for all levels and age groups in all weathers for members. An additional weekly training session has been designed to support increased participation in the sport by women. This has led to more women being active in the club on and off the water including the racing. Priory Sailing Club are also proud to have achieved “Community Amateur Sports Club” (CASC) status.



### Queen's Park Youth Cricket Club

Queen's Park Youth Cricket Club offers engaging cricket sessions for youth ages 6-18, fostering a passion for the sport. The club holds Friday evening tape ball sessions all year-round, lasting two hours and free of charge. Additionally, hard ball sessions run on Saturdays for two hours, with a reduced cost of £30 per session. Queen's Park Youth Cricket Club also participates in the Bedfordshire Youth League, fielding teams at U9, U11, U13, and U15. These programs provide young participants with the opportunity to develop cricket skills, play competitively, and enjoy the game in an inclusive, supportive environment. Queen's Park Youth Cricket Club operates under the umbrella of Faith in Queen's Park, offering cricket opportunities to participants of all backgrounds and abilities to encourage inclusivity in sports.



### Song Squad and Share a Smile – Dance & Movement

Lisa has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on the development of sport and physical activity in the local Bedford community. Song Squad offers a wide range of inclusive, fun and uplifting performing arts classes for children, which encourage physical activity but also the development of singing, dancing and acting skills. Share a Smile Singalong offers singing and movement sessions for pre-schoolers - but goes beyond just the participants in terms of reach and benefits, as the classes are hosted in local care homes. Residents therefore are exposed to the huge benefits of intergenerational contact and the stimulation of music and movement.



### Sparks Girls' Multisport

Sparks Girls Multisport was born in 2022 when founders Andy and Vicki couldn't find noncompetitive, girls-only, participation football sessions for their daughters. As established coaches in other sports, they decided to do it themselves. Sparks now provides Saturday multisport sessions for girls aged 6-10 with a focus on fun, friendship, confidence and participation. Sessions focus on ball skills, communication, body movement, fitness, working together and always finish with a fun team game. Nearly 25 girls from the Bedford area have now taken part in Sparks sessions. Andy and Vicki have been delighted to see older girls 'graduate' from us into competitive football, netball, cricket and athletics.



### Spiral Freerun – Parkour

Spiral freerun welcome anyone aged 4 years and over to come and take part. The Community Interest Company that settled into their new temporary home in the Harpur Centre in January 2024 have supported lots of local events including the Bedford River Festival where they welcome all people from all backgrounds to try freerunning. Based in the town centre they are looking to increase participation from a wide range of groups. Over the summer of 2024, more than 3,000 children took part in their workshops.

## Nominations for **Community Club / Group Award**



### **University of Bedfordshire's Community Exercise Clinic**

The University of Bedfordshire's Community Exercise Clinic is providing much needed exercise and physical activity support for community participants with neuromuscular, cancer, diabetes and obesity, dementia and/or cardiac conditions. The participants have said that it assists with not only their physical health but creates an extended social support network where they feel less isolated, more connected to the community and have improved hope about their recovery. These sessions have had a life-changing effect on the 70+ participants currently being supported by the clinic.



### **Verve Gymnastics**

Verve is a small club with a big heart, committed to reaching as many aspiring gymnasts as possible in the local community. This past year, they have doubled in size, now offering sessions to well over 100 participants a week. Verve now delivers a broad variety of sessions in house and through partnership with other likeminded partners. These include a large General Gymnastics programme, Artistic and Team Gym competitive squads, SEND, Adult, Aerial Silks, parties and Cheerleading. As a not-for-profit organisation, all money raised goes towards buying new equipment and subsidising outreach and participation. Verve partnered with FACES to pledge a free space per session to local children, who could not otherwise afford to participate in gymnastics.



### **Walking Hockey**

Walking Hockey has removed many of the boundaries preventing sectors of the local community from participating in the sport of hockey. Since its introduction six years ago, the group has had members of the community, across the age range, use this format to try hockey for the first time, others have returned to the sport after a significant period of time away, whilst some, who were faced with giving up playing the sport due to illness, injury or fitness levels, have discovered a form of the game that enables them to continue participation, benefiting their physical, mental and social wellbeing. Walking Hockey is affiliated to Bedford Hockey Club.







## Nominations for Primary School of the Year



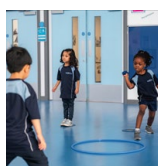
### Bromham C of E Primary School

Bromham C of E Primary School ensures that all pupils engage in at least thirty minutes of daily physical activity. Their PE curriculum provides Years 1-6 with two hours of PE per week, while Reception enjoys one hour. To promote active play beyond PE lessons, they offer organised sports activities every lunchtime, fostering an energetic and inclusive environment. Their wide range of free lunchtime clubs further encourages pupils to explore different activities, supporting physical well-being, teamwork, and resilience. This commitment to physical activity contributes to Bromham CofE Primary School pupils' development and sets a foundation for lifelong fitness and health.



### Great Denham Primary School

The level of physical activity offered by Great Denham Primary School is second to none, the P.E. team work over and above to ensure the sports on offer are readily available and tailored for all. The children are both given the opportunities and encouragement to regularly take part in a variety of physical sports, this includes clubs before and after school as well as regular P.E. sessions during the day, both as part of the curriculum and supervised activities during break and lunch periods. The variety of sport offered is designed to suit all abilities, ranging from low level physical engagement up to athletics clubs, both on a local school and regional level for those more capable and competitive individuals.



### Great Ouse Primary Academy

Since the school opened in 2017 all pupils at Great Ouse Primary Academy have been regularly engaged in a wide range of physical activities including dance, swimming, martial arts, athletics and a variety of ball sports. Despite being relatively small (the current academic year is the first to have two forms in every year) Great Ouse Primary Academy has consistently punched above its weight in local sports competitions, for example in the last couple of years they have reached the county (2024) and regional (2023) finals in cricket. Great Ouse Primary Academy also allow several local sports groups to use its facilities, showing the school's commitment to making links with the local community as it grows.



### Hazeldene School

Hazeldene School is very focused on sport, they do daily wake up and shake sessions, together with regular brain breaks where the pupils engage in physical activity and have use of the outdoor gym and the trim trail every day. Hazeldene had a 'smooga' (Multi-Use Games Area) put in two years ago that is used daily. They have sporting activities on everyday both before and after school and every year group has swimming once a week and PE twice a week. Hazeldene School pupils also have use of the outdoor pool which they fundraised to have a roof put on it in 2022.



### Pinchmill Primary School

The whole of Pinchmill Primary School take part in two hourly sessions a week of physical activity. Physical activity is so important throughout the whole ethos of the school, that all pupils from the age 2 to 11 have tailored lessons that are 100% inclusive. The school supports the need for physical activity not just for lesson time but for appropriate movement breaks tailored to the needs of individual pupils. These breaks are timetabled, and children can choose from a variety of activities helping them refocus, regulate and get back on to track with their lessons. Every teacher supports this approach and it has had a major impact on improved behaviour and wellbeing.



## Nominations for Primary School of the Year

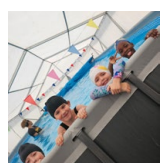
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### Scott Primary School

Scott Primary School engage all pupils in regular physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day in school. All children have at least 2 hours of sport a week and have regular activities to take part in at lunchtimes and break. There are a variety of activities that help develop pupil's skills. There are also opportunities to take part in extra curriculum sports and external competitions that the school always do really well by winning in including Football, Basketball and Netball. Scott Primary School aim to have everybody active and this is seen through the skill development at lunchtimes for all children across the school and the lessons weekly.

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### Springfield Primary School

Springfield Primary School have worked extremely hard to improve the engagement of all pupils across the school to take part in regular activity. New equipment has been purchased, playground painted for the children during break and lunchtimes and each class now has a bag of sports equipment available to them during the day. The school have employed a teacher to specifically work with the children in PE as well as training all staff to improve their knowledge of how PE/fitness can impact children's education. The profile of sport has significantly been raised in the last year, particularly as the school had a swimming pool added to the playground to enable the whole school to access swimming lessons not just Year 6 as per the national curriculum.

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### St John Rigby Catholic Primary School

Physical activity is extremely important at St. John Rigby. Alongside the P.E. curriculum, they have implemented the Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) programme to transform playtime into an explorative and creative outdoor experience (with den-building and tyre play being very popular!) and increase wellbeing through physical activity. St. John Rigby have installed an outdoor gym for KS2 pupils and Active All Fitness Boards in both playgrounds to improve fitness, co-ordination skills and confidence. Pupils participate in a 'Daily Mile' on the school field, 5-minute 'Keep Fit' at lesson transitions and 'Jumpstart Johnny' sessions. Staff run lunchtime clubs such as dance, messy play and cross-country.

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### Ursula Taylor C of E Primary School

Breaktimes are active whether on the playground, field or trim trail, with a wide selection of activities for lunchtimes lead by the Ursula Taylor Sports Leaders. The Sports Leaders have a say in sports that they would like to play at lunchtime and are involved in organising and leading many of the breaktimes activities. Ursula Taylor provides cross curricular lessons throughout the school – i.e. orienteering course with Maths and English tasks, 2 hours PE delivered to all children per week and have their own swimming pool, which helps deliver 2 weeks of swimming every year to the whole school from Reception to Yr 6. Ursula Taylor offers opportunities to all children regardless of gender – everyone is given equal opportunities.





## Nominations for Primary School of the Year



### Westfield Primary School

Currently Westfield Primary School offers daily morning clubs and after school activities for all pupils with the extended school day starting at 8am and finishing at 4pm throughout the week. The school offers a wide variation of sports, from dodgeball, rounders, cricket, netball and everyone must complete the daily mile while at school. Westfield Primary School have also incorporated sports leaders in Year 5 & 6 who help coordinate and officiate in events after school. The school offer high intensity sports as well as the low intensity sports, giving all children an opportunity to participate and build their confidence. Westfield Primary School also attend a wide variety of fixtures which are supervised by various staff.



### Wootton Primary School

Wootton Primary School offers a very wide range of opportunities for both boys and girls of all abilities and medical conditions to participate in a wide range of PE activities in and out of the school from tag rugby, cricket, football, tennis, this year the school took a group of children to Wimbledon to court number 1. The school have an adventure week where outside organisations come to the school offering different sports and activities including a wall climbing and an assault course. The school is very involved in the local community from events at local clubs, helping the local community both young and old.

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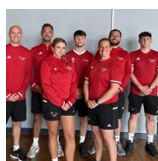


## Nominations for Secondary School of the Year



### Goldington Academy

Goldington Academy excels in providing its students with a wide array of opportunities to engage in high-quality physical education (PE) and extracurricular sports. The academy offers a diverse PE curriculum that encompasses various sports, allowing students to explore different activities and discover their passions. Beyond the classroom, Goldington Academy enriches student life through a vibrant selection of after-school sports clubs and activities. These programs encourage students to participate in sports outside of their regular PE classes, promoting a healthy lifestyle and enhancing teamwork and leadership skills. Goldington Academy have a dedicated PE staff that ensures students receive the guidance and support they need to thrive in their chosen sports.



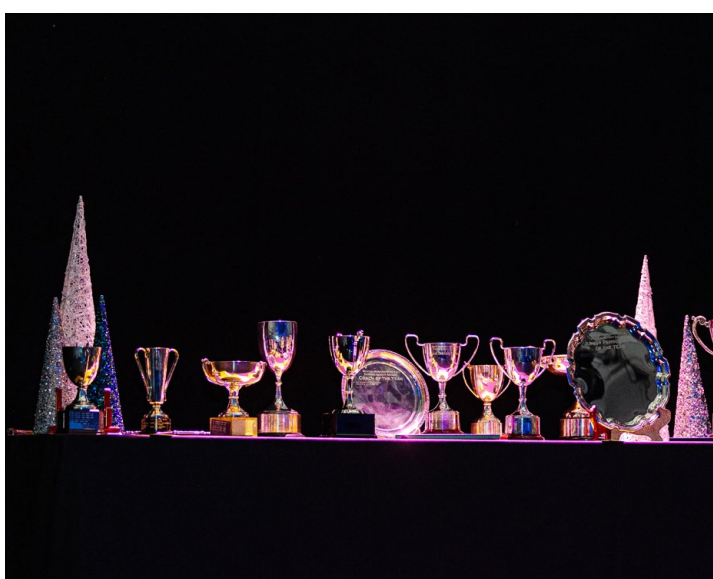
### Kempston Academy

Kempston Academy PE department offers a range of sports across Key Stage 3 giving students the opportunity to participate in 12 different sports across the school year. Including, but not exclusively; table tennis, rugby, flag football and dance. Students in Key Stage 4 have autonomy of the curriculum path that they take, either following a traditional sports route, where they participate in sports such as football and rugby. Or a varied sports route where they play sports including kin ball and badminton. The PE department participates in regular extra curricular sports, entering a range of team and individual sports through the schools sports partnership, but also entering county and national competition.



### Wixams Academy

For a small department with only 3 members of staff, Wixams Academy put on offer an extra-curricular club almost every single lunchtime and ensures that all year groups get the opportunity to participate in clubs or in fixtures, often with 4-6 fixtures a week in a range of different sports. Wixams Academy has factored in a unit focused on introducing students to more diverse sports such as Gaelic Football, Goal Ball and Kin Ball to encourage a greater participation and to promote disability sport. In addition, students are given the opportunity to be coached by external coaches to further inspire.







## Nominations for Young Volunteer of the Year

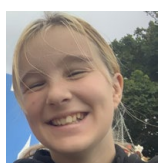
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### **Bodie Christison – Multi Sports**

Bodie has, at the young age of 13/14 volunteered a number of his weekends and school holidays to help benefit the lives of other children, helping in different activities with Edusports. Whilst he has been in the Edusports Instructor Academy his confidence has grown along with the standard of his instruction which has developed very well across the year. He is happy to volunteer with many different activities which Edusports run, some of which have been completely new to him, helping wherever he is needed.

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### **Layla Cooper – Dance**

Layla has been a student of the VyMy Dance & Fitness Dance School for years and, last year, expressed an interest in helping to assist. She has since become a valuable teaching assistant, helping in several clubs at her local primary school. Layla never fails to be on time and helpful, and she continues to train in dance to keep her technique strong. Prior to assisting, she was part of her primary school's competition squad. She now assists in that same class to help children achieve medal wins like she has. She is especially adept at working with shy key stage 1 pupils.

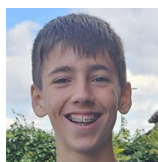
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### **Aidan Gray – Multi Sports**

Aidan has shown great commitment throughout this season since he was successful in getting into the Edusports Instructor Academy, which required him to fill in an application form and have an interview. His commitment to helping has made him really stand out as he has noticeably gained in confidence, especially as he was nervous about helping when he first started. Edusports have seen a major difference in his standard, ability, and confidence. He has spent many weekends and days volunteering during the school holidays and across the year helping with a number of activity days or sessions which Edusports may be running. He is also keen to help with tasks in different areas of the business, especially when it comes to buying new kit!

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### **Josh Hayes – Football**

Josh volunteers his time, 1-3 hours weekly in all weathers, to support his younger brother's football U10's team at Shortstown Rangers FC, a club that has grown massively over the past few years. He commits to being the referee for their matches, a role that no-one else wanted to volunteer for, as well as helping at training sessions. This involves arriving early to help set up the goals and equipment when playing at their home pitch, as well as refereeing the entire match with skill, fairness and professionalism. Josh also plays football himself, so he utilises the skills learnt as a player, and will provide positive feedback to other players.

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### **Sam Miller – Water Sports**

Sam is always the first to volunteer and has demonstrated great energy and drive to complete his silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. He has also completed a large number of paddlesport qualifications including PSRC (Paddlesports Safety and Rescue Course) and then the Paddlesports Instructor (PSI). Sam has also joined the Canoe Trail Team on white water days, acting as a volunteer on rescues and supporting other paddlers on a social and professional basis despite his young age. He takes time to develop bushcraft and climbing as part of wider love of outdoor activities. Sam also volunteers as an assistant Cub Scout leader helping young people develop outdoor skills.



## Nominations for Young Volunteer of the Year



### Manpriya Sira – Hockey

Over the past year, Manpriya has enhanced her coaching skills at Bedford Hockey club, earning the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. She led the U8s and U10s to victory in all county tournaments, remaining unbeaten. To support new players, she formed specialised groups, teaching fundamentals and fostering social skills, while introducing a weekly medal ceremony to recognise exceptional effort. Manpriya also umpired tournaments and organised the Bedford Hockey Club Juniors Tournament for two years. Additionally, she is fundraising for the new pitch and provides private coaching to young kids free of charge, boosting their confidence and skills.



### Arthur Surridge – Hockey

Arthur is just 14 and has been a member of Bedford Hockey Club since 2018. Arthur started volunteering as part of his Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award in September 2023, but found he enjoyed it so much he continued volunteering every Sunday morning for the past 2 seasons, helping the junior goalkeepers learn the skills they need. He is currently working towards his Silver Duke of Edinburgh. Arthur creates a genuine welcoming atmosphere for newcomers and is a role model for young players with his commitment both to the sport and to fair play.



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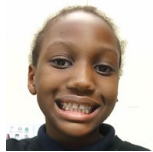
beactivebeds.co.uk



## Nominations for **Junior Disability Sports Personality of the Year**

### **Sean Chigumba – Wheelchair Racing and Basketball**

Sean is an exceptional sports person. Not only does he play wheelchair basketball in Milton Keynes but also enjoys wheelchair racing with Bedford and County Athletic Club. Sean has been selected for England Athletics training squad for talent development as a potential Paralympian and attends regular training sessions at Loughborough University, whilst also being on an England young basketball squad. His dedication cannot be faulted, he trains hard and races harder! Sean has set personal bests (and club records) for his age and classification in three different track events in Wheelchair Racing.



### **Hezekiah Corbin – Boccia**

Hezekiah has a unique technique in Boccia that won St John's School a lot of games in the Bedfordshire School Games. Hezekiah has spent time focusing on developing his skills and technique. At the School games tournament, the coach thought Hezekiah was magnificent, as he recognised one of the Teams, they were playing against were struggling so he gave them some tips to help during the match, and definitely deserves recognition.



### **Archie Freeman – Basketball**

Archie has shown great personal endeavour to overcome adversity and take part. Archie has a condition so rare (64 people in the world) it does not have a name yet it is 16p12.2 Reoccurring Microdeletion Syndrome. In simple terms this mean that Archie cannot retain information for a long period of time and it is degenerative. Alongside this he also has Autism Spectrum Disorder, Global Developmental Delay, Microcephaly and he is losing his eyesight. Despite all of this Archie has beaten the odds and continues to progress every week. When he first joined Bedford Thunder Basketball Club, his coordination (due to his condition) was average at best falling over frequently and unable to dribble the ball. He now is one of the strongest people in the group and wants to keep playing and does not let his disability stop him from playing with abled bodied athletes.



### **Torin Mcfarlane – Boccia**

Torin was the main reason why St John's School won the Bedfordshire School Games Tournament, he successfully got close to the Jack, and he was exceptional at his long-distance throws. Torin was committed to lunchtime clubs to practice this and to gain confidence and knowledge. At the boccia festival, Torin was excellent at landing the ball close the target. The biggest success for him was when we were losing one of the games early in the tournament he focused well and understood that we had to win this set to even have a chance of winning the game.

## Nominations for **Junior Personality of the Year**

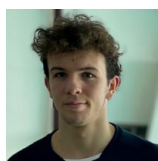
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### **Lola Bracey – Football**

Lola was nominated and won Bedfordshire FAs Lionesses award for her dedication to making a change in womens football. Lola has worked hard this year and continues to do so both on and off the pitch. This year after a 3 week trial Lola secured her spot in Tottenham Hotspurs under 12s Emerging Talent Centre, and travels to London on a Monday night, she then trains Tuesdays and Thursdays with her other local club Real Bedford Under 12s. She enjoys working hard and remains dedicated to her sport. At just 12 years old Lola continues to be an ambassador for equal access to football / sport in schools for all girls.

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### **Ed Carpenter – Water Polo**

Ed captained his School, Bedford Modern School at the English Schools Swimming Association where they won the U18 plate final in March 2024. He was top goal scorer (29 goals) in the Mens Division 2 National Conference League for the 2023/2024 season with Bedford Mens team. Ed was awarded the Most Valuable Player (MVP) for the U18 Eastern Region team and also MVP for the whole Division 2 Inter regional tournament on 19/20th October. Ed played for the GB U18 team at the Diapolo Tournament in Szetes Hungary in August 2024 and GB U18 Team at EU Nations Cup in Brno Czechia in October. He won a medal with the Bedford Men's team in the Herts League and also competed at the Ter Apel Waterpolo tournament with the Bedford mens 1st team.

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### **Hayden Clark – Football**

Hayden is a successful and dedicated defender, who is the U13 team captain at Shortstown Rangers FC. He is very committed, playing football for the team, as well as his school team. Hayden assisted Shortstown Rangers to progress to the League Cup Final. He rarely misses a match, training or tournament and will support and motivate his team to the best of his ability. At Shortstown Rangers FC 's Annual Awards Ceremony, he was the first to be awarded the Club Secretary Award, for his contribution to the club , and his consistent help at events such as the two-day tournament held annually. He is hard-working, always willing to develop further, will put his full effort into every game and is a role model to others.

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### **Lyla Danobrega – Steeplechase**

Lyla has received recognition from the National Governing Body for her achievements in the Under 17's Womens Steeplechase category. With a personal best of 5 minutes and 20 seconds she is 7th in the UK for U17 Women's Steeplechase. Her dedication is second to none and on top of her personal training sessions she also organises group workouts with like-minded athletes.

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### **Caleb Griffith – Tennis**

Caleb is currently in the top 10 in the UK for his age U12 group. He competes for U14, U16 and U18 Beds County representing Riverside Tennis Club. Caleb was a runner up in the Tennis Europe Junior Tour and won Doubles representing Great Britain. He was also runner up twice in National Competitions. On top of this Caleb got through to Wimbledon juniors where he got to the last 16 of U14 Boys and was invited to attend a Yonex experience coached by the Croatian coach Nick Horva. Caleb has shown he has the potential to play for his country but is also humble about his success, he cheers on his friends and he celebrates their successes as much as his own.





## Nominations for Junior Personality of the Year



### Lucas Gyau-Awuah – Football

Even at age 11, Lucas is already an incredibly skilled, successful and dedicated young footballer. He is very committed, playing at various levels for 3 teams: Shortstown Rangers (playing a year older - U13's), Bedford Academy (voted as Team Captain) and at Academy Level status with Rushden and Diamonds. He helped Shortstown Rangers progress to the League Cup Final where he was awarded the Player of the Match award, (voted by match officials). His last season stats for Shortstown as a midfielder include 30 goals and 20 assists. He rarely misses a match, training or tournament and will support his 3 teams to the best of his ability. As well as football, he is achieving very well academically in school and is a registered young carer.



### Sophie Harrison – Football

Sophie secured a 2-year contract for the Arsenal Ladies' U21 Women's Super League academy squad in 2023 and also represented England Women's U17s at the 2024 Euros in May where the team made the final and finished second overall. On top of this, Sophie coaches the Girl's Football Club at Bedford Modern School. Sophie divides her time between training at Arsenal and England with her A-Levels! She is leading a new initiative at BMS alongside the sports staff to open the conversation about women's health in sport – to support young female athletes to understand their menstrual cycle and not let it be a barrier to participation or performance.



### Callum Inkson – Gymnastics

Callum has had a very successful 2024. He was selected for the Great Britain Junior gymnastics squad, he won the 15/16yr category at the National Qualifiers for the British Championships in May (in the middle of his GCSEs!) and was selected to represent Great Britain at the Loulé World Cup in Portugal in October, where he won a silver medal in the Junior Men's competition and a bronze medal in the overall men's team final. Callum trains at the Milton Keynes Gymnastics Club, attends Great Britain Squad training weekends at Lilleshall National Sports Complex, whilst still in full time education at Bedford Modern School.

### Zach Lindsay-Clarke – Multi Sports

Zach is an all-round sportsman his interests being table tennis, football and cricket. He is part of Kempston's Boys' Brigade who were regional champions and were national finalist in table tennis in their league. He plays with many cricket and football teams, including Kempston Methodists cricket, plus local and school teams for football. He has gained entry to Kimberley Sports college and is studying sports and management at sixth form level and will pursue a career in the field of sport. He is now also a trained football referee and every weekend for the last few years he referees local club matches on Saturdays and Sundays for the local leagues.



### Rory Luddington – Sailing

Rory, age 11, represented Team GBR sailing in an optimist dinghy (GBR 6107) at Howth in Ireland during the summer. He has also competed in numerous international regattas in both the UK and overseas, including France, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium. In May he represented the East of England sailing optimists in the National Team racing event held at Oxford Sailing Club. Sailing requires a high degree of commitment. Rory has sailed almost every weekend this year and will do so over the winter being on the water for long days, only returning to shore when the light fails. All his available holiday is spent on the water, working with his coaches on his technique and endurance.

## Nominations for Junior Personality of the Year

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### Thaila-Jade Mason – Athletics

Thaila-Jade is talented in many Athletic disciplines , in Long Jump she is ranked 2nd in the UK U17's with a personal best of 5.92m. She came 1st in the English Schools Championships, 2nd in the Schools International v Scotland, Ireland and Wales, 2nd in the UK School Sports Championships and 1st in the South of England Indoor and Outdoor Championships. In Heptathlon Thaila-Jade is ranked 5th in the UK U17s with 4627 points, she came 2nd in the English Schools Heptathlon Championships and was selected for the Schools International Pentathlon. Finally in High Jump Thaila-Jade is ranked 10th in the UK with 1.65 metres as her personal best and came 3rd in the England Indoor Championships.

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### Harry Pybus – Hockey

This season Harry moved from Division 3 to the Premier Division playing for Bedford Hockey Club's 1st Team. Harry has also been accepted into the Cambridge Talent Academy, where he also attends coaching. Talent Academies are part of the England Hockey Development Pathway, which provide the training & skills required for the next step up, which would be selection into the England Age Group squads, which are the pinnacle of the England Hockey Talent System. Harry is a role model for other youngsters in the club, not only due to his on-pitch match performance, but also his work ethic, aiming to improve in any way possible through his commitment to training.

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### Ava Richings – Dance

Ava became East Coast Champion in Street Solo and Lyrical Solo at just 6yrs old . Along with solo competitions she also competes with dance partners, having recently been placed 1st, 3rd and 4th. Ava has now been awarded the status of dancing intermediate, and she was also awarded a nomination for under 10s dancer in the North Regional Entertainment Awards , which at only 6yrs old against all the other students in this region was a tremendous achievement . Ava is always willing to help students at Inspire Performing Arts and will always assist the teachers with anything they need. For such a small person, she has a massive heart and is one of the most loving children you will ever meet.

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### Caleb Schuricht – Water Sports

Caleb has recently started kayaking and performs his skills to an extremely high level. He has started to enter competitions in whitewater, having already been ranked up in terms of his division and is showing substantial progress. Caleb has undertaken his Paddle sport Safety and Rescue Course and is working towards becoming an instructor. He has also started to invest in kayak polo, another sport where he is doing exceptionally well. Caleb is part of the Edusports Instructor Academy, within this role, he is starting to help instruct other groups voluntarily building his skill and confidence, as well as helping at the Junior Paddle Squad sessions, therefore giving back to the group where he started in the sport.





## Nominations for **Junior Personality of the Year**



### **Sanav Sethi – Multi Sports**

At just 8 years old, Sanav has demonstrated extraordinary skills and dedication across multiple sports, earning significant achievements this year. In Table Tennis, he is ranked Number 1 by Table Tennis England in the U11 category, consistently competing against older players and is also doing well in local adult leagues. In Tennis, he became Bedfordshire County U8 runner-up and has won tournaments in Bedford, Ampthill, and Welwyn. His Cricket skills proved him to be the best bowler in his leagues. With commendations from coaches and teachers for his humility and determination, Sanav exemplifies excellence in sports and teamwork at this early age. His determination to improve is evident through his consistent attendance and effort, earning high praise from his coaches, who often describe him as a gifted athlete.



### **Bradley Wigg – Football**

Bradley is a dedicated and passionate young footballer, aged 13. He is very committed, playing at various levels for 3 teams including Shortstown, Woburn, and the Academy team GLK. He helped Shortstown Rangers progress to the League Cup Final and is one of the top league goal scorers. He rarely misses a match, training or tournament and will support his teams to the best of his ability. Bradley is recognised as a strong striker, with an exceptionally high goal-scoring record! Bradley contributes massively to the sport and team. He is passionate and dedicated and helps keep the team motivated and inspired.

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For further information: **[www.bpeosa.co.uk](http://www.bpeosa.co.uk)**



## Nominations for **Team of the Year**



### **Bedford Blues Women – Rugby**

Bedford Blues Women secured their second promotion in three years in the 2023/24 campaign, winning every single league fixture to finish with a 100% record. This has seen them promoted to NC 1 level, the highest level the team has ever played at, they are currently performing up and above their potential and a third promotion is still highly likely.

Thanks to another stunning start to the season, they currently sit second in the league heading towards Christmas. Several members of the playing group are teachers by profession, while many others work in the community to promote the game of rugby union to the younger generation and have integrated over 100 females to the game.



### **Bedford Cricket Club U9s Mixed Team**

Bedford Cricket Club Under-9s Mixed Cricket Team had an outstanding season, achieving an unbeaten record winning over 18 matches this 2024 season. Competing in the league matches the young players demonstrated remarkable progress and skills development in bowling, batting, and fielding. This achievement is particularly significant given the

team's composition of young players, many of whom have recently transitioned from the ECB All-Stars program. Their resilience was impressive, even in matches where they played with fewer players than their opponents. Every player was awarded with a club medal and cap at the end of the season.



### **Bedford Cricket Club Women's Team**

As a continually developing team, Bedford CC Women played their first full season in league cricket in 2024. They came 2nd in the Home Counties Women's League Super 8 Division 4 competition and 2nd in the T25 Division 3 North competition (only losing to

the eventual league winners and scoring the best Net Run Rate of all teams in the division). Individual players feature in the best bowling and batting statistics from the season. The crowning moment of the season came in August, when they won the inaugural East Beds Charity Shield Women's Knockout Cup with a comprehensive victory! The team continue to attract new players, ranging from experienced adult cricketers to those new to the game and all team members are valued equally.



### **Bedford Ladies Tug of War Team**

Building on the 2023 season Bedford Ladies Tug of War Team competed at the English National Championships in Honiton in June, where they won 3 Gold medals and 1 Silver medal, over 4 weight classes (500kg, 520kg, 540kg, 560kg). In August they went on to

attend the British and Irish Championships in Melton Mowbray, bringing home 5 Gold medals. The season culminated with the team competing at the World Championships in Mannheim, Germany - in the open 540kg competition the team won a silver medal. They were the only English senior team to win a medal at the Championships in the open. They also went on to represent England in the closed 540kg competition where they were placed 4th (highest placed seniors).



### **Bedford Modern School Girls Squash Team**

In March this year the Bedford Modern School Girls Squash Team achieved 2nd place in the National Schools Girls Squash Championships, the U13 team include Laura Bradley, Emma Clarke, Charlotte Denyer, Annabel Denyer and Jennifer Eyton-Williams. The girls train once

a week and also train outside of school in their own time alongside their other school commitments plus they have fixtures against other schools. The girls have qualified for the second round of the national schools competition this year which takes place in February. They are seeded to do well across the competition again.



## Nominations for **Team of the Year**

### Bedford School Golf Team

Freddie Tucker (18), Jack Peters (18), and Finlay Rennie (16) make up the Bedford School Golf Team who have secured the top position in the country and demonstrated unwavering commitment to personal and collective growth, making them exemplary role models. Their achievements this year include: first place in England Golf Schools' National 'Scratch' Team Championships, first place in Swifts Tour HMC Foursomes National Final, second place in the Swifts Tour 2023-24 Season Team Event, and Jack Peters won the Swifts Tour Event at Dundonald Links. Beyond their athletic accomplishments, the team members mentor younger golfers, generously offering their time and expertise through mentorship and peer coaching sessions, fostering a supportive and inspiring environments for all aspiring golfers.



### Bedford Women's Masters Over 55s – Hockey

Bedford's Women's Over 55s Team lead the field in showcasing that age is no barrier to playing hockey, with current team membership up (which includes players in their 70s) Each season the team participates in England Hockey's National Master's Championships. Last season's journey to the final saw them beat Oxford Hawks 6-0; and win 3-0 in a penalty shoot-out with Cheshire in the quarterfinals; and secure a 9-0 victory against LX North in the semi-finals. A 1-0 defeat to Harlestone Magpies in the final had them crowned National Tier 2 silver medallists. All team members also play club hockey for various adult squads throughout the season, but the Over 55s team as an entity is fully affiliated with Bedford Hockey Club, and with England Hockey



### Queens Park Cricket Club U11's Team

The U11's team based at Queens Park Cricket Club are in their first season of hardball cricket and won the Northeast League as well as the County District Title. They also won the Regional Chance to Shine Cricket Tournament which involves teams from as far as London. This is a great achievement but also incredible considering it was the first time a lot of the children had played cricket, and hard ball cricket at that. They remained undefeated in most of their competitions and represent themselves with dignity and show respect to everyone they meet.



### Shortstown Rangers Football Club U10's (Sharks) Team

Shortstown Rangers U10's is a team that has progressed massively since forming as a new team in 2021. There have been many achievements; with some of the players being very new to football, but all have progressed massively. Their achievements include being commended at last year's award ceremony and being crowned tournament winners again this summer, bringing home trophies on two consecutive years. All of the players played incredibly well as they were crowned winners a second year in a row after some very tough competition. Shortstown Rangers U10's have shown great strength, passion, and dedication within their positions on the pitch and in the team. They have forged strong friendships with one another and are always positively encouraging one another on the pitch, as well as from the subs bench.

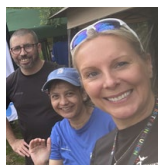
### St Johns Boccia Team

St John's School in Kempston enjoyed success at the Bedfordshire School Games. St Johns Boccia Team competed against Mainstream schools in a Boccia Tournament and won all eight of their matches, and secured first place, this was a huge achievement for this team, some of whom have increased challenges i.e. sensory overload. The team practiced every lunch time leading up to the tournament, learning and understanding the rules and how they could improve their game skills and their co-ordination. Everyone who took part got a certificate and the winners received a trophy which they were all immensely proud of.



## Nominations for **Coach of the Year**

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### **Bedford Wheelchair Racing Coaching Team**

The coaching team at Bedford Wheelchair Racing is led by Head Coach Zoe Luscombe, alongside Michael Blunt and Sharmila Harman. Together, they form a dynamic and highly skilled team. Zoe and Michael are both qualified at the highest level in wheelchair racing, while Sharmila, who also serves as President of the Nepalese Paralympic Association, is advancing her coaching qualifications. As the Club continues to grow, the coaches' influence becomes increasingly vital. They all take on responsibilities for fixing the equipment; attending competitions; accompanying athletes to England squad training days and generally ensuring that the Club is the best it can be.

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### **Pete Benedickter – Personal Trainer**

Pete has shown unwavering dedication to supporting the progress and well-being of young people within RISE Space, many of whom are struggling with mental health challenges at unprecedented levels. Thanks to his efforts, young people who once felt unable to leave their homes are now re-engaging with the community, attending college, and rediscovering a sense of purpose. They report increased confidence, hope, and self-esteem, along with significantly reduced anxiety. Working primarily with highly vulnerable individuals, most of whom are under the care of CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Pete designs tailored programs that combine physical activity with mental health support. His approach includes group sessions and one-on-one coaching, utilising activities like circuit training, boxing, wrestling, and gym workouts to help participants achieve their goals and improve their overall well-being.

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### **Alex Bonney – Multi Sports**

Alex has progressed significantly this year as a young coach developing skills and qualifications including completing his Level 2 Core coach, enrolling and working towards a Level 5 apprenticeship including a teaching qualification. Alex has also completed his Grand National Archery Society (GNAS) Archery qualification and attended lots of Institute of Outdoor Learning (IOL) Bushcraft training. Alex has worked alongside national coaches in kayaking with the young guns freestyle squad and has now signed up for a kayak white water leader and canoe white water leader qualifications with national coaching leads. Alex has regularly led skills and drills sessions with less experienced coaches, led paddling trips to Wales and elsewhere in England to support aspiring white-water paddlers and also coached several hundred young people each year with Canoe Trail.

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### **Michael Easton – Fitness**

Michael has 13 years' experience in fitness training, sports massage therapy and exercise referral. Represented England in the World Deaf Squash Championships in 2018. Became the UK's first deaf snowboarding instructor in 2015 and was part of Team GB in the European Open Deaf Snowboarding championships in 2010 and 2012. Michael has created his own company called Back to the Fitness where he offers weekly fitness classes which is fully accessible for Deaf and Hard of hearing participants in Bedford and Milton Keynes. He adapts the sessions to meet the needs of the group which include over 80-year-olds and wheelchair users. Micheal also led a National team of Deaf Mudders under the banner of Tough Mudder.

## Nominations for **Coach of the Year**

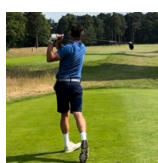
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### **Simon Feaver – Tennis**

Simon has achieved remarkable progress with the players and groups he coaches at Riverside Tennis Club. This progress is evident in the impressive tournament results of his individual players, significant technical improvements in beginner and intermediate groups, and the personal growth of those he coaches in the disability category. Simon has shown an unprecedented level of commitment to his coaching which he does on top of running a full time business. He works tirelessly, often putting in long hours across six days a week, starting as early as 7 a.m. and finishing after 9 p.m. Simon is the first to volunteer and will cover any session needed even at short notice. In addition to his coaching duties, Simon has been an exceptional mentor to the club's younger coaches, offering guidance and support that benefits the entire coaching team.

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### **Sam Filipczak – Golf**

Sam (SJF Golf Academy) has been established since 2018 and is currently based at Mowsbury Golf Course. Sam has helped develop one of the largest Junior coaching programmes within the Bedfordshire area, teaching children of all ages with a goal to help develop the next generation of golfers. Not only is Sam help develop Junior golf he teachers a wide range of abilities and continues to help new golfers join the game through the Active Adults programme but also with private sessions too. Sam tailors every session to the individual, breaking down the swings and use of each club plus improving the participants game while making the session fun and interesting. Sam is in high demand and has waiting lists for all his sessions.

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### **Amber Forman – Dance**

Amber teaches the competition squad for Inspire Performing Arts in street dance and lyrical dance and had success with teams having recently been placements 2nd and 3rd in competitions. She also creates solos and duets dances for the competition squads with many of them placing in the top 6 throughout the year. Amber choreographed along-side another teacher for the national entertainment awards and the dancers were selected to perform at the 02 next October. She creates dances for many events including those for charity. Amber has been recently diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome and still amazes everyone day in day out with the care and knowledge she shows to everyone she meets.

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### **Ben Hammond – Multi Sports**

Great Ouse Primary School cannot commend Mr Hammond enough, his teaching of P.E. has transformed our students and nurtured their sporting talent. Mr Hammond's kind manner, gently- fierce competitiveness and above all willingness to work hard for all the students he teaches has encouraged a love of sport in his students which they will carry through for the rest of their life. Mr Hammond worked tirelessly to develop teams and teach the children how to work together, an important life skill. By elevating P.E. beyond a couple of hours a week of exercise into something the children could believe in and help them form a sense of their growing identities helping the children build pride in themselves.

## Nominations for **Coach of the Year**



### **Geoff Hollyhead – Tug of War**

Over the past 7 years Geoff has managed the development and growth of the Bedford Tug of War team, seeing the squad expand from 8 to 15 pullers. Having competed at prestigious championships around the world he's able to draw on his 40+ years' experience guiding the team to compete at the highest possible level. They've now represented Great Britain at The World Games (held every 4 years) and England at numerous European and World Championships. Geoff is always pushing the team to strive for the best and to believe in themselves. He is always heard saying, "You have to believe to achieve!".



### **Gaynor Hutchison – Archery**

Gaynor works with the Aim 4 Sport Archery Club where members have wide ranging abilities, disabilities and additional support needs. She is also an Archery GB Coach, Senior Coach, World Archery Coach, and Youth National Talent Development South Lead Coach. As part of the Archery GB Olympic Performance Pathway Gaynor identifies, nurtures and prepares athletes to realise their potential as performance archers and flourish as individuals. This year her AGB athletes, delivered significant U15, U18, U21 success: In the AGB Youth Festival, SCAS Junior Championships, SCAS Youth Tour, JAS Tour and European Youth Championships - Champions! European Youth Cup - Team Silver. Veronica's Cup Slovenia - Silver. From grassroots to Olympian performance potential, Gaynor is dedicated to bringing belief and achievement on a personal level. A real strength is her ability to empower the individual person in front of her.



### **Richard Light – Cricket**

Richard is a highly skilled Level 2 cricket coach, with an incredible depth and breadth of knowledge, who has been the driving force behind the progress and success of Bedford Cricket Club Women's Team. He has taken the team from a group of women playing softball cricket for fun in 2018, to a competitive hardball league side and their first silverware in 2024 as the team won the East Beds Charity Shield Women's Knockout Cup. He ensures each person develops their personal game, but also guides the team in what training methods, facilities, equipment, and playing opportunities are necessary to ensure continual development and success going forwards.



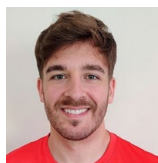
### **Tony Milioti – Football**

Tony is a Level 2 FA trained Football Coach and has coached Elstow Abbey 1st team since 2014. Tony has coached Elstow to win the league and gain promotion to the Bedford County Premier League, they have also won back-to-back Britannia Cup trophies in 2022 and 2023, which no club has ever achieved. This year they are trying to make it 3 in a row and will challenge again for league and County Cup success after narrowly missing out on lifting the trophy in the final last year. An amazing achievement and a reflection on Tony's managerial expertise, patience and hard work. On top of Elstow Abbey 1st Team Tony also manages Kempston Rovers U7s and Kempston Rovers U9s team.



## Nominations for **Coach of the Year**

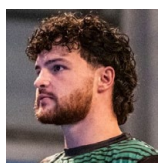
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### **Sam Morris – Squash**

Sam has recently completed his England Squash Level 3 Performance Coach qualification in September this year which is an extensive 8-month course showing his commitment and dedication to squash and the squash community. He supports numerous individuals, both juniors and adults in their squash journey with ongoing coaching sessions. Sam also supports various teams around the county with group coaching sessions. Sam is also involved in supporting the running of various adult and junior competitions in the county, whether that is in a coaching capacity or a refereeing and admin capacity.

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### **Paolo Gemmell Prato – Combat**

Paolo has a very broad and flexible knowledge when it comes to coaching combat. Through his company PGP Strength and Conditioning he offers 1-1 sessions, joint combat and fitness training and focuses on personal wellbeing, sleep and dieting. Paolo plans the work out with his clients in mind and is very committed to meeting their individual needs. Paolo coaches across all areas of combat sports and across all sections of the community including Daniel McGowan a multiple Muay Thai World Champion, he also has a following of 55k on Instagram.

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### **Eddie Rennell – Rugby**

Eddie has been the Head Coach of Bedford Blues Women since 2022, since then the team have come on leaps and bounds and recently secured their second promotion in three years, going the entire league season with a 100% winning record. This most recent promotion saw the team reach NC1 - the highest level they have ever played at - and have made a blistering start to this and currently sit second. Eddie has played a huge part in this transition to a higher level and continues to develop the team. The team is open to all abilities and Eddie has specially constructed different training patterns and sessions to suit everyone who comes along to join in the training at Goldington Road.

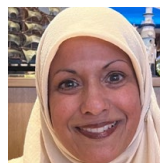
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### **Saurabh Sethi – Cricket**

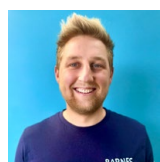
Coach Saurabh coaches the Under-9s Mixed Cricket Team, he has built the team from just a few children playing catch, into a successful squad who have had an outstanding season. He coached the boys and girls to create a wonderful team, promoted caring and kindness and all-round goods sportsmanship, so much so that pretty much every child came to cricket training and weekend matches all summer! The team won all of their 18 matches this 2024 season. Saurabh coached the team in all league matches, developing the young players so that they demonstrated remarkable progress and skills.

## Nominations for Community Person Award



### **Fsella Afzal-Pagliari – Fitness**

Fsella organises two Ladies only fitness classes as a volunteer in Queen's Park. This year she and the participants celebrated the 10th anniversary of those classes. Fitnisa was founded in 2014 by Fsella after she couldn't find a women-only fitness group in Bedford. Undeterred, Fsella decided to set one up herself and the group now runs sessions twice a week at Queens Park Community Centre. Not only does this serve as a vital community resource bringing local people out of their houses to socialise, but it is also an important health intervention. Fsella is passionate about her work in the community, and she has built strong relationships within the town, she always goes over and above to make sure her sessions are available to all.



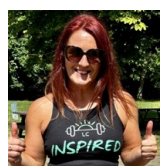
### **Harrison Barnes – Personal Training**

Harrison has developed a community (Barnes Active) whereby individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can access physical activity and movement in a safe, calm, non-intimidating environment. It is the only SEND specific gym setting in Bedford Borough and is a hub for individuals with disabilities to access exercise, where a commercial gym may not be suitable for them. Harrison coaches a range of clients from young people out of school, to older clients who need support to stay fit and healthy. Harrison and his team recently raised money to fund a defibrillator for the premises in Stagsden, along with contributions to 2 charities - Look UK and the CVI Society.



### **Larissa Clarke – Fitness**

Larissa has added to her already impressive provision of training sessions by setting up and gaining funding for women who are victims of domestic abuse, a boxing session for those fighting Parkinson's disease and working with the University of a 3rd Age (U3A) at Rothsay to deliver functional fitness for older adults. On top of these sessions Larissa also runs regular sessions for women - boxing, strength and conditioning, run and box, paddle boarding, plus working with the Bedford Borough on the Active Adults programme and Active Wellbeing Sessions show a long standing, genuine commitment to reaching out into the community and offering sessions for all ages and abilities.



### **Lucy Clark – Fitness**

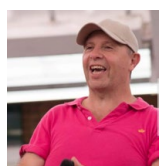
This year Lucy started Healthy Minds Network walks for anyone of any age, ability to meet in Bedford and just walk and talk. This has been incredibly popular and great for people who feel lonely or just not in a good head space to meet up and walk and talk. It is a great way of bringing people together with no pressure and a free activity for all. Lucy holds exercise classes for parents and children in the school holidays, these have been very successful and a great activity to get the kids moving and a chance for a parent to meet another parent. Lucy also attends local schools in their lunch breaks and holds weekly sessions with some of the students.



### **Michael Cox – Multi Sports**

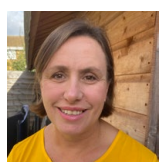
Michael has been huge in the development of sport at Bedford Free School. He would go out of his way to develop opportunities for young people. Including inviting in external coaches, arranging fixtures against far more capable schools so that children could experience the game properly. He also used to run a before school club to provide further opportunities for girls to increase their confidence in the hard ball game. Michael is a phenomenal leader; he inspires fellow colleagues and supports and encourages young people to want to play sport. His ethos that 'the result doesn't matter' has been paramount to helping young people to enjoy sport for the right reasons rather than being solely focused on winning to bring the participation.

## Nominations for Community Person Award



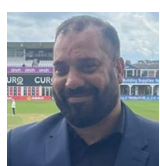
### Mike Del Boyer – Line Dancing

Mike is the brains and the power behind Mikes Line Dancing sessions which are legendary around Bedford. He organises 10 sessions per week within Bedford Borough attracting at least 200 people per week, his sessions are mainly advertised on social media and spread by word of mouth, his caring and fun attitude keep people coming back. Mike has organised numerous sessions in Bedford Park where anyone walking by can come along and join in, plus also in the Harpur Square. On top of this Mike also organises events for local Charities and has raised over £12,000 for varied charities, including Tibbs Dementia, Bedford Food Banks and is currently organising an event at the Addison Centre in Kempston to help raise money towards their Heating costs, plus the group raised funds to instal a new Defibrillator at a Community Hall where theirs had been stolen.



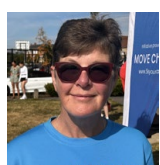
### Beverley Gous – Running

Bev is the parkrun Regional Ambassador; part of this role is to support the individual parkrun events around the Bedford area. She provides support and guidance to Event Ambassadors and helps to recruit new Event Ambassadors to set up new parkruns and junior parkruns. Bev has supported the set-up of the newly formed Great Denham junior parkrun which had its first event in July 2024. Bev is also the Race Management Secretary for Bedford Harriers and oversees the three local races that the Club holds each year.



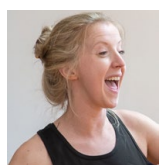
### Abid Hussain – Cricket

Abid has been the driving force behind the Queens Park Cricket Club for the past 25 years, singlehandedly ensuring its survival and success. Operating in a community where sports participation is low, Abid found himself managing multiple teams without the necessary support or resources. His unwavering passion for cricket and deep commitment to his community have been the lifeline of the club, allowing it to thrive despite numerous challenges. Working with underprivileged children, Abid has consistently found ways to keep the club running, creating countless cherished memories for the many young players who have trained under him.



### Sylvia Jones – Running and Walking

Sylvia was a co-founder of the Bedford 5K Your Way group which meets at Bedford parkrun on the last Saturday of every month. 5K Your Way is an initiative of the Move Against Cancer Charity, which encourages those affected by cancer to participate in physical activity, as it is known to have many short- and long-term benefits on physical and mental wellbeing both during and post treatment. Those unable to complete 5k are encouraged to join in by cheer or volunteering and afterwards they enjoy a drink and cake together and have a chat. Sylvia and her team are committed to continuing the event each month and have the support and commitment from 5k Your Way and the Move Against Cancer charity.



### Lisa Martin – Dance & Movement

Lisa works tirelessly to benefit the community through her performing arts. Her Squad Clubs focus on growing the confidence of children through music, dance and acting. Creativity and development are encouraged through performing fun songs, dance and plays, which allow the children to flourish without any pressure of the usual exams. Lisa's latest sessions, "Share a Smile" Singalong, unite the youngest and oldest members of the community helping to combat social isolation in the older generation. This heartwarming music and movement class brings 0-5-year-olds into a residential care setting and facilitates physical and mental stimulation for all of the little ones and the residents of the care facilities.



## Nominations for Community Person Award



### Rebecca Martin – Sub Aqua Diving

Rebecca has been motivational in her role as Training Officer because she is very well organised, extremely competent and as a young female diving Instructor a great role model for females in a predominately male sport. During her time as Training Officer post Covid, Bedford Scuba Divers has grown from 25 to 44 members and now has an almost 50/50 male/female membership with many women now in Leadership and Instructor roles. As the Training Officer she is involved on a weekly basis with planning and organising the training activities both in the pool, classroom and during the warmer months in the lake/sea.

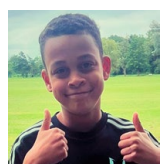
### Niamh McBride – Rowing

Niamh has been pivotal in revitalising Star Club, particularly by growing the junior squad from circa 15 to 50 members through three successful “Learn to Row” courses. Her efforts have not only developed rowing talent but also increased local engagement in the sport. Collaborating with British Rowing, she has brought additional resources and support to the club, strengthening its position as a hub for rowing in the community. Her leadership has significantly raised the profile of rowing and provided opportunities for people of all backgrounds to engage with the sport.



### Linzi McDonald – Fitness

Linzi runs inclusive circuit training classes in Bedford Park. The ages of those taking part range from 20s to 80+. Her attendees are all inspired to participate whatever the weather, benefiting from exercise and mental wellbeing in a beautiful and seasonally changing environment. She has a very loyal group of members, many of whom have trained with her for nearly 20 years. Under her company name of LM Fitness & Wellbeing, Linzi is constantly bringing new ideas and services, including yoga, massage and dietary advice. New people are always made very welcome and given alternatives to match their level of fitness or any injuries.



### Austin Ncube – Football and Athletics

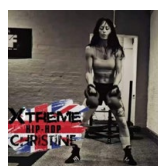
11-year-old Austin lost his father in 2017, his dad was a very talented runner, so Austin decided that over the course of June 2024 that he wanted to raise money in his memory. Austin Dad had always wanted to run the London Marathon but never got a place, so Austin decided he would run 26.2 miles over the course of June 2024 and raise money for three places that have helped him since his bereavement. He raised money for his primary school Hazeldene School, Bedford Park Rangers Football Club and CHUMS the bereavement charity that helped him when he was younger. He raised £2830 in total and in the process has inspired the community to take up running.

### Hafi Rahman – Basketball

Hafi has used a youth mentoring model allowing young people to fall into leadership roles accessing development and training for them so they can use this for their future goals and plans.

## Nominations for **Community Person Award**

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### **Christine Robinson – Fitness**

Christine's passion and dedication to both adult and young people fitness is shown through the classes she delivers throughout Bedfordshire 7 days a week. She delivers Fitter Body Ladies (FBL) sessions 6 days a week, early mornings and evenings. She also takes hip hop classes and Irish dancing. Her enthusiasm to keep the community motivated throughout the class is shown by the number of 50+ women who turn up and have seen the results from the sessions over the last 12 months. Christine makes exercise fun and can adjust the sessions to accommodate for those with disabilities, injury or rehabilitation.

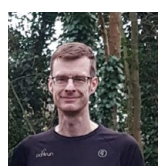
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### **Marion Wallace – Exercise and Fitness**

Marion has been running numerous Exercise and Fitness classes in Bedford since 1944 when she moved here. As part of the Borough Councils Live Longer Better project Marion has been tutoring exercise classes for “mature” people, both before and after COVID, she tutors a class at the Harpur suite every week (alongside Jane Warner), after which she goes straight to Goldington Community Centre to tutor a second class as part of this project. Marion also tutors a session at a school in Bedford which has been running for over 30yrs. Marion’s sessions are open to all; she is extremely popular and caring with all the participants and takes time to make sure that they work at their own pace and ability.

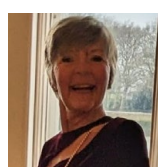
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### **Andrew Waller – Running**

Andrew has single-handedly assessed demand for Great Denham Junior Parkrun, researched the process, contacted Landowners, raised funding, run test events, trained all staff and created the event. He has marketed it locally, and it has reached over 500 people already. This all-new event has created a real stir at the local primary schools and is likely to spread far more over the coming 12 months. The Great Denham Junior Parkrun has grown from 14 participants at the end of June to 102 participants by mid-September. It is supported by >40 parents on the day, and many of them have started to walk or run with their child.

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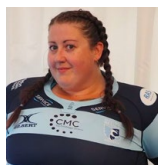


### **Jane Warner – Exercise and Fitness**

Jane has been running numerous exercise classes around Bedford for forty years, she has dedicated groups of participants at every class that she tutors. For ten years she has also been running a fitness class for people who have Parkinsons Disease, and when COVID struck she then worked alongside the Borough Council to help facilitate the class online. Jane also ran a daily online exercise class for anyone who would like to exercise during Lockdown, the participation numbers for this class were over 20 daily and Jane did all these classes from home as a volunteer over the entirety of the COVID pandemic. Many participants commented that the online exercise classes during lockdown were a lifeline for them. She is now back to running a very popular in-person class at the Harpur Suite in Bedford which attracts approx. 100 participants per month, plus a session at a school in Bedford which also attracts similar numbers.

## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**

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### **Hanah Donovan – Rugby**

Hanah is a rugby player for Bedford Blues Women, a community club open to anyone and is an extremely important face of the team. A founding member of the side since inception in 2020, Hanah has worked proactively to promote the game within Bedfordshire and is one of the senior figureheads within the playing squad - providing important council to those around her and helping first time players to rugby integrate and feel comfortable playing the game. The team would not be where they are today, following two promotions in three seasons, without Hanah's impetus towards everything they strive to achieve.

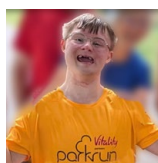
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### **Jean Fitch – Hockey**

Jean is a volunteer who is an important vertebra in the backbone of Bedford Hockey Club. She works as Publicity Officer for Bedford Hockey Club committee, but is so much more than that; she innovated and currently organises the highly regarded and inclusive Walking Hockey session; Jean is the photographer for the club, sometimes taking and adding online up to 2,000 photographs per weekend of games held at the club; she manages Bedford Hockey Club's social media and is currently helping organise fund raising for the club to replace the current pitches. Jean has been a member of Bedford Hockey Club since 1995 and now, in her late 50s, she still plays in goal and as a breast cancer survivor, she shows no signs of slowing down nor losing any motivation in her passion for the Club and for hockey. Jean hates personal attention, but the club would like to say a massive thank you for all that she does.

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### **James Grammer – Running**

James has additional learning needs and has overcome a lot of barriers in his life, he is dedicated and well known for his "ray of sunshine" personality. James is a dedicated volunteer to the Bedford Parkrun and Bedford Junior Parkrun and attends almost every Saturday and Sunday morning. Not only does James cheer and give high fives to the runners (participants) from the side, he even joins in and run alongside them, giving them words of encouragement and pacing their run. At Junior Parkrun he is a marshal or does the countdown to set off the run for the children. He screams his cheers as they run to the finish, always a warm and friendly hug as he greets everyone on their arrival. James has been involved for years and is always a friendly face to new and reattending participants.

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### **Beate Hollowell – Lawn Bowls**

Beata (also known as Lidka), received the devastating news, some 3 or 4 years ago, that her husband, John, was going to lose his sight due to previously un-diagnosed diabetes. Committed to helping John find something he could succeed in and enjoy, he discovered a natural talent for the sport of lawn bowls. Beata supported John to the full and learned how to help him with his sport - and then learned how to become his Director at National and International level. Beate helps John create a mental picture of where each bowl is positioned. As a director Beata stands beyond the jack and lets John know what angle and distance the bowl has rested from the jack, without this assistance and connection John would not have reached International Level.



## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**



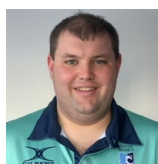
### **Shapna Khanam – Multi Sports**

Shapna Khanam serves as the Founder and Director of Hawaa Empower, a grassroots organisation she started to empower and unite the local community, particularly women, youth, and families. In this role, she wears many hats—organising events, managing volunteers, coordinating community treks, and collaborating with local charities. Shapna leads from the front, ensuring every workshop, hike, and charity fundraiser is impactful and inclusive. Beyond planning, she is hands-on, dedicating countless hours to ensuring the success of each event, from initial brainstorming to execution. Her work has brought the community closer together, fostering a spirit of unity and positivity.



### **Joy Leeson – Hockey**

Although involved in Bedford Hockey club, as a parent, player, team captain, mentor and fund-raiser, for many years, Joy stepped up and took a lead promoting Women's Masters Hockey at the club six years ago. Since that time, she has provided a platform for Women's Masters Hockey to thrive and is a member of the club's core committee in this capacity. Joy organises participation in friendly fixtures and veteran's tournaments, also drawing together teams to represent Bedfordshire in East County Masters tournaments and supports the club's involvement in England Hockey's National Masters Championships, for Over-35s, 45s and 55s.

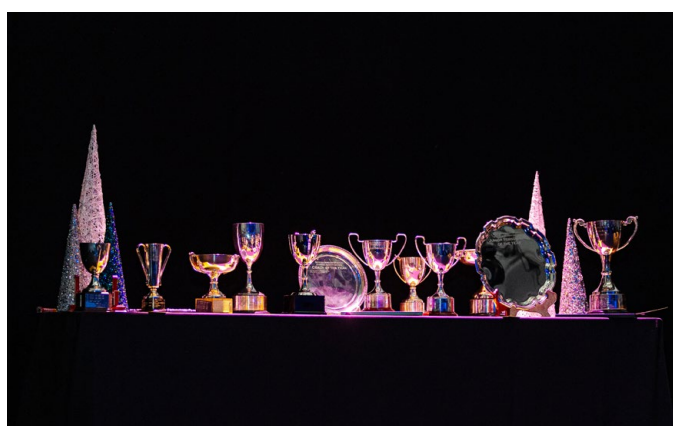


### **Benjamin Minney – Rugby**

Benjamin has been helping out the Bedford Blues Rugby team for the last 16 years since the age of 10. One of Benjamin's duties is mentoring the ball boys on match days as well as being a role model to young fans. Between helping out at the rugby club he is also a qualified RFU referee and Head of History at a prominent Bedfordshire School. During his tenure volunteering at Bedford Blues he has developed into kind, caring and dedicated gentleman.

### **Shabnaz Shepu – Multi Sports**

Shabnaz is part of Hawaa Empower, an organisation through which she has been able to provide opportunities for many women, who would not have had the chance to experience certain activities otherwise. This has included organising treks, workshops, discussions groups and opportunities to learn new skills. Both roles in Hawaa Empower and as a Muslim Mortician requires Shabnaz to liaise with high profile individuals, other organisations, charities, people in the community and professionals. This is all voluntary alongside being a full-time mum to 4 children, this shows the dedication and commitment she provides.



## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**



### **Abi Simpson – Rugby**

Abi has been involved with Bedford Blues as a coach and player across both Women's and Girls teams since 2016. However, her current position within the club is Head of Women's and Girls Rugby; she has held this title since March 2023. This role involves Abi being Head Coach of the Bedford Blues Junior Girls teams, leading a team of 8 coaches. Alongside coaching, Abi coordinates school rugby festivals for girls and leads taster sessions in schools. She also is part of the coaching team for the Women's Senior Team, and she supports the Team Manager and Head Coach with the coordination of the Women's team.

### **Frances Topa – Tennis**

Frances is the volunteer Vice Chair of Riverside Tennis Club and provides a huge amount of time, calm authority and effective guidance to the members, players, coaches, employees and committee members. Frances has been instrumental in managing the club's cafe provider and ensuring the successful transition to a new cafe partner. Frances is calm and consistent and always tries to find a working solution to any issue or problem. Frances has natural authority, is an effective communicator and organiser. Frances is a fantastic team player; she follows through on her promises and consistently delivers the best possible outcome.



Ever since we were founded by Sir William Harpur in 1566, The Harpur Trust has been providing education and supporting people in Bedford Borough



We have grown and evolved hugely, yet we remain true to our roots. Our long-term strategic plan, *Together for Bedford*, commits us to invest in people's futures, and to work for a whole generation to enable more children and young people facing disadvantage to achieve their potential.



[www.harpurtrust.org.uk](http://www.harpurtrust.org.uk)



## Nominations for **Adult Disability Sports Personality of the Year**



### **Varun Bandi – Wheelchair Racing**

As a founding member of Bedford Wheelchair Racing, Varun has made significant progress. Varun is so dedicated that he has been advised by a top Paralympian and record holder that he is training too hard as he is undertaking some form of training almost every day of the week! He has a set of rollers at home and almost without fail attends training sessions at the Bedford International Athletic Stadium. He has now been on the England Athletics talent programme for future Paralympians and regularly attends the sessions at Loughborough University. Varun tops the national rankings for his age and classification in several track events and acts as a role model for the club helping to inspire others to participate and develop their love of the sport.



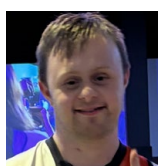
### **Christopher Bradley – Equestrian**

Chris has a very rare chromosome disorder which affects his appearance and physical ability. He is also Autistic. Chris's milestones were all delayed and he was non-verbal until he was 7 years old and still struggles with verbal communication however, when on his horse he becomes animated and chatty. Chris volunteers twice weekly at the Elisabeth Curtis Centre Riding for the Disabled in Bromham. He has given demonstrations of dressage there which have inspired other riders to take part in competitions. Christopher competes with Riding for the Disabled, Special Olympics, Sport Excel UK (Virtus) and British dressage. Chris represented GB in July 2024 at the Virtus European Championships. GB won the Team Gold medal and Chris took the individual Silver.



### **Gary Cox – Tennis**

Gary is a wheelchair user and there is no doubt that tennis has played a significant part in his rehabilitation and wellbeing. This year Gary was Singles runner up and Doubles winner at the International Tennis Federation Loughborough, Singles Champion at the International Tennis Federation Grantham and Singles runner up and Doubles Champion at the International Tennis Federation Abingdon. He was the GB World Team Cup European Champions, made the GB World Team Cup finals (6th place) and came 3rd in the Play Your Way to Wimbledon competition.



### **James Forrester – Dance and Football**

James has been a member of the Pathways Dance Group at Bedford College for the past two and a half years. James struggles with anxiety and at times has been reluctant to attend events, groups and new classes because of his anxiety. Working with those that support him James has taken small steps each week to feel more comfortable. When faced with the feelings of anxiety James always tries hard to overcome his feelings and works hard until he is fully comfortable and involved. James has recently taken a football coaching course to help to teach children football and is keen to do further courses with support. In dance he is now a class mentor and can help his peers through dance exercises and remind them of choreography.



## Nominations for Adult Disability Sports Personality of the Year



### John Hollowell – Lawn Bowls

Having lost his vision 4 years ago John took up Lawn Bowls and has been playing for 3 years now. John won the World Championship gold and bronze medals at the Disability Bowls World Championships and won National Visually Impaired Singles and Pairs titles represented England on 4 occasions. John regularly plays against fully sighted players 4 to 5 times a week and has already selected to represent England at the blind bowls world championships in New Zealand in two years' time and will have trials for selection for the commonwealth games taking place in 2026. Moreover John is the Regional Development Officer for Visually Impaired Bowls England covering the East of England trying to attract more visually impaired people to get active and take up a sport.



### Liz Houghton – Table Tennis

Liz was diagnosed with Parkinson's, a progressive, incurable neurological condition, in 2013. Parkinson's affects Liz's balance and posture, and causes her to think, walk and generally move much more slowly. The effect of Parkinson's on the brain also makes it much harder for Liz to motivate herself. Keeping fit and active is an important part of slowing down the decline from Parkinson's and table tennis has been found to be particularly beneficial. Despite her physical and mental challenges, Liz plays table tennis regularly in and around Bedford and competes in the Ping Pong Parkinson's World Table Tennis Championships and other international tournaments.



## Street Tag Makes Getting Fit Fun & Rewarding!

- ✳ Collect virtual tags to get points by exploring Bedford Borough, through physical activities like walking, running, cycling, or rolling.
- ✳ Get rewards/win prizes such as Amazon vouchers, gift cards, sports equipment, and lots more.
- ✳ Over 13 million steps and 13,307 miles have been achieved so far by families in Bedford Borough.



Visit our website:  
[www.streettag.co.uk](http://www.streettag.co.uk)



## Nominations for Adult Personality of the Year



### Laura Allen – Judo

Laura achieved Junior Bronze and Senior Silver in the Judo British Championships. She also won Junior Silver in the Scottish Open Judo Tournament and Senior Silver in the English Open Judo Tournament. In Laura's first trip abroad, she came 7th place Seniors in the Danish Open Judo Tournament. In the London Open Judo Tournament, she received the Gold for Junior and Senior, and in the British Judo Association Northern Home Counties Laura came second in the Open Senior section. In the North Hertfordshire Team Event Laura won Gold and Heart of England Senior Silver and Bronze at the England Closed Championship.



### Kate Costin – Hockey

Kate plays in Bedford Hockey Club's Ladies' 1st XI and was part of the team regaining National League status in 2017. Her elite hockey achievement in the past year was performing with the England Masters' Over-35s. Having been selected yearly since 2021, the past 12 months has seen her gain her 30th cap. In the summer, she was part of the gold-medal winning team at the 4 Nations Championship in Cork. Kate followed that up in the autumn by returning from South Africa as bronze-medal winner in the World Cup, scoring 2 goals to take her international tally to 20.



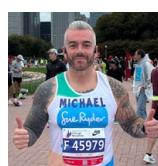
### Thomas Davies – Touch Rugby

Tom was selected to represent England Touch Men's Over 30's at the 2024 Touch World Cup held in Nottingham. Over a 7-day tournament Tom played in 11 matches scoring 14 tries, most notably scoring 4 against Canada in the pool game, and 2 crucial tries in the bronze medal match against France helping his team to win a bronze medal. In addition Tom is a coach within the Midlands Tigers regional set up. In May he coached the Tigers Men's Over 30's team to a 4th place finish at the Touch Nationals and in September he coached the Panthers Boys 18's during the Junior Touch Nationals.



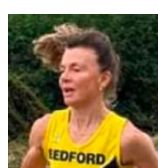
### Jemma Eastwood – Athletics

Jemma excels at Pole Vault, with a personal best height of 3.32 metres. She is unbeaten in all competitions in the Women's Masters category and competitions include World Champion (W45), European Indoor Champion (W45), British Champion Indoors (W40), British Champion Outdoors (W45) and Eastern Indoor and Outdoor Senior Women's Champion. Jemma is also ranked 2nd in the World in the W45 category and ranked 1st in the UK Indoors and Outdoors in both W40 and W45 age categories. Jemma is also joint coach to a group of up to 10 pole vaulters from ages of 11- to 70-year-olds.



### Michael Fry – Running

Michael completed the 2024 Berlin (29th Sept) and Chicago Marathons (13th Oct) within two weeks of each other, whilst fundraising for the local St. Johns Sue Ryder Hospice in Moggerhanger. This year's completed Marathons were the 3rd and 4th of the original 6 World Major Marathons he has successfully finished following London in 2022 and New York in 2023. All four Marathons have helped raise over £18,000 so far. However, his journey has not ended, as Tokyo 2025 has been confirmed, with hopefully Boston in 2026. Sydney has just been added as a 7th Major Marathon giving more scope to raise more money and awareness of the charity.



### Nora Haggart – Multi Sports

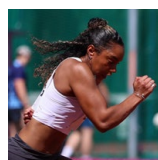
Nora is a key, successful member of Bedford Harriers running club. In the past 12 months Nora came 2nd in the Bedfordshire Cross Country Championships (Women's Over 50 category), 1st place in her age group in the World Championships Standard Duathlon Australia (a 10k run, a 40k cycle and a 5k run). She also claimed 6th out of 124 runners in the Sydney Marathon, 1st in her age group in the Chester Marathon, 3rd in her age group at the Peterborough Half Marathon and competed in local Bedfordshire events coming 1st in her age group. Nora has also qualified to represent England in the England Masters in 2025.



## Nominations for Adult Personality of the Year

### Rihanna Luke – Netball

This year Rihanna attended the England Netball Roses selection camp again (after being unsuccessful last year) and was successful in her selection, so is now part of the England Netball Roses Futures Academy. Rihanna has also recently been selected to play for the newly formed Netball Super league Franchise Team – Nottingham Forest Netball, who are linked with Nottingham Forest Football Club. She will play in their U23 Squad playing games at Nottingham's Motorpoint Arena.



### Etienne Maughan – Athletics

Etienne is an U23 and Senior Woman who competes at 60 m hurdles (indoors) and 100m Hurdles (outdoors). She came 1st in the Loughborough International representing the England Senior Team, came 1st in the British Universities and Colleges Championships, 2nd in the England under 23 Championships, 4th in the British Universities and Colleges Indoor Championships, 2nd in the South of England Indoor Senior Championships and is ranked 4th in the UK for Under 23s. Etienne has a personal best of 13.54 seconds and has the best performance by a Senior Women at Bedford and County Athletics Club.



### Vincent Pretorious – Hockey

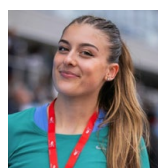
Vincent is a dedicated player for Bedford Hockey Club's Men's 1st XI, who are having a successful run in the East Premier Division this season, assisted by Vincent's prolific goal scoring. He also, represents England at Men's Over 35s, having gained 20 caps so far. In the past year, Vincent has played in the 4 Nations and, most recently, in the Masters World Cup in South Africa, with his England Over 35s squad returning as World Champions, Vincent scoring critical goals in the play-offs to take them to the final, and two gold-winning ones in the final, to beat the host nation.

### Euan Supple – Athletics

Having missed much of his early season training with an achilles injury, Euan ran a perfectly judged race to storm to victory in the English Schools Senior Boys 2000 metres Steeplechase Championships. Euan also came 5th in the 3000 metres steeplechase at the England Athletics Under 20 Championships. Euan is the Bedfordshire Schools Athletics Team Captain and a very positive role model advising and motivating younger and less experienced athletes.

### Ethan Vernon – Cycling

Ethan has achieved a number of world-class results as part of the Great Britain Cycling Team in the past 12 months, namely winning an Olympic silver medal as part of the men's team pursuit squad. Earlier in the year he won the European title with the team pursuit squad, as well as another gold medal in the same event at the Track Nations Cup. On the road, he took the bronze medal in the elite men's time-trial at this year's National Road Championships. With his professional team he has won two stages of the Tour Guangxi and one stage of the Tour des Aplines-Maritimes.



### Jasmine Wilkins – Athletics

Jasmine was selected for "Ivy League" exchange in the USA with Birmingham University. She was also selected to represent GB in European competition and selected to represent GB at the world U20 games in Peru. Jasmine beat the Bedford and County Athletic Club record for 100m and 200m this year, a record that stood since 1989 and ended the season inside the top 10 for GB and Europe. Jasmine is training full time as well as studying for a degree in physiotherapy at Birmingham University. With setting a personal best in 100m at 11.37 seconds, Jasmine has been selected to join the "Olympic Development Squad" overseen by British Athletics.

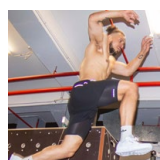


## Nominations for Service to Sport



### Ian Brown – Football

Ian has been playing Football since the age of 11. Now 43 years old, he has played in goal for all those years and is extremely passionate about his position. He has played for many clubs such as Hemel Hempstead, Bedford Town, Biggleswade Town, Kempston Rovers and as a youth played for Watford FC and Birmingham FC. Ian currently coaches the goalkeepers from Real Bedford and many youth goalkeepers locally. He provides goalkeeping techniques and advice but also gives the participants confidence to believe in themselves and know their worth.



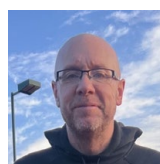
### Luke Brown – Parkour

Luke is fiercely dedicated to Parkour, training in the sport since the age of 13 (14 years training) and he has built a beautiful and safe Parkour club for all children and adults to find their passion in the sport too. Spiral freerun has been running since 2012, starting off as a group of young lads sharing a passion and eventually becoming a business in 2016. Luke has dedicated his life to Parkour, not only training hard in it since 13 but also building a Parkour business from nothing, training children and adults of all ability including many neurodiverse individuals and has been competing in many Parkour/ free running competitions all across the UK and the Netherlands over years



### Ian Cole and Steve Williams – Walking Football

After 15 years of service to Bedford Walking football, Ian and Steve have decided to retire and hand the reins to a new organiser. They have worked tirelessly in Bedford; to build and retain the Walking Football Leagues, encouraging men and women of all ages to come along and take part, and have had over 20,000 attendances over the years. Ian and Steve have been present at almost every one of the 4 sessions which take place weekly in Bedford and Kempston. Ian has also been working recently with Parkinsons UK to start a Walking Football session and also has done extra sessions aimed at people with mental health illness.



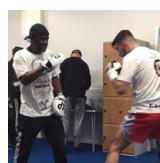
### Mat Dunkley – Tennis

Mat has recently been appointed Head of Tennis at Riverside Tennis Club and in doing so he has completed the Club Grand Slam of holding every one of the key club positions over the past 30 years of dedication and service to the Tennis Club. Mat is the most decorated winner in the Riverside Tennis Club's History (singles, doubles, mixed), he is a multiple Bedfordshire County Champion, has represented Great Britain at junior age categories and has individually coached country, regional and national county champions. He has lead the performance tennis programme at Riverside for many years.



### Jan Emms – Football

Jan has made significant contributions to women's football over several decades, not only through her achievements as a player but also through her role in promoting the sport and preserving its history. Jan was part of the 1971 England Women's Team, which competed in the unofficial Women's World Cup in Mexico. Her participation as a Centre-Forward highlighted the potential of women in football during a time when the sport faced institutional barriers. She scored two goals during the tournament, showcasing her talent on an international stage. Over the years, Jan has been vocal about the struggles she and her teammates faced, including their ban from football upon returning to England. Jan and her teammates have now been celebrated as pioneers, receiving honours such as bespoke commemorative caps and in 2024, they were featured in the documentary Copa 71 and the 'Lost Lionesses' book, which highlights their story and the struggles they faced.



### Carl Hazelwood – Boxing

Carl has coached at Bedford Amateur Boxing Club since 1978 after retiring from professional boxing. He has been the Head Coach at the gym for the last 46 years; dedicating much of his time, in a voluntary capacity, to train boxers of all ages (11-40 years old). He has also spent a significant amount of time and effort doing match making and taking Bedford Boxers to contests throughout the UK and Europe. Carl is a very patient and approachable coach; utilising his extensive knowledge and expertise to train young aspiring boxers to fulfill their sporting potential. Carl is a humble man with a big heart; who is a great mentor.

## Nominations for Service to Sport



### Tim Hewett – Water Sports

Tim is about to start his 20th year serving actively on the committee of Priory Sailing Club with 15 of these leading as Commodore. The posts are voluntary and he works tirelessly to ensure all aspects of the club function for the benefit of members and the local community. After a career teaching Outdoor Education at the University of Bedfordshire, he's continued

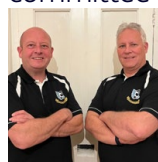
to devote his time and energy to promoting wider participation in water sports through Priory Sailing Club. He has used his skills and time to shape the strategic direction of the club, train and mentor a growing team of volunteer instructors, support youth development programmes and conduct outreach work within the local community.



### Tracy Lawrence – Hockey

Ever since joining Bedford Hockey Club, over 15 years ago, Tracy has provided her support to its day-to-day running, playing pivotal roles right from the outset. She stepped up to the position of team captain, very early on, holding that position for many seasons, for whichever senior squad she was playing for at the time, often leading teams with a wide

age-range of players, including youngsters transitioning to senior play for the first time. Tracy's leadership saw several seasons culminating in promotions for her teams. For many years now, Tracy has been a core committee member, taking on the role of fixtures' Secretary.



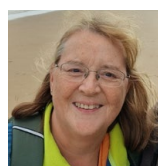
### Chris O'Dell and Chris Shacklady – Rugby

Two of the key members of the Bedford Junior Blues Colts coaching team are Chris O'Dell and Chris Shacklady who have been involved in providing a pathway from junior to adult rugby over a long period of time. Chris and Chris have been involved as volunteers with

Bedford Junior Blues for 20 plus years and have been key to supporting this transition for their playing members. The team works with children of all abilities in U17 and U18 age groups and have had immense success over the years, with players going on to play for East Midlands U20 and U18 England, Northampton Saints and of course Bedford Blues.

### Bob Plowman – Cricket

Bob has been involved with Kempston Hammers Cricket Club for well over 50 years. At the age of 72 he is still their groundsman and every week he prepares the wicket for the club and makes sure the ground and pitches are ready in time for all the sessions, including when the ground is hired by other teams in Bedford. Bob continually inspires other club members and youngsters to thrive in Cricket. He always comes to watch the match and shares his vast experience and in-depth knowledge of cricket.



### Fran Smith – Netball

Fran began volunteering in netball in 1982, she has been an umpire for over 40 years, in this time, she has established herself as a well-respected umpire, coach, mentor, and tester where she has gained a wealth of knowledge and experience that she willingly passes onto others. As Umpiring Secretary for the League, she works tirelessly to help as many people

as possible achieve their goal to become an umpire in the Bedford and District Netball League. Fran willingly gives her time to help young umpires, she has also mentored adults at the beginning of their umpiring journey. The Bedford and District Netball League now has a wealth of umpires because of Fran's dedication and commitment.



### Bill Tallentire – Running

Bill was a founding member of Bedford Harriers Athletics Club in 1985 and has continued to be an active member of the Club ever since. At 82 years of age, Bill no longer runs competitively, but is still an active member of Bedford Harriers, leading the 'Walking Harriers' on Wednesday night walks (at quite a pace) and joining in a Friday night's Circuits Session.

Bill volunteers at all the Bedford Harriers races, helping to set up as well as marshalling and during the winter months he stands in the cold to cheer on the cross-country runners at the 3 Counties League races. Bill also used to volunteer at the Bedfordshire Games, an annual sporting event for students and adults with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties.



## Guest speaker



### Luke Tarrant

Luke Tarrant, a proud Bedford local, competed at a national level for Star Rowing Club, representing his hometown. In 2024, while riding a motorcycle from the USA to Antarctica, Luke experienced a life-changing crash in Colombia, resulting in the loss of his leg. Since then, he has built a large online following, sharing his journey of adapting to challenges and promoting an active lifestyle. Luke's story highlights the importance of resilience, positivity, and staying engaged in sport, no matter the obstacles life presents.

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## The Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit

It's been a busy year with many new programmes starting across the Borough...

The team have been running a wide range of initiatives to encourage more people from across the Borough to take part in sport and physical activity. As well as these programmes the team are working closely with a range of partners to help support and deliver the many community benefits associated with sport and physical activity.

### Programmes:

- Active Adults - Sports Courses for grown-ups! (run 3 times a year)
- GP Exercise Referral - Structured and supervised exercise programmes for patients.
- Mindful Sport - Weekly programmes to support mental health and well being
- Live Longer Better Bedford - Gentle exercise classes for over 60s
- Summer Sports Courses - for 6-15 year olds
- engAGE together – online, chair based, live stream activity sessions for over 65s and group accommodation settings.
- Beyond Limits - initiative to promote physical activity and well-being within the SEND community.




### Events:

- Active Wellbeing - activity sessions for people with long term health conditions
- Aquathlon – Children's Swim and Run competition for 6-16 year olds
- Sports Village – Village within the River Festival which showcases local clubs and organisations
- Sports and Physical Activity Awards – Celebrating the achievements and dedication of sports people and clubs across Bedford Borough.
- Yoga and Wellbeing in the Park – Free Yoga sessions and wellbeing advice based in Bedford Park.
- World Mental Health Day – A free taster event offering table tennis, Yoga and mindfulness workshops.

### Support:

- Ageing Well Festival - annual exhibition with “come & try” activities held at the Corn Exchange
- Trans Swimming – Rainbow Bedfordshire's LGBTQ+ inclusive swimming programme

For more information:

 [www.bedford.gov.uk/sport](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/sport)  01234 718827  [sport@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:sport@bedford.gov.uk)  
 Twitter: @boroughsports  Facebook: bedfordsportsdevelopment

**Thank you for coming tonight, we hope you enjoyed yourselves.**

Please give us your feedback about the Sports and Physical Activity Awards.

[www.bedford.gov.uk/awardsfeedback](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/awardsfeedback)



BEDFORD COLLEGE IS PROUD TO  
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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2024.

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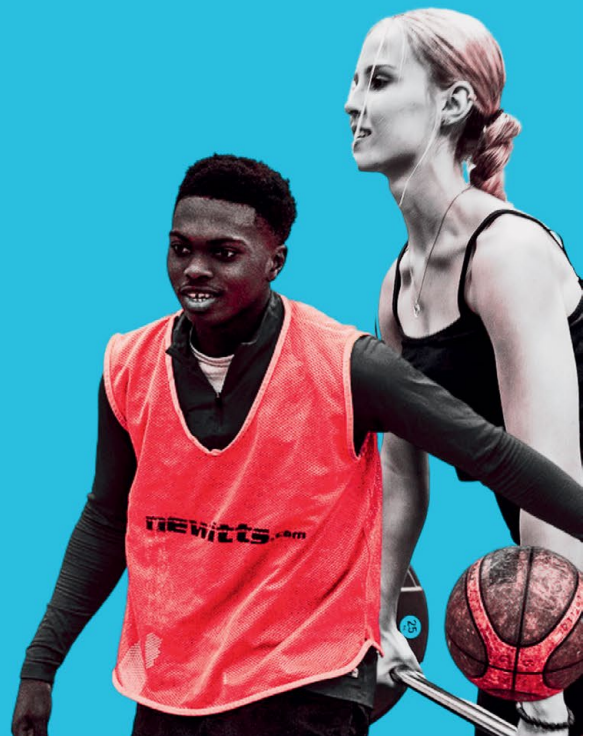
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# BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2024

*Organised by Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit*

6.30pm	Doors Open	
7.05pm	Take your seats please	
7.10pm	Introduction	Richard Tapley, Bedford Borough Council Manager for Sports Development and Leisure
7.15pm	Official Welcome	Tom Wootton, Mayor of Bedford Borough
	The Bedford Borough Sports Development Team (Film)	
7.30pm	Award Presentations	<i>Presentations will be made by Sponsors &amp; Special Guests</i> Club, Community Club Award, Primary School, Secondary School, Young Volunteer, Junior Disability, Junior Personality
8.00pm	Interval	The Bar will be open during the break
8.20pm	Welcome Back	Guest Speaker - Luke Tarrant
8.30pm	Award Presentations	<i>Presentations will be made by Sponsors &amp; Special Guests</i> Team, Coach, Community Person, Unsung Hero, Adult Disability, Adult Personality, Service to Sport
8.55pm	Closing Message	Tom Wootton, Mayor of Bedford Borough

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

*Please could all nominees stand up when their name is called out by the category announcer. Could all award winners assemble next to the stage straight after the Mayor's closing message for the official photographs.*



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL