

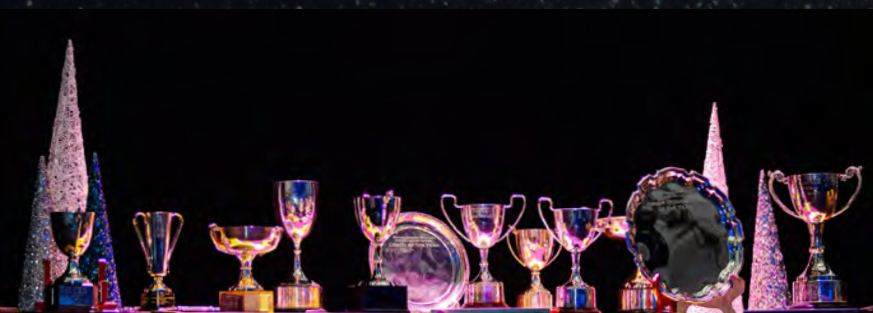


**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2025

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December

*Bedford Borough Council Sports Development Unit*



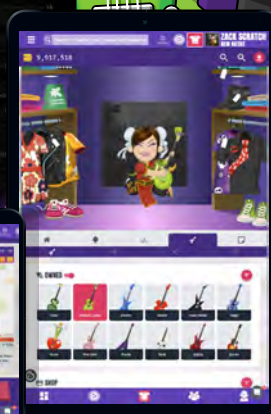
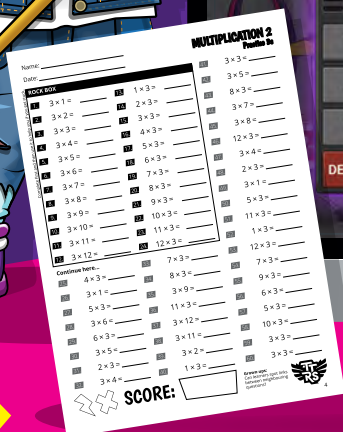
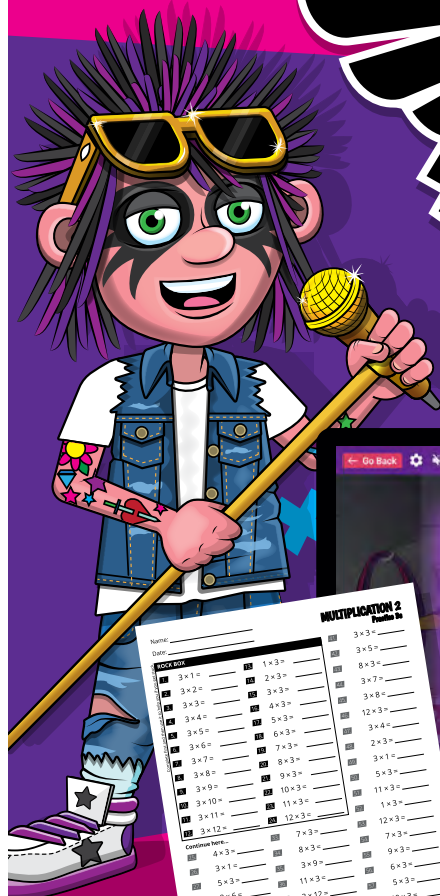


HELPS CHILDREN  
**RECALL**  
THEIR TIMES  
TABLES

# TIMES TABLES ROCK STARS

AWARD  
WINNING  
PLATFORM

MULTIPLICATION & DI-  
VISION. SOLVED.



- MOTIVATIONAL DAILY PRACTICE
- ADAPTIVE ALGORITHM
- MAKES MATHS FUN

USED BY OVER 4 MILLION  
CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

12 MONTH  
SUBSCRIPTIONS  
AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLS,  
TUTORS AND FAMILIES



TTROCKSTARS.COM



# *Welcome to the* **BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2025**

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**

---

## **Contents**

History of the Awards	Page 4
Meet the Judges / How the Judging works	Page 5
Award Categories	Page 7
The 2025 Nominee Profiles	Page 8
Programme for the Evening	Back Cover



## History of the Awards

The Bedford Sports Awards have been running now for 30 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 Borough’s 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 eight regionally within your sport.



**APPLICATIONS OPEN ON 20TH DECEMBER 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.

**Lucy Bardner**

Community Programmes Director,  
the Harpur Trust

**Craig Barter**

Manager Editor - Sport, YouthTV

**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

**Dr Steve Bilham**

Chair of the Foundation/  
International Committee, Rotary  
Club of Bedford Park

**Denise Byrne**

Manager for Organisational  
Development, Bedford Borough  
Council

**Tor Caldwell**

Creative Copywriter, Times Tables  
Rock Stars

**Aaron Colbert**

Community Sports Manager,  
Bedford Partnership, GLL, Better

**Steph Daniels**

President, Bedford Physical  
Education Old Students' Association

**Urban Judge FRSA**

Group CEO, YouthTV

**Simran Kaur Khinder**

Recovery Service Operational  
Manager, East London NHS  
Foundation Trust

**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

**Jen Pierce**

Community Engagement  
Manager, 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

**Sarah Stevens**

Manager for Community Safety,  
Resilience & Flood Risk, Bedford  
Borough Council

**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 mark 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.

# Club Support

Local sports clubs and volunteers are vital to the provision of sport in Bedford Borough.

In partnership with several local and national organisations we can support you in a number of ways.

Take a look below and please get in touch if you'd like more information.

.....

## Safeguarding Support

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 on best practice for your club or organisation we can help. You can also sign up to our bi-monthly welfare newsletter.

## Activity Finder

Looking for a way to tell more people about your activity, session or club?

Register on our Activity Finder which will not only show on our website but across other activity finders on many other websites as well.

## Training Courses & Workshops

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 courses around physical activity.

## Funding

We can help support your funding applications. Our website has the latest updates on local funding streams, including details of the Sport England Movement Fund.

## Marketing & Promotions

Let us help share your successes by tagging us in your social media posts. Sign up to our monthly newsletter for all the latest updates and local events happening across Bedfordshire.

## Get In Touch



[Johnathan@beactivebeds.co.uk](mailto:Johnathan@beactivebeds.co.uk)



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



[@BeActiveBeds](https://www.instagram.com/BeActiveBeds)

  
Inspiring Bedfordshire to move more

## 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>	 Inspiring Bedfordshire to move more
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Community Club / Group Award</b> Sponsored by Better and GLL Sports Foundation</li></ul>	 the feel good place
<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 YouthTV</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 Charity 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 and County Athletics Club**

With around 500 members training from under 7's to over 70 year olds Bedford and County Athletics Club have achieved a lot this year; In Track - 13 athletes represented Bedfordshire at the English Schools Championships, 5 athletes are ranked in the UK Top Ten in their events, they achieved Championship medals in 5 National Championship and 5 South of England Championships. A youth athlete came 2nd in the Eastern Young Athletes league, their Masters teams won numerous medals at the National Championships, bronze and relay gold and the European Masters Championships and won the Eastern Masters Final.

---

### **Bedford Wheelchair Racing**

2025 has been a momentous year for Bedford Wheelchair Racing. Although only small in terms of numbers, it has certainly punched above its weight. One member was selected to compete for England in an International Grand Prix in Switzerland; two members were selected for the England Athletics talent development programme for future Paralympians; at least half the members achieved personal bests in a range of track events, whilst two of the younger members competed for the first time at several Stoke Mandeville Grand Prix events. Bedford Wheelchair Racing focuses specifically on people with disabilities, encouraging anybody, irrespective of gender, to join and participate.

---

### **Edusports – Multi Activity**

The Edusports Adventure Club has successfully engaged over 150 children in outdoor sports, helping many overcome anxieties and build confidence through structured adventure activities. Participants have achieved milestones in teamwork, resilience, and physical fitness. Feedback from schools and parents shows improved attendance, emotional wellbeing, and motivation. The club's inclusive ethos ensures every child celebrates achievement, whether mastering a new skill or completing a team challenge. Edusports runs all year-round programmes including climbing, kayaking, hiking, and nature-based resilience workshops. New initiatives, such as 'Calm Through Adventure' specifically support children experiencing anxiety, blending outdoor challenges with mindfulness and peer support.

---



### **Riverside Lawn Tennis Club**

This past year has been another successful year for Riverside, both for their teams and individual members. They now field 22 teams across the Bedfordshire County Leagues (Men's, Ladies, Mixed, Vets and Indoor categories) some of which have reached top-division titles, multiple division wins and promotions. Riverside players excelled at the Bedfordshire County Closed Championships, achieving 8 adult titles, 5 runners up, and 8 junior titles. Riverside pride themselves on their 'All Ages, All Abilities, All Welcome' ethos. Located in the heart of Bedford, they have one of the biggest coaching programmes in the region, which runs throughout the year both during term time and the holiday periods.

---



### **Star Rowing Club**

This year Star Rowing Club qualified a men's 8 and a junior quad into Henley Royal Regatta (the world's most prestigious and famous rowing event) and a single and a four into Henley Women's Regatta. The junior squad also won a bronze medal at National Schools regatta in the championship single (the largest junior regatta in Great Britain). Alongside this Bedford Star Club achieved 4 wins at Henley Masters Regatta and delivered an outstanding performance at the World Masters Regatta in Banyoles, Spain, earning 55 individual medals and ranking Bedford Star Club 7th in the world, showcasing excellence across all ages and disciplines.



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



### **Thurleigh Cricket Club**

Thurleigh Cricket Club's 1st Team have been promoted to Division 3 in the Northants Cricket League (this makes 2 promotions in 2 years after joining the league). Their 2nd Team was promoted to Division 2 in the Beds Invitational League and their brand new Under 9 Youth Team won a small number of games in their very first ever season. The club also boasts that their 1st indoors cricket team came 2nd in their league and Aiden Moore who plays for our 2nd team was awarded a "rising star" award at the Cricket East Awards.



**CAREER  
POWERED  
EDUCATION**

## **STUDY SPORT IN BEDFORD: BEAT YOUR PERSONAL BEST**

**Exceptional facilities that give  
you a competitive edge**

**Sport scholarships available**

Terms and conditions apply.

**Apply now [beds.ac.uk](https://beds.ac.uk)**



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



### **Bedford MS Therapy Centre – Neuro-Physical Exercise**

The MS Therapy Centre for Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire delivers over 1,000 sessions each year to help people with Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's stay active, strong, and independent. With over 2,200 people locally affected, the Centre's tailored strength, cardio, and group classes, from Pilates to Boxercise, which help delay symptoms and support people to remain in work and live independently for longer. Every move is guided by neuro-physiotherapy experts, helping individuals build strength, confidence, and hope through movement. Accessibility underpins every session, with adapted equipment and expert instructors ensuring all can participate at their own pace.



### **Beyond Limits – Multi Sports**

Beyond Limits encourages disabled people to take up exercise which is vital to people's mental and physical well-being. The Beyond Limits team deliver a variety of activities at the Bedford International Athletics Stadium and take it in their stride to involve all attendees, whose challenges are very diverse, in a calm and respectful manner. A parent of one of the participants said "In the past year my own son, who has autism, has gone from being very wary and unwilling to exercise to today being an eager participant in many sports." Beyond Limits recently celebrated their first birthday.



### **Bridgemans Bowling Club**

Bridgemans Bowling Club is run by volunteers who offer their services for free, with coaching sessions free of charge and big encouragement to get people active. The Bowling Club is open to anyone in the local community regardless of age and ability. Bridgemans Bowling Club have two open days every year to attract new members.

Various cubs and scout groups come along for evening activities and several care homes attend for free to help them keep them active. The club have qualified coaches on hand to assist with anyone who needs help.

### **Canoe Trail Adventure School – Multi Sports**

Canoe Trail Adventure School was founded in partnership with Sport England Innovation funding almost 10 years ago. This year over 6,000 young people have participated in adventure school with 1343 completing NGB qualifications, first aid modules and well being activities. The programme has provided a safe space to make friends, develop outdoor skills, build confidence and resilience enjoying our outdoors spaces with significant emphasis on spending time in nature. Elements of Canoe Trail Adventure School programme has been delivered through all youth programmes with schools, youth charities and local community groups. Groups have included vulnerable young people, SEND groups and a number of charities.



### **Diamond Runners Wootton**

In January 2025, Sammie and Richard and the rest of the leaders made the step of providing a running club in Wootton. The club has now grown in numbers of participants and staff. The group now has 4 leaders to enable them to offer more sessions and provide support to all members. The club provides runs on a Monday and Thursday evening for mixed abilities and encourages people to join in and volunteer at the local parkrun events.



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

### Embrace – Swimming

Embrace supports children, young people, and their families living locally with complex disabilities. They offer a wide range of activities including family swim sessions, providing opportunities for the whole family to swim together in a safe and inclusive environment. This has a significant and positive impact for those that may not be able to access the sport elsewhere, due to the complexity of their needs. The whole family can swim together in a fully-accessible hydrotherapy pool, which has an ever-lasting effect on their health and well-being. There is always a lifeguard on duty, staff and volunteers to support and engage with them, and hoists and accessible changing spaces available.



### Fun 4 Young People – Multi Sports

Fun 4 Young People has made a measurable and lasting impact on sport and physical activity in Bedford by providing inclusive, high-quality programmes for children and young people. Over the past year, they have supported 654 unique young people through 352 hours of face-to-face delivery across 39 after-school clubs and 30 days of holiday clubs.

They have offered Multi Sports, Parkour, Multi Arts including dance sessions, and Taekwondo, with year-round programmes shaped by young people's interests to promote participation, engagement, and enjoyment and tackled barriers such as bullying, isolation, and low confidence while promoting well-being, communication, teamwork, and healthy lifestyles.



### Great Barford Run Together

Since 2022, Sharon and Chris have co-established and grown the Great Barford RunTogether group into a thriving, inclusive community of over 70 members. The group's success is measured in confidence and participation rather than medals.

Many members have progressed from beginners to completing 5Ks, 10Ks, and half marathons, often entering local parkruns and events. Sharon and Chris lead by example, competing regularly while celebrating every personal milestone. Their warmth and encouragement have inspired dozens of residents to become active, stay active, and discover a genuine love of running within a supportive village community.



### Hawaa Empower – Multi Sports

In the past year, Hawaa Empower has delivered women-only badminton and squash at John Bunyan Centre, runs at Bedford Park, and walks at Priory Park—engaging hundreds of participants, including over 350 women in badminton and 40 in squash since April. They have also introduced men-only runs and hikes, encouraging regular 7,000–10,000 daily

steps and new leisure memberships. Their collaboration with GLL and Bedford Borough Council has enabled consistent, inclusive delivery that promotes health, confidence, and community cohesion. By offering representation and safe spaces they have inspired individuals who once felt excluded to see sport as part of their lifestyle.



### iLearn Bedford – Multi Sports

iLearn Bedford is making sport and exercise more accessible for women, children, and families, especially in ethnic minority and disadvantaged communities. Post-Covid, its programmes, like Hi 5, Together We Can, and inclusive swimming, have helped combat isolation and inactivity. Swimming sessions combine lessons and aquarobics, adapted

for disabled participants. Cultural events such as Pitha Party and Boishakhi Mela integrate movement, dance, and games, making physical activity fun and socially engaging. iLearn Bedford promotes inclusive, enjoyable exercise, boosting confidence, wellbeing, and long-term health. Its impact is significant in fostering active lifestyles and community connection

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



### **Kempston Rugby Club**

Kempston Rugby Club are open and accessible through their website, social media and in person. Anyone is welcome to attend both training sessions and support their regular matches. The team attend local community events and other sport clubs to support the community whilst promoting their own club at the same time.

Kempston Rugby Club makes you feel welcome and it is quite evident from the environment that care is taken to not only promote physical wellbeing but Mental health awareness.

---

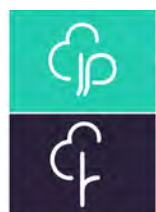
### **Marlins Water Activity Club – Swimming**

Marlins Water Activities Club provides a regular weekly, fun session in the swimming pool for individuals with a disability and their friends and family. The emphasis is on enjoyment in the water in whichever way best suits the individual. It fulfils a real need in the community for families and friends to get together in an environment where you can just be yourself. The club caters for all ages and abilities. Everyone is welcome and there are often three generations of a family in the pool together.



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

The No Barriers Tennis Programme runs 15 sessions a week across a full range of disabilities for 90 people a week including people with social, emotional, and mental health issues, visual impairments, Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML), use of wheelchairs, autism, learning disability and Downs Syndrome tennis sessions. No Barriers work with schools, charities, day care centres, groups and individuals to provide the opportunity for people to be active, socialise and learn new skills alongside performance training for one of our wheelchair players.



### **parkrun and junior parkrun**

Bedford have a number of parkrun events across the Borough, held weekly in Bedford Park, Great Denham and Jubilee Park. Each is led by amazing volunteer Run Directors who bring people together to walk, jog, run, or cheer. parkrun is free, inclusive, and open to all. Every weekend morning, people of all ages come together to get active, connect with others, and start their weekend with smiles, friendship, and fresh air — helping make our community happier and healthier. Bedford parkrun began in 2011, followed by Bedford juniors, Great Denham, Great Denham juniors, and Jubilee parkrun in 2025. Together, they attract over 1,000 participants each weekend.



### **Rainbow Bedfordshire CIC – Multi Sports**

Rainbow Bedfordshire is Bedford's local LGBTQ+ charity which supports people to feel safe and welcome by projects and activities for the queer community. Mack along with the strong support of Pat and the wider Rainbow Bedfordshire team have organised a wide range of amazing inclusive events and coordinate the regular

Swimming sessions and multisport activity groups. Launching only the second LGBTQ+ swim session in the UK Mack carefully and considerably organised a space where people could feel safe and welcomed to swim. With 9-10 attendees each session swimming and people who travel significant distances to attend the sessions shows how important the unique offer is.



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



### **Shaheedi Sports Council Bedford – Multi Sports**

Shaheedi Sports Council Bedford was founded in 1967, holding tournaments for all communities and age groups across the country. Sports in these tournaments were football, hockey, kabaddi, volleyball, cricket, athletics, tug of war. Since 2018 Shaheedi Sports Council Bedford in association with Khalsa Football Federation have held tournaments every year, in July, at Hillgrounds Road Playing Field in Kempston. The whole community joined in to help and make the tournament a success. 2025 was the first year that Shaheedi Tournament had girls teams playing in the tournament, girls football was a huge success in all tournaments all over the country.

### **Share a Smile Intergenerational Movement and Music**

Share a Smile is Bedford's 1st Intergenerational Movement and Music class, uniting the youngest and oldest members of our community running sessions for 0-4 yr olds in care homes. In the past year Share a Smile has run 80 classes across Bedford, Kempston and Wilstead that's facilitated over 2000 connections between the generations. The benefits are immeasurable: residents are moving, improving cognitive ability, balance, dexterity and becoming re-energised. Children are learning developmental skills, gross and fine motor skills and coordination with movement stimulating neural connections. The caregivers are impacted positively by being an active part of the sessions.



### **Spiral Freerun CIC – Parkour**

What began as a few outdoor sessions has become a thriving hub that helps children, teens, and adults rediscover confidence through creative motion. Their work brings physically inactive or hard-to-reach groups into exercise by removing the competitiveness that turns many people away from mainstream sport. In doing so, they've created a culture where moving, exploring, and learning new skills feels natural and safe. Spiral Freerun's timetable includes sessions for toddlers, youths, adults, families and SEND-friendly sessions. Coaches adapt lessons for each ability level, and the team keeps costs as low as possible with free trials and funded blocks for those who need support.



### **Sporting Aid – Multi Sports**

Sporting Aid makes a real difference in young people's lives. They use sport as a tool to engage and support children, particularly those who are young carers, from low-income families or involved in gangs or displaying Anti-Social Behaviour. Beyond just activity, sessions build confidence, teamwork and resilience. Sporting Aid also refurbishes community sport spaces with youth input, making local facilities more welcoming. Their programmes offer mentoring, healthy living guidance and life skills, helping young people thrive both on and off the pitch. Sporting Aid is genuinely inclusive, providing free programmes to young people from all backgrounds.



### **Stewartby Striders – Running**

Stewartby Striders make running and walking accessible, welcoming, and inclusive for all. The free Couch to 5K programmes have helped many take their first steps into running, with participants often becoming regular runners, volunteers, and qualified leaders. The club also supports local events, volunteers at parkruns, and paces races, inspiring confidence, mental wellbeing, and community connection. More than a free running club, Stewartby Striders is a hub that motivates people to be active, build friendships, and enjoy sport together, whether that'll be through running, jeffing or walking, to the development of sport and physical activity in our local communities.

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



### **University of Bedfordshire Community Exercise Clinic – Multi Sports**

The club offers a range of classes for wellbeing, exercise, recuperation and confidence in exercising in a safe environment under supervision. It aims to encourage participants to try different exercises and equipment and improve physical ability, strength and mobility with access to physio provided by students under supervision. The clinic specialises in sports sciences and led by very skilled and dedicated staff, supported by students who are studying appropriate specialties in the field of sports sciences. As well as physical benefits the clients benefit from the camaraderie of the collective exercise and social benefits.



### **VyMy Dance and Fitness**

VyMy Dance and Fitness has been running since 2015, providing extra curricular dance sessions to schools across Bedfordshire. The company aims to provide access to dance classes where children may otherwise be unable due to cost, time or location, and provide children with the same opportunities as a formal dance school. Over the course of 10 years, many of their students have discovered their love for dance and gone on to study dance at a higher level and represented their schools in competitions. VyMy Dance is welcoming to all children between the ages of 4 and 18, the only criteria is the desire to dance.



### **Wilstead Table Tennis Club**

Wilstead Table Tennis Club is a new table tennis club built from the old Elstow Table Tennis Club. The addition to Wilstead village has added two new times where all ages, abilities and disabilities can enjoy a relaxed, competitive and fun game. The club is open to all from juniors to very seniors. The club runs 6 teams in the Bedford league with two in Division 1, 2 in Division 2 and 1 each in Division 3 & 4. Wilstead Table Tennis Club also runs a thriving over 60s session every Monday with coaching, fun games, tournaments and social events. Their facilities are fully accessible to wheel chair members and less physically able players.

### **Yoga with Lenka**

Inclusivity is at the heart of Yoga with Lenka. Classes are open to all ages, genders, and abilities, offering a safe space for anyone seeking movement, healing, or connection. The community welcomes beginners, busy parents, older adults, and those facing life challenges, making wellbeing truly accessible. With Kids Yoga now running and past collaborations like Cancer Yoga with Ailsa's Aim, the group supports both children and those navigating illness or recovery. Monthly social clubs extend connection beyond the mat, helping people form new friendships and support networks. Yoga with Lenka stands for belonging, empowerment, and authentic community care.





## Nominations for Primary School of the Year



### Great Ouse Primary Academy

Great Ouse is committed to promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles for all pupils, including those with SEND. Every child receives two active hours of high-quality PE weekly through a broad, inclusive curriculum. Trained sports leaders organise and deliver break and lunchtime clubs, inter-curricular house tournaments, and multiple sports days. Great Ouse run nine afterschool sports clubs weekly for Reception to Year 6, alongside three to four fixtures per week, encouraging widespread participation. Inclusive provision includes adapted PE sessions and dedicated SEND activity days. These initiatives help all pupils achieve at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily.



### Livingstone Primary School

Every pupil at Livingstone enjoys at least 30 minutes of daily activity through clubs, forest school, SSCO/SEND events and Sports Leader-led sessions. Active breaks re-engaging less active pupils, while participation is tracked to ensure full inclusion and offers opportunities for all. A mix of staff, visiting coaches and sixth form students keeps provision exciting and diverse throughout the year and continues to expand in both lessons and at break times. Pupils develop skills, confidence and a love of movement that lasts well beyond the school day, helping to develop a healthy lifestyle.



### Pinchmill Primary School

Over the last five years Pinchmill Primary School has continued to use their yearly sports premium to extend the excellent offer of sports equipment that can be used by all students that attend the school. Pupils not only use these brilliant resources before school, break and lunchtimes, but throughout the school day when movement breaks are needed by all students. Pinchmill understand that regular movement breaks are key to increase children's ability to concentrate for longer periods of time and this has been a school priority for many years now and should be recognised in the wider community. A minimum of two hours of PE is also delivered per week from pre-school to Year 6.



### St John Rigby Catholic Primary School

Pupils at St John Rigby certainly engage in at least 30 minutes physical activity each day. Pupil leaders in Year 5 and 6 have supported this through undertaking training to lead orienteering sessions, running structured multisport activities during playtime for KS1 children and facilitating younger children with den-building, outdoor gym and tyre play. Children engage in dance and aerobics at lesson transitions to aid concentration and learning. They use their wonderful big field for the 'Daily Mile' to allow our children to just run! This year St John Rigby has introduced Active Maths lessons which sees children take learning outdoors and engage in maths tasks in a healthy and physically active way.



### Wootton Primary School

Wootton Primary School are dedicated to ensuring the engagement of all pupils in regular physical activity, striving to provide at least 30 active minutes every day for every child within the school day. They believe that physical activity is fundamental to a child's physical health, mental well-being, and their readiness to learn. To achieve this, they have embedded opportunities for movement and activity throughout the entire school day, not just within PE lessons. Wootton Primary School actively seeks out these opportunities through the following key strategies: 1. Active Playtimes and Lunchtimes, 2. Movement in lessons, 3. Dedicated Programmes and Initiatives e.g. the daily mile.

## Nominations for Secondary School of the Year

---



### Bedford Academy

Bedford Academy offers an extensive PE curriculum that encourages every student to participate in a wide range of sports, including basketball, football, racket sports, netball, athletics, and dance. Pupils benefit from high-quality facilities and enrichment clubs before and after school. The Sixth Form Sports Academies in basketball, football, and dance provide elite-level training alongside academic study, ensuring students experience the balance of performance and education. The school's inclusive ethos ensures opportunities for all abilities, promoting physical literacy, teamwork, and personal growth through regular participation in district and national competitions.

---



### Castle Newnham School

Castle Newnham offers a wide range of high-quality PE and extracurricular sports, recognised by the Equal Access Schools Award 2024. Castle Newnham's offer is broad, fielding 76 teams across 16 sports, and inclusive with 53% of Year 7 and 8 students participating. They are committed to expanding access which is evident in the new A and B netball teams, attracting over 50 regular attendees. Quality is consistently high, demonstrated by multiple district level wins in sports like Flag Football, Tennis and Sports Hall Athletics. Furthermore, Castle Newnham successfully provides elite pathways, with students representing the District at County Athletics and numerous teams achieving County Representation across Flag Football, Futsal and Athletics.

---



### Goldington Academy

Goldington Academy offers a wide range of high-quality PE and extracurricular opportunities that promote participation, enjoyment, and skill development across many sports. Their KS4 curriculum encourages continued involvement through both competitive and recreational pathways, catering to all interests and abilities. Alongside PE lessons, Goldington Academy run numerous inclusive clubs — such as rugby, football, netball, basketball, rowing, table tennis, tennis, rounders, dance, badminton, and cricket — open to all students and designed to break down gender stereotypes. With clubs for all ability levels, including B teams, so that every student has the chance to represent the school.

---



### Wootton Upper School

At Wootton Upper School sport and physical activity is for all: They offer a wide range of sports including football, rugby, netball, athletics, trampolining, fitness, cricket, rounders and dodgeball. Wootton Upper School also encourage a range of activities through their Duke of Edinburgh bronze and silver awards - where they have really built up an impressive uptake. Wootton Upper School use sport to build up leadership skills and be inclusive. They have an annual sports day for their local primary school where their young leaders work with Year 4 pupils to engage them and develop their skills. This has proven to be hugely successful and has helped develop their sports leaders and enhance their communication and leadership skills.





## Nominations for Young Volunteer of the Year



### Jasamine Bailey – Multi Sports

Jasamine has volunteered with Fun 4 Young People (F4YP) for over 12 months, initially as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award and continuing beyond her required hours. She has supported three terms of Multi Arts sessions and a five-day Multi Sports session in the summer holiday club, contributing consistently to a wide range of activities, from sports, dance and art to general youth support. Jasamine has developed leadership, communication, and teamwork skills through hands-on experience in youth work. She has grown in her ability to engage participants independently and respond to their needs.



### Bodie Christison – Multi Sports

Bodie has spent many of his school holidays (including full weeks) volunteering for Edusports in addition to regular Friday nights throughout the past couple of years. He has helped to lead and progress in a number of different sports from paddlesport, where he is a qualified Instructor, to climbing, shooting and archery amongst many others. Bodie has been committed to building his own standard within the sessions he helps to lead and is constantly asking questions to help himself progress further, as well as looking for opportunities to help him get out and lead.



### Jessica Leach – Hockey

Starting in September 2024 Jessica undertook the role of Junior Coach coaching the Under 8s on Sunday morning at Bedford Hockey Club. Having nearly 30 children attend, Jessica took a small group of 10 children and taught them advance skills and how to play in a team. Jessica took her group to 2 tournaments of which they won 1 and came 2nd in the other, a great achievement for the group, many of which had been total beginners at the start of the year. Jessica having played senior hockey for Bedford Ladies 6 team and has a desire to continue coaching and to gain her coaching qualifications.

**design  
& print**



**DID YOU KNOW...**

**WE CREATED THIS BROCHURE,  
& CAN DO MUCH MORE FOR YOU?**

- Posters & Flyers
- Leaflets

- Brochures
- Vinyl Banners

- Large Posters  
(up to A0 size)

- Pop-Up  
Display Stands

... literally anything  
you could want!

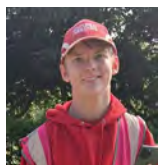
**> HIGH QUALITY > FAST TURNAROUND > COMPETITIVE RATES >**

Call **01234 228154** or email **design@bedford.gov.uk**

Design & Print is a department of Bedford Borough Council



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



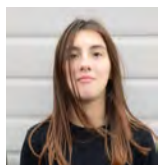
### **Max Gallaher – Running**

Max is 17 years old and lives with severe epilepsy and autism. He regularly experiences tonic-clonic seizures, which involve sudden muscle stiffness and rapid jerking movements, as well as sometimes loss of consciousness. Max often experiences a seizure immediately prior to parkrun, as well as regularly having seizures during the 5km run. Max shows great personal endeavour when he attends parkrun and inspires others at parkrun not only with his enthusiasm for running and parkrun but also for taking part in parkrun despite the significant physical challenges presented by his severe epilepsy. To date, Max has completed an impressive 245 parkruns.



### **Tammy Harrison – Wheelchair Racing**

Tammy has cerebral palsy, since a baby she has dealt with permanent movement disorders, including poor coordination and strength. Tammy joined Bedford Wheelchair Racing Club and has been an active and valuable member promoting not just wheelchair racing but disability sport up and down the country. Tammy is an integral part of the Paralympics Equal Play campaign which calls for no child to be left on the sideline. Involved in the Channel 4 documentary Tammy discovered the transformative power of sport, and fight against exclusion from sport and physical education at school because of disability. Invited to the Paralympics, taking part in the National Lottery Big Bash show and several media interviews with the BBC and Sky TV Tammy has always promoted her sport and how positive it is on health and wellbeing.



### **Naomi Wilsher – Multi Sports**

Naomi has become a role model to younger pupils at the Grange Academy School with her willingness and determination to succeed in all areas of PE, she has shown that she can work with her peers and has overcome the barrier of being the only girl in the school football team. Her passion for sport shines through and encourages other to try and develop their own skills. Naomi has dedicated her own time to improving her sporting skills, she will practice outside in all weathers to finely tune her skills be that in football, gymnastics or running, she encourages other to join in and helps them to develop their own skills, leading by example in lessons and practice. Naomi has joined a football team outside of school and is thriving in that team, she is also a House Captain at Grange Academy.





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



### **Yaleena Ali – Running**

Yaleena has completed a marathon equivalent of junior park runs on a Sunday morning and regularly comes in the top 10. She has participated in the Bedford Junior Aquathlon in October and has also represented her scouting group at the Muslim Scout fellowship Olympics. Her section of girl cubs actually ended up coming first out of all the other Muslim scout groups that attended that day. She has achieved all this all whilst having the condition of Juvenile Arthritis (a chronic autoimmune disease causing joint inflammation, pain, and stiffness in children under 16).



### **Zaphaniah Bryan – High Jump**

Zaphaniah is South of England Champion, London Indoor Games Champion and County Champion in high jump in his age category. He also received Bronze in the English Schools Competition with a personal best jump of 2.01m (11cm higher than his PB in 2024). Zaphaniah is currently short listed on the Youth Talented Program run by England Athletics and trains 3 times a week at the track and twice a week at the gym and a mobility session at home midweek. At Bedford and County Athletics Club Zaphaniah always demonstrates drills and explains and helps execute exercises within the group, especially to the beginners.



### **Celine Cordner – Dance**

Celine has had an outstanding year as a dancer with Inspire Performing Arts Club, achieving an incredible 2nd place at the National Championships. This remarkable result showcases her technical skill, artistry, and the dedication she brings to her craft. Her success at national level is a testament to her focus, resilience, and love for dance. Celine's talent, focus, and growth this year highlight her strong potential for continued success. Her coaches praise her ability to learn quickly, take feedback constructively, and translate it into beautiful performances. Her humility, kindness and teamwork make her not only a talented dancer but also a wonderful role model for others at Inspire Performing Arts Club.



### **Mia Flynn – Hammer**

In the Under 15 girls Hammer Mia is ranked 2nd in the UK with a personal best throw of 51.48 metres and she is ranked 24th in the UK 'of All Time'. Mia came 2nd in the English Schools Championships, 2nd in the England Championships, 1st in the South of England Championships, 1st in the South of England Inter-Counties Championships, 1st in the Eastern Counties Championships and has improved her club record at the Bedford and County Athletics Club. There are no national or regional squads for Mia's age group, but she was invited by England Athletics to compete in the hammer throw at the winter long throws championships in March.



### **Lois Fordham – Pole Vault**

Over the past year, Lois Fordham has delivered an exceptional season in pole vault, cementing her status as one of the UK's top young athletes. Starting the year with a personal best of 3.01m, Lois went on to achieve a new lifetime best of 3.20m at the English Schools Championships, where she won the bronze medal competing for the Bedfordshire Schools team. This result placed her 3rd in the UK rankings for U15 girls in 2025. Lois now boasts the titles of, Eastern Indoor Champion (U15), Eastern Outdoor Champion (U15, U17 and Senior Women) and County Champion. She also retained her club record at the Bedford and County Athletics Club.





## Nominations for Junior Personality of the Year



### Caleb Griffith – Tennis

Caleb, whilst only 13 years old, has achieved Beds County U14, U16 and U18 and competed at County Cups as well as in Nationals and Tennis Europe tournaments throughout the year. He has achieved top 15 rank in his age category in the UK this year and has been selected on the performance tennis pathway which include a number of training camps in Nottingham and one of 8 boys in the UK chosen to train in Spain, Girona for clay experience. His most prestigious achievement being an opportunity to play at Wimbledon as one of 6 promising boys on the performance pathway programme.



### Rory Luddington – Sailing

Rory, aged 12, represented Team GBR sailing an Optimist Dinghy (GBR 6677) in Brest, France during the summer. He has also competed in numerous international regattas in both the UK and overseas, including Italy and the Netherlands. In May he represented the East of England Sailing Optimists in the National Team racing in Oxford. In July his school honoured him with the Outstanding Performance Award which is awarded each year to just one pupil across the whole school, which has well over 1,000 students. Sailing whilst living in Bedford requires a high degree of commitment, however, Rory is still competing in a variety of top level international regattas against some of the best young sailors in the world.



### Thaila-Jade Mason – Athletics

Currently in Long Jump, Thaila-Jade is ranked 10th in the Under 20's category in the UK with a 5.87 metre PB. She came 3rd in the English Schools Championships and 2nd in the South of England Outdoor Championships. In High Jump Thaila-Jade is ranked 16th in the Under 20's category in the UK with a 1.65 metre PB and she came 1st in the East of England Indoor Championships. Thaila-Jade is also ranked 13th in the UK Under 20 Heptathlon with a PB of 4434 Points. She came 7th in the English Schools Heptathlon Championships and 1st in the English Schools Midland Region Championship.



### Cerys Rees – Football

At Dunstable Town Women's Football Club, Cerys scored a goal within 17 seconds in an FA cup game, overall scoring 5 goals in three games, on top of this she was the youngest on her team. After scoring the goal Cerys fell to the floor injured resulting in a fractured tibia. Cerys is now going through intense physio to get back to what she enjoys most. Cerys is so passionate about football and on Thursdays supports one of the coaches at the local football club coaching the girls U12 team. Cerys also plays in a grassroots division 1 team on a Saturday.

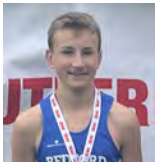


### Luke Rulton – Running

Luke has already completed over 250 junior parkruns. This is a record that less than 75 in the world and only a few people in Bedfordshire have achieved. On top of this, he's also participated in 163 adult parkruns. His time during the year in the adult park run from 41:03 down to 20:14. Luke trains twice a week with Bedford Athletics, twice a week of Park Run and 3 x a week with Kraken in Brazilian Jui Jitsu. His dedication to his running has been clearly shown with his time. Luke also volunteers at the junior event, regularly helps to pace others, whilst also encouraging his friends to go and join in the run.

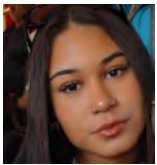


## Nominations for **Junior Personality of the Year**



### **Fraser Williams – Athletics**

Fraser was part of the Under 15 'A' side at the Bedford and County Athletic Club that won silver medal in the National Cross-Country relays, placing second in the country out of 96 teams, finishing four seconds behind eventual winners. Fraser won Gold in the County U15 1500m in 4m 20.4s. In doing so he broke the county record that had been in place since 1993. Fraser placed 9th at the English Schools National Championships U15 1500m. During the heats he raced a new personal best of 4:16.09. This was an improvement of over 18 seconds off his 1500m time from the start of the season this year.



### **Neve Wright – Football**

Neve has gone from playing at Real Bedford for the last 4 years to now playing in the Junior Premier League for Cambridge United this season after wanting to progress herself. At school Neve is the captain of her team and helps organise and coach some of the sessions. Her school team also won the Meridian Trust League in the summer. Neve is a sporting role model and can show leadership and dedication to her fellow team mates. Neve doesn't realise how appreciated she is and self-worth for her achievements. She shows up and shows dedication in all she does and to all she plays with.

## Bedford Physical Education Old Students' Association

Registered Charity Number 290930

### **Advancing Physical Education Worldwide since 1903**

Bedford Physical Education Old Students' Association is 1,300+ members strong: Alumni of the former Bedford College of Physical Education, Bedford College of Higher Education, De Montford University and the current University of Bedfordshire.

The Bedford Physical Education Archive is housed at the Bedford Campus of the University of Bedfordshire.

**The Association supports clubs, schools and the community with opportunities to apply for funding for distinct projects, including research.**

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





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

---



### **Bedford All Stars U18 Hockey Team**

22 players from 13 different state schools that do not provide hockey as a sport or were unable to field a team, came together to compete under the umbrella name of Bedford Hockey Club All Stars. The competition ran on Monday evenings with different age groups and finished with the County Tournament at the end of the season with players gaining special permission to play during school hours. The U18 team came 4th and 5th in the County Tournament.

---



### **Bedford and County Athletics Club, Under 17 Men's Endurance Squad**

The Under 17 Men Endurance Squad comprises of 9 athletes and is drawn from a variety of schools across Bedfordshire. This year they won Gold at the South of England 5k Road Race Championships, Silver at the South of England Cross Country Championships and 4th in the National Cross Country Championships. The Team won all 5 races and the overall season title in the Chiltern League XC – UK's largest Cross Country League comprising teams from Beds, Herts, Bucks, Northants, Berkshire and Oxfordshire

---



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

In June, Bedford Ladies Tug of War Team competed at the National Championships in Tonbridge where they won 3 silver medals and 1 bronze medal across four weight classes and won the AAA Championships held in Cumbria. In July they attended the British and Irish Championships in Armagh, Northern Ireland, bringing home 5 gold medals (3 as Bedford Ladies and 2 as England Ladies). Finally in August Bedford Ladies Tug of War Team were the National League Champions across all 4 weight classes (500kg, 520kg, 540kg, 560kg). Their season climaxed with the team competing at the World Championships in Nottingham, the ladies went on to win a silver medal in the open competition and bronze medal as England Ladies in the closed competition.

---



### **Bedford Tigers Rugby League Club**

Bedford Tigers have finished 3rd in the Bedford Southern Conference League which is a testimony to all the hard that has been injected by the players and staff. This is a difficult league with many of the opposing teams residing in London and having access to players from New Zealand and Australia, the homes of rugby league. Many of the Tigers players also represent their university, country teams and some play international rugby for their countries of origin. Due to their strong season, Bedford Tigers have qualified for the BETFRED Challenge Cup Final due to play in January 2026, if Tigers win their match this opens up the chance for the club to play professional rugby league teams.

---

## **Canoe Trail Team – Water Sports and Outdoor Activities**

The Canoe Trail Staff Team has delivered over 14,250 activity sessions working with local schools and community groups and also won recognition from their work in National Newspapers putting Bedford on the map as well as highly commended in the recent Everyday Hero Awards in Bedford this year. The team are recognised nationally and have delivered talks and workshops at many national events this year including the Royal Geographical Society, Institute of Outdoor Learning professional Development Groups and the Welsh Canoe Symposium. Members of the team hold the highest level of coaching and leadership awards in the UK and share expertise across the sector to schools, universities and colleges.



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



### **Intensity Dance Team**

Intensity Dance Team are made up of girls range from age 12-16, all competing in solo and duets routines in Street Dance and Lyrical Dance. In October 2024 Intensity Dance Team were awarded the Golden Buzzer at the National Entertainment Awards to perform at the O2. In October 2025 Intensity Dance Team performed at the O2. Throughout this year they have competed as a group and placed at every competition (1st-3rd). In June they placed 1st at a Regional Competition allowing them to compete at Nationals in July. They came 3rd in their category, making them the 3rd best team in 14 and under beginners in street dance.



### **Junior DS Team – Tennis**

The Junior DS (Down's Syndrome) Active Group, based at Riverside Tennis Club, has been running for over 10 years now. The Team wanted to especially mention Caitlin, Alice and Benji who have been coming consistently over a number of years. They turn up no matter what the weather and love their tennis. They all bring 100% energy to the session and the session is a joy to coach - sometimes with more laughter than tennis but we always get plenty of action from the group. The Junior DS Team plan to continue with the group, ensuring that there are the appropriate entry and exit routes for all players who can access the group.



### **St. John's School Football Friday**

St. John's School Football Friday began in February 2025 as a behaviour reward within the school and before the end of the 2024-25 academic year, had already grown to a level where it was able to compete in an externally organised competition. Whilst still very much at the participation level, the enthusiasm of the school's young people to play football each week has seen a significant increase in it's size since it began. The hope is to identify potential within the pupils and recommend them to the England Learning Disability (LD) Team in future.



**PROUDLY  
SPONSORED BY  
JEWSON.**

**Search 'Jewson' today for all your  
building supplies.**



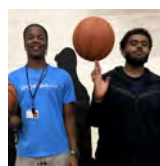
## Nominations for **Coach of the Year**

---

### **Chris Ashdown – Multi Sports**

Chris has shown outstanding skill and compassion, supporting children to achieve personal milestones that extend far beyond sport. Within Edusports, Chris tailors adventure and sports sessions to individual emotional needs, using outdoor challenges to build trust, confidence, and resilience for children who struggle in mainstream environments. Chris dedicates exceptional time and care to every child, offering extra sessions, smaller group activities, and calm spaces. A participant said “his patient, trauma-informed approach transformed my child’s anxiety—helping him progress from panic attacks and sleepless nights to confidently completing five residential trips within 12 months of engagement.” Chris continually develops his practice through training in mental health, SEND, and inclusive coaching.

---



### **Rahul Bandha and Joel Francis – Basketball**

Rahul and Joel’s journey began as youth club members seeking direction. Discovering passions for basketball, they channelled their energy into personal growth and supporting their community. Both completed Level 1 and 2 basketball coaching awards, alongside first aid, safeguarding and a young mentoring course, enabling them to guide and inspire others. These achievements allowed them to deliver high-quality, inclusive sessions across Bedford. From volunteers to project leaders, they continually improve through reflection and collaboration. Their journey shows how opportunity and dedication can transform young people into confident, capable community role models.

---

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

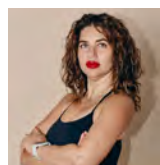
All three members of the coaching team are dedicated to the sport. Zoe Luscombe and Michael Blunt have achieved the highest qualification in the UK for wheelchair racing, whilst the third member of the team, Sharmila Harman has progressed with qualifications on the coaching ladder - as President of the Paralympic Association of Nepal she has experience of coaching and team management. When possible, they attend all track meetings when members are racing or training and spend, on average, during the summer competition period, up to 20 hours per week. Training sessions are held twice a week, but members also have rollers for additional home training.

---

### **Alex Bonney – Kayaking and Canoeing**

Alex has recently completed his Level 5 apprenticeship in outdoor activities with a coaching and education award allowing him to coach and teach participants at a higher level. Included within his apprenticeship he has completed his Canoe Leader Award, Kayak Leader, Archery GB instructor and Climbing Wall Instructor. Alex previously attended Shuttleworth College completing his Level 3 Extended Diploma, Paddle Sports Instructor, and Core Coach Award in canoe and kayak. Despite his young age Alex has grown into an experienced outdoor instructor, coach and leader with thousands of hours of coaching experience. He supervises and leads a wide range of activities for visually impaired groups, vulnerable groups, and SEND groups as part of our alternative provision offer.

---



### **Cornelia Cordner – Fitness**

Cornelia offers many fitness classes across lots of different centres in Bedford such as Legs, Bums and Tum, Pilates and Spinning. She demonstrates a high level of support and commitment to her classes and participants. She is observant, kind and patient and in tune with those participants who have challenges and injuries. The contents of Cornelia’s classes are fun, professionally delivered and always changing and updated to keep them fresh. A participant said, ‘The progress and development i have personally made since i began to train with Cornelia is significant. I am stronger, fitter and leaner than ever before.’



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



### **Sib Eames – Paddle Sports**

Sib is an outstanding team member at Canoe Trail, providing support to many others on school sessions, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and the wider staff team. She coaches hundreds of young people each year teaching them NGB qualifications, first aid lifesaving skills and more general life skills. In addition to this Sib is a mum of 5 who has been a cadet instructor for 10 years teaching water sports and first aid to local cadets. She has recently completed her Archery GB award, Outdoor REC first aid tutor and also passed the Canoe Trail canoe leader (white water) assessment and helps lead their SEND provision for schools and youth charities. She has completed expeditions on the River Spey, Algonquin and Canada.



### **Simon Eastwood – Athletics**

Simon is a volunteer Level 4 Performance Coach in Pole Vault, part of the National Coach Mentoring Scheme and a coach at Bedford and County Athletics Club. In 2025 he coached a squad of twelve athletes all Nationally Ranked in their age groups including some World & European Champions: Simon coaches for 6-8 hours per week throughout the year as a volunteer coach. He travels to competitions across the UK summer and winter and Mentors three coaches at other clubs. At competitions Simon is often asked for advice by other coaches and asked to advise athletes whose coaches are not present. Simon is already a Level 4 Performance Coach (the top level) in Pole Vault, but to ensure he is up to date with the latest developments and current thinking he uses the internet and has group discussions with other Elite Coaches.



### **Manny Eze – Personal Trainer**

A professional coach with a degree to back up his years of helping people transform, Manny's boxing strength and conditioning training is helping boxers to win matches. Based at Storm Gym Limited Manny works with a very wide range of ages and abilities including people with disabilities to help them learn boxing skills, improve fitness and become confident in themselves. Manny also supports other coaches and competed this year at a charity boxing match.



### **Simon Feaver – Tennis**

Simon is an LTA level 2 coach working towards his level 3. He is also highly skilled in all areas of disability tennis. Simon works mainly with beginners, developing players and in all areas of Disability tennis. His success is demonstrated by the vast range of players who go on to achieve success having been given a passion for the game from Simon's enthusiasm. Riverside Tennis Club regularly receive comments from all of his players with a disability; about the role Simon plays in their development and quality of life. Simon does 20/30 hours of coaching each week, often starting early in the morning (7am) and can still be seen on court at 9.30pm. What makes this even more impressive is that Simon does this on top of running his full-time printing business.



### **Adam Hills – Running**

Over the past year, Adam has developed greatly as a coach and as a person. As a Group Coach at Bedford Harriers Athletic Club and the head coach at the Stewartby Striders Running Group, he has delivered structured, inclusive sessions that support runners of all abilities. He achieved his Coaching award in Running Fitness qualification, and became a Run Leader Mentor, he has also trained as a Mental Health Champion all of which has strengthened his ability to help others both physically and emotionally. He is passionate about creating welcoming, supportive spaces where everyone feels valued, confident, and inspired to achieve their goals within a positive running community.



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



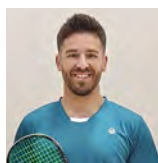
### **Darren Kerr – Athletics**

Darren's areas of coaching expertise are throwing events and specialist movement, educating athletes and others in efficient movement. He has helped and coaches members of the Bedford and County Athletics Club to achieve their goals; in Hammer and Weight throwing, he has coached many athletes to a very high standard including Glen Kerr ranked 7th in World Men's 50–55 rankings, receiving a bronze medal in the European M50 Championships, unbeaten in UK in his age group. He not only coaches his own group of 7-8 athletes, but also supports other coaches and athletes with advice and technical support. In his professional life, as a "wonkiologist", he works with people from grass roots to elite athletes teaching them efficient movement patterns and injury prevention and rehabilitation using movement analysis and education.



### **Samantha Marilton-Woods – Running**

Samantha, better known as Sammie, is a qualified Leadership in Running Fitness (LiRF) coach, coaching running for Diamond Runners Wootton which started in January 2025. Sammie has developed significantly not only as a LiRF but as head of the Wootton arm of Diamond Runners. She has also become a Run Director at Millennium parkrun and a Run Leader Mentor for England Athletics to help support and mentor other running coaches all on a voluntary basis. Sammie has recently won a runner up regional award for newcomer to volunteering from England Athletics. She leads her team of coaches at Diamond Runners Wootton and ensures parkrun goes ahead on the days she is the Run Director.



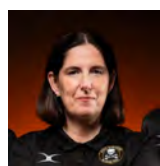
### **Sam Morris – Squash**

Sam Morris is a highly skilled and dedicated squash coach who has achieved significant progress and development over the past year. As a qualified England Squash Level 3 coach, Sam consistently delivers high-quality coaching that has helped individuals and teams excel in the sport. He coaches and manages his own squash team, which consists of three sub-teams and engages approximately 25 players competing at county level. Through his structured training programmes and continuous support, many of his players have improved their skills, confidence, and competitive performance. His voluntary work, leadership, and innovative initiatives, such as the Box Leagues, reflect his commitment to both personal growth and the long-term development of squash.



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

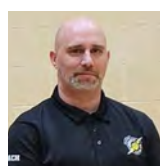
---



### **Caroline McNally – Netball**

Caroline is a level 2 netball coach and has completed her C award netball umpire adding to her coaching knowledge. She coaches a number of teams within the local area, she is head coach of the U15s Real Bedford Netball team who compete in local and regional competition with great success, she is head coach for the U13s Bedfordshire County Netball PDP (on the Roses pathway) and she is coaching the Bedford Modern Independent School U14A netball team. Caroline coaches in the region of 8hrs of training sessions each week, she then travels to games, matches, tournaments at least twice, sometimes up to four times a week anywhere within Bedford or to other games all around the Country.

---



### **David Pearson – Basketball**

David is a Basketball England Level 2 coach who has led the clear progress that has been made across multiple Bedford Thunder teams this year. He coaches the U12 boys in the National League and the U12 and U14 girls who compete in the Young Basketball League (YBL). He develops the U10 boys and girls and the U12 and U14 community teams, building skills, confidence and game understanding for players aged 7–13 along the whole club pathway. David also mentors older players completing their Duke of Edinburgh volunteering, guiding them as assistant coaches and supports U18 players working towards coaching qualifications. David commits countless hours each week to coaching at Bedford Thunder. He plans and delivers all training sessions for his teams and coaches their fixtures.

---

### **David Sawyer – Paddle sports**

David has completed his Level 5 Apprenticeship in Outdoor Activities with a coaching and education award which also included his Canoe Leader Award training, Archery GB instructor, Climbing Wall Instructor and continued to develop his remit and experience in first aid training for local community groups. He attended Shuttleworth College preparing him for working life as an outdoor instructor doing the Level 3 Extended Diploma. David has volunteered as a Scout leader the last 6–7 years at Putnoe Scout Group sharing knowledge and a giving back community spirit to participants. David also works with disability groups and SEND programmes as part of his work with Canoe Trail. He has been promoted to team leader with more responsibility for mentoring and coaching other instructors.

---

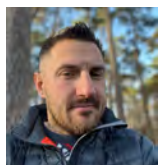


### **Donna Simpson – Running**

Donna has been a member of Stewartby Striders for some time and has completed her Leadership in Running Fitness qualification. She is actively seeking to progress further in her coaching journey. She regularly attends the club, leading warm-up sessions and safely guiding a group of runners. Through her dedication and support, she helps individuals improve their fitness, confidence, and running technique, while contributing to a positive and inclusive club environment. Her commitment and ambition exemplify the impact a developing coach can have. Donna has shown exceptional dedication in coaching at Stewartby Striders, particularly through her work with Couch to 5K groups.

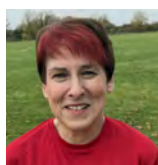


## Nominations for **Community Person Award**



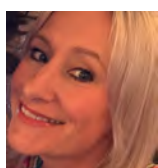
### **Del Burling – Football**

At Wixams Wanderers Wasps Football Club, Del has created an environment where every child feels valued, no matter their confidence or starting ability. Many of his boys arrived struggling with nerves, low self-belief, or anxiety about results. Through his consistent encouragement and patience, Del has taught them that the real victory lies in turning up, giving their best effort, and supporting one another. He puts the boys first every single week, meeting every challenge with calm, steady leadership. His unwavering presence and belief in each player have helped them face adversity with pride, resilience, and joy.



### **Sharon Chesham – Running**

Sharon is a true champion for grassroots physical activity. After taking up running in her late forties, she realised how intimidating that first step can be and wanted to make it easier for others. In 2022, she launched the Great Barford Run Together group, offering free and welcoming Couch to 5K programmes. Since then, she has helped dozens of residents become more active, confident, and connected. Many have gone on to complete parkruns, 10Ks, and join local clubs — but their journey began with Sharon's warmth, encouragement, and her belief that everyone deserves a positive start in running.



### **Marianne Dent – Dance**

Marianne (Maz) tutors Chair Dance as part of the Borough Council's Live Longer Better sessions, which aim to keep people aged 60 and over active in later life. Her classes combine gentle dance and stretching to participants' favourite tunes. Maz also teaches Jo Jingles sessions to nursery-aged children and delivers dance routines over Zoom to young people and adults with disabilities as part of the Beyond Limits programme. In addition, she has run Urban Funki Munki, a dance club for young people and young adults with disabilities, for over 20 years. Through her work, Maz has helped participants grow in confidence, improve their self-esteem, build friendships, and manage behavioural challenges.



### **Colin Dowding – Qigong**

For over 20 years, Colin has been a familiar and inspiring presence at the Bedford MS Therapy Centre, where he supports his wife, who has MS. His research into therapies led him to Qigong, an ancient martial art focused on gentle movement and balance. Colin trained diligently, achieving his second-level award, and introduced Qigong as an accessible activity for people with MS and Parkinson's. Through his five weekly classes, he now supports more than 30 individuals, helping to improve their mobility, confidence, and mental wellbeing. His dedication has transformed lives and brought a new, inclusive form of physical activity to the Bedford community.



### **Beverley Gous – Running and Walking**

In the last 12 months, Bev has been the driving force behind the creation of a new 2k junior parkrun event in Flitwick and a new 5k parkrun event at Jubilee Park in Bedford. Parkrun events are free, open to all, and delivered entirely by volunteers. They promote exercise and wellbeing in the great outdoors, and the addition of these two new events has made this even more accessible across the county. Bev's endless enthusiasm for parkrun brings in new runners, walkers, and volunteers every week. She is always the first to celebrate running, walking, volunteering, and event-specific milestones, sharing photos and great ideas for promotion.



## Nominations for **Community Person Award**



### **Anjumanara Hoque – Multi Sports**

Anjumanara has devoted over nine years to volunteering with iLearn Bedford, creating free and inclusive community sport for all ages. She runs walking groups, family sports days, and informal games sessions that welcome people who might never join mainstream programmes. By providing safe and enjoyable opportunities, she has helped hundreds improve their mobility, confidence, and wellbeing while breaking down cultural, social, and financial barriers. Her grassroots approach fosters cohesion across the community, reducing social isolation and inspiring participants to stay active, build friendships, and engage fully in the life of their neighbourhood.



### **Hayley Inskip – Netball**

Hayley is a cheerful and kind individual who has been instrumental in encouraging others to take up netball and get active. By openly sharing her own journey from being inactive to finding a love for sport, she has given others the confidence to take that first step. Her enthusiasm and energy have helped people join and stay committed, whatever their previous ability. Hayley has encouraged friends, family, and work colleagues to get involved. As a result, the Denham Valkyries Netball Team has grown, and she has also created a netball team at her workplace — a local primary school — which now competes in local competitions.

# THE PLATFORM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

YouthTV Sport is your home of sport, presented by up and coming journalists to deliver high quality and reliable sports coverage. We entertain, inform and empower young people by giving the generation of tomorrow the opportunity of today. Our goal is to shake up the scene, and we are only just getting started.

NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT

SPORT

WELLBEING

CLIPS

CONNECT



Youth Television CIC

Company Number: 16231382

youthtv.co.uk



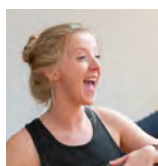
@youthtvuk

## Nominations for Community Person Award



### Shapna Khanam – Multi Sports

Shapna has made a remarkable impact in Bedford by breaking down barriers to participation in sport and physical activity, particularly among underrepresented and culturally diverse groups. She leads female-only walks, hikes, squash, badminton, and running sessions, engaging hundreds of women — including over 350 in badminton and 50 in squash. As a Badminton England No Strings Coordinator, she runs sessions with Bedford Borough Council and GLL Better, and introduced the 10 Million Step Challenge, motivating participants to walk 7,000 steps a day for 60 days. Her Ready Steady Ride initiative and the Bedford Health Fair have involved more than 300 young people in inclusive sports activities that inspire active, healthier lifestyles.



### Lisa Martin – Dance, Movement and Wellbeing

Lisa created Bedford's first Intergenerational Movement and Music class, uniting the youngest and oldest members of the community by running sessions for 0–4-year-olds in care homes. In the past year, Share a Smile has delivered 80 classes across Bedford, Kempston, and Wilstead, facilitating over 2,000 meaningful connections between generations. Lisa offers sessions where participants aged 0–99 join in together — marching to The Grand Old Duke of York, dancing with instruments to Let's Twist Again, waving scarves to Sing a Rainbow, and of course, popping bubbles to Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head. Many residents live with dementia, and Lisa carefully tailors every class to help spark memories that may have faded, ensuring everyone can take part at their own pace and ability.



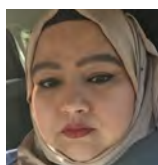
### Linzi McDonald – Fitness

Linzi has made a significant contribution to sport and inclusion in the community through the classes she offers, with options for those new to sport or returners after a break. By running classes in Bedford Park, people walking in the park are tempted to try a class, whereas they may never go to a gym. Seeing people of all ages and abilities engaging in exercise in a public place, whatever the weather, is inspiring as well as being rewarding for the participants. Linzi runs circuit training classes outdoors in Bedford Park and aerobics and yoga classes indoors. Linzi also raises money for charity by encouraging participation in the mud run, raising lots of money for Cancer UK.



### Lenka Powell – Yoga and Wellbeing

Lenka has redefined wellness in Bedford through yoga, breathwork, sound healing, and cacao ceremonies that encourage people to reconnect with their bodies, emotions, and community. Her weekly classes, retreats, and festivals attract hundreds, promoting physical activity as an act of self-care rather than performance. She has helped people manage anxiety, burnout, and feelings of disconnection through movement and mindful practices that support healing from within. By blending traditional yoga with modern wellbeing tools, Lenka has created a powerful community where physical, emotional, and mental health come together — making Bedford a recognised hub for conscious, holistic living.



### Iminah Rahman – Multi Sports

Iminah has dedicated over nine years to volunteering with iLearn Bedford, transforming community fitness through structured and inclusive programmes. She delivers tailored in-person sessions for women and older adults, as well as online classes for those unable to attend. Her work includes No Strings Badminton, community badminton championships, and Health & Fitness Awareness Days, helping hundreds improve their confidence, mobility, and wellbeing. By combining professional guidance with culturally sensitive and empowering sessions, she has inspired previously inactive women to embrace long-term physical activity while fostering community cohesion and reducing social isolation across Bedford.



## Nominations for Community Person Award



### John Paul Smith – Boxing

John Paul, known as JP, founded Boxing Saves Lives after witnessing first-hand how many boys and young men were struggling with mental health, confidence, and vulnerability to exploitation. He built a safe, trauma-informed environment where those who once felt overlooked now have a voice and a place to belong. JP's resilience, compassion, and lived experience help young people overcome barriers that previously held them back. His personal commitment to supporting those most at risk has transformed countless lives. JP delivers structured, high-quality boxing and wellbeing sessions in more than twenty schools every week. His dedication extends far beyond sport — he mentors, checks in on mental health, supports families, and works closely with teachers and safeguarding teams to ensure every young person receives the care and stability they need.

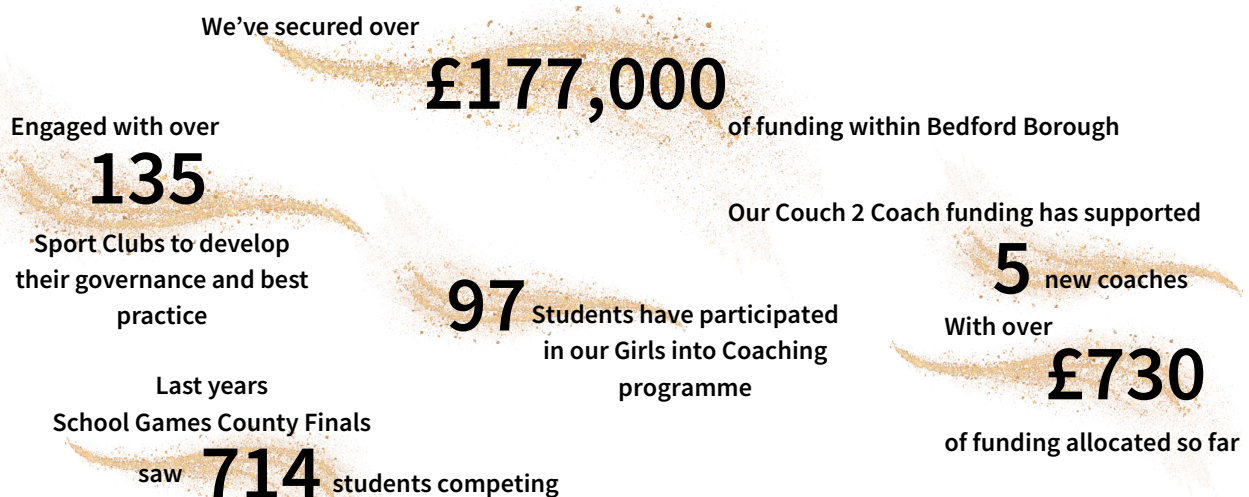


### Dr Diana Soares – Multi Sports

Dr Diana Soares runs an incredibly varied and effective programme of fitness activities at the Community Exercise Clinic based at the University of Bedfordshire. Her classes fill large gym spaces, and each participant has their own journey and story — many beginning in very poor physical health. Her impact comes from organising a truly individualised menu of classes that meet each person's needs, whether they are living with illness or recovering from surgery. All participants make remarkable progress and genuinely enjoy the sessions. Diana is a remarkable professional, managing an exceptionally heavy workload with dedication and care. Participants often report that their physiotherapists have contacted her to understand what she is doing, as they are recovering better and faster than expected following surgery.

Be Active works hard to ensure movement is part of everyone's day to day life across Bedfordshire. We can help your club with FUNDING, TRAINING, FACILITIES, GOVERNANCE, SAFEGUARDING, INSIGHTS and MORE.

We're delighted to share with you some of our achievements over the past couple of years across Bedford Borough.



Want to know more information about Be Active.

We'd love for you to get in touch.



Johnathan@beactivebeds.co.uk



www.beactivebeds.co.uk



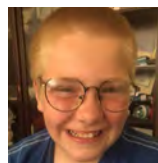
@BeActiveBeds





## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**

---



### **Steven Ames – Running and Walking**

Steven has some learning challenges, but this does not stop him from being an exceptionally committed volunteer at Bedford junior parkrun. He is a dedicated marshal who takes the role extremely seriously and always reports any potential hazards to the Run Director. Steven has taken on several other volunteering roles at the event, including assisting as Run Director, and he is always willing to put his first aid training to good use when needed. He is incredibly dedicated, responsible, and reliable, and he rarely misses a Sunday morning event.

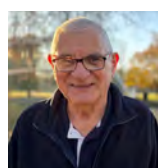
---



### **Baldev Singh Bhachu – Hockey**

Bhachu officiates as an umpire for matches at Bedford Hockey Club — from junior games through to adult and masters fixtures, including friendly, league, and cup matches and tournaments. Quite simply, matches cannot take place without umpires, and Bhachu is one of the club's most prolific. Due to the size of the club, there is a huge demand for umpires to ensure games can go ahead, and without Bhachu's substantial contribution it would be extremely challenging to fill all the gaps. In the 2024–25 league season alone, he has umpired more than 70 games, including adult league matches, friendly fixtures, summer mixed league games, junior tournaments, and masters fixtures.

---



### **Mike Canning – Running**

Mike Canning is a dedicated volunteer who supports a wide range of Bedford sporting events. His roles include course marshalling, participant support, start and finish line duties, registration, safety guidance, and general event operations. Since moving to Bedford in 2012, he has been a constant presence at events such as the Bedford Run Festival, Bedford Triathlon, parkrun, Bedford River Festival Regatta, Bedford Harriers races, Big Cow Sports events, and Race for Life. He also volunteers at major national events, including the London Marathon and the Royal Parks Half, supporting charities such as Macmillan and the MND Association.

---



### **Tom Carr – Sports Reporter**

Tom is the Sports Editor for the Bedford Independent, where he reports on and provides coverage of sports across the county. As a volunteer, he dedicates countless hours attending matches to produce detailed reports, alongside the additional time spent writing articles on a wide range of other sports stories. Since joining the Bedford Independent in late 2019, he has written 645 articles covering rugby, football, golf, cricket, hockey, rowing, netball, basketball, swimming, martial arts, motorsports, and almost every sport Bedford has to offer — from grassroots to professional. Tom's 645 articles have been read collectively almost half a million times. Remarkably, he achieves all of this while remaining dedicated to his full-time job as a ward receptionist at Bedford Hospital.

---



### **Hardeep Chana – Football**

For over 15 years, Hardeep has led Youth Development at Meltis Rangers FC, managing teams, mentoring coaches, and ensuring the smooth running of the club. He also serves as a key organiser within the Khalsa Football Federation, coordinating Bedford-based teams for national tournaments. His work spans coaching, administration, and community outreach — creating inclusive spaces where young people and coaches can enjoy football and develop their skills. Hardeep dedicates countless voluntary hours each week to supporting players and coaches, and his mentorship has launched numerous coaching careers. He actively seeks funding opportunities and makes sure everyone feels valued and supported.

## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**



### **Steve Fish – Football**

Steve spends many hours each month raising funds for The Eagles at Bedford Town Football Club, both on matchdays and in his 'spare time'. He is also very active on social media, working to boost attendance at the club's games by advertising the free bus service to the ground — and even offering to pick up anyone who cannot access it. Steve runs two lotteries that raise approximately £1,000 per month in donations for the club. In addition to his work with Bedford Town FC, Simon also volunteers for Marie Curie and presents three shows each week on Bedford Health Radio.



### **James Grammer – Running and Walking**

James has a learning disability, but this in no way stops him from being a regular volunteer marshal at Bedford junior parkrun. He is well known and loved by everyone for his huge, sunny personality, his enthusiasm, and the encouragement he gives to every participant each week. In addition, he can be seen at the Bedford 5k parkrun almost every Saturday morning, high-fiving and cheering on runners simply because he loves supporting people. He is an absolute fixture of both events and is adored by all who see him there.



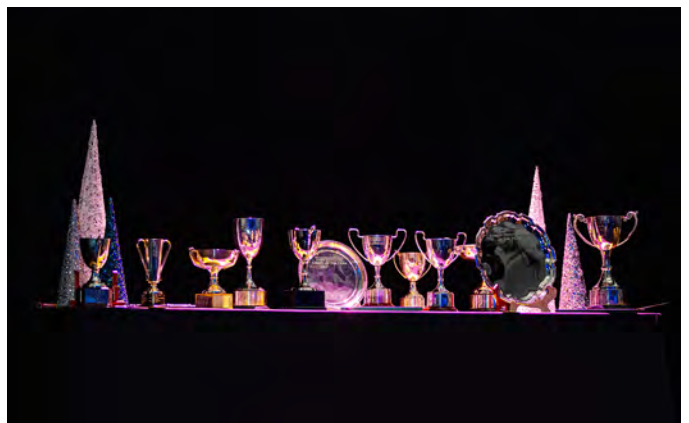
### **Cheryl Harding – Hockey**

As vice-chair of Bedford Hockey Club's committee, Cheryl has been integral in building connections that have secured sponsorship for the club as a whole, as well as for the junior sections, including the Youth Development Centre. She has facilitated meetings with local businesses and council departments, where her passion for the club and for the sport of hockey has clearly demonstrated the benefits their investment can bring — not only to the club but to the wider community. Cheryl has also completed her coaching and umpiring qualifications, investing her own time in the club in both roles when she is not playing on the pitch herself.



### **Chris Hoare – Running**

Chris is the driving force behind the Great Barford Run Together group — a thriving and inclusive community of over 70 runners. He leads weekly sessions for two ability groups, carefully planning routes and ensuring each run is safe, supportive, and enjoyable. He promotes participation for all, from complete beginners to experienced runners, creating an atmosphere of encouragement and achievement. Chris also organises community events such as fun runs and group challenges, helping to strengthen local connections through physical activity. His calm leadership, reliability, and enthusiasm have made him the heart of the group's success.





## Nominations for **Unsung Hero**



### **Norman Kitchener – Lawn Bowls**

Norman is the President at Bridgmans Bowling Club and takes care of the green as well as much of the work that happens behind the scenes. He has been available to help anyone who needs it for most of the time since 1989. Norman was also part of a team that travelled to Ukraine to deliver vehicles adapted for use as ambulances. In addition, he has dedicated enormous energy and personal time to supporting a visually impaired bowler, John Hollowell, helping to raise the funds needed for him to travel to South Africa to compete in the World Championships. Norman's work for the community is truly endless.



### **Ralley Rahman – Fitness**

Ralley, a trailblazing community leader and beacon of inclusion, has volunteered in Bedford for over 30 years and founded iLearn Bedford nine years ago. She delivers women-only swimming, Zumba, Pilates, yoga, gardening sessions, wellness walks, and No Strings Badminton, creating life-changing opportunities for women in cancer remission, those with disabilities, and underserved BAME communities. Her programmes are inclusive, affordable, and transformative, empowering participants both physically and mentally. Working in collaboration with GPs, social prescribers, Public Health, Mind, Oasis Pool, and local funders, Ralley demonstrates that movement is medicine and inspires holistic wellbeing. She dedicates countless hours each week mentoring and supporting women and children facing cultural, social, or health barriers.



# HARPUR TRUST



For over 450 years, The Harpur Trust has been inspiring and supporting the people of Bedford to help improve lives and nurture potential.

#### HERE'S HOW WE DO IT:

- Give grants to community projects
- Funded partnerships with local primary schools
- Events that bring the whole community together
- Deliver Bedford Giving on behalf of the Bedford Giving board

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

TOGETHER FOR BEDFORD





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



### **Christopher Bradley – Dressage**

Chris has a very rare chromosome disorder, along with an associated learning disability and autism. He was non-verbal until the age of seven, and verbal communication remains challenging. His first words were spoken to a pony, and from that moment horses have been his main focus in life. Despite undergoing surgery for a life-threatening bowel tumour at 19 and facing a long recovery, Chris insisted on caring for his horse as much as he possibly could. In 2025, the GB team won the inaugural Virtus Para Dressage World Championships — and Chris achieved two individual gold medals with his horse, Harley.

### **Sean Chigumba – Wheelchair Racing**

Over the past year, Sean has shown remarkable personal endeavour in establishing himself as one of the most promising wheelchair athletes in the T34 classification. He rose to the challenge of competing at elite level, becoming the first member of Bedford Wheelchair Racing to be selected for an England team, representing his country at the PurAthletics WPA (World Para Athletics) Grand Prix in Nottwil, Switzerland. His determination to overcome adversity and succeed at this level highlights both his resilience and his commitment to the sport.



### **Gary Cox – Wheelchair Tennis**

Gary is a wheelchair user, and sport has played a key role in his rehabilitation. His honours for 2025 include: National Singles Quad Champion for the fourth year in a row, GB World Team Cup Finals bronze medallist, Wild Card entry for the British Open, and Wild Card entry for the Eastbourne International. Gary trains five times a week at Riverside Tennis Club, plus two gym sessions, and attended a GB training camp before the World Team Cup. This year, he has travelled to the USA, Turkey, Portugal, and the Czech Republic to complement his UK events.



### **Emily Fordham – Running**

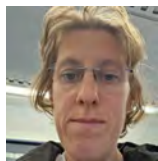
Emily contacted the Stewartby Striders Club before joining to discuss her disability and ensure any barriers to participation could be overcome. She has shown determination, positivity, and a strong commitment to fully engaging in all club activities. Emily is now a regular and valued member, leading a group of runners with patience, encouragement, and warmth. She has been open with other members about her disability to raise awareness and promote inclusivity, and she has been a strong advocate for reasonable adjustments. Emily has truly thrived at Stewartby Striders, significantly improving her health, wellbeing, and self-assurance.



### **John Hollowell – Bowls**

After the sudden shock of losing his eyesight, John found that taking up bowls prevented him from becoming depressed and kept him active at a time when he could easily have given up on himself. He is a member of Bridgeman Bowls Club and travelled to South Africa to compete in the World Championships. John's aspiration is to continue being selected for England at international level and, hopefully, to defend his visually impaired world title.

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



### **Carla Whitmore – Running**

Carla is a member of Bedford Harriers Running Club and Beds and County Running Club. She is a role model to anyone, with or without a disability, thanks to her commitment to training, competing, and her determination to overcome the challenges of autism and ADHD.



## 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



### David Appleton – Hockey

Dave is a 1st XI player for Bedford Hockey Club in the East Premier League. He was captain in 2024-25, and for several seasons prior. Since 2023, he has represented England as an International Master's player for the Over-40s in both Indoor and Outdoor hockey. By 2025, he has earned 22 International Outdoor caps and 5 International Indoor caps. This year has been particularly successful for Dave. In May, he helped England defend their Gold medal at the Four Nations. In June, he became a European Champion in Valencia, where he was also named Man of the Match in the final. Off the pitch, Dave serves as Men's Club Captain, overseeing the management of the club's seven men's teams. He is also part of the coaching team for Bedford Hockey Club's Sunday Juniors (up to age 12) and the club's Development Centre, coaching the Under-14 Boys.

### Kelly Bingham – Hockey

Kelly plays for Bedford Hockey Club Ladies' 1st XI in the East Premier Division, and also represents the Bedford Masters Over-35s and Over-45s in the England Hockey Club Championships. She is an England Masters international with 41 caps and 22 goals, having first represented her country in 2019 and now competing as part of the Over-45s squad. In June 2025, Kelly won Bronze in the European Championships, followed by Gold at the Four Nations in August 2025. She will once again step out for the England Over 45's as the squad prepares for the Four Nations Championships in June and the World Cup in Rotterdam in August 2026. Kelly is an inspiration on and off the pitch, always encouraging and guiding both junior and senior club players.



### Margaret Cotter – Swimming

Margaret began swimming after undergoing two transplants, and she has since become an outstanding competitor and advocate for organ donation. This year, she won the 50m Backstroke and 100m Backstroke at the East Region Masters in the 60–69 age category. At the 2025 British Transplant Games, she claimed Gold in the 50m Backstroke and earned Bronze medals in the 50m Freestyle, 100m Freestyle, and 200m Freestyle in the Women's 60–69 category. Her success continued on the world stage: at the 2025 World Transplant Games, Margaret won Silver in the 100m Backstroke and Bronze in the 50m Backstroke. Margaret uses her swimming achievements as a platform to raise awareness of organ donation and highlight the life-changing impact it can have on others.



### Nora Haggart – Running, Marathon and Duathlon

Nora has been a long-standing and highly respected member of Bedford Harriers. A dedicated and disciplined athlete, she trains daily (running, swimming, cycling) and regularly attends the club's circuit training sessions. Throughout the year, Nora has competed in full and half marathons, cross-country events, and duathlons, achieving outstanding results. She has consistently finished as a Gold Champion or placed in the top three, both in the UK and abroad.



### Ben Howard – Rowing

Ben broke into the top thirty at the first GB Early ID Trials, and by April he had climbed to 9th overall at the National Trials, an exceptional achievement that reflects his relentless work ethic and trust in the process. In the weeks that followed, Ben continued to excel, winning at Bedford Regatta in the quad and securing further victories at Star Rowing Club in both the quad and the single. He capped off this remarkable run with a bronze medal in the Championship Single Sculls at the National Schools' Regatta; the first Championship medal for Star Rowing Club in many years. This historic result highlights Ben's outstanding talent, resilience, and determination.



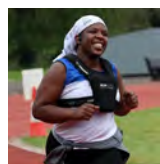
## Nominations for Adult Personality of the Year



### **Glen Kerr – Hammer**

In the Men's 50 Masters Hammer Throw (6kg), Glen is ranked 7th in the world with an outstanding throw of 57.23 metres. He placed 3rd at the European Championships and remains unbeaten in his age group in the UK, winning the British Masters Outdoor Championships, the British Masters Winter Throws Championships, and the England Inter Area Match. He also claimed victory in the Heavy Weight Throw (11.34kg) at the British Masters Winter Throws Championships.

Glen's athletic career is remarkable across multiple disciplines. In a previous chapter of his sporting life, he represented Great Britain at the Bobsleigh World Championships, won Britain's Strongest Man (under 90kg), and became World Masters Powerlifting Squat Champion (under 90kg), setting a world record that still stands today.



### **Jean Sandati – Marathon Running and Netball**

Jean is a dedicated and passionate runner. In 2025, she completed nine half marathons, including the Victoria Falls Marathon in Zimbabwe, and an impressive twenty 10km races across England. Beyond her own achievements, Jean is committed to encouraging others to lead active, healthy lives. She established a running club at her workplace, Destiny Integrated Care, inspiring colleagues to take part in regular fitness and running activities. She has also spearheaded the organisation of the Starlight Queens community netball club, bringing together local netball enthusiasts. Most recently, Jean joined Valkyries Netball Club in Great Denham, competing in the Bedford and District League and continuing to contribute to the local sporting community.



### **Clive Whittle – Hockey**

Clive has been playing International Masters Hockey since 2017 and has earned 25 England caps. He began his international career in the Over-60s and progressed to the Over-65s squad in 2022. In the 2023–24 season, he won Gold at the Four Nations, followed by becoming a European Champion in June – July 2025 Six Day International Grand Masters Hockey Festival, representing the Alliance Over-60s. Alliance International Hockey Club unites hockey enthusiasts, aged 35 and over, from multiple nations, creating a team that transcends borders bringing together players from all corners of the globe, forming squads that compete against the world's best. The club now includes more than 300 members from 32 countries, truly embodying a global hockey community.

## Nominations for Service to Sport



### Howard Darbon – Multi Sports

Howard has devoted his entire life to sport. At school, he represented his teams in five different sports, showing early versatility and passion. He went on to represent the AFA League in football on several occasions and competed in cross country for the Territorial Army. As a member of Shaftesbury Harriers, he earned numerous medals. Moving to Bedford in 1977, Howard competed for Bedford and County Athletic Club veterans and was selected to run for the England cross country team. He competed in three World Track championships, gaining a bronze medal in Melbourne. In 2017, Howard founded Bedford Wheelchair Racing, a dedicated section within Bedford and County Athletic Club. His leadership has since attracted over £40,000 in funding, helping to transform opportunities for wheelchair athletes and making a profound and lasting difference in people's lives.



### Richard Edwards – Multi Sports

For more than 25 years, Richard has made an exceptional and sustained contribution to school and county sport. Since joining Lincroft Academy in 2000, he has transformed PE provision through his leadership as Teacher of PE, Director of Sport, and Head of Faculty. He has developed athletics, cross-country, rugby, table tennis, and cricket programmes that have taken students to multiple National Finals, firmly establishing Lincroft as a leading sporting school. Beyond the school, Richard has served Bedfordshire tirelessly as Regional Organiser for the English Schools' Athletics Association (ESAA) Cross Country, as well as County Team Manager, Competition Organiser, Umpire, and Referee. His unwavering dedication has strengthened opportunities for young people across the county and left a lasting legacy on the sporting community.



### David Jackson – Scuba Diving

David has been a Scuba Diving Instructor at Bedford Scuba Divers since the club was founded in 1994. As a volunteer-led organisation, Bedford Scuba Divers has greatly benefited from the countless hours David has dedicated to helping it thrive. In addition to instructing, David serves as Boat Handler/Driver and Boat Handling Instructor, teaching many members to operate the club's RHIB. He also supports local river events, providing safety boat cover at occasions such as the Kite Festival and Bedford River Festival. After over ten years as Bedford Scuba Divers' Diving Officer, David has recently stepped down from this role, but his passion and enjoyment for the sport remain undiminished.



### Duncan Talbot – Hockey

Duncan joined Bedford Hockey Club in 1984, starting in the Men's 5's and steadily progressing through the teams to become Men's 1's captain in 1990, a role he held for four years. Soon after joining, he began running weekly training sessions across both the men's and women's teams. From 1997, Duncan also became a key member of the club's Junior coaching team, providing regular support for many years, while continuing his coaching contributions to the Ladies' section. He later took on the role of Men's Club Captain and organised the club's mixed teams for several seasons. Duncan consistently goes above and beyond, stepping up to officiate at Junior and Masters' fixtures, demonstrating his long-standing commitment to the club and its community.

# Quality Healthcare in Bedfordshire.

**Manor Hospital**

Part of Circle Health Group

Manor Hospital, providing independent healthcare for over 40 years

## Don't wait for treatment

Manor Hospital is your local high-quality private healthcare provider, offering access to a range of treatments at times which work around your schedule.

Our team is committed to providing an outstanding quality of care to our local community.

- Based in Biddenham



## Thinking of going private?

Pay for yourself and get fast access to appointments, diagnostics and treatment. We offer a wide range of services including:

- Gynaecology
- Urology
- Private GP
- Health Assessments
- Orthopaedics
- General Surgery
- Private Physio
- Podiatry

Children under the age of 18 can be seen at our sister site Saxon Clinic in Milton Keynes.

If you have private medical insurance, you can be confident that we work with all major insurance providers.



To book an appointment at Manor Hospital, please call 01234 818221 or scan the QR code to book online.

34995 3635 MKT ADV / 11.2025







## 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.
- 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.
- Active Wellbeing - activity sessions for people with long term health conditions.

### Events:

- Aquathlon – Children's Swim and Run competition for 6-16 year olds.
- Sports Island - Island 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.
- Ageing Well Festival - annual exhibition with “come & try” activities held at the Corn Exchange.

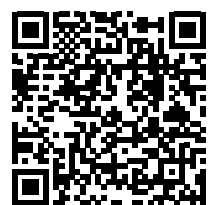
For more information:

 [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)





# Your future starts here

**Kick-start your future with our Sport courses at Bedford College**

Designed to build your skills, confidence and career opportunities in the growing sports and fitness industry.



**Scan the QR code**

to find out more about our Sport courses at Bedford College

**Bedford College, part of The Bedford College Group**

Cauldwell Street, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK42 9AH | 0345 658 8990

# BEDFORD SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2025

*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
7.20pm	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	
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
9.15pm	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