

## **Didcot Town Council Awards - List of Nominees 2020**

### **Special Award**

This year when we saw the nominations we decided to present a special award which we are calling Covid Hero. This person had to be given a category of his own to give everyone else a chance. He has provided free meals for NHS workers, homeless people and people who have lost their jobs because of Covid, among others.

This special award goes to **Hasnath Miah**

### **Didcot Artistic Award Nominees**

#### **Sophie Purbrick**

Sophie is a mad animal fan who did a year placement at Chester Zoo from university. Just after her placement they had a fire so Sophie, who is an excellent artist, sold some of her drawings to raise money for the zoo.

#### **Angels Performing Arts**

A dance school in the town who go from strength to strength with around 200 children on their books. A charity arm of the Angels provides scholarships and pays for costumes for less fortunate children.

They ran a weekly class for residents of Style Acre.

During lockdown they moved classes online and provided free taster sessions on Instagram.

They have also raised thousands of pounds for charities such as Children in Need and Comic Relief with raffles and cake sales.

They regularly partner with local charity Play2Give to raise funds. In 2019 they jointly put on Didcot's Got Talent at Cornerstone.

One of their former pupils has gone on to star as a child actress in The Worst Witch.

And the winner is

**Angels Performing Arts**

### **Sporting Achievement Award Nominees**

#### **Harwell Harriers Running Club**

Harwell Harriers has been established for about 3 years and in that time have grown from 40 to 140 members. They have set up a couch to 5k and re-established the Harwell half-marathon. They firmly believe they have a duty to pass on their passion for fitness and running to the local community.

#### **SMAF Oxford**

A small family company providing martial arts training based in Didcot in a fun, friendly environment. They provide classes for disabled people and this year have provided unlimited Zoom training 6 days a week. When restrictions were lifted they provided free 1 to 1 personal training sessions and have gone the extra mile to keep people motivated.

#### **John Houston, South Moreton Boxing Club**

Nominated for the motivation to keep everyone exercising by providing so many varied Zoom sessions catering for all, including children.

And the winner is

**SMAF**

## **Service with a Smile Award Nominees**

### **Steven Light, Shire Pest Solutions**

Pest controllers don't always get appreciated for what they do but they get satisfaction from solving people's problems. Shire remove honey bees from buildings rather than destroy them and bumblebees are rehomed or their nest entrance is re-routed so it's less of a problem. They care about wildlife and put customers at ease.

### **Daniel Merritt**

During the first lockdown he opened up a centre offering business services and support to other veterans, alongside mental health courses and training sessions.

### **John Hall (John the Postie)**

During lockdown and after he raised people's spirits by delivering the post in a different fancy dress outfit every day. He has also produced a charity calendar featuring some of his costumes and has raised funds for the NHS.

### **Hasnath Miah**

### **Amira Popa**

Didcot resident who sells pizzas from her van in the local villages. Described by her nominator as a very friendly lady.

And the winner is

**Daniel Merritt**

## **Young Volunteer or Charity Fundraiser Award Nominees**

### **Daniel Lloyd**

Daniel began raising money in April 2019 in memory of a friend to support the Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit at the JR.

He went on to raise money to enable St Birinus School to train 16 members of staff in mental first aid, allowing students to access help more freely and raising awareness.

In January he started a project called "Markers for Mindfulness" collecting new and used school basics for primary schools affected by budget cuts.

### **Lincoln Callaghan**

Football fanatic Lincoln raised £3500 for Didcot Town Football Club by cycling 100k in a month. This provided funds to help the club stay in business.

And the winner is

**Daniel Lloyd**

## **Lifetime Achievement Award Nominees**

### **Claire Hughes**

Claire has raised thousands of pounds over the last 20 years for different charities. She helped raise £250k with the Didcot Thong Rangers. She helped to organise and raise £25k for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance, the RFU Injured Players Foundation and a cancer charity, while ill herself.

She is a volunteer bereavement councillor and recently developed community larders to provide food during the pandemic. She also helps run Secret Santa 365 with her daughter.

### **Courtney Hughes**

The Secret Santa charity founded by Courtney when she was 12 is well known. Over 80 thousand gifts have been given out across Oxfordshire and she has been awarded the British Empire Medal by the Queen, a Points of Light award by Theresa May and a British Citizens Award. She was runner-up at the Pride of Britain and a Royal College of Nursing finalist. During Covid, Courtney has worked full-time as a frontline NHS worker and supported over 200 elderly residents with food and essentials.

Courtney is a previous winner of the John Eldridge award.

### **Rachel and Steve Hunter**

Rachel and Steve have been helping out at the Didcot 23<sup>rd</sup> Cubs/Scouts for about 18 years. They started when their son was a Beaver and are still running the weekly session though their son is now grown up. They take the kids on hikes and camping trips and teach them skills like cooking, sewing and map-reading. They both work full-time (Steve is a paramedic). During lockdown they ran the group via Zoom.

And the winner is

**Rachel and Steve Hunter**

### **Unsung Hero Award Nominees**

#### **St Birinus School staff**

For going above and beyond to support their students during lockdown. Taking extra steps to ensure those at home were well, physically and mentally and being in touch with everyone by email and phone. They deserve to know how much their support has helped students during this time.

#### **Staff at The Meadows care home**

For everyone at The Meadows for all their efforts during the Covid-19 crisis.

#### **Claire Ward and Kaye Wynn**

Aka the Newlands Avenue Community Mask Tree. Claire and Kaye handmade over 800 masks and Claire also made scrubs bags for the local GP surgery. The masks were available for a donation and all proceeds went to the Didcot Foodbank and SOFEA.

#### **Ann Paterson**

Mrs Paterson works tirelessly to keep the mini-roundabout and the area by the doctors' surgery on Tyne Avenue attractive with flowers and maintains the communal garden on Avon Way.

#### **SOFEA Fairshare**

For providing food hampers for vulnerable people in Didcot and surrounding areas throughout Covid-19.

**Trevor Newman**

Trevor runs a Facebook group, dedicating his time to helping those in need with basic essentials. He has helped many families with food packages. He has the biggest caring heart, helping those in need around the clock.

**Marianne Slipper**

In March 2019 Marianne set up her Every Little Thing Helps charity to sell clothes and good condition books and DVDs to support those in need, raising nearly £2,500 in less than 18 months. She helped raise funds for Play2Give's fundraising for Ronald McDonald House and the children's cancer ward at the JR. She is now helping Play2Give provide "magical pamper hampers" for people going through difficult or distressing times.

**Courtney Hughes****Angels Performing Arts****Alison Lane**

Alison has chaired Didcot Choral Society for at least 15 years. She has presided over an increase in membership and run lots of social events as well as rehearsals and concerts and moving pews and making the tea. Concert tours she has organised include Paris, Bruges, Dublin, Derbyshire and the Edinburgh Festival. All of this while teaching full time.

**Robin McStay**

Since 2003 Robin has organised and led Didcot Health Walks twice a week for up to 25 walkers. He is very reliable and turns up whatever the weather despite being in his 80s and having some health problems himself. He also does the admin and organises a social event at Christmas. He is always friendly and welcoming and has a very loyal following.

**Ady Crook**

During lockdown Ady was hosting weekly isolation bingo sessions where he lives to raise money for the ICU at the John Radcliffe. He also hosted weekly quiz nights. His main achievement was a charity spinathon of over 1000 miles on his drive to raise over £8000 for a local child with bone cancer and the hospital ward where she has been treated. He is still continuing with his charity fundraising and cheering people up.

**Hasnath Miah**

And the winner is

**Ady Crook****John Eldridge Award Nominees****Andy Baker**

For setting up his Play 2 give charity. The charity has helped lots of people over the years with head injuries and raised loads of money for charity. Recently he helped people during lockdown.

**Emily Heins**

Emily has taken up the role of leader at 1<sup>st</sup> GWP Guides and has turned the struggling group around. The group nearly had to close but with Emily's determination it is now thriving.

**Claire Hughes**

For raising thousands of pounds over the last 20 years for different charities

**Courtney Hughes**

Courtney is a previous winner of this award

**Hasnath Miah**

**Robin McStay**

For organising and leading Didcot Health Walks twice a week for up to 25 walkers for nearly 20 years whatever the weather.

And the winner is

**Robin McStay**

**Allotment winners**

**Best plot on each site:**

Mereland Road – Mrs Hughes

New Road – Eileen Bracken

Wantage Road – Colin Churchman

Broadway – Mr Mason

Cockcroft – Denise Mortimer

**Overall plot winner**

Mrs Hughes

**Overall site winner**

Broadway