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Grassroots sport and recreation celebrated in prestigious community awards

The winners of the Sport and Recreation Alliance's **Community Sport and Recreation Awards**, formerly the Sports Club of the Year Awards, have been decided for 2012.

Outstanding sport and recreational clubs, projects and schemes were recognised that spanned golf, rowing, sailing, archery and included an innovative bike project that helps young people with mental health issues to lead independent lives.

The judging panel, chaired by the BBC's Eleanor Oldroyd, commended the quality of the shortlist and the outstanding examples and practices that were shown in the areas of volunteer management, school links, green thinking and innovative projects.

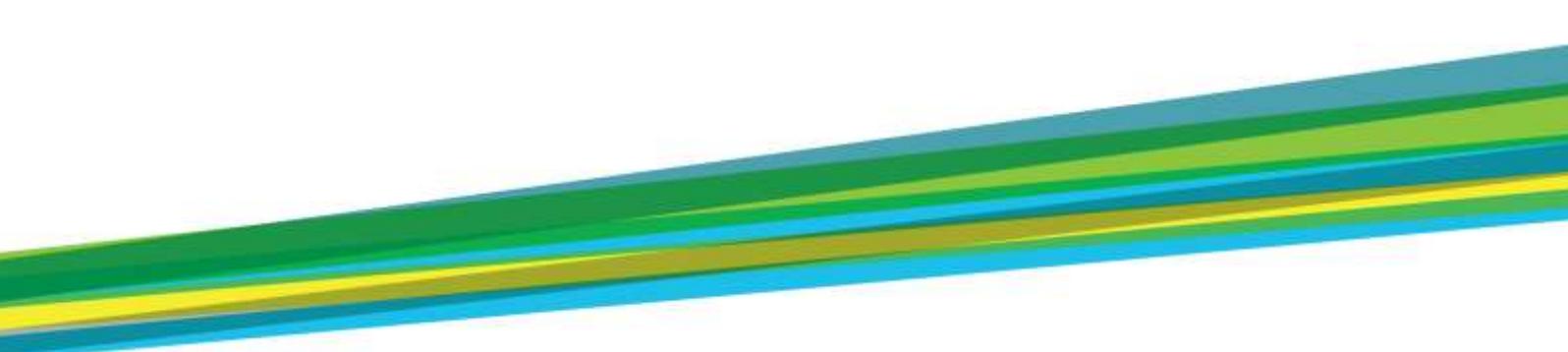
Eleanor Oldroyd said: "With London 2012 around the corner it's a fitting time for grassroots clubs, schemes and projects to be recognised for the tremendous work they carry out in local communities up and down the country. The Olympics and Paralympics are all about celebrating the diversity of sport and this mirrors what the essence of the Community Sport and Recreation Awards is all about."

This year's winning organisations represented a move away from more traditional categories to include a wider variety of activities, including a pioneering chess project that has been rolled out in state schools with ambitious plans to eventually reach every school in the UK.

Tim Lamb, chief executive of the Alliance said: "The awards are an annual highlight for grassroots sport and recreation. It's the work of these clubs and organisations that create cohesive communities, more happy and motivated people and a pool of talent for the future.

"The positive effect that these organisations have on society must not be underestimated and we are glad that these awards give them the recognition they deserve. We want these awards to grow and we encourage even more clubs and projects to excel and tell us their stories next year."

The winners will be presented with their awards at the Alliance's Annual General Meeting in July which takes place at St. James's Palace. Presentations will be made by the organisation's president, HRM The Earl of Wessex.



THE WINNERS

South Staffordshire Sailing Club – Community Sport and Recreation Premier Award, sponsored by the RSA

South Staffordshire Sailing Club encourages and promotes amateur dinghy sailing by providing a safe sailing environment for adults and juniors of all abilities. The club has around 400 members aged from six to 95 and its annual Try Sailing open day attracts nearly 100 new sailors per year. Its development of junior members and under-privileged children in the Wolverhampton and Midlands area is unrivalled. The club was an excellent all-rounder that scored highly in all areas of volunteer management, school links, innovative projects and green thinking. The Royal Yachting Association described them as “a great example of a club that continually pushes itself to improve and develop.”

Professional Club Award – Everton FC’s Everton in the Community

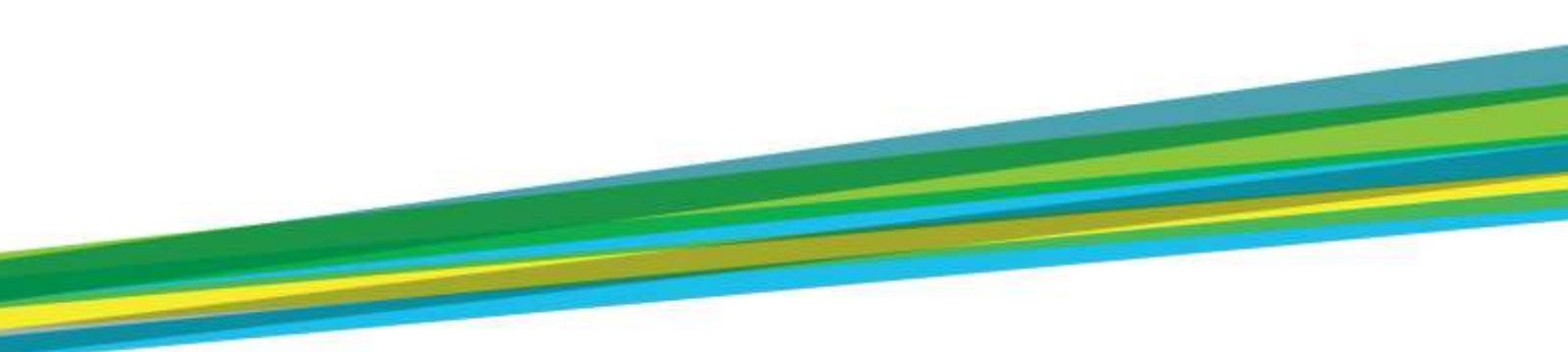
Founded in 1988 Everton in the Community is now one of the leading sporting charities in the country delivering hugely innovative projects throughout the North West and North Wales covering issues such as health, education, employment, social inclusion, physical activity, disability and cultural equality. Using the powerful brand of Everton Football Club and its iconic sporting stars, the charity aims to motivate and inspire people from all sections of the community to achieve their full potential whilst striving towards ambitious life goals. Each year more than 90,000 people are touched by the ground-breaking work carried out by the Charities team of specialist practitioners, with projects making a measurable and sustainable impact in the communities they serve. The Charities staff, as well as its broad network of volunteers, work tirelessly to provide local people with inspirational pathways into education, training and employment, to steer young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour, to create healthier, stronger communities, and to engage children and adults, regardless of ability, in physical activity. This year, Everton in the Community will also be opening its own Free School, a pioneering project being delivered alongside the government to provide an alternative education pathway for young people in the region.

Deer Park Archers – Volunteer Management

Deer Park is an archery club in Gloucestershire that prides itself on its strong family ethos and its mission to inspire every single one of its 200 members to achieve their full potential. The club realised that in order to encourage a positive volunteering mentality they needed to get the families of the juniors involved with the club too, resulting in the majority of its membership being formed of family units. Its volunteering programme is organised and structured with a clear strategy in place, and the club provides a range of excellent incentives that has created an environment where it is easy and fun to volunteer.

Addington Court Golf Club – School Links

With structured coaching sessions set up with 24 primary schools and 12 secondary schools in Croydon and growing, Addington Court Golf Club has made golf accessible to a great number of young people who would not have otherwise been introduced to the sport. The club has also forged links with pupil referral units, girls’



schools and sixth form colleges. It runs after-school sessions for 15 different groups every week, and has introduced an innovative coloured wrist band scheme that motivates young people to progress and develop their skills to the best of their ability.

Staunton Harold Sailing Club – Green Thinking

Staunton Harold is a sailing club that puts green issues at the top of its agenda, and this is proven by it winning the Royal Yachting Association's Volvo Eco Challenge Award for two years running. The award recognises juniors who design and present a programme to address some of the environmental challenges the club faces. Member Hannah Jones's idea to install a plumbed in water cooler, provide reusable water bottles to all members and plant wildflowers on the nearby river banks to combat soil erosion won her £1,000, and has led to even more measures being implemented including the installation of cavity wall insulation in the club house to conserve energy.

Bristol Hospital Education Service – Innovative Project

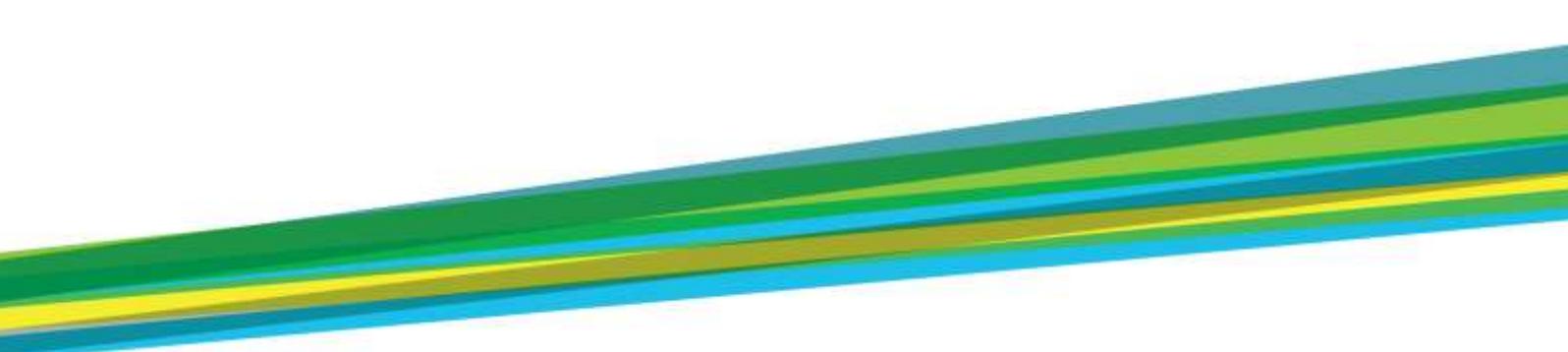
Bristol Hospital's project caters for young people with social and emotional mental health issues – some of whom start off being unable to leave their homes, and gradually teaches and provides them with the support they need to be independent learners – all through biking activities. Activities include one-to-one bike lessons, bike maintenance sessions and the excitement of bmx-ing, velodrome cycling, cycle speedway and mountain biking. The project has enabled young people to grow in self-esteem and confidence and has led to increased attendance and improved academic performances. The project takes a holistic approach, encouraging other benefits like healthy eating and developing social skills.

Chess in Schools and Communities – Highly Commended

Chess in Schools and Communities is a registered charity based in 108 schools in 18 local authority areas. It encourages the teaching and playing of chess in state schools and inner city communities, organises world-class chess events to encourage mass participation and promotes the educational and social benefits of the game. In the schools in which they operate, chess often serves as a bridge – bringing together children of different ages, races and genders in an activity they can all enjoy. For children with adjustment issues, there are many examples where chess has led to increased motivation, improved behaviour and self-image and even better classroom attendance.

Notes to editors:

1. The Sport and Recreation Alliance is the umbrella organisation for the governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation in the UK and represents more than 320 members – organisations like the FA, the Rugby Football Union, UK Athletics, the Ramblers, British Rowing and the Royal Academy of Dance. Our role, like every trade association, is to speak up on their behalf, represent their views and to provide them with services which make their life easier.
2. The Community Sport and Recreation Awards are voted for by a panel of independent judges drawn from across the sports world. The top award,



sponsored by the Royal and Sun Alliance is worth £2,000 to the winner and each of the category winners receives £1,000.

3. For more information about the Community Sport and Recreation Awards contact Helen Tan: htan@sportandrecreation.org.uk or 020 7976 3928.
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