



E E B W

EAST OF ENGLAND
BUSINESSWOMAN
OF THE YEAR

East of England Businesswoman of the Year 2008 Announced

Press Release

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Issued On behalf of Institute of Directors Suffolk Branch

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MANUFACTURING COMES OUT TOP IN EAST OF ENGLAND BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

On Thursday night, Leigh-Ondrea Bendall, Managing Director of Suffolk-based Herbert Industrial Ltd was announced as the East of England Businesswoman of the Year 2008. Samantha Hale, founder and MD of the Cambridge-based Advance Performance running stores, was presented with the Businesswoman Entrepreneur of the Year Award and the accolade of Young Businesswoman of the Year was presented to Lucy Reeves, founder of Muddy Matches of Bedfordshire; with the Beatrice Wilkinson Memorial Award being awarded to Susan Ball, formerly of Prettys and now National Employment Tax Director for RSM Bentley Jennison. Held at the Radisson SAS Hotel, Stansted Airport, the evening celebrated the achievements of all the finalists.

The awards this year have been supported once again this year by principal sponsor, Lloyds TSB Commercial and by the Young Businesswoman of the Year Award sponsor, Adnams Plc, and by Suffolk Business Women network who nominated and presented the Beatrice Wilkinson Memorial Award in memory of their founder.



Guest speaker Perween Warsi CBE, founder and Chief Executive of S&A Foods, assisted Steve Elsom, Area Director for Commercial Banking for Lloyds TSB Norfolk and Suffolk, in presenting the East of England Awards. As an entrepreneur herself, Perween was quick to praise all of the finalists. She said "Having begun my business making ethnic finger foods in my kitchen, I have first-hand experience of the ups and downs of running a business. By winning my first major contract with two major supermarkets via blind tasting and perseverance it taught me a lot about commitment and dedication. All of the finalists here tonight" she continued "have shown that they have not only these qualities, but also business acumen and market knowledge. As a direct result they are creating wealth and jobs and have far reaching effects." Steve Elsom said "In times of economic downturn, such as we face today, it is even more important to recognise the success stories. Lloyds TSB applauds these finalists and hopes that others find their stories inspirational."

East of England Businesswoman of the Year.

After joining the Herbert Group in 1999, Leigh-Ondrea Bendall was appointed Managing Director of Herbert Industrial Ltd in 2006. As a technical engineering company serving the food industry, the business was then at a pivotal time, did the main board continue to invest in the development of the division? Leigh-Ondrea's appointment was a major turning-point for the company, and within 18 months this business was at break-even point with the plans and strategy to become profitable as both a UK and global business.

The other finalists competing for this prestigious title were:

Denise Smiles, of Optical Metrology Services, Bishops Stortford and Clare Whight, MD of Suffolk-based SOS-HR.

The Businesswoman Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Samantha Hale is founder and managing director of the Advance Performance running stores in Peterborough and Cambridge, retail outlets providing both products and advice for those who exercise. Samantha's focus for providing motivation and advice to her customer base has seen her invest significantly in her staff; ensuring that they provide specialist footwear advice whilst building loyalty through long-lasting customer relationships.

The other finalists in this category were:

Pam Calvert of Hertfordshire-based Communications Management and Norfolk-based Mary Pratt of CocoaBean Recruitment.

Young Businesswoman of the Year

Launched in March 2007 and based in North Bedfordshire, Muddy Matches, a niche online dating and social networking website aimed at country-minded or 'muddy' people in the UK and Ireland was



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founded by Lucy Reeves. 'Muddies' joining the network can engage in 'real' events such as sailing trips, pub meals and art exhibitions as well as access like minded 'muddies' online. Now with over 15000 'muddies' Muddy Matches is well-established and growing significantly on a daily basis.

The other finalists in this category were:

Jenna Gould founder of Norwich-based Media Jems and Sophie Morford of Suffolk-based Bizari Promotions.

Beatrice Wilkinson Award

Susan Ball built a significant local profile whilst at Pretty's before moving to her new role at RSM Bentley Jennison, as National Employment Tax Director. Although there are increasing numbers of women in the accountancy and legal professions it is only relatively recently that they've been building the sort of business profiles that Susan has achieved. Despite the demands of her job and family life she has always found time to give back into her local community and sits on the Governing body of Suffolk College, is Vice Chair of Suffolk Heritage Housing Association, Joint Chair of the Suffolk Branch of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, and Chair of BUDDIE (Business Understanding Diversity & Discrimination in the East). She emulates all that is needed to be a good role model for women in business of any age, but probably particularly for young women. Professionally qualified, looks above and beyond her own sphere of influence, and gives willingly of her time, knowledge, and experience to help other organisations

ENDS

Prizes and donors :

Young Businesswoman of the Year

- An overnight stay and dinner for two at the Swan Hotel, Southwold courtesy of Adnams Plc
- A Deluxe Spa Day at The Stoke by Nayland Club, Hotel and Spa
- Champagne from Lloyds TSB
- A coaching session from Lynette Allen of Pink Skills, a leading coach for women in business.
- From DPS Technology Group, the choice of an iPod, a PDA, sat navigation system or voucher for IT services.
- A half-day coaching session from Akenham Professional Executive Coach, Jane Cox, and a bottle of pink Champagne.

The prizes for the Business Entrepreneur of the Year Award are;

- An overnight stay and dinner for two at the Milsoms Kesgrave Hall
- A Sheer Indulgence Spa Day at The Stoke by Nayland Club, Hotel and Spa
- Champagne from Lloyds TSB
- A coaching session from Lynette Allen of Pink Skills, a leading coach for women in business
- A ladies wrist-watch courtesy of Fred Olsen Travel.
- A half day coaching session from Akenham Professional Executive Coach, Jane Cox, and a bottle of pink Champagne.



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Awards and prizes for the Businesswoman of the Year are;

- Automatic entry into the Veuve Clicquot National Businesswoman of the Year Awards.
- An overnight stay and 3 course dinner for two at Hintlesham Hall
- A Sheer Indulgence Spa Day at The Stoke by Nayland Club, Hotel and Spa
- Champagne from Lloyds TSB
- A coaching session from Lynette Allen of Pink Skills, a leading coach for women in business.
- A ladies wrist-watch courtesy of Fred Olsen Travel.
- A half day coaching session from Akenham Professional Executive Coach, Jane Cox, and a bottle of pink Champagne.



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