

# FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PRESS RELEASE

17 November 2021

### **Pandemic heroes celebrated at 2021 Pride in Fenland awards**

Ordinary people who did extraordinary things for others during the Covid pandemic were honoured last night at the 14th annual Pride in Fenland Awards.

The event, which celebrates the incredible contributions of unsung heroes from across the district, was this year dedicated to those who went above and beyond during the pandemic.

Organised by Fenland District Council and the Fenland Citizen newspaper, this year's ceremony was once again held online. It premiered on the Council's YouTube channel last night and can be watched back again at: [www.youtube.com/FenlandCouncil](http://www.youtube.com/FenlandCouncil).

The awards were presented by Cllr Sam Clark, the Council's Portfolio Holder for Communities, and Cllr Maureen Davis, Pride in Fenland judge and ward member for Doddington and Wimblington, with a Special Judges' Award and surprise Community Covid Award presented by Jeremy Ransome, Editor for the Fenland Citizen.

Cllr Clark said: "The Pride in Fenland Awards is always such a heartwarming event, and this year was no different. It was an absolute pleasure to hear about the amazing acts of kindness and selfless support we know so many in our communities have been part of.

"The efforts and dedication of all the individuals and groups nominated helped make the pandemic that little bit easier for everyone."

Cllr Davis added: "The standard of nominations was outstanding, making the judges' task of choosing winners and runners-up particularly difficult! There were so many inspiring stories of people devoting countless hours to others less fortunate than themselves, often without any recognition. Their efforts and dedication truly make Fenland a better place."

The winners and runners-up in the categories are:

#### **Community Group**

**Winner: No Pain No Gain.** Louise Nicholls, Lee Nicholls, and Samantha Carter are the driving force behind the No Pain No Gain charity, which raises money for syringe drivers, which help very sick people to stay at home instead of in a hospital or hospice. When they started the charity there were only two syringe drivers in the area – now there are hundreds!

**Runner-up: The Wisbech Lithuanian Community Group.** Nominated twice, the group helps people who have recently moved to Fenland, with advice and guidance on health, social and financial matters and much more. They have also arranged days out for people and helped start up a voluntary cooking club for children.

## **Young Person in the Community**

Winner: **Beccs Bowell**. Teenager Beccs (17) joined Help in Wimbo at the start of the pandemic and was one of the group's main volunteers until she went off to university. Her efforts were endless, and included multiple shopping trips, prescription collections and post office trips for those who were shielding or self-isolating. But perhaps most importantly, she always had time to chat to people who otherwise might not have seen a friendly face from one week to the next. She also waved to elderly residents through their windows, always showing her huge community spirit and respect for the older generation.

Runner-up: **Team 9ers**. School friends Rhys, Elliott, and Ruby were nominated for raising over £3,000 for charity by jumping on their bicycles! In April they cycled 120 miles each, raising £1,000 for Diabetes UK, and in August they cycled a further 200 miles each and raised £2,000 for a friend who had been diagnosed with Sydenham's Chorea. Next year they plan to raise even more money for charity.

## **Good Friend**

Winner: **Alexia Franklin**. Alexia received two nominations for being "an amazing and inspiring" woman. Despite being born with a disability that affects her walking, she is so dedicated to the environment that she has litter picked around her neighbourhood every single day for several years to make it a better place for residents and wildlife. She built herself trolleys to collect litter in, including one that fixes to her mobility scooter, so she can collect as much as possible.

Runner-up: **Lynn Hancock**. Lynn set up Pearl's Puzzle Library during the pandemic, delivering jigsaw puzzles from her own collection to people who needed something to focus on during lockdown. Now she loans puzzles for a small donation to charity, helping to raise money for good causes at the same time.

## **Special Judges' Award**

Winner: **Mandy Curtis**. Mandy was nominated by her friend after she helped her when she left hospital following a broken hip during the pandemic. Mandy did all her friend's washing and ironing, helped with getting food shopping and helped round the house too. Her friend said Mandy made a huge difference and she simply could not have managed without her.

Runner-up: **Edwin Fey**. Edwin was nominated for his magnificent efforts as Chairman of the March Bears Rugby Club. When he took on the role two years ago, the club was in somewhat of a crisis, with only eight senior players. Now, thanks to Edwin's time, effort and dedication, the club has over 200 community members covering all ages from as young as four. Edwin has also introduced a thriving walking rugby club with over 50 adults engaging in the sessions, and links in with rugby at the Neale Wade Academy.

## **Community Covid Award**

Winner: **Help in Wimbo**. With a volunteer force of about 30, this community group pulled together to ensure that no-one in the village of Wimblington got left behind. Volunteers reached out to the village's vulnerable, isolated, and aged and helped them as much as was allowable under the Covid restrictions.

**ENDS**

**Press Office**

**For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226**