



**March 3 2004**

# **Report: Women of Achievement Awards**

**Nikki Coles**  
**Event Manager, Business Link**

The first ever Leicestershire & Rutland Women of Achievement Awards took place on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March and was hailed a long overdue success by guests, sponsors and partners.



Business Link for Leicestershire, in association with LeicestHERday hosted the event at Leicester City Football Club to reward local women who ordinarily would not be recognised for their hard work and commitment in business and the community.

The event attracted almost 400 guests and was supported by many local and regional organisations including East Midlands Development Agency, Government Office for the East Midlands, Leicestershire Learning & Skills Council and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership.

Over one hundred applications were received and short-listed by an independent judging panel to just eighteen finalists –

**Business Woman of the Year:** Mina Bharat Patel, Kidz R Us Children's Centre; Jo Derbyshire, Loughborough University Enterprises and Rachel Hargrave, The Phoenix Partners.

**Rural Business Woman of the Year:** Pauline Graves & Sarah Sanders, Shepshed Carers Co-operative; Linda Lawrence, The Grange Courtyard and Tracy Rist, Truly Madly Deeply.





**Woman Against Adversity:** Claire Hanson, The Lavender Clinic; Jo Smith & Lata Allman, LCIL, Wendy Bonser.

**Woman in the Community:** Alyson Lynn Graham, Leicester North West Community Forum; Janet Statham, Turning Point Women's Centre and

Chris Cronogue, Hand in Hand Tenants Association. **Young**

**Achiever of the Year:** Caroline Mac, The Salon; Letisha Youmans and Laura Guest, Jotters.

**Woman of the Year:** Jenny Mapp, Familytique; Samantha Robinson, Robinsons Mazda and Dr Angela Lennox, City GP.

The calibre of entrants was so impressive, the judges had a very difficult task of collectively deciding on a category winner. It's just a shame we couldn't reward all of the women.

The category winners were announced by Leicestershire's Maggie Philbin, co-presenter of Tomorrow's World and the Saturday Picture Show and congratulated by Sahar Hashemi, co-founder of Coffee Republic, the evening's Keynote Speaker:

Winner Business Woman of the Year – **Mina Bharat Patel**, Kidz R Us Children's Centre.

Winner Rural Business Woman of the Year – **Tracy Rist**, Truly Madly Deeply.

Winner Woman against Adversity – **Jo Smith** and **Lata Allman**, founders of the Leicester Centre for Integrated Living.

Winner Woman in the Community – **Janet Statham**, Turning Point Women's Centre.



Winner Young Achiever of the Year – **Letisha Youmans**, mentor at the Saffron Drugs Project & volunteer at Leicester Outdoor Pursuits. Winner Woman of the Year – **Dr Angela Lennox**, MBE, City GP and chair of Leicester Shire Promotions.

Special awards were made to **Maureen Milgram Forrest**, chair of LeicestHERday and **Rita Patel**, chair of Belgrave Baheno/Peepul Centre for their tireless work and voluntary hours helping and supporting many projects in and around Leicestershire.

**Tina McEwen**, Chief Executive, Business Link Leicestershire adds "The awards truly were an inspirational success. There was a definite buzz on the evening and since then we've received very positive feedback. We're already planning and looking forward to recognising yet more inspirational women at next years event".

For further information on the Women of Achievement Awards 2005 or LeicestHERday contact Business Link for Leicestershire on 0845 070 0086 or visit [www.leicestershire.businesslink.co.uk](http://www.leicestershire.businesslink.co.uk)



**Committee:** Nikki Coles, Danielle Gillett, Sharon Jeffrey, Tina McEwen, Maureen Milgram Forrest, Rachael Snutch, Jacqui Spittlehouse, Martin Traynor, Penny Waterfield

