



LOCAL CHAMPIONS – Chris Bloomfield, left, nominated The Bell Tower Community Association for a *Pride of Reading* award for its work cleaning graffiti in Central Reading. Members are pictured here with Chris Drew, right, the owner of Drews the Ironmongers on Caversham Road, one of the areas the group operates in
 Picture: MIKE ENGLEFIELD (Ref 73381)

Working hard to keep town graffiti-free

Inspirational group nominated

BY MARK COLEMAN

AN INSPIRATIONAL community group whose members have personally scrubbed off more than 300 graffiti tags has been nominated for a *Pride of Reading* award.

The Bell Tower Community Association has been put forward in the Environmental Project category for working "tirelessly" in its community since forming two years ago.

Chris Bloomfield, community projects manager at Reading Borough Council, nominated the group because they "roll up their sleeves" and "do the job themselves" without council assistance whenever they can.

Mr Bloomfield said: "The group impresses me because they work tirelessly for their local community."

"For example, members have gone out and physically scrubbed graffiti from walls, cleared litter and tended to the general maintenance of roads – before the council has time to act."

"That is not to say that they do not expect the council's help for this type of thing."

"They will ask us 'what can we do?' and whenever possible they will get out there and fix the community's problems themselves."

"They're a really inspirational group." He added: "They also have a wonderful website that is both informative and user-friendly."

"They had help from myself and the council to get started, but since the launch in 2005 they have very much been a self-sustaining group."

"I would also like to bring attention to their monthly newsletter, which is distributed to 550 households within their area and is well presented and extremely informative."

Teresa Colliass, who chairs the Bell Tower Community Association, told the *Post* the group feels privileged to have been nominated for the award and members are grateful all their hard work has been recognised.

She said: "We have worked extremely hard within our neighbourhood, and although it has been done by members of Bell Tower Community Association, we would not have been able to get our feet off the ground without the help of the council."

The Bell Tower Community Association, which is based in Newport Road, serves Caversham Road, Northfield Road, Barry Place, the residential end of Cardiff Road and Randolph Road.

For more information email info@bell-tower.org.uk or visit www.asb170.dsl.pipex.com/bell-tower/index.htm.

This year's categories

■ **Child of Courage**, sponsored by Malmison. This award is given to the town's bravest youngster. There are often times when the courage of youngsters shines through. Some children become heroic lifesavers, others battle illness or challenging circumstances. We want to know about these amazing under 16-year-olds.

■ **Restaurant of the Year (casual and city)**. Sponsored by Reading Food Festival. This award, last year won by Chronicles (casual) and the London Street Brasserie (city), will be judged by celebrity chefs Antony Worrall Thompson and Daniel Galmiche for its food and services.

■ **Local Hero**, sponsored by Waitrose. This award commends someone whose kind or brave actions have made a difference to the community.

■ **Community Champion**, sponsored by the Broad Street Mall. This award is given to a volunteer, carer or community group member who has worked tirelessly as an individual to improve Reading's community in a positive way.

■ **Cultural Champion**, sponsored by Chatham Place. This award rewards an individual who has enhanced Reading's culture by setting up a group or organisation to the benefit of the community.

■ **Employee of the Year**, sponsored by Novotel. This award commends an employee who goes the extra mile for their company or customer.

■ **Business in Action**, sponsored by Kyocera. This award is given to companies, large or small, who get involved in community work. There are two awards – for firms with under 50 and over 50 employees.

■ **Service Excellence**, sponsored by Yell. This accolade recognises a working individual who consistently goes the extra mile to deliver the best service while ensuring the customer always comes first.



Your Reading awards in association with Reading Borough Council are:

■ **Young Person of the Year**, sponsored by Reading 107fm.

This award recognises the contribution to the community of someone under 18.

■ **Healthy Lifestyle**, sponsored by GreenPark. This award congratulates a firm, organisation or school which promotes healthy living.

■ **Environmental Project**. This award goes to a school, organisation or charity which has started an innovative eco-friendly project.

Organising committee



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