

CIVIC AWARDS OPEN WITH NEW AWARD IN MEMORY OF SPORTSMAN LEON PRETORIUS

Latest news from Malmesbury Town Council

Malmesbury's 2025 Civic Awards are now open for entries and councillors have introduced a new award to commemorate the life of local sports man Leon Pretorius – The Young Sports' Person of the Year.

These awards celebrate individuals and groups who have made exceptional and enduring contributions to the local community within Malmesbury, Cowbridge, Burton Hill, Common Road, Foxley Road, and Filands.

Leon Pretorius was a passionate sportsman and supporter of young people from Malmesbury. He was a coach at Malmesbury Junior Football Club, Malmesbury Cricket Club, and supported the HEALS Summer Programme. Leon passed away (details please)

Town mayor, Cllr Phil Exton said: "It's a privilege to be able to award trophies to residents that have been nominated by fellow residents of our town.

"We decided unanimously as a town council that this new award would not only honour Leon and his commitment to sport in the community but would provide a lasting legacy to honour other young people making a difference in our town."

This commemorative award recognises sporting excellence among young people of 25 or younger participating in Malmesbury's sporting clubs and celebrating qualities of confidence, teamwork, and sense of play through sport. All qualities Leon was known for valuing.

His wife Gemma said:

"Leon was all about living life to the full and he saw sport as key to this. Sport was part of his life from when he could walk up to the day he died. He saw how much difference focussing on sport could make in a young person's life.

"He dedicated so much time to volunteering in Malmesbury to give children access to something that made such a positive impact in his own life.

"Leon was truly someone with the biggest heart who would give anything he had to lift someone up. He was the life and soul of any party, he loved having an open and busy garden, he was always throwing a ball, teaching anyone who was around rugby, cricket or football.

"Having this award in his memory means so much to Nathan, Ruby and I to keep that passion alive and we know how proud he would be."

The other Award Categories this year are: Citizen of the Year (26+), Young Citizen of the Year (16-25) who receives The John Poole Cup, Junior Citizen of the Year (under 16) who receives The Julie Exton Cup, Organisation or Group of the Year who

receives The Paul Dove Trophy, 10 Year Service Volunteer Contribution Certificate, and Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award and the winner receives The Paul Smith Cup.

Last year's winners were:

- *Freya Knight – Junior Citizen of the Year.
- *Hannah Pitman– Young Citizen of the Year.
- *Paul Overton– Citizen of the Year.
- *Charles Vernon - Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award.
- *HEALS of Malmesbury community fridge team – Organisation of the Year.

Nominations close midday on Friday March 21. The Civic Awards Ceremony will be held on Wednesday April 23 at 7pm.

To nominate and organisation or individual, visit: <https://www.malmesbury.gov.uk/component/content/article/malmesbury-civic-awards-2025?catid=9&Itemid=101>

ENDS

EDITOR'S NOTES

Attached is an image of Freya Knight who won the title of Junior Citizen of the Year 2024.

If you would like to speak to Malmesbury Town Council about the awards, please contact Fiona Scott media consultant at 07789 270030, or email fiona@fionascott.co.uk.

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