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SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

And the winner is...
ESKA NORFOLK



Founded in 1995, ESKA Norfolk is a leading martial arts organisation that delivers inclusive, high-quality karate and fitness-based programmes to children, adults and families.

It operates across multiple venues countywide and is headquartered in Norwich.

With three full-time and 12 part-time team members, ESKA blends elite coaching (with several world and European champions on board) with grassroots delivery.

It has evolved from a traditional karate club into a community-first wellbeing provider with a focus on physical activity, youth development and accessible health programming.

ESKA's programmes cater to a wide range of needs, including neurodiverse children, those with disabilities, young leaders and families facing disadvantage.

It is also part of the Short Breaks Framework, which provides support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families.

ESKA's delivery spans free school tasters, holiday activity and food sessions, SEN-specific classes, fitness initiatives and community engagement. It also collaborates with schools, Active Norfolk, the NHS and local authorities to enhance wellbeing outcomes for its members and the wider community.

The judges called ESKA "a fantastic example of a community rooted organisation that delivers genuine value to families and individuals".



Left to right: Expert judge Kelly Cartwright from Core Recruiter with Jason Hitchings, Ethan Dye, David Lynskey and Nathan Bond from ESKA, and expert judge Candy Richardson of the Federation of Small Businesses
Image: MATTHEW POTTER PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

They commended the organisation for its strong core values, loyal staff and proven ability to adapt, adding that "it has every reason to be proud of its achievements".

Commenting on the award, ESKA's senior technical instructor Nathan Bond said: "It's a great recognition for the hard work our team, our staff and our instructors put in."

Chief instructor Jason Hitchings said the business is "really proud to be working on a new project, extending our karate tuition to the SEN community" and working on its partnerships.

THE FINALISTS

BARSHAM BREWERY

Barsham Brewery brews craft beers and ales on the West Barsham Estate.

It does this using a base malt of Maris Otter barley, grown on the estate and malted just down the road, plus water from the estate's borehole and worldwide hop varieties.

The judges called it "a proud Norfolk brand with clear values, strong leadership and a compelling product".

BRANCASTER HOUSE FINANCIAL PLANNING

Norwich-based Brancaster House Financial Planning delivers tailored wealth management solutions.

Its services include retirement and estate planning, investment management and more.

The judges said the firm "demonstrated a clear strategy for growth" and set itself apart from other financial management businesses.

REED COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Reed Commercial Services, headquartered in Wymondham, is a commercial cleaning and facilities management company that delivers tailored services to clients including schools, offices, private landlords, healthcare settings and more.

The judges praised owner Toni Reed's focus on staff, calling her "the definition of a striving and successful small business owner".

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