



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

For immediate release

# news release

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Date: 17 January 2018

## Search begins to uncover top sporting talent

The search has started to find the organisations and individuals driving sporting success in West Oxfordshire.

The 2018 West Oxfordshire Sports Awards have been launched and nominations are being sought for the best coaches, clubs and unsung heroes in the District.

The Sports Awards are run by the Council in partnership with the GLL Sport Foundation which gives talented local athletes the chance to apply for funding to help with costs such as training and is run by the Council's leisure contractor, GLL Better.

Grants of £50 to £1,250 can be applied for by athletes participating at county level or above and successful applicants will also receive free access to Council-owned leisure facilities in the District to assist with training.



Last year, 39 individuals and organisations were honoured for their achievements from county to international level including Oxford United and England under-17 international Lucy Thomas.

Lucy, 16, from Standlake, said: "The award is a great boost to my confidence and assists with some of the considerable costs that my family encounters around my sporting life – subscriptions, travel, boots and equipment.

"Membership of my local gym also provides me with the opportunity to further develop my strength and conditioning at times which more easily fit around my school work and training/playing commitments."

Swimmer Callum Smart, also 16, is the current ASA National Champion for 50m and 100m breaststroke and has been selected for the England Talent programme with a view to competing in this year's British Championships.

Callum, from Charlbury, added: "The support from this grant will help fund the kit I need and also travel expenses. My long-term goal is to swim for Great Britain at the Olympics."

Cllr Jeanette Baker, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Health, said: "I am continually amazed by the depth of sporting talent we have in the District – it is truly inspirational.

"These clubs and individuals deserve as much recognition as possible and I am delighted we can play a part in that through the Awards. I look forward to seeing this year's nominations and urge as many as possible to enter."

Peter Bunday, Chairman of the GLL Sport Foundation, added: "I would like to thank all the athletes who have delivered such phenomenal sporting success. We look forward to supporting you and future generations of athletes for years to come."

Nominations for the Awards are being taken in the categories of Sports Coach of the Year, Sports Club of the Year and Unsung Hero.

Details of how to make a nomination for an award or apply for a grant are available on the Council's website: [www.westoxon.gov.uk/leisure](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/leisure) or at [www.gllsportfoundation.org/application-form](http://www.gllsportfoundation.org/application-form). Alternatively, call 01993 861080. The deadline for all nominations and applications is 20 February.

**Picture shows left to right:** Peter Bunday, Chairman of the GLL Sport Foundation, award winner Billy Wotton and Cllr Jeanette Baker

### Notes to Editors

GLL is the UK's largest leisure provider and runs West Oxfordshire District Council's Leisure Centres under its brand name Better, for more information please visit [www.better.org.uk](http://www.better.org.uk)  
The GLL Sports Foundation is partnered with SportsAid and the Mary Peters Trust.

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