

# Countdown's Nick Hewer Awards South West's Best Fair Trade Businesses



AWARDED ON BEHALF  
OF THE SOUTH WEST  
FAIR TRADE NETWORK

**TV personality and Fairtrade Foundation Patron, Nick Hewer, has praised organisations that support Fair Trade through their business.** In a speech made as host of the 2019 South West Fair Trade Business Awards, Hewer commended businesses “willing to put their money where their mouth is and use their business as a force for good”.

The awards, now in their seventh year, recognise organisations of all sorts and sizes throughout the region who sell or purchase Fair Trade certified products, and who promote Fair Trade campaigns and values through their communications.

Scooping the prize for Best South West Fair Trade Retailer (Single Product) was Koolskools, recognised by judges for their incredible commitment not only to Fair Trade business, but also to Fair Trade advocacy and education in schools and Universities.

**Speaking of their win, Koolskools Joint executive Andy Ashcroft commented: “We are delighted to win the 2019 Bristol and South West Fairtrade Business award for Best Fairtrade (Single Product) Retailer. Nick Hewer made a great speech, during which he said ‘Fairtrade is more than putting supply chains on the spot, it does so much more by putting the farmers and producers to the fore.’ So it is great to be part of a cadre of like-minded ethical businesses in Bristol and the South West who are really walking the talk for Fairtrade and, of course, we are always trying to encourage more businesses to join the Fairtrade club!”**

Other organisations recognised as best in their category include Cotton Smiles, University of Bath, Create Centre, Lyons Davidson, Full of Beans at UWE, Natural Beverage Company and Katie Hodgkinson—founder of ethical textile businesses Fairly Beautiful and Eco Bee Wrap—who was recognised for her advocacy of Fair Trade.

Fifty applicants were celebrated for their dedicated support of Fair Trade through their business, each leaving with bronze, silver and gold certificates, plus specially commissioned Bristol Blue Glass trophies for the category winners.

As well as host Nick Hewer’s rousing speech, attendees heard from LJ Loftus from Fairtrade Foundation, and from coffee and cocoa producer, Junieth Leiva, visiting the UK from Nicaragua to advocate for Fairtrade.

**Speaking with the aid of an interpreter at the ceremony, Leiva said:**

“By choosing Fairtrade, you are not just helping one person, you are helping a whole community. Just by buying one product you are helping many people have a better life. Working with Fairtrade is the best thing that has happened to me in my life [...] It has meant that everyone—not just me and my siblings—but the whole community has access to education and healthcare.”

The ceremony took place in the unusual setting of Arnos Vale Cemetery, final resting place of many of Bristol’s social justice heroes. It was sponsored by ethically-minded businesses Burges Salmon, Wogan Coffee, Indigo Valley and Ecoffins—whose Fair Trade certified eco-friendly coffins were an apt fit for the ceremony’s location. Destination Bristol and South Gloucestershire Council supported the planning of the event, which is spearheaded each year by Bristol Fair Trade Network CIC.

The ceremony is the flagship event for Fairtrade Fortnight in Bristol. The two-week celebration of Fairtrade, led by Fairtrade Foundation, has seen the [launch of a campaign](#) that calls on people to urge government and companies to ensure that cocoa farmers in West Africa are paid a living wage. Currently, farmers—often women—are paid less than 75 pence per day, less than half the amount needed for a decent standard of life.

For more information, contact Danni Rochman, Bristol Fair Trade Coordinator  
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### Notes to editors

- A full list of category winners from this year's ceremony accompanies this document (Word file), plus a list of all certificate winners (Excel file).
- A selection of photos [**please credit as per image title**] to accompany this press release can be downloaded from <https://1drv.ms/f/s!AoK7bG--Cy7ck0BI0kwRjBE05PDS>. Please contact [coordinator@bristolfairtrade.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@bristolfairtrade.org.uk) if you would like names etc. of people photographed.
- The South West Fair Trade Business Awards are organised and administered by [Bristol Fair Trade Network CIC](#) on behalf of the South West Fairtrade region, with the support of Destination Bristol and South Gloucestershire Council.
- The [South West Fairtrade](#) region spans from Cornwall to Swindon. It is one of the leading Fairtrade regions in the UK.
- **Nick Hewer** is known to millions as host of Channel 4's *Countdown* since 2012 and, before that, as advisor to Lord Alan Sugar on BBC's *The Apprentice*. Nick was born in Swindon, and before his television career, owned a public relations firm whose clients included world-renowned Amstrad. For over 20 years, Nick played an integral role in the British electronics company's management. A long-time champion of Fair Trade, Nick travelled to St Lucia in 2014 to meet Fairtrade producers. He became a patron of the Fairtrade Foundation in 2018.
- **LJ Loftus** joined Fairtrade in 2011 and has held many roles over the last 8 years including Senior Global Partnership Manager and Head of Commercial Partnerships. She has worked across sugar, cocoa, vanilla, coffee and banana supply chains as well as leading Fairtrade's global partnerships with organisations such as Ben & Jerry's and Starbucks. LJ was most recently appointed Head of Supply Chain and Programme Management in November 2018 and now leads a team of commodity specialists focussed on building supply chain business partnerships and the programme management of projects at origin.
- **Junieth Leiva** is visiting the UK from the community of San Pedro Buculmay, Nicaragua. From a young age, Junieth assisted on her mother's coffee plot—part of a Fairtrade cooperative member of the union SOPPEXCA—eventually joining a young coffee workers programme at the age of 14. As well as completing a degree in Business Administration, she has taken advantage of Fairtrade training on topics as diverse as gender issues and specialist coffees. Today, she supports her family and their coffee plot, as well as working as Treasurer for SOPPEXCA. Thanks to Bristol Link with Nicaragua for facilitating Junieth's visit.
- Awareness of the **Fairtrade Mark** in 2015 was recorded as 93%, with a trust rate of 83%. 71% of shoppers use the Fairtrade mark to decide if a product is ethical [Fairtrade International Globe Scan Consumer Study 2015].
- **Fairtrade** guarantees a fair and living wage for small scale farmers in developing countries, as well as a social premium to benefit the wider community, to be spent on healthcare, education, clean water and more. Fairtrade standards also guarantee environmental protection of local ecosystems and rainforests, as well as strict controls on waste, carbon emissions and water use. Fairtrade is an excellent anti-poverty tool as well as supporting sustainable farming methods across the globe. For more information on Fairtrade, and Fairtrade Fortnight, visit: <http://fairtrade.org.uk/>

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