

## King of the Castle: Mark Higgs, Licensee of the Year 2017!

The industry's toughest competition came to a dramatic close yesterday, with licensee Mark Higgs beating the five other finalists to the top spot and winning LOYA 2017- this year sponsored by Sky.

Mark (pictured right), a tenant of Hook Norton, runs the Castle at Edgehill (pictured below) near Banbury in Warwickshire. He fought his way through the previous three rounds of the competition to wow the judges at the final judging day on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, where he displayed excellent knowledge and experience in three different areas; Business Development, People and Training and

Financial Awareness.



Mark picked up his gong in front of a packed audience at the BII Summer event at the HAC in the City of London on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, attended by the brightest and best from the industry. When asked what winning the competition meant to him Mark commented: *"Winning LOYA will help give me a platform to champion this great sector, I feel so proud to be an ambassador for the BII in an industry I absolutely love."*

David Rey, Managing Director of Sky Business said: *"A huge congratulations to Mark Higgs in winning the Licensee of the Year Award. Sky is delighted to sponsor this award and play a part in recognising the individuals that have achieved so much in the industry."*

Mike Clist, Chief Executive of the BII commented: *"I'd like to offer a massive congratulations to Mark and his team at the Castle at Edgehill on behalf of myself and everyone here at the BII. This is a tough competition to win, but Mark's dedication and passion shone through to the judges and I am sure he will be an excellent ambassador for this great industry of ours. I'd also like to congratulate our other finalists for getting this far and being such brilliant candidates- it really was a tough decision!"*

As winner of Licensee of the Year competition Mark will receive a European Study Trip to Amsterdam, a year's free subscription to Sky Sports, honorary lifetime membership of the BII, a year's free PR support and a 'party in the pub' to help locals celebrate his success.

The BII would like to thank everyone who entered this year's competition and made it our biggest to date.



ENDS

**Notes to editors:**

The BII is a membership organisation for individuals working in the licensed retail sector, with over 9,000 individual members running premises across the UK - predominantly tenanted, leased, managed and freehold pubs. The organisation provides free helplines, online business support, and guidance on key industry issues, face-to-face networking opportunities and savings on a range of supply deals for its members. It is the only organisation of its kind to represent the individuals working at the front line of licensed retail.

The BII Summer Event, which took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017, is one of the biggest industry events of the summer. This year's event saw over 800 of the top licensees and pub operators in the UK flock to London's stunning HAC Marquee for a day of networking, entertaining, celebration and fun.

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