

**MEDIA INFORMATION**  
**4<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

**ARORA HOTELS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN DONALDSON NAMED  
GATWICK DIAMOND BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR**



Mr John Donaldson, Executive Director of Arora Hotels Ltd was named 'Business Person of the Year' last week at the Gatwick Diamond Business Awards 2010. John collected his award from Nick Hewer of BBC TV's The Apprentice and Caroline Burley, Barclays Commercial, in front of 360 business leaders at a glittering awards ceremony on Thursday 4th March 2010 (pictured right).

Sponsored by Barclays Commercial, the prestigious award was in recognition of John's involvement in and commitment to the Gatwick Diamond business community. Upon hearing the news, he said: "This Award is a tremendous honour for me personally, but also recognises the enormous contribution of the entire Arora Hotels team to our growth and success. I feel humbled that this has been recognised by the judges and the business community, which will spur us on to even greater heights!"

Judge and sponsor Caroline Burley, of Barclays Commercial, said "Central to the success of the Gatwick Diamond area is a thriving airport economy and this has seen serious challenges over the past decade from the impact of 9/11 on visitors to the region, the open skies agreement, the uncertainty of airport ownership and the economic downturn. Against this backdrop John has shown strong leadership, creativity and drive to deliver double digit business growth, whilst being an active participant and former Chairman of key local business groups. An elected Councillor and Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality, he has a hands on commitment to recruiting and developing talent from across the region and a real passion for business."

Arora Hotels Ltd employs over 450 team members within the Gatwick Diamond area who combine to offer customers an award winning proposition which continues to delight and deliver an internationally respected brand. The Arora Hotel Group includes the Arora Hotel Gatwick/Crawley; the Sofitel London Gatwick and the Mercure London Gatwick. Its portfolio also includes the award winning Sofitel London Heathrow (Terminal 5), recently voted 'Best New Business Hotel in the World' at the Business Traveller Awards 2009 and 'Best Airport Hotel in the World' at the Business Traveller US Awards 2009.

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#### **Note to editors**

#### **About Arora Hotels – [www.arorahotels.com](http://www.arorahotels.com)**

Arora Hotels is an independent hotel company owned and founded by Surinder Arora in 1999. It is the UK's leading specialist hotelier to the airline industry and one of the fastest growing private hotel companies in the UK.

The portfolio currently comprises of 7 hotels with over 2500 bedrooms. Prime locations include Arora Hotel Heathrow, Arora Park Hotel Heathrow, Arora Hotel Gatwick/Crawley, Arora Hotel Manchester city centre, the flagship Sofitel London Heathrow, directly connected to Terminal 5 (voted '*Best New Business Hotel*' and '*Best Airport Hotel*' at the Business Traveller Awards 2009), Sofitel London Gatwick at the North Terminal and Mercure London Gatwick. Both Sofitel hotels and the Mercure operate under a franchise agreement with Accor Hospitality.

At the Brit Oval, Arora is currently working in partnership with Surrey County Cricket Club on the development of a four-star, 168-bedroom hotel. Each of its hotels is Investors In People accredited.

The company recently announced that it had secured an agreement to design and construct four new budget hotels at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. Subject to planning, the hotels will open on a phased basis from autumn 2011.

#### **About the Gatwick Diamond Business Awards (GDBA) - [www.gatwickdiamondbusinessawards.com](http://www.gatwickdiamondbusinessawards.com)**

- The awards are open to public and private organisations
- The Gatwick Diamond area extends from Redhill and Reigate to the south coast, from Horsham in the West to Haywards Heath in the East, taking in all the major towns in the area.
- The GDBA is organised by CADIA, the Gatwick Diamond Business Association
- The entrants were judged impartially by the sponsors and representatives from CADIA's Executive Council
- CADIA was established more than 50 years ago and exists to provide a united voice for businesses and organisations to influence local and central government issues.

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