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Butchers bid for glory with *Downton* actor's top bangers

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A VILLAGE butcher's shops famed for bangers endorsed by stars of ITV period drama *Downton Abbey* is up for two awards.

Bampton's Patrick Strainge Butchers' Bampton Royals pork sausages are among eight of its products nominated for the Q Guild Smithfield Awards.

The sausages have proved a hit with some stars of the popular drama, which films outdoor scenes in the West Oxfordshire village.

Another of its nominated products is the Patmore Pie, named after Downton Abbey cook Beryl Patmore, played by actress Lesley Nicol.

Last month, actor Rob James-Collier, who plays villain Thomas Barrow, was reported to be a fan of the butcher's sausages.

Manager Oliver Weaver, 20, who began working at the shop six years ago, said: "The Bampton Royals are really tasty sausages but they've done even better off the back of *Downton Abbey* and got even more popular.

"The awards are very competitive but it would be great to win.

"Over the course of six years it has been quite a fast transition for me but it's a great achievement for someone so young."

The Bampton resident, whose family took over the business two years ago, added: "I've got to spend a lot more time on them and choose the right products, with more precise measurements and ingredients."

The eight nominated products are Bampton Royals, caramelised onion sausage, Patmore pie, beef burgers, pork and apple burger,



PREMIUM PRODUCE: Alison Weaver with some Bampton Royal sausages which are in the running to win a national award

Picture: OX69941 Mark Hemsworth

scotch egg, and unsmoked and smoked back bacon.

Thame butchers M Newitt & Sons is also represented in the South East awards by nine products, including sausages, pies, steak and bacon.

Finalists will go before *Great British Menu* judge Matthew Fort in London on Thursday next week.

The Bampton butchers are also among six finalists in British Sausage Week's Great British Banger South East contest, alongside two other county butchers

Mr Weaver entered the Blood, Sweat and Tears sausage, with its name represented by the ingredients of black pudding (blood), salt (sweat) and onion (tears),

Among the other competitors in the contest are Witney's Denshams Butchers for their allotment sausages.

Former England rugby union team captain and *Celebrity Masterchef* 2011 winner Phil Vickery will judge the entries at the Bel & the Dragon pub in Reading today.

Award proves butcher's sausage is bang on. November 7th 2014



downton Abbey stars are known to be fans of the award-winning sausages

A VILLAGE butcher's famed for bangers endorsed by stars of ITV period drama Downton Abbey has won an award. Patrick Strainge Butchers in Bampton was crowned in a celebration of the Great British Banger to mark British Sausage Week, which runs from November 3rd to 9th.

Its Blood, Sweat and Tears sausage – inspired by next summer's Rugby World Cup – was recognized as the best innovative recipe in the South East. Manager Oliver Weaver, 20, won a cook-off judged by former England rugby team captain Phil Vickery alongside other shortlisted chefs in Reading yesterday.

Mr Weaver said:

“The black pudding represents the blood, the salt in the sausage was the sweat and the onions represent the tears, all combined together with locally produced pork. It's performed really well in the shop.”

Celebrity Masterchef 2011 winner Mr Vickery said:

“It was a good combination of flavours and textures. “The whole sausage was well put together, with the textures and spices subtly working together and complementing each other.”

It is the first of what could be two awards for Patrick Strainge, which has eight products nominated for the Q Guild Smithfield Awards. These include the Bampton Royals pork sausage, praised by actor Rob James-Collier.