



PRESS RELEASE

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Cumbria's Top Villages Revealed

The winning villages in the 2008 Cumbria Calor Village of the Year competition have been announced.

Kirkby Stephen is the overall winner of the competition, gaining the prestigious title of Calor Cumbria Village of the Year 2008. The competition is co-ordinated by Voluntary Action Cumbria (VAC) with sponsorship from liquefied petroleum gas supplier Calor and Cumbria County Council.

Representatives of the winning villages were presented with their awards by Calor's Nick Brown at a celebratory event held on Friday 29th August at Kirkby Stephen Tourist Information Centre. As the overall winner of the competition, Kirkby Stephen received £200 prize money and a commemorative plaque. The category winners and recipients of the judges' special awards were presented with certificates.

The full results of the competition are as follows –

Overall winner: Kirkby Stephen

Category winners: People - Caldbeck & Hesket Newmarket
Business - Kirkby Stephen
Environment - Dalston
Communications - Ravenglass

Judges' special awards: 'Community Leadership' - Sedgwick
'Community Togetherness' - Ireby

Dr Mike Walker of the Kirkby Stephen Town Forum accepted the award, and giving a summary of the presentation previously shown to competition judges explained why it is not only 'Village of the Year' but 'Village of Every Year'!

As the Calor Cumbria Village of the Year 2008 Kirkby Stephen now has the added honour of being nominated to go forward and represent the county in the prestigious Calor Village of the Year® for England competition 2008/9. Here they will have the opportunity to gain recognition at a national level and a share of the prize fund totalling more than £40,000.

The celebratory event was also attended by Roger Roberts, VAC Chief Executive; Lorraine Smyth, Cumbria County Council Community Programmes Manager and Roger Hart, Cumbria Community Foundation Grants Development Officer. Roger, speaking on behalf of all the competition judges highlighted how much they had enjoyed visiting the short listed villages.

VAC's Roger Roberts said "The work of this year's entrants includes many inspiring examples of what can be achieved if enthusiastic local people work together for their community. VAC's task is to learn from these examples so that we can help others to deal with the challenges faced by Cumbria's rural communities."

Cumbria County Council has co-sponsored the awards. The council's Leader, Tim Stoddard, is the county councillor for Kirkby Stephen and said: "I'm obviously delighted that my own area has won the competition and everyone is excited about the prospect of competing for the national title.

"Cumbria has some of the most active and vibrant communities in the country and the Village of the Year competition is a fantastic way of delivering the county council's key aim, which is 'Building pride in Cumbria'. The people in the county who have entered this competition have demonstrated the sense of pride which runs through our communities. Well done Kirkby Stephen and well done everyone who entered - you have a lot to be proud of."

Competition co-ordinator Hellen Aitken commented: "I've been impressed by the high standard of entries throughout the competition and would like to thank the judges and especially all those who entered for their hard work.

"Congratulations to Kirkby Stephen for not only being named as the county winner but also winning the Business Category. I wish them the best of luck in the Calor Village of the Year for England competition. They're a great community and I'm sure they'll do really well at national level."

For further information regarding the county competition please refer to the VAC website www.ruralcumbria.org.uk/calorvoy.html or contact Hellen Aitken on 01768 869520 or by email at hellenaitken@ruralcumbria.org.uk

- Ends -

Photo:



Nick Brown (Calor), Dr. Mike Walker (Kirkby Stephen Town Forum), Jona Johnstone (Vice Chair Kirkby Stephen Town Council), Roger Roberts (VAC Chief Executive), Lorraine Smyth (Cumbria County Council), Roger Hart (Cumbria Community Foundation & one of the competition judges)

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Notes to Editors

Voluntary Action Cumbria

- VAC is Cumbria's Rural Community Council and a registered charity.
- VAC is working with people and communities to improve the quality of life in rural Cumbria.
- VAC is an independent organisation able to work with a wide range of partners on an open and equitable basis.
- Established in 1948, for 60 years VAC has been supporting communities that are socially, economically and environmentally vibrant where the needs of all are considered.
- To find out more information, please visit VAC's website: www.ruralcumbria.org.uk

Calor Village of the Year®

Calor, the leading supplier of LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) to those living and working in the countryside, has supported rural activities in England, Scotland and Wales for 21 years through its Rural Sponsorship programme, which includes the Calor Village of the Year® for England competition.

The Calor Village of the Year® for England competition, now in its twelfth year, was founded and developed by Calor, and is organised and funded by the company on an annual basis.

Please note that Calor Village of the Year® is a registered trademark and should be referred to in full in all circumstances.

Entry to the Calor Village of the Year® for England competition is through the existing county competition network. Every year, Calor sponsors the majority of the county village competitions – which this year total more than 40 – each of which is invited to nominate one village to take part in the Calor Village of the Year® for England competition.

The national Calor Village of the Year® judges look for well-balanced, pro-active, caring communities which, irrespective of size, have made the best of local opportunities to maintain and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

The prize money for the 2008 national Calor Village of the Year® competitions stands at over £40,000. First prize in the English competition is £7,000 with £2,000 going to each of five regional winners. In addition, there are four category prizes of £500 within each region (covering People, Business, Environment and Communications).

For general information on the Calor Village of the Year® for England competition:

Email: info@calorvillageoftheyear.org or visit: www.calorvillageoftheyear.org

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For all general enquiries relating to the Calor Village of the Year® competition, please contact Brian Challis:

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