

To All Village Hall Secretaries, Parish Council Clerks, Community Associations and Development Trusts in Northumberland

AH/SA/CalorVillofYear150208

15 February 2008

Dear Friend,

Calor Northumberland Village of the Year Competition

This letter is inviting you and your community to enter the Calor Northumberland Village of the Year Competition for 2008. The competition is organised by Community Action Northumberland as part of the nationwide Calor Village of the Year® competition.

In Part One the competition assesses communities on four aspects of rural village life: People, Business, Environment, and Communications. In Part Two you are also asked to tell us in less than 500 words: 'What makes your village a special place' Villages can enter as many or as few of the categories as they wish.

The Northumberland Village of the Year competition is open to free-standing settlements with a population of no more than 5,000, located in the historical county area of Northumberland (including Northern Tyne and Wear). Entries are welcome from any such community, regardless of whether you have entered - or even won - in previous years, and regardless of which part of the county you're in. Past years have seen the majority of entrants in the north, central or west, but we would be delighted to see the south east entering too. Wherever there are community groups who feel that their village deserves to be recognised, this competition is for you.

There is no rule that states which organisation in a village should be the lead body in submitting an entry to the competition. We have therefore sent invitations to all parish councils and village halls / community buildings

and similar organisations on our database. In some instances invitations will have gone out to more than one organisation in a village. We do ask organisations in such circumstances to liaise with each other to agree whether the village will submit an entry and if so who will be responsible for completing and submitting the entry form. In other instances invitations will have gone out to parish councils that cover more than one village eligible to enter the competition. Again we would ask those councils to liaise with organisations that we may have missed and decide whether an entry is desirable and if so which body in the village would be the most appropriate to complete and submit the entry form.

Entry forms can be obtained in a variety of ways:

- downloaded from our website www.ca-north.org.uk
- by email – send a request to villageoftheyear2008@ca-north.org.uk
- by telephoning 01670 517178 and requesting a hard copy.

Entry is, of course, optional but the competition gives entrants the opportunity to promote their community and celebrate its achievements - as well as the chance of winning the £400 prize on offer for the winning village.

Entries can be submitted electronically to villageoftheyear2008@ca-north.org.uk or posted to Community Action Northumberland, (Northumberland Village of the Year 2008), Tower Buildings, 9 Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1PY and be received by 4pm on 30 May 2008.

Thank you for reading this letter,

Yours faithfully

Alan Hedley
Assistant Director

Copy of article published in the February to April 2008 issue of Northumberland Community News

Northumberland Village of the Year 2008

By Alan Hedley

The first Calor Village of the Year[®] competition was launched in 1997 and Northumberland villages started entering the competition in 2005. Community Action Northumberland is again organising the Calor Northumberland Village of Year Competition 2008 and is seeking entries from villages or free-standing settlements with a population of no more than 5,000, located in the historical county area of Northumberland (including Northern Tyne and Wear).

The competition is not about pretty window boxes and the village green. The entry categories cover a variety of community issues from contribution to the village's young people, to the environment and the elderly.

Entrants are asked to complete 4 sections on the entry form, describing the vibrant, enterprising and caring qualities that are found in their village. The 4 sections are People; Environment; Business; and Communications. Within each section there are a number of questions and suggested activities which may or may not be appropriate to your community. You are invited to write a profile of your community for each section addressing the questions, if appropriate, and adding any other relevant information on any other activities that might demonstrate your prowess in the category covered.

Finally the entry form invites you to say in no more than 500 words "What makes my village special". This will help the judges compose a stronger picture of how your community operates.

The majority of entries come from the rural districts of Northumberland. CAN is especially keen this year to encourage entries from villages in the South East of the county. If there are any community groups in the Wansbeck and Blyth Valley area that think their village deserves to be recognised then please contact CAN for an entry form and guidelines to the competition.

Previous winners of the Northumberland Village of the Year competition are Wingates, Allendale and Acklington. Your village could be next so why not request an entry form to see the detail involved? Entry forms are available from CAN's website, www.ca-north.org.uk or by telephoning CAN's Morpeth office, 01670 517178 or by emailing villageoftheyear2008@ca-north.org.uk

The closing date for receipt of entries is 30 May 2008. Later in the year the overall winner in Northumberland will have 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. This will give them the opportunity of gaining recognition at national level as well as a share of a prize fund totalling more than £36,000.