

Pride of Place Glory for County Donegal

Oileán Árinn Mhóir has received national recognition after being named as one of the principal winners in Cooperation Ireland's annual Pride of Place Competition 2009.

At an award ceremony held in the Slieve Donard Hotel in Newcastle, Co. Down on Saturday night last, 21st November, Oileán Árinn Mhóir was named overall winner in the Islands category. Comharchumann Oileán Árinn Mhóir was lauded for its efforts in improving the quality of life for the residents on the Island. The Comharchumann has undertaken many developments over the last number of years including the building of a Day Care Medical Centre, Heritage Centre and holiday home village. The judges visiting the Island last July recognised the benefits of these initiatives to the community and how they have helped to promote and create civic pride on the island.

There was further success for the County with Habinteg Housing Association Ltd, Lifford being named as a runner up in the 'Integration' themed Single Issue category. Habinteg Housing Association seeks to achieve the twin aims of 'habitation' and 'integration' through the development of high quality, affordable housing, which is integrated into the wider community. Habinteg's approach is to build a wide range of house types to provide homes for all, irrespective of age, culture, background, or levels of ability.

Ardara Parish Council was also shortlisted under the 'Heritage' themed Single Issue category.

This is the seventh year of the Pride of Place Competition, which is run by Co-operation Ireland in partnership with the All-Island Local Authority Steering Forum, a forum which encourages strategic and sustainable approaches to cross-border co-operation by Local Authorities. The Pride of Place awards is an all-island competition which is directed towards recognising improvements by local communities to create civic pride in their area. The competition focus is on people coming together to shape, change and enjoy all that is good about their area.

Breid Neely, Community Development Officer and Pride of Place Co-ordinator for Donegal, stated that "Donegal County Council is delighted to be involved with this competition and we see it as a good way to highlight the wonderful work that is being carried out throughout the county by community groups and volunteers. Comharchumann Oileán Árinn Mhóir and Habinteg Housing Association are very worthy of this national recognition. She added that "I would also like to congratulate the other finalists in this year's competition from Donegal and to wish them the very best in their future endeavours".

Donegal County Council have been involved in this competition since 2005 and hosts an Annual Donegal Pride of Place Awards competition. Since Donegal became involved in this competition, the following groups have received national recognition: Taobh Tire (2006), Carrigart Development Association (2007) Castlefinn Partnership Initiative (2008), and Coiste Forbartha Dhoibhair (2008)

In 2009, five projects, namely Cara House FRC, Letterkenny, Forbairt na Rosann Teo, An Clochán Liath, Ardara Parish Council, Comharchumann Oileán Árinn Mhóir and Habinteg Housing Association Ltd, Lifford received County Pride of Place Awards at a Gala function in Letterkenny in May and were selected by Donegal County Council to represent Donegal in the 2009 All Island Pride of Place Awards.

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L-R Christopher Moran, Chairman, Co-operation Ireland, Noirín Uí Mhaoldhomhnaigh, Oileán Árann Mhóir, Minister for Social Development, Margaret Ritchie, MLA, Tom Dowling, Chairman of Pride of Place, Breid Neely, Donegal County Council, Seán Mac Eachmharcaigh, Oileán Árann Mhóir



L-R Christopher Moran, Chairman, Co-operation Ireland, Kevin Gallagher, Habinteg Housing Association, Clr. William Dick, Chairman, Down District Council, Moire Gallagher, Habinteg Housing Association and Tom Dowling, Chairman of Pride of Place