



MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY GROUPS ACROSS CLARE URGED TO PARTICIPATE IN 'PRIDE OF PLACE 2007'

Clare, IRELAND, Wednesday 21st February 2007 - Clare County Council has announced that it is currently seeking nominations from communities interested in participating in 'Pride of Place 2007'. The annual competition, which is run by Co-operation Ireland in conjunction with local authorities north and south of the border, aims to recognise and celebrate the vital contributions that community groups make to society. This year the organisers of the All-Ireland contest have changed the structure of the competition to include new categories for villages with a population of less than 200 people and towns with a population of over 5,000 people.

'Pride of Place', first piloted in the summer of 2003, came from the Local Authority All-Island Steering Forum - a forum that encourages strategic, sustainable approaches to cross border co-operation. Since 2003, the following communities in Clare have taken part: Kilrush, Kilkee, Ennis, Labasheeda, Shannon, Sixmilebridge, Ballynacally, Scariff, and O'Briensbridge/Montpelier. Last year, the communities of Labasheeda, Kilrush and Sixmilebridge were nominated by Clare County Council to participate in the awards scheme.

According to Cllr. Patricia McCarthy (Ind), Chairperson of the Environment, Emergency Services & Consumer Protection Strategic Policy Committee, "*This competition focuses on local communities, both north and south of the border, coming together to shape, change and enjoy all that is good about their area. Groups have the opportunity to network, exchange ideas and learn from others and further promote their activities.*"

Ms. Nicola Cullinan, Pride of Place Co-Coordinator added, "*The competition offers communities the opportunity to showcase the positive contribution that local groups make to the overall enhancement of their localities. This year, we are hoping to receive expressions of interest from towns and villages the length and breadth of County Clare. Once all submissions have been received and adjudicated upon, Clare County Council will proceed to nominate the selected entrants to participate in the competition*"

Each Local Authority can nominate up to five towns in the population-based categories, of which there are six. Category 1 caters for villages of up to 200 people, category 2 is

for population centres of 200-500 people, category 3 features towns and villages with a population of between 500-1000 people, category 4 is for centres of between 1000-2000 people, category 5 includes centres of between 2000-5000 people, and category 6 caters for towns and cities with a population in excess of 5,000.

Meanwhile, *'Pride of Place 2007'* features a separate category entitled 'Single Issue Project'. Entries that have been successful in recent years have concentrated on themes such as Childcare Provision, Community Service Outreach, Heritage, Disabled Provision, Third Age Provision, Community Amenity, Estate Management, Social Integration, Suburban Regeneration, Inter-Community Relations and Care of the Environment.

"One group only, per population category, may be entered by Clare County Council, but multiple entries are allowed in the 'single issue' category, providing the total number nominated in all categories does not exceed five", Ms. Cullinan added.

Judging for *'Pride of Place 2007'* will take place between mid-June and late July while the awards will be presented at a ceremony in Westport, County Mayo on 10th November 2007. Community group winners, runners up and special award recipients receive a crystal trophy and small monetary prize at a special awards ceremony.

Community groups interested in being considered for nomination are asked to submit written **expressions of interest**, detailing their preferred Category number to: *Nicola Cullinan, Pride of Place Co-Ordinator, Environment & Emergency Services Directorate, Clare County Council, Block B, IAPE, Gort Road, Co Clare*. Expressions of interest should be submitted by Friday 9th March 2007 to allow time for internal judging procedure. Clare County Council will announce the successful nominees on 13th April 2007.

For **further information** on *'Pride of Place 2007'*, please contact Nicola Cullinan, Pride of Place Co-Coordinator, Clare County Council at 065-6846496 or Geraldine Madden, Environment & Emergency Services, Clare County Council at 065 – 6846281.