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SEARCH BEGINS FOR SURREY'S TOP VILLAGE

The search has begun for Surrey's Calor Village of the Year 2008. Competition organisers, Surrey Community Action, are encouraging entries from every village in the county with a population of 5,000 and under. The Village of the Year competition is sponsored by Calor, the UK's leading supplier of LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) and assesses communities on various aspects of rural village life with categories covering People, Environment, Business and Communication.

Cash prizes are on offer to the winning communities in the competition. Jean Roberts-Jones, Chief Executive of Surrey Community Action is looking forward to a good response from villages in this year's county competition. She commented: "The emphasis of the competition is on finding caring, vibrant village communities, which take pride in their sense of community 'spirit' and encourage local initiatives that enhance the quality of life for residents. The judges are looking for quality rather than quantity, so a village which has a few well run activities has as much chance of winning as any other entrant. In order to make it easier for villages to enter this year, there will be a very short entry form to fill in. Villages should register their interest and Surrey Community Action will do the rest for you." The deadline for entries is 30 May and judging will take place in June and July.

Later in 2008, one of the winning villages from Surrey will have the added honour of being nominated to go forward and represent their county in the prestigious Calor Village of the Year for England competition 2008/09. This will give that village the opportunity of gaining recognition at national level as well as a share of a prize fund totalling more than £36,000. The county's nominee to the 2007/08 national competition, Ripley, is now preparing for a visit from competition judges.

Entry forms for the 2008 county competition can be requested from Surrey Community Action by telephoning Anne Barry on 01483 459292 ext 216 or email anneb@surreyca.org.uk or download a form from www.surreyca.org.uk

Surrey Community Action is resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector across Surrey through access to advice, training, funding and advocacy. Surrey Community Action actively promotes volunteering and our website www.surreyca.org.uk can signpost you to local opportunities at a volunteer centre near you. Help is especially needed in health or as a school governor.

If you are interested in volunteering the details of local volunteer centres in Surrey are on our website: www.surreyca.org.uk/vb.htm