



Top Ten Tips from Belleek for the Calor Village of the Year Competition

1. When completing the application form, approach it in terms of the community as a whole, not just the work your organisation does. Talk to as many other groups and organisations that operate in your village, finding out the various activities they have to offer.
2. Make sure the whole community is aware and that it is a community application. Keep the community informed on such things as the judges' visiting day and the award day.
3. Repeat, Repeat, Repeat! Treat each Category question as a stand-alone answer. So, if you mentioned 'Meals on Wheels' under 'Older People', it may also have potential go under the 'Community Life' and 'Business' categories. Each question is judged individually.
4. Enter all the categories. You don't have to be a contender to win each individual category, but you do have to enter all to have a chance at the overall title. The Calor Competition is about individual villages and what they do with the resources available to them, not what they do in comparison to other villages.
5. Get inputs from as many people as possible. Brain storm each category, you'd be surprised at what you may have forgotten.
6. Start at the start of the year, month or week and document everything that happens in your village. Think about different categories of people: Older, Young, Unemployed, Sick, Parents and what's available for these people.
7. Gather supporting documentation or material: Flyers, Posters, Newspaper cuttings – Anything that shows the levels of activity in your village.
8. Plan and co-ordinate the day the judges will visit. How best can you encapsulate your village in just two hours? What makes your village? If it's the people, then let them meet the people. If it's a building then show them the building. If it's past or present work, then show that or if all of the above... you know what to do.
9. Answer the "your village" section of the application from the heart. What is it about your village that makes it the best in Northern Ireland? If YOU can't answer that from your heart then a hundred hours of judging visits will never convince them.
10. **GO FOR IT!** If you're not in, you can't win. When we entered Belleek in the inaugural year of the competition, never, did we for one second think that we would win the Community Life Award and come runner-up to Broughshane, and then go on to lift the overall title the following year, but we did. The Calor Village of the Year competition for us has been a wonderful experience from start to finish. It's great for once to get the opportunity and encouragement to look at what's good and right about our communities.

Good Luck!