



PRESS RELEASE

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FALKIRK MAKES SHORTLIST IN SEARCH FOR UK'S MOST ENTERPRISING PLACE

Hot on the heels of its victory in the Scottish heat, Falkirk has made the six-strong shortlist of locations which will compete in London to be crowned the UK winner of the Enterprising Britain competition.

Now in its sixth year, the UK-wide competition, run by Enterprise UK with Scottish Enterprise in Scotland, rewards cities, villages, towns and neighbourhoods that have tackled the economic downturn head on and are successfully creating jobs, boosting local business and nurturing entrepreneurial talent as the UK emerges from recession.

After scooping the Scottish round last month, Falkirk has been chosen as one of six regional finalists from an initial list of twelve who will pitch their entries to a panel of expert judges. The shortlist will then be reduced to three locations each of will receive a visit from the judges to showcase first hand their work and investment, before one overall victor is announced later in the year. Falkirk will be hoping to bring home this honour and to represent the UK at the European Enterprise Awards in 2011.

Falkirk was recognised for its success with *My Future's in Falkirk*, a 10-year initiative originally created to tackle job losses in the petrochemical industry. It initiated a series of projects impacting on the area's economy and promoting Falkirk to the wider business community. New developments have been created including the regeneration of the town centres with the creation of the Falkirk BID and £20 million of regeneration funds, a 30 acre business park on land reclaimed from the petrochemical industry and a new 33 acre business park on the former

Alcan site. Innovative partnerships have also been formed, such as that between INEOS and Forth Valley College to create Modern Apprenticeships, and between businesses and support agencies to develop a skilled workforce and create employment.

Brian McVey, Director of Operational Management at Scottish Enterprise and one of the judges for the competition, said:

“The success of *My Future’s in Falkirk* demonstrates what can be achieved if people and organisations work together to improve the social and economic prospects of their community. We are confident that their great example will encourage other communities to do more to support the development of entrepreneurship, which will be critical in responding to the economic challenges we face in future.”

Councillor Adrian Mahoney, the Convenor of Economic Strategy and Development at Falkirk Council, said: “The news that we’re in the final six for this UK award is fantastic news and a great endorsement of the work done to support local businesses and encourage new investment in the Falkirk Council area.

“It would be great to win the top prize, but the big goal for the Council is to get through the tough times and ensure that the whole district is a great place to live, work and do business.

“Our strategy ‘My Future’s in Falkirk’, is crucial to help us do that.

“We want to support and stimulate the local economy across the Council area, from Bo’ness to Bonnybridge, and have already completed some amazing projects which have brought about real change and improvements to local communities. This is all about practical support – not talk – to deliver real dividends for local firms and the residents we serve.”

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For more information about the 2010 Enterprising Britain competition go to

www.enterpriseuk.org/enterprisingbritain

Case studies of all previous Enterprising Britain regional winners are available to view on

www.enterpriseuk.org/get_involved/enterprising_britain/map

ENDS

- Enterprising Britain is a nationwide competition that celebrates and recognises enterprise achievement throughout all the regions of the UK. For more information please visit www.enterpriseuk.org/enterprisingbritain
- Enterprising Britain is open to all organisations in the UK that are working in partnership to create an enterprising place. The place can be a town, a city, a parish or a neighbourhood and organisations must demonstrate that enterprise is central to the economic and/or social transformation of the place
- The competition runs nationally across Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland and operates in two stages: a regional nomination stage and a national competition between the regional finalists
- Six of the 12 regional finalists will pitch to a judging panel and the top three will be visited by the judging panel in September
- Previous national winners have included:
 - 2009 NWES Lowestoft
 - 2008 Scarborough Renaissance Partnership
 - 2007 North Staffordshire Regeneration Zone
 - 2006 West Kilbride Craft & Design Town
 - 2005 Sherwood Energy Village, Ollerton