

Putting the pride back into Copeland

Mayor of Copeland, Mike Starkie is set to relaunch the Pride in Copeland awards to recognise the great achievements being made by owners of buildings in the borough and encourage others to improve their premises.

The last Copeland Pride awards for the best buildings in the borough were held in 2012, with the Woolpack Inn in Eskdale taking the top award and Haverigg Lighthouse and Gillerthwaite Field Centre in the Ennerdale valley taking the runner-up prizes.

As part of a wider scheme to rejuvenate the towns and villages across Copeland, the Mayor has been looking at how the renovation of dilapidated buildings and conservation of the public spaces can help economic growth.

Mayor of Copeland, Mike Starkie said: "As I have been going around Copeland on council business I have taken the opportunity to take a look around the towns and I have seen some excellent examples of where owners have restored their properties.

A great example of a commercial property which has the pride factor is The Georgian House in the centre of Whitehaven. Not only has the building be beautifully restored, the owners have taken the time and effort to add colourful window boxes and hanging baskets of flowers. It is one of the jewels in the crown of Whitehaven, a gem of a town. The owners of buildings like this are the ones I want to see rewarded with a Copeland Pride award.

"However there are pockets of buildings which have fallen into disrepair, yet have the potential to become real assets to the character and vibrancy of Copeland, for example the former Methodist Church and Victorian swimming baths in Whitehaven. The potential for the Mark House land on the harbour side is also another example of a site with great potential.

"I want to see the pride back in Copeland and to celebrate the great achievements which are being made, and encourage others to maximise the potential of their buildings and land. This is why I am encouraging property owners to contact Copeland Council for advice on how to renovate their buildings.

"The Town Heritage Initiative in Whitehaven's Market Place and James Street is a great example of how we've been able to proactively improve the beautiful Georgian buildings there. We are also leading by example by improving our own property, the Market Hall.

"This is not just an aesthetic issue. We want our towns and villages to look cared for because that is clearly linked to economic prosperity. If we are to revitalise our town centres - and that is absolutely

one of our priorities – we need everyone to have pride in them. This means taking care not to erode the historic character of protected areas.

“Our buildings are a hugely valuable asset, which is why I am planning to relaunch the Copeland Pride awards.

For advice on renovating properties, please contact Copeland’s conservation officer, Richard Majewicz, on 01946 598315.



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