

PROGRAMME - PARISH HALLS, GLASGOW - 15TH JANUARY 1999

Roger Crofts - The Environmental Regeneration Awards

“Thank you Iain. Virtually all of the projects we are celebrating today, irrespective of their scale, the type of the project or the location are examples of the benefits of working in partnership and co-operation - a theme that Scottish Natural Heritage is very familiar with and fully endorses.

The awards we are celebrating today are another example of partnership, in this case between Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Enterprise. The Environmental Regeneration Award is now five years old and was originally set up to do something that no other award scheme within the environmental field in Scotland achieved. That is to identify and mark not only the quality of projects in Scotland’s urban and rural environments but to recognise their positive regenerative effects. These effects cover a range of areas including:

- increasing the attraction of the countryside as a wildlife habitat.
- improving moral by providing better environments for people to live and work.
- enhancing the economy through the creation of more attractive business locations.
- the drawing of greater numbers of tourists.

This Award, looks at the improvements of Scotland’s environment through these diverse partnership projects and the ways in which they enrich all aspects of our lives.

In the first year, the Supreme Award went to Birnie Loch in Fife, a scheme promoted by a private sector company in partnership with the local community and local authority to reclaim a sand and gravel quarry. The second year’s award went to a project sponsored by a partnership of public organisations - Provand’s Lordships in Glasgow - promoted jointly by Glasgow Development Agency and Glasgow City Council which give a new setting to a key historic area and building in the old part of the city. In its third year, the Supreme Award went to Sauchie Nursery School, a scheme supported by the Beechgrove Garden Community Corner and last year’s winner was the Crofters Memorial Cairns on Lewis an extraordinary community endeavour to create a group of prominent landmark artworks.

For this year - well, we have to wait and see but I am sure we will find partnership played a key factor in delivering this year's Supreme Award winning project.

What can be said is that each year has seen schemes of quite different types take the trophy - this is encouraging and indicates the diversity of projects being undertaken throughout Scotland and submitted for these Awards. The diversity of the Awards also marks the skills and breadth of experience of the judges from Carole Baxter with a very strong horticultural background to Professor Seaton Baxter whose breadth of expertise in the fields of environment and planning makes him ideally suited as a Judge. Of course the representatives of the two sponsoring organisations, Iain Hart of Scottish Enterprise and Rebecca Hughes of Scottish Natural Heritage (who sadly cannot be with us today) each bring additional experience of environmental and landscape matters.

The final partner in today's proceedings is Lord Sewell, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries, who will now present the prizes."