



TIDY
Northern
Ireland

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PRESS RELEASE

BLUE FLAG BEACH TALLY STICKS

Embargoed until 00.01 hours Tuesday June 5, 2007. Includes a full list of winners.

EIGHT beaches in Northern Ireland have been bestowed the prestigious Blue Flag awards today for having litter-free sands and clean bathing waters – the same number as last year.

On World Environment Day, two of the country's marinas also received the esteemed accolade for their good facilities and cleanliness.

Ian Cole, Chief Executive of Tidy Northern Ireland, the charity responsible for Blue Flag in Northern Ireland said: "It's great that we can offer beach and sailing enthusiasts such good places to visit.

"It is testament to the growing popularity and credibility of the awards. But also the hard work that those who look after our beaches and marinas put in to maintain such high standards."

Among the beach winners are **Portrush East Strands** in Antrim (which missed out last year) neighbouring **Portrush, Whiterocks** and **Portrush, West Strand**. Plus **Benone Strand** in Derry and **Tyrella** in Down.

A Blue Flag beach must satisfy 29 different criteria including litter-free sands, bathing water that meets guideline standard, safe access to the beach for everyone, good, well maintained facilities and life saving equipment.

Marinas have to meet over 20 various standards like fire fighting, first aid and life saving equipment, have rubbish bins, visually clean water free of litter and oil and provide drinking water.

Blue Flag is an international award which runs in 36 countries across the globe. Every single Blue Flag beach and marina whether in Northern Ireland, Portugal or New Zealand has achieved and must maintain the highest standards. Foreign feet treading our sands can expect to experience the same quality as on their home shores.

Added Ian: "These beaches and marinas may have been given their Blue Flag – but they need to continue to work hard to maintain standards. The public can do their bit to help by putting all their rubbish in a bin and looking after the facilities."

An Taisce, the body responsible for Blue Flag in the Republic of Ireland, has also announced its awards for the season. South of the border 80 beaches and 3 marinas were rewarded with Blue Flags, making the total on the island of Ireland 88 beaches and 5 marinas. Two beaches in Co Louth, just a short drive from the Co Down coast, met the required standard, as did two beaches on Sligo's East Coast. Donegal provided Ulster with the largest number of Blue Flags, 11 beaches representing 16% of the entire country's Blue Flag awards.

The full list of all beaches and marinas in the whole of the Island of Ireland is available on the TIDY Northern Ireland website www.tidynorthernireland.org by clicking on the IrelandBrochure2007 pdf.

For further information

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Notes to editors

Blue Flag is an award scheme for beaches. It is run internationally by Fee (Foundation for Environmental Education). Each of the 36 nations has an organisation which facilitates the awards in their country. For England it is ENCAMS (the independent charity behind the Keep Britain Tidy campaign), for Northern Ireland; Tidy Northern Ireland, Wales; Keep Wales Tidy and Scotland; Keep Scotland Beautiful.

Blue Flag winners 2007

Beaches

Name of beach	County	Beach Manager
Ballycastle	Antrim	Moyle District Council
Benone Strand	Derry	Limavady Borough Council
Cranfield West	Down	Newry & Mourne District Council
Portstewart Strand	Derry	The National Trust
Portrush East Strand	Antrim	Coleraine Borough Council
Portrush, West Strand	Antrim	Coleraine Borough Council
Portrush, Whiterocks	Antrim	Coleraine Borough Council
Tyrella	Down	Down District Council

Re-entry: Portrush East Strand Out from last year: Downhill

Marinas

Name of marina	County	Marina Manager
Ballycastle Marina	Antrim	Moyle District Council
Carrickfergus Marina	Antrim	Carrickfergus Borough Council

Out from last year: Bangor

*Tidy Northern Ireland runs the **Keep Northern Ireland Tidy Campaigns**, and manages the **Northern Ireland Borough Cleanliness Survey, TIDY Business, TIDY Communities, Eco-Schools**, and the **Blue Flag** scheme for clean beaches and marinas in Northern Ireland.*

Tidy Northern Ireland is the trading name of Environmental Campaigns Northern Ireland

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