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**22 May**

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## **BALLYCLARE COMPANY RANKED AMONGST COUNTRY'S BEST NEW BUSINESSES IN HSBC START-UP STARS AWARDS**

Renewable Ireland, based in Ballyclare, has outperformed hundreds of hopeful new businesses to reach the regional finals of the 2007 HSBC Star-Up Stars Awards.

The national contest, now in its seventh year, is designed to seek out the most promising new businesses in the UK and to recognise the entrepreneurs behind them.

Robert Misselbrook and Tony Gordon, who started Renewable Ireland two and a half years ago, are now hoping to clinch one of the top titles and take a share of the Awards' prizes, worth £85,000.

Driven by concerns about climate change, combined with new building regulations and consumer demand for alternatives to high priced fossil fuels, Robert and Tony set up a business to develop, market and distribute renewable energy products and solutions.

These include micro wind turbines (Windsave and Vawtek), heat pumps (Kensa), and solar thermal systems (ISL).

Established in 2005, the innovative, eco-friendly company is working hard to change perceptions about alternative power sources and, while hampered by their high start-up costs, have grown significantly to become the market leader in their area.

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Key breakthroughs have been receiving their first order for 500 Windsave units and installing a number of their products in key public sector buildings. A recent presentation to key building specifiers was well received and promises to build interest in the company.

Last year Renewable started exporting to the Irish market while 2007 sees plans to add to their portfolio of products and a move to roll out their business model throughout the UK.

Renewable Ireland is one of 20 companies to secure a place in the West, Wales and Northern Ireland regional finals of the 2007 Start-Up Stars Awards. Their entry will now be considered by a panel of local business experts who will select 10 top new businesses to represent Northern Ireland in the national judging session.

This year there will be five heats, generating 50 regional winners from throughout the UK. From this pool of talent, the national judging panel will choose 10 National Finalists who will come to London to explain why their business deserves the top prize of £25,000 cash, plus the coveted title HSBC Start-Up Star 2007.

The winning business and runner-up will be revealed at a glittering gala dinner at London's Dorchester Hotel on October 24, attended by more than 300 guests representing business, politics and the media.

During the evening the winner of the first Start-Up Stars Green Award, celebrating the start-up company demonstrating the best green credentials, will also be announced, receiving an HSBC cheque for £5,000.

Each National Finalist will also take away a prize package comprising the Quick Books Pro and Small Business Payroll, SimpleStart from Intuit, Google Awards credits and 30 days of dedicated account servicing from Google UK.

Simon Wainwright, Chief Operating Officer for HSBC Commercial Banking, described the 2007 Awards as "the biggest and best" yet.

"Last year HSBC alone helped nearly 100,000 new ventures get off the ground," he said. "This is representative of the huge pool of entrepreneurial talent that exists in Brittan today.

"Many are still only small businesses - but they have big ideas. We are proud Start-Up Stars can contribute to their aspirations and that the Awards play a pivotal role in identifying the business leaders of the future."

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### **3/... BALLYCLARE COMPANY RANKED AMONGST COUNTRY'S BEST NEW BUSINESSES IN HSBC START-UP STARS AWARDS**

Taking advice is the first step in getting a new business off the ground, and useful information is available in the free HSBC pack *Starting a Business* which can be order by visiting [www.ukbusiness.hsbc.com](http://www.ukbusiness.hsbc.com) or by calling 0800 328 6942.

#### **Notes to editors:**

##### **1. HSBC Start-Up Stars Awards**

The HSBC Start-Up Stars Awards, presented in association with the *Daily Express* and Sky News, invites entries from UK businesses that have been trading for less than three years and can demonstrate they have the management skills and ideas for success.

##### **2. HSBC Start-Up Stars 2007 judging panel**

This year's judging panel includes:

Simon Wainwright, Head of Business Banking, HSBC; Derek Browne, Chief Executive, Entrepreneurs in Action; Peter Hoskins, Senior Business Producer, Sky News; Dr. Glenda Stone, CEO, Aurora; Maisha Frost, Business Journalist, Daily Express; Pippa Kitaruth, Marketing Manager, Intuit UK; Dan Cobley, Director of Marketing, UK, Ireland and Benelux, Google UK; Claire Owen, Leader of Vision & Values, The SG Group.

##### **3. HSBC Bank plc**

HSBC Bank is a wholly-owned subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc which is headquartered in the UK. The HSBC Group serves over 125 million customers worldwide from more than 9,500 offices in 76 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa. With assets of US\$1,738 billion at 30 June 2006, HSBC is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations. HSBC is marketed worldwide as 'the world's local bank'.

##### **4. Intuit UK**

Intuit UK is a leading provider of business and financial management solutions for small businesses and their advisors including accountants and book-keepers. Key products and services include the popular QuickBooks family of business accounting software and QuickBooks Payroll and Exceed support among other services. These are available directly or through major retailers and partners including High Street banks. Intuit works with the industry through its QuickBooks Professional Advisor Programme and Intuit Developer Network to serve the accounting needs of small enterprises nationwide. Intuit UK is headquartered in Maidenhead, Berkshire. Intuit UK a subsidiary of Intuit Inc., and is quoted on the Nasdaq stock market under the symbol INTU. For more information on Intuit and its partners visit [www.intuit.co.uk](http://www.intuit.co.uk) and [www.quickbooks.co.uk/advisors](http://www.quickbooks.co.uk/advisors).

##### **5. Google**

Thousands of successful start-ups use Google Adwords to win new customers and grow their businesses. Google's performance-based, keyword-targeted advertising programme connects millions of consumers to thousands of UK advertisers every day. With Google ads, you only pay if people click, you can target by geography, you have total control over what you spend and your results are measurable. For more information visit: <http://adwords.google.co.uk>

##### **6. About Sky News**

Since its launch in 1989, Sky News has established itself as a formidable and innovative force in the world of news broadcasting. It now provides news to around 98 million people in 36 countries in Europe alone. Valued for fairness, balance and journalistic objectivity by both viewers and regulators, the award-winning channel has also earned a reputation for the speed of its 24-hour coverage and flexibility in reporting live news – first. The Sky News service also includes provision of news to [sky.com/news](http://sky.com/news) and to Sky News Active – the world's first interactive television news service. It is the second biggest provider of radio agency news in Britain and it provides news and SMS alerts to mobile phones, and desktop alerts to your PC. In an increasingly competitive world, these innovations, and a commitment to quality journalism, will ensure Sky News remains at the forefront of news provision in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.