Connecting Scotland: how Scottish organisations engage internationally

Argyll and Bute Council

International Networking
The Council’s Economic Development section is involved in an international network of European regions, the CPMR (Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions), which work together to ensure their common interest and unique geographies are taken into account by the EU institutions and national governments. The policies include regional policy, competition policy and state aids, transportation and fisheries. The CPMR have an annual General Meeting which takes place each year hosted by a different member region, and likewise. Within the CPMR, Argyll and Bute Council are also members of the Atlantic Arc geographic sub group which also hold an annual General Meeting each year in a member region.

Twinning Arrangements
Argyll and Bute is twinned with Amberg-Suzback in Germany. A youth group from Amberg-Sulzbach visited Argyll and Bute two years ago. The Council organised a number of activities for those participating in the visit. The Council are currently planning further activities with Amberg-Sulzbach.

Youth Exchanges
In addition to the above, Argyll and Bute Council have been involved in the organisation of various youth exchanges in recent years:

- Spain – the theme was Youth Democracy and involved groups from both countries looking at examples of youth democracy structures in their each other’s communities. They also held joint training in youth participation skills, including presentation and marketing.

- Poland – the theme for this exchange was facilities for young people. It led to a campaign by young people from the North Argyll Youth Forum to introduce a local alcohol tax, with the proceeds going to services and facilities which will offset the damage caused by alcohol misuse.

Both Oban and Rothesay are in the very early stages of planning exchanges for next year.

Location Promotion
Film in Argyll and Bute is part of the Scottish Film Locations Network which is a partnership with the Scottish Film Commission. Through this we have links to the European Film Commission and work internationally to promote Argyll and Bute to and answer screen enquiries from Europe and wider. This often leads to productions from Europe and wider, using Argyll and Bute as a location.

Support for local organisations to engage internationally
Argyll and Bute Council were the lead partner for the Argyll and the Islands LEADER European funding programme. Through this programme, a number of local organisations were assisted in the development of international
projects which, following support by the Local Action Group, received LEADER funding. These include:

_Fifteen Hundredth Anniversary International Exchange:_ this project which was hosted by Luss Parish Church, Argyll and Bute and involved exchange visits and information sharing between the communities of Roviga in Italy and Luss. Together, the groups explored common problems such as the lack of affordable housing in rural communities and the relationship between the environment and encouraging tourism.

_Columba Challenge and Festival of the Sea:_ this project involved the Inishowen Development Partnership from Donegal and South Islay Development, Argyll and Bute. This involved a series of regattas, awareness raising events and workshops in each area.

_Local Produce:_ this initiative involved Skand Nordvaste Sodre and Skane Nordvaste Nodre Local Action Groups from Sweden and Tarbert and Sknipness Community Trust, Kintyre Environmental Group, Bridgend Community Centre Group and the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust from Argyll and Bute. The project which centred around local food production provided resources to increase production, access to local markets through training, volunteering and employment in local food projection as well as increasing capacity for the long term sustainability of these community resources.

If you require further information on any of the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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