



Cyngor Tref Rhydaman
Ammanford Town Council

REPORT OF THE TWINNING MEETING BETWEEN
AMMANFORD AND BREUILLET
HELD FROM
THURSDAY MAY 29TH – SUNDAY JUNE 1ST 2014.

Our friends from the twin town of Breuillet, Paris arrived in Ammanford at midday on Thursday, May 29th and firstly attended a welcoming reception in the Pensioners Hall given by the Mayor of Ammanford, Cllr Jonathan Jennings.

This is the 17th year of the twinning link between the two Towns.

The rest of the Thursday was spent with the host families entertaining their visitors.

FRIDAY MAY 30th : Morning Conference at Ysgol Dyffryn Aman

The Title of the Conference was :

The Opportunities provided by the EU for the training and employment of young people.

Programme:

9.00am: Welcome address from the Mayor of Ammanford and Fabienne Bruneau, Deputy Mayor of Breuillet.

The Keynote speech was given by **Derek Vaughan**, member of the European Parliament. He started by giving a historical overview. The first rationale for the countries of Europe was to encourage peace which led to the formation of the EU. This has resulted in a peaceful Europe since 1945. Mr Vaughan stressed the advantages of EU membership e.g. the economy, defence, foreign policy, tackling climate change and the need to build alliances to compete with India and China for attracting investment and providing jobs. He then spoke of the benefits to Wales e.g. around 190,000 jobs directly reliant on trade with EU partners, the support for business, training, and improved broadband provision. Half a million have participated in EU funded training schemes. He praised Twinning Associations for their work in fostering a better understanding of each other's beliefs, culture and language.

Workshop 1. Rural Entrepreneurship Project for 16-30 year olds.

This powerpoint presentation was given by Mrs C. Edwards from Menter Bro Dinefwr. It is a project funded through the Rural Development fund 2007-13 supported by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural development. Some

200 individuals had been assisted in the 3 years of the project, 26 businesses had been created, one of which now employed 26 staff. Advantages quoted by the project were, being part of Europe yet living in Carmarthenshire. The access to a single market of 500 million, the reduced mobile phone charges down and each citizen being £1,225 better off as a result of being part of the EU. The project offered training and support to young people wishing to start their own business.

Workshop 2.

Fabienne Bruneau , Deputy Mayor of Breuillet.

The French Perspective.

Fabienne gave an insight into the projects being provided in the region supported by the EU specifically aimed at young unemployed people. One of the main differences with Wales was the fact that Breuillet and its Council have more direct control over its finances and can often implement actions quicker.

Workshop 3.

The Young Recruits programme and Jobs growth Wales.

This was presented by Janice Thomas, Job Force Wales Company Manager.

This highlighted these initiatives introduced by the Welsh Government supported by the EU. This included the Traineeship programme to support young people in improving their employability skills. Janice provided the audience with an understanding of Education for Sustainable development and Global Citizenship.

Workshop 4.

The Welsh Perspective

Presented by Lee Waters, Director of the Welsh Institute of Welsh Affairs.

Lee was born and educated in Ammanford. As someone who knew the area well, he highlighted the changes that had to take place in the community following the closure of the coal mines. Europe had provided direction for a mixed economy with all the training and opportunities offered. He spoke of the ERASMUS and LEONARDO projects as examples of projects for training opportunities and placements across Europe.

This concluded the Conference. Some 145 people had attended the conference, including 46 visitors from Breuillet. The Welsh attendees included County Councillors, local Town Councillors as well as members of the public.

Friday afternoon.

Following lunch, both the visitors and their host families travelled to visit Llanstephan on what was a beautiful afternoon. Here the visitors were given a guided tour of the Norman castle .This emphasised some common heritage links between the two towns.

The venue for the Friday evening was the Aman Centre when both the visitors and host families danced to the music of Bus Stop.

Saturday May 31st .

An early start was made at 9.00am to travel to Cardiff Bay to visit the Welsh Assembly Government building, the Senedd. Here a guided tour had been organised with translators in attendance. This was an excellent tour and gave an understanding of the role of the Welsh Government and its specific responsibilities. It also gave an insight into democracy in action with the elections of Assembly Members by proportional representation and the involvement of citizens in political life.

Following the visit both coaches travelled to Cardiff City Centre. The 100 or so who travelled then were split into two groups with one visiting Cardiff castle and the other visiting the Museum of Wales.

On **Saturday Evening**, a Multicultural Concert was arranged in the Pensioners hall, attended by over 100 people, including the 46 visitors from Breuillet.

The food provided was an oriental buffet by Cafe Celia. Celia is originally from the Philippines who has settled in Ammanford, being very much part of the community who often puts on themed events to help local charities.

The entertainment was provided by Fea Fdufea, living in Llandybie. Fea is an Indonesian dancer and singer and performed her traditional dances in full costume.

Ghubemi Amas , an African drummer entertained all present with his wide range of drums, involving many members of the audience. Amas lives in Cross Hands

Finally Owen Bailey from Ammanford finished the evening by singing modern hit songs.

Sunday morning, June 1st.

It was time to bid farewell to our friends, both old and new from Breuillet after what was an action filled visit. The return visit by the people from Ammanford will take place in October 2015 when a welcome is extended to all who would like to be part of the twinning party.