

Call for one Roscommon community

to be involved in development of Community Tourism Toolkit

Roscommon LEADER Partnership wish to invite submissions from towns and villages to be part of an exciting project which will see one community develop and pilot a community tourism toolkit from the ground up. In practical terms, the project will look at how best an area can apply the best possible methodologies in achieving community engagement with the tourism sector and in presenting a warm and interactive environment for visitors. This will then be transferred to other interested communities across the County.

The concept of community tourism is based on the articulation and bringing to life of an area's unique sense of place and people, this represents the foundation on which an authentic selling message is based. This has been very much to the fore in the development of the new Roscommon tourism marketing campaign which emphasises the local voice – see more on www.visitroscommon.com.

The Community Tourism Toolkit initiative is being undertaken in partnership with LEADER in Co Meath where a similar initiative is now underway with the community in Oldcastle. Claire Carty of Roscommon LEADER Partnership explains, 'we work very closely with the Community Tourism Network in Roscommon and with towns and villages across the county in building a better tourism connection in each area. The Community Tourism Toolkit is all about best practice, our consultant with work with one area on really drilling in on their potential and how best that can be nurtured and marketed for community tourism purposes.'

Leading the project are tourism specialists John Higgins and Associates. John was instrumental in the revival of Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo which is regarded as a successful blueprint in community and economic development. John points out that community tourism is about new levels of relationships between the host village or town and its environs in welcoming visitors. What is particularly appealing to the visitor can be found among the varied natural attractions, local resources and talents, the indigenous attributes of a community including various themes and expressions of local culture.

Claire Carty explains 'this is a competitive call, just one community will work with the consultant initially but we look forward to transferring the learning across the county into 2013. Any community interested should contact us on 090 6630252 or claire@ridc.ie for a copy of the Terms of Reference.