



The meeting in Spilinga Background

The Italian partner, ICRE, had been (in 2018) the initiator & driver' of the Green Bridges programme and application. The project was based on successful actions taken by ICRE over several years allowing them to develop the community aspects of their work, whilst sharing their environmentally based activities with an international partnership that had committed to similar actions.

The TPM in Italy was originally placed strategically in Spring of Yr 2 (2021) in order to actively demonstrate to partners the details of the practical nature of the the whole project.

The pandemic changed whole meetings structure. Only TPM 1 had been achieved until September 2021 when, following regular requests from ICRE for the partnership to visit their work, regulations changed to allow all partners to visit Italy without lengthy periods of isolation.

The position of ICRE as being at the 'heart and soul' of the Green Bridges concept, provided for a meeting base and series of activities that exemplified & demonstrated in practical fashion, all the underlying purposes of the project.

The project application had stated:

"The underlying objective is to promote social cohesion & wellbeing through 'connection and inclusion'. Using creative inclusive educational processes that become 'bridging routes' promoting that individual well-being, social community connection & cohesion and deepen environmental awareness & concern.

The project uses a tripartite engagement between individuals & society ('people in ordered community') & the natural world as a means of caring for and nurturing social cohesion by creating reciprocal tri-lateral well-being." (p47)

The meeting in Spilinga successfully demonstrated in a practical manner, the way ICRE has achieved 'connection & inclusion' within its community, thus





promoting 'individual well-being, social community connection & cohesion' along with deeper 'environmental awareness and concern'.

Every aspect of the meeting acted to demonstrate some aspect of those aims. The partners who were present became involved in the whole process as 'actors' not simply 'observers'.

Though the project has completed it is hoped that partners will have taken from the meeting an understanding that for 'learning' (aka 'education') to occur, there needs to be processes that engage the 'whole' person & involvement of the societies & cultures within which they individually exist.

In essence the key elements of such a 'Learning Process' are:

- Effective preparation of all elements, events & participants
- Embedded Informality throughout the whole process
- Avoidance of the desk-bound 'stasis' that is frequently regarded as evidence of a 'working environment'
- Variety of activity providing movement and exploration (inside or outside)
- Considerable use of social interchange - 'fieldwork' contexts, social activities (especially meals and social events)
- Opportunities for reflection

The Green Bridges project has its 'concrete results' (ref: Final Report section 3), expressed as 'tangible outputs' (<https://greenbridgesproject.org/the-tangible-results/>).

They demonstrate that despite the pandemic, partners have been successful in their efforts.

The meeting in Spilinga, set, in tandem with the dynamic purposeful informality of the first meeting in Iasi, (<https://greenbridgesproject.org/first-partnership-meeting/>) provides a sense of how much more could have been achieved had circumstances been different.





Spilinga Meeting structure

ICRE has been involved in encouraging & working with a wide range of local individuals and companies, all engaged in conserving or promoting aspects of local culture.

ICRE aims to encourage tourists, whose main focus for visiting the area is 'sun & sea', to step aside and experience more of the nature (human and natural) within the area.

There is also another major aim for ICRE: that of encouraging local communities to develop their potential – individually, as communities and economically.

Day One:

Partnership Breakfast Meeting

1. Outlining the purposes of the visit

Throughout the 2 days the focus is on

- exploring the potential for social developments.
- Sharing the practical environmental work already achieved

2. Considering reporting processes (document circulated separately)

3. Discussion re: The Two Day Agenda (with flexibility due to inclement weather)

Morning visits

The Brewery (a tourist related development supplying only during the action season)

The Nduja production unit

Afternoon: Capo Vaticano

An opportunity to learn more of the locality at residence, hosted & special meal prepared by local supporters of ICRE.





Evening

Social event hosted by the Mayor & Spilinga community

Day Two:

Morning meeting

1. Evaluation of previous day
2. Group work exploring the motivational factors that partners have for engaging with partnership programmes

Visit to the Valley of the Mills

Focused on a specially created trail leading to one of the historic mills

Afternoon:

Lunch with the original contacts in the area (in a project from 2005)

Evening

Meal at the Agri-tourismo where partners stayed.

Organised by ICRE with members and local associates.

