



## **SAFEINHERIT – SAFEGUARDING OUR HERITAGE**

**Community development through sustainable use of resources in  
Peripheral areas — process and demonstration**



### **WORKSHOP REPORT: Green Tourism**

**Engeløya, Steigen, Norway  
21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2001**

## **SAFEINHERIT- Safeguarding Our Heritage**

The SafeinHerit Network was established in 1999 in response to a European Union/Norwegian Government initiative to stimulate community development and environmental protection in northern parts of Europe through the Northern Periphery Programme (NPP). It is a partnership between four communities and organisations:

The community of Fair Isle, Scotland, under the auspices of their Fair Isle Marine Environment and Tourism Initiative (FIMETI).

The Nord-Trøndelag County Council (Nord-Trøndelag Fylkeskommune), Norway  
Steigen Municipality, Nordland County, Norway

The community development organisations of Inlandslandet, Vindelälvs kommunerna and SOS-kommunerna, Sorsele, Sweden.

Each is responsible for taking a lead role in a series of one or more joint and individual projects, aimed at benefiting the communities and environment and, equally important, demonstrating how community development can be achieved through use of environmental and cultural resources in a sustainable, non-damaging way.

One of the joint SafeinHerit Network activities is a series of three workshops on specific themes of sustainable resource management. The first workshop on Sustainable Development of Natural and Cultural Resources was held on Fair Isle in June 2000. The second was in Gargnäs, Sweden in February 2001, on Rural Land Management and Community Development. The third and final workshop was held in Steigen in June 2001 on the theme of Green Tourism.

These workshops are to allow direct transfer of information between individuals, communities and countries, and are to discuss process and practical measures generally applicable or adaptable to other peripheral communities in areas of high quality environmental and cultural value.

For more information on the SafeinHerit network, visit the website at

[www.safeinherit.net](http://www.safeinherit.net)

## GREEN TOURISM WORKSHOP IN STEIGEN

Steigen was the venue for this third and final workshop on Green Tourism, and presented itself in perfect sunshine from blue skies, in fact, the only hot and sunny week this entire summer.

The main part of the workshop was held at Modtaget, a restored fish-quay building, with spectacular views of the Lofotens. With a 15 minutes walk along the beach and no car-access on high tide this location was especially well suited to host such an event.



The workshop consisted of project partner meetings as well as a two days open workshop. The aim was to:

- Define the expression *green tourism*.
- Present several good examples of *green tourism* in peripheral areas.
- Define mutual problems and possible solutions for *green tourism* in peripheral areas.
- Create the beginning of a *green tourism* network across the borders of the Northern Periphery Area.

### Opening of the workshop:

#### The Mayor of Steigen:

Arne Marhaug

Arne Marhaug opened the workshop by telling the story how small coincidences led him to stumble across the early stage of the SafeInHerit project, and how often it is that chance plays a role in any good project. One little step leads to another, and communication with different areas of similar structure and peripheral position is beneficial to defining mutual problems and ways forward.

He went on to describing Steigen as a small coastal community with 3000 inhabitants and a history that stretches back over 10.000 years.

The combination of fishing and farming has been the main means of survival in the area until



recent times. The new ticket to success is fish farming, which is rapidly taking over as being a major income for the society. Traditional coastal-fishing and farming is gradually diminishing.

When Steigen had an 8 kilometre long tunnel built 10 years ago that connected Steigen with the mainland, it was predicted that hoards of tourists would arrive. Luckily this never happened, and by looking at our neighbour Lofoten, which is packed with coaches in the summer months, it became clear that Steigen wants to present itself to a different audience – smaller groups and nature-based tourism with less negative impact on the local environment. We are in the early stages of tourist development, and in the lucky position to be able to influence the future.

Arne Marhaug finally wished good luck with the workshop and to future co-operation between the areas.

## Sustainable Tourism in Northern Norway

**Toril Bakken, Alta**

Toril Bakken runs an environmental consultant office in Alta in Finnmark, Northern-Norway. She has worked in many different areas of business development and in the tourist-trade in Norway as well as abroad. We invited her to get an overview of “green tourism”. How to define it? Why green tourism, and possible directions? Her experiences, reflections and visions are interesting and varied and created a good framework for the succeeding talks and discussions.

Toril started her talk by describing how governmental strategies have been launched over the years to “save” the districts. Fisheries, fish farming, IT and tourism are all potential candidates, and a combination of all of them is probably the best solution.



“Tourism is by its attributes not green” – Toril says.

The traffic from planes and cars are one of the biggest environmental challenges we have. The aim must be to make tourism as local as possible to avoid the long transport. That also includes the transport of food and other essentials associated with running the business. Toril claims that we should aim to make all tourism as sustainable as possible. We need to save resources, increase the motivation and quality and also set “eco-criterias” to obtain better quality – longer lasting products and hence cut the cost. To have an environmental profile in the first place, eliminates many future problems. The general environmental aim for each company should be:

- Use as little as possible
- Re-use everything where possible
- Recycle as much as possible
- Choose the most environmentally friendly products (look for serious labels and read content-declarations)

## **How to plan for Green Tourism?**

Too much planning sometimes stops the action, but where investment and networks are planned it is important to organize a good plan. .

- Start by minimising use of water, chemicals, electricity and start using locally produced food, recycling strategies etc.
- Do not make it too easy to travel without using the local infrastructure!
- Make action that is visible and easy to reach.
- Sometimes it is better not to advertise certain local "treasures" to tourists to avoid the risk of ruining sacred places. This is also management!

The second stage is networking, evaluation and education. A network will strengthen the unity feeling and can be encouraging when it comes to inspiration and sharing ideas and customers. A network is also good for marketing purposes and can cut the costs of expensive brochures etc. It is also beneficial when it comes to a unified marketing aimed at a more international level.

Toril was very encouraging at the SafeInHerit efforts of starting a Green Tourist Network and would also like to be involved in the future development of this. She finally encouraged everyone in their future work, and reminded us about the private responsibilities we have towards the environment: "If you are serious about your environmental enthusiasm then start with changing your private habits!"

## **Green Tourism in the Nordic Green Belt –**

Examples of local solutions in Trøndelag and Jämtland in Sweden.

### **Turid Haugen, North Trøndelag**



Turid Haugen works for the Confederation of Municipalities in Norway (KS), and have over the last couple of years been working with a partnership between 49 counties in the north and south of Trøndelag and Jämtland counties across the border in Sweden. These are all counties with many similarities, such as a mutual, shared history, vast and rich nature, sparse population, one-sided business-structures and lack of jobs. The region has been named "The Nordic Green Belt". Together they are aiming to develop a co-operation between the municipalities on themes of sustainable resource management. The emphasis is on strengthening the environmental profile and to make use of the environmental and cultural resources – very similar to our main goals of the SafeInHerit Network. They want to develop a sustainable development where

problems are solved and initiatives are taken from the "bottom-up" perspective.

## GREEN BUSINESS AND GREEN TOURISM

The environmental aspect as *a competitive advantage* in business has been emphasised through a set of conferences where over 60 local businesses participated. Mainly the participants came from tourism and food production/distribution. The results from these conferences were primarily that environmental management system and the environmental emphasis as an advantage was brought into focus for businesses and municipalities in the region.

Another conference dealt with green tourism titled “Gold from the green forests”. The focus here was how to make environmental aspects a competition advantage in tourism.

Some of the conclusions were that ecological knowledge and developing ecological products would give competitive advantages to businesses in the region, particularly within the tourist industry. So far the knowledge of this in the municipalities and the industries is limited, but the conferences have shown great interest and potential.

Some small industries out in the districts are pioneers on sustainable environmental business development. To build networks, to exchange knowledge and to co-operate in areas like marketing will be important in the nearest future. Computer-networking and internet may be very useful for this purpose in regions where long distances and a sparse population otherwise inhibits communication.

Turid also pointed out that in order to get environmental changes it has to come out of a real necessity, and therefore the results will have immediate effects. She took the example of Copenhagen which in Scandinavian terms is a forerunner for environmental work. Copenhagen was forced to clean up and change attitudes because of the pollution of its ground water.

In the “periphery” we do not have major pollution problems, but we have to emphasise the advantages of still being a low pollution area with all the competitive advantages that gives.

Turid gave two examples of Green Tourism businesses in this region.

Skallstuggu is a guesthouse with facilities for courses, conferences, meetings and parties, situated in Frolfjellet in North-Trøndelag County. Skallstuggu has been aiming at developing a good kitchen with food from the local area and organically produced where this is available. This supports the small businesses in the region as well as giving the Skallstuggu a profile and a reputation for good, tasty and healthy food with a local profile. They also have a strong waste-management philosophy. Their idea is that experiences in nature, the taste of home-made food from the region and the environmental understanding all are integrated parts of being at Skallstuggu. They compost their kitchen waste and are presently working on a sewage system where the sewer is mixed up in a bog near by.

Another example is Vålådalen tourist station run by the Swedish Tourist Association in Åre, Jämtland County. This is a popular starting-point for hikes or skiing, and the station can offer



different standard rooms to different prices.

Experiences in nature are the basis of the Swedish travel association, and characterises all their offers and products in the mountains. All their hostels and tourist-stations are situated in places where nature is vulnerable, which makes it very necessary to be responsible for and to follow up what happens in nature.

In Vålådalen the environmental profile has been integrated in everything from heating and ventilation-systems to education of staff. They have used ecological building materials such as wood and stone for their buildings and outfitting. Their environmental policy is very important for the marketing and the profile of the place. The guests have come to expect a high standard of environmental consciousness they have to live up to.

## **Green Tourism Net – A presentation of the project**

**By Leopold Sjöström Hélène Marlot and Ai-Li Au-Duong**

The Swedish part of the SafeInHerit network has worked especially with developing a Green Tourism Net. The objective of this has been to identify enterprises in the region managed sustainably - in harmony with nature and cultural heritage in the region, and to set up a Green Tourism Network.

During the workshop they presented their project (extractions) as follows;

*Johan Tomas Labba, a Sami living in Lapland, explains that the Sami people always have been living from nature and not exploited it. They have not left any marks and not changed the environment; “We have picked the fruits of nature and left the place as it was. We have been a part of the natural circle and we hope this will still last a long time.”*



## **Green Tourism, a form of Sustainable Tourism**

Definitions of Rural tourism, Sustainable tourism and Green tourism

- **Rural tourism** is defined as
- The tourist valuation and appreciation of the of rural spaces, natural resources, cultural heritage, rural buildings, village traditions and local products; illustrative of the regional identities also covering their need for accommodation, food, leisure activities, and various services.

- **Sustainable Tourism** designates every form of tourist development, creation or activity, respecting and preserving in the long term the natural, cultural and social resources, and contributing in a positive and fair way to the economic development and this of the individuals who live, work, and stay in the protected spaces.”

*(Loving them to death? The need for sustainable tourism in Europe's natural and national parks*

Europe's natural and national Parks Federation (1993.)



- **Green Tourism**

Green Tourism is a form of sustainable, rural tourism (providing natural and cultural resources, traditions, products all in line with the local identity), but with a sounder aim to respect and preserve the natural resources and adapted to fit the context of northern, fragile landscapes. The main aim is to find a way of using and appreciating these areas of natural beauty without damaging them.

**Objective:**

Green Tourism offers respectful holidays and activities which respect the well-preserved areas – in our case; Northern Sweden. Our goal in the project is thereby to support the individuals working in the field of tourism and who participate in measures to safeguard their green assets. Our idea is to identify tourism enterprises in the region managed in consideration of the local natural and cultural conditions and setting up with them a Green Tourism Network (GTN).

**This means:**

- No waste of energy (electricity, raw materials) and if possible, use of bio energy and other renewable energy forms (hydro-electricity, wind power, biomass fuel, sun power etc)
- Information about the history and culture of the area
- Willingness to be accessible to people but avoiding too large a number of visitors
- Offering a discovery of the surroundings preserving the natural resources and limiting the nuisances:
  - Practise of waste segregation, recycling and purification of water, if possible in an ecological way
  - Preservation of the animal and vegetal species (seeing the rules of nature are respected, explaining about the local fauna and flora, about the ecosystems)
  - Integration of the buildings in the landscape
  - Use of pathways to limit trampling
  - Informing about the damage of the environment
- Take part in the construction of a territorial identity:
  - Improve the image of the area (valuation of the traditional villages and buildings, rehabilitation of old structures for new functions, marketing traditional events, etc)
  - Use of local cultures and know-how
  - Be a local purchaser, trade with local and small scale producers

- Involve the local authorities, producers, others tourism operators
- Establish a climate favourable for co-operation and partnerships creation
- Plan projects with a long term view



The Green Tourism Network project is meant to help the promotion of a sustainable tourism dealing with natural and cultural activities.

We want to offer a possibility to market a sustainable way of working. We support the local actors who participate in the safeguarding of Lapland, more precisely in the community development of Inlandslandet, Vindelälvs kommunerna and SOS-kommunerna, comprising the municipalities of Arjeplog, Arvidsjaur, Storuman, Malå, Sorsele, Lycksele, Vindeln, Vännäs.

## Outcomes:

### 1. A “Green Guide” presenting each company and its:

- surroundings
- natural and cultural resources
- tourist activities
- management
- means of participating sustainably in the life of its territory

A focus is set on **providing information**: to explain the visitors or future visitors what the companies are doing and why, what is their philosophy regarding the preservation of the resources. The idea is to edit a **local green guide** presenting the companies and their specific choices concerning environment and welcoming people. The purpose is to enhance their image and marketing. The document provides information and education about sensitive use of the area.

This guide, written in English and Swedish, will be available in the tourist offices of the 8 municipalities concerned and as much as possible, in other tourist offices in Sweden. It will have the form of a file, so that it is easy to update.

### 2. An IT-based Green Tourism Network

The communication with the companies is mostly by electronic mail and the Green Guide will be available on the SafeinHerit web-site: [www.safeinherit.net](http://www.safeinherit.net). A complete and independent Green Tourism web-site is expected for the continuation of the project.

## Guide Laponica – one of the *Green Tourism Net* participants

### Johan and Lisa Sandlund



Johan and Lisa Sandlund participated in the workshop from Swedish Lapland, and contributed with lots of good advice from the green tourist business “Guide Laponica” they have set up in Jäckvik, Arjeplog County, close to the Norwegian border. Their philosophy is to offer environmentally-conscious guided tours in this area, and they can offer everything from walking and canoeing to serious hikes, dog-sledding, and bird hunting or lake-fishing. They can cater for small groups as well as larger companies, and have their own cook who offers high quality food made from local produce and recipes.

Guide Laponica also finds it hard to deal with the bureaucracy when trying to be “green”. The Swedish authorities are generally very ahead when it comes to environmental aspects, but they still have very difficult rules concerning health regulations in serving home-made food from local produce. They also expressed a major problem with the taxation policy in Sweden. It is hard to run a company in the periphery, and especially hard to start a business. Maybe there should be special allowances in the early days of a business if you make all efforts possible to have a sustainable profile.

## A presentation of Batterie Dietl

- The transformation from a German 2<sup>nd</sup> world war battery to a tourist venue.  
“The Vestfjordroute” - a cycling route through Steigen to Lofoten.

### Anne Grete Bjørlo

Anne Grete Bjørlo runs the Steigen Touristservice, a company that tries to practice green tourism in all parts of the business and trying to adjust the products that already are available in Steigen to a tourist market.

Anne Grete gave us a tour of the German Second World War battery “Battery Dietl” that she runs as a museum during the summer months. Here she is trying to turn the nasty war history atmosphere into something positive by arranging art-exhibitions, concerts and even church-services within the premises.

During the time she has been in charge of the battery she has also been running a cafe based on home-made food from local produce (to the extent this has been available).



She is also running a guesthouse – Modtaget – that also was the venue for the seminars during the workshop. Here she wants to market nature and stillness together with local food specialities. Unfortunately this was her last season running the guesthouse, as the rent the owner charged was too high to make it profitable.

### **The Vestfjord route**

Steigen tourist service has also participated in the development of the “Vestfjordroute”. Anne Grete developed the concept of marketing the Steigen coast as a **cycling route**. It is important to turn the advantages of being “off the beaten track” to something positive.

Cycling tourists are generally more environmentally conscious and would prefer natural beauty with little through traffic on the roads. They overnight locally and they would come on the local boat, which would be another argument for keeping up the present level of boat-communication with Bodø and Svolvær – the neighbouring “cities”. This project was launched this summer and has had tremendously positive response.

Anne Grete's experiences are that it is difficult to establish “green tourism” as a pioneer. The financial situation and the lack of support in the early stages were the hardest to overcome.

She recommends that a municipality who wants to support Green tourism ought to develop a support system for small businesses that want to start up.

## **Green Care – experiences from a farm in Nordland.**



### **Marianne Nielsen**

With great enthusiasm and strength Marianne presented “Farm-tourism” and “Green Care”. She describes herself as a “stubborn optimist” who jumped on the “green wave” in the 70-ies. Despite being a citygirl she went to Agricultural College and started running her present farm in 1978. The entire family has been involved, and it is obvious that her enthusiasm has given results as 3 of her children have chosen a farm-related future.

“Green care” has long roots in Norwegian society. It was common that a family on a farm took care of mentally and physically handicapped, orphans or old people with no relatives. A lot of these people were thus given a meaningful life.

The big problem with our present society is that we have made people redundant because of age, illness or their social situation. We place these people in institutions where they can be of no use to the rest of the society and Marianne claims that it is obvious that this does not produce content and balanced people.

There are many groups in our modern society which are in need of “Green Care”:

Physically handicapped, refugees and asylumseekers, mentally handicapped, people with mental disabilities and foster-children are frequent visitors to Marianne's farm.

What has the farm got to offer:

- Real work: To get your hands grubby and receive encouragement for your actions.
- Animals: Contact with animals is very important for everyone who comes to the farm. A variety of animals like cows, calves, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, hens, rabbits, ducks, geese and pheasants provide endless opportunities for care and cuddles. The kittens are the most important ones in this respect.
- Horses are of course very popular, especially with the girls.
- The nature around the farm also provides endless activities from canoeing in rivers and waters to mountain hiking.

There are 3 reasons why Marianne and her family began “Green Care” on their farm.

- 1: They could start slowly with little investment
2. They can remain living and working on the farm.
3. They already have a lot of experience with caring for animals, plants and their own children.

Green Care provides a very important income for the family where 1/3 of the income is based upon the husband’s teaching, 1/3 from milk production and 1/3 from Green Care. This also has positive synergy effects in the rest of the community with increased business in the local shop (where they get all their supplies). “Green care” is an opportunity for established farms to share their everyday life with people who need it, as well as providing a vital income to the farm. The demand is increasing and so is the number of farms providing “green care”. The quality and standard of this activity is particularly important when you are dealing with a group of people who need special attention.

Marianne finished off by explaining what it entails being a “stubborn optimist”. She claims that the possibilities within the farm are endless and that they have only started to scratch on the surface. Recently the media has focused a lot on the negative trend in farming and the decline of the countryside. Marianne believes that if you have a positive outlook and vision, and see the opportunities, then it is still possible to live in the periphery and still be farming. Green care provides another leg to stand on.

## **Green tourism in Fair Isle - till now not always ‘green’**

**Anne Sinclair**

Although there is a common perception that Fair Isle has always been ‘isolated’ this has never been the case. Since prehistoric times it has been inhabited and its communities visited by peoples seeking shelter, trade and news. The shards of pottery found in recent years indicate the existence of trade with other areas. In *Njal’s Saga* Kari Solmundarson sailed to the Isle and spent the winter gathering information. When he left at least one Isle man, David the White, went with him.



The *Orkneyinga Saga* tells of Fair Isle's strategic importance in the conflict between Earl Rögnvald and Earl Paul. The first recorded shipwreck is that of the Long ship of Sivar, a Viking, circa AD900. Men arrived on its shores for many reasons, intentionally or in error, and the inhabitants became adept at dealing with the appearance of shipwrecked mariners, visiting clergy, holiday makers and traders.

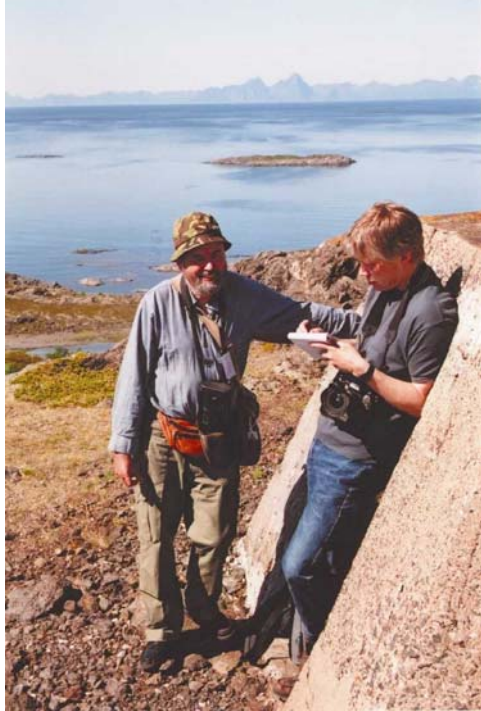
Travellers to the Isle came under several categories: -

- The many shipwrecked mariners who were rescued and cared for by the men and women of the Isle.
- The traders who came for diverse commodities – in the 16<sup>th</sup> century hawks were exported to the Scottish Court of King James. The merchants of the Hanseatic trade were regular visitors. Fish oil, feathers, bere meal and butter were all exported from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century but throughout the for centuries fish was the main export; skeo blawn (dried) or salted and dried. Used in trade and as rent, this was the main renewable resource the Fair Islanders had. The unique, two colour patterned knitting was traded for goods from passing ships.
- The clergy visited at various times, to baptise, marry, expound the merits of religion, teach and observe.
- Divers came – in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to search for Spanish treasure and in the 20<sup>th</sup> to investigate the many shipwreck sites.
- Diarists and writers called, were shipwrecked or viewed the Isle from offshore. Although they were somewhat preoccupied, not unreasonably, with the “perilous tides and jagged reefs”, they had mixed feelings about the native population. Ranging from ‘sober and industrious’ to ‘wasteful and dirty’, it seems the media of a bygone age were as flexible in their powers of interpretation as today's are.
- The Isle intrigued artists. In 1867 John T. Reid visited, as did 20<sup>th</sup> century notables such as Stanley Cursiter and Roland Svenson.
- In the days of the press gangs the British Navy hove to and small boats came ashore filled with armed men. They were often thwarted in their aims as the hiding places the young men fled to were well hidden from sight and dangerous for a stranger to reach.
- Ornithologists began arriving from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the Isle quickly became renown for its many rarities and the size of its seabird colonies.

Today, tourism takes a step forward. Visitors to Fair Isle are here on our terms. We still have a great deal to offer the traveller: rare birds, huge seabird colonies, impressive scenery, incredible light, beautiful and exclusive knitwear and crafts, music, tradition and a sense of community. Now we, as a community, can decide how these assets should be used. Our resources are renewable only if we protect them. Green Tourism will enable Fair Isle to build a viable future for its inhabitants, its birds and plants, and the preservation of the sea around it.

# The local touch, an extra dimension on Fair Isle

Nick Riddiford



In 1948, George Waterston made a personal dream come true and, together with a group of like-minded ornithologists, raised the money to buy the isle and establish the UK's third bird observatory. A series of wartime naval mission huts at North Haven were used for the purpose.

George only owned the isle for six years, selling it in 1954 to the National Trust for Scotland, the current owners. By that time Fair Isle Bird Observatory had established a pre-eminent worldwide reputation for its studies of seabirds, migrants and rare birds.

There was sufficient accommodation in the huts for twelve guests. They stayed for periods of a week or more, arriving and departing on the weekly 'Good Shepherd' ferry which was the only transport in and out of the island.

By the late 1960s, a growth in interest in birds and the increasing costs of maintaining ageing wooden huts led to the opening in 1969 of a purpose-built building at Mavers Cup, just above North Haven. The new building had space to accommodate 24 guests, and in greater luxury.

The new building was well patronised. However, by the late 1970s, birdwatchers were becoming more sophisticated and mobile. Holidays abroad could be achieved, often more cheaply than making the journey to Shetland (!); and those who sought rare birds now had access to a "grapevine" (effective and extensive word of mouth) which gave news of rarities all over the country. They thought nothing of driving the length and breadth of Britain to see a rarity – a behavioural change from staying in known migration and rare bird localities, such as Fair Isle, for a period of time. On top of that, the observatory was competing with a rapid growth in specialist birdwatching companies. Many birdwatchers who previously may have come to Fair Isle now opted for an exotic holiday abroad.

In an early attempt to counter this, the observatory tried to widen its appeal by offering environmental weeks in 1983 and 1984. These entailed looking at other aspects of Fair Isle's wildlife than just birds, and were led by naturalists from the Scottish mainland who had close connections with Fair Isle. Though the participants clearly enjoyed it, it was hard to market against similar courses being offered by Field Study Centres, etc. in easily accessible locations. It was not cost effective for the observatory, and was abandoned as an idea.

In 1989 the observatory accommodation was upgraded, and extended to cater for 37 guests. With increased size and running costs it became all the more imperative to maximise numbers of staying guests. Attracting extra birdwatchers met with the same problems as before -

increased opportunities elsewhere and competition from specialist holidays. Only in September, when extremely rare birds for Europe are close to guaranteed on the isle, could the observatory be confident of filling its accommodation places. The bird observatory has always opened its doors to visitors irrespective of their interests and reason for visiting Fair Isle. In the summer months, birdwatchers share the observatory with walkers, island lovers, seekers of tranquility and wild places and those appreciative of the traditions and culture which make Fair Isle so distinctive.



This culture has always been accessible, marked by the friendly and open nature of the islanders. For many years, island folk have welcomed visitors to see and participate in their day to day activities. It was this link with the island community which was absent from the previous attempt at more inclusive holidays piloted in the 1980s. Here was a product which most other activity-type holidays could not match – the local touch.

The NPP project could not have come at a better time. Here was the opportunity to develop a unique brand of holiday which made use of the expertise and facilities of a long-established activity outlet, the bird observatory, while at the same time drawing more formally on the skills and values of the isle.

The activity holidays theme has brought a number of benefits. It allows the observatory to attract more people outside the main birdwatcher periods, it brings added income to the isle and spreads it among a range of people participating in the initiative. Also, by formalising the process, it overcomes the problem of unplanned interruption to individuals' work programmes. As life and demands on time get busier, it has become increasingly difficult for craftsmen and women to down tools on a frequent basis to cater for ad hoc visits. Islanders continue to be welcoming and happy to demonstrate their work, but it is far less disruptive to steer visitors into one allocated time rather than constant individual visits by a stream of people.

Fortunately, the isle boasts not only a broad range of skills but people with the ability to explain and interpret Fair Isle's fascinating culture and environment. This gives a very special extra dimension, for the information comes from those who are best placed to interpret because they have the insight of local knowledge.

An unexpected spin-off from the activity holidays initiative has been the interest of wildlife groups. They have

- 1) opted for participating in the initiative;
- 2) created additional holidays along the same lines;
- 3) and acted as "agents" for sending additional tourists out with the normal groups.

They have been quick to recognise the unique brand of holiday that the local participation element offers and have been keen to develop the activity holidays theme themselves. This has a number of benefits to the isle:

1. it makes accessible the professional expertise and marketing skills of the wildlife holidays sector;

2. it boosts and increases the promotions element of the initiative, at no extra cost to the project;
3. the wildlife tour companies act as “agents” in matters such as organisation, travel arrangements and attracting additional tourists to the isle.

Their enthusiasm for this new development in speciality holidays ensures that the activity holidays scheme will continue beyond the life of this project and bring further long-term benefits to the isle.

## **Steigen Local Museum – a museum with prospects.**

### **Eva Bakkeslett**

The Local museum in Steigen is a collection of buildings and objects brought together by local enthusiasts around 20 years ago. The location is fabulous with its view of the fjord and situated only a short walk from the old rectory. The museum is only open for a couple of months during the summer, when there is a cafe being run on the premises as well. The museum partly generates its own income, but is mainly run by the council. In the last few years the number of visitors has gone down and a strategy for the future is forcing itself to the surface.



Future goals:

- To generate more visitors.
- To present the museum in new ways to local people as well as for the growing tourist-market.
- To be able to generate more income for the museum and possibly create a full time job associated with the museum.

### **Plans to reach the goal:**

- Make the museum more attractive to come and visit for schoolchildren and nurseries.
- Make space for touring exhibitions and events that will draw new people.
- Use the museum as a venue for courses and demonstrations of old craft techniques.
- Create a community garden with herbs and traditional plants associated with the rectory-garden.
- Use the museum as a base for information of other tours and attractions in the area.
- Presentation and publicity as a result of the above.

### **Possible effects:**

- Involve the community to create a meeting-place for different generations
- Transfer of knowledge between the generations.
- More knowledge about edible plants and wild herbs in the area, and thus a potential growing interest in commercial herb growing.
- Generate general increase in tourism in the area – by using the garden as an attraction.
- Bigger financial stability for the museum and the possibility of creating one or two new jobs in the region as a direct result of the garden

## LOCAL CRAFTS



In the premises of the local museum there were also opportunities to view and purchase silverware by the local jeweller, Sabine Seifert, who moved to the region and established herself as a silversmith 3 years ago. The local felted wool expert, Kirsten Kristensen, was also there with her collection of felted wool-objects, from cycle-seat-covers to hats.



## “Steigenkysten”

–presentation of the early days of a green tourist business.

### Sigvart Bjerkenes



Sigvart made us all remove our shoes before we entered the beach on Brennviksand, his homestead and a natural choice as the venue for his talk. “You cannot feel the place properly with shoes on!” he said, and he was right. The warm sand between our toes, surrounded by a backdrop of spectacular mountains and a bonfire where Sigvart made coffee for all of us made us all convinced that this should be experienced by as many as possible.

It is the first season of this project that

Sigvart has been working on for two years. The main concept is to offer facilities for courses and meetings for bigger companies to be combined with tours in the mountains and surrounding area, canoeing, fishing, local culture and local food and nature therapy (massage etc.) in Steigen. Sigvart has involved several other local enterprises in his business – guesthouses, a fisherman and a natural therapist. This will have positive effects on these businesses as well as offering a variety of opportunities to the potential customers.

“Steigenkysten” is a concept based on experiences in nature by people who do not necessarily spend much time there on a daily basis. He emphasises the importance of the environment – to be conscious of not having a negative impact by introducing tourists into these fragile areas. He is very clear about letting environmental awareness become a part of his tours – by

teaching the guests to be aware and not leave any traces, and by making use of transport etc. with as little negative impact as possible, use local food where it is available

Another clever aspect of this idea is to make use of a time of year when it is difficult to market Northern Norway to other tourists because of the cold, the dark and the snow.

Sigvart Bjerkenes is not attracting mass-tourism with his concept, but designing his tours and concept to be attractive to a smaller audience who are willing to pay a bit more for receiving “off the beaten track” experiences of nature and culture in a beautiful and unspoilt natural world.



## Løvøya

– a journey on a famous “Nordlandsboat” to visit a very sustainable tourist-venture on a remote island.



On an island in the Steigen archipelago lies Løvøya. Only one couple inhabits the island, and you have to get there by boat.

Ingri and Knut Rindahl are running a farm on old principles and have together restored the old merchant’s house from the seventeenth century, in close co-operation with the County Council conservation department.

Most of the house is restored back to its original state, and a flat is rented out to guests. They make their own, delicious

food, from local produce where it is possible, and have a “green” profile in all aspects of their business. They also cater for bigger audiences, and have catered for groups up to 50 people. It is a truly beautiful place with endless potential. The problem is also its beauty – the remoteness. Another problem to overcome is the health authority's restrictions on local food production. They are legally not allowed to slaughter their own sheep for use in their catering. The sheep have to be transported to the nearest abattoir across the fjord in Lofoten or Bodø – an expensive process that

leads to lower weight of the animals and lesser quality of the meat. Knut and Ingrid also keep “wild sheep” – an old breed with tastier meat but lower fat and weight than ordinary breeds. This would be a good selling-point and a subsidiary income for them if they were allowed to slaughter and sell this meat from their home.

## Conclusions:

The main focus of the NPP-program is to demonstrate possibilities for sustainable development in remote areas - areas sharing many difficulties, challenges and possibilities. Abundant natural and cultural resources give many of these communities a good chance to create new businesses, job opportunities and to bring a new optimism to their community.

During the workshop we have seen several good examples of Green Tourism in Steigen as well as other parts of Norway, Sweden and Fair Isle. We have seen that Green Tourism can be interpreted in several ways, but that the main definition has keywords as: sustainability in all aspects of the business, non-damaging to the natural environment, and aiming at using a local profile wherever possible – making use of local business and avoid long distance transport when necessary.

Tourism is becoming an important income in the peripheral areas that cannot be ignored. Many good examples have been demonstrated of how remote rural communities take advantage of their local specialities and sell them as “packages” to an increasing number of tourists who are looking for the genuine experience of a life closer to nature and in touch with their cultural roots.

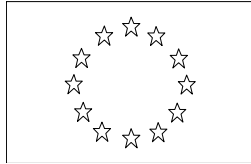
It is important to address the issue of management locally, and to assess what kind of tourism that we want in these remote and fragile areas of natural beauty.

Small tourist businesses based in remote areas are often small and fragile. A network would be of **great importance** for these to share experiences, information, customers and ideas across the borders. Common criteria for these businesses will also help to give them a profile that could help marketing and funding.

Green tourism is a topic that all the SafeinHerit partners are focusing on, and during the Steigen workshop it became clear that the SafeinHerit network will plan for a new Interreg IIIb/NPP project application next year. New partners will then be sought in the extended NPP region to co-operate in a “Green Tourism Network” where the potential of local green tourism initiatives will be explored even further.



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Dunrossness Community Council



Steigen Kommune



Nord-Trøndelag Fylkeskommune



Lierne Kommune

Williamson Bequest



National Trust of Scotland



Scottish Natural Heritage



Shetland Islands Council



Shetland ENTERPRISE  
Shetland Enterprise

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- The people in the village of Bø for sharing their community hall with us on Midsummer Solstice.
  - Sigurd, Leopold and Ivar for contributing with photographs.
- The weathergods – for giving us continuous sunshine 24 hours a day during the entire week!!!



# WORKSHOP III: GREEN TOURISM

Engeløya, Steigen, Norway  
21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2001

## Thursday 21<sup>th</sup> June

**Arrival for SafeInHerit Partners**

**Programme for SafeinHerit partners**

**Venue:** Modtaget, Brunnes

Welcome meal, information about the workshop and the facilities.

## Friday 22<sup>th</sup> June

**Programme for SafeinHerit partners**

**Venue:** Modtaget, Brunnes

Partner programme

## Saturday 23<sup>th</sup> June

This is midsummer solstice in Norway – and is celebrated with a big bonfire by the beach in the evening. Participants of the workshop are welcome to come along to this celebration. Musical instruments are very much appreciated!

## **GREEN TOURISM – OPEN WORKSHOP**

**Workshop venue:** Most of the day – Ungdomshuset på Bø (Bø community hall)  
Some of the day: Batterie Dietl, Bø

- 9 AM: Welcome and opening of the workshop  
Arne Marhaug – Mayor of Steigen
- 0920 - 1020: Torill Bakken, Alta: Sustainable Tourism in Northern Norway - planning, or practical work in each business?"
- 1020 - 1030: Short Break
- 1030 - 1115: Turid Haugen from North-Trøndelag: Green Tourism in the Nordic Green Belt: examples of local solutions in Trøndelag and Jämtland, Sweden.
- 1115 - 1145: Green Tourism Net – a presentation by  
Leopold Sjöström, Hélèn Marlot and Hélène Au Duong, Sorsele, Sweden
- 1200 -1315 Lunch: Traditional Sour cream (Rømmegrøt) porridge served in  
“Ungdomshuset i Bø” together with the locals.
- 1315 -1330: Batterie Dietl: Short presentation of the transformation of history from a  
German battery to a tourist venture. – Anne Grethe Bjørlo
- 1330 -1400 Vestfjorderuta – a cycling route through Steigen to Lofoten

How to turn the periphery from disadvantage to advantage?  
– Anne Grethe Bjørlo

- 1400 - 1430 Coffee in Batterie Dietl and transport back to Ungdomshuset i Bø
- 1445 - 1515 Marianne Nilsen: Grønn omsorg – Green Care – experiences from several years of “Green care” on her farm in South Nordland
- 1515 - 1545 Green Tourism in Fair Isle by Nick Riddiford and Anne Sinclair
- 1545 - 1615 Summary of the day – by Sigurd Kristiansen, SafeInHerit partnership, North-Trøndelag

**Evening:**

“Seafood-specialities” (havrettsbord) at Modtaget 1930

Traditional midsummer solstice bonfire and entertainment under the midnight sun!

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June**

- 0930 - 1000 Steigen Bygdetun – A local museum with prospects- Eva Bakkeslett
- 1000 - 1100 Tour of the local museum and herbgarden. Possibility to buy local jewellery and knitwear.
- 1100 Departure to Brennviksand by car or minibus. (45mins. Drive)
- 1200 -1330: Lunch in “The Barn” – Brennviksand
- 1330-1500 Sigvart Bjerkenes presents his Green tourism-project “ Steigenkysten”
- 1500 - 1520 Coffee break
- 1520 -1630 Summary of the workshop and future strategies  
Return to Engeløya by car
- 1900 - Evening meal with local specialities at Modtaget

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June**

Partners meeting – Modtaget and Løvvøya

Boat trip with *Ægir* – an old Nordlandsjekte (local sailboat similar to Viking-ships)- to

**Løvvøya** - A spectacular island with historical roots. ([www.steigen-turistservice.no/løvvøy](http://www.steigen-turistservice.no/løvvøy))

Lunch with local produce from the farm.

Summary of workshop and project.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> June**

Departure