

Midlothian Council set to look for more twinning towns for county

A hunt for new communities to twin with Midlothian towns is set to be launched in a bid to boost trade and tourism.

A report to go before councillors next week says that while the county is twinned with two places in mainland Europe there are only four towns with a similar relationship.

And they will be asked to support plans to seek new connections abroad as the 'friendship agreement' involved is hailed for promoting peace and cultural exchanges.

Midlothian is twinned with Heinsberg, Germany, and Komárom-Esztergom, Hungary.

In addition Bonnyrigg and Lasswade is linked to Saint-Cyr-l'École, France, while Dalkeith and French town Jarnac are linked and Danderhall has a connection with Angres in France. Penicuik is twinned with L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, France.

A report to next week's council meeting says the aim of twinning is to "encourage the coalition of towns, cities, districts or regions".

It says: "Twinning links are legal or social agreements between two cities, towns or villages, to boost trade and tourism, promote peace and cultural exchange.

“A town twinning link is a friendship agreement involving co-operation between two communities in different countries, endorsed by both local authorities. The twinned communities organise projects and activities around a range of issues.”

The report seeks councillor nominations to take positions on the county’s two twinning associations in Penicuik and Dalkeith.

But it also asks for the green light to seek out new liaisons for more communities.

It says: “Further to the established twinning links that Midlothian and its towns have, as Midlothian continues to grow, it is deemed important to consider further twinning opportunities with different countries.

“Council is asked to instruct the executive director place to progress options for further twinning of Midlothian’s towns to promote trade, tourism and culture for Midlothian.”

The report will be considered at a meeting of councillors next week.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter