

Eisteddfod yr Urdd

SIR CONWY

26 – 31 Mai 2008

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Datganiad i'r Wasg / Press Release



26 May 2008

Towards a Sustainable Eisteddfod

Today, a report on the sustainability of Urdd Gobaith Cymru's Eisteddfod is published.

Synnwyr Busnes - Business Sense (SBBS), a specialist business support service, based at University of Wales Bangor, issued the report. The service aims to assist companies to understand and fulfill the benefits associated with thinking and acting in a sustainable way.

Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense considered 13 elements of sustainability, including transport, the use and efficiency of power, managing waste, water, effluent, land and building management, biodiversity, environment management, risk assessment, economic, business, personnel and workplace development. The report states that during last year the Urdd's performance has improved in nine of these elements.

Furthermore, it states that the Eisteddfod is making a great contribution to Welsh culture, to the Welsh language's prosperity and brings activity to the region that hosts the event. The Urdd is prepared to work in partnership and shares good working practices with other bodies. It notes that it is highly unlikely that Wales as a whole is aware of the details of all the social activities surrounding the Eisteddfod, nor would it be aware of its full value.

In addition, through its unique contribution to Welsh culture, and the Urdd's more recent efforts to emphasise the seriousness of issues such as climate change, the Eisteddfod makes a positive impact to develop Wales' sustainability. It is important that the Urdd continues to integrate its vision into its three pronged approach to sustainability – community, environment and economy, and that it uses this as a marketing tool. The result of the research states that management has a clear and increasing understanding of sustainability, and action has been taken on the majority of the relevant issues discussed during the evaluation.

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It was noted that the Urdd Eisteddfod needed to look in more detail at subjects such as energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. The emissions produced from burning diesel fuel in generators on the site, is one of the Eisteddfod's main negative environmental effects. The Eisteddfod should form an energy policy and set firm targets in place to reduce, or at least stabilise consumption and carbon dioxide omissions. This means educating, managing expectations and working jointly with stallholders on the site.

The report recommends action for the future. The recommendations include looking at forming a fair trade policy, being aware of developments in green energy, ensuring that the organisation purchases equipment that has the least negative impact on the environment, and encouraging customers to use less energy.

Efa Gruffudd Jones, Urdd Gobaith Cymru's Chief Executive said: "We are grateful to Synnwyr Busnes-Business Sense for carrying out this assessment on our behalf. Ensuring that the Urdd develops its sustainability for the future is key our work. We will act on the recommendations as we prepare for future Eisteddfodau.

"I was pleased to see that the Eisteddfod received high marks on many of the performance indicators, but we also understand we must make a concentrated effort to ensure any future assessments show all targets are met. This is a great challenge for a travelling event such as Eisteddfod yr Urdd, but we look forward to facing that challenge with confidence. Taking action sensitively to safeguard the environment and its sustainability is imperative to our members, as we are securing their future."

Ieuan Wyn Jones, Wales' Deputy First Minister said: "Developing sustainability and the environment is becoming more important to people across Wales, especially to the younger generation. It's great to see the Urdd, one of the main Welsh organisations for young people, thinking of these issues and taking positive steps to implement them."

Gruffudd Edwards, Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense said:

"Concentrating solely on environmental issues is negative. Obviously from this report, the Urdd's contribution to sustainability in the wider sense is huge. Obviously, there is room for improvement regarding transport and energy, but this provides a challenge to the whole of society, not only to the Urdd."

End

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EISTEDDFOD YR URDD

The Urdd National Eisteddfod is the largest youth festival in Europe.

40,000 young people will be competing in various competitions including recitation, choral singing, dance, arts and craft, composition and poetry.

The Eisteddfod attracts over 100,000 visitors, 15,000 competitors and almost a million television viewers.

Welsh stars such as Bryn Terfel, Ioan Gruffudd, Cerys Matthews, Aled Jones, Shân Cothi and Daniel Evans all gained valuable performing experience on the Urdd stage.

The Eisteddfod offers wall to wall competitions between 11.00 - 5.00 and evening competitions on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The Eisteddfod will be held at Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff in 2009 and in Ceredigion in 2010.

