

Appendix B: Portsmouth's Twinning, Sister and Friendship City Relationships

Background

Historically PCC has supported and maintained a number of relationships with other cities throughout the world as part of a twinning, sister and friendship city process.

Whilst the rationale for the establishment of the relationships between cities has varied in recent years the key elements of our oldest link with the German city of Duisburg originated out of the desire by the UK Government to foster improved relationships between the UK and Germany in the post Second World War period.

The range of cities Portsmouth has subsequently connected with has then varied in their rationale and the benefit to the city. Some can be clearly understood, such as the relationship with Caen City Council being forged at the time of the establishment of the International Port however others, such as the Portsmouth compact with the North American Portsmouth's is less clear.

Our understanding of the definitions of the three different relationships is as follows:

Twin Cities - historically these had received financial support to forward and develop the links. This arrangement ended in 2013

Sister Cities - links between cities where there was something in common e.g. name of the city

Friendship Cities - links where were supported by members of the community and were primarily around exchanges between families and/or community groups.

Our understanding however is that the reciprocal cities do not have such distinctions between the relationship they have with Portsmouth and in most instances the status they afford our relationship is that of a twin city.

Summary of current Portsmouth Relationships & Activities

Duisburg, Germany - Twin City Established 1950

The oldest of the twin city links there has been an active series of events and activities shared with Duisburg throughout the years of the relationship. Most recently this has included elements such as hosting an exhibition about Conan Doyle, Duisburg beers featured at our Oktoberfest and opportunities for Duisburg tourism films to be shown on the Big Screen. There have been regular visits to Duisburg by Mayor Soren Links and likewise by our Mayor to Duisburg. The number of youth visits has diminished which reflects the significant reduction in the number of schools offering German as a second language however PCC has continued to support regular intern placements.

Caen, France - Twin City Established 1987

This link was established at the time the International Ferry Port was established as a way of supporting both cities to make the port a success. As they physically closest link there has been a considerable amount of activity occurring between the

two cities over the 30 years of the link especially following two successful applications for European Community Interreg funding. This funding supported two extensive schools projects which, at their height were working with over 30 Portsmouth and 30 Caen schools. In more recent years changes in the emphasis of the relationship has pushed more work towards economic development e.g. support for several Portsmouth small businesses to attend some of the key Caen markets, sharing knowledge over the development of the Portsmouth Hotwalls offer.

The Duisburg and Caen relationships are also linked to an external European Committee which merged the previously separate individual city committees in order to foster relationships between the cities and their equivalent residents groups in both Duisburg and Caen.

Haifa, Israel - Sister City Established in 1963

This relationship was set up at the invitation of the city of Haifa who realised that many Israeli naval personnel were on courses at the time in the RN dockyard and other military establishments around the immediate area.

There is an active Haifa Committee who support a range of small initiatives between the two cities. Elements of this have been the establishment of a link between Highbury College Portsmouth and Tiltan College Haifa as well as a virtual Conan Doyle exhibition.

Whilst active this is a complex link due to the high security demands required to support activities occurring in the city.

Maizuru, Japan - Sister City Established in 1997

This link was initiated to support an increase in Japanese tourism and economic development between two cities with a shared historical military links. Despite the challenges of the distance between cities there has been an increasing amount of activity over the last 22 years especially following successful funding bids to support programme with young people.

Maizuru have funded approximately 25 young people from their city to attend Portsmouth each year since the beginning of the link. Once here they have taken part in a range of English language teaching and tourism activities. In 2016 a link was established with Mayfield school and this has gone onto secure funding so enabling a group of young people to visit Maizuru in 2018 and again we hope in 2020.

Additionally there have been a number of specific business initiatives to support and assist SMEs in Portsmouth interested in expanding into the Japanese market as well as a range of Parks & gardens initiatives including the Portsmouth Japanese Garden in Southsea and a range of new cherry trees which were planted to mark the 20th anniversary of the link in Cosham.

Sydney, Australia - Sister City Established in 1984

Developed as a direct result of the historical links between the two cities this has been one of the quietest of the sister city links due in the main to the extreme distance and challenges of exchanges.

The Portsmouth branch of the Britain Australia Society is active and regularly holds activities to mark the historical relationship between the two cities. Examples of this include marking elements in regards to the departure of the First Fleet ships and also a forthcoming ceremony to put a plaque on the building where Sir Henry Ayres lived in Portsmouth (this will be taking place in November 2019).

Portsmouth Atlantic Compact - Established 2013 consisting of

- **Portsmouth Virginia - Sister City Established 1982**
- **Portsmouth, New Hampshire - Friendship Link Established**
- **Portsmouth, Rhode Island - Friendship Link Established**

This compact was established by the four Portsmouth's with the aim of promoting cultural and educational activities across the similar named town and cities. The links have had little activity although they were all visited by our Lord Mayor in 2013 when the compact was established and again by our Lord Mayor in 2018 as part of a wider visit during his Mayoral year.

Any visits have been self-funded and we do not anticipate that this would change in any way. Portsmouth Rhode Island are the most active of the compact partners and annually have sent a representative of the Town Council over to the annual Mayor Making ceremony here.

Lakewood, Colorado - Friendship Link Established 1982

Originally started to support a range of different exchange visits initially there was activity between the two cities every other year. However this has very much fallen into abeyance we believe primarily as the originally strong community committee in Lakewood who wanted to pursue the link is no longer active.

Zhuhai, China - Friendship City Established 2014

The Friendship City agreement was set up in March 2014. Since then there have been various visits by delegations to China and Portsmouth to establish links. These have mainly been to establish some links and projects focussing on economic growth. Various businesses have been working with Zhuhai including Portsmouth Football Club. Zhuhai are keen to establish links in areas such as electronics, computer software, biotechnology and pharmacy. Portsmouth has sent key officers to attend various conferences in China including the International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition and the China Outbound conference which both focus on establishing business investment opportunities.

Meetings have been held with the University of Portsmouth to establish credit programmes or summer school programmes, frequent talks and visits are helping to realise these plans. In addition an Education Fair will take place in Zhuhai later in 2019 showcasing education establishments in Portsmouth including the University of Portsmouth, ICP, Portsmouth Grammar School, St John's College and Portsmouth College with a view to encouraging Chinese students to study in the city.

Delegations have been shown Portsmouth's key tourist destinations and meetings have taken place with our Tourism Manager with a view to establishing some joint marketing and promotion.

Zhaijiang, China - Sister City Established 2018

Zhanjiang has the first Chinese international port which is one of the biggest globally, they are also home to the Chinese Navy. Delegation visits to both Portsmouth and Zhanjiang have focussed on joint projects between the Ports and conversations continue.

The University of Portsmouth has established links with a University in Zhanjiang with the various projects being agreed including mutual teacher training, short-term student exchanges, and 3+1 study abroad programs.

Portsmouth was offered a free stand at Zhanjiang's Expo event to promote the city to residents and businesses in Zhanjiang.

Lord Mayor will visit Zhanjiang in October with a reciprocal visit planned to take place in December 2019 both visits with the purpose of maintaining existing links and establishing new ideas for joint working.

Sylhet, Bangladeshi - Sister City Established 2019

This newly established link has been established with an economic development focus at its heart. The Leader of the Council is due to have his first visit to the city in November 2019. The visit will focus on establishing economic development and educational links and will include meetings with the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Education Ministry and Commerce Ministry, the Port Authority and Navy as well as the signing of the Sister City Agreement. The anticipated outcomes of the visit are:

- Successful signing of the Twin City Agreement
- Greater understanding of how education plays an important part in regional development and regeneration of Bangladesh.
- Enabling the delegation to meet the right people in governance & enterprise implementation of the developed of both cities and nation.
- Review; create new and existing relationships with the region.
- Have the opportunity to meet high level officials in Bangladesh.
- Have the opportunity to meet business decision maker in Bangladesh.
- Opportunity of exposing the potential and future knowledge transfer.

The work is supported by an economic development group, the Portsmouth Bangladeshi Business Association (PBBA) where local businesses including Portsmouth International Port and Portico are supporting the development of the link.

The University of Portsmouth see great potential for investing in the growth of Bangladeshi market and have established the International College Portsmouth (ICP) in Bangladesh enabling a pathway for students to get a University of Portsmouth degree.

Other Historical Links

Toulon, France

A twinning link was established by Portsmouth with Toulon in the south of France in 1970 reflecting that both cities were major naval bases and thriving ports. However the administration of the city of Toulon changed to National Front and a resolution was passed to suspend contact at both Member and officer level.

In 2001 the then Leader of the Council wrote to the Mayor of Toulon, after it changed to a Conservative administration, suggesting a rejuvenation of the link however this was not taken up. A subsequent invitation to the Mayor of Toulon to the Trafalgar Dinner in 2005 was declined and no further communication has taken place between the two cities.

Zha Lai Te Qi, Inner Mongolia

This link was established in 2004 with the aims of exchanging arts and culture and increasing the numbers of students attending Portsmouth University. This link has been overshadowed by the increasing activity with the two more recently established links with Chinese cities and the officer view is that this has fallen into abeyance.