

## Promoting and protecting

### Acting as a Catalyst

The Prince of Wales has had, over some decades, a perhaps unrivalled opportunity to meet people and to hear their aspirations and concerns as he undertakes 'awaydays' and other engagements and visits around the country. His Royal Highness tries to use his access to people from all walks of life to ensure that views and concerns which might not otherwise be heard receive some exposure and support.

The Prince can act as a catalyst, with often unseen effect, by raising issues in correspondence or at private meetings, seminars and events with a wide range of influential individuals and groups, as well as through speeches and, articles, and television and radio contributions.

The Prince also tries to do what he can more generally, to promote and protect national values, traditions and excellence – whether it be encouraging tolerance and respect for other faiths and ethnic groups, supporting traditional ways of life in rural communities, or recognising those who achieve success on the local, national or international stage.

### Rural Communities

A good example of how The Prince works to safeguard what he believes is best about Britain is his long-standing support for rural communities. As a farmer himself, His Royal Highness cares deeply about the British countryside and the welfare of those who live and work in it. Maintaining a healthy agricultural sector is vital to the country, not just because the landscape relies on the accumulated knowledge of farming communities for its continued stewardship, but also because the social fabric of the countryside depends on a strong farming base.

As part of The Prince's determination to support British farmers, particularly smaller family farms, he is doing all that he can to encourage local sourcing, not only by retailers and food-service companies, but also by public bodies such as schools.

As His Royal Highness said in November last year at the launch of Business in the Community's Local Sourcing Guide (a new guide for farmers and small producers to help them to understand the processes involved in working with larger retailers and food-service operators): "We are rapidly losing what is left of our local culture. When we finally wake up and find it is all gone, we cannot just reinvent it or grow it in yet another test tube. It is a living, delicate organism that has to be nurtured because *'agri-culture'* should be exactly that – a subtle blend of a production system with a profoundly important psycho-social component."

## Lynher Dairies

Lynher Dairies Cheese is a successful company that recognises the importance of local sourcing and the support for small businesses provided by Business in the Community. The company is known for making the famous nettle-covered Cornish Yarg cheese. Catherine Mead, explains:

"In our early business planning we rarely considered exactly where our business growth was going to come from. Retail was a broad and all-encompassing sector, as was export. But I can honestly say, I do not think we wrote down the word 'food-service', and if we had, we would not have understood what we meant by it.

"I did not have an accessible guide that looked at the trade options or considered the implications of targeting one market over another, and what we might have to do to meet the needs of that market.

"To have to hand a well-thought-out synopsis of working with the different trade sectors enables the small business to plan and build those market needs into the production process.

"The local sourcing booklet, 'Opening the Door for Small Business', produced by Business in the Community and the grocery industry think tank IGD, is such a guide. It provides the starting point for ensuring that the small producer can take a professional stance, as opposed to that more ad hoc reactive approach that may well constrain growth through the food-service sector."



The Prince with Catherine Mead from Lynher Dairies Cheese (far left) and Joanna Jenner, owner of Barton Pickles (centre), at the launch of the "Opening the Door for Small Business" local sourcing guide.



### Far left.

The Prince of Wales is greeted by members of the public as he walks along the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. He visited some of Scotland's top visitor attractions in a bid to raise the profile of the country's tourism industry.



### Left.

The Prince at the Real Mary King's Close, Edinburgh.

In the same month, he gave a dinner for senior representatives of the food-service sector to encourage them to consider doing more to buy from British farmers, and, where possible, locally. Following this, the Institute for Grocery Distribution and BITC set up a working party to narrow down areas for action, which will report back in the coming year.

More recently, in February, The Prince, as Patron of the Soil Association, met representatives from two schools in North Yorkshire who are working with local organic farmers to provide high-quality, locally-sourced organic food for school meals, giving clear benefits to both farmers and children.

The Prince is also keen to encourage the development of co-operatives in the agricultural sector. During a visit to Lincolnshire, he met members of the Lincolnshire Machinery Ring and Labour Exchange who explained how their co-operative works and, in particular, the difference it makes to the viability of small farms. He also met a group of farmers in Cumbria to discuss their proposals for a co-operative meat-cutting plant.

Just after the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001, His Royal Highness visited Skipton Auction Mart in Yorkshire to talk to farmers who had suffered particularly badly. In February this year he returned to open the new Craven Rural Business and Skills Centre, which provides a one-stop shop for the local rural community: agricultural merchants, a tractor franchise, a butchery and cutting plant, rural skills training for local young people and, of course, the auction mart. His Royal Highness was deeply encouraged to see the renewed sense of optimism and confidence amongst these rural and agricultural businesses.

Looking forward, The Prince is determined to continue doing all he can to help rural communities, and in the coming year his agenda will include issues such as helping to develop a viable future for market towns, dismantling the barriers which prevent young people from entering agriculture, and encouraging local sourcing and greater co-operation among farmers.



**Left.**  
The Prince of Wales, wearing a bright orange Ramal headscarf at the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara Sikh Temple, in Southall.



## The Church of England and Ethnic Minorities

The Prince of Wales has regular contact with the Church of England, including meetings with the Archbishop of Canterbury and other bishops. In addition to his attendances at Sunday services, he makes numerous visits to cathedrals and churches around the country throughout the year.

Moreover, through his patronage, The Prince supports a number of organisations that aim to preserve these fine buildings. Among others, The Prince is Patron of The Friends of Brecon Cathedral, The Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust, The Lincolnshire Old Churches Trust and Music in Country Churches.

Tolerance of others is often regarded as a central feature of the British character, and His Royal Highness has long had an interest in trying, by building bridges in different ways, to promote better understanding within the UK and elsewhere of the world's different faiths, and between ethnic minorities and wider society.

Celebrating rather than simply tolerating differences, understanding the importance of what matters most to different peoples, and finding and nurturing the cultural and spiritual roots of all groups in our society: these have long been priorities for The Prince, both in his private interests and his public work.

Several of the organisations which he has established – for example, The Prince's Trust and The School for Traditional Arts – have made the understanding and intergration of ethnic minorities a key part of their work. Over the year, His Royal Highness engaged with representatives of all the world's major faiths, and events he attended with UK ethnic minorities ranged from a huge Sikh celebration in Southall to an Eid event with the Muslim College, and from a dinner for World Jewish Relief to the Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey.

## Tourism

Promoting tourism in Britain is another feature of The Prince's working life. When he travels round the country, highlighting attractions for domestic and overseas visitors is a regular part of his work. For example, last year His Royal Highness supported British Tourism Day along with other members of the Royal Family. As part of his contribution, The Prince hosted a dinner and lunchtime reception at Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh.

The event was not just for those who run the industry but also those who are in the frontline – the hotel and guesthouse keepers, the operators of the country's varied attractions, and the voluntary staff who play such an important role. As part of the Tourism Day, His Royal Highness also toured Linlithgow Palace in West Lothian, and visited the House for an Art Lover in Glasgow as well as some of the key attractions on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.

### Left.

The Prince is pictured at Southwark Cathedral with the Dean, the Very Reverend Colin Slee.



### Left.

The Prince watching butchers in action at the Skipton Auction Mart, Yorkshire.