

## **Cities of the Isles**

The cities of Dublin and Liverpool twinned early in 1997, mainly because of the historical links existing between the two cities and both were facing the challenges of urban renewal. Dublin has also had a long outstanding relationship with Belfast and the logical follow on to the twinning with Liverpool was for the three cities to form the Irish Sea Partnership with a view to exploring how the existing links could be strengthened and could build on the common experiences. To complete the links Glasgow joined the Irish Sea Partnership in 1998.

As a result of the Belfast agreement, it was decided that the Council of the Isles would be established by both your Government and the Irish Government. In 1999, after the Local Elections it was considered that the Council of the Isles should be mirrored at Local Government level, and both Edinburgh and Cardiff were invited to join the alliance and the name was changed to the *Cities of the Isles*.

The first full meeting of the *Cities of the Isles* was held in Liverpool in November 2000. A formal constitution was approved of and it was agreed that an annual conference would be held in one of the cities each year to discuss a previously agreed topic that would bring the cities together. This year's summit of the Cities of the Isles network was held in Belfast on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010.