

The importance of a Global Geopark in a rural area in Denmark

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Geopark Odsherred has applied for acceptance into the EGN and GGN and hopes to be accepted into the prestigious network in 2014. For the past six years, Odsherred Municipality has been a driving force in gathering and co-ordinating the county's key players within tourism, business, culture, and the local communities. Throughout this process, the focus has been on results, responsibilities and relationships. It has been about putting political will behind the visions, about aligning the many varying agendas, and about capitalizing on diversity as much as possible.

A Danish municipality is responsible for a wide variety of public services: schools, daycares, health services, environmental protection, harbors, sporting facilities, roads, fire and rescue, city/county planning, unemployment, nursing homes and many more. The responsibilities include both carrying out the actual work, as well as overseeing it at the strategic level, and are financed through independent tax collection. And there is enough to use the money on, since Odsherred is not among the richest of Denmark's counties. Yet, in its way, it is an advantage for a project like Geopark Odsherred that the administration is so local, covering, as it does, such a broad spectrum.

The geopark has turned out to be a gathering point for thousands of initiatives and projects within four main themes: Through its unique ice age landscape, Odsherred focuses on our rich cultural history, our art history and artistic ambitions and our local produce and products.

Sustainability, environmental protection, job creation, education, dissemination, growth, and, not to forget, identity, have become the common denominator for the area's collective development.

Geopark Odsherred is looking forward to putting in even more energy from both the public and private sectors and the NGO-level into the welfare and growth of Geopark Odsherred and the international geopark network.

Presented in Theme 4.