



### **Brian McGuire, Paisley on the web - Owner and Founder**

By volunteering, I wanted to improve the way Paisley was perceived in the media, I started in 1998 way back when the internet was just new and wasn't really a big thing to the public, it was 14k modems and really expensive to just get online and browse, plus the content was all in its early days, no Google.

Anyways I decided to learn how to build a Paisley website, no idea of what a domain name was and lots of other things, but I am a fast learner and aimed it mostly at x-pats who had left Paisley and were craving photos of the town as it was, and what it looked like in old photos..

Hence the start of [www.paisley.org.uk](http://www.paisley.org.uk) (it had a different domain .org but the business I bought it through went out of business during the .com bang early days)

I used to get 10 to 100 people a day and probably most of them were me, but over the years I have built up a solid base of people who come to the website and all my social media sites (there is not one we are not on) and we get 30 to 40,000 visitors per day now just on the website, one post on our Facebook Page if its video or a nice image will get up to 20,000 views within an hour so we can influence what people think of the town, we post approx 5-10 blogs (news updates per day) and we keep our topic purely on the Positive side of the town, there was already too much bad press out there, we have done loads with our #PositivePaisley campaign over the years and I am convinced we have changed attitudes and perceptions.

People used to complain that nothing ever happened in Paisley as there never used to be a central place where you could find what was on, now you can see months ahead and Paisley is in reality thriving, we promote business, people, heritage, history and lots more on the site.

We have never been properly funded from the council, but for a camera in 2009 and once we won the Bank of Scotland local heroes where we managed to get laptops and some hardware for our base of volunteers.

I have a good few volunteers but one woman who has been with me from the very start, so it shows just how much we have invested our time and passion into the website and into the town. We have loved every moment of it and we will be around for a lot longer than most organisations will be as we are sort of sustainable in our format and its down to being one thing, Positive about Paisley.

Now, of course, we don't just have one website, we have quite a few now and have social pages for every housing scheme in Paisley and every town/village in Renfrewshire. We have a huge Glasgow website which started last year, it's still in its infancy and will develop over the years as our volunteers have done since our conception.

By volunteering, people feel valuable and gain skills they only ever thought about but didn't realise they had the potential to do anything they put their mind to, plus the confidence people get from what we do is so rewarding and valuable to them and to us not to mention to the town. It is a role that is fluid and develops at the same pace the volunteer wants to develop.

As an encouragement to volunteering, just get in touch with an organisation that you are passionate about, with us it's Paisley and you can develop people skills, photography, web, video etc but with any organisation, the huge benefit to an organisation is someone who is willing to give their time to help others.

You can contact Engage Renfrewshire who will help direct you to volunteering opportunities.