

## **The twinning story of Monterubbiano and Winster.**

In 1986 there was a visit of a delegation from Derbyshire to Ascoli Piceno as part of a mutual goodwill relationship between the two provinces and the Winster Morris Dancers represented the dance culture of Derbyshire. Most of the activity was in the towns of Ascoli Piceno and San Bernedetto but one evening the dancers set off into the hills and after visiting one or two deserted villages came to Monterubbiano where they were welcomed by the local people and entertained in the piazza. So the idea of a twinning relationship was proposed and sustained particularly by Roy Witham of Winster and Federico Vitali of Monterubbiano.

A first twinning visit took place in 1988 and further visits took place primarily involving the morris dancers and the sbandieratori e musicisti of Monterubbiano but with many other citizens up to and including 1993.

There was then a gap of eight years until the twinning relationship was revived and formally signed in 2001. Since then regular visits have continued to take place but we have broadened the links to involve more and more citizens and activities. In 2005 and 2006 there were exchanges between the children of Winster School and the middle school of Monterubbiano who met each other initially by e-mail and then with their families. In 2009 Winster Wasps football team and their families formed the nucleus of the visitors to Monterubbiano and in coming to Winster this year there will be a return match on Sunday morning 4<sup>th</sup> July.

Whilst our respective visits have tended to centre on our respective festivals La Scio la Pica at Pentecost in Monterubbiano and Winster Wakes at the beginning of July in Winster there are now regular informal visits of families and friends between our two communities. One of our principles is that visitors stay in the homes with the families of their hosts and long term friendships are made and maintained.

It is very much a twinning of the people sharing our culture and our activities and our way of life and is now a permanent feature of our respective communities.