

Beaconsfield Twinning Association

Promoting educational, cultural, sporting and friendship connections with Langres in the Champagne-Ardennes region of France



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

The Fitzwilliams Centre, Beaconsfield

Friday, 22nd November 2014 at 9.45pm

Following an excellent dinner provided by Ann Tennant and a very interesting and informative talk by the Rt Hon Dominic Grieve QC MP, the 2014 Annual General Meeting of the Beaconsfield Twinning Association took place. 38 members and guests of the Twinning Association were present.

Apologies for absence were received from David & Helen Baker, Ann Benstock, Graham Corney, Tony & Sue Ebbutt, Sheila & Peter Gawne, Mike & Mary Hird, Huw & Chris Jones, Harry & Sheila Knox, Dick & Averil Lister, Flora Pedler, Anne & Dieter Shaw, Peter & Sally Willison.

1. Chairman's Welcome & Report

The Chairman's Report had already been sent to all members by email or by post. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, saying that at the end of a busy year this was the time to reflect on what had taken place and what would be coming up in the future. He presented Ann Tennant with a bouquet, thanking her not only for all the catering she had done for the Association during the year, but also for the extra help she had given so generously, such as the loan of catering equipment during the recent visit of the group from Langres. The Secretary then read out the note of thanks received from Sophie Delong, the new Mayor of Langres, following that visit. The Secretary also read out the list of apologies received from those not able to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes from the 2012 AGM and Matters Arising

The 2013 Minutes were proposed by Susan Sheahan and seconded by Alan Walters, thereby approved with no matters arising.

3. Treasurer's Report

The Receipts and Payments for the Year to 30 June 2014 were available in printed form for attendees to see. Marlen Lihou, the Treasurer, gave her report and confirmed that the Receipts and Payments had been examined and approved by Dick Lister. Cash at bank at the end of June 2014 was £3,242.90.

The Treasurer's Report was proposed by Rod Jones and seconded by Juliet Gorton, and thereby approved.

4. Election of Officers

The election of the following positions was unanimously approved by the members present:

Chairman:	Phillip Sheahan	Proposed by Juliet Gorton
Treasurer:	Marlen Lihou	Proposed by Alan Walters
Secretary & Membership Secretary	Susan Jones	Proposed by Phillip Sheahan

5. Nominations for Committee Members

The following committee members were re-elected unanimously by all present:

Annik Heal, Peter Sanders, Susan Sheahan.

6. Appointment of Auditor

The re-appointment of Dick Lister as Auditor was unanimously agreed by all present.

7. Future Events

The 20th anniversary of the twinning of Beaconsfield with Langres will occur during next year. There will be a visit to Langres at some time during 2015 and a visit here in 2016. For 2015 activities, we are planning a musical event at Hall Barn, a film evening, boules parties and the continuation of Café Langres. We will also maintain contact with local schools and encourage links with organisations such as the Women's Institute, sports and other clubs and local businesses. The BTA considers itself a "catalyst" organisation and welcomes suggestions from all members and their friends.

8. AOB

The Chairman thanked Susan Jones for her ongoing initiative with "Brush Up Your French" and for maintaining the website. He also thanked Marlen Lihou for her work as Treasurer and on the Archives.

The Chairman thanked Juliet Gorton for her two years as President, which had given the Association important continuity of Presidency following John Gorton's death, and presented her with a gift.

Juliet then asked to say a few words. She said that although she had been daunted at first by the prospect, she had enjoyed her two years as President of such a friendly and hardworking organisation and that she owed a debt of gratitude to Phillip, the Chairman. She said his report was a treat, full of ideas, and she thanked the committee.

The Chairman then welcomed Alan Walters as the new President, saying that, as one of the founders of the Association and a former Mayor, he brings a wealth of experience of the history and purpose of twinning and will be a great asset in understanding the evolving situation in Langres.

The Chairman also welcomed Graham Corney as our new Vice-President. Graham gave the Association tremendous support during his year as Mayor and would doubtless assist greatly with our initiative to forge stronger links with the local business community. He was unable to attend the AGM and had given his apologies.

Alan Walters then thanked the Chairman for his warm welcome and evoked the memory of the origins of twinning in 1994 with John and Juliet Gorton, Henry and Pat Wilson and Eddie and Chantal Weiss.

The Chairman then paid tribute to Henry Wilson, who died earlier this year, saying that he and Pat, who was present at the meeting, had been at the heart of the twinning relationship and that their contribution was greatly appreciated.

The Secretary then thanked the Chairman for all his initiatives, including the “Flames of Friendship” feature in the centre of the room and the WWII commemorations, the refurbishment of the memorial to the Free French which had created very successful and effective occasions of remembrance, and the re-printing of Robin Pedler’s book, copies of which had been presented by Dominic Grieve to representatives from Beaconsfield Library, Beaconsfield High School and Hotspur School earlier in the evening.

There being no other AOB, the Chairman closed the formal meeting.

Susan Jones, Secretary, 25th November 2014