

WELWYN ANGLO FRENCH TWINNING ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting

on

*Wednesday 19 October 2016 at the Civic Centre, Welwyn
at 6.00 p.m.*

Minutes

Present President - David Nice
 Chairman - Nigel Jeffery
 Secretary - Susan Nice
 Treasurer - Graham Middleton

12 other members

David welcomed members to the meeting.

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from 21 members.

2 Notification of items of Any Other Business

None.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 September 2015

Approved unanimously.

Matters arising None

4 Review of the past year

Nigel thanked members for attending. It had been another successful year with a good mix of events. We had a talk on the Great War in October, followed by a very enjoyable Christmas get together. The quiz in January was successful financially. The Wine Tasting enabled members to participate, as did A Place in the Sun. We had an excellent talk on Paris and the Isle de France in June.

A trickle of new members has joined us and Nigel felt that the free membership scheme could be justified. He also paid tribute to the Conversation Group which also brought in new members.

The Twinning weekend went well and we received a letter of thanks from the Mayor. The Pompiers enjoyed themselves.

In Welwyn Week we participated in the Street Market but not the Fun Day as there were insufficient

volunteers. The Petit Tour in Welwyn was particularly successful and the hamper that was raffled and the Name the Bear competition raised some £150. We also got a list of cyclists for the May trip to Champagne.

The Development Group has achieved its first objective, to establish priorities, and is now on the back burner. There is limited progress with local institutions. An exchange of letters has been set up with St. Mary's school. It had been planned to send football teams to Champagne but these were abandoned by St Mary's School following terrorist attacks in France. We will try now with local clubs.

A number of thanks are due, firstly to the Parish Council for its generous support regarding free hire of the halls, but also to Bill Morris for his help during the Twinning Weekend. Special thanks to St Mary's Church, as we received over £900 raised by last year's cycle ride to Champagne. Thanks too to members who supplied wines for the wine tasting, and who participated in the A Place in the Sun event.

Thanks are due to what we may call the Shadow Committee - to Ruth for her sterling work on the website; to Janice for running the French conversation group; and to Rob and Veronne, not only for the posters but for the Twining weekend programme (finalised with little notice).

With regard to the Twinning weekend, thanks go to John Winchester, for organising the Pompiers' accommodation and arranging the cycle treasure hunt; to Geoff Boardman for sourcing the wines; to Barry Bracken for his photos and to Graham and Marion for their taxi service/sandwich preparation.

Thanks also to all members who turned out for the Street Market and the Petit Tour.

Special thanks are due to the committee members. Graham picked up the Treasurer's reigns from John Winchester very ably. But the greatest thanks are due to Dave Clarke, Vice Chair, who was responsible for communications in particular but who is now taking a break after many years' service. Sue was thanked for her contribution in a male dominated group, and thanks also to David Nice for his contribution as President.

A pleasing achievement was that we won the 2016 inter twinning boules competition, thus regaining the trophy that we held in 2014 (with the help of our secret weapon Frank Withers).

5 Approval of the Accounts for the year to 31 July 2016

Graham explained that the accounts were not finalised and have not been seen by the Independent Examiner, who is away. We can provisionally agree the draft and circulate the final version to everyone present and put it on the website.

Last year was very satisfactory financially. We had budgeted for a deficit because this is the year we entertained the French but income was greater than expected, thanks to the donation from St Mary's Church, and expenditure was less, so that the deficit was only £1.550. We have reserves of just over £7.000 and subs are due. Nigel Bridger queried whether we still needed to ask for subs but Nigel Jeffery explained that they raised a similar amount to two events, and French members pay quite a high sum. Those present agreed we should continue to have an annual subscription.

We spent some £3,900 on the Twinning Weekend close to budget. It was felt that last time we had scrimped too much, and our fund raising has been successful.

We intend to put the money donated by the church into youth links; something necessary to ensure our continued existence.

The accounts were approved unanimously, subject to a positive conclusion from the Independent Examiner.

6 Revised Constitution

Graham explained that we now have an Independent Examiner instead of an Auditor so needed to agree the change in wording

7 Election of Officers and appointment of other Committee Members

The three existing members of the committee were re-elected unopposed.

Barry Bracken was elected as Vice Chairman, proposed by Dave Clarke, seconded by Janice Kaye.

Susie Bassinger was elected as a committee member, proposed by Nigel Jeffery and seconded by Dave Clarke.

8 Election of Honorary Independent Examiner

The re-appointment of Martin Gerty was unanimously agreed.

9 Approval of the level of subscriptions for 2017-18

It was agreed unanimously that the level should remain at £10 for a family and £5 for single members.

10 Future events – information and discussion

We have our first event tonight, a possible Christmas event, and our quiz is on 21 January. We also plan a wine tasting in March and in May there will be another talk by Michael Bunn, this time on the south of France. We will participate in Welwyn week and the Petit Tour.

There was discussion about a Christmas Event and the majority favoured a visit to a pub, maybe on a weekday evening or lunchtime.

Nigel advised that the Twinning Weekend in 2017 is likely to be 19 -21 May. Eurostar timings and prices were advised; the majority favoured returning on the 6 pm train rather than at 4 pm. We will be seeking expressions of interest soon. He described the arrangements being made for the cycling group.

No suggestions for future events were made from the floor except that Jackie Davis thought an informal pub lunch every so often might be appreciated.

10 Any Other Business

There being no Other Business, the meeting closed at 7.20 p m.