



**Thame & District Twinning Association
Annual General Meeting
Friday 7th July 2017**

7.30 at The Gallery, Christchurch, Upper High Street, Thame, OX9 2DN

	Agenda Items	
1	<p>Present: Linda Emery, Sue + Roy Motteram, David Laver, Robert + Bridget Trueman, Owen + Sally Davies, Dudley Wilson, Simon Baynes, Hillary Dollman, Helena Fickling, Simon Baynes, Phyllis Brown</p> <p>Apologies for absence: Susan Kogan, James Green, Jeannette Matelot-Green, Julie Fitzsimons, Liz and Pieter-Paul Barker, John Brown, Caroline Baynes, Philippa Tawn, Stéphanie Prévost, David Jackson, Vic Watson, Norma Laver</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the AGM held on 24th June 2016 - approved Proposed by Owen Davies Seconded by Helena Fickling</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owen asked why the date of the May visit had been changed. The date was requested by the French because of the Presidential elections this year. We can only assume they wanted a weekend off between the elections and coming to Thame. • Owen asked whether the Institut Français had been contacted regarding using their facilities / services No – sorry. It's a very good idea and we must contact them this year. • Unfortunately Lord Williams were unable to find an exchange partner for Owen's friend's granddaughter. However the girl did find somewhere to stay in London. • Despite a teacher from Lord Williams visiting Montesson in September, no exchanges between the schools have been set up as yet. Bridget reiterated her plea for someone at Lord Williams to apply for the grants available from The Alumni Association to current students to enable them to participate in cultural visits to enhance their studies. We must ensure that students and teachers are aware of these grants, although time is now running very short for this year as the deadline for applications is 31st August and the school year finishes very soon. • Scouts and Guides – this appears to have stalled. The scout leaders have a very busy schedule. Linda is going to be helping at the Guides this year so hopefully there will be a better chance of setting up a link here. 	
3	<p>Chair's Report – see separate document (attached) David Laver proposed a vote of thanks to our Chairman, Linda. "Thank you Linda, we couldn't function without you!"</p>	

4	<p>Treasurer's Report - see separate document.</p> <p>We continue to operate within our means, with a small buffering profit, mainly due to people who had to cancel their trip last September and not asking for a refund. At the end of May we had a balance of £291.56, less than last year, but we should bear in mind that we made a large profit at the quiz in 2015/16. A quiz is planned for November.</p>	
5	<p>Election of Officers and their Roles & Responsibilities</p> <p>Current committee members agreed to continue in their current rôles. (see separate document) There was the usual appeal for new committee members and officers!</p>	
6	<p>Fundraising 2017/18</p> <p>We already have a few fundraising events in the diary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, 22nd August David Laver has booked a pitch at the August Thame Market Community Event. He has some books to sell, but the supply needs replenishing. Please let David have any books that you can donate. We also mentioned the possibility of having a small tombola or children's lucky dip on the stall. • Saturday, 2nd September – Cynthia and David Jackson have very kindly offered to host another Cream Tea afternoon for us. This was very successful last year, despite poor weather. We hope that it will be well supported again and we are very grateful to Cynthia and David for putting on this lovely event for us. Bridget offered to make Gluten-free scones. • Friday, 3rd November – Quiz night. The town hall has been booked with Sue Boyle as the quizmaster. We agreed that we would donate some of the profit from the evening to the Stroke Association for which Sue raises funds. We need to advertise this event widely, including using social media (see AOB) Have a Champagne Treasure trail instead of Heads or Tails. • June 2018 – take part in the carnival again. This was very successful and enjoyable this year, despite a few hiccups! We had 4 activities: Bottle Tombola - the fact that all the prizes were French was liked by those who had a go. Champagne treasure trail – using champagne donated by Montesson Children's Pick-a-Stick lucky dip – prizes all French sweets Children's biscuit decorating – Thanks especially to Cynthia for making the biscuits and to Rachael (Sue + Roy's daughter) for manning the stall. This was one of, if not the most popular children's activity of the day. Although we paid for our stall this year, we understand that we can apply for a free site next year. <p>Many thanks to everyone who helped out on the day and especially to Hillary Dollman who entered into the spirit of the day and dressed up according to the 1940s carnival theme and carried our banner in the parade.</p>	
7	<p>September Visit 2017</p> <p>This year the dates are confirmed as 15th - 17th September. We have no details of the programme as yet, but it is expected that it will be much the same as in the past, given that this is the weekend of the Fête du Pâté à la Carmen. Linda needs know urgently how many members intend to go on the bus this year, so that she can work out the price and make the booking.</p>	

	Sue M will email the membership.	
8	<p>Christmas Events 2017. No dates confirmed yet, but we fully expect to have a stall as usual at the Marché de Noël in Montesson and that the French will come over to have a stall at the Thame event.</p> <p>We made a good return on our produce etc in France last year and we welcome any ideas of the sort of products, both edible and craft / gift items to sell. Our hosts have suggested that we might like to stay on beyond the weekend, to make it less rushed and a more worthwhile break.</p> <p>Likewise the Montesson stall was successful in Thame – especially the crêpes, including the new savoury ones, which sold very well.</p> <p>We will have a stall as well at the Thame event – the tombola is always a success and it's a good way of using up goods left over from the Montesson market and of maintaining our presence in the community.</p>	
9	<p>May Visit 2018</p> <p>Dates not confirmed, but most likely the 1st or 2nd weekend in May.</p> <p>Ideas welcomed for the Saturday trip. We've done London for the past 2 years, so perhaps it's time for a change. Some of the French have expressed a desire to visit Bicester village – this would not be the ideal trip for those present at the AGM! It was felt that this wouldn't be of universal appeal to our guests, although it could be offered as an option with some careful planning.</p> <p>London has the advantage of having a number of free museums while still giving people time and the option of doing their own thing.</p> <p>Oxford has some good free museums but they went there on the Friday afternoon this year and have visited the Ashmolean in recent years. The Pitt Rivers museum was suggested, followed possibly by an afternoon in Bicester for those who are keen.</p> <p>Basically, any trips need to be very low cost and ideally free! Please contact Linda with any suggestions.</p> <p>It was also suggested that we change the programme to have the meal on Saturday evening. This would avoid the rush that we always have on the Sunday lunchtime.</p> <p>It could also be time for a change. Although The 3 Horseshoes is convenient, it was more expensive this year and became very crowded when the numbers changed at the last minute. This would also allow time for hosts to do something more interesting with their guests on the Sunday morning – even a trip to Bicester village!!</p> <p>Marie-Jeanne of Towersey Manor, who was at the lunch invited Linda to look at the barn at the manor with a view to us using it for our big meal. Linda thinks that it looks promising, although it would depend on how much we would have to pay to use it! There are tables and chairs there, so it would just be up to us to set it up.</p> <p>If we use the barn on the Saturday evening, we could have music and possibly even a barn dance. Sue M said that she would do some research into the cost of a barn dance or just musicians.</p> <p>We would clearly have to provide the food – a cold buffet, What's cooking, Waitrose entertaining and outside catering from the 3 Horseshoes were the suggestions.</p> <p>We need to start planning this now for it to be a stressfree evening. It could be a really lovely evening.</p>	
10	<p>Thame Twinning & Sinaia</p> <p>Linda reported on the fact that we had been approached with the offer of a grant from the Town Council if we were to link up with Sinaia twinning association.</p> <p>We discussed the matter seriously at committee level and came to the conclusion that our 2 associations are very, very different and that we don't share the same aim or function. Therefore we declined the offer. However Linda wanted to know the views of those present. Owen</p>	

	<p>supported our decision, believing that the aim of the Sinaia end of the twinning association is just to be twinned with as many different places as possible, not to pursue links between families etc as we do. Roy asked whether a vote was needed on the decision that had been taken. Not necessary, but the consensus of those present was that of support for our decision. This doesn't deny the fact that we do need to find ways of increasing our membership. (see AOB)</p>	
11	<p>AOB Ways of increasing membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have flyers at every event we do. At the carnival people showed interest, but we had no publicity material • Hopefully something will come of the links that are in their very early stages between Thame and Montesson schools • Linda hopes to be able to promote Twinning through her involvement with the Guides • Promote ourselves through the different Churches in Thame • David said that we have quite a few members from St Mary's Church, but we are not as widely known as we could be. We need to do more networking • Simon Baynes said that Caroline goes to the French conversation group which meets at Treacles every couple of weeks and wonders if we could promote ourselves there. Sally also goes to the group with Caroline and said that they had tried, but to no avail! • Linda – we need to put our news out in newsletters and publicise our events more widely. We don't even feature in the latest edition of the annual Thame Town Guide! • We have a Facebook page and website but many don't think to look at them and they are not frequently updated. Helena talked to us about Facebook Pages which can be a tremendous source of information and useful way of publicising things. It is very easy to share information to a page. At the moment Jeannette is the only editor of these sites – can someone help her? Ideally we need someone on the committee who can quickly add news etc after or even during a committee meeting. Bridget offered to become an editor of the Facebook pages. Helena offered to teach Bridget how to use Facebook Pages and how to add events. • Linda – ask other organisations to publicise our events and we will do the same for them. • Publish a monthly update of what's going on to send to members and share via social media. • David – There are U3A French classes – ask the class leader, Ann Barrington to publicise our events • Roy – how do we get young people more involved? • Linda – we just need to keep being involved and having a presence at events. We must keep in touch with the school – Linda will write again to the Languages department. • Bridget reminded us of the Old Tamensian Awards which are often not awarded. The John Hampden War Memorial fund is a huge pot of money which can be used to award travel grants to eligible students. Linda will email Claire at Lord Williams' again to ask if there are any A Level students who could use this money to fund a weekend in Montesson. • Sue M gave a short powerpoint presentation of photos of our activities during the past year, which illustrate how busy we have been. • Linda gave small gifts to Sue, Rachael, David and Cynthia to say thank you for their help with the Carnival and other events throughout the year. • Linda thanked everyone for their support throughout this year <p>The meeting closed at 9.30pm</p>	