



**FRIENDS OF OIGNIES TWINNING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF AGM HELD Saturday 14 October 2023**

Present: Derek Thomas, Peter Bloomfield, Susan Quas-Cohen, Chris Clegg, Ian Calvert, Sue Hodgkinson plus Members: Peter Quas-Cohen, Helen Bloomfield.
No members took part in the online Zoom meeting.

1. Notice of Meeting: Sent on 25 September 2023

2. Apologies: Due to the change of venue Derek had contacted the Mayor's secretary and advised him not to attend.
Catrin Davies, Alison Hales, Ian & Jeanette Hamilton, Jane Calvert, Graham & Val Oakley, Noel & Joan Patterson, Judith & Stuart Dakin, Martin & Anne Willey, Sue & Ian Morris, Sue & Jec Jacobs, Luke & Jennie Johnson, Charles, Maureen & Simon Kitchen, Gareth & Kim Flanagan, John Walton & Ginney Priestley, Jane & John Rothery.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting:

Minutes and Treasurer's Report of AGM on 8 October 2022 were posted on the website and no comments received. Read and Accepted.

4. Chair's Report:

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening, welcome and thank you for joining us for our AGM.

Since our last AGM we have had the pleasure of hosting our Friends from Oignies for the first time since 2019. Our plans had commenced the moment we waved goodbye to our visitors in 2019 and we were very pleased that our hospitality reservations were held open and prices held despite the visit being unavoidably knocked back by two years.

We had some challenges in matching our visitors with hosts but in the end had everyone happily accommodated with some young relationships becoming stronger and new bonds being formed.

We continue to learn from each visit as we try new venues and activities and we always appreciate the constructive feedback and ideas from all our members.

The work of the committee never stops... we are putting together plans for social and fundraising events including our deferred **Quiz & Fizz evening at the Bath Road Centre on 18 November** and our stall at **The Dickensian Market on 25 November**. At the same time we are considering the logistical challenge of our visit next May. **With the coach costing in the region of £6,000 we will need a minimum commitment of around 30 passengers to make it viable to offer coach travel as an option for this visit.**



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As mentioned in a recent newsletter, we are looking at ways to promote The Twinning and increase our membership and we'd like to share with you the flyer that Peter and Chris have produced.

We are constantly assessing how we meet the ongoing challenge of balancing the Association's accounts. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the committee alone to not only plan and organise the visits but to also finance the operation with less than a third of our funds currently coming from subscriptions.

We would welcome any help and ideas from all our members in raising future funds to ensure the ongoing success of our wonderful Twinning. Vive le Jumelage.

In closing, I'd like to thank Peter Quas-Cohen for his support and expertise in scrutinising the accounts and to our excellent committee for their efforts throughout the year.

5. Treasurer's Report:

Peter Bloomfield presented the Balance Sheet for 2022/23 showing a healthy balance going forward of £2,953.56. These were proposed, seconded and accepted.

A card reader has been purchased to be used at the Dickensian Market.

At this point the Committee stood down pending the election of a new Committee. In the absence of our President, The Mayor of High Peak, the business was conducted by Derek Thomas and Sue QC.

6. Election of Scrutineers: The meeting proposed Chris and Helen.

7. Election of Officers:

Committee and Officers all agreed to remain in post. Other nominations were invited but non received.

There were sufficient on-line votes and no objections, therefore to propose and carry the following:

Chair: Derek Thomas was nominated and seconded. **No other nominations. Elected unopposed.**

Vice Chair: Helen Bloomfield was nominated and seconded. **No other nominations. Elected unopposed**

Secretary: Sue Quas-Cohen was nominated and seconded. **No other nominations. Elected unopposed.**



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Treasurer & Subs Secretary: Peter Bloomfield was nominated and seconded. **No other nominations. Elected unopposed.**

Publicity Officer: Chris Clegg was nominated and seconded. **No other nominations. Elected unopposed.**

8. Election of Committee: Ian Calvert, and Sue Hodgkinson were proposed and duly elected. **No further nominations for Committee Members received.**

The newly elected Chair and Committee reconvened.

9. Annual Subscription:

As outlined in Item 9 in the Chair's report included in the Notice sent out prior to the meeting, in order to continue to balance running costs and the cost of entertaining between fundraising and subs, the Committee propose an increase in subscriptions from £28 to £30 for the year 2024/25 to commence on 1st September 2024. Children under 18 will continue to be free.

The proposal to increase annual subscriptions to £30 was put forward and seconded. A vote of those present were all in favour, with online voting 11 in favour and 2 abstaining. The Motion was carried: therefore the annual subscription for 2024/25 will be £30.

The Committee proposed to create a new Membership Category, that of Associate Member, at an Annual Subscription of £10. Associate Members would not host or take part in the visit to France or be eligible to vote. **This was voted for in principal by all those present, with online voting 11 in favour and 2 abstaining. The Motion was carried therefore and will need to be voted on by Members at either an EGM or the next AGM in order to make the change to the Constitution.** Peter Bloomfield will check the wording to define 'Associate' membership and it will be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

10. Election of Accountant:

Derek advised that Peter Quas-Cohen had again volunteered to stand as independent accountant. **Those present and on-line votes in favour. The proposal was carried.**



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11. AOB: No items received on line.

- i) **Perce** to check with Paul re the Quiz Social on 18th November
- ii) Still awaiting confirmation from Oignies of the 2025 dates of visit to Buxton
- iii) **Re 2024 visit to Oignies:** we shall need more than 30 people travelling by coach to make it viable. Need to explore other possibilities e.g. ferry foot passengers and hire a coach in France. PQC advised of the EU proposal to require fingerprint and facial recognition for non-EU visitors from 2024. We need to monitor this.

Derek thanked all present for their attendance and involvement in the meeting. The Minutes will be posted on the website in due course. Meeting Closed 8.50pm