

## **Ludlow French Twinning Committee.**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015.**

**Present:** Dave Mulliner [Chair], Philip Adams, Sheila French, John French, Sylvia Duffy, Shirley Davies and Tony Price.

**Apologies:** Tim Mawson

#### **1. Minutes of previous meeting were approved.**

#### **2. Matters arising:**

***Committee meeting attendance:*** The invitation to anyone who might be interested in attending a committee meeting will be included in the next newsletter. Those interested must then let the secretary know that they would like to come along. Subject to numbers wanting to come, the secretary would then send the minutes to those persons.

***Ludlow in Bloom:*** Dave Mulliner will meet Viv Parry on 12 June to be shown the location in Castle Square. The plaque is now available and it will be attached tomorrow evening. John French offered to help.

***New website:*** Members who have tried the new site agreed that, although incomplete, it functions very well and that Shirley Davies is to be congratulated on the speed and quality of her work on it. Features yet to be included are links to LFM's Town and Twinning sites, for example. Shirley advised that photographs cannot be inserted, except in the gallery, and that this requires members to be told that they need to submit photographs to her for inclusion. It was agreed that we should continue with the existing site until the development of the new site is complete. The sites could be differentiated by calling the new site *Ludlowfrenchwinning.eu*, for example.

#### **3. Ashford Carbonell get-together 16th May**

The committee reviewed the effectiveness of the pre-departure get-together held on Saturday 16th May at Ashford Carbonell Village Hall. Although it was held on Saturday, rather than the preferred Sunday, the event met its objective of briefing new members' families on how they should prepare for the visit. It was felt that it was a friendly venue. Although smaller than Brimfield, it offered decent parking and bar facilities in a pleasant environment which we should use for future events. Ideally we should aim to combine a Twinning event with something already planned by the village. (Details of events are on the village website.) One possibility would be a cream tea, or garden visit. Early September should be considered, as well as next May, prior to the French visit here. The committee were pleased that the Jackmans had brought this facility to our attention. John French hopes this will develop into a pattern of similar ideas from members. Tony Price will speak with Dave Jackman about feasibility.

#### **4. Review of May visit to France**

**Bus:** Routing, drivers and timetabling of breaks were fine both ways. However the seat pitch in the bus had been reduced to increase seating capacity from 48 to 53. This caused comfort problems, especially for taller members.

**Ferry:** UK Border Control procedures at Portsmouth continue to be unpredictable and inconsistent with regards passport examination and customs bag searches. Although the passenger loading platform had been damaged at Ouistreham on the outward leg, the unloading procedures there were chaotic and resulted in unnecessary standing for an hour or so. Sheila French gave a big thank you on the Committee's behalf to Dave Mulliner for organising the cabins and reclining seats at short notice.

**Friday:** The Bayeux visit was most agreeable for both adults and children. Committee agreed that reception at Cave d'Andaines is preferable to the car park in place Neustadt.

**Saturday:** The morning visit around the town with Bernard Blondeel went well with approximately thirty members in attendance. Many had never been around the town with a knowledgeable guide. The Chateau at Ranès was an excellent venue, with plenty to do beforehand. The hall was roomy and this was assisted by assigned seating. Catering was good and the impromptu gymnastics display most enjoyable.

**Sunday:** No negative feedback has been received regarding the day out with host families. Many enjoyed the Art Festival at St Ceneri-le Geri, for example; the Belle Epoque quarter at Bagnoles de l'Orne and the triathlon.

**Monday:** Lucerne Abbey was a good place to stop for adults, but less so for children. Members felt it would have been better if it were possible for Bernard Blondeel to have escorted us around to avoid the machine-gun speed French from the guide. St Pair-sur-Mer was a good place to stop, but advice beforehand about restaurant arrangements were necessary.

#### **5. Ideas for 2016 visit and 2017 thirtieth anniversary**

It was agreed that members should be asked for visit ideas for the 2016 visit via the Newsletter. The dates will be from Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup> until Sunday May 8<sup>th</sup>. As far as the 2017 visit is concerned members have already asked whether it will be possible to mount a choral event. Sheila French pointed out that to host a full choir had been a tremendous success previously but that it would put a tremendous burden on the French. Members felt that we should, instead, consider doing it from *within* the twinning group. This would be feasible because ten members of the choir were actual twinningers. A further suggestion was a gift of a 30-page booklet to present to our hosts, each page featuring one of the thirty years of twinning. (Possible involvement of Merlin Unwin Publishing?).

The Committee asked that the Chair writes to Wesley Chapel to thank them for their £500 contribution towards the youth subsidy. The letter should let Wesley's know the number of children benefitting, the details of the trip and how the trip went.

## **6. Finance**

The costings of the visit to LFM were reviewed. They included a net subsidy of £880 towards the coach cost of £3040; £270 towards the ferry cost of £1242. However currency movement in our favour on ferry and meal costs reduced the total subsidy from £1180 to £902.61. Treasurer reported that there was, therefore, around £4000 in the Bank after third party insurance for the trip has been paid.

### **Other business**

Dave Mulliner reported that he had met the Principal of the local agricultural college during the LFM visit and had arranged for students to spend two weeks at Bromyard and Kinlet with new hosts. Contact had been made, as part of our Twinning principles, through Burwarton Show.

**Next meeting: 23rd July, 2015, at Livesey Road at 7.30pm.**