

GUILDFORD – FREIBURG ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 25 May 2016 in the Guildhall

Present: Mayor Gordon Jackson (GJ), Chairman Peter Slade (PS), Treasurer Mike Gorman (MG), Minutes Secretary Pauline Azizi (PA) & approximately 25 members

Chairman's Introduction: The Chairman, Peter Slade, welcomed all members to the meeting, before the official meeting of the meeting commenced.

1. Appointment of Mayor as President: Peter Slade welcomed the Mayor of Guildford, Cllr. Gordon Jackson, and his wife Sue to the meeting. He confirmed that in accordance with the Constitution Gordon was duly appointed as our President for the year. He then took the Chair.

2. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr. Nikki Nelson-Smith, Camilla Allison, Margaret Burgess, Keith & Leslie Charles, Sonia Coombe, Andrea & Guenter Dombrowe, Roger Eeles, Tony Ford, Julie Francis, Paul Gillingham, Pat Grayburn, Angela Gunning, Tessa Johnson, Mary Lloyd-Jones, Helen Margrave, Hugh & Alwyn Marriage, Bernard Parke, Ursula Pettit, Helen Poole, Jen Powell, Joan Roberts, Stella Whitbourne, Joan Wrenn.

3. Minutes of last Annual General Meeting 2 June 2015. These were circulated at the meeting. No points were raised so the minutes were approved.

4. Chairman's report. Peter Slade outlined the highlights of the past year in his report, as follows:

As he had done in previous years Peter started his report by saying that he thought that the past year had been a very successful one for the twinning with Freiburg & for our Association, with a large range of activities & visits to & from our twin city, & he hoped that everyone agreed.

To give a flavour of the year's events, Peter summarised what has happened: All the details appear in our just-published Newsletter.

- Peter was delighted to say that both Guildford's Mayor & Deputy Mayor spent time in Freiburg – last year's Mayor Nikki Nelson-Smith in December for the City's Weihnachtsmarkt, which she opened, & last year's Deputy Mayor Gordon Jackson for the inauguration of a bench that Guildford presented to the city.
- Both have been very supportive of the Association's events and we were very pleased to welcome them both to our summer party, which was a great success in spite of the weather.
- Last summer we participated, as usual, in Freiburg's Partner Cities Meeting, when all Freiburg's Partner Cities get together in the Rathausplatz. The event gave us the chance to promote Guildford & its attractions, a process helped by the exhibition of photographs by the Council's Graham Foster & the Guildford Society's Doug Scott which we arranged & which Graham mounted. Thanks are due to members Ros Calow & Frauke Burge who worked very hard for two days running the Guildford stand, to Brian Lewis who arranged the tasting of Hogs Back Brewery beer, to the Freiburg Anglo-German Club for once again dispensing free English tea & home-made cakes for visitors & to Tony Trent who entertained with his accordion playing, even persuading some Freiburgers to do the Hokey Cokey & the Gay Gordons.
- A notable extra at last year's meeting was the entertainment provided by Freiburg's latest Partner City – the tenth! – Suwon from South Korea, who brought a team of drummers who filled the Square with an extraordinary display of drumming.
- Our involvement in the meeting included a visit by a group of Association members, some of whom were making their first visit & who found the city as delightful as those of us who had been many times before - in Peter's case 15 times.

- Our visit included a guided tour of Vauban, the world-famous low energy, sustainable settlement in Freiburg. As usual we had an enjoyable get-together with the Freiburg Anglo-German Club.
- It was very good once again to participate in what was, as always, a really international occasion, bringing people together from Freiburg's Partner Cities. All the activities were enhanced by the customary hospitality & support from Freiburg City Council and the contributions from the Anglo-German Club.
- Here in Guildford our annual Christmas market again went very well in spite of having to be switched to a Sunday instead of the usual Saturday.
- The churches group & the Zonta Club of Guildford both took part in successful & stimulating encounters with their Freiburg equivalents.
- The Freiburg youth band were here last July to play with the South West Surrey Concert Band & together they produced an evening of wonderful music.
- At our Public Lecture in the Guildhall we heard the former Consul in Frankfurt, Michael Hall, read some delightful excerpts from his book "Dear Deutschland".
- The Freiburg student who spent time at the University of Surrey said she found Guildford to be like a second home. That is how Peter thinks of Freiburg after his 15 visits.
- At a personal level Peter was honoured to receive the Mayor of Guildford's Award for Community Service for his involvement in the twinning with Freiburg.

Peter said he wouldn't need to remind anyone that in a month's time we would be voting in the EU Referendum. In March we were asked to participate in a BBC Radio 4 World Tonight Programme, part of its coverage of the Referendum. They used the fact that Guildford is twinned with Freiburg to investigate the views of people from both towns. Two of our members spoke, amongst others from the town, as did some members of the Freiburg Anglo-German Club. An interesting approach & an interesting programme & some useful publicity for the twinning & the Association.

Prior to that Peter was approached by the Surrey Advertiser who were asking various Guildford groups for their views on Remain or Leave. He explained that he couldn't possibly give the overall view of our Association's 160 members, so he gave his own view. Without wanting to stir up controversy here, Peter wished to say that he would be voting for the UK to "remain in". He sees one of the EU's benefits as helping to stimulate a stronger sense of community between the nations & people of Europe, & forging closer links between citizens of other cities is surely an important aspect of twinning. Indeed our Constitution urges us to promote international understanding by strengthening the link between Guildford and Freiburg.

We received another useful bit of publicity last month when the local Round and About magazine published an illustrated article about Freiburg & the twinning which they asked Peter to write.

In contrast to all the positive happenings listed above there is some very bad news to report. After 29 years the annual encounters between Guildford City Boys & Girls Football Club & Freiburg's Blau Weiss Club did not take place, mainly because of problems with Guildford families being unwilling to provide accommodation for the Freiburg visitors. These exchanges have been a notably successful aspect of the twinning for a very long time, so it's very sad that they've stopped happening & Peter said he was sure that all concerned hope that they will be resumed in the future.

To return to good news, Peter said he was delighted to say that a 15 strong civic delegation from Freiburg led by Oberbuergermeister Dieter Salomon will be coming to Guildford in September. Other forthcoming events will be our summer party – date & venue not yet decided, our annual public lecture in the Autumn and our Christmas Market on December 4.

Finally there are lots of thank-yous to everyone who has contributed to a successful year. First to our past President, last year's Mayor of Guildford, & to Gordon Jackson, last year's Deputy Mayor who have both been very supportive. We are also grateful to the three Council nominees on our Committee for their contributions. Our Vice-Chairman Wolf Pietrek again played a major role in organising a Christmas market & other events and Ros Calow continued with the good work to increase the involvement of schools. As always Michael Gorman looked after our

finances & the membership records very efficiently. Hilary Perry has again done an excellent job as our secretary & Pauline Azizi has taken some of the burden off Hilary's shoulders by taking on the important role of Committee minutes secretary. Our new Social Secretary, Frauke Burge, has taken on the role with enthusiasm. And as you will see when you get your copy of the newsletter Barbara Ford has again done a superb job as editor in spite of her full-time demanding work commitments. Peter said he thinks this year's edition is the best yet. And Tony Ford has helped to publicise the Association by keeping the web-site, which he devised, up to date. Last but certainly not least, Brian & Susan Lewis have helped by transporting items for our Christmas market to and from Freiburg when they visit their flat in a village near the city.

Peter said there is just one other thing to mention. On Friday he is meeting the leader and deputy leader of Guildford Borough Council, at their request, to discuss issues relating to the twinning. He asked if anyone had any thoughts on what topics he might discuss to please raise them under any other business.

5. Treasurer's & membership Secretary's report.

Treasurer Michael Gorman presented his Treasurers Report, the audited figures having been signed off by David Barr, our Honorary auditor.

Audited accounts for the year 1-Apr-2015 to 31-Mar-2016.

Assets at 1-Apr-2015 £5444; Assets at 31-Mar-2016 £5529; Surplus 2015/6 £85

- We receive an annual grant from Guildford Borough council of £420. Because of an administrative error, this had not been paid in 2014/5, but was paid in 2015/6 in addition to the grant for that year.
- We donated £600 to Musikschule Freiburg, as a contribution to their costs for a performance in Guildford in May 2015.
- Our social functions made a net deficit of £70. The major events were: Partner Cities Fair (-369), Summer Party (+192), Xmas market (+328), Public lecture, Feb (-163), Art exhibition, cancelled (-50), and the German Dinner (-7).

After his report, the Treasurer answered questions.

Q: This year, despite receiving two instalments of the grant from the Borough, our surplus was only £85. Should we be watching carefully?

A: Yes, we must always be prudent.

Q: In the previous year we made a large surplus of £568 on social functions, but this year there was a deficit of £70. How did that happen?

A: Firstly, the Xmas market was more successful last year on a Saturday than this year on a Sunday. Secondly, the Partners Cities Fair in Freiburg is in alternate years, so there were costs this year but not last year.

Membership Report

On 1st April this year there were:

Addresses 99; Members 152; Singles 46; Couples 53

This amounts to a loss of 12 members (6 addresses) since April 2015

6. Elections:

- a) **Appointment of Patron - Anne Milton MP** was reappointed as Patron. Agreed as in the Constitution.

b) **Election of officers:** The following officers were unanimously elected:

To continue as Chairman:	Dr. Peter Slade
Vice chairman:	Mr. Wolfgang Pietrek
Hon. Treasurer/Membership Sec:	Mr. Michael Gorman
Secretary:	Mrs. Hilary Perry

c) **Election of Committee:**

The following members of the committee were all agreed & elected en bloc:
Mrs Pauline Azizi, Mrs Irene Black, Mrs Frauke Burge, Mrs Rosamund Calow, (Schools Liaison), Mrs Barbara Ford (Newsletter Editor), Mrs Patricia Grayburn (University Liaison, Ald. Bernard Parke,
Counsellors Nikki Nelson-Smith, Mike Piper, David Goodwin.

7. Any Other Business

Peter asked for comments to raise at the forthcoming meeting with the Leader & Deputy leader of the Council. Suggestions were:

Freiburg's biennial Partner Cities market allows us to promote Guildford & arrange cultural events. Travel expenses have been paid by the Association for our two delegates who run the Guildford stand. Freiburg City Council pays their hotel. Could Guildford Council contribute?

- Could there be more support for musical events? One example is 'Six Cities – Six Voices' which Freiburg has arranged in the past
- The Freiburg Baroque Orchestra have expressed interest in coming here.
- There should be better and more visible twinning signs at the entrance to the Borough. Most members couldn't recall seeing any. There isn't a sign at the main Railway Station,
- The Freiburg mosaic at the Council offices is to be relocated. The Mayor suggested it could perhaps go on the new bridge over the River if there is one.
- Members would like to see a Freiburg Street in Guildford, as there is a Guildford Allee in Freiburg. There is a Mayen Place in Godalming (Mayen is Godalming's twin).
- The Mayor said that once the master plan is in place, we might have a street or square named after our twin town.
- A member said that he thought that Guildford doesn't learn from Freiburg, & all the developments they have made.
- Another member said that Freiburg could learn from Guildford's countryside, so it is not all one way.
- A member said that Guildford gives more support to disabilities than Freiburg does.
- Ros Calow said that Freiburg wanted to bring a disabled group to Guildford, but there wasn't sufficient suitable accommodation for the numbers they wanted to bring.
- A member who has visited Freiburg as part of the Church Group said that a lot of work is being done on Care for the Elderly. The theme for his last visit was 'Growing old in Freiburg'.
- Perhaps there could be a cyclists' exchange, perhaps involving Charlotteville Cycling Club
- Pit Farm Tennis Club exchanged with a Freiburg club last year and are doing so again this year.
- A member suggested sending Morris Dancers over to Freiburg, but although they were keen, most of them would not be able to take the time off work, & it would be expensive.
- A member asked if we could get a bigger discount on hire of the Guildhall. The Mayor said that even he has to pay. The Association does have one free event per year.

After the formal business of the meeting, Association member David Petcher of Petersfield Wines, who supplies wines for our events, gave a very interesting illustrated talk on "**Wines from the Freiburg area**". Wine was available to purchase after the meeting.

Notes prepared by Pauline Azizi