



## ***Come and share in the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary party!***

**\*\* Finally, the time has come to dust off those passports, cast aside those intimidatory Covid travel complications and prepare for the return of twinning as it was meant to be – a living rather than an online experience.**

This year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bristol-Hannover connection and preparations are advancing in both cities for a renewal of the annual exchanges at formal, cultural and educational levels.

Bristol-Hannover chair Ann Kennard says:

*We share this great anniversary with our colleagues in Bristol-Bordeaux Partnership and several of the events this year are joint ones. BBP started in style with their participation in the Winter Lantern Parade in Bedminster in January, and we will join them for a wine-tasting event at Avery's cellars in June.*

*The big events for us this year are the civic exchange visits in Bristol (July) and Hannover (August), each led by the respective Mayor's office, and with ceremonies including tree planting, exhibitions, dance events and the arrival in Bristol of a boat bringing a barrel of Hannover Gin!*

*Before that, plans are afoot to place planters with posters of the twin city in both cities' parks, and the start of several major musical events with the Festival of Voice in Bristol.*

*In Hannover John Rutter will conduct his own Requiem as part of a Week of Peace in August, and Bristol Choral Society will sing Brahms' German Requiem in Hannover in October with the Hannoverscher Oratorienchor in the Marktkirche.*

*So lots to enjoy and we hope to engage many of our members!*



## ***The Anniversary Calendar***

### APRIL

*23-24th:* Ariel Rowing Club meet Hannover's Linden Ruderverein in Lingen for a training camp ahead of championships in Bordeaux in September.

### MAY

*Mid-May-October:* Planters with posters of parks in partner city to be placed in key locations in Bristol and Hannover.

*9-12th:* Bristol "City of Honour" at Bordeaux Remembrance Week – participation of Bristol group in sharing experiences around slavery memorialisation.

*28-29th:* Upfest in Bristol with Bordeaux and Hannover participation.

### JUNE

*Throughout June:* Festival of Voice, St George's.

*5th* (Queen's Jubilee weekend): Händel's Messiah with massed choirs.

*16th:* Wine tasting at Averys, featuring French, German and English wines.

*Late June:* Hannover Gin barrel leaves Hannover for London and Bristol.

### JULY

*July 5th-November 13th:* Exhibition at Historical/Kestner Museum in Hannover, 'About golden carriages and colonial history'.

*14-19th:* Civic visit of Hannoverians to Bristol for Harbour Festival.

### AUGUST

*4-7th:* Week for Peace in Hannover, to include choir (MitSING World Choir for Peace 2022) of 2000 from Hannover's twin cities, singing the Rutter Requiem in the Kuppelsaal in the Congress Centre, with John Rutter conducting. Choir group from Bristol to participate.

*18-23th:* Civic visit of Bristolians to Hannover

----- Hannover Police Youth Sports Club Football team visits Bristol – visit to include reception with the Lord Mayor.

### SEPTEMBER

*7-11th:* Ariel/Linden clubs participate in World Rowing Masters Regatta in Bordeaux (Libourne), Ariel/Linden return to Hannover (16-19th).

*22-26th:* Return visit of Young Bristol to Hannover – 10 young people with lead worker Faye Keane.

---- Sharing Memories event in Bristol, with meetings between today's school pupils and past generations of Bordeaux exchange students.

### OCTOBER

*8-9th:* Hannoverscher Oratorienchor and Bristol Choral Society to sing Brahms' 'German Requiem' in concerts at the Marktkirche, Hannover, celebrating the 70th anniversary of its reconstruction in 1952.



## ***Twinning celebration on ambassador's social media radar***



\*\* Jill Gallard, the British ambassador to Germany, acknowledged our historic inter-city twinning link [above] while visiting Hannover earlier this year.

Gallard took up her appointment in difficult circumstances amid the pandemic in November 2020.

She noted via Twitter: “It was a pleasure to get to know Oberbürgermeister Belit Onay personally and sign my name in the golden book of the city of Hanover - appropriately in the 75th anniversary year of the twinning between Hannover and Bristol.”

### ***Restrictions***

Gallard, born in Northern Ireland, has been trying to make up for lost time after being unable to spread the message for the first six months of her appointment because of pandemic restrictions.

She lives, naturally, in Berlin but told a local newspaper: “Last summer I was able finally to make many business trips since I think it's always very important for the embassy to know the whole country - because the capital isn't typical.”

Gallard, married with two children, was British Ambassador to Portugal from 2011 to 2014 then Deputy Political Director and Director Western Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean in London.



## ***Hannover and me – by Alix Hughes\****



\*\* Going to school in Bristol and doing a German A-Level, I had heard about Hannover and especially the Hannover 96 football team. After A-levels, I had a year off and taught English in Toulouse for six months before hitchhiking around Germany visiting friends in Munich and Cologne but didn't make it to Lower Saxony.

Hannover only really appeared on my radar when I met Eva-Maria, the German Lektorin at the University of Bristol, where I was starting a four-year languages course.

Eva is from Hannover and had taken part in the schools' exchange and knew Bristol well before she took up the university post. She and I have been friends now for 45 years.

### ***Fundraising***

When I started my job as the Bristol International Twinning Association Co-ordinator in January 1992, I began to work closely with the Bristol Hannover Council committee chaired by Councillor Betty Topham. She and her sidekick Iris did a great job fundraising and leading the sports exchange elements of the twinning.

I enjoyed meeting a range of Hannoverian community sports people over the years from rowers to junior rugby players. I always admired Betty and Iris's commitment to inclusivity and the involvement of the children's disability judo squads.

Gabi Ciecior was the Hannover City Council twinning officer for 30 years and did a great job promoting the twinning with Bristol across her city.

On her last visit she accompanied her partner Detlev and his choir as the official photographer and it was great to catch up with them.

Now she is retired I joked she had more time to listen to Detlev practising his trumpet!

Gabi and I have organised countless twinning initiatives together and her expertise on cultural issues helped me a lot, especially when I started in the job.

### ***Mayoral memory***

The 2017 visit to Hannover was perhaps the most memorable because I was able to accompany Mayor Rees when he gave five different speeches at a range of venues from the Marktkirche to the Rathaus via the Expo site.

It was interesting to see how the Mayor began to remember a long forgotten trip to Hannover from childhood and also the effect the warm welcome and immediate friendship had on him.

At the Rathaus who can forget the speech made by the Foreign Office diplomat from the British Embassy in Berlin? He told us he had been a schoolboy on an exchange from Bristol when he first visited the Rathaus and the trip had inspired him “to study German and have a career in the Foreign Office and of course, make friends for life.”

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*\*\* Alix Hughes worked for BITA as twinning co-ordinator from January 1992 until 2017 and then joined Bristol City Council as International Twinning Officer – adding up to more than 30 years promoting the twinning message in and on behalf of Bristol.*

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### ***Anna Baerbock: From Hannover to headlines***

**\*\*** The tragic events in Ukraine have thrown an international political spotlight on German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock who had been born and brought up in Hannover.

Baerbock, 41, is the daughter of a mechanical engineer and a social worker. The family lived briefly in Nurnberg then returned to Pattensen eight miles south of Hannover.

At 16 she undertook an exchange year in Florida before completing her schooling at the Humboldtschule.



Later Baerbock [above] she studied political science at the University of Hamburg and completed a one-year postgraduate masters in international law at the London School of Economics.

She worked as a freelance journalist with the *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung* before entering the Bundestag on behalf of the Greens in 2013.

In January 2018, Baerbock was elected joint party leader and, last December, was appointed Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new German government led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz.



### ***Dining in celebratory style for Karneval***

\*\* For some 13 may be an unlucky number but it was a happy one on February 28 for the Bristol-Hannover Council when members and friends were able once more to celebrate Rosenmontag together [below].

Venue was the Klosterhaus restaurant in Quakers Friars. The site is the remains of a Dominican friary, Blackfriars, which was established by Maurice de Gaunt in the early 13th century.

The Hannover Room was an appropriate exclusive salon for the latest in the revived social programme as restrictions continued to be eased after the Covid-19 lockdowns and group event controls.



Chair Ann Kennard provided authenticity by wearing a traditional hat in red-and-white – the Cologne/Köln colours – worn traditionally at all the so-called ‘Sitzungen’ of the Karnevalsgesellschaften.



## ***Remaking the German Government***



\*\* The choice of two enlightening presentations on the run-up to the formation of the new German government proved remarkably prescient.

Dr Mark Allinson and Dr Christophe Fricker of University of Bristol offered a post-election informative and entertaining review of the new political landscape in Germany.

The most evident change from the past is the fact that there is now effectively a six-party system in Germany, so that the former Volksparteien (catch-all) parties, the CDU/CSU and SPD no longer command the large majority of the votes (as the Conservatives and Labour still do in UK).

Although they are still the largest parties in the Bundestag [*above*], it is the Greens who follow, and the FDP (Liberals) next.

The current government is thus composed of the SPD, the Greens and the FDP (the 'traffic-light' coalition) with the CDU/CSU, Alternative für Deutschland and die Linke (the Left) in opposition.



### ***This is what we do . . .***

*Bristol-Hannover Council aims to involve as many Bristolians as possible, young and old, in extending these ties which have already enriched the lives of so many people in both cities. Many exchanges have been supported by the Council, including:*

*Schools exchanges*

*Exchanges of citizens*

*Sports exchanges*

*University student exchanges*

*Band, choir, orchestra and drama visits*

*Youth club visits and exchanges*

*Church exchanges*

*Reuniting old friends*

*[www.bristolhannovercouncil.org.uk](http://www.bristolhannovercouncil.org.uk)*

