# ***BRISTOL-HANNOVER COUNCIL***

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

***Oct 26, 6.15pm - Hannover Room, City Hall***

**MINUTES**

*Present: Acting Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Bristol Councillor Steve Pearce, Ann Kennard, Frank Titmarsh, Colin Evans, Gillian Davies, Irena Górzyńska, Lynne Evans, Anna Turner, Ian Turner, Mark Allinson, Tony Kennard, Zoe Gibbons, Jonathan Keir Radnedge, Vivien Brown, Rob Foster.*

1. **Apologies**: Janet Caswell, Allie Dunnington, Richard Harris, Esther Keller, Alison Parry, Derek Pickup, Paul Watson, Kai von Pahlen, Sue Williams.
2. **Opening remarks** by Acting Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Bristol Councillor Steve Pearce, standing in for the Lord Mayor Paul Goggin who was unwell. He acknowledged the 76 years of the twinning and the many events of the past 12 months.
3. **Minutes** of the last Annual General Meeting: Approved. Proposed by Frank Titmarsh, seconded by Ian Turner.
4. **Reports**
   1. Chair’s Report (see website) – Ann Kennard: The chair’s report had been circulated to the committee ahead of the meeting. Ann noted that this past year had been incredibly busy since the previous year’s activities had prompted further exchange events. Zoom had enabled joint meetings with Hannover. Highlights included a visit to Bristol from the new German ambassador which included a joint dinner with BAGS as well as the visit of our friends in the Gesellschaft and many other exchange activities.
   2. Treasurer’s Report - Irena Górzyńska: The BHC (charity) account balance was £4,887.83. Major items had included exchange activity grants. A 14pc increase in subscriptions was noted as well as an increase from National Savings Bank interest. The Foundation account balance was £872.88, and this had provided support for events expenses.
   3. Adoption of Reports: Approved. Proposed by Ian Turner, seconded by Colin Evans.
5. **Vote of thanks** to retiring Officers and Committee prop by the Acting Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Pearce. Carried by acclamation.
6. **Election of Officers and Committee**
   * 1. Chair: Ann Kennard. Proposed by Ian Turner, seconded by Colin Evans.
     2. Vice-Chair: Frank Titmarsh. Proposed by Ann Kennard, seconded by Jonathan Radnedge
     3. Honorary Secretary: Lynne Evans. Proposed by Ian Turner, seconded by Kai von Pahlen

(iv) Honorary Treasurer: Irena Górzyńska. Proposed by Lynne Evans, seconded by Frank Titmarsh

1. Minutes secretary: Jonathan Radnedge. Proposed by Anna Turner, seconded by Irena Górzyńska.
2. Committee Members: Richard Harris, Hon. Consul Kai von Pahlen, Paul Watson, Cllr Kye Dudd, Dr Ian Turner, Anna Turner, Gillian Davies, proposed en bloc. Proposed Ann Kennard. Seconded by Jonathan Radnedge.
3. **Subscriptions for 2023/2024**: No change.

After the official business, **Sarah Maddox of Ashton Youth Football** team delivered an illustrated talk about their successful return visit to Hannover this past summer. This included a reception at the Rathaus and visit to the Niedersachsenstadion (currently known as the Heinz von Heiden-Arena). Next year would be a break. In 2025 Hannover teams would come to Bristol, with Ashton going back in 2026.

**AOB**: Zoe Gibbons described how Gary Thompson from Cables and Cameras visited Hannover in Oct 2023, having been invited by independent cinema, Kino Im Sprengel to take part in its UK Sessions festival. He showed four short films, made by filmmakers of colour, and spoke in a Q&A, which also linked via Zoom to one of the directors in the UK. It was a very successful first visit, hopefully to develop into something more long-term.

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*CHAIR’S REPORT 2022-23*

*Annual General Meeting, 26th October 2023*

*After the 75th anniversary events of 2022, it has been a surprisingly busy year with continuing exchanges, which is most gratifying and we can be pleased that the partnership is indeed blossoming in new ways. We have continued to use Zoom to stay in contact with our colleagues in Hannover, after it proved so useful for planning anniversary events in the months running up to 2022. We are also continuing to have our own committee meetings on Zoom, as this seems to be easier for some members, not least because the early closing of City Hall makes it difficult to arrange meetings which are accessible for the working population.*

*T****he Lord Mayor, Cllr Paula O’Rourke*** *presided over the AGM last year, welcoming those present, and saying how much she had personally enjoyed many of the anniversary events, pointing in particular to the planting of the tree in the Botanic Gardens.*

*In November, the new* ***German Ambassador, Miguel Berger****, came on one of his first visits outside London, helping us to celebrate our ongoing 75th anniversary, as well as BAGS’ 40th. Whilst here, he visited Airbus, City Hall and Bristol University, and gave us an inspiring address at a formal dinner at Bristol Golf Club.*

*Also in November, our member,* ***Hon. Consul Kai von Pahlen was a splendid St Martin*** *in the St Martin’s Day lantern parade of the children of the German Saturday School.*

*In December we were delighted to celebrate at the* ***Christmas Market lunch****, and to have the Lord Lieutenant Peaches Golding O.B.E with us.*

*In January a group of us went up to the Royal Academy in London to see the exhibition of four* ***German modernist women painters*** *from the first half of the 20th century. Fortunately our art and film specialist, Colin Evans, had briefed us beforehand, and he also spearheaded the showing at Stoke Lodge of a* ***series of films about different aspects of life in the GDR.***

*This theme was picked up in a lecture by member Neil Taylor later, entitled: “****The GDR: could it have******succeeded?****” – Neil gave us some fascinating insights into life in the GDR from his own experience.*

***Rosenmontag*** *was celebrated in February at our old haunt, the Black Swan in Westbury and along with funny hats and singing, we were also treated to watching the Karneval processions in Köln and Düsseldorf on satellite, which made it much more real and colourful.*

*At the end of March, we had a veritable invasion of* ***75 rugby enthusiasts,*** *both players and supporters* ***mainly from Hannover’s******Odin Sports Club****, happily reviving the long missed rugby exchange which had been so much part of the sporting relationship between the two cities. Sadly David Perkins was no longer with us to enjoy it, but his old friend Horst Josch, former Hannover Councillor and Chair of HBG, and Odin rugby lead Julian de Riva led the group on a spectacular weekend of matches, culminating in a visit to the Bristol Bears’ new state-of-the-art High Performance Centre, where they were thrilled to meet Ellis Genge, Vice-Captain of the England team!*

*Continuing the sport theme, our committee member* ***Jonathan Radnedge****, in his professional life a sports reporter, in particular football, was honoured with a replica of the* ***World Cup trophy*** *in acknowledgement of the 15 finals tournaments which he has reported – ever since England’s triumph over West Germany in 1966!*

*Several members attended an excellent performance:* ***Brecht on Love and War****, in May at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford.*

*Also in May, 2 of Bristol’s Youth Mayors attended a* ***Youth Peace conference*** *in Hannover, and had reported on it very positively.*

*In June a number of members enjoyed lunch with some of* ***Clevedon’s twinners****, and we hope to be able to repeat this with other twinning organisations around Bristol, eg Portishead also.*

*June saw a major event of* ***Bristol’s 650th anniversary*** *as a city and county, and we had a stall on College Green which attracted a lot of attention.*

*In July we welcomed our friends from the* ***Gesellschaft for their biennial visit****, the highlight of which was a visit to Cheddar Gorge and Thatchers’ Cider Distillery! We also visited Bristol Old Vic backstage, the Underfall Yard, had a German language walk round the harbour, and a splendid farewell dinner at Aqua in Harbourside. We were delighted to welcome the Lord Lieutenant again, who gave a fascinating account of the last year in her role representing the monarchy, since this year had included the Queen’s jubilee, later her sad death, and then the Coronation of King Charles III. I am grateful to Lynne Evans for all her hard work in setting up the programme for the visit.*

*Later in July,* ***RISE Youth Dance hosted a return visit of their Hannover partners ‘Under Construction’*** *for a week of workshops and danced on the Saturday of the Harbour Festival on College Green.*

*In August the* ***Ashton Youth FC*** *made their return visit to Hannover with two teams, and have agreed to give us a presentation at the AGM of their very successful visit.*

*Strangely September became a very busy month, with myself accepting an invitation at short notice from the ‘other’ Hannover organisation, the* ***Hannoversch-Britische Gesellschaft****, to join them in hosting 3 UoB students of German, whom they had sponsored, so that they could get to know some of the German institutions. We will be cooperating with the other HBG in future.*

*On my return, a group of people from the* ***Hannover Wikipedia*** *office arrived, wanting to research Bristol and its environs for the German edition.*

*Soon after that, 2 guys who had been* ***school partners since 1983*** *met in Bristol (had wanted a larger group, but it didn’t work out) to celebrate 40 years’ friendship. The German partner, Martin Werner, in fact captained the famous gin boat last year for 8 days, from Reading to Bath!*

*The most recent visit was from* ***Linden Ruderverein*** *to their longtime partners,* ***Ariel Rowing Club****, and they had a very active weekend – I was delighted to go in the launch with Ariel lead Steve Howie, from the boathouse in St Anne’s into the harbour.*

*Later in October, a representative of the Bristol film company,* ***Cables and Cameras****, will accept an invitation to present at a film festival in Hannover.*

*We have been pleased to give* ***small grants*** *to most of these exchanging groups, as this is part of our raison d’être, anchored in our Constitution, to support in particular young people exchanging between our two cities.*

*There have sadly been a number of deaths again this year:* ***Richard Wong****, long-time leader of the Badminton exchange, Prof.* ***Tony King****, Ursula’s husband, at the age of 91,* ***Elfi******Nadler****, also 91, and* ***Gerda Müller****, 88, both long-time members of the Gesellschaft, and* ***John Langman****, also 88, long-time member of BHC and former Hon. German Consul and holder of the Bundesverdienstkreuz.*

*I would also like to officially welcome* ***Zoe Gibbons****, who took over the role of twinning officer in the summer, after Kate Holberton, whom we welcomed last year as Alix Hughes’ successor, left us for personal reasons in January. The International Office has been very helpful and supportive, and Zoe has quickly become very much part of the team – welcome Zoe!*

*And finally, I am grateful for the support of the* ***committee*** *as ever: new members* ***Ian and******Anna Turner, and Jill Davies*** *have been active and helpful, especially in doing surveys of the membership and of the situation of German teaching in schools, and I know we are looking forward to a busy year!*

***Ann Kennard***

*26th October 2023*