

**BRISTOL-HANNOVER COUNCIL /**  
**BRISTOL-HANNOVER FOUNDATION**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**  
**Wednesday, October 23 / 6.15pm**  
**Hannover Room, City Hall (formerly Council House)**  
*President: The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor of Bristol (Cllr Andrew Varney)*

1, Welcome and introductions: The Lord Mayor.

2, Apologies: Geoff Allan, Michael Bloom, Vivien Brown, Janet Caswell, Peaches Golding (Lord Lieutenant), Carla Murray, Alison Parry, Leslie Scarborough, Neil Taylor, Paul Watson, Patricia Wyatt,

3, Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting: Approved.

4, Reports

(i), Chair's report: Ann Kennard provided a resume of the past year's activities including various BHC and other organisations' exchange visits plus local activities such as community atlas contributions, Rosenmontag, raising of the College Green twinning signpost, Harbour Festival and "twinning Tuesday" at the M Shed. Many more visits and activities already scheduled for next year. Ann expressed her thanks to the committee for its support and her best wishes for the future.

(ii), Treasurer's report: Irena Górczyńska listed the Council account at £5,490 with a surplus of £603, mainly due to gift aid receipts and National Savings Bank interest. There had been a 10pc increase in subscriptions. The Foundation account stood at £1,240 with a surplus of £366.

(iii), Adoption of reports: Proposed by the Lord Mayor, seconded by Jonahan Radnedge. Unanimous.

5, Vote of thanks to retiring officers and committee: Proposed by the Lord Mayor, seconded by Ian Turner. Unanimous. Thanks to Ann Kennard for her work were also expressed on behalf of the German Embassy by the Honorary Consul and committee member Kai von Pahlen.

6, Election of Officers and Committee

(1), Chair: Ian Turner - proposed by Ann Kennard, seconded by Lynne Evans. Unanimous.

(ii), Vice-Chair: Frank Titmarsh – proposed by Ann Kennard, seconded by Jonathan Radnedge. Unanimous.

(iii), Honorary Secretary: Lynne Evans – proposed by Irena Górczyńska, seconded by Kai von Pahlen. Unanimous.

(iv), Honorary Treasurer: Irena Górczyńska – proposed by Lynne Evans, seconded by Frank Titmarsh. Unanimous.

(v), Minutes secretary: Jonathan Radnedge – proposed by Anna Turner, seconded by Irena Górczyńska. Unanimous.

(vi), Committee members: en bloc – Cllr Kye Dudd, Kai von Pahlen, Ann Kennard, Anna Turner, Gillian Davies, Richard Harris, Paul Watson. Proposed by Ann Kennard, seconded by Jonathan Radnedge. Unanimous.

7, Subscriptions for 2024-25 to remain at £15 individual, £25 family, £40 corporate. Approved unanimously.

## **Informal items:**

1, Ian Turner introduced himself after a Hannover association stretching back 52 years to his original visit to the city as part of the Bristol Hannover school exchange. Noted the welcoming and inclusive organisation he had found on his return three years ago. Ian ascribed much of the council's current active status to Ann Kennard's immense and conscientious work with the support of a strong team both in terms of the committee as well as members and other supporters. Ian said one of his targets would be the recruitment of more and younger people to renew the organisation going forward.

Ann Kennard reviewing the history of the twinning from joining the committee in 1996 and becoming chair in 2000 with the encouragement of the late John Veale. It had 30 members at the time with minimal activity apart from the visits, undertaken by coach. Notable events included hosting 4,000 at the 60th anniversary celebration held at the Zoo plus 2,500 for a repeat 10 years later. Further celebrations marked the 2014 accession as well as the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024 (including the famous gin boat). Many other organisations had been brought on board the extensive BHC network. The liaison work and support of the Embassy had also been significant.

Mark Allinson, on behalf of BAGS, congratulated Ian on his accession and paid his own tribute to Ann and also her husband Tony.

Derek Pickup, chair of BITA, described Ann as "a powerhouse" on behalf of the Hannover twinning. Twinning, he said, were just as important in today's world as they had ever been.

Presentations included a bouquet from Lynne Evans on behalf of the committee and another from the Bristol City Council international team.

2, Twinning officer Zoe Gibbons reviewed her own recent visit to Hannover which had been enabled by support from BHC. She had undertaken a busy and wide schedule of networking meetings in Hannover with a view to generating an expanding range of cultural and social exchanges. Zoe is preparing a visit from a 'multiplier group' of representatives of Hannover organisations to Bristol later in 2025.

Meeting declared closed at 7.45pm: date of the 2025 AGM to be confirmed.

*\*\* In attendance: The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor Cllr Andrew Varney, Mark Allinson, John and Ethne Dando, Gillian Davies, Cllr Kye Dudd, Colin Evans, Lynne Evans, Rob Foster, Zoe Gibbons, Liz Gill, Richard Harris, Ann Kennard, Tony Kennard, Derek Pickup, Jonathan Radnedge, Sue Thompson, Frank Titmarsh, Anna Turner, Ian Turner, Kai von Pahlen.*

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## **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

Annual General Meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

It has been a quieter year, but still active with connections with Hannover continuing, and I know there are lots of plans for 2025. And we have only recently returned from a wonderful visit to

Hannover, with more details of that to come in a special report to be published. We are also continuing to have our own committee meetings on Zoom, as well as enjoying our online meetings with our Hannoverian friends.

**The Acting Lord Mayor, Cllr Steve Pearce** presided over the AGM last year, due to the indisposition of the Lord Mayor Cllr Paul Goggin. Cllr Pearce welcomed those present, and acknowledged the longevity of the city partnership at 76 years, with a continuing active programme of events.

**November 11<sup>th</sup> is celebrated as St Martin's Day** in Germany (it also happens to be the start of Karneval season, especially in the Rheinland!), and our own Kai von Pahlen, Honorary Consul, again looked resplendent in his costume as St Martin, celebrating with the children from the German Saturday School, singing songs and carrying their colourful lanterns.

The **Christmas Market lunch** was a bit different, as we were in two heated 'igloos', but we enjoyed the usual fare of Wurst and Glühwein, and a good time was had by all. At the end of January, some of us took part in another memory-sharing afternoon, this time with Bristol's other twinings, as part of a project to set up a **Community Atlas** to celebrate Bristol's 650<sup>th</sup> birthday. The project is the brainchild of Ruth Myers (of 'Someone Else's Shoes' fame), and she has secured National Lottery funding for it.

**Rosenmontag** was celebrated in February at our old haunt, the Black Swan in Westbury. We were delighted to welcome Cllr Paul Goggin, whose health had now greatly improved. Again we were able to watch the Karneval processions in Köln and Düsseldorf on satellite - always colourful and interesting to see what political issues are represented on the floats.

There were a number of **films and talks** – Mark Allinson gave an entertaining talk - 'Games with Thrones' - about the demise of the German monarchies.

In April, after 8 years' gestation, with the process started by Alix Hughes, a **twinnings signpost** was finally unveiled in front of City Hall in the presence of the Mayor and the Lord Mayor – it is a real draw for passers-by and is a definite raising of the twinnings' profile. May saw a group of us attending the much-lauded **Expressionist exhibition** at the Tate Modern, entitled: Kandinsky, Münter and the Blue Rider – an exciting and colourful visit which we all enjoyed.

In June a number of members enjoyed **lunch in Clevedon** again, this time with both the Clevedon and the Portishead twinners, and Ian Turner is taking this cooperation forward with plans for next year.

Also in June we had an **inaugural darts evening** at the Post Office tavern on Westbury Hill – a most enjoyable evening, with Ian scoring a bullseye with his very first dart! In July **Bristol Choral Society** welcomed their partner choir, the **Oratorianchor** from Hannover, and the combined choirs gave a splendid performance in the refurbished Bristol Beacon.

In the same month, **Bristol Cathedral Choir** visited Hannover and gave several concerts both in Hannover and the wider region, with great success. Another of Hannover's choirs,

our friends **Canta Nova** also contributed a podcast for the Festival of Voice in June at St George's.

Also in July, with a follow-up in August, at the instigation of Zoe Gibbons, our twinnings officer, we took part in activities at the **Harbour Festival** and also in the '**Twinning Tuesdays**' at M-Shed, to inform and involve families in the twinnings – grateful thanks to Zoe for this great idea!

Finally we have only recently returned from a **splendid visit of Council members** to Hannover, where we were treated with great enthusiasm and generosity to a full programme of visits and events, which will be detailed elsewhere.

So – we have been as busy as ever, with other things also going on in the background, such as an investigation into the state of **German in schools, attending Embassy events and keeping them informed** of what is happening etc. And there are plans afoot for various exchanges in 2025: our own hosting of the **Gesellschaft members in August**, a group of Lower Saxony **historians in July** (as a result of the Wikipedia visit in 2023), a mega-group of **rugby players** at some point, **Ariel Rowers** will host the Linden Club etc etc. So the partnership is alive and kicking!

As you all know, this AGM will be **my last as Chair** – I think 24 years is probably long enough and it's a good idea to have a new broom. I will say a few extra words about my 'journey' later, but suffice to say that I have found the experience largely rewarding and life-enhancing, so I am grateful for the opportunity to have been in this position.

And finally, I am also grateful as ever for the support of the **committee**: we have had a few new members, who have been active and helpful, and I wish Ian well and hope that he finds the role as interesting and fulfilling as I have.

Ann Kennard  
23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

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