

Minutes of Skype video session

With Les Herbiers on

Monday 18 Dec 2017

Present:

1. **Les Herbiers** : Guy T (president LH twinning committee), Bruno Y (president of LH music school), Jean-Michel (president des parents-élèves)
 2. **Newtown** : Sue P (Chair of Montgomeryshire / North Powys youth orchestra, Michelle M (Manager of Montgomeryshire / North Powys youth orchestra), Kevin W & Fred M (Newtown twinning committee)
- **Logistics** - Expecting two full coaches of French visitors – cc 110 of them – as follows :
- **Coach 1 – Musicians coach** – About 60 of them including children (13-17), accompanying adults/parents as well as 5 to 6 music teachers. Coach will leave LH on Thursday 26/04 late afternoon, come by shuttle and arrive in Newtown on Friday 28/04 at cc 5 pm (exact time still TBC). On the way back, will leave Newtown on Monday evening 30/04 at cc 9pm to get their shuttle overnight (overnight journey).
 - **Coach 2 – Twinning coach** – About 50 people including some twinning committee members and other visitors from LH. Will leave LH on Wednesday 25/04 at 3:30 pm and come by ferry. Expected in Newtown on Thursday at cc 5 pm. On the way back, will leave Newtown early on Tuesday at cc 7 am (as they normally do). As Newtown Twinning Committee, we will need to organise a day out with them on Friday (TBA) but ensure we are all back to Newtown High School no later than 5 pm that Friday to welcome the musicians turning up in Newtown.
- **General outline / structure of the weekend** – Discussed the following :
- a welcome do will be organised at the High School at 6 – 7 pm on Friday where refreshments will be served, an overall update about the weekend will be provided and all visitors will then meet with their host families.
 - Friday night spent with host families
 - Saturday – Day of musical rehearsals in the High School but also various indoors/outdoors activities (incl sports... possibly using Malwyn Centre) organised throughout the day. For other visitors – incl twinning members, anyone interested really – we could organise some day out (to the coast, Snowdonia,... TBA). We need to start thinking about which activities we are planning ahead of this weekend so that we can let LH know what they may need to bring (ie, w/aking shoes, sport clothing, swimming costumes/trunks, rain coats...)
 - Late afternoon on Saturday , everyone would go back to their host family, freshen up / rest
 - Saturday evening is a big buffet evening at the Ely for everyone to join (precise Nos to be agreed as there are already 110 expected French visitors + all host families!). Possibly some small bands would play some music in the background (possibly Ffonic, Sarah Smith – as solo violinist, a small jazz band – 5-6 of them – coming from LH and already playing in their orchestra.... All TBC by Sue P / Michelle M)
 - Back to host families on Saturday evening

- Sunday would be another day of music rehearsals and various fun activities. Due to other local commitments in the afternoon, local music teachers would only be able to attend morning rehearsal sessions. Some light lunch would need to be provided to everyone.
 - Again, back home mid-late pm to host families to freshen up / rest / put on concert outfit & get some dinner prior to going back to Newtown High School for evening concert
 - Sunday night – Evening concert at Newtown High School – exact time & format TBC but probably starting at 7 - 8 pm (refreshments to be organised).
 - Once the concert over, back to host families
 - Monday am – Leaving host families and meeting in Newtown early morning (8-9 am TBC) before local family members start their work/school normal day. Day out organised by Newtown Twinning Committee incl Monday evening dinner (to be discussed further)
 - Musician coach leaving Newtown at cc 9 pm on Monday. Other visitors to spend the last evening with their host family
 - 2nd coach (twinning coach) to leave Newtown at 7 am on Tuesday.
- **Music rehearsals Vs other activities** – Was agreed that as there will be many youngsters, it is important to get the right balance between rehearsing music in small workshops throughout the weekend (on Saturday & Sunday) Vs having fun/sport activities to let pressure off. These will now need to be discussed, organised/booked & communicated to LH by Newtown twinning committee. Could involve swimming pool, football, table tennis, archery, etc... It was also mentioned that more typical Welsh/English based activities (such as playing bowl games in Montgomery for instance as we already did several years ago) would also be most appreciated.
- **Instruments (types & Nos) & levels played** – LH will come with two ‘orchestras’ - two separate groups :
- String orchestra (incl a range of instruments such as violin, cello,...) – 20 musicians which on average 6-7 years’ experience (quite experienced!)
 - Orchestra (incl percussions) – 40 musicians including quite a few adults. Also on average 5-6 years’ experience (incl flutes, clarinet, saxophone, trombone, trumpet...)
 - Between the two above orchestra, a small group of 5 to 6 musicians play jazz music pieces together (small jazz group) and could possibly provide nice jazzy background music during Saturday evening dinner? (TBC)
- For certain pieces of music, the two orchestras from LH will all play together as one single orchestra of cc 60 musicians. There will only be 1 to 2 guitarists.
- As some instruments are too large to physically take to Newtown, it was discussed and agreed that we would try to provide LH musicians with the following instruments/equipments for them to use during their weekend in Newtown : 3 kettle drums, 1 drum, 1 xylophone and (lots) of music stands.
- **Vendée local songs ‘/ dancing / local music** –
- LH confirmed the eastern music is actually traditional music from Eastern Europe (The Balkans) – mystery is now cleared! - but there will be no dancing nor any singing involved at all during the whole weekend, only music. As far as the music from LH is concerned, it will only be groups of musicians playing together, no solo music to be expected. In terms of style of music, it was discussed and agreed that both LH as well as Newtown play a selection of contemporary, classical as well as film music so there is no problem there (seems very similar between the two towns).
 - It was also agreed that each music repertoire (from LH and Newtown) should be completed and sent to the other town by no later than the end of January 18 (Newtown confirmed they should be able to email theirs to LH mid-Jan 18 whilst LH should send theirs to Newtown by the end of January). Once each repertoire is known by everyone,

we can then move to the next step, ie decide which piece of music can be played separately or possibly together (French and Welsh combined) – To be discussed further and agreed in the New Year between Sue, Michelle, Gregg and Bruno Y.

- Each repertoire to include the following info : 1. Name of piece of music; 2. Name of composer; 3. Name of the musical-adaptation; 4. Name of the music publisher (if it has been published)

- **Hosting** – It was agreed that young French musicians will be hosted in local (Welsh) young musician host families as much as possible. There could be more than one young French per family depending on what they request and what we can offer. The format of hosting information will be provided by LH in two separate files towards the end of January 2018:
 - One Excel file from the music school (1st coach) to be provided by Bruno Y
 - One Excel file from LH twinning committee (2nd coach) to be provided by Guy T.Both files will include the following info : first name, surname, age, gender, level in spoken English, any issue with pet, instrument played, level played, diet requirement, allergy, preference to stay with someone of not and if yes who, any life threatening conditions (incl Asthma).

- **Safeguarding/risk-assessment policies & requirements / Insurance** – As for Newtown twinning committee, both LH twinning committee as well as LH music school have their own public liability insurance and both Guy and Bruno will check what is covered by their own insurances as far as this kind of trip is concerned.

LH music school will request a standard letter signed by all parents – whose children are on the trip – confirming their agreement for their child to travel abroad to Wales and be allowed to stay in a local host family.

When it comes to safeguarding matters, they do not seem very demanding on such matters (different national legislation) as we are here in the UK. So I guess that as long as we have the adequate safeguarding measures in place – meeting both PCC and Newtown TC requirements), they should be fine with it. (one for Cheryl and Richards E to discuss shortly).

Once this has been reviewed and documented locally, we can always share with LH to ensure they are OK with the approach suggested.

This first Skype session lasted about an hour 15 mins. It was agreed that this seems to be an effective way to communicate matters to each other (Guy T called me 24 hours later confirming they were very pleased with this Skype session).

We therefore agreed to hold a 2nd Skype session some time in February 18 (exact date TBC) and possibly a 3rd one some time in April. Any other communication will take place mostly by emails and possible occasional phone calls.
