

NEWTOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR AGM 18TH JULY 2025

Newtown Twinning has had a pretty busy year all in all!

After our 2024 AGM in early May we had our Annual French-themed Dinner at the Themes Restaurant, Newtown College. It was a truly excellent meal and our congratulations and thanks go to the college, staff and students for the organisation of such an enjoyable evening for us. You will see this annual event returned to later on in this report!

During August we had our informal 'Summer Get Together Picnic' in Dolerw Park where we renewed friendships with committee members, hosts and supporters past and present. It was a chance to chat together . . . rightly so committee meetings don't always afford this opportunity!

October 2024 saw the return of our hugely popular autumn and winter season of French Film Evenings. This year we have moved venue for these to Hafan Yr Afon and each film is preceded by a light buffet with wine. Previously, we have had 4 of these evenings during the winter months in October, November, January and February but talks are afoot to possibly extend this due to public demand! For the October 2024 Film Evening our secretary, Andrew Gentle, created an excellent display of Twinning activities since its inception 25 years ago with video, photos, gifts from Les Herbiers and memorabilia. He also gave a talk during the winter to Newtown Civic Society on Twinning with Les Herbiers. All these events help to bring Twinning to the forefront of the minds of Newtonians and spread the word about what we do. A huge thank you is due to Andrew for his work on preparing for these evenings.

Our minds in committee meetings during the winter months were focused on planning for the upcoming visit to Les Herbiers for 'Les Herbiers Sous Pression' – a Beer Festival with their three twin towns, Coria in Spain, Liberwolkwitz in Germany and ourselves so the event was truly a European Celebration with parties of residents from France, Spain, Germany and Wales! Each town brought with them 2 brewers from their region so with us came Monty's Brewery and Bragdy Tanat and the whole trip was a roaring success! Everyone from the three visiting towns was hosted by a local family and so it really was an exchange of language and culture and a great opportunity to exhibit produce from each of the 4 regions. Hats off to Les Herbiers for organising and promoting the whole event, a mammoth task!

I said I'd return to our French-themed Annual Dinners at the College and because this AGM is taking place a little over 12 months since the last one it includes the 2025 Dinner, which took place just last week! It was another lovely evening with delicious food and the exemplary skills of the college students showcased. It was so good that we have, yet again, already booked for June 2026! In fact, we will be discussing the possibility of having a mid-year meal in January at the Themes Restaurant so keep an eye on our website for more details and book early as the places really are limited.

All our events happen only because of our dedicated small committee and as chair I want to thank them sincerely ALL for their determined work on behalf of Newtown Twinning. Special thanks must go to Andrew, our secretary, who shoulders a huge load in planning and organisation of ALL we do. Also, thank you to Tracy Owen, our committee member who is our representative on Newtown Town Council. I think I must be the most fortunate committee chair in Montgomeryshire as they make my life so easy and enjoyable by being so willing and full of energy and ideas! **Diolch yn fawr pawb!**

Kate Rayner