

# Romsey Twinning

## Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Present:** Roland Matthews (Chair), Denise Amery, Angela Bernhardt, Karen Bolton (Minutes), Debbie Evenhand, Kathrina Gwynne, John Parker, Judy Phillips, Phil Thomas

**2. Apologies:** All committee members present.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting** held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025: These were taken as a true record, subject to the following **correction**:

Item 7a (Paimpol report): No report from participants had been made about accessibility, but Karen felt that it would be important to raise such matters for subsequent visits so that all members could access all activities.

### 4. Matters arising

Community transport: Kathrina said that she had been told there was sufficient funding for Unity Transport to continue for the next five years.

### 5. Treasurer's Report

John Parker had sent out the Annual Accounts with AGM papers in advance of the meeting. They are available on the Members page of the Twinning website, notice of which has been sent to the Membership. The association's current reserves stand at £2080, after allowing for prepayments, debtors and creditors. Thanks to John for preparing the accounts.

### 6. Membership

Numbers remain fairly stable at 64, with one new member joining recently. John has yet to update the Membership Form by adding, as agreed, the question 'How did you hear about us?' Details are contained in the Annual Accounts for 2024/25 available on the Twinning website.

### 7. Twin towns

- a) Paimpol – Karen had nothing to report as we await further discussion about the future of exchanges. Roland talked to the committee about his visit to the Chant du Marin Festival and encouraged everyone to go should the opportunity arise.
- b) Battenberg – Debbie spoke for us all in our disappointment at the lack of a visit from Battenberg this month and expressed Fred's sadness too. We hope that a group will be able to come to Romsey again in the future (see below).
- c) Treviglio - Phil had no news to report.

### 8. Twinning Exchanges – update

2027 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Romsey – Battenberg partnership, so it is hoped that we might be able to arrange for a group from the town to come to Romsey in the first half of that year, perhaps including the Mayor. In past years Battenberg has almost always come to us in the autumn/winter months, when outings are more limited owing to shorter days and less favourable weather. More recently it has been suggested by several Battenberg twinningers that they would prefer to visit Romsey earlier in the year .

In reference to the paper he distributed in January and his subsequent mailing to the membership in July Roland reported that there had been very little feedback to its proposals. It was decided that since this issue was fundamental to the future of Twinning a reminder would be sent out to members shortly before the AGM stressing the importance of the matter, in the hope of getting a good attendance for a full discussion at the meeting.

## **9. Romsey Festival 2026**

Roland has 2 artists from Paimpol who are interested in coming to join the Festival, and thanks to recent contact with the Burgermeister in Battenberg now has a list of arts organisations he can write to there. Gian Battista has asked the Town Hall in Treviglio for their help and is awaiting their response. It is hoped to be able to have representation from all three twin towns at the Festival.

Romsey Twinning is registered as a group on the Romsey Festival website but until we have confirmed participants from our twin towns we are unable to organise anything further. Roland expressed concern that we may not be able to provide the right venue if we wait too long.

The number of participants was raised as a potential issue, particularly if large dance/theatre groups want to come. It was suggested that perhaps some things could be done digitally if this proves too complicated, but it is preferable to have 'the real thing' to enable better community engagement. In line with normal twinning practice visitors would be expected to pay their own transport costs to Romsey, and we would offer accommodation with hosts here. We would endeavour to help with transport costs via grant applications.

Judy suggested looking at other local interest groups in the towns, eg walking, sport, bell ringing, reminding us that part of our remit was to foster links between such groups to further develop the idea of twinning partnerships. Members were asked to make suggestions of interest groups that might be worth following up in this respect.

## **10. AGM:**

The hall is booked from 6.30 – 9.30 and Judy, Debbie & Karen will go early to prepare refreshments. Judy will buy the necessary supplies. Karen & Debbie will organise either a large screen or laptop to show photos on the website while people are having their cuppa.

Committee members were asked if they wished to remain in post. John would like to hand over the rôle of Treasurer. Kathrina offered to take this on and will offer herself for election at the AGM. If approved, she would work with John in the months ahead to afford a smooth transition. All other Committee members agreed to remain in post.

## **11. Quiz Night**

No bookings so far. Members were asked to advertise amongst friends/groups. John will add to FB pages. Karen will correct the error on the Home page of the website and try to get something in the Romsey Advertiser. Thanks to John for getting Test Valley to change the night of their proposed Mayor's quiz which had been clashing with our date.

Angela will buy wine for team prizes and a wooden spoon, Roland will buy a gift for quizmaster Mike Bull. Kathrina was disappointed with the poor responses to her request for raffle prizes; the only local company who had given anything was KutchenHaus. Committee members agreed to

source additional prizes. Judy kindly offered to store them at her house and to number them in advance to help speed up the process on the night. She also said she would go in person to Hilliers to ask if they might like to offer a prize. John will arrange the tickets for the raffle.

## **12. Website and publicity:**

A very full Summer newsletter went out in August and Karen thanked those who had contributed items. She asked for items for the next newsletter which will go out in December.

The matter of a new banner/sail and poster would be discussed at a future meeting when there was more time.

Website – the photo archive managed by Steve Hunter has been removed as the link is now obsolete. Albums have been created on Google Drive and Karen wants to test out a few things before linking everything to the website. So far only the Paimpol 2025 visit can be viewed. It is hoped the rest can be made available soon. It would be helpful if other committee members could have a look and give any feedback.

We have been asked by a couple of other twinning associations to advertise their events – there wasn't really time to talk about this so in the interim Karen will use her discretion if approached to do this.

**13. Any other business:** Judy will contact the British Legion to organise a wreath for Remembrance Day.

**14. Date of next meeting:** Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2 pm, at 70A Winchester Road.