

Proposal for a formal Town Twinning Agreement between Trowbridge Town Council and Trowbridge French Twinning Association

Background

A Twinning Charter was signed on 1 June 1996 by the Mayors of Trowbridge and Charenton-le-Pont, to “seal their endeavour to create friendly links between their towns to enable the people to forge closer contacts with each other ... by encouraging personal, cultural, sporting, social and economic relations”. They declared their “common will to support the activities of the Twinning Committees in order to consolidate the friendly links between (their) two countries and to contribute to a united Europe in peace and liberty”.

Trowbridge French Twinning Association is a voluntary group set up to carry out the day-to-day promotion and functioning of the twinning arrangement with Charenton-le-Pont. However, the Twinning remains ‘owned’ by Trowbridge Town Council.

Over the years, TFTA has gradually felt a diminishing amount of support and interest from TTC, and at present TFTA feels that TTC acknowledges almost no ownership of the Twinning arrangement. The purpose in proposing a formal Town Twinning Agreement between TTC and TFTA is to clarify relationships, duties and responsibilities, thus engaging TTC in an active partnership with both TFTA at the local level and Charenton-le-Pont at the international level.

PROPOSAL

1. Trowbridge French Twinning Association is the voluntary body which brings together people who live, work or have another strong interest in Trowbridge and wish to be involved in French twinning and other aspects of a positive relationship with France and French culture in the widest sense.

TFTA will:

1. Adhere to the Twinning Charter of 1 June 1996.
2. Operate by means of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other Committee Members, to be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Association to which all members are invited. The Committee must also include the Mayor of Trowbridge, as ex-officio President, and a nominated town Councillor.
3. Hold regular, minuted meetings of the Committee.
4. Manage the financial accounts of the Association and publish audited accounts to the AGM.
5. Ensure that public liability insurance is maintained to cover TFTA events.
6. Organise members’ visits to Charenton-le-Pont, normally on a biennial basis, and reciprocally organise arrangements for citizens of Charenton-le-Pont visiting Trowbridge, including their accommodation in local homes.
7. Organise regular social and fundraising events in support of the Association’s aims.

8. Promote TFTA and the aims of Twinning through such means as a website, social media, participation in town events, promotional literature etc, as appropriate.
9. Encourage and assist interested groups and institutions in the town to arrange exchanges with their counterparts in Charenton-le-Pont, so as to increase the those who benefit from the French Twinning.
10. Advise TTC on twinning-related matters.

2. Trowbridge Town Council, as the official signatory to the Twinning Charter with Charenton-le-Pont, holds the responsibility of positively maintaining relationships between the two towns at the Mayoral and Council level.

TTC will:

1. Adhere to the Twinning Charter of 1 June 1996.
2. Appoint a Town Councillor to act as a link between TFTA and the Council, with the Mayor being the ex-officio President of TFTA, and both to be members of the TFTA Committee.
3. Maintain effective and regular contact with TFTA through staff members who will link with the Association, and ensure that TFTA has full access to town events etc at which it is appropriate for Twinning to be represented.
4. Ensure that Town Councillors and TTC staff understand that that their Twinning arrangements are owned by TTC, and that all can promote and benefit from them.
5. Provide an annual grant to TFTA.
6. Maintain contact with the Mayor and Council of Charenton-le-Pont, inviting them to appropriate town events in Trowbridge.
7. Support TFTA when Councillors and/or citizens visit from Charenton-le-Pont, including an official reception of guests at which attendance by Councillors and staff is to be strongly encouraged..
8. Ensure that French Twinning is appropriately and visibly promoted in Trowbridge through those means in the control of TTC - eg signage, commemorative installations, publications, the website and town facilities.
9. Promote and develop exchanges with Charenton-le-Pont on behalf of groups and organisations in Trowbridge that have contact with TTC staff, such as sports, arts, business and civic groups.
10. Meet annually with TFTA representatives (together with those of the other Twinning Associations) to discuss future twinning events and the funding thereof.

Date:

Signed:

(Chair of TFTA)

(Mayor or Council Leader of TTC)