

## CIRENCESTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION – NEWSLETTER

### Exchange Visits

It seems only yesterday that we were enjoying the best of summer weather and hosting our friends from Itzehoe to all that the Cotswolds has to offer. The year ended in style with a small but select contingent from CTA travelling to Germany to enjoy the “Itzehoe Advent 2019” tour.

From Thu 28 Nov until Mon 2 Dec 19, Peter Berrell and his daughter Lily, Lesley and Ben Thackeray, and Marion and Peter Stephenson were the sole ‘overseas’ visitors for the weekend. However, for a part of the weekend they were joined by four people from Malchin (about 200 km from Itzehoe and who enjoy a ‘friendship’ with the Itzehoe Twinning Group) and a further four from Paslek in Poland, who are twinned with Itzehoe.

The Cirencester contingent flew from Heathrow to Hamburg, where they were met and conveyed to Itzehoe. Renate, the enthusiastic and tireless President of Itzehoe Twinning Association, greeted all of the guests at a meal on their first full day. On behalf of the CTA, Marion Stephenson presented a card and calendar to Renate, and made a short address thanking their hosts. The Polish Group also made a presentation.



Then, by means of train, minibus and car, the group enjoyed a feast of Christmas Markets. Hamburg was the largest and the group arrived in time to enjoy a major parade. Barmstedt offered local produce, while Toenning (by the coast) was snugly indoors in a restored warehouse. For further variety, the group were also taken to a Finnish Christmas Market in Hohenlockstedt.



As we have come to expect, all the arrangements went well and, with friendly and welcoming hosts, the CTA contingent greatly enjoyed their visit. There were some interesting and enjoyable group meals, including one in the basement restaurant of the Hamburg town hall (much grander than it sounds), on the banks of the River Eider, and at the home of one of the hosts.



Lily had a good time at a local secondary school, where she spent a day. Renate is willing to assist with any other people studying German who would like spend some time with a German family.

This year offers the ideal opportunity to join the CTA and see what it is all about. Cirencester has been invited to join in the Itzehoe twinning festival on 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June. This will mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of twinning with Paslek (Poland) and friendship with Malchin (from former East Germany) and will include their Weinfest. They also hope that the folk from La Couronne (France) will be there to join in the celebrations. CTA has been linked to Itzehoe, near Hamburg, since 1982 and St Genis Laval, near Lyon.

**If you are interested in joining this trip, please contact** us on the website and we will be delighted to give you more details.

## **Linking International Twinnings**

Following on from a Bristol Conference promoting International Twinning between towns and cities where 'Twinning is a tried and tested way of linking people with their counterparts in other countries', Cirencester Twinning has taken the initiative to form an Umbrella group with neighbours Tetbury, Malmesbury and Nailsworth Twinning in order to collaborate and support one another in today's diminishing interest for European connection.

Our first meeting was held last year on 20th November, hosted by Tetbury and Chaired by CTA with support from Patrick Coleman our mayor, was met with an enthusiastic response from all members. We believe that collaboration with one another exchanging ideas and sharing social events will strengthen our resolve to keep the doors to Europe open. Malmesbury hosted our second meeting in February, at which plans, experiences and ideas were shared.

For more information, please look at our website: [cirencestertwinningassociation.org.uk](http://cirencestertwinningassociation.org.uk) or contact Margaret