

## Minutes of Reset AGM Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

Present: Catherine Bessières-Craddock, Steve Craddock, Richard Shipman, Lesley Govier, Eileen Mallen, Killara Burns, Mike Wilkins, Chris Oswald-Jones, Julian Saunders

Apologies: Christine Ford, Anne Salmon, Trevor Payne, Jane Shipman, Clarissa Hanna, Trevor Bryan, Tim Whishaw, Trevor and Margaret Abram, Trevor Martin, Bob McKay, Daniel Gould

1. Minutes of AGM of Thursday 30th January

Accepted.

Proposed Chris Oswald Jones

Seconded Lesley Govier

2. Finances and membership

The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Richard reported that our recent sizeable win from the lottery has now been received.

He added that subscription fees will remain unchanged and that insurance costs are also unchanged.

Chris OJ asked that Dennis Parrett be formally thanked for his ongoing involvement in examining the association's accounts.

Catherine informed members of the Committee's decision to make £500 (including the lottery money) available to primary schools to fund efforts in promoting French language and culture and that it is proposed to provide schools with a questionnaire aimed at helping the Committee in the allocation of funds.

There was a brief discussion related to the problems of French teaching in the primary school syllabus. Lesley pointed out that foreign language teaching now has to be done largely in pre-school day sessions. Chris OJ and Mike W asked if we could propose that schools use their breakfast clubs to promote French. Catherine commented that it was up to individual schools to decide how to fit French teaching into their curriculum and that such proposal from FTTA could be seen more as an attempt to interfere.

3. Brief report on the Francofun event of 5<sup>th</sup> March 25

Catherine reported that the event had been successful and enjoyed by the 8 participants 4 of whom were FTTA members and the French Club helpers. It is hoped to repeat this event at a future date but in a slightly different format as, in view of the small numbers involved, we will not be able to have Castella for our sole use.

4. Brief update on planned events.

**The Bastille Day event** which was so successful last July will be repeated, hopefully again at the Physic Garden. As 14<sup>th</sup> July falls on a Monday the Committee had planned to hold the event on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>. Chris pointed out that the Pirates festival is due to take place on that day. Catherine will check availability of the Physic Garden on that day and confirm the place, date and time for this event in the next few weeks.

Members of the Deal twinning association have expressed an interest in joining us for this event. Deal is twinned with St Omer situated at only 25km of Hazebrouck and Catherine had approached the Chair of Deal Twinning Association to see if there would be an interest in

organising joint trips and events. She found that they were experiencing the same problems as our group in establishing and maintaining links with their French partners but would be very keen to do things jointly.

Chris OJ informed the group that following his intervention at the Town Hall, the flagpole in the town centre will be flying a tricolour during the Bastille Day weekend.

**A trip to Lille** is planned for October and Eileen M and Catherine have started doing research on transport and accommodation. The original idea was to do a trip coinciding with the weekend of the “Grande Braderie de Lille” on 5<sup>th</sup> October but after hearing negative reports on this event and seeing the higher costs of accommodation for that weekend, it was decided to postpone the trip to the following week starting 13<sup>th</sup> October. There are a number of interesting things to see and do in Lille and around at any time of year anyway. We have no firm dates yet but are thinking of 2 nights between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October. A questionnaire will shortly go to FTTA membership to their views on the various transport and accommodation options available.

5. AOB

-There was a brief discussion as to how the existence of FTTA could be better publicised. A number of the ideas suggested had, in some way already been explored. However, the Committee will give some thought to approaching Net magazine and the person responsible for the Council Newsletter.

-It was mentioned that there will be municipal elections in France in March 2026 and that a new administration in Hazebrouck might prove more responsive than the present one.

-Catherine informed the group of her decision to stand down as Chair at the next AGM in April 2026. She however gave her assurance that she will continue as committee member to support the new Chair and help organise events.

COJ asked that she be formally thanked for her hard work by those present.

Next AGM to take place in April 2026. Exact date to be published at a later date.