



BUCKINGHAM

Twinning Association

Newsletter - October 2025

www.buckinghamtwinning.org.uk

Autumn Edition

Buckingham's Swan Wheelers Visit Mouvaux

7th - 8th June 2025



In This Newsletter:

Cycling Trip to Mouvaux, France (In our last newsletter, we missed sharing this news... *Our apologies!*)

7th - 8th June 2025

Sport and Cultural Trip to Valmadrera

Sept 20th - 22nd 2025

Walking group from Neukirchen-Vluyn to Buckingham

Oct 3rd, 4th and 5th 2025

Next Twinning Meeting

**AGM on 30 October. Room
at the University, Enterprise
Hub in Vinson Centre, 7pm**

Buckingham's cycling club, Swan Wheelers, is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Back in 2016, when the club was only a year old, we had the pleasure of welcoming cyclists from our French twin town to Buckingham. This June, it was finally our turn to return the visit, and we were delighted to spend the weekend of 6–8 June in Mouvaux.



Seven of us made the trip and were given a wonderfully warm welcome by Rallye Cyclo Mouvaux.

The weekend began on Saturday with a breakfast of croissants and coffee at their clubhouse, a perfect way to meet everyone before setting off. Two routes were on offer, 45 km and 150 km, both taking us across the border into Belgium. The longer route included climbs over several of the local *monts* that rise from the otherwise flat landscape, including Cassel, where we stopped for lunch in a traditional Flemish tavern.

On Sunday we all joined together for a 70 km ride to Ypres (Ieper) in Belgium. We cycled through the Menin Gate, stopped for coffee beside the rebuilt Cloth Hall, and passed numerous memorials and cemeteries along the way, a moving experience, especially given that our own *débarquement* on French soil had been on 6 June.

The weather was kind to us, and we returned to an amazing champagne lunch at the clubhouse, generously sponsored by Mouvaux's Twinning Association.





The visit was a great success, wonderful rides, delicious food, and new friendships formed.

We were all struck by the impressive cycling infrastructure: a clubhouse within the local leisure centre, beautifully smooth tarmac even on country lanes, and well-marked cycle paths through the towns.

It was lovely to see so many local cyclists out and about, including several groups of children on Sunday.

We did have a little rain on Saturday, and unfortunately one of the Mouvaux riders had a fall. We send our very best wishes for a speedy recovery and are glad to hear he's on the mend.



Our thanks go to Rallye Cyclo Mouvaux and the twinning associations for their wonderful hospitality. We're already looking forward to welcoming our friends from Mouvaux to Buckingham and to planning more cycling adventures with our twin towns in the future!

James Tebboth



A Weekend of Friendship and Exchange

Sept 20th - 22nd 2025

On Friday, 19th September, Adeep and I travelled from Stansted to Bergamo, near Milan, to take part in a sporting and cultural weekend hosted by our Italian twin town, Valmadrera. Sadly, James, who had planned to join us, was unable to travel due to illness.

Valmadrera Gemellagio committee had invited representatives from all three of their twin towns. In total, there were nine visitors from Buckingham, four from Châteauneuf-les-Martigues (France), and three from Weißenhorn (Germany)

The main sporting event was a tennis tournament, following on from the successful one held in Buckingham last year. This time, our Italian hosts kindly offered to stage it, with teams from Italy and the UK competing. (The French and German towns did not send players on this occasion.)

A further seven members of Buckingham Tennis Club travelled independently, flying to Milan Linate and continuing by train to Lecco, where they stayed in an AirBnB.



The weekend began with a spectacular boat trip on Lake Como, travelling in elegant Venetian-style water taxis. We explored much of the southern part of the lake, passing impressive villas and several film locations, including scenes from James Bond. The weather was glorious, setting the tone for a memorable visit.

Lunch was hosted at the Aldo Moro School, where catering students prepared and served an excellent meal as part of their vocational training. The food was of a very high standard, beautifully presented and absolutely delicious.





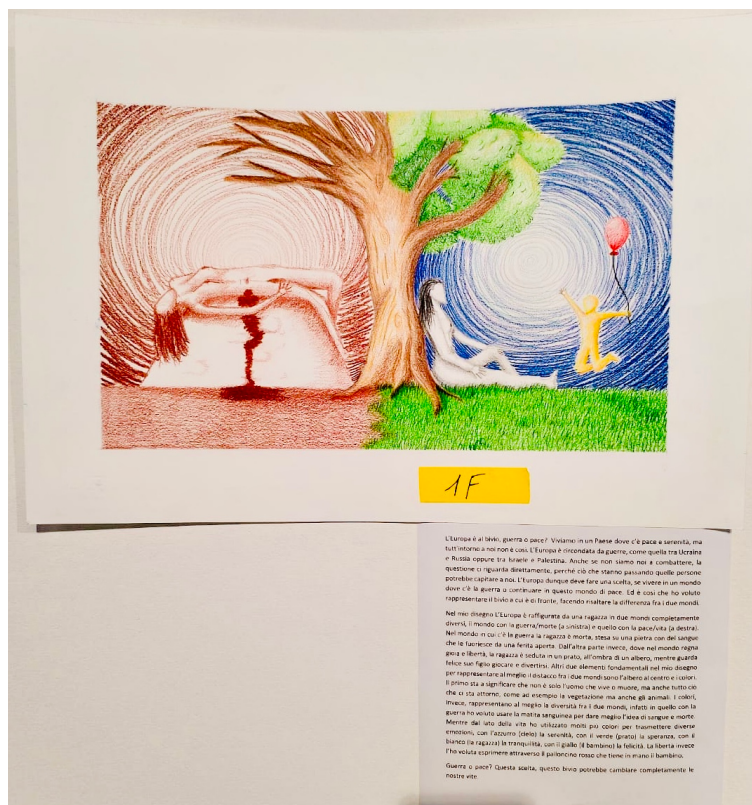
“Europe: Perspectives” Round Table

In the afternoon, the eight tennis players (including Adeep) went to the Valmadrera’s Tennis Club for a practice session, while I attended a round-table discussion at the Cultural Centre on the theme “Europe: Perspectives.”

Before an audience of around 50–60 people, we introduced ourselves, first in our own language, then in Italian. I was surprised that the French and German mayors relied on interpreters, while I managed mine in both English and Italian, a proud moment!

The discussion explored the words and objects that connect our twin towns with Europe and moments when we had felt truly European. I spoke about my time working at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, within the Europe Directorate, and a memorable 2019 visit to the European Commission in Brussels to debate alongside delegates from 27 European countries.

Afterwards, I was invited to help judge an art competition, a role originally planned for James. The exhibition featured 20 mixed-media pieces created by 17-year-old students from a local college on the theme of Youth and Europe. Fortunately, I had some guidance and could translate the accompanying notes from each artists. With the help of smart phone technology, and my college art background! I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



Shared Meals and Creative Connections

That evening, all 16 visiting guests and several members of Valmadrera's twinning organisation gathered for a lively pizza dinner, a "table for 26" filled with laughter and friendship.



The following day, I returned to the Cultural Centre to run a presentation of Buckingham's artists, prepared by James and members of Buckingham Art for All (BAFA). The rolling PowerPoint, complete with Italian captions, was shown to local artists and introduced by Lorenzo Castelnovo, son of Valmadrera Gemellagio's, Beppe Castelnovo. The audience was very impressed, and we hope this will lead to future art exchanges and collaborations.



At lunchtime, I visited the tennis club to watch the tournament and meet friends from previous visits. With Valmadrera's stunning mountain backdrop and warm hospitality, it was another glorious day, albeit a humid one. The Buckingham team triumphed, promising to host the next event at home next year.



That evening, I joined my hosts and the family who had been due to host James for a relaxed barbecue overlooking Lake Como. It was a wonderful evening of good company and conversation, rounded off perfectly before the rain began to pour later that night.

The next morning, the rain continued. Adeep and I were kindly driven to the airport by Beppe, who was flying to Poland for work. Unfortunately, a national transport strike, heavy rain, and Monday morning traffic made for a long journey. After eight hours at Bergamo Airport, we finally made it home, exhausted but delighted.

Despite the 14-hour journey, it had been another fantastic visit, full of friendship, culture, and connection. Our thanks go to Valmadrera for their exceptional hospitality.

Steve Haines



Apologies for the Flag fail

Tennis Triumph and a Perfect Farewell

The weekend was a wonderful demonstration of the spirit of twinning, promoting sport, culture, and friendship.

Grazie, Valmadrera! A team of eight from Buckingham LTC had the pleasure of visiting our twin club, Tennis Club 88, and the experience was nothing short of spectacular.

A special thank you to Stefano and Pamela, whose warm hospitality, along with the welcome from every member of the Valmadrera club, made the visit truly memorable.

The memories made on and off the court will last a lifetime, and we look forward to returning the hospitality here in Buckingham soon.

Adeep Fallouh





A tale of Unpredictable Weather and Warm Friendship

Oct 3rd, 4th and 5th 2025

The Germans have a saying: "There is no such thing as bad weather, there is only inappropriate clothing!" And this saying was tested to the limits at the annual walking weekend with visitors from Neukirchen-Vluyn during the first weekend in October. Many thanks to all who hosted and participated in making the weekend a success, in spite of the weather.

Eight intrepid Neukirchen-Vluyners set off in the early hours of Thursday 2nd, but due to traffic and roadworks one car was just in time to see the ferry steaming out of the harbour! They missed out on the planned trip to Cambridge, but they all arrived at the appointed time on Thursday evening in Buckingham.

The small organising group for the weekend had debated which day to do the big walk, a "Flora Thompson" walk from Cottisford to Fringford and back to Cottisford via Tunsmore. The choice was between scattered showers and possible heavy rain later on Friday, or rain with very high winds on Saturday. In the end, we went for Friday, for better or worse!

Two versions of the walk were planned, to allow for those with injuries or who preferred a shorter walk. The morning weather was kind enough, and everyone enjoyed the walk to Fringford, where we had a very pleasant lunch at the Butcher's Arms. We were joined by Jonathan, who wasn't able to walk but came along for the company and the food.

After lunch, the long walkers braved the rain to return via the obelisk at Tunsmore, led by Margaret and Paul, while the others took a shorter route, capably led by Udo. In the evening, half of the group (and their hosts) experienced a typical English quiz night in Buckingham, while the others headed to Akeley for drinks, snacks and plenty of good conversation.



Saturday dawned fair, a really good day for our planned visit to Blenheim Palace, chosen as the tourist highlight of the weekend. Unfortunately, the high winds meant the gardens were closed, which caused a certain amount of disappointment. Still, we made the most of it! We toured the palace, then enjoyed a walk around the grounds and the village before rounding off the day with a very enjoyable shared supper at Margaret and Paul's house. Many thanks to them for hosting, it was relaxed, full of laughter, and there was plenty to talk about.



Sunday morning was a quieter affair, with time for relaxation or church, before we all gathered for lunch at the Stowe Café. Afterwards, we enjoyed a pleasant, if rather blustery, walk around the Stowe perimeter, finishing with afternoon tea at the Chantry Chapel. Particular thanks go to Sally, Ann, Isabella and Gillian for their wonderful efforts in setting up, serving and clearing away, and to everyone who contributed cakes and bakes for the occasion.



As always, this traditional tea was a real favourite with our German guests and made the perfect ending to a lovely weekend. Sunday evening was spent quietly with hosts, and everyone departed on Monday morning happy, despite what the weather had thrown at us!

Lorna Joy - Chair

Interested in joining the trip to Neukirchen-Vluyn for Martinsmarkt?

Members of the Buckingham Twinning Association will be travelling to our German twin town, Neukirchen-Vluyn, in early November to take part in their much-loved **Martinsmarkt festival**. The event runs from **Saturday afternoon, 8th November, through to Sunday evening, 9th November**.

You can find out more about the festival here:

gaudium.de/neukirchen-vluyn-martinsmarkt

Our own Udo and Sally Dölz will be there, running a stall filled with English goodies such as homemade jam, marmalade and chutney, always a big hit with our German friends. We'd love to add to their collection, so if you can make something traditionally British that might appeal to visitors, it would be greatly appreciated.

If you like to join the trip and help on the stall, it promises to be a warm and friendly weekend celebrating local culture and the special bond between our towns.

For more details, please contact **Lorna Joy**, Chair of the Buckingham Twinning Association, on 07917 002101.



Call for Volunteers Mouvoux Christmas Market

5th, 6th and 7th December

It's nearly that time again! We'll be taking part in the **Mouvoux Christmas Market** this December, the market runs from **Friday evening through to Sunday late afternoon**, with a lovely festive celebration usually taking place on the Saturday night.

We're looking for volunteers to travel to France to help set up, serve on the stall, and spread some British cheer over the weekend. It's always a fun and festive event, and a great way to be part of the community spirit.

We're also calling for **donations** of all things typically British to sell on the stall, **marmalade, jam, chutney, mince pies, shortbread**, and any other treats or goodies you can make or contribute. (You can claim back the cost of ingredients if you wish.)

Please let **Stephanie Scrase** (email - stephanie.scrase@fourfrogs.co.uk) know what you'll be donating so she can arrange collection or delivery.

Thank you all in advance, these events wouldn't be possible without your help and generosity!

Call for Volunteers Christmas Fair & Parade

Following the Christmas Parade on **Saturday 13th December**, we'll once again be taking part in the **Buckingham Christmas Fair**, where we'll be running our ever-popular **Tombola and Raffle stalls**. To make these a success, we're looking for donations of bottles of wine, spirits or liqueurs for the Tombola, and home-made food or festive treats to include in a Christmas Hamper for the Raffle.

We'll also need plenty of volunteers to help set up, run the stall, and spread some festive cheer on the day. It's always a lovely community event and a great way to get into the Christmas spirit.

Santa Float Collections – Volunteers Needed!

In the run-up to Christmas, we'll also be helping with the **Santa Float collections** around Buckingham. It's always great fun and raises valuable funds for our Twinning activities, as we receive a share of the collection for taking part.

If you can spare some time to help, please let the Committee know. It's a really worthwhile and enjoyable way to support the group while taking part in the festive celebrations.



Upcoming events

Annual General Meeting, **30th October 7pm**

Martinsmarkt, Neukirchen-Vluyn, **7th - 10th November**

Marché de Noël, Mouvaux, **5th - 6th December**

40th Buckingham Christmas Parade and Community Fair, **13th December**

To find out more:

Email: chair@buckinghamtwinning.org.uk

Instagram: [@twinningbuck](https://www.instagram.com/twinningbuck)

www.buckinghamtwinning.org.uk