



BUCKINGHAM

Twinning Association

Newsletter - April 2026

www.buckinghamtwinning.org.uk

Spring Edition

New Fingerpost for Valmadrera

10th April 2026



The new fingerpost sign, 'Valmadrera 633 miles', kindly organised by Buckingham Town Council.

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10th April 2026

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11th - 18th February 2026

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German Twin Town?
10th -13th/14th September 2026

Next Buckingham Twinning Association Meeting:

Thursday, 7th May 2026 at
7pm in the Vinson Centre,
University of Buckingham



Trip to Aldo Moro School, Valmadrera

11th - 18th February 2026

On 11 February I travelled to Valmadrera for a week to support a busy programme of school visits, help with English, and at Fiorenza's request deliver presentations about Buckingham. It proved to be a full and very rewarding visit.

I stayed with the Longoni/Brambilla family, whose home overlooks the town and provided a wonderful base for the week.

A key part of the visit was working in local schools alongside Patrizia Parolini at the Aldo Moro vocational school.

I attended nine classes and delivered the Buckingham presentation five times, with students of varying English ability engaging well, particularly during lively Q&A sessions.

I also visited the Scuola Media and the primary school, on Shrove Tuesday, where they were learning about pancakes. They were being taught about American pancakes.

I spoke about how we celebrate Pancake Day in the UK and also explained a bit about our 'crepe' type and the tradition of pancake races, before giving another but simplified presentation of Buckingham.

The enthusiasm from all age groups was fantastic. In total, I delivered the presentation 11 times during the week.



Patrizia Parolini (language teacher, Aldo Moro School), Steve and Fiorenza

Outside the classroom, I met with local sports groups, including the tennis club and Consulta dello Sport, to strengthen links and encourage future exchanges. There was strong interest in developing further connections, including in football.

I also had the opportunity to spend time with members of Gemellagio, visit local cultural sites, and enjoy the generous hospitality for which Italy is well known.



Beppe Castelnovo (centre) founder of Valmadrera Gemellagio, Lorenzo Castelnovo (Beppe's artist son) and Steve



Steve giving Buckingham presentation at Fatebenefratelli community centre, Valmadrera

A highlight was a hike around Monte Barro, with beautiful views over the area.

It was a packed and successful visit, and a great strength of our twinning relationship as we look forward to welcoming students and visitors from Valmadrera to Buckingham in April.



Fiorenza (President of Valmadrera Gemellagio), Steve and Rita Bosisio (Uni3, Valmadrera)



There is also an opportunity for all to visit Valmadrera in mid-May for their "Portami al Lago" event on Lake Como. If interested, please get in touch.

Steve Haines



View of Valmadrera from mountain opposite



 **BUCKINGHAM**
Twining Association

QUIZ NIGHT

Quiz Night Brings Another Evening of Fun, Akeley Village Hall

27th February 2026

We gathered again at Akeley Village Hall on Friday 27 February for our annual Quiz Night, and once again it was a full house, with 12 tables of quizzers.

In a change from the previous four years, when Steve had been quizmaster, we invited someone new to take on the role. And what a great choice Mikey Dyson Smith turned out to be. Mikey is a well-known local entertainer who regularly hosts pub quizzes in Buckingham and further afield, and some may also have seen him in panto. He comes from a strong entertainment background, including time spent working on cruise ships, and he certainly brought that experience with him. With his own sound system set up, he got things going straight away with music that created a lively atmosphere.

Quizzing got underway at 7pm, with a range of questions covering sport, TV, geography, history and music, all carefully put together by Mikey to suit the audience.

Once again, our fantastic team of twinning volunteers provided a delicious supper.

This year's Mexican theme went down very well, with chilli con carne (including meat-free and gluten-free options) served with salad and bread. Desserts were a real highlight too, with a great selection of cakes and puddings baked by members.

Behind the bar, Stephanie and Chantal kept the wine and beer flowing, with support from Henry, Howard and Cliff.

In the second half, Mikey turned things up a notch, bringing even more energy to the room and finishing with a music round that had plenty of people singing along. The evening ended with a raffle, with Steve calling out the winning numbers, and with prizes spread around, every table had a winner or two.

Steve closed the evening by thanking everyone for coming, all those who helped organise the event, and of course Mikey, who very kindly stepped in as quizmaster free of charge.

Another very enjoyable and successful evening, a welcome bit of fun during the winter months.

Jane Mordue



Valmadrera Students Bring a Taste of Italy to Buckingham

9th - 12th April 2026

Valmadrera youth came to town this weekend. Twenty students from their training college cooked and served lunch to all comers at the Community Centre today, *bruschetta* and *pasta, perfetto!*

They also gave a mini Italian teach-in on around 20 key phrases, *dov'è il bagno?* ("Where is the loo?", very important!), along with a hilarious session on Italian hand gestures.

The Aldo Moro college encourages students to travel and cook in European towns, supported by ERASMUS, staying with local families and contributing towards the cost themselves. Many thanks to the students, their teachers, and all our host families.

MP Callum Anderson came along to meet them, and we took the opportunity for a photo-call beneath the new fingerpost sign, "Valmadrera 633 miles", kindly organised by Buckingham Town Council. Interested in finding out more? secretary@buckinghamtwinning.org.uk

Jane Mordue



Valmadrera Students Visit to Buckingham: A Memorable Exchange

9th - 12th April 2026

Last October, Patrizia Parolini (teacher at CFP Aldo Moro in Valmadrera) and I came up with what might reasonably be described as an ambitious idea perhaps to bring final-year students from Aldo Moro vocational school to Buckingham.

Despite ongoing attempts to establish a formal exchange with Buckingham School, it was the enthusiasm from the Italian side that convinced us to press ahead and create something that might help build stronger links between our communities.

On Thursday 9 April, Robin Dammers, Debbie Trujillo-Philippopoulos (a Buckingham School parent), and I travelled to Luton Airport to collect our 23 Italian visitors. For many, it was their first time flying and their first real experience outside Italy.

Thanks to the generosity of Buckingham Twinning Association members, 16 students stayed with host families, enjoying a genuine taste of UK life. The remaining students, along with two teachers and another member of the Valmadrera group, stayed in local hotel accommodation.

After a pizza lunch at the Chantry Chapel, the group visited the Old Gaol Museum and took a walking tour of Buckingham before heading off with their hosts for the evening.

Friday began with breakfast in host homes before a visit to Silverstone Museum. We then travelled by bus to Oxford, where a highlight was a tour of Merton College, kindly arranged by Cliff Dammers. With sunshine and some well-earned free time, the visit was much enjoyed by all.



Back in Buckingham, fish and chips in the Old Gaol exercise yard rounded off the day.

Saturday focused on community engagement at Buckingham Community Centre. The students prepared and served *pasta all'amatriciana* and *bruschetta*, delivered a lively presentation about their school, shared a mini Italian language lesson, and entertained visitors with a guide to Italian hand gestures. The event attracted a strong turnout from local residents, and MP Callum Anderson also dropped in.



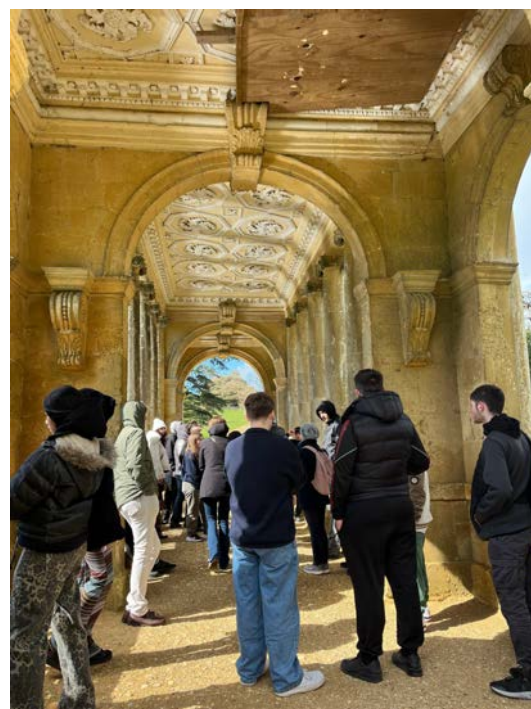
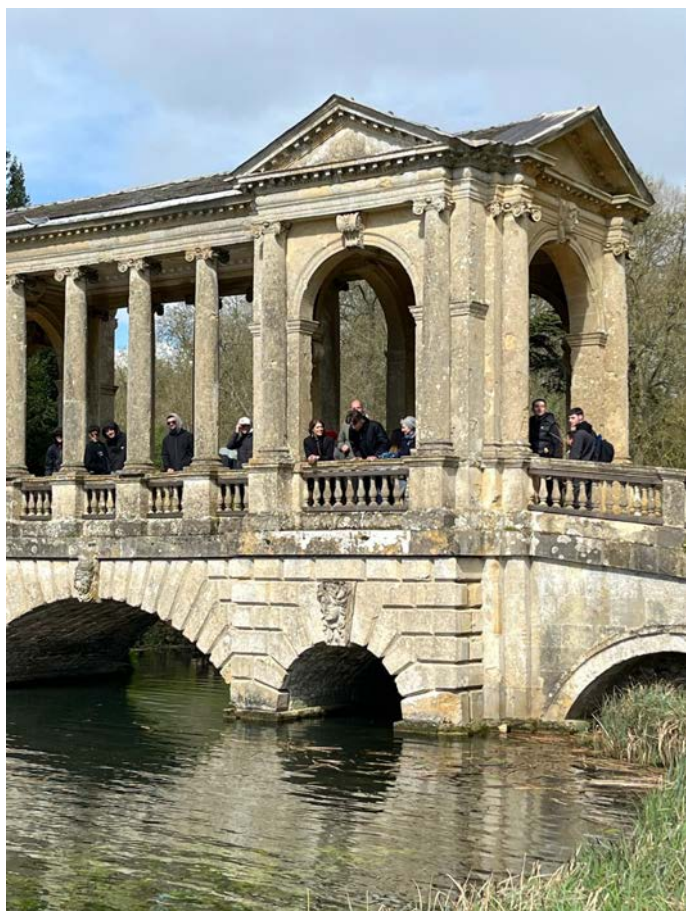
The students did an excellent job throughout, including clearing up afterwards.

In the afternoon, we visited Stowe Gardens, where Valerie kindly led a guided tour. The visit concluded with a buffet dinner at the White Hart, which proved a fitting and enjoyable finale.





On Sunday morning, we gathered to say our goodbyes before returning our visitors to the airport. By all accounts, the visit was a great success.



This ambitious venture would not have been possible without the support of many people. Special thanks go to Jane and Howard; our drivers Robin, Debbie, and Brian Dipple; and our generous host families, as well as all those who contributed to making the visit run so smoothly.

A huge thank you to everyone involved.

Steve Haines



How would you like to visit our German Twin Town? Neukirchen-Vluyn

10th - 13th/14th September 2026



Our friends in Neukirchen-Vluyn have invited us to take part in a “Wanderwochenende” (walking weekend) from 10th to 13th/14th September 2026. We will each cover our own travel costs (flight, train, or car), and German host families will kindly provide accommodation.

They have put together a programme that includes two walks (with varying distances to suit different abilities), along with some cultural visits in the surrounding area.

If you've never visited Neukirchen-Vluyn before, I would really encourage you to give it a try. You don't need to speak German, but if you do, and would like to practise, you'll have plenty of opportunity!

Please phone Lorna on 07917 002101 or email lorna.joy@btinternet.com to indicate your interest. It would be very helpful to know by the end of May who would like to come.

Some pictures from the same weekend in 2024.

Lorna Joy



Bluebells in woodlands near Buckingham

Upcoming events

Cycling visit to Buckingham, **8th - 10th May 2026**

Vluyner Mai, **30th April - 3rd May 2026**

Tennis tournament in Buckingham, **6th - 8th June 2026**

Boules tournament, **Date TBC**

How would you like to visit our German Twin Town, Neukirchen-Vluyn?
10th -13th/14th September 2026

To find out more:

Email: chair@buckinghamtwinning.org.uk

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

www.buckinghamtwinning.org.uk