**Blackford Community Council**

**Approved Minutes of Twinning Meeting Moray Institute, 24th Sept 2019 4pm**

**Present:** Irene McLaughlan, Iain Paton and Janet Law (Blackford Community Council), Andrew Peacock (Blackford Fiddle Group), David McLaren (Blackford Highland Games Committee), Helen Laing and Margaret Beith (residents)

**1. Apologies:**  Sandy Marshall (Tarneybackle), Moira Hanslip (Blackford WI), Sabine Hallyburton (Tullibardine Distillery)

**2. Minutes of Meeting of 6th June:** Minutes of Meeting of 6th June were approved (proposed IM seconded AP)

**3.Matters Arising from Minutes** IM, David McLaren, Stuart Laing, Helen Laing, Andrew Peacock, Isla Peacock and Sabine Hallyburton had travelled to Trebsen for the weekend of the Trebsen Highland Games, as guests of residents of Trebsen. IM had signed an Agreement with Trebsen on behalf of the Community Council.

**4. Correspondence** None

**5. Report on visit to Trebsen IM presented a report (APPENDIX 1)**

Irene had delivered a letter from Iain Paton Community Council Chair to Stefan Muller, Mayor of Trebsen.

A folder, containing the signed Twinning Charter, photos and press cuttings, was circulated. (see APPENDIX 2 for wording of the Charter). The folder is stored with other CC documents. IM will make arrangements for the folder to be shown to other groups. MB offered to help with editing photos. JL offered to post photos on the Blackford Network Facebook Page. IM agreed to forward photos.

Community Council to approach PKC to see where road sign could be positioned IP

IM reported that she had been grateful for the help of Alexandra Stein of the Scottish Government Berlin office.

IM proposed to send a letter of thanks to Tullibardine Distillery for supporting Sabine Hallyburton to travel to Trebsen as part of the group. IM

IM had researched the availability of funding for hosting organisations inviting representatives of other EU nations to visit. It was agreed that IM should contact Alexandra Stein for further information about this fund. IM

**6. AOCB**

IM reported that representatives of Trebsen planned to visit Blackford for Games weekend next year. It was agreed to contact all the organisations represented on the Twinning Committee for suggestions for the 2020 visit so that a programme could be drawn up. JL/IM/AP

It was suggested that there might be an interest in a German conversation group for adults. IM/MB

JL confirmed that the Lodge would be available for guests from Trebsen for the weekend of the Blackford Games in 2020. Other potential offers of accommodation will be welcomed in order that a larger number of guests can be accommodated. It is hoped to have an idea of total numbers of guests who can be offered accommodation by the date of the next meeting. JL/IM

**7. Dates of Future Meetings**

It was agreed that the Committee should continue. The Committee welcomed the fact that the Fiddle Group and the Games Committee were already forging direct links with Trebsen. It was agreed that all the organisations who were not in attendance should be contacted to clarify their ongoing role on the Twinning Committee. JL/IM/AP

**Next meeting 1****4th November 7.30pm at the Moray Institute if available.**  IM

APPENDIX 1

**Report on Trebsen Visit**

On Thursday 12/09/19, 7 delegates from Blackford left for Trebsen. Representing Blackford Community Council was Irene McLaughlan, from Blackford Highland Games, David McLaren, Stuart Laing and Helen Laing, from Tullibardine Distillery, Sabine Hallyburton and from Blackford Fiddle Group, Andrew and Isla Peacock. We flew form Edinburgh to Berlin, then after a lovely afternoon in the city we boarded the train to Leipzig. On arrival at Leipzig Station, we were met by colleagues of Christian Pfaff, Head of the Fire Service, who had arranged the transport.

We were driven to Trebsen where after a brief visit to Schloss Trebsen, we met up with those who had attended Blackford Highland Games earlier in the year, Stefan Muller, the Mayor, Christian Pfaff, Petra Kraus and Julia Lehne, as well as the families who were hosting us and members of the Town Council. A delicious buffet supper was provided, with a chance to get to know people before we headed off with the host families.

On Friday 13/09/19, we first visited the High School where the Head Teacher showed us round several of the classes before going for “Elevenses” – tea and delicious cakes! A reporter from the local paper also accompanied us. Then it was off to the Town Hall where Stefan showed us around and introduced us to members of staff, as well as presenting Blackford with a canvas aerial photo of Trebsen (to be posted). A walk to the primary school followed, giving us an opportunity to see Trebsen. We visited the 4th year class who welcomed us, introduced themselves and told us about their hobbies (all in English) before a short musical interlude. We then went outside for a photo opportunity with the children and their teachers. Lunch followed, with more cakes!

We were then driven to the Julius Schulte Paper Factory, seeing more of Trebsen and the surrounding area on the way. We were told about the history of the factory before donning safety gear to allow us to see round the factory. Using recycled paper, the factory makes packaging paper.

That evening we were VIP guests at the Highland Games opening evening, where Stuart presented a flag from himself and David to the organisers of Trebsen Highland Games. Stalls around the Schloss were open and music was provided by a number of artistes taking part over the weekend.

On the Saturday, with the sun shining, we all headed to the Town Hall before making our way to the Games. All of us took part in the main parade through the grounds to the main stage. The opening ceremony complete, we spent the rest of the day in the grounds, with Davy and Stuart taking part in the Toast to the Haggis. Food and drink were provided. A guided tour of the Schloss was arranged for the afternoon. Later in the afternoon Davy and Sabine were taken on a tour of a dairy farm by Stefan, before returning to the Games.

On Sunday, another lovely day of weather, we again met at the Town Hall before heading to the local church. The service included singing, piping and harp playing by some artistes from the Games. Following the service, we were given a tour and told the history of the church. Some brave souls ascended into the tower for excellent views of the town! Then Stefan, Davy, Stuart and myself were driven to the outskirts of Trebsen to have our photos taken beside a sign with the logos of Blackford Community Council and the town of Trebsen on it, confirming the Twinning of the two communities.

At 1pm the important moment arrived – the signing of the paperwork confirming the Twinning of Blackford and Trebsen. Before the signing took place, Andrew, with guitar, and Isla, with her fiddle, were joined on stage by Julia, playing the harp, and Steffan Slowik, playing the double bass, to play some Scottish tunes. Following some short speeches, Irene and Stefan signed the paperwork and exchanged some gifts – a plaque from Blackford Community Council, with their logo, to Trebsen and a Twinning sign from Trebsen to Blackford (to be posted as it was too big for a suitcase!).

We had the afternoon to spend at the Games then in the evening we went to a Greek restaurant, where we had a lovely Greek meal with all the host families there. Andrew and Isla again played with Julia and Steffan.

Monday 16th September arrived all too quickly. After an early breakfast we all met for one last time at the Town Hall. Goodbyes were said before we left for Leipzig train station to head for home.

We had a great weekend and everyone was very friendly.

We look forward to welcoming our Trebsen friends next year to Blackford Highland Games.

**Irene McLaughlan**

**Twinning Committee Chair**

**Blackford Community Council**

**September 2019**

APPENDIX 2 The signed Charter is to be stored with the Community Council Minutes

**Twinning Charter**

On behalf of the inhabitants of Blackford, Perthshire, in Scotland

and the inhabitants of Trebsen, Saxony, in Germany,

we confirm today our twinning partnership.

The object of our twinning partnership is to maintain and strengthen the relationship between Blackford and Trebsen,

and to foster exchange between the residents,

associations, schools and church parishes of Blackford and Trebsen.

May future generations cherish and preserve this partnership,

and start new friendships.

Trebsen, 15th September 2019

Irene McLaughlan Stefan Müller

Blackford, Perthshire Mayor of Trebsen

