

12 October 2019

Essex & Suffolk Twinning Congress (hosted by Haverhill and District Twin Towns Association)

Dunmow Dourdan Twinning Association

Open Forum Report by David Beedle

Our Chairman Wendy Barron sends her good wishes to Haverhill and thanks them for hosting today's event.

In Dunmow we look to raise three thousand pounds over two years to fund the bi-annual visit of our friends from Dourdan.

Twinning in Dunmow has followed a similar programme over the past few years. Based around a few tried and tested events that include food and drink.

Our **AGM** is held at the end of November /early December combined with a cheese and wine/Christmas party, the wine helps to get the following year's subscription in the Treasurer's bag.

January – we had a Burns Night. April – Promotion/Display in the library with coffee and a chat. May – our twin town Dourdan were over for their three day visit. We decided this year we would keep it local and spent the morning in Saffron Walden with a pub lunch and in the afternoon they visited Audley End. June – our local Wind Band hosted a group of 28 musicians from the School of Music in Dourdan, with a workshop in the morning followed by an open air concert including local Rock Choir. July our family BBQ. October – we have just returned from an overnight visit to Douai meeting friends from Dourdan, visiting a belfry and a coal mine. October – tonight we hold a fish supper, so as soon as we are finished here, I will be off home to get the fish out of the fridge ready for this evening.

Our success for the year - as always is to encourage youth and younger members and this has been achieved by bringing together our Town Wind Band and the Dourdan music school and we hope that this will result in a reciprocal visit to Dourdan by our musicians. We are also looking at how to link a local Art and Drama group that performed very successfully to our visitors last May. I see us as ambassadors / facilitators helping to introduce and recruit new members to twinning.

Our failure is perhaps our lack of technical ability with items such as websites and Facebook (which we do not use) perhaps due to the age of our members. This is a method of communication that we are failing to tap into.

Overall twinning is still healthy in Dunmow, but we know we must not be complacent and continue to target parents with children at junior schools and other youth groups of any to join us.