



**MINUTES OF THE 32nd AGM HELD ON
THURSDAY 10th SEPTEMBER, 2009 AT
CHRISTCHURCH HALL, PERRY STREET, BILLERICAY**

Present: **Maria McAulay** *Chairperson*
 Sharon Byrne *Secretary*
 Kim Hilborne *Treasurer*
 Helen Beattie *Membership Secretary*
 Rona Breeding *Website Co-ordinator*
 Julie Alderton *Card Secretary*
 Vicky Lawrence *Hospital Liaison Secretary*
 Audrey Osborn *Nursery Group Secretary*

In Attendance Amanda Deacon
 Jo Ellis
 Sharon Sansom
 Melinda Wyatt
 Wendy Greene
 Ilse Rust
 Sandra Ward
 Shani Reynolds

1. **Welcome**

Maria welcomed everyone to the 32nd AGM of the Billericay Twins Club.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Sally Spillett.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

Nothing arising from previous minutes.

4. **Chairperson's Report**

Welcome to our 32nd AGM and thank you all for attending this evening.

The AGM is always a good time to look briefly back over the history of BTC, so that our newer members can appreciate how the Club evolved and how it continues to strive to meet the needs of its members today. The Club was founded by Margaret Fowler and Wendy Greene back in 1977. Originally meeting fortnightly at member's homes before eventually moving here, (Christchurch, Perry Street, Billericay) where we have stayed to date. Maggie York took over from Margaret in 1991 as Chairperson and Nursery Group was introduced on a trial basis but was soon found to be an essential addition to benefit our new members and continues to thrive today. I took over in 1998 and after considerable committee discussions it was decided that evening meetings would be reduced to once a month and I have endeavoured to continue to provide the support to our members as intended from the start of the Club in 1977.

The Committee meets regularly every 8 – 10 weeks and recently we have been reviewing our individual roles. We have all produced brief "role descriptions" and Sharon (Secretary) and I have reviewed the Club Constitution which was signed and implemented on 10th September 1992, exactly 17 years ago. The original document is here if anyone wishes to look at it. It states that the main aim of the Club – "is to assist, advise and support, where possible the parents of twins, triplets, etc" which of course is still very much our aim today and therefore, have decided that at this stage the Constitution is still effective and doesn't require any changes.

I have always stated and believed that the strength of BTC has been its hard working and dedicated committee. This year has been not exception as we have had to cover the social programme role as unfortunately, our Social Programme Secretary, Rachael, had to step down in March and between us we had to put together the Summer programme at very short notice. But as always the job got done together with the Autumn programme and our social events continued to run and I am sure you will all agree that the summer buffet in July was a huge success. We received very positive feedback after the event.

However, having no volunteers for the position of Nursery Group Secretary to run Monday morning Nursery Group on a weekly basis is proving more difficult for us and unfortunately we had to put back our return from the summer holidays by a week to next Monday 14th. We have discussed a few options at committee but we will discuss these later in the meeting under any other business.

We still have a very loyal membership with around 100 members. Each year for as many members who don't renew their membership we have new members joining and after 32 years that truly is remarkable.

This all wouldn't be possible as I said before without our committee who continue to show enthusiasm and commitment. I am sure you are aware that all committee members give their time freely. Many of us work full or part time and of course, have families to look after but we all enjoy our role on the committee with many of us being committee members for a number of years. Of course our Newsletter is also a very important part of our club together with our Website.

So I now want to introduce you to last year's committee of:

Sharon Byrne	Secretary
Kim Hilborne	Treasurer
Sally Spillett	Newsletter Editor
Helen Beattie	Membership Secretary
	Programme Secretary
Julie Alderton	Card Secretary
Rona Breeding	Website Co-Ordinator
Vicky Lawrence	Hospital Liaison Secretary
Audrey Osborn	Nursery Group Secretary
Amanda Deacon	Assistant to Newsletter Editor (Non committee member)

Rachael Wingrave was programme Secretary until March this year with Angela Jasper assisting her and we thank them and the whole committee for their hard work again in the past year.

A special thank you to Kim, Helen and Audrey as they step down from the committee.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome to the Committee Jo Ellis, as Treasurer and Melinda Wyatt, as Membership Secretary, who will be elected on to the committee shortly. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the committee in the year ahead.

Although the Committee does its best to run the Club in the way it believes is beneficial for its members, it is of course your Club and without your feedback we are unable to be sure that we are getting things right. We would love to hear your comments good or bad and hope you take the opportunity at the end of the meeting under any other business to let us know if you have any questions or comments for us. Alternatively, there are links on the website for you to contact us.

The committee are now going to give their individual reports highlighting their role last year and any plans/changes for this year to improve and enhance the Club.

Finally, I would like to finish by thanking all our members for their continued support again this year.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

It is with mixed emotion I read out my final report as BTC treasurer.

Firstly relief that the figures all agree and pleased that next year I can sit back and enjoy the evening without the last minute panic of creating my report.

Glad that I have put something back into the club (11 years as treasurer, 1 as membership secretary) that has provided me with lifelong friendships, numerous belly laughs and wonderful experiences since I walked into Nursery Group some 13 years ago.

Finally stress free that the club finances will be in excellent hands now Jo Ellis has taken up the reins. Jo is a management accountant and she did a grand job of humouring me when I attempted to tell her what figures went where when she collected the books. I am expecting great things for next years AGM, perhaps a pie chart and coloured graphs at the very least!

Fortunately the credit crunch seems to have avoided Twins Club. Our income increased by over £500 and our outgoings on special events only increased by £110 in comparison to 2008.

Our bills for printing, postage, hall hire etc. was really on par to the previous year so in summary we earned more than we spent – success!

I wish Jo and our other new recruit Mel the best of luck and of course the remaining committee all the best in taking Billericay Twins Club onwards and upwards.

6. **Membership Secretary's Report**

Statistics

Our total membership is as constant as ever and currently stands at 110 compared to 97 at this time last year.

Renewals

The renewal process is now under way and going well under the supervision of my replacement Melinda Wyatt. Out of 49 renewal invitations sent out, we have already received 6 which is an excellent start. We usually give people until around the middle of December to renew, at which time we email a gentle reminder, before assuming that they wish their membership to lapse. Last year 17 members did not renew out of 44.

New Members

Since last year's AGM a total of 34 new families have joined which is superb, and thanks are due to the Nursery Group Secretary and helpers for coping so well with the increased number of young families.

7. **Social/Programme Secretary's Report**

Due to this role being vacant Maria reported on behalf of the Committee who were currently covering this role.

Last year we had a good variety of evening events such as a quiz night, salsa dancing and bowling. Attendance ranged from just 1 member to 30+! Our summer buffet was very well attended and something that we will probably repeat.

We are currently planning the various Christmas parties and have a few ideas ready for the Jan to Easter term of pudding tasting and belly dancing.

8. **Nursery Group Secretary**

Nursery Group continues to be popular with 20-25 sets of twins and triplets in attendance every Monday.

The Nursery Group Christmas and Easter parties were again very well attended, lots of fun was had by all.

The toy cupboards were given a good de-clutter and spring clean by myself, Kim Hilborne (Treasurer) and Sharon Byrne (Secretary), and a number of new toys were purchased during the year.

I would like to thank Joy and Florence for providing our refreshments every week. Also, thank you to the committee for ensuring there was sufficient cover during periods of sickness and holiday, and for helping at our parties.

On a final note, it is a great shame that we do not have a replacement for me, I hope volunteers are forthcoming during the next few months.

9. **Card Secretary's Report**

On a monthly basis I spend a day writing out the birthday cards required. I generally write the date it needs to be posted on the top right hand corner. On a quarterly basis I co-ordinate with Sally the Newsletter Secretary to check that we both have the correct names of members for cards and the newsletter announcements.

Due to the increase in postal charges earlier this year the decision was made to make the cards smaller to save the club money. We feel the new size cards are just right.

10. **Website Co-ordinator's Report**

All has gone well again this year. I have managed to keep it up to date with what is going on, although I have just received the new social calendar for this quarter, so that will be updated in the next week.

We are still receiving a lot of emails through, although Sharon has been taking care of the emails for the last five months for me, as I have been a bit tied up with the new baby.

If anyone has any new ideas about information that could be added to the website, please feel free to let me know what you think.

11. **Hospital Liaison Secretary's Report**

It has been another good year for Billericay Twins Club including meeting a lot of prospective parents of twins and triplets through our hospital meetings.

The meetings have been well attended over the last year. This introduces us to them and I find that some families join straight away while others tend to leave it a few months before seeking us out again.

As hospital liaison secretary I do get the occasional telephone call or email at home. Usually these are from mums that are looking for various advice or support or needing directions to our popular Nursery Group.

Also this year Maria asked me to add some more information to the packs that I give out at the meetings. So I wrote out a brief outline of the club and my involvement in it. It has already come in useful for parents that have especially missed one of the meetings or somebody that has heard of us by other means as it clearly sets out the role of the club and of those of us that help to run it and why.

Hopefully next year will be as good as the last.

12. **Editor's Report**

I must start my report with a massive Thank You to Amanda Deacon who shares the role of putting together the BTC Newsletter and without her help and continual support I would fall at the first hurdle.

This year has seen a change in the Newsletter in that we have now reduced the number of issues each year from 4 to 3. The reason for this was

1. To try to reduce printing and postage costs and bring the newsletter in line with the programmes for social events.
2. The articles written by members for the newsletter is significantly lower than in previous years and therefore a 4 issue would spread the articles thinner.
3. Time restraints for both myself, and Amanda Deacon makes 3 issues more manageable.

I hope that you will agree however that the quality of the newsletter is still improving. The layout and presentation (all courtesy of Amanda's IT skills) have certainly bought the newsletter into the 21st Century.

When the deadline approaches for us to collate the articles and gather together all other relevant information – checking we have the children's birthday's up to date – new member information not to mention membership renewals and Christmas raffle tickets ready for the Autumn issue! It has to be said that both Amanda and myself always have a 'little wobble', will there be enough variety? Are there enough articles? Will we get it to the printers and back in time for the postage deadline?

Somehow between working and running around with our family commitments and with constant emails back and forth we thankfully make it - sometimes even with minutes to spare!!

However that said I am going to have to have my usual moan, nag, plea for pity (call it what you like) about the lack of articles you – the members – send us. We are DESPERATE to hear from you voluntarily rather than Amanda and myself constantly bullying for articles.

We want to hear about your thoughts when you were first told you were having twins, we want to hear about any funny things your children say, any holidays you have had (good or bad), some of you now have Grandchildren or your children are now married, working abroad, travelling, some members no longer live locally - that is no excuse it would be lovely to hear from you too!! Even a photo or two would be lovely – without your help the newsletter cannot continue and after over 30 years that would be such a shame, because the newsletter is what binds the members together regardless of whether they are active members of the club.

Please give a little thought next time the newsletter drops on the doormat, that without your input there is no newsletter.

13. **Election and Re-election of Officers and Committee Members**

The re-election of Officers (Maria McAulay and Sharon Byrne) was proposed by Ilse Rust and seconded by Sharon Sansom.

The re-election of Members (Rona Breeding, Sally Spillett, Julie Alderton and Vicky Lawrence) was proposed by Jo Ellis and seconded by Melinda Wyatt.

The election of New Officer (Jo Ellis) was proposed by Julie Alderton and seconded by Kim Hilborne.

The election of New Member (Melinda Wyatt) was proposed by Vicky Lawrence and seconded by Rona Breeding.

14. **Any Other Business**

Shani Reynolds expressed an interest in taking up the Nursery Group position with the help of Verity Hoffman but was concerned that her children were too young at the moment. It was agreed that Shani and Verity run the Group for a couple of weeks and see how they manage, with a view to one of them possibly becoming involved on the committee.

No other business was raised and the meeting was closed.