



President's Report to Members – Annual General Meeting March 19th 2019

Dear Members:

It is with pleasure that I am again able to report to you that your club is in excellent shape in terms of:

- membership numbers,
- the wide range of activities offered by our many volunteer organisers, and of course
- financially.

Membership has continued to grow and we ended 2018 with 379 members, an increase of 6.1% compared to 2017. It is particularly satisfying to note that the proportion of French members increased from 21% in 2017 to 25.6% last year – one of our main messages to the local community is that we are an international, not a British club!

A principal purpose of this report is to review the performance of the Club against its remit, as enshrined in our constitution, namely, to welcome foreigners to the Quercy region and to facilitate their integration by interacting with the French community by organising:

- language workshops, conducted by volunteers;
- cultural workshops and recreational activities;
- activities which enhance Members' health;
- walks, excursions and trips;
- cultural and festive events, all promoting conviviality, open to all.

The Activities Report will demonstrate that we are indeed meeting these objectives.

On the communications front, our goal remains to drive more traffic to the website and I encourage all members to make maximum use of it. It has two purposes:

- to convey information to members, for example about forthcoming activities, and
- to act as our shop window to the greater community.

There have been some system-related challenges in the dissemination of information, but these are being dealt with. It is gratifying that many of our new members have found us through the website.

The Club Bulletin is much discussed by the committee and it has to be said that it has sometimes been a struggle to pull it together. A decision has been taken to reduce the frequency to quarterly and I am very grateful to Rosemary Howat who has stepped back up to the plate as editor. I know that she would welcome some assistance, so please do contact her if you like creative writing and have some time to spare.

As you can conclude from the Treasurer's report, we are in satisfactory shape financially with a healthy balance sheet. Our efforts to streamline and digitize our administrative processes have produced excellent results and we are now much more efficient in the way we work.

As I wrote last year, our balance sheet is rather large for an association such as ours. This is due to grants that were received earlier this decade from the Caisse d'Allocations Familiales de Tarn et

Garonne (CAF). The remaining balance of these funds is about €10,000 and the committee has now approved a plan to utilise this money for good causes in our local community over the period 2019-21. Thereafter our balance sheet will have reduced to an appropriate level. We will talk about this at the AGM.

Our current strength and success are in no small part due to the hard work and dedication of my fellow committee members, without which we would not be where we are today. Huge thanks are also due to our many volunteers who give their time to organising and running our activities and events.

I'd like to conclude with the same request that I made last year: the Committee is eager to hear from anyone who is willing to offer assistance - there is plenty of scope and no offer will be refused!

I would say to anglophone members: whilst we rightly conduct the affairs of the Club in the French language, we do understand that not all of us are confident in speaking French and need some help with translation - I ask you to do as I do and take it as an opportunity to improve your French!

To our French members and those of other nationalities I say, please think about joining the team and prove that we are indeed an international club!

Finally, thanks to you all for your support of our Club and, very importantly, thanks once again to the Mairie of Montaigu for so generously providing us with our clubhouse!

Chris Barrington, President
10th March 2019