

## **Hosting: What can I expect?**

Hosting can be a lot of fun but also quite daunting for members new to hosting. This guidance note has been drawn up in response to questions frequently asked by new hosts. It attempts to clarify both expectations and support. Key to successful hosting is the notion of reciprocal hospitality. Essentially, just treat your guests as you would wish to be treated in their homes and hopefully you will both enjoy the visit. It is not uncommon for guests to arrive as strangers and to leave as life-time friends.

We hope you find this information helpful in deciding whether hosting is for you.

### **How long do visits last?**

Usually visits take place over a long weekend with guests arriving on Thursday evening and departing Monday morning.

### **How are my guests allocated?**

Based on the information you will provide about your accommodation, language capability, interests and preferences we will try to match guests to your situation. Our twinning partners provide us with information about guests' needs and preferences too. So we try to ensure a "best fit" match within these constraints. It's not an exact science!

Where hosts and guests express a specific preference to stay with each other we try to observe these requests.

### **Do I need to be able to speak French or German?**

No. Obviously some language capacity is always useful and many hosts enjoy the opportunity to dust the cobwebs off their schoolday French or German but it is not a requirement.

Wherever possible, we try to match hosts who are not fluent in their guest's language with English speaking guests and vice-versa. Keeping a dictionary/phrase book to hand is nevertheless a good idea!

### **What will my guests expect in terms of accommodation?**

The joy of twinning is that visitors expect to stay in family homes and to appreciate the diversity of homes within Wirksworth. As a minimum, guests should have their own bedroom and be provided with fresh linen and towels. Guests are very happy to share family bathrooms and living areas.

### **What food will I need to provide?**

Generally, hosts are expected to provide meals unless the association has made other arrangements in the programme. In essence this means a daily breakfast, some packed lunches and a couple of evening meals. WTA will usually provide a reception meal for guests and hosts on one evening and we arrange neighbourhood "Fuddles" on another evening where hosts take a dish to share in small groups with their guests. Where guests have any special dietary requirements we will tell you about these in good time so that you can decide whether you can cater for the guest or not.

### **Are hosts expected to pay for meals if we take our guests out?**

A tricky one! Some guests may insist on paying but others may assume it is all part of our generous hospitality, so it is really up to individuals to decide. A packed lunch is a fail-safe option!

### **What will we do?**

We will provide a programme of activities for guests and hosts for each day of the visit, so there is nearly always something for your guests to do, even if you are busy. Hosts are always welcome to join activities and excursions but may not always choose to do so. We do ask that hosts arrange to take their guests to collection points for the start of activities and to collect them at the end. If, however, you want to take your guests out to share your interests or to visit other places of interest, that is fine too.

### **Do my guests have to join in all the activities?**

No. Whilst we hope that the programme will be appealing to guests, we understand that

guests and hosts might prefer to do their own thing at some points. It is perfectly OK for guests to take time out of the programme. We just ask that you let the activity leaders know .

**Do I need to be able to drive my guests?**

No. Whilst some activities will rely on car sharing, others will be by coach. If you cannot take or collect your guests, we can usually arrange lifts.

**What support can I expect if things don't work out as planned?**

Hopefully this won't happen but glitches sometimes occur, so we will allocate a link member of the Hosting Committee to you for the course of the visit. If you experience any difficulties hosting, please call your link Host member at the earliest opportunity so that we can discuss options and alternative arrangements.

**What should I do if my guests are ill on their visit?**

Do what you would normally do for a family member, take medical advice and let your link Host Committee member know. Your link member will inform the guest's tour leader and we'll take it from there. Guests are covered for healthcare as part of the European Union agreement and will carry health cards.

**What happens in an emergency?**

If your circumstances are affected on the visit, for example by family illness, we will make every effort to re-allocate your guests to hosts on our reserve lists. Just inform your link Committee member and we'll take it from there.

**Who can I chat to about Hosting?**

All members of WTA are generally happy to talk about their experience of hosting and have invaluable tips, like using the family photo albums, pictures of historic Wirksworth or holiday snaps as icebreakers for conversation, as well as taking meals out of the freezer to free up time for socialising. It is important to remember that this is meant to be a fun time for hosts too.

**How can I sign up to be a Host?**

First, you need to join Wirksworth Twinning Association by completing the Membership Form **at link**. Membership is free to new members for the first year. Then please provide the information requested on the Hosting Form **at link**. We will then add you to our **Hosts Register** and be in touch before our next exchange visit.

Many thanks. We do hope you enjoy it!

**Wirksworth Twinning Association Committee  
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