

# Brits Abroad Shanghai Annual Report 2020 - 2021

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Supplementary sheet – temporary  
change to the Constitution

## 1. President's review of the year



The year 2020 has been a challenging year across the globe due to the Covid 19 pandemic and we all learnt to do things online which we never imagined we would do before, such as online school, meetings, learning instruments, music, dance and even weddings.

I was honoured to take the role of President of Brits Abroad 2020/21 as we enter our 25<sup>th</sup> year, having previously served on the Committee as PR Coordinator.

We couldn't hold our AGM in March 2020 to thank the outgoing Committee, welcome the new Committee and meet all our members, but instead we had to wait for a few months to see if we could all return to Shanghai and finally by June we all decided to hold a Zoom meeting to swear everyone in. It was strange but it seemed to be the right thing to do, as most of us were spread across the continents, including our members. Our priority at that time was to kickstart our social events and engage with our members when it was safe to do so. Finally, from August, with half of the Committee physically in Shanghai we started running our events fully. Thanks to the wonderful Committee and to all our members for being supportive and accommodating. First of all, I would like to thank all of the Committee and our Social Team who dedicated their time to make this year special, despite the challenges. Anita Aggarwal took the role of Vice President and Membership Co-ordinator. She is such a vibrant, enthusiastic person who helped and assisted in every aspect of the Committee and social events. She encouraged and supported our activities and was there whenever we needed her. We will miss Anita as she steps down from these roles.

Kellie Henry was our Social Co-ordinator. She is a very friendly and humorous person and although she wears many hats, and has other social commitments, she still manages to accommodate our Brits Abroad events.

Christel Adriaenssen, our Treasurer is a charming lady. She is very prompt and responsive in dealing with our finances and does her duty well even though she is still away from Shanghai.

Pam Gray previously served on the Brits Committee as Treasurer but she is now our Proofreader. She also took over the role of Wire Editor from October and did an incredible job of personalising it by interviewing Committee members, adding a virtual Book Club and virtual Photography Club and including members' family recipes to make it a very interesting read. She is a very dedicated person and we will miss her as she steps down from this role. She has kindly agreed to continue as our Proofreader.

James Dyson has been our website Coordinator and we appreciate his hard work. He supports us even though he is no longer in Shanghai and has a very demanding work schedule and also family commitments. He continues to help us whenever we need IT assistance and to keep our website running.

Marysia Trebley helped us as Vice President and Outreach Coordinator during the year and was great in helping us reach out to the charities however, as she is still in the UK she couldn't continue her role and stepped down from the Committee, but promised to re-join us when she's back in Shanghai.

Pippa Horrocks is new to Shanghai and joined as our Discounts Coordinator. Pippa is a very friendly person who loves to help people in need. She is fabulous in getting the best discount deals for our members from various organisations.

We are very fortunate to have a wonderful Social Team who help us run various events which our members love.

Meet and Greet Coffee Mornings are hosted by Anita Aggarwal who tries hard to find a different venue every month for us to explore the best cafes in town. Her friendly nature is appreciated by new members attending the coffee mornings for the first time and she helps to keep our existing members engaged.

The 10K Walks are led by the very enthusiastic Sarah Sellars who chooses routes that are widely enjoyed and which we can then recommend to our family members and friends too. Cultural Walks are led by Kellie Henry, our Social Coordinator. It's interesting getting to know the history behind the buildings and the areas we walk through. There are always long waiting lists for both Walks and everyone enjoys them so much.

The Bead Workshop was conducted by Ilse Dumont where she showed us how to make beautiful jewellery. Our members had a fabulous time making and wearing the items.

Thank you to Gillian Knight for supporting us and organising Quiz nights and we look forward to seeing her back in Shanghai soon.

Our new Feed and Read event was initiated by Kellie Henry and our members had a great time indulging in a book.

The Mosaic Workshop run by Lucy Ellis-Hardy was super fun and our attendees thoroughly enjoyed making their pot stands. With their sleeves rolled up, it was an action-filled event and we can't wait for the next one.

Brunches arranged by Sam Cunningham are always events everyone looks forward to and Brits Abroad members block out their full day for these as they always go on well after dinner time.

Drop In Drinks organised by Kellie Henry is held on the last Friday evening of each month. Kellie likes to explore different venues and she chooses the ones she really enjoys so we can enjoy a relaxed Friday evening.

The Christmas Decoration Workshop conducted by Pam Gray was a fabulous event before Christmas where we learnt to make Christmas baubles. Pam was a very patient teacher, guiding us on how to make perfect baubles to hang on our Christmas trees for years to come.

May I is a card game event which Ilse Dumont helps us to conduct every Wednesday. Ilse is a great teacher and a humorous person, cheering along our members and everyone has a great time playing this game.

Mahjong is conducted by Karen Carrington every Monday. Karen is a very caring and enthusiastic person and our members really enjoy playing this game.

Cooking Workshops are organised by Kellie Henry and our members enjoy trying different country's cuisines.

Our big events this year were the Breast Cancer Luncheon and the Christmas Lunch. The Breast Cancer Luncheon was organised by Anita Aggarwal, Kellie Henry, Vidhya Nagendran and Gillian Knight while Sarah Sellars helped us by capturing some beautiful photos. Our Christmas Planning Committee of Vidhya Nagendran, Anita Aggarwal, Kellie Henry, Sam Cunningham, Emma Dilliway, Caz Johnstone, Janice McGregor and Pippa Horrocks did a fabulous job of planning and making this the best party in town. Both events raised large sums for the

charities More Than Aware, Heart To Heart and Helping Hands. Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

Huge thanks to Philip Crispin for creating a wonderful and sophisticated website for us to manage events and all our admin functions. We are grateful for his continued contribution.

We had to take a Committee and members vote on amending our Constitution from 55% full members and 45% associate members to 60% and 40% respectively, and this applies to the end of the membership year 2021.

We have had a fabulous 6 months despite the challenges and we are looking forward to our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball and the exciting 2021/22 year ahead. I would like to wish all our members all the very best for a happy and healthy year ahead and I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

Vidhya Nagendran  
President

## **2. Membership**

The membership year of 2020, as we all know, has been an unusual year. Membership enrolments were nil from the beginning of Chinese New Year, which was in late January 2020, until early August. As a result of the worldwide pandemic and extenuating circumstances causing many expatriates to repatriate or prevent them from entering China, we proposed a temporary amendment to the Constitution on Article 2.2 and 2.3 relating to membership from the middle of August 2020. The amendment meant that Associate membership, open to any nationalities apart from the UK, should not exceed 45% of the total membership base and this was ratified by our members.

The total number of members for the calendar year of 2020 was 275. We had 107 families with 205 adults and 70 children. We have maintained 60% Full Membership and 40% Associate Membership which is within our amended constitution of 55% and 45% respectively.

Our membership fee was at RMB300 until June 30<sup>th</sup> and reduced to RMB200 thereafter. We started our membership renewals from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 and any new members who joined from then onwards could join 2021 and get November and December 2020 free. Our annual Christmas lunch saw a surge of expatriates wanting to join us.

James Dyson, who is our Website co-ordinator, repatriated and as a Committee, a decision was taken to extend him an honorary membership so we can have his continued support on the Brits Abroad Website and App.

Membership sign-up was available at all Meet and Greet Coffee Mornings, May I, Mahjong and many other Brits Abroad events.

This year our membership cards had '25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary' printed on them to remind members and build excitement for this special year. This year we decided to give only one membership card per family to be more environmentally friendly.

As part of membership, we had an active WeChat group maintained for all members where we posted events and exchanged news that would help the wider membership community.

Anita Aggarwal  
Membership Co-ordinator

### **3. Social**

It will surprise no one that the first half of this year was rather quiet and without much socializing, but we have made up for it in the second half. Once it was deemed safe to do so, our social calendar started out with some lovely walks along the river and we were soon back into the swing with our regular Mahjong and May I groups. The monthly Drop In Drinks have drawn a good and lively crowd, as have our weekend family brunches. We've had a few fantastic cooking classes, done some interesting exploring on historical walks, welcomed friends new and old at our coffee mornings, and have had a chance to indulge

our creativity with a few arts & crafts workshops, led by fellow Brits members sharing their talents. A biking day trip to one of Shanghai's islands was a marvellous autumn break, and we introduced a new reading activity as well. As ever, our annual Christmas Party was a fabulous, fun afternoon and our Breast Cancer Luncheon was a great success as well.

Kellie Henry  
Social Coordinator

## **Breast Cancer Awareness Lunch**

The Breast Cancer Awareness Lunch was this year held at BANG. We decided once again to raise money for More Than Aware, a charity which supports women to be proactive in the prevention and recovery of breast cancer.



Thanks to your generosity throughout October and the generosity of the companies and individuals who donated to our Breast Cancer Lunch raffle, we raised the amazing sum of RMB9,640 which we will top up to RMB20,000 and the cheque for that amount will be presented at our AGM to Suzanne, the charity's representative.

## **Meet and Greet Coffee**

After a very dull start to the year due to the ongoing epidemic control measures, our first Meet and Greet was held at The Press on 18 August. Centrally located for both Puxi and Pudong members, the venue has a very distinct atmosphere given its foundation as a converted old Press.



Our Meet and Greets are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month. In our endeavour to be in a different location every month and reach our members in different districts, our September Meet and Greet took place at the Baker and Spice at Wheelock Square near Jing'an Temple. Baker and Spice had some interesting offers and kindly allocated us a secluded area where our members could reconnect with each other.

For the October Meet and Greet we moved to Pudong and La Parisienne in Lujiazui. Our members enjoyed the tempting spread of cakes and pastries on display.

Our November Meet and Greet was a pre-Xmas coffee with vendors at Cottons on Anting Road. The venue had a villa-like atmosphere and a very quaint outdoor area. We had 14 vendors ranging from home decorations to Christmas specials, as well as gifts, charities (Heart To Heart and Hands of Hope), jewellery and consumables. The entire venue was buzzing with Brits Abroad members, given the perfect outdoor weather under the autumn sun.



Come December, we were back to The Press, followed by MEL BOURNE in January.

In February, we returned to Pudong and Baker and Spice at the L+ Mall. With some coffees at half price, the atmosphere was lovely.

Anita Aggarwal  
Meet and Greet Lead

## **Crafting**

This year three of our members very kindly agreed to hold craft Workshops. In September, Ilse Dumont kicked off with a bead Workshop, then in October Lucy

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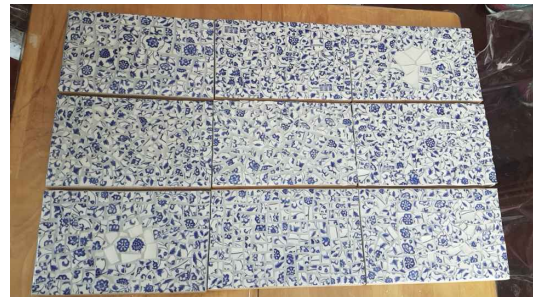
Ellis-Hardy instructed us in the art of mosaics and then in December, just in time for decorating the Christmas tree, Pam Gray held a bauble-making Workshop.



Here are the ladies concentrating at Ilse's Bead Workshop and 2 of the lovely necklaces they made.



Lucy reported – “In October, members took part in a mosaic workshop to make a pot stand. They learned how to cut ceramic bowls using tile nippers. Beautiful mosaic pot stands were prepared by all. The ladies left the class with the skills and tools to create more art work at home. This was a fun afternoon with a lovely group of ladies and we hope to mosaic again soon!”

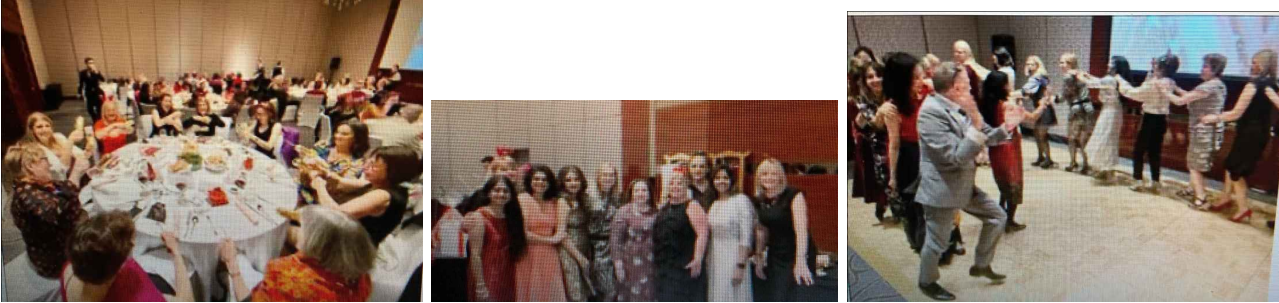


7 ladies joined the bauble-making Workshop in December. No sewing was necessary and the final results (see photo on the right) were stunning.



## Christmas Party

The Christmas party, as always, is the highlight of the Brits Abroad social calendar. This year it was held at a new venue - The Langham Hotel in Xintiandi, which proved to be an excellent venue for our party.



We had welcome drinks, sponsored by Bottles XO, followed by a 3-course meal and free flow. We also had a range of fun activities including a Secret Santa, a table quiz, a dance-along and a heated game of musical chairs. We ended up swinging to tunes by DJ Thomas until the late evening. More importantly we raised an impressive RMB14,800 for Heart To Heart. We have decided to top this up to RMB30,000. The cheque for this amount will be presented to Karen Carrington from Heart to Heart at the AGM.

## Brunches

This report comes from Sam Cunningham - "Our brunches have been a great success this year, getting together on a Saturday or Sunday to celebrate the weekends has been fun. We've been to Cottons, Da Marco, The Apartment and El Bodegon.

Often our brunches have proved to be so successful, people have not wanted them to end and have resulted in many of our pals going "out out".

The next Brits Abroad brunch is on 27 March at Bull and Claw, the details of which are on the calendar and please don't worry, what happens on the brunch....stays on the brunch."



## Feed and Read



This new event was held in January at The Flying Fox in Jinqiao and involved taking lunch together first then, with phones, Kindles and actual books at the ready, we moved to the sofas and enjoyed an hour of quiet, companionable reading.

## Cycling



In November we held a bike ride of around 30km on Hengsha Island. This trip included a ferry ride to the island, lunch, cycling along the coastline followed by



orange picking and go-cart riding.

## Cooking Classes

We arranged 3 cooking classes during the year, a French cooking class in September, a Chinese Dumpling class in November and a second Chinese cooking class in January. We needed at least 8 people to sign up for the French cooking class but unfortunately we only got 6 sign-ups so we had to cancel that one. The dumpling class was well attended and enjoyed by everyone. Wontons and Leaf Buns were the order of the day. In the January class, the



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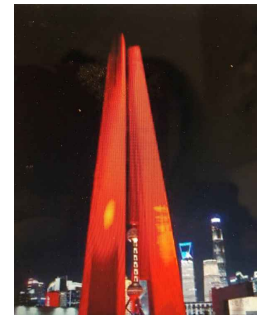
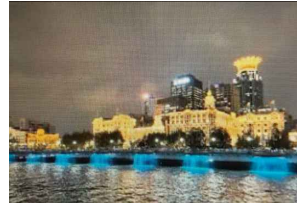
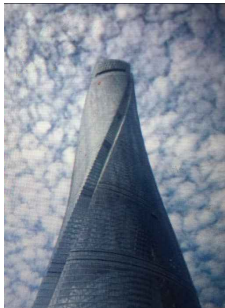
attendees made eggplant with soy sauce, salt & pepper pork ribs and aromatic green soybeans.



## 4. Regular Activities

### Photography Club

The Photography Club, coordinated by Sigrid Brede and Sarah Sellars was temporarily suspended after April 2020 but from October 2020 we have been producing a 'virtual' Photography section in our monthly Newsletter where members could publish their favourite Shanghai photos. Here are just a few of the great photos taken by our members:



### May I

2020 started with a bang until Covid arrived and we had to stop all activities during February and March. Luckily, we were able to play cards again from April onwards and since then numbers have been constant. We are surely missing lots of people who weren't able to return to Shanghai but we also gained some newbies who keep our numbers up.





We have now been playing a full year at Abbey Road where the staff are pampering us weekly with great food and service.

May I is a great way to meet fellow Brits Abroad members. Each week participants pick a card to determine on which table they will play. By picking cards, members play with different people each week allowing them to get better acquainted with fellow expats and forge new friendships. For only RMB50, participants play cards for approximately 3 hours and receive two drinks – coffee, tea and soft drinks. Join us for a fun afternoon of May I on Wednesdays!

Ilse Dumont  
May I Co-ordinator

## **Mahjong**



You're in China so why not try your hand at Mahjong? Mahjong is a game that originated in China but is now played (in varying forms) all over the world. Like the Western card game rummy, Mahjong is a game of skill, strategy and calculation and involves a

degree of chance... or it's just a fun game of getting to know your fellow Brits Abroad members.

Every Monday afternoon (1:30pm – 4:30pm) we play the British version of Mahjong at Abbey Road on Taojing Road, at the corner of Fenjang Road. It's a popular event and lots of fun. It's open to everyone and is a great way to relax, chat and meet new people. We have a beginners' table every week so don't worry about not knowing how to play. We only charge RMB50 to play, which

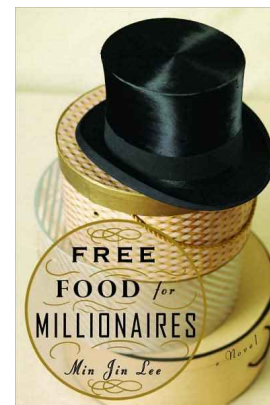
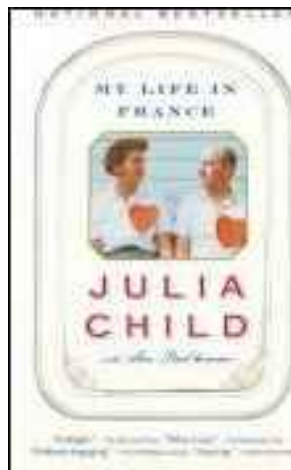
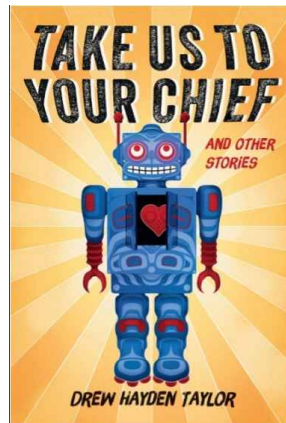
includes beverages for the afternoon and money for the charity pot. We have a lot of fun! Come join us!

Karen Carrington

Mahjong Co-ordinator

## Book Club

The Book Club with Candia Allen and Catherine Hogan-Conlon as co-ordinators, was last held in March 2020. That month they read *Free Food for Millionaires* by Jim Min Lee. Since October 2020 we have been featuring a 'virtual' Book Club in our monthly Newsletter where members let us know their 3 favourite books and provide a short description of the book and reasons for their choices. Here are some of the books featured:



If you're in need of some inspiration on which books come highly recommended by our members, take a look at our website where all the previous Book Club books are listed, along with the score they achieved.

## Quiz Night

We held a Quiz night at Abbey Road in September and a Christmas Quiz night at The Camel in December. Both proved very popular and very competitive but, of course, very enjoyable too. Emmett, the resident quiz master at Abbey Road provided us with a general knowledge quiz like no other and Abbey Road very kindly donated 10% of the bar takings to H2H.

The quiz master at The Camel was Ned who gave us a Christmas-themed quiz. Santa hats, jumpers and tinsel all helped to make it an enjoyable, Christmassy event. Both quizzes included an extended 'happy hour' drinks deal and there was a RMB500 prize for the winning team on each occasion. If you haven't tried one of our quizzes, they are highly recommended.



## Cultural Walks

Our Cultural Walks led by Kellie Henry proved extremely popular, often filling up before the route was announced. Kellie's vast knowledge of Shanghai and the research she does, makes these walks extremely interesting.



The walks this year included The Jewish Settlement, Old Millfun, J. G. Ballard's residence and surrounding area and

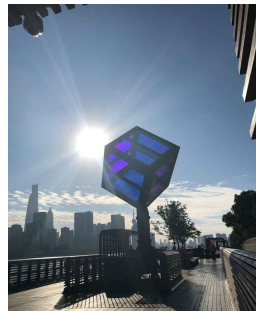
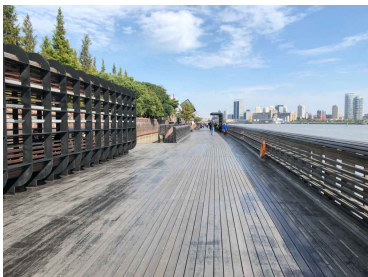
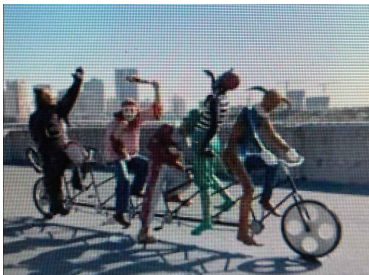




North Shaanxi Road. If you fancy exploring Shanghai, look no further than our website – there you will find all of our past walks, including directions and historical information.

## **10k Any Day Walks**

Our monthly 10k Any Day Walks led by Sarah Sellars, have proved extremely popular with our members. Sarah reports “The 10K Any Day active walks resumed in September with a stroll in the sunshine along the Bund, finishing on the other side of the river at the China Art Museum. Over the last five walks we have completed most of the Huangpu riverside walking path and explored Suzhou Creek. No matter what the weather, or the pandemic situation, there has always been a keen gathering at 10am to get out, put our best foot forward and expend some energy. Although not always 10K in distance we always do 10,000 steps or more. The conversation and the lunch/coffee afterwards is also a plus. Many new friendships have been made as we walk and talk in this most beautiful part of Shanghai and nearly RMB2,000 has been raised for our charities.



## **Drop-In Drinks**

This year we continued to hold our ever-popular, last Friday of the month, Drop In Drinks events. Venues this year included The Apartment, The Hop Project, Co. Cheese, Cages, The Hai and The Beer Lady. We are always on the lookout for interesting venues so please get in touch if you know of anywhere suitable.

## **5. Community Outreach**

The jewel in Brits Abroad's crown is its Community Outreach programme. Every jiao Brits Abroad raises from events goes to various worthwhile organisations in China. Our donations in this financial year went to Shanghai Sunrise, Hands of Hope, More Than Aware and Heart To Heart.

**Shanghai Sunrise** is a charity dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty by creating access to education through sponsorships for under-privileged young people in Shanghai. We continued to sponsor the education of 3 **Shanghai Sunrise** students at an annual cost of RMB3,000 each.

**Hands of Hope** creates uniquely designed products to support the livelihood of women with disabilities in China. The lives of the women who do the sewing for these products are transformed through the provision of housing, technical training and a steady income. Our Christmas party raised RMB1,768 for this charity and they were also one of the vendors at the Meet and Greet coffee morning at Cottons in November, where our members got to see the excellent quality of the products they produce.

**Heart To Heart** is a charity which provides much-needed heart surgery and follow-up support to children.

Our Christmas party raised RMB14,800 which we have topped up to RMB30,000. As previously mentioned this will be donated to the charity at our AGM. We also collected gifts and clothing at the Christmas party which Heart To Heart distributes to families who live in harsher climates.

**More than Aware** is a Shanghai-born support group that has been empowering women to be proactive in the prevention and recovery of breast cancer since 2011. As previously mentioned, RMB9,640 was raised during our activities in

October, including at the breast cancer lunch, and this will be topped up to RMB20,000 and donated to the charity at the AGM.

Here are the charities links if you are interested in supporting them further:

[www.shanghaisunrise.com](http://www.shanghaisunrise.com)

[www.facebook.com/handsofhopechina](https://www.facebook.com/handsofhopechina)

[www.h2hsh.com](http://www.h2hsh.com)

[www.morethanaware.com](http://www.morethanaware.com)

The total amount Brits Abroad donated for 2020/21 was RMB65,208. THANK YOU to everyone for this fabulous achievement. You have helped so many children, young people and adults.

## **6. Internal and External Communications**

There are many ways in which we keep you informed about what's happening with Brits Abroad and there are a range of ways in which you can keep in touch with us. In addition to our monthly Newsletter publication, there are of course the Brits Abroad Website and our Hotmail account. And if you are a Facebook user, we hope that Brits Abroad is one of your Facebook friends.

Finally, don't forget our members' request facility. Members are encouraged to use this feature to ask help from fellow Brits Abroad members. All you need to do is fill in the form on the website and we'll post your request in our Newsletter. For specific enquiries or to contact the committee, please use our Hotmail account: [britsabroad57@hotmail.com](mailto:britsabroad57@hotmail.com). Just put a description of your enquiry in the subject line to direct it to the appropriate person.



## **8. Public Relations, Marketing & Discounts**

Brits Abroad very much deserves the excellent reputation it has amongst the expat communities in Shanghai. We have continued during 2020 to promote Brits Abroad to new members, sponsors and the wider community.

### **Discounts**

Since taking over from the very wonderful Caz Johnstone I have been able to maintain our current list of organisations that offer Brits Abroad members discounts. Some did need a little persuasion to continue! Alongside this with the help of some very well-connected people I have added to our list of organisations that offer some form of discounts.

The variety and spread of the discounts we receive is wide and I will continue to look for more companies that could offer some form of discount.

At the time of writing, we have 16 organisations that offer discounts and I am in the process of trying, with all my might, to recruit more. New organisations that have recently signed up include Culture Shock – Bike Tours, MinuteCare – Cleaning and Tian Yi Corp - printing and business identity.

Please make sure that you visit the discounts page on our website and make full use of all the discounts on offer as it proves to the vendors that it makes good business sense to support Brits Abroad.

Our current discount providers are:

Abbey Road Restaurant - 10% off their midweek à la carte menu

Australia Expat Travel - 10% off their consultancy fee

Breakfast Champion – 10% off their whole range

Culture Shock Tour – 10% off all bike tours

EMW Fine Wines – 20% off all wines

Epermarket – varied monthly free gifts/discounts

Geneva Restaurant – 10% off their midweek à la carte menu

Greenwave – 10% off water purifiers and Blue air purifiers

Husk – A welcome drink when you dine at Husk

Kate & Kimi – 5% off shopping

Kebabs on the Grille – 10% off their à la carte menu

MinuteCare – 15% off the first month's cleaning plus a percentage off for successful referrals

Pera Indian and Turkish Restaurant – 10% off their à la carte menu

Spin Ceramics – 10% off their range  
Tian Yi Corp Identity Design and Printers – 15% off all printing  
Un Tour Food Tours Shanghai – 10% off food tours

New organisations are always on the horizon so please keep checking the Discounts page regularly for future vendors

Pippa Horrocks  
Discounts Co-ordinator

## **9. The Brits Abroad Team**

The Committee members and representatives who served during 2020/21 are set out below:

### **The Committee**

President	Vidhya Nagendran
Vice President	Anita Aggarwal Marysia Trebley (Apr. 20 to Dec. 20)
Treasurer	Christel Adriaenssen
Secretary	Kelly Cornish (Feb. 21)
Social Co-ordinator	Kellie Henry
Membership Secretary	Anita Aggarwal
Community Outreach Co-ordinator	Marysia Trebley (Apr. 20 to Dec. 20)
Newsletter Editor	Pam Gray (Oct. 20 onwards)
Website Co-ordinator	James Dyson
Public Relations /Advertising/ Discounts Co-ordinator	Pippa Horrocks (Nov. 20 onwards)

### **The Representatives**

Walks Co-ordinators	Kellie Henry & Sarah Sellars
Mahjong Co-ordinator	Karen Carrington

May I Co-ordinator

Ilse Dumont

Book Club Co-ordinators

Candia Allen & Catherine Hogan-Conlon

Photography Club Co-ordinators

Sigrid Brede & Sarah Sellars

Proofreader

Pam Gray

Together with the above, Brits Abroad are lucky to have a host of other volunteers who give their time, energy, enthusiasm and advice and help make the Brits Abroad community a welcoming, active and fun place to be. Without the help of all of the above people, many events and activities would not be able to continue – thank you.

## **Supplementary Sheet to Annual Return 2020/21**

“Temporary Change to Section 2.2 and 2.3 of the Constitution”.

Given the extenuating circumstances related to Covid 19 and the impact that this has had on the wider community in Shanghai, the committee proposed a temporary change in membership terms for 2020/21. This proposal was presented to members who voted in support of a temporary change. The revised membership quotas for 2020/21 are agreed as 55% British citizens and 45% other nationalities. This temporary change of the constitution will be reviewed at the AGM.

Signed and dated

29<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

Brits Abroad Committee