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VOISINS VOICES

A BRITISH EMBASSY NEWSLETTER



WELCOME

BY ED LLEWELLYN, BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE



Welcome to the first edition of Voisins Voices, a newsletter from the British Embassy. We decided to start a regular bulletin in response to feedback we received from the British community living in France. I hope that you find it an interesting and useful addition to our [website](#), [Facebook](#) page and [Twitter](#) account.

LES VOISINS

“Les Voisins” is a new campaign celebrating the links between Britain and France. We will be organising events showcasing our cooperation in areas such as fashion, literature, music and the arts, as well as reflecting together on challenges like modern slavery.

The Franco-British relationship is fundamentally about our two peoples. Did you know that: 14 million British people visit France each year; 18,000 French students study in the UK; 60,000 passengers use the Channel Tunnel each day; 400,000 British and French people have chosen to live on the other side of the Channel? You can find some human stories which illustrate the time-old friendship between our two countries at lesvoisins.shorthand.com. And if you have your own Franco-British story to tell, we would love to hear from you – simply [follow the instructions](#) on our website to become a Voisin yourself.



ROYALS IN PARIS

Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge [visited Paris](#) on 17-18 March 2017. A key focus was on building Franco-British links, with the launching of “Les Voisins” at an event drawing together the next generation of French leaders from the arts, politics, voluntary sector and sport.

The Royal Couple’s visit included a meeting with President Hollande and a sporting encounter with local school children in front of the Eiffel Tower. They also visited Les Invalides military hospital to meet wounded veterans, victims of the Paris terrorist attacks, and the French team that supports them.



BREXIT

On 29 March the UK gave formal notification of its intention to leave the European Union (by triggering Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty). The UK is leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe – our continent. We want a new deep and special partnership with the EU. One which allows us to continue to have a strong economic relationship so that we can all prosper, but also to work together to keep our continent safe and secure.

For the UK and France this means a new chapter in our close friendship and cooperation, from our strong commercial links (current trade is worth over 50 billion euros annually and investment supports 500,000 jobs in our two countries), to our cooperation on defence and security, to our shared values and alliance in defending them (as shown by how we worked together after recent terror attacks in both London and France).



THE BRITISH EMBASSY ON TOUR

In addition to our offices around France, the [Ambassador](#) and team get out of Paris as often as possible – including to meet members of the British community. Over recent months we've been in the North and West – meeting with the Association Integration Kreiz Breizh (AIKB) in Rennes, and others in Bordeaux, the Sarthe and Lille. We also travelled south to meet with a large group of British citizens in Aix-en-Provence (organised by the Anglo American Group of Provence), spoke to British employees at the groundbreaking ITER reactor at Cadarache, and attended the inaugural lunch organised by the Mediterranean Anglo American Business Association in Marseilles. In April, the Ambassador met with Brits in Lyon, under the auspices of the Franco-British Business Association, FIBA. There are meetings planned in the coming weeks with British community representatives in Paris, Alsace and Aquitaine.

If you are part of a local group that would like to hear from the Ambassador or an Embassy official, please do get in touch at France.Enquiries@fco.gov.uk. We will advertise future events on our [Facebook](#) page.



WHAT BREXIT MEANS FOR YOU

We know that the prospect of the UK leaving the EU brings some uncertainty for the British and French communities living on either side of the Channel. The Government has stressed that it wants settling your status to be a priority in the talks that will now begin, and that we will always put the interests of citizens first. [British nationals living in France](#) should remember that your rights – to healthcare, employment and so on – have not changed.

One frequent question we are asked is about the carte de séjour (French resident permit). British nationals living in France do not have to apply for one, but you can do so if you wish at your local prefecture.

CONSULAR SERVICES

Our consular services in France in Paris, Marseille and Bordeaux provide advice, assistance and support to British citizens travelling in France. We provide lots of useful information online via the [gov.uk](#) website including on [living in France](#) and [travel advice](#) for France, or elsewhere in the world.

One frequent question we are asked is about renewing a British passport. You need to start the process [online](#). You can apply to renew a passport up to nine months before it expires and the remaining validity will be transferred to your next passport.

#YOURVOTEMATTERS

Register by
22 May
to vote in the
General Election
on 8 June

gov.uk/register-to-vote