



# VOISINS VOICES

A BRITISH EMBASSY NEWSLETTER



## WELCOME

BY ED LLEWELLYN, BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE

Dear all,

This is the latest of our newsletters, aiming to keep you up to date with our work, and to update you on the Brexit negotiations. I know that with things moving quickly at present this is particularly important, and we are also continuing to hold outreach events around France, including recently in Annecy, Aix-en-Provence, St-Malo, St-Germain-en-Laye and Bordeaux, and Facebook sessions such as [that](#) earlier this week. We will be doing even more of this over the coming months.



As you are no doubt aware, the situation in the negotiations is that the European Council of 25 November has signed off the [Withdrawal Agreement](#), which gives legal effect to our departure from the EU, and the Political Declaration outlining the shape of our future relationship with the Union. The former document contains the agreement on citizens' rights, providing for rights to live, work and study as well as addressing issues like pensions and social security. It now requires the approval of the House of Commons and thereafter the European Parliament. The vote in the House of Commons is expected to take place in the week commencing 14 January.

In the meantime, it is important to underline that the UK and France have both said that people should be able to continue to live their lives in each other's countries whatever happens. On our side we have published information on how we will provide for the full rights of EU nationals in the UK in all scenarios. And the French Government are about to finish taking [a bill](#) through their Parliament, enabling it to take measures by decree to prepare for Brexit, including on citizens' rights. The text has now been agreed by both Houses (National Assembly and Senate). This is welcome news because it means that the French government is proactively laying the groundwork to ensure continuity in the status of British citizens who live and work in France in both a deal and no-deal scenario. There are of course lots of details we need them to confirm.

We have been working closely with them on this work, for example lobbying them to make the same guarantees to British citizens working in the French civil service as we have made in the UK (now provided for in the Bill I mention above), as well as on the running of the carte de séjour process in Préfectures around France. Brits in different areas should be treated consistently and we raise this issue regularly. Thanks to your feedback we have seen improvements and greater clarity of information from Préfectures, for example in Bordeaux, but there is clearly more to do and we will continue to work very closely with them.

You may also have seen that the French Government have launched a [website](#) on Brexit, which includes information for British nationals in France. This confirms that a new registration system will be brought in and that people will be able to apply from March 2019 (in the event of no deal) or [continues on p.2]

until end June 2021 in the event of a deal. We are urging them to translate the information but have put an unofficial English version on our own [website](#). While we await that system their advice to us remains that British citizens should apply for cartes de séjour under the existing EU system so that they are in the system, though this is of course your decision.

Let me close by wishing you all a happy Christmas and holiday period, and underlining how much of a priority this work on citizens' rights is to us, and me personally. That will, of course, continue in 2019.

- We will continue to post information on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts and update our Voisins Voices newsletter. At least once a month we will be doing Facebook discussions to answer your questions live.
- We will continue to run a [series of events](#) with me and my team across the country throughout 2019. More information on dates and locations will be posted soon, so please keep following us.
- More general information about living in or moving to France is available on the [Living in France Guide](#), including the latest on cartes de séjour and the French registration system.
- For more on what Brexit could mean for you, please check out: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advice-for-british-nationals-travelling-and-living-in-europe>

Ed Llewellyn



## The Fabulous Christmas of Mary Poppins at BHV Le Marais

This Christmas, the British Embassy in Paris [has partnered](#) with Parisian department store BHV Le Marais to showcase the best of British products, from design to food and drinks. From 14th November until 31st December, over 50 British brands will be available in store as part of the Christmas campaign "The Fabulous Christmas of Mary Poppins". The campaign coincides with the release of the new Mary Poppins film, "The Return of Mary Poppins", starring Emily Blunt who we were delighted to welcome to the Residence earlier this month.



The film's release is also a chance to promote the teaching of English language. Our team organised a bilingual screening for 150 schoolchildren. After the film, the children tasted a delicious and typically British goûter at the Grand Rex cinema in Paris, and got down to learning some English. They were accompanied by representatives of the French Ministry of Education, and come from Paris' "experimental poles", which have recently launched an initiative to teach all subjects in 50% English and 50% French from primary school level.

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!



The Embassy organised several free tours around Paris to (re)discover the Wallace Fountains on 15-16 December.

## Make our planet green again!

Climate and environmental issues are a central pillar of our bilateral relationship and a UK Government [priority](#). In October, the Embassy held a series of events and activities to promote green initiatives for [Green GB and Northern Ireland week](#).

The week included roundtables on environmental policy with French experts, NGOs, activists and students. The UK Delegation to the [continues on p.3]

## Celebrating Sir Richard Wallace's 200 years of philanthropy

Have you heard of Sir Richard Wallace? Born in London in 1818, Wallace, who was said to be the illegitimate son of the Fourth Marquis of Hertford, was brought up by his paternal grandmother in Paris. Growing up, Richard Wallace mixed in bohemian circles with the likes of Flaubert, Delacroix and Baudelaire.

When the Marquis died in 1870, Wallace was named his sole heir and received the entire family fortune. Deeply troubled by the extreme suffering he saw in Paris during the Siege of Paris and the Commune (1870-71), Wallace used his fortune to fund an ambulance service and the construction of the Hertford British Hospital. He also founded the [British Charitable Fund](#) which many of you may know. Particularly concerned by the shortage of clean and accessible drinking water in Paris, Wallace decided to design and gift 50 public drinking fountains to the city.

2018 marks the bicentenary of Wallace's birth and so, to celebrate this 'voisin's' generous contribution to the city of Paris, as well as the opening of the exhibition '[L'eau dans la ville, du XIXe au XXIe siècle](#)' at Eau de Paris, the Embassy organised tours of the Wallace Fountains in Paris on the weekend of 15-16 December. We were delighted at the interest in the tours and the fountains – a part of the fabric of Paris!

[Make our planet green again! continues...]

OECD organised an event with the OECD's Greening Coordinator, giving us a direct insight on greening a multilateral organisation, which has given us many ideas to implement locally. Internally, the Embassy's volunteer-run Green Team gave green tips to staff and hosted a plastic-free lunch to raise awareness amongst colleagues on the waste generated by take-away lunches.

Overall, the week provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness - internally and externally - of the key policy and practical issues related to climate change. As a result, our Embassy is working to ban all single-use plastics.



Meeting with our Honorary Consuls at the British Embassy in Paris on 27 November 2018. The Honorary Consuls play a crucial role in supporting our work for British citizens living and traveling to France and are located across the country and in French overseas territories.

## LIVING IN FRANCE GUIDE

Find out the latest information on our [Living in France Guide](#), which also includes information on how to access healthcare, get documents legalised, our lists of lawyers, etc. Sign up for updates [here](#).

If you are having any difficulties with acquiring a carte de séjour, [please contact us](#) outlining the difficulty you have encountered, when, and which préfecture (département).

**UPDATE FOR BRITS LIVING IN GIRONDE:** Following our recent outreach event in Bordeaux and meeting with the Préfet of Gironde, we understand that Gironde Préfecture is now offering appointments for carte de séjour applications, in line with the reminder sent out to all Préfectures before the summer. We continue to use information shared with the British Embassy by UK nationals to inform our discussions with the French authorities.