

MAY 2021

# VOISINS VOICES

A BRITISH EMBASSY PARIS NEWSLETTER



British Embassy  
Paris

## WELCOME

Welcome to the May edition of Voisins Voices! In this edition, we look at the changes to our Travel Advice, voting rights, healthcare, and how the Church of England is helping UK Nationals apply for residency in France. As always, our online Living in France Guide has the most up to date information - please click on this [link to see](#) more detail and register to be notified of updates.

Do please forward this to any friends, family, or new acquaintances living in France. To get added to the distribution list, simply email [France.Enquiries@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:France.Enquiries@fcdo.gov.uk) or follow this [link and fill](#) in the form with your email address and name.

## British Ambassador to France: May Article for Connexion France

Each month the British Ambassador to France, Ed Llewellyn, shares an insight into his role through [The Connexion](#). Here is his latest:

### By Ed Llewellyn

In recent weeks, like many of you, my thoughts have been with Her Majesty The Queen. The sad news of the death of His Royal Highness, The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was marked the world over and reminded us what a remarkable life he lived, dedicated to the service of his Queen, his country and his family.

Thank you to all of you who have sent messages to the Embassy, which have been very much appreciated.

My team and I have enjoyed sharing memories of the Queen and the Duke's many visits here (most recently in 2014) and looking back at photos from our archives. You may not know that the Duke began his education here in the Paris suburb of Saint-Cloud and spoke excellent French – or that the then Princess Elizabeth and the Duke's first visit overseas as a married couple was to Paris in 1948.

Since I last wrote, we have of course been back in a national lockdown in France. Perhaps you have returned to a few weeks of home schooling, maybe you are working remotely or your business may be temporarily closed.



I know that, especially for those living alone, or missing family and friends in the UK, this will have been a difficult time. We continue to support you as much as we can with information and travel advice, so please follow our social media pages to stay up to date.

It remains a tough time, I know, but as the vaccine campaigns make headway both at home and here in France, I hope we can look forward – through what remains of the spring and towards the summer – with the hope of restrictions gradually easing. We will continue to keep you informed of the developing situation in both France and the UK.

In May, France will mark the bicentenary of Napoleon's death. My residence – bought by the Duke of Wellington in 1814 – has many connections to Napoleon, having belonged to his sister Pauline Borghese. The house and its contents retain a sense of that time. We look forward to sharing stories about it.

I must also remind you that there are now just under two months left to apply for residency under the Withdrawal Agreement. If you haven't done so yet, now is the time! I know lots of you have found it a smooth process – the latest Interior Ministry figures show that more than 125,000 people in France have already applied.

Please keep a sharp eye out for emails from your prefecture since responding promptly to requests for further information will help them process your application as quickly as possible. For those who need more help making an application, the UK Nationals Support Fund organisations can assist – see our online Living in France guide.

I know many of you are frustrated by the continuing uncertainty around driving licences and I understand how difficult this is making things. The Embassy and the UK Department for Transport are working hard to finalise an agreement between the UK and France which will cover the recognition and exchange of licences. I would like to reassure you that our priority is reaching a pragmatic agreement that will provide certainty to those of you who have been unsure about the future of your driving rights in France. We will share details as soon as we can in our Living in France guide, on social media and in The Connexion.

Just a final reminder from me that for any questions on visas or the 90-day rule, please check France Travel Advice, and especially the French Embassy in London's website.

I'll close by wishing you all a very pleasant May. As the days get longer, I hope they will be a reminder that brighter times are on the way.



# Travel Update

**France is on the UK's amber list for international travel.** You should not travel to amber list countries or territories for leisure purposes until 17 May.

## Travel to the UK from France

**Travellers to the UK must:**

- [Complete a passenger locator form.](#)
- [Have proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days of departure \(if 11 years or over\).](#)
- [Quarantine for 10 days.](#)
- [Complete COVID-19 tests on day 2 and 8 of your quarantine.](#)



You may be denied boarding if you do not comply with these requirements, or fined if found to have broken the rules. If you entered France from a red-listed country less than ten days before you arrive in England, then you will need to use [managed quarantine](#).

There are a small number of exemptions to these rules, which you can find [here](#).

In England, you can still use the Test and Release scheme to end quarantine early, [if you take a test after 5 days](#).

You can find specific information [here](#) if you are travelling to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.





## Travel to France from the UK

It remains illegal to travel internationally from the UK for leisure, and a fine of up to £5,000 for anyone trying to travel abroad from England without good reason is in force. Valid reasons for travel are listed [here](#).

### Travellers to France must:

- [Complete a Declaration Form for international travel](#).
- [Have proof of a negative COVID-19 test \(PCR only\) taken within 72 hours of departure \(if 11 years or older\)](#).
- [Self-isolate for 7 days upon arrival, before taking another PCR test](#).
- Complete [a sworn statement that they are not suffering from any symptoms associated with coronavirus, and have not been in contact with any confirmed cases in the preceding fortnight](#).

You can find [here](#) the exemptions apply for completing the Declaration Form for international travel.

Please continue to follow our [Travel Advice for France](#) and [@BritishinFrance](#) on Twitter.

If you are travelling from France elsewhere within the European space, please do check our [Travel Advice for the relevant country](#) in case of border restrictions and/or testing requirements.

You can find general advice on travelling abroad from the UK [here](#).

# Voting Rights

In The Queen's Speech on 10 May, the Government recognized that the 15-year limit on the voting rights of British expats is arbitrary and anachronistic in an increasingly global and connected world. We know that most British citizens overseas retain deep ties to the United Kingdom. Many still have family here, some will return here. Many will have a lifetime of hard work in the UK behind them, and some will have fought for our country.

The Government has set out that it plans to deliver 'votes for life' and give a General Election vote to all British citizens living overseas who have been previously registered or previously resident in the UK. In addition, the Government will make it easier for overseas electors to remain on the register with an absent vote arrangement in place.

These changes will come into effect in time for the next scheduled General Election in 2024.

# Upcoming Online Outreach Events

Our next online event for British citizens on Microsoft Teams is now open for registration!

125,000 people have applied for residency in France ahead of the deadline on 30 June 2021. If you haven't applied yet, start today, and if you have any questions, join us live:

- Tuesday 18 May from 6PM to 7.30PM:  
Register now: <http://bit.ly/OnlineOutreach1805>



## SETTLED IN FRANCE?

**ONLINE OUTREACH MEETING  
FOR UK NATIONALS IN FRANCE**

**18 May 6PM-7.30PM**  
Register at →  
<http://bit.ly/OnlineOutreach1805>

 ITS TIME TO TAKE ACTION, FIND OUT MORE  
AT [GOV.UK/LIVING IN FRANCE](http://GOV.UK/LIVING IN FRANCE)

 Check  
 Change  
 Go

# Healthcare

Are you a UK state pensioner, or a dependant of someone who is?

If you moved to France from 1 Jan 2021 onwards you can still apply for an S1 form to access state healthcare in France. You'll also be entitled to a UK issued Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) once you have registered your S1 form locally.

The GHIC covers you for medically necessary care when visiting other EU countries. Visit [www.nhs.uk/ghic](http://www.nhs.uk/ghic) for more information.

The NHS is a residence-based healthcare system. This means that if you move to the EU after 1 January 2021, you may no longer be automatically entitled to medical treatment under normal NHS rules. This applies even if you are eligible to use a UK S1 for healthcare cover in your EU Member State of residence. However, if you are an S1 holder who moved to the EU before 31 December 2020, you'll also have access to the NHS in England when you're visiting.

Depending on your personal situation, we suggest you find out more on what kind of access to the NHS for trips to England you may have [here](#).

You can read more about accessing the NHS when visiting the UK on the NHS pages and [you can watch this video on our Facebook page for more information](#).



# Applying for Residency in France and Available Support

If you're applying for residency, don't forget to regularly check your emails, including your junk folder. Your prefecture may ask for more information and responding promptly will help keep your application moving. Let the prefecture know if you cannot make the appointment you have been given.

Apply now for a [Withdrawal Agreement Residency Permit](#), even if you already have a carte de sejour. All UK nationals need to have this new permit, unless they have a second EU nationality. If you don't take action by 30 June you risk losing your rights in France.

There are a number of organisations dedicated to helping British nationals living in France in applying for a Withdrawal Agreement residency permit. Each month, we profile one of these organisations to highlight their great work and how they might be able to help you, or someone you know.

## Church of England

### **Would you like to introduce yourselves?**

The Diocese in Europe is part of the Church of England and has over 300 congregations across continental Europe, including over 80 churches in France. The Diocese Residency Support Project is a team of six people available to UK nationals needing help or support with their Withdrawal Agreement (WA) residency applications in France. The project focused initially on the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, with its large concentration of UK Nationals in France; it has since expanded to also cover Occitanie, Bourgogne Franche-Comté, Centre Val de Loire, Grand Est and Corsica.

Alongside the Project Director and Project Manager we are fortunate to have a team of four experienced caseworkers who have an in-depth knowledge of the application process and the requirements for WA residency. We provide help via our [website](#), email and helpline which is open six days a week.





### **How many people have you been able to help so far?**

We joined the UK Nationals Support Fund (UKNSF) project in September 2020, and over 6000 people have accessed our direct services, such as our website and helpline. Our caseworkers have assisted over 900 people with their applications. Covid constraints have meant most of our support has necessarily been virtual but in the countdown to the application deadline, less than 2 months away, we are putting greater emphasis, wherever we can safely, on getting printed leaflets and flyers in French and English out via local networks to those who may not be online.

### **What sort of people have you been helping?**

It's been really varied, from students, professional workers, the retired or those who may need greater assistance due to ill health or other vulnerabilities.

The feedback we have received from people using the French Government residency online portal has been largely positive. However for some, especially those who may have moved to France towards the end of 2020 and need to integrate into unfamiliar work, health and social systems it can feel more complex. Sometimes, understandably, people are concerned about having the correct information for their individual circumstances, which paperwork to collate or how to negotiate the electronic process and upload their documents. That's exactly the sort of thing our team is able to assist with.

Where people have more complex needs we look to tailor the support we provide and link to other services that can help.

## What has surprised you most about the experience and the process overall?

How appreciative people are of the support we provide! It's been incredibly rewarding to receive feedback that we have genuinely made a difference in people's lives by helping them with their residency applications. Alongside the process and the paperwork people have shared their personal stories and experiences of living in France and what it means to them.

## What would be your key message to anyone who has not yet applied for their WARP?

Apply online now! Don't miss your opportunity to protect your residency rights under the Withdrawal Agreement. We are still encountering some British people and hearing from others about friends and family who don't think they need to apply. This might be because they already have the old style permanent EU Carte de Séjour, are married to a French partner, or in some cases have been given the wrong information. The application process is straightforward and if you have questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact the UKNSF partner in your region - we really are a friendly bunch and are here to help you - for free. For those who have already applied you can also help by checking that your British friends and neighbours have applied - especially those who may be elderly, isolating from COVID or without online access. If they haven't, please point them in our direction!

[www.frenchresidency.org](http://www.frenchresidency.org)

Helpline: 05 32 80 00 05

Monday to Friday: 09:30 - 12:00 & 13:30 - 16:00. Saturday: 09:30 - 12:00.

[Email](#)



# UK NATIONALS SUPPORT FUND

In France, [four British Government funded organisations](#) can help UK nationals secure their residency rights. They provide practical support to individuals finding it harder to complete applications, including pensioners, disabled people, those living in remote areas or who have mobility difficulties, and those who face language barriers or barriers in accessing technology.

## **IOM - The International Organisation for Migration (Brittany, Normandy, Ile de France, Hauts-de-France, and Pays de la Loire)**

Visit the [IOM website](#)

Email: UKnationalsFR@iom.int

Hotline: 08 09 54 98 32 available during the following hours:

Mon - Tues 2pm to 4pm and Wed - Thurs 10.30am to 12.30pm

## **FBN - The Franco-British Network (Dordogne, Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes)**

Visit the [FBN website](#)

Email: [The Franco-British Network](#)

Hotline: 05 19 88 01 09 available during the following hours:

Mon, Tues and Wed, 9am to 1pm; Thurs and Fri 1pm to 5pm

## **Church of England - Diocese in Europe (Nouvelle Aquitaine, Occitanie, Grand Est, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Centre-Val de Loire, Corsica)**

Visit the [Diocese in Europe Residency Support Project website](#)

Hotline: 05 32 80 00 05 available during the following hours:

Mon - Fri 9:30am to 12:00pm and 1:30pm to 4pm;

Tues 5.30pm to 8pm; Sat: 9:30am to 12:00pm

## **SSAFA, The Armed Forces Charity (veterans across France)**

Visit the [SSAFA website](#)

Email: [ukvie.support@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:ukvie.support@ssafa.org.uk)

Hotline: 08 05 11 96 17

# USEFUL LINKS TO ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE OR SUPPORT

Please visit the webpages below for more information. The links and contact details can signpost you in the right direction and also connect you to those who can provide support or offer help with technical matters if you need it.

Key websites:

- Living in France Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>
- France Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>
- Sign up to the Business Newsflash: [bit.ly/WeeklyNewsflash](http://bit.ly/WeeklyNewsflash)
- French government website: [www.brexit.gouv.fr](http://www.brexit.gouv.fr)
- Healthcare in France: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france-including-martinique-and-guadaloupe>
- NHS advice on planning healthcare abroad: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/moving-abroad/planning-your-healthcare/>
- If you use social media, do also follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ukinfrance> and on [Twitter](#) @BritishinFrance

If you use social media, do also consider following us on [Facebook](#) @ukinfrance and on [Twitter](#) @BritishinFrance.

