

For the first time, we welcomed some native speakers to exchange with them. We asked them questions in order to know each other.



Paul is an Englishman who comes from the West side of England. He was born in Bristol where he used to live. He has two sons : the older one lives in Bristol and the younger one in Bath. They do not intend to live in France for now. Before Paul retired, he was a salesman in machinery and he once was a sailor.

He and his wife decided to leave their country for France to have a better life quality. Moreover, the lifestyle in England is more expensive than in France so coming to France has saved them money and kept their money last longer. He returns, sometimes, in his native country at a rate of once a year. Generally, he travels by car and boat. What he is missing the most from his country of origin is where his house was located, near the coast and the sea.



He communicates with his relatives or friends who still live abroad by phone or by skype. He decided to settle in France in 2002 so he has lived here for 15 years. To find a house in France his wife and him decided to travel by camping car.

They spent their first week in “Val de Loire” and their second in Charente. They were supposed to go Aquitaine but they fell in love with a house in Confolens. So, with the help of an estate agent, they bought it. They live, actually, between the town and the countryside; more precisely “rue du pont de l’ecuyer” in Confolens.



He chose this country because he has traveled around France for 1 month when he was 13 years old and he had already worked here for 1 year. In addition, he liked the way of life of France and its calm compared to England. The houses of Charente are also cheaper than in some other regions of France. He hesitated with Spain but it reminded him

too much of England. He doesn't intend to return to England one day because he prefers the french lifestyle to the english one. He doesn't regret his decision to settle in France at all.

Paul made a lot of friends in France; He finds it very easy because at the time he moved in France, there were a large group of English people in Confolens. They organized meetings

and lunches with other foreigners such as German, Dutch and of course French people. His sons were too old to go to school when he moved in, but one of them made the same trip, in Charente, like him when he was 13 years old. Before they moved in France, he and his wife were living in the outskirts of Bristol and as the city expanded more and more, it became more and more “urban”. It was neither boring nor difficult to adapt to a slower pace of life since it was what they wanted. Paul finds it rather easy to live in the countryside and likes the fact that it is calm and peaceful. He didn’t have to find a job in France since he came here when he was retired but he told us that he finds it difficult to start a business here. There is much more administrative papers to do in France and it costs a lot if you want to employ someone compared to England where it’s quicker to do so. For him, the language barrier doesn’t exist since he wanted to learn. He even bought a learning course and listens to French cassettes in his car to learn French. So he became fluent and had a great accent, which is useful. He lost a bit of his French since he doesn’t work anymore but he still speaks it well.

The cost of living is different from the British one. The cars are cheaper and the overall grocery products are also cheaper in France even though it can vary depending on what you buy. The one thing that is expensive is the mutual / healthcare.

Paul did not find it difficult to drive on the right because he was used to it from the year he spent working in France. He loves French cars and especially Peugeot’s cars. Generally speaking, France is what he expected it to be.



He has a workshop he uses as a hobby during his free time. He also has a garden although he hates gardening. Listening to classic music is one of his favorite pastimes. He likes travelling and as a sailor, he was used to travelling all around the world. For example he went to India and South Africa. He is involved in the Red Cross and he belongs to a group of friends, who are from many

origins (there are Australian, Scottish, English, French people...). They go together in restaurants once a month to speak and exchange with each other. He didn’t have to take French lessons because he has already learned it when he was younger and then he practised by himself.

Eventually, we asked him a few questions about the Brexit. He said he was able to vote. Indeed, you keep the possibility to vote until 15 years abroad and he was in France since a little less than that. At the moment, they haven’t felt the impact of the Brexit yet because the negotiations are still in progress. Anyway, no matter what would have changed, he hasn’t thought about going back to England after the Brexit vote because he likes his life here, in Confolens.