

ACTIVE CITIZENS TOGETHER PROJECT NETWORK NEWSLETTER TWO: SEPTEMBER 2016

Hello again to all members of the Active Citizens Together Project Network. This is our second newsletter to keep you in contact with the project.

IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTIVE EUROPEAN CITIZENS

The British Council is running an Active Citizens Leadership Programme in the UK during 2016-17 which includes an international study visit to meet other active citizens around the world, to share experiences and visit a community project.



There are no fees to pay BUT THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS: SUNDAY 11th SEPTEMBER!!! Please click here for information:

https://www.britishcouncil.org/active-citizens/global-locations/uk/recruitment?utm_source=e-shot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ac-recruitment-16



ACT Project News.....

Over one hundred people from fourteen different European countries have now taken part in our workshops to discuss their rights and opportunities.

English language tutors have also been using our project materials for their classes, with over seventy European citizens taking part so far.

Active Citizens workshop – Hatfield, Thursday 7th July



Michal Siewniak, resident of Welwyn Garden City and a former Local Councillor said: “I am delighted that I was able to participate in the Active Citizens workshop. This project is helping to effectively engage with many residents, who are often described as ‘hard to reach’.

The workshop participation gave us all a platform to understand how to become even more involved in the local community, why it is important to be ‘civically active’ but most of all, it was a fantastic opportunity to share, network and feel truly ‘empowered’.

Our ‘get together’ felt like a real partnership event which recognised the input and contribution of each partner involved. Exchanging ideas, sharing our own personal stories and experiences helps us to grow as local activists and citizens.

Let’s all continue on this journey which values each member of our community and helps to build a safer, happier and more tolerant society.”

Our featured ‘Active Citizen’ for this edition of the newsletter is Ines Maria Moura from Ipswich



I was born in Portugal in the late 70’s and I have decided to move to England in 2002.

When I first came here, I worked in a factory, cutting chickens on an eight hours daily shift. It was a handling job and a group of about 20 other Portuguese people also worked there. At break times, I used to mix with English people. I didn’t sit with the other Portuguese people because I wanted to get to know English and the English way of life. I could also practice the language more. I progressed to have part-time jobs and it meant that I was always communicating with lots of different people.

I live in the town centre and one day I have received a leaflet about meeting the Neighbourhood Watch group. The information on this leaflet was about community activities organized by the group and other useful information about the area.

I got in touch with the group’s secretary and I attended my first meetings in 2006. The group was predominantly formed by middle-aged white British home owners. I felt like the ‘odd one out’, but it didn’t bother me. I explained that I was renting the property and that I couldn’t commit myself to very long term plans. I was very welcome by the group, attending meeting, social gatherings and quiz nights. I just said what I thought about the issues being discussed by the group. I met very interesting people.

Then when my kids started going to school and I thought that I was a good idea to get more involved with their education. I asked ‘what is a parent governor’? Two of the Neighbourhood Watch members were retired teachers, so I went to them for advice. They explain the governor’s role and I approached the primary school and asked if they had vacancies. I was welcome to attend a couple of meetings to get the feeling about what the group of school governors do. I was quite happy with it and I registered myself with the school with the intent of becoming a parent governor. I had to attend a couple of courses that explained the role, rules and responsibilities. We have one committee meeting and a full governing body meeting per term. I really enjoy it.

I think the best way to get to know the community is to approach people and to go online to find things out. There’s a wonderful website www.gov.uk where you can find out all sorts about life in the UK, it is up to date and it uses a language that you can understand.

Get involved and enjoy being part of the community you live in!

Active Citizens Together – Autumn/Winter Workshops

When?	Where?	How to register for a place
Wednesday 21st September 2016 10:00 - 12:00	KLARS (Kings Lynn Area Resettlement Support) offices, 41 Old Hospital Mews, Hospital Walk, King’s Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 5RU	http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/events/active-eu-citizens-workshop-kings-lynn/
Thursday 10th November 2016 10:00 – 12:00	West Watford Community Centre, 15 Harwoods Road, Watford, WD18 7RB	Contact Sue Hay: (m) 07920-257-964 (e) sue.hay@eelga.gov.uk or Rachel Heathcock (t) 01284-758311 (e) Rachel.heathcock@eelga.gov.uk

<p>Saturday 12th November 2016</p>	<p>Polish Saturday School, Chaul End Lane, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU4 8EZ</p>	<p>Contact Sue Hay: (m) 07920-257-964 (e) sue.hay@eelga.gov.uk or Rachel Heathcock (t) 01284-758311 (e) Rachel.heathcock@eelga.gov.uk</p>
--	--	---

There will be other workshops taking place up to summer 2017, but these are still being planned. For more information on our events, please go to:

<http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/events/>

What are people saying about the project?



“Thank you for your information to let me know about the project what you are mention it. I am particular very interest this program. I hope, I can participate to do this program's for to get more experience for my life and to build more my capacity in the future more better.” (Jose, Portuguese Participant in Peterborough Workshop)



“I appreciate the great work you are doing. Migrant communities, in particular, need projects like yours as their journeys are difficult and sometimes insecure. I hope we will still collaborate in the future and I wish you all the best!” (Angela, Romanian Participant in Ipswich Workshop)



“Thank you for all your effort in this project. It's nice to see that any participant means something to community. I believe that all big changes always start with small things or ideas. I was thrilled about activities involved in program "Active citizens". It was my pleasure to be part of your workshop. Thank you very much.” (Dragica, Slovenian Participant in Cambridge Workshop)

Here are some information items that might interest you:

1. The government has asked an organisation called 'British Futures' to do some research into the position of EU citizens in the UK after the vote to leave the EU. If you would like to know more please contact the project team (below)
2. If you live in Peterborough and want to become a British Citizen, there are classes starting on Saturday 10th September, 10.00am at The Voyager Academy, Mountsteven Avenue, Peterborough PE4 6HX to help you prepare for the 'Life in the UK' test. If you would like to join, just contact Lucie Totakova (e) lmuckova@seznam.cz or find her on Facebook. There is a charge of £2 per session and Lucie is starting to enrol people now

In our last newsletter we had a quiz, which some of you enjoyed taking part in. But as nobody quite got the right answer, we thought we would invite you to try another one to win a prize!

QUIZ QUESTION.....

Can you list the top five European countries from which our workshop participants have come so far, putting them in the correct order, so that 1 = the largest number 2 = next largest and so on? Please email your answers to: sue.hay@eelga.gov.uk or Rachel.heathcock@eelga.gov.uk by Friday 9th September

The correct answer will be on our website <http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/migrant-workers/act-project.aspx>



If you would like to talk to us about the Active Citizens Together Project, please contact us.



Sue Hay: (m) 07920-257-964 (e) sue.hay@eelga.gov.uk

Rachel Heathcock (t) 01284-758311 (e) Rachel.heathcock@eelga.gov.uk

Look out for our next newsletter in January 2017!