



## The British Community Committee of France

Paris, 14 March 2018

Dear members of the British Community Committee of France (BCC),

**This letter provides news from the BCC and an update on the most recent British in Europe developments regarding Brexit, and I would greatly appreciate it if you would kindly forward this letter to your own members, to keep them fully informed. Many thanks!**

### **Votes For Life - Overseas Electors Bill**

No date for the Committee Stage of Glyn Davies MP's Overseas Electors Bill has yet been announced. When a date has been set, it should be announced on the Parliament website: <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/overseaselectors.html>

### **Brexit**

Last December's European Council meeting famously concluded that the UK had made 'sufficient progress' in preparing for Brexit, yet continuing free movement rights for British people living in the EU, and various associated economic rights, were deemed to be 'outside the scope' of Phase 1 of the negotiations. So it was no surprise that the draft legal text of the Withdrawal Agreement, published by the European Commission on 28 February 2018, did not satisfy British in Europe regarding all outstanding citizens' rights issues.

British in Europe therefore sent a wide-ranging 21-page critique of the draft Withdrawal Agreement, pointing out all its deficiencies, to the Department for Exiting the EU in London, the Article 50 Task Force of the European Parliament, and the European Commission, on 14 March 2018, after burning the midnight oil to meet the deadline! If you have the stomach for detailed legal analysis, you can read the British in Europe critique at <https://britishineurope.org/draft-withdrawal-agreement-bie-comments/#more-2931>

### **Briefing Westminster MPs, and how you can help**

We urgently need to help MPs at Westminster to understand what's at stake, and the very real risks we face of losing rights that are essential to our ability to 'live our lives as before'. So British in Europe has also written to all Westminster MPs to brief them fully.

In support of these letters to MPs, British in Europe is also inviting UK citizens living in all EU27 member states to join in its latest "grass roots" lobbying initiative. This has two parts, both equally important, and we hope you'll get involved with both parts. Firstly, we ask you to write (via email or good old-fashioned letter) to the MP who represents the constituency where you last lived in the UK. It doesn't matter whether or not you're still registered to vote. You can find out who that MP is here: <http://bit.ly/MPSpreadsheets> .

Secondly, we ask you to enlist the help of at least one friend or relative who still lives in the UK, and ask them to write to – or better, visit the constituency surgery of – their MP to raise citizens' rights issues directly. There's a suggested template for the letter that you can pass on to friends and family here: <https://britishineurope.org/mptemplate/> .



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Two important points:

1. Please personalise the template as much as possible, especially the opening paragraphs. It's important that MPs receive individually written emails and letters, rather than many identical, cut-and-paste communications from different constituents. Show that you really care about the issues you're presenting by taking the time to craft your own email or letter, using the points included here.
2. Make sure that you include your last UK address at the top of the email or letter. It doesn't matter if you're no longer on the electoral register (and there's no need to mention this if it's the case!) but because of House of Commons protocol, they will generally only respond to those living, or having previously lived, in their constituency.

### Thanks

Thank you for participating in this crucial campaign to keep the 'unfinished business' of our rights on the negotiating table. Even if you're not personally concerned by those issues that remain to be settled, please take part, and support those who stand to lose their livelihoods and their planned futures. And do please get started today – the clock is ticking. Just half an hour of your time could prove to be a sound investment the future for all of us.

### Please donate

British in Europe is now inviting donations from supporters, to help defray travel expenses and legal costs. You are very welcome to contribute! Any donation will be greatly appreciated, large or small. Find out more about giving, and keep up with what British in Europe is doing on behalf of UK citizens living in France and elsewhere in Europe, at <https://britishineurope.org>.

### BCC AGM and second Quarterly Meeting of the year

Just to remind you: by kind permission of HE Lord Llewellyn, HM Ambassador to France, the AGM and second Quarterly Meeting meetings will both take place at the British Ambassador's Residence (39, rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, 75008 Paris) on Wednesday 18 April, beginning at 5.30 pm (doors open 5.00 pm), followed by a reception. Documents for the meeting, including the motion to make certain changes to our Rules, will be sent later to presidents and delegates of member organisations and to individual elected members.

With all best wishes,

Christopher Chantrey OBE

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