

Skerries Town Twinning -- Language Buddy article for Skerries News – 28 03 2021.

Parlez vous français? Skerries Town Twinning launch a new way to learn French



Some people have been improving their French language skills over recent weeks thanks to a new initiative called “Language Buddy” launched by Skerries Town Twinning (and it’s free!)

Ruth Bain is one of those taking part. She says that she wouldn’t have been able to learn as much if she had been trying to learn French on her own. “I am starting to speak with a French accent now. I’ve been a Language Buddy for only six weeks and I’ve learned so much”.

For another Skerries resident, Máire Jones, the experience has been an enjoyable one. She has a weekly WhatsApp video call with her Language Buddy. They have discussed everything from food and drink to travel and work. When asked if there were any issues with language, Máire said: “My buddy has better English than I have French but it doesn’t seem to matter. We set a regular time to chat and get on so well together.”

David Marshall told us that “Dominic and I chat most days over WhatsApp, just a line or two. We record a short voice message (in WhatsApp) in our own language, and immediately follow it up by texting a copy of the spoken/recorded message into the app. So in these short messages, I speak and write in English and Dominic in French. So he gets used to understanding spoken English, and me, spoken French. These brief messages are a follow-up from our weekly WhatsApp video chat. We originally agreed these chats would last half an hour, but the last one ran on to 70 minutes without either of us realizing the time. We talk about where we live, our work, hobbies and the language/words we use. It means that we get regular practice in commonly used words and phrases. It’s great because you learn “first-hand” the way different things are said and the ‘little and often’ approach re-enforces our understanding. It’s fun, very enjoyable and most definitely not a source of stress. We do what we can, when we can. We keep each other informed if we are busy elsewhere. WhatsApp means we can exchange messages at any time and the approach is more productive than studying something on YouTube.”

Are you interested in improving your French by talking with a native French speaker?

The project is open to anyone over 18 years of age. If you would like to take part send an email (Subject line: Language Buddy) giving a short description of yourself and your interests to skerriestwinning@gmail.com and we will try to match you up with a suitable partner

(based more on mutual interests rather than age or gender). Then it's up to you to agree with your partner how and when you link up with each other.

Skerries was twinned with the Canton of Guichen (Brittany) in 1994 and over the years strong links have been established between the two communities. In recent years Skerries Town Twinning has been exploring contacts with Srem (Poland) and hopes to set up a link between the local chess clubs. Skerries Town Twinning is a committee of Skerries Community Association CLG.