

Conversation Club

REVIEW OF 2021



HAPPIER, HEALTHIER,
INSPIRED COMMUNITIES



Conversation Club



Come along and learn English

FREE OF CHARGE

BEGINNERS WELCOME

Various groups available in Sincil Bank

Email community@lincolncityfoundation.co.uk

JAN TO SEP 2021



55

PARTICIPANTS



6

VOLUNTEERS



85

**HOURS OF
VOLUNTEERING**



430

**ATTENDANCES
BY LEARNERS**



Conversation Club Introduction

This is the story of the English in the Community Project which aims to support and develop all those people who speak English as a second language in the Sincil Bank area and beyond.

It has been over two years since the previous magazine, gosh hasn't time flown?

We have all been on a challenging journey since then but it is time to showcase some of the great stories about the fantastic students and the tremendous team members involved. As you can see from the stats and from the pages ahead, we have been reaching a lot of people and having a high degree of impact within their lives. As well as English language lessons, we support people into further education and work. The opportunity to socialise and grow confidence cannot be underestimated.

Before we start we must say a huge thank you to the National Lottery Community Fund which has backed our work for these two years, we are hugely grateful. Thank you to the Lincoln City Foundation team who have helped and supported wholeheartedly.

Thank you to all the students who have pushed themselves outside their comfort zone, given us lots of laughs and smiles to treasure on a journey of growth.

Enjoy.

THE COMMUNITY TEAM



CONVERSATION = FRIENDSHIP

We teach English for free but we are most happy to see people from different backgrounds coming together every week to share moments together and to build life long friendships.

The Lincoln City Foundation's aim is to support happier healthier communities. If you wish to support or follow our work please connect with us via

www.lincolncityfoundation.co.uk



// INSIDE STORY //

ALICE

How would I feel packing up my belongings and moving to a new country where I either do not speak the language and/or do not feel confident conversing with others? If I am honest, I would feel quite scared and lonely. That is why I admire the individuals we engage with at our Conversation Classes across Lincoln City Foundation, as many have done just this.

Could I confidently form a sentence in another language or answer someone's question? The answer is no, unless my now patchy memories of GCSE French could save me! I admire the multilingual abilities of the individuals we work with and their dedication to learning a second (sometimes third or fourth!) language.

Prior to starting work at Lincoln City Foundation, I had a few friends who were Polish, but I must admit my experience of working with international communities was quite limited. Being involved in the delivery and development of Conversation Classes in the local community over the past four years has completely changed this. It is an experience that I have both enjoyed, and which has helped to develop me personally.

In my time teaching, I have assisted mainly advanced learners, supporting them to feel confident in conversational English and developing their self-belief to progress onto

further opportunities, be that employment, community volunteering or simply feeling more able to engage in British life. One of the joys of this role has been watching people as they progress from attending their first class and often being quite shy, to a few months later receiving a request for a job reference, or them telling me they have gained a volunteer placement. I have personally learnt so much about different countries and cultures, and it has made my understanding of the world far richer.

In my time at Lincoln City Foundation, I have also witnessed our Conversation Class offer develop significantly. Our initial one class a week has now grown into a full weekly programme across multiple classes, utilising both face to face and virtual delivery, and we also offer further support to the international parent networks connected to both local primary schools. Our classes have offered further work experience and placements to students studying at both the University of Lincoln and Bishop Grosseteste University, and multiple other community volunteers have also supported our sessions.

I now love walking into our Conversation Classes and seeing a room filled with different cultures connecting and learning together. I know we are helping to facilitate people change their lives and look forward to continuing together on this journey.



// VOLUNTEER STORY //

ANNE

Hi I am Anne. I grew up in Kingston-upon-Thames, went to the local girls' grammar school and went on to Oxford Brooke's university to study Automotive engineering. After I graduated I got a job at the BMW/Mini plant in Oxford and spent 10 years there working in logistics and supply chain planning (basically working out how to get bits from the supplier to the factory in one piece and on time!).

In 2005 my partner, Dylan, and I bought a little house in central Brittany and spent our holidays over the next few years visiting and starting the renovation work. At the top me the house had no electricity, no bathroom or anything that we get used to in normal life. We made the permanent move over here in 2012 and have continued making (slow) progress on the renovation work. We do now have electricity but the 'temporary' bathroom is outside which can be interesting in the winter (we were without a shower for a week last year as the water froze!).

In the nine years we have spent living in France we have picked up the language to a reasonable level, although I don't think either of us would describe ourselves as fluent, we can hold a conversation and deal with most of the admin that comes with French life. I'd did a TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) qualification not long after we moved but never did anything about making

further use of it until my Dad remembered I'd done it and volunteered me to help with the Lincoln City Foundation English language lessons that he had been doing via zoom.

I hope that the fact that I am in a similar situation to the students (living in a foreign country trying to do things in another language) has helped me connect with them as we have something in common. I can empathize with how difficult the last 18 months have been, not only being separated from family and unable to travel to visit but also being more cut off at home with less chance to practice the language, I am certain my French skills have worsened as I am not using or hearing the language as much.

One thing I realised soon after moving was that that you need to have the confidence to just go out and use whatever language skills you have, you won't improve if you rely on other people to do everything for you. Learning a new language, especially as a adult, is really hard but never write yourself off as too old (Dylan had never learnt a language in his life before we moved, he's now able to converse in French with people about all sorts of random things!). Hopefully our hour per week is giving the students a bit more confidence in their English skills so that they can go out and put it to more use and move on with their future lives and careers that they would like to do.'



GALINA

Lincoln City Foundation is the best charity foundation in so many aspects.

English course was very useful for me, I liked and enjoyed the journey of learning in these five weeks. The teacher Neville is very clear and taught very interestingly. We discussed different topics, learning pronunciations, Grammar and much more.

I am now studying Esol Level 1 at College.

I received an email from school of my son that Lincoln City Foundation offers free English lessons which was really good for my speaking. I wrote an email to you that I wish to take a part in and I started learning online every week. The material in English was from the workbooks of Oxford, which I was seeing at College.

Both the teachers are really good team and I'm very happy with Neville and Frank.

Thank you again!

KIKI

The English course was very useful for me. I learned new words, new rules in grammar and pronunciation. It was a pleasure for me to study in such a diverse environment of different ethnicities.

I will now return to work from furlough but I hope to attend another course in the future.

SIHAM

Dear Foundation. I would like to let you know I'm following a new path for my career. May I take this opportunity to thank Neville and the supporting team for all your assistance, effort and support I received during my enjoyable weeks in the course.

TANNA

My name is Tanna and I came to England from Macau in 2019. Luckily I was recommended by my friend to join the English Conversation Club held by the Lincoln City Foundation. I enjoy the class with my classmates every lesson.

My English teacher, Neville teaches us patiently. My English has improved a lot. I am grateful for Neville's teaching. He teaches us earnestly and professionally. I would also like to thank Lincoln City Foundation for running this free English course.

Today, I have moved to Portsmouth but I can still carry on my study through the zoom meeting. So grateful for Neville and the supporting team that let me have a happy study in the U.K.



// VOLUNTEER STORY //

JAMES

“I volunteered with the Lincoln City Football Foundation in my second and third year of university, as an assistant English language teacher for their conversation club. I wanted to gain experience in this role as I have a long-standing interest in culture, travel, and language which I wanted to explore. I really enjoyed my time helping others learn English, I found the process enjoyable as I interacted with and learned about different people from various walks of life. Neville and the staff always helped me feel comfortable with their friendly, professional attitude and I appreciate that they trusted me and actively involved me in the classes. Volunteering allowed me to grow my confidence, practice interpersonal skills and gave me an idea of a potential future career. I would definitely recommend anyone at university or otherwise to get involved as the experience was beneficial and rewarding.”



March 22nd 2021

Conversation Club in conjunction with Lincoln City Foundation.

The Rotary Club of Bailgate Lincoln is one of four Rotary Clubs within the City of Lincoln. We are all part of the national Rotary clubs and linked to all the Rotary clubs throughout the world.

We are all just groups of ordinary people who are trying to help our local community and also the wider international community. As part of this work one of our members discovered that there were schools in Lincoln that had unusually large numbers of immigrant children who could benefit from some specialist books to help them with learning their new language.

The Rotary Club of Bailgate Lincoln were able to provide them with some of the books they required and it transpired that many of the parents also had difficulty with the use of the English language so several members joined the teachers helping this group of adults expand their use of our language.

These meetings took place at St Peter-at-Gowts school Lincoln, then came Covid19! It all stopped but all was not lost as we adapted to using Zoom.

In March this year we started using the Zoom program to help those struggling with the intricacies of speaking and understanding the English language. We all try to keep it fun for both teachers and pupils. It is not the same using Zoom but even in these early days we are enjoying helping others to get to grips with our complex language.

Through the wonders of Zoom we have the daughter of one of our Rotarian members joining us from France helping us with new students who come from the wider Lincolnshire community.

Yours in Rotary

The Rotary Club of Bailgate Lincoln.



// VOLUNTEER STORY //

KAI

My name is Mulikai, I am a TESOL and Linguistics Student at Bishop Grossteste University in Lincoln. The Lincoln City Foundation was a great opportunity for me, as a TESOL Student to see and experience what it would be like to teach English as foreign language. Neville, the teacher I worked with had a great passion for the community, helping students develop and progress with their language learning as part of my observation day. He has an incredible passion for making a difference and helping his students. As language teacher it's important that each individual learner needs are met whilst creating a great atmosphere and learning experience. The Lincoln City Foundation is an outstanding charity that do incredible work which I was pleased to experience first-hand. It has helped me to develop practical skills in relation to my studies. Outstanding Work, Great Charity.



HAEUN

Hello. My name is Haeun and I am from South Korea. I love meeting new friends, drinking coffee, and learning English. I moved to Lincoln last January with my husband. I still vividly remember the first day when I moved to Lincoln. It was cold at that moment. Back then, everything was new for me. This is because it was my first visit to the UK. To adapt myself to this new environment, I tried to explore all around the city of Lincoln. However, because of Covid-19 restrictions, there were not many places to go and visit. In addition, it was not easy to meet people. After Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, I started to look for English classes and finally I had found this English Conversation Club at Lincoln City Foundation. Now, it has been about 4 months since I have come to English classes.

Thanks to the Conversation Club, firstly, I have got more opportunities to practice speaking English with many people. From my experience, even if I am living in the UK, it was not easy for me to have a chance to speak English. As you already know, learning the local language is one of key factors when you live in other country as a foreigner. Thankfully, through the lessons at

Lincoln City Foundation 2-3 days a week, I could have practiced speaking English by talking with people in class. I have learned good English expression and practiced speaking that right after learning. Whenever I ask some questions to Neville, he always kindly answers my questions. Neville is nice and supportive teacher to international friends. Sometimes, I joined some activities organized by Lincoln City Foundation so that I met several local British people and had a chat with them. I appreciate Neville teaching English to us and organized meetings for us.

Additionally, through the Conversation Club, I have met a lot of international friends who are from a variety of countries such as Ivory Coast, Iran, Bulgaria, Mexico, Sudan, Hong Kong etc. I love spending a time with them and getting to each other. Here, English is a bridge between us. Even though we all are from different countries and each person has own mother tongue, but when we have conversation in English, we can communicate in one language so that it makes us connected to each other. During the conversation, I learn something about other cultures, their values to life, and history of other countries. I think that communicating with people from other countries is interesting to me and it motivates me to learn English more.

Since the middle of July, I started volunteering for the Conversation Club. As an official volunteer, I have had extra English classes with several international friends by teaching English. After I came to the Conversation Club, I realized that there are many foreigners living in the city of Lincoln and some of them are having difficulties speaking English. Although I am not a native speaker, I was thinking that I wanted to help them as far as I can. For extra English classes, we usually have another review session what we learned last class. Sometimes, we just have a chat over a cup of coffee or meet outside.

I just want to say that this English Conversation Club means a lot to me. It brings positive energy into my life. If you want to learn English more, please come and make new friends. You are not alone! I hope that more international friends come to this English Conversation Club and enjoy their time by supporting each other.

