



# Ambassador's Activities

2013

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- Press and Communications Services -  
58 Knightsbridge, SW1X 7JT London  
E-Mail: [press@ambafrance-uk.org](mailto:press@ambafrance-uk.org)  
Web: [www.ambafrance-uk.org](http://www.ambafrance-uk.org)

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Speech by HE Bernard Emié,  
French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

during visit of Brent Town Hall

2 April 2013

Mr Mayor

Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of Brent Council

M. le Consul général,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to thank you wholeheartedly for this very warm welcome. I am very honoured that both the Worshipful Mayor of Brent and the Leader of the Council could find time in their very busy schedules to be here with us for my first visit to Brent Town Hall. There couldn't be a better symbol of the emergence of a new partnership between the London Borough of Brent and the French Embassy, and the French community at large.

For the last few months I have heard a lot about this building. The Trustees of the French Education Property Trust described it as the ideal site to create a new French school in London. They were absolutely right. It is a magnificent piece of architecture and one cannot but be impressed by it. We were very honoured that FEPT was chosen as the preferred bidder last December. There is still a long way to go before the new school opens its doors to its first pupils in September 2015, but I am certain that we and Brent Council can go "Forward Together" (to quote Brent Council's motto). So it is together that we shall move forward. I'm sure that our fellow citizens in this area of London will benefit a great deal from the arrival of this new French school, from this friendly invasion in your neighbourhood! This was the case with Kentish Town and, in great friendship, will be the case with Brent.

We would like the new lycée to be part of the spirit of cooperation and friendship linking our two countries. This new school is obviously strategically important in our network of schools in London, but also in the world. When the school opens in 2015, the Lycée Charles de Gaulle in South Kensington will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary, so this opening will be wholly in keeping with the long shared history we have forged through good times and bad. It will be a perfect addition to French people's long-running love affair with London.

This new school will be resolutely international – French-speaking, but embracing British society and the English-speaking world as well. English will play a key role. We see the school as part and parcel of the cooperation between our two countries. This superb building

will be used to educate new generations of young polyglots, whose skills will be tailored to what will be their century: the 21st century.

To this building's prestigious municipal and civic history will be added a history of academic excellence. Mr Mayor, like you, we are embarking on this new chapter in Brent Town Hall's history with enthusiasm. We shall write this page together for the benefit of the pupils.

I would like to thank you once again for the welcome you have given us this evening and pay tribute to the excellent relations which have been established between the Council, the French Education Property Trust and the French Embassy, and which, I'm certain, will continue to grow even stronger in the years to come. Thank you./.