



# Daveys in France

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Dear friends and supporters,

Well, here we are in Villenave d'Ornon!

Villenave d'Ornon is a little suburb of Bordeaux, right on the southern edge of the city. We live about 1km outside the ring-road, so it's quite convenient for the children's school and for our language school, which are just 4 exits away.

Above is a picture of one of Villenave's roundabouts. This one is the Bridgend roundabout (get it?) and marks the twinning of the two towns. In fact the Mayor of Bridgend is coming to visit this weekend. She is staying with a neighbour of ours (Madame Lemaire, would you believe?) and we'll invite her for a cup of PG Tips while we still have some.

### Things to thank God for:

1) The move went quite smoothly in the end. Eight men (yes, 8) loaded our stuff into the truck and about a fortnight later three men unloaded it again here. In the meantime we camped in the house on folding beds and chairs and a borrowed patio set. (And yes, the lorry WAS bigger than our house!)

2) After some struggling France Telecom eventually got our telephone line working, closely followed by the internet connection. They had technical difficulties, but now we're up and running.



3) The day after we arrived we went to find the children's school and the headteacher spotted us and came out to say hello. The children started at school the following day and despite various difficulties, they're doing extremely well. Gwilym already has the best accent of any of us. The picture shows them bravely walking into the yard on the first day.

4) Our neighbourhood is quiet and friendly.

5) Our church is on the other side of the river in Floirac. It's a nice, welcoming church where the pastor's wife is American, so sometimes we can make ourselves understood. A little. Occasionally.

6) We had tests at the language department on 7<sup>th</sup> October to decide what classes to put us in. Boy, they were **HARD!** A severe little lady kept telling us that it was not an exam, merely a test, but frankly that didn't help. Anyway they put Pat in the threshold class (high grade beginners) and Alan in the top class (though you wouldn't guess if you heard him pray in the prayer meeting). He was glad because he can do modern history and modern literature in that class.

7) We are so thankful that our timetables at language school (see picture) enable us to manage half-term and Wednesdays when the kids are off school. Pat basically does afternoons and Alan does mornings.



8) We are homesick now and again, but only if we think about it. Of course, we are usually either too busy, too confused or too tired to think.

9) Thankfully the traffic is really not that bad. The ring-road is no worse than the M6. Having said that, it's raining today and we've seen about 6 different accidents of one kind and another.

Incidentally, Pat has become Patreessia because otherwise her name means pasta. We've all become the Dahvays, because otherwise no one will spell our name right, and Alan has become anglo-saxon because after 6 weeks he's fed up of fighting it and he has bigger things to worry about.

### **Matters for prayer**

1) Our financial support. So far we don't think Alan will be returning to Britain for more deputation in 2005. Please pray that we'll be fully supported without that.

2) Tiredness. Everyone warned us, and they were right. We're exhausted, and we haven't even started our courses yet (17<sup>th</sup>)! Pray especially for the children. Their day is long (8h30 – 16h45 plus homework, plus travelling) and it's all in French so they get worn out! But they get Wednesdays and Saturdays off at present.

3) Language study. Pray that we'll learn quickly and efficiently and that we'll quickly be useful at church. Alan is on a small team training preachers – mainly feedback at this stage. They'll be glad because he can only say positive things in French.

4) Thank God for the wonderful opportunities to befriend and reach out to our (200 approx.) fellow students from all over the world! Pray for our neighbours, too.

5) Please pray for the remaining bureaucracy. Perhaps the biggest hurdle yet – the French Social Security system.

Thank you once again for all your prayers.

A bientôt!

Alan, Pat, Gwilym & Catrin

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Mr. Phil Harman, 14 Eaton Avenue, Connah's Quay, Flintshire. CH5 4HR

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