



**SAVTE**

Sheffield Association for the  
**Voluntary Teaching of English**



# Connecting People, Changing Lives



Creating community **through conversation**

**Empowering People, Connecting People,** Changing Lives  
through English Language Support **Annual Report 2022-2023**



Welcome to SAVTE's annual report for 2022 to 2023. We will begin by thanking all our 154 volunteers – they have all gone 'over and above' throughout the ongoing cost of living crisis. Their commitment and support has been unprecedented.

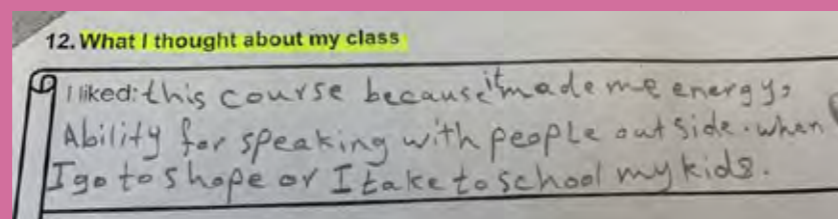
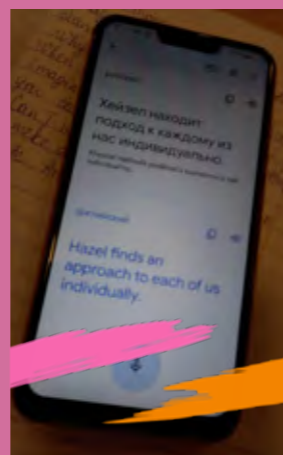
# Thank you to **all our volunteers!**

Thanks also of course to all those who have participated in SAVTE's work, the volunteers, the staff, the trustees and the funders for their unending creativity and compassion throughout this year.

Just like SAVTE, this report is full of diverse voices. You'll hear from people who've been empowered, connected and changed through our work. We hope our informal photos entertain and help you get to know the team.

## SAVTE Volunteers during 1st August 2022 – 31st July 2023

Aaishah Aslam	Elizabeth Coatman	Karolina Borys	Penny Simons	Tim Miskell
Abdu Salih Adem	Eman Ahmed	Kate Harrop	Peter Clarkson	Tim Moran
Alison Jane Moore	Emily Hewitt	Kate McCullough	Peter Gladden	Tony (Anthony) Black
Amaal Khartoutu	Emily Jones	Kathleen Wallace	Raksmeythida (Mey) Oum	Tony Tingle
Amanda Baxter	Emma Matthews	Katie Brear	Raphy Poon	Victoria Catton
Anam Saeed	Esther Goodier	Katie Johnson	Rebecca Vickers	Zainem Hussain
Andrea Slobodnikova	Frances Byrnes	Katie Rockett	Rezan Mohammed	Zakia (Zara) Benghellab
Aneela Khan	Frances Conlon	Kay Kingsnorth	Rhiannon Price	Zubeda Khatib
Ann Blanchflower	Frances Morton	Keriman Kaya	Richard Kingsnorth	
Anna Hough	Frances Robertson	Kimberley Jade Pearson	Ros Tratt	
Anna Lomas	Frances Taylor	Lara Dyer	Rosemary Telfer	
Anne Shutt	Gabani Gamar	Laurie Burrow	Rozina Aleem	
Annie Yasmin Vohra	Gay Horsfield	Linda Baxter	Saba Samsoon	
Asma Aslam Jarwar	Glenn Birch	Liz (Elizabeth) Woods	Sabina Manzoor	
Ayat Ali	Grace Collins	Liz Ford	Sally Birch	
Aysha Begum	Graham Barkworth	Liz Griggs	Sana Ibrahim	
Balazs Maro	Hamed Davami	Liz Perry	Sanam Ara	
Barbara Groves	Heike Becker	Liz Wilsher	Sarah Ross	
Ben Owen Smith	Helen Heuze	Louise Pringle	Sarah Sinclair	
Beverley Brown	Hendrika Stephens	Lucy Kitto	Sarah Zadik	
Bryan Hopkins	Hussain Salih	Mahmoud Ibrahim	Saskia Wilcox	
Carolyn George	Ian McHugh	Malcolm Reed	Selim Ozdemir	
Carys Mapleson	Irene May	Maria Koszler	Sham Haseen-Khan	
Catherine Kilbride	Irene Pugh	Mariana Cordero Caballero	Sharon Ghosh	
Cecilia Minter	Isabel Newman	Martin Freeman	Shler Jumaa Al Talabani	
Cecilia Nikolas	Jack Dorward	Mary Anne Lynes	Simon Cooke	
Chris Crawley	Jane Clare Doyle	Mary Helme	Simona Liteanu	
Chris Duggan	Jane Phipp MacIntyre	Mohammed Mustafa	Sophie Beckingham	
Clive Davies	Jane Stanley	Nathan Turner	Sozan Elhdad	
Colin Havard	Jasvinder Khosa	Nauzad Hamadali	Stephanie Burke	
Crosby Stevens	Jenny Fortune	Pat Rockett	Steven Taylor	
Cynthia Sutherland	Jim Dimond	Pat Rogers	Sue Stocks	
Darren Wake	Joanna Seth	Patrick Moran	Temoor Iqbal	
Debbie Bolam	Joanne Heap			
Delphine Marson	Joe Mottershead			
Denise Annett	Judith Davies			
Denise Carter	Julie-Ann Dixon			
Diana Ridley	Juliette Foster			
Dilchah Chikho	June Cattell			
Elizabeth Buchanan	Karolina Bakalarz			



## 10 Interesting **SAVTE** facts

- Our trained volunteers help people in Sheffield learn to speak English through conversation either in community groups or 1:1 at home. Every year we support 150 volunteers who support 100 placements and 24 conversation groups at a time. This means that an average of 1700 people in Sheffield directly benefit from our work every year.
- In 2024 we will be fifty years old! SAVTE started off in 1974 as the Home Learning Project – steelworkers helped Yemeni families learn English in their homes because they could not attend ESOL classes due to shift patterns.
- We have a community development approach and a commitment to diversity at every level of SAVTE. We focus specifically on training and supporting volunteers from established local communities where our participants live.
- Often participants become volunteers and sometimes they become employees or trustees. In recent years we have employed three volunteers new to working in the UK and one volunteer became a trustee. We engage, we build confidence, we provide a platform where old and new communities come together. We change lives!
- SAVTE supports anyone regardless of their status – 47% of our learners describe themselves as disabled, 77% report a mental health condition and more than half of our learners are refugees or asylum seekers including those who are destitute. Some of our learners are carers, some have been trafficked, some are spouses. More than 80% of our referrals come from statutory services. We fill the gap left by mainstream provision to ensure no one is left behind.
- Equality and inclusion matter to us and this extends to digital inclusion. We provide devices, data and additional support to improve access to online learning and digital services.
- We are flexible and respond to changing needs in Sheffield. We provide an 'English for orientation' programme to newly arrived asylum seekers. We have provided additional groups for Ukrainians and provide women only groups where necessary.
- Participants are at the heart of everything we do. Our bespoke training courses, assessment, support plans and resources have been specifically designed, developed and improved over the years to meet their individual needs.
- We are grateful for funding from Sheffield Council, The National Community Lottery, Asylum, Migration Integration Fund and Charities Aid Foundation. We are developing a business model to ensure our sustainability and plan to diversify our income streams.
- We have a national reputation. We are cited for case studies and we present at national conferences but we are Sheffield's best kept secret. We don't have a physical presence since we work with the most excluded, isolated and vulnerable people in the city. They are under-represented but SAVTE seeks to make their voices heard! In 2024 we will be launching our new brand and celebrating our 50th year.

**SAVTE** Connecting People, Changing Lives

Empowering People, Connecting People, Changing Lives through English Language Support

# Stories from SAVTE

**Hamed-volunteer tells us about how his voluntary experience** has helped him feel a part of the Sheffield community and to secure employment.

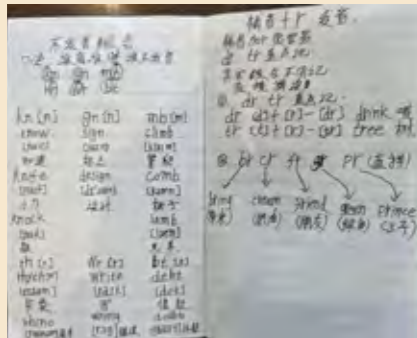
When I moved to the UK I started volunteering as an English teacher, then later, as an office volunteer with SAVTE. This experience helped me improve my English language, especially my knowledge, teaching and pronunciation skills. As an office volunteer I learnt about working in an office environment in the UK. This included being a member of an interview panel, interpreting for team members when they visited people in their homes, contacting learners to signpost them to conversation groups and representing SAVTE during a visit to the Lord Mayor's parlour. Last year I studied for the Level 2 in Management and Leadership and Stella helped me apply for a role as a Care Assistant in a residential home. SAVTE have been a brilliant support for me, helping me with my asylum claim and giving me advice and information about many things in Sheffield.



Hamed receiving Life Long Learning Award from Sheffield Council Adult Community Learning celebration

**“It has been useful and helpful to learn different skills to build my personality, communication skills and expand my knowledge and enabled me to feel valued and make a difference.”** Hamed

**Leo-conversation group learner**  
written by Nuhu, staff.



I am Leo. I have been attending SAVTE English Conversation group sessions in the city centre for six months now. I didn't speak much English and depended on translation (using

digital devices). I miss my family and feel lonely. The English group sessions have helped me learn English and overcome feeling hopeless.

I now speak and understand a bit more English. I am able to communicate with my GP, the dentist and when shopping but still depend on translation on my devices. I have made some progress but I need to work more on my English. I was a cyclist and I like to fix bicycles. I am grateful to Heike (volunteer) for arranging a volunteering place for me at a bike shop. I am also doing 1-2-1 lessons with Glenn at SAVTE. SAVTE teachers are really friendly and helpful.

Things are hard for me, but I have got a lot of support and the opportunity to learn English and volunteer which will help me practise speaking and listening even more. For me it is a 'thumbs up' for the support I am getting from everyone at SAVTE.

**Gulala Rahman-learner**  
written by Kerry, staff.



**“I've been here 16 months now, when I first came I had only one month of English learning and that was in Kurdistan. From day 1 life was very difficult for me, people spoke quickly and I didn't understand.”** “I joined the class with Hazel, and Liz's Conversation Group in Gleadless. I like the Conversation Group with Liz. We talk about a different topic every week. My English

got better. Before when the Council came to my house I couldn't talk to them, I closed the door. Now I can and they are making repairs in my house.

**I didn't have any friends before and I stayed at home. Now I go out and speak to lots of people. In the conversation group I have friendships and it makes me happy.”**

Gulala finished her class at St Marys in July. Since then we have helped her find a volunteering placement at her local Library in Gleadless.

# Spotlight on Saba Samsoon (volunteer)



I first came into contact with SAVTE at the Family Voice Conversation Group. In Pakistan, I was a senior cardiac theatre nurse, but I lost a lot of confidence when I moved to Sheffield because everything was so new and I didn't know many people. Last year I applied for a link worker role, I was not successful because I didn't have the right experience. Instead of being simply told no, Stella invited me in to meet her. I was really worried about meeting the CEO, I thought it would be very formal, but Stella made me feel comfortable, and once I told her my story and aspirations, I was very quickly signed up to volunteer with SAVTE, one morning in the office and another supporting the womens group at CoSS. Salwa supervised my volunteering, and I gained lots of experience from working in the SAVTE office, including being a part of a link worker interview panel, so that I could learn about interview processes, but also learn that it was nothing to be afraid of - this helped me a lot. Sharon also helped me a lot, because of her professional background working in schools, to understand the education system, and access support for my son.

This year Nuhu referred me onto the NHS ReSTORE programme, I attended the information day and passed the interview process and I am now on their training programme and have been offered a job similar to the one I left in Pakistan. SAVTE has helped me a lot. I have regained all my confidence and I can see my future in Sheffield with my son. If it wasn't for SAVTE I would not have heard about the ReSTORE Programme.



**Blerta Ilazi-ReSTORE programme lead, NHS England**

**“ReSTORE, (Refugee Support Training Orientation, Recruitment, and Education), is a recently established NHS programme this year. The aim of the programme is to help overseas nurses including refugee nurses living in South Yorkshire who are qualified nurses from their own country but have not been able to practice nursing in the UK.**

**We support the nurses through a structured programme starting from English Language exams, nursing knowledge exams and clinical practical exams up to the registration with the Nursery & Midwifery Council and finally finding a job as a nurse in the NHS.**

**SAVTE's referral of Saba was the first referral we received since starting the programme, and SAVTE is an ideal partner because the people they support are exactly the people we want to join ReSTORE. As a result, Saba has been offered a post as a healthcare assistant and is waiting for the start date at a local hospital where she will receive the preparation for her clinical exams which will eventually return her to her nursing profession as a cardiac surgery nurse.**

**SAVTE is key to helping us identify talented people who have arrived in the UK, but who have not learnt to navigate the system.”**

# Highlight of achievements this year

This year we have:

- Provided new ESOL classes in the community, integrating the Adult Education Budget contract into our delivery team.
- Rolled out our evaluation processes to our community based projects – this ensures that we are accountable for everything we do and that we can evidence impact in the community.
- Partnered with Sheffield Hallam University graphic design students to develop our new brand which will be launched next year as part of our 50th year celebrations.
- Created an Office Manager post, to help update and implement Health and Safety, GDPR and HR systems, and to ensure the smooth running of the SAVTE office.
- Appointed a Marketing and Fundraising Manager to diversify our income and turn Sheffield's best kept secret into it's best known charity.
- Provided invaluable work experience and CV building opportunities by creating an Office Volunteer Coordinator post to provide support for our office volunteers who are new to working in the UK.



## Jo Reynolds, Trustee and Co-Chair of the Board.

This past year has felt to me to be one of change at SAVTE. We were sorry to say goodbye to longstanding staff member Hannah Thornton, and trustee and co-chair



of the board Sylvia Ashton, both of whom had contributed so much to the charity in recent years. We've experienced some changes in the funding landscape, and in how we deliver some of our language support to people learning English. And we're also preparing for further, big changes in the coming months. By the end of 2023 we hope to have in place the hotly anticipated new name and branding for SAVTE. We will also be wishing our wonderful CEO Stella Burton a sad farewell as she moves on to her next adventure. January 2024 will see SAVTE welcoming its next leader, ready to help us celebrate the charity's 50th year.

Yet, despite all this change, I've also been able to reflect on what remains constant. The commitment of all SAVTE's staff, volunteers and trustees to the charity's mission – to change lives through English language support – is as strong as ever. And importantly, there continues to be a great need among communities to learn practical English, and to be able to connect with people, services and support, and to feel empowered. This need has not changed in the 50 years of SAVTE's existence, and will continue into the future. I'm very proud to be part of an organisation that has been, and continues to be, so committed to connecting and empowering communities through language.



## Nina, Trustee.

I can't believe that my first anniversary as a trustee with SAVTE has already come round. It has been great to see our team of trustees growing during the past year – though we still need more – I personally feel that the appointments of Sharon and Polly have strengthened the management organisation, adding structure to a largely organically grown team. It was exciting to see the professional output of the rebranding challenge for SAVTE put to students from Hallam University – watch this space. And my small personal highlight was the invitation to join the SAVTE team to their annual picnic in Weston Park. I finally met the staff I heard so much about but never had the chance to meet and who bring SAVTE's mission to life.

## Patrice, Trustee.

This has been a really exciting year at SAVTE. We've been working on updating our brand and will be launching a new name that better reflects what we do towards the end of the year. New members have joined both the staff team and the



trustees team and lots of fresh ideas have come forward. Sadly for me the end of my 3 year term is this year and because of family commitments I'll need to stand down. It's been a fantastic experience working with such inspirational learners, volunteers, staff and trustees in my time here.

# ESOL classes in the community



## Hazel, Staff.

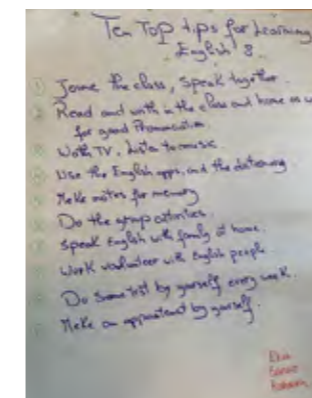
This year SAVTE made a return to running community based ESOL classes in Burngreave Library, St Mary's Church and CoSS. These classes completed a different programme of learning each term: My Life English Skills, My Community English Skills and My Future English Skills.

Our classes provide a stepping stone between conversation groups and formal accredited ESOL. Each class has a tutor and community development worker so as well as focusing on language skills we can provide individualised advice and guidance linked to learners' long term goals.

The three courses each have different themes based on relevant contexts: My Life; focusing on talking about hobbies, interests, learning and skills, My Community; linking to opportunities and organisations in Sheffield, local areas, projects and accessing services and My Future; focusing on accessing education and training, gaining volunteering experience and employment. Learners also develop digital skills for learning using a course website and digital tools to complete weekly homework tasks.

With ongoing information and guidance provided, learners have progressed onto a range of opportunities including employment, volunteering in charity shops and schools, accredited ESOL courses, courses at Sheffield College, Sector Routeways courses in Hospitality and Early Years, digital skills courses and ReSTORE (programme for refugee nurses returning to nursing).

Responding to learners' requests, next year we will continue



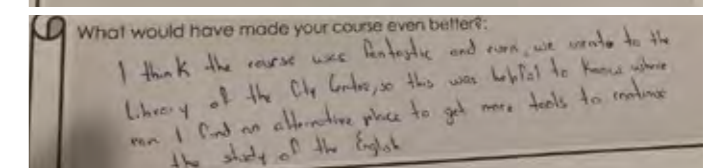
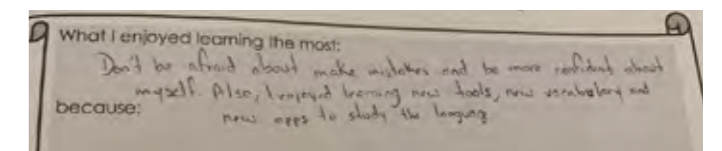
to run the three programmes with an additional course English Skills - Ready for Work, building skills and confidence for work and volunteering.

Many thanks to all the learners for such dedication and energy every week. Thanks also to volunteers Jasvinder Khosa and Chris Duggen for their support with the St Mary's class.

## My highlights this year.

I've loved getting back into the classroom and feel very privileged to have got to know such amazing learners throughout the year. Seeing people's language skills and confidence grow and the groups form such supportive bonds has been fantastic. It's been great to work closely with colleagues to organise the classes and provide a positive and beneficial experience for learners.

Delivering a webinar for NATECLA was a personal 'first' and I was proud to be talking about our approach to volunteer training and representing SAVTE on a national level.



# SAVTE Office Volunteer Programme

## Spotlight on our new Office Volunteer Development Programme.

Last year we created the nation's first accredited Volunteer Development Programme in language teaching. The aim is to support and enable people who face barriers to volunteering – whether due to their English language level, work experience or confidence levels to benefit from volunteering opportunities.

This year we have developed a new programme providing office-based work experience opportunities for people who have never worked in the UK in order to gain employment. Katrin, Salwa and Sharon all support volunteers to gain experience and confidence in many aspects of working in an office environment including telephoning and signposting learners, data inputting, supporting assessments and evaluations, interpreting, participating in team meetings, supporting with checking of resources and making of resources, and participating in interviews for SAVTE staff. Our volunteers are usually clear about why they want to volunteer, and SAVTE support them to achieve their aims, such as writing a CV, interview preparation and accessing training and employment support services.

SAVTE will continue to support the office volunteer programme, and engage with our learners through conversation groups for recruitment.

**“I have learnt professionalism, I have learnt how to work within the team, I have learnt creativity, planning, work ethics, how to deal with people.”** Sanam



### Salwa, Staff.

The best part of my role this year was training office volunteers from different backgrounds and cultures to be able to take the next step in their career and be aware of the working environment in the UK. I have been observing how they improve and gain confidence over time. That makes me feel satisfied and pleased and it gives me a new aspect of experience.

### Sozan Elhdad, Volunteer.

I enjoyed working with SAVTE as an office volunteer. I learnt how the work environment is in the office. They helped me to extend my IT skills and knowledge and improve my English. The staff were very kind and helpful. I am so proud to be a part of SAVTE. When I started everything looked hard for me but the staff made it easy for me. I have been learning how to work professionally, planning, team work, time management and solving problems. I enjoyed calling the learners and helping them to find the conversation group which they need to improve their English skills, because I had this challenge when I came to England.

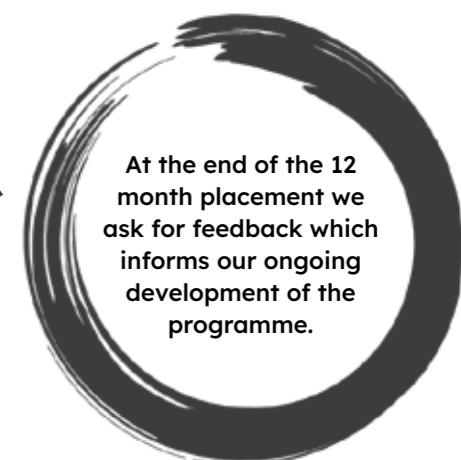
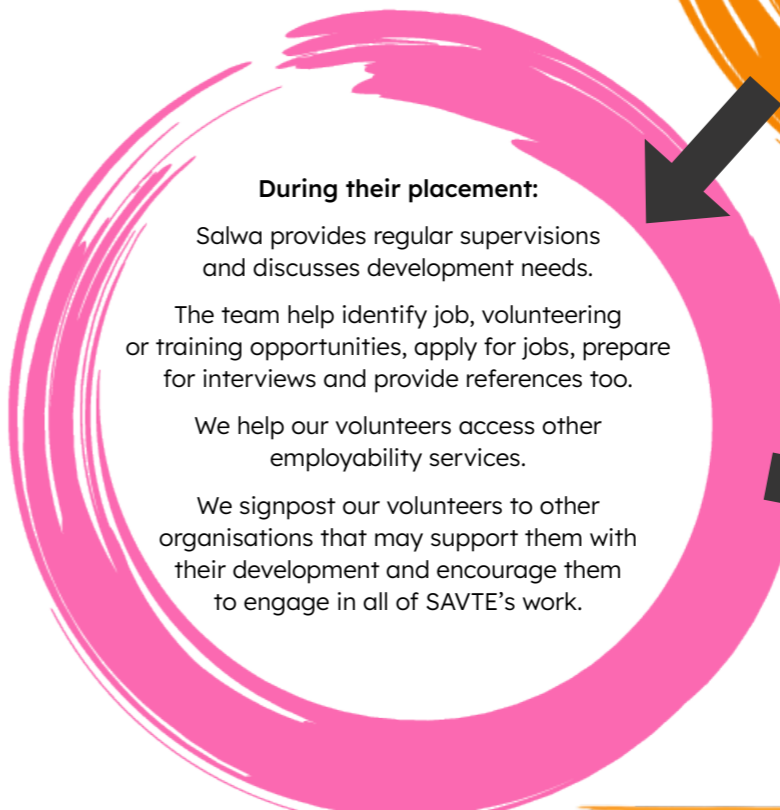
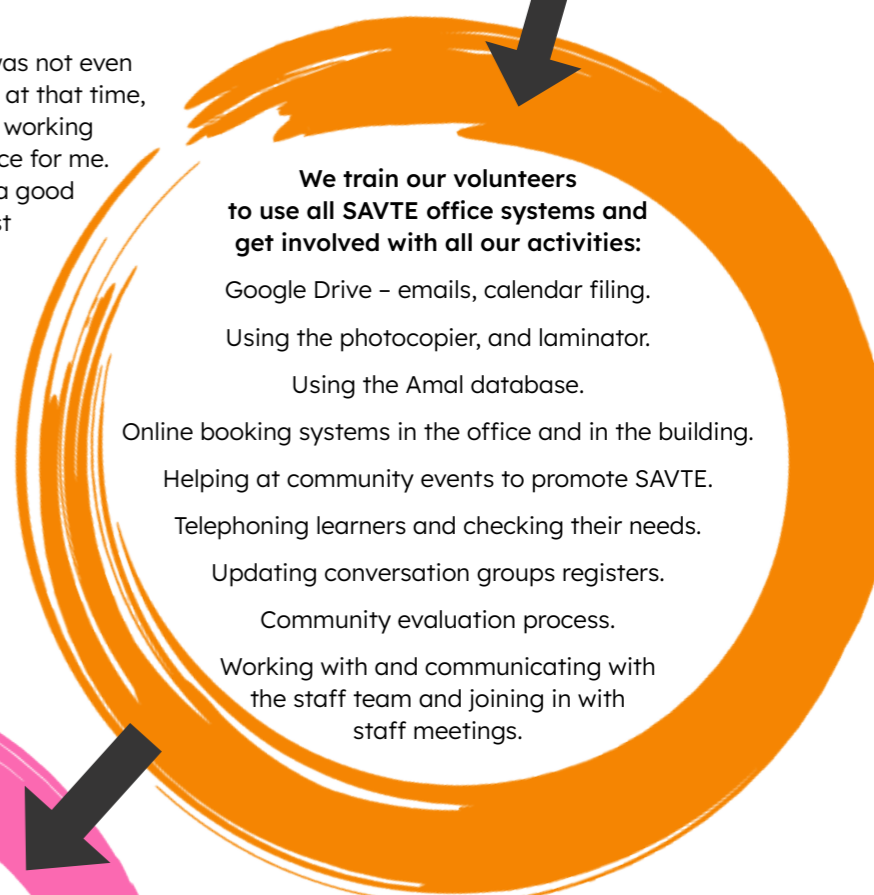


# Information Advice and Guidance for Office Volunteer Programme



### Amina Sahar, Learner.

I remember when I first came to the UK and I was not even able to speak fluent English. I found it very hard at that time, then I decided to learn English and then started working with SAVTE as a volunteer. It is a great experience for me. I am learning new skills that will help me to get a good job in the near future. I feel like SAVTE is the best place to learn. I found the Staff are always very helpful. They always try to help others. The way SAVTE is providing the services is great. They offer different ways of learning to the learners and volunteers as well. SAVTE is a wonderful place with a lot of good opportunities. SAVTE always tries to make everything easy for the learners. SAVTE always serves according to the learner needs. My goal is to learn new skills and speak fluent English so I can get a good job and help other people.



# Evidencing what **we do**

**We aim to be fully accountable** for everything we do.

## Facts and Figures for SAVTE 2022 to 2023

### Participants

- 69 people received one to one support
- 99 people accessed online groups
- 765 people accessed conversation groups in the community
- 67 1:1 people reported improved confidence and increased activity in their local community

### Volunteers

- 54 new volunteers were trained to provide 1:1 Support
- 24 new volunteers trained to provide conversation groups
- 37 volunteers provided conversation groups in the community
- 68% of volunteers are still volunteering 9 months after training
- 6 office volunteers supported

### Community Activity

- 21 conversation groups supported
- 6 volunteers from other organisations trained

### Digital inclusion

- 10 volunteers providing online conversation groups
- 1 digital device library, enabling participants to access IT equipment and data packages
- 7 online learning groups supported 99 participants

### New Arrivals

- 180 new arrivals received English language support in hotels, or signposted to college or other provision including SAVTE classes

### Programme Support

- 400 telephone/email enquiries received and responded to
- 232 SPRING Referrals processed
- 135 Referrals from partner agencies
- 151 Volunteer applications

### Progression

- 12 1:1 participants progressed into group learning
- 6 participants progressed into volunteering
- 9 ESOL class learners progressed to Sheffield College
- 567 Learners signposted to other provision

### Clive Davies, Trustee.

This has been my first year on the Board of Trustees although I have been volunteering with SAVTE since 2016 when I became a language support volunteer.

It's been a very busy first year as a Trustee and I've been heavily involved with Stella and Polly on the re-branding project, working with staff and graphic design students at Sheffield Hallam University.

I have carried on with teaching too and during the first half of this year I gave classes at the city centre hotel housing asylum seekers. More recently I have started meeting with Hamza, my 1:1 learner from Syria, and often his family too. This is going really well and I love to be a part of the incredibly valuable service that SAVTE provides.

**Naomi, staff – applied for and secured money from Sheffield City Council's Local Area Committee Coronation Funding.** This enabled some of our conversation groups to organise trips, picnics, tea parties and communal lunches.

### Here's how the groups spent their money:

Volunteers Jim and Hendrika organised a picnic for their Abbeyfield House conversation group at Grimsthorpe Community Allotments. It was an idyllic day with the clearest of blue skies and everyone enjoyed a spread of salads, olives, bread, Turkish delight, dates and fresh juices. There was a tour of the allotment and a range of interesting discussions.



Beck and Jayne from High Hazel conversation group in Darnall introduced their group participants to a traditional British buffet and afternoon tea. The group enjoyed sharing food and learning new vocabulary.



Grace and Liz from our Gleadless Valley groups used the opportunity to celebrate Nowruz, Tamil New Year, Eid, a birthday and the coronation! They had Persian dancing, music from around the world, a royal quiz, pass the parcel and food from Iran, Turkey, Eritrea, Kurdistan, Iraq and England.



Volunteer, Ian McHugh and Nuhu took learners from the City of Sanctuary Sheffield English groups on the bus to Weston Park. They did a tour of the museum and had a Coronation picnic where everyone brought food to share. The funding paid for bus fares, teas, coffees and cakes. Everyone had a great time catching up with each other, practising their English and discussing local history and the Royal family.



# SAVTE is Rebranding!

Over 1700 people in Sheffield benefit from SAVTE's work every year and this number is growing, yet we are one of Sheffield's best kept secrets.

We asked SAVTE's learners and volunteers why, and learned that many people didn't like, or didn't understand the acronymic name of the charity, lots of people thought we were called "Safety".

Word of mouth is our greatest marketing tool, so we needed change. Rebranding was the obvious solution, it means re-naming the charity and redesigning the logos, colours, slogan and website, all of which must be original, engaging, accessible and relevant.

Our CEO, Stella contacted Sheffield Hallam University. Matt Edgar's Graphic Design degree students needed a "Live" commission to work on for their final project. Thus, a great collaboration was born, and 4 teams of highly skilled students competed to design SAVTE's new brand.

The first step was to choose a new name, which is easy to pronounce and spell.

We settled on "Convo", which is short for "Conversation". We liked its informality, brevity and relevance - Learning English through friendly conversation is what we're all about!

The brands the students built around the new name were all excellent, in the end we chose the one that felt most relevant and accessible, aesthetically pleasing and professional whilst also being fun and useable.

The winning design, with its interlocking speech bubbles, colourful brush strokes and easy-read font was designed by a team of three, Lewis Johnson-Renshaw, Dylan Elliot and Oliver Murray.



Staff and trustees voted on 10 options for our new strapline and "Creating community through conversation" was the winner because it describes our mission concisely.

# Celebrating our

# 50<sup>th</sup>

## ANNIVERSARY

### 1974-2024

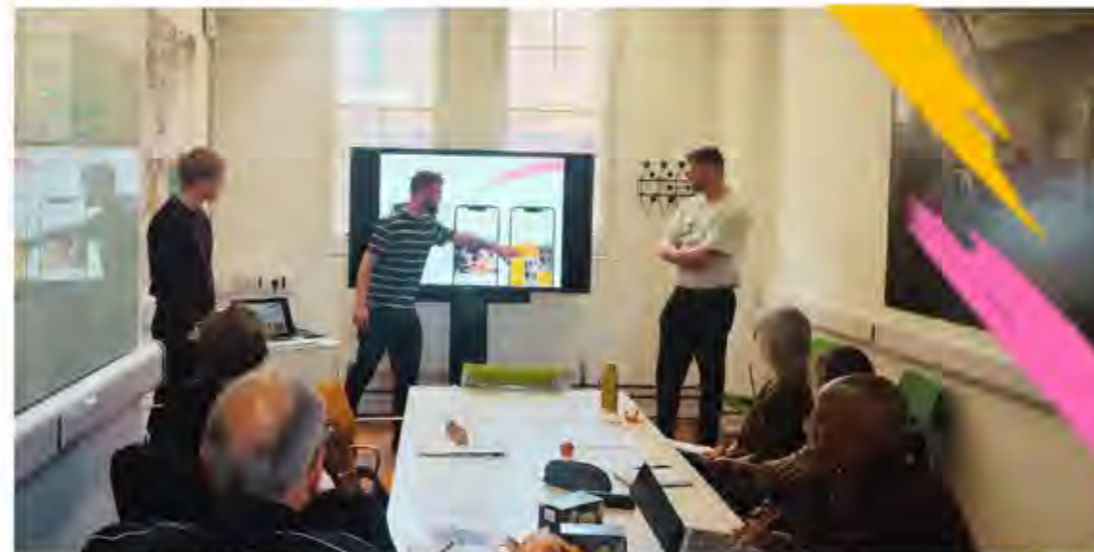
## Creating Community Through Conversation



The old website: savte.org.uk



The new website: convo.org.uk



Students Dylan, Lewis and Ollie introduce their winning brand to SAVTE's team



Wearing our name out! Dylan shows us some options for branded merchandise

## Share our history Share your story

SAVTE/Convo will turn 50 next year!

We began our mission in 1974 when local steel workers decided to help their newly arrived Yemeni colleagues to learn to speak English. The need for these services grew rapidly and The Home Learning Project was created, eventually becoming a registered charity called Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English, or SAVTE.

Since then, SAVTE/Convo has helped many thousands of people learn to speak English and build new lives in Sheffield and we need your help to celebrate our 50th anniversary!

We're planning exciting events and projects to celebrate our half centenary with you

We're collecting 50 stories from 50 people that SAVTE/Convo has supported to learn or to volunteer and we hope to publish your stories in an E-book at the end of the year.

If you'd prefer to create poetry, music, videos or art, then we'd love to share these on our website and at fundraising events and festivals, however you prefer to tell your story, please share it with us.

SAVTE/Convo needs to hear your ideas about how we should celebrate our 50th year so please email us at [50thyear@convo.org.uk](mailto:50thyear@convo.org.uk)



Designing an animation to publicise our rebrand

# SAVTE's City Centre Programme

## SPRING Partnership Lead Nuhu, staff

I have been working closely with key partners to set, maintain and improve SAVTE's English Language provision in the City Centre. The key focus of this is the SPRING Partnership to which the City of Sanctuary Sheffield and Victoria Hall Drop-in are central. SAVTE has also partnered with ISRAAC to offer beginners English conversation group sessions as well as volunteer opportunities to members of the Somali community.

SAVTE now runs two beginners, one improvers, one intermediate English conversation group session and two classes running Tuesday to Thursday in the CoSS. This expansion is in response to increased demand for English language support and signposting especially for people with low levels of English.

Alongside this demand are also the needs of people from the Ukraine and Hong Kong for English language skills, jobs and timely information, advice and guidance on pathways to work and job opportunities. In addition, a Women only English Conversation group was set up to run sessions on Fridays. This provision offers opportunities to women who prefer women-only sessions to attend and often have child care responsibilities.

SAVTE has also established a permanent information desk at the Victoria Hall Drop-In to be supported by a team of volunteers and SAVTE staff. This service offers outcomes for volunteers who want to improve their English and conversational skills as well as relevant information and signposting to SPRING and other clients.



## Nuhu's reflections after supporting learners throughout the year in our ESOL class at City of Sanctuary Sheffield (CoSS).

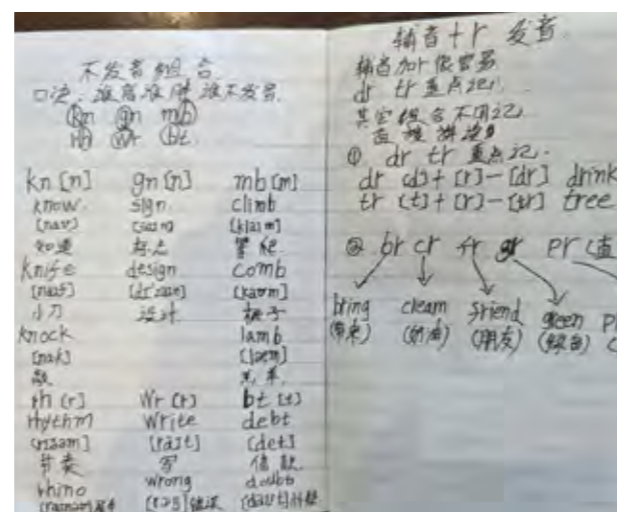
### It is the last day of term:

Learners are doing presentations about themselves and their future plans. Some apologise for their 'English'. There is no need to. I have had the privilege to interact with them for months. I can see their progress! Their growth in confidence, new words, new expressions, more accuracy and fluency. There are less pauses (time needed to translate from their own languages) and no-one is saying 'how do you say it in English?' as was the case at the start.



Everyone has made a remarkable individual journey and their dedication to learning is inspiring. Some (like our friends from Ukraine) have left successful careers back home. **Ivan** says: "I want to find a volunteering role in an engineering company, get a job and settle in Sheffield. I want to establish roots". Spoken fluently, and without a pause.

Everyone is eager to take the next steps. Our provision for new arrivals as well as those who have been in Sheffield for longer will aim to consolidate outcomes and the quality of sessions to keep both learners and volunteer tutors motivated and engaged. I look forward to the 2023/24 academic year with optimism, especially the start of our new English skills class "getting ready for work".



# More Stories

## Maha Ismail & Martha Ting

(Learners at the City of Sanctuary Sheffield English groups)

Martha and Maha attend our English Conversation group sessions at the City of Sanctuary. They share a lot in common - they are both outgoing and like helping other people. They have become inseparable friends.



**"SAVTE, at the City of Sanctuary Sheffield is the first English class I joined in Sheffield. I've been attending for three months now, and it make me really happy because I get to meet new friends from different countries. We learn a second language together. Here, they have classes at different levels, and we can choose freely. It's perfect for me since I just came from Hong Kong. These classes, I practise English with different teachers and classmates. I hear many different accents, which help me learn faster. I want to thank all the staff here, I really enjoy my time learning here."** Martha

**"Learning English is hard but here everyone is helpful and this makes it a bit more easy. I have made a lot of friends. I have tried other classes, but it is not the same like here. My friend, Martha is funny and easy going. She is talkative and not a stress! Thank you very much SAVTE. I have learnt a lot. I learnt to ask about anything that I don't know with confidence. I want to say more but English is hard."** Maha



### Quote from ESOL Class participant:

**"Thanks SAVTE, you taught, inspired and gave us confidence. It was a great time shared with great people."** Svitlana Smyrnova (ESOL Class)

## SAVTE have continued to provide English support in 2 hotels to new arrivals.



### Hydrice Ngantcheu (new arrival, Conversation Groups & ESOL Class participant) - Nuhu

When I came to Sheffield in March 2022 (from Cameroon) my English was very low. I was afraid to open my mouth and say something. I found out that SAVTE was offering English language support in my residence. I took this opportunity and every Tuesday and Wednesday from April to September 2022, I attended all courses offered to us.

This enabled me to improve my listening and speaking, expand my vocabulary and even learn grammar. It was wonderful. The more I attended, the more I became confident in speaking English.

In addition, I made friends who led me to other opportunities. My teacher Mr Peter Gladden, after noticing that I have a passion for nature, gave me my first opportunity volunteering at the Manor Field Park. I also got to know Nuhu, a fellow Cameroonian, another wonderful person, who gives me a lot of advice and support.

SAVTE asked me if I want more learning opportunities. I told them I needed a laptop. The next day they called me to say they had one for me. The reason SAVTE makes a lot of difference to asylum seekers and refugees who need to learn English is because they go to the learners.

I would like to thank all the volunteer teachers who took their time to help us, the team at SAVTE and the CEO Stella who organised for us to meet the Lord Mayor of Sheffield.



# Working with Partners – Partnership working underpins everything we do, **we believe we can achieve more for communities by working collaboratively.**

## Naomi, Staff.

A highlight for me this year has been establishing two successful community partnerships. We are now working collaboratively with Jade Wilkes, the Community Hub Leader at Oasis School, Fir Vale to run a really successful conversation group. Volunteers Zainam and Sarah do an amazing job at bringing the community together each Thursday morning to discuss interesting topics and develop new vocabulary. The group is going from strength to strength. In a neighbourhood that has been historically



and unfairly tarnished with a reputation for divisions and tensions it is brilliant to see people from a range of cultural backgrounds supporting each other to learn English in a warm, relaxed and welcoming environment.

We are also working with the social landlord Arches Housing and run weekly conversation groups in their offices on Burngreave Road.



Arches were keen to engage with their tenants and the local community as they recognised that improving English would support community cohesion and allow them to engage better with their customers. This group has proved popular and I am looking forward to developing it further next term.

## Kerry, Staff.

Following on from our successful partnership with Shipshape, where we trained their volunteers to deliver their own conversation group – this year we partnered with Zest and delivered training for their volunteers to equip them to deliver a Conversation Group in the Upperthorpe area.

**6 months on, Emily (Community Co-Ordinator for Zest's 'This Community Can' project) reported the following:**

**"The training gave our volunteers more confidence to plan and lead a session, and SAVTE gave us access to their wealth of brilliant online resources, which we often rely on for inspiration and ideas.**

The sessions have been a huge success, with an average of 10 learners per week, all of whom (volunteers and learners alike) have grown massively in confidence. Learners have practised their pronunciation and their vocabularies have increased massively. We have since started a men's only conversation class, and a reading group, all volunteer led and supported by myself. Our initial conversation class, training and support from SAVTE staff were absolutely stepping stones to these other groups, not least because my own confidence in supporting them has increased.



**I never expected to enjoy the conversation class so much! It's one of the highlights of my working week and it's become a very special place for our learners and volunteers too. In fact, I enjoy it so much I'm considering further training to be able to teach ESOL classes".**

# Investing in **People**

**Examples of how we have supported staff development this year.**

## Maymona, Staff.

Last year I achieved remarkable milestones in my work, SAVTE funded me to undertake the Level 2 certification in accounting, enabling me to further expand my knowledge and expertise in bookkeeping. This year I am working towards achieving my Level 3 and developing my knowledge and proficiency in more advanced accounting concepts. Through this study and the support of Sharon my line manager and Kehinde, SAVTE's Treasurer, I have acquired a deeper understanding of accounting principles and practices, enabling me to contribute more effectively to the financial management of the organisation, including implementing more efficient financial reporting systems, ensuring accurate and timely reporting enabling Trustees to make decisions confidently.

I owe a great deal of my success to the invaluable help and support of my managers and colleagues at SAVTE.

## Stephanie, Staff.

SAVTE supported Stephanie to fulfil her teaching practice requirements as part of her Level 4 Teacher Training award – Stephanie was able to use this experience to secure a place on a PGCE course to teach modern languages at secondary school level.

**"I started as a volunteer at 19 and it definitely shaped the course of my life to date. During these final months I have been so aware of the privilege as link worker of meeting so many people from so many different backgrounds."**

## Kerry, Staff.

In 2019, SAVTE supported Kerry to successfully apply to become a Churchill Fellow and this year, Kerry finally visited Amsterdam and San Francisco on sabbatical to research community based refugee integration practices. We are looking forward to Kerry implementing her learning within in her role as Community and Volunteer Development Worker.

## Faisal, from Volunteer to Staff

I first met several SAVTE workers when I entered the UK as an asylum seeker in 2020, and that is when my life started.

I first started volunteering for SAVTE in 2020, the organisation inspired and motivated me to apply for a Link Worker role and now I want to use that inspiration and power to help others. I also deliver English classes at the City of Sanctuary Sheffield and ISRAAQ (A Somali Community Association). The nicest feeling comes from seeing students make progress.

### My highlights this year:

**"I've loved getting back into the classroom and feel very privileged to have got to know such amazing learners throughout the year. Seeing people's language**



**skills and confidence grow and the groups form such supportive bonds has been fantastic. It's been great to work closely with colleagues to organise the classes and provide a positive and beneficial experience for learners.**

**Delivering a webinar for NATECLA was a personal 'first' and I was proud to be talking about our approach to volunteer training and representing SAVTE at a national level.**

# Statement of Financial Activities

For the period ended 31st July 2023.

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL 2023	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources</b>						
Donations	1,055	-	1,055	10,581	-	10,581
Charitable activities	145,649	214,268	359,917	92,683	384,063	476,746
Investment income – bank interest	1,256	-	1,256	422	-	422
Other income	-	-	-	161	-	161
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>147,960</b>	<b>214,268</b>	<b>362,228</b>	103,847	384,063	487,910
<b>Resources Expended</b>						
Charitable activities	82,573	276,837	359,410	15,453	322,523	337,976
<b>Total Expended Resources</b>	<b>82,573</b>	<b>276,837</b>	<b>359,410</b>	15,453	322,523	337,976
<b>Net income/expenditure</b>	<b>65,387</b>	(62,569)	2,818	88,394	61,540	149,934
Transfers between funds	(15,325)	15,325	-	30	(30)	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>50,062</b>	<b>(47,244)</b>	<b>2,818</b>	88,424	61,510	149,934
Total funds brought forward	247,957	100,878	348,835	159,533	39,368	198,901
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>298,019</b>	<b>53,634</b>	<b>351,653</b>	247,957	100,878	348,835

## Kehinde, Treasurer.

I joined SAVTE as a Trustee in January 2023 with experience from the corporate world and have found my involvement interesting, exciting and educating. Interacting and engaging with co-trustees who have invaluable, diverse knowledge and experience, and provided support to ensure I quickly settled in. I was appointed Treasurer in May and have found my role as Treasurer extremely exciting.

I have had the opportunity to meet members of staff at various times and happily went along to City of Sanctuary Sheffield for an engagement session on one of the days and appreciate the great work done by our staff/volunteers. I was very pleased that staff invited Trustees along to the staff picnic at Weston Park and was a part of that.

I look forward to more exciting times ahead as we support learners in the journey to becoming better equipped for the bright future that lies ahead.



# The Year Ahead – Strategic Development and **planning for our future**

In the year ahead we plan to:

- Continue delivering Adult Education Budget contracts as well as new classes in the community.
- Achieve Matrix Standard reaccreditation, which will include consolidating our Quality Assurance processes and being more explicit about our information, advice and guidance offer.
- Develop new programmes that widen access to informal English learning in the city.
- Launch our new name and brand. We will be transitioning to be renamed as Convo in Spring 2024, this will involve launching a new website and producing new assets that are aligned with our strategic plans.
- Celebrate our 50th year and aim to raise £50k.
- Continue to fundraise and create fundraising opportunities.
- Continue to implement new HR practices including a staff wellbeing forum and structured CPD processes.



## Sharon, Staff.

I joined the team in January this year as the new Office Manager to support the CEO and Trustees to review policies and procedures, including Health and Safety, GDPR, HR and Safeguarding to ensure the organisation is robust. During this time, we've introduced a new online HR system, reviewed all contracts and created a new staff handbook. We are improving the office environment and staff wellbeing, and updating our communications and marketing strategies. Supporting our learners, volunteers and office volunteers is part of my role and working alongside partner organisations to support SAVTE's vital work in the community.



# Welcoming new staff to the team and saying goodbye too.

## Isabella, Staff.

As a previous teacher of ESOL and English in France, Australia and England, I was drawn to SAVTE because of its focus on helping people from different countries (who are in difficult and often traumatic situations) to learn English and integrate with their local community. My role as a Link Worker is very rewarding, as it enables me to expand on my previous experience by also fostering new relationships and cohesion between a huge variety of Sheffield residents. I am enjoying working with an ESOL class, assessing potential 1:1 English learners and getting to know our volunteers and my supportive colleagues!

This year, I aim to start as many new 1:1 learners as possible on their English-learning journey by pairing them up with volunteers. I am also looking forward to training 1:1 volunteers and teaching an ESOL class.



## Jo Holliday, Staff.

My first experience of SAVTE was back in 1985 when I volunteered as a 'Home Tutor' for a Yemeni woman who lived locally. For a period of about 9 months I visited my learner weekly and helped her to develop her English language skills so that she would feel confident to go shopping, access her GP etc without the need for an interpreter or to be accompanied by her husband who was working at one of the steelworks. Years later, inspired by my SAVTE experience I set up a Lingua Club at the University of Sheffield Students' Union to train home student volunteers to support family members of our students who did not speak English.



## Ethel Meqeda, Staff.

We were sad to say goodbye to Ethel who took up her dream role as a Development Worker for Utopia Theatre. Ethel brought incredible insight and life experience to SAVTE and developed our new Conversation Group training which integrated our community development approach.



**"I really enjoyed the way people worked together and was so committed to the same things. Everyone is so passionate but approached their role from different angles to reach the same goals."**

## Kay, Staff.

I began my relationship with SAVTE as a volunteer language teacher in the Spring of 2023 and quickly understood that the role of SAVTE was so relevant and important to people who live here but find it difficult to integrate into their local communities.

I love the challenges of my new Link Worker role and feel so fortunate to have joined a team of committed and supportive colleagues who have been very welcoming. I have many relevant skills from my background in the education sector, but I am also learning more about the specific individual needs of our home based learners, and I am humbled by some of the "back stories" of our learners and the resilience they display. I am also looking forward to building relationships with our valued volunteers, supporting them in their roles and helping to develop the vital relationship between learner and volunteer.



# Farewell to Hannah and Stella

## Hannah Thornton

I left SAVTE in early 2023 after 10 years with the charity. Over my time at SAVTE my career and experience grew, as did the organisation! I have been so fortunate to find a role which worked for me as a freelance ESOL teacher, working part time around young family commitments, to then be able to develop into a staff team role training and supporting volunteers, and then later progressing onto the, planning and coordination of programmes as SAVTE grew and broadened its offer and opportunities for participants. Having now moved on to new challenges, I feel so grateful for my experiences at SAVTE - the opportunity to increase my understanding of the many different cultures and communities that make up the Sheffield population as well as gain experience of community development, on the ground with groups and organisations - all brilliant experiences that have helped me in my new role in Rotherham Voluntary and Community Sector. I've also met so many wonderful people and had a lot of fun at SAVTE! I'm really looking forward to seeing the next phase and hopefully playing a role in the SAVTE's future as a trustee.



**Stella, CEO will be leaving SAVTE at the end of 2023 to fulfil her dream to experience freedom with a backpack, travelling around the world for the next few years.**

**"It has been an absolute privilege to be the honorary custodian of an organisation like SAVTE. I could not believe my luck in landing this job in 2018. SAVTE's mission and values were in complete alignment with my own, and, on some days, it barely felt like work. The challenge has been however keeping everything going throughout the pandemic and that is why I see myself as a custodian of this charity. My role has been to give this organisation its best chance to keep going for another 50 years in Sheffield. The work is so vital, I will always remember all the people who I have met and who have touched my heart with their own stories, their positivity and their determination to live their lives to the fullest. I am so thrilled also to be passing this honour onto Rob Hindle, a senior manager in the WEA, whose values and commitment to social justice has always won my respect. Good Luck Rob - you will be totally brilliant as the new CEO for Convo."**



## My Highlight of the year, Stella, Staff

**It was wonderful to accompany a group of our learners and volunteers to meet the new Lord Mayor, in his parlour and to hear personally from everyone about how they have benefited from coming into contact with SAVTE this year. These personal stories fuel my passion for the work that I do!**



## Acknowledgements

We are hugely grateful to all of our funding partners and their ongoing support of SAVTE's work.

The National Lottery Community Fund, Sheffield Council Voluntary Sector Grant Fund, Transitional Funding, Covid Recovery grant and UK Resettlement Scheme funding, European Union Asylum and Migration Impact Fund (AMIF) Charities Aid Foundation Resilience Funding, Health Watch, Sheffield Hallam University.

### Board of Trustees

Behind the scenes, but incredibly committed to SAVTE is a Board of Trustees who bring skills, experience and knowledge to the running and forward planning of SAVTE

**Fanda Alazani** retired Dec 2022  
**Khaldoon Al-Mathhagi** retired Dec 2022  
**Sylvia Ashton** retired December 2022  
**Sarah Beardsmore**  
**Usha Blackham** retired December 2022  
**Nina Cardinal**  
**Jim Dimond** retired December 2022  
**Kehinde Obemeata**  
**Patrice Panella**  
**Jo Reynolds**  
**Debbie Hall** joined December 2022  
**Mandy Wilson** joined December 2022  
**Clive Davies** joined January 2023

### And a superb Staff Team

Operations Director **Hannah Thornton, Jo Holliday** (joined May 2023)  
 Quality Manager **Hazel Leigh**  
 1:1 link workers **Stephanie Milton, Ethel Maqeda, Joanne Heap, Faisal Muhrez**  
 SPRING Partnership Lead **Nuhu Jallow**  
 Community Volunteer Development Worker **Kerry Cressey, Naomi Hinch**  
 Programme Support Team **Salwa Ahmed, Katrin Klosa**  
 Business and Finance Manager **Maymona Ghannam**  
 Marketing and Fundraising Manager **Polly Perkins**  
 Office Manager **Sharon Santhouse**  
 Chief Executive **Stella Burton**



# SAVTE

# Connecting People, Changing Lives

Empowering People, Connecting People,  
Changing Lives through Local English Support

## Refer to SAVTE

If you know someone who needs help with their English and can't get access, refer them through our website [www.savte.org.uk](http://www.savte.org.uk) or call us on **0114 212 3050**

## Volunteer with SAVTE

SAVTE will introduce volunteers to learners, and train them to offer English Language Support

Apply to volunteer via our website:

[savte.org.uk/volunteering/](http://savte.org.uk/volunteering/)

## Partner with SAVTE

We welcome any opportunity to come and talk to your organisation about how we could work together

Email us at: [savte@savte.org.uk](mailto:savte@savte.org.uk)

# SAVTE .org.uk

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