

Sept 2026

Welcome to the SAVTE Volunteer Newsletter!

Welcome to our latest volunteer newsletter! ❤️

We've got lots to share with you, from upcoming workshops and important updates to volunteer stories and highlights. You'll also find ways to get involved, support SAVTE, and keep connected with our community.

Thank you for being part of SAVTE and for all the time, care and support you give. We hope you enjoy reading!

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Wednesday 25th Nov

10:00-12:00

Volunteer Coffee Morning

❤️ Turn your everyday shopping into support for SAVTE

What if your everyday online shopping could help someone learn, connect and feel part of their community?

With **easyfundraising**, you can support SAVTE simply by shopping online through the app. **It doesn't cost you anything extra** and a small donation from your shopping can help make a real difference to our learners, volunteers and conversation groups.

For example:

- £5 could help cover travel expenses for learners and volunteers.
- £10 could help provide resources for our conversation groups.
- Your support could help us hire welcoming spaces where people can practise English, build confidence and connect with others.

Your Newsletter, Your Say!

What would you like to see in the newsletter? Please tell us what you think using [this survey](#). Thanks!



How to support SAVTE with easyfundraising

Follow these simple steps: 

1. Download the easyfundraising app



App Store



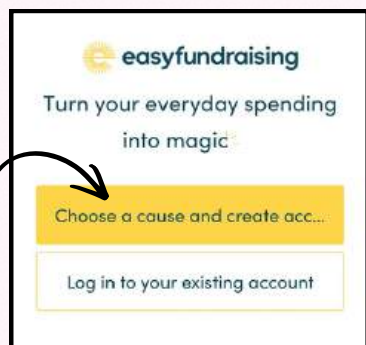
Play store

Download the easyfundraising app from the App Store or Google Play.

2. Choose a cause

3- In the search box, type:

4- Select SAVTE

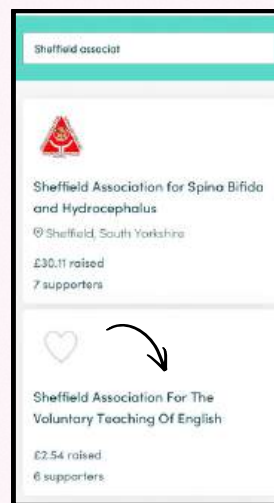


Open the app and tap “Choose a cause and create account”.

If you already have an account, simply log in.



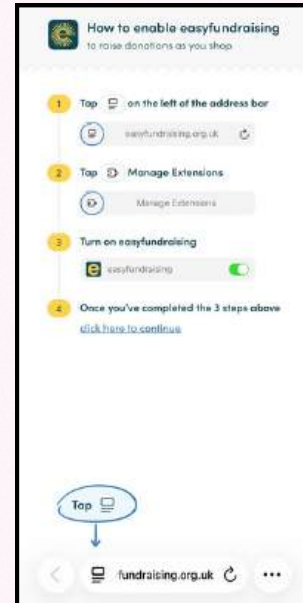
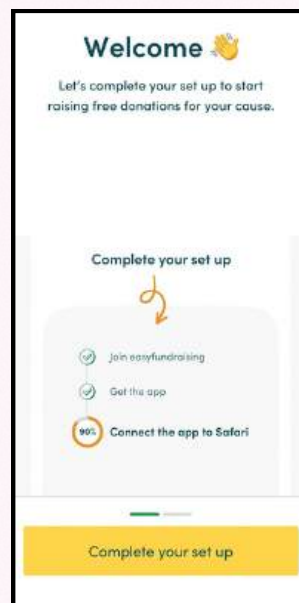
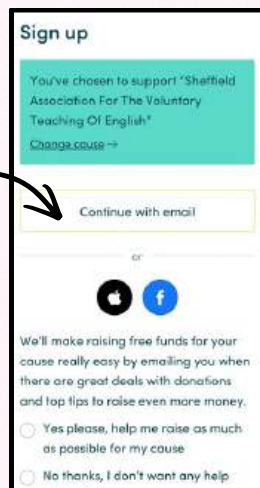
Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English



Find Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English and select it.

5. Sign up and support SAVTE

6. Turn on the easyfundraising reminder



Don't go to the shop first!

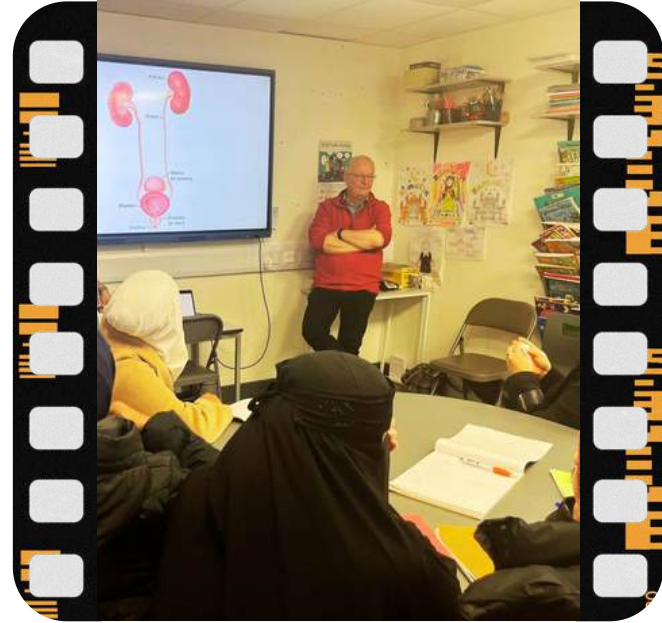
Start with easyfundraising → choose SAVTE → find your shop → click “Shop Now” → then shop as normal → SAVTE receives a donation

In Loving Memory of Michael Eric Nelson

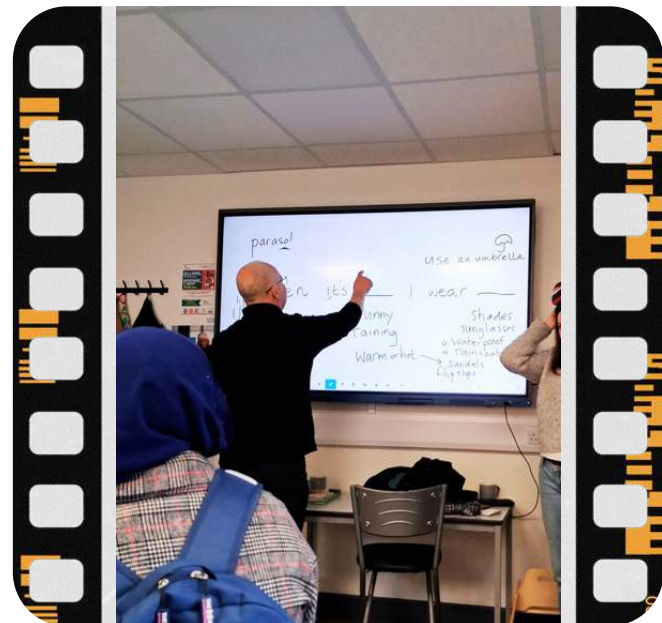
14 June 1957 – 6 August 2026

It is with great sadness that SAVTE remembers Michael Nelson, a much loved volunteer whose warmth, humour and generosity touched so many people.

Michael first volunteered with SAVTE before the Covid pandemic and returned to the Oasis Conversation Group in April 2024, where he continued volunteering until his final weeks. He also supported a learner through our 1:1 programme and recently took part in volunteer training, generously sharing his experience with others.



Michael loved the Oasis class and took great joy in sharing and explaining the English language. He planned varied and engaging lessons, made use of the interactive whiteboard and IT, and brought plenty of humour to the classroom. On hot days, he even brought lollies for his learners. His kindness and enthusiasm were clearly felt by everyone.



His learners remember him with great affection:

“

“He was such a warm man and spoke so beautifully. We will miss him so much.”

”



“

Michael was such a wonderful teacher, and his warmth and wisdom made our classes so special. It's truly hard to imagine our lessons without him,

”

“

“I like Michael so much. I will always remember him.”

”



“

“Michael was such a wonderful teacher, and his warmth and wisdom made our classes so special. He will be missed beyond words.”

”

Faisal, a SAVTE community link worker, said: “I wished I could have been one of Michael’s learners myself, for the rapport he built and the humour he brought to class.”

His fellow volunteer Sarah Sinclair described him as “a wonderful, witty, warm man and friend who loved his work with SAVTE and will be missed by so many people.”

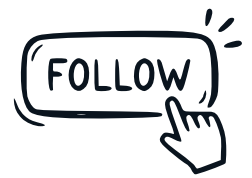
Before volunteering with SAVTE, Michael had a distinguished career as a hospital doctor and clinical academic in Sheffield. After retiring, he studied English Language and Linguistics, graduating with First-Class Honours in 2023. He also played saxophone with the Altonators and was an avid reader.

Michael leaves behind a grateful SAVTE community of staff, volunteers and learners. His kindness, passion, humour and dedication will be remembered by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.



Rest peacefully, Michael.

Help Us Grow on Social Media!



Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, so we'd love all our volunteers to support us by being active on our **Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram** pages.



If you use these platforms, **please follow our pages**, like our posts, share them with your friends and network, and leave a comment when you can.

Your activity really does make a difference. By liking, sharing and commenting on our posts, you can help us:



- 📣 Reach more people and increase our online visibility.
- 💡 Raise awareness of who we are and what we do.
- 🤝 Attract new volunteers who may want to get involved.
- 💬 Connect with supporters and build our community.
- ✨ Promote our work and celebrate the difference our volunteers make.
- ❤️ Reach people who may benefit from our services and help them discover us.



The more our volunteers engage with our social media, the more visible our organisation becomes.



So please get involved, spread the word and help us make our social media community stronger! ❤️

Your Stories

From “I Don’t Speak Anything” to “I Know More!”

We’re delighted to share the story of Nour and her volunteer, Jenny Patient, who recently completed their 1:1 placement after seven months of weekly sessions.

Nour arrived in Sheffield in January 2024 through the UK Resettlement Scheme with her two young children and very little spoken English. She relied heavily on her husband to interpret for her.

That began to change when Jenny started visiting Nour each week.



Each week, Jenny helped Nour build her English through practical activities, from telling the time and shopping vocabulary to trips to the library, supermarket and bus, helping her use English in everyday life.

By the end of the placement, Nour was confidently holding conversations and talking about her future plans. She even went home and tested her husband on telling the time!

“I am challenging me and my husband. My husband knows little and now I know more.”

Nour is now working towards Level 1 English, with ambitions to study cake design in the future.



Jenny summed up their progress perfectly: **“Every little target that I set, tick, tick, tick.”**



A huge thank you to Jenny for her patience, creativity and genuine care throughout the placement. We’re so proud of the progress Nour has made and excited to see what comes next for her.

Determination, Confidence and New Connections: Bilile's Story

When Bilile started her one-to-one placement with volunteer Beverley, she lacked confidence speaking English in everyday situations. Tasks such as speaking to doctors or her children's teachers felt challenging, and although she wanted to make new friends, she didn't yet feel confident enough to do so.



Over the following 12 months, Beverley supported Bilile to develop her English skills and encouraged her to take part in local learning opportunities. With growing confidence, Bilile joined an ESOL class at The Furnival twice a week and began attending another group at her children's academy.

Bilile's hard work and determination have paid off. After persevering through a couple of unsuccessful attempts, she passed her B1 English test and also achieved her Life in the UK test. She now speaks English with her children, communicates confidently with teachers and healthcare professionals, and regularly attends three ESOL and conversation groups each week.

"Beverley helped me.
I feel sad if she
didn't come!
Thank you."



"Bilile is now going to three
conversation groups a week! She
is really enjoying them and is very
happy. She is much more
confident now with her English.
SAVTE brings people together."

Bilile & Beverley



A huge thank you to Beverley for her encouragement, commitment and belief in Bilile's potential. Together they have shown how confidence, perseverance and the right support can open doors to new opportunities and connections.



Important Updates for All Volunteers

IMPORTANT

1- DBS checks

As part of our ongoing responsibility for keeping staff, volunteers and learners safe we have decided to start carrying out basic DBS checks for staff, trustees and volunteers who are working 1:1 with learners.

If you are volunteering on our 1:1 programme we will be in contact with you over the next few months to give further details.

Thank you for your support.



2-New Resources Borrowing System

We are excited to share that we are stocking up on new books for our learners this year! We love seeing our volunteers use them, but to make sure our materials do not go missing, we are introducing a new process.

Next time you want to borrow or return material from the resources room:

- 1. Scan the QR code:** Use your phone to open and fill out the quick Google form on display.
- 2. Or use the paper sheet:** If you run into any issues with the QR code, just sign out using the paper sheet.

Thank you so much for everything you do to support our learners and for helping us keep our resources organised!



3-Volunteer Workshops - dates for your diaries!

IMPORTANT

We are planning to run a number of volunteer workshops again and have planned three which will run next year:

22/03/27 1.00-3.30 Supporting learners with digital skills - practical ideas to develop and use digital skills in your sessions

06/05/27 10:00-12.30 Supporting your learner/s - exploring learning differences and ways we can support learners

30/06/27 10:00-12.30 Supporting learners with next steps
Sharing knowledge and ideas for activities around the topic of progressing on to learning, volunteering and work. Exploring 'signposting' and what the ESOL levels mean.



If you have any other ideas about workshops that would be useful, please let us know!



4-Our Next Volunteer Coffee Morning

Wednesday 25th November | 10am-12pm



Come along to our next Volunteer Coffee Morning! It's a relaxed opportunity to meet other volunteers, share experiences and pick up some new ideas.

Our topic this time is:

"It's all about resources!" Sharing and swapping ideas

We'll be sharing useful resources, tips and ideas that can support your volunteering, whether you're involved in **1:1 language support** or

Conversation Groups. We'd love to hear what resources and activities you've found helpful too!



There's no need to stay for the whole session. Just drop in anytime between 10am and 12pm at Snowdrop Building, 7 Castle Street, S3 8LT.



All volunteers are very welcome. We hope to see you there!

★ Volunteer **Spotlight**: Abi's SAVTE Research Project



Abi

Over the past nine months, our volunteer **Abi Greenwood** has been working with SAVTE on a research project exploring learners' experiences of the service.

As part of her volunteering, Abi designed, created and promoted an online survey to gather feedback from SAVTE learners. The survey explored learners' **confidence in speaking English, their sense of belonging within the community, and how SAVTE and its volunteers have supported them.**

The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with many learners sharing how much they value their time with SAVTE and the support they receive from their volunteers.



Abi also brought these findings together in a presentation for the SAVTE team, highlighting key findings, suggestions for future research and ways the data could help demonstrate SAVTE's impact.

Abi's reflections

“There are many things that I will take away from this experience. Getting to work with a wide range of different people, from one-to-one learners to staff and volunteers and talking to some of the learners really helped me see the SAVTE community at its heart and understand SAVTE's impact on a human level.”



Abi has gained valuable experience in survey design, research, data analysis and presenting findings, and we are delighted that she has been able to develop these skills through her time volunteering with SAVTE.

Abi would also like to thank Dareen for supporting her throughout her project, helping with everything from arranging meetings and discussing survey ideas to answering her questions along the way.

Thank you, Abi, for sharing your time, skills and expertise with SAVTE. Your work has helped us better understand the experiences of our learners and provided valuable insights that will help us reflect on and develop our work going forward.

Upcoming 1-to-1 Training Course

Our next 1-to-1 Volunteer Training Course will start on 7th October, and we are looking for volunteers to take part. Please help us share this information with your networks and spread the word.

We also recently started our Conversation Group Training Course on 17th September and are planning to open new conversation groups soon to reach more learners in our community.



SAVTE **Learn English!**

Supporting people to make positive changes

SOAR

Practise speaking English for **FREE** in a welcoming and friendly conversation group.

Coming soon In November

At Longley Four Greens,
Southey Avenue.
S5 7NN.

Days and Times TBC

WELCOME

To register a place contact either Kerry on 07593 736770 or Barbara at L4G: 0114 399 0520.

SAVTE .org.uk

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savte@saunte.org.uk
7 Castle Street,
Sheffield, S3 8LT
Registered Charity No. 1081597

Sheffield City Council, SYMCA, National Learning Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, matrix



Language Support Volunteer training course

Help Someone Learn to Speak English

No previous teaching experience is needed.

Six Weekly sessions on Wednesdays 10:00 - 13:00

7, 14, 21 October and 4, 11 November
Final session 18th Nov 2026

**at The Snowdrop Building
Castle Street, S3 8LT**

To apply Please visit our website or scan the QR code

SAVTE 0114 212 3050
savte@saunte.org.uk
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Sheffield City Council, SYMCA, National Learning Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, matrix

Together, we can help more learners build confidence, practise their English and feel more connected. Thank you for helping us spread the word!

We hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to bringing you the next one in Feb 2027.

We'd love to hear your thoughts!