



Scottish Seniors

Special Edition Update

May 2020

The Newsletter of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum

Coronavirus: Keeping in touch during the Crisis

As we continue in lockdown, our latest news update brings together some important helpline numbers and government initiatives which we are sure will be of use to you. For those who have digital access, there are some great online resources to help relive the boredom as well as some useful telephone helplines and befriending services you may wish to contact - they would be more than happy to hear from you.

Adding to the information already mentioned in our earlier briefings, we wanted to highlight some other great community initiatives which we feel that our readers, and all older people, could benefit from as well as touching on some of the work the SPF, and other older people's organisations, continue to do to help safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of older people during this crisis.

We again would like to give special thanks to **Royal Mail** staff for allowing us to keep in touch with older people by post, all of the marvellous **NHS** staff and social care workers looking after people in hospitals and within the community and to all other key workers in other areas of essential work, you're all amazing!

WE REALLY COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

We are sure that, like us, you will all be showing your support on Thursdays at 8PM, clapping and cheering from our doorsteps and windows to show our appreciation.

Please feel free to get in touch and if you think of anything that may be of interest to others which could be included in our newsletters, please let us know.

Our telephone number is 0141 337 8113. Our website details are www.scottishpensioners.org.uk

We can also keep you updated on Twitter @ScotPensForum and on Facebook too

For more up to date information go to <https://www.readyscotland.org>

We were delighted to hear that our OPSAF colleagues at **Age Scotland** have been awarded over £600,000 of additional funding from The Scottish Government to extend their helpline service due to the growing demands on their services during the current crisis. They are always there to offer advice and support and would be more than happy to help.



The Scottish Government have recently launched a new helpline to provide advice and support to Scots who are at high risk of contracting Covid-19 and who do not have a support network at home.

This helpline number will connect people to local services allowing the most vulnerable members of society to access the help that they need.

At present, the freephone number **0800 111 4000** is operational between 9.00am to 5.00pm although this may well be extended to meet demand.



www.readyscotland.org

www.clearyourhead.scot

SPF Annual Conference 2020, Glasgow

You may remember, as reported in our last news briefing, we had to take the unfortunate decision to cancel our Annual Conference in June in line with recommended social distancing measures and to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our delegates.

After discussions amongst our committees and with our hosts, Glasgow City Council, we are pleased to announce that a date of **Thursday 1st October 2020** has been agreed, subject to recognised conditions on public gatherings.

As many people will know this is United Nations International Day of Older Persons, an event which the SPF have been commemorating for many years, most recently through our annual demonstrations at the Scottish Parliament, with help and support from our affiliates and MSPs.

We hope that as many of you as possible will be able to join us on which we're sure will be a special celebration for older people in Scotland.

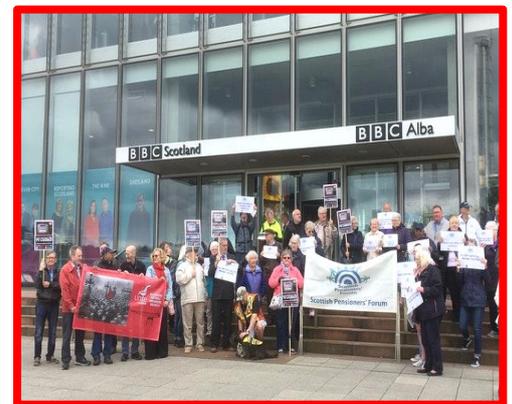


BBC Extend Free TV Licence Amidst Pandemic

Recently the BBC took the decision to extend the eligibility for the free TV licence to all over 75s until August 2020. Although this will alleviate the concerns of many older people at this time, the SPF feels this does not go nearly far enough.

BBC Chairman, Sir David Clementi, said that due to exceptional circumstances now is 'not the right time' to implement change. So we would like to ask when **is** the right time to potentially rob up to 3.7 million older people across the UK of an essential lifeline.

We will continue to campaign on our demands that Westminster takes back responsibility for this concession instead of passing the buck to the BBC.



New Report Aims to Threaten Triple Lock

A recent report by the Social Market Foundation called for the triple lock pension scheme to be replaced by a double lock system thereby helping recoup some of the costs associated with the coronavirus pandemic in a show of 'intergenerational fairness.'

SPF Chair, Maureen Gardner argued: -

"Once again think tanks are putting out reports pitting young against old at a time when many older people's organisations are not in a position to make their voices heard."

"This scheme has been under attack for years and all we hear is the same old story that pensioners are to blame for the state of the economy – what about the £34 billion in voluntary work and unpaid care we save the UK economy, year on year?"

"We will defend the state pension vehemently not just for ourselves but for the many young workers who come behind us."

A link to the full report can be found here

<http://www.smf.co.uk/publications/intergenerational-fairness-coronavirus/>



Local Heroes

As lockdown continues, more and more community initiatives are being set up across Scotland to help safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of older and vulnerable people,

We appreciate that these are extremely difficult and worrying times however there are lots of free helplines and online resources to help support us all. Here are just some of the examples of the great work being done.



LEAP
0141 641 5169
leap-project.co.uk

LEAP is a registered charity SC024196 and Company SC300044

The LEAP project is offering free services for eligible older people in the South Lanarkshire area who do not have support at home. Their personal shopper service offers pick-up and delivery of food shopping and prescriptions and they are also offering a telephone Befriending service for those feeling lonely and isolated.

Our affiliates at Glasgow's Golden Generation have enlisted the help of volunteers and have been getting out and about delivering emergency food parcels, offering telephone befriending services and benefits advice. They can be contacted on **0141 221 9924** and at mailbox@glasgowgg.org.uk



Dundee Volunteer and Voluntary Action have enlisted the help of over 1,000 volunteers across Dundee to help with shopping and delivery as well as offering a befriending service. Working as part of a team along with Volunteer Scotland, they are concentrating on placing their volunteers across eight community support centres across the city. They can be contacted on **01382 305 700**

Are you a person living with dementia, an unpaid carer or provide services for people affected by dementia? About Dementia would like to know how Covid-19 has affected you.

If you could help, please find a link to their short online survey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XV8KYBQ>



Shetland Befriending Scheme

A new telephone befriending scheme has been set up to support people who are living in their own homes, who are feeling significantly lonely or isolated as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, who have very limited or no support and who would benefit from a regular phone call.

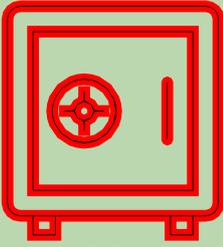
You can also refer for this service

For more information please contact Lynn Tulloch on 01595 743907 or at

lynn.tulloch@shetland.org



For more up to date information on your health and wellbeing during this crisis please visit www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus



Our Executive Committee member, John Boyle, alerted us to a new initiative being set up by some banks which allows trusted individuals to help those who can't get out and about at this time.

Dubbed the 'companion card', the card can be topped up to £100 and to enhance security the carer's card will be associated with the customer's bank account but kept separate by banks. This card does not share a PIN or long card number with the customer's debit card and ATM withdrawals are restricted to £50. For added security the system will be subject to the bank's fraud monitoring systems. If you're interested, contact your bank for more information and to find out whether they are part of this scheme.

Looking after your Mental Health



As the changes to our everyday lives continue, more and more people are becoming more anxious and despondent about being stuck at home. This colourful artwork, reproduced with the kind permission of Emma Paxton, helped put a smile on our faces – we hope it does the same for you!

For tips on looking after your mental health visit www.clearyourhead.scot

Your Data's Safe with Us

The SPF have a GDPR policy which is fully compliant for the purposes of storing and processing your data.

We are also registered with the Information Commissioner's Office

A copy of our policy is available at <http://www.scottishpensioners.org.uk/spf-gdpr-policy>



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