



Scottish Seniors

Special Edition Update

June 2020

The Newsletter of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum

Coronavirus: Keeping in touch during the Crisis

Over the past few weeks, there has been much conflicting advice over the measures being put in place to ease society out of lockdown. Initially, there had been a four nation approach throughout the UK on the best public health advice for the nation as a whole however, the latest advice from Scotland, and other devolved governments, has been more tentative than the approach now being adopted by the Westminster government.

From 29th May 2020, the First Minister has moved Scotland into Phase 1 in easing lockdown meaning that one household can meet up with another household outdoors, with a suggested maximum of 8 people. This can also be in someone's garden, however physical distancing should still apply. As well as this, public spaces can now be used for recreational purposes and people can travel short distances, recommended as up to five miles, for outdoor leisure and exercise.

We're sure that for many this will be a welcome step and a chance to see family and friends again however it's important to bear in mind that the overall advice from the Scottish Government is still to stay at home as much as possible and maintain physical distancing from other people outside of your own household. Unfortunately, at this time, the advice for people who are shielding remains the same as before.

For those people with digital access, more information on the latest Scottish Government advice can be found here at <https://www.gov.scot/news/lockdown-begins-to-ease-in-phase-1/> and an easy to read series of graphics detailing these changes can be found on the back page of this news briefing, reproduced by kind permission from People First (Scotland). More information on their work can also be found here <https://peoplefirstscotland.org>

Even though the Clap for Our Carers show of support has now officially ended, we would ask that we still spare a thought for our NHS and all of our key workers by sticking to the new public health guidelines as much as possible.

As always, 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

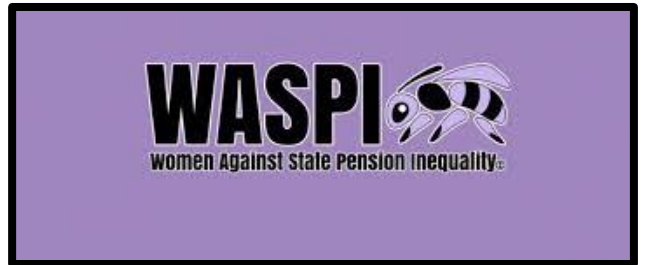
Every year, Volunteers' Week takes place between 1st and 7th June in recognition of all the invaluable work carried out by millions of volunteers across the UK. During this pandemic, their role has never been more important and their tireless work in helping organisations and boosting community initiatives has been something many of us have had to rely upon.

Here at the SPF we know only too well that we couldn't carry out the work we do throughout the year without the unstinting support of our volunteers and so during this annual celebration of voluntary work, we think its only fitting to extend our heartfelt thanks to all volunteers who, in putting others before themselves, are ensuring that older people across Scotland are being looked after during this crisis. The contribution you make is making a world of difference for so many.



WASPI Launch Call to Action on Covid-19

Women Against State Pension Inequality has launched a new campaign calling on the Westminster Government to take urgent action as many women are being disproportionately affected during the current crisis and are facing further financial hardship.



The group are asking that two major changes be implemented as a matter of urgency. Firstly, that WASPI women are given early access to Pension Credit as many on low incomes are falling through the gaps in the welfare system and are unable to access additional support like Universal Credit and secondly, that those women due to retire in 2020 be given early access to their state pension to avoid having to be supported through state benefits and furlough payments.

The SPF fully supports the work of this campaign which has in excess of 135,000 supporters and represents the interests of approximately 3.8 million women, born in the 1950s, across the UK.

No Threat to Manifesto Promise on Triple Lock pledges Boris Johnson

You may remember from our last news briefing, we highlighted a report by the Social Market Foundation stating that the triple lock pension scheme would be unsustainable and would have to be altered in order to recoup some of the costs associated with the coronavirus pandemic. This belief seemed to be mirrored by the Treasury and by subsequent comments from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, thereby totally renegeing on the government's own election manifesto promise.



According to Breane Horne of Moneywise UK, during a recent session with the Prime Minister, the Conservative MP for Central Devon, Mel Stride, asked for a 'categorical assurance' that the triple lock pension scheme, along with other manifesto pledges, would be protected and was assured by the Prime Minister that all manifesto pledges would be honoured.

Good to know! We may well be in the midst of a pandemic, but the SPF certainly won't be taking their eye off the ball on this issue. Watch this space!

**HANDS OFF
OUR
PENSIONS**



UN Secretary General: 'Rights and Dignity' of Older People must be respected during Covid-19 and beyond

A recent report, launched by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, stated that the world's response to Covid-19 must take into consideration the rights of older people as 'they have the same rights to life and health as everyone else.'

The UN Chief went on to say, 'Difficult decisions around life-saving medical care must respect the human rights and dignity of all.'

Mr Guterres argued that digital technology, and access to it, also had to be improved and these were vital resources for older people who may be suffering from isolation under lockdown and other restrictions. As well as this, beyond the pandemic's immediate health impact, older people are at greater risk of poverty, discrimination and isolation and that social and economical responses must take into consideration the needs of older people particularly in terms of universal health coverage, pensions, jobs and social protection.

'Older people must not be treated as invisible or powerless but recognised for their diverse experiences and the multiple ways in which they are contributing to overcoming this crisis.'

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres

The full report can be accessed here <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/05/1063052>

www.readyscotland.org

www.nhsinform.scot

www.clearyourhead.scot

Local Heroes – Volunteers' Week 2020

Within our lockdown news briefings, we thought it was important to highlight the great work being carried out by volunteers throughout Scotland – and this edition is no different. We're sure that you'll agree that all of the hard work and selfless dedication being carried out by volunteers through helping others can't go unnoticed.

The Sikh Foodbank

After lockdown caused the Gurdwaras, the hubs of the Sikh community, to close their doors, their bank of volunteers had set up the Sikh Foodbank within a matter of days.

Co-founder Charandeep Singh said "The gurdwaras are not only a place of worship but where people eat, socialise, seek advice, comfort and shelter and we knew we would have to offer support in some other way"

With the kitchens, the resources and 50 people from all different backgrounds willing to help, the mobile foodbank has, over the past 9 weeks, helped 50,000 people across Glasgow and the surrounding areas with over 800 meals delivered in the past week alone. Pretty impressive stuff!

This multi faith initiative, building on the message of Guru Nanak and the Sikh values of service and charity, has helped older people, asylum seekers, the unemployed and those who are self-isolating.

Charandeep said "It really is heart-warming to see the amazing innovation of services." We totally agree!



Food Train Connects



During Volunteers' Week, Food Train have launched their new initiative, Food Train Connects, its aim to connect any older person, age 65 and over, who is in need of a little extra

practical and social support with a volunteer from their local community.

Since 1995, the charity has been providing vital services for those who may not be able to manage independently through age, frailty, illness or disability so this new addition to their services will be most welcome. For more information contact **0800 3047924** or find them online at

<https://www.thefoodtrain.co.uk/index.php/contact-us/local-branches>

**LAUNCHING
New
Service**



**Connects is a Scotland wide
volunteer connecting service for
older people.**

For older people needing some help with regular grocery shopping, we can arrange a connection with a local volunteer. The volunteer will arrange a suitable day/time to regularly carry out the shopping and delivery, also putting items away if required.



If you would like to find out more about our service or how to volunteer please contact us.

E: shopping@thefoodtrain.co.uk
W: www.thefoodtrain.co.uk
T: 0800 3047924

The SPF would also like to extend our special thanks to our OPSAF colleagues, particularly Age Scotland, Hourglass Scotland, Outside the Box and Generations Working Together, whose bank of volunteers continue to carry out work within their communities, and on their helplines, on behalf of older people throughout Scotland during this crisis.



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LOCKDOWN UPDATE:

28th MAY 2020



On 28th May the First Minister has shared new lockdown rules for Scotland.

The number of people who are ill with Coronavirus is slowly going down so some of the rules can change.



The lockdown is still in effect. The key message is still to stay at home as much as possible.

The new rules start on the 29th May.

The new rules say that:



You can now meet people from **one** other household.

You have to meet them outside, for example in a garden or park and must stay 2 metres (6 feet) apart.



You can now sit or sunbathe in parks and open areas respecting social distancing.

1



Some outdoor activities can start again, like golf, tennis, bowls and fishing.



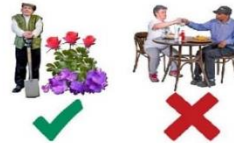
You are now able to travel to a place **near** your local community for social and fun activities outside.



Some drive-through and take-away food shops will open.



Waste and recycling centres are starting work again.



Big outdoor shops, like garden centres, are reopening but inside cafes and restaurants are still closed.



2



Some NHS operations and treatments that had stopped are slowly starting again.

SHIELDING

The rules for people who are shielding stay the same, until at least the 18th of June.

The Scottish Government will give an update on the new rules for shielding by the 18th



REVIEW

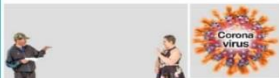
If the number of people who get ill from Coronavirus goes up again, the rules may go back to what they were at the start of the lockdown.



The Scottish Government will review all the rules again on the 18th of June.

KEEPING SAFE

Remember to:



Wash your hands regularly.

Use tissues if you cough and sneeze and then bin them.



Respect social distancing.



Wear a face covering, where possible.

Only travel a distance if you can make it back without using a toilet.



Self-isolate if you have the virus or if you have been in contact with someone who had it.



4

Test and Protect

From the 28th of May the Scottish Government starts a new Plan called "Test and Protect".



This Plan encourages people who think they have symptoms of Covid-19 to get tested.

Tests are also available for people who may have been in contact with someone infected with Covid-19.

If you test positive, you will be asked for the names of all the people you have been in contact with.



If you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19, you will be contacted and asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

This will help stop the virus being transmitted from one person to another.

This concise, easy to read guide has been reproduced with the kind permission of People First Scotland. A link to the pdf format can be accessed here <http://peoplefirstscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/28May-UPDATE-v7.pdf>



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