

JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER



FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE

is a small voluntary organisation which aims to enhance the quality of life and well-being of older people by working with those providing practical, pastoral or spiritual care

FiOP hopes that you and your family and friends are keeping well, physically, mentally, and spiritually

As time moves on, we hear and learn more about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Not just the ghastly physical toll on individuals and the enormous grief people are feeling when a relative or friend dies but how the sense of isolation manifests itself. Grief is doubly felt when it is not possible to be with your relative or friend at end of life leaving people with both a feeling of sorrow and guilt.

For so many older people whether in their own home or a care home the sense of aloneness is profound. For some it is not seeing or speaking to another person for days and perhaps not receiving the help they had previously relied upon. In a care home there are people who care for you but perhaps behind a mask and the normal activities of having meals together with other residents or going out has not been possible. There must be a sense of loss and bewilderment.

Listening to people who took on caring roles at the beginning of the lockdown so as to be with their relative and friend has been heart-warming and heart-wrenching as they have

known the importance of the togetherness but also struggle with their own intense sense of isolation and loneliness as they provide round the clock care on their own coping with physical and mental issues. Many faith communities and voluntary organisations are doing a tremendous job in providing contact and befriending through phone calls. They are putting in place food and medicine deliveries and doing all they can to maintain the vital services they have developed to complement and underpin our statutory services. Everyone is playing their part in a big or small way. It has brought out the best in our communities but also highlighted the mountain we will need to climb to revive people's well-being and to cope with the loss and grief experienced by many.

How to address loneliness and isolation has been a big issue over many years resulting in the Scottish Government Strategy 'Connecting Scotland'. We all have a role in tackling it and that we will need to be imaginative in finding a way forward and as individuals showing compassion and kindness in everyday life.

A powerful reunion

Around 1998 I was a home visitor for a project supporting older people. As part of this I visited a woman who I'll call Edie. Edie had married late in life, having bumped into the man of her dreams on a weekend away to mark her retirement. She and Alf had been happily together for over 20 years but since he had passed away, life was increasingly a struggle. Edie managed out to collect her pension but had little other social contact and no family members at all.

Edie was a little uncertain about this 'young man' (I was in my 30s) coming to visit but she quickly took the chance to chat. We got into a rhythm of weekly visits and Edie would say that she felt better at the end of our chats, and looked forward to the next, so it became an important milestone for her in an otherwise blank diary. Edie often talked about her childhood and I was fascinated by the tales of someone born and bred in Edinburgh – her school days, the changing city centre, trams and horses – all of these things painted a different picture of the place I knew. But there was a darker side to life as well, because in today's terms, Edie had lived through some serious domestic violence as a child – something she also often referred to. This had culminated in her, along with her mother and sister being hidden by taxi drivers outside the Caledonian Hotel as they fled from home. The only thing Edie had with her was her doll, Meg. Edie would often talk of Meg being her one real friend during this difficult phase of life. She would hold her at night, telling her all her troubles. As a dressmaker, Edie always made sure that Meg was well turned out. The two were inseparable.

As many years passed and Edie became established in adult life and work, she reached a point where she felt that a better home for Meg would be at the Museum of Childhood and donated her there. As part of the frequently told story of Meg, Edie would often say, *"I'd love to see her one last time, and give her another cuddle."*

So, I hatched a plan. I confirmed with the Museum of Childhood that they could trace a doll donated by a particular person and that arrangements could be made for a reunion. When I broke the news to Edie, that if she wanted to, she could see Meg again, she was

speechless. And then this almost housebound woman quickly got into planning for the big event – how we'd get there, what coat she'd wear, where we might get a cup of tea afterwards – there was a new purpose. The day came and we arrived safely at the museum. Edie held my arm. Her chattiness was gone and she was like an anxious relative in a hospital waiting room. What will always remain with me from that day was the care taken by the museum staff member, who arrived with a large presentation box. She opened it to reveal Meg, lying on a deep bed of tissue paper.

"Can I hold her?"

We watched as Edie now in her early nineties was reunited with Meg, who had been both her rock, her confidante and her comfort blanket through the most troubled part of her childhood.

"Oh my wee love...my wee love...and there's the dress I made. You look so lovely...."

I shared a glance with the museum staff member, and this is also something I won't forget. We were watching something special and deeply personal. As she chatted away to Meg, petting her and fussing over her, I had a brief anxiety that Edie's embrace of Meg wasn't going to end, and we would have trouble returning her, but all Edie wanted was have that little bit of time, the chance to see Meg again and tell her that all was well. Once she had made sure Meg's dress was sitting right, she laid her back down gently – her dearest childhood friend put away safely again.

Over twenty years later that brief moment has remained a powerful one for me. It seems to illustrate many things – the difficult times in people's lives which stay with them forever, objects that can have incredible meaning almost beyond words, the desire to re-connect with our past, the power of listening and getting to know people, simple actions that become landmark events, and the kindness of strangers. All of these things connected by a doll in a box.

Mike Nicholson , Writer and Consultant
Website www.mikenicholson.co.uk

Let our Care Homes know we are thinking of them . Perhaps you could send a card to your local Care Home, so they know that the residents and staff are thought about and appreciated.



FiOP extends thanks to all those who look after our health and wellbeing where ever you work or volunteer or are a good neighbour.

We invite you to -

FiOP would also like to sustain its on-line blogs and we would like to invite you to send us your reflection of our times and how we can consider what really matters to us.

Please send your contribution to Maureen O'Neill at Director@fiop.org.uk. We would love to hear from you.

Scottish Government's Mental Health Directorate

The **Test and Protect Campaign**, NHS Scotland's approach to controlling the spread of coronavirus in our communities, was launched on **Thursday 28th May**. This campaign will run for six weeks, with activity on social media, TV and radio, press and outdoor digital posters.

The main focus of the campaign is to inform people about the Test and Protect process, and how this process will support people to get tested as soon as they develop symptoms. We are looking for your support to share this message within your networks and within your organisations, as we require our collective cooperation to control the spread of coronavirus within our communities. The First Minister has set out the [Route Map](#) for easing restrictions, and as we move through Phase 1 we are calling on everyone to become familiar with the Test and Protect service. **You can also view the published guidance for employers for Test & Protect [here](#).**

We are also developing a **Door Drop** for every household in Scotland that will provide key information about the service and guidance on the support available for those that need to isolate, which will land in every Scottish home the week of **22nd June**.

Stakeholder Toolkit

Please find attached the Test and Protect Stakeholder Toolkit, which outlines:

- The Test and Protect service
- Infographic outlining the Test & Protect process
- Links to further information
- Key messages
- Campaign details
- Social Posts
- Editorial Copy

You can also download all campaign assets [here](#). You can access the Digital Toolkit here: [file:///C:/Users/Main/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/20-21%20-%20Coronavirus%20-%20Test%20&%20Protect%20-%20Stakeholder%20Toolkit%20-%204%20June%202020%20\(3\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Main/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/20-21%20-%20Coronavirus%20-%20Test%20&%20Protect%20-%20Stakeholder%20Toolkit%20-%204%20June%202020%20(3).pdf)

SOURCES OF HELP AND ADVICE



EIFA has been doing a series of talks about faith and other things during the lockdown.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndP1y75J98c&feature=youtu&fbclid=IwAR1osy8C-IpkiwLAnEfHilLZAwNHZQeo2yjGbeH1bfugei51tKZjs8UxbQc&mc_cid=fe5bc1dff&mc_eid=72722a224e

EIFA has launched a new service TIME TO TALK – A Covid-19 listening service for care home residents and their families. An Edinburgh -Glasgow project funded by the Scottish Government Immediate Priorities Fund which will offer empathy, kindness, and a willingness to listen.

CONTACT: ClaireAtTimeToTalk@gmail.com 07519 418451

A Scottish Eid Tribute to the NHS and all frontline workers

The Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society joined with partners and associates across Scotland, on the blessed occasion of Eid Al Fitr, to pay tribute and extend our gratitude to the NHS and all frontline workers. FiOP was pleased to participate

Eid Al Fitr marks the end of the holy month of fasting; the Month of Ramadan — a time for charity, kindness and reflection.

On the occasion this year, we paused to remember all those souls who have departed during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Our heartfelt condolences are paid to their families, friends and colleagues.

This Eid, a heartfelt note of appreciation from every organisation and body listed here goes to all NHS staff, emergency services, civil society organisations, faith community operations, support teams, carers, supermarket chains and independent grocers, and to all other frontline workers who have absolutely surpassed their duties to our country as a whole, and to its communities, over the course of this pandemic.



Let this be our collective stand in solidarity, thanksgiving and humanity.

Ahlul Bayt Society

INTERFAITH SCOTLAND To read the latest newsletter see below

<https://mailchi.mp/b52eae488cfc/interfaith-scotland-newsletter?e=9140a22420>

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH - SAMH provides a range of information and advice

<https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/self-help-and-wellbeing/coronavirus-information-hub>

The ALLIANCE and the Scottish Human Rights Commission have submitted a joint response to the Finance Committee. (Extract from Alliance Newsletter) The Scottish Parliament's Finance and Constitution Committee is looking at [the impact of COVID-19 on the public finances and the Fiscal Framework \(this link will take you away from our website\)](#).

In a joint response between the ALLIANCE and the Scottish Human Rights Commission, we welcome the Committee's focus on COVID-19, particularly given the postponement of some of the standard in-year budgetary oversight mechanisms. We note how the pandemic, and responses to it, have highlighted the pressing need for human rights to guide financial policy and decision-making.

<https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ALLIANCE-SHRC-response-to-Finance-Committee-29-May-2020.pdf>

[The impact of COVID-19 on the public finances and the Fiscal Framework](#)

4 The remainder of this response will focus on setting out what makes a 'good' budget, and why taking a human rights based approach to fiscal scrutiny and public finance decisions would help navigate the current crisis and the economic recovery beyond.

www.alliance-scotland.org.uk

ALLIANCE responds to mental health law review

<https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/alliance-responds-to-mental-health-law-review/>

The Review examines how to better protect people's human rights. The ALLIANCE has responded to the first phase of consultation by the Scottish Mental Health Law Review led by John Scott QC. [The Review](#) aims to "improve the rights and protections of persons who may be subject to the existing provisions of mental health, incapacity or adult support and protection legislation as a consequence of having a mental disorder, and remove barriers to those caring for their health and welfare."

ALLIANCE

Below is the link to information on the Alliance website about communications with people with sensory loss which has become a critical issue for many during the pandemic.

<https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/covid-19-and-communication-for-people-living-with-sensory-loss/>

CLEAR YOU HEAD CAMPAIGN These are worrying and uncertain times. The coronavirus outbreak has changed daily life for us all in Scotland and has had a real impact on how many of us are feeling. It's ok to not feel yourself right now, and we have some great tips to help get you through it. The Scottish Government's together with other organisations has developed the **Clear Your Head** Campaign has produced animated films now showing on TV plus social media lines and images to use. The campaign gives people tips to help get through the crisis. For information and advice visit www.clearyourhead.scot

Compassion - the University of Edinburgh

"When we are struggling with our mental health, often we will feel as if no one else is feeling as we are. It can be a huge relief to discover that you are not alone in these struggles. The Let's Talk podcast is a new series hosted by our Chaplain, Harriet Harris, bringing together different members of the University community to have honest and thought-provoking conversations about a range of mental health topics. These are serious topics with lots of space to grow understanding - and with lots of laughter along the way too! Listen now"

The following is the link to a talk between Harriet Harris and Marti Balaam on compassion. This discussion was also developed by the Queen's Nursing Institute recently.

<https://podcasts.google.com/?feed=aHR0cHM6Ly9hbmNob3IuZm0vYy8xMDcxNzg5Yy9wb2RjYXN0L3Jzcw%3D%3D>

RNIB

How RNIB can help during the current Coronavirus situation:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/scotland/how-we-can-help>

RNIB Helpline The RNIB Helpline is available on 0303 123 9999 from 8am to 8pm weekdays and from 9am to 5pm on Saturdays. Our advisors can give advice and information and referrals to other services.

RNIB Connect Radio RNIB Connect Radio will continue to broadcast information and entertainment programmes aimed at people with sight loss, available on Freeview 730, online at www.rnibconnectradio.org.uk and on 101FM in Glasgow.

RNIB Talking Books library RNIB's Talking Books library can still post or download the thousands of titles we have available in audio and other formats.

DEAF ACTION – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The following link provides information about the Corona virus and services for people who are deaf

<http://www.deafaction.org/coronavirus-info/>

SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP OF PALLIATIVE CARE

The Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care (SPPC) brings together health and social care professionals from hospitals, social care services, primary care, hospices and other charities, to find ways of improving people's experiences of declining health, death, dying and bereavement. It works to enable communities and individuals to support each other through the hard times which can come with death, dying and bereavement. **Below is the link to information and resources** relating to the CoronaVirus:

<https://www.palliativecarescotland.org.uk/content/coronavirus---latest/>

Hourglass, the only UK-wide charity dedicated to calling time on the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people. We provide the only national helpline for people concerned about or experiencing abuse. Our experienced helpline Information Officers can help you make the best choice to keep yourself safe and put you in touch with the appropriate agencies. It's entirely confidential, free to call from a landline or mobile and will not appear on your phone bill.

Call our Helpline on: 0808 808 8141 – Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm

AGE Scotland

Age Scotland has compiled advice for older people and their families on how to avoid exposure to the virus, as well as actions we can all take to help each other.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/information-advice/health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus/>

The Age Scotland helpline is a free, confidential phone service for older people, their carers and families in Scotland. Our team provide information, friendship and advice.

Our helpline is free to call and available Monday - Friday 9-5pm. Call us today on 0800 12 44 222.

National bereavement support service launched



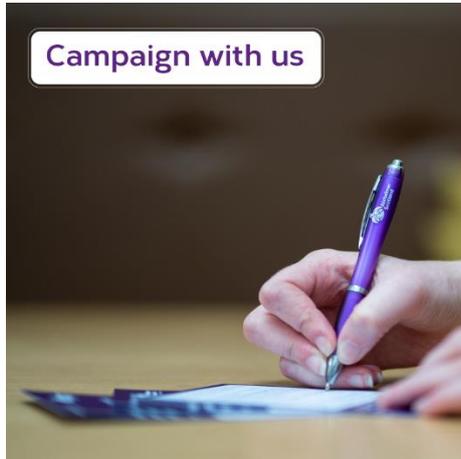
Marie Curie has started a new helpline for those who are dealing with the loss of a loved one during lockdown

Marie Curie Support Line is free to call and open 7 days per week. Call **0800 090 2309**.

ALZHEIMER SCOTLAND



Call our Helpline on 0808 808 3000



During these uncertain and worrying times, we want to reassure you that we're here for you.

Our 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline is available for you whether you are looking for information, emotional support or just need someone to talk to. We have a team of dedicated and experienced volunteers willing to listen, many of whom have personal experience of caring for someone with dementia.

An open letter from our Chief Executive

Our Chief Executive, Henry Simmons, wrote an open letter dedicating Dementia Awareness Week to people with dementia and their carers, who have been devastatingly impacted by the coronavirus. He also asks for your support with our Fair Dementia Care campaign.

[Read Henry's letter here](#)

The Silver Line operates the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK that's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year. We also offer telephone friendship where we match volunteers with older people based on their interests, facilitated group calls, and help to connect people with local services in their area. **The Silver Line Helpline – 0800 4 70 80 90**



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

For information which clarifies some of the basics of data protection, and gives established community groups, services and charities clarity on how to apply the law in this extraordinary time, please see the below link to a blog from the Information Commissioner:

<https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/news-and-events/blog-community-groups-and-covid-19/>

Please feel free to circulate to your networks.

Age Equality, Older People Policy | Age Equality, Older People and Social Isolation & Loneliness Team | Equality Unit | Scottish Government | Area 3H North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ | email: Rachel.Smith@gov.scot

An updated guidance online on support for the non-shielding at risk (NSAR) group is now available <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-support-information-food-and-other-essentials/pages/help-with-food/>

**CHEST, HEART AND STROKE
SCOTLAND – advice line
0808 801 0899**
<https://www.chss.org.uk/corona-virus/i-need-help/>

We want to reduce isolation and loneliness to people in Scotland.
We have over 4,000 volunteers who can call, collect shopping, dog walking and pick up

prescriptions. We are flexible when we do the calls and shopping so this can be done at evenings and weekends.

NEW FILM BY BRITISH DEAF ASSOCIATION SCOTLAND - GRIEVING & BEREAVEMENT

British Deaf Association Scotland has released a new film focusing on the feelings of grief and bereavement someone who cares for a person with dementia might experience. **[Watch it here](#)**

Supporting communities safely

A new resource has been published to support community organisations to carry out their vital work safely during the Covid-19 outbreak. This free, [online resource](#), developed by SCDC and Public Health Scotland, features a range of practical information and advice, such as:

- How to safely promote an organisation's services
- Keeping volunteers safe and fit to provide services
- How to get help with complex care needs
- Safely collecting and delivering items
- How to cook and transport hot meals

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Since lockdown started, many of us have been learning how to stay connected online with young people or families in our church. As social distancing looks likely to continue for some time, this way of working will become part of the 'new normal'. The Scottish Episcopal Church has produced [new guidelines](#) which are essential reading for anyone working with young people online. They feature six key principles plus detailed notes on each of the most popular apps and platforms. There are also downloadable resources such as an Online Contact Log and Risk Assessment, plus links to electronic consent forms for online contact and photo consent. You can read the full guidelines [here](#): they are also good to share with parents of young people in your church, for their information and reassurance. If you have further questions about working with these guidelines, please contact me.

Claire Benton-Evans, Scottish Episcopal Church - youthandchildren@dioceseofedinburgh.org

The International Longevity Centre (ILC) ILC Global Alliance issued a position statement on COVID-19

ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2020, THE [ILC GLOBAL ALLIANCE](#) (ILC GA) HELD A REMOTE MEETING OF ITS MEMBERS TO DISCUSS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. FROM THE MEETING, A POSITION STATEMENT WAS PREPARED.

The ILC GA stands united in support of the most vulnerable members of society during the pandemic. In the position statement, ILC GA members:

- denounce ageism, age discrimination, xenophobia and other human rights violations in the management of the pandemic, and the treatment of infected and affected persons;
- urge that older persons' perspectives are taken into account in the design and implementation of Covid-19 related measures to ensure they are relevant to and respectful of their lived experiences;
- support basic and applied sciences leading to optimal testing, treatment and immunisation programmes as well as enhanced public health literacy.

<https://ilcuk.org.uk/the-ilc-ga-issues-a-position-statement-on-covid-19/>

The ILC also has an interesting blog on the impact of loneliness and isolation on the current situation <https://ilcuk.org.uk/the-age-of-isolation-thoughts-on-social-connections-later-life-and-covid-19/>

Caritas Europe emphasises the importance of including faith leaders in the response to Covid-19
Op-ed on Devex on the importance of involving faith leaders and community engagement during the pandemic response worldwide. Governments and international aid agencies urgently need to increase existing efforts to develop their “faith literacy” and encourage the inclusion of faith leaders in program design and delivery.

Scotland's Route Map out of the Covid-19 Crisis

The daily briefings have highlighted the way forward planned by the Scottish Government. The link below is to the document which provides the detail.

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/05/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/documents/covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/govscot%3Adocument/covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis.pdf>

Covid-19 Framework for Decision Making - Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis

Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis 3 Go to: Ministerial Foreword 1. Current Position 2. Framework for Decision Making 3. Phased approach to

www.gov.scot

Macmillan Telephone Buddies



What is it?

A UK-wide Telephone Buddying service for people living with cancer. We know cancer can be an isolating experience at any time, more so during these times of shielding and social distancing. One of our volunteer Buddies can provide a listening ear to help ensure your patients don't face cancer alone.

How do I access it?

The person living with cancer will need to self refer or can be referred by any professional using this link www.macmillan.org.uk/telephonebuddies

What about Practical Support?

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland have recruited and trained over 5,000 Kindness Volunteers to support people across Scotland due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The aim of the project is to keep people safe and well in their own homes. Many people right now are feeling lonely and isolated and the Kindness project is there for anyone who needs it.

Through our partnership you can now refer into this service offering people with cancer the opportunity to be matched to a Kindness Volunteer who can provide one or more of the following:

- A regular kindness phone call – checking in for a supportive chat
- Collection of shopping
- Dog walking

Refer anyone with cancer in Scotland via the link below, complete the form – remembering to select Macmillan as the referring organisation <https://www.chss.org.uk/coronavirus/i-need-help/>

Generations Working Together has put together a great new directory, full of inter-generational resources and ideas to use during the Covid-19 crisis. The directory can be found attached as a PDF and by following this link:

<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/resources/directory-of-intergenerational-ideas-and-resources-for-use-during-covid-19-crisis>

Generations Working Together offers free membership to individuals, groups and organisations living within Scotland.

The Queen's Nursing Institute for Scotland

Below is the link to its website which has interesting ideas to sustain well-being.

<https://www.qnis.org.uk/wellbeing-practices/>

Our Spirit

Our spirit is our most precious possession.

It is our greatest source of energy.

However, while it can be very strong,

it can also be very brittle.

It can be an oak unmoved in a storm,

or a frail reed swaying in the wind.

It can be a piece of granite or a piece of china.

What is it that enables the spirit to soar,

and what is it that causes it to sink?

Sadness weighs it down; joy lifts it up.

Criticism erodes it; praise builds it up.

Failure shrinks it; success enlarges it.

Despair causes it to wilt; hope breathes new life into it.

Rejection wounds it; acceptance heals it.

Hatred poisons it; love purifies it.

Fear cripples it; solitude calms it; prayer strengthens it.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Flor McCarthy, New Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies Year A; Dominican Publications; p.145



Faith in Older People

Registered Company SC322915 Registered Charity SC038225

21a Grosvenor Crescent, EDINBURGH EH12 5EL Tel: 0131 346 7981 Email: info@fiop.org.uk Website: www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk