

# AUGUST 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

### **FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE**

Over the past few months, we have all developed ways of coping with being in lockdown and shielding. Never easy to adjust to a situation when there is so much uncertainty as to when it will end. However, people have found the determination to take on home schooling, finding ways of working from home when surrounded by people who need their attention, learning something new, volunteering, enjoying nature. It has not been an equal time of discovery for people. The situation has highlighted the extremes, those with access to

different opportunities and those for whom it has been a struggle to maintain an equilibrium in caring, getting sufficient food and support and for whom walks in the country is not a possibility. The situation has opened our eyes to the inequalities in health, education, and social care as well as the economy and the importance of addressing this as we go forward. As we tackle Covid-19 and find our way out we must give equal attention to the renewal of systems and reviving our spirits.

It is evident from recent article that many people are paying more attention to their spiritual needs, recognising the importance of family and friends; a sense of community; the ordinary daily routines, music, and nature. Perhaps we have grown to appreciate what we took for granted and thankful for the support of those around us. This spiritual awareness has also been apparent in the increased connection with faith communities through the Internet highlighting a big increase in people joining services and prayer meetings.

“Faith communities and our leaders can play a vital role in grappling with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are often the most relevant, and trusted networks and messengers. Their presence is constant and uninterrupted, even in remote communities. Faith communities working with the broader society, health care workers and governments, can help accelerate the return to a world free of this crippling pandemic.”

[\(https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/resources/documents/overcoming-the-covid-19-pandemic-with-faith-communities-some-guidance-for-churches/\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/resources/documents/overcoming-the-covid-19-pandemic-with-faith-communities-some-guidance-for-churches/)

In Scotland nearly every community has a church or faith community. India Knight, the journalist, described them as the glue that keeps communities together whether people are of faith or not. There needs to be more awareness and appreciation of what they contribute to supporting people

across the age spectrum; homelessness, food distribution, tackling loneliness and isolation and much more. It is hoped that this awareness of spiritual need and practical action will not be lost.

As we look to the future, we welcome the Scottish Government's establishment of a Social Renewal Advisory Board and accompanying policy circles. Faith communities have much to contribute to this process alongside those organisations in the voluntary, statutory, and private sectors. We all have a perspective and experience to bring and now is the time to share as we refresh and revive systems, policies and importantly our spirit.

### **Scottish Government Social Renewal Advisory Board**

On 9 June 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People announced the creation of a Social Renewal Advisory Board.

During the response to the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant amount of work undertaken to support people and communities which was delivered at pace and challenged traditional ways of working, cultures and mind sets.

The Board aims to build on the shifts in policy and practice that we have seen as a result of working across portfolios and in partnership with frontline service deliverers in local government, the third sector and communities.

The Board aims to bank the policy and practice shifts seen during COVID-19 and utilise our current practice and knowledge with an emphasis on delivering equality and social justice. It will focus on reducing poverty and disadvantage, embedding a

human-rights based approach and advancing equality.

Board Members include experts in housing, disability, poverty, homelessness and the third sector. In recognition of the role that local government plays in delivering services crucial to communities, both COSLA and SOLACE have representatives on the Board.

A detailed programme to bring in the voices of lived experience will sit alongside the Board. This will inform every decision taken as part of this process.

### **Policy circles**

The Board will scrutinise the work of a series of 'policy circles' that will each be tasked to work at pace on recommendations and solutions. The circles will be specific groups working on a series of key policy issues.

The circles will focus on: addressing low income, community-led and place based renewal, cross-cutting delivery, financial

security, food, the housing system, third sector and volunteering. Key to the circles will be ensuring that those with lived experience are right at the heart of discussions. Throughout the process we will ensure that people are supported to engage effectively.

For further information go to:

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/social-renewal-advisory-board/>

### **Geoffrey Lord OBE**

We are deeply saddened to inform you of the death of Geoffrey Lord who was one of the first Trustees of FiOP when it was set up in 2007. He was a significant figure in the voluntary sector for many years and was previously the CEO of the Carnegie Trust. He contributed to many organisations bringing expertise and wisdom as well as kindness and humour. He will be much missed and our sympathy goes out to his family.

## Stepping Up: Responses of Community groups

Anne Connor, Chief Executive, Outside the Box

One of the strong, positive features of life over the past few months is the response of community groups, as people step up to provide practical help and a social connection to those in their communities who might need that support. Faith groups are often part of it, providing volunteers and practical resources to make it happen and years of experience in organising community activities, underpinned by values and belief.

Many commentators are noticing this, sometimes with an element of surprise – while many of the formal bodies seemed to be still thinking about what to do and where to start, the community just got on with it and made it happen.

Those of us who are part of the community sector were not surprised. Community groups have been doing this sort of work for many years, complementing and reinforcing the role of public services and more formal care services. Outside the Box is bringing together resources to share good practice and this has started with what many groups had learned over the years as well as sharing the learning from this

particular set of circumstances. Committed to Good Support has examples and tools, and we are always keen to hear your experiences and suggestions on what helps:

<https://otbds.org/projects/committed-to-good-support/>

The evidence of our impact has also been there for longer than many people realise. Five years ago, I did a literature review of the evidence around smaller-scale community responses, the impacts of age-friendly communities and the other supports and policies that older people said they wanted. I found a lot of evaluations and reviews, all coming to the same conclusion: this sort of community support works, and compares well with the less flexible types of services that the public sector generally provides or commissions. If anyone is feeling keen, you can read it at: <https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/buildingcommunitybasedsupportwitholderpeople23.pdf>

The experience of Covid is prompting the Scottish Government to look at how we can all create a community that takes forward the

positive achievements and creates the right circumstances for social renewal. This includes a strong Equalities focus and welcoming the contribution of many groups and communities, and Outside the Box is working alongside Faith in Older People and other networks to make sure the voices of older people are part of this.

Outside the Box is also working with NHS Health Improvement Scotland on a series of conversations (webinars at the moment, hopefully some small face to face sessions later if all goes well) to think about how the links between this community support and more formal care systems can be stronger in the future. The first session prompted a lot of good questions and comments – and more about how people and organisations trust each other and understand what they contribute than about rules and processes. I'm looking forward to continuing and widening the conversation: what is your experience of what can help community activities that support our friends and neighbours to get going and keep flourishing?

## **What has FiOP been doing recently?**

### **We have**

- Developed an on-line Listening and Caring in Confidence Service for care home and care at home staff.
- Produced our newsletter every two weeks so that we could highlight sources of support from a range of statutory, voluntary, faith communities and private sector organisations. This has been welcomed

“ *Thank you for the very full and well-rounded newsletter. It is so helpful to have easy access to relevant information. The letter from Michael Parker was particularly interesting and he clearly was very grateful for your support at a difficult time.* ”

“ *I just wanted to drop you and email to congratulate you and the team at FiOP on this newsletter. It is a really excellent resource, very well put together and both informative and uplifting. We share it with our team of volunteers who have also found it very useful.* ”

- Commenced a scoping exercise on spiritual care education for nursing and social care staff in our universities.
- Begun work on further developing our Learning Resource for Faith Communities to support people with dementia which we hope to publish later in the year. We were delighted that the Dementia Advocacy Canada asked for permission to adapt this resource to the Canadian context.
- Continued the Evaluation of the Life Changes Trust funded Befriending programmes.
- Contributed whenever we can to the work of other organisations and kept informed by joining webinars on critical issues.
- had to cancel our training programme but will reorganise this as soon as we can.

Much of our work will continue to be developed and we plan a specific focus on mental health and older people. This will be in conjunction with VHS and Support in Mind and a group which has been convened by VHS.

Faith in Older People has set up **'LISTENING AND CARING IN CONFIDENCE'** – a free on-line service for care home staff and care at home providers.



The wellbeing of staff in our care homes and care at home must be a priority; their health and resilience are essential in supporting those vulnerable older people who are dependent on their care. We believe that it is **'Okay not to be Okay'** and the opportunity to talk can help to prevent anxiety. This free service is independent and there is no monitoring or reporting except for the numbers of people who use the service. The aim is to provide an oasis of time for staff to simply off-load.

Our **'Listeners'** are all experienced and qualified and are giving their time on a voluntary basis. Self-compassion and kindness are important to enable you to care for others and **'Listening and Caring in Confidence'** is a way to help all staff continue to do this.

We would encourage our readers to help by sharing information about this important new service so that our vital carers can be supported and encouraged through this excellent new venture.

To access the service please use the following link: <http://faithinolderpeople.org.uk/listening-service>

“Thank you for this newsletter, packed with good things, and for the way you continue to hold this important work”



Here's a photo that might strike a chord, from one of the daily Companionship letters

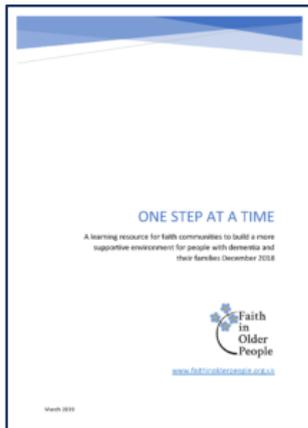
the chaplaincy here in St Andrews sent out March- June

<https://chaplaincycompanionship.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2020/04/25/okay-25-april-2020/>

**There is also a movement to establish 'time to talk' benches to encourage people to talk to those around them to combat loneliness and isolation.**

**Good idea - could you encourage such an initiative in your area?**

## ONE STEP AT A TIME



FiOP developed this free learning resource to assist faith communities to build a more supportive environment for people with dementia and their families.

Our handy quiz on “*How Dementia Friendly is your Faith Community*”, is available on our website along with the resource. FiOP was delighted that Dementia Advocacy Canada has adapted this resource to the Canadian context as a joint approach. **Download the resource from:**

<https://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk/project/one-step-at-a-time/>

## SPIRITUAL CARE MATTERS



People who will be interested in the course include care assistants, health care staff, home care visitors, activity coordinators, catering staff, administrative staff, carers and anyone with a role in supporting older people. It provides an opportunity to consider your own spiritual needs as well as helping you to enable the spiritual needs of others to be met.

FiOP developed this free eLearning resource for all staff and volunteers working in care homes, health and other care settings.

Download the courses from:

<https://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk/project/spiritual-care-matters/>

## **Voluntary Health Scotland**

### [#WeArePublicHealth: Creating Health and Wellbeing for All](#)

Join us at our virtual Annual Conference on the 4th and 5th of November: taking place online over 2 days with 4 sessions to allow flexible access and options for joining us. With home working still the default position in Scotland, we wanted to bring the best of our event to you in a bitesize format.

With the newly created Public Health Scotland and a national set of public health priorities, is Scotland now set to re-focus its approach on prevention, protection, and improvement of the nation's health? What does 'public health'

mean for the third sector and what is our role and contribution?

To find out about sponsorship and exhibition opportunities, please contact [Lauren Blair](#). [Ageing Well: 4th Virtual Talk with the Open University](#)

Join VHS and the Open University for the fourth in a series of joint online events exploring ageing, health and wellbeing on Wednesday, 2 September 11:00 am - 12:45 pm.

[Keeping the Conversation Going: Loneliness and Social Isolation](#)

Read the Key Messages from our event held in

collaboration with members of [Arts Culture Health and Wellbeing Scotland](#) which explored the role arts and health organisations and practitioners have been playing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### [Digitally Healthy: Health Literacy and Health Inequalities](#)

Read the Key Messages from our joint zoom event with NES Digital Service, NHS Education for Scotland which discussed health literacy and health inequalities

I am a participant and have personally taken part in remote peer support [take the survey](#)

### [Face Covering Exemption: Not Everyone Can Wear One](#)

The use of face coverings is now mandatory in Scotland in shops and on public transport. It is important to recognise that not everyone can wear a face covering.

#### **People are exempt if:**

\*They have a disability or health condition that

means they cannot put a covering on  
\*A covering will cause them severe distress or anxiety

\*They need to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading

\*They have a reasonable need to eat, drink or take medicine

### [Deafness and Dementia Research Report](#)

The links between dementia and hearing loss have been widely researched, however, this joint research collaboration between deaf Scotland and Queen Margaret University looks more closely at prevalence rates in Scotland in order to better inform advance planning - timely now given the impact of COVID-19 on government funding and, by extension, government priorities.

### [Inclusion Scotland Social Care Support Survey](#)

New evidence from Inclusion Scotland says disabled Scots shielding from Covid-19 are still not getting the vital support they need to access food, medicine, and other essentials.

## **LIFE CHANGES TRUST**

### **Webinar: Law 4 Dementia Carers in Scotland: Coming out of Covid?**

Tide and Age Scotland would like to invite carers of people with dementia to join a webinar on:

#### **Law 4 Dementia Carers: Coming out of Covid? on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August from 4.00 to 5.30 p.m.**

The aim of the webinar is to help carers of people living with dementia to understand their legal rights and what the law might mean for them as lockdown (potentially) comes to an end. This is a time of change and uncertainty for carers. There are many questions to be answered and explanations to be provided about carers' rights and entitlements – and those of the person they care for - in a wide range of situations. From knowing when and how care home visiting might resume to understanding what happens if you have to sell your house, what support you might be entitled to on a day-to-day basis and what happens if a second wave occurs and we go back into lockdown, carers need to be clear about what the law in Scotland says and the impact it could have on them.

This webinar is for carers of people living with dementia and is based on the issues and questions that carers raise from their day-to-day experiences. It will feature an expert panel with representatives from TiDE, Age Scotland's About Dementia and Dementia Training teams and the legal profession in Scotland. The panel will give brief presentations on different aspects of carers' rights in post-Covid (or nearly post-Covid) Scotland and who will take and answer your questions.

Questions can be submitted in advance through a short survey which we will send you after you book (and we would strongly encourage you to submit questions in advance this way) or on the day through the chat box. It is likely that we will not get round to addressing all the questions raised during the webinar, so we will be doing extensive follow up of various kinds with participants in the after the session.

We hope you can join us and we are looking forward to hearing your questions and comments.

**To join the webinar please register in advance for this meeting:**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/webinar-law-4-dementia-carers-in-scotland-coming-out-of-covid-tickets-115166307526>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## **Creating Better Lives in Edinburgh & Lothians - By Local People for Local People Small Grants Programme 2020-2022**

Meantime, we are opening a small grants programme. Local organisations can apply to deliver work to support people affected by dementia. Funding to support projects in the Edinburgh & Lothians region opens to applications today.

For more information, go to –

<https://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/funding-opportunities>

## **LONELINESS AND ISOLATION**

The **Campaign on Loneliness** recently held an on-line conference about the psychology of loneliness to mark the launch of its new report. It was a very insightful discussion and adds a perspective to how we consider the factors contributing to loneliness and isolation and what potential solutions there might be.

<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/blog/the-psychology-of-loneliness-why-it-matters-and-what-we-can-do/>

The **Campaign to End Loneliness** believes that nobody who wants company should be without it. We want to make this happen by ensuring that:

1. People most at risk of loneliness are reached and supported
2. Services and activities are more effective at addressing loneliness
3. A wider range of loneliness services and activities are developed

<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-the-campaign/>

### About the Campaign | Campaign to End Loneliness

The **Campaign to End Loneliness** believe that people of all ages need connections that matter. There are nine million lonely people in the UK and four million of them are older people. Many older people find constant loneliness hardest to overcome. They lack the friendship and support we all need.

[www.campaigntoendloneliness.org](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org)

**Re-engage** a new UK-wide telephone befriending service, **Call Companions**. You may know someone who could benefit from a regular chat. This is a free service for any older person, in particular those 75 and over, who may be socially isolated and lonely and would enjoy a regular friendly chat over the phone. We currently have volunteer call companions ready to be matched with potential referrals.

**Re-engage** (formerly Contact the Elderly) has been providing social contact for this age group for over 50 years. We set up Call Companions in response to the current COVID-19 crisis, as along with other services and organisations, we were forced to suspend our regular social gatherings. We plan to run both services after the crisis is over. If you would like to refer anyone to **Call Companions**, you are welcome to refer online (with their permission, of course) or simply pass on our freephone number: **0800 716543**. We have staff who can go through the application form with them over the phone. If you have any further questions, please do get in touch on the number below. I hope this information can be cascaded to any appropriate teams who may be in contact with older, lonely people.

**Lorna Dunbar**, *Support officer - Re-engage* Telephone: 01738 730249

### Coming soon - a new series of films from the Scottish Older People's Assembly



**Older People – a bonus not a burden**

**A new SOPA campaign - coming soon!**

For some time, we at SOPA have been very concerned about the way in which Older People are regarded by others. In the coming weeks, we will be showcasing the views of Older People in 'doorstep interviews' filmed during 'lockdown'.

As someone who also supports the voice of Older People, we hope you will support this campaign. You can:

- follow SOPA on Facebook and Twitter
- like and share the interviews
- bring the interviews to the attention of your family, colleagues, and networks

### **Silver Sunday, The National Day for Older People - SAVE THE DATE: 4 October 2020**

As we all emerge blinking from the coronavirus lockdown, we'd love you all to start imagining what you can do for our National Day for Older People, Silver Sunday this year.

These past few months have been particularly difficult for older people as coronavirus took its hold over loved ones as well as daily life. We also know how much of a difference Silver Sunday provides as a day to look forward to, for opportunities for connection and reciprocal acts of kindness and gratitude. Silver Sunday provides a silver lining of hope and happiness to those for whom worry, isolation and loneliness can be a daily challenge. So, whilst doing everything we can to protect our vulnerable older population we are calling on kind partners like you to do what you can to make a difference around the UK this October.

## Befriending Arts: UK Wide Creative Postcard Exchange Project

Please see the link below for information on the Carnegie UK Trust report on the Enabling State:  
[https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie\\_uk\\_trust/2020/07/08153724/LOW-RES-4614-CUKT-Guiding-Principles-for-Recovery-A5-1.pdf](https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie_uk_trust/2020/07/08153724/LOW-RES-4614-CUKT-Guiding-Principles-for-Recovery-A5-1.pdf)



**We have exciting news...**

*Announcing the 2020 Just Festival programme*



**Just Festival** is Edinburgh's social justice and human rights festival. A part of Edinburgh's Fringe Festival our events aim to challenge perceptions, celebrate differences and encourage dialogue on the key issues of our time.

Our 2020 festival is based on the theme of 'transformations', drawing together a programme of digital events accessible online via Zoom, as well as one 'live' event.

## GENERATIONS WORKING TOGETHER

### Piloting new intergenerational training online

Please find details below of an opportunity to help **Generations Working Together** (GWT) pilot their new online course. Please reply directly to Alison (copied in) by Wednesday

"You may be aware that GWT has been developing short online courses (free) on intergenerational work and on ageism which will be going live shortly. Our first course takes between 2 1/5 to 3 hours is now available to pilot (What is intergenerational work?).

I wondered if any of the SOPA members would be interested in piloting the course for me over the next week and giving feedback. We shall be able to make improvement to the courses and plan to keep reviewing the course over the next 6 months learning and improving as we go.

Our ageism course will hopefully be ready to pilot at the end of next month. If members are keen to take part all I need is their first name, surname and an email address.

[alison@generationsworkingtogether.org](mailto:alison@generationsworkingtogether.org)

## Alzheimer Scotland's innovative response to COVID-19

Read about how Alzheimer Scotland has adapted its way of working due to Covid-19

[https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/case\\_studies/alzheimer-scotlands-innovative-response-to-covid-19/#expanded](https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/case_studies/alzheimer-scotlands-innovative-response-to-covid-19/#expanded)

## SOUTH WEST ADULT LEARNING

### Guid Fer A Laugh - Free Scots Literacy Pack for adults to try at home



We usually deliver our sessions to adults in small groups; however we can't do this due to Covid-19. Good news, we have adapted material into an Introduction Pack for you to use at home.

#### Introduction to Scots Literacy – Whit's it a'about?

- it's about learning Scots language and auld words
- take a look a Scots comedy and writing
- hae a guid laugh at ourselves and others

We'll be using poems, songs, comedy, jokes, informal fun activities. Perfect for lockdown, suitable for adults who have social media and particularly those who don't.

**For a free pack to be delivered or sent to you by email please contact: Lydia Markham, South West Lifelong Learning Development Worker**

**Mobile: 07719420424 or**

**[Lydia.markham@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Lydia.markham@ea.edin.sch.uk)**

**EDINBURGH**  
SUPPORTED BY  
YOUR COUNCIL - YOUR CITY

## THE ALLIANCE

**Supporting life after death** Written by: **Alison Payne**, Research Director, Reform Scotland and **Elinor Jayne**, Head of Influencing, Sue Ryder and **Richard Meade**, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Marie Curie. Published: **29/07/2020**

Although death remains a taboo subject for many, the pandemic has meant we are all talking about it more. [Read the full story on our website](#)

## LIVING STREETS

Living Streets Scotland has drafted a position paper on 'inclusive streets', which formed the basis of the discussion at our first [Walking Summit webinar last week](#). We are seeking feedback on this paper from partners across the voluntary and active travel sectors, and from individuals, in Scotland, to inform our planning and future work in this area. The paper can be accessed [here](#), or can be sent in another format if needed (please email me on [dani.anderson@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:dani.anderson@livingstreets.org.uk)). We are grateful for any feedback on the paper via [this short survey](#), or you can send your thoughts to me or [scotland@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:scotland@livingstreets.org.uk).

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

### Cyber attacks

The Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience bulletins which are produced regularly highlight that there has been an increase in scams related to Covid 19, so hopefully they will be useful reminder of how to keep safe and what to look out for.

<https://blogs.gov.scot/cyber-resilience/2020/05/06/cyber-resilience-notice-covid-19/>

## GOOD LIFE GOOD DEATH GOOD GRIEF TO ABSENT FRIENDS

### Grants available to support Scots remember people who have died

A small grants fund (up to £250) has been set up to support people in Scotland to put on remembrance events this November as part of the To Absent Friends festival. Remembering and telling stories of someone who has died, and being around others who knew them, can bring comfort. The To Absent Friends festival takes place across Scotland every year from 1-7 November and this year it is keen to support communities to organise events that remember people who have died from covid-19 and during the lockdown period. Click here for: Ideas of how to take part are available. The deadline for completed applications is Monday 31 August 2020.



**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](mailto:info@fiop.org.uk) Website: [www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk](http://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk)**