

## JANUARY 2021 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

**EVERYONE at Faith in Older People  
send their very best wishes for 2021  
to all our friends and colleagues**

**..... and looking to 2021, if you haven't already, we'd like to ask you to become a FRIEND OF FIOP.** An annual contribution of £25 would make an enormous difference to our small organisation.

Over the years, we have been fortunate to have worked with a tremendous team of associates who have brought different skills and experience which has enabled this incredible expansion of our work. Our growth has been enriched and complemented by opportunities to collaborate with organisations whose work also encompasses the spiritual dimension.

Keeping the spirit alive, despite circumstances, is fundamental to our well-being so we need to understand what matters to each of us as we age. We remain ambitious for the future, but we need, and would value, your support.

**Please become a FRIEND of FiOP.** As a Friend you will receive our regular eNewsletter and invitations to our events. **PLEASE FIND APPLICATION FORM ATTACHED.** You can find out more about our work on [www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk](http://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk)

## FAITH IN OLDER BLOGS

Our regular blogs can be reached on our website at [www.fiop.org.uk](http://www.fiop.org.uk) - here are two of our latest .....

**I can't tell you how much I have valued older people** - and that's throughout the whole of my near thirty-year parish ministry. It's often said that churches are short of children and young people - and that's true, worryingly so - but we should also be ready to say, 'Isn't it great that we've got lots of older people!'

Let me tell you about May. She lost her husband in her mid-years and continued with what she was doing for a short time before deciding that God was calling her to something different. And so, much to the shock of her family, she announced that she was going to train to be a teacher in a mission setting. She was in her 60s when she packed up her home and headed to Kenya. It was, for her, an absolute life transformation; she got a fresh start and discovered things about herself that hitherto had lain dormant.

Upon returning to Scotland, May threw herself into various charitable activities - not least organising local efforts for The Leprosy Mission and for the World Day of Prayer. A dedicated Guild member, she would never miss a meeting - even when having to trail down the road on a pouring wet night!

When our congregation launched a service to support those struggling with addiction, May - by now into her 70s - was one of the first to step up as a volunteer. She served until she was 80 and many were the young men and women who came to know her and trust her and turn to her as a confidant and counsellor. That was a whole new world for May - she was so far out of her natural environment and comfort zone - and yet she never judged and never brought anything other than compassion and wisdom.

May got past her 90th birthday - and so what did she do to celebrate her big birthday? She got her head shaved for Macmillan Nurses, at the front of the church following the benediction!

In her final years, she struggled with poor health and with a cancer diagnosis, yet she was never anything other than bright and hopeful and an inspiration to everyone around her. Sensing that becoming 'confined to barracks' would hasten her deterioration, she forced herself to go out twice a day. She became a well-kent figure, slowly making her way along Arbroath's High Street and back again, leaning on her walker and only occasionally pausing to draw breath.

That was May. The great tragedy was that when she was lost to us, lockdown restrictions meant that only a few were able to be there to give thanks for her life. But though not present, many more of us rejoiced to have known her and mourned to have lost her.

May lived all her life. She was one of the most faithful people I've ever met. I'm thankful to God for her and for the many older people like her who have inspired me and enriched my life as a result.

Faith in older people? May.

**Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair**  
**Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland**

## **'I'm not ageist! I love the old dears...'**

The events of 2020 were "unprecedented", extraordinary, challenging, and sadly, for too many, they've been deadly. But something what has struck me is that ageism is alive and well. The first time I really noticed it was when a wise woman pointed out the messaging around the original COVID-19 warnings: apparently if you were over 70 when the virus hit, you were automatically in the highest risk category. Now, I appreciate that people over 70 do sometimes have more underlying health conditions than people under that age, but to automatically place all over 70s effectively under house arrest last March was, I think, a bit of a knee-jerk reaction. I know of many in that age group who are active, healthy, providing child care, and much more. The lack of subtlety in approach here could be seen as a form of ageism.

More recently, I'm sure we all enjoyed the drama and intrigue of the US Presidential election! Whatever our stance on that, it can't have escaped anyone's attention that both candidates were over 70 (Donald Trump was 74 and Joe Biden 77 when the polls opened). And much was made of their age. But why should that be their defining characteristic? Why not allow their skills and experience to speak for them first? Perhaps this applies across the board, and not just to American Presidents. There is sometimes a general perception that older

people are a drain on our economy. However, there is evidence that those of pension age are contributing more than they are 'costing'. According to the RVS, over 65s made a *net contribution* of £40billion ten years ago. More recently, in 2014 Age UK found that £61billion was added to the coffers by over 65s the previous year.

Ageism creeps in to various aspects of life and society. Retirement ages are set for us – there comes a time when, regardless of how productive we may be, we may be told to stop working. Our age can prevent us from accessing certain financial benefits or services. Insurers, for example, will often set maximum entry ages for taking out a policy, and will not renew the policy for someone who has reached their policy's upper coverage limit (limits can vary between providers). The Equality Act 2010, however, names Age as one of its protected characteristics – meaning not allow discrimination based on age in the provision of goods and services. It is simply not allowed (there are very limited exceptions).

Possibly most insidious of all is the tendency, especially in the media, to portray older people as sweet but 'dodderly'. While on the face of it, this may seem harmless, it can tend to patronise, to minimise or invalidate the older person's experience, and ultimately can diminish their humanity. That

way lies abuse. Once we allow ourselves to see an older person as 'less than a person', it becomes easier to ignore their needs or interests, to fail to treat them with dignity and respect, and even to directly harm them – physically, verbally, financially...

For all of these reasons, we need to think carefully about the messages we hear, and the messages we speak, around the issue of ageing. Hourglass held its first Safer Ageing Week (beginning 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020) to promote Safer Ageing, a key strand of our work against the abuse of older people. We want to create environments where older people are empowered to age securely and live free from abuse. Some older people may face barriers to this, but together we can work to remove those barriers – physical, social and attitudinal. People may not think they're ageist, but can older people thrive in our communities?

If you'd like to know more about Safer Ageing and Hourglass Scotland's work in keeping older people safe, please visit our website

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

There is information available there on what to do about any concerns about the welfare of an older person or we have a free helpline (0808 808 8141).

**Colin Scott,**  
**Community Response Co-ordinator,**  
**Hourglass Scotland**  
colin.scott@wearehourglass.org

## Do you have caring responsibilities? .....

### LISTENING AND CARING IN CONFIDENCE

#### A FREE, CONFIDENTIAL, ON-LINE SERVICE FOR CARE HOME AND CARE AT HOME STAFF

With our 'Listening and Caring in Confidence' on-line service we want to offer the opportunity to all those who have caring responsibilities to have an oasis of time for themselves as new challenges emerge but with the potential of the vaccine making change.

*Consider your own needs and wellbeing so that you can continue to support those for whom you care.*

Our experienced listeners are here for you: <https://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk/listening-service/>



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#### FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE AND CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD - ECUMENICAL GROUP

**If you would like to join our Ecumenical Group and be a part of our future meetings, please email [Director@fiop.org.uk](mailto:Director@fiop.org.uk) We would welcome participation from different denominations and geographical areas.**

For the past three years FiOP has worked collaboratively with the Church of Scotland Guild to develop an ecumenical group which could consider key issues affecting congregations and their local communities. This builds on previous work led by the Guild on the 'Golden Age Project' which considered supporting older members of congregations and the contribution they make. The Ecumenical Group has considered the issues around loneliness and isolation and the work of congregations; supporting people at end of life and developing support for people affected by dementia. The Group has met twice a year and in 2019 stimulated two conferences – one around dementia and the other around end of life in partnership with the Scottish Partnership on Palliative Care.

Our intention was to take the discussions to other parts of Scotland but like lots of plans this year this was deferred. However, we had a meeting using Zoom in early November around making connections in this difficult time. We used this opportunity to have a general conversation about the issues people were facing, their own reflections and things to consider for the future.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Tuesday 11 May 2021**  
**THE MALCOLM GOLDSMITH LECTURE 2021 to be given by**  
**Dr Donald Macaskill, Chief Executive Officer, Scottish Care**

The fullness of humanity: human rights and spirituality

This lecture will explore the relationship between human rights as a moral and legal framework and the world of spirituality. It will advocate a positive potential relationship between human rights and traditional spiritual belief and religious traditions both in practice and in thought. It will approach the subject with particular reference to care and health.

**Booking details will be available early March.**

### **FiOP's Plans for 2021**

FiOP's Board has recently discussed the action plan for the organisation for 2021-22. Fundamental to all our work will be spiritual care education as it is encompassed in the key themes of mental health and wellbeing; end of life matters and combatting loneliness and isolation. The pandemic has underscored the importance of all these themes and FiOP will continue to offer its 'Confidential, Free, Caring and Listening Service' for carers wherever they are - Listening and Caring in Confidence (faithinolderpeople.org.uk).

We will continue to work collaboratively with a range of individuals and organisations to raise awareness, take practical action, and to share knowledge and resources.

#### **Spiritual Care Education**

Faith in Older People has just completed this scoping review to examine pre- and post-registration education in spiritual care for nurses and allied health professionals, excluding medicine and chaplaincy, in Scottish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) March - September 2020 Ruth E Aird QGN ONC MSc Ed and Maureen O'Neill BA(Hons), DMS

This project was funded and supported by NHS Education and the full report is available [HERE](#)

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT**

#### **COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME – EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

A letter from Christina McKelvie MSP, Minister for Older People & Equalities, sent to FIOP, was received at the beginning of January 2021; to read the letter – which covers **(1) Sharing information about the vaccine** and **(2) Reassuring communities about the vaccine, to encourage take-up.** To read the letter in full, click [HERE](#)

## **CORONAVIRUS AND OLDER PEOPLE**

The Coronavirus and Older People page on the Scottish Government website: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): older people - information - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-older-people-information/gov.scot) contains information and available services, including helpline numbers that older people will find valuable. You may have also seen the Clear Your Head advert that was published in December and is targeted at the 65+ audience, containing a series of tips that were felt to be most relevant to the older adult demographic. More Information is available on the Clear Your Head website: [Home | clearyourhead.scot](https://www.clearyourhead.scot)

These tips include:

1. Keeping in touch – whatever works for you – phone, digital, post, a walk outside. Say hello and smile when you're out. Even with a facecovering, it shows in your eyes.
2. Get sun – it's especially important during winter to help keep your body clock right, ideally in the morning. There is sunlight even when it's cloudy. While out, notice the things you see – like birds or trees, and try to identify them.
3. Eat well and drink enough fluids. It can be tempting to have lots of cakes and savoury snacks – but that can make you feel sluggish. Give an old recipe a go, or swap food ideas with others.
4. Get Involved with Meal Makers – our volunteer cooks make a tremendous difference to the lives of older people.
5. Be kind – a single thoughtful gesture can make someone's day. If you'd like to do more, why not offer to lend a hand or share your expertise with someone trying a new hobby?
6. Plan something you enjoy, an activity you used to do, or a new one. Maybe start a jib saw, knit, read a book, sing along to the radio and dance in the kitchen. Or make a movie/music playlist with a friend.

### **Strategic Framework for Scotland and Visiting in Adult Care Homes**

Please find below, a link from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport outlining the alignment of the Strategic Framework for Scotland's Levels with Adult Care Homes visiting guidance.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-adult-care-homes-visiting-guidance/>

**This guidance also includes updates on:**

**Guidance on travel to and from level 3 or 4 areas to visit people in care homes; Support for visiting arrangements; Communications on updates to national protection level advice, and Forthcoming further guidance on visiting**

This updated guidance is now available on the Scottish Government [Covid-19 Care Homes guidance web page](https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-care-homes-visiting-guidance/gov.scot)s and the travel advice will also be updated in the very near future.

## **HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND IMPROVEMENT**

Please see our tweet about the changes to shielding guidance – your help in sharing this would be very much appreciated.

<https://twitter.com/scotgovhealth/status/1346799612854759427>

**Francesca Della Pietra - Shielding policy lead - Directorate for Healthcare Quality and Improvement, Scottish Government**

**francesca.dellapietra@gov.scot**

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OLDER PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND

[GenAnalytics](#) is working with the Scottish Government and the Older People's Strategic Action Forum to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on older people in Scotland. **We would like to hear your views.** [This survey](#) will only take a few minutes to complete and responses are confidential. **Thank you for your time and support.**

**NHS National Services Scotland** and **Public Health Scotland** have been assisting NHS NSS and PHS who have developed a short film to explain what to expect when a contact tracer calls. **The Contact Tracing Video Explainer- What happens when a Test and Protect Contract Tracer calls you?** is available in multiple languages and we would be grateful if you could share with the contacts you have kindly been passing on our key covid-related messages to.

The film and translated transcripts are available on the **NHS Inform website** at [www.nhsinform.scot/contact-tracing](http://www.nhsinform.scot/contact-tracing)

We've also developed some shorter clips of the film for sharing on social media. They highlight the following:

- What is a close contact (and what it's not)
- How to know if a call from a contact tracer is genuine
- Pick up the call if you see a number from our 0800 number on your phone

The video clips, as well as social media assets for you to use on your local platforms, can be found in the WeTransfer link below: [Download the videos and social media assets via WeTransfer here](#)

Feel free to share this information/assets with those in your networks who may find them of use.

## CHRISTIANS ON AGEING

The following are webinars that are being offered with sign-up details at the end:

**TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY - 10.30 am**

**Connecting people with dementia with nature and the arts**

*While more is now understood about the biological changes which occur in Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, physical treatments have limits to their effectiveness and value. Other approaches can reach the inner person to re-engage pleasure and creativity which make the life worth living and achieve better health and sense of purpose. This does not happen without careful planning and skilled interpretation.*

The session will be led by **Barbara Stephens** who is CEO of Dementia Pathfinders [Home | Dementia Pathfinders](#)

**TUESDAY 16 MARCH - 10.30 am**

**Are we dispirited? Older Christians and mental health at the start of 2021.**

*2020 has brought with it multiple stresses: the spread of Covid 19 – illness, hospitalisation for some, and deaths. Restrictions designed to reduce the spread have deprived people of the chance to meet for normal comforting behaviour. Faith communities have not been allowed their usual freedom to worship. Extremes in politics around the world have added to uncertainties. Surveys find higher levels of anxiety and depression than is normal. What is the situation for people of faith? Can we encourage hope?*

The session will be led by **David Jolley**, Chair of Christians on Ageing and a retired psycho-geriatrician.

## **TUESDAY 20 APRIL - 10.30 am**

### **Valuing the narratives of older people**

*"There are attributes that can only be possessed in old age, and that therefore older people have something irreplaceable to offer society as a whole". Thus argued **The Dignity of Older People**, drawn up by the Pontifical Council for the Laity of the Catholic Church in 1998. How can we pay due respect to the riches which older people bring to faith life and the work of faith communities? First let us listen. Then help make use of what is learned.*

The session will be led by **Graham Hawley**, a retired Methodist minister, who is actively engaged in research and also serves as a Vice-President of *Christians on Ageing*.

Conference Calls are open to all and there is no charge for taking part. If you would like to join one or all of the new series just write to David Jolley using the e-mail link [discussion@ccoa.org.uk](mailto:discussion@ccoa.org.uk) You will need to be able to access Zoom but there is no need to take out a subscription; use your search engine to learn about how to do this if you have not tried this new technology already. You will be sent an e-mail with a link allowing you to join the discussion nearer the time of the Call.

Each session is led by someone with knowledge of the subject who will usually give a short introduction to the theme. Numbers for each session are limited to around a dozen in order to allow meaningful discussion. A report is produced and is circulated to all participants before publication on our website.

Please ask any more questions when you register your interest.

**Register your interest for the next series by e-mailing** [discussion@ccoa.org.uk](mailto:discussion@ccoa.org.uk)

Thank you for your interest in our work. If you want to know more about our organisation you will find lots of information and other links on our [website](#)

## **THE EDINBURGH PACT**

The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, responsible for delivering community and bed-based health and social care services for adults in Edinburgh, want to build thriving communities in Edinburgh and embrace the opportunity to create a different type of relationship with residents, communities and organisations across the city.

### **What is the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Pact?**

We want to start a conversation to build the Edinburgh Pact. The Edinburgh Pact will be an agreement between the Partnership and everyone who lives and works in Edinburgh. And the first step is to listen and learn what health and social care means to people who live and work in the city.

### **Why are we developing this now?**

During the pandemic we have seen people and communities across Edinburgh rally together to support one another, helping and caring for people who might be struggling. We have also seen

organisations and charities work together and produce solutions to support communities during this difficult time. The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership want to build on this.

The Partnership know that we face some real challenges for our health and social care system. The population is ageing, demand for services is increasing and our funding is not expected to grow at the same rate as the population. That's why the Partnership are thinking boldly about what can be different.

We would be delighted to hear from you -

We've been engaging people largely through digital platforms, due to limitations to meet publicly, which means we're not hearing everyone's voices.

We'd be grateful to connect with you and hear your views. During this phase of engagement, we are focusing largely on online focus groups to engage but we're open to hearing other formats that would work better for your group, if you wish to get involved. All your ideas, experiences and thoughts will help shape the Edinburgh Pact. If you would like to be part of the conversation, please contact [Sophie.Milner@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Sophie.Milner@edinburgh.gov.uk).

Emma Louise Gall, Assistant Psychologist

Waverley Court | Floor 1 | 4 East Market Place | Edinburgh | EH8 8BG |

Website: [Thrive Edinburgh](http://www.edinburghthrive.com) ([www.edinburghthrive.com](http://www.edinburghthrive.com))



Book events and training, access funding resources and read the latest Intergenerational Practice news

### Recent News

#### **United for all Ages Newsletter**

Hopeful for a better 2021 with more intergenerational interaction ...

#### **Keeping our Care Homes connected – How we can help you!**

Get involved, we are working to keep Care Homes connected and assist in making new connections with younger...

#### **TES Classrooms to Care Homes**

Connecting schools to care homes to help alleviate loneliness for older people and the care home staff...

#### **What impact does a year of intergenerational connection have?**

Read the new report by Dr. Ali Sommers about the impact of InCommon, a social enterprise that brings...

### Forthcoming Events

#### **GWT AGM 2021**

3rd February 2021, 1:00pm–2:00pm at Zoom - online

[Book Now](#)

### Training Courses

#### **Intergenerational Training for Trainers and Practitioners**

17th Feb 2021 at Zoom virtual meeting (£75 Full / £50 Concession)

[Book Now](#)

## MEARNS KIRK HELPING HANDS CHARITY

Mearns Kirk Helping Hands charity have received an award from The National Lottery Community Fund to pilot a Befriending Project aimed at people aged 65 and over and experiencing social isolation. The areas benefitting are Newton Mearns, Giffnock, Clarkston, Eaglesham & Waterfoot areas. Mearns Kirk Helping Hands was established in 2016. The charity aims to reduce loneliness and isolation and improve health and wellbeing by community helping itself. The Befriending Project is the latest activity the charity has developed to meet these aims.

The National Lottery Community Fund, Scotland Chair, Kate Still: said: "In these uncertain times our priority is

to ensure that National Lottery money continues to flow to charities, voluntary sector organisations and grassroots groups. I would like to congratulate Mearns Kirk Helping Hands on their award, theirs is an important project and will support people now and in the future when they can physically come back together to make great things happen in their community."

Current restrictions mean that at present, befriending will place over the phone or by video calling. Where appropriate, befrienders may agree to meet in a café for a coffee and a chat, following relevant guidelines.

When restrictions allow, the Project will move to offering home visits or companionship

to attend social activities. Project Manager Vicky Attwood said: "At Mearns Kirk Helping Hands we understand that now more than ever it's important for people to feel connected. We are really pleased to be able to offer befriending to older, isolated people in our community. We think that the coming winter months will be particularly challenging, so the Project is starting at just the right time."

**Anyone interested in finding out more about the Project, interested in volunteering or know someone who may benefit from taking part, should contact [hello@mkhelpinghands.org.uk](mailto:hello@mkhelpinghands.org.uk)**

**or call the team on 07858 552767**

**The Kindness line: a reflection for St Andrews Day:** [28th November 2020](#) by Donald Macaskill - Scottish Care

**A good reminder to start 2021 - [The Kindness line: a reflection for St Andrews Day - Scottish Care](#)**



## SCOTTISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS FORUM

**Statement of Commitment: On the occasion of the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (CoP 26) Glasgow 2021**

We the Scottish Religious Leaders' Forum, are united as people of faith in protecting the dignity of human life and creation. We look forward, with others throughout the UK, to welcoming delegates, guests and pilgrims from around the world to Glasgow and Scotland, whether in person or online. We look forward to offering you our hospitality, solidarity and support, to listening to you, and to learning from the stories of your lives and your communities.

We understand the gravity of the situation; the impact of climate change around the world; the inequality of its effects and the critical importance of decisions made in this conference to take forward the agreement made in Paris in 2015 (CoP21).

We call for transformational change in our lives, our communities, our economies and our governments. We recognise that humanity has exploited the planet, causing climate change and that the burden of loss and damage falls most heavily on the poor, especially women and children. We call for care for each other and care of the earth to be the highest duty in all our lives. As the Scottish Religious Leaders' Forum, **we commit** to respond to this challenge by:

- ❖ **Reflecting deeply** in prayer, meditation and worship to discern how to care for the earth and each other, and to encourage our respective communities to do the same
- ❖ **Making transformational change** in our own lives and in the lives of our communities through individual and collective action.
- ❖ **Being advocates for justice** by calling on governments, businesses and others who exercise power and influence to put into effect the Paris agreement; to make the transition to a just and green economy a priority; and to commit to science-based targets that are aligned with a healthy, resilient, zero-emissions future.

*We recognise the enormity of this task, especially for rich countries whose models of production, consumption, development and waste have caused many of the current climate-related problems. We ask those who visit us from around the world, especially those from countries who experience the worst consequences of climate change, to guide us. We conclude with an excerpt from a traditional Scottish blessing and Gaelic greeting;*

*And may the blessing of the earth be on you  
Soft under your feet as you pass along the roads*

**Ceud mìle fàilte**  
*A hundred thousand welcomes*

### **It's a fair question- The Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair in conversation with Steve Aisthorpe**

[It's a Fair Question: Steve Aisthorpe - YouTube](#)

In the Ecumenical Group Discussion in November, the book by Steve Aisthorpe 'Rewilding the Church' was brought up and this is an interesting conversation about this and the Steve's previous book 'The Invisible Church'.

### **Reflecting on the role of kindness in the healthcare response to COVID-19**

Today, the Carnegie UK Trust is pleased to publish [The courage to be kind: Reflecting on the role of kindness in the healthcare response to COVID-19](#), a report that draws on a number of personal experiences of working in the NHS in Scotland during the pandemic, and considers what these might mean for health and social care renewal.

At the start of 2020 there was a gathering momentum to conversations about the role of kindness and compassion in health and social care in Scotland. When COVID-19 happened, the healthcare system entered a period of rapid transformation in which many of the previously insurmountable 'barriers' to kindness appeared to fall away. In this context, it felt important to capture what was happening.

[The courage to be kind](#) draws on a series of reflective conversations, conducted between April and September 2020 with five medics working in different parts of NHS Scotland. The conversations reflected on what can be achieved when there is a common purpose, and when work is

underpinned by relationships and collaboration. But alongside the opportunities presented by changes in practice and a renewed focus on wellbeing, there was concern that these may be lost amidst a focus on remobilising and ‘getting back to normal’.

The voices in this report offer a particular perspective. But the depth of reflection, and the clear message about the need to ease some of the pressure in the system in order to ensure the wellbeing of staff and patients is one that resonates with many other conversations and is relevant and urgent right across the health service.

At the end of a year that has demanded so much from our health service, we hope that this report adds to our collective understanding of the impact of COVID-19. As we look to develop this work, we would really value your thoughts and reflections, which you can share with [ben.thurman@carnegieuk.org](mailto:ben.thurman@carnegieuk.org) or by joining the debate on twitter @CarnegieUKTrust.

Gross Domestic Wellbeing (GDWe): An alternative measure of social progress

## **Age Scotland News**

Look out for older neighbours as temperatures drop, urges charity

Age Scotland is urging everyone to take extra care and look out for their older friends, relatives and neighbours during the cold snap.

Icy weather conditions can be especially dangerous for older people who are at increased risks of falls and poor health. With new lockdown measures in force, there is also the risk that more older people will feel isolated at home and cut off from their family and friends.

The charity is urging people to find safe ways to stay in touch and look out for vulnerable members of their community. It is also sharing top tips for staying warm and well during the winter months.

Michelle Supple, Age Scotland’s Director of Charity Services, said: “This winter is an especially harsh one for hundreds of thousands of older people in Scotland. While we understand why new restrictions are necessary, they are a bitter blow for those who are already struggling with loneliness and isolation.

“The icy weather conditions gripping much of Scotland are only making this worse. Going out for a stroll can be dangerous for those at risk of falls, while meeting family and friends outside in sub-zero temperatures is far from ideal. As we get older, it can take us longer to warm up, while cold temperatures can exacerbate respiratory problems, heart disease and other health conditions.

“However, there is plenty that we all can do to help ourselves and those around us. It’s more important than ever to check on your older relatives and neighbours. A friendly phone call or an offer to help with shopping could be a lifeline for someone who feels isolated at home. If you haven’t seen a neighbour for a few days, why not pop a note through their door to check they’re OK?

“We can also all take time to care for our own mental and physical health over the winter. After a long, difficult year the prospect of more cold, dark months can easily get us down. But simple steps such as staying active safely at home, eating well, and keeping in touch with loved ones can make a real difference.”

## **Age Scotland's top tips for staying warm and well include:**

Keep moving – Sitting still for too long can be bad for you. If you can, try to move at least once an hour. [Our Around The House In 80 Days](#) challenge is a series of short, fun videos to help you stay strong and flexible at home.

Eat well – it's definitely not the season for salad fresh from the fridge, but eating a healthy diet will help boost your energy and mental health. Check out our [Eat Well](#) guide for information and ideas about food, and who can help if you have problems with eating a balanced diet. Make sure you are getting enough vitamin D; the sunshine vitamin is in short supply in winter.

Stay connected – Lockdown restrictions have left many of us feeling cut off from family and friends – and loneliness can seriously affect our mental and physical health. Our Friendship Line is available weekdays from 9am to 5pm on 0800 12 44 222 for a friendly chat or information about local services.

Keep up with medical appointments – While coronavirus has affected some NHS services, don't neglect health problems or long-term conditions. Make sure you stay as well as you can be by attending routine appointments or having vaccinations.

Remember to wash your hands regularly; we've been told this a hundred times, but it is excellent advice!

Stay cosy – it is tempting to turn down your heating to keep your bills down, but being too cold puts you at risk of colds, flu and hypothermia. Living areas should be heated to 21 to 23 degrees Celsius, and wearing layers can help you stay warm. [Home Energy Scotland](#) has more information on saving money on energy bills and help that is available.

Stay stocked up - there is always peace of mind from having a well-stocked cupboard but it's more important than ever when any of us may need to self-isolate for a while. Our Eat Well guide has suggestions for basics for every kitchen.

Keep an eye on your money – winter food, winter clothes, and even drying your washing can cost more in winter. It's also the time of year when your house can spring nasty surprises such as leaks, damp and draughts. [Care and Repair Scotland](#), Home Energy Scotland, and the Age Scotland helpline (0800 12 44 222) can help you access advice and support.

## **LONELINESS AND ISOLATION**

### **New campaign encourages focus on community, kindness and mental health**

[https://tfn.scot/news/new-campaign-encourages-focus-on-community-kindness-and-mental-health?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Weekly%20Third%20Force%20News%20-%20health-and-social-care&utm\\_content=Weekly%20Third%20Force%20News%20-%20health-and-social-care+CID\\_f938e7d3c0ccc1b5c215dce0204c1ce&utm\\_source=tfn&utm\\_term=New%20campaign%20encourages%20focus%20on%20community%20kindness%20and%20mental%20health](https://tfn.scot/news/new-campaign-encourages-focus-on-community-kindness-and-mental-health?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Weekly%20Third%20Force%20News%20-%20health-and-social-care&utm_content=Weekly%20Third%20Force%20News%20-%20health-and-social-care+CID_f938e7d3c0ccc1b5c215dce0204c1ce&utm_source=tfn&utm_term=New%20campaign%20encourages%20focus%20on%20community%20kindness%20and%20mental%20health)

### **CHURCH OF ENGLAND RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC**

[Synod highlights injustices in pandemic response \(churchtimes.co.uk\)](https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/news/2020/04/22/synod-highlights-injustices-in-pandemic-response/)

## RESOURCES

### Faith in Later Life

This last eight months has been a difficult and devastating time for so many older people in the UK. We have seen increased loneliness and isolation due to shielding and social distancing, and the coronavirus pandemic has impacted on both the physical health and emotional well-being of many older people.

At Faith in Later Life, we want to encourage churches, Christian organisations and individuals to think about how to practically reach out to older friends and neighbours, and elderly people in local care homes who may have no family or friends in the community. This is particularly important as Christmas approaches, with this Christmas looking very different from the last one.

Could you pick up the phone and share the free Daily Hope telephone number with an older person? [You can find more information here.](#)

Or perhaps you could send a Christmas postcard to an older neighbour, or an older person in your local care home (after checking with the care home first)?

We have lots of free resources on our website that have lots more ideas about reaching out to older people, and this year we have also produced a selection of Christmas postcards which you could send to an older person, so they know someone is thinking of them. Do [visit our website](#) if you would like more information.

### Ruth Preston

Ministry Support Executive,  
Faith in Later Life

**SENIOR CARE HELPER** was designed to be the **single place on the web to unite those looking for senior services with the local service providers in your area and provides useful resources as below.**

<https://seniorcarehelper.com>

[Guide to Home Modifications to Prevent Falls](#)  
[Handling Financial Hardship for Older Adults](#)  
[Fall Prevention](#)

[How to Safely Pick up a Senior After a Fall](#)  
[Legal Guide for Seniors](#)  
[COVID Resources for Seniors](#)



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