

Advantage

Age Scotland
Love later life

Age Scotland's magazine: Summer 2021, issue 60



CELEBRATING NEW BEGINNINGS

Could you be missing out on £1,000s? p4

Breathing your way to better health, p7

The Shed Effect on the silver screen, p12

Scotland's helpline for older people

A free, confidential phone service for older people,
their carers and families in Scotland.



**'You're the
first person to
talk sense about
this. I'll always call
Age Scotland first
in the future.'**

Helpline caller

For information, advice and friendship,
call the Age Scotland helpline:

0800 12 44 222

age.scot/helpline

**Monday
to Friday
9am – 5pm**

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Advantage is the Age Scotland magazine that provides information, inspiration and ideas to empower Scotland's older people, their friends, families and carers.

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If you have news, events or issues that you would like Advantage to cover, please get in touch. We would also welcome ideas on how we might improve the magazine. To stop receiving Advantage, please just get in touch with us on the details below.

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Brian Sloan, Chief Executive



Welcome to Advantage magazine!

This year has been a year like no other. But as we look forward to summer, there is a sense of hope and new beginning in the air.

Now most of us have been vaccinated, we are starting to return to normal life. We're rediscovering simple pleasures, such as a cuppa with a friend, hugging a grandchild, or finally meeting as a group again. After more than a year of staying mainly at home, we can go out and meet our friends and family again or even look forward to a summer holiday.

Of course, the impact of the pandemic won't be forgotten quickly. Many of us have lost loved ones, felt the impact on our mental or physical health, or been lonelier than ever before. That's why it's vital that we continue to help each other and not lose that amazing community spirit that helped us get through this.

Our community groups have shown remarkable resilience over the year. Find out how a new film will celebrate the camaraderie and ingenuity of Men's Sheds across Scotland. Our groups share stories of putting our health & wellbeing grants to great use, from flowers and afternoon tea to a book of real-life stories.

It's never been more important to stand up for the rights of older people. Catch up on the latest from our campaigns, from Older People's Champions to better housing and increasing benefits uptake.

And get inspired by our fantastic fundraisers, pioneering women veterans, and creative partners over at Luminare. We hope you enjoy our latest edition, and don't forget to let us know what you think!

Brian Sloan



Check in, Cash Out – helping put money back in people’s pockets

Every year millions of pounds of vital financial support go unclaimed by older people in Scotland. Our Check in, Cash out campaign aims to raise awareness and increase take-up of social security support designed to help older people live well. We’re encouraging people to check in to see if they may be entitled to cash out by contacting our helpline and using our free information guides.

In later life, it can be difficult to increase income or move out of poverty due to factors like ill health, caring responsibilities, or no longer being in employment. The latest Scottish Government statistics show that 150,000 pensioners in Scotland live in poverty – of whom 120,000 are classed as living in persistent poverty.

While there are a range of social security payments available to help older people depending on their income and circumstances – including Pension Credit, Council Tax Reduction and Attendance Allowance – millions of pounds worth of support is not being claimed. For Pension Credit alone, 123,000 eligible older households in Scotland are estimated to be missing out, equating to £332m which is not going where it is due.

There are a range of reasons why social security is underclaimed by older people. These include

lack of awareness; stigma; people feeling they are managing fine or that money is better used to help others; the claims process involved; digital exclusion; and not knowing where to find advice.

Check in, Cash out is a rolling campaign to raise awareness and increase take-up of social security support among older people. We’ll do this by signposting people to our free information guides, which can be downloaded from our website or ordered in hard copy, and our helpline for a free eligibility check and help to claim.

In 2020, our helpline identified £493,350 of unclaimed support for older people who called us. Our training team also offer free training sessions covering social security for people above State Pension age.

In addition to pointing people to our guides, helpline, and training sessions for general social security information and advice, we will “spotlight” several individual payments and themes in more depth.

As we don’t want any older person to go without, we plan for this to be a recurring campaign. We’ll work with partners, stakeholders and member groups to ensure the message gets out and no one loses out on the support they are entitled to.



Don’t miss out!

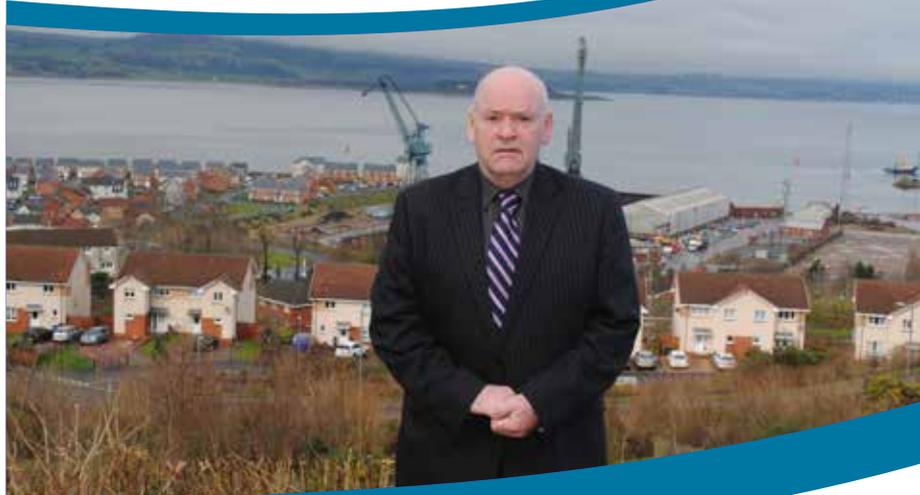
If you think you could be missing out, check in today to see if you could cash out:

Contact the Age Scotland Helpline for a free entitlement check and help to claim – **0800 12 44 222**, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

You can also call to request Age Scotland’s free information guides for advice and support or order these via our website: **www.age.scot/order-guides**



Standing up for older people across Scotland



Cllr Robert Moran

In our last Advantage, we launched our campaign for an Older People's Champion in every Scottish council. Together with the Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA), we called for a dedicated councillor to stand up for older people's interests.

And what an incredible response we've had!

Four councils have agreed to the new role - West Lothian, Midlothian, Falkirk, and Angus - with the first postholders now in place. They join ten existing Champions who have already made a difference across Scotland. And we're in discussions with more councils who have expressed an interest.

While the role is unpaid (so doesn't cost the council or taxpayers anything), it's definitely not just ceremonial. Watch this space for the latest on the campaign!

We caught up with **Cllr Robert Moran**, who has three years' experience as Inverclyde Older People's Champion, to find out more about his role.

Why did you take on this role?

I was doing a lot of work with veterans and the voluntary sector and got to know groups and individuals. We have an ageing population in Inverclyde and the demand on services is increasing all the time.

I thought it was really important that older people had someone to champion their causes if they couldn't themselves.

What type of issues do you deal with?

A lot of my work involves supporting voluntary groups, but if someone has a specific problem they can contact me.

For example, a local art club used to meet in a community hall that was closing down. We managed to help them relocate in a new building. Another issue that concerned many people was taking away free swimming from older people.

It's important that people are aware of what they are entitled to, and how they can enjoy their retirement.

How have local people been affected over the last year?

A lot of older people have had a very hard time with the lockdown. There used to be so many activities, but they all stopped. If you live on your own and were used to going to a lunch club or for a game of bowls, suddenly there was nothing there anymore.

We have a very strong community in Inverclyde and we're proud of how people came together to help each other. Many groups were really busy, for example delivering lunches to people living in sheltered housing. These days, you can get everything delivered, but it's all about the human touch.

We got some Covid relief money to help some of those who had been worst affected. As things start up again, we need to make sure no-one has been left behind.

Get involved!

If you don't have an Older People's Champion yet, then why not sign our petition or write to your council leader? Find more details on our website or by calling our helpline.



Food Train Connects is not just for lockdown

A charity which responded to unprecedented demand during the coronavirus pandemic is reaching out to even more older people across Scotland as it expands efforts to improve lives.

The Food Train Connects service was launched last summer, adding to widespread community efforts to ensure people do not go without vital shopping supplies.

It is part of the charity's mission to ensure over-65s can eat well and live well in their own homes, tackling issues including malnutrition and loneliness.

It is an extension of Food Train's award-winning established home shopping service, enabling the charity to support people in parts of Scotland where it does not currently operate a branch.

Each older person is matched with a specific volunteer shopper in their area who carries out weekly grocery trips for them.

Development officers Jennifer Kaney and Carol Anderson are encouraging residents to spread the word among older people in their communities. With well-established track records of working with older people, they both know the difference the service makes.

Jennifer said: "The feedback we get is that the service is a real lifeline, but we know there is a need to reach greater numbers of people.

"Connects is an ideal way for the charity to get involved in helping people across Scotland. It removes geographical boundaries and reaches out to anyone who needs support, no matter where they live.

"An older person who can't get their own shopping can now have someone to get it for them. This also helps with social isolation and for them to stay connected to their community. It enables them to stay independent for longer."



A Food Train Connects volunteer delivers shopping to a member

Across Scotland, Food Train's team of volunteers and staff are now getting groceries to about 3,380 people, compared to 1,905 before the pandemic. At its peak last year, 70 per cent more people were having shopping delivered than in 2019.

"What we offer is a bespoke one-to-one service - your own personal shopper," said Carol. "People can choose which shop they would like their volunteer to go to collect their messages. It's a really tailored service.

"It's particularly good at reaching people in more rural areas, where access to shops is more difficult, particularly for those who can't drive."

Carol, who has extensive experience in the charitable sector through her work with Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland and Barnardo's, added: "I love working with older people and I love the ethos of Food Train, where the older person is at the heart of the charity. They have brought back the 'good neighbour' philosophy to our communities.

"Volunteering with Food Train Connects is something that can be done when you are getting your own shopping. It doesn't take a lot of time but makes a huge difference to someone who is lonely and isolated. You also build relationships and make a friend."

To find out more about Food Train Connects, refer an older person or volunteer, visit www.foodtrainconnects.org.uk, email connects@foodtrainconnects.org.uk or call 0800 304 7924

Breathing your way to better health

Conscious breathing can help quieten an anxious mind. photo: Jason An on Unsplash

Our new health & wellbeing officer, Gillian Harris, shares one simple thing we can all do to feel better.

Breathing is an automatic process. It's the first and last thing we do in life, but how many of us give it much thought in the years in between?

We breathe between 12 and 16 times a minute, adding up to around 18,000 breaths a day. The average 80-year-old has clocked up almost seven billion breaths over a lifetime.

But although we breathe without having to consciously remind ourselves, it is also something we can control.

We can – and should – stop and notice our breath.

Bringing the breath under control can help to calm an anxious mind. Just taking time to focus on your breath for a few minutes can be enough to settle your thoughts and clear your head.

There are proven health benefits of regulating your breath: reduced anxiety & depression, help regulating emotions, increased feelings of optimism & happiness, improved sleep, and reduced addiction cravings.

Conscious breathing can be done anywhere by anyone. You can do it sitting down, lying down or out walking. You don't need any equipment, it's free and it's available 24/7.

So how does it work?

Breath is linked to the autonomic nervous system (which regulates glands, blood vessels, internal organs).

The autonomic nervous system is made up of two branches – the sympathetic nervous system (fight,

flight or freeze) and the parasympathetic nervous system (quietens the mind – rest and digest).

The parasympathetic nervous system is controlled by the vagus nerve, also known as the 'wandering nerve'.

Observing and regulating the breath during a period of anxiety or panic activates the parasympathetic nervous system to take over and stimulates the vagus nerve into making the mind relax.

Research shows that making the exhale longer than the inhale – for example inhaling to a count of 4 and exhaling to a count of 6 – is the most effective way of activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

To see how breathing practices can help, let's look at the damaging impact that loneliness can have on health and wellbeing. Acute loneliness is a public health epidemic, creating chronic levels of anxiety and putting older people at greater risk of depression, low mood and cardiovascular disease. It also doubles the risk of developing dementia.

While breathing practices alone can't cure isolation, they can help people handle some of the symptoms.

Observing the breath and bringing it under control activates the parasympathetic system to reduce stress. In time, regulated breath becomes a tool that can be used to stop an anxious mind from spiralling.

There is a growing body of scientific evidence to support the benefits of regulated breathing. But the best proof is to try it for yourself. Take a big breath in and a big breath out... and relax.



Women have played key roles in the WRNS and other services

Women have been a formal part of the armed forces for more than 100 years. Older ex-service women may have served in the Women's Royal Naval Service, the Women's Royal Army Corps, or the Women's Royal Air Force.

While these were absorbed into their respective branches of the armed forces in the 1990s, their service associations continue to support veterans. Other women were in services such as the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, which exists today with both male and female nurses.

Women were conscripted during World War II. Many contributed to the wider war effort rather than serving in the armed forces and are not viewed as veterans by the Westminster and Scottish Governments. However, women who were in the Women's Land Army and Women's Timber Corps up to 1950 can apply to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for a badge in recognition of their service.

Most veterans in Scotland are white and male, but diversity in the veterans' population is increasing as gradually the armed forces have been getting smaller and new opportunities have opened within them for women. As of 2019 women can apply for every armed forces role available to men.

Overall, the veterans community is gender balanced, as it includes veterans' spouses and partners, widows, and widowers. Many armed forces charities and services will support family members as well as veterans.

Celebrating women in the Armed Forces

We asked women veterans about their experiences. They agreed that things were different for service women in the past.

"I served in a unit which worked with the Royal Navy and when I was onboard ship I was not permitted below decks," said Emma.

Evonne told us: "For many years woman had to leave the forces or go on extended leave if they became pregnant. Promotion was a lot less for women in my time."

However, all feel veterans groups and services today are welcoming for women.

Grace said: "When it comes to forces banter women are treated the same as men, but I've also found that male veterans are respectful of me."

Evonne said: "I am essentially 'one of the boys'! I take this as a good thing and for men in their 40s upwards this is a clarification of being accepted."

Emma does however worry that "some older women may not identify as veterans as in the main they will not have done active service so may feel that they are not eligible for support, from veterans' groups and services, when they are."



Age Scotland, working with the Unforgotten Forces partnership, offers older members of the ex-service community a doorway to camaraderie and extra support, should they need it. To find out what's available call the Age Scotland helpline 0800 12 44 222 or visit www.unforgottenforces.scot.

WASPI women keep up the fight



Anne Potter explains why she joined thousands of women concerned about changes to the state pension age

In February 2016 I was watching BBC Breakfast news when I realised I was one of the 3.8 million 50s-born women affected by state pension age delays (around 340,000 in Scotland).

I expected to receive my state pension at 60, so was shocked to find I would not collect it until 65 years and 10 months. This was totally unexpected and ruined my retirement plans. I received no notice or warning, which is quite bizarre given the importance of the loss of income - in total £48,000.

The two ladies being interviewed on TV explained the severity of the situation and indicated they were running a campaign highlighting the injustice, encouraging those affected to join them.

This started my WASPI (Women Against State Pension Injustice) journey. Over time, I joined thousands across the UK who had become activists, lobbying MPs, MSPs, and writing letters of complaint to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) claiming maladministration.

I started the Glasgow Lanarkshire WASPI group in early 2016 and before long we had a membership of a few hundred. It was a huge responsibility rallying women in their 50s as for the first time they were being asked to challenge government decisions.

Encouragement and motivation were provided at regular meetings as well as assistance with letter writing. The aim was to eventually lodge our complaints with the Ombudsman. This is where we are at present, waiting on their decision as to whether or not maladministration by the DWP occurred.

My highlight was in the summer of 2016 when around 25 of our group travelled to Westminster, joining up with thousands of WASPI women to demonstrate outside Parliament.

I never imagined I would be doing this at this stage in my life!

The campaign continues and if you want to join please get in touch.

WASPI campaign facts:

- **The pension age for women used to be 60, but in 1995 the Government announced that it would be raising this to 65, to phase in equality with men.**
- **In 2011, the Pensions Act brought forward the timetable for increasing women's retirement age to 65 (as well as increasing State Pension age to 66 for both sexes.)**
- **These changes affect women born between April 1950 and April 1960.**
- **The WASPI campaign agrees with equalisation, but believes women were not adequately informed or given enough time to make alternative plans.**

To find out more, call Age Scotland on 0333 323 2400 or email waspiglas73@gmail.com.



How the pandemic has shaped our views on housing

Many of us have spent more time at home in the last year than ever before – and relied more on our communities. But has that changed the way we think about our homes and our plans for the future?

Age Scotland has recently published new housing research called ‘Housing Needs of Older People – Panel Report’, funded by the Scottish Government. This was based on focus group discussions with older people about how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted their lives and their housing decisions.

The study built upon our National Housing Survey Report that we published in 2020. In total we had 29 participants from areas all over Scotland, all of whom had replied to the Housing Survey. The research was conducted by Scotinform during November and December 2020 either online or via the telephone.

So what did we find?

A large part of the research was about how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted people’s lives. We found that our participants had really relied on their communities to help them through the pandemic, whether this was through supporting others or receiving support. Here are a couple of comments from the research:

"The pandemic has put a lot of local clubs out of business so they cannot meet but I still ring around our members to see if they are OK." (Rural participant)

"I wasn’t shielding and I felt exceptionally grateful for having a safe place to be with a garden etc. For some it was truly a miserable time." (Urban participant)

"Initially I was positive but now that depression and loneliness make me feel down and some days cannot be bothered." (Rural participant)

It was particularly striking that when discussing participants' housing needs even those who said their home did not suit them well were reluctant to consider moving home. The experience of the coronavirus pandemic had made people unwilling to plan for the future when they didn’t know whether they might need to cancel these plans.

The sense of being connected to a community and the relationships that people have with others nearby are also of high importance when making decisions about housing.

Our research also found that participants had a fairly low awareness of services to help them make home adaptations, such as Care and Repairs, and that part of the reason for this was their varying availability across Scotland due to local authorities funding them to different degrees, which creates a very confusing picture of what support is available.

What will we do next?

Following this report, Age Scotland has called on the Scottish Government to build more homes that are accessible and adaptable, invest more money into services that help people to adapt their home, such as Care and Repairs, and to work with local councils and housebuilders to build a greater range of homes in new developments so that people have more choice of homes to move to.



A snapshot of later life in Scotland

This year, Age Scotland undertook its biggest and most comprehensive ever survey of older people. Looking at everything from health and wellbeing and the impact of Covid-19 to ageism in society, it gives a snapshot of what it's like to be an older person living in Scotland today.

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Big Survey – a whopping 3,562 people shared their views with us between January and March, with 1,766 submitting online and 1,796 by paper. The findings highlight just how important it is to not be digital by default in order to be as inclusive as possible.

Two thirds of respondents were female, and whilst people of all age groups over the age of 50 took part, most were aged from 65 to 80. We're also very pleased that there were responses from across all 32 local authorities in Scotland, with the most coming from Edinburgh, Highlands, Fife, and Glasgow.

At the time of writing, we're still busy analysing all of the responses and will share a full report soon. Here are a few stand-out findings:

53%

said the pandemic had made them feel lonelier

- Unsurprisingly, **Covid-19** has had a big impact on levels of loneliness experienced by older people, with 53% of respondents stating that the pandemic had made them feel lonelier. We also found that 52% of respondents considered that their mental health had stayed the same in the past five years and 11% felt that it had improved. A third of respondents, however, considered that their mental health had deteriorated.

- The pandemic has also had an impact on people's **finances**, with 67% reporting that they had increased energy bills because of having to stay at home more since last March and 38% of respondents had taken measures to use less energy as a result.

87% of respondents said that they or someone they know has been the target of a scam

- Alarming, 87% of respondents said that they or someone they know has been the target of a **scam**, most likely by telephone. Sadly 32% of people didn't see the point of reporting the scam, with only 19% informing the police.

1/3

felt that older people were made to feel a burden to society

- We also found that a third of respondents felt that older people were made to feel **a burden to society** and that life is getting worse for older people in Scotland. Only 9% of respondents reported that they felt very positive about the future. We want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow older so it's clear we have some way to go.

The Big Survey provides a rich insight into the lives of older people today. The findings will be used to influence our work, including how we prioritise our campaign work. Look on our website – or watch this space! – for further information and the full report.

MEN'S SHEDS



The film brings together stories from sheds across Scotland

Kenny Cosgrove of Clydebe

Film brings magic of Men's Sheds alive

You've heard of Men's Sheds, read about the 'shed effect' – and now it's time for the film! Community development officer Tim Green gives an exclusive preview.

Due to launch this summer, 'Shedders: Four Corners of Scotland' will bring together stories and footage from sheds around the country.

Created by filmmaker Steve Jefferies, it will give shedders, potential shedders, supporters and funders an insight into the magic that goes on in sheds: "the shed effect", as we like to call it.

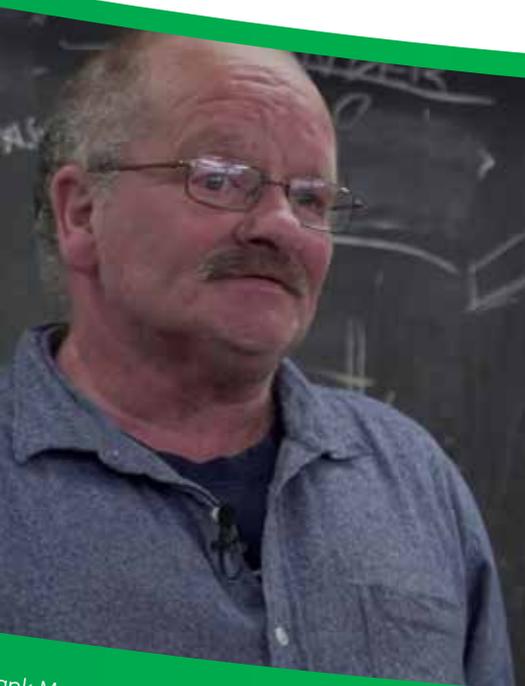
Its release will coincide with the relaunch of many Men's Sheds, when it is safe for them to re-open their doors after the pandemic.

Steve said: "Shedders: Four Corners of Scotland is not just an incredibly in-depth look at the Men's Shed movement, it is a powerful reminder of what the shed environment is like in normal times, how special it is for all the shedders that attend. By capturing the essence of a Men's Shed, this film has inadvertently become something of a snapshot of where sheds aspire to be when they reopen.

"The narrative comes directly from the individuals who spoke about their shed experiences on camera. The feedback from the previews is not only hugely positive, but also affirms that the story being told is very much hitting the nail on the head (pun intended)."

The project is also working with Moffat, Inverclyde, Cromarty Firth and Galashiels Men's Sheds to equip them with the film-making skills to tell their story, document their experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic, and outline each Shed's vision for recovery from coronavirus restrictions.

Steve added: "I've enjoyed interacting with the shedders, sharing filming skills, techniques and building them up so that they can start to tell their own stories. They are all starting to think like filmmakers now, some of them admitting they



Bank Men's Shed



Shedders have been learning to make and edit their own films

now study programmes that they used to passively watch on TV.

“The online training and Zoom sessions are not only helping the shedders learn how to use filming kit quickly, but also avoiding the pitfalls that self-taught filmmakers can fall down. As the technical side becomes more second nature, I’m sure we’ll see the shedders’ creative sides come through and I’m looking forward to watching their film projects develop.”

The sheds signed up to be involved in the film project for a variety of different reasons.

Dick Monaghan, chairman explained: “The reason the Moffat Shed got involved is the importance of telling the shed’s story. The Covid-19 pandemic has given us time to reflect on the benefits of our sheds, but each of our members have a story to tell. The importance of understanding how our shedders coped in the pandemic needs to be recorded, but also what they look forward to within the shed, not just the workshop side of things but being able to meet fellow shedders.

“We think it's important to try and record our feelings during and after Covid-19 to enable our thoughts to be stored on social record.”

Ross Hall, of Gala Men’s Shed, said: “Gala got involved as we recognised the huge impact that

closing the sheds during Covid-19 had caused to the increased isolation, well-being and camaraderie of our members.

“We wanted to record the thoughts of our members in their own words and this project is the ideal vehicle in which to do so.”

David Chambers, secretary of Cromarty Firth Men’s Shed added: “We all know how much the movement means to us all. We have a wonderful location (albeit freezing cold!), but we are kept busy.

“I thought it important to record some feelings about why the shed is so important, especially during these unique times.”

“Shedders: Four Corners of Scotland” was premiered in June 2021, with the Sheds participating in the film project sharing their experiences and giving us a sneak preview of their creativity. Combined, this helps to demonstrate how Age Scotland has supported and enabled men’s sheds to multiply “the shed effect” we first uncovered in 2017.

Sheds are contributing to making Scotland the best place in the world to grow older: promoting positive views of ageing and later life; tackling loneliness and isolation; and helping older people be as well as they can be.

The Scottish Ambulance Service helps patients back on their feet

Did you know that falls are one of the most common reasons people dial 999? April Lochhead, the Scottish Ambulance Service's clinical effectiveness lead for falls and frailty, explains how the service is changing to provide the best care at hospital or in the community.

In recent years, the ambulance service's role has been evolving. While the traditional and necessary role of response to life-threatening and traumatic incidents has always been key, our population's needs are changing. And the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) is keen to embrace this.

Many contact SAS at a time of crisis when the presenting complaint may be other than a life-threatening condition. Falls and frailty are one of the biggest reasons people call 999.

Traditionally we convey most patients who fall at home to the A&E department. But this may not always be the most appropriate place to treat them.

We now have extensive community health networks and resources that SAS are keen to work with. We are looking at how we can provide the best care to patients who have had a fall at home.

There will inevitably be times when a patient must attend A&E. But a large proportion who fall at home don't need this. Instead, they need support to remain at home as independently as possible.

Research also shows that unnecessary A&E visits can have detrimental effects on patients by quickly reducing their independent and functional level.

We therefore hope to engage with patient groups and community services to develop alternative "falls pathways".



April Lochhead

The aim will be to have resources available to crews and ambulance call centres to provide the most appropriate response at the right time, in the right place.

We're pleased that we have access to a community falls resource in every region in Scotland. We are now working to develop communication networks and ease of access for all front-line staff.

Our vision is a seamless service for all patients who are frail or experience a fall that is tailor made to each individual's needs. We want to work with community services to support preventative work for patients at further risk of injury and provide advice.

Find out more at www.scottishambulance.com

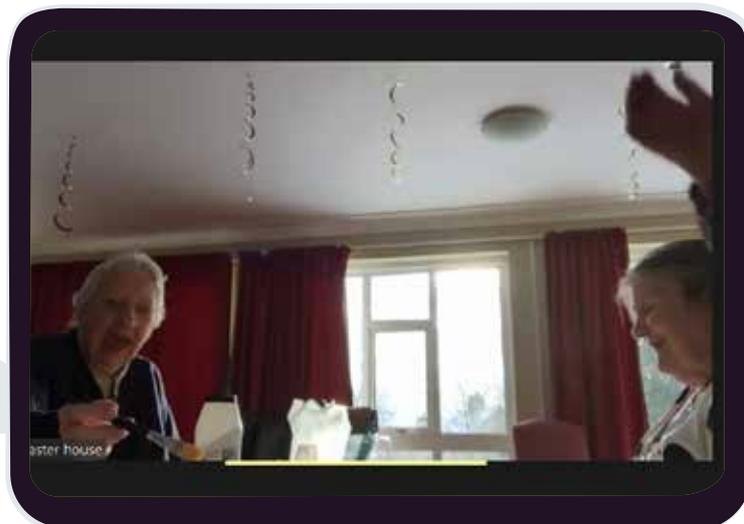
Focusing on better care & support

Earlier this year, Age Scotland's policy team undertook a consultation on behalf of SAS to find out how older people would like to be treated after a fall at home.

The questions focused on people's expectations and how they would feel about being treated at A&E or in their own home.

We're now producing a report to inform the SAS's national falls pathway strategy. We'd like to thank everyone who took part, and hope to hold similar sessions on other topics in future.

Tracy leading an art session at Ancaster House



New technology sparks creativity and laughter in care homes

Last winter, at a time when so many older people were dealing with feelings of loneliness and isolation, four pilot projects across Scotland explored how creative activity could be delivered remotely.

In a new publication, *Luminate*, Scotland's creative ageing organisation, looks at these unique partnerships between artists, care homes and participants, and shares ten insights to help support and inspire others who'd like to build on this work in the future.

The four projects ran over several weeks between November 2020 and March 2021.

Choreographer Chris Stuart-Wilson collaborated with Anderson's Care Home in Elgin to create dance routines and physical movements to music, while visual artist Tracy Gorman worked on an arts and crafts-based project with Ancaster House Care Home in Crieff.

Photographer Jenny Wicks ran activities with Lizdean Nursing Home in Kilmarnock. Lesley Wilson led Telephone Stories, a telephone-based project capturing the stories of older people on Skye.

All the projects these artists were working on would once have only been delivered face to face. Now, they're using platforms like Zoom and interacting with participants via TV and computer screens, or in Lesley Wilson's case, using the telephone.

The vital role of care home staff is one of the clearest learning points from these projects. The artists described how their energy, enthusiasm, and

practical support on the ground meant they were their "eyes and ears".

They received and quarantined materials in advance, tested technology and equipment, provided creative support during sessions and were crucial in shaping the atmosphere in the room. Care home staff essentially became the artists' co-facilitators.

Having access to the right technology was essential, and in many cases took an incredible amount of perseverance and dedication to achieve. However, the positive impact was clear.

"This project has brought so much happiness and laughter to the residents that they don't want it to end. This has been such a difficult year for us all and since this project began, our residents began to look forward to something again. It has kept them active and thinking about it throughout the week", said Katie, a staff member at Anderson's.

For the staff, the projects led to new kinds of relationships being forged between themselves and with residents, based on sharing, learning and enjoying an activity together.

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The full publication is available at www.luminatescotland.org. A small number of printed copies are available to order from info@luminatescotland.org or by calling 0131 668 8056.

Breaking down barriers for older autistic people



In recent years, there's been a big rise in awareness of autism in children and young people. But what about older autistic people?

Autism affects around 1% of people in Scotland, and can impact their ability to communicate, understand others, and participate in society.

In 2018, the Scottish Government highlighted a need for improved outcomes for older autistic people. We spoke to **Lynsey Stewart**, capacity builder and network co-ordinator with the Autism Network Scotland, about an innovative Strathclyde University project that explores autism and ageing.

What are you doing?

Autism Network Scotland (ANS) has developed a pilot project that enshrines the autistic viewpoint at its heart. We included two autistic individuals in the delivery team: Neil Barbour, autistic associate and Gemma Harley, project SEARCH intern.

So far, we have delivered workshops in Perth and Kinross, East Dunbartonshire, and Shetland, with one autistic individual involved in leading each session.

These look at what autism is; appropriate communication strategies; supporting autistic individuals with difficult transitions; supporting sensory needs; and a human rights-based framework for working effectively with older autistic individuals.

What are the aims?

These workshops provided attendees with a clear and pragmatic insight into the needs of older autistic individuals and how to support them. The key learning was that as a person gets older, autism should not be a barrier to living a full and actively engaged life.

We advised people on strategies to use, including clear simple language, giving individuals additional time for processing information and responding, and using differing communication methods such as email, text message, phone calls.

What feedback did you get?

Comments were overwhelmingly positive, including:

- “...Highly informative and interesting and definitely useful, it is an amazing course and would recommend it to other staff members.”
- “It was amazing having Gemma involved who has experience...and that she is continuing to use her health to teach, help, and educate others...”
- “I... found the strategies insightful and useful, I will definitely try them out!”

So, what are the next steps?

We're currently looking at how to take forward the learning from the pilot project.

One of ANS's founding principles is that autistic people should be at the centre of any policy or planning as they are the experts in what works.

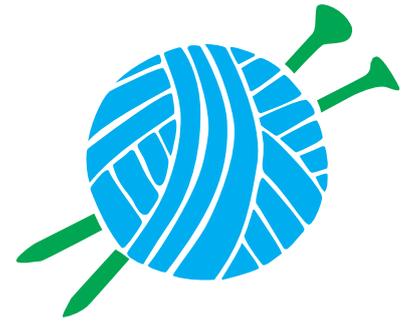
ANS and Age Scotland are working in partnership on a series of initiatives, such as training employees to have better understanding of autism and exploring ways in which current resources can be tailored to meet the needs of older autistic people.

If you would like further information on the work of ANS or wish to organise some workshops for you and/or your organisation feel free to contact ANS at **autism.network@strath.ac.uk**

the **BIG wheesht!** **shhh**

As I am a real blether, it wasn't easy - but I did it!

Lynn Short,
Dundee councillor



Shhh... the Big Wheesht is back!

Do you think you've got what it takes to "haud yer wheesht"?

You can help us tackle loneliness and be there for older people by joining the Big Wheesht in September.

There are lots of ways to take part - on your own, with friends and family, or as a group. You could hold a sponsored silence, challenge yourself to give up social media, or part with your mobile phone. It could be two hours, 24 hours, or more - the choice is yours!

Or why not crank up the tunes and hold a silent disco?

We're also looking for business leaders and influencers to join the Big Wheesht corporate challenge on Thursday 16th September 2021. We're challenging them to "haud their wheesht" and raise £1,000 in silence, before being allowed to talk again.

As well as raising funds this is also a great opportunity to raise awareness of loneliness among older people and how Age Scotland are helping.

Contact the fundraising team on fundraising@agescotland.org.uk



We always felt well supported and I know the team loved it. It was a good boost for them in a long, tiring year."

Lawrence Broadie, MD of marketing communications company Electrify



I know what it is like to feel lonely, and after receiving support from the Age Scotland Helpline I wanted to give something back"

Jean, of the Gregarious Chinwags Community Group, Edinburgh

Hats off to our Big Knitters!

Our 2021 Big Knit campaign is going strong, with knitters across the country contributing more than 19,000 little hats - and counting.

As always, we've been impressed by the creativity and productivity of our supporters, with designs ranging from stripes to strawberries, teddy bears to unicorns.

It's also wonderful to hear how groups have been brought together over a knit and a natter, whether in person or online.

Each little hat will end up on an Innocent smoothie bottle this autumn, helping us raise valuable funds for our work and groups around Scotland.

Contributors include Gemma, 24, a volunteer for the Tuesday Group in Fort William, who has knitted 100 wonderful woollen hats. The group normally meets weekly for games, quizzes, and talks. During the pandemic, they've been delivering newsletters, afternoon teas, and Christmas hampers.

Dedicated knitters and regular supporters Annan Day Centre have completed a tremendous 6,750 hats to date. They've really enjoyed taking part and have been regular supporters for several years.

A big thank you to all our contributors!

For more information and sample patterns contact bigknit@agescotland.org.uk, 0333 323 2400 or visit www.agescot/Bigknit

REMINDER: Please send completed hats to Age Scotland, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR before 17th September 2021.

How fundraising brings families and generations together

The start of 2021 looked a tough year for fundraising. High profile events, from fun runs to marathons were cancelled. Tea parties and coffee mornings had to go online. And even our dedicated bucket shakers couldn't go out on the streets.

But supporters across the generations took that as a challenge. Spurred on by the devastating impact that the pandemic has had on older people, they were determined to help. From a daily run around their neighbourhood to a UK-wide team effort, we were impressed by the creativity and dedication of our fundraisers.

As well as helping us fight isolation, these efforts also helped to bring families together. At a time when it has not always been possible to see loved ones, running, walking or cycling together (whether in person or virtually) was a fantastic way to bond over a shared goal.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped. No matter how big or small your goal, every penny you raised will help us make Scotland a better place for older people.

Here are just a few of their inspiring stories:

Family go extra 1,800 miles in memory of great-grandmother Betty

Big-hearted Betty Grant would always go the extra mile for any of her numerous family or friends.

Now three generations of her family have completed their challenge of walking, running, cycling – or toddling – 2,901 kilometres – or 1,800 miles – in her memory to raise funds for Age Scotland.



Student Julia Chan and her 18-month-old cousin Violet

Twenty children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren took part, ranging in age from 18-month-old Violet Mann Ruxton to family members in their 70s. They beat their initial target of 2,000 km by 1 March, which would have been Betty's 99th birthday, raising £2,250.

While grandson Chris Grant-Pantrey completed a marathon as part of the challenge, others have fitted shorter walks and runs around home-schooling and work in Glasgow, Dundee, Dover and Bristol.

Betty Grant, a Glasgow mother of four, grandmother of nine, and great-grandmother of 14, passed away last summer.

Her granddaughter Julia Chan, 24, a PhD student at Abertay University, said: "It's been really brilliant for bringing us together as a family, virtually, particularly when it is easy to feel separated during these times. We wanted to support Age Scotland because they make the later years of life that much more enjoyable.

"Our Mum, Gran and Great Granny was able to spend her time at home supported by her daughter, fantastic carers and with lots of visits from the rest of the family, but many other older people are not that lucky."



Six-year-old Emily put on her running shoes | Gary McGowan | Glasgow Caledonian University Occupational Therapy Society

Emily puts her best foot forward to help older people

Like many children, **Emily Govan** missed seeing her grandparents during the lockdown. But the thought of tens of thousands of older people feeling cut off from their families and friends inspired the Midlothian primary pupil to raise funds for Age Scotland.

Emily, six, began a daily sponsored run at the start of the year, and raised an impressive £670 for the charity. No matter the weather, she ran every day for a month with her parents around her neighbourhood.

Her mum, Fiona Gauld, a teacher, said: “Emily is a very active and kind girl who always thinks of others. When she started, she said she wanted to raise £10 and we encouraged her to aim a little higher, but we certainly didn’t expect the fantastic response we got. Emily was delighted when she heard how the money was going to help people.”

A big thank you to...

Gary McGowan from Aberdeenshire, who ran four miles every four hours for 48 hours during March. Gary said: “Knowing I have raised over £2,500 that will go towards older isolated people getting the contact they need fills me with joy.”

Shaun Payne from Livingston asked for donations for his birthday instead of presents, to cheer up older people who were feeling lonely and isolated. He organised 50 hampers to be distributed by the Craigshill Community Centre in Livingston for people within the community who needed something to make them smile, as well as a donation to our friendship line.

Debbie, Katie, Jamie, Jen and Amanda from the **Occupational Therapy Society** from Glasgow Caledonian University took part in the virtual Kiltwalk in April to raise money for Age Scotland, after students chose it as their charity of the year.

Get involved!

No matter your age or ability, there’s a challenge to suit you

Big Braw Bucket Shake throughout 2021: We will be raising money for older people through our new virtual bucket shake. Why not donate in memory of someone, in lieu of a celebration or just because you would like to put a smile on an older person’s face!

Ride the North 2021 24th JULY: Cyclists can choose from three distances (62 miles, 86 miles, or 112 miles) and 158 suggested cycling routes from Aberdeenshire to Moray.

Stirling Marathon 24th OCT: A marathon through Stirling, and historic towns of Doune and Dunblane.

Glasgow Kiltwalk 29th AUG: The first physical Kiltwalk since the pandemic will be held in Glasgow. So why not get friends and family together, put on your tartan and walk for older people?

Find out more from our website or by emailing fundraising@agescotland.org.uk



How unconscious bias training can build more age-friendly workplaces

We can all make assumptions about people – based on their appearance, age, or social stereotypes – without even thinking about it.

This is called “unconscious bias”, and it can affect the way we interact with others both in and outside the workplace.

As we all work longer, tackling ageism at work is key to creating more inclusive, age-friendly environments. We’re constantly developing and evolving our Age Inclusive Workplace training for organisations across Scotland.

The latest addition is an Unconscious Bias workshop designed to provoke real thought and to change behaviours through its innovative use of digital media.

As the name suggests, unconscious bias takes place outside of our conscious awareness and is often formed without us even realising it. The biases we have could be based on our previous experiences, our upbringing, or media portrayals.

These biases can be so systemically ingrained that they can change how we interact with the people around us in life in general and in the workplace. At work, they can affect everything from fair recruitment right through to our everyday relationships with colleagues.

Our opinions of others can be based on several areas such as appearance, gender, race, and age. Whilst research tells us that ageism is an issue in the workplace, age is an often-overlooked characteristic in training such as this. Age Scotland’s workshop adds age bias alongside other protected characteristics.

The challenge in developing this training was how to deliver a workshop that would help people to understand their own biases in order to encourage them to want to change their behaviour.

By using specially filmed videos to highlight real-life workplace scenarios throughout, the workshops are able to immerse participants in situations where their own unconscious biases will come into play. Through unique digital scenarios, participants gain an understanding of how it feels to be on the receiving end of other people’s biases too. Experiencing first-hand our own personal biases and those of others can create a greater desire to change.

The workshop is delivered by equalities expert, Robin Iffla. Robin is a retired police officer and has been an equalities advisor to organisations such as the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service as well as being a director and lead trainer of an equality and diversity company. He was awarded an MBE for his work on equalities and community cohesion in 2016.

Robin’s expertise together with the unique use of immersive and interactive digital media is what helps to make this training effective. Across 15 organisations piloted, 99% of participants said they would recommend this workshop to a colleague and 87% felt they could now apply their awareness of unconscious bias in the workplace.

By immersing ourselves in situations which might prompt our own biases, we can encourage meaningful discussion and drive greater awareness of the effect of unconscious bias in work and beyond.

Putting individuals at the heart of social care

There's been a lot of buzz around self-directed support lately. Self-directed support (SDS) was a key theme in the recent independent review of Adult Social Care. Age Scotland's About Dementia project was invited to deliver a workshop at Self-Directed Support Scotland's recent National Voice Event in March. But what is self-directed support and how could it benefit you?

You may also have heard of SDS referred to as direct payments. It's basically a way for people to manage their own social care support and to choose services that suit them best. It's designed to put the individual at the centre of the planning process around this.

There are four ways in which people can direct their own support in Scotland. The four options are: receiving payments to purchase your own support, deciding which services you want but allowing the council to handle the payments, choosing for the council to arrange all support or a combination of all the options.

Self-directed support can seem confusing at first, but don't be put off as it can provide more flexibility and control over social care support. Most importantly, you don't have to navigate the process alone.

If you are interested in SDS you can make use of free independent advocacy services, delivered by organisations such as your local centre for inclusive living, peer support networks or brokerage services.

Independent advocacy is there to ensure that people are as fully involved as they can be in making decisions about their lives. An independent advocate can make sure your voice is heard in conversations



about social care. This type of support may be especially useful if a person does not have friends, family or carers to help them.

We believe that independent advocacy is key to unlocking access to SDS. Unfortunately, there is a lack of dementia-specific independent advocacy in Scotland. We used the recent Scottish Parliament elections as an opportunity to influence change for people living with dementia and unpaid carers. We launched our own About Dementia manifesto to highlight areas we hoped the new government would take action on.

One of our key asks was for guaranteed specialist independent advocacy to be made available to support people access to SDS as part of the proposed National Care Service.

We will also be focusing on independent advocacy later this year when we launch our Independent Advocacy sub-group. If this is something that would interest you, then please do get in touch following the details below.



As ever, the Age Scotland helpline is there to provide information and advice to older people including on benefits and SDS.

Simply get in touch on 0800 12 44 222 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm).

Lunch with Jacques Cousteau and other stories

Last year, Age Scotland launched its health and wellbeing grants programme, together with sponsors, to support groups during the pandemic. Here we catch up with some of our members to see how they put their grants to good use.

For the past quarter of a century **Cowal Elderly Befrienders** has provided a range of befriending services designed to reduce isolation and loneliness and keep older people independent and active for as long as possible in the Cowal area of Argyll. In normal times, services include telephone, hospital and at-home befriending, peer-befriending, minibus outings, strength and balance classes and activity clubs.

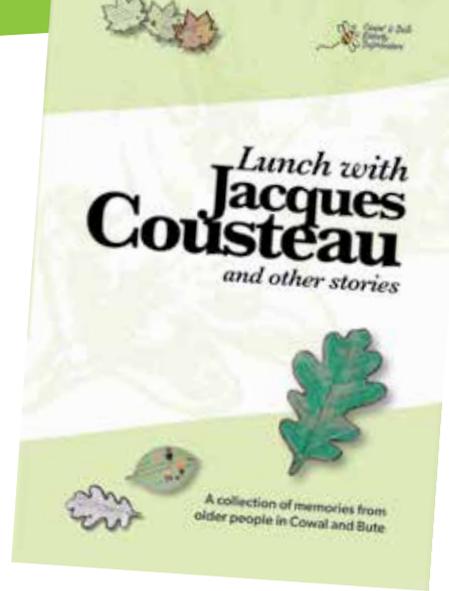
As part of their 25th anniversary celebrations Cowal Elderly Befrienders recently launched **“Lunch with Jacques Cousteau and other stories”** - a wonderful collection of memories from older people in Cowal and Bute, with illustrations by children from local schools and nurseries and by older people.

Robin Miller, Project Co-ordinator, explains:

“We have been thinking of compiling a book of memories, thoughts and stories shared by older people in Cowal and Bute for many years - we even started writing down some of the stories we heard and began interviewing people in 2012.

“However, we were side-tracked by more pressing issues and time ran away with us.

“During lockdown in 2020, with much of our community minibus work curtailed, we made a move to complete the intermittent work on the memory book. We asked many more people in the community if they would like to share their stories - we knew



from years of conversation on our minibuses that there were a great many stories worth telling.

“We didn’t specify or try to limit the subject matter and as a result our contributors have covered a wide range of subjects from giving birth under hypnosis, being part of a WWII bomber crew, fixing the Queen’s toilet, to appreciating the sense of community found in coffee shops. There are thought-provoking memories, sad stories and humorous anecdotes - all of life really.”

The publication is beautifully and movingly illustrated with leaves that have been decorated and annotated by older people and children with messages to each other, symbolising a shared sense of hope and community when we all need it most.

Age Scotland was delighted to be able to provide Cowal Elderly Befrienders with a health and wellbeing grant to assist with the costs of the design and printing of this wonderful publication.

Warmest congratulations on your 25th birthday, Cowal Elderly Befrienders!



Group members & local children created leaf illustrations



Eileen met explorer and filmmaker Jacques Cousteau on a diving trip in Jamaica

Extract from Lunch with Jacques Cousteau and other Stories

By **Eileen Graham**

I became a diver in my early twenties in Jamaica. My parents lived there for a time and this is how I came to be in Jamaica. At first, I worked as a secretary and then moved to the north coast of the island where they had a much respected diving school and marine laboratory, the Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory. This is where I learned scuba diving in the sixties – we used to dive to two hundred feet which was considered very deep at the time although technical advances later meant this was not considered quite so deep.

The diving was wonderful – beautiful clear waters. I worked alongside a Thom Goreau who was a lecturer at the academy and laboratory – he was a geographer as well.

In time I became an underwater photographer for the lab and used a Nikonos underwater camera which was based on the Calypso camera developed by Jacques Cousteau. I took thousands of pictures of corals which are still used today by oceanic researchers.

I learned recently all my pictures are still available on the internet and I was able to look at them thanks to Elaine from the Befrienders. I had donated many of my pictures to the National History Museum years ago. I don't think coral reefs now look like they did back then and I suppose comparing my pictures helps to illustrate the effects of years of erosion and pollution.

At one point Jacques Cousteau and his researchers were on Jamaica, working from his boat the Calypso, and some of my friends at the diving academy dived with them.

One of the staff at the marine lab was a very good cook and we all had a big lunch with the Calypso crew – only a couple of us from the lab spoke French and we had a whale of a time chatting with Cousteau's team. I remember champagne was involved! Jacques was not called 'Jacques' by his crew – he was respectfully referred to as the 'commandant'!

“Duns Senior Citizens Club – you’re simply the best”, say their members

Duns is a small market town in Scottish Borders and home to just over 2,500 people. The Duns Senior Citizens Club was established some 55 years ago and in normal times runs a vibrant programme of meetings welcoming guest speakers on topics of interest to its members, hosting demonstrations and slide shows, organising outings and special events.

Most club members live alone and look forward to the regular meetings and activities. They have greatly missed the regular contact with their friends over the past year.

Last summer, May Kinghorn, Club chairperson, applied for an Age Scotland health and wellbeing grant. The committee had been keeping in touch with members by phone and wanted to let their members know that they cared about them by organising deliveries of afternoon tea and flowers to members’ homes.

“We felt it was important that our members realised how much we miss them. The delivery of gifts and flowers will emphasise this and bring hope that we can meet again soon,” she explained.

On 25th August 2020 Madge Cran, Club Secretary and other committee members delivered a boxed afternoon tea to members on their doorsteps. They followed this up with a delivery of flowers in October.

Madge said: “The project was a great success and very much appreciated by our members. Their faces



Volunteer Madge delivers an afternoon tea in Duns

fairly lit up when we presented at their doorsteps and their words of gratitude spoke volumes. There were 'happy tears' too.

“To know we were thinking about them during these testing times helped them feel less isolated. It obviously and genuinely was a great comfort. They sorely miss our meetings, activities and special occasions, and the social interaction that comes with these events.”

Comments made by club members included: “lovely surprise”, “made my day”, “top marks”, “thanks for caring”, “you’re simply the best”, “cheered me up” and “brightened up a rainy day”.

Afternoon Tea in a Box has been transformational in inspiring the club to keep connected through the extended Covid-19 restrictions.

Age Scotland’s 12 Days of Christmas Resource, Burns in a Bag and the Easter Scots Literacy Pack have all been used to deliver seasonal gifts and activities to Club members in their homes.

What was envisaged as a one-off afternoon tea delivery has become a way of ensuring connectedness with members during these difficult times and helping those most at risk of becoming socially isolated.

Duns Senior Citizens Club certainly has lived up to the town’s motto, “Duns Dings A”.



Members were delighted to receive flowers



Members appreciate their regular newsletter, as well as a doorstep chat

Keeping connected while apart

Like many other small volunteer-run social groups, The Tuesday Social Club in Fort William started to make regular phone contact with members in March 2020 when the Covid-19 health pandemic forced an end to their weekly face-to-face meetings.

But they found that some members found the phone difficult to use and had less to speak about when they weren't able to go anywhere. So the club applied for an Age Scotland health & wellbeing grant to enable them to send out a fortnightly letter/newsletter from October onwards, and to make three special doorstep deliveries in lieu of their usual club celebrations for St Andrew's Day, Christmas and Burns Night.

Club chair, Mary Bruce, and secretary, Sine Montgomery shared their experiences with us:

The newsletter helps members stay connected and gives them a chance to contribute – with quizzes, recipes etc – as well as allowing us to share news and information at this strange time.

The doorstep deliveries - St Andrew's Afternoon Tea, Christmas Hamper and Burns' Night Goody Bags - were well received. Members were touched by the care shown to them, and very pleased to see us.

It gave people something to look forward to and they also welcomed receiving Age Scotland information leaflets, 12 Days of Christmas Activity Cards, and Highland Senior Citizens Network newsheets.

Our members are more likely to contact us now that they've got used to interaction around newsletters and deliveries. It gave people something different to talk about – prompting them to be in touch with us and with each other. Our doorstep chat was much appreciated – especially as we came out in really bad weather!

For some, the Tuesday Social Club was the only activity they attended outside their home – so the connection with our members is vital. Our volunteers (mainly our family members!) have also been very supportive of this project, and we couldn't have done it without their help. They say they enjoyed it too.

We couldn't have done it without the Age Scotland grant. We fund ourselves and, with no meetings, we had no money coming in. The grant allowed us to make a very tangible difference at a time when we couldn't be together at all. We were really pleased to do something in addition to keeping in touch by phone.

As it has kept club connections going so well, we are now continuing newsletters from our own small funds and recently delivered one, along with an Easter egg, to each member. Doing this over the past six months adds to our determination to keep the club together.

A helping hand with HR for organisations of all sizes

For voluntary organisations, finding support with everything HR-related isn't always easy. Lindsay Macpherson and Lorna Robertson, of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, explain how their new service is filling a much-needed gap.

During the early stages of the pandemic, HR was one of the most searched terms on SCVO's website. That's one reason why we decided to launch our new HR & Employability Support Service in November 2020, offering organisations across Scotland guidance from our dedicated HR team.

With changing guidelines and processes, we wanted to make sure there was a platform available to support people. Once we were awarded seed funding from National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, we got straight to work.

So, how does it work?

Any voluntary sector organisation can fill in a form on the SCVO website – you don't need to be a member. The HR team will usually respond within 48 hours.

We know that HR issues can often be nuanced, so we offer up to 30 minutes free of charge.

The point at which we require SCVO membership is if an organisation needs legal advice for a particularly complex situation. (This is free for organisations with an annual turnover of £100k or less.) We work with three firms who offer free legal services for members.

How's it going so far?

Since launching, we've helped over 100 organisations across Scotland and the feedback has been excellent.

We often hear that there can be a lack of understanding from private firms of how the voluntary sector is different to public or private sectors. This is a great step forward to help organisations of all shapes and sizes without additional costs.

What else is available?

We're currently developing an online HR hub, covering issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. These include employee rights, organisational change and the process of returning to the workplace. We'll also be looking at the future of work and how priorities have changed over the past 12 months.

We're developing a year-round calendar of digital events. So far these have ranged from a webinar about apprenticeships to a workshop with legal firm Anderson Strathern on redundancy and the restructure process.

Our goal is to be the place to go for small organisations that don't have any HR expertise internally, as well as working with existing services. For more information visit www.scvo.scot or call our helpline on **0800 169 0022** and leave a voicemail.

Get in touch!

There are many ways you can keep in touch with us all year round.

Sign up for our email newsletter which is packed full of news, advice, campaigns, news and much more at www.age.scot/bulletin

We are always keen to hear your stories, experiences and anything you're concerned about – or think we should be campaigning on!

Please write to us at Age Scotland, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR or email communications@agescotland.org.uk.

Follow us on social media.

 /agescotland

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 @age_scotland

 Age_Scotland

*Leave light,
not loneliness*

**No one should feel
alone in later life.**

A gift in your Will to
Age Scotland means
more older people will

Feel valued.

Be supported.

And stay connected.

**Leave light, not loneliness.
Leave a Legacy to Age Scotland.**



the
BIG
wheesht!



**Will you
“haud yer wheesht”?**

Help tackle loneliness by joining the Big Wheesht in September!

**Whether it’s a sponsored
silence, 24 hours without
social media or a silent
disco, you can raise vital
funds to support isolated
older people.**



**Business leaders can
also take part in our special
corporate challenge on
Thursday 16th September,
challenging themselves to
raise £1000 in silence
before being allowed
to talk again.**

**Find out more at www.age.scot/bigwheesht
or contact fundraising@agescotland.org.uk**