



National Carers Week (8th to 14th June 2015)

In celebration of National Carers Week 2015, **Western Isles Community Care Forum** organised various events throughout the Western Isles. Most carers are on call 24hrs a day and it can be a very stressful and tiring role which impacts on their own health and well being. The 2011 Census revealed that 9.5% of the population in the Western Isles were unpaid carers. Right is a photograph taken at the Lewis event which took place on 9th June in The Lewis Retirement Centre, Stornoway, where a delicious lunch was prepared by Donald McKee and his team. The event kicked off with a presentation on Falls Prevention, by Alison Martin, Physiotherapist at Western Isles Hospital, which everybody found useful and informative. Following on from lunch, over a cup of tea, Karen Toovey (Lead Officer Adult Support and Protection at CNES) gave a talk on Adult Support and Protection in relation to caring.



In Harris the Forum organised a lunch in the Harris Hotel for local informal carers. It was an opportunity for them to relax away from their caring role and enjoy meeting other carers. Alison Martin joined us again in Harris to give a very informative presentation on Falls Prevention. Following a delicious lunch, attendees relaxed over tea and coffee and enjoyed a talk on Communication with Dementia, presented by Karen Thomson, Speech & Language Therapist at Western Isles Hospital.



In Barra (also on 9th June) 11 carers attended a lunch in the Craigard hotel after which Social Worker Ed Lowe gave a presentation on Self Directed Support. Unfortunately we have no photograph of this event.

Meanwhile in Uist, 6 carers (pictured right) attended an evening buffet in Iochdar Care Unit. Guest speakers were Mary MacKenzie (SCN Community Nursing) and Chrisitne Lapsley (Speech and Language Therapy Manager) who gave talks on Dementia.



The Forum is very grateful to the Carers Information Strategy Group for providing funding for this event and to the Guest Speakers at each venue for giving of their time. A huge thank you also to the catering providers at each venue and the staff who looked after everybody so well. The carers themselves very much appreciate the opportunity to

to do so.

We would encourage carers to submit articles for the newsletter. This could be on any subject, or could be recipes, short stories or photographs from hobbies etc.

We would love to hear from you, contact details

LARGE PRINT NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE—PLEASE CONTACT US

WICCF IS JOINTLY FUNDED BY NHSWI AND CNES



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Stroke4Carers

[Stroke4Carers](http://www.stroke4carers.org/) is a website designed for unpaid stroke carers, family and friends of anyone affected by stroke illness. The website has over 340 pages of content and uses interactive graphics, animations, film clips and quizzes so that the information is interesting and easy to use. Many of the pages have links to other useful sites, printable checklists and useful contacts for further local and national information. It has been developed by Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS), The National Advisory Committee for Stroke, The University of Edinburgh Learning Technology Section (LTS) and The Big Lottery Fund Scotland. This project marks our 4th year of successful collaboration with CHSS.

The website is: <http://www.stroke4carers.org/>

EUAN's GUIDE- <http://www.euansguide.com/> features disabled access reviews from disabled people and their friends and families.

"The aim of Euan's Guide is to empower disabled people by providing information that will give confidence and choices for getting out and about. Euan's Guide is an alternative to hours of web searching and phone calls and, most importantly, removes the 'fear of the unknown' when visiting a venue for the first time." **Euan MacDonald, Founder of Euan's Guide**

As well as tourism and entertainment venues such as hotels, restaurants, bars, theatres & visitor attractions, Euan's Guide features disabled access reviews of any place that is visited as part of everyday life such as post offices, railway stations, supermarkets and many others. Search to find a venue in your area and, if there isn't one, write a review for the first one now!

The website went live in November 2013 so is still in early days. Please write a review today so that we can create a knowledge bank that disabled people and their families and friends can use to search and plan visits with confidence.

NHS Health Scotland, in partnership with Alzheimer Scotland has produced a publication and DVD called 'Younger people with dementia: living well with your diagnosis. The resource is aimed at providing support for younger people diagnosed with dementia and their families. It's also available online. Most people with dementia are aged 65 or over but in Scotland there are over 3000 people under 65 who are affected.. Until now there has been no comprehensive information specifically tailored for people with younger onset dementia in Scotland. The new resource features the voices of people with dementia and their carers, describing their experiences in their own words. The video shows how different people respond to their diagnosis in different ways and how, with the right support, it's possible to live well with dementia.

Feedback about the resource from people with dementia has been very positive, with comments include "it's just like my story" and "it provides very helpful information". The resource has had a very positive feedback from as far afield as Australia and Taiwan!

To download a copy of the resource and to view the videos, visit : www.alzscot.org/younger_persons



We're delighted that we've again secured funding to enable us give awards of £150 to each of 50 carers from our Register of Carers (on application only.)

If you are a carer, on our register and have not yet submitted an application but wish to do so, please contact us (details on the front of the newsletter).

The money can be spent on a holiday, respite for the cared for, hobby etc and we must get receipts by the specified date as proof that the money was spent as per the application. Awards will be made 4 times in the year—Nov '15 and Feb, Apr & June 2016.

Book a FREE home fire safety visit and make sure you're 'as safe as houses'.

Did you know that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service provided free home fire safety visit? They will also fit smoke alarms free of charge if your home needs them. It's easy to book a home fire safety visit—you can get in touch using the details below.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is also encouraging community members to think about anyone they know who could be at risk from fire. It could be friend, relative or neighbour. If a fire does start, having working smoke alarms could provide vital time for everyone to get to safety and call 999. If you know anyone who could benefit, please get in touch.

BOOK A VISIT

- ♦ **Phone 0800 0731 999**
- ♦ **Text 'check' to 61611**
- ♦ **Fill out a form at www.firescotland.gov.uk**
- ♦ **Contact your local fire station**

CHEST, HEART & STROKE SCOTLAND

Living with chest, heart or stroke illness can have considerable implications on the finances of an individual and their family. One of the services offered by CHSS aims to help those struggling financially through the provision of a Personal Support Grant. Grants are one-off payments designed to help those with respiratory, cardiac or stroke conditions purchase goods or services that may improve quality of life, independence, mobility or dignity.

Grants can help with a variety of general and specific needs. Some examples of the type of items include, aids to daily living, adaptations, holidays, respite care, white goods, heating costs, telephone installation, driving lessons, clothing and travel costs. There are different grant limits for different grant purposes. For example, for 'standard' grants the maximum amount that can be offered is £350, rising to £500 for travel costs or family holidays. There is a higher limit for aids to daily living of up to £750 and in exceptional circumstances, where a grant may enable a person to live independently rather than in care, the contribution can be up to £2000. All applications are assessed by the Chest Heart & Stroke Welfare Committee on a regular basis. **Retrospective grants** or contributions to on-going costs cannot be undertaken. Nebulisers are also excluded from funding.

Applications must be made through a 'sponsor'. This needs to be someone like a Local Authority social worker, a health professional employed by the NHS, or in some cases, a representative from a voluntary agency. Applications forms are only ever sent to the sponsor and successful grants can only be paid to the agency or organisation the sponsor represents. A section of the form also requires a short report from a GP or doctor to confirm relevant conditions. Applications for aids to daily living and adaptations must be sponsored by or include a report from an Occupational Therapist.

HOW TO APPLY—If you, someone you know, or someone you are working with, is in financial need as a result of chest, heart or stroke illness you could apply for a Personal Support Grant to provide a service or item that would make a difference to your or this person's quality of life. To find out if you are eligible to apply, please follow the links appropriate to you. Bear in mind that if you are applying for yourself, you must have a sponsor.

[I would like to find out about a grant for myself](#) or [I would like to apply for a grant on behalf of someone I'm working with](#)

For further information/guidance contact of the offices at: 5 Mealmarket Close, Inverness IV1 1HT (0300 1212777); The Hub, Pacific Quay, Glasgow G51 1DZ (0300 1212666) or 3rd Floor, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5EZ (0131 2256963)

Have you heard about the new pension freedoms but aren't sure what your options are?

Since April 2015 people have been able to access their pension as they wish. As well as buying an annuity (a guaranteed, regular income), you can also take all your pension out in one go as cash, or withdraw it bit by bit and leave the rest of it invested.

How can I get help? To guide people through their options the government has set up a free and impartial guidance service called Pension Wise. You can get a face to face appointment with a fully trained guidance specialist from Citizens Advice. The guidance is tailored and will provide information on your individual options. It's not financial advice however and so won't tell you what to do. The guidance is also available online, via gov.uk and over the phone

Who is the service for? The service is for anyone who has a defined contribution pension pot and are close to age 50. This means you can use the service even if you don't plan on accessing your pension pot yet but would like to think about your options for retirement.

How do I access the service? You can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau for face to face appointments. www.pensionwise.gov.uk for online guidance or call 0300 330 1001 to book a telephone appointment.

Details of your local Bureau are: Lewis CAB 01851 705727; Harris CAB 01859 502431; Uist CAB 01870 602421; Barra CAB 01871 810608

The Warm Home Discount scheme is a Government scheme, designed to provide financial assistance to low income and vulnerable households. In the 2015/16 financial year, eligible households will receive a discount of £140 on their electricity account by 31 March 2016. The Warm Home Discount scheme is split into two groups - the 'Core' and 'Broader' group.

You may automatically be eligible for the discount under the 'Core' group if you or your spouse/partner are the named electricity account holder and if on the 12 July 2015 you received the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit only (not just the State Pension) or the Guarantee Credit element and the Savings Credit element of Pension Credit. If either applies to you, you don't need to do anything—the DWP will write to you between September and November 2015 to confirm your possible entitlement and whether you need to do anything else.

It's **IMPORTANT** that you read the letter carefully as some customers may have to contact the DWP to provide additional information before they can send an instruction to apply the discount to your electricity account. In this instance you must do so before the 29 January 2016 as the DWP are unable to accept claims after this date. If SSE wasn't your supplier on 12 July 2015, then your old supplier will be instructed to apply the discount subject to you meeting the eligibility criteria above. If you do automatically qualify for a £140 discount, it will be applied to your electricity account by the end of March 2016. If you are not automatically eligible, you may still be able to apply for the discount under the 'Broader' group criteria. (You can check the eligibility criteria online.) If you don't have online access, ask at your local CAB.

The rules of the Warm Home Discount scheme are very precise and we are only allowed to apply a discount if you or your partner fully meets the criteria of the scheme. The person who receives the qualifying benefits must be happy for us to share their details with the Department for Work and Pensions, or another third party, for the purpose of verifying your eligibility for the discount. Please remember that you must have an active electricity account with us to apply. If your electricity is supplied by another company you'll need to contact them to apply for the discount

The quickest way **to apply for a** rebate is by downloading and printing out an application form. Once you have filled in your details, please send it back as soon as possible. There are only a limited number of discounts available and the scheme may have to close at short notice.

Post: Careline, FREEPOST, PO Box 224, Havant, PO9 9DG

Alternatively, a copy of the form can be posted to you for you to complete.. If you'd like to request a copy of the form, then [please complete our online Warm Home Discount application request form](#).

If you don't have internet access, you can get the information (& forms) via your local CAB—contact details as above.