

# APRIL 2023 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

### **..... Reflections on two Namaste Sessions .....**

A Namaste care session reflection:

Warmly welcoming 'Emily' and 'May' (both living with advanced dementia) into the softly lit room, a warm colourful blanket was placed around them after assessing for any discomfort. The door closing to the outside noise left the sound of relaxing music and the smell of lavender emanating from the oil burner. Inviting relaxation, both May and Emily appeared asleep. Turning off the background music, I placed a keyboard in front of Emily and set it to automatically play a classical tune. Her head rose and eyes slowly opened as her feet began tapping. She raised her fingers to feel the keys.

Emily's body moved in time with the rhythm of the music and her fingers started to tap the edge of the keyboard. When the tune repeated, Emily placed her fingers on the keyboard and gently touched the keys as she played along to what appeared to be a familiar tune. As Emily's movement increased, May became aware of Emily and I, and appeared to

be interested in the tune coming from the keyboard. May's feet began tapping. I placed May's arm in mine, and we began to sway gently together in time to the music. I began playing May's arm as though a keyboard, using the pressure and speed of my fingers to mirror the accents in the music. May held my gaze for the duration of the song, moving her own fingers in time with the rhythm. May's sister arrived and took over my position beside May.

Both sisters shed tears as May's sister resumed playing her arm. At the end of the session, two staff members arrived to take Emily and May to lunch.

Seeing Emily playing the keyboard, they appeared to regard her in awe, as though seeing her beyond her dementia for the first time. As they assisted Emily out of her chair to go to the dining room for lunch, she became visibly upset and resistant. A care worker said, '*I thought these sessions were meant to calm them*', not realising that her agitation might mean that she wanted to stay in the moment she was experiencing.





A Namaste care session reflection:

'May' is living with very advanced dementia and has been attending my Namaste care sessions every week for a few months now. Having not been given the time to find out about her life history or preferences (by my organisation prior to working with her), I have struggled to find our connection and assumed she was largely non-verbal. In all of our previous sessions, she has not been very responsive to my touch or communication (verbal and non-verbal). Yesterday however, having one on one time with her, I requested her care plan folder and read through it out aloud to her like a book, as I sat beside her and helped her sip on a cup of tea and enjoy some chocolate pudding. At first, I felt like I was doing her an injustice as I wasn't "giving" her anything however, the more I read, the more I began to know her. The more time I took to understand who she was, the more I realised what was meaningful to her. With that knowledge came ideas and excitedly implementing them, she opened up instantly - blossoming like a flower. It was magical. For the first time, she spoke softly to me, smiled a knowing smile, held my gaze and squeezed my hand. Under my mask was a smile so wide that my cheeks hurt and my eyes blurred with wetness of love for this other being as I watched her feeling understood, listened to and connected.

**Amy Crichton**  
**Faith in Older People Trustee**

**Further information about the Namaste website and upcoming Namaste Care course:**

<https://namastecare.com/namaste-care-individual-program/>

<https://www.princeandprincessofwaleshospice.org.uk/family-events/381-namaste-online-2-day-training-course>

## FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE – RECENT EVENTS

**Dedicated Minister for Older People – a collective letter to the First Minister** - If you wish to publish on your website and share, that would be great.

*“Along with many others, we are calling on First Minister @HumzaYousaf to reinstate a named Minister for Older People. Find out more in @Sunday Post”* The link to the story is on the Sunday Post website; you’ll find it here <https://www.sundaypost.com/>

**Humza Yousaf MSP**, First Minister, The Scottish Government

**Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP**, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, The Scottish Government

**Emma Roddick MSP**, Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees, The Scottish Government

Dear First Minister, Cabinet Secretary and Minister,

### Reinstating a Minister for Older People

We would like to offer our congratulations to you on your respective election as First Minister and appointments as Cabinet Secretary and Minister.

However, we are disheartened and extremely disappointed that the prominence of older people’s issues and its position as a named responsibility have been downgraded within the new Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees’ portfolio. The list of policy areas covered here are larger and more diverse than ever before, which gives us cause for concern about the amount of necessary focus older people will receive.

We feel this is a backward step on the progress that has been made, and reduces the importance of older people’s issues at a time when Scotland’s population is ageing and facing a growing number of serious challenges. Collectively, we have heard from many older people’s groups and individual older people who feel let down by this.

In order to demonstrate a serious commitment to improving the lives of older

people in Scotland, we believe that you should reinstate a named ministerial title for older people.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Stuart Purdy**, Chair, Age Scotland

**David Paterson**, Chair, Scottish Older People's Assembly

**Susan Hunter**, CEO, Befriending Networks

**Dr Rowan Wallace**, Chair, Scotland Council - British Geriatrics Society

**Maureen O'Neill**, Director, Faith in Older People

**Michelle Carruthers**, Chief Executive, Food Train

**Alison Clyde**, Chief Executive Officer, Generations Working Together

**Richard Robinson**, CEO, Hourglass

**John Palmer**, Director of Policy and Communications, Independent Age

**Graham Galloway**, Chief Executive, Kirrie Connections

**Anne Gallacher**, Director, Luminare

**Louise Wilson**, Chief Executive, Outside the Box

**Dr Leanne McGurk**, Principal Investigator, School of Life Sciences, University of Dundee

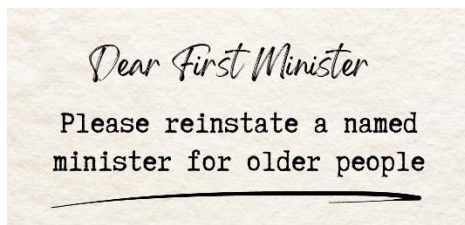
**Dr Donald Macaskill**, Chief Executive, Scottish Care

**Mukami McCrum**, Chair, Scottish Ethnic Minority Older People Forum

**Rose Jackson**, Chairperson, Scottish Pensioners’ Forum

**Elizabeth Lumsden**, Community Safety Manager

(Scotland), The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents



## **MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER – A FOCUS ON BEREAVEMENT**

Our March Newsletter was dedicated to issues around bereavement in collaboration with the Scottish Partnership on Palliative Care and Good Life; Good Death; Good Grief.

We focussed particularly on end-of-life matters and bereavement. If you missed this particular newsletter you can find it on our website by clicking [here](#)

### **EXPLORING CARING – INCLUDING EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2023**

**Richard Meade, Director, Carers Scotland** presented this seminar and discussed the impact of the caring responsibilities of unpaid carers and their wellbeing; in particular, in relation to spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing including financial consequences and social isolation.

Spiritual care has been shown to play a very important role in supporting carers, particularly when the person they are caring for is terminally ill and approaching the end of life. A good spiritual wellbeing can reduce levels of burden and stress for carers as well as increase levels of happiness, but not every carer is able to get the support they need.

Carers need a range of support including health and social care services, communities and faith groups as well as their families and personal networks in order to continue to provide the care that they do. This presentation will explore the importance of spirituality and caring, what it means and how we can do more to support carers to improve their spiritual wellbeing.

## **FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE – FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR 2023**

### **End of Life Skills for Everyone**

FiOP is planning an EASE course (End of Life Skills for Everyone) in the early summer. This is a free course. It will take place over four half days online and has excellent resources behind it.

Please note that numbers for this course are restricted to twelve; if you register, it is important to attend each of the half day sessions.

If you are interested in taking part, please let Maureen O'Neill know on email: [director@fiop.org.uk](mailto:director@fiop.org.uk)

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

### Benefits for Carers Research Recruitment - Voices Needed

Share your experience  
and help us improve  
benefits for carers

The Scottish Government is working to improve benefits for people who care and we would like to hear from you.



[mygov.scot/carers-survey](https://mygov.scot/carers-survey)

[Download](#)

The Scottish Government's Social Security Programme is currently working on developing new carer's benefits in Scotland, and they are looking to speak to carers to help us design the new benefits offering. So far the team have spoken to over 160 carers about their experiences and taken their feedback on board, and they would love your help reaching more voices.

The Social Security Programme Team would appreciate your help in sharing our social media assets via your relevant channels. They have created a graphic that provides a link to a five-minute, online survey where carers can register their interest in taking part in our research.

Social media, website, newsletter and poster assets are available for download. The printable poster also contains a QR code that links directly to the survey and also has a phone number for people that do not have

access to a mobile device or internet to contact us to register.

#### How You Can Help

- Please **share** the campaign assets via your social media, website, newsletters
- Please **post** the printable posters available in your relevant buildings.
- Please **forward** these assets to relevant stakeholders who may be able to spread the word

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with [eduard.vasile@gov.scot](mailto:eduard.vasile@gov.scot) if you have any questions or feedback.

#### Research Report about the impact of COVID on faith communities

This Research Report has been published on the government website and is available via the following link:

[The impact of COVID-19: Conversations with Faith Communities - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/research-reports/2020/06/faith-communities-impact-covid-19/pages/1-2020-06-01.aspx)

## GENERAL INFORMATION



### Celebrating Kind, Caring, Connected Communities Virtual Café

April 24th 12-13.30 BST

[Link to Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Passcode: 169079

#### Purpose of the session

- To provide space to reflect on your experience of co-creating kind, caring, connected communities
- To enable local, national and international partners to share learning and collaborate

<b>Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Dr Laura Turney, Head of Public Service Reform Unit, Scottish Government</li></ul>
<b>Nurturing Compassionate Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Caroline Gibb, Programme Lead <a href="#">The Truacanta Project</a></li><li>❖ Alison Bunce, Programme Lead <a href="#">Compassionate Inverclyde</a></li></ul>
<b>Co-creating Wellbeing, Hope and Resilience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Vicki Cloney, Partnership Facilitator, CVS Inverclyde</li><li>❖ Reflections from local and international partners</li></ul>
<b>Age and Dementia Friendly Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Colm McBriarty, Age Scotland Community Development Officer (<a href="#">About Dementia</a>)</li><li>❖ Emer Coveney, National Programme Manager, <a href="#">Age Friendly Ireland</a></li></ul>
<b>Final Reflections</b>
<b>Thanks and Close</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Prof Anne Hendry, Director IFIC Scotland</li></ul>





# Anna Chaplaincy

Offering spiritual care in later life

You can read all the previous posts on the [Anna Chaplaincy blog](#).  
Debbie Thrower and the Anna Chaplaincy team at BRF  
[annachaplaincy@brf.org.uk](mailto:annachaplaincy@brf.org.uk) | [annachaplaincy.org.uk](http://annachaplaincy.org.uk) | [brf.org.uk](http://brf.org.uk)



Welcome to our  
March e-news

[READ OUR LATEST NEWS](#)

## Age Scotland's Big Survey



### Background

In 2021, we introduced Age Scotland's Big Survey, our first ever comprehensive survey of what it is like to grow older in Scotland. We are delighted to be working with researchers from Scotinform once again to re-run the Big Survey to find out whether the issues facing older people have remained the same, got better, or got worse.

### The Big Survey

The Big Survey asks about a range of topics to help give us a greater understanding of what it is like to be an older person living in Scotland today. We'll use the findings to prioritise what issues we campaign on and it will help construct our media and policy responses. It also asks about the impact of the cost of living,

so we can capture information from a large sample of over 50s about how they are coping.

In addition to helping Age Scotland with our future work, respondents also have the chance to win one of ten £50 vouchers for filling out the survey.

An online version of the survey is available [here](http://www.age.scot/bigsurvey), at [www.age.scot/bigsurvey](http://www.age.scot/bigsurvey). You can also order paper copies by calling **0333 323 2400** or emailing us at [bigsurvey@agescotland.org.uk](mailto:bigsurvey@agescotland.org.uk).

Our ambition is to reach and capture the views and experiences of as many people over the age of 50 as possible.

**We would be very grateful if you could help us by sharing this survey with your members and across your networks.**

**Jo McGilvray** (she/her)  
Policy officer

## Volunteers' Week 2023: Celebrate and Inspire



With just over two months to go until **Volunteers' Week 2023**, taking place 1-7 June, the organisers have shared the theme for this year's week-long celebration is 'Celebrate and Inspire'. Volunteers' Week is an annual event, now entering its 39th year. **You can find out more** about how to get involved and get resources to plan your own participation on the Volunteers' Week website in Scotland [volunteersweek.scot](http://volunteersweek.scot)



## SILVER SUNDAY

THE NATIONAL DAY FOR OLDER PEOPLE – 1 OCTOBER 2023

As we head towards the brighter days of spring, we are so excited to be looking ahead and making plans to hold the biggest celebration of older people yet. So, if you haven't already, make sure **Silver Sunday on 1st October** is firmly in your calendar and join us and thousands of others to celebrate older people this year!

Silver Sunday 2022 was an overwhelming success, with more than 1,000 events for older

people taking place across the country. From dance-a-thons to dog shows, communities and generations came together to celebrate, connect and try something new. Thank you so much to everyone who took part and brought so much happiness to lonely and isolated older people.

well



We're

underway with plans for this year's event and look forward to hearing your ideas. Look out for our updated Info Pack and other **resources** later this month.



### New Research Publication

#### 'The Cost of Living Crisis – Quarterly Bulletin No.2'

Volunteer Scotland has just published its second bulletin examining the impact of the cost of living and wellbeing crisis on volunteering and volunteers:

[VIEW PUBLICATION HERE](#)



## The Scottish Dementia Friendly Communities Network



My name is Colm McBriarty and I am the Community Development Officer in Age Scotland's About Dementia team. I'm writing to you with a warm invitation to be part of the new Scottish Dementia Friendly Communities Network.

### **What is the Network?**

The Network is funded by the Scottish Government and aims to bring together all the communities in Scotland that are working with, and for, people living with dementia, unpaid carers of people with dementia, and their families and friends. There is an amazing number and variety of dementia communities in Scotland, and my aim is for the Network to be a community in itself – a place for people to learn and share ideas, give and receive support, and ultimately improve the lives of people living with dementia in Scotland.

### **Membership**

Membership of the network is free, and all we ask is your commitment to nine key principles of a dementia friendly community that were identified by the Life Changes Trust in 2019. These principles, as well as other information, are on the leaflet attached to this email. You can also read about the Network on our website here:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/what-we-do/dementia/about-dementia/dementia-friendly-communities-network/>

### **Monthly meeting**

There will be one 60-minute online Zoom meeting on the last Wednesday of every month (a recording will be made available to anyone who can't attend), as well as a regular newsletter, email updates, learning opportunities and support for peer mentoring.

### **People with lived experience**

The Network is open to everybody who is interested in dementia friendly communities, so you are welcome to join the Network even if you are not a formal member of a group. It is very important that people living with dementia and unpaid carers are involved in the Network from the very start. If you are living with dementia or a cognitive impairment, or if you are a relative or friend of a person with dementia, please feel welcome to come to the online meetings and be an active and leading part of the community. There will be plenty of opportunities to contribute to the meetings, newsletters and learning events, and to help set the agenda on behalf of the Network members.

### **Get in touch**

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact me and I will be very glad to help. If you have already made up your mind and would like to sign up, all I need are the names and email addresses of your contacts. It would also be helpful if you could let me know if you are from a particular organisation or community group.

### **Spread the word**

I want as many people as possible to know about the Network so I would be enormously grateful if you could share this email with anybody who may be interested.

**Email:** [colm.mcbriarty@agescotland.org.uk](mailto:colm.mcbriarty@agescotland.org.uk) |

## Luminate art in care report

### Arts in Care programme was a care home success

A programme that placed professional artists in older people's care homes in Scotland for a series of regular creative activities was a positive experience for residents, staff and the artists themselves, a [report](#) has found. From poetry reading and writing to pottery and textiles, and from music making and dance to photography, *Arts in Care* saw older people across Scotland take part in a rich array of creative activities last summer. A collaboration between Luminate, the Care Inspectorate and Creative Scotland with support from the Baring Foundation, the *Arts in Care* programme launched in 2019 and aimed to support highly skilled artists to work with older people living in care homes. The artists worked in different artforms including visual arts, creative writing, dance and music, and all took part in an initial training programme that supported them to work in a person-centred way with older

people living in care homes, many of whom live with dementia and other conditions. Research Scotland carried out an independent evaluation of the project, and their report has been published today. The research found that older people enjoyed the creative activities and looked forward to them. Working closely with an artist, even when using unfamiliar artforms, was often a stimulus for further conversation or sparking memories. For the artists, the importance of the training beforehand was clear, as was the vital support of care home staff. Care home staff felt that the *Arts in Care* project had an impact on residents by giving them new things to do, and observed that many residents became calmer, spent more time interacting with other residents, increased their confidence and self-esteem and improved their dexterity, strength, balance and movement.

<https://luminatescotland.org/arts-in-care-programme-was-a-care-home-success/>

**Faith in Older People's ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022  
is now available on our website.  
Please click [HERE](#) to read it**

### **BECOME A FRIEND OF FIOP**

**IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY - we'd like to ask you to become a FRIEND OF FIOP  
An annual contribution of, say £25, would make an enormous difference to our  
small organisation. As a Friend you will receive our regular eNewsletter and  
invitations to our regular events.**

**PLEASE CONTACT US FOR AN APPLICATION FORM – [info@fiop.org.uk](mailto:info@fiop.org.uk)  
You can find out more about our work on [www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk](http://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk)**

**OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY SIGNED UP**

**IF YOU WISH TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM OUR NEWSLETTER,  
PLEASE EMAIL [info@fiop.org.uk](mailto:info@fiop.org.uk)**



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