



# ScotsCare Shout!

**The charity for Scots in London**

Newsletter May 2013 – Issue 30

We welcome any input or comments you may have. If you would like to receive this newsletter by email in future, visit our website and sign up, [www.scotscare.com](http://www.scotscare.com)



## A letter from our new Chairman

As the latest in a very long list of Chairs of ScotsCare, I was delighted and honoured to have been offered this important and key position in the charity - and I would like to pay tribute to Peter Scott, the outgoing Chairman, for his great work over the last five years.



ScotsCare has a long and honourable history and it is my aim to ensure that we build on this and continue to evolve, to ensure that our future work is as successful and of even greater benefit to the community that needs our help. With the help of my fellow Trustees and our team of volunteers, staff, client support workers and administrators, I hope to make 2013 another year

There is no doubt that 2012 was a very tough year for nearly everyone in the country, as the difficult economic situation continued. I am proud to be able to say that, for thousands of our fellow Scots and their children in and around the capital, ScotsCare once again provided a lifeline. We have a wonderful team of hardworking staff and dedicated volunteers who have helped the Scottish community to get the assistance they need. London can be a lonely and difficult place in which to live, or to make a new life, and I know that we make a huge difference to many, many people. ScotsCare is a vital and vibrant organisation that is determined to build a community that supports every Scot in need of our assistance - nobody who comes to us for help is ever turned away.

in which we make a real and lasting difference to our countrymen and women and their children.

I am proud to be associated with ScotsCare and will do all I can to ensure its success now and in the future.

David Guild, Chairman



## Activity Holidays for kids

We are currently planning a children's activity holiday in East Sussex. This will be taking place in August and sixteen children, between the ages of nine and twelve, will take part. The holiday is provided by PGL, which is one of the leading organisations in this type of holiday. The children (and staff) can look forward to a fun-filled few days, jumping, climbing, raft building, biking, canoeing and lots of other exciting activities. We hope to make this holiday a yearly event with more children taking part next year.

Watch out for the photographs in our autumn newsletter!

## Contact

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## ScotsCare Christmas outings

Since our last newsletter we had a busy Christmas season. In December, we held a Christmas lunch at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church where we were joined by 90 of our senior clients, with karaoke and a magician. Our Luton Group had their own Christmas party at the Celtic Club in Luton with music and dancing. During the Christmas

holidays we also organised a visit to Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park. We were delighted that 330 children and parents joined us for their choice of ice-skating or circus.

In January we held our Annual Burns Lunch for Scots over 50 back at Bloomsbury.

## Individual Careers Coaching Programme

We have recently developed a new service that could help you to address your difficulties in getting back into employment or training. We have two careers coaches who can provide a one to one, flexible support service to you in person, by phone and email. For many of you there may be a range of issues on which you would like some help, so they would look at whether your confidence or self esteem is an issue before moving onto the more practical areas such as CV writing, making applications and interview skills.

## Chiswick Scottish Dance Club 30th June

Midsummer Magic - open air picnic dance at Chiswick House grounds, London W4 2RP.

Dancing from 5.30pm to dusk (9.00pm) to the Frank Reid Band.

MCs: Jim Cook & Ken Martlew, see; [www.chiswickscottish.org.uk](http://www.chiswickscottish.org.uk) for details, programme and cribs.

There will be three practice sessions from 6.30 - 9.30pm on the previous three Sundays, 9, 16 & 23 June in The Catholic Centre, 2 Dukes Avenue, W4 2AE (opp. library).

### Are your details up to date?

If you have applied to us for help and your details have changed, please let us know, or we won't be able to contact you when we need to. It is important that we have the correct phone number and address for you, otherwise your application may be delayed.

## Changes to benefits

As you are no doubt aware, significant changes were made to the benefits system in April of this year.

**These include:**  
'Bedroom Size Criteria', whereby, if you under-occupy your property (i.e. have one or more unused bedrooms), you would have to contribute to the rent for these unused rooms or find somewhere smaller.

'Benefits Cap', whereby a limit of £500 will be set per household. This is currently being trialled in Bromley, Croydon, Enfield and Haringey.

'Changes to Disability Living Allowance', which will now be replaced with a 'Personal Independence Payment'.

**If you have been affected by any of these changes, we may be able to offer advice and support. Call our freephone number on 0800 652 2989 and speak to a member of our client support team.**



## Do you know about the 60+ Oyster Card?

If you live in London and are aged 60 or over but are not yet eligible for a freedom pass, you can apply for a 60+ Oyster Photocard (£10 one off fee), to travel free on bus, tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and most National rail services in London.

For further information, visit TFL online at: [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

## Do you follow us on social media?

Are you a regular tweeter or Facebook member? If you are, why not keep up to date with us by **liking** our ScotsCare page on Facebook or **following** us on Twitter?

We hope that you enjoy reading ScotsCare Shout and find the content useful and interesting. If you would like to hear from us more often though, you can use social media to keep in touch with us on a daily basis. Facebook and Twitter also give you the option to comment on our posts and share them with friends. It's a great way to get even more Scots involved with the charity, but we do need your help to build these networks.



To Like us on Facebook or to Follow us on Twitter, log in and search for ScotsCare.



## From Marc Knox: Did you know?

# Hospital Arranged Funerals

The loss of a loved one brings a whole host of issues, amongst which is the funeral arrangements. This usually falls to the next-of-kin who, if they are in receipt of a means tested benefit, can apply to the DWP for a grant towards the cost of the funeral. DWP grants are usually in the region of £700-£1,000, which often only makes up a small proportion of the cost, given that in London a 'basic' cremation can be around £2,000, with burials costing much more.

If you find yourself in the position of having to arrange a funeral, you may be interested to know that hospitals (via Patient Affairs office) can arrange funerals on a very low cost basis. These are usually very basic but include:

- The removal of the deceased from

the hospital to the funeral directors premises

- A simple coffin
- A hearse to transport the deceased from the funeral directors to the cemetery/crematorium
- A hospital Chaplain

As an indicator, Charing Cross Hospital can arrange a cremation including a small floral tribute for £850. Expect to pay more if you wish cars to take the family to the cemetery/crematorium.

Please also remember that you can make an application to ScotsCare for assistance. We currently offer a maximum contribution of £1,000, payable directly to the funeral directors. Please call our helpline for more information and an application form.

## Advocacy

Did you know we can now ensure your voice is heard and rights are upheld when dealing with both statutory and non statutory services through our new advocacy service?

You can use this service when going through specific formal processes that affect how you live your life. These are some examples of scenarios where we may be able to provide advocacy support.

- Appeals against a DWP decision to change or decline benefits
- Dealings with HMTS and support to complete the tribunal process
- Complaints against housing providers with regards maintenance or unethical treatment
- Representation and support during meeting with third parties such as the NHS, mental health service and local council
- Carers who feel isolated in their role and need support in accessing services