

# Partners' Newsletter

Bringing you the news from our Official Partners across Spain

## Know your EHIC Rights

As you may have heard recently in the news, there have been questions raised around the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) being accepted in Spanish public healthcare facilities.

The UK Department of Health is aware of this issue and has raised it with the Spanish authorities. It is important for visitors to Spain to know that they can use the EHIC to access all necessary medical care in public hospitals and healthcare centres and that this cover is not just limited to emergency care. Even if someone has

taken out travel insurance, they have the right to insist that their EHIC is accepted. Tourists that do not have their EHIC with them



can call the Overseas Healthcare Team (OHT) in Newcastle to apply for a Provisional Replacement Certificate. They can be contacted on 0044 191 218 1999. You should also note that there

are hospitals in Spain that offer both private and public healthcare and it is up to the patient to make sure their EHIC is accepted if they want to be treated under the state scheme.

If you find that you or someone you know visiting Spain is being denied necessary care on their EHIC, please call the Healthcare Team at the British Consulates in Madrid and Alicante on 902 109 356. Alternatively you may also contact the OHT on the number given previously.

## Change to Passport Service for British Nationals



From Monday 13 May, all applications will need to be sent directly to the Identity & Passport Service (IPS) in Belfast in the United Kingdom, instead of the regional passport processing hub in Madrid.

All the necessary information about the new passport application process, including a new IPS overseas application form, can be found at [www.gov.uk/overseas-passports](http://www.gov.uk/overseas-passports)

Andy Hamilton, head of the regional passport processing centre in Madrid, says "In real terms, all that this means is that British nationals living in Spain now need to send their applications to a different address. Current passport processing times remain the same. If you are renewing your passport, you should allow at least four weeks from the date the fee is taken and all the correct documentation has been received.

If you are applying for the first time or you are replacing a lost or stolen passport, you should allow at least six weeks"

The only other change is that the current passport helpline call charges are being removed. Instead of paying for a premium rate phone line, customers will now only have to pay for the cost of a call to the UK. British nationals who lack internet access or want

advice are able to call the IPS Customer Service Centre on +44 (0) 300 222 0000.

People who need to travel urgently but whose normal passport is unavailable should contact their nearest British Consulate via 902 109 356 or email [info.consulate@fco.gov.uk](mailto:info.consulate@fco.gov.uk). Your local Consulate may be able to issue an Emergency Travel Document to help you travel.

## Life Certificates

A 'Life Certificate' is a form sent by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to UK state pensioners living abroad to check their continued eligibility to receive their state pension.

The DWP has made changes to who can witness a Life Certificate. This is now the same as the list of people who can countersign a passport photo for a British passport and can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications>

Note, however, that if you live in Spain your witness does NOT need to be British NOR resident in the UK.



British Embassy  
Madrid

### Our Partners



Department  
of Health

THE ROYAL BRITISH  
LEGION



AGE Concern  
ACASA  
The National Casework Service  
of Age Concern España



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

For more information  
on Living in Spain, see  
[www.gov.uk/living-in-spain](http://www.gov.uk/living-in-spain)

# New Welfare Coordinator

## District North of The Royal British Legion in Spain welcomes a new Volunteer Welfare Coordinator

Pamela Twissell-Cross retired to Spain three years ago after spending thirty years in the nursing profession, working both abroad and in the UK. After a number of years as Matron of a palliative care unit,



Pam became a nurse consultant in palliative care which involved her supporting patients, relatives and staff within her team. In addition to the many life skills Pam brings

with her to this new role, she also has empathy with the armed forces family, having served for a time with the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. Pam has been a volunteer caseworker for the Legion for three years so has an understanding of the challenges and the rewards that being a volunteer for the Legion can bring. She is very committed to

supporting our team of volunteers in District North and to building strong relationships with other charitable organisations in the area.

Along with the Volunteer Welfare Coordinator for District South (Pauline Harpin) Pam will be working closely with the Country Welfare Officer (Donna Wilson) to coordinate the activities of the Legion caseworkers and to effectively deliver welfare services to Legion beneficiaries living in Spain.

Pam's predecessor in the role is Marianne Pearce whom we sincerely thank for her valuable contribution to the delivery of welfare in District North during her time as welfare coordinator and wish her well for the future. Pam can be contacted on the District North Welfare telephone number or email as follows:

[welfare.rbl.dns@gmail.com](mailto:welfare.rbl.dns@gmail.com) / 0034 676 541 780. Welfare enquiries in Spain may also be directed to the Country Welfare Officer – Donna Wilson: Email: [dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk)

Telephone: 902109356 (option 1 followed by 6). Mobile: 690 144 603



ACASA

The National Casework Service of Age Concern España

# MBE Honour



Angela Keay, who was awarded a MBE in the New Year's Honours List, attended an Investiture Ceremony on Friday, 10 May '13 where she received her award from HRH Prince Charles.

Angela, who is Secretary of ACASA, works tirelessly for ACASA and for the older expatriate community in Spain

Official Partners of ACASA



ACASA's client base is people over 50 years of age and those seeking to return permanently to the UK. For further information please write to [casework@ageconcern-espana.org](mailto:casework@ageconcern-espana.org)

# Get Involved!

This quarter our 'Get Involved' section features the U3A association in Spain.

U3A is an acronym for the University of the Third Age. The main goal of the U3A in Spain is to encourage lifelong learning and friendship for those no longer in full time employment, by providing Educational, Recreational and Leisure Activities for its members. It is open to all English-speaking adults of any nationality and age.

There are many U3A groups throughout Spain, all doing different but similar activities. Groups can be found in Fuengirola, Torrevieja, Moraira-Teulada, Vall del Pop, Oliva, Javea, Calpe and Denia amongst



others and if there isn't one in your area, then why not start one!

We spoke to the The Costa del Sol U3A group based in Fuengirola. Activities available to their members range from painting, drawing and photography to talks on art and art history. Game players can enjoy bridge, scrabble, Mah Jong and canasta and for those who prefer to be more active there is walking, yoga, table tennis and modern jive classes on offer.



Members also have the opportunity to attend monthly lectures on a wide range of interesting topics. Talks on notable British crimes, larger than life people, heraldry and The Golden Age of Spain are expected to be popular in the year ahead as are travel talks, drama, psychology, museum visits and

even a dining and relaxation group. If you like reading there is a Book Circle and a Poetry Group and for those keen to improve their Spanish, there are various levels of Spanish classes available. There is also a short story writing group for beginners and a writer's circle for the more experienced.

So as you can see, there really is something for everyone. Whether as a couple or someone on their own it is a great way to make friends.

Each group is run by the members for the members. Group members are all voluntary and groups are always happy for people to join who want to share their knowledge and skills.

If you would like to become a member of the U3A in your area, check out your local group's website. For further information on joining the Fuengirola group contact Ann Matthews, President, by calling 952577671 / 635837417 or visit their website: [www.u3acostadelsol.org](http://www.u3acostadelsol.org)