

BRITISH CONSULAR NETWORK IN SPAIN

PARTNERS' NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2013

Feeling the post Christmas pinch? That's no excuse for Benefit Fraud!

Following a busy festive season filled with spending on parties and presents, many will be feeling the pinch and their pension or benefit will be an important source of income. However, no matter how much this extra bit of cash is needed, if you are living outside of the UK there are certain benefits you may not be entitled to. If

DWP Department for Work and Pensions



you are in receipt of a UK pension or benefit it is important that you notify the relevant authority of any change in your circumstances such as living in Spain. If you don't, you may find yourself in a much worse position as not doing so is considered an offence and could lead to prosecution, imprisonment and even the confiscation of your home and possessions. Information on UK benefits and which ones can be received whilst living abroad can be found on www.gov.uk.

Do you know someone who's cheating the system?

The British Government made a resolution to target benefit thieves and in 2013 they will continue to do so. You can help with this. If you know someone who is cheating the system and committing UK benefit fraud whilst living in Spain, you can call the free, confidential benefit fraud hotline in Spain on **900 554 440** or fill in the online form available at www.dwp.gov.uk/benefit-thieves-spain and help UK investigators close the net on benefit thieves.

Accessing state healthcare as a resident



Due to recent changes to the law, the Spanish social security office has set up a service where everyone can check if they're still on the state healthcare system. '[Asistencia Sanitaria: Comprobación del derecho](#)' can be accessed from the home page of the INSS (www.seg-social.es) and is particularly important for those whose circumstances have changed (e.g. ex-workers).



The sooner you find out, the sooner you can apply for and receive the necessary documentation to register correctly for healthcare if you find you are no longer on the system. The good news is that if you registered with the police as a resident prior to 24th April 2012, have an annual income of less than 100,000€ and do not have entitlement to healthcare through any other way, you should now be able to access healthcare as a resident. Don't wait until you need the doctor's before you apply! Please note that proof of healthcare cover is now a requirement for anyone who needs to apply for or renew their residency. Please visit the healthcare pages of [UKinSpain](#) for further details on how to access healthcare. You do not want to find yourself without access to healthcare when you most need it.



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

The British Consular Network, Spain

Help is out there for English speaking victims of domestic violence

The British Consulate and the *Subdelegación del Gobierno* in Alicante recently held an event to help English speaking residents and tourists access the extensive support network that is available in Spain for victims of domestic violence. The Consul in Alicante, Paul Rodwell, opened the event and said "As part of our objective to assist the vulnerable, I want to make sure that British nationals are aware of the support that the Spanish state provides for victims of domestic violence. It is very important that victims know, for example, that they can call the domestic violence helpline 016 and get through to someone English speaking." During the event, local English speaking associations, such as RBL, Samaritans, HELP Benidorm and HELP Marina Alta and Women in Business, had the opportunity to hear about the different services that are available and how to access them, as well as a chance to meet the local Spanish authorities who offer the support.

Here is a useful checklist of available resources. For more detail, visit residenteseuropeos.com:

- **Emergency services** helpline 112 if you feel you are in danger.
- Call the **national domestic violence hotline** 016 for professional advice on support and services available.
- **To make a report:**
062 – Civil Guard police
091 – National Police
Domestic Violence Court
Local Duty Court
- **For advice, without making a report:**
Town Hall Social Services
Women's Centres 24-hours - tel. 900 58 08 88
Infodona Centres (35 centres throughout Valencian region) – tel. 902 011 029
Assistance to Victims of Crime offices (in local courts)

Comprehensive information guide on welfare rights for victims of gender-based violence, which can be accessed, in English and Spanish, at www.residenteseuropeos.com

ACASA - The National Casework Service of Age Concern España



ACASA

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Age Concern Volunteer Honour

Angela Keay's New Year got off to a surprising start, when she discovered that she had been awarded an MBE for services to the British community in Spain in the New Year's Honours List. Angela, from Torrevieja, has made a remarkable contribution to the development of the charity, Age Concern, in Spain. In 1997 she helped to set up Age Concern Costa Blanca Sur, as its Secretary and then President. She then became Secretary and President of Age Concern España and is currently Secretary to ACASA, Age Concern España's national INFOLINE and Casework service organisation, as well as one of its Caseworker volunteers. Judy Arnold-Boakes MBE, founder of Age Concern España and President of ACASA said "Angela has worked tirelessly for the British community with Age Concern in Spain. Her volunteering record is exceptional and recognition of her work long overdue. I know that Angela will agree with me when I say that I cannot let this moment pass without acknowledging the part that Angela's husband, Fred, has played. His support and commitment to the work Angela has done has been second to none." Angela Keay's work has ensured that many thousands of people have been helped by Age Concern, in her home town of Torrevieja, where Age Concern Costa Blanca Sur is based, and right across Spain.



Pictured Above: Angela with her husband Fred at an Age Concern Costa Blanca Sur function in Torrevieja.

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



British Embassy Madrid



Official Partners of ACASA

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



The Royal British Legion 'Shoulder to Shoulder with all who serve'

Poppy Appeal 2012



The photo shows l-r Eddie Hefferman MBE, Overseas Trustee; Robin Hargrave, District Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator; Jean Chattey, District Treasurer and Chris Wyatt, District Chairman.

TRBL District North Spain raised **€171,376.88** and District South raised **€88,765.34** for the 2012 Poppy Appeal.

Our most sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to this fantastic total and to the Volunteer Collectors. Special thanks also to the Poppy Co-ordinators, David Harpin (South) and Robin Hargrave (North).

Join the team in Spain

Helping us to deliver our Poppy Support services to those who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, **Volunteer Caseworkers** and **Visitors** are the face of the Legion. You do not need any previous experience to be a volunteer Caseworker or Visitor, but previous knowledge, training or even an interest in a health, social services or a welfare field can be a real advantage as well as the ability to speak Spanish. All volunteers are offered free training and out-of-pocket expenses. **Volunteer Caseworkers** are asked to visit with people in their own homes, and conduct informal interviews and assessments. This includes talking to people about their situation and gathering important personal information. Caseworkers are asked to write down their observations and findings in the form of a report and provide this to a Legion case manager. The role requires a special kind of volunteer, someone with patience, who can listen sensitively and can write a clear report without judgment. If you think you possess these qualities, and you would like to undertake this personally fulfilling volunteer role we would love to hear from you. **Volunteer Visitors** carry on one of the longest traditions within the Legion, offering companionship to people who are isolated or vulnerable. The role requires a willingness to donate time regularly, an ear that can be bent and the ability to offer friendship. If you think you would enjoy a chat and carrying out regular visits to people in your local area please get in touch. We would be particularly happy to hear from you if you live in the Barcelona and Tarragona area of Cataluña. We are planning to hold training courses in April 2013 (date to be confirmed). If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the Legion please contact Donna Wilson – Country Welfare Officer - to find out more. Tel: +34 902 109 356 (option 6); Email: dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk.

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For more information on Living in Spain, see <http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk>