

# Community Care News

**your  
voice**

Inverclyde Community Care Forum

[www.yourvoice.org.uk](http://www.yourvoice.org.uk)

The Inverclyde Community Care Forum Newsletter  
Issue 25  
Summer 2009

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Inverclyde Community Care Forum

**Inverclyde Community Care Forum  
Is holding its**

## **'Annual General Meeting'**

**Date: Thursday 20th August '09  
Time: 10.00 - 12.00**

**Venue:  
Tontine Hotel, 6 Ardgowan Square,  
Greenock**

**If you require support or assistance to enable  
you to attend e.g. loop system, respite, sign  
language, interpreter or transport**

### **Contact us by:**

**Telephone: 01475 728628  
Textphone: 01475 728608  
Fax: 01475 728605  
Email: [enquiries@yourvoice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@yourvoice.org.uk)**



## **Inverclyde's Epilepsy Group**



**Christine Quigg**

Epilepsy Scotland are putting the Inverclyde group forward for best practice in Scotland for their effort and achievements. The group met with Duncan McNeil MSP earlier in the year and he offered his support. This year the National Epilepsy Week concentrated on raising awareness and the need for more specialist epilepsy nurses throughout Scotland. The group set up a stall in the Oak Mall in Greenock to raise awareness and through the team efforts more than 80 signatures were gathered and sent to the NHS. The group achieved success this year after meeting with the trainer from Epilepsy Scotland and Colin Laird (Education Services) to discuss awareness raising and staff training within the schools in Inverclyde. Colin agreed to a training programme taking place starting at the start of term 2009. The group involved a class of young people from James Watt College in designing a new poster. Christine Quigg from the group met with the college students for a question and answer session on epilepsy and this was a most informative day. For more information about the group phone 01475 728628.

## OUR WEE BREK

In the first weekend in April,  
In the year of 2009.  
From the Carers Centre, Cathcart Street,  
We set out fur a weekend sublime.

As we aw climbed in tae the bus,  
Oor cases were pit in the boot.  
We aw knew soon enough,  
We'd be headed along the route.

Then we sped o'er the Erskine Bridge,  
Leavin' behind Inverclyde.  
The weather wis sunny,  
We had plenty o' money (Ha! Ha!),  
As we wonder'd whit we wid find.

Arrin' at the Tarbet Hotel,  
About four o'clock in the day.  
We aw got the keys fur oor rooms,  
Oor mood wis happy and gay.

A lovely surprise wis in store,  
Aw oor rooms were lovely and fine.  
As soon as we opened oor doors,  
We found fruit and chocolate and wine.

Doon fur oor dinner we went,  
A menu of lovely fare.  
The best treat of all,  
Wis nae dishes tae wash,  
Nor mop fur tae clean the flair.

The cabaret wis oan later,  
A big man wi a guitar who sang.  
Songs frae the past and present,  
His act went doon wi a bang.

A lovely trip tae Helensbura,  
A rumble ron charity shops.  
Then a trip tae Braw Inverary,  
And the chase roon the jail by the cops!

It wis all over too quickly,  
As we were all homeward bound.  
Wavin' farewell.

Tae the Loch and the Hills,  
Where such happiness we had found.

There wis Joe and Martha and Bridie  
And Eleanor and Heather and me.  
Then Rae and Rena and David,  
A great wee community.

So thanks tae the Inverclyde Council  
and the Carers Centre as well,  
Fur fundin' oor lovely wee brek.  
We're aw lookin' forward tae next year,  
Who knows where we'll end up next.

Cheers! By E. Watters, Carer

## Unity Enterprise

### THE GEDDES READER



The Geddes Reader is an affordable visual aid for the partially sighted.

#### **The Geddes Reader is:**

Very Simple Design, Easy to Use,  
Portable  
Can Connect to Most Modern TV's  
Produced by a Charity On A Not for Profit  
Basis, Flexible

#### **Uses of the Geddes Reader:**

Reading Books, Writing Letters  
Sewing or other Hobbycraft  
Viewing Small print such as on a medicine  
bottle  
Do Crosswords, Sign Cheques

#### **Value Statement**

“Unity Enterprise is committed to promoting the ability of people for full cultural, social and economic inclusion within their community”

#### **Contact**

**Danna McDade or John Clarke**

For further information demonstrations or purchasing information:

Inverclyde Education Programme  
11 Jamaica Street, Greenock PA15 1XX  
Tel No: 01475 720813

Email: [danna.mcdade@unity-enterprise.com](mailto:danna.mcdade@unity-enterprise.com)

Website: <http://www.unity-enterprise.com>



## Concessionary Fares Scheme Extended

Scotland's nationwide concessionary travel scheme is to be extended to include injured forces veterans.

Transport Minister Stewart Stevenson today published the results of the Scottish Government's review of the concessionary fare travel scheme.

This means older and disabled passengers will continue to enjoy free travel throughout Scotland at any time on any bus route.

The review – a commitment made by the previous administration – has been assessing how the scheme has been operating since its introduction in April 2006, and looking at ways to improve the scheme even further.





## Pre-pay meter users may be 'due rebate'

Many pre-pay customers are on low incomes.

**Customers who use pre-payment meters have overpaid the energy companies nearly half a billion pounds over the past three years, it is being claimed.**

The National Housing Federation (NHF) made the calculation using figures from Ofgem, the energy regulator. About 12% of energy customers use the meters, including many on low incomes. Even though pre-pay customers pay for their fuel in advance, the big energy firms have frequently charged them more than other households, the NHF found. Under EU directives introduced in 2004, energy firms are allowed to charge pre-pay meter users extra only if this reflects higher collection costs.

Lawyers from the National Housing Federation claim these directives have been breached, and that the regulator Ofgem failed to stop this. Between 2006 and 2008, they say, millions of pre-pay customers were charged well in excess of the average extra cost of installing and maintaining gas and electricity pre-pay meters, which is estimated by Ofgem as being £87 over direct debit tariffs. Some pre-pay meter customers have been charged up to £500 more than those paying by online direct debits. Federation chief executive David Orr said: "It is an absolute scandal that Ofgem allowed energy firms to overcharge customers to the tune of £460m, and potentially breach EU rules for so many

years. "Ofgem has been asleep on the job, and it must urgently start defending the rights of ordinary people, instead of protecting the profits of big business.

"As a way of compensating pre-pay customers for the historic overcharging, Ofgem has a moral duty to go beyond the EU directives, and force the energy companies to equalise pre-pay meter prices with those for quarterly bills".

The National Housing Federation is now raising the possibility that customers might take action to get some money back. Garry Felgate, of the Energy Retail Association, which represents energy companies, said companies had already brought down their prices in response to Ofgem requirements.

"Those prices have come down by £300 million overall on pre-payment, so they are now at comparable". Scottish Power, E.ON and Npower have stopped charging gas and electricity pre-payment meter customers more. They have brought their prices in line with quarterly billed prices. British Gas, EDF and Scottish and Southern Energy are still charging their gas prepay customers more. These remaining suppliers have removed their electricity premiums.

John Pierce from NHF is working with a barrister to produce a template letter to send to the offending companies. If you have a pre-payment meter and would like more information and a copy of the template letter to send to your current provider (if it is one of the above recognised still to be charging) please contact 'Your VOICE' Inverclyde Community Care Forum on 01475 728628 or email; [enquiries@yourvoice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@yourvoice.org.uk) where you may obtain a template letter to send to your supplier.

## CARERS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GROUP

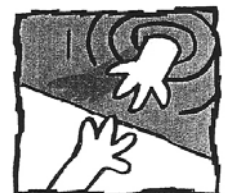
**Did you know that 1 in 4 people suffer from a mental health condition?**

The Carers Mental Health Support Group is open to anyone who cares for someone living with a mental health problem. Whether the person you care for is suffering from stress, anxiety, depression or a more severe and enduring mental illness, you are welcome to join us at our meetings on the first Thursday of every month from 11.00am – 1.00pm, in the Carer's Centre, 68 Cathcart Street, Greenock. Come along and take part in the discussions.

We would be grateful for your input.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

**For further information please contact;  
Eleanor Miller on 07983447074 or The Carer's Centre On 01475 735180.**





# Tatty Teddies & Positive Health

The Tatty Teddies group and the Positive Health for Young and Old group have been meeting for almost half a year. They have had some fun whilst exploring some serious subjects e.g. Stories of Yesteryear (World War II Memories, Concepts of Love, Social Isolation and Depression. Guests have been invited along to offer information on a variety of subjects. Recently Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) gave a presentation on their new service Gateways To, and Joyce came along from Greenspace and gave an informative talk on plants and their uses. Everyone went home with basil, chives, parsley and strawberries in a pot. The groups meet once a month and welcome new members, there will be no meetings in July and if you are interested in joining in the fun, please call 728628.



Would you like something to keep you interested as well as meeting new people? Why not try the Positive Health Arts & Crafts Group. The Swallow Group meet once a week each Friday from

1.30pm – 4.30pm at Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock. Martine and Liz will both share their talents ranging from art, card making, sewing, dressmaking, knitting and crochet. Phone 728628 for more information.



Offering Support  
To Everyone  
Affected By  
Kidney Disease

Cup Of Tea &  
Chat

Various guest  
speakers

Last Wednesday Of The Month

5.00 - 6.30pm

Elim Church Kelly Street

Contact Lynne 01475 727079

Kimberley (Your Voice) 01475 728628

**Community Care News** is published by **Inverclyde Community Care Forum**. Although **Inverclyde Community Care Forum** makes every effort to ensure that all details within this publication are correct, we can accept no liability for any errors or omissions which may be contained within these pages. If you spot any errors, or would like to contribute to **Community Care News** please contact:

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