**SAMARITANS IN SPAIN (SiS) NEWSLETTER MAY 2020**

**Hello Everybody,**

**I hope that this finds you all safe and well. You will be aware by now that the Spanish Government have announced that there will be some easement of the lockdown, in four phases, from now until around the end of June – if all goes smoothly.**

**Over the past few weeks, the Trustees and Centre Management (CM) team have been considering the various compliance issues that might need to be addressed for the re-opening of the Charity Shop and Drop In at Punta Prima, and also our charity unit at Lumsdens. Any activity MUST be sanctioned first by our Legal Adviser at ABC (our Board Secretary Jan Knight is already liaising with them) and approved by the Board. A date for return cannot be announced as yet while the situation is still so fluid and we await official guidance.**

**Meanwhile, the CMs and Shop Supervisors will be checking with their teams to identify those local volunteers willing and able to come back as soon as we can safely re-open. We do understand if anybody in an “at risk” group (over 65 and/or with underlying health conditions) feels uncomfortable with that and declines – your welfare is always our top priority. Other volunteers may be forced to stay away due to ongoing travel restrictions - for example, as in the case of our Treasurer, Ade Webster, who is based in another province.**

**The good news is that the Listener Rota is now well covered on mobile 10am to 10pm Monday through Sunday . Well done to the CM team (particularly Linda Bentley, Heather Pearson and Richard Hunt) and all for making that happen!**

**In terms of raising awareness, Martin Bentley arranged some free and comprehensive newspaper coverage, including a fairly high profile piece, in the EuroWeeklyNews and I was interviewed live on Sunshine FM on Easter Sunday. We have seen increased activity with our Facebook feed and we can encourage even more if we ALL please share posts,”like” the Samaritans in Spain page, and invite our own contacts to do the same. Thank You!.**

**Although all our group fundraising events are on hold, and Les Holloway and Donna Williams are re-working future plans, we have recently received donations from pre-lockdown activities in Ibiza (630€ from a pool league) and Benidorm (403€ from a 10k and half marathon run). Local Torrevieja entertainer JoJo also included our charity in an online fundraiser concert last Friday, held in conjunction with the Masons and we await further details of the donation that might result from that.**

**Our IVA submissions are now being processed and although our first bill for January was 0€ we need to see how this pans out!. ABC solicitors and the management company for the Punta Marina Mall have waived their fees for April and ABC are negotiating a small rent reduction for our lease renewal.**

**Meanwhile, business goes on as best it can for now and our priorities remain:**

**a) keeping the Listener service operational on mobile, and the welfare and morale of those listening volunteers**

**b) keeping our financial situation under control, including:**

**c) getting the Charity Shop up and running - and Lumsdens - as soon as we are allowed, plus keeping our volunteers safe.**

**It is likely that Listeners will remain on mobile for a little while longer, even after the Shop opens. Belinda Bradley and the CMs will handle recruitment applications and interviews online pending the re-opening of the Drop In – Office and identifying possible training options for later in the year.**

**Once again, thank you all for your patience and support and I will be in touch as soon as I possibly can with more news!**

**Until then, please take care of yourselves,**

**Lynda Brettle**

**President**

**lynda.spainsams@gmail.com**

**www.samaritansinspain.com**