

Newsletter

Spring 2024

Issue 4

BBA



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Welcome!



This last year has seen many changes for our organisation and as we move forward into 2024 we want to reassure members and potential service users that our aim is to continue to provide practical help and assistance to residents and visitors of all ages in our beautiful region.

We have a great track record in supporting those in times of need. No job too big, no job too small. In the last few weeks we have helped stranded tourists with transport, organised a home help for a resident, assisted residents applying for TIE's to navigate the system and make successful applications and sourced temporary medical aids for another. We are a one stop shop of practical help! Spread the word and help us to help you.

Speaking of change clocks are Springing forward this Sunday! Literally overnight we are into the new season, on the one hand it is a lovely time of year hedgerows bursting with colour and trees and fields showing signs of new life, on the other there is concern for the climate.

We are very blessed to have such an amazing country around us,

despite the drought it is still a very green and pleasant land which is a miracle given the very little rainfall we have had. The reservoirs are testament to the lack of rain and winter snow. Whole villages, buildings and churches rise from the depths.

We must continue to do our bit our last piece in News Round up has a links to suggestions on how we can practically all conserve water and to the GenCat website which gives a regular updated map of which areas are under most threat.

Aside from the drought we have some really useful (we hope!) and interesting articles for you this quarter.

In this issue we have done a round up of What's On this Spring around the region. Other events, like the Hot Topics Cafe, are in the planning stages with the Mossos d'Esquadra on Safety in the Home and the Streets and will be shared on our **Facebook Page** so be sure to follow us there to keep up to date and informed.

Our Spotlight this quarter is Age In Spain who have a fantastic online resource to help English speakers find their feet. They are looking for a Social Media guru to join their team and you can find all the details in the article.

If you feel that you have a story to tell that would interest or benefit our readers please get in touch. We are always looking for news stories from people who have made this region their home and want to share their journey.

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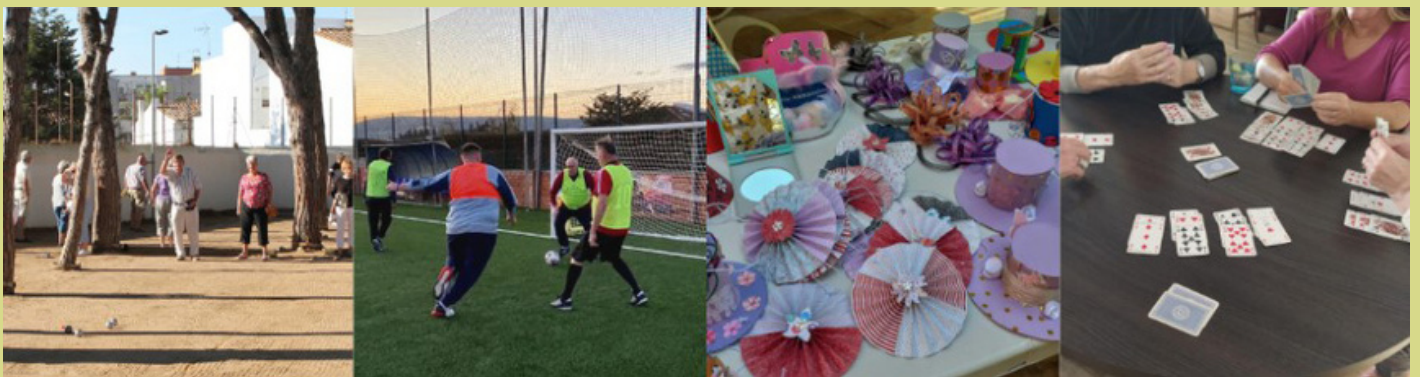
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U3A - live, laugh, learn, connect



The U3A, the University of the Third Age to give it its grand title, refers to the University many of us have attended the university of life! We all have skills developed over the years and would love the opportunity to learn new ones. That is what the organisation is all about sharing, learning and socialising, keeping active in mind and body.



The U3A is run entirely by volunteers and offers a wide range of interest groups such as gardening, art, music, history. One main focus here in the Costa Brava is outdoor activities such as walking, cycling, walking football, walking netball and golf.

For those of a more sedentary nature there are a wide variety of workshops like craft, regular card games and cafe meetups, most recently some members visited a local vinyard for a wine tasting which was a great success!



For a modest fee of just 15€ for a whole year's membership you have access to countless activities across the region, there is bound to be one that suits you. To find out more about the U3A in the Costa Brava and the different groups you can take part in check out the website [here](#), you can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to get a feel for how we rock and roll!

Spotlight - Age in Spain

About Age in Spain

Age in Spain is an organisation which enables English speakers in Spain to live their best life and be well prepared for later life changes.

It is a volunteer led organisation that:

- empowers people to make considered and well informed choices
- removes barriers to accessing information and services
- reduces isolation and loneliness for the vulnerable and older people



Infoline and General Enquiries:

+34 932 20 97 41

www.ageinspain.org

Good Neighbour Award

Earlier this month Age in Spain were delighted to announce the results of the Good Neighbour Award which attracted nominations from all over the country, from Cordoba to the Canaries! The results were so heartwarming that the judges selected a number of people for commendations. Which of these wonderful finalists was the overall winner? And what are the stories that made these nominations stand out?



The overall winner, [Alison Brophy](#) who lives in Carralejo, Fuerteventura.


Alison was nominated for creating 'Stronger Together' an organisation which exists for the benefit of non-Spanish residents, simply "to help people, to improve things, to help the nationalities integrate and generally to improve the life of everyone in Fuerteventura"

Stronger Together aims to integrate people into Spanish society, for example by providing language lessons – more than 300 people have gone through their classes facilitating social activity and encouraging people to register to

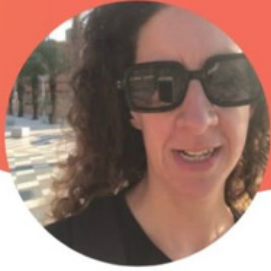
vote in local elections; it navigates bureaucracy and helps people with their TIEs, their driving licences, or their business start-ups. The association arranges care packages when needed, accompanies people for hospital visits, and it also liaises with consulates, government bodies and other charitable organisations. It produces Breeze, the only English language magazine on the island and for which Alison has secured local business sponsorship. If you live or know people that live in Fuerteventura and would like to find out more then check out their Facebook page [Stronger Together](#)

For further details on good neighbours who received commendations visit the website [here](#)

Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteering opportunity!
Social Media Assistant



Why did Sarah volunteer as our first Social Media Assistant?

Due to her family move to Asia, we are looking for a new Sarah to join our friendly communications team. Social media might be your passion, your hobby or your work. Share a few hours a week with us to help grow our social media presence and have a great time.

Find out more [here](#)



Check out Sarah's Youtube Video where she talks about her experience supporting Age in Spain [here](#)

Sarah Jones, our first Social Media Manager, invites you to fill her shoes! Our volunteering vacancy gives talented people a real opportunity to continue the transformation of our social media work. Can you take us to the next level and help us expand our reach to people who need our help and new supporters?

Become a Friendline Volunteer

Make a positive difference in someone's life through regular telephone calls from the comfort of your own home.

One of life's great pleasures is making a new friend – finding someone who shares your interests, your priorities or maybe just your sense of humour. But making new friends often gets harder as we get older. That's why Age in Spain launched Friendline.

Friendline is a telephone friendship service that connects people who want to rekindle the joy of chatting to a friend with volunteers willing to give a little bit of their time on a regular basis.



**Our Friendline Lead
Veronica from Catalunya**

Reaching out and volunteering for Friendline can give an older person something new to look forward to in their week and help them avoid the negative effects of loneliness and isolation.

Find out more [here](#)

Death Café



DEATH CAFE
Sant Feliu de Guíxols

Talking about death helps us live fully

Facilitated by
Ruth Milner & Melissa Levey
CBH volunteers

Friday, 5th April, 2024
11:00 to 12:30

Casa Irla
Carrer de l'Algavira, 65
Sant Feliu de Guíxols

Book a free place
634 898 481
(Limited places)

Costa Brava Hospice

In October, 2023 I attended my first Death Café. I was on holiday on the UK's south coast. I had been keeping an eye out for a Death Café every time I visited the UK and at last I had found one, in Eastbourne. Because of my interest in death and my training as a death doula, I was excited to finally be part of something where death and dying were discussed with respect, interest, curiosity and not in lowered tones. I was not disappointed. What a lovely group of people, all bringing their own thoughts and experiences and sharing them with each other, over a cuppa. It was advertised as an inviting,

relaxing, respectful space, to get together to eat, drink and talk about death, dying and the end of life. I left that evening feeling overwhelmingly grateful for the opportunity to connect and have a conversation about death and dying that felt productive.

The idea of a death café was started in 2004, in Switzerland by Bernard Crettaz. In 2011, Jon Underwood, an English man, introduced the Death Café concept to London. He launched a website called DeathCafé.UK which is now active world-wide, the idea took off globally. Wherever you are in the world you can find a Death Café near you, plus the website gives the guidelines to organise one. There have been over 14,500 Death



Cafes held in 82 countries, plus many are now online. Many more are not registered on this website.

Jon Underwood created the non-profit café because he saw that discussions about death and dying were being lost. Communities and families no longer thought about the process of death, they were passing the responsibilities and choices to the professionals.

Important conversations in life were not had between family and friends. The language we used allowed us to sanitise death and we had in Jon's words, "lost control of one of the most significant events we ever have to face". He wanted there to be an honesty and directness and therefore used the word Death to represent the cafes. He wanted people to see that conversations about our own mortality helped us live a better life and take away some of the pain when death occurs.



On April 5th, the Costa Brava Hospice will be hosting its first English speaking Death café in Sant Feliu, though the hospice already runs a number of Spanish/Catalan speaking Death cafes on the Costa Brava. This will be a confidential space, where we respect and listen to one another's thoughts and feelings on everything to do with death and dying. Everyone is welcome regardless of their own beliefs and experiences. If someone has had a recent death close to them and is feeling raw, this might not be the space for you. However, if you feel you need to talk to someone please contact the Costa Brava Hospice phone number on the advert.



Ruth Milner is a qualified Death Doula and the author of this helpful article.

If you have any questions regarding the Death Café feel free to contact Ruth on milner933@hotmail.com or enquire on the booking number on the poster for the event.

Change to UK Voting Rights for British Residents in Spain



British citizens living abroad are now eligible to register to vote in UK general elections, regardless of how long they've been living outside the UK. A new law, which came into effect in January, removes the previous 15-year time limit.

The Electoral Commission is calling on voters in the UK to help spread the word and tell friends and family living abroad to check if they are eligible. The Commission is working with partner organisations to inform eligible voters around the world.

People that have previously lived in or been registered to vote in the UK now have the right to vote in UK parliament elections. They can register online at gov.uk/registertovote and will need to confirm their personal information every three years. Under electoral law, those on an electoral register are also permitted to donate to political parties and campaigners.

Craig Westwood, Director of Communications, said:

“This change gives more British citizens living abroad the opportunity to participate in UK Parliament elections, and to contribute to the funding of political parties and campaigns.

“We know there are eligible voters in every corner of the world so we're calling on those with friends and family abroad to help spread the news. With a general election likely this year, it is important this newly enfranchised group of voters are aware of the change and can take action. Registering to vote can be done online in just five minutes.”

So spread the word folks, although we may no longer live in the UK the decisions that parliament makes affects our lives here in Spain, from pensions to healthcare so it makes sense to continue to have a say in who is running our country!

Read more on the [The Electoral Commission](https://www.electoralcommission.gov.uk/) website

To apply and register to vote online click [here](#)



Support in Spain - a helpful online resource for English speakers



**Support
in Spain**

**A guide for British nationals over 50
and other foreign residents in Spain who may need extra help and advice**

YourSupportinspain.info is an independent, not-for-profit website. It is aimed at British nationals resident in Spain over 50 and others who may need extra advice or help. It provides details of official Spanish government and non-government organisations in Spain as well as many others in the voluntary sector run by local residents. It was originally created by the University of Birmingham with the support of the British Embassy in Madrid, both of which support and collaborate with the project.

It is designed to help you quickly find a brief description of the services offered and contact details to support you, or a friend or relative, on a wide range of common issues. These include healthcare, financial matters, emergency advice, social care and much more.

Currently the information covers the Costa del Sol, inland Malaga province, Almería province, the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Costa Blanca /Alicante and southern Valencia, coast of Catalonia, Costa Cálida/Murcia in detail, although there is also general information on national organisations covering other areas. The BBA is listed as one of their go to voluntary organisations.

The Directory of Useful Organisations can be accessed as a list relating to specific requirements or searched based on your search terms. Both super easy to use enabling you to find a support organisation in your area or as near as possible.

The search facility is really helpful, just type in your question or key words and a whole host of articles and information comes up to choose from. Alternatively you can select Helpful Topics from the menu at the top of the home page and most subjects relevant to moving to and living here are listed.

An informative well laid out site well worth a visit, like all things voluntarily managed to keep going they rely on donations so if you find it useful every cent counts!

To find out more visit [Support In Spain](https://www.supportinspain.info)

Chiropractic Care and it's Benefits

From a young age our body adapts to all kinds of situations ; it is able to walk, run, to take on injuries and then heal. From childhood through adulthood and into old age it works hard for us, giving birth, carrying out hard labour, taking part in sports, standing or sitting for long periods. Our body is an almost perfect machine but it needs maintenance and small adjustments to be able to function at 100%.



Tell me, have you ever felt that neck strain after being all day driving or at the office? We tend to normalize it, take an anti-inflammatory out of our pocket and get on with our day-to-day lives. Or maybe, that pain in your back that bothers you on Sunday when you wanted to play with the kids in the park. And what about the damn knee? You don't know the reason it is playing up but you struggle on. Small or large everyday "inconveniences" that we normalize, that prevent us from enjoying life in all its fullness and that sometimes cause us to feel down and depressed.

Did you know that there is a way to alleviate and even eliminate some of these discomforts? Do you know that there is a way to keep your machine always at 100%?

Chiropractic - what is it and how can it help?

Chiropractic is a health care profession that focuses on the relationship between the body's structure and its function. It is a form of recognised medical care that focuses on helping your body heal naturally, without drugs or surgery. It's about giving your body certain impulses, helping it with adjustments that will return it to its ideal state. Practitioners may use a variety of treatment approaches, they primarily perform adjustments (manipulations) to the spine or other parts of the body with the goal of correcting alignment problems, alleviating pain, improving function, and supporting the body's natural ability to heal itself

Health benefits of chiropractic:

62%

Less surgery

85%

Less consumption of medicines

62%

Fewer hospital admissions

59%

Fewer days of hospitalization

Chiropractic - what is it and how can it help?



At **Origin Chiropractic Girona**, we are committed to providing quality chiropractic care, focusing on postural alignment, overall health and optimal well being. In this introduction into chiropractic care we explain the transformative impact chiropractic care can have on posture and the connection between that, our nervous system and overall health.

In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives we often overlook the silent influencer that shapes our well being - Posture.

Maintaining a healthy posture is a fundamental pillar of overall health and vitality. Incorrect posture can affect everything from musculoskeletal alignment to respiratory function.

Our posture is largely governed by the autonomic nervous system, a part of the central nervous system, it helps regulate involuntary bodily functions like breathing, heartbeat, digestion, going to the toilet, reflexes. The activities that our bodies naturally do without us consciously thinking about them. It makes sense then that if your posture is misaligned then those functions may be impaired.

Aligning the spine, harmonising the body

Chiropractic care is a holistic approach to wellness that focuses on the spine's alignment to restore balance and enhance the body's healing capabilities. Chiropractors employ precise adjustments to correct misalignments in the spine. By doing so, they not only relieve pain but also promote optimal posture and overall well being. As we embrace chiropractic care, it's essential to recognise it's role in fostering a mind body connection. Beyond physical adjustments, chiropractic care influences the central nervous system, promoting mental clarity, emotional well being and a heightened sense of vitality.

We are **Origin Chiropractic Girona**, a newly opened practice in Girona. Founded by two passionate French chiropractors, **Elodie Mougín** and **Arnaud Bermond**, both speak English

Our team is dedicated to promoting well being and postural health and we would like to make you an **INTRODUCTORY OFFER** - Book an initial consultation with us for just **45€ (normally 80€)**

You can find out more about us, what your first consultation entails and book your place on our website www.originquiropactic.es

Gran Via de Jaume 1 30 5c 17001 Girona
0034 604 278 260



News Round Up

Spring Festivals across the region



Just some of the events taking place this spring leading into summer across the region, click on the highlighted links for details. We will also continue to share events on our **Facebook Page** as local ajuntaments and organisations promote them.

Perelada Festival Easter Edition 28-30 March

Figueres Comedy Festival 29 March - 1 April

Girona Acapella Festival 11 - 19 May

Torroella de Montgrí International Magic Fair (FIMAG) 31 May - 2 June

Figueres es Mou - National and International dance around the city starts June

Tossa de Mar Rumba and Catalan Music Festival 21 - 23 June

(a)phonica Festival Banyoles 28 - 30 June, details not yet released but visit to see previous editions

Spring Festival of La Rambla



The legend of Tarlà - many years ago the city of Girona suffered a serious episode of plague, which raged mainly in Carrer de l'Argenteria and, so that it did not spread beyond this place, the street was quarantined and isolated from the rest of the city with reed fences at both ends. The neighbors were sad, bored and sick one neighbor began to make tombarelles, which distracted and amused them. To remember him a doll was built and hung from a rotating bar, imitating his acrobatics on Carrer de l'Argenteria.

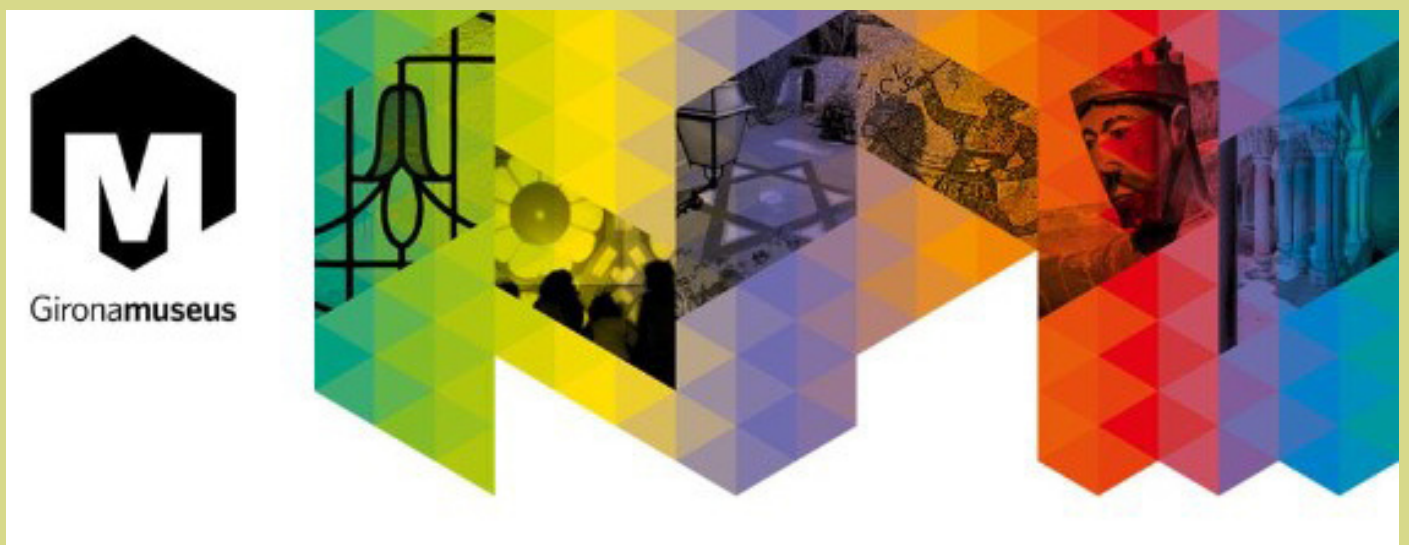
Programme of Events [here](#)

Girona highlights - Temps de Flor - 11-19 May



One of the biggest festivals in the Girona calendar drawing thousands of local, national and international tourists to the city takes place this year from 11- 19 May. Details are never released until very close to the actual event so be sure to follow our **Facebook Page** to be kept informed! In the meantime check out the **Programme of Events** from last year's edition for an idea of what to expect, if you haven't experienced it before it is a real treat.

Free Girona Museum entry Sunday 7 April



Open doors to the City Museums

The first Sunday of every month, free entrance all morning to the History Museum (also to the air-raid shelter of Jardí de la Infància), Jewish History, Art, Archaeology and Cinema museums

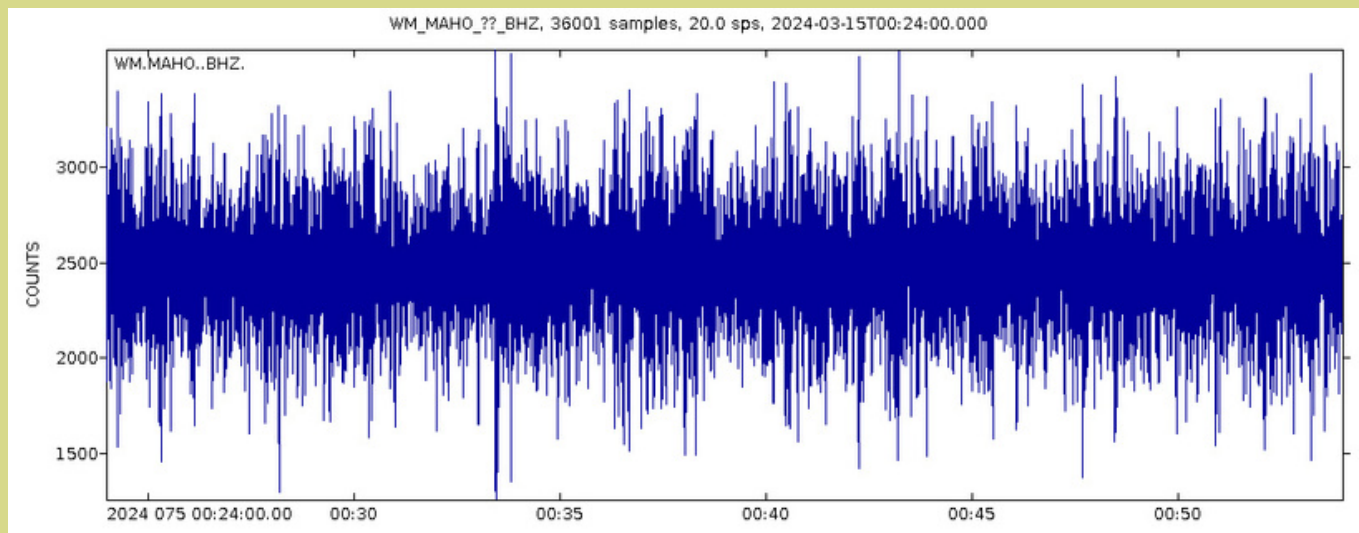
Girona is proud of its heritage and strives to share its rich history with residents and visitors. Keen to show that museums are not, or should not be, storehouses to keep valuable objects or more or less well-organized visualizations of the memory but alive and active presences of a history and a reality that is part of heritage. Museums in Girona in general accomplish this didactic function bringing the visitor closer to certain experiences, culture and legacy. The visitor may find diversity but also this shared mission to be as a whole an accurate reflection of a warm, cultured, thousand-year-old city.

This monthly offer is a great way to take the opportunity to find out more about the city and region

Did the earth move for you?

3 earthquakes in as many days and 8 apparently this month, St Feliu 2.3, Vidreres 2.2 and yesterday Tossa 3.3. Negligible on the scale really and not the first time but given we do have a volcanic region just north west it is no surprise.

This is the recording of the seismic activity and it looks pretty scary but the reality is it was not particularly strong.



The latest quake reported by the National Geographic Institute (IGN) recorded it with a magnitude of 3.3 during the afternoon of this Friday, March 15. The epicenter of the tremor, which has affected the province of Girona, has been located 5 kilometers from Tossa de Mar at several kilometers depth (yet to be determined).

The earthquake although not strong was felt in Lloret de Mar, Girona, Llagostera, Tossa, Blanes or Vidreres among other towns and without any material or personal damage. Several residents of Lloret de Mar, exactly in the Roca Grossa neighborhood, have contacted our editorial team describing this latest earthquake, all agreeing with a similar testimony "It has been a couple of seconds and we have noticed a small tremor."

Those who felt the earthquake were asked to complete a seismic questionnaire to enable the authorities to gather more data. If you feel the earth move in future this is the form you need to fill in [here](#)

New increased airport bus service

At last! There will be an increase in the shuttle bus service between Girona Airport and Girona with drop off points along the way.

Most notably the increase in service hours which has long been a complaint for people arriving and departing. Considering that the first flights are scheduled to take off early in the morning and the last ones to land at midnight, a 21-hour daily service schedule has been planned: the first bus will leave Girona at 04:00 and the last will arrive at 01:00, to ensure that no plane is left without a public transport connection to the city.

Full story and details in [Diari de Girona](#) - in Catalan but if you right click on the page in Google you can select Translate to English

Towing a trailer in Spain

Towing in Spain is different to the UK Trailers fall into two distinctive categories when it comes to classifying them for normal use on the roads of Spain, those below 750kg and those above 750kg maximum weight.

A SMALL trailer, or “Remolque Ligero”, which has a maximum weight less than 750kg does not have to be registered. You must however clearly display the number plate of the vehicle towing the trailer on the rear, which must also be a certified style of number plate and the trailer must have lights fitted which repeat the actions displayed by the towing vehicle. A LARGER trailer, which also includes caravans, with a maximum weight over 750kg kilograms, the “Remolque Pesado”, is different. Firstly, it has to be registered as a separate vehicle and must have its own “Permiso de Circulación”, or log book. It must also have its own registration plate, which is red in colour, and this must be displayed on the rear of the vehicle, along with the number plate of the vehicle towing it.

This type of trailer also requires insurance and is subject to mandatory testing, and the ITV documents must also be carried with the vehicle. It must also display lights on the rear that repeat what the towing vehicle is doing.

There are a couple of points to remember when towing a trailer. Your view of the road must not be obscured, which includes the view in your mirrors. All number plates must be of an officially recognised and certified form, handwritten numbers on cardboard for example are not permitted. If you are towing any form of trailer, you must also carry a fire extinguisher with you in the vehicle.

Towing another car is not permitted in Spain, and that includes by a so-called A-frame. That is why you must call a “grua” in the event of a breakdown. The grua will then recover your vehicle. The only way to tow another vehicle like a car is for it to be on the back of an approved trailer.

Our biggest challenge just now - the drought

The campaign for World Water Day, 22 March 2024, is now live. This year’s theme is ‘Water for Peace’, which focuses on the critical role water plays in the stability and prosperity of the world. When water is scarce or polluted, or when people have unequal or no access, tensions can rise between communities and countries. Witnessed here between agricultural needs and supply.



Never before has saving water been more vital in Catalunya than now. Do your bit click here for **Ten Tips for Saving Water at Home** and to keep informed you can check out the current status for drought conditions in your area on this **regularly updated map** on the GenCat website

Partnership Programme



Would you like to introduce your products or services to the English speaking community in the Girona Region?

We are inviting Companies and Service Providers who have something to offer our readers and members to take part in our Partnership Programme.

We have a comprehensive programme which includes promotional space in this quarterly Newsletter, listing on our website as a partner and blog posts which are distributed via social media.

We mail out the Newsletter quarterly to our members and we also share on social media with Facebook pages used by British and English speakers across the region, followers of these pages exceed 10,000.

We have also started hosting Hot Topic Cafes across the region and Partners will be invited to take part in relevant Topics providing another opportunity to connect with the wider community.

Partnership starts from as little as 20euros. To find out more contact britbengirona@gmail.com

We reserve the right to decline applications if we feel they are not aligned to our members and readers needs.

Image courtesy of Freepik

Partners and local providers we work with

To find out more about these organisations click the images to go to their websites.

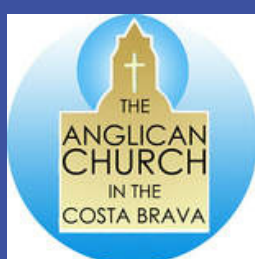
Want to join our Partnership Programme? Connect your business and services to our membership. Sponsorship starts from as little as 20euro for inclusion in our quarterly newsletter, promotion across our social media and annual entry in the partnership section on our [website](#)



Providing information and support to English speakers in Spain since 1992, check out their website for the wide range of locations you can meet with other members as well as online support



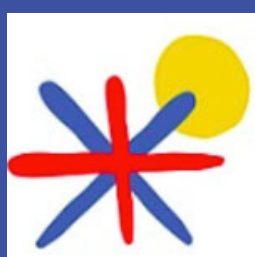
Offering help and support to those with life limiting illnesses and their families



Anglican Church in the Costa Brava, holds Zoom services on a Sunday and other meetings online, some physical Church services are held check the website for details



Spanish Red Cross site in English [some explanation needed as to what services are being offered]



The British Benevolent Fund is a Spain wide Charity for when times are tough – providing financial support to help Britons in Spain get back on their feet



The Royal British Legion provides lifelong support for the Armed Forces community – serving men and women, veterans and their families. District North Spain covers an area from the French Border to Almeria



The British Society of Catalunya – Bay of Roses since 1995 members group welcoming people of all nationalities organising social and group events including sports across the region check the website for details



Formerly Girona Grapevine changed to online Meetup during Covid and has kept the online presence but now organising physical events and meetings again check the web for details



An informative and useful website. The site will assist you with all aspects relating to living, visiting, owning a holiday home or investing in Spain.



U3A Girona region, members groups and events across the region, check the website for details



A Diocese of Girona organisation the website is in Catalan but should translate automatically if using Google translate option in your search engine



A central hub for volunteers in the region, from training to projects and opportunities



British Benevolent Association



GIRONA PROVINCE

The British Benevolent Association for the Province of Girona (BBA) was set up as a registered charity in 2007 with the aim of providing practical help and support to any British or Commonwealth subject living in, staying in or passing through the province of Girona and the Costa Brava. Practical help is provided through a network of volunteers across the region and supported by donations and fundraising events.

Do you need help now?

Call the BBA between 8am – 8pm Tel: 695 210 108 To speak to one of our volunteers

Email: britbengirona@gmail.com

or call the 24 hour emergency number at the British Consulate Barcelona

Emergency 24 hour telephone: (+34)902 109 356 or (+34)917 146 300

Spain Emergency Number: 112

