

Newsletter

Summer 2023

Issue 1

BBA



WOW!
**Thank you for
your support!**

Also in this issue:

Enhancing our
services

Volunteer
opportunities

Hot Topics Cafe

Welcome!



Before we get started we must make an important announcement. Some of you may have already heard on the grapevine that our esteemed President, Veronica Wheeler, who has done an amazing job rallying the troops for several years will be stepping down at the next AGM.

She has been instrumental in building strong relationships with partners and in particular the British Consulate and their representatives in Madrid and Girona. Her work was recognised recently when she was awarded the British Empire Medal

From all of the team here at the BBA we wish Veronica the very best in the next chapter of her life and hope she enjoys a well earned rest in her retirement.

Naturally, this will leave a gap in our team and we will be looking for someone to step up and take on the role. We will be taking applications from members who feel this is a role that they would be interested in, please contact us for more information.

Let us celebrate our firsts!

Many of you will have seen our new **website**, **blog** and rejuvenated **Facebook page** and this is the **first** peek of our revamped Newsletter carrying on the old tradition in a new format.

All have been very well received and we have had great feedback on the information that we have been sharing from around the region.

Just before summer we held our **first** big event for some time, the **Coronation Garden Party**, as well as being a sell out and engaging with new people from across the region we also had a fabulous response to the after party reports on the blog and on Facebook.

A staggering 1,430 people read the posts about the party and our Facebook page is now reaching on average 550 people a month, an increase of 68% just in the last month.

This is all down to **YOU** sharing our posts on your individual pages with your friends and family.

The more people we reach the more opportunity there is for us to help those living in and visiting the region who may not have been aware of our organisation and the services we offer.

So a very big **THANKYOU**, we hope you will continue spreading the word!

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How can we improve our services?

Those of you familiar with the BBA may have delivered or, indeed, received free services from our willing team of volunteers. As well as those highlighted here this is by no means an exhaustive list and we welcome any request in times of need.

Now that the pandemic is officially over and we are well into the post Brexit era we are beginning to see a return of British and Commonwealth citizens taking up residency under the many different visas available.

It has been a rocky road and a steep learning curve for many and our partner organisations, like **Age In Spain**, have a fantastic library of information for those looking for advice on relocating. We aim to continue sharing information across our **Blog** and **Facebook page** to ensure our members and followers are up to date with any developments.



BBA Community Hubs

To provide a service across the region it seemed a natural step to move away from a centralised service to one that recruits volunteers in more diverse locations. Less travelling and more local knowledge playing an important part in this decision.

We are hoping to set up new local BBA groups in Lloret de Mar, Girona, Torroella and Figueres (or any other locality in the region that you feel might benefit from a BBA Community Hub)

What we need now are volunteers to head these up. The role/s will be to keep in touch with current members in the local community, disseminate information in the local area, deal with local enquiries and maybe organise local events to raise funds and recruit volunteers. If you think this is something you might be interested in, or you have any suggestions that might help us grow this initiative, please get in touch to have a chat.

Services we have provided across the region

BEREAVEMENT



HOME SUPPORT



LEGAL



MEDICAL



TRANSLATION



TRANSPORT



UK/SPAIN AUTHORITIES



Volunteering Opportunities

We are increasingly aware that our membership should reflect the changing demographic of our potential client base and would welcome members and volunteers from amongst the new arrivals to our region.

There are lots of exciting opportunities so whether you are based at the coast or in one of our inland towns or villages we hope that you would consider working with us.

Volunteering is hugely rewarding, not all of it client facing. We have volunteers who are our backroom people, website designers, social media specialists, project managers, people with creative skills, marketing and management committee.



Volunteering is an unpaid role but we pay out of pocket expenses, travel costs and provide training. Some of our volunteers offer a set number of hours and days that they are available, others help on an ad hoc basis. If you are new to the area it is a great way to make friends!

Our recent Garden party was completely catered for by a team of volunteers organised by one of our regular volunteers, Ruth Milner, pictured here with Karen Borrows of Cake by Karen and the team. They planned and executed the most amazing afternoon tea in very warm weather whilst smiling all the way through!

If you know someone new to the area do pass our details on!

Volunteer opportunities now include:

Administration - Helping to maintain a member and volunteer database and supporting communication across the region by assisting with the monitoring of our email account and redirecting queries to relevant service volunteers amongst other admin tasks.

Leaflet distribution - Not everyone has access to or is comfortable with online communication. Our new leaflet design with handy business card insert that can be kept in a wallet or purse needs to be distributed across the region. Suggestions have been tourist information, chemists, private doctors, hotel receptions, camp site receptions. We need volunteers to carry out this important task in your local communities.

All roles can be divided and shared by multiple volunteers, if you feel you have a few hours to spare please contact us to find out how you can be involved.

Hot Topic Café

One of our new initiatives is to provide a regular series of coffee mornings where you can firstly meet other people in your local area and secondly access and share information that may be relevant or useful to you.

Our first will be in **Montjuic, Girona at Praline Café**. There is lots of free parking and your first coffee at this inaugural event is on us! You can find all the details, directions with your freebie ticket on our events page on Facebook with a link to Google maps

The subject for this particular coffee morning is **"What to do when a loved one dies in Spain"** At some point in our lives death will affect us or our friends and knowing what to do and how to help is immensely useful. The discussion will be led by Ruth Milner and Melissa Levey, BBA members from the Costa Brava Hospice, they will be there to answer all your questions.



Our next planned Hot Topics Cafe will be Staying Safe Online – if you have specific questions you would like answering, or other IT related questions, send them to us and we will endeavour to have answers for you, date and venue to be advised

Naturally we welcome any topic suggestions you have, we will be running a Facebook poll in September to gather your ideas so watch out for that. You can also contact us by email or through the website to propose subjects that you feel might be interesting or useful for others.

News Round Up

Road Safety

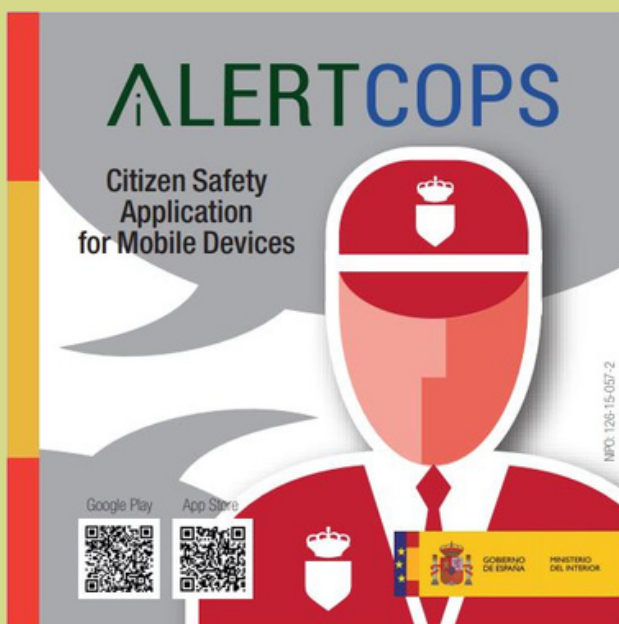
Our region is popular with professional and amateur cyclists due to our hosting of Tour de France, Spain and Catalan Tours and the teams that come here to train. It is important that there is mutual respect to avoid accidents and the [N332 Facebook Page](#) is a good source of information for road safety and legal requirements.

For example when cyclists ride all together, they are considered a long vehicle, so once they enter a roundabout, they have right of way until the last of them pass. All together means, in a peloton.

For example, in the picture, you can see how the group enter the roundabout and leave it on the third exit. If instead of one group, there are three separate groups, each of them should stop before entering the roundabout, because they are considered three different vehicles.



Emergency Help



Have you just suffered a robbery on your street? Can't find a family member and you think they have been lost? AlertCops allows you to communicate to the State Security Forces and Corps in a simple and discreet way it's the new [Guardia Civil and Policia App](#)

To use it, you just have to register, open the app and press the specific alert button in its icon menu. This way your position will reach the nearest control center.

You can send images and videos, indicate if the alert has happened to you or you have witnessed it. Your position and your data will be sent to the State Security Forces and Corps. More info [here](#)

Safety in the Hot Weather

Extreme temperatures are currently affecting many areas of Spain. For severe weather warnings and updates, visit the Spanish Meteorological Office ([AEMET](#))

As well as protecting ourselves from the sun's rays and avoiding sunburn and heatstroke it is important to be aware of the dangers of wildfires and great care needs to be taken not to do anything which could inadvertently start a fire.

For information on how to take care in the heat visit [NHS](#) or the website of the [Spanish Ministry of Health](#) (only available in Spanish) and check out our Safety in the Sun advice on our website you can find that info [here](#) Please follow the advice of local authorities at all times



Dog Friendly Beaches



Travelling or living with canine companions? You will find that many beaches prohibit dogs, find the nearest dog friendly beaches in Costa Brava Lifestyle's handy guide [here](#) and go enjoy some fun in the sun and sea with your lovely pooch!

Driving Licence Exchange

Now that the process for you to exchange your driving licence is in place, please don't forget the deadline. If you have a UK or Gibraltar licence, you can exchange your driving licence for a Spanish one without taking a practical or theory test.

You should do this within 6 months from 16 March or within 6 months of the date you obtain your residence, whichever is later.

After this your UK or Gibraltar driving licence will no longer be valid for driving in Spain. However, you will be able to exchange it for a Spanish one. Please check all the info [here](#) Thanks to [Brits in Spain](#) for sharing this information



Healthcare for Visitors to Spain

If you have friends or family from the UK, who are planning on travelling to Spain for a holiday, remind them that they can continue to use their UK European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or the new Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC).

Either card will enable them to access necessary healthcare. However, they are not a substitute for travel insurance and visitors to Spain should always travel with both.

That is because EHIC and GHIC may not cover the entire treatment cost, and there are some things that they won't cover, like mountain rescue or medical repatriation.

You can read more about healthcare when visiting Europe [here](#)

Thanks to [Brits in Spain](#) for this important information

We hope you have found this Newsletter helpful and informative. If you would like to contribute to our next one (October) please send details before the end of September, space is limited and editorial decisions may have to be made! If you have a service that you think would be beneficial to our members and readers we welcome sponsorship, please contact us via our email britbengirona@gmail.com for details.