



ARPO NEWS

Association of Retired Police Officers
Costa Blanca South

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www.arpo.org.uk

Meeting Report

Minutes of the ARPO meeting held at Sacko's Bar Wednesday 8th October, 2008. 66 members were present and 4 new members introduced themselves.

Treasurer's Report:

Loll Bielby reported that •265 was received from the raffle at the Portico Mar event in June. There was a •100 profit from the raffle on the Benidorm trip. Subscriptions received from 2 new members and 7 renewed members giving •90. Proceeds from Angie's books •16.10

In the Bank Deposit General Account there is •1003 which includes •50 from the ARPO pig yet to be given to charity.

The long term Deposit Account stands at •600 with 4% interest maturing in November 08. Cash in Hand stands at •191.76

Social Functions:

Jim gave a breakdown on the day coach trip to Benidorm on 24th September. 53 members attended and the cost of the coach was subsidised by ARPO. Congratulations to David Adams and Ann Stevens on their recent marriage. Pictured right taken whilst on the Benidorm trip.

Ron Burk outlined the next lunch event to be held at the Dona Isabel Restaurant on Wednesday, 22nd October - which is a market day in San Miguel. Ron also advised that over •4000. was raised for the Help for Heroes Charity bringing the total to £6,500.

The November lunch event will be arranged by

Bob Morgan on 26th November at a restaurant in Quesada - 3 courses, half bottle of wine or a beer with coffee and liqueur at •15 per head - look out for the details at the next meeting and on the web site.

The Xmas Party will be held on 19 December at Portico Mar at •25 per head. Jack Clayton has been booked for dancing from 8 p.m. until mid-night. As Mike Peters is away for the November meeting, will members please ensure that all monies and menu choices are given in at the December meeting please. There is a 'reserve' list and it would be appreciated if booked members who find they cannot attend to advise Mike beforehand - thank you.

The January meal event has yet to be finalised - possibly at an Indian restaurant in Montesinos - to be arranged by Brian Smith.

There are still some places left for the Valentine's Day (Saturday 14th Feb) Dinner

Dance being organised by Mike Peters. The usual standard menu at the Portico Mar will be available and Jack Clayton is again booked for the entertainment. Please contact Mike Peters for further info or check our web site.

Any Other Business:

An information update was given regarding recent press articles on non-residents Bank Accounts. It would appear that some banks issue the necessary certificate automatically but others need you to sign, say, every two years. Members should check with their own individual Bank.

George Patterson confirmed that his bank, Banco Popular, automatically generate the certificate whether you are Resident or Non-resident.

George also reminded members that the ARPO meeting can be a great pool of information and if anyone has a problem or question, then please voice it and the members or the Committee will do their best to help.



It was again brought to the notice of the meeting that changing to the Iberdrola White Meter (from the Green Meter) is beneficial as not only is the price of electricity cheaper but the bill can be produced in English. The Cheap Rate timing for the White Meter is 11p.m. until 1p.m. (winter) and 10p.m. until 12noon (summer).

Web Site links to South Wales & Manchester NARPO Web site have been added. Any items for our web site please e-mail Gerry Lawson, i.e. helpful tips or reliable service providers

The winner of the 25 Euro draw was no. 56 - John Kane.

Health & Pension Matters

The Dept. of Work and Pensions together with a representative from the British Consulate will be hosting further meetings in Spain for the benefit of ex-pats. There is limited seating so reservations are required. The next meetings are on 5th November (should be some fireworks that day) at 11.00 Orihuela Costa Town hall off N332 near Mercadona's. A later event will be held on 19th November at L'Alfas del Pi, Casa de Cultura and on 3rd December at Mazarron Hotel Sensol both at 11am.

Reserve places at the following www.ukinspain.fco.gov.uk/en/help-for-british-nationals/open-day or by telephone 915 249 729. See below for a report by Susan Bradford who attended an October meeting. Further meetings in 2009.

Susan and Nick Bradford attended the DWP Consulate meeting in Torrevieja on 8 October 2008 which was okay, nothing earth-shattering ... there was quite a large information pack given to each delegate. This is available in Word format on our web site www.arpo.org.uk/documentmenu.htm

The British Consulates in Malaga and Alicante together with the DWP are hold a series of open events in the Malaga, Alicante and Murcia areas to talk about issues that matter to the majority of British residents. The DWP will provide essential information on UK pension, benefit and healthcare entitlements in Spain and the services that their team in Spain can offer.

The following main points were highlighted:

Emergency passports – Alicante Consulate provides one fifth of the worldwide demand for emergency passports

Notarial work

Help & support with e.g. Bereavement benefit (£2K)
Hospitalisation, Prison, Complaints procedures in Spain.

Partnerships:

Age Concern information 902 003 838 or info@ageconcern.espania
The Royal British Legion, HELP
On-line Registration with the Consulate when travelling abroad via LOCATE ...
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/Locate/>

There are approximately one million ex-pats in Spain with 300,000 in the Alicante region. 650,000 of the ex-pats are over 50 years of age.

The DWP office in the Alicante Consulate can offer a liaison service between the UK and Spanish INSS authorities, offer help and guidance regarding any state pension query, and approximately 50% of calls for help are regarding healthcare

The Vice-Consul at the meeting (out of Alicante) had it confirmed verbally by the head of Trafico (awaiting it in writing) that Medical Certificates for driving are NOT necessary and you don't have to change your European Driving Licence (UK) until you are 70. It was suggested by the Vice-Consul that if fines are imposed locally, that you complain to the Head Honcho of Trafico in Alicante to get a refund!

The only other point of note was that all those residents under 65

(men) 60 (women) will have their Spanish NHS cover automatically extended until 15 Jan 09 ... by which time an announcement should be made by Valencia what happens next regarding the amount and date of 'affordable' contribution in Spain to provide full NHS cover! Even the Consulate doesn't know yet ...

Another interesting point was that the Winter Fuel allowance is only payable if you qualified in the UK before coming to live in Spain ... it is not OAP linked!

There are lots of contact nos. email addresses in the handout, as they are offering to be a 'help desk' for ex-pats in the area for anything to do with Pensions, Healthcare but NOT Income Tax.

Mobile telephones

New legislation requires owners of Spanish mobile phones to register them. This can be completed easily by providing a passport or similar with a photograph at Telefonica shops or phone outlets. You have until October 2009 otherwise the phone will be cut off.

Pay-as-you-go mobiles in Spain require topping up at least every 6 months otherwise current credit will be lost. The easiest way is to use one of the automated machines available in many phone shops. These take payments as little as 5 euro.

ARPO Book Loan Service

Angie and Brian who run the book stall at monthly meetings have suggested that this be extended to include DVD's and videos. This is to be implemented with effect from the November meeting. A small charge will be made for loans of these items. This will be a great boost to those who currently are experiencing difficulties in receiving TV . It will also help bolster the funds of the organisation.

It is requested that members who have any DVD's or videos that they no longer need donate them to the scheme so as to build a library of titles. Members would be asked to return loaned material at the following monthly meeting and take care not to damage them. I have started the collection with a number of DVD's of recent TV programmes.

Google Search Tips

Anybody can perform a simple web search using Google but with so many sites being published, most searches will produce hundreds of results. By fine tuning your search technique, it is possible to find what you are looking for without having to sift through hundreds of unrelated sites.

An informative guide on how to make the best use of search terms is included on our web site in the form of a Word document.

This can be found at Item 10 at this link www.arpo.org.uk/documentmenu.htm