



ChiFRA AGE CONCERN NEWSLETTER

September 2025

Welcome to ChiFRA's September newsletter. We hope you might find some items here that interest you as members. The group would welcome any feedback or suggestions regarding things people would like to see included in this newsletter that you can't pick up from the website or Facebook page.

VOLUNTEERING for AGE CONCERN

If you have been considering joining ChiFRA Age Concern as a volunteer, you may be wondering what this involves. Although calls to the help-line are varied, volunteers are not obliged to help in every instance and are free to choose which type of assistance they feel comfortable volunteering for.

We are currently working towards holding a welcome event where volunteers can get to meet each other, as well as a training programme to address the different levels at which volunteers might be prepared to offer their services.

Here are some examples:

- Transporting people to medical/hospital appointments.
- Spending an hour or so visiting people in hospital who have no-one else, or taking people to visit relatives in hospital.
- Taking people shopping, or shopping with a list on someone's behalf.
- Helping to obtain and attend appointments for general day to day matters

New volunteers are always needed and every offer of help will be welcomed. If you are interested, please contact us Lesley or Susan on

+34 634 31 52 89

WANT TO DONATE?

Some of you may be aware of some of the overheads involved in running ChiFRA & Age Concern. We have to pay for storage, maintenance, repair and replacement of mobility equipment. We also pay for a contact phone, website hosting and email, and bank charges.

All of our committee and volunteers do so free of charge and to date we have never asked members for contributions. Now we urgently need to raise money in order to buy and repair equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers etc.

To this end we have set up a GoFundMe page and would appreciate any donation no matter how big or small you could make.

Here is the link:

<https://gofund.me/5495b562>

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY:

Following Chifra's successful presentation at The Box last November, we thought it might be useful to remind members of some essential information. You might want to print this page, and stick it to the door of your fridge.

For police, fire, ambulance, phone **112**

For serious medical emergency, phone **061**

You don't need to enter +34 even if you are using a UK phone. Both numbers can provide services in English, either with a English-speaking staff, or with AI.

Have this information to hand:

My name is (*me llama*) _____

My address is (*mi dirección es*) _____

My telephone no. (*mi teléfono*) _____

(Emergency services may be able to get your phone number and location from your phone)

Don't forget you can call at your health centre without an appointment, or use the *Urgencias* service at La Longuera, available from 20.00 to 08.00 Mon-Fri, and during weekends and holidays. At other times Puerto Real Hospital operates a 24 hours *Urgencias* service

Be aware of the signs of a stroke. The mnemonic is 'FAST'

- F** Face may appear droopy
- A** Arms may be drooping
- S** Speech may be slurred
- T** Time counts. It is essential to minimise the delay before treatment.

It is advisable to have your blood pressure checked regularly. You can have this done free of charge at any pharmacy. High blood pressure is known as “the silent killer”, as there may be no symptoms, and it can lead to a stroke.

Other useful phone numbers:

National Police:	091	Local Police:	092
Civil Guard:	062	Fire Services:	080 or 085
Road Emergencies:	011	Gender Violence:	016

For more information on when to use these numbers,
see www.lodgerin.com/public/posts/emergency-phone-numbers-in-spain

DIARY OF A SURVIVOR

Well, this summer has been good and hot. Where we are out in the *campo* it hit 43.5C, which is the sort of temperature that sends you scuttling back indoors into the welcoming arms of the air conditioner, swearing never to leave. A few years back, we had solar panels installed, which cut our electricity bill by about four-fifths and in the summer, during the day we can run the water pump and the aircon effectively for free. It really is worth the investment.

Year on year here it has been getting hotter, and the garden is paying the price. Plants that previously need a normal rate of watering now need watering every day, or they die. Plants that were difficult to grow, but with care and plenty of water would do well are simply dying on us. A classic example is the fuchsia we were given. Unlike all the fuchsias you see in the *viveros*, that die as soon as June rolls round, this one was from a local gardener, and as long as the pot was out of the sun, and it was kept moist and cool, the plant was happy to grow out of the shade into the full sun, where it made a flamboyant display. Not any more though. We started the year with about a dozen plants, all doing well, and one by one they keeled over and died until by mid August they were all gone. That will be for keeps, as I have no intention of seeing all that work going for nothing another year.



Last year the sharon fruit/ persimmon were so badly burnt that they were inedible, and I ended up tearing both trees out, so this autumn we will plant some avocado trees in their place.

Mind you, even the avocados have suffered this year. When the heat was at its

worst, the trees were dropping a lot of fruit, which was depressing. That was despite them being watered every day.



Some plants have enjoyed the weather and grown well. Sunflowers and French marigolds have been growing like mad things, as have the chillies and the sweet potatoes have been turning their steel towers into green mounds. If you grow sweet potatoes, and want to get ahead, harvest vine cuttings from them before the frosts come, and use water culture to root them, before potting them up to overwinter in a greenhouse or somewhere bright and frost free. Doing it that way you will have vigorous plants to plant out late February when the frost risk is gone.



People here plant the tubers out in march so there are no slips till April, and by then, your plants would have been in the ground for 2 months, so you can see how sensible it is to get ahead

The mandarin trees have decided to fruit after a year's rest, and this year, as the peel is thin and loaded with flavour, I plan to try making my own version of *limoncello*, using mandarin peel instead of lemon. Fingers crossed for a good result.

At least Autumn is coming round, and with it more tolerable temperatures. Time to start stockpiling potting soil and begin the work of repotting/potting up all the pot plants to give them a good chance of flowering next year, as so many of them are getting pot bound. That will keep me busy once it gets cool enough to work without inducing heatstroke.

One job I need to get done is giving the flat and *uralita* (fibre cement) roofs a coat of *caucho*. When we moved here the roof was covered in red *caucho*, and I got laughed at for using white, however it does reflect a lot of sunlight, helping to keep the house cool. One tip, however, is to never use *caucho* that contains glass fibre. It is murder to spread out and within a couple of years the *caucho* coat starts to shrink and split. I had to tear all the old *caucho* off that roof, right down to the bare *uralita* and then repaint and cover it with glass fibre cloth, which was a hell of a job. The disadvantage of a white roof is that if you go up there to work, it is like the Atacama salt flats, and when you come down you are effectively snow blind, and can't see anything for ages. Still, it has the supreme advantage that if the roof is damaged in any way, it can be repaired in the blink of an eye.

As we occasionally get well problems that leave us without water, we decided to install a reserve tank. We bought one of the 1,000 litre tanks from *Campo y Hogar*. They come in two types, white ones for drinking water and black ones for water for irrigation. We chose the black one as the plastic ought to be much more resistant to UV light.

The down side was that it had been used to hold lubricating oil or something similar and there was about half a gallon of oil



inside that I couldn't get out, so in the end, we waited till it was in place then filled it to the brim with water and then went up on a ladder with a bucket and ladled the oil out from the top access. It was quite a job making a stand out of breeze blocks for it to sit on, and I did need a trio of neighbours to lift it in place, even though it was empty. So as to make it less of an eyesore, I added some trellis and we are growing a creeper up there to hide the tank. Still it was all worth it as it will help us to keep the plants alive in the event of a pump outage.

So it is the end of the summer and now we get to make the garden ready for winter and then next summer. I just hope it isn't hotter than this one, but frankly that doesn't seem to be the way the trend is going.

Bil Wight

A quick reminder where to find us:

Website: <https://chifra-ageconcern.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100071300016978>

Telephone: +34 634 31 52 89