

# First Class New Chaplains!



**A new Chaplain has been appointed for Jewish students in Scotland and NE England.**

SCoJeC is delighted to welcome the Waylands, and we look forward to a fruitful collaboration that will help us serve the parts others cannot reach.

Rabbi Garry and Suzanne Wayland will take up the post jointly in early September. They have already visited a number of campuses including St Andrews, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, to meet students and university personnel.

They will work closely with students from all walks of life to develop Jewish identity and leadership skills, while providing education, welfare, and counselling. They will also liaise with youth groups and school pupils in the Community to help prepare young people for life on campus and in the work place.

Garry is a former chair of the Jewish Society at Durham University, and has a first class degree in Maths from Manchester. He studied for the rabbinate in the USA and Israel, and has worked with King David School and Bnei Akiva in Manchester. Suzanne also has a first – in politics from Queen Mary University – and has done youth and community work in London, the USA, and Israel. They have a 2-year old son, Natanel.

Garry and Suzanne can be contacted on 07791-292 790, or at [northern@jchaplaincy.org](mailto:northern@jchaplaincy.org). Both mobile and email will be monitored throughout the summer but messages may not be answered immediately. Enquiries can also be made to Nicola Livingston, Chair of the Northern Region Chaplaincy Board, on 0141-571 0927 or 07801-286 881, or at [nlivingston@btinternet.com](mailto:nlivingston@btinternet.com)



**Welcome!**

It's always good to start with really good news, so we are delighted to report the appointment of a new student Chaplaincy couple. SCoJeC has always recognised the students as one of our participant communities and tried to draw them into our events. We also believe that the local communities – and their members – can be a very useful resource for students in their area, and we are looking at ways of collaborating with the Chaplaincy Board to strengthen these links.

We congratulate Ehud Reiter of Aberdeen on his invention to help children with speech difficulties communicate, catch up with former SCoJeC Chair Kenneth Collins, invite you to get involved with Mitzvah Day UK, and have more than our usual variety of outdoor activities!

We also report on our own activities – keeping the Community up to date with legislation that has the potential to affect communal activities, as well as pressing Government on issues that matter to the Community, such as post-mortems and Holocaust education.

Have a pleasant and enjoyable summer!

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## **Please send your comments and contributions to Four Corners**

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# MRI: FROM LAS VEGAS TO SCOTLAND

In a recent episode of the Las Vegas based crime drama CSI, the team agreed to a request from a Muslim family not to carry out an invasive post-mortem on their son, and used Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) instead.

Soon this may be possible in Scotland, as Ministers have responded positively to representations from SCoJeC, on the basis of Jewish religious practices, urging them to make clear that non-invasive methods are acceptable for all purposes for which a surgical post-mortem is generally accepted, and to consider amending the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Bill to clarify this.

At present all post-mortem examinations taking place in Scotland are conducted surgically. However, MRI has been employed in the Manchester area since 1997, and we have been informed that it can sometimes (for example, in deaths from pneumothorax) be even more informative than a surgical post-mortem. It is also more acceptable to Jewish, Muslim and many other families, since the body remains intact. Of course we fully accept that surgical procedure may be unavoidable in some cases.

The Lord Advocate, Elish Angiolini, and John Logue, head of policy at the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service have confirmed to the Scottish Parliament Justice Committee that "in principle there is no objection to its use", and we are therefore hopeful that the current regulations will be amended to permit the use of MRI in place of surgical post-mortem examinations in Scotland.



## How Was School Today?

*How was school today?* is a revolutionary new software system that has been developed by Dr Ehud Reiter, a leading member of the Aberdeen Jewish Community (left with son Moshe), to help children with disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, which lead to speech difficulties.

*How was school today?* enables children to communicate more freely with those around them by using sensors, swipe cards and a recording appliance that can all

be attached to a wheelchair. These devices monitor the child's movement and gather information about what the child experiences during the course of a day, as well as recording messages from people they come into contact with such as carers and teachers. At the end of the day, the computer creates a story about the day that can be edited by the child who can then play the story to those at home. It allows children to take control of conversations without having to rely on direct help from other people.

Work on the project, a collaboration between computing scientists from Aberdeen and Dundee Universities and Capability Scotland, has been going on for the last year. Now pupils from Corseford School in Renfrewshire have been the first to test the software, which is aimed at children aged from 8 to 14. Plans are now in place to evaluate the system further to assess its longer-term impact on children, and to expand its coverage to support children with different levels and types of impairments.

Dr Reiter, whose 11-year-old son, Moshe, is autistic and unable to speak, says "One of my dreams is to be able to hold a real conversation with Moshe. The initial version of *How Was School Today?* focuses on helping children with cerebral palsy, but I hope that future versions will help autistic children like Moshe".

MitzvahDayUK  
make your mark  
... and make a difference



GARY SAKOL

As the 'Scottish Lad' on the Mitzvah Day team, I wondered who else could write this article for SCoJeC! Having moved from Glasgow to London, primarily for the Jewish scene, I was keen to get involved in as many ways as possible, and wherever possible. One thing quickly grabbed my attention, and that was Mitzvah Day UK.

Mitzvah Day was born out the belief that we can all make a positive difference to the world in which we live by taking action – collectively.

On Mitzvah Day, Jews everywhere make a real tangible difference by giving their most valuable commodity – their time. As we bring in the New Year on Rosh Hashanah and atone for our sins on Yom Kippur, the dream is that on Mitzvah Day, world wide, Jews will lead the way in volunteering – collective social action that will make a real impact on the world. Mitzvah Day takes place during Jewish Social Action Month, which it also coordinates throughout Europe.

Our mission is to reduce hardship and poverty, to help our environment, and to bring a little joy where it is sorely needed – and all through volunteering, not by fundraising. It is a way for all of us to make our mark regardless of our affiliation, level of religious conviction, wealth, age, gender, or indeed nationality.

On Mitzvah Day people collect and distribute food, sing to and befriend seniors, clean parks, prepare food, make and send gifts to needy children, and sort clothes to send to where they are needed. On Mitzvah Day we support existing charities proving them with volunteers and donated goods or services. The projects run on Mitzvah Day include our centralised Mitzvah Day Projects – simple, ready to do and needing minimal preparation. Other projects can be set up by groups supporting the charities that are close to their hearts or in their neighbourhood.

In 2008 nearly 10,000 people were touched by Mitzvah Day and dozens of charities benefited from the efforts of our volunteers. This year Mitzvah Day will also be part of English Inter-Faith Week, and many partner organisations will choose to work side by side with volunteers from other faiths on the day.

**The beauty of Mitzvah Day is that it brings the community together – old and young, religious and non-religious. So why not get involved today?**

**For more information, visit [www.mitzvahday.org.uk](http://www.mitzvahday.org.uk) or email [info@mitzvahday.org.uk](mailto:info@mitzvahday.org.uk).**

**Mitzvah Day 2009 is on November 15th. Join us!**

# Visiting Jerusalem

KENNETH COLLINS

FORMER CHAIR OF SCoJeC



People tell you that when you retire it is often difficult to fit what you used to do in your free time into the canvas of what was a full working day. In my case the transition has allowed me to indulge my special interest in medical history, and last year I was appointed English language editor of *Vesalius*, an international journal for the history of medicine.

In addition, I was invited by colleagues at the Department of the History of Medicine at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem to become a Visiting Professor. They were particularly interested in my recent work re-evaluating the medical practice of the Cairo-based 12th century rabbi physician Moses Maimonides, whose work forms an important Jewish component of mediaeval Islamic medicine.

The Hadassah University Hospital and Medical School is famed internationally for the quality of its clinical standards and the research achievements of its staff. It is also a microcosm of the Israel that few people manage to see. Its staff and patients are Jews and Arabs caring and being cared for harmoniously together. Patients come from all over Israel, from the Palestinian areas, and from the wider Middle East.

Unfortunately, Hadassah Hospital has had to develop a special expertise in handling the victims of mass casualty and terror incidents, defined as criminal acts intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons or the general public. At Hadassah problems such as staff management during crisis, security, provision of information to the public and media, and handling the economic burden, while coping with the clinical routine and teaching and research activities, were all aspects of hospital administration that had to be taken care of. The hospital management were able to deal with the core issues of hospital functioning during the time of terror attacks, establishing the right balance between the specific and peace time routine. Fortunately, improved intelligence and the building of a security barrier have contributed to the easing of the security situation and while these measures remain controversial they have been crucial in saving countless lives.

We happened to be in Jerusalem during the Israeli action in Gaza and were distressed to hear, on our return to Scotland, of the rash of antisemitic incidents that inevitably seem to follow outbreaks of hostilities in the Middle East. It is therefore fortunate that the work of people of goodwill, such as the members of the Interfaith Pilgrimage, sponsored by the Church of Scotland and the Scottish ethnic minority umbrella body, BEMIS, as well as the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, are taking the message round that it is only through co-operation and understanding that peace will be established for Israelis and Palestinians alike.



## Lag b'Omer Barbecue

IRVING HYMAN

Lag b'Omer is one of the lesser festivals but also one of the more interesting ones. There are a number of different explanations put forward for Lag b'Omer but the one I like is that it's the day that Rabbi Akiva's students stopped insulting and fighting each other. It celebrates a day when Jews remembered the importance of their heritage and respected each other just because they were fellow Jews. It's a day when we can remember that everyone in the community has an important role and place, whatever their personal circumstances and point of view happens to be.

In what has now become an annual event in the community calendar, my wife Anne and I once again organised a successful post Lag b'Omer barbecue at Muiravonside Country Park in Linlithgow. SCoJeC has a role in reaching out to the smaller communities and our scattered masses, and we are happy to have it associated with the event.

The outing is organised to bring the Jewish community together from far flung parts and this year we had old friends and new from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Falkirk, and even Fort William. With the friendly informal setting people get to make new friends and renew old friendships.

Everyone enjoys a nice day out in the country and a barbecue is always a good way to enjoy the sunshine without too much effort. On a bring-your-own basis no-one can complain that the food doesn't suit them!

A healthy gathering of around 45-50 friends from across the communities had a great time together to celebrate this informal happy little chag in the Jewish calendar.



## Reaching Out TO BRING FOLK IN

Reaching out to Jewish people living outwith the mainstream Jewish community was one of the projects for which SCoJeC was recently awarded a three-year grant from the Scottish Government's Race, Religion and Refugee Integration Fund.

This has already supported a number of events in outlying centres, as well as sending copies of *Scotland's Jews* along with posters and leaflets about the Community, to all public libraries in Scotland. Now, to expand the possibilities of providing resources and events for isolated Jewish people in rural areas of Scotland, SCoJeC has invited communal organisations to work with us to further these aims.

More than ten organisations have expressed an interest and we are hoping for some really exciting and creative new ideas. Four Corners will, of course, feature all the events and resources developed in the next few years as a result of this initiative!

# a time to cry

TALYA SILVER

*Tears of frustration and rage stood out in my eyes as I stared at my toddlers. All my time and effort – gone.*

*Colourful flower petals lay strewn on the floor amongst clumps of breakfast cereal, the water and milk mixing in wandering streams on the table.*

*The room I needed spotless for an important meeting straight after work had been turned upside down in the time it took for me to walk to the kitchen and back. The tears were turning to self-pity now, and I gritted my teeth angrily, exhaustion feeding exasperation.*

*On the bus to work, the kids safely stowed at nursery, I relaxed with the newspaper, flipping through the headlines. "No hope of swift return for Pakistan displaced." "Sudan gunmen attack food barges." "Nuclear North Korea a grave threat." I yawned, glanced out the bus window, and turned to the letters page.*

*It was not until many hours later that I noticed any inconsistency in my behaviour.*

**Many tragedies throughout Jewish history have occurred on Tisha b'Av, the ninth of the Hebrew month of Av. The destruction of both First and Second Temples, the expulsions from England and Spain, the beginning of the deportation of the Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto. Does anything underlie this coincidence of calendar?**

Centuries ago, at the beginning of Jewish history, ten leaders of the Jewish people spread an insidious slander; a slander which the nation chose to believe. Forgetting or ignoring the personal Divine revelation they had recently experienced, they lost faith in both themselves and G-d. Fearful and hesitant, the nation cried. Empty tears, needless tears. Tears of salt but no substance. It was the night of the ninth of Av.

"Because you cried needlessly on this night, I will make it a night of tears for you throughout your generations," decreed G-d.

**Angry vengeance? Poetic justice?  
Or a lesson in when to grieve?**

Too often we waste our emotions. We should cry for the children dying of AIDS in Africa, not because we didn't get the job we wanted. Our anger at a rude shop assistant would be better directed against the perpetrators of genocide in Darfur. These misplaced emotions show our faulty grasp on reality, our lack of understanding. We need to be shown a correct perspective.

G-d's scheduling of tragedy was deliberate. He's hoping the juxtaposition will wake us from our self-centred dreams and impel us to rediscover that unity, that perspective – the lack of which was what caused all the tragedies in the first place.

**'The Three Weeks' between the Fasts of 17 Tammuz and 9 Av are a time of mourning the destruction of the Temples.**

**Fast of 17 Tammuz:  
dawn till nightfall 9 July**

**Fast of 9 Av:  
evening 29 till nightfall 30 July**



## Lessons from Auschwitz

After extensive campaigning by the Holocaust Educational Trust and SCoJeC, the Scottish Government has committed itself to continuing to support the "Lessons from Auschwitz" programme that enables two 6th-formers from every school to visit the Nazi death-camp. On their return they then work with their classmates to disseminate what they have learned.

Welcoming more than a hundred of this year's participants at a reception in Edinburgh City Chambers, the First Minister (above) said, "We must never forget the suffering and inhumanity of the Holocaust. Remembering the evil of fascism from the past compels us to fight racism and antisemitism today, in all its forms. We all have a role to play in combating discrimination and hatred, and the Lessons from Auschwitz Project is a great way of keeping alive the memories of those who suffered and died, and of getting young people involved in making sure genocide and racism are things of the past."

The previous week, on what would have been Anne Frank's 80th birthday, John Park MSP (Labour, Mid Scotland and Fife) initiated a short debate in the Scottish Parliament. He spoke of "the power of Anne Frank's life and diary to challenge prejudice, to reduce hatred and to encourage people to embrace positive attitudes, responsibility and respect for others. People have expressed how much they recognise the importance and relevance of the work, even today."

Replying to the debate, the Schools Minister, Keith Brown MSP, said, "We want our young people to understand what it means to be Scottish, but at the same time to admire and accept the identities of others. That means taking a stand against racism, discrimination and intolerance in all its forms. Educating young people about the Holocaust can contribute greatly to that aim because it opens windows to wider aspects of citizenship education. We must ensure that all of our young people receive a clear and consistent message about identity, tolerance and respect for others."



## Reaching the

# HEIGHTS!

STEVEN BANKS

On the 4th of May, 75 men, women and children climbed Ben Lomond, one of Scotland's highest mountains, to mark the occasion of Giffnock Shul's 75th anniversary. The event was organised by Steven Banks and Mark Tenby, and the hardy crew included Rabbi Rubin and his son Pinny, who had just celebrated his Bar Mitzvah.

On a wet and windy morning, two buses and eight cars set off for the middle of nowhere to start the 3000ft climb. Initially, climbing through the forest lulled everyone into a false sense of security, but as they cleared the sheltered area, the conditions seemed to worsen with every few steps taken! The wind became gale force, and driving rain soaked the participants and their back packs. Many climbers decided to turn back after a couple of hours, but a few hardy souls carried on, tackling a narrow ridge, with a sharp drop on either side, to reach the summit. To their credit some of the younger climbers made it to the top: Gil Banks, Matthew Tenby, Curtis Bennett, and Noah Black, all aged 12, and from the same Bar Mitzvah year.

Mark Cohen kindly provided a packed lunch for everyone once he had achieved the summit - with a folded table attached to his body! Richard Dover set up camp at the base of the mountain with a table and chairs, extra water, foil blankets and first aid kits which he had donated. The foil blankets were used by most people as they struggled to keep warm even after a change of clothes. And all the homemade soups helped too! There was panic over a lost dog, and one casualty who slipped and twisted her ankle just at the moment when she had decided to retreat down the mountain, but friends were on hand to help and a later x-ray showed that nothing was broken. The dog is well too!

Everyone felt justifiably proud of their exploit. A hardy band had taken to the mountains of Scotland and £2000 was raised for the shul. They probably won't do it again, but it was quite a remarkable day!



### Is the grass greener?

*"From Israel to Argyll... so much water, and more water, in every place and around every corner. To an Israeli this is something so very special - our land struggles all the time with the lack of it.*

*And the air is so clear and clean, it's a joy to breathe! People are much more tranquil, and they drive with such good manners it was fun to be just a tourist ..."*

ARNON FRIEDMAN

## 5<sup>TH</sup> CORNER

# fringes

ALBERT J. KIRSHEN

(LEFT, WITH EPHRAIM BOROWSKI DRESSED FOR PURIM IN DUNDEE)



Have you ever stopped to look at the tzitzit, the fringes, on the talit, and wondered why we make a point of wearing them? Don't they look funny sticking out from some people's trousers, hanging from our talitot, swinging with movement, catching on things. Yet there they are - always with us in prayer.

I've thought a great deal about tzitzit during and after my recent sojourn in Dundee and Scotland now that I'm back in the Toronto area. Toronto is privileged to have every flavour of minyan you might imagine (and a few you can't.) Restaurants are easily found. Yet something has felt lacking at times.

So how does this all relate to tzitzit? Toronto, and New York see themselves as the centres of the Jewish universe. People gravitate towards each, much as they do towards Glasgow, Manchester and London. Yet Toronto, and New York are incomplete, for all that one may see tzitzit literally flapping in the breeze in each.

They are incomplete without ALL of us, especially those of us "on the fringe". Let's be honest - we see ourselves on the fringes of Jewish life, when we live in Dundee, or St. Andrews. Yet without the tzitzit, a garment or, in this case, the Jewish continuum, is incomplete. We make a point of wearing our tzitzit in prayer, and cannot pray properly without them. So, too, are we who don't live in Manchester or London. We are tzitzit, a requirement for our coreligionists, for their prayers to be properly received.

May those of us "on the fringe" continue to enjoy strength and growth as Jews and people, so that all of the community of Israel may one day merit the arrival of the Moshiach, may he come rapidly and in our time.

*I recently completed a short sabbatical in Dundee. The scenery of the Firth of Tay greeting me each morning, with greenery on both banks of the Firth in mid-winter, was heartening. T'fillah at the crack of dawn in my single room, no distractions beyond the lovely scenery outside, added to my sense of calm and ability. Walking along Perth Road with its stone walls felt like a short jaunt into the past. And joining the Dundee Hebrew Congregation in their gatherings, with their friendliness (and Scotch) helped maintain a sense of community.*

*Glasgow also contributed greatly to my appreciation of Scotland, when I spent Shabbat there during the weekends of the 4 parshiyot. The community warmth and acceptance of a fellow Jew, travelling, far from home and family, emphasized to me the special mitzvah of Glasgow and of Scotland - hachnassat orchim, the taking in of visitors. Please accept my thanks for your hospitality and generosity while I was with you all.*

*May you merit the opportunity and strength to continue to excel in your mitzvah, and in all the mitzvot, for many years to come.*

# SCOJeC AGM 7 JUNE 2009



*"I doubt whether any other Jewish community has found itself so deeply involved with the day to day work of its country's government."*

That was the verdict of Dr Walter Sneader, looking back on his first year as Chair of SCOJeC. He commented on the wide range of activities reported to the meeting, and said he was particularly impressed by the close relationship of Leah Granat and Ephraim Borowski with the Scottish Government, Parliament, and other civic bodies. In addition to its engagement with politicians and others, Dr Sneader stressed SCOJeC's efforts to bring together Jewish people from outside the main conurbations.

SCOJeC Director, Ephraim Borowski, highlighted some of SCOJeC's activities during the past year, particularly the Interfaith Pilgrimage, MEMO, MEMO+ and the outreach project, all of which had attracted Government support. He also spoke of the fallout from the war in Gaza which resulted in a significant peak in antisemitic activity - 16 events in January 2009 compared with only 10 throughout 2008. The Scottish Government and police had asked SCOJeC to brief them about this, assuring SCOJeC of their concern, but the increased stridency of anti-Israel rhetoric that crosses into explicit antisemitism or creates the climate for others to do so, continues to cause disquiet.

Introducing their report on current issues, Ephraim and Leah commented on the importance of reflecting all views in the community. When SCOJeC is preparing a response to a consultation, they first consult widely with

relevant organisations and interested individuals, and then circulate a draft for comment. When opinion in the Community is sharply divided, SCOJeC either does not submit a response or makes the division of opinion clear. They thanked all who assist with this process, which helps contribute to the democratic legitimacy of the Council.

The meeting agreed to establish a panel of Consultants, including former Chairs, John Cosgrove and Kenneth Collins, to provide the Council with expert advice. A warm welcome was given to new Edinburgh representative Gillian Raab (Chair, Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community), and co-optees Nicola Livingston, Neil Livingstone, and Simon Dover.

*The following office-bearers were elected:*

*Chair: Walter Sneader (Glasgow)*

*Vice-Chairs:*

*Philip Mendelsohn (Glasgow ex officio)*

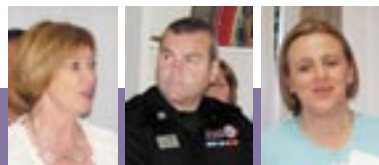
*Hilary Rifkind (Edinburgh ex officio)*

*Paul Spicker (Dundee)*

*Treasurer:*

*Neil Livingstone (co-opted member)*

## SCOJeC LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING



L TO R: ANN O'NEILL (CRBS)  
GROUP COMMANDER JIM SCOTT  
(STRATHCLYDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE)  
LYNN MACINTOSH (UK BORDER AGENCY)

More than 30 people from around 20 organisations attended a recent briefing organised by SCOJeC on recent and forthcoming legislative changes that could have a major impact on the Community.

◆ The most demanding of these are the new **border controls** for people coming from outwith the European Economic Area. Lynn Macintosh from the UK Border Agency (UKBA) explained that people coming to participate in an event in Scotland - even as a volunteer and for only a few hours - must be sponsored by an organisation registered with the UKBA, and must also apply for a visa under the "points-based system" (PBS) at a British consulate. SCOJeC is registered to sponsor visitors coming to work in the Jewish Community, and the UKBA will accept SCOJeC's assurances that visitors are able to support themselves in the UK. However, this arrangement would be withdrawn if it was found to be abused, and breaches could also attract criminal penalties, so that SCOJeC has an obligation to report any organisations or visitors who breach these terms, in order to protect the good name of the Community.

◆ The new **fire safety** regime was explained by Group Commander Jim Scott of the Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service. This places an obligation on those responsible for premises to carry out their own risk assessments, and to keep a written record. The Fire Service will periodically audit all premises and can issue a variety of enforcement notices, and failure to comply with the regulations could affect organisations' insurance.

◆ The present "Disclosure" system for obtaining **criminal record checks** for anyone working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults only provides a snapshot at the time a check is requested. Ann O'Neill from the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS), which operates this system for voluntary organisations, explained that a new system will be introduced from mid-2010, which will continuously update records. Ann O'Neill said that the way in which SCOJeC operates, so that one "Disclosure" allows a volunteer to work for many Jewish communal organisations, has worked well and will continue.



◆ Some of the requirements of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) were highlighted by Leah Granat, SCOJeC Public Affairs Officer. She stressed that the importance of charities keeping in touch with OSCR since failure to do so can result in a loss of charitable status. This almost happened to a number of communal charities which failed to respond to communications from OSCR and were only saved from delisting after SCOJeC had alerted them to the situation. Leah reminded organisations that charities operating in Scotland must show their charity number and all the names by which they are known on a wide range of documents, including stationery, e-mails, and adverts.

Winding up the meeting, SCOJeC Director Ephraim Borowski stressed the consequences of failing to comply with regulations both for the organisation concerned and for the good name of the Jewish community. SCOJeC has excellent connections with regulatory bodies enable it to help communal organisations effectively in these matters, and is always happy to give advice and assistance. Fuller details of the briefing can be found at [http://www.scojec.org/events/2009/09vi\\_briefing/briefing.html](http://www.scojec.org/events/2009/09vi_briefing/briefing.html)

Another briefing session will be held in a couple of months' time for those unable to attend in June. Contact Leah (0141-638 6411, [leah@scojec.org](mailto:leah@scojec.org)) for more information.