



Giving a Voice to Your Experience

NEWSLETTER

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VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Welcome to the first edition of the Voice of Experience Forum newsletter of the new decade! The Board and staff would like to take this opportunity to wish our members, funders and partners a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

The coming year will continue to see us involved in VoEF events, partnership events, consultations, meetings and discussions on matters affecting older people on both a local and national level. We look forward to continuing to serve, support and inform all older people in the North Lanarkshire area.

We hope that 2020 is a year of fun, friendship and new experiences for us all!



INTRODUCING OUR NEW DEVELOPMENT WORKER — DENIS O’KEEFE

We would like to introduce you to our new Development Worker, Denis O’Keefe. Denis has previous experience in the voluntary sector as a development worker and has been employed by a number of organisations including the Royal Voluntary Service and Larkhall & District Volunteer Group.



Denis is looking forward to making contact with our members and partners in the next few months. He is currently very busy familiarising himself with the local area and its groups and has already started to organise a number of events—keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter pages for more information.

'THE SAIR FECHT'

We had a fabulous turnout at our performances of the Safety Play 'The Sair Fecht' at **Lanarkshire Deaf Club** and **Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre, Bellshill** in November.

We would like to thank our partners who attended the events—especially Maggie Aitken of Daisychain Associates, Victim Support Lanarkshire, Red Cross and NLC Road Safety.

Our thanks also to other partners involved in the creation and running of the project—Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NLC Trading Standards and Alzheimer Scotland.

This project has now come to an end, however, we will shortly be announcing a number of Adult Risk Awareness events within Shotts and Wishaw funded by NHS Lanarkshire—details to follow.

What We've Been Up To & A New Initiative

In October we took part in NLC's Annual Tenants Conference at Coatbridge High School. The successful conference was packed with information, networking sessions and the famous marketplace, and gave tenants and residents the opportunity to find out more about plans for homes and communities in North Lanarkshire and have their say in key areas.



Presentations were given highlighting the new Tenant Participation Strategy. A repairs surgery and speed networking sessions, covering topics including Digital NL, community safety, dementia friendly living and town centres 'Shared Vision for our towns and communities' also took place.

We also attended Age Scotland's West Regional Network event which updated us on walking netball, dementia friendly communities, banking cons and scams, benefits updates and befriending.



In November we ran our last two safety events—details to the left. The audiences at Lanarkshire Deaf Club and Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre provided excellent feedback on the events and thoroughly enjoyed the content of the play and talks given by partners. We were also represented at North

Lanarkshire Disability Forums AGM in Motherwell.

Although the festive period impacted on the number of events attended in December, we were excited to participate in Age Scotland's National General Elections Hustings in Glasgow and Lanarkshire Links quarterly members meeting in Motherwell.

The above events were in addition to those attended by our very busy Board Members who continued to be actively involved in a number of discussions across North Lanarkshire including Assimilation meetings, Local Planning Groups, Community Council meetings, Local Consortiums as well as various clubs, groups and Senior Forums.



Motherwell residents with dementia to be offered free fire safety visits

People living in Motherwell, who have been newly diagnosed with dementia, are now being offered free fire safety visits to help them safely remain within their own home for longer. The joint project between NHS Lanarkshire and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will see people living at home with dementia being referred for the visits.

Following the visit, their details will be added to Scottish Fire and Rescue Services database, to inform fire officers of any potential difficulties during future visits or evacuation. NHS Lanarkshire and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are working together to expand the programme to other areas within Lanarkshire.



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Funeral Support Payment

What is Funeral Support Payment?

It's a payment available to people in Scotland, who are on certain benefits or tax credits, and need support to meet the costs of a funeral.

Can I get it?

You may be eligible if you meet all of the criteria below:

- you are responsible for the payment of the funeral
- you live in Scotland
- the person who died lived in the UK
- you are the nearest relative of the person who died
- the funeral takes place in the UK or, in some cases, in a member state of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland
- you are in receipt of, or have applied for one of the qualifying benefits.*

*Universal Credit (UC), Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit (CTC) and disability or severe disability element of Working Tax Credit.



When can I apply?

People can apply from when the person dies, and up to six months after the funeral.

How much will I get?

It is a part-payment and will cover some, but likely not all, of the funeral costs. This is dependent on individual funeral choices and varying fees for services across Scotland. If eligible, the amount you get will depend on what you have claimed and what funds were left by the person who died. Funeral Support Payment can pay an average of £1,300 and can cover:

- burial and cremation costs (these costs vary throughout the country, therefore an average local amount will be paid)
- £700 for other expenses. If the person who died had a funeral plan or funeral insurance, this amount will be reduced to £120
- some travel costs, document costs and medical costs.

How many people can get this payment?

One person per funeral.

How can I apply?

You can apply using our freephone helpline on 0800 182 2222, by post or online at mygov.scot/funeral-support-payment. Before you apply for Funeral Support Payment you should register the death and give your funeral director (if you have one) consent to speak with us about your application. Doing so will speed up the processing time for your application.

How long after applying will people have to wait to get their payment?

You should receive a decision within 10 working days of us receiving a completed application form, along with all supportive evidence that is required. Your payment will follow shortly afterwards.

What evidence will be required?

Bills or receipts for the items you are claiming, for example travel receipts to plan or attend the funeral, will be required. You will be sent a pre-paid envelope that you should return to us to start your application.

Do I need to pay this money back?

No, it's not a loan and doesn't need to be repaid by you. If the person who died left financial assets we will recover this payment from their estate.

Is the money paid to me directly?

We pay it directly to your chosen financial account or direct to the funeral director (this is normally the preferred choice, but we will need your permission to do this).

Does it affect other benefits?

No, Funeral Support Payment will not have an impact on any other benefits or tax credits.

VoEF Membership

FREE Membership of Voice of Experience Forum is open to all older people and organisations representing older people in North Lanarkshire.

Benefits of becoming a member include:

- Regular Newsletters
- Invitations to events
- Being involved in consultations
- Your views & opinions being heard by other agencies
- Influence in the planning of service provision for older people

VoEF also deliver presentations throughout North Lanarkshire.

If you run a group or attend a group for individuals over the age of sixty and would like to book VoEF for a presentation, please get in touch with Denis O'Keefe using the details on page 1.

Remember, Membership is **FREE!**



The Board of NHS Lanarkshire has approved a shortlist of **three** potential sites for a new, state-of-the-art University Hospital Monklands. The shortlisted sites are (in alphabetical order):

- Gartcosh
- Glenmavis
- Wester Moffat

The land at Wester Moffat is a new addition to the options for an alternative location for the hospital, and was identified through a public site nominations process run by NHS Lanarkshire.

The community will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the three shortlisted sites before a site re-evaluation process is undertaken through a formal scoring event involving a representative group of members of the public and NHS staff.

The NHS Lanarkshire Board also approved a recommendation that the scoring event should involve 100 participants, 51 of whom will be members of the public.

The site scoring event, planned for March, will be a formal, objective assessment based on an agreed set of benefits criteria. To ensure impartiality, it will be facilitated by an independent engagement organisation. To provide the opportunity for fully informed public feedback in advance of the scoring event, NHS Lanarkshire will publish detailed information on each of the shortlisted sites by the end of January. This will cover issues such as site history, site conditions, transport and travel information, site remediation costs, road infrastructure costs and construction costs.

The public will then have the opportunity to:

- Suggest additions or changes to the proposed benefits criteria for the scoring event;
- Be a participant in the scoring event. Use NHS Lanarkshire's open channel of communication;
- Take part in "People's Hearings". NHS Lanarkshire intends to publish, at the end of January, details of how to participate in the People's Hearings, which are planned for late February.

See the MRP webpage – www.monklands.scot.nhs.uk – for more information.