



Voice of Experience Forum

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Welcome to our May Newsletter. We have been busy here at Voice of Experience Forum planning for the year ahead as well as hosting the usual events.

In February, we held an "Information Event", in Airdrie, about the new system being introduced by Social Security Scotland and the new Sheltered Housing Service from North Lanarkshire Council. The event was opened with some songs from the Carers Choir which meets regularly in St Margaret's Church Hall, which was a great way to energise attendees and get the event underway.

A big thanks to all who came along and helped us with the event.

In March we held our first "Not Just You!" safety event in Lanarkshire Deaf Club, Motherwell. The event is in the form of a play commissioned by the Voice of Experience Forum and written by Maggie Aitken from Daisy Chain Associates. It was very well received. The play incorporates some humour as well as portraying real life situations.

The information stalls were provided by our partners who have helped shape and deliver the project; Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Services, North Lanarkshire Council Road Safety, Victim Support, Red Cross, Lanarkshire Deaf Club and Voice of Experience Forum.

The event was signed, to be inclusive of the deaf community, and is the first time that the Voice of Experience Forum has worked with the Deaf Club. We aim to do more partnership work with the deaf community going forward and make our services more accessible.



The event was a great success, attendees saying it was :

"Interesting and fun!", "Very enjoyable", "Lots of information and support", "Lots of information and met so many different people" and "Fan-dabi-dosi!"

We will be delivering more of these events across North Lanarkshire, see over the page for further information!

Hope to see you there!

Not Just You!

Following the successful launch of our safety event in Motherwell, the next event will take place on the Friday 31st May from 1-3pm in Newmains Community Trust Centre, 15 Manse Rd, Newmains, Wishaw, ML2 9AX .

Delivered as a play, **'The Sair Fecht'** is about Fiona and Michael – she's getting home early from hospital. He's horrified!

After the performance there's an opportunity for discussion, questions and sharing of experiences. There will also be an opportunity to visit stalls from our partners at Victim Support, Trading Standards, Red Cross, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, Road Safety . **There are limited spaces, so please book through Pauline or Beverley on 01236 439550 to avoid disappointment.**

A Sheltered Housing Service Fit For The Future

North Lanarkshire Council has spent the past year reviewing their sheltered housing service to identify the best way forward to help meet the broad range of housing needs of older people.

The service was last reviewed in 2009, and since then there has been significant change in how services are delivered, with more support and services delivered in the community, helping older people live well at home for longer. Considerable developments and progress in the way that technology is used has also had a notable impact, with an increasing range of technology based solutions available for people that can help enable independence and provide greater control and choice. Improvement in health care has also meant that people are living for longer, which is really positive, however this also brings challenges in the demand for housing and support services.



North Lanarkshire Council is the largest social landlord in Scotland with over 37,000 properties of which sheltered housing accounts for 3%. Considering these factors it is crucial more than ever that the Council ensures that sheltered housing is allocated effectively and that sheltered housing support is targeted appropriately to help meet the needs of older people in North Lanarkshire.

In the summer of 2018 North Lanarkshire Council carried out consultation on proposals for a new sheltered housing support service. This involved the creation of three categories of older people's housing:

Sheltered Plus – providing enhanced housing support, 24/7 emergency response service, capacity to meet high housing support needs, suitable for people aged 60 or over who need housing support to live well in their own home; who may be socially isolated where they live currently; and their current home is no longer suitable for their needs

Retirement Housing – providing enhanced housing management, 24/7 emergency response service, suitable for people aged 60 or over who would benefit from increased social opportunities and a retirement housing management service

Amenity Housing – housing specifically designated for people aged 60 or over, suitable for people aged 60 or over who wish to reside in housing specifically allocated to older people

North Lanarkshire Council received approval in November to implement these proposals and is on track to implement them for the 1st April 2019.

Mr Stephen Llewellyn, Head of Housing Solutions, said: 'The new sheltered housing service will help us address some of the issues we experience in mismatch in supply and demand for sheltered housing and help ensure that resources are targeted effectively to meet the broad range of older people's needs, supporting older people to live well for longer in their own home'.



If you would like to find out more about the new sheltered housing service please contact Margaret Kelly, Business Strategy Officer, North Lanarkshire Council on 01698 274154 or kellymarg@northlan.gov.uk

Tenant Participation Team

Want to get more involved in Housing Services?

North Lanarkshire Council have a dedicated Tenant Participation Team which is made up of Tracy Lennon; Tenant Participation Manager, Julie Gonzales Bradley; Tenant Participation Officer, Nancy Robertson; Tenant Participation Officer and Kate McDonagh, Administration Officer.



The team supports Tenant and Resident Associations and individuals from across North Lanarkshire to get involved in housing services in a whole range of ways.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved;

- Form or join a local tenants and residents group
- Get involved as an individual and join our interested individuals database
- Attend issue based events and consultations
- Come along and join in conferences and housing events
- Work with local housing staff to improve your area
- Take part in surveys

Tenants and residents can also take part in estate walkabouts; this is great opportunity to take a walk round your local community with local housing staff and highlight areas that require action, repair or improvement.

Tenant Scrutiny offers tenants and residents a way to take an in-depth look at housing services by joining a scrutiny group.

The Tenant Participation Team are available at local housing offices across North Lanarkshire at various times; so you can call in and talk to a member of the team.

Just contact the team on **01698 302565** or email tenantparticipation@northlan.gov.uk to find out when they will be in your local area. They can also help you find out more about what's happening in your area or any of the participation activities listed above. You can also follow the activities of the team via Facebook at [@nlctenantparticipation](https://www.facebook.com/nlctenantparticipation).

So why not get in touch and get involved!

Trading Standards Alert!

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 Beverley Lockhart using the details on page 1.

Membership is FREE!

Trading Standards have asked us to bring the following information to your attention!

ROGUE TRADERS OPERATING IN THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE AREA

Householders in Airdrie, Coatbridge and Wishaw are warned to beware of roofing companies calling at their door claiming to be able to access grant funding from North Lanarkshire Council to help householders replace the roofs/roughcast of their homes.

Cases have been reported in the last few weeks, where a business has been visiting properties in areas where Council sub-contractors are carrying out roofing/roughcasting works and attempting to gain roofing contracts by telling homeowners they are working on behalf of North Lanarkshire Council and can secure government funding for roof replacement works, thus offering discounted quotes.

The Council's Trading Standards and Private Sector Housing teams are putting out the following advice:

- First and foremost it is your home and you do not have to answer the door to anyone.
- Always ask for a written quote and if they won't give you this then go no further.
- Make sure you get your right to cancel in writing and don't let any work commence before you are completely satisfied it is necessary. You should be given a 14 day cooling off period unless you sign away this right.
- Don't take their word that the repairs are needed and get further opinions and quotes from recommended traders.
- Make background checks on the company. Search for the company on the internet or ask a friend or relative to help do so. Does the address check out, what about the phone numbers?

**If you have any concerns about rogue traders,
call
Advice Direct Scotland
on
0808 164 6000**

Never challenge anyone on your own and if you have concerns for your safety contact the police.

Stay safe!