

GIVING A VOICE TO YOUR EXPERIENCE

Voice
of
Experience
Forum

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VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM NEWSLETTER



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Welcome to our Winter Newsletter

Welcome to the Winter edition of our quarterly newsletter. The staff and Trustees at Voice of Experience Forum would like to wish all of our members a healthy and happy year ahead. Due to the commencement of a new funding agreement at the start of October, we are entering a period of change for the organisation and the communities which we serve.



This may mean some changes to the way in which VoEF delivers services to our members but rest assured we will continue to champion your rights, views and opinions, whether individually or as a group.

As always, we are seeking to increase the size and reach of our membership to amplify your voices in all matters of interest to older residents of North Lanarkshire. If you have a friend, relative or neighbour, please encourage them to join—membership is free! You can contact us via the details on the blue panel on the left hand side.



Voice of Experience Forum 2024 Calendar

With the help of a grant from Bellshill Locality Activity Fund we produced and distributed 2,000 copies of this handy resource to localities across North Lanarkshire in December. The calendar is full of useful information and contact numbers for you to access easily. We appreciate that some people prefer a digital version, so the calendar is also available via the 'News and Events' section of our website <https://voef.org.uk/>

The theme this year is "Engagement & Participation" and we have tried to reflect this in the Calendar by providing examples of partners who evidence this in their daily operations.

As always, there is a Wordsearch competition with a £50 voucher prize for a supermarket of your choice. More importantly, we welcome your feedback on the design and content of the Calendar, if you have any suggestions for future editions, please let us know.

Donation to St Andrew's Hospice



Voice of Experience Forum were pleased to donate a cheque for £25 to St Andrew's Hospice, which was received from Chapelhall Women's Group, in respect of a presentation delivered on the application process for Power of Attorney.

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM — INCREASING FINANCIAL AWARENESS IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE



Power of Attorney

Since our last edition of the newsletter, we have delivered presentations on the application process for Power of Attorney, to groups in Newarthill and Shotts. These have generated a healthy level of interest resulting in 5 positive interactions with people wanting to proceed with their POA applications. Also, 2 out of these 5 were possibly looking to instruct mirror POAs with their spouses. This was from one group only, and is evidence of the importance of these presentations. We have a number of presentations booked for the coming months and these will continue at intervals throughout the year.

Social Security Scotland Benefits for Older People



VoEF also deliver presentations on the Social Security benefits available to older people who are resident in Scotland. These are worth keeping up with as new benefits are being introduced seasonally.

Consultations

VoEF have been coordinating North Lanarkshire's response to the Proposed Bill for a Commissioner for Older People for Scotland.

Currently, the non Government Bills Team are reviewing the responses and compiling a report which they hope to publish in the New Year. Colin Smyth (MSP for South Scotland Scottish Labour) will bring forward a Bill later in the year. Once we hear the outcome, we will be sure to feed back the impact of our consultation to our members.

Getting it Right for Everyone—GIRFE



Focus Groups

VoEF participate in the 'Getting It Right For Everyone' steering group to ensure that residents within the over 60's community in North Lanarkshire are represented fully in the discussions around service provision.

As a result, VoEF would be interested in obtaining the views of under represented groups or those who feel their voices are seldom heard, to ensure inclusivity in the process. These might include, but are not limited to, groups such as those with addictions, BAME communities, LGBTQIA groups, Gypsy Travellers and "New Scots".

Should you wish to be included or, if you would like to find out more before deciding whether to become involved, then please feel free to call Denis on 07305 692098 for an informal chat to discuss your options.

COMMUNITY AND WIDER INFORMATION

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGION



VoEF Hospital Outreach



Voice of Experience Forum are undertaking outreach activities within University Hospital Wishaw, on the first Tuesday of each month. We are located in the entrance foyer to the right as you arrive through the main door. In addition to this, we will trial a similar project at University Hospital Monklands, on the third Thursday of each month.

Both of these initiatives have a number of aims including, promoting the organisation, increasing our membership and providing information to the wider community. If you are attending the hospital or accompanying/visiting someone else, please stop for a chat and say hello. We are happy to tell you what we have been up to and help in any way we can.

Rabbie Does Strictly – Tea Dance with Falls Prevention



Voice of Experience Forum, in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire's Health Improvement Team and the Falls Prevention Team, delivered a community event whose aims included beating the blues on Blue Monday, tackling social isolation and loneliness in older people, increasing the awareness of falls prevention and safety and raising awareness of the impacts of alcohol.



The event was funded by Community Solutions via the Bellshill, Motherwell, and Wishaw & Shotts consortiums. Initially, 81 people registered for the event however, due to temperatures falling to -4° on the day, 59 guests attended, an outstanding turnout given the conditions underfoot! Attendees were accompanied by 18 stallholders who provided a wide range of supports aimed at improving health and well-being and reducing the risks of trip hazards in the home.

The event was a roaring success and Rabbie himself would have been proud of the turnout and more so in the participation of those attending.



The evaluations which were completed were evidence of the multiple benefits of the event in providing an educative and fun experience while raising awareness of the contributory factors and risks in the home environment.



Everyone took part in strength and balance exercises and after lunch, music was provided by a DJ and a large dance floor allowed for people to get up and strut their stuff, which they gladly accepted. Elvis even made an appearance! A great time was had by all.



INFORMATION FROM ACROSS NORTH LANARKSHIRE

VoEF Membership

FREE Membership of Voice of Experience Forum is open to anyone over the age of 60 and organisations representing older people in North Lanarkshire.

Benefits of becoming a member include:

- Regular Newsletters
- Invitations to events
- Involvement 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 60 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!**

Winter Health Hub



As the new year unfolds, NHS Lanarkshire is encouraging local residents to prioritise their health and wellbeing by understanding the healthcare options available to them.

Throughout the remainder of the winter season, the online Winter Health Hub will continue to highlight the wide range of NHS services where you can get help in lots of ways if you feel unwell.

The hub provides a centralised portal, outlining the healthcare options available to help people seek the right care in the right place.

<https://www.nhs.uk/news/look-after-yourself-this-new-year>

SCAM ALERT!

Age Scotland Impersonation Scam



The Scam

Age Scotland has warned the public to be wary of cold callers who say they work for the organisation. Scammers will say that you are eligible to receive a £500 grant from Age Scotland and ask you to provide your contact details and bank account information.

How to Avoid

Don't give any details to a cold caller. If you are unsure whether a call from an organisation is legitimate, hang up and contact the organisation using a number found on their website or in an official directory.

Never give a cold caller any personal information, even if they already have some of your details. Be wary of any cold call where you are offered a grant, prize or anything else that sounds too good to be true.

Contact your bank immediately if you think you may have given your account details to a scammer.

If you are worried about an older relative, you can sign them up to the Telephone Preference Service for free by calling 034 070 0707 or online at www.tpsonline.org.uk.