

# GIVING A VOICE TO YOUR EXPERIENCE

Voice  
of  
Experience  
Forum

ISSUE 67  
JANUARY 2025

REGISTERED CHARITY  
NUMBER SC037466

## VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM NEWSLETTER



Inside this issue:

Welcome	1
Lottery funded events	1
Community Work	2
VoEF Outreach update	2
Seldom Heard Communities	3
Summerlee: New Stories	3
Consultations—Your voice	3
NHS Winter Advice & Help	4
Current Scam	4

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## Welcome to our Winter Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of our 2025 newsletter. We hope this year will be as successful as 2024, in which we secured funding from The National Lottery Fund, allowing us to plan and deliver a range of health and well-being workshops to 2026. The Forum was also successful in reaching and surpassing the 350 members milestone and we aim to continue to increase our membership in the coming year.

We hope that you managed to stay safe and well over the festive period and enjoyed the company of family and friends. As we enter a new year, Voice of Experience Forum look ahead to delivering more Digital Safety Awareness and Health Improvement workshops, building upon those delivered in November in Kilsyth and Coatbridge. We will also continue to our core work of representing older people in North Lanarkshire to ensure your voices and views are heard.

## LOTTERY FUNDED EVENTS



In the last quarter, VoEF has been active in delivering the first of our Digital Safety Awareness (DSA) events and our second Health Improvement event in line with the funding received from The National Lottery.



A DSA event was held in Kilsyth on 12<sup>th</sup> November and was well attended. A follow-up event with the group has been arranged for 11<sup>th</sup> February in partnership with AbilityNet, who will be delivering a workshop on “Getting to Know your Device” as part of the legacy we wish to leave following each of our workshops.

On 27<sup>th</sup> November VoEF in partnership with NHS Falls Prevention Team, successfully delivered a Falls Prevention event to residents of Coatbridge, at Blairhill/Dundyvan Church in Blairhill Street.



The event included a light lunch and was attended by 28 people. The information and advice imparted was well received by the participants. VoEF will be delivering more of these events across the local authority between now and July 2026. If your group are interested in being involved in one of these, please contact **Denis** on **07305 692098**.

# VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM — YOUR VOICE AND VIEWS MATTER



## PRESENTATIONS TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

\*\*\*\*\* KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UPCOMING DATES \*\*\*\*\*

VoEF continues to provide information presentations on a range of topics to over 60's throughout North Lanarkshire which will have a positive affect on their well-being.

In October, we delivered our new SCAMS presentation to New Wellwynd Church and Chapelhall Women's Group in Airdrie. Both presentations received a positive response as evidenced in the feedback from the groups. We were also recently invited to Waddell Avenue Retirement Home to deliver a full presentation to the residents which resulted in new members. This month we provided a short presentation to the NL Community & Voluntary Sector on our organisation, outlining the work we do along with the benefits of becoming a member. If you have friends or family who you think would benefit from membership, please pass on our details—we would love to hear from them!



We are delighted to announce that we have further digital awareness and health improvement events planned across the local authority between now and July of this year. The provisional location for the **Health Improvement** event is **Bellshill** around April/May. The **Digital Awareness** events are being planned for **Cumbernauld** and **Wishaw**. **Dates and venues for both event are yet to be confirmed.** Keep an eye on social media for updates!

## VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FORUM COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Presentations to Community Groups:

Over the Autumn season, VoEF delivered 4 presentations on a range of subjects including SCAMS and the purposes and benefits of becoming a member of Voice of Experience Forum.

**Hospital Information Stalls:** Voice of Experience continues to undertake outreach activities within University Hospital Wishaw, on the first Tuesday of each month and at University Hospital Monklands, on the third Thursday of each month. **NHS Lanarkshire** VoEF engaged with 26 individuals (including patients, visitors and NHS staff) through our information stalls at Monklands and Wishaw hospitals during the last quarter, resulting in new members and multiple opportunities to signpost the supports that we and other local organisation can provide.

**Donation to St Andrew's Hospice:** VoEF were pleased to accept a generous donation from Chapelhall Women's Group in respect of the SCAMS presentation which was delivered on 23/10/24. We subsequently donated this to St. Andrew's Hospice as a gesture of local support for this vital resource.

### Visit to Grantees from the Growth Pot Fund



Denis maintained contact with the third of our allocated recipients of the Engagement & Participation Growth Pot Fund (Round 1) as part of the support and information which is provided in conjunction with the funding awards. Included in this edition are the Bestway Community kitchen group, located at the Jerviston Community Centre.



# COMMUNITY AND WIDER INFORMATION

## NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGION



VoEF has been engaging with rural and seldom heard communities to promote our organisation, the Engagement & Participation Network and the Growth Pot Fund.

Denis was delighted to be invited to celebrate a Christmas evening with the Ukrainian community of Wishaw and Motherwell held in the Gowkthrapple Community Hall in December. It was a great opportunity to meet and speak with most of the people who attended, to hear some of the traditional music and songs from Ukraine and, not least, to try some delicious Ukrainian food. We hope that this engagement will strengthen the links between the over 60's in this community, ourselves and the wider community.



>< **NewScots** We are currently in discussions with regard to holding an event which will promote integration for the over 60's, as part of the wider New Scots community.

### Summerlee: New stories, New Audiences, Better Lives' Project

The Forum has been invited to provide input on the plans for the development of the above project from the perspective of older residents of North Lanarkshire. The Museum celebrated it's 36th anniversary in 2024 and the missing period of interpretation is from Post-War to the closure of Ravenscraig Steelworks.

Specific areas of interest include: former customer's and staff of the Rainbow Café and Tommy Tango's both in Coatbridge, former customers and staff of the White House shop which was in Kilsyth, former employees of Ravenscraig and people who arrived from abroad to begin a new life in North Lanarkshire. So, if you fit one or more of these categories, the Project Officer and Curator would be interested in speaking to you regarding your experiences which will help shape the redevelopment of the current site.

There are 5 key areas of development planned and these are: Miner's Village, Miner's Welfare Hall, Boat Shed Creative & Gallery Space, Learning Landscape, and Learning Centre. To get involved, please contact Denis on 07305 692098 for further details.

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE CONSULTATIONS

### - Your Views Matter -

There are a number of live consultations on the NLC website via the below link:-

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/working-communities/consultations/live-consultations>

Subjects such as 'Tell Us About Your Place', 'Local Transport Strategy' 'Community Safety Strategy' and 'Digital Zone Consultation' are available for you to provide your views and have your voices heard. Please take the time to have a look. It really is important for those making decisions to hear what's important to your age group!

# 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

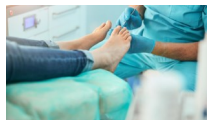
VoEF also deliver presentations throughout North Lanarkshire.

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 ADVICE FROM NHS LANARKSHIRE

NHS Lanarkshire is encouraging residents to prioritise their foot health this winter with support from its expert Podiatry Service. NHS Lanarkshire's Podiatry Service provides informed self-care advice, assessment, and treatment for a wide array of conditions affecting foot health including common aches and pains or more complex problems such as diabetic foot care.



The **Podiatry Hub** is open from **Monday to Friday** from **8am to 5pm**. Call the hub on **01698 753753** for any queries or to discuss your concerns with staff.

For more information about the self-referral podiatry hub, and to access useful information, visit:- <https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/podiatry/>

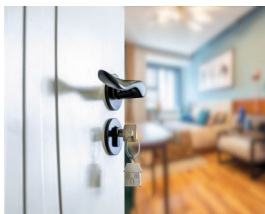
### Look After Your Eyes and Ears

**Eye Health:** During winter, lower light levels can strain your eyes, so regular tests are essential—annually if you're over 60. Ensure your glasses are clean and fit well, especially as fogging in cold weather can blur your vision. If you wear bifocal or varifocal lenses, consider single-lens glasses for better clarity when navigating icy paths.

**Hearing Matters:** Winter weather can amplify hearing challenges due to cold winds or wearing hats. If you notice changes in your hearing, book a test. Good hearing supports balance, helping you navigate icy or slippery conditions confidently.

## HOLIDAY BOOKING SCAM

### The Scam



Action Fraud have recently warned customers using the Booking.com platform to be wary of unusual messages or phishing emails from hotel accounts. Several hotels have had their accounts on the platform taken over by scammers, who are messaging customers with reservations to ask for additional payments or credit card details.

### How to Avoid

**AVOID**

Booking.com has confirmed that **no legitimate transaction on their platform will ever require a customer to provide their credit card details by phone, email, or text message (including WhatsApp).**

If you receive any urgent payment requests that require immediate attention, such as a booking cancellation, **confirm them by contacting the Booking.com Customer Service team** via the details on their official website or app. If you have any doubts about a message, **contact Booking.com directly** using the details from their official website. Don't use contact details provided in a suspicious message.