



## **Community Briefing – 21 November 2022**

Welcome to the latest edition of the Community Briefing, which is packed with information for you to share with your community. We hope you find the content useful.

### **Updates from West Lancashire Borough Council**

#### **West Lancashire Leisure Access Card Membership**

More Leisure Community Trust are offering a Leisure Access Card which gives eligible residents in West Lancashire up to 50% discount on a whole range of activities including: Gym, Swimming, Badminton, Squash, and Health Suite for £2 annually.

The card can be used at all three West Lancashire Leisure Centres (Ny Bevan Pool, Skelmersdale, Park Pool, Ormskirk, and Burscough Racquet & Fitness Centre.

For more information and eligibility criteria visit the [website](http://www.westlancsleisure.com/west-lancashire-leisure-access-card-membership/): [www.westlancsleisure.com/west-lancashire-leisure-access-card-membership/](http://www.westlancsleisure.com/west-lancashire-leisure-access-card-membership/)

#### **Warm & Welcome Spaces - West Lancs**

As part of the Governments Warm and Welcome Spaces Initiative, [Lancashire County Council](#) libraries will become warm and welcome spaces over the coming months where people can shelter and get information and advice.

In addition, LCC are asking district councils to find out if there are any locally based VCFSE (voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise) provisions that are available, who can offer drop-in shelter and support over the winter period. These spaces must be publicly accessible places, are free of charge and where people are welcome to keep warm and comfortable. If this is something that you feel you can offer, please [email](#) Customer Engagement Team: [CustomerEngagement@westlancs.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerEngagement@westlancs.gov.uk)

#### **Funding Opportunities - Cost of Living Support Hub**

The cost-of-living crisis is affecting us all. We understand that residents may be concerned about the rising fuel and living costs, and so we have gathered a range of support in place across the Council and wider organisations to help plan for winter. Visit our [Cost of Living Support Hub](#) for more information. ([www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/help-and-money-advice/cost-of-living-support-hub](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/help-and-money-advice/cost-of-living-support-hub).)

#### **Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme**

The Council has allocated a budget of £260k for the financial year 2022-23 to assist all Council Taxpayers who are experiencing severe financial difficulties due to the on-going cost

of living. For more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply visit our [website](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-payment-difficulties) (www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-payment-difficulties)

## **Discretionary housing payments**

Discretionary housing payments (DHP) help people who need extra help with their rent when their housing benefit or universal credit housing costs do not meet the full value of their rent. If you are suffering severe financial hardship as a result, or your tenancy is at risk, you may be able to get a discretionary payment to help. For more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply visit our [website](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments) [www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments)

## **West Lancashire Borough Council's Website Translation Service**

When accessing West Lancashire Borough Council's website, if English isn't the first language, pages can be read out in a chosen language using ReachDeck translation service. ReachDeck is a digital inclusion support tool, which provides speech, reading and translation to help make information on websites easier and more accessible for people.

## **Other Updates**

### **Lancashire Adult Learning**

Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) aims to provide learning opportunities for all adults across the region. LAL currently have several free online volunteering and community training courses running in November. Click on the title for course overview, date, time and how to enrol.

- [Positive and effecting communication](#)
- [Introduction to Safeguarding & Prevent](#)
- [Introduction to Mentoring](#)
- [Introduction to Information Advice and Guidance](#)
- [Assertiveness Training](#)
- [Confidence & Resilience Training](#)

For more information on the extensive range of subjects they offer visit their [website](http://www.lal.ac.uk/about-us/). (www.lal.ac.uk/about-us/)

## **Winter vaccinations – boost your immunity this winter**

Eligible cohorts for the COVID-19 autumn booster vaccine:

- Pregnant women
- People 50 years old and over
- People aged 5-50 in groups at increased risk
- Residents in care homes
- Health and social care workers

Eligible cohorts for the free flu vaccine:

- People with certain health conditions
- Pregnant women
- All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2022
- All primary school children (from reception to year 6) and some secondary school aged children
- Those aged 6 months of age upward in a clinical risk group
- Those in long-stay residential care homes
- Carers in receipt of carer's allowance
- People 50 years old and over

For more information visit: [www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations)



## **Better Health – Every Mind Matters**



Get expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental wellbeing and make them part of your daily routine.

Visit [Better Health – every mind matters](http://Better Health – every mind matters) for a range of resources and simple steps to tackle stress and improve mental health wellbeing.

## **Energy Bills Support Scheme – Beware of scams!**

The government is urging consumers to stay alert of potential Energy Bills Support Scheme scams and report these to the relevant authorities where they are suspected.

If individuals receive a message that asks for their bank details or to click on a link, it is very important that they report it promptly. Individuals are encouraged to send a screen shot of the message to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and to [energy.bills.rebate@beis.gov.uk](mailto:energy.bills.rebate@beis.gov.uk)

## Learn my way

Getting online can help you to save money, find work, stay in touch with friends and family and much more. But it can be daunting and hard to know where to start.

Learn My Way has free courses for you to learn digital skills to stay safe and connected.

Visit [Learn my Way website](#), where you will be able to access content such as:

- Using the internet
- Video calling
- Online shopping
- Online safety
- Job finding
- Accessing GP services
- Online banking and much more



## Barnardo's

Barnardo's provide free, confidential advice and information to support asylum seekers and Hong Kong BN(O) status holders. Visit their [website](#) or call the BOLOH helpline free on 0800 151 2605

## We Are Digital

We Are Digital provide free digital support service in partnership with HM Courts and Tribunal Services to those who may not feel confident filling out online forms or may not have access to online services.

The services they are offering support with are:

- **Social Security and Child Support** – to appeal a benefit decision
- **Single Justice Services** - to submit a plea for the summary-only offences (such as speeding or fare evasion)
- **Online Civil Money Claims** - for people to resolve civil money claims online
- **Help With Fees** - for people to apply for help with Court and Tribunal fees.
- **Probate** – to apply for probate of an estate
- **Divorce** - to end a certificate of marriage

To find out more about the service you can visit their website: [HMCTS Centres - We Are Digital | Partner \(we-are-digital.co.uk\)](#) or call **03300 160051**

## Other Funding Opportunities:

### The Foyle Foundation (UK) Small Grants Scheme



The Foyle Foundation has re-opened its Small Grants Scheme to support smaller, grassroots, and local charities across the UK during the Covid-19 crisis

Organisations which are currently delivering services to the young, vulnerable, elderly, disadvantaged or the general community either directly or through online support can apply.

**To apply visit:** <http://www.foylefoundation.org.uk/how-to-apply/> . Applications are accepted all year round.

### Aim Crisis Fund for Independent Music Contractors



ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT MUSIC

The Association of Independent Music (AIM) has announced that AIM and its members have launched a support fund aimed at the contractors and freelance workers in the independent music industry whose source of income has been severed without warning due to lost work in April and May because of the COVID-19 pandemic. AIM Rightsholder members can now invite their artists and their artists' managers to nominate candidates to be pre-approved on this basis.

For more information visit their [website](#)

### Community Shares Re Boost fund; and the Community Shares Booster Programme



Community businesses in disadvantaged and under-represented communities in England that want to issue shares to their community to support their recovery from COVID-19 can apply for financial support through the Community Shares ReBoost fund, and the Community Shares Booster Programme.

Both programmes provide development grants to prepare a community share offer as well as match equity investment.

The funding is delivered by Co-operatives UK and funded by Power to Change and the Architectural Heritage Fund.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with grant and investment decisions made within eight weeks of application.

## **Coronavirus update**

### **Coronavirus figures**

Between 10 November and 16 November 2022, there have been 769 tests. This shows an increase of 60.2% compared to the previous 7 days

Between 6 November and 12 November 2022, 5 people had a confirmed positive test result. This shows an increase of 25.0% compared to the previous 7 days

Figures are taken from the UK [Government dashboard](#) on 21/11/2022. Visit the dashboard for a regular updated summary of the picture across West Lancashire.

Continue to follow government guidelines for 'Living with Covid' and trying to limit the spread by:

- Getting vaccinated
- Washing hands
- Letting in fresh air, when meeting indoors
- Consider wearing face coverings in crowded, enclosed spaces