

Independent Living Fund Scotland

From 1st of July 2015, Scotland will have its own Independent Living Fund headquarters to manage ILF payments for 2900 existing users in Scotland called **Independent Living Fund Scotland**.



Just now ILF Scotland is making sure there will be a smooth transition of current ILF funding to existing Scottish users.

Progress on this is being overseen by a Project Board and each week a Delivery Group is meeting to take sure all work is on track. The Department Work and Pensions (DWP) have agreed to transfer the IT system used by the UK ILF. This will ensure current Scottish users' data is transferred securely and safely.

First Chief Executive of ILF Scotland:

The first Chief Executive of ILF Scotland has been appointed. Peter Scott, (former Chief Executive of ENABLE Scotland), will take up post in June 2015. As well as the Chief Executive, other key positions have been recruited for including Head of Operations, Head of Appeals and Reviews and a team of Caseworkers.

The new ILF Scotland team are based at Denholm House, Livingston. A phone number will be made available soon (keep checking out LCiL website for further details). You can also get in touch by emailing: enquiries@ILF.scot

ILF Scotland have been engaging with a variety of stakeholders including current ILF recipients, local authorities, families and carers, Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) and service providers to update them on the transfer of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) from the UK to Scotland. They are also starting the process of appointing ILF Scotland's Board of Directors. Please check out LCiL's website for further announcements and/or the Scottish Government's website: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Independent-Living/ScottishIndependentLivingFund>

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Once this transition has taken place the next stage of their objectives is to focus on

a possible new fund for new users. This work will begin once the Scottish ILF is up and running for current Scottish users.

Further information about ILF Scotland can be found in our news and events column at: www.lothiancil.org.uk



Lothian Centre for Inclusive Centre (LCiL)

News and events:

LCiL awarded a further three years of self-directed support (SDS) funding

LCiL has been awarded three years funding from the Scottish Government's 'Support in the Right Direction' self-directed support funding stream for independent support and advice organisations.



This is great news! It means we can continue the work we've been doing over the past 2½ years, and take it further between now and March 2018. Having this funding means we can:

- Continue to support and develop the existing group of LCiL Champions, and recruit, train and support a second group – there will be more details about how we'll do this later in the summer.
- Develop more training and peer support opportunities for disabled people, people with long-term conditions and carers – these will be designed to help people to develop the confidence, skills and resilience to play an equal role in assessment, and to get the most out of planning and managing their self-directed support.
- Continue to work with the four Lothian local authorities as they implement SDS.
- Share what we're learning with others, especially other user-led disabled people's organisations.
- Do more work with other partner organisations.

Ultimately, of course, all of this is about the right of disabled people to live more independent lives in the communities of their choice. As we do these things we will make sure that we're working with the spirit of the SDS Act 2013 – with its **values**: respect; fairness; independence; freedom and safety; and its

principles: participation; dignity; involvement; informed choice; collaboration; responsibility; risk enablement; innovation and, very importantly, that we work hard to keep these at the front of everyone's minds.



Grapevine news - evidence at Scottish Parliament Welfare Reform Committee

Last month Grapevine submitted written evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Welfare Reform Committee on the replacement benefit for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - Personal Independence Payment (PIP). A Grapevine service user also gave evidence in person on the panel, along with other disabled people from across Scotland (see photo).



MSPs on the Committee listened to the accounts of those taking part and asked questions about how they had found the whole process, from the claim form, to attending the face to face assessment, and about some challenging decisions.

The personal accounts from those on the panel shared common themes; for example stressful arrangements around attending face to face assessments, with some claimants having to travel long distances on public transport to get to the venues. It has also been unclear how information on the claim form has been used during these assessments, for example whether professionals involved in a person's care or support are ever contacted for further information.

Most of those who were on the panel were volunteering or had jobs which they were able to continue doing because they had the assistance of DLA or PIP and associated 'passports'. For example one lady explained that without her Motability Vehicle and Blue Badge she could no longer continue to travel to and from her place of work, which enables her to maintain her independence, whilst contributing to society.

Following the evidence the Committee agreed to investigate some of the processes involved in PIP, including whether contact is made with professionals on the claim form, the mandatory reconsideration stage and face to face assessments. A full written report from the meeting can be found on the Grapevine section of the E-library at: www.lothiancil.org.uk/e-library as well as our written submissions.

You can also watch the Committee meeting in full at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/80514.aspx>

NEWS FOR DLA RECIPIENTS

Now that we are faced with a new UK Government at Westminster, work will need to commence on moving forward with recommendations from the Smith Commission. These include devolving certain responsibilities for welfare to the Scottish Parliament, including for disability benefits.

As things stand just now the DWP have issued information about their timetable for people across the UK about the introduction of PIP for people currently claiming DLA. From October 2015 we have been informed that DLA claimants living in EH postcodes who have **turned 65 after 8 April 2013**, when PIP was first introduced, will most likely be invited to claim PIP first. Full details can be found on our E-library in the Grapevine section here: www.lothiancil.org.uk/e-library

If you or anyone you know has questions about PIP or any other disability related matter you can contact Grapevine on 0131 475 2370 or email your enquiry to: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk

'Good to know others are in the same boat' How an LCiL Champion has been involved in the parent and carer workshop



Since January of this year LCiL has been hosting workshops for parents and carers of disabled children and children with additional support needs. In addition a monthly peer support group for parents and carers has formed, facilitated by LCiL (see next meeting date below).

The aim of the workshops and the peer support group is to give parents a chance to meet other parents in a similar situation, learn about getting the right support, self-advocacy and confidence building.

Rosemary, one of the LCiL Champions, has contributed to the workshops and being a member of the peer support group since the start. At the parent and carer workshop Rosemary speaks from her lived experience of getting support for her daughter during the transition period, including what it was like prior to the support been put in place to setting up the direct payment, arranging the support and the positive difference it has made to the family. Rosemary says:



"Through hearing my story they know they are not on their own. Hearing my story and what I have been through can help give them the confidence to speak up and ask for what they need."

From attending the workshops and joining the peer support group Rosemary has not only contributed and shared her experiences, but has also learned a lot about what support is out there from the other parent carers who attend.

Rosemary believes that it is important for parents and carers to have time and space to come together and share information. Rosemary says:

“It makes a difference hearing the information from other parents and not just from professionals. They have been through it, they can tell you it in Layman’s terms”

To find out more about the supports LCiL can offer parents and carers of disabled children and young people contact Emma Wynack SDS Development Worker at LCiL on 0131 475 2350.

Peer Support for Parents and Carers

The Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL) hosts a peer support group for parents and carers of disabled children and children with additional support needs. The parent and carer peer support group gives parents and carers the opportunity to:

- Meet other parents and carers.
- Explore ideas and opportunities around support
- Find out practical information, resources and information on who to ask
- Develop skills and build confidence
- Hear from guest speakers and organisations on a range of topics

They take place once a month, alternating Monday and Thursdays, 10.30am - 1.30pm. Lunch from 12:30pm.

Next Meeting:

Thursday 18th June – Moving Out of Home

Two guest speakers from Housing Options Scotland will speak about the pathway for a young disabled person moving out of home.

A development worker from Housing Options Scotland will speak about:

- When to start the process;
- the practicalities of finding a home for a disabled person in all tenures from buying to private renting and social housing;
- Information on all the help that is given in terms of grants and adaptations.



A Housing Options Scotland peer supporter, from Edinburgh will speak about her experience as a mother going through the maze of social work to get the right support package for her son so he could move out of the family home into his own flat.

Where: The group will meet at Norton Park Conference Centre in the Napier Room. 57 Albion Road Edinburgh EH7 5QY

Lunch and refreshments are provided.

To let us know you would like to attend or find out more information about the peer support group, contact Emma Wynack at LCiL on 0131 475 2350 or email emma.wynack@lothiancil.org.uk

City of Edinburgh Council's Draft Contribution Based Charging Policy Consultation

Charging for non-residential care affects a wide range of people, including disabled people, unpaid carers and communities as a whole. The City of Edinburgh Council is running a consultation on a Draft Contribution Based Charging Policy until the 12th of July 2015.



LCiL has prepared its own response to the consultation which you can read in full on our website here: www.lothiancil.org.uk

This mentions various aspects of policy and legislation which serve to protect the rights of disabled people, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (UNCRPD) and how contributions based charging can undermine these. There are many ongoing debates about whether a person should contribute financially towards the cost of their support. For example, the national campaign group, Scottish Against the Care Tax (SACT) have been lobbying the Scottish Parliament on this issue for a couple of years, calling for all local authorities to scrap all charges levied on disabled people for non-residential care.

Many disabled people are already feeling the pinch as a result of cut backs in support services and welfare reform. For example, replacement of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Such benefits are meant to protect the income level of disabled people, due to additional costs of living with a long term condition or impairment (for example, extra heating costs, maintenance and repair of disability related equipment; specialist dietary requirement; specialist clothing; help with cleaning and other domestic tasks, etc.). Many local authorities already take the care component of DLA or daily living component of PIP into account when assessing someone's ability to pay for services or not.

You can find out more about the consultation including an online questionnaire on the City of Edinburgh Council's website at:

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/hsc/draft-contribution-based-charging-policy/>

If you need a paper copy or need the questionnaire emailed to you, contact the local authority on: 0131 529 6552 or email: Hsc.chargingconsult@edinburgh.gov.uk

You can also post your answers to the questionnaire to: Charging Consultation, c/o Alex Black, The City of Edinburgh Council, Health and Social Care, Level 1.6 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG.

Also in the news recently:

Those who are interested in the care charge debate may also be interested to hear about a case in England where a ruling was made that the local authority could not take into account someone's DLA Care Component in calculation of their Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). Amongst the rulings the judge gave was that this was an example of "**indirect discrimination** because it treats disabled applicants and their disability-related income in exactly the same way as it treats others and their non-disability related incomes, giving rise to unfavourable treatment to the disabled applicants". You can read full details of the case here:

<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2015/890.html>

Changes to East Lothian Direct Payments Procedure

If you are an East Lothian Council direct payment recipient then you may have received a letter from the Council about changes. Until you get the letter keep on doing things as you have been. Once you get the letter it will basically tell you to keep filling out your financial statement of expenditure every four weeks but to send the completed forms to the council every 12 weeks.



That means that every 12 weeks you will be sending in three financial expenditure forms, bank statements to cover the 12 week period and other supporting evidence, like the paperwork you get from LCiL's payroll department if you employ personal assistants (and use our service.)

It is important to try and keep on top of the paperwork. It's a good idea to **fill in the forms every four weeks rather than wait until the end of the 12 week period.** That way, it can seem less daunting.

Keeping on top of paperwork, rather than let it build up, is good advice for everyone, not just East Lothian council direct payment recipients.

For more information about this please contact LCiL on 0131 475 2350.

LCiL Training Team Updates:

LCiL's training team have announced 3 new dates on their programme over the summer months. These include:



A Working Life Day, 9th of July 2015

A day taken from the 4 day Living and Work Choices programme, to help participants explore options in work and training.

Self-Directed Support and Equality Day, 11th of August 2015

A day to explore why equalities are important for participants and give a basic introduction to self-directed support (SDS). This is covered in the 4 day Living and Work Choices full programme.

Essential Personal Assistant (PA) Employer Skills, 13th, 17th, & 19th August 2015

A 3 day course that provides disabled employers of PAs with an understanding of the essential responsibilities and roles required of a good employer.

All the above courses will take place from 10.30am to 3.30pm at the Norton Park Conference Centre, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY and will include lunch



To register your interest, find out more about any of the above courses please contact the Living and Work Choices Project at LCiL on **0131 475 2350** or email either elspeth.ferguson@lothiancil.org.uk or kelly.jack@lothiancil.org.uk

Changes to Access to Work

Some changes have been announced relating to Access to Work:

Upper limits for awards from October 2015

From 1 October 2015 anyone making a new claim for an Access to Work grant will be capped at £40, 800 per year, per individual. This will apply from:

- 1 October 2015 for all new grants and
- 1 April 2018 for all grants given before 1 October 2015

Personal Budgets: On 1 April 2018 the DWP will start a process of offering personal budgets for those with on-going awards for travel or support so as to give users more freedom over how they use their awards.

Translation services - the DWP is looking to review the way translation services including British Sign Language are delivered. This includes working with deaf people and stakeholder groups to review BSL interpretation provision to explore long term improvements in the market. The current 30 hour guidance about employing BSL interpreters is suspended from April (more information can be found on DeaftAtW website: <http://www.deafatw.com/30-hour-rule.html>)

A **Video Relay Service** option for BSL users is to be launched later in 2015/16.

'**Digital service**' - a new project is underway to re-engineer Access to Work as a digital service, building on the email channels opened up before Christmas.

Starting early in 2015/16, the DWP will look to pilot **contracted taxi services** for customers across large towns and cities.

Business start-up advice: The DWP has recently established a specialist team to provide expert advice and support to disabled people who want to run their own successful businesses

The DWP will publish **summaries of the guidance** for customers, including in **easy read** and **BSL** formats, and also illustrate good practice to employers with case studies to help them in becoming more Disability Confident in supporting disabled employees early in 2015/16.

For more details please check out: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility>

If you are a disabled person living in Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian you can contact Grapevine the disability information line on 0131 475 2370 or email us at: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk if you have general enquiries relating to the Access to Work and other employment/workplace issues.

To Contact Access to Work:

Access to Work (AtW) has a centralised telephone number: 0345 268 849 for all applicants and claimants in the UK.

Other News and Events:

The Value of User-Led Disabled People's Self-Directed Support Organisations



Self-Directed Support Scotland (SDSS) is carrying out a study to look at the value of Disabled People's Organisations. A user-led organisation is one that is designed by and for disabled people. The organisation must provide information, advice, training and support from other disabled people.

Lothian Centre of Inclusive Living (LCiL) is run by and for disabled people. Because of this, we understand the barriers that disabled people face. We have created services that meet your needs. We've created a place where disabled people can come together and share their experiences so that others can learn from them.

As part of the study, semi-structured interviews will be conducted. If you are interested in being interviewed these will last between 30 minutes to 1 hour. You will be asked a number of questions about your personal experiences of your support

organisation and about times where you have received support from another service user and impact that it has on your life. The interview will be recorded on an audio recorder and your name will be changed in the write up of the report.

This study is completely voluntary and travel expenses will be reimbursed or the researcher can come out to visit you. If you are interested in taking part or if you have any questions about the study or you need specific arrangements to take part, please contact April at SDSS on 07711 039459 or email: april@sdsscotland.org.uk

contactSCOTLAND – The Scottish Government have launched a new British Sign Language (BSL) online Video Relay Interpreting Service which will allow the Deaf community to have the same access to public services as everyone else. The extended online interpreting service will allow Deaf people throughout Scotland to use BSL to make contact (webcam/signing) with public services, such as, their Doctor, Police Scotland, Council Services, Housing, Social Work and NHS 24. It is NOT for Emergency 999 calls. In the event of an Emergency, service users will need to use alternative ways, for example, text or get someone to call on their behalf. You can find out more about the service at: <http://contactscotland-bsl.org/contact/>



Tax Help for Older People

Tax Help for Older People is a service from the registered charity Tax Volunteers providing free, independent and expert help and advice for older people on lower incomes who cannot afford to pay for professional tax advice. With over 450 volunteers and a national helpline, it doesn't matter where you live. Contact them on: Helpline – 0845 601 3321 (local rate) or 01308 488066

Email – taxvol@taxvol.org.uk

Website –

No more paper driving licenses:

From 8 June 2015 the paper counterpart to the photocard driving licence has been abolished. From this date DVLA will stop issuing the paper counterpart and those that currently exist will no longer be valid. Driving licence holders can get more information on DVLA's campaign page on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/driving-licence-changes>



www.taxvol.org.uk

NEW PREMISES - Volunteer Centre Edinburgh are now based at "new" premises on: 222 Leith Walk, Edinburgh, EH6 5EQ

There will be no Health and Wellbeing drop in at the new premises until the end of June / beginning of July. Arrangements thereafter depend on how quickly work is completed. Please call ahead if you intend to visit as there may be some disruption on 0131 225 0630, email us at admin@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk, or check the website for the latest details if you can. Up to date details are available at: http://www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk/contact/contact_form



Do you need a break?

Grants are available for disabled children, adults, families and carers. If you have access to the internet you could check out the [Disability Grants](http://www.disability-grants.org/holiday-grants.html) website: <http://www.disability-grants.org/holiday-grants.html> which has a search facility for people across the UK to search for funding sources. Alternatively if you are a disabled person, or family member/carer of a disabled person living in Edinburgh, Midlothian or East Lothian, then you can call Grapevine who can also carry out searches for suitable charitable trust funders on your behalf. These may be willing to help individuals pay for things like furniture, household goods, disability equipment, holidays and short breaks based on your own personal circumstances.

#RedCordCard

Euan's Guide is about sharing ways to improve disabled access. Our reviewers continually mention that in accessible toilets the emergency cord is often tied up or doesn't reach the floor. This can prevent a disabled person from asking for help. So we have designed cards that can be attached to the emergency cord to let people know how important they are.



To request your cards please reply to this email with your address and the number required or go to www.EuansGuide.com/RedCord

Please attach the cards to red emergency cords and spread the word!

Thank you! You can email your pictures to hello@euansguide.com or share them with us on social media (@euansguide) #RedCordCard.

Rugby for Disabled People

Trust Rugby International is looking to deliver taster sessions in Edinburgh. They specialise in 3 main types of rugby: Trust rugby specialises in 3 main types of rugby; Rehabilitation, Wheelchair and Unified rugby. Their main aim is to bring individuals, communities and cultures together through the sport of rugby by raising confidence and skills. To find out more contact Shabaz Khan: Equalities Development, Trust Rugby International on 07428 768550 | shabazkhan@trustringby.com

You can check out their promotional videos last year online at You Tube:

Clan Promo - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odcVdJFvqMk>

Turning Point - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB1sw_dved8

MIDLOTHIAN EVENT: Improving the lives of disabled people in Midlothian – Wednesday 24th of June 2015, 11am-3pm, Dalkeith Arts Centre, 2 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, Midlothian

This event is for people interested in shaping a new Action Plan for Disabled People in Midlothian from 2015-2018. Disabled people, carers, workers and service providers are invited to attend. To book a place and/or for more information please contact Eric on 0131 663 9471 or Jayne on 0131 271 3665.

Grapevine Disability Information Service



Providing up to date, reliable and accessible information to disabled people and their supporters in Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian. We cover all disability related matters and our service is completely free and confidential.

You can contact us on:

Disability Information line 0131 475 2370 (Monday – Thursday, 10am-4pm) (If you can't get through to speak to someone please leave a message on the answer machine and someone will call you back as soon as possible).

Alternatively you can email your enquiry to: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk

Or use our Online enquiry form at: <http://www.lothiancil.org.uk/our-services/grapevine/services-grapevine-enquiry-form/>

Check out the latest news on our website at: www.lothiancil.org.uk or write to Grapevine, LCiL, Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY.

Appointments can be offered to disabled people living in Edinburgh, who require assistance on their Personal Independence (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) forms.

To contact the Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL) please call our main switchboard number on 0131 475 2350 (available Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm or email: lothian@lothiancil.org.uk)

This publication is available on request in a range of alternative formats, including

