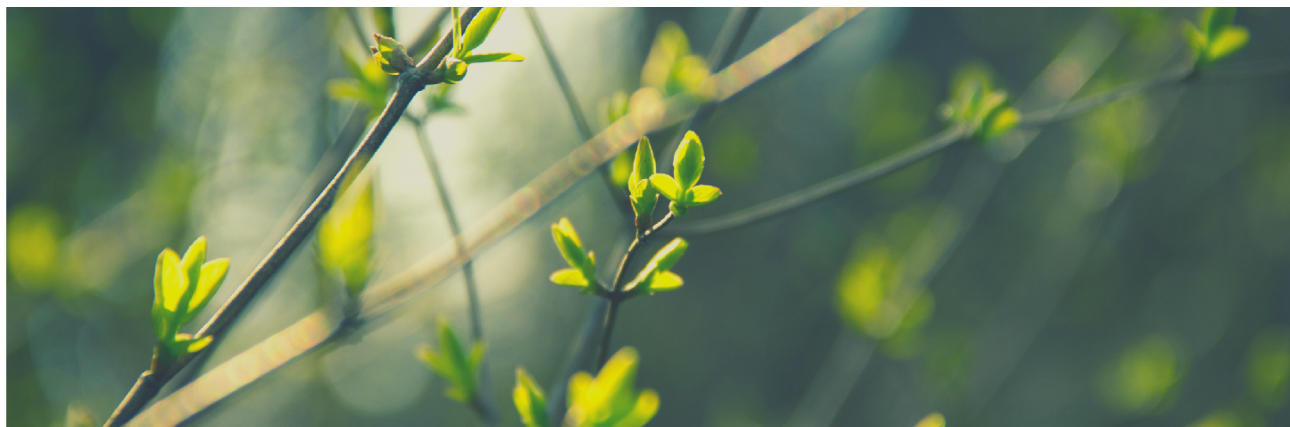


LOTHIAN DISABILITY NEWS

LOTHIAN CENTRE FOR INCLUSIVE LIVING



FOREWORD

Welcome to the first edition of the new decade. LCIIL has taken time away from newsletter production to focus on redesigning our services. The staff have been working hard over the last year to reach people in the comfort of their own homes. This has included online workshops, remote support with benefit forms, and a new website that is being launched in time for our 30th birthday celebrations. Another newsletter will be out within the next few months to tell you more about that and introduce you to our new staff.

This edition is dedicated to saying a fond farewell to Florence Garabedian alongside recognising our award-winning champions. Florence has been applauded for her contribution to the independent living movement by being awarded an OBE for her service to disabled people. I am sure you will join us in wishing her all the best for the future. Florence leaves behind a legacy of inclusive services and practices and will be hugely missed by all whose lives she has touched, both professionally and personally.

LCiL's Chief Executive, Florence Garabedian, says farewell after 14 years

'The time has come for me to move on. LCIl is ready for new leadership, for liberating new energy, and this is the best time for it to happen.'



As the first CIL in Scotland, we are deeply rooted in the energy, the struggle at times, and the rights of visionary disabled people. To honour this legacy, in these new times, we have a chance to build on this collectively. Our organisation has the opportunity to self-renew, refresh our connection with the community we serve, and contribute actively and very positively to an emerging better future.

In 1991, at the inaugural General Meeting of LCIl (called at that time Lothian Centre for Integrated Living), the Convenor Douglas Herd declared that 'it would empower disabled people in the process of them living independently on their own terms of reference including taking risks.' Right from the start, it was, and still is, about 'disabled people taking control of their own lives and the Centre helping them realise that it is possible.' Over the years, thanks to the individual and collective commitment of Board Members, staff, volunteers and people using our services, LCIl has continued to do that, and I am confident that it will continue to do so, albeit perhaps in a very different world.

Two of the main reasons why our organisation has remained true to its core values is its commitment to:

- being user-led, i.e. a Disabled People's Organisation and
- describing disability as a process of disempowerment, rather than an impairment, a condition or an (old) age, and as something that could and should be changed.



To be a genuine user-led organisation is not easy. It is, actually, an ongoing challenge because it takes the ongoing vigilance of staff and volunteers to ensure that services and projects are developed and delivered as opportunities for the people we serve, to self-empower and be involved in the organisation.

This is not easy to embed in people's practice and not easy to sustain, especially when it requires time to listen and engage meaningfully in a different type of conversation with the people we support.

Time and meaningful engagement come at a cost and we are consistently told that resources are scarce.... Being a genuine Disabled People Organisation is also being able to provide peer support opportunities and opportunities for disabled people to share their experience with those who need to hear it.



For the last nine years we have been very fortunate to receive funding from The Scottish Government to do this. Thanks to LCiL Champions, who are volunteer disabled people, people with long term conditions, older people and carers giving their time to be trained, and who have become an integral part of LCiL, we reach out with the message of people with experience.

This experience is not so much about a particular impairment, condition or age, but about facing barriers (social, physical, attitudinal, cultural etc.) and the lack of support, resources, access and control over one's life, that are the true disabling factors in many lives.



We still have an opportunity to change this, and some of us feel that there may never have been a better time than now for it.



Chief Executive, Lyn Pornaro

Under the leadership of the Board and Lyn Pornaro, the new LCIIL CEO, and with a wonderful team of committed staff members and volunteers, I know that LCIIL is one of the best organisations to make a difference and build this new world.

I am proud to have been a part of this work and confident that I am leaving the organisation in good hands. I thank the Board, Lyn, and all LCIIL staff for their support over the years and I wish all every success for the future.

Florence Garabedian - March 2021

Award-Winning LCIiL Champions



We are delighted to share the news that our LCIiL Champions have been awarded an Inspiring Volunteer Award in recognition of the valuable contribution they make to the work of LCIiL. Our Champions are a group of disabled people and parent carers who support us by sharing their lived experience at all of our workshops and provide input to other events such as local authority welcome meetings and student training.



LCiL Champions are ambassadors for our organisation and support us in raising awareness of some of the issues experienced by parent carers, people with long term conditions and disabled people.

Whether the audience they speak to provide or receive support, hearing the experiences of disabled people and parent carers first hand can really make a difference. We receive so much positive feedback about how valuable this has been in helping people to think about what matters to them.



As well as the benefits to attendees, presenting their story gives our Champions an opportunity for their own self-development whether this is to build confidence or learn new skills.

We are very proud of our Champions and it's lovely to see them going from strength to strength. Thanks to them all and well done on their fantastic achievement in receiving this award.

From all at LCIIL

SDS Development Events

April - June 2021

West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 1st April 11am on Zoom	Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 26th April 11am on Zoom	PA Employer Forum Wednesday 19th May 11am on Zoom	How to Make a Complaint for Disabled People Tuesday 8th June 11am on Zoom
Introduction to SDS for Disabled People Tuesday 6th April 11am on Zoom	Midlothian Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Wednesday 28th April 7.15pm on Zoom	Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 19th May 1.30pm on Zoom	Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 15th June 11am on Zoom
Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 13th April 11am on Zoom	Preparing for Meetings and Assessments for Disabled People Tuesday 4th May 11am on Zoom	Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 24th May 11am on Zoom	Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 21st June 11am on Zoom
Housing and Support for Disabled People Thursday 15th April 11am on Zoom	Preparing for Meetings and Assessments for Parent Carers Wednesday 5th May 11am on Zoom	Midlothian Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Wednesday 26th May 7.15pm on Zoom	Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 23rd June 1.30pm on Zoom
Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 21st April 1.30pm on Zoom	West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 6th May 11am on Zoom	Communication Skills and Becoming More Assertive for Parent Carers Wednesday 2nd June 11am on Zoom	Midlothian Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Wednesday 30th June 7.15pm on Zoom
Young People's Transitions into Adulthood Thursday 22nd April 6.30pm on Zoom	Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 11th May 11am on Zoom	West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 3rd June 11am on Zoom	

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Self-Directed Support Events January to March 2021
www.lothiancil.org.uk

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living
 57 Albion Rd
 Edinburgh
 EH7 5QY

All of our events are free to join and are currently taking place via Zoom due to the Covid-19 restrictions. If you have any questions or would like to book on to an event then please get in contact via **0131 475 2350** or email **SDS@lothiancil.org.uk** to obtain the Zoom link.

Please Note: Our workshops are open to people in all local authority areas – East Lothian, West Lothian, Midlothian, and Edinburgh. Furthermore, we encourage those in local authority areas without a currently listed peer support group to please join one of our other groups for the time being.

LCiL New Website Launch

On 31st March we launched our brand new website. This was an exciting project which spanned a 6-month period and offered us the opportunity to showcase our services and impact in a totally different way. Follow this link to see the difference www.lothiancil.org.uk.

The website is an ever-evolving project, please let us know what you think and if there is anything you'd like to see more of in the future.

You can get in touch via email at info@lothiancil.org.uk or give us a call on **0131 475 2350**



Look out for our next edition in the summer where we will tell you all about the new faces at LCIIL and update you with news about our individual services in more detail.

Thank you for reading and continuing to support LCIIL!