



Lothian Disability News



Contents

- New Staff
- Self-Management
- Peer Support Volunteers
- PA Recruitment in Crisis
- DLA Update
- Reflections of a Grape
- Payroll Team News
- End of Year Thanks



Welcome to Lothian Disability News

Welcome everyone to our last edition of the newsletter for 2021. This quarter we welcomed new staff including three new trainees through the Community Jobs Scotland Fund. The roll out for devolved Scottish benefits has begun with Child Disability Payment replacing Disability Living Allowance for children. Although Grapevine's funding doesn't allow us to offer support filling out applications for the new payment, we plan to run a series of online information sessions in the New Year covering all the devolved benefits for Edinburgh residents. Give us a call on 0131 475 2370 for more information and to book your place.

Our Self-Directed Support (SDS) team have been offering groups meetings in our offices in Norton Park and we include their learning program for the new year. Our Independent Living Team (ILT) continue to support disabled people to employ Personal Assistants (PAs) although this has become increasingly difficult due to the pandemic.

LCiL took the opportunity to give our office a new coat of paint and carpet before welcoming staff and service users back. Our service users welcomed the option to meet face-to-face again as staff slowly adjust to the extra ventilation and cleaning required to keep our offices safe. We will still be offering remote services to those who want to access our services in the comfort of their own homes. We have organised refresher training for all staff on safeguarding vulnerable adults to make sure our service users receive the best service we can offer.

Nicola

Information & Communications Coordinator



**It's great to
welcome back
service users to our
freshly painted
refurbished office.**



New Staff

We are delighted to welcome and introduce some new faces to our team at LCiL - read on to find out a bit more about our new staff.

Caitlin

"Hi, my name is Caitlin and I am the new Office Manager here at LCiL. I have been here about a month and settling in well. Everyone here is so lovely and friendly, which definitely makes coming into the office much easier!



My employment background is varied – from working in bars/restaurants to working in banks and insurance companies. LCiL is a different environment that I am loving getting to know more about and developing myself more. I have to say, this environment, helping others, is definitely something I have longed to do for a while now."

Gemma

"I am Gemma Innes, currently Trainee Payroll Administrator. I joined the team back in January 2020 as a temporary Filing Clerk, however I proved myself an asset to the team and was offered another role as Administrator.



In March 2021 I was offered my current role in the Payroll Team, where I organise timesheets for processing, answering client queries and carry out administrative tasks, supporting the team to continue offering the best service possible as our client base grows. In my spare time I love to read and make arts and crafts. I am particularly fond of a bit of crochet, evidenced by the ever-changing display of critters at my desk in the office. I hope that during my time with LCiL that I can continue to deliver excellent service and continue to develop my skills."

Community Jobs Scotland



From September 2021 LCIl was delighted to welcome some new additions to the team thanks to Community Jobs Scotland.

The Community Jobs Scotland employability programme delivered by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) has allowed LCIl welcome some new members to our existing teams. These new additions bring with them exciting new skills and energy to drive forward our administration and communications activities. Joining us for an initial six months, these new staff members will be working to assist our Payroll Team, Office Administration and Communications in a variety of ways. Find out more about some of the new additions to our team below!

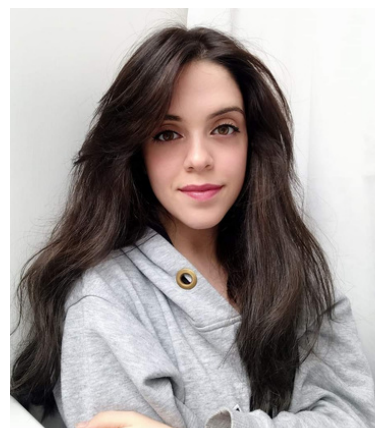
Cameron

"When I left school I went to college to study a course called Gateway to Engineering which didn't end up going to plan so I changed subject to study a business and admin course that I passed which lead me to getting the FMS Administrator post here at LCIl. Outside of work my hobbies are gaming, cars and sports such as skiing, football, tennis and certain water sports. I like going abroad because I use to live in Luxembourg for 8 years."



Nerea

"My name is Nerea, I joined LCIl in September as a Social Media and Marketing Administrator, and my role includes managing the organisation's external image and social media. My previous job positions have been related to digital marketing, and it's something I really enjoy, and I am currently studying to learn more about it and improve my skills. During my free time, I enjoy listening to music and podcasts. Hiking is one of the things that I enjoy doing as an active person."



Supporting People to Self- Manage their Pain

Our Self-Management Worker Paula shares some reflections on her time designing and delivering workshops on pain management.

Since I started my post in April last year I have been working with people living with long-term conditions in Edinburgh as part of the Self-Management Project with LCI.

We know even in normal circumstances life can be challenging for people who have a health condition, and unsurprisingly many of these challenges have been compounded by the impact of the COVID pandemic.

One of the most striking issues people have faced has been how to self-manage their pain. In the absence of routine pain clinics and with people often having to shield, their daily routines have been badly disrupted. It was clear from the conversations I was having that more support around the self-management of pain was really important.

Having completed the Simply Learning Facilitator Training and helped to deliver the Lifestyle Management Course online, I decided it was time to put some of this knowledge and these skills to the test.

A short bite-size Workshop was the goal. To achieve this I spoke to a number of health practitioners; attended a "Flippin' Pain" Webinar and carried out a lot of my own research to ensure that the content and delivery would be as useful and relevant as possible for those who came along.



The aim of all LCIl's Workshops are to be inclusive and participative so that people can learn and support each other with their own lived experiences. We, therefore, decided to share feedback from one of our LCIl Champions, designed some exercises which everyone with pain could relate to and incorporated two videos which were particularly appropriate at getting the main messages across.

Attendees reported feeling more encouraged and confident. They had enjoyed being listened to, connecting with others and felt more empowered to deal with their everyday challenges. One quote from a participant that I have their permission to share is:

"You guys on Zoom have helped to save my life and this is not an exaggeration.... just by simply being there and offering the opportunity for a safe, real-time, human interaction to people like me - the ones who fall through the net and/or are difficult to reach. Thank you, guys, for changing my life!"

We all know that there are no magic solutions; self-management is often a journey and what works for one individual will not necessarily be right for another. Despite this, we can help people to feel more confident and knowledgeable about the different tools available.

We aim to run this workshop on a rotational basis going forward with dates to be announced in the coming months.

To register your interest please email SMW@lothiancil.org.uk

Paula

Self-Management Worker



Self-Directed Support Development Project



**Welcome to our new Volunteer Co-Facilitators
Colin, Garrion, Ashleigh, Kirin and Kate.**

Since July the Self-Directed Support team have been training up a small group of disabled people and parent carers who will be co-facilitating some of our peer support groups and workshops with us.

We felt this would allow people to build skills and confidence, as well as adding value to our groups by bringing a deeper understanding of some of the issues facing disabled people and using their lived experience to support others.

Volunteers were recruited both from our Champions Programme and our wider group of service users. We had an application and interview process ahead of the training and five volunteers were successfully recruited to take part.

We had a mix of parent carers, disabled people and people with long-term conditions with a variety of impairments. Participants also had a range of experience including a trainer and a trained counsellor as well as bringing tremendous life experience.

The training was planned just as restrictions were being lifted so we took the opportunity to organise this session face-to-face.

As well as providing the opportunity to trial our new ways of working, it also gave participants the chance to attend something in person in a relaxed and non-pressured way.

All participants were supported to attend by providing transport where needed and we had a PA available to meet any support needs.

Topics covered included the role of the facilitator, group agreements, setting up a session, boundaries, active listening, asking questions and managing difficult situations.

Much of the learning was through discussion and looking at scenarios along with opportunities each week to develop active listening skills. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their own strengths and challenges throughout the course.

Here's some of the feedback we received:

- "It has provided an opportunity to consolidate existing skills."
- "I learned some different methods of facilitation and creative exercises."
- "I enjoyed learning about others access needs and requirements."
- "It's good to try and focus on reigning myself in."
- "Training gave a new outlook and a new way of working."
- "I found the programme really encouraging."
- "After using peer support for a few years it's such a good way to help other people, and be thoroughly equipped to do so."

We observed as a team how each participant grew in confidence and developed throughout the course. They are now starting to join our groups to co-facilitate and have met some people already.

We are looking forward to continuing to work together with them.



Amanda

SDS Development Officer

PA Recruitment in Crisis



New Scottish Government campaign aims to help promote social care careers.

As part of our services, LCIl's Independent Living service supports people to recruit Personal Assistants (PAs) to assist them to live independently. PAs can provide assistance from everything from support with personal care and daily-living tasks to assisting disabled people in the workplace.

People often opt for PA recruitment as they require flexibility and they also want to have increased control over who provides their support. In some cases, people opt to employ PAs as more 'traditional' options- care agencies or direct services provided by the local authority, for example- are not available due to a range of reasons including complexity of need, geographic location, religious and cultural requirements etc.

Over the last two years LCIl have seen considerable difficulties for many potential PA employers. Difficulties caused by a range of issues including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit.

A recent article in The Guardian, although focused on England, also rings true in our experience- both for those looking to recruit PAs and for those who elect to have their needs met by a care provider. The article also discusses the issue of pay, with many Direct Payment recipients unable to offer competitive hourly rates in comparison to other sectors.

For example one person cited in The Guardian article can afford, from their funding, to offer £9.50 per hour while local dog walkers charge £15 per hour.

While LCiL continue to support PA employers we are also aware that the situation is not improving and, for many people who would benefit from the support a PA could offer, the multiple factors at play are creating a perfect storm from which disabled people are paying the price.

From our own experience of supporting PA employers with recruitment, the statistics help illustrate this. Between April and July 2021 PA applicants were receiving, on average, only two applications per advert and by September over 51% of those roles advertised between April and July remain unfilled.

As a Disabled People's Organisation we are making local authorities and the Scottish Government aware of the pressures our service users are facing with regards to sourcing assistance from both PAs and care providers.

Over the coming months you may see the Scottish Government's campaign to raise awareness of social care careers. More information is available here: <https://caretocare.scot/whats-asc/>

LCiL would like to highlight that becoming a Personal Assistant is one of the roles on offer in this sector where you can make a lasting difference to a disabled person's life.

All of our roles are advertised on our website and Facebook page.

Iain

Independent Living Coordinator

Changes to Disability Living Allowance for Children



Read on to find out how you might be affected by upcoming changes to DLA.

Scotland has started taking control of some benefits under Social Security Scotland. Due to this, disability living allowance for children (DLAc) is changing for Scottish residents. It will now be called Child Disability Payment (CDP).

All Scottish residents will be moved to the new benefit by Spring 2023. The changes will happen automatically in phases.

The first group that will be moved over first are 16-18 years old and those with a terminal diagnosis, this will happen now, from October 2021.

Under 16's will be transferred from Spring 2022.

People will receive notification of the transfer and there should be no action required for the process. It will take place within 13 weeks after they receive a notification, unless there are good reasons for a delay.

The information provided in the original application for DLAc will be used for the assessment.



“

All Scottish residents will be moved to the new benefit by Spring 2023

People will be transferred to the new award on a like-for-like basis. CDP has a slightly different assessment criterion.

This means that there is chance that you may receive a higher award than you were awarded under DLAc. There should be no reduction in awards, only increases when applicable. There should be no gap in payment, the DLAc doesn't stop being awarded until the CDP is in place.

Although Grapevine doesn't support people to make new applications for CDP, we can signpost you to other organisations that do.

We are also offering an information session about the change over of all Social Security Scotland benefits. This includes payments for carers and adult disability payment which is taking over from personal independence payment (PIP).

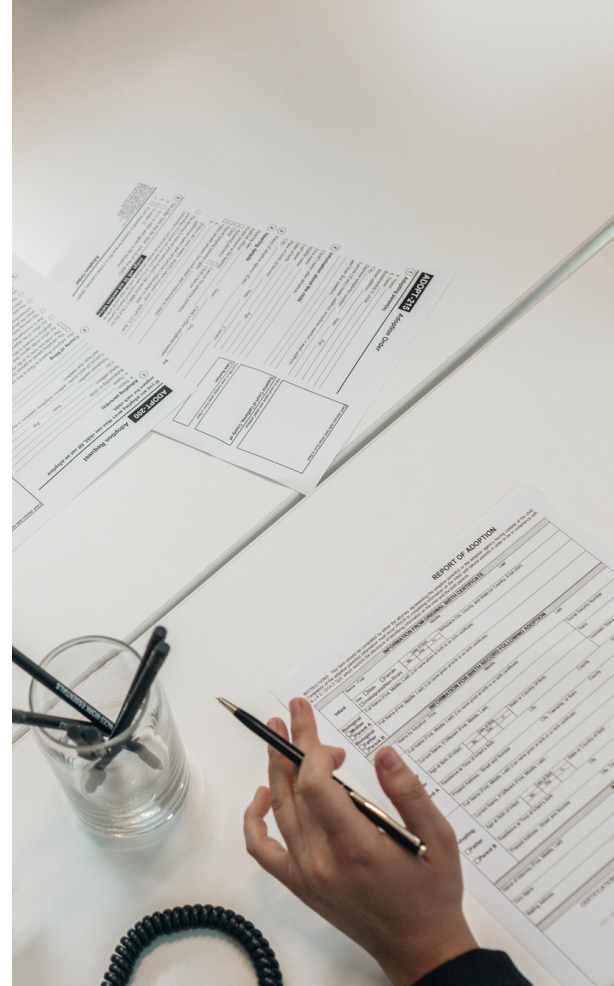
Please get in touch by calling Grapevine's helpline on 0131 4754 2370 for more information.

Heather

Grapevine Information Officer



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba



**We are also offering
an information session
about the change over
of all Social Security
Scotland benefits on
Thursday February 3rd
from 10-11am online,
call Heather on 07517
840600 to book your
place.**

Reflections of a Grape



Ruth looks back on her experience on the Grapevine as she takes up a new exciting position with our finance team.

It is just the most wonderful feeling! It costs me nothing, yet it's extremely valuable to the recipient. What I receive in return has no monetary value either, but to me it's priceless. What am I referring to?

I'm referring to working for the Grapevine Disability Information Service. Specifically, it's the feeling of building up a rapport with a service user, providing them with information and helping them to access the services and benefits that they are entitled to, or for which they can apply.

What I receive in return – the satisfaction of knowing that I have helped someone in difficulty and the warmth and gratitude that is reflected back to me from them – is such a wonderful feeling.

As I've mentioned above: it's priceless.

You might now be thinking that I am some idealistic, naïve young ingenue. I wish I were!

In fact, I am in my fifties; I have lived and worked in more than 10 different countries including in war zones;

I became physically disabled in my forties and later returned to the UK (Essex) to be the full-time Carer for my terminally-ill mother.



I just wish there had been a Grapevine Disability Information Service available to me in Essex!

Since 2016, I've been living in Edinburgh, and just as I know that working for Grapevine has helped the recipients of its services, I also know that Grapevine has really helped me. Here are just some of the ways Grapevine helps both the giver and the receiver of the call:

Information

It is often said that "information is power", but unless information is shared, it is not serving much purpose. The Grapevine Disability Information Service must - on this basis - be super-powerful, as the service's core function is the sharing of disability information for the benefit of many people seeking assistance.



Empathy

Again, this involves sharing. The Grapevine advisor receives the call and shows the caller empathy and guidance on the matter(s) they wish to address. By sharing their experiences and needs, the caller knows that they are not struggling alone.



Assistance with benefit applications

The Grapevine advisor guides the caller through the processes required to claim benefits, such as PIP, which can be complicated and stressful. The Grapevine Service guides and assists the caller through the maze of procedures, with the result that both the caller and the Grapevine advisor gain the satisfaction of a job well done. (e.g., a welfare benefits submission.)

Knowing that you are not alone

This is of paramount importance, especially during these pandemic times. We have all become so accustomed to keeping our distance and isolating ourselves from each other, and for an automated message to be the response to every phone call.

Instead, it is very rewarding for both the caller and the Grapevine advisor to “accompany” another human being through the labyrinth of benefits and services potentially available; even if this has to (currently) be down a telephone line.

Appreciation

Feeling valued and valuable. The caller knows that the Grapevine advisor is investing time and effort in them, and the caller feels valued. The Grapevine advisor also benefits from feeling valuable and from receiving the caller’s appreciation.

In short: whether you are making or receiving the phone call – Grapevine is a Win/Win service, and it has been a real honour for me to have been part of it.

My parting gift before taking up my new role at LCiL was a mad hatters tea party which was much enjoyed as an opportunity to get together and share food and laughs.

Ruth

Information Officer



Payroll Team



Meet some of the Payroll Team at LCIl.

"Although not a new face to the team, my name is Lindsay and I've taken on a new role as Payroll Manager. I'm 2 months already into my new leadership role. My previous role as Payroll Officer has set a good and strong foundation which I hope will prove valuable to not just myself but to the Payroll team and LCIl as a whole during the exciting times ahead. I'm an avid Minions fan: so much so my office walls at home are full of fun and inspirational quotes, a favourite being: The best thing about me...I'm a limited edition. There are no copies! Bet you're thinking (those who know me) thank the good lord!"



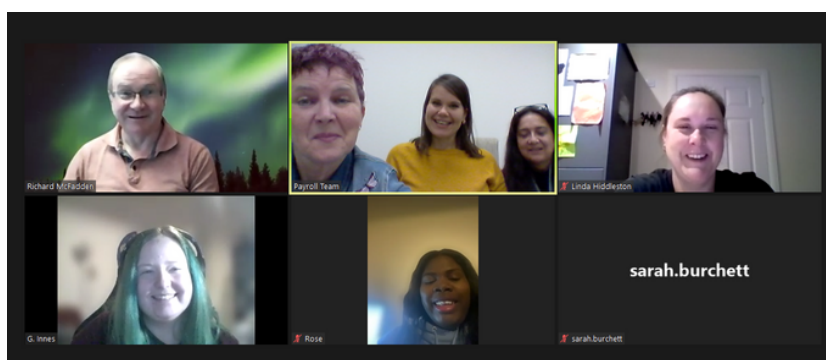
I'm Lisa, the FMS Administrator for LCIl. I am a proud mummy of 2 beautiful...Guinea pigs! My colleagues usually hear me before they see me! I am a social butterfly, and huge fan of travelling. I love the theatre, cinema and live comedy and gigs! Basically, everything that got cancelled over the last 18 months!"

"I am Linda Hiddleston and have been with LCIl for over 6 years. I am a payroll officer; I mostly deal with queries in the payroll inbox and pensions."

"I am Rose, I enjoy singing and dancing outside of work and I enjoy my job"

"I am Dianne and joined the Payroll Team in November, I recently moved home to Scotland after living in Donegal for over 16 years, where I learned to surf and paddleboard. I love hillwalking, kayaking and springer spaniels."

"I am Gemma and recently joined the payroll team, see above for more about me."



LCiL SDS Events

January to March 2022



West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 6th January 11am, Venue TBC	Preparing for Meetings and Assessments for Disabled People Tuesday 1st February 11am, on Zoom	Introduction to SDS for Parent Carers Thursday 24th February 11am on Zoom	Outcomes and Support Planning Part 1 Wednesday 23rd March 11am, on Zoom
Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 11th January 11am, Venue TBC	West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 3rd February 11am, Venue TBC	Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 28th February 11am, on Zoom	Online Disabled Person Peer Support Group Thursday 24th March 11am, on Zoom
Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 17th January 11am, on Zoom	Social Care Assessments - Top Tips for Disabled People Tuesday 8th February 11am, on Zoom	West Lothian Disabled Person Peer Support Group  Carers of West Lothian Thursday 3rd March 11am, Venue TBC	Edinburgh Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Monday 28th March 11am, on Zoom
Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 19th January 1.30pm, on Zoom	Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 15th February 11am, Venue TBC	PA Employer Forum Wednesday 9th March 11am, on Zoom	Outcomes and Support Planning Part 2 Wednesday 30th March 11am on Zoom
Online Disabled Person Peer Support Group Thursday 20th January 11am, on Zoom	Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 16th February 1.30pm, on Zoom	Edinburgh Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 15th March 11am, Venue TBC	
Midlothian Parent Carer Peer Support Group  vocal Wednesday 26th January 7.30pm, on Zoom	Online Disabled Person Peer Support Group Tuesday 22nd February 11am, on Zoom	Peer Support Group for Parent Carers of Adult Children Wednesday 16th March 1.30pm on Zoom	

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Self-Directed Support Events January to March 2022
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.

Thank You for Supporting LCiL

Everyone at LCiL would like to wish you and your family a wonderful end to 2021 and a happy new year!

The festive season is traditionally a time to reflect back, and look forward to what is to come in the new year. 2021 has been a year marked by challenges and unprecedented times for many of us - but we have also found much to celebrate and be grateful for.

To close 2021, we are delighted to share a poem written by Margaret-Anne Elder reflecting on her experience as a PA employer and service user with LCiL.



Office Opening Times Update

Over the festive period, the LCiL offices will be closed from 23rd December to the 5th of January 2022.

See you next year!

@LothianCiL
0131 475 2350
lcil@lothiancil.org.uk
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Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL)
Norton Park, 57 Albion Road
Edinburgh EH7 5QY

THANK YOU SO MUCH LCiL
(Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living)

I am a PA employer,
helped by the LCiL.
The council now thankfully pay for my care;
and I've lots of stories to tell.

I am disabled by ill-health,
chronic fatigue and constant pain.
I discovered the LCiL,
who help to keep me sane.

When I need to recruit PAs,
they will help me post an ad;
on their web site and to uni's too,
and for this I'm eternally glad.

The SDS Team are amazing!
helping us all to connect;
at the Peer Support Group;
and the Pandemic Group, let's not forget.

They organise forums and workshops,
which update our knowledge and skills.
They listen to our feedback,
and give us forms to fill.

We openly share our stories,
take part in panels and films,
which will help to educate others,
who are also disabled or ill.

There is so much that I could say,
about the service they provide;
they teach, they guide and inform us,
and they're always on our side.

Margaret-Anne Elder
1st December 2021