



Image: Celebration to thank LCiL's fantastic Volunteers (Page 4)

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Hello from the LCiL team!

Hello and welcome to the new edition of LCiL's newsletter!

The LCiL team are excited to share information and say hello to all the people who use and benefit from the support and services we provide.

We hope to run this every quarter to keep you up to date with news, events, and opportunities from across Edinburgh, East, Mid and West Lothian.

SHARE YOUR NEWS

If you have any news that you would like to include in future newsletters, please email:

communications@lothiancil.org.uk

or call: 0131 475 2350.

We'd love to hear from you!



**MORE
INFO**



Welcome to our new CEO - Narek Bido



I am delighted to be the new CEO for LCiL. I joined the organisation in July, and it has been great to meet and work with such a hard-working, dedicated team so far. I have worked over two decades in leadership roles across Scotland's third sector. Prior to LCiL, I was Chief Executive of Recovery Scotland, leading major organisational transformation, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring people with lived experience shaped service design. Throughout my career, I have been driven by a passion for empowerment, equality, and community-led change - values that align closely with LCiL's mission.

What are the biggest current challenges facing disabled people that LCiL is addressing?

Disabled people continue to face significant barriers to full participation in society - from inaccessible services and housing to inequalities in employment, income, and digital access. The ongoing cost of living crisis has made these challenges even more pressing. LCiL works tirelessly to tackle these issues by championing independent living, helping people navigate complex social care systems, and influencing policy so that disabled people's voices are central to change. We strive to reduce inequality and uphold every disabled person's right to live with choice, control, and dignity.

How does LCiL ensure Services are designed and led by disabled people?

LCiL is firmly rooted in the social model of disability: Barriers, not impairments, create exclusion. As a Disabled People's Organisation, we are led and governed by people with lived experience. Disabled people shape our Board, lead our service design, and co-produce our policies and programmes. Through consultation, forums, and direct involvement, we ensure our work reflects real needs rather than assumptions.

"Nothing about us without us" is not just a slogan - it is a principle we live every day, ensuring peer leadership and lived experience remain at the heart of all we do.



We strive to reduce inequality and uphold every disabled person's right to live with choice, control, and dignity.



Narek Bido, CEO

Narek Bido, CEO interview continued...

What new or upcoming initiatives should Service Users be excited about?

LCiL is embarking on an exciting period of innovation and growth. We are restructuring to streamline services, enhance coordination, and strengthen long-term financial sustainability. We are exploring new technologies to make it easier for service users to access information, manage support, and connect with staff. Our digital inclusion and peer mentoring initiatives are expanding, ensuring those isolated by geography or technology can still fully participate.

How can Service Users get involved or give feedback to shape LCiL's work?

Service Users are central to everything we do at LCiL. People can get involved by becoming members, joining user forums, advisory groups, peer networks, or participating in surveys and consultations. Feedback is welcomed at events, online, and through direct engagement with our staff. Because our Board, staff, and volunteers include people with lived experience, service users' voices influence decisions at every level. This collaborative approach to co-production, shared leadership, and continuous learning ensures LCiL stays responsive, effective, and true to the people we serve.



Service Users are central to everything we do at LCiL.

What are LCiL's main goals for the next few years?

I see LCiL striving to consolidate its position as one of Scotland's leading Disabled People's Organisations while fostering innovation. Key priorities include expanding our reach, improving digital access to services, and piloting initiatives that promote financial stability and reduce poverty among disabled people. Equity, diversity, and inclusion are central to our work, ensuring we reflect and respond to the communities we serve. Together, these goals will build a stronger, more sustainable foundation for growth, enabling LCiL to deliver lasting impact while remaining true to our person-centred, rights-based ethos

How we can support you

We support disabled people, people with long-term health conditions and older people. Find out more at www.lothiancil.org.uk or scan QR code below.



Peer Support and Learning (PSL)

The PSL team organise peer support groups and information sessions focused on aspects of Self-Directed Support (SDS) and available social care options to disabled people and carers in Edinburgh and the Lothians.



Independent Living Service (ILS)

LCiL's Independent Living Service provides independent advice, information and ongoing support on all aspects of Self-Directed Support (SDS) to disabled people living in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

LCiL rights & choices

PROVIDING CRUCIAL SERVICES & ADVICE IN EDINBURGH & THE LOTHIAN



Payroll and Financial Management

LCiL provide a payroll service (wages processing and administration) for disabled people who employ their own Personal Assistants (PAs) in Edinburgh and the Lothians.



Disability Advice and Information Service (DAIS)

The DAIS team offers independent disability advice and information, as well as disability benefit and welfare support throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Celebrating LCiL's Volunteers

LCiL celebrated Volunteers' Week in the summer with interviews with volunteers and highlights of the great work they do. We also hosted a lunch at Norton Park with LCiL staff to celebrate all our volunteers too! (see image on front)

We currently have 12 volunteers at LCiL - they have direct experience of disability or are Carers and are an integral part of the organisation.

Volunteers have many years of lived experience and knowledge of the challenges and barriers faced by disabled people in today's society. They use their lived experience to help educate and raise awareness in a variety of ways. There are two volunteer roles within the organisation, Peer Facilitators and Community Ambassadors.

Peer Facilitators work within the self-directed support focused peer support groups; they help newcomers feel at ease and offer good advice and support to people through their shared lived experience. They are currently being trained in peer facilitation so they can take the lead in some group work in the future.

LCiL's Community Ambassadors work with interested professionals and organisations to educate and inform about the challenges and barriers faced by disabled people. Their recent work includes - working on the process of social work assessments with Master of Social Work Students at Napier University and speaking about accessibility issues in Edinburgh with Councillors at the Living Streets AGM. They have been asked to work with the Edinburgh Festival to test accessible venues and are part of a digital skills survey being run by Manchester Metropolitan University.

LCiL appreciate all the work that our Volunteers do; their lived experience helps shape and strengthen the work we do across the whole organisation.

LCiL and our Volunteers are keen to work collaboratively with other organisations to share knowledge and lived experience.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the Peer Support and Learning team: PSL@lothiancil.org.uk



Image: Community Ambassadors at Napier Uni



Upcoming Peer Support Groups



Visit Eventbrite



Outcomes and Support Planning

Online via Zoom
11.00am - 1.00pm

16
OCT

Midlothian

West
Lothian

28
OCT

PA Employer Session

Voluntary Sector Gateway 20-22 King St, Bathgate
11.00am - 1.30pm

Communicating about your support

Napier Room, Norton Park Conference Centre
11.00am - 1.30pm

19
NOV

Edinburgh

Online

25
NOV

Outcomes and Support Planning

Online via Zoom
11.00am - 1.00pm

Communicating about your support

The Fisherrow Centre, South St, Musselburgh
11.30am - 2.00pm

26
NOV

East
Lothian

Online

(All Local Authorities)

3
DEC

Evaluating Peer Support

Online via Zoom
11.00am - 1.00pm

Round up and Evaluation

Napier Room, Norton Park Conference Centre
11.00am - 1.30pm

17
DEC

Edinburgh

CONTACT US

PSL@lothiancil.org.uk

Advice & Support - Loan Sharks

As costs continue to rise heading into the colder months and festive season, we want to share helpful resources and advice for those exploring financial support options.

Illegal money lenders, often called loan sharks, are people who lend money without being allowed or authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the official regulator of legal lending in the UK. These lenders often charge very high interest rates, sometimes add hidden fees, and may use threats to get their money back. They usually operate secretly and target people who may be struggling financially or feel vulnerable. Borrowing from loan sharks is not a crime—you are not in trouble—but the lenders are breaking the law.

Loan Sharks - FAQs

What is a Loan Shark?

'Loan shark' is a popular term for an illegal money lender - someone who lends money to people without being authorised to do so by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

Why are Loan Sharks bad?

Loan Sharks target the most vulnerable people in society and cause them immense misery. They lend money to people who are in a crisis or who feel that they have nowhere to turn for financial support.

Why do people use Loan Sharks?

To people who are feeling desperate and who don't know where else to turn for help, Loan Sharks can appear to be very friendly and accommodating to start off with. Many people who use Loan Sharks may have been refused loans or credit elsewhere and may be at a crisis point in their life due to financial difficulties.

With Christmas coming up and the cost of living rising, it can feel really hard to manage money. The Scottish Illegal Money Lending Unit (SIMLU) is here to help anyone feeling trapped or worried about borrowing from illegal lenders. They provide confidential, friendly support to help you find safer ways to manage your finances and debts. You can reach their 24/7 helpline anytime by calling 0800 074 0878, or visit their website at www.stopillegallending.co.uk. You can also email them at stopillegallending@cosla.gov.uk. Remember, you are not alone, and help is available to keep you safe

Advice: Staying safe from scams & fraud

We know to be careful and mindful of common scams online and tend to be more aware than we might have been. In this article we look at some scams that might take us unaware and how to spot them and deal with them!

Scottish Trading Standards deals with many common scams that target people across the country. These include doorstep scams where fraudulent workers offer unnecessary or poor-quality repairs, garden scams involving promises to build sheds or do landscaping but never completing the job, and online shopping scams where goods are paid for but never delivered.

Other frequent scams are fake emails or texts pretending to be from banks or government agencies to steal personal and financial information, as well as prize or lottery scams that trick people into paying money to claim false winnings. With scams constantly evolving, Trading Standards provides up-to-date advice to help people spot and avoid them.



Advice & who to contact!

If someone suspects they have been targeted by a scam or needs advice, they can contact Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 or visit www.consumeradvice.scot. Local Scottish Trading Standards offices can be reached, for example, in Glasgow by email at ts.enquiries@glasgow.gov.uk or phone at 0141 287 1061.

Reporting scams quickly helps protect others and allows Trading Standards to act. For emergencies or criminal concerns, contact Police Scotland on 101 or 999. These services are committed to helping everyone stay safe from scams and fraud.

Get top tips & advice in our

COST OF LIVING WORKSHOPS

FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



Upcoming Workshops

Thu 6 Nov | Thu 13 Nov | Thu 20 Nov | Thu 27 Nov

Join LCiL's expert Disability Advice and Information team for monthly informative workshops to give you top tips to help you manage the cost of living crisis.

We'll help you understand your spending habits, maximise your income and budget your finances with greater confidence!

Each session offers practical, expert advice with a supportive team and community to guide you through these challenging times.

Our DAIS team helped & supported 42 people who attended our workshops fill in crucial benefits forms!



SCAN FOR INFO



**MORE INFO & SIGN UP
EMAIL: DAIS@LOTHIANCIL.ORG.UK**

Canny Chef: Chilli & Potato Wedges

LCiL's Canny Chef has prepared a lovely meal for you for just £11 / £1.80 per portion.
(Prices correct at time of purchase)

'After attending one of our Cost of Living workshops, I decided to try out one of the shopping apps. Using the app, I was able to see which shops had the best price to make this yummy Chilli & Potato Wedges dish for 6 people.

There are only 5 ingredients and it takes around 25 mins to make. You will love it!

**FOR MORE TOP TIPS & ADVICE
JOIN OUR COST OF LIVING
WORKSHOPS**

Instruction

Method

Start by cooking the potato wedges in a saucepan of boiling water over a high heat for 10 mins, drain and return to the pan to dry.

Heat your oven to 220c / Gas 7, then layer the potato wedges and spray with low calorie cooking spray, mix with 1 tbsp of the Fajita Seasoning and cook for 10 mins in the oven.

At the same time brown the mince in a pan breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and then once it is browned drain off any fat. Add the rest of the Fajita Seasoning and cook for 3 mins, then add the sliced peppers and cook for 7 mins.

Add the kidney beans with chilli sauce with some water to stop the mince from sticking in the pan and simmer for 15 mins, adding a bit more water if needed.

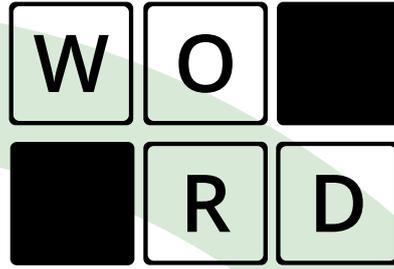
Once chilli is cooked serve with potato wedges.



Ingredients

- 1kg of floury potatoes cut into wedges (£1.45 from Morrisons)
- 2 tbsp of Fajita Seasoning (£1.25 from Sainsbury's for a 48g jar - can be used more than once!)
- 500g 5% Mince (£5 from Tesco)
- 1 off red and yellow peppers, sliced (65p each from Morrisons)
- 2 x 400g can of Kidney Beans in Chilli Sauce (£1 per can from Tesco)

Have fun with our LCIIL themed wordsearch!



Can you find all the words?

E	Q	U	A	L	I	T	Y	E	I	G	L	P	J	X	I	Q	D
R	I	G	H	T	S	M	U	I	N	W	S	Z	E	I	I	N	M
X	J	C	G	V	D	G	Q	I	D	I	I	Y	S	N	J	E	Q
C	E	M	P	O	W	E	R	M	E	N	T	C	S	C	I	F	E
M	T	R	S	A	D	R	S	F	P	U	U	N	U	L	L	U	S
P	G	L	U	N	F	K	Q	A	E	D	T	S	P	U	O	M	B
D	Q	H	Z	K	G	T	R	C	N	G	H	R	P	S	T	Y	K
G	P	P	R	W	R	N	Z	C	D	N	U	Z	O	I	H	G	M
E	G	E	S	N	A	H	E	E	E	T	V	L	R	V	I	F	X
C	M	M	E	V	H	N	F	S	N	W	M	D	T	E	A	R	U
H	J	J	X	R	O	P	Q	S	T	L	C	Y	Q	O	N	S	T
O	Y	I	M	X	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y	N	Z	Q	M

INDEPENDENT

EMPOWERMENT

INCLUSIVE

COMMUNITY

EQUALITY

LOTHIAN

SUPPORT

ACCESS

RIGHTS

PEER

Payroll Service Developments

LCiL Payroll and FMS will be reaching out to you soon with a survey to help inform our future development plans and ideas! Your opinion is important to us - so please fill in the survey and send it back to us. We will also be holding small online meetings to get your views on the service and what you want from it moving forward.



Please get in touch with us if you would like to be involved in the online chats: payroll.team@lothiancil.org.uk

PA Employers - Great network to recommend to PAs & Festive timesheet reminder

If you employ PAs, we highly recommend putting them in touch with PAN Scotland! The biggest independent network of PAs in Scotland. Enhancing opportunities to learn, grow and develop.

To join and more info:
www.panetworkscotland.org.uk

Personal Assistants Network Scotland

Join the biggest independent network of personal assistants in Scotland and learn, grow and develop as a social care professional.

Join the Membership now!
www.panetworkscotland.org.uk

Having issues with the application? Tell us!
Call 01563 594217 | Email pans@wea.ac.uk

LCiL
rights & choices

FESTIVE REMINDER!



★ DEADLINE FOR PA ★
★ TIMESHEETS ★

Timesheets need to be with us by your schedule date or Santa may be late.



Just a gentle reminder to those who submit timesheets. Timesheets for the festive season in December need to be with our team by your scheduled date.



Did you find all the words...?

E Q U A L I T Y E I G L P J X I Q D
 R I G H T S M U I N W S Z E I I N M
 X J C G V D G Q I D I I Y S N J E Q
 C E M P O W E R M E N T C S C I F E
 M T R S A D R S F P U U N U L L U S
 P G L U N F K Q A E D T S P U O M B
 D Q H Z K G T R C N G H R P S T Y K
 G P P R W R N Z C D N U Z O I H G M
 E G E S N A H E E E T V L R V I F X
 C M M E V H N F S N W M D T E A R U
 H J J X R O P Q S T L C Y Q O N S T
 O Y I M X C O M M U N I T Y N Z Q M

Wordsearch answers

E Q U A L I T Y . I
 R I G H T S . . . N . . . I . . .
 D . . . N . . .
 . E M P O W E R M E N T . S C . . .
 P . . . U L L . . .
 A E . . . P U O . . .
 C N . . . P S T . . .
 . P C D . . . O I H . . .
 . . E E E . . . R V I . . .
 . . . E S N . . . T E A . . .
 R . . . S T N . . .
 C O M M U N I T Y

HELP US MAKE INDEPENDENT LIVING A REALITY

LCiL supports disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and older people across Edinburgh and the Lothians to take control, make choices, and live with confidence.

When you donate, you're not just giving money – you're giving someone the chance to say:

“LCiL gave me the confidence to employ my own personal assistant—someone I chose and trust.”

“I didn't know what benefits I was entitled to until I spoke with LCiL. They changed my life.”

“Meeting others in a peer group made me feel less alone, less worried and more hopeful.”



I can finally manage my support without feeling overwhelmed

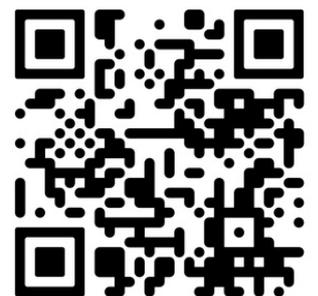
Service User

SUPPORT OUR WORK - DONATE TODAY!

£10 means someone has access to the right advice at the right time—help that can make daily life so much easier.

£25 helps to run peer support groups, giving disabled people and carers a place to connect and find strength together

£50 trains LCiL Volunteers so they can inspire others, share knowledge, build trust and encourage friendships.



DONATE



We are in the process of revamping our membership - keep an eye on our website and our socials for more information - coming soon!

Feedback

If you have questions or comments about anything you have read in this newsletter, or have feedback or news and information, you'd like to share - we'd love to hear from you!

Please email:

communications@lothiancil.org.uk



Contact Us

admin@lothiancil.org.uk

0131 475 2350

www.lothiancil.org.uk



Scan for info

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