



# We'd Just Like to Say...

Newsletter of East Lothian Community Care Forum

Older People's Forum : Learning Disability Forum  
Equality Forum : Mental Health Forum

Summer 2011 **Have Your Say** at [www.elccf.org](http://www.elccf.org)



## Doors open for Karen



It's a big 'Hello' and welcome from Karen Hamilton, ELCCF's new Development and Outreach worker.

A Haddington resident, Karen is a weel-kent face, and has been active for the past three years with the Nungate Tenants and Residents Association.

She comes to the forums with bags of experience from the voluntary sector and is eager to meet everybody.

[karen@elccf.org](mailto:karen@elccf.org)

## Julie makes the breaks



Julie Oswald has started as Short Breaks Development Worker with Carers of East Lothian.

She said: "We're talking about people with disabilities having a break from their daily routine, as well as carers having time away."

"We're hoping that towards the end of my six months we will be able to plan a Short Breaks Bureau for East Lothian so anyone can get in touch with us to get the help they need."

[julie@coel.org.uk](mailto:julie@coel.org.uk)

## Social care budget safe - for a while

Despite fears of hard financial times ahead, East Lothian Council is not cutting its adult social care budget - at least for this current financial year.

But ASC services will be undergoing a redesign.

Moves on this reshaping and its possible impact

are being closely followed by the ELCCF forums.

The removal of the county's home help service - which was initiated in last year's budget - will also continue over the next 12 months, which the council claims will save an estimated £240,000.

# What have the ELCCF forums been up to?

Key to much of the forums' discussions has been the redesign of day services across the spectrum of Adult Social Care.

Although this has highlighted common areas of interest, restraints on the frequency Planning Group meetings meant some Forums were not able to be held as frequently as desired.

It was in at the deep end for our new development worker Karen when she took her first meeting - the May **Mental Health Forum**.

The MHF has developed an action plan guiding its vision and aims for the future. The revamp has led to a new name 'Heads Up East Lothian'.

With the help of Linden Ross of Home Start,

members built a plan topped by a facelift, recruitment and user involvement.



*A new logo for the MH Forum?*

The MHF has also been keeping in track of consultations over the specification of mental health day services.

The **Learning Disability Forum** has discussed day activities, making suggestions on what opportunities members would like to take up.

In harmony with other forums, LDF voices said: 'I want to do the same things as other people do out and about in the community.'

Members of the **Equality**

**Forum** took part with service users, carers, planners and officials recently for a three-day event in Fisherrow to examine day services for physically disabled people and people with complex needs in East Lothian.

The plan is to move towards more flexible and inclusive opportunities that are also available at evenings and weekends.

Work on the ELCCF Community Action Research project was highlighted (*see the CAR report at [www.elccf.org](http://www.elccf.org)*).

To see the report of the Our Lives, Our Opportunities event, visit [www.elccf.org](http://www.elccf.org).

The **Older People's Forum** will be back in action in soon.

Lothian NHS and East Lothian Council have still to agree on a financial framework for the East Lothian Older People's Strategy.

However, the council have been developing the 24hr response and rehabilitation service, and working with day centres.



*Hands up for improvements - members of the Learning Disability Forum vote on what they'd like to see services deliver.*

## David's our award winner

ELCCF's own management committee member David Barrie has won an award as Community Activist of the year.

The prize was given to David amongst a host of other winners at a ceremony and dinner given in Jewel & Esk College recently for the East Lothian Inspiring Volunteering Awards scheme, run by the local Council, East Lothian



*David - he's our star!*

Learning Partnership and the Volunteer Centre, East Lothian.

### Life line open

Free specialist telephone support is being offered by the NHS to users of the Livinglifetothe full mental health website at [www.lttf.com](http://www.lttf.com).

Your GP may be taking part in the pilot, if so you can be referred to NHS Living Life, or you may be able to self-refer. The Living Life helpline is 0800 328 9655.

## Available now - free aids for blind people

People in East Lothian with sight loss can now get free equipment that can help them live a safer and more independent life.

A range of walking aids can be had, including symbol canes for the partially sighted, long canes for those with severe visual impairments, and white walking sticks for those with mobility difficulties as well as sight problems.

Blind people will be also be able to request liquid level indicators, to pour hot drinks safely, and self-adhesive raised dots, known as bump-ons, to mark up controls on domestic equipment.

Some people may also be able to obtain ultra violet

shields, following a low vision assessment.

The scheme is being run with partners East Lothian Council, NHS Lothian and the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

Ken Reid, who is blind himself, and a member of East Lothian Access Panel said: "It is fantastic that we can now get these essential mobility aids free of charge."

Contact RNIB South East Scotland, 12 Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh, EH7 5EA, call 0131 652 3140.

## TEXT 999

Network operators should be forced to offer a free SMS text service to emergency numbers, according to industry regulator Ofcom.

The scheme would extend the current Emergency SMS service, on trial for the last year. ([www.emergencysms.org.uk](http://www.emergencysms.org.uk))

The service is mainly used by visually impaired and hard-of-hearing mobile phone users.

### What do you think?

Let others know on the 'We'd Just Like to Say..' page at [www.elccf.org](http://www.elccf.org), or email us at [info@elccf.org](mailto:info@elccf.org).

**What do you do?**

I am one of the Local Area Co-ordinators (LAC) working for Capability Scotland's Local Area Co-ordination service based in Haddington contracted by East Lothian Council to deliver this service on their behalf with my colleague Sue Green.

We work with people with any disability, any age and on any topic.

We offer independent advice, information and support to individuals and their families, look for ways to build community capacity, and promote inclusive opportunities for disabled people.

**What's the most important issue facing East Lothian today?**

Disabled people face a range of difficulties daily, and can often benefit from advice and support to navigate complex systems which sometimes appear to be non user friendly.

The main issues which affect a large number of

**Introducing..**



**Carrie Poole,  
Local Area Co-ordinator**

people are accessing suitable housing and the government's threat of financial benefits for disability being withdrawn or reduced.

**What's the best thing about your organisation?**

Capability Scotland has a very clear message which underpins everything it does - it is about equality for disabled people.

It is also a campaigning organisation which draws attention to important issues locally and

nationally and works to promote the rights of the disabled person.

**What's next on the agenda?**

To work with ELC to ensure LAC continues to meet the needs of disabled people and to extend the number of people we are able to work with.

**What's been the high point of the year so far?**

Working with the members of the newly constituted 'New Beginnings Club' - run and led by a group of disabled people and is open to all for adventure, activities, fun and friendship.

**What would you do as ruler of the world?**

Work to end poverty and injustice and increase opportunity for everyone. Locally, ensure white lines are painted at every dropped kerb.

Contact Carrie or Sue on 01620 82 5937.



**Come and join us.  
Contact us on the web,  
by email or call on  
01620 822 212.**



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