

# HOUSING

Winter Newsletter 2020



## FAREWELL TO AMAZING ALLAN!

For nearly 20 years, Allan McIntosh, has served as a tenant representative and a Street Voice for Barrow Island. So, (purely for selfish reasons!) we were sad when Allan announced he was to step down from the role.

The very first meeting of the Tenants' Forum Allan attended was in December, 2001 and shortly after this he was appointed as a Street Voice and a member of the Council's Housing Management Forum; Allan also represented Barrow tenants on the Cumbria Residents' & Tenants' Forum travelling all over the county to attend meetings. Allan was elected Vice-Chair of the Tenants' Forum and was appointed Chair in 2017.

Allan was also member of our Tenant Scrutiny Working Party and played a key role in providing a tenants' perspective on a wide range of policies and and Housing Service documents.

At the Tenants' Forum AGM in September, Allan formally stepped down and we took the opportunity to present him with a gift from Housing and the Tenants' Forum in thanks and appreciation for his wonderful contribution to tenant participation over the years. He was given an engraved silver letter opener to be used for 'real mail - not email!' We wish Allan all the very best for the future.

Turn to page 5 for details of the new chair and vice-chair of the Tenants' Forum.



THANK YOU: Assistant Director – Housing Janice Sharp, presents Allan with a leaving gift

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### CHRISTMAS CLOSING

We will be closed from  
4pm Thursday, 24 December  
until Monday, 4 January 2021

## Have I got housing news for you

Hello everyone

I hope this finds everyone safe and well in such difficult times, especially for the vulnerable.

I am certain, like me, everyone will be glad to see 2020 end and a new year coming in. Let's hope in 2021 we can move forward towards what will be the 'new normal' and be able to embrace life and all it has to offer once more.

With lockdown being introduced again in November, our recovery plan has been put on hold with us continuing to work to ensure our priority services are being provided at all times. This includes our 24/7 emergency repair service, gas safety checks, access permitting, re-letting properties and ensuring our estates are kept clean and tidy.

Our Homelessness & Advice Team continue to be busy ensuring vulnerable persons contacting the service are provided comprehensive advice and assistance with the impact of Covid-19.

The majority of our staff are working from home to reduce the foot fall in our offices, with all their telephone extensions transferred to mobile phones, so they continue to be available during office hours on their office telephone numbers (as listed on the back page of this newsletter).

Due to lockdown being re-introduced, limitations continue to affect some services we normally provide, including a routine repairs service. I can assure you, as soon as restrictions ease we shall resume business as usual. Many thanks for your understanding of the limitations we had no alternative but to introduce.

On page 9 we have the key findings from our STAR survey – the customer satisfaction survey – which was carried out a few months ago. Of the 1,740 tenants randomly selected, 568 tenants took part in the survey, which enables us to see what we do well and what not so well.

I am so proud of the results – to have 87% of tenants satisfied with the service provided by the Housing Service reflects the excellent quality of service my staff provide, especially with the challenges they have faced since lockdown in March this year. I'd like to thank my staff for their support, tenacity and positive attitude.

Lastly, I'd like to wish you all a safe, happy and restful Christmas.

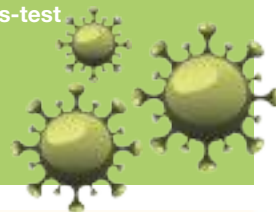
*Jane E. Sharp*  
Assistant Director - Housing



# BARROW'S COVID TESTING UNIT

Here's what you need to know about the testing unit:

- The unit is open seven days a week
- The unit is located in The Courtyard at the rear of Barrow Town Hall
- The site is easily accessible without a car, though car parking is available in the adjacent Market Street Car Park as well as others nearby
- Anyone tested will be required to follow public health measures
- Those testing positive will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace
- You can book an appointment online: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119



For residents who need urgent help finding food and essential items, or if they are struggling to cope with their current situation for whatever reason, they should call Cumbria County Council's Emergency Support Helpline on 0800 783 1966 (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm).

## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR REFUSE & RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

### Normal Collection Day

Thursday, 24 December  
Friday, 25 December  
Tuesday, 29 December  
Wednesday, 30 December  
Thursday, 31 December  
Friday, 1 January  
Tuesday, 5 January

### Revised Collection Day

Thursday, 24 December  
Sunday, 27 December  
Tuesday, 29 December  
Wednesday, 30 December  
Thursday, 31 December  
Saturday, 2 January  
**Normal service resumes**

We all have extra waste and recycling over the Christmas period. **Please remember foil/metallic type wrapping paper cannot be recycled, so please put this with waste for disposal. Any extra waste should be placed in bags, left next to your bin and this will be taken at the time of collection.**

### Disposal of real Christmas trees

- For residents not on the Green Waste Collection – real trees can be put out with your waste and they will be taken by refuse collectors.
- For residents on the Green Waste Collection, real trees should be put out on the date of their next scheduled collection.

BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CUSTOMER SERVICES TEAM (01229) 876543

For details on exactly what can and can't be recycled, visit: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/streetcare/recycling-guidance/>

# Innovative ORANGE BUTTON scheme aims to make suicide everybody's business



Here in the Housing Service, we are proud two of our housing officers, Simone Singleton and Caroline Kendall are holders of the Orange Button.

The Orange Button is a new scheme formed by a partnership of the NHS and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups in South Cumbria and Lancashire. The scheme aims to support those who are struggling with their mental health or suicidal thoughts.

The actual Orange Button (as worn by Simone here) is a way of identifying anyone who has undertaken suicide prevention training and they can be approached for help.

Simone says: "Let's make suicide part of our everyday language and drop the taboo! Does the taboo make it easier for us to ignore?"

"On completing numerous suicide training programmes, I was offered the opportunity to join the 'Orange Button' to show others I am approachable, comfortable in hearing the word suicide and able to provide time and a safe place to work with a person in forming an immediate safety plan."

If you or anyone you know is having thoughts of suicide, please call Simone or Caroline (during office hours) on (01229) 876580 or 876462 or email: [ssingleton@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:ssingleton@barrowbc.gov.uk)



Look out for orange button stickers in businesses and organisations such as shops, cafes and pubs which alert people that trained staff are available to help.

Find out more about the Orange Button Scheme <https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/orangebuttonscheme>

You can also call the Samaritans any time of the day or night on 116 123.



## Council pledges support to National Charter Against Modern Slavery

Barrow Borough Council has pledged its support to a national charter which aims to tackle the scourge of modern slavery.

Councillors unanimously backed plans tabled in a motion by Leader of the Council, Councillor Ann Thompson, to sign up to the National Charter Against Modern Slavery.

Councillor Thompson said: "Modern slavery is one of the great evils of our time and could be impacting 13,000 people in the UK according to figures from the Home Office.

"It includes forced labour, sexual exploitation, forced begging, fraud and illegal adoption. Traffickers use whatever means they have to force victims into a life of servitude which is more than at any other time in history.

"Modern slavery happens in plain sight across so many sectors, but we don't see it because we're not looking for it. By adopting this charter we are sending a clear message to everyone in the borough that it will not be tolerated."

At a full Council meeting Councillor Thompson's motion was backed by Council Deputy Leader, Lee Roberts, and received cross-party support.

The motion included a ten-point plan committing the council and its teams to ensure local authority contractors are not involved in people trafficking or modern slavery of any form.

For more information and to read the ten-point plan visit:

<https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/news/council-pledges-support-to-national-charter-against-modern-day-slavery/>

SIGNED: BBC Leader, Cllr Ann Thompson, signs the Charter Against Modern Slavery



## BARROW COMMUNITY KITCHEN HUB

We offer a selection of bakery, fruit, vegetables and other food – free to collect – no referrals or forms to fill in, just pop along and take what you need.

It's a one-in, one-out system. Please sanitize hands on arrival and wear suitable face covering if possible to safeguard our volunteers and yourselves.

**Saturday & Sunday**  
1-3pm Roosegate Community Centre  
3pm Egerton Court

**Monday**  
12pm-2pm Roosegate  
Community Centre



*All welcome!*

**Christmas/New Year opening all 1pm-3pm:**

Boxing Day, 26 December  
Monday, 28 December  
Wednesday, 30 December  
Friday, 1 January  
Sunday, 3 January



Barrow Community Kitchen Hub

## MULTI-CULTURAL WOMEN'S GROUP



A PLACE FOR WOMEN TO CHAT, SOCIALISE AND CONNECT. Each session will focus on a new topic chosen by the group.

**Starting Wednesday 11th November**  
**10AM-11AM**  
**Fortnightly Online Sessions via Zoom**

Please email [furnessmulticulturalforum@gmail.com](mailto:furnessmulticulturalforum@gmail.com) to receive a joining Zoom link

-Facilitated by Lina Tyson



## BARROW women's COMMUNITY MATTERS

A vibrant women-only centre making a positive difference to the lives of women in Barrow-in-Furness with care, kindness, compassion and love. We aim to support you with anything you may need, including benefits, housing, domestic or sexual abuse, the police, courts, prison, mental wellbeing, employment, education and social activities.

Our reception is open as normal:

- Monday & Wednesday 9.30am-4pm
- Tuesday & Thursday 9.30am-6pm
- Friday 9.30am-1pm

We are offering face-to-face and telephone appointments and some of our groups are up and running. Please contact us for further information.

01229 311 102

[reception@womenscommunitymatters.org](mailto:reception@womenscommunitymatters.org)

Women's Community Matters (private message)

<http://www.womenscommunitymatters.org>



Whether you're dealing with poor mental health, emotional distress or in crisis, we are here to listen and to offer support and advice.

Mind in Furness are currently offering telephone support service and the office number is 01229 827094 or visit our website [www.mindinfurness.org.uk](http://www.mindinfurness.org.uk)

Mind in Furness office hours are Monday to Friday 10-3pm. Our office is closed on Christmas Day, Monday, 28th December and New Year's Day.

@mindinfurness



# WELCOME TO NEW CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR OF TENANTS' FORUM

The departure of Allan left an opening for a new chair of the Tenants' Forum so at the same meeting, members of the forum nominated and elected former Vice-Chair, Mandy Anderson, to the role of Chair and James Christie was elected Vice-Chair of the Forum.

Mandy and Jim were congratulated on their appointments for the coming year.

Mandy, who is the Street Voice for Raglan Court and Corporation Terrace said: "I will really miss working with Allan – his knowledge of the Housing Service and how it operates is second to none, but I'm really grateful and proud to have been given this opportunity and will do my very best representing the interests of all our tenants."

Jim Christie, Street Voice for Grange and Cartmel Crescent said: "I'm really pleased to have been elected as Vice-Chair and to work alongside other members of the Forum and the Housing Service to promote tenant participation and involvement".

Contact details for Mandy and Jim can be found on the back page together with details of other street voices and tenants' associations in the Borough.



WELCOME NEW CHAIR:  
Mandy Anderson



NEW VICE-CHAIR:  
Jim Christie

## LOVE2SHOP WINNER

Congratulations to Janice Fell, the latest winner of our Rewarding Good Tenant prize draw. Janice won £100 of Love2Shop vouchers which, just before Christmas, couldn't have come at a better time!

### Who can enter the draw?

Any tenants can enter the prize draw – all we ask is:

- you've maintained a clear rent account for three months;
- you've not been involved in any anti-social behaviour in your area;
- you've maintained your tenancy and any garden area to an acceptable standard; and
- you've allowed our contractor to gain access to your home to complete the annual gas check (and, when due, the electrical check) without any delay.

Eligible entries are taken to a meeting of the Tenants' Forum where the prize draw takes place. The first drawn receives £100 of vouchers and 2nd and 3rd prize receive £50 of vouchers

### How do I enter?

You need to complete a simple Rewarding Good Tenants form which can be downloaded here:

<https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/incentive-schemes/>

or email: [housing@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@barrowbc.gov.uk)

or give Cathy Kirk a call on (01229) 876523.



## Is your home too big for you? Are you struggling to pay the bills or maintain your property?

If so, we can offer you incentives to downsize to a smaller property. Our **Downsizing Scheme** offers practical support and financial assistance to help eligible applicants to move from a larger property to a smaller one.



### If my application is accepted, what support will I get?

- You will receive a high priority for rehousing in the areas of your choice.
- You will receive a grants towards expenses and the cost of fittings in your new home.
- A housing officer will contact you to assess your needs and requirements.
- For those tenants assessed as being in special need, practical advice to assist with the move will be provided.

For more information on this scheme, please call us on (01229) 876577 or email: [housing@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@barrowbc.gov.uk) and we'll take it from there.

## ARE YOU STRUGGLING TO PAY YOUR RENT?

Our friendly Rents Team is still here for you if you've got any queries about your rent account or you're struggling to pay.

As our Rents Team is currently working from home, if you do call and get diverted to voicemail, please leave your name address and phone number and someone will get back to you.

Please don't sit at home worrying, pick up the phone and give them a call or email [housing@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@barrowbc.gov.uk) and a member of the team will get back to you.



(01229) 876345

(01229) 876397

(01229) 876469



## YOU COULD BE PAYING LESS FOR YOUR WATER

Tenants whose income has been impacted by COVID-19 will be able to apply for reduced water charges - even if they are not in arrears.

Successful applicants will be put on one of the six Back on Track bands for their 2020/21 charges only.

You can also apply if you are in receipt of any of these benefits:

Universal Credit / Job Seekers Allowance / Income Support / Employment Support Allowance / Pension Credit / Housing Benefit / Working Tax Credits / Child Tax Credits / Council Tax Reduction

**The Housing Service's Money Management Officer, Jo Hughes, has managed to secure reduced water bills for over 100 tenants during the pandemic.**

*If you want to check if you're eligible or for more information, please contact Jo Hughes:*

Call: (01229) 876534

Text: 07733 009 558

Email: [jhughes@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:jhughes@barrowbc.gov.uk)



## REPAIRS UPDATE



At the time of writing this, we are still only able to carry out emergency and urgent repairs, along with vital annual gas services.

Our contractors are currently working their way through the backlog of non-urgent (routine) repairs which were put on hold during the initial lockdown in March.

This, together with contractors' staff having accumulated significant holiday entitlement as a result of being furloughed during the first lockdown and which needs to be taken before the end of December, will have an unavoidable impact on the completion of non-urgent repairs over the next two months.

As soon as the situation changes and we are able to log new routine repairs, we will post an update on our website and social media (Barrow Borough Council Housing Department facebook page) or you can call us on (01229) 876578.

**We would like to take this opportunity to THANK YOU for your continued understanding and patience during this difficult time – it really is much appreciated.**

Details of how to report emergency/urgent repairs are shown on the back page. If you're unsure which repairs are classed as emergencies, please visit: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/your-home/repairs/>

# NO WIN NO FEE WARNING AFTER HOUSING REPAIRS CASE

**CAUTION!**

Council tenants across Barrow are being urged to be cautious if approached about no win no fee disrepair claims following a recent legal case.

Barrow Borough Council successfully defended a claim before Barrow-in-Furness County Court in October 2020 that it had failed to carry out repairs in reasonable time to a property.

## **Council tenant ordered to pay legal costs of over £9,000**

The judge in the case ordered the Council tenant who brought the claim, assisted by solicitors on a no win no fee contract, to pay the Council's legal costs summarily assessed in the sum of £9,159.26.

Speaking on behalf of Barrow Borough Council, Councillor Kevin Hamilton warned our tenants to be careful to check the terms of the agreement being offered if they are approached by law firms offering no win no fee agreements on housing disrepair claims.

Cllr Hamilton said: "In certain circumstances, no win no fee agreements carry a substantial risk to the claimant if their case is unsuccessful.

"If a claimant loses the claim at trial, the court may order the claimant to pay the defendant's costs as well as their own.

"Unless the claimant has a policy of insurance or other indemnity in place to cover any costs made against them by the court, they are taking a risk if their case is not strong enough to succeed.

"Our concern is this might not always be clear from the outset". Cllr Hamilton added: "If our tenants have a concern about a repair or an issue with a property, we would advise they get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can rectify it in good time.

"We take our responsibilities as a provider of social housing very seriously and we undertake repairs promptly.

"We would urge people to get in contact with us for help and advice if they feel this isn't the case."



**Chair of Housing:**  
Cllr Kevin Hamilton urges tenants to contact the Housing Service if they are concerned about a repair

## **IT'S CONDENSATION – NOT DAMP!**

At this time of the year, we get enquiries from tenants worried there is damp in their property. In the vast majority of cases, the problem is caused by a build up of condensation.

Condensation is completely normal and is the most common cause of dampness in the home- especially colder rooms. It's especially common in winter, when the central heating system comes on in the cooler hours of the mornings and evenings. It occurs when warm air collides with cold surfaces, or when there's too much humidity in your home. When condensation builds up on a surface it causes mould to grow. The air can't hold the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. It also occurs in places the air is still, like the corners of rooms, behind furniture or inside wardrobes.

### **How to reduce condensation in your home**

#### **Simple things make a huge difference:**

- Regularly wipe clean surfaces which are prone to condensation
- Move furniture away from the walls so there is a gap to allow air flow
- Increase ventilation by opening windows wide on opposite sides of your home for 15 minutes every morning to allow moisture laden air to be taken away
- Put lids on pots and pans in the kitchen when cooking
- Use the cooker hood or extraction fan if you have one



- Open a window in or near the kitchen and close doors when cooking or sterilising baby bottles
- Don't use a gas cooker to heat your kitchen as burning gas creates moisture
- Avoid drying clothes inside. If you have to, make sure a window is open in the room where the clothes are drying. Don't put clothes on a radiator or in front of a fire
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it has a vent to the outside or is a condensing dryer
- Close the bathroom door when having a bath or shower, and open the window when possible for at least 30 minutes afterwards
- If you have an extractor fan make sure it is on and don't switch it off as it has a built-in overrun
- When filling a bath, run the cold water first, then top up with hot water. This simple rule reduces steam by up to 90% - preventing condensation
- Dry bathroom surfaces after a bath or shower

### **Inexpensive Dehumidifiers**

Wiping down windows and sills in the morning will really help. Local shops such as Poundland and B&M sell scented dehumidifiers which help stop damp, mould, mildew and condensation and cost as little as a £1 – you'll be amazed how much water they absorb! And finally, if you already have mould on your walls and ceilings then you need to clean it off properly. An effective method is to start by cleaning off the mould with spray containing bleach. This will help remove the staining persistent mould can leave behind. Leave to dry overnight and then spray the affected area with an anti-fungal wash and allow that to dry.

# GREAT COMMUNITY WORK IN THE BOROUGH

Since the last newsletter, HMP Haverigg have been involved in a number of projects aimed at tidying up the Borough in general.

These have included the paths around Ormsgill Reservoir, footpaths in Dalton and the paths alongside the Red River both towards little Tesco and also the other direction going towards Furness Abbey.

More recently, the Haverigg team did a great job cutting back the vegetation at the rear of Lesh Lane Shops (see left) and they've also done a fabulous job of tidying up one of the communal areas at the rear of houses in Abbotsmead Approach which had become severely overgrown.

If you have any suggestions for work which could be carried out – that would benefit a communal area – please contact housing on 01229 876578 (for the attention of Caroline Kendall) or email [housing@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@barrowbc.gov.uk)



## ...WE DID

Mandy Anderson the Street Voice at Raglan Court contacted us to report a couple of trees in the communal area at Raglan Court were very overgrown and touching the windows of the adjacent flats.

Following a site visit we arranged for the trees to be cut back.





# TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2020: Key Findings

We would like to pass our thanks on again to everyone who took the time to complete this year's Survey of Tenants & Residents – a total of 568 took part which was a 10% increase from the last survey carried out in 2015.

The satisfaction survey is a chance for us to engage and find out your views on the services we deliver and, as the Council Plan states, "Our residents are at the heart of all we do".

Satisfaction levels remain high and we have received fantastic feedback which will enable us to shape our service going forward over the next five years.

Here are the key findings from the survey, many of which have increased since the 2015 survey.

As soon as the final STAR report is finalised, we will share it on our website, Facebook and Twitter pages.

**87%** of tenants were satisfied with the **service provided by Barrow's Housing Service**



**87%** of tenants were satisfied with the **overall repairs service provided the last time they had repairs carried out**



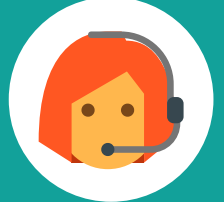
**87%** of tenants were satisfied that Barrow's Housing Service **provides a home that is safe and secure**



**85%** of tenants were satisfied that their **rent provides value for money**



**85%** of tenants were satisfied that Barrow's Housing Service is **easy to deal with**



**84%** of tenants were satisfied with the **overall quality of their home**



**79%** of tenants were satisfied that Barrow's Housing Service **listens to their views and acts upon them**



**76%** of tenants were satisfied that their **service charges provide value for money**



# SUPPORT OVER CHRISTMAS

Usually, at this time of the year, we publicise opening hours of local organisations and the services they offer over the festive period. Unfortunately, the global pandemic has affected the way in which many organisations can offer support but even if some aren't able to meet with people face to face, help and advice is still available on the phone and online. Please remember, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

## SAMARITANS

Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.  
We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

You don't have to be suicidal to contact us. Our volunteers are on hand to offer emotional support any time of the day or night to anyone who needs our help and they will never judge.

**If you need a response immediately, it's best to ring 116 123 – this number is FREE to call and you can speak to someone any time of the night or day.**

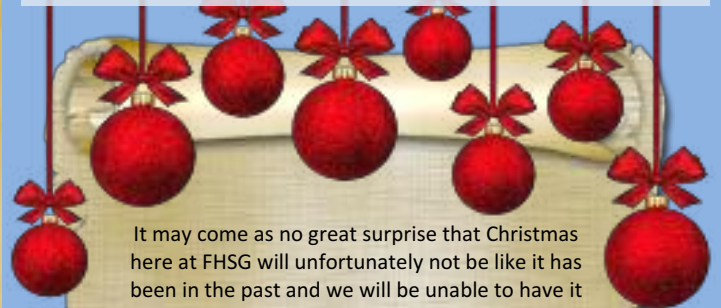
**You can also email us: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**

Every six seconds, we respond to a call for help. No judgement. No pressure. We're here for anyone who needs someone.

**Tel: 116 123**



## Furness Homeless Support Group



It may come as no great surprise that Christmas here at FHSG will unfortunately not be like it has been in the past and we will be unable to have it in our usual form due to Covid 19 restrictions.

We will still be providing a great Christmas for our residents, and we also aim to still support our clients who rely on us to provide a lifeline at Christmas time, but in an alternative way. We are going to make individual Christmas hampers with treats and a gift from Santa which will then be delivered to the recipients.

**If you would like to help us to achieve this you can donate via our Just Giving page and then we can purchase the necessary provisions and gifts in order to keep to the social distancing rules**  
<https://www.justgiving.com/furnesshomeless>

If you would like to nominate an individual to receive a hamper and gift please contact us on 01229-821134

**Thank you in advance for your support, it really does make a difference.**

Registered Charity No: 1051415



Registered Charity No: 1051415



## Salvation Army

Once government guidance allows, our charity shop will be open in December on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am-2pm.

We will be able to offer practical support for anyone coming to our building during these times.

From Monday, 21st December the building will be closed, but we are reachable by phone on 01229 433550. Please leave a message if there is no answer and someone will get back to you.

We will be unable to give practical assistance on 25th, 26th and 27th December.

The building re-opens on Tuesday 5th January if Government guidance allows.

As things are constantly changing at present, please see our facebook page for the latest information



[www.facebook.com/salvationarmybarrow](https://www.facebook.com/salvationarmybarrow)



Barrow Foodbank provide three-day Emergency Food Parcels for those in need.

We know that anyone can find themselves at crisis point for a number of different reasons so, in order to provide the most appropriate help, we work with a large number of local agencies, who are able to identify those most in need and can issue Foodbank vouchers on our behalf.

Our local agencies can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis.

### Do you require assistance?

**If you feel you require assistance from Barrow Foodbank but are not sure of how you can access the service, then please call us on 01229 343436 or Ways to Welfare on 01228 221100.**

**Please be aware that due to Covid-19 we are operating a reduced service but if you leave a message someone will get back to you.**



@Barrow Foodbank



# THE WELL COMMUNITIES

## Are you or anyone you know struggling with drug and alcohol addiction?

The Well Communities in Barrow uses local resources to galvanise the community to make recovery possible and visible for everyone. Services include day-hab, 12-step programme, mutual aid, peer mentoring, employment skills, sports and social activities.

### Want to find out more about The Well Communities?

Whether you're experiencing addiction, or have a family member you're concerned about, we can give you the support you need to make a change now. Ring us on 01229 829832 or alternatively email: info@thewell2.co.uk

**We recognise that we don't just struggle with addiction between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday- Friday. It is important that support reflects a continuum of need and is in place as and when required.**

**Come and connect with people just like you who seek a new way of life.**

**The Well Community Support Group 7 days a week at 10am  
Zoom ID 999 9698 0555**

The Well



**NEVER ALONE - NEVER AGAIN**

## COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT HELPLINE

Talking is more important than ever ...

Our team of experienced counsellors will provide emotional help and support over the telephone. Anyone in Cumbria can ring to access free support. We can work with:

- ◆ Self-harm or suicidal feelings
- ◆ Isolation
- ◆ Loss
- ◆ Bereavement
- ◆ Anxiety
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Anger
- ◆ Trauma
- ◆ Relationship issues



**CALL OR TEXT 07508 035 048**

**or call (01229) 832269**

**Monday to Friday 9am-5pm**

**Age UK Barrow and District provide a wide range of services to people aged 60 and over living in Barrow, Dalton & Askam. To make a referral or if you have an enquiry, please call our office on (01229) 831425 and speak to a member of our team.**

### Information & Advice

Our qualified advisors give free and confidential advice and will complete a full benefits check to help clients maximise income and ensure that they get all of the benefits they are entitled to.

We will give advice on safety adaptations around the home such as stairlifts, grab rails and bannisters. We can help to signpost to other local organisations who may be able to help with other day-to-day matters such as assisted living, nursing or care home facilities, will writing and power of attorney.

### Remote Dementia Support

We can loan an iPad to someone with early onset dementia who may live with a spouse or carer to receive two, 30 minute facetime sessions a week from a trained dementia support worker. The sessions provide the carer with some respite and support and have a friendly chat, sing song or reminisce with the client.

### Home Energy Checks

We can look at ways to help to reduce energy costs and minimise household bills, as well as provide information on how to stay well during the winter months.

### Telephone Befriending

Our telephone befriending coordinators manage our dedicated team of male and female volunteers. They have regular telephone chats with people who maybe feeling lonely or isolated.



### Hot Meal Delivery

Free, hot, nutritious meals, prepared & cooked by Shepherds caterers, delivered by our team of volunteers on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

### Prescription Collection & Delivery

Our Community Support Officer coordinates our volunteers who are available to collect prescriptions from local pharmacies and deliver straight to people's homes, free of charge.

### Food Parcels

Our food parcels are specifically tailored to people's dietary requirements, cooking abilities and facilities. The food parcels are supplied as a short-term emergency measure to people who may be self-isolating or have no alternative means of obtaining supplies.

### Hearing Aid Batteries

Batteries are supplied by the Audiology department and can be collected from our Lakeland House office on Abbey Rd or hand delivered upon request.

### Handyman Service

Our handyman can undertake small DIY tasks, gardening jobs and installation of home safety equipment. (This is a payable service and does not include the cost of materials).

### Volunteering

We have many opportunities available and volunteering can give people a sense of contributing to the local community by supporting those people who are vulnerable and lonely. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, improve wellbeing, increase confidence and gain new skills.

# LAURA'S VIRTUAL MARATHON

**Laura Heasley is a member of our Homelessness & Advice Team and here she tells her story of running a unique and very special marathon..**



2020 - the year I ran the Virtual London Marathon. I started running just under two years ago and when I started I couldn't run for 30 seconds, so never in a million years did I think I could run the London Marathon - and definitely never thought it would be virtually!!

I never entered the ballot for the London Marathon as it is so hard to actually get a place and this year was its 40th year.

Because of the pandemic they had to cancel mass participation and only allowed elite athletes, but then they announced they were doing it virtually and opening up about 50,000 extra places so I thought why not give it a go, it'll be the only time I get a London Marathon Medal and T-shirt!

So, on Sunday, 4th October at 08:02:22 I set off on my 26.2 mile run - five-and-a-half laps of Millom and Haverigg - and completed it at 14:28:22. It has got to be the hardest thing I've ever completed but what an amazing feeling at the end - such a buzz when my app told me I'd completed it!

I would never have managed it if it wasn't for the support of my family and friends who were dotted around the course, cheering me on and also my amazing running club (Millom Striders) and running bubble who ran with me.

I started running at first as a form of exercise but I quickly began to realise it's not just good for exercise it's also amazing for your mental health!

I managed to raise an excellent amount of £255 for WellChild - the national UK children's charity who make it possible for children and young people with exceptional health needs to be cared for at home instead of hospital, wherever possible.

Thank you to everyone who sponsored me and helped me on my journey to complete the London Marathon.

**Everyone in Housing is so proud of Laura and her amazing achievement and thanks her for sharing her inspirational story with us all.**

# WELCOME TO...

## Lisa Lindley

Hello my name is Lisa and I have just started as the new Housing Repairs Co-ordinator, I previously I worked as a Housing Benefit Officer for 15 years.

Starting a new job in lockdown has its challenges but I am excited to learn the role and I am enjoying meeting everyone in the department.

Outside of work me and my partner have a little boy named Jensen who is 15 months old, he keeps me very busy - I'm sure he runs off Duracell batteries as he never sits still!



# FAREWELL TO...

## Charlotte Thompson



Charlotte worked in the Housing Maintenance Team as the Repairs Co-ordinator for two years. Prior to this Charlotte was a member of our Reception Team for two years. During that time Charlotte provided motivation, dedication and a work ethic which reshaped the way repairs and void properties are managed. Her role involved providing a key link between customers and the surveying team.

As a key member of the Maintenance Team, Charlotte will be missed but we all wish her well in her new role within the Council's Technical Services Department.

...and

## Adam Morris

We also recently said goodbye to Adam Morris who is off to pastures new. Adam joined Housing in 2019, initially working in the Lettings Team and then moved to join our Estate Management Team. Adam was a valued and popular member of the department and will be missed by all his colleagues.

We wish him all the very best in his new venture.



# FACE TO FACE with...

## Karen Hillman

Karen has worked in the Council for 28 years. She first started in the typing pool and Finance Department and has worked in the Housing Department for the past 25 years.

She has spent time working in the Housing Maintenance Section and is now a member of the Housing Department's Business Support Team. Karen's role involves helping to maintain the Department's IT systems and processes.

She is spending the majority of her time working from home at the moment and particularly enjoyed discovering in the spring time that she isn't very good at teaching, languages, interior design, landscaping or DIY. And (according to her) she definitely doesn't have a book in her.

## Karen, tell us ....

### What are your three best character traits?

I'm optimistic, energetic and social - but only on a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

### What are your three worst character traits?

I'm pessimistic, lazy and aloof - but only on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Sundays are pot luck.

### What are you most proud of?

Obviously, my sense of humour.

### What's your earliest memory?

One of my earliest memories is of watching the sea lions at Blackpool Zoo when I was around four or five years old. My grandparents used to take me and my brother to Blackpool every year for a holiday in the 1970s and early 80s. We'd go and watch the ice skating shows and the acts at the North Pier, like Cannon and Ball.

### What's your favourite film?

My favourite film is the 1969 film Easy Rider, starring Dennis Hopper and Henry Fonda. In a nutshell, it's about two friends taking a road trip on motorbikes across America to start a new life in Florida, but it's so much more than that. It also has an amazing soundtrack.

### What's your favourite TV programme?

My favourite TV programme is 'Keeping up with the Kardashians'. I unapologetically love it and will not spend anymore time justifying it! A good or bad day is always improved for me by bingeing these programmes.

### What's your favourite book?

My favourite book is Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë, but I love so many books. Reading is what I do to switch off and relax and I'll read anything. I've been reading Amanda Owen's, The Yorkshire Shepherdess books over the past few months and have found them really helpful in relaxing and escaping the restrictions we've all been coping with.

### What are you most afraid of?

Politicians (of all nationalities) who have the skills to convince people that self-interest above anything else is a positive personality trait.

### What do you do in your free time?

Free time is spent dragging three children on dog walks. I particularly enjoy the hour we have to spend before leaving the house listening to endless questions about where we are going and why they have to come! It really adds to the enjoyment of family time.



### What was the first record you ever bought?

I think the first record I bought was Wham's first album on cassette, to play on my new tape player.

### What's your favourite singer/band?

My favourite band are The Cure. I've seen them live a few times and we were lucky enough to see them headline at Hyde Park in 2018 for their 40th Anniversary.

### What three items would you take on a desert island?

I've decided to answer this as if I'm not stranded on the island, but just enjoying some uninterrupted alone time. So I'm opting for a hat, some gin and my dog!

### What's your most treasured possession?

I have some jewellery from both my grandmothers. Not particularly valuable, but full of sentimental value.

### What or who makes you laugh the most?

When he's on form, my husband – it's the main reason I keep him around, and the children are quite attached to him. And he can cook.

### What's your favourite meal?

I love a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. Lovely.

### What's your favourite drink?

To be honest it would be easier to list the drink I don't like – whisky. That's it. Although it is my aim to start liking in when I'm in my seventies, that and cigars.

### What superpower do you wish you had?

I'm a woman – who needs a superpower? Probably just HRT.

### What's your dream holiday destination?

Please see desert island question above!!!

### Who would be sat around your dinner table if you could invite six people – living or dead?

It'd be nice to have anyone around the dinner table at the moment, but I'm going for The Girls – you know who you are!

# RESULTS OF CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLOURING COMPETITION

We had some really wonderful entries to our last competition and you really rose to the challenge of personalising your entries – they were just brilliant!!!  
Massive congratulations to our overall winners Tamim Abd Elhafiz and Miley Robertson and all our runners-up. (Not pictured: Florrie Blythe & Mason Wood)



**WINNER:** Tamim Abd Elhafiz



**ALL SMILES:** Gracie, Miley (Winner) & Hallie Robertson



**RUNNERS UP:** Ryan Roberts & Emily Wilde



## CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!!!! Not too long to go now. Have you written your letter to Father Christmas yet? Here's a lovely Christmassy picture for you to colour in. The competition is split into two age groups: 7 years and under & 8-11 year olds and as long as your parents or grandparents are Council tenants/leaseholders then you can enter. **The deadline for entries is 14 December.** Please post your entries to: Cathy Kirk, Housing Dept, Town Hall, Duke St. Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD Hope you all have a really happy fun-filled Christmas ☺



NAME (IN CAPITALS PLEASE) .....

ADDRESS .....

TELEPHONE NO ..... AGE .....

# FREE DEBT ADVICE

If you're struggling with debt, it can be hard to know where to turn. But with lots of free advice services available across the UK, you can find help in a way that's best for you.

A debt adviser will:

- never judge you or make you feel bad about your situation
- always be happy to talk to you, however big or small your problem might be
- find ways to manage your debts even if you think you have no spare money
- suggest ways to deal with debts that you might not know about

**If you don't want to speak to anyone in person you can get help and advice online. Have a look at the different agencies to see which one suits you best:**

## ONLINE Debt Advice Services

### Debt Advice Foundation

[www.debtadvicefoundation.org](http://www.debtadvicefoundation.org)

Debt Advice Foundation is a national debt advice and education charity offering free, confidential support and advice to anyone worried about debt.

StepChange Debt: [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

Their online advice tool has helped over 1.7m people. Create a budget and get a personal action plan with practical next steps. Get free help from the UK's leading debt charity.

National Debtline:

[www.tools.nationaldebtline.org/dat-reg](http://www.tools.nationaldebtline.org/dat-reg)

National Debtline offers free debt advice online through its digital advice tool and its web guides, fact sheets and sample letters.

Citizens Advice: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Citizens Advice offers free, independent, confidential and impartial debt advice through their web chat service.



## TELEPHONE Debt Advice Services

Debt Advice Foundation: 0800 622 61 51

Debt Advice Foundation is a national debt advice and education charity offering free, confidential support and advice to anyone worried about debt.

StepChange Debt: 0800 138 1111

Call the UK's leading debt charity. They help change the lives of thousands of people every week. Get free, confidential advice and practical solutions to help you deal with your debts.

National Debtline: 0808 808 4000

National Debtline has helped millions of people with their debts. They'll talk you through options and give clear advice on how to take back control.

Citizens Advice Bureau: 0808 2787 817 freephone

Full debt and consumer advice service. Many bureaux have specialist caseworkers to deal with any type of debt, including repossessions and negotiation with creditors.

CAP- Christians Against: 0800 328 0006

Their friendly team will give you a listening ear and provide a real solution to your debts. They have helped thousands of people get out of debt.



# ADVICE FROM THE COUNCIL'S REVENUES & BENEFITS TEAM

## Discretionary Housing Payments

Where the Council considers a claimant requires further financial assistance towards housing costs a Discretionary Housing Payment can be awarded. To claim a Discretionary Housing Payment you must be entitled to:

- Housing Benefit; or
- Universal Credit which must include the housing element and
- require further assistance with housing costs

For more information, please contact us:

Telephone: (01229) 404242 or

Email: [benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk)



## Council Tax Reduction

You may be entitled to some help towards your Council Tax if you are on a low income. The reduction is calculated by taking into account your circumstances and household details and includes things like income and capital.

For more information please contact us:

Telephone: (01229) 404242

Email: [benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk)

## Council Tax Covid-19 Hardship Fund

If you are not entitled to full council tax reduction and you are suffering financial hardship as a result of the pandemic, please complete a Covid-19 council tax hardship application and return to [counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk)

For more details on the Council Tax Covid-19 Hardship fund and to complete a hardship application form visit the Council's website: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-tax/council-tax-advice/> or alternatively you can request an application form by ringing our Customer Services Team on (01229) 404242

**Anyone struggling to pay their Council Tax should contact our Customer Services Team on 01229 404242 or email [counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk) to make an arrangement to pay.**

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - HOUSING**

Janice Sharp (01229) 876523

**OPERATIONS TEAM****Operations Manager**

Caroline Wagstaff (01229) 876310

**Assistant Operations Manager:**

Caroline Kendall (01229) 876462

**RENT RECOVERY TEAM****Housing Officers:**

Andrew High (01229) 876345

Carol High (01229) 876397

Emma Johnston (01229) 876469

Katie Barker (01229) 876471

Kelly Lamond (01229) 876352

**ESTATE MANAGEMENT TEAM****Housing Officers:**

Debbie Cubiss (Snr) (01229) 876423

Cheryl Waite (01229) 876520

**LETTINGS TEAM****Housing Officers:**

Jackie Rimmer (Snr) (01229) 876550

Alison Horricks (01229) 876403

Sue Drake (01229) 876456

**OTHER SERVICES****Homelessness Advice****Office hours:**

Triage (01229) 876599

**Out-of-hours:** (01229) 833311**Tenancy Support**

Simone Singleton (01229) 876580

**Housing Needs Assistant**

Lindsay Gedling (01229) 876577

**Benefit Liaison Officer**

Amanda Morris (01229) 876581

**Money Management Advisor**

Jo Hughes (01229) 876543

**Direct Debits**

Georgina Bridgens (01229) 876478

**MAINTENANCE TEAM****Maintenance & Asset Manager**

Les Davies (01229) 876540

**Senior Surveyor**

Bryan Walker (01229) 876466

**Senior Projects Officer**

Nigel Clarke (01229) 876326

**Contract Supervisors**

Graham Harcourt (01229) 876465

Peter Rimmer (01229) 876530

Andrew Hartley (01229) 876531

**Gas Technician**

Mike Robson (01229) 876488

**BUSINESS SUPPORT TEAM****Leaseholder Enquiries**

Georgina Bridgens (01229) 876478

**Right to Buy**

Michelle Bradley (01229) 876483

**Household Insurance**

Joanne Worrall (01229) 876488

**Choice-Based Lettings**

Rachael Hornby (01229) 876554

**Email us:**[housing@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:housing@barrowbc.gov.uk)**Website:**[www.barrowbc.gov.uk](http://www.barrowbc.gov.uk)**Write to us:**Housing Service, Town Hall, Duke Street,  
Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD**Office Hours** Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm. Tel enquiries: Mon to Thurs 8.30am - 5pm (4.30pm on Friday)**REPORTING EMERGENCY REPAIRS****During office hours****Out-of-office hours**

Non-gas repairs

(01229) 876578

(01229) 833311

Gas only repairs

0800 031 6578  
*freephone*

(01229) 833311

**EMERGENCY REPAIRS**We are continuing to carry out emergency repairs, along with gas servicing. For a list of repairs classified as emergencies, please visit: [www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/your-home/repairs/](http://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/your-home/repairs/)**ROUTINE REPAIRS**

Updates are posted on our Facebook and Twitter pages and on our website.

**TOWN HALL  
Switchboard:  
01229 876543****CONTACTS FOR TENANT GROUPS***Listed below are Council-recognised tenant/resident associations and street voices within the Borough.***Street Voice for Raglan Court & Corporation Terrace**

Mandy Anderson - 0792 5410 817

**Street Voice for Grange & Cartmel Crescent**

James Christie - 07748 427 104

**Street Voices for Lord Street Area, Dalton**

Jackie Scott 07595 389 895 &amp; Irene Asbury (01229) 468138

**Street Voice for Brathay Crescent/Levens Terrace/Vulcan Road**

Linda Craig - 07516 309 159

**Street Voice for Devonshire Road**

Lisa Webb - (01229) 219787

**Street Voice for Eamont Close**

David Rollinson - d.rollinson43@gmail.com

**Devonshire Road Residents' & Tenants' Association**

Jennifer Lord - (01229) 835165 - Griffin Community Hall

**North Walney Residents' Association**

Steve Thornton - 07856 753 482