

HOUSING



Summer Newsletter 2021

SPRING CLEAN OF ESTATES

We are committed to providing our residents with safe, comfortable and well-maintained homes. But that's not where it stops for us – we also want the surrounding area where you live to be clean places to live and enjoy, free of rubbish, fly-tipping and dog mess.

The vast majority of our residents respect their estate and we thank those that do. But unfortunately, not everyone is so considerate and this has led us to recently organising a clean up of some estates which involved not just litter picking but removal of bags of waste and fly-tipping.

Our Estates Team will be closely monitoring our estates and where necessary take a robust approach to enforcement action with our Streetcare Team to ensure neighbourhoods are clean and litter free. We want all our neighbourhoods to be clean, welcoming and attractive for our residents.

To read more about the estate tidy and how you can dispose of bulky items, turn to page 5.



Gloved up and ready to go:
Cllr Kevin Hamilton and
Head of Housing, Jan Sharp



Annual Report

Turn to page 13 to read our Annual Report which gives an overview of how we performed during the financial year 2020/21.

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REOPENING OF TOWN HALL

After being closed for over a year, the Town Hall is due to reopen on an appointment-only basis - for those customers who need help and support with issues that cannot be dealt with over the phone or online.

See page 3 for more details.

Have I got housing news for you

Hi everyone

Here's hoping this summer edition of Housing Matters finds everyone safe and well as we move forward with the relaxing of Covid restrictions towards the 'new normal' – whatever this may bring.

I am so pleased to advise that as of Monday, 21 June the Town Hall will be open for customers who we are unable to assist over the phone or online.

Customers will need to make an appointment to come and see us. Further details are provided on page 3. In due course, in line with Government guidelines, we will extend the face-to-face service we are able to offer, with our future goal being to return to business as usual.

The Council is currently reviewing its customer service - as it wants to put residents at the heart of everything it does and so it engages with customers in a positive way. To enable the Council to improve customer service effectively WE NEED YOUR HELP by providing your views. Please see details in the next column on how you can access a short survey.

On page 13 is our Annual Report which shows how we performed during the financial year April 2020 – April 2021. As you will appreciate, the 2020/21 period has been extremely challenging to maintain our performance, in particular on repairs due to Covid restrictions. I am proud of the results achieved, and of our staff and contractors for their flexibility and positive attitude throughout the period since the first lockdown in March, 2020.

Our front page 'Estate Spring Clean' was a great example of all hands on deck, when a mix of Council staff and contractors were out and about on estates clearing up litter and fly-tipping. The amount of waste collected was phenomenal and the environment looked much improved and highlights the need for us and communities to take collective responsibility to enable us to be proud of our estates.

A success story in this edition is that at long last, and working in partnership with HSBC, we can now assist customers who have struggled in the past to open a bank account. With Post Office card accounts closing in November this year, it is vital that anyone who has their DWP payments paid into one of these accounts opens a bank account. Read more about this and who to contact on page 3.

Another success story is the Brilliant Barrow Town Deal. See page 4 for details of the excellent news that Barrow was one of the first towns to be awarded £25 million from the Government's Towns Fund. Exciting times are ahead, transforming Barrow into an even greater place to live, work and visit.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone well, and here's to a lovely sunny summer as hopefully restrictions continue to be lifted and we move forward with our lives.

Jouice E. Sharp

Assistant Director - Housing



What do you think of the Council's Customer Service?

The Council needs *your* views

Our Council Plan clearly states we want to put our residents at the heart of all we do and we want to ensure all our customers have a positive experience when engaging with the Council.

Our Customers are defined as anyone who lives, works in or visits Barrow Borough.

We are currently reviewing our Customer Service and we need your help. Can you please spare a few minutes to complete a short survey to help us improve our Customer Service – the deadline is Friday, 11 June.

A link to the survey can be found on the home page of the Council's website: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, look out for the survey on either Barrow Borough Council Housing Department or the Council's facebook pages or use the QR code below - thank you!



IMPORTANT REMINDER!!

Update your journal with new rent charge

As you know, your rent increased on 5 April. For those in receipt of Universal Credit, it's your responsibility to update the housing costs on your journal, and you should have received a message about this on your To-Do list.

It's really important - if you haven't already done so – to update your journal with the new rent charge so your UC payment can be adjusted to cover the rent increase. It's quick and easy to do and could prevent your account falling into arrears.



If you don't have an online journal, you can call the DWP free of charge on 0800 328 5644.

If you need help or you want to check your new rent charge, please contact our experts, Amanda Morris on (01229) 876581 or Jo Hughes on (01229) 876534 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk

DATE SET FOR TOWN HALL REOPENING IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT ROADMAP



We are delighted to announce that from Monday, 21st June the Town Hall will reopen for customers who need help and support with issues that cannot be dealt with over the phone or online.

You will need to make an appointment if you want to come and see us - and measures will be in place to ensure everyone's safety.

We will be taking the latest government advice into account before opening our doors and ask that you keep in mind the following guidance.

- The Council has adapted many of its services and most matters can now be dealt with over the phone or via the Council website. So please only book an appointment if you really need to see someone in person.
- If you do need to make an appointment, contact details for our services are shown below.
- It is really important you arrive on time and please only bring someone with you if you need assistance or support.

- We will let you into the building at the time of your appointment - you won't be able to wait inside if you arrive early.
- No walk-in appointments will be available and customers who turn up without a timed slot will be asked to return home and book in advance.

A spokesperson for Barrow Borough Council said: "We are very pleased to be able to welcome members of the public back into the Town Hall from 21st June.

"Initially, we will be operating on a strict appointment-only basis, and appointments will only be made available to customers who we are unable to help over the telephone or online.

"In due course, we will extend the in-person services we are able to offer, in line with government guidance, with the ultimate goal of returning to business as usual."

Priority Face-to-Face Appointments

Housing Service

Lettings: For sign-up of properties
Tel: (01229) 876550

Arrears: Serious rent arrears/legal action
Tel: (01229) 876397

Estates: Serious anti-social behaviour/legal action
Tel: (01229) 876423

Homelessness: Emergency homeless cases
Tel: (01229) 876599 / Out of hours: (01229) 833311
email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk

Revenues & Benefits Service*

Council Tax & Housing Benefit
Tel: (01229) 404242

email: benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk
email: counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk

*Appointments will take place in the Town Hall.

Development Services

Building Control
Tel: (01229) 876356 | email: buildcontrol@barrowbc.gov.uk

Planning
Tel: (01229) 876405 or 876568
email: consultplanning@barrowbc.gov.uk

Land Charges
Tel: (01229) 876364 | email: bbclandcharges@barrowbc.gov.uk

Public Protection Services

Environmental Health & Licensing
Tel: (01229) 876444 | email: envhealth@barrowbc.gov.uk

All other Council Services

Including automated payments/waste collection/car parking
Tel: (01229) 876543 | email: customerservices@barrowbc.gov.uk

This information is correct at the time of going to press.

For the latest information visit www.barrowbc.gov.uk/
and the Council's Facebook & Twitter pages.

STRUGGLING TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT?

We can now help you to open a bank account

If you've struggled in the past to open a bank account - because for example you've no ID - we're pleased to say that we can now help. HSBC is working with us and can offer a service to our tenants which will enable you to open a bank account.

As Post Office Accounts will no longer be able to accept payments from the DWP from November 2021, if you currently have your benefits paid into a Post Office account, you will need to open a bank account as soon as possible.

How it works

The whole process is very simple and our officers will guide you through each step of the way - even going with you to the bank. Our housing officers will take along information to show you are a tenant or a prospective tenant.

How to manage your account and internet banking will be discussed with you. The appointment will last between 30-60 minutes and the housing officer will be present throughout.

The accounts are basic current accounts with a visa debit card. There is no borrowing allowed on the account.

Once your bank account is set up, the card, PIN and any correspondence will then be sent to your home address.

Success story

Some of our tenants have struggled for years to open a bank account, so it really is great that we now have this arrangement with HSBC.

We're pleased to say that one of our tenants, after spotting our post on social media, got in touch with us. Our Tenancy Officer, Simone Singleton, then arranged an appointment at HSBC where she accompanied them to the appointment and guided them through the whole process.

Our tenant later sent Simone this message:

"Thank you for the help you have given me over the last week helping me to open my own bank account - it's been priceless, thank you so much!"

If you need any more information about opening your own bank account, call Simone Singleton on (01229) 876580 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk



✂️ Here's a handy calendar for you to cut out and keep which includes non-collectable weeks ✂️

RECORD OF RENT PAYMENTS 2021/2022



- Payments made after Thursday afternoon may not show on your account until the following week
- Payments made using Allpay cards or barcode letters can take two working days to reach your account

Wk	From	Payment	Wk	From	Payment	Wk	From	Payment	Wk	From	Payment
1 *	05/04/21		14	05/07/21		27	04/10/21		40	03/01/22	
2	12/04/21		15	12/07/21		28	11/10/21		41	10/01/22	
3	19/04/21		16	19/07/21		29	18/10/21		42	17/01/22	
4	26/04/21		17	26/07/21		30	25/10/21		43	24/01/22	
5	03/05/21		18	02/08/21		31	01/11/21		44	31/01/22	
6	10/05/21		19	09/08/21		32	08/11/21		45	07/02/22	
7	17/05/21		20	16/08/21		33	15/11/21		46	14/02/22	
8	24/05/21		21	23/08/21		34	22/11/21		47	21/02/22	
9	31/05/21		22*	30/08/21		35	29/11/21		48	28/02/22	
10	07/06/21		23	06/09/21		36	06/12/21		49	07/03/22	
11	14/06/21		24	13/09/21		37	13/12/21		50	14/03/22	
12	21/06/21		25	20/09/21		38	20/12/21		51	21/03/22	
13	28/06/21		26	27/09/21		39 *	27/12/21		52 *	28/03/22	

* NON-COLLECTABLE WEEKS – Please note unless your account is clear, payment is still due during the non-collectable weeks.

ESTATE SPRING CLEAN

A few weeks ago, Housing staff and our Mobile Caretaking Unit together with the Council's Streetcare, Parks & Gardens and FCC teams were out and about on estates clearing up litter and removing fly-tipping.

In just two days – and not including the contents of the skip – we collected 5.7 tons of waste. Seventeen tyres and five fridges were also removed. Numerous bags of rotting food were also removed – please don't leave food waste outside – they attract vermin!!

Operations Manager, Caroline Wagstaff said: "Litter and fly-tipping is unsightly and we hope by working together and clearing these areas this raises awareness of our collective responsibility to help keep our estates clean and to enhance pride in the area."



Share the cost with a neighbour

All regular household rubbish (excluding recyclable items) should be disposed of in your black refuse bin. If you need to dispose of any large items such as a mattress, sofa or fridge, the Council provides a bulky waste collection service. The charge is £15 for up to five large items (with additional items charged at £3). But why not think about sharing the cost with a neighbour who also has large items they wish to dispose of. To arrange a bulky waste collection, call the Council on (01229) 876543. Bags or boxes containing household waste and small items are not classed as bulky waste – so dispose of these in your black refuse bin.

For more information on the Bulky Waste Collection service visit: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/recycling-refuse/> where you will also find information on the following:

- Find My Collection Day
- Request a replacement bin/ recycling container
- Report a missed bin collection
- Fly-Tipping and how to report it
- A-Z of what you can recycle

Tougher measures will be taken

We are committed to ensuring all our estates are pleasant places to live. Fly-tipping and dumping of rubbish is anti-social behaviour which breaches our Tenancy Agreement – and it won't be tolerated by the Council. We will look to take swift enforcement action to prevent anyone from engaging in unacceptable behaviour on our estates.

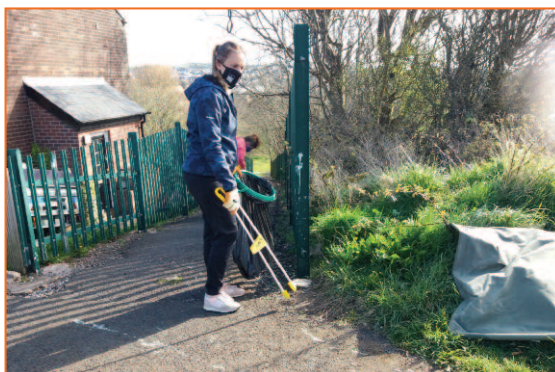
If you witness anyone fly-tipping, please contact our Estates Team in confidence on (01229) 876423 or 876520 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk



Before



After



HOME ADAPTATIONS



Are you or a member of your household finding it difficult to remain active and independent in your Council home because of a disability or ill health?

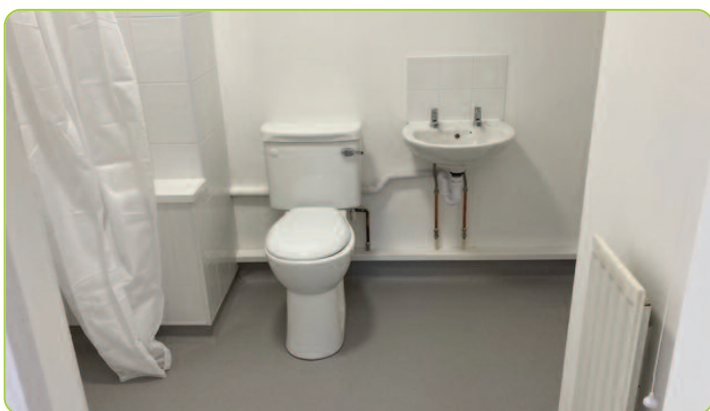
If so, did you know we can carry out adaptations to your home so you can continue to live in a safe and comfortable environment that meets your needs.

Adaptations are divided into two categories – minor and major:

Minor adaptations are works that do not need any structural changes to your home, and include: grab/hand rails, lever taps and an additional bannister rail.

Major adaptations include work such as wheelchair ramps or level access showers.

Here are some examples of work we have recently carried out in our properties, ranging from minor adaptations to major adaptation work which was carried out in one of our ground-floor flats, which we think looks fantastic and which will make a life-changing difference to the tenant.



For more information on home adaptations, please contact our Housing Needs Officer, Lindsay Gedling, on (01229) 876577 or email housing@barrowbc.gov.uk There is also more information online: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/your-home/disabled-adaptations/>





...WE DID

Wow ... what a transformation!

When Jackie and Irene, the Street Voices for the Lord Street area in Dalton, raised their concerns about the rear of Lord Street in Dalton and the lack of handrails in the area we discovered this area was in serious need of a makeover. It was very overgrown, neglected and was being used as a rubbish dump.

Since then, we've fitted new handrails, removed a dead tree and planted two new trees, repaired brickwork in the walled area, trimmed all greenery and power-washed all the block paving to the area. As you can see, the area is now looking as good as new and fit to be used again by the local residents as an area to sit out in and put the world to rights over a cuppa.



Before...



and after

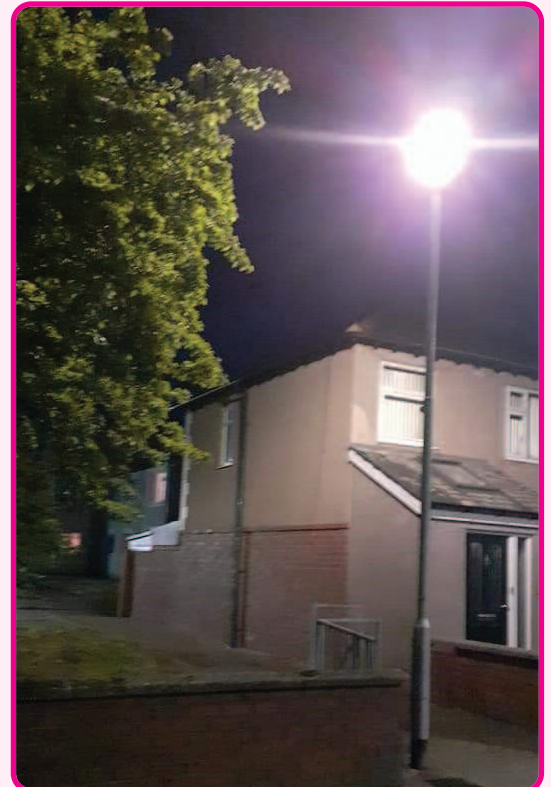


...WE DID

And there was light!

Mandy Anderson, Street Voice for Raglan Court, contacted us concerned about the dark alley between Corporation Terrace to Raglan Court and the ongoing problems of anti-social behaviour in the area.

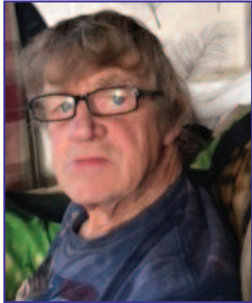
Borough and County Councillor, Kevin Hamilton, then became involved and, following his intervention, organised with Cumbria County Council Highways Team for two new street lamps to be provided either end of the alley. Mandy says: "The new street lamps are great, they really brighten up the alleyway and lots of people have commented on the improvement they have made in making the area a brighter and safer place. A job well done – thank you".



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STREET VOICES

We are always keen to increase our tenant engagement, so were really pleased when two tenants approached us interested in becoming street voices for their area.

After receiving the required number of 'yes' votes from local residents, we're pleased to announce that both David Pearson and Nicola Bull have been successfully appointed as street voices.



David Pearson

David is the Street Voice for the Newton Road Area in Dalton.

David says:

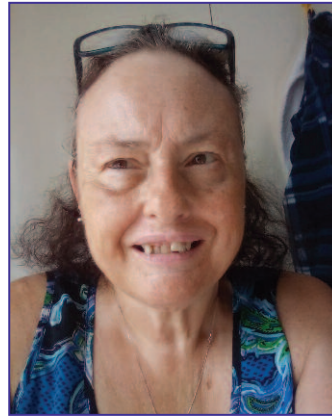
"I've been interested in becoming a street voice for some time, so I was really pleased to have been appointed street voice for this area in Dalton.

I've already attended a couple of Tenants' Forum meetings which have been very interesting and I'm looking forward to helping identify issues that are important to residents living in the area."

These are the streets covered by David:

Buttermere Drive	Ennerdale Cl	Ruskin Avenue	Thornton Park
Coniston Avenue	Eskdale Drive	Rydal Close	Ullswater Close
Coronation Drive	Newton Road	Thirlmere Close	Windermere Cl
Dalton Fields Ln			

David Pearson: (01229) 230019 | email: pearson920@gmail.com



Nicola Bull

Nicola is our second new Street Voice, having been appointed only very recently.

Nicola says:

"I'm proud to say I've been a resident on the Roosegate estate for over 20 years - 19 years of which living on the corner of Salthouse Road where I've brought up my family.

"During this time I've been a member of the Roosegate Residents' and Tenants' Association, the Disabilities Forum and I've also volunteered in many community-based roles.

"I'm so happy to have become the Street Voice for the area, and I will help people as much as I can - just call, text or email me and I'll do my best to help or point you in the right direction."

Nicola's patch covers the following streets:

Broadway	Salthouse Road
Gateway	Thrums Street
Longway	Westway
Roose Road	

Nicola Bull: 07808 264 941 | email: nicolajanebull@gmail.com

We warmly welcome David and Nicola and we look forward to working with them both to encourage good engagement and to ensure residents have the opportunity to shape the services we provide.

OUR GOOD TENANTS ARE REWARDED



Huge congratulations to our lovely tenants, Adam Kyte and Vera Kerr, the latest winners of our Rewarding Good Tenant prize draw!! Anyone can enter the draw - all we ask is that you've:

- Maintained a clear rent account for three months.
- Not been involved in any anti-social behaviour in your area.
- Maintained your tenancy and any garden area to an acceptable standard.
- Allowed our contractor access to your home to complete the annual gas check (and, when due, the electrical check) without delay.

Eligible entries are then taken to a meeting of the Tenants' Forum where the prize draw takes place. The first drawn receives £100 of vouchers and the second and third drawn receiving £50 of vouchers. You've gotta be in it to win it!!

There are a few different ways you can enter ...

- email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk with your name and address and the subject heading 'Rewarding Good Tenant Entry'.
- Download a Rewarding Good Tenants entry form from our website: <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/incentive-schemes/>
- Call Cathy Kirk on (01229) 876523.

BLOOMIN' BRILLIANT!!!!

Tony Barry is the latest recipient of our Good Neighbour 'Thank You' and boy does he deserve it!

Nominated by his neighbour, Gwen Fallon, she says: "During the pandemic Tony has worked hard regularly picking up rubbish and cleaning the area. He did back-breaking work to clean the verge on Bank Lane (and cut back the hedging) and planted banks of daffodils which are now blooming and looking beautiful."

The daffodils were in full bloom when we visited Tony and they looked absolutely spectacular!

Tony, who works for Hayes Garden Centre, told us they had very kindly given him bags of daffodils bulbs for him to plant in the roadside verge. But before he could get down to planting the bulbs, he had the mammoth task of cutting back the overgrown hedge row – a task he did single-handed using his own tools – take a look at the photos of the hedgerows on Bank Lane before Tony got to work on it!

His sheer determination and hours of work were richly rewarded when the bulbs bloomed this spring, and when we shared this story on our social media platforms, Tony was inundated with messages from people thanking and praising him for all his efforts.

Councillor for Ormsgill, Will McEwan said: "Well done Tony - what a great effort! You are inspirational to the community of Ormsgill. Well deserved, brilliant work you have done to brighten up the area - star man".

Head of Housing, Jan Sharp said: "Tony has gone above and beyond to improve this area of Ormsgill for the benefit of others in the community – it really does look wonderful."



When Tony said he also wanted to also give us two birch trees to plant on the grassed area nearby, we sought approval from our Tenants' Forum to purchase another four birch trees. All six trees have now been planted and as they mature they will really enhance the area. In recognition of Tony's fantastic work, it's was our pleasure to award him £30 of Love2Shop vouchers.



The hedgerow as it looked before



FACE TO FACE with...

Sam Plum



This edition's Face to Face is with the Council's Chief Executive, Sam Plum.

Here Sam tells us a bit about herself and the challenges she and her team have faced since she took over the top job:

Hi, I'm Sam, CEO of Barrow Borough Council. I've been here for two years now and it's flown by. I'm originally from East Lancashire, but Barrow felt like home very quickly and I moved to Walney just after Christmas.

The past two years have been both brilliant and challenging. Supporting our councillors to lead the Borough through the Coronavirus pandemic has been tough at times, but also incredibly humbling. The way our officers, partners, communities, businesses and residents have stepped up and supported each other has brought out all that is great about our Borough. The compassion and kindness, pride and neighbourliness have blown me away.

At the same time as managing us through the pandemic, we've also continued to deliver all of our regular services. Some of these have had to be done in different ways to make sure our staff and residents are kept as safe as possible.

We have also been given a number of opportunities to bid for funding for a range of new initiatives. In the past year we have secured over £30 million to deliver new projects over the next two to four years. The biggest chunk of this is £25 million for a new Town Deal which will see seven major projects delivered including a new Learning Quarter, four new or improved community hubs, and new walking and cycling routes created. You can find out more from our website or the Brilliant Barrow website, or their Facebook or Twitter pages – (page 4 also has more details on the Town Deal).

We are on track to bid for even more funding in the coming months, which could see major improvements to the town centre and more opportunities for our residents to get involved in their own neighbourhoods. In the next few years these projects will help to transform our Borough and make it an even better place to live, work and visit.

We want to work with local people to make sure these changes really improve our borough for all of us, making it greener, more welcoming, safer and more vibrant. We want people to have happy, healthy lives and we want our children to have the best opportunities to thrive. This will be central to our work in the coming months and years and we'd love for you to be involved.

If you have any ideas for how we can work together I'd love to hear them.



Sam, tell us ...

What are your three best character traits?

Honesty, compassion, enthusiasm.

What are your three worst character traits?

Demanding, a bit stubborn, easily distracted.

What's your earliest memory? My Dalmatian dog, Tina.

What are you most afraid of? The dark or spiders.

What are you most proud of? My daughters.



What's your favourite film?

Any Harry Potter

What's your favourite TV programme?

The Detectorists.

What's your favourite book?

The Salt Path by Raynor Winn.

What do you do in your free time?

Swim outside, cycle, walk the dogs.

What was the first record you ever bought?

Breaking Glass by Hazel O'Connor

What's your favourite singer/band?

Billy Bragg or Frank Turner, can't decide!

What three items would you take on a desert island?

Swimming goggles, the books I never have time to read, chocolate.

What's your most treasured possession?

My wedding ring (which was my grandmas).

What or who makes you laugh the most?

My husband Rog.

What's your favourite meal?

Spaghetti carbonara (home made).

What's your favourite drink?

A cold beer on a warm day.

What superpower do wish you had?

The ability to fly.

What's your dream holiday destination?

Anywhere with water and mountains.

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

Billy Bragg, David Attenborough, my dad, Rosa Parks, Michelle Obama, Kate Raworth.

WELCOME TO...

Ste Herrington



Hi, my name is Stephen and I started as a Contract Supervisor in the Maintenance Team back in December last year. I previously was in the construction sector for over 30 years.

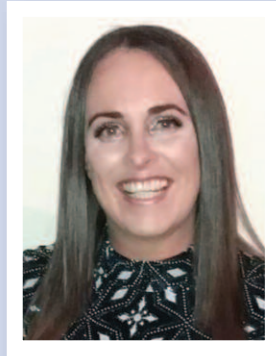
Starting a new job in lockdown has been very challenging and I have been given great support from all of the Housing Department.

In my own time, I like to spend time with my family and granddaughter.

and Donna Brown

Hi my name is Donna. I started as a Business Support Officer in February this year.

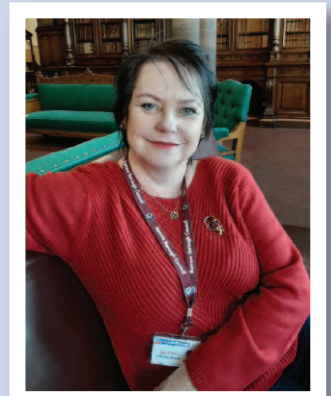
Strange times to start my new role during a Pandemic but the girls in the office have been fantastic and I have settled in really well.



Whilst not working, I run round after my two children who have enough hobbies to last a lifetime. I am a dance teacher at local dance school which keeps me fit and active.

FAREWELL TO...

Sue Drake



Sue joined us a member of our Lettings Team in June 2019 and as soon as she started we realised what an asset to the department she was. Hard working, capable and willing to put her hand to anything, Sue stepped forward last year and headed up a small team of staff tasked with processing business support grants.

In March this year Sue not only relocated to Kirkham in Lancashire but she also started a new job – within days of each other! She's actually still working for the Council as a home worker for the Property Services Group.

Although Sue's time with us was short and we were all sad to see her go, she and her family take with them our very best wishes for a very happy new future.

STAFF SUPPORT FURNESS PRIDE

Housing staff – both working in the office and at home – proudly joined with other Council employees supporting the recent Furness Pride event organised by Drop Zone Youth Projects.



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



ARE YOU STRUGGLING PAYING YOUR RENT?

If so, don't sit at home worrying

The last year has been a challenging time for everyone and inevitably some tenants have been struggling to maintain rent payments.

If you've fallen behind with your rent and not contacted us yet, please give our friendly Rents Team a ring – they're just a phone call away and can provide you with expert advice and guidance. If needed, they can arrange a repayment plan - affordable for you - to help you reduce the arrears.

The sooner you contact us, the sooner we can help get you back on track.



Here are the telephone numbers you need:

- Emma Johnson (01229) 876469
- Carol High (01229) 876397
- Katie Barker (01229) 876471
- or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk

Please don't feed seagulls

- It encourages the stealing of food and waste
- It affects their health
- It makes gulls aggressive towards humans
- It causes a nuisance
- It encourages rats!

If you don't feed seagulls - thank you!!



**Barrow Borough Council
Housing Service**

Changes to Cumbria Choice

New & Improved Allocation Policy

- Introduction of three simple to understand bands:
Band A – Urgent need for housing
Band B – Statutory housing need to move
Band C – All other applications in housing need
- Increased bids for applicants in low priority (Band C)
- Nine transparent qualification guidelines
- Ability to suspend bidding rather than making an application ineligible, allowing applicants to accrue time on the register

Improved Cumbria Choice website

- New accessible Cumbria Housing Portal, to use on smartphones, tablets and computers
- Customers can reset their login passwords more easily
- Shorter, intuitive Housing Application form
- Supporting evidence can be uploaded by the applicant
- Better look website, showing adverts like 'Right Move'. You can search on a radius from a certain location or on a map view.

These changes are due to be brought in mid to late July. Check our website and social media for the latest info. All current Active applications will be transferred across so, there will be no gap in being able to 'place bids of interest'.

When applicants login after the 'going-live' date, they will be prompted to complete the new version of the Housing Application form, this relates to the new Allocation Policy, so their application can be brought up to date and the banding reviewed if needed.

In the meantime we ask that you ensure we have your up-to-date contact information on your Housing Application, and you are aware of your login details.

Any queries, please ring us on (01229) 876554 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk



ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 in numbers

Here's our annual report which gives information on how we performed during the financial year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. We hope this is useful in terms of understanding key costs and our performance. If you've any queries or comments, please call us on (01229) 876523 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk.

Responsive Repairs



£808,078 spent on responsive repair work:

-  **2816** were emergencies
-  **2605** were urgent
-  **2398** were routine



£86 average cost of responsive repair



£1,415 average cost of major repairs

£3,801 average cost of a void repair



Planned Maintenance Works

£1,123,546 spent carrying out major improvements to **971** properties:



197 central heating



481 painting



75 rewires



86 roofs



104 windows



28 doors



100% properties meet Decent Homes Standard



Rents

£82 average weekly rent

£390,941 current tenant arrears

0 tenants evicted for rent arrears (suspended due to Covid)



Tenancy & Estate

1523 people on Cumbria Choice register

166 homes were re-let

65.8% properties accepted on first offer

5 houses sold under Right to Buy Scheme

2,534 properties managed by Housing Service



Your Home

Gas Safety Checks



99.9% properties have valid gas certificates (7 properties overdue due to tenants shielding Covid-19)

3 warrants obtained to gain access to properties to carry out gas servicing where tenants refused access

£240 spent on warrants



Aids & Adaptations

£118,863 spent on adaptations

57 aids/adaptations completed



Neighbourhood

0 reports of Hate Crime

Complaints	Stage 1	Stage 2
Upheld	1	0
Not upheld	2	0
Partly upheld	1	0
Rejected/withdrawn	0	0
Total	4	0



WINNER: Blake Cummings



WINNER: Lexi Harris

RESULTS OF CHILDREN'S XMAS COLOURING COMPETITION

Wow! We had some really brilliant entries to our last competition and here are the two winners and runners-up.

Congratulations and well done to Lexi Harris (winner of 7 years and under age group) and Blake Cummings (winner of 8-11 years). Well done to the runners-up pictured here and thanks to you all for entering the competition.

(Not pictured: Tamim and Raed Abdelhafiz and Ryan Roberts.



Gracie, Millie & Hallie Robertson



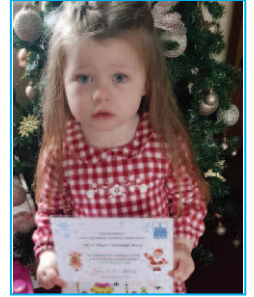
Emily Wilde



Millie Faddy

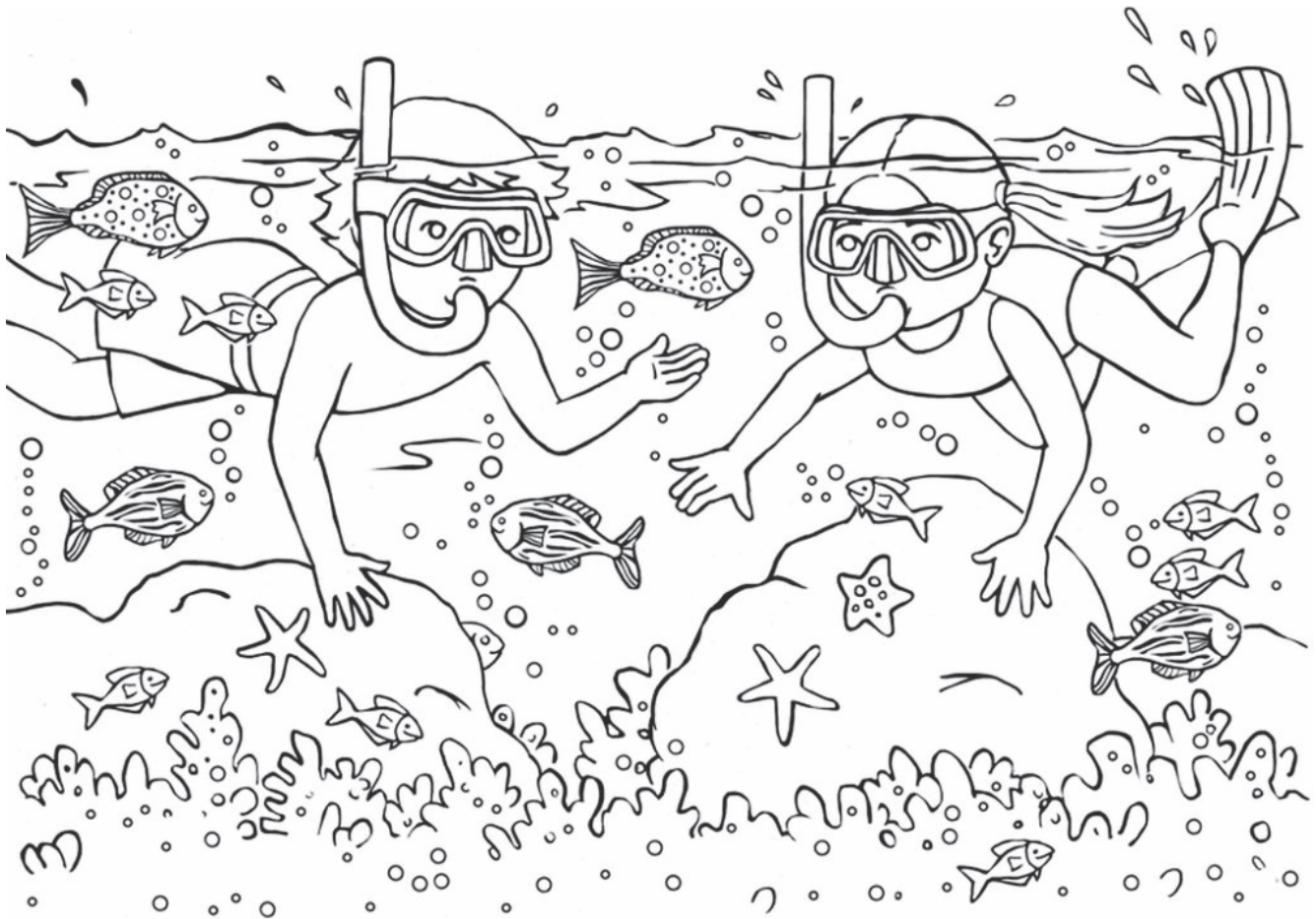


Mason-Olivia Wood



SUMMER COMPETITION

Here's a fun 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 Friday, 18 June. Please post your entries to: Cathy Kirk, Housing Department, Town Hall, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD



NAME (IN CAPITALS PLEASE)

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NO AGE



BRILLIANT BARROW TOWN DEAL

This is an exciting time
for our town!

Barrow received excellent news when it was one of the first towns to secure £25 million from the Government's Towns Fund. The #Brilliant Barrow Town Deal includes seven key projects which will transform Barrow and help the area to thrive for future generations as a great place to live, work and visit.

The seven key projects are:

- 1 A university-style campus facility offering both further and higher education courses
- 2 A network of community well-being hubs, including a new outdoor centre at Earnse Bay
- 3 A programme of bespoke business support provided to residents, entrepreneurs and small businesses to harness economic opportunities in Barrow
- 4 The development of events and performance spaces to draw people to the area
- 5 A programme of housing renewal
- 6 New cycling and walking infrastructure to allow Barrow to become an active travel town
- 7 Preparations to allow Barrow's Marina Village to get underway

The Council will be working closely with partners and the local community to gather ideas over the coming months.

We would like to hear from as many people as possible to help us to finalise the projects which will be submitted to Government in 2021.

More details about these fantastic projects can be found on the #Brilliant Barrow social media pages and website where you can comment:

Website: <https://brilliantbarrow.org.uk/>

 <https://m.facebook.com/BrilliantBarrow>

 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BrilliantBarrow>

**#brilliant
BARROW**

Free Debt Advice

If you're struggling with debt, it can be hard to know where to turn. But there are lots of free advice services which can help you along with our very own staff in the Housing Service.

Free Debt advice services

Debt Advice Foundation

www.debtadvicefoundation.org Tel. 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 Charity

www.stepchange.org Tel. 0800 138 1111

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 Tel. 0808 808 4000

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

Citizens Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk Freephone 0808 2787 817

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 Poverty

www.capuk.org Tel. 0800 328 0006

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

Age UK

ageuk.org.uk Tel. 01229 831425

If you're struggling with debt, you're not alone and it's never too early or too late to seek help. Take the first steps to regain control and find your way back to a debt-free life.



Struggling to pay your water charges?

Support may be available to reduce your weekly water charges. Please contact our Money Management Advisor, Jo Hughes, on (01229) 876534 or email: jhughes@barrowbc.gov.uk

Are you claiming housing benefit?

Do you need help with your housing benefit claim form or assistance with any letters you have received from the housing benefit team?

If so, please get in touch with our Benefits Liaison Officer, Amanda Morris on (01229) 876581 or email: ajmorris@barrowbc.gov.uk

Problems paying your rent?

Please get in touch with our Income and Debt Recovery Team - they are here to help you:

Carol High (01229) 876397 | email: chigh@barrowbc.gov.uk

Emma Johnston (01229) 876469 | email: eejohnston@barrowbc.gov.uk

Katie Barker (01229) 876471 | email: kbarker@barrowbc.gov.uk

Universal Credit

If you need any advice about claiming Universal Credit or help with your existing claim for Universal Credit, please contact:

Amanda Morris on (01229) 876581 | email: ajmorris@barrowbc.gov.uk

Jo Hughes on (01229) 876534 | email: jhughes@barrowbc.gov.uk

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:**

Carol High (01229) 876397

Emma Johnston (01229) 876469

Katie Barker (01229) 876471

ESTATE MANAGEMENT TEAM**Housing Officers:**

Debbie Cubiss (Snr) (01229) 876423

Cheryl Waite (01229) 876520

Dan Crowe (01229) 876479

LETTINGS TEAM**Housing Officers:**

Jackie Rimmer (Snr) (01229) 876550

Alison Horricks (01229) 876403

Andrew High (01229) 876345

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

Stephen Herrington (01229) 876492

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

**Website:**

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**

Non-gas repairs

During office hours

(01229) 876578

Out-of-office hours

(01229) 833311

Gas only repairs

0800 031 6578
freephone

(01229) 833311

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 Brathay Crescent/Levens Terrace/Vulcan Road

Linda Craig - 07516 309 159

Street Voice for Grange & Cartmel Crescent

James Christie - 07748 427 104

Street Voice for Devonshire Road

Lisa Webb - (01229) 219787

Street Voices for Lord Street Area, Dalton

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

Street Voice for Eamont Close

David Rollinson - d.rollinson43@gmail.com

Street Voice for Roosegate

Nicola Bull - 07808 264 941

Devonshire Road Residents' & Tenants' Association

Jennifer Lord - (01229) 835165 - Griffin Community Hall

Street Voice for Newton Road Area, Dalton

David Pearson - 01229 230019

North Walney Residents' Association

Steve Thornton - 07856 753 482