

HOUSING MATTERS



WINTER
2021

The newsletter of Barrow Borough Council Housing Department

BE PROUD AWARD WINNERS

Earlier this year, Barrow Borough Council launched the Be Proud Awards which celebrate those colleagues who have gone the extra mile or made a special effort to provide excellent service. Over 90 nominations, split between four categories, were received for the wonderful work delivered over the last 12 months. After much deliberation, our Chief Executive, Sam Plum, and her two directors narrowed down the nominations and chose the winners, four of whom, we're delighted to say are based in the Housing Department.

Huge congratulations to all the winners, with a special mention to our fabulous colleagues Amanda Brierley, Lindsay Gedling (not pictured), Jacky Macaulay and Caroline Wagstaff – we're so proud of you!



SO PROUD!!
Caroline Wagstaff



CONGRATULATIONS!!
Amanda Brierley & Jacky Macaulay

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See page 15 for details on how to enter our draw to **WIN FREE TICKETS FOR THE PANTO**

CHRISTMAS CLOSING
The Town Hall will close
4pm Friday, 24 December &
reopen Tuesday, 4 January 2022

Have I got HOUSING NEWS for you



Can you believe it's December already?! Where has this year gone? Here's hoping this winter edition finds everyone safe and well despite the challenges of Covid-19.

We continue to open for customers who we are unable to assist over the phone or online and, as I previously advised in the summer edition, customers will need to make an appointment to come and see us – see details on page 4.

The Council's Customer Service review is progressing with the aim of putting residents at the heart of everything it does as we engage with our customers in a positive way. Many thanks to our customers who accessed a short survey to provide their views earlier this year to enable us to provide customer service effectively – read more about this on page 3.

Having good neighbours can make all the difference to your community and we like to reward and pay tribute to those customers who have made a difference to the lives of their neighbours through our Good Neighbour 'Thank You' Scheme (page 8). What a pleasure it is to read about their contributions.

For an update on Local Government Reorganisation and the process of delivering two new councils for Cumbria, which I am sure will benefit all our residents in the future, please turn to page 15.

In this edition, we have included a selection of compliments which have been received from customers. Our staff work really hard to provide good customer service and being thanked is so appreciated.

This, alongside our feature on the front page with four of our staff winning Be Proud Awards, makes me so proud to be head of the Housing Service with such supportive, caring staff.

To close I would like to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2022.



Jaunce E. Sharp

Deputy Director of People & Place

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR REFUSE & RECYCLING

This year collection dates will not be changed:

Normal Collection Day

Friday, 24 December
Tuesday, 28 December
Wednesday, 29 December
Thursday, 30 December
Friday, 31 December

Confirmed Collection Day

Friday, 24 December
Tuesday, 28 December
Wednesday, 29 December
Thursday, 30 December
Friday, 31 December

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 black bin and they will be taken by refuse collectors.

For residents on the Green Waste Collection, real trees should put 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/>

HELP TO OPEN BANK ACCOUNTS

If you've never been able to open a bank account, we can now help

We know from experience, that unfortunately some of our tenants – because they have no official ID - have never been able to open a bank account. But we're delighted to say that working with the local branch of HSBC we can now assist tenants to open their own basic bank accounts.

The process is very simple and our Tenancy Services Officer, Simone Singleton, guides tenants through the whole process - even going with them to the bank.

Simone says:

"Every single person I've referred through this service has been so desperate to open their own bank account in their own right! Each one has had their own story to tell and having their own account has opened up so many opportunities for them - for this reason alone I feel privileged to be part of the process.

"Not having your own personal account, for your own personal money can be harsh and limiting.

"We are extremely proud to be linked in with the HSBC to offer the support for this service to our tenants- it is truly a game changer!!"

Contact Simone for more information

Call Simone Singleton on (01229) 876580 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk



IMPROVING OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR YOU

Huge thanks to everyone who completed the Customer Service survey earlier in the year. The response was excellent with 164 members of the public completing the survey.

Our services will be designed around our customers' needs

The findings from the survey have been used to create our Customer Services Strategy which received Executive Committee approval in July.

Our Strategy sets out how, over the next four years:

"We will put our customers at the heart of everything we do. We will listen to our residents giving them a real voice - a chance to share their experience of their customer journey and from this we will design our services around our customers' needs."

An Action Plan has been agreed which will ensure the effective implementation of the strategy. The key themes of the Action Plan are:

- **Digital** – Operations and Performance To look at technology currently in place, to prepare a specification for new IT platform. Align our services with Local Government Reorganisation to put us in the best possible place for the new unitary authority in 2023.
- **People:** Develop further new ways of working to improve customer contact and experience
- **Place:** Develop new mobile ways of working and explore existing assets to support improvements.

This is an exciting time for the Council and we will keep you updated as the changes to our services are introduced.



We would like to thank our tenants for the compliments we have received during the past year. Our staff truly appreciate them. Here are some of the kind words you have sent us:

For the Estates Team

"I'm eternally grateful for everything you and the housing team have and are doing for me. I know there's a better way of life and I'm gonna grab it with both hands, so a massive thank you, you've saved my life."

For our Maintenance Team & Contractors

"Thank you for fitting new windows and for choosing such efficient tradesmen to fit them. The three workers were polite, considerate, hard-working and meticulous."

For our Homelessness Team

"Thank you so much for the help and advice you gave me when I had to get out of my abusive marriage for my own safety and was left homeless. I know you say it's your job, but it meant so much to me because I could barely function. I will be forever grateful for the help and kindness shown to me."

For our Mobile Caretaking Team

"We are very grateful for the swift action in removing items in communal area" and "Thanks for the brilliant work you did in cutting back overgrown hedges."



BARROW TOWN HALL IS OPEN FOR PRIORITY FACE-TO-FACE APPOINTMENTS

The Council has adapted many of its services and most matters can now be dealt with over the phone or via the Council's website <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/>

Customers who we are unable to help over the telephone or online, will be able to make a priority face-to-face appointment to come in and see us. Walk-in appointments are not available. Measures are in place to ensure everyone's safety.

(Out-of-hours emergency contact numbers are shown at the bottom of the page).

- If you need to book an appointment, contact details for each of our teams is shown below.
- It's really important you arrive on time and only bring someone with you if you need assistance or support.
- We'll let you into the building at the time of your appointment – if you arrive early, you won't be able to wait inside.
- If you turn up without an appointment you will be asked to return home and book in advance.

To request a priority face-to-face appointment, contact the relevant team:

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 (during office hours)

Tel: (01229) 833311 (out of office hours)

or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk

All other Council Services

Including automated payments/waste collection/ car parking

Tel: (01229) 876543 |

email: customerservices@barrowbc.gov.uk

Out-of-hours EMERGENCY enquiries,

including Council housing repairs and *homelessness enquiries: (01229) 833311

*Office hours homelessness enquiries: (01229) 876599

Office hours: Mon-Thurs 8:30am-5pm (4:30pm Friday)

Revenues & Benefits Service*

Council Tax & Housing Benefit

Tel: (01229) 404242

email: benefits@barrowbc.gov.uk

email: counciltax@barrowbc.gov.uk

*Appointments will be in the Town Hall.

Development Services

Building Control

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

Planning

Tel: (01229) 876405 / 876568 email:

consultplanning@barrowbc.gov.uk

Land Charges

Tel: (01229) 876364 | email: bclandcharges@barrowbc.gov.uk

Public Protection Services

Environmental Health & Licensing

Tel: (01229) 876444 | email: envhealth@barrowbc.gov.uk

ARE YOU STRUGGLING PAYING YOUR RENT?

If you're struggling financially, we know it's not always easy to talk about it, but our friendly Rents Team is here to help.



Our expert Benefits Officer, Amanda Morris, can also check you're receiving all the benefits you're entitled to, give her a call on (01229) 876581.

Remember, we are here to help and support you, so if you've any questions or concerns, please get in touch

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

SUPPORT OVER CHRISTMAS

If you're struggling with life – for whatever reason – don't hesitate to contact these organisations – they're here for you – and please remember, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

THE WELL COMMUNITIES

Don't be alone on Xmas Day

If you are lonely, isolated, or even just want another Christmas Dinner, come and join The Well Communities for lunch on Christmas Day 12pm - 4pm.

We have a full Christmas dinner and fun and games on offer open to all at Hindpool Community Centre, Nelson Street, Barrow. *Please call with any special dietary requirements.*

DON'T BE ALONE - TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER.

The Well Communities CIC,
242 - 244 Dalton Road, Barrow.

Tel 01229 829832.

TAKE THAT FIRST STEP – WE WILL LOVE YOU UNTIL YOU CAN LOVE YOURSELF

The Well



HELP WITH EMERGENCY FOOD

If you're struggling to feed yourself or your family, help is available.

The last year has been a very challenging time for everyone and sadly we are seeing an increase in enquiries from tenants needing help with sourcing food by way of a food parcel. If you are struggling to feed yourself or your family, help is available.



For anyone in desperate need of a food parcel, please call Cumbria County Council's Welfare Team on 01228 22 11 00 for assistance and, if eligible, you will be given a code.



Once you have a code, call Barrow Foodbank on 01229 343 436 so you can arrange to collect a parcel or they will arrange delivery to you.

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

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 



Salvation Army



For anyone needing support or friendship, Barrow Salvation Army is open for a coffee and chat every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am – 2pm.

We try to make sure there is always someone available to talk to, pray with or offer practical support/referrals to other agencies.

We also run a friendship group on Wednesdays 1:30pm-3pm.

From Thursday, 23 December the building will be closed, but we are contactable by phone on 01229 433550. Please leave a message if there is no answer and someone will get back to you.

The building re-opens on Tuesday, 4th January.

Please check out our Facebook page for the latest information

 www.facebook.com/salvationarmybarrow

CHRISTMAS AT FURNESS HOMELESS SUPPORT GROUP

Good News! Once again we will be holding our Christmas Shelter at our Bath Street Day Centre. We will be providing a full Christmas dinner with all the trimmings and a gift from Santa for everyone. **You don't have to spend Christmas alone.**

Christmas Day 11am - 4pm
Boxing Day 11am - 4pm

If anyone would like to help us achieve this you can donate via our 'Just Giving' page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/furnesshomeless>

Thanks so much for your support - it really does make a huge difference!

From everyone at Furness Homeless Support Group we wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Registered Charity: 1051415

COUNCIL SUPPORTS SAFEGUARDING

Earlier this year, over 250 Barrow Borough Council employees and councillors undertook Safeguarding Awareness training which has given them an insight into safeguarding - what it is and how to recognise the different types of abuse and how to report concerns.

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”



The Council’s new Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jan Sharp, said: “The objective of the training was to develop staff’s understanding of their role and responsibilities as a Council employee. As a local authority, we have a legal and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

“We believe that it is the responsibility of every individual to take appropriate action where there is a risk of harm, abuse or neglect to a child, young person or vulnerable adult.”

Report a Concern

Anyone can refer a safeguarding concern. If you are worried that someone is at risk of abuse, neglect or harm please report it:

Emergencies

Always dial 999 for the police

Concerns for a Child/Young Person

Call Cumbria Safeguarding Hub on **0333 240 1727**

Concerns for an Adult

Call Cumbria Adult Social Care Offices on **0300 303 2704**

(out of hours **01228 526690**)

or email: customerservicesouth@cumbria.gov.uk

For more information visit: www.cumbria.gov.uk/healthandcare



Women's Community Matters is run by women, for women and young people aged 12-19 years.

We offer a wide range of support groups, courses, activities and appointments in a safe place and we aim to make a positive difference to the lives of women and young people in Barrow 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.

We welcome ALL women through our doors.

If you have any questions or want to speak to a 'real' person please get in touch. We're based at the Nan Tait Centre on Abbey Road, Barrow and our reception is open:

- Monday & Wednesday 9:30am-4pm
- Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am-6pm
- Friday 9.30am-1pm

Drop-in for a drink & a chat: Mon & Wed 10am-12noon

Drop-in for young women: 14-19 years Thurs 3.:30-4:30pm

Drop-in for young men: 13-16 years Tues 3:30-4:30pm



01229 311 102



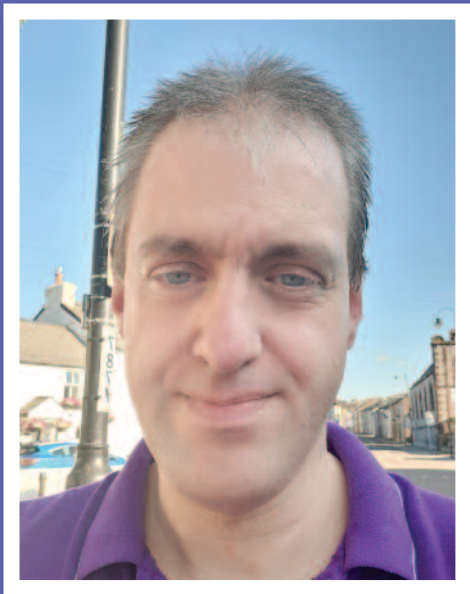
reception@womenscommunitymatters.org



Women's Community Matters (private message)



<http://www.womenscommunitymatters.org>



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STREET VOICE... Danny Green

Great news, since the last newsletter, another street voice has been appointed - this time covering the Broughton Road area in Dalton.

Danny, who lives on Broughton Road got in touch with us after reading about our new street voices in the last issue and was keen to become one himself and represent local residents.

Despite Danny being fairly new to the area, he was thrilled when he got the required numbers of 'yes' votes. He is now enjoying getting to know his neighbours and already has ideas on how he can improve the local area.

Danny says:

"Thanks so much for appointing me as your street voice. Barrow and Dalton need more of us to help improve our local areas. If you have an issue and need advice, I'm always willing to help".

Danny covers the following areas in Dalton: Broughton Road, Hartington Street & Bridge House

Danny Green Tel. 07999 462 934 | email: Dannygreen.stv@googlemail.com

TENANTS' FORUM

As a Street Voice Danny automatically becomes a member of our Tenants' Forum and here is with other members of the forum after their meeting in September.

The Tenants' Forum consists of a group of volunteers – all street voices - who give up their free time to meet with Housing officers and the Chair of the Housing Management Forum.



MEET THE TENANTS' FORUM:

Back row left to right: David Pearson & Danny Green

Front row: Nicola Bull, Jim Christie (Vice-Chair), Mandy Anderson (Chair), Irene Asbury & Jackie Scott

The meetings are an opportunity for the tenant representatives to discuss issues relating to the management of their homes and estates and to provide feedback and influence our decision making which could impact on the services they and other tenants receive.

For more information on the Tenants' forum and our Street Voices - who they are and which areas they cover - visit

<https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/get-involved/>

£2 PER CHILD PARTY GAMES DISCO

RAGLAN VOICE CHRISTMAS PARTY
 Venue: Sacred Heart Church
 Date: Sunday, 12 December 2021
 Time: 2pm to 5pm

Santa's Workshop
 SANTA SURPRISE - KIDS KAROKE - HOT DOGS

Tickets available
 Tel. Mandy on 07925 410 817 or
 Contact Sacred Heart School



CELEBRATING GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Having a good neighbour can make all the difference to a community and this is something we like to reward. Our Good Neighbour 'Thank You' scheme gives us the opportunity to pay tribute to those that have made a difference to the lives of their neighbours or the local community. Congratulations to the latest recipients of these awards and thank you for being such good neighbours.



Well done Keith!

Keith Roebuck of Redwater Gardens was nominated by a neighbour for the amazing work he has done in transforming their shared garden. After moving into the property less than a year ago, Keith wasted no time in cracking on and tackling the garden which had become neglected.

As you can see from the before and after photos, his hard work has paid off and the garden is now a pleasant place to sit and relax.

Keith was over the moon when we got in touch to tell him about his successful nomination – you deserve it Keith!



Bravo Brian

Another tenant who was nominated for recognition was Brian Hudson. During the summer, Brian who lives on Corporation Terrace, transformed an unloved corner of Raglan Court into a beautiful flower-filled display, positively bursting with colour!

Brian also does regular litter picks in the area – another tenant who takes real pride in the area he lives. Well done and thanks to Brian for all he does for his community.

Dream Team

Two tenants who have gone out of their way to keep their community looking clean tidy are Mandy Anderson and Larry Vincent.

Mandy and Larry were both nominated to receive a Good Neighbour Thank You after helping out during a skip day at Raglan Court.

They cleared and swept out the bin store areas and did a litter pick around the area, leaving it looking spick and span. Huge thanks to them both for all their efforts this year!

Mandy, very generously, chose to spend her vouchers on buying plants and decorative stones and, with the help of her granddaughter, Millie, they created this beautiful flower bed at Raglan Court.





Thanks Anne!

Congratulations to Anne Lourie (pictured) who was awarded £50 of Love2Shop vouchers in our latest Rewarding Good Tenant prize draw.

Angela Higgins was also a £50 winner and a tenant who wished to remain anonymous won £100. Congratulations to you all and thanks for being such fab tenants!

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.

All 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 draw receiving £50 of vouchers. You've gotta be in it to win it!

- 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.



MAKE SURE YOU CLAIM YOUR PENSION

PARKPLAY

ParkPlay is a simple idea – it's an event with free fun and games every Saturday in local parks.

Who is ParkPlay for?

ParkPlay is for everyone!

ParkPlay is a completely free event and it's perfect for adults and children alike. There's no age limit or fitness requirement.

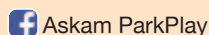
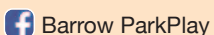
Just turn up and there'll be games and activities everyone can play



Barrow ParkPlay & Askam ParkPlay

ParkPlay takes place at Barrow Park every Saturday morning – whatever the weather - meet at the bandstand at 9:30am and every Saturday at the Lots Field, Askam (9:30am meet).

Register at www.park-play.com ready to #MeetMovePlay



Our Support Officer, Simone Singleton, recently became aware of a customer who, although of retirement age, had not been receiving their pension – they hadn't realised you must make the claim yourself. So, for those of a certain age

You are eligible for the Basic State Pension if you were born before 6th April, 1951 (if you're a man) and 6th April 1953 (if you're a woman). If you were born after these dates, you must now claim the 'New State Pension'.

The earliest you can claim your state pension is when you reach pension age. For men and women, this is currently 66.

You should get a letter no later than two months before you reach State Pension age, telling you what to do.

If you have not received an invitation letter but are within four months of reaching your State Pension age, you can still make a claim.

There are three ways in you can claim:

- **Online** via Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/get-state-pension>
- **Phone** the State Pension Claim Line 0800 731 7898 (textphone: 0800 731 7339).
- **Post** Fill in a claim form and return by post. Print off the form from the Government website.

If you have any queries about claiming your pension, please call Simone on (01229) 876580



HOUSING IMPROVEMENT WORKS



Every year planned maintenance works are carried out to certain properties. These works are planned in advance to make sure our properties do not fall into disrepair, that they have modern facilities, are warm and efficiently heated and meet health and safety standards. There is a decent Homes Standard for all social housing which is set by the Government, and 100% of our properties currently meet this standard.

Stairwell Painting on the Griffin Estate

External woodwork and rainwater pipes are painted on a six-year cycle.

This year's painting programme also includes painting the stairwells on the Griffin estate.

The contractors carrying out this work are George Jones & Son Ltd. and they're pictured here next to one of the newly painted stairwells. The difference in the before and after photos speaks for itself!



Colour Change at Raglan Court

Another area included on this year's painting programme is Raglan Court and our contractors have been hard at work painting the exterior of the blocks.

It was decided to have a change in the colour scheme, so we moved away from the white wall covering to this mid-grey colour which we think has brought a really smart feel to the estate.

Other Improvement Works

Other planned improvement schemes currently in progress include the re-roofing of 130 homes in Ormsgill, Dalton and Askam, and external repairs, involving cavity cleaning, re-pointing and the replacement of windows and external doors at 67 homes in the Newbarns area.

Alongside these projects, our rolling programme of electrical rewires and central heating upgrades continues.



For more information on where improvement works will be carried out this current financial year, visit <https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/council-housing/your-home/repairs/> or tel: (01229) 876326

WARNING No-Win, No-Fee Disrepair Claims

We have received reports from tenants telling us they have been visited by a disrepair company, implying they were calling on the Council's behalf to inspect any repairs needed to the property – which is definitely not the case.

We'd like to remind everyone to be cautious if approached about no-win no-fee disrepair claims. Last year we successfully defended a claim in the county court that we had failed to carry out repairs to a property in reasonable time; this resulted in the tenant being ordered to pay legal costs of over £9,000.

We take our repair responsibilities very seriously and if you have any concerns about a repair or an issue with your property, please contact us as soon as possible so we can rectify it in good time: tel (01229) 876578 | email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk



ALL THINGS GAS

Your safety is our top priority

Following the retirement of Mike Robson, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you all as your new Gas Technician and to remind you of some important information relating to gas safety in your property.

Gas Cookers

If you are fitting or replacing a gas cooker in your house, you **must** have this work carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer, otherwise you are committing an offence under gas regulations.

Ensure that the engineer is registered before they carry out the work and ask for the relevant paperwork to be completed and left with you as proof of a safe installation.



Gas Fires

We don't have too many gas fires left in our housing stock now, and those that we have fall into two categories:

Council owned fires

These are maintained and repaired by the Council. But, please be aware, if there are expensive flue repairs needed or gas fire parts are not available, the gas fire will be condemned and isolated from the supply. The choice is then yours whether to have the gas fire removed by the Council and the opening bricked up and replastered (all at no cost to you), or simply leave the gas fire in place as a focal point.



Tenant owned fires

Checks on tenant owned gas fires are carried out at same time as the annual gas service on boilers, but these fires are not maintained by the Council. Any repairs required must be carried out by the tenant using a Gas Safe registered engineer. Any expensive flue repairs which are highlighted on the safety check will mean the fire will be condemned and the two options above will be available.

As a general note, the Council is no longer giving permission for gas fires to be fitted, so if your existing fire is condemned, the two choices above will apply - regardless of who owns the fire.



Graham Harcourt,
Gas Technician

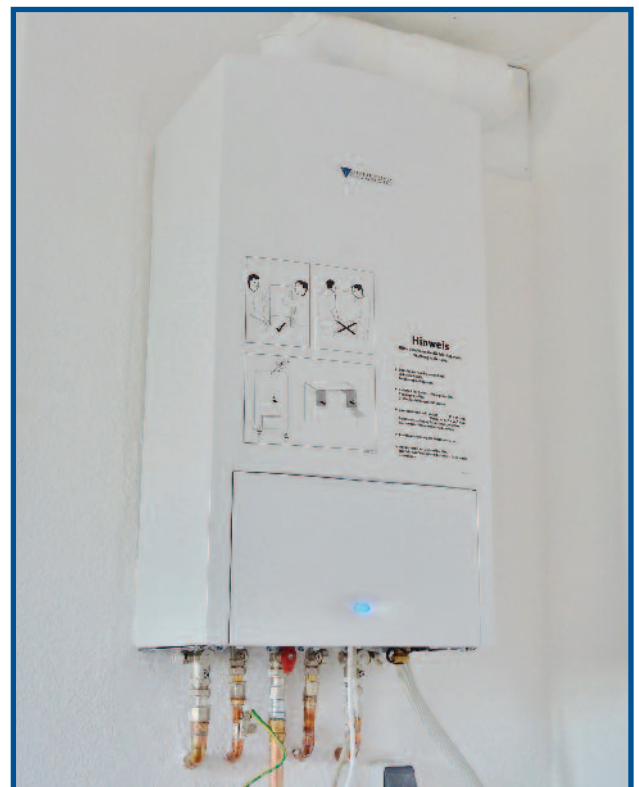
Annual Gas Service/Safety Check

The safety of our customers is our top priority and, as a landlord, we are required by law to carry out an annual safety check on all your gas appliances.

Our contractor, Sure Group, will contact you in advance of these checks to make an appointment to visit.

If you miss the appointment, you will receive a card or a letter asking you to rebook. You will receive four notifications in total if access isn't gained, at which point Sure will hand over the details to us and we will then send you a further two letters asking you to arrange the service. If access still isn't gained, an application for a warrant of entry will be made to the courts to ensure the checks are carried out.

These checks ensure gas safety in your property for you, your family, guests and neighbours. So please allow access when requested to ensure everyone stays gas safe - thank you.



Any questions?

If you've any gas-related questions or queries, please give me a call on 01229 876465.

Graham Harcourt,
Gas Technician

CONDENSATION

At this time of year we get enquiries from tenants worried there is damp in their property. In the vast majority of cases, the problem of mould is caused by condensation which every home suffers from to some extent. Unlike penetrating or rising damp, condensation does not usually leave a tidemark, but it can lead to the growth of mould – usually black spots on walls, ceilings and other surfaces.

Condensation Control

It is important to bring condensation under control and it can be reduced by tackling three main issues:

1. Minimising the amount of moisture released into the air.
2. Ensuring good ventilation and circulation of air.
3. Ensuring adequate heating and avoiding cold spots in the home.



- Set your heating controls to give a constant low-level background heat, trying to ensure there are no rapid changes in temperature, which encourage condensation.



- 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'd be amazed how much water they absorb!

Tips

- Wherever possible, dry washing outdoors or in a closed bathroom with a window open or extractor fan on. Never dry washing on heaters or radiators.
- Cover cooking pans and don't leave kettles boiling.
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when not use. If you have extractor fans, use them, if not, open a window and leave it open for a while.



Tackling Mould

If mould does appear, clean it immediately – a few black spots can be easily removed. If you leave it, it can develop into a more serious problem.

ARE YOU INSURED?



Give yourself peace of mind this winter

It's that time of year, when everyone seems busy, rushing around. But is it time to consider, if an accident were to happen in your home, would your home contents and personal belongings be protected?

We all see what devastating effects the weather can have, from gale force winds, rainwater flooding and frost bursting pipes.

The Council's pay-as-you-go home contents insurance scheme, offers cover for damage to your contents caused by storms or floods, falling trees and branches, as well as fire, theft and much more.

- **You pay premiums alongside your rent.**
- **You don't need to have special door or window locks – just a lockable front door.**
- **There's no excess to pay on any claims.**

We hope you'll never suffer a flood or water damage, but these things do happen and this is why we suggest tenants take out home contents insurance either through this special scheme or by making your own arrangements.

To find out more about the Council's pay as you go home contents insurance scheme, which is designed for tenants in social housing - where you can pay premiums weekly alongside your rent – give us a call on (01229) 876488 or email: housing@barrowbc.gov.uk

NO HEATING or HOT WATER/BOILER PROBLEMS?

Call our gas engineers, Sure Maintenance:



DURING OFFICE HOURS*

OUT-OF-OFFICE HOURS

Freephone **0800 031 6578**

(01229) 833311

SURE MAINTENANCE - OUTSTANDING SERVICE DELIVERY

24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK AND 365 DAYS A YEAR

*OFFICE HOURS: Mon - Thurs 8:30am - 5pm (4.30pm Friday)

Barrow Borough Council
Housing Service

For your chance to **WIN FREE** tickets for the Beauty & The Beast Panto, turn to page 15

FACE TO FACE with... Natalie Chapples

Natalie has recently been appointed as Engagement Officer with Barrow Borough Council. She is currently based in the Housing Service office, however Natalie works across the council's departments and in the community.

Natalie works on community partnership projects and engagement activities for the authority.

Natalie tell us...

What are your three best character traits?

Dedicated, honest and a good listener

What are your three worst character traits?

I'm laid back, I talk to myself, and I'm easily distracted

What's your earliest memory?

Feeding the ducks in the park

What are you most afraid of?

I'm not keen on rollercoasters

What are you most proud of?

My Mam and my volunteering with Furness Group Riding for the Disabled Association

What's your favourite film?

E.T

What's your favourite TV programme?

The Great British Bake Off

What's your favourite book?

The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse



What do you do in your free time?

Horse riding, spending time with family and friends, volunteering with Furness Group Riding for the Disabled Association

What was the first record you ever bought?

PJ & Duncan/ Boyzone

What's your favourite singer/band?

Arctic Monkeys and The Strokes

What three items would you take on a desert island?

A journal/pens, a radio and a boat

What's your most treasured possession?

My late Nana's ring

What or who makes you laugh the most?

Peter Kay and Stewart Lee

What's your favourite meal?

Can't beat egg and chips

What's your favourite drink?

Ice Tea or Caipirinha

What superpower do you wish you had?

To be able to fly

What's your dream holiday destination?

Somewhere hot

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

My late Nana Rosie, Robin Williams, Julie Walters, Bradley Walsh, Alex Turner and Dr Maya Angelou

A new face in our Estates Team... Dan Crowe

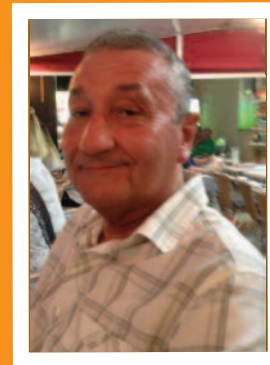


Hi, I'm Dan and a few months ago I joined our Estates Team as a Housing Officer. Some of you may recognise me as I was previously a housing assistant on our reception desk.

I'm really loving my new role and getting to know tenants and assist them with any issues they may have.

The diverse nature of my role is something I particularly enjoy and the fact that no two days are ever the same! I look forward to meeting more of you when I'm out and about on our estates.

FAREWELL TO... Mike Robson



In June this year, Mike Robson, Gas Technician retired from the Council after 40+ years of service.

Mike served his time in the early 1970s as a plumber/gas engineer for the Council's Building Department working on the Griffin estate.

Mike then moved on to work in the Council's Design Services Group, taking responsibility for gas safety within the Council's housing stock.

As an avid Manchester United fan Mike often visits Old Trafford with his sons to cheer on the Red Devils.

We would like to wish Mike a long and healthy retirement with his wife Kath and family.

RESULTS OF CHILDREN'S SUMMER COLOURING COMPETITION

Thanks to everyone who entered the competition. We had some fantastic entries, which made judging really tricky – you always do this to us!!

The winner of the 8-11 years group was Raed Abd Elhafiz (pictured far right) and Gracie Robertson won the 7 years and under age group (Gracie is shown here in the middle with sisters Miley and Hallie). Massive congratulations to you both and well done to the runners up too.



CHRISTMAS COMPETITION



We just love this picture and can't wait to see your entries! It's super easy to enter the competition and it's for two age groups: 7 years and under & 8-11 year olds. To enter, your parents or grandparents must be Council tenants or leaseholders. The deadline for entries is Monday, 13 December. Please post your entries to: Cathy Kirk, Housing Department, Town Hall, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD Have an absolutely brilliant Christmas everyone xx

NAME (IN CAPITALS PLEASE)

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NO AGE

Local Government Reorganisation

Delivering Two New Councils for Cumbria



A new website www.newcouncilsforcumbria.info has been launched which gives lots of useful information about the complex process to create two brand new councils for the county.

From 1 April 2023 the current six district councils, including Barrow Borough Council, along with Cumbria County Council will be replaced with two new 'unitary' councils.

Names of the Two New Councils

- For the current Barrow, South Lakeland and Eden council areas, the new council will be called **Westmorland and Furness Council**.
- For the current Allerdale, Carlisle and Copeland council areas the new council will be called **Cumberland Council**.

Government has also confirmed that there will be 65 councillors on Westmorland and Furness Council and 46 on Cumberland Council.

The two new councils will be responsible for services currently provided in those areas by the district councils and the county council.

The changes aim to:

- Improve services for local people, making them more effective and efficient with a greater integration of planning and delivery activities.
- Provide greater clarity for residents on their democratic representation, making local authorities even more accountable to the people they serve.
- Provide a stronger voice to central government.
- Attract inward investment into our communities.

Since Government announced its decision in July to reorganise local government in Cumbria, work has been ongoing on the first steps of the transition.

All seven existing local councils, supported by Government, are working together on the programme to create the new Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland councils. The final plans must be laid before Parliament for approval within a Structural Changes Order.

The new website explains the process and the timeline and will include updates on the work of the reorganisation programme.

Barrow, Eden & South Lakeland councils will become Westmorland & Furness Council



COMPETITION TIME!!!

WIN Family Tickets for the Panto

Our lovely colleagues at The Forum have very kindly donated two family tickets for four (at least one adult) to see this year's panto – the enchanting Beauty and The Beast.

Prize Draw

You must be a Council tenant to enter and all you need to do is let us know your name/address/tel number and your name will be placed in a draw. The first two names to be drawn will each receive a family ticket.

The winners can choose tickets for any performances on 17–22 December and 27–29 December, subject to availability.

Deadline!

We need to hear from you by 5pm on Wednesday, 8 December. The winners will be contacted the following day. Good luck everyone!!!

Send your name/address/tel no. to:

- housing@barrowbc.gov.uk
- Tel. Cathy Kirk (01229) 876523
- Private message our Facebook page (Barrow Borough Council Housing)

Tickets are still available Don't worry if you're not one of the lucky winners, there are still tickets available to see this fabulous panto and at a range of prices. Contact The Forum Box Office on (01229) 820000 or book online: www.theforumbarrow.co.uk

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND PLACE

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

Donna Brown (01229) 876468



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

	During office hours	Out-of-office hours
Non-gas repairs	(01229) 876578	(01229) 833311
Gas only repairs	0800 031 6578 <i>Freephone</i>	(01229) 833311

TOWN HALL SWITCHBOARD

01229 876543



@ Barrow Housing



Barrow Borough Council Housing Department

CONTACTS FOR TENANT GROUPS

Listed below are Council-recognised street voices and tenant/resident associations 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 & Irene Asbury (01229) 468138

STREET VOICE FOR ROOSEGATE

Nicola Bull - 07808 264 941

STREET VOICE FOR NEWTON ROAD AREA, DALTON

David Pearson - 01229 230019

STREET VOICE FOR BROUGHTON ROAD AREA, DALTON

Danny Green - 07999 462 934

Email: dannygreen.stv.googlemail.com

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