

IN TOUCH

LEAH AND PAULINE - INVOLVED TENANTS: PAGE 2



Message from the InTouch Editorial Panel

The editorial panel is a group of involved residents working in partnership with the Resident Involvement Team to keep you informed on issues that affect tenants and leaseholders of North West Leicestershire District Council. If you would like to make any comments or contribute to the magazine, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 01530 454795 or resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Leah and Pauline - involved tenants



This issue, we're pleased to welcome Leah, a new involved tenant:

Hi, I'm Leah. I'm a 22-year-old law student and I've lived in the district all my life. I wanted to become an involved resident to try and get a young person's voice across, to affect change within NWLDC and to show

others that they can too.

The council has a diverse and ever-changing tenant base that deserve to have their voices heard, and I believe that working alongside the resident involvement team is the way to achieve that.

People need to see themselves represented and I'm hoping to be able to do so.

This issue, we're also saying farewell to Pauline Gamble, who's been an involved tenant for over seven years as a member of the tenant scrutiny panel.

Pauline has decided to step down from tenant scrutiny due to ill health. She says she might consider other options to get involved again in the future, but for now needs to focus on getting better.

Pauline encourages other tenants to get involved, and says it's a great way to make a difference and meet new friends along the way.

Best wishes to Pauline. Thank you for being part of the panel for so long, and for contributing to lots of improvements in our housing service over the years.

Struggling to pay?

This time of year can add a financial burden for many people as the reality of Christmas spending comes to light in January just as rent needs to be paid.

We recognise that some people may be finding it difficult to make ends meet, and if you're struggling it's important to have a payment plan in place.

This will allow you to make regular, affordable payments to reduce the outstanding balance and to avoid any formal action being taken.

Council officers are on hand to advise you and agree a payment plan with you if you need one.

Our tenancy sustainment officers can also help with advice and support on claiming benefits to maximise your income. If you are struggling, please contact us on **01530 454660**.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, it is also worth speaking to Citizens Advice who hold a drop-in session at our Customer Centre on Belvoir Road in Coalville on Friday mornings, 10am-12pm.

You can find more information and support at nwleics.gov.uk/costofliving

Have your say with our tenant satisfaction surveys

You may remember in April 2024's edition of InTouch, we shared the results of our 2023/24 tenant satisfaction survey.

We would like to thank tenants for the great response we received to last year's survey and want to show we have listened and acted upon the feedback you gave us.

Our tenant satisfaction survey for 2024/25 is now underway.

Once again NWA Research will be carrying out this survey, but following your feedback about how we communicate, there will be some changes when compared to last year.

Firstly, as well as the postal and web-based surveys, we will be carrying out some telephone surveys.

This year there will be some opportunities for you to expand on why you have given the answers that you have, so that we can better understand how we can continue to improve our services.

Feedback from tenants last year highlighted that you are less satisfied with the time taken to complete repairs and the way we handle complaints than the service overall. We have listened to your feedback and as part of this we have:

- Reviewed the repairs policy in partnership with our tenants - from your feedback we revised our target times for repairs, and we have brought in an additional contractor to ensure that we are able to meet these targets
- Produced new guidance for officers dealing with complaints and changed our process so that we will continue tracking the complaint after a response has been sent.

If you have any queries about the survey you can contact us on 01530 454660.

You said...

We should improve the standard of the properties we let

It takes too long to complete repairs

We should let you know when repairs are going to be completed

We should regularly update you when you have reported a problem with anti-social behaviour

We should provide information about asbestos

Our housing officers should book appointments

You want to know when improvement work is going to be done

You'd like information to be provided on different coloured paper

We did...

We have made changes so that properties we let will be decorated. We're also reviewing the lettable standard for our properties and will be consulting with tenants on this

We've partnered with a company called Wates to help us reduce the backlog of repairs

We are making improvements to the way repair requests are logged and, where possible, an appointment will be made at the time of reporting

We will now agree a communication plan with you when you report a case

We've put together some advice and information which is given to new tenants along with a copy of the most recent asbestos report

Your housing officer will now book an appointment in most circumstances

We've appointed a company called Savills to carry out condition surveys of all of our properties. This will tell us how long work such as replacing kitchens, bathroom and roofs etc will take, and we'll let you know when we arrange this kind of work with you

For anyone who would find this useful, we've identified that a coloured overlay sheet can help. If you need one, please let us know



Don't suffer in silence



Did you know that one in seven men (nearly 14%) and one in four women (27%) will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime (ONS figures 2022/23).

Everyone has the right to live safely and without the fear of violence and abuse. The definition of domestic abuse is 'the behaviour of one person towards another, where both people are aged 16 or over, and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.'

Abusive behaviour can take many forms, including any of the following: physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse (for example, controlling or withholding someone's money), or psychological or emotional abuse.

It doesn't matter if the behaviour is a 'one off' single incident, or happens over a long time.

It's also important to remember that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse.

It can happen in all kinds of relationships, regardless of age, race, sex, sexuality, disability, wealth, gender identity, or lifestyle.

It also includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called 'honour' based violence.

Domestic abuse does not discriminate.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 also recognises children as victims of domestic abuse if they have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse.

If you are a housing tenant and are experiencing domestic abuse, we have a dedicated housing link practitioner, Hasna Bibi from Women's Aid, who provides specialist domestic abuse support, including access to emergency accommodation.

All contact with Hasna is confidential. If you would like to speak to Hasna please contact the NWLDC Customer Centre 01530 454545 or your housing officer.

Support is also available to help improve security, such as replacement locks and window shock alarms.



Useful contacts

Local Helpline: 0808 80 200 28 (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, 8am-8pm every day)

National Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (24 hours a day)

Police non-emergency: 101

Child Line: 0800 1111

NSPCC help line: 0808 800 5000

Samaritans: 116 123

In an emergency, call 999.



Recognising anti-social behaviour

We want all of our tenants to be able to live peacefully in their homes. However, we also recognise that anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance can be a real issue for some.

This type of disruptive behaviour can take many forms, including noisy or abusive behaviour, vandalism and graffiti, intimidation, street drinking or drug use, littering and fly tipping, dogs barking excessively, misuse of communal areas, and prostitution or sexual acts in public.

Anti-social behaviour does not include one-off parties, rudeness, disputes on social media, normal household noise, inconsiderate parking, car repairs, civil disputes, or gossip.

If you believe you are the victim of anti-social behaviour, could you speak to the person causing the nuisance, and explain what's causing you a problem and why?

Sometimes people may not be aware they're causing a nuisance, and most people are reasonable if spoken to calmly and politely. It can also stop the issues escalating, which can



happen if the council or other agencies have to get involved.

If that doesn't work, or you don't feel able to speak to the person, you can report anti-social behaviour to us by going to nwleics-self.achieveservice.com/myservices and selecting 'Anti-Social Behaviour'.

Nominate your community champion

Community champions are volunteers who are proud of where they live and are inspired to help their communities become better places to live. They also focus on helping others living within the community.

If you know an NWLDC tenant, leaseholder or household member who goes the extra mile to help someone in the local community, why not nominate them as a community champion?

You can submit your nomination by scanning the QR code on your phone or by going to forms.office.com/e/cK9pwDLGc8



Community Champion Nominations



Asbestos in your home

As your landlord, we will tell you as soon as we become aware of any asbestos in your home.

Please remember that the presence of asbestos doesn't mean you need to worry, as it is safe as long as it's not disturbed.

Asbestos is hazardous only when its fibres are released into the air and then inhaled – it's these fibres which can potentially harm your health.

The risk is when asbestos is disturbed, such as when it is damaged, drilled or sanded, for example during DIY projects.

If you suspect a material might contain asbestos, tell us immediately and **do not attempt to work on it or try to remove it yourself.**

For any major repairs or renovations in your home, approved contractors will conduct a risk assessment to identify and address any potential risk from asbestos.

If damaged asbestos is found, our asbestos consultant will assess the situation and recommend appropriate actions, which may include sealing (encapsulation) or complete removal by a licensed specialist.



If you plan to make home improvements and think there may be asbestos, always seek our permission first. We now provide asbestos survey information when you sign a new tenancy, and we can also check our records upon request.

If you, or someone you hire, disturbs asbestos without approval, you will be responsible for the cost of addressing the asbestos issue, reinstating the property, and properly disposing of the material.



Warm spaces in our district

If you're struggling to stay warm at home this winter due to rising energy prices and the cost of living, you can visit one of the warm spaces in our district:

Coalville Foodbank, New Life Church, Margaret Street, Coalville

Ebenezer Baptist Church (Coalville), Ashby Road, Coalville (next to ASDA)

Marlene Reid Centre, 99 Belvoir Road, Coalville LE67 3PH

George Smith Hub, 24-28 Hotel Street, Coalville LE67 3EP

Measham and District Community Library, High Street, Measham

Age UK (Measham), Temperance Hall, High Street, Measham

Baptist Church (Measham), Chapel Street, Measham

Measham Community and Recreation Centre, off High Street, Measham DE12 7HR

Palace Community Centre, High Street, Ibstock LE67 6LG

Charles Booth Centre, The Green, Thringstone LE67 8NR

Castle Donington Community Hub, 101 Bondgate, Castle Donington DE74 2NR

Please remember we are here to help. If you're struggling, please speak to us.



Love Your Neighbourhood weekend of action to keep your streets clean

On Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 July 2024, hundreds of people across the district worked together to keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and tidy as part of NWLDC's Love Your Neighbourhood campaign.

During the Weekend of Action, a total of 21 events were organised across the district, drawing the participation of 248 dedicated volunteers.

These volunteers generously contributed 855 hours of their time in the local area, taking part in various clean-up and community improvement projects.

We plan to run the event again in 2025, 30 June – 6 July, which will be a 'Week of Action' so even more people can get involved.



Cllr Woodman, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property

You can take part no matter how small the activity to brighten up and improve the area where you live. You can join an established group or volunteer as an individual. You'll be able to register to take part in this year's Week of Action and log your volunteer hours and activity from April.

For more information, go to nwleics.gov.uk/LYN



Mental Health Cafes

There are a number of mental health cafes in North West Leicestershire, run by trained supportive staff who are there to listen and provide practical support when you need it.

Some days you may feel like you can take on the world and others are more challenging. Why not come along to one of these cafes?

You can find out more information and the locations of these cafes by visiting leicspart.nhs.uk/neighbourhood-mh-cafes



How to check your waste collection dates

We're no longer delivering waste collection calendars to households.

Here are three ways to find your recycling and waste collection information:

- Scan the QR code or visit my.nwleics.gov.uk
- Log into your council MyAccount at nwleics.gov.uk/myaccount
- Search your postcode in the 'My Location' box on our website.



A limited number of printed calendars are available for collection from the Customer Centre on Belvoir Road in Coalville. To request a copy of your calendar in an alternate format, such as large print or braille, please call **01530 454545**

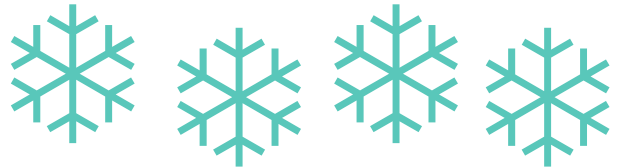
How to recycle your real Christmas tree



If you had a real Christmas tree this festive season, here are three ways you can recycle it:

- Put it inside the garden waste bin. Bin lids should be fully closed so you may need to trim the tree for it to fit!
- Take it to your local recycling and household waste site – you can find details at nwleics.gov.uk/recycling_centres_and_sites
- Check if your local animal sanctuary or charity is collecting Christmas trees.

How many snowflakes can you count?



The competition this time is to count the number of snowflakes scattered around the pages of In Touch. You could win a £20 High Street Voucher. Please submit your answers by **28 February 2025**. Either fill out the form and return to us at Resident Involvement, North West Leicestershire District Council, PO Box 11051, Coalville, LE67 0FW or email us your answer at resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk with your name, address, telephone number.

Number of snowflakes you have found:

Your name:

Address:

Telephone: