West Lothian Council
Area Service

Volume 2, Issue 4

April 2012

In Touch...

Advice Shop & ABE Newsletter

West Lothian Council

Team Monthly focus

Projects and Development Team

Better off West Lothian Maximise your Benefits

The Better Off – Maximise your Benefits, 3 year campaign was officially kicked-off at a special conference on Thursday 8 March, at Howden Park Centre. This very successful event brought together 150 individuals from different parts of West Lothian. These included members of the public, officers drawn from a range of council services, representatives from our community planning partners, private and voluntary organisations.

The event included presentations on the Welfare Reforms both at a national and local level and engaged with attendees to find out their views and issues most important to them.

This campaign will be a specific drive to make sure that people know about the Welfare Reform changes, the impact these will have and how the Council will work to minimise the impact and increase the incomes of those most affected by the changes.

If anyone wants to know more about the Welfare Reforms please contact the Advice Shop on 01506 282899 or E-mail: Advice.Shop@Westlothian.gov.uk

Work report for February
Overall Performance

Customer Contacts	6131
Extra Income Gained	£2,832,502
Debts Handled	£1,439,939
Money Saved -Energy Advice	£76,1756
Evictions Prevented	92

Calendar of Events: APRIL

Beginning April
Driving Theory at the Daisy Drop-in
Playlab at Whitdale Family Centre
Energy Training at Bathgate Partnership Centre

Lip-reading groups: Talk on Benefit Changes
Tuesday 24th April—St Johns Hospital
Thursday 26th April—Strathbrock Partnership Centre

'Home's for Keeps' is a series of four sessions for homeless or new tenants to help them retain their tenancies. The course will include advice on money management and the consequences of not paying rent.

Dates for courses:

- Wednesday 18 April (Sign up)
- Wednesday 25 April (Rights and responsibilities)
- Wednesday 2 May (Money management)
- Wednesday 9 May (Health & fab pad)

Beginning May
Cooking by Numbers at Letham Primary School
Inked at Strathbrock Partnership Centre
Words for Employment at Forestbank Community Centre

Monday 21st May—Income Maximisation talk to Stroke Carers Group

Access to Employment/Advice Shop sessions at Armadale Work Club Community Centre
First and Third Monday of the month between 2.30 and 4pm.

"Peter, not everyone has care & understanding. You will never know how invaluable you are. To take the time to guide and support individuals such as us when we are at our most vulnerable is priceless. Thank you"

"I want to pass on my thanks to Ian McFall. Ian treated me very well and put me at ease and I'm very grateful. The staff at the Advice Shop are always very helpful and are excellent from start to finish".

CONTACT INFORMATION

About ABE & The Advice Shop

ABE's aim is to work with anyone over the age of 16

- who can set learning goals to improve literacy and numeracy skills
- who is experiencing hearing loss and wishes to learn lip-reading skills *or*
- whose first language isn't English and wants to improve language skills

We provide a free service with access to workshops, short courses and ongoing individual learning.
For up to date details of learning opportunities see www.abeonline.org.uk or our Facebook page (search for West Lothian Adult Basic Education).

Contact us on 01506 282936 or adultbasiceducation@westlothian.gov.uk

Principal Officer : Elaine Nisbet 01506 282936

The Advice Shop's aim is to tackle poverty, social exclusion and help disadvantaged people in West Lothian.

We are happy to deal with any enquiry and we particularly specialise in the following areas:

- Benefits
- Energy Advice
- Money Advice
- Housing/Homelessness

We hold sessions and road shows in various towns within West Lothian. We are also happy to provide information and talks to local groups.

Contact us on **01506 283000** or advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk
Opening hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs 8.30am—5pm Friday 8.30am—4pm

Advice Shop Duty Managers
Monday- Joe Eley
Tuesday- Anne Stevenson
Wednesday - Nahid Hanif
Thursday - Anne Stevenson
Friday- Joe Eley
Telephone: 01506 28300

Welfare Advice Manager
Alan Cunningham

Advice Shop & ABE

Bathgate Partnership Centre
Lindsay House
South Bridge Street
Bathgate
EH48 1TS