



o n e w e s t l a n c s

our assets • our community

One West Lancs Forum Newsletter

October 2015

Solar power for Council homes

Tenants living in West Lancashire Borough Council homes could save between £50 and £200 a year on electricity bills following approval to invest up to £4.44m installing solar panels on selected Council properties.

The panels will be installed on around 1,000 houses and bungalows and will generate electricity during daylight hours which can be used by the tenant free of charge. This will significantly reduce the amount of electricity they consume from the National Grid, and reduce their energy bills. Works will start in mid-October and be complete before January 2016.

Councillor Jennifer Patterson, portfolio holder for Housing, said: "We are very excited about this project as it could be of great benefit to tenants struggling with fuel poverty, as well as reducing carbon emissions and helping to tackle climate change. It will also contribute to the UK's renewable energy targets."

The Government's Feed-in Tariff scheme will pay the Council for the electricity the solar panel systems generate, regardless of whether it's used in the tenants' homes or not. Over time, this income will pay back the capital cost of installing the panels and provide a return on investment that can be used to support Council services in future years.

The properties selected for solar panels have been chosen based on their orientation and roof size, as south, southeast and southwest facing properties will generate the most energy. This means the Council can't include all properties, but many other tenants have already benefitted from other energy efficiency measures. These include new energy efficient heating systems and gas network extensions, insulation measures and new energy-efficient doors and windows. Some of this work has involved bringing gas into homes in Skelmersdale which have never had gas before.

For more information on West Lancashire Borough Council housing services please visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/housing.



One West Lancs is a partnership of the local voluntary, public and business sectors which aims to improve the quality of life for everyone in West Lancashire

This One West Lancs quarterly e-newsletter is sent to over 500 people. It is circulated to all One West Lancs Forum members, the One West Lancs Board, our elected representatives as well as members of the wider VCFS community.

If you no longer wish to receive the One West Lancs e-newsletter, please let us know and we will take you off the circulation list.

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Tanhouse housing project

Tanhouse Community Enterprise Ltd (The Enterprise), an organisation set up in 2014 by volunteers to run the Tanhouse Community Centre, is working with West Lancashire Borough Council to acquire the disused block of flats adjacent to the Community Centre which used to serve as the Neighbourhood Housing Office. As a non-profit organisation, The Enterprise can apply for grant funding and other investment to restore the building and return it to its original use as resident accommodation.

The Enterprise is talking to the Borough Council and asking for the Council to agree to transfer the block on a long lease to the Enterprise. They then wish to offer on short term tenancy four 2-bed shared flats for use by young people looking for their first tenancy with added support and supervision to help them into their new role as tenants. Also two 3-bed maisonettes will be offered to people on the Borough Council's Housing waiting list.

The project is applying for funding this autumn from Locality and others to undertake the building refurbishment work required and then let the flats so the project can be run sustainably with all surpluses being retained by The Enterprise to expand and develop the Enterprise for the benefit of the Tanhouse Community.

www.onewestlancs.org

Show What You Grow 2015

School children from all over West Lancashire celebrated their growing achievements at the 'Show What You Grow' festival of school gardening in July. Over 72 green fingered children from 11 schools brought school grown produce, homemade scarecrows and magnificent displays of drawings, paintings and photos of their gardening work to the event which was held at West Lancashire College.

The Mayor of West Lancashire Nikki Hennessey opened the day which was organised by the Community Food Growing Project of West Lancs CVS in conjunction with West Lancs Allotment Federation and West Lancashire College. It was funded by Upholland Tawd Vale Lions.

The event was also supported by the local business community – M.A Forshaw donated the vegetables and prizes were donated by Altys, LS Systems and Morrisons. Representatives from the RHS and the National Union of Farmers helped with judging of activities. The report and photos of the day can be found [here](#).





West Lancs Light Railway

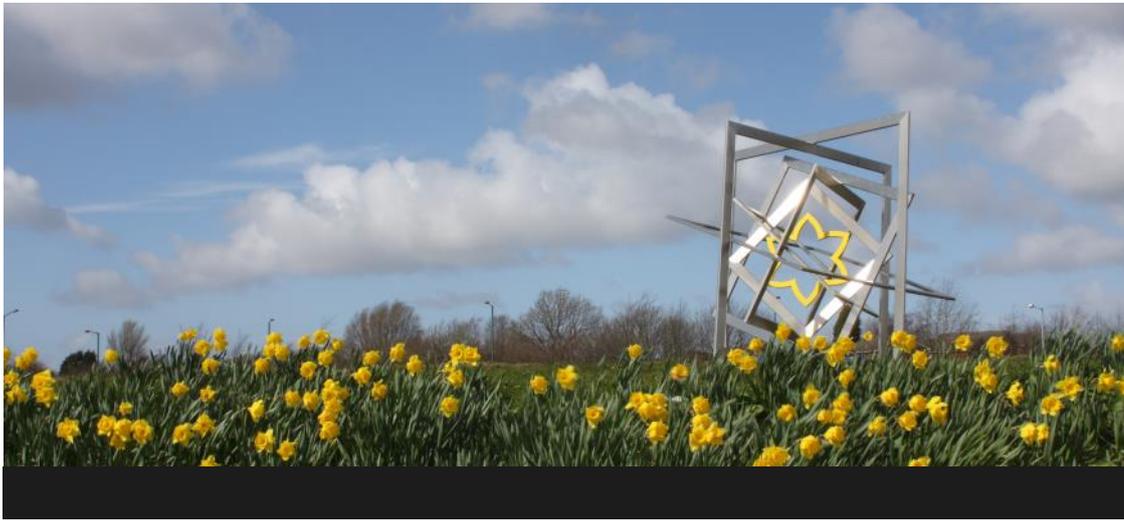
Development of the River Douglas Linear Park and the Light Railway

Hesketh Bank is strong on heritage. It had a small port, a large brickworks and was the busiest station on the old railway between Southport and Preston. However, since 1967, the village has also been the home of the West Lancashire Light Railway - a voluntary enterprise set up to preserve and operate a collection of narrow gauge railway equipment (a form of transport, which was once widespread, but now almost disappeared).

The venture has grown to become a charity, with over 150 members. The collection is unique in the North West and is the basis for a regional narrow gauge railway heritage centre, providing a window not only on local history, but the wider world. However the venture is handicapped by the shortness of its current railway line and by insecurities in its current lease. It has a pressing need to achieve a position of long-term sustainability.

The Light Railway Trust is ready to move its venture forward to become a stronger 'day-visit' attraction for a broad range of visitors by creating an extended line and an exciting new heritage centre and visitor facilities. Part of the site on which the railway sits is currently being considered for housing development with the rest being set aside as a linear park running alongside the River Douglas. The new line would connect the existing track to the nearby idyllic Beconsall Old Church and the new RSPB site and the coastal footpath on the River Douglas. The development of the Railway and the River Douglas Park are to a very significant extent dependent on each other. The Park provides a secure home for the Railway and the Railway provides strong identity for the Park and a transport system through part of the Park. The Railway Trust is currently in discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund who have shown real interest in supporting the project. The Trust is eager to see discussions take place between the key stakeholders to secure the delivery of the Park and a good quality overall scheme.

The proposed new linear park and the railway development are a good fit with the County's and Borough's Tourism Strategies and could provide employment possibilities as well as a resource for generating a wide range of modern engineering skills, in addition to those directly related to heritage and conservation. The Park and Heritage Centre would also be a resource which schools and colleges are already interested in for a wide range of courses. This is an exciting project, driven by an ambitious community enterprise. Hesketh Bank will gain an asset for the community and will be able to tell others about its special heritage. West Lancashire will have a unique attraction and learning resource. This is a project to watch in the next year or so.



Lancashire LEADER funding launch

The new Lancashire LEADER rural funding programme will be launching shortly. To ensure that you are kept informed about funding opportunities in your area please contact ruralfunding@lancashire.gov.uk and ask to sign up to receive their quarterly newsletter.

Initially funding will be available for new and existing small and micro businesses, as well as farming businesses. However, from 2016 onwards there will be opportunities for tourism, culture and heritage, community and forestry projects.

The Lancashire West LAG has a total allocation of £1.28 million, although the allocation is in Euros so this may fluctuate throughout the lifetime of the programme.

New Enterprise Allowance



The £2.1 million New Enterprise Allowance initiative is enabling nearly 4000 unemployed people to start their own business.

The North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce operates the New Enterprise Allowance scheme across the north and west Lancashire area. Funded by DWP this initiative supports people on Jobseeker's Allowance and certain other benefits, with volunteer mentors to help budding entrepreneurs to produce business plans and get their businesses up and running. Financial support is available for the first six months of trading, along with the opportunity for those on the scheme to apply for easy access loans.

For more information about what a mentor does, how to become one and details of the organisations across the UK that match new businesses with a mentor please go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-enterprise-allowance-information-for-mentors>

Learning in West Lancs

The new CVS Training Programme has just been published and includes the following courses for voluntary, community and faith groups:

- [Food Hygiene](#)
- [Meet a Funder](#)
- [Disability Awareness](#)
- [Funding Advice Workshop](#)
- [Alcohol and Drug Awareness](#)
- [An Introduction to Fundraising](#)
- [Writing a Press Release](#)
- [Safeguarding Children](#)
- [Role of the Chairperson/ Treasurer/Secretary](#)
- [An Introduction to Volunteering](#)
- [Building on the Strengths in your Community](#)
- [How to Plan and Run a Successful Meeting](#)
- [Royal Society for Public Health \(RSPH\) Award in Understanding Health](#)

West Lancs College also runs a wide range of courses for employees including:

- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Infection Control](#)
- [Fire Marshal](#)
- [Moving and Handling](#)
- [Dementia Awareness](#)
- [Paediatric First Aid](#)
- [Food Hygiene Level 2](#)
- [First Line Management Award Level 3](#)
- [Customer Service Awards](#)
- [Leadership & Management Award Level 5](#)
- [Emergency First Aid at Work](#)
- [NEBOSH General Certificate](#)
- [Team Leading Award Level 2](#)
- [Safe Handling of Medicines Level 2](#)
- [Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults \(SoVA\)](#)

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One West Lancs Thematic Groups

To date One West Lancs Thematic Groups have been set up looking at issues in the following areas:

- [Skills, Training and Employment Partnership STEP](#)
- [Community Safety Partnership](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Partnership](#)
- [Children and Young People's Board](#)
- [People and Communities](#)
- [Ageing Well Partnership](#)
- [Transport](#)

These links will take you to pages on the One West Lancs website where information on the thematic groups and copies of their action plans, minutes and agendas can be found. Work is underway to set up the Environment thematic group.

www.onewestlancs.org