

STAY COSY – WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS

Following on from the last Council meeting, there was much interest in relation to pension credits, so here is some useful information for you to share. Pension Credit is one of the most under claimed benefits in Lincolnshire, but once someone successfully claims it a whole range of other benefits can be unlocked too. If a person is eligible for Pension Credit, they could also receive the WINTER FUEL PAYMENT, household benefit, cost of living payments, support for mortgage interest, Council Tax discount, a free TV licence (for those aged 75+) help with NHS discounts and more.

It takes only moments to check eligibility here:- www.gov.uk/pension-credit

There's also a helpline for anyone to call if they're struggling to claim on 0800 99 1234

It's been announced that eligibility for the Winter Fuel Payment will change to include those who are on Pension Credit or other means-tested benefits only, so it's well worth anyone checking now if they think they could be eligible for Pension Credit. It only takes a few minutes and could make all the difference for them this winter.

You can also follow the Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership on social media for more help and advice – find by searching for @MONEY TALK LINCS on Facebook X and Instagram.

If anyone struggling with bills and debt generally, they can call 01522 873382 and ask to speak to the Shared Revenue and Benefits team for a friendly chat about the range of help they may be eligible for and any support by the councils partners. They can send an enquiry to the team online at

: <https://www.linciln.gov.uk/online/apply-money-benefit-advice>

Or to keep things simple , they may simply wish to regularly reshare the Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership's social media posts which are comprehensive and include the steps to claiming Pension Credit : <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100084836829321> or search ' Money Talk Lincs' on Facebook, Instagram etc to find them. There are also posts this week (last week in October) Scam awareness Week, so definitely worth a follow and reshare. There'll also continue to be posts on NKDC's social media channels @northkestevendc which can be shared.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME CONSULTATION

The Council's Revenues and Benefits team is currently looking at the Council Tax Support scheme for 2025/26. However, before any decision is made on the final scheme a consultation

is open for residents and any other person/organisation who might have an interest in the scheme.

The consultation period started on October 7th, 2024, and will end on November 18th 2024. A decision about the final scheme will be made by councillors in January 2025. As soon as possible after this date full details of the scheme will be published on NKDC website.

Council Tax support is awarded to approximately 2704 pensioner households and 2705 working age households. This equates to about 9.8% of the total households in North Kesteven area as of 30th June 2024.

PLEASE NOTE, PENSIONERS ARE NOT AFFECTED BY THESE PROPOSALS, FOR WORKING AGE HOUSEHOLDS ONLY.

The consultation considers whether to continue with the current scheme of annual uprating or to move to a banded scheme which would see customers placed into one of several bands based on their income.

NKDC want to make it easier for people to receive what they should, to understand what they are getting and what council tax they should pay.

Council tax support is separate from Universal Credit. It must be claimed from the council. By linking this more closely with Universal Credit most claims information will come directly from the DWP. In these cases , it is hoped that claims can be processed without claimants having to provide the same information twice.

These changes are not being considered to reduce the amount of Council Tax Support people get. The aim is to make it simpler for claimants and more efficient for the council to administer, As with changes to any scheme, there may be some individual variations in current levels of support, but the overall cost to the council is expected to remain approximately consistent.

SLEAFORD MONUMENT GARDENS ARE LOOKING GREAT

The fencing has now come down to reveal the refreshed space at Monument gardens in Sleaford.

There are new hexagonal flowerbeds and some fresh paving around them (while also retaining an existing flowerbed) along with feature lighting, new and additional seating, a flagpole, and a beautiful floor mosaic by local artist Vikki Buss inspired by the River Slea.

There are some final works now taking place, including painting the Wyvern Barrier. As a final flourish, a salvaged Sleaford town sign will also be installed as a new feature.

There have been lots of positive comments already about the space and the new mosaic.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT SCAM

People are being warned about a scam involving a fake Universal Credit app and text messages. The app is called 'Universal Credit UK'.

The Department of Work and Pensions is investigating and is encouraging people not to use the app or respond to any suspicious text messages.

People should use only the DWP Universal Credit website, and if you are unsure how to claim, the Citizens Advice Help to Claim service can offer support on 0800 144 8444

Anyone who has given information to a scam should report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

You can also help to stop these scammers by reporting by texts. Most phone providers are part of a scheme that allows you to report suspicious text messages for free by forwarding to 7726.

IMAGINING NKDC IN 50 YEARS: WRITING COMPETITIONS FOR KS2 SCHOOL PUPILS

This year as part of NKDC's 50th Anniversary, they are challenging young people once again with a new creative writing competition that asks them to envisage the future of their community in 2074.

A lot has changed in North Kesteven over the past 50 years, and NK want to hear from the children about what they think the future holds. They might consider changes in technology, the environment, and the community, and use their creativity to paint a picture of the future in words.

The competition is open to all students in key stage 2 (age 7-11) who live or study in NKDC (including those who are home schooled) There will be a winner and a runner up in each age group.

See the poster, competition overview and lesson plan. All the info is also on this page – Democratic Engagement and Participation NKDC

(n-kesteven.gov.uk)

EXCITING GRINTER CLOSE DEVELOPMENT OPENS

This week NKDC officially opened the door on their latest scheme of refurbishment and new build as they continue to expand and extend access to quality, affordable council housing.

By refiguring properties at Grinter House that are nearly 60 years old and replacing and building additional homes – all to accommodate modern needs at Grinter Close, NKDC has provided 18 new and 14 refurbished homes in North Hykeham.

Completed in August, two months ahead of schedule, tenants are already starting to make their homes and enjoying the new benefits of electric charging points, enhanced insulation, better internal layout, and configuration, as well as cycle storage.

Council Leader Richard Wright described it as a unique flagship development that typified the council's approach to building to a high specification – this through a collaborative team effort as six professionals within the Council's property team each contributed individual designs into a scheme of complimentary and cohesive designs that also provided opportunity builders Lindum's apprentice bricklayers and stonemasons.

2024 ANNUAL CANVAS FOR ELECTORAL REGISTER

The NKDC Elections team are continuing to carry out the 2024 Annual Canvass to keep the District Electoral Register up to date.

Between 10th October and 15th November 2024 Electoral Register Canvassers will be visiting those properties for which a response to an annual household canvass form has not yet been received. They will show their ID at all properties they visit.

The canvass identifies any residents who are not registered so they can be encouraged to do so and to remove any electors who no longer live at an address.

The Elections team are asking electors across NKDC to be aware that the Canvassers are visiting properties and to complete any necessary forms as quickly as possible.

More information on the Annual Canvass is available on the Councils website:

Annual Household Voter Registration Canvass North Kesteven District Council (n-kesteven.gov.uk)

Best Wishes

Lucille



[HNG53VF58]

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Lots of our services are available at

www.n-kesteven.gov.uk

*You can apply for help, report a problem,
find your bin days and lots more,
all from our website.*

