



February 2024

Opportunities to get involved and have your say!

Please visit our engagement platform [Your Voice...West Lancashire](#) to have your say on our current surveys.

Draft Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029



West Lancashire Borough Council is inviting residents, tenants, businesses, and organisations to share their views on its draft Housing Strategy for 2024-2029 and Action Plan.

The Strategy highlights housing challenges and establishes five delivery priorities, while the Action Plan presents tasks linked to each delivery priority.

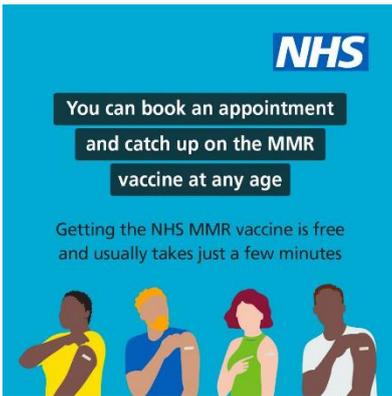
The survey will be open from 12 February 2024 and closes on 25 March 2024.

To have your say access our engagement platform [Your Voice...West Lancashire](#) from 12 February.

<https://letstalkwestlancashire.uk.engagementhq.com/>

Wellbeing Updates

Measles, Mumps and Rubella - NHS



Measles cases are rising across England.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine provide the best protection against 3 serious illnesses:

- measles
- mumps
- rubella

For more information about vaccinations, you can speak to your GP surgery or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

NHS Better Health – Start for Life 'Little Moments Together'



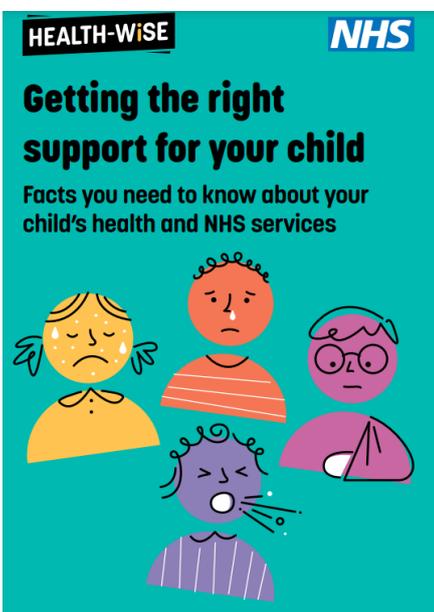
90% of your children's brain growth happens before the age of 5.

Right from the start, all those little moments you spend together with your child are building their brain.

Every smile, cuddle and game make a big difference, helping them learn to communicate and develop confidence.

For more information on how you can aid speech and communication development through daily have activities visit <https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/early-learning-development/>.

Getting the right support for your child – NHS



There is host of information available to support parents/guardians when deciding which NHS service to use.

Please find attached documents which contains information and support for parents to help them make informed decisions about a child or young person when they feel unwell.

There is also an app that can be accessed called Healthier Together which provides clear information on common childhood illnesses, including advice on what 'red-flag' signs to look out for, where to seek help if required, what you should do to keep your child comfortable and how long your child's symptoms are likely to last, plus much more.

Click the links to download the app: [Apple](#) or [Google](#)

Apple store - <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/healthier-together/id1507487185>

Google Play - <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cenigma.healthiertogether>

Funding and Support opportunities

West Lancashire Ukraine Community Grants Fund

✨ Applications for the West Lancashire Ukraine Community Grants Fund are closing this week! Act fast and secure funding of up to £10,000 for your innovative projects that benefit the Ukrainian community in West Lancashire. 🌍

🗨️ Whether you're envisioning allotment projects, language initiatives, sports/bike programs or have a unique idea to support the Ukrainian community, we want to hear from you! If you're unsure about the funding process, don't worry – we're here to help you every step of the way. 💡

The funding, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life and well-being of our Ukrainian community, is available for voluntary groups, registered charities, not-for-profit organisations, national charities, or faith groups benefiting the wider community.

🕒 Hurry! The application window is closing at midnight on February 9, 2024. Don't miss the chance to make a positive impact! Click the link below to submit your application:

<https://formbuilder.evolutive.co.uk/formsite/form/05ab9b0b-7328-446c-b432-d56b9fd7925a>

⚠️ Quick note: Remember, there's no option to 'save and come back later,' so gather all your info before starting your application. For more details or queries, contact us at: ukraine grants@westlancs.gov.uk

ONE STOP SHOP

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A monthly drop in where families can access support on:

- Housing
- Finance
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Access to service for:

- Employment advice
- Relationship advice
- Home safety

Find out about:

- Mental health support
- Accessing Food Banks
- Household living support

First Thursday of the month, 9am 'til 12 noon

SKELMERSDALE FAMILY HUB AND ZONE WEST LANCASHIRE

The West Lancs Family Hub and Zone
Yeadon
Skelmersdale
WN8 6NL
01695 651 350

Lancashire County Council Children and Family Wellbeing Service are offering monthly "one stop shop" drop in's where families can access support on areas like financial support, access services such as employment advice and find out about support on:

- Mental Health
- Accessing Food banks
- Household living

Visit The West Lancs Family Hub and Zone on the first Thursday of every month between 9am until 12 noon to access the different support services.

Contact: The West Lancs Family Hub and Zone, Yeadon, Skelmersdale, WN8 6NL. Telephone 01695 651 350.

For more information click [here](#) or visit:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/family-support/children-and-family-wellbeing-service/>

Household Support Fund

The Government have given approval for the household fund to continue for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The fund is intended to support all residents and we would encourage residents who are disabled, carers and care leavers to complete the application.

The funds can be used to help towards the cost of:

- Energy/water needs
- Food
- Essentials linked to energy / water needs
- Wider essentials but only in exceptional circumstances

For more information visit our website <https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/help-and-money-advice/household-support-fund.aspx>

Cost of Living Support Hub

Visit our Cost-of-Living Support Hub for information about a range of support available from the Council and wider organisations that can help people with the energy costs, financial and food support, and debt help - www.westlancs.gov.uk/costofliving

Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme

The Council has funding to assist council taxpayers who are experiencing severe financial difficulties due to high energy bills. Visit our website for more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply - www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-payment-difficulties

Government Energy Bill Support Schemes – Alternative Funding

The government has announced two new schemes which will be available for those households who are not entitled to the £400 discount via the Energy Support Scheme.

Scheme One - Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding

This Energy Bill Support Scheme is intended to provide £400 of support for households across the UK that would otherwise miss out on the first part of the Energy Bill Support Scheme, as they do not have a domestic electricity contract. E.g., those who may pay for energy through a landlord and have no direct bill.

The government will be opening the scheme for applications from 27 February 2023 via: <http://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>

Scheme Two - Alternative Fuel Payments

This scheme is also intended to deliver a one-off payment of £200 to UK households who are not on the mains gas grid and therefore use alternative fuels, such as heating oil, to heat their homes. The government will be opening the scheme for applications from 6 March 2023 via:

www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic

Discretionary housing payments

Discretionary housing payments can help people who need extra support with their rent when their housing benefit or universal credit housing costs do not meet the full value of their rent. If you are suffering severe financial hardship as a result, or your tenancy is at risk, you may be able to get a discretionary payment to help.

Visit our website for more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply - www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments

Grants online.

[Grants Online](http://www.grantsonline.org.uk) is the UK's most comprehensive and up to date UK grant funding information service. Updated on daily bases, Grants Online informs you of grant funding opportunities from the European Union, UK Government Agencies, the Lottery as well as Grant Marking Trusts & Foundations.

For more information visit website: www.grantsonline.org.uk where you can:

- register for grant funding alerts
- subscribe to their free monthly E-newsletter and keep up to date on latest funding opportunities
- use their grant finder search, where you can filter by region, category and agency/organisation

Learn my way

Getting online can help you to save money, find work, stay in touch with friends and family and much more. But it can be daunting and hard to know where to start.

Learn My Way has free courses for you to learn digital skills to stay safe and connected.

Visit [Learn my Way website](http://www.learnmyway.org.uk), where you will be able to access content such as:

- Using the internet / Video calling
- Online shopping /accessing GP services
- Online safety
- Job finding
- Online banking and much more

