

# WEST END



WEM NEWSLETTER SEPT 2020

## OUR LARGEST COMMISSION EARMARKED FOR NEW CO-OP ENTERPRISE PROJECT

[www.westendmorecambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorecambe.co.uk)

Most people know it as the Co-op building on Regent Road but the full name is Centenary House. In February this year, just before Covid struck, WEM agreed to begin discussion on supporting a new project there with its first commission and largest funded support to date £100,000.

Long empty (apart from the Co-op food store) the building is now owned by the Council who behind the scenes have been in long discussions with The Exchange community group about using it as a major Creative Community-Led Enterprise Hub.

Now it looks as if things are moving ahead with plans to renovate the basement and ground floor of the building for use. Improvements then moving on floor by floor as resources become available. In doing so The Exchange is also changing its name to 'The Good Things Collective' and the project will be adopting a large membership community interest company (CIC) governance model.

Contd. page 3



Chair of WEM Chris Price and Beki Melrose of the new Good Things Collective at Centenary House

### AT THE TIME OF WRITING...

Well, the coronavirus crisis continues with some things better and other things more confused. But there it is becoming more apparent that it is going to be a long haul. Unlike the sands of Morecambe Bay we don't have a Queen's Guide to tell us the right path so everyone is taking it step by careful step and WEM is no different.

At the start of lockdown we made a contribution of £10,000 to the local Emergency Response Fund which is aimed at supporting activity relating to the crisis. We have also supported young children at Sandylands and West End primary schools with home learning during their extended time away from school.

Contd. page 2



**WEM: THE BASICS**

West End Morecambe Big Local (WEM) is a resident-led community partnership that works toward making the West End a better place to live. We are one of 150 partnerships across the country who make up a programme called Big Local, run by the Local Trust with lottery funding.

WEM was awarded one million pounds over ten years. That is around one hundred thousand pounds per year. WEM is charged with spending that support through an Action Plan. Our current plan is for 3 years and was agreed in the summer of 2018.

The ethos of WEM is to try and work collectively and to build positive relationships with individuals, local groups and agencies. It does not get involved in political or religious activity.

WEM is not a typical community group and we don't have a bank account. Big Local holds the money for us and we draw on the support of a local trusted organisation (Lancaster District CVS) who do our finances.

Now in our fifth year WEM has had its ups and downs. It's succeeding with some things and made mistakes elsewhere but this is in line with the Big Local approach which supports learning as we go along. In the last year WEM has moved to a new process of commissioning activity.



West End Morecambe, Big Local, has a focus in this area although activity may ripple further out.

If you are a West End resident, voluntary group or organisation, public agency or local business and want to find out more, go to our website and see what's new.



To keep up to date join our mailing list.

We may continue both those lines of support in the coming months with more work.

Other larger projects were also in the pipeline when lockdown arrived and we are now slowly picking those up (see the news on the Co-op project and on housing). We are also considering other new initiatives regarding food poverty, digital access and the mental health impact of Covid.

Even though we can't physically meet around a table we are looking to find

some new people who may be interested in joining our partnership. We are looking to invite a few new members so if you read the article on getting involved and like the sound of it then let us know.

Whilst these months continue to be challenging we still see many acts of friendship and kindness which again reminds us of the strength that exists within our community. Whatever your circumstances we hope you stay safe.

[www.westendmorecambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorecambe.co.uk)

**Urgent Response Fund**

The Urgent Response Fund from Lancaster District CVS was set up to provide financial support to community organisations across the Lancaster district that are working to support people affected by the impact of the coronavirus. The fund has slowly adapted to meet evolving needs as they have changed over time. The impact of Covid-19 in the next few months

looks to be as difficult as ever so the fund will continue.



WEM made a contribution toward the original fund of £10,000 and will be reviewing how the support has been used locally soon.

You can find out more about this fund via LDCVS on their website at [lancastercvs.org.uk](http://lancastercvs.org.uk)

**WEM: A MOVE TO COMMISSIONING**

Now in its fifth year WEM has, over time, gone through a number of changes. This is consistent with the expected life cycle of a Big Local such as WEM where the Local Trust supports learning as we go along.

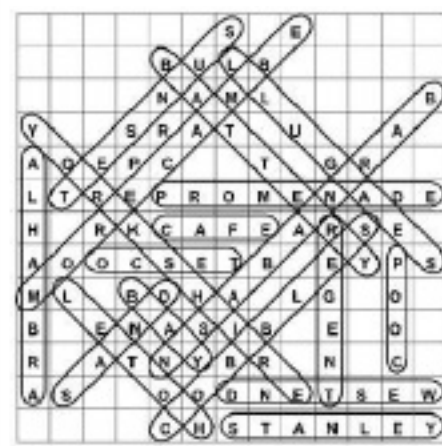
Initially a strong emphasis was placed on funding but this gave the impression that WEM was simply a source of individual grants rather than aimed at meeting a collective plan.

Subsequently it moved away from that approach but then got bogged down in micro-managing and some internal wrangles.

At the end of 2019 WEM finally took the step to commissioning, by which the partnership works together to agree work which meets our Action Plan and then individuals, groups and organisations are invited to express an interest in delivering

that work. This is a big change which will allow WEM to look at wider long term solutions in the work we support. These changes will mean we discuss projects with local organisations in a different way. It should also start to see WEM making a bigger difference locally.

**WORD PUZZLE** Answers for page 8



# NEW CO-OP ENTERPRISE PROJECT

From page 1

This will give local residents a stake in the organisation moving forward.

The project will not only bring a long neglected building in the West End back into productive, community-led use but increase local capacity to support more people, projects and enterprises setting up businesses. With creative community activity sitting alongside affordable co-working space and programmes aimed at incubating existing and new enterprise locally.

WEM agreed to earmark a potential £100,000 which would be a major contribution to WEM's Action Plan theme of 'Enterprise and economy' and will offer a range of support and opportunities for local people and individual enterprises through a single long term strategic project. In terms of our 'community' theme the venue will host a range of opportunities for local residents and will add significantly to the theme of 'place' in improving the aspect of the main road and drawing people to the West End.

## FIRST PHASE

WEM's first contribution will be supporting a full business plan drawn up with the assistance of experienced partners

brought in to ensure the plan is credible and fully costed out.

After that is done WEM would discuss supporting the project with the larger part of the £100,000

earmarked to the longer term initiative.

The bigger project will include a long term transfer negotiated with Lancaster City Council and in the longer term the goal is to support further growth by offering affordable privately rented workspace on the upper floors.

**"A long term dream for people at The Exchange and now with WEM's help it has a chance to become a reality for the West End"**

Also other things such as a community cafe, shop, gallery, a tool library, workshop and meeting rooms as well as specialist studio facilities including printmaking, digital, textiles and woodwork. The benefits will stretch across the whole of Morecambe but also target specific activity for the West End.

itself will make a major difference to the West End. It is strategic, will help many people, and bring multiple agencies together to make it viable and sustainable. Furthermore our contribution is helping to draw larger funding from others. The idea has been a long term dream for people at The Exchange and now with WEM's help it has a chance to become a reality for the West End".

Beki Melrose, director at The Exchange, said "This decision from West End Morecambe Big Local has given our committed team and community members a huge vote of confidence. It puts us in good stead as we look to approach national funders in the final hurdle to making this project a reality. Plans for the coop have been developed to address some of the barriers that have held us back as a community in order to create



Centenary House Co-op building

Chris Price, chair of West End Morecambe Big Local, said "This really is the first step into the realm of commissioning for WEM with the potential support of scores of small local business and enterprises through a single project, which in

lasting change. Centenary House and will provide much needed space, resources and support for the community and enterprise."

# WEST END ISSUES AROUND HOUSING

TAKE PART

In 2019 a small discussion group was initiated by WEM with the support of a national group called the Academy of Urbanism. Bringing together agency professionals, residents and some interested community groups, the discussion looked at issues and answers to the problems which effect local housing, employment and public areas including green spaces. Out of ongoing discussions the theme of housing was singled out where the group (or individual partners) might try and take things forward.

Lancaster City Council are looking toward creating a trading company that will undertake a district wide housing initiative as part of the council's economic strategy as well as aiming to address concerns faced by residents. This initiative is something that might influence others or start off ideas locally.

The aim currently is to find out what issues are important to local West End residents in relation to housing needs and priorities before agreeing any major moves forward.

## WHAT'S IMPORTANT?

So we wanted to talk more widely to the community about the ideas and get feedback about what might work or not. So WEM is working with other partners to look at setting up something like an online forum for those with a strong interest in local housing issues, especially residents who own or rent the place they live in the West End.

We have various questions around housing but also want to find out if there are any major gaps in what is being looked at or other ideas missing.

We hope to carry out an area wide consultation in the near future but there are some existing ideas which we hoped to get feedback on.

One idea is to carry out an experiment of purchasing and doing up a single property as a pilot project in both community ownership and as a focal point for skills training in the renovation.

4 Another idea is setting up a land trust which has the ability to secure specific property and

land that is of importance to the community. Something like this can help avoid negative developments on key community sites.

Other ideas simply include making better links with the council to sort out problem properties and find ways to coordinate approaches to influencing decisions and to build closer community relationships with housing associations.

It's important to note that, though discussions are ongoing, no commitments have yet been made.



Above, A seagull's eye view of the West End

A.P.S (UK) / Alamy

The hope is that if there is enough backing we can encourage activity that will have the support of the community.

**If you are interested in any issue related to housing (problems or positives) and might be interested in coming to an online forum in the next few months please send us your name, contact details and what interest you have via our contact form on the website [www.westendmorcambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorcambe.co.uk)**

You can also express an interest by post. Please send it to WEM housing, c/o LDCVS, The Cornerstone, Sulyard Street, Lancaster, LA1 1PX

# WEST END MORECAMBE BIG LOCAL LOOKING FOR NEW PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS



WWW.WESTENDMORECAMBE.CO.UK

WEM (West End Morecambe) Big Local is looking for new partnership members. Big Local is a Lottery initiative which has seen 150 neighbourhoods across England allocated a budget of £1m of Lottery funding to work with over ten years.

Earlier this year we had planned to recruit new members to the WEM partnership. This was interrupted by the impact of Covid but we have now come to the time when we need to think about our next Delivery Plan and we're ready to recruit 3 or 4 new members to help us to achieve our goals. Our new Constitution allows for up to 16 members of the Partnership but we've agreed to approach our recruitment in stages.

## FOCUS

In addition to access to funds we have the benefit of working with Lancaster CVS, and two part-time experienced members of staff, who look after our support services. This frees up Partnership members to focus on what the community needs and who best to work with to respond to these needs.

Our current Delivery Plan runs to next March and we will be starting work on a new plan before the end of the year - we have some flagship projects already underway that we're excited about developing further. This is your chance to influence what this new plan will address.

## WEST END

We are looking for residents who live in the West End who want to help shape the work we do. You don't need any professional ability or knowledge, but we need people who will bring their commitment and energy to making the West End the best place to live in that we can. We need Partnership members with a facts based approach to how the West End can be improved and who will take account of our community's diverse needs. We work with a range of local partners and, moving forward, we will be funding collaborative projects that we can commission to meet the gaps or opportunities that have been identified.

We are not looking for quick fixes - we want to take the time to build foundations that will outlast our Lottery funding.

There is a full description of the role of a Partnership member in our application pack but what are the benefits of being involved?



## BENEFITS

Well aside from being part of a great team of fellow residents you'll learn a great deal about how services in your community work and have the chance to influence the agencies who deliver these. As a member of the WEM Partnership you will link with many groups and organisations you might not normally meet.

There are also practical benefits with training available on anything that increases your skills. You'll also get to meet different Big Local partnerships across the UK.

We normally meet once a month as a Partnership but members are encouraged to represent the Partnership at other meetings and events that are relevant to our Plan.

At the moment we meet via Zoom (online video conferencing) and we can help members with access to the internet, and with protecting your privacy, if needed. If you have the energy and commitment needed, we will try to address any practical problems standing in your way.

If you think this might be for you then please contact our secretary [admin@westendmorecambe.co.uk](mailto:admin@westendmorecambe.co.uk) and he'll email you our application pack.

If accessing the internet is a problem you can ring our secretary on 0759 305 0858 and he'll talk through other ways of engaging with us. Please note he only works part-time so it may take a few days before he can pick up the message or respond.

The application form is quite simple and the pack includes other

documents that will give you a feel for what being a Partnership member means. We look forward to hearing from you. With only 3 or 4 spaces available some applicants are likely to be disappointed. But there will be other opportunities to be involved and we'll be recruiting again next year.

**Interested?  
See the 'partnership  
members' page  
at our website,**

[www.westendmorecambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorecambe.co.uk)

## AND OTHER GROUPS IN THE WEST END

WEM is not the only organisation out there looking for people to get involved. Whether you are a banker or baker, retired or unemployed, a student or a septuagenarian (or both) most groups are keen to involve new people and with so many West End groups there is bound to be one that's right for you.

# CARING FOR THE WEST END

Over the last five months we have all seen some dramatic changes to our lives. The way your surgery has been working is also very different. Our patients have been really supportive and patient as we have worked through this pandemic. As we head into winter and all the challenges that will bring, we are introducing some important processes to help keep our patients well and safe.

## Flu vaccination programme

This year is more important than ever we have a successful flu vaccination programme. This time it is not specifically about numbers but about attending to the right people at the right time. **We need to ensure our older more vulnerable patients receive their vaccine first as they are the most susceptible.**

Patients who shielded through the height of lockdown did so because of Covid, and these patients are just as susceptible to the flu.

We have worked hard this year on a process to ensure we reach as many people as possible. We have taken the decision to invite all the eligible patients by letter, these letters started dropping through West End doors from the 26th August and our clinics started not long after. Throughout September we ran 'Walk through Flu Clinics' and have seen a majority of our over 65 patients who have either been shielding or have long term conditions. These clinics have been very successful and we have managed to keep social distance between patients.

Starting in October we will be inviting those under 65 and eligible by letter, and surgeries will be running at weekends much as the over 65's clinics ran.

**We are acutely aware some of our patients are concerned about the wait for flu vaccinations and we hope you all appreciate the magnitude of the task, and the importance of ensuring the most vulnerable are seen first.**

Please be assured we are working as hard as possible to vaccinate every eligible patient as soon as possible. **Please don't call the surgery for a vaccination appointment until you receive a letter from us asking you to do so.**

6

## Thank you

We want to take this opportunity to thank our patients in the West End of Morecambe for their patience and support over the last 6 months, they have shown real resilience and support for each other and we are proud to be serving such an awesome community.

As we all know the Covid 19 virus is still here and still active, and we plan to do our part in the fight against this. We will do our best with the resources we have to offer the best care we can to our community.

*Bay Medical Group*

## Long term Conditions yearly reviews

Many of our patients suffer from long term conditions such as diabetes, heart problems and COPD, these patients are normally reviewed by our nursing team each year. Because of Covid 19 all practices in the country were told to halt non-essential work and this included annual reviews of this group of patients. It's important to clarify that reviews are classed as non-essential because they are to check that conditions are being managed and that medication is working as it should. They are not to address deterioration of any condition and if that is happening we want to know straight away so it will allow us to take appropriate action to keep you well.

## New annual reviews

With that in mind we have now commenced a Long Term Conditions annual review programme. This is a very different approach which we hope will benefit both our patients and staff. From September patients will receive their annual review in the month of their birth. We will not be able to offer every patient a review this year but will be calling patients who are most at risk with multiple conditions first.

Once this system is running smoothly we are confident we can offer annual reviews in a better time frame for the years to come.

We will be inviting patients by letter to contact the surgery and with a new option on our phone line you will be able to talk to our team to book your appointments.

[www.baymedicalgroup.co.uk](http://www.baymedicalgroup.co.uk)

# CONSIDERING FOOD POVERTY

## POSSIBLE COMMISSION

The challenges of food poverty in the local community have long been at the top of our agenda but so far we have only made small contributions toward organisations working on it. WEM is now looking at commissioning activity that will make a sustained difference

locally. Rather than small temporary interventions WEM wants to achieve something that meets our commissioning agenda, offers the widest benefits, brings organisations to work together, is strategic and is sustainable.

Having talked with the Lancaster

District Food Poverty Alliance it seems there are some potential projects that meet this criteria. One may be partly supporting a Food Club shop in the West End.

Based on the same ideas as many local food clubs, (including the one at Stanley's Community Centre) it offers a different means of accessing food support through a shop.

This is in some ways more empowering for people who use the service but it also opens up opportunities for people who aren't able to come to food club sessions at a community centre. Working with local partners from the Food Poverty Alliance, including Lancaster based Egg Cup and Stanleys Community Centre in the West End, plans are still in discussion and any support will be reliant on match funding from other partners. But if it goes ahead it could make a major contribution on this important local issue.

The Lancaster District Food Poverty Alliance brings together various groups and agencies all working on food poverty and related issues. You can find out more about them at [www.facebook.com/foodpovertyactionplan](https://www.facebook.com/foodpovertyactionplan)

Food Poverty zoom meeting



## FOOD VOUCHERS

The local Food poverty alliances is helping to increase the uptake of Healthy Start Food Vouchers and asked WEM if we could mention the scheme in our newsletter.

The vouchers can be used by pregnant people and people who are responsible for children under 4 to buy healthy foods. The vouchers are an important scheme providing a basic nutritional safety net to encourage families to make healthy food choices.

Currently, low-income pregnant women, pregnant women under

the age of 18 and children aged 1-4 years old can receive one £3.10 voucher per week to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables, milk or infant formula. Children under one year can get two vouchers.

Uptake of the vouchers in the Lancaster district is only at 42% so there are many people out there who are currently not taking up the opportunity.

To access vouchers fill in a form inside a leaflet called 'Healthy Start', which you can get from your midwife or doctor. You can also fill in the form and apply online at their website [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk) or call the 0345 607 6823

## LOOKING AT MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSION

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted the issue of mental health for everyone. The pandemic is like nothing else we have experienced before and has impacted in ways that can be a struggle to understand.

This issue has been raised by a number of people so we are talking with Bay Medical NHS and local mental health specialists to see if there is anything we can do to impact on this issue positively for the whole community. If so it may lead to a small commission from WEM to deliver that work locally in the West End.

## WEST END PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



We've been going through some pretty remarkable times this year and West End Morecambe Big Local (WEM) has decided to try and capture just a bit of it with a photography competition, something we hope that everyone young or old might be able to take part in.

The competition is called 'West End 2020 Vision' and will be open to anyone who lives, works or has visited Morecambe's West End. What we want is any photo that captures any aspect of life during the time of the Covid crisis so far or in the coming months. It can be absolutely anything, a little moment or a big feeling but something that reminds you, and hopefully us, of these strange times. It might be arty, thoughtful, family, funny, landscape, portrait, a sign of hope or a hoard of toilet rolls. It can be serious or funny and anything in-between.

[www.westendmorecambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorecambe.co.uk)

This newsletter is an occasional publication delivered by hand door-to-door in the West End. We try to ensure at least one copy reaches every house but if you don't receive it you can download a copy via our website. Information is correct at time of going to press. We endeavour to ensure that all information is accurate. Newsletter: Sept 2020.

## WEST END PUZZLE

• Easy

PROMENADE  
CAFE  
STANLEY  
ALHAMBRA  
REGENT  
BAY

• Medium

BATTERY  
YORKSHIRE  
SUNSET  
MORECAMBE  
SAND  
COBBLES

• Hard

COOP  
SEAGULL  
TESCO  
BARNABAS  
HOTEL  
WEST END

P	L	G	U	P	J	S	C	E	S	O	K	N
G	U	N	B	B	U	L	B	D	D	W	Z	S
O	P	J	F	N	A	M	L	K	F	D	B	B
Y	N	E	S	R	A	T	N	U	D	M	A	K
A	O	E	P	C	I	W	T	V	G	R	E	L
L	T	R	F	P	R	O	M	E	N	A	D	E
H	X	R	K	C	A	F	E	A	R	S	E	P
A	O	O	C	S	E	T	B	L	E	Y	P	S
M	L	D	B	D	H	U	O	L	G	E	O	M
B	F	E	N	A	S	I	B	J	E	I	O	C
R	D	A	T	N	Y	B	R	H	N	D	C	N
A	S	C	T	O	O	D	N	E	T	S	E	W
A	Y	L	A	C	H	S	T	A	N	L	E	Y

Can you find the words in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally but always in a straight unbroken line. Answers on page 2.



Which camera do you choose?

All you need to do is submit a photograph you have taken and add a few details. We will pick some of the best each month to put up on our website and in our future newsletters and every three months we will pick a winner who will receive a prize of £50.

So have a look of what photos

you might have already taken in 2020 or start snapping away now with grandad's old box-brownie, an expensive SLR, a holiday camera or your mobile phone.

You can submit up to two photographs taken any time from January 1st 2020 onward and entry is via an online form with digital photographs only.

Photos of any identifiable people must have been taken with their permission.

For full details and to enter the competition page on our website [www.westendmorecambe.co.uk](http://www.westendmorecambe.co.uk)

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



This brain teaser shows an exact double of a historic image of Morecambe, one picture has been changed. Can you spot the difference?