

woven

Community News

Edition 18 | **SPRING** | March 2026



Welcome to the 18th edition of Community News.

We hope you enjoy all the latest news, activities, upcoming events and items of interest from around our Woven communities.

Tenant Conference 2026

Members of the Woven Newsletter Group were delighted to join with tenants from schemes across NI for the Woven Tenant Conference at the end of February. Many thanks to all those who joined on the day for a variety of workshops, presentations and interactive sessions plus lunch, with entertainment from Emer Maguire.

Conference this year was held at the Balmoral Hotel, Belfast



Would you like to join our Newsletter Group?

Community News is produced by tenants, for tenants; co-ordinated and compiled by the Newsletter Group and members of Woven's Homes & Communities Team.

We are on the lookout for willing tenant volunteers. Gain experience of newsletter production and share news with tenants across NI. Email: newsletter@woven.org.uk

MEET THE STAFF

Claire Wright has recently joined the Woven team.

She will be taking up the role of **Community Organiser - (Common Ground Project)**

She recently sat down with Community Involvement Officer, Tom Cummings to discuss all things Woven and her new role!



Welcome to the team, Claire. What are you most looking forward to about joining Woven?

Thank you, it's great to be joining! One of the things that really stood out to me was how Woven has people at the heart of everything they do so I'm really looking forward to getting out into local communities and meeting tenants knowing I'm working for an organisation that has the same values as I do.

Have you come from a community background?

I have come from a community background! I initially started out almost 19 years ago volunteering and then started working for a few different charities - mainly working with young people- and I absolutely loved it. I then went to Ulster University as a mature student and got my qualifications in Community Youth Work and I've been working in grass roots youth and community organisations ever since.

What do you most enjoy about community work?

Honestly so many things! I love that no two days are the same. I love that I get to meet lots of different people that I might not otherwise get the chance to meet. But I mainly love seeing what incredible things people can achieve when they work together. I think having a sense of community is such an important thing for all of us and for me personally, being able to support others to feel part of their local community and also to feel confident enough to make their own voice heard and create actual changes in their area or even in their country is a real privilege.



What is PEACEPLUS?

PEACEPLUS is a cross-border funding programme that is supported by the EU, both the UK and Irish Governments and the Northern Ireland Executive and is designed to support peace, reconciliation and economic growth across Northern Ireland and the border counties. SEUPB oversees the PEACEPLUS funding programmes (such as The Common Ground Project which I work on) and they make sure we are working in the right ways to meet community needs.

What will PEACEPLUS look like for Woven tenants?

Woven tenants will likely see me out and about across Mid-Ulster (although The Common Ground Project is a collaboration with lots of different housing providers so there will be things happening across all areas). Tenants will be able to participate in arts, culture and heritage events and programmes, get the chance to meet new people and to get involved in community development training. The purpose is to help create sustainable and more inclusive communities right across the region and border counties, so we'll also be providing training to staff who work in communities and working closely with a wide range of community-based organisations to complement their work. At the moment the team are working hard to identify the best delivery strategy and we're hoping to then roll things out around summertime which is very exciting!

What do you do to relax outside of work?

I really enjoy being outside in nature so I go walking a lot and find that really relaxing and a great way to clear my head. I also really like to read and to bake.

What is your motto for life?

"Always be a rainbow in someone else's cloud" - Maya Angelou



OUT AND ABOUT



SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

The Communities Team have stayed busy in the Winter months with a variety of seasonal, indoor events being ran all across our schemes in Northern Ireland and with Spring just beginning, the team are currently planning a number of gardening and outdoor events for the (fingers crossed!) nicer weather. The Summer will also see the continuation of our Summer projects for kids funded by the Big Lottery. Latest information and updates can be found on Woven's Facebook page or website.



Regional Panels

The next round of Regional Panels have recently taken place in Belfast, Dungannon and the Northwest. Regional Panels provide an opportunity for tenants to meet with staff to discuss 'everything Woven' to help steer our services and community events. The next round of meetings will be held in May,

Environmental Update

The Environment Steering Group, comprised of staff and tenants recently met. There are lots of exciting projects in the pipeline as we move into Spring/Summer. Ciaran, Woven's Biodiversity Officer will be out and about across a number of schemes with the Community Involvement Officers!

For events and projects nears you, keep on eye on Facebook and our website.

The annual Woven Gardening Competition is also now live. Check our the Woven website for more details and to submit your entry!

WOVEN TENANT CONFERENCE...



Wednesday 25th February



Balmoral Hotel in Belfast - this years venue

Tenants from all across Northern Ireland joined us for the Annual Tenant Conference, this year held in the Balmoral Hotel, Belfast.

This was the third Tenant Conference to be held and this year was bigger and better than ever with tenants and staff alike enjoying the day, from engaging speakers, informative workshops and brilliant entertainment



Supporting Communities sought views on our proposed Tenant Strategy



Woven CEO Alan McKeown opens the day



Jade Bradley from Global Horizon Skills ran a nutrition workshop



Students from Training 21 introduce a video they produced with tenants

...ENJOYED BY ALL!



 **Balmoral Hotel, Belfast**

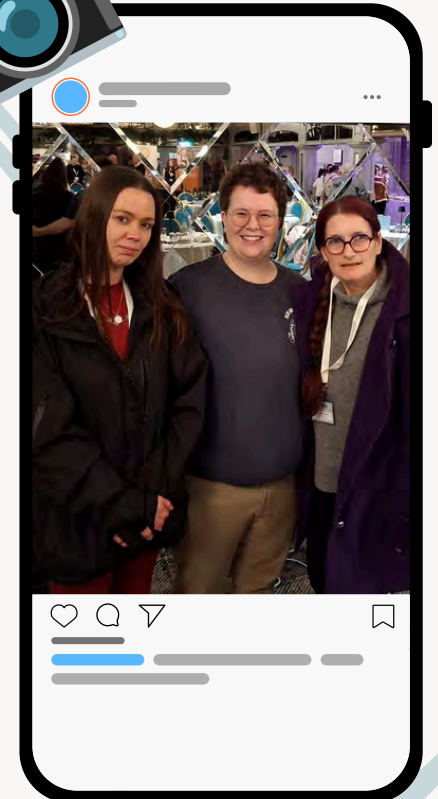
A big thank you to our Workshop hosts:



Tenants from all across Northern Ireland came together



Partisan ran a workshop focusing on how we deal with customer complaints



Editorial Panel members, Cavell and Lynne got a photo with Emer Maguire on the day!

with her unique brand of comedy music!

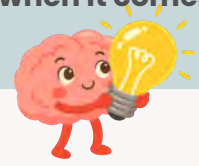


Comedian Emer Maguire ended the day



AUTISM AWARENESS

Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition with diverse experiences. It is estimated that there are 700,000 individuals with autism in the UK. When you consider families, autism affects around 2.8 million people daily. There are a lot of misunderstanding and myths when it comes to autism.



What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong neurodivergence and disability that influences how people experience and interact with the world. Autistic people are different from each other, but for a diagnosis they must share differences from non-autistic people in how they think, feel and communicate.

How does it present itself?

Being autistic means you may feel things and react to them differently to non-autistic people. You may find socialising confusing or tiring, and you may become overwhelmed in loud or busy places. You may have intense interests, prefer order and routine, and use repeated movements or actions to calm yourself or express joy.

AUTISM IS CAUSED BY VACCINES

The biggest myth of all is that vaccines, specifically the MMR vaccine, cause autism. The safety of vaccinations has been repeatedly tested across large groups of people. High-quality research studies involving hundreds of thousands of people have found no link between vaccinations do not cause autism.

ONLY BOYS HAVE AUTISM

More males have an autism diagnosis than females. However, people of any gender can be autistic. Girls are more likely to 'mask' their autism, learning the skills to interact with non-autistic people better than boys. This can mean that many autistic girls get a diagnosis later in life than boys.



AUTISTIC PEOPLE ARE ANTI-SOCIAL

Autistic people may need support with social skills or interact differently with the world around them, but most autistic people enjoy relationships. People show their social difficulties in different ways. Some are quiet and shy or avoid social situations, others speak too much and struggle to have two-way conversations. Autistic people might find body language, tone of voice and sarcasm difficult to read. These challenges can make it difficult to make friends, build relationships or get on at work. Taking time to get to know autistic people and understand their differences in an environment where they are happy makes all the difference.

EVERYONE IS A LITTLE AUTISTIC

Sometimes people think about autism as just being introverted or a bit socially awkward, but this is very invalidating. The reality is so much bigger than that. Autism is a neurotype that affects how people communicate and experience the world.

AUTISM IS A LEARNING DIFFICULTY

A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life.

Some autistic people also have a learning disability, but not all.



Woven are proud to work with Orchardville, who offer support and training to people living with autism and learning disabilities. Orchardville recently attended our Tenant Conference to promote their SkillSET programme which provides employability support to people who have a learning disability, autism or other neurodiverse condition who are looking for a job. **Find out more: [orchardville.com/programme/skillset](https://www.orchardville.com/programme/skillset)**

A WOMAN WHO REFUSED TO STAY ON THE GROUND...



...THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF SOPHIE HEATH

WORDS BY
WOVEN TENANT, DAVE MAHER

Some people live quietly within the boundaries set for them. Sophie Heath was not one of them.

She was born in Knockaderry, Co. Limerick in November 1896, Sophie Catherine Theresa Mary Peirce-Evans, later known to the world as Lady Heath, spent her life pushing against limits - social, physical, and cultural. She was an aviator when women were expected to stay earthbound, an athlete when sport was seen as unfeminine, and a vocal advocate for women's independence at a time when the idea of equality was considered radical.

Ireland at that time was a place of rigid expectations, particularly for women. Education for girls was limited, independence discouraged, and ambition often frowned upon.

But Sophie was academically capable and fiercely determined. While many women of her generation were steered away from higher education, Sophie attended university and earned degrees in science and engineering, fields that were almost entirely male-dominated. This alone marked her out as unusual, but it was only the beginning.

Before aviation entered her life, Sophie made her mark in sport. She was a remarkable all-round athlete. She swam competitively, played hockey at a high level, and set records in javelin throwing. She also competed for Britain in three events at the 1923 Women's Olympiad.



What made her sporting success particularly significant was not just the medals or records, but what they represented. Sophie's athleticism was a quiet rebellion against the idea that women were fragile, passive, or physically inferior.

It was aviation, however, that truly defined Sophie Heath's place in history. Flying in the early 20th century was dangerous, unpredictable, and overwhelmingly male. Sophie didn't care.

She trained as a pilot and quickly distinguished herself through skill and nerve. In 1928, she achieved what made headlines around the world when she became the first woman to fly solo from South Africa to Britain.

The journey involved thousands of miles, unreliable aircraft, hostile terrain, and constant risk. Sophie faced mechanical failures, bad weather, and exhaustion. At one point, she crashed her plane and was seriously injured, but she survived and carried on. When she finally arrived in Britain, she was celebrated as a pioneer.

Sophie became "Lady Heath" through marriage to Sir James Heath, a British aristocrat. The title brought status, but it never sat comfortably with her independent spirit.

She was not interested in high society or decorative roles. If anything, the contrast between her title and her lifestyle highlighted her refusal to conform.

The marriage did not last, and Sophie continued her life largely alone, financially precarious at times, often moving between countries, always restless.



Sophie argued that women should be financially independent, physically strong, and mentally confident. She challenged the idea that marriage should define a woman's life.

It would be dishonest to paint Sophie Heath as universally loved. She could be abrasive, stubborn, and uncompromising. She did not soften her views to make others comfortable but these traits were also part of what made her effective. She lived in a world that constantly tried to shrink her.

Sophie Heath died in 1939 in London after falling down the stairs of a double decker tram. She was just 42. Alcoholism had become a serious problem for her, but it was thought that an old blood clot may have caused the fall. It was a quiet end for a woman who had lived so boldly.

No grand ceremonies or lasting financial rewards for her contributions. For a time, her name faded from public memory.

Today though, Sophie Heath is increasingly recognised for what she truly was, a pioneer whose life helped widen the path for those who followed.

For a housing organisation like Woven, her story resonates in a deeper way. Sophie understood the importance of stability, dignity, and autonomy. She knew that having control over one's life, where you live, how you move, who you become, is fundamental to human wellbeing. She reminds us that secure foundations allow people to dream, to strive, and sometimes, to fly.

ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF MYTENANCY?

Did you know that you can log into MyTenancy on the Woven website to manage aspects of your rent account and property repair history at your own convenience via laptop, pc or smartphone, and view your rent statement online wherever and whenever you choose.

Getting started

To get started, you must first have a valid email registered with Woven*. If you haven't already done this, contact Woven and register your email. Once this is done, you're ready to set up your account with MyTenancy.

Scan the QR Code alongside to visit the '**For Tenants**' section of Woven's website.



Click on **Create Account**, enter your email and your chosen password (which is case sensitive). You will receive an email containing a link to verify your account.

Click on the link and provide **Tenant Key** and your **date of birth**. Your Tenant Key is a resident code which you will find printed on your rent statement (or you can call Woven to find out).

Your Account

Once you've created an account, you'll be able to sign in at any time and on any device.

You can access the MyTenancy login page from the '**For Tenants**' section of Woven's website.

Accessing MyTenancy

From Woven's website - www.woven.org.uk - on any device, open the '**For Tenants**' section, click on **MyTenancy** from the drop-down menu, and on the page which opens, follow the 'click [here](#)' link.

Once you've logged in, you will be able to access features such as **Statement of Account** and **Repair History**.

Statement of Account shows the balance on your account and any transactions. If your Balance is in arrears a **Red** box with **x** will be displayed. If your Balance is prepaid the box will be **Green** with a **✓**

Repair History shows repairs at your property and can be expanded to show details about the work carried out. You can also click to Request a Repair. The Files button is to access uploaded documents.

SWEET TREATS



CARAMEL RICE KRISPIE TREATS MAKES 12 BARS

Ingredients

- 3 cups Rice Krispies
- 1 cup mini marshmallows
- ¼ cup caramel sauce
- 1tbsp butter

Method

- Melt butter and marshmallows in microwave for 30 seconds then put back in for 30 second intervals until fully melted
- Stir in caramel sauce then add Rice Krispies and mix
- Press into lined tray and chill in fridge for minimum of 20 minutes



CONDENSED MILK FUDGE MAKES 16 SQUARES



Ingredients

- 1 cup condensed milk
- 2 cups chocolate chips

Method

- Add chocolate chips and condensed milk to a bowl
- Melt gently over hot water or microwave in short bursts
- Stir until smooth and thick
- Pour into lined pan and spread evenly
- Chill for 3 hours until firm then cut into squares

COCONUT MACAROONS MAKES 10 - 12 MACAROONS

Ingredients

- 2½ cups shredded coconut
- ¾ cup condensed milk

Method

- Preheat oven to 170 C. Line baking tray
- Mix coconut and condensed milk until sticky
- Scoop small mounds onto tray
- Bake for 15-18 minutes until lightly golden
- Cool completely before removing from tray



With Easter coming up, what a perfect time to treat yourselves to these delicious recipes! If you try any of these or have a recipe of your own you want to share, then snap a photo or send an email to newsletter@woven.org.uk and you could feature in the next Edition!



FOCUS ON SUPPORT

Get the Right Support at the Right Time

Money worries, health issues, housing problems, grief, loneliness, displacement or family stress - we all experience times when it feels like the world is against us. That's when Right Support Right Time can help.

Working in partnership with our six expert charities, Right Support Right Time helps people take positive steps to manage the issues causing them worry and distress, ensuring they can access the support that works best for them, when and how they need it.

Our dedicated staff will take the time to listen to each person's concerns during a one-to-one conversation before discussing a comprehensive range of supports, including mental health and physical wellbeing sessions, group support and advocacy.

Right Support Right Time - which is supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) - is open to adults living in Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic.

You can contact the Right Support Right Time team from Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm, by telephoning 0808 189 0036 (freephone); emailing hello@inspirewellbeing.org; or via our webchat at www.inspirewellbeing.org/rsrt. These details can also be used to make referrals to the service.

We look forward to speaking to you.

www.inspirewellbeing.org/rsrt

Further contact details:

Infoline NI: **0808 189 0036**; Infoline ROI: **+353 1800 911 546**; Email: hello@inspirewellbeing.org

right support ●●●●●
●●●●● right time

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!

We focus on the everyday issues that can lead to poor mental health and help you take positive steps forward.

No judgement. No pressure.
Just the right support, at the right time

Get in touch when you are ready:

Freephone - 0808 189 0036
Use our webchat - www.inspirewellbeing.org/rsrt
Email - hello@inspirewellbeing.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE

PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the

European Union

UK Government

Logos for Northern Ireland Executive, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability and Integration Services, apex, British Red Cross, Cedar, DEPAUL, inspire, menicap, and respond.

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TENANT ZONE



IMPORTANT

Have you tried MyTenancy yet?

MyTenancy is a secure online service that lets you:

- Check your rent account
- Report a repair and check its progress
- View your details

You can log into MyTenancy to manage aspects of your rent account and property repair history at your own convenience via laptop, PC or smartphone. You can also view your rent statement online whenever and wherever you choose.

To access MyTenancy, simply visit:

woven.org.uk/tenant-information/mytenancy

WE WANT YOU!

Welcome to Tenant Zone! This section is all about our tenants. Got a photo, a story, a poem or anything else to share? Get in touch and we could feature it here.

This is also your opportunity to get involved and have your voice heard.



Dates For Your Diary

Interested in Community Events in your area, or want to get involved in our Tenant Engagement activities?



Follow us on Facebook for the latest updates



Visit woven.org.uk (Community > Get Involved) to view our latest calendars



Call the Community Involvement Officer for your area (028 9042 7211)



Email communities@woven.org.uk



Want to join our Editorial Panel and get involved in writing articles as well as designing and editing the Woven Community Newsletter?

Or do you just have a story you want to tell? Maybe you have an article you think other tenants would love to read or a recipe to share?

Whatever it is, get in touch at newsletter@woven.org.uk today!