



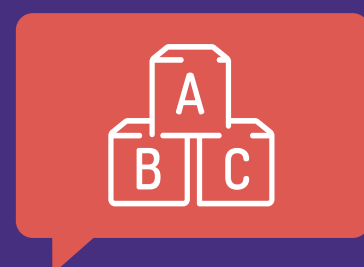
Your Council Your Say

Calling all West Lothian residents

We need your help to influence & shape the future of council services in West Lothian.

By taking part in this consultation your feedback will be used to help us become more sustainable, address the council's funding gap and meet the challenges ahead.

Please turn to page 7 or scan the QR code for more information on the consultation and how to take part in the survey.



www.westlothian.gov.uk/WL2028

Help with costs in West Lothian



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Winter Ready 2022/23



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Bathgate Partnership Centre renamed



A special ceremony has been held to mark the official unveiling of the Jim Walker Partnership Centre.

Jim Walker was a well-known and much-respected figure in his home town of Bathgate and across wider West Lothian. He served as a councillor on West Lothian Council and its predecessor authorities for over 40 years, after first being elected to Bathgate Town Council in 1972.

Councillors voted unanimously to rename the town's hub for council and community services

in 2021 following his sudden passing.

Provost Cathy Muldoon welcomed members of the late Jim Walker's family and local elected members to a small ceremony at the former Bathgate Partnership Centre.

Jim was also heavily involved in a number of other important aspects of Bathgate life, including Bathgate Procession, Kirkton Brass Band and Bathgate

Thistle Football Club. He was awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) in 2013 in recognition of his work in the community.

Provost Cathy Muldoon said: "It's a huge honour to officially unveil the Jim Walker Partnership Centre at the heart of the Bathgate community he served so well for so many years.

"Jim made a massive contribution to community life

to the town where he was born and bred throughout his life, so it's fitting we have a lasting tribute like this.

"He was well-liked and hugely respected at the council and across West Lothian for his dedication to public service. He was also known a dedicated family man, so it's fantastic to have so many of his family along to mark the occasion."

Tribute to Councillor Ann Davidson



Cllr Davidson who represented the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward, passed away on 8 September 2022 following a short illness, after being first elected to the council in May 2022.

The flags at the West Lothian Civic Centre were lowered as a mark of respect, and cross-party tributes were paid to her at a meeting of West Lothian Council on 27 September.

Provost Cathy Muldoon said: "My thoughts and prayers are with Ann's family at this sad time. Ann had not been a councillor for long but was a very popular woman.

"She was very proud to have been elected in May and followed in the footsteps of her late husband, Alex, by winning a seat in the Broxburn, Winchburgh and Uphall ward.

"I had known Ann for several years before she was elected and I will miss her dearly."

REMEMBER, REMEMBER, KEEP YOURSELF SAFE ON 5TH NOVEMBER



The West Lothian Community Safety Partnership is working to ensure that everyone can enjoy a safe bonfire period this November.

If you encounter an unregistered bonfire that is already alight please contact the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) on 999.

Illegal or any other suspicious activity can be reported to Police Scotland by calling 101 or alternatively contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

FOR MORE GUIDANCE ON SUBJECTS SUCH AS THE ILLEGAL SALE OF FIREWORKS AND MORE, PLEASE VISIT THE WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL WEBSITE: WWW.WESTLOTHIAN.GOV.UK/BONFIRE

Please **recycle** & don't contaminate your bins

Thank you to everyone who has been using their new green recycling bins.

By separating your recycling correctly, you are playing your part in protecting the environment and making sure our limited resources can be targeted on local services rather than expensive landfill fees.



Blue bins – paper, card and cardboard



Green bins – plastic bottles, tubs and trays, tins, cans, aerosols, foil and metal lids, food and drink cartons and empty plastic bags

! Please remember: Everything put in your recycling bin should be clean and dry

Following the introduction of the new green bin and during the transition period over to the green bins, we have been placing tags on bins that contain incorrect or contaminated materials and, in some cases where contamination was particularly bad, we have not been lifting the bin.

From 3 October, we will no longer empty bins that contain contaminated material and this will help keep improving the material that is recycled from the green and blue bins.

If a contaminated bin is put out for collection after this date, we will tag your bin to let you know. It will then be the responsibility of the householder to remove the contamination before the next scheduled collection date. Please note that we will not return to collect the bin before the next scheduled uplift.

If you want to avoid this happening to you, please simply place the correct material into your bins.

Further details of what can go in each bin can be found at www.westlothian.gov.uk/bins

£62 million Winchburgh school campus near completion

Two new state-of-the-art schools have opened in Winchburgh as part of the council's largest ever investment in education.



Winchburgh Academy and Holy Family Primary School welcomed pupils from August 2022, with the new shared sports and leisure hub also open to pupils.

The schools were delivered by development partner Hub South East, with Morrison Construction as the primary contractor.

The new schools are required to meet with the increasing demand in the expanding village, which has been

designated a core development area and will see approximately 3,500 new homes expected to be built.

Winchburgh Academy has space for 660 young people initially, but the innovative design of the school means that it can be expanded to accommodate up to 1,210 pupils as the village increases in size.

The third and final school in the campus is Sinclair Academy, which will open to pupils in

August 2023.

Andrew McGuire, Executive councillor for Education said: "This is a very exciting time for the local community in Winchburgh and we're delighted to have the buildings completed and handed over to us.

"This demonstrates West Lothian Council's commitment to improving education and learning facilities for local people.

"Our new schools and Sports Hub have been delivered ahead of schedule and within budget, which is clearly a big achievement, particularly set against the challenges of the past few years.

Leader of West Lothian Council Lawrence Fitzpatrick added: "West Lothian Council has invested heavily in our schools and we already have one of the best school estates in the country.

"When combined with rising educational attainment, it's no surprise that more and more families are choosing to make West Lothian their home."

The Winchburgh Sport & Wellbeing Hub will be home to a state-of-the-art fitness suite; gymnasium and fitness/dance studio; two full sized sports halls; a six-lane swimming pool; a full-sized grass sports pitch and two synthetic pitches suitable for hockey, football and rugby, car parking and drop-off (see back page for further details).

West Lothian Council will maintain the hub and all schools in Winchburgh will use the facility, including Holy Family Primary, Winchburgh Primary, Sinclair Academy and Winchburgh Academy. West Lothian Leisure (WLL) will manage community access to the hub.



Livingston schools clean up local woodland

Two Livingston schools have joined forces to tackle issues with litter spoiling their local environment.

S1 pupils from Inveralmond Community High School and P7s from nearby Harrysmuir Primary spent a day litter picking in woodland areas in Ladywell recently.

Supported by the West Lothian Litter Pickers and the Woodland Trust, the hard-working pupils managed to collect an amazing total of 113 bags of litter in just one day.

They also helped remove a number of other larger items that were spoiling the area's natural environment, including chairs, burnt-out bins, TVs, a glass table top and even a bouncy castle.

Inveralmond Headteacher Suzie Young said: "Many thanks to all the young people from Inveralmond and Harrysmuir on their incredible efforts to clear up our local woodlands.

"It really helped demonstrate the importance of looking after our local environment and the terrible impact of dropping litter."



Trophy success for West Lothian Schools Pipe Band

West Lothian Schools Pipe Band have been celebrating a superb second place finish at the World Championships in Glasgow recently.

In the first full competition season after covid, the senior band scooped the silver award in the Novice Juvenile A grade ahead of tough competition.

The young people put in some excellent performances over the course of the season at Gourrock Highland Games, The British Championships and North Berwick Highland Games in the build-up to the top competition.

The junior band also enjoy a successful season and continued to progress and gain valuable experience, with the highlight being a second-place finish at North

Berwick Highland Games in the Novice B grade.

Pipe Major Graham Drummond said: "We are immensely proud of all our young people on what they have achieved in our first season back in competition.

"The pandemic has affected us and many other pipe bands, so to be able to field a band who competed so well and delivered some fantastic performances is a huge achievement. Special thanks must also go to our dedicated parents and carers for their huge support over the season.

"West Lothian Schools Pipe

Band have now finished second a number of times at the World Pipe Band Championships, so our goal for 2023 is to come back even stronger and win the title for the first time in our history."

Executive councillor for education Andrew McGuire added: "It's fantastic to see our amazing West Lothian School Pipe Band back in competitive action once more.

"Well done to all the young people on a fantastic season, with the superb second place finish at the Worlds just rewards for all their hard work and dedication."

Could your business help to prepare a young person for the world of work?

Local businesses are being invited to support the pathway between school and employment.

West Lothian Council works alongside partners such as the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Group to improve students' understanding of the world of work by inviting employers to deliver a range of activities including career insight sessions, workplace visits and mentoring.

Employer involvement with schools brings numerous business benefits including building stronger community links, creating a talent pipeline, and raising awareness of your organisation and industry.



If you think your business could help develop the workforce of the future, then please get in touch today.

michelle.robertson@westlothian.gov.uk
investinwestlothian.com



Executive councillor for education, Andrew McGuire (Far left); West Lothian Council Depute Chief Executive, Elaine Cook (second from right) and Acting head teacher at St Margaret's Academy, Isla Wright (far right), joined pupils from West Lothian's 11 Secondary Schools to mark another fantastic year of exam results



Decade of success for west lothian schools

A great sense of achievement was felt by pupils across the West Lothian school community as the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications and Awards results were received earlier this year.

Early indications show that the results from pupils across West Lothian's secondary schools have improved across a number of key indicators at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) which includes Highers and equivalent level 6 qualifications.

Overall, this means a tenth successive year of improvement for pupils across West Lothian Council schools.

Pupils across the local authority have the opportunity to undertake a wide range of courses either in their

own schools or in conjunction with partners through the West Lothian Campus and at West Lothian College.

As well as National Qualifications, pupils have achieved National Progression Awards, HNCs, Skills for Work courses and Foundation

Apprenticeships among others.

Executive councillor for education, Andrew McGuire joined pupils from 11 secondary schools who were amongst many in West Lothian to successfully achieve a range of qualifications.

He said: "I have to congratulate each and every pupil across West Lothian on their results. They should all be proud and take a moment to reflect

on all the hard work they have put in.

"Early indications show that overall, it's now been a decade of continued achievement for West Lothian schools. This shines a light on the incredible work of teachers and support staff across our school community. They too, should reflect on this astounding achievement as it is a reflection on the fantastic support they offer our pupils on a daily basis.

Support local business this winter

West Lothian residents are being urged to back local businesses this winter.



The West Lothian Gift Card is the perfect way to show your support to the firms who make up our high streets.

For more information or to buy gift cards, please visit www.scotlandgiftslocal.com

Local businesses are also encouraged to join the 120 businesses already signed up to the scheme, which aims to support businesses in our towns and villages. Email wlgiftcard@westlothian.gov.uk or visit www.lovelocal.scot/giftcard for further detail.

Another way to support local businesses is to make one or more special or festive purchases during 'Small Business Saturday' which takes place this year on Saturday 3 December 2022. This is a nationwide campaign that seeks to support and encourage greater prosperity amongst small, independent, local businesses.

For more details visit www.smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com

West Lothian Council pays tribute to Commonwealth Games participants

A civic reception is to be held in celebration of the achievements of local athletes and coaches who represented Scotland at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.



A recent meeting of West Lothian Council saw members come together to share their tributes to the outstanding success of local athletes and coaches for their involvement in this summer's games.

West Lothian was represented well across the games with boxer, Rhys Lynch from Fauldhouse taking home gold and Uphall's Shannon Archer winning Scotland's first-ever individual women's gymnastics medal at a Commonwealth Games as she picked up a bronze medal.

The selection of father-daughter, gymnastics coaching duo of John and Becki Campbell in artistic gymnastics was another source of local pride.

West Lothian's Provost will write to all West Lothian athletes and coaches who took part in the games to personally congratulate them for their achievements and to invite them to a civic reception which is to be held in their honour.

West Lothian Provost, Cathy Muldoon said: "There is always a sense of pride when a local person

manages to reach the very top and achieve national recognition. To be selected as an athlete or a coach at the Commonwealth Games not only demonstrates the talent of an individual but also unerring commitment and determination.

"On behalf of West Lothian Council I would like to congratulate all of our local athletes and coaches who were involved in the Commonwealth Games and would also like to wish them every success for the future."

Pictures courtesy of Team Scotland.

Help with costs in West Lothian

The cost of living is increasing rapidly and prices are rising at rates we haven't seen since the 1970s. This includes fuel, food and energy process.

West Lothian Council has created an online hub

which contains lots of information on financial support available and advice on how to help ease the cost of living challenges faced by many households in West Lothian.

A range of financial benefits are also available.



The main areas of assistance are broken down into three main sections:



Given that information changes frequently, please regularly look online to find out the latest updates.

Visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/costofliving or scan this QR code. **Please consider cutting this QR code out and keeping it in your home.** Scan it regularly to stay on top of what advice and financial support is available to householders in West Lothian.

Help with costs in West Lothian



West Lothian Council

www.westlothian.gov.uk/costofliving

WEST LoTHIAN HAS PAID TRIBUTE TO QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Flags were at half-mast at West Lothian Civic Centre and council buildings to mark the period of national mourning following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.



Books of Condolence were available at West Lothian Civic Centre and all of West Lothian's Partnership Centres for members of the public to write down memories of Her Majesty. An online book of condolence was also available. Cards or tributes left at West Lothian's war memorials were collected the day after the funeral and sent to West Lothian Council's archives alongside the Books of Condolence.

Provost Cathy Muldoon said: "On behalf of the citizens of West Lothian, we have sent a message of sympathy to The Royal Family on the passing of Her

Majesty The Queen.

"The Queen has ruled for 70 years, which is longer than any other Monarch in British history. During this time, she became a much loved and respected figure across the globe.

"Her sense of duty and her devotion to a life of service for Great Britain and The Commonwealth was remarkable.

"It's important to remember that The Queen was also a much-loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother, so the Royal Family are very much in our thoughts and prayers at this poignant time."

West Lothian's Lord-Lieutenant, Moira Niven MBE, added: "Her Majesty led an extraordinary life and I'd like to extend my sympathy to the entire Royal Family at this very sad time.

"It is impossible to put into words the impact that Her Majesty has had on shaping our great country.

"She lived a long and full life and The Queen will always remain a legendary public figure who carried out Her duty with great honour, dignity, respect, intelligence and kindness. The country will miss Her, dearly."



Honouring a lifetime of service

Two special events were held in West Lothian to mark the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The West Lothian Proclamation ceremony in West Lothian for His Majesty King Charles III took place at West Lothian Civic Centre on Sunday 11 September, and was open to everyone in West Lothian to attend.

Lord-Lieutenant for West Lothian, Ms Moira Niven MBE invited those in attendance to participate in a two-minute silence which was followed by a reading of the Proclamation of the Accession by West Lothian Council's Chief Executive, Graham Hope.

Whitburn Brass Band were in attendance and played the National Anthem 'God Save the King' following the reading of the Proclamation of the Accession.

Wreathes were laid at the War Memorial outside the Civic Centre where they joined the numerous floral tributes left by West Lothian residents in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Kirk of Calder's Interim-moderator, Reverend Dr Nanda Groenewald led the service, with Reverend John Povey and Reverend Alistair Cowper of Kirknewton and East Calder also leading prayers.

Provost Cathy Muldoon and Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick provided readings during the service, with Lord-Lieutenant for West Lothian, Moira Niven MBE also speaking of Her Majesty's connections and visits to the local area.



Welcoming Queen Elizabeth II to West Lothian

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was a regular visitor to West Lothian over the years.

The first visit by the then Princess Elizabeth was in 1945, when she performed the official opening of the Trefoil School at Polkemet House in Whitburn.

She then accompanied her father King George VI on a family visit to Linlithgow in July 1946, the first visit to West Lothian by a reigning monarch since 1914 where they were greeted by cheering crowds.



Her first visit to West Lothian as Queen took place in July 1955, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh. Crowds cheered at the Queen and Duke when they arrived at Linlithgow Cross, before travelling on to Armadale, and then Whitburn, where they Royal couple were guests of honour at George V park for Whitburn gala day.

The trip was rounded off with a visit to Kirkton Park in Bathgate, with their visit also passing through Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh.

Footage of the 1955 visit is available to view as part of the National Library of Scotland's archive at movingimage.nls.uk/film/7371

Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh were regular visitors to West

Lothian for the next 20 years, including visiting the Scottish National Institute for the War Blinded at Linburn in both July 1958 and July 1975.

South Queensferry was still part of West Lothian when Queen Elizabeth II performed the official opening of the Forth Bridge in September 1964 along with Prince Philip and the Royal couple passed through Linlithgow in June 1965.

Queen Elizabeth II also toured the BMC truck factory at Bathgate in July 1968, meeting a number of staff on the shop floor.



Queen Elizabeth made her first visit to the new town of Livingston in July 1978. Her tour began with a visit to Howden Park where she walked a half mile route to Howden East with local people lining the route, waving flags and cheering. The Queen also visited the new shopping centre at Almondvale, Lanthorn Centre and Dedridge Community House.

A video of this visit can be viewed at www.youtube.com/westlothianvideos

She returned to Livingston in July 1983 to officially open the NEC

semiconductor plant at Livingston, with footage available to view at movingimage.nls.uk/film/9314

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip came back to Livingston in June 1987 as part of the new town's 25th anniversary celebrations. Hundreds of local people came out to greet the royal party on their hour-long tour of the town, which included Mill Farm, now part of Almond Valley Heritage Centre and the Forum arena.

Queen Elizabeth II returned to Linlithgow in July 1989 as part of a Royal visit to Scotland. She was shown an exhibition marking 600 years of the town, and took part in a walkabout of the town centre.



Her final visits to West Lothian took place in 1990s where Queen Elizabeth II conducted the official opening of St John's Hospital in Livingston in July 1990, then the official opening of both the Dogs Trust rescue centre at Bentyhead, near Harburn, and then the Bloom House Centre of the Livingston and District Epilepsy Association in Livingston Village in June 1994.

Your Council Your Say

2028

A message from the Chief Executive

The council is committed to meeting the needs of local people and high performance across all areas of service delivery.

Like other local authorities in Scotland, West Lothian Council faces constrained funding and substantial cost increases in the next five years.

This means that the council, along with the West Lothian community, will have to make difficult decisions about local services. Reductions in local government public spending have impacted council services for over 15 years and the council has made over £150 million worth of savings since 2007/08.

We also understand that local people and businesses are also experiencing difficulties from the Cost of Living increases and the next five years are also expected to be extremely challenging for the council as it will also face many of the same pressures from the Costing of Living crisis.

In preparation for the challenges ahead, we want to work with you – our community and partners – in shaping the future of council services in West Lothian. This consultation is the second in a series of planned engagements.

Your feedback will be used to help us become more sustainable, address the funding gap and meet the challenges ahead.

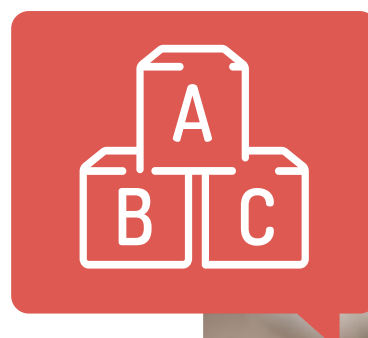
Phase 1 of the Council's consultation approach commenced in June 2022.

Following further developments in the Cost of Living crisis and related cost pressures on energy costs the budget gap has increased to £47.1million over the five-year period 2023/24 to 2027/28, with a budget gap of £36.5million over the three-year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The consultation on the officer savings proposals will only take around 5-10 minutes to complete but it is vital that you take the time to tell us what your views are on the officer budget proposals contained within this document; and what your views are on Council tax, which is used to help fund local services.

Your views are important and I would encourage every person who lives and/or works in West Lothian, local organisations and business to get involved

Graham Hope,
Chief Executive



Consultation Roadmap to 2028

The council is undertaking a three-stage consultation with the people, business and customers of West Lothian in order to form the Council's Priorities and Budget Strategy for 2023/24 to 2027/28, and also consult on the future direction of the Council.

PHASE 1 | CONSULTATION - COMPLETE

PHASE 2 | CONSULTATION

Autumn 2022 Budget savings 2023/24 to 2025/26

BUDGET SETTING

5-year financial plan 2023/24 to 2027/28

3-year detailed revenue budget 2023/24 to 2025/26

Agreement on taxation levels for 2023/24 to 2027/28

PHASE 3 | CONSULTATION

Summer 2023 - Budget savings 2026/27 to 2027/28

Phase 2 | Our Budget

Local voices matter and, in the second phase of our consultation, we want you to help us:

1

Consider the officer proposals that are set out in the consultation to address the funding gap of £36.5 million



2

Provide feedback on the proposals



3

Suggest any other ways that we may help to reduce council expenditure and/or changes to council services to make them more efficient



4

Have your say on Council Tax in West Lothian



How to take part in the survey:



Online
Respondents are encouraged to complete the form online by going to www.westlothian.gov.uk/WL2028 or by scanning the QR code with your mobile device.

Paper copy

You can complete this form, Please read the proposals from pages 10 to 12 and share your views on pages 13 and 14. Post your completed form to:

West Lothian Council
Freepost BULLETIN SURVEY
Livingston
EH54 6FF

Hand survey in

Alternatively hand your completed survey into any partnership centre or Customer Information services (CIS) office.

Have your say by 20 November. The consultation is now open and closes on 20 November.

It is expected that West Lothian Council will have to make significant savings over the next five years due to insufficient funding and rising costs.

This means that the council, along with the West Lothian community, will have to make difficult decisions about local services.

We are consulting on officer proposals, from the senior leadership team, to save £36.5 million over the next three years – from 2023/24 to 2025/26. The council must balance its budget – something we are legally required to do. Because we have insufficient budget, we are forced to reduce expenditure on local services. We want to ensure that the funding we do have is spent on services that matter most to our communities.



What you need to know

Background

Reductions in local government public spending have impacted council services for over 15 years and the council has made over £150 million worth of savings since 2007

Like other councils in Scotland, West Lothian Council faces further constrained funding and substantial costs over the next five years

The Scottish Government has advised that councils face a cash freeze in funding for 2023/24 to 2025/26. These funding constraints are combined with rising costs

which include growing number of pupils, an increasing number of older people with care needs, higher energy costs and meeting pay awards.

This means that the council, along with the West Lothian community, will have to make difficult decisions about local services.

It's clear that the council need to make changes to the way services are delivered in future

Are we consulting on proposed changes?

Yes, the council is consulting on the future direction of council services

At this stage, council officers have published a number of budget proposals which represent reductions and changes in services. Decisions on what will change will not be made by elected members (councillors) until after the consultation is complete

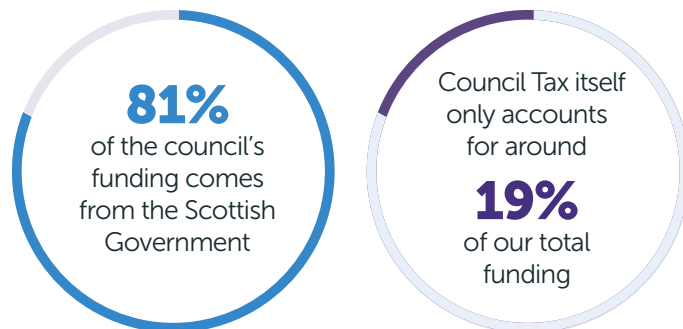
What might the future look like for local services?

The council has a legal duty to provide certain services and this will continue. The council will also continue to prioritise our resources and ensure we have the right people, partners and assets to deliver

positive outcomes for West Lothian In future, the council will not deliver all of the services it currently provides – we simply do not have the resources to do so. Some services currently delivered will have to be delivered by partners, communities and other organisations

If all of these officer proposals (pages 10 to 12) are agreed, the council will be able to balance its budget – something we are legally required to do. If some of these proposals are not agreed, other ways to deliver a balance budget via additional savings proposals will have to be identified.

How is the council funded?



In 2022/23 our revenue budget (day to day running costs) amounts to:

£490 million

How do we spend that budget?*

£10.5 million on public transport (including school transport) including and bus subsidies for privately owned bus providers

£15.8 million on facilities management, including school meals, cleaning council buildings, janitorial staff and street crossing patrol guides



£5.8 million on the council's fleet of vehicles



£29.2 million is spent on social work services for children and families

£36.6 million on services for vulnerable adults



£26.7 million on Early Learning and Childcare



£9.3 million on footpaths, street lighting, roads, winter maintenance, structures and flood prevention



£53.8 million on services for older people

£3.6 million on culture and sports services



£4.2 million on homelessness services and community safety



£19.5 million on support for children with additional needs



£70.5 million on Primary School education

£60.5 million on Secondary School education



£4 million on planning, regeneration, economic development, trading standards and environmental health

£2.9 million on neighbourhood services, including libraries, registration services, community centres, and customer information services



£14.9 million on the council's property portfolio



£6.4 million on country parks/ open spaces, play areas, street cleaning and cemeteries



£13.3 million on waste management & recycling services

*This graphic provides a selection of the main budget areas but not all areas of spend.

Phase 1 | Consultation | Our Future

Local Voices matter and the first stage – Phase 1, aimed to:

- 1 Understand the services that local people want and need in the future
- 2 Identify priorities that will help West Lothian be a better place to live, work, learn and visit
- 3 Identify some principles for change that help us to transform the way that the Council works
- 4 Understand how you think we should address the funding gap.
- 5 Understand how you want the council to engage with communities and customers

A summary of the outcome from the Phase 1 consultation is set out below:

Your Community

? We asked

What are the best parts of living in West Lothian?

≡ You said

- Access to open spaces, parks and green spaces
- Access to shops and services
- The Transport links

What parts of your community need to be improved?

- Better community facilities
- Availability and reliability of public transport
- Access to open spaces

What are the most important issues for your community?

- Access to health care
- Economy and the cost of living
- Crime and community safety

What are the most important issues for you?

- Access to health care
- My mental health and wellbeing
- My physical health

What we will do

- The council will continue to protect and maintain the local environment through a range of council services.
- The council will continue to support the local economy through support for business and employability programmes.
- The council will develop a re-prioritised and demand led Public Transport Strategy (see proposal 4b).
- The council will offer communities the opportunity to access community facilities in partnership with other organisations.
- The council will pass comments about access to health services to our partners NHS Lothian and will continue to work with them to increase the quality and responsiveness of local health services.
- The council will pass comments about crime to our partners in Police Scotland and will continue to work with them to improve community safety in West Lothian

Engaging with the Council

? We asked

What is your preferred way of engaging with the council on the future of council services

≡ You said

- By far the most popular option was through online surveys
- Some support for social media
- Only limited support for in-person public meetings, focus groups and road shows
- Only limited support for paper surveys

What we will do

- The council will continue to engage with people who live and/or work in West Lothian, local organisations and business through a range of methods, forums, and channels.

Council Commitments and Priorities

? We asked

Connect, Empower and Deliver as commitments for the Council?

≡ You said

- These are good commitments
- The council must put them into action
- The council must demonstrate achievement

What we will do

- The council will put these commitments into action, including; re-developing the council values, appraisal process and performance management system to ensure they are embedded in the delivery of our services and actions of all of our staff.
- Opportunities to connect and empower the community and our staff will also be advanced, such as under proposals 1a, 1c, and 3a.

? We asked

Are the Eight Priorities for West Lothian still the right ones?

≡ You said

- Yes, they still matter
- Consider adding Housing & Homelessness
- The council must demonstrate achievement in the priorities

What we will do

- The council will realign our priorities using feedback from the community. This will be used as the basis for our Corporate Plan for the period 2023 to 2028 and will guide our decision making and resource prioritisation in the years ahead.
- The council will ensure that measurable progress and achievement in each of the priorities is reported to the community on a regular scheduled basis.

Reducing Council Costs

? We asked

To reduce costs, the council should?

≡ You said

- Sell some Council properties and assets
- Close some buildings that have low usage
- Empower local groups and communities to deliver some services

What we will do

- The council will continue to modernise and rationalise all properties across the estate.
- As the number of buildings required to deliver council services reduces, community groups will have the opportunity to request ownership of properties through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, see proposal 3a.

? We asked

The approach to Digital Council service provision should be?

≡ You said

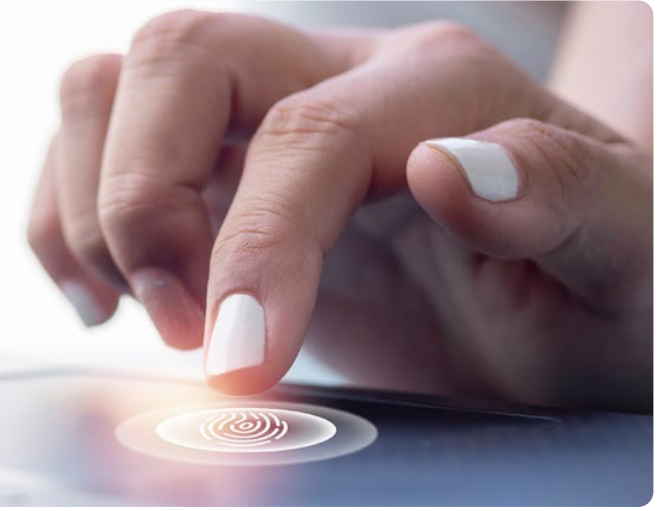
- Continue to invest in the council website
- Increase the number of services that are accessible online via the council website
- Continue to provide telephone and face-to-face access to services for those who do not or cannot access digital services

What we will do

- The council will pursue opportunities to digitalise processes where there is a clear benefit to customers/efficiency, see proposals 1a and 1c.
- The council is committed to the partnership model that increases access and connectivity of council services for the public. We will also continue to provide a comprehensive customer service that is demand-responsive and preserves face-to-face and telephone contact as well as digital contacts.

1 Modernising the council

Measures totalling £21.3 million over the next three years have been identified, which would make the council more agile and cost effective. There are opportunities – due to new technologies, planned service changes and new ways of working – to increase the efficiency of council operations. This will mean changes and/or reductions to some of the services that we deliver and the council will also make changes to structures, resourcing and management arrangements in some services in order to achieve efficiencies.



1A Service Redesign, Integration and Modernisation

Estimated saving: £1.2 million

The internal business and financial support functions that are provided to council services to support statutory (legal) requirements would change through redesign, integration and greater use of technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness. This would include consolidating services, reducing staff numbers and the number of systems we use within the internal business and financial support functions that are provided to council services. There will be an impact on customers but we will seek to minimise the impact through redesigning services, integration of teams and further use of technology. The council will also review a small number of externally contracted services, with a view to achieving cost reductions.

1B Review of Management arrangements / Management efficiencies

Estimated saving: £500,000

Some management arrangements will be reviewed in conjunction with changes to services and resource re-alignment, where it is appropriate. The council will ensure that the management structure continues to support effective delivery of council services and statutory duties, whilst also seeking to make council governance and decision-making more efficient.

1C Digital Transformation

Estimated saving: £502,000

The council must continue to match provision with the way that customers access services, which increasingly requires investment in digital solutions to meet demand. The council will adopt technologies that will deliver automated processes and a reduction in staff costs and will also deliver multi-media customer services that will increase customer choice and accessibility. This would allow the council to continue to provide support whilst delivering a more efficient service at low cost.

1D Allocation of School Resources

Estimated saving: £5 million

It is proposed that the model for determining devolved school resources is revised further to identify opportunities for more efficient service delivery. This may include utilising resources provided to deliver additional support in schools for core staffing requirements, greater use of technology to deliver the curriculum, and changes to administrative and pupil support staffing arrangements.

The council proposes that changes made in the allocation of resources to schools, through a revised Devolved School Management funding model and through a review of provision by third party providers, will enable the council to continue service provision.

1E Realignment of free provision in schools to match Scottish Government commitments and funding, and maintain school clothing grants at current levels

Estimated saving: £890,000

The council would propose to align free school meal, breakfast club and instrumental music provision with Scottish Government funding levels. The council would continue to deliver these vital services for our children and young people. The council would also maintain school clothing grants, which are above the amounts paid by many councils, at existing levels.

1F Restructuring the School Day

Estimated saving: £2.4 million

West Lothian has developed an agile learning culture and approach and delivered improved school attainment results and improved learning experiences for pupils. Teacher contact time is currently 22.5 hours per week and there is an opportunity to re-align the primary school day to match this time. This could provide continuity for children and offer the opportunity to provide alternative learning experiences for the remainder of the time. This would result in teacher/pupil contact time being reduced but with no change to the length of the overall school day. This proposal would also lead to a review of the secondary school week by reducing the school week by 50mins, but again with no change to the start time and end time of the school day, and would bring the secondary school week in line with other local authorities.

1G Review of Services for Children

Estimated saving: £1.2 million

The proposal includes a review of all Social Policy children's services to achieve further efficiency by redesigning and aligning teams more closely to deliver more streamlined teams and reduced staffing. The service will maintain its focus on supporting children most at risk and providing earlier intervention services in line with statutory (legal) requirements.

There will also be a strengthening of the range of fostering options available locally to support children stay in West Lothian. This will support good outcomes and prevent children having to leave their home community of West Lothian to be cared for.

This proposal includes developing intensive foster care to support the most traumatised children, investing in

increasing the existing group of fostering families and also increasing the numbers of foster carers able to care for children with a disability.

1H Review of Commissioned Services

Estimated saving: £533,000

This proposal includes a review of all commissioning arrangements with third parties in place for children's services ensuring that they are aligned with the services current priorities and taking account of all new developments and approaches in place. This review will lead to cost reductions and the delivery of commissioned services targeted at the highest areas of priority.

1I Revised facilities management in schools

Estimated saving: £1.1 million

It is proposed that the facilities management service will be reviewed to seek better scheduling of activities and revised cover arrangements and opening hours in schools.

1J Technical Financial Savings

Estimated saving: £1 million

The council has strong financial planning and management arrangements in place and the effectiveness of those arrangements are recognised by our Audit and Regulators. The council intends to make efficiencies in the administration of our financial processes, with resources re-aligned to match the demand for support for customers and changes to processes such as Universal Credit.

1K Review funding models in partnership with West Lothian Leisure

Estimated saving: £750,000

Reflecting the council's reduced income, the core funding provided to West Lothian Leisure will be removed and it will become largely self-funded. The council would continue to engage and support West Lothian Leisure in reviewing its business model and service delivery for communities.

1L General balance of savings to be identified

Estimated saving: £6.2 million

Officer proposals amount to savings of £30.3 million for the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26 against a budget gap of £36.5 million over this period, resulting in a general balance of savings of £6.2 million that has still to be identified. Given that the majority of the council's budget is staffing costs, it is highly likely that the balance will be met by changes to service delivery and staffing levels across the council's workforce.

2 Modernising Social Care

The **West Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB)** has responsibility for planning for most of the health and social care services for adults in West Lothian.

The IJB role is to set the strategic direction for functions delegated to it and deliver the priorities set out in its Strategic Plan. The functions of the IJB include: Primary Care, Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Learning Disability Services, Physical Disability Services, Community Health Services, Community Pharmacy Services, Health Improvement, Unscheduled Care for Adults, Housing Support/Aids and Adaptations.

The IJB receives funding allocations from West

Lothian Council and NHS Lothian to enable delivery of local priorities for health and social care for adults. The Board gives directions to the council and health board as to how they must carry out their business to secure delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Over the three-year period, from 2023/24 to 2025/26, it is expected the IJB will have to make substantial savings as funding available will be insufficient to meet the increasing cost of service delivery. The

ongoing financial pressures and the increasing levels of demand mean that the IJB will need to change the way it delivers services.

A range of officer proposals totalling £5.45 million over the next three years have been identified for relevant social care services and the IJB will consult with people in West Lothian to seek their views on these proposals and associated changes to service delivery. The IJB's consultation can be accessed by visiting www.westlothianhsc.org.uk/consult2022.

3 Community Empowerment and Partnership

Through community empowerment the council is seeking to support people to working together with others in their community to increase control over their lives and the services they use. Measures totalling £3.8 million over the next three years have been identified which would enable the council to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.

3A Empowering communities and reducing the number of council facilities

Estimated saving: £1.1 million

Over the years the council has significantly reduced the number and cost of buildings and the council will continue to modernise and rationalise all properties across the estate.

As the number of buildings required to deliver council services reduces, community groups have the opportunity to request ownership of community centres and other council properties through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. As the council has moved to the partnership model, there is an opportunity to consolidate the number of

community centres and village halls. It is therefore proposed to rationalise the provision of council facilities and community centres across West Lothian and support community access through council or partner facilities within each community.

3B Redesign of Early Learning and Childcare

Estimated saving: £2.3 million

The council will make sure that all resources available for early learning and childcare are fully utilised to support high quality service delivery. The council will realign provision and staffing in nurseries to match parental choice for nursery placements, and deliver an option for parents/carers to purchase additional hours of early learning and childcare in council settings.

3C Service Re-structure of Youth Services

Estimated saving: £500,000

A review of youth services has shown that the service makes its greatest impact through More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) – a programme that aims to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

The focus will be on MCMC, with other initiatives and work supported through closer working between schools and community learning partners.

Scan to Complete the survey online



4 Environment, Climate Change and reducing energy use

Measures totalling £4.8 million over the next three years have been identified that would change the services we provide to improve the local environment and infrastructure, and ensure that the council continues to have efficient and effectively managed assets to support service delivery. This will include new standards and delivery models that will ensure we continue to protect the built and natural environment in West Lothian more effectively.



4A Revised Service Standards and Delivery Models – Waste Services Estimated saving: £336,000

There is a requirement to review service provision at the Community Recycling Centres to make sure that the service is delivered in an effective and efficient way whilst meeting council priorities.

4B Reprioritised Passenger Transport Strategy Estimated saving: £2.2 million

The council currently subsidises around 20% of bus routes as well as providing a number of other services, such as school transport and concessionary transport schemes.

Many of the subsidised services are underutilised, and a public transport review is proposed to focus on connecting communities and businesses in a way that is affordable and effective. This will include ceasing some services and exploring alternative transport models. An updated transport strategy would focus on use of concessionary bus, Handicabs and Dial-a-Ride schemes, and removal of all subsidies for bus routes that are not commercially viable.

The council would also propose to remove concessionary rail schemes with are in addition to existing national schemes.

4C Reprioritised School Transport Strategy Estimated saving: £1.4 million

The council currently provides school transport to pupils who live less than the statutory (legal) distance of 2 miles for Primary School pupils and 3 miles for Secondary School pupils. An updated school transport strategy would apply the statutory (legal) minimum limits for school transport and the use of the Young Persons national entitlement scheme for free travel on commercial bus routes.

4D Revised Country Parks Service Estimated saving: £95,000

It is proposed that animal attraction at Beecraigs Country Park is closed, with the animals being relocated to alternative animal attraction venue(s) out with council operations. This attraction currently operates at a net loss and closure is expected to have minimal impact on future visitor numbers.

4E Revised Service Standards and Delivery Models – Roads and Transport Estimated saving: £246,000

There is a requirement to review service provision and standards to make sure that the service is delivered in an effective and efficient way whilst meeting council priorities.

Service delivery, including winter maintenance, will be changed to focus on statutory (legal) requirements with an updated approach to asset management. This will mean some services, such as festive lighting, will no longer be provided by the council.

4F Efficiencies from improved use and management of council properties Estimated saving: £279,000

The council has a ten-year programme for investing in its assets to support service delivery. This approach reduces the need for reactive maintenance work, improving how the council invests in property assets.

4G Reducing carbon emissions and improving efficiency Estimated saving: £245,000

Following the success of previous energy efficiency initiatives, the council will continue to reduce energy consumption and related costs through new energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

5 Reviewing income, concessions and other contributions

The council has one of the lowest levels of income through sales, fees and charges per head of population in Scotland. The council established an approach to income and concessions in 2015 where all discretionary charges are benchmarked with Scottish averages or other local providers. Measures totalling £1.1 million over the next three years have been identified, which would raise additional income.



It is proposed that all opportunities for discretionary charging will be reviewed and benchmarked in addition to a standard indexation increase being applied in line with existing practice.

Areas where the council could investigate opportunities for additional sources of income include:

- Introduction of charges for household garden waste collections
- Review of fees for planning advisory services and to maximise developer contributions
- Lease facilities to a commercial operator, social enterprise or franchise
- Review of rents and fees for the council's commercial properties



Scan to Complete
the survey online

What will happen next


Following analysis of the feedback received, the results of the Phase 2 consultation will be reported to a meeting of the Council Executive Committee on 20 December 2022, and thereafter a series of special Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels will take place in January 2023. This will provide a platform for elected members and community organisation representatives to discuss the findings of the consultation and put questions to council officers relating to the consultation.

The feedback from the PDSPs will go towards shaping the council's budget will be set in early 2023.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this consultation document.

How to take part →

Have your say by 20 November. The consultation is now open and closes on 20 November.



Online

Respondents are encouraged to complete the form online by going to www.westlothian.gov.uk/WL2028 or by scanning the QR code with your mobile device.

Paper copy

You can complete this form, Please read the proposals from pages 10 to 12 and share your views on pages 13 and 14. Post your completed form to:

West Lothian Council
Freepost BULLETIN SURVEY
Livingston
EH54 6FF

Hand survey in

Alternatively hand your completed survey into any partnership centre or Customer Information services (CIS) office.

Have your say on West Lothian’s proposals

Provide your comments here (please include the budget measure reference, for example: 1a)

Have your say on Council Tax

The majority of funding for council services (81%) comes from Scottish Government grant. In addition, 19% of total funding needed to deliver essential services to our local communities is from council tax. The council is required by law to agree council tax levels in advance of each financial year. Council tax levels for the next five years have not yet been agreed by West Lothian Council, however the council is basing its long-term financial planning on the assumption that council tax will increase by at least 3.5% for all properties each year between 2023/24 and 2027/28. For a band D property, a 3.5% increase would represent an annual increase in 2023/24 of £46 (or 88p per week).

West Lothian Council has the tenth lowest council tax level in Scotland and the current band D rate is £32 lower than the average rate across all Scottish councils

and over £650 lower than the average rate across councils in England. Although council tax is applied to all houses, not all households are eligible to pay council tax. Various council tax reductions, exemptions and discounts are available to reduce the tax burden for the most vulnerable in society and to protect low income households. Most properties in West Lothian (75%) are in the lowest council tax bands of A to D.

Increases in council tax would help reduce the amount of cuts necessary and increase the amount of funding the council has to spend on local services. The council has budgeted to raise £93.249 million from council tax in the current year (2022/23) and a 1% increase in council tax in 2023/24 would only raise an additional £934,000. If council tax is not increased by 3.5% each year, the council's projected budget gap would increase

by a further £17.9 million, requiring additional cuts to services. The council is keen for you to comment on how council tax can be used to support local services.

- The council's future budget estimates assume increases in council tax of at least 3.5% each year. If council tax was not increased by 3.5% per annum over 2023/24 to 2027/28 this would increase the budget gap by £17.9 million. If you don't support the annual increase how would you find the additional income to bridge the increased budget gap?
- Would you support an increase of more than 3.5% if all funding raised above this was spent on key identified priorities, such as schools and social care?

Please comment below:

Tell us about you – please complete the details below

The data you provide is confidential and individuals cannot be identified from the information provided.

I am responding as...		Do you consider yourself to have a disability?		YES <input type="checkbox"/>
An individual: <input type="checkbox"/>		NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
An employee of West Lothian Council: <input type="checkbox"/>		Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>		
Name of service area: <input type="text"/>		If you consider that you have a disability, please indicate if you have any of the following conditions:		
On behalf of a Group / Organisation: <input type="checkbox"/>		A learning disability <input type="checkbox"/>		
Name of organisation: <input type="text"/>		A longstanding illness or other health condition <input type="checkbox"/>		
		A mental health condition <input type="checkbox"/>		
		A physical impairment <input type="checkbox"/>		
		A sensory impairment <input type="checkbox"/>		
		Other condition <input type="checkbox"/>		
		Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>		
Gender Identity		Do you have caring and/or parenting responsibilities for a child, children or for anyone else (e.g. a family member, friend, neighbour etc)?		
How would you describe your gender identity?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (children under 18)		
Man <input type="checkbox"/> Woman <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes other		
In another way <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
If you are responding as an individual or an employee of the council, please complete the following information:		<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		
Age: <input type="text"/> Nearest town/village: <input type="text"/>				

What is your ethnic group - Choose one section from A to E, then tick ONE box which best describes your ethnic group or background			
A White		C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	
<input type="checkbox"/> Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> Polish	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other White ethnic group, please write in: <input type="text"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please write in <input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in <input type="text"/>		E Other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> Arab <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please write in <input type="text"/>	
D African, Caribbean or Black <input type="checkbox"/> African, African Scottish or African British <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British <input type="checkbox"/> Black, Black Scottish or Black British Other, please write in <input type="text"/>		F <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	

Challenging poverty

As part of Challenge Poverty Week, Whitburn Academy organised an outdoor pop-up food bank stall providing essential food and household items for local families most affected by the cost of living.

It was opportunity for families to meet with Family Link Workers Rachel Fry and Christine Ferguson, who work with a range of flexible services to meet the needs of pupils and their families.

Local businesses including Scotmid, Iceland, Marks & Spencer's and Morrisons provided donations to support the foodbank stall which provided an opportunity for families to meet with the school's Family Link Workers. Rachel and Christine work with a range of flexible services to meet the needs of pupils and their families, reducing

barriers to learning and provide targeted support to parents/carers.

Also in attendance on the day was the Families and Young People's Service (FYPS) who were on hand to give advice and support on the Scottish Child Payment, fuel grants and other cost of living advice#WLEquity#CPW22 Deputy Head Teacher Anne Marinello said:

"As part of Challenge Poverty week, we are delighted with the efforts of our Family Link Workers to provide this pop-up foodbank and to the local

community for the donations received. We are well aware that with the increasing cost of living, families are struggling. We always look for new and innovative ways to help our young people and their families in any way we can. Having our family link workers now in post allows us new ways of accessing and supporting families to remove barriers, to meet their needs and to continue the fantastic support that we continue to try to provide to each and every member of our school community. We are a community learning together."



Housing Support

"There is a clear need to take action to tackle the issues with homelessness in West Lothian and this is a positive step forward in helping local people at a time when they are in desperate need."

"To reduce the number of people placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, a number of actions are being put in place to provide suitable temporary accommodation, including dedicated new build housing for younger people and sharing spaces for single homeless applicants. Single homeless applicants make up 71% of all homeless applicants in West Lothian, and sharing accommodation can often be a more suitable placement for young people as this provides peer support which reduces social isolation often felt by young homeless people, whilst our officers have

an opportunity to assist in building their skills to move into settled accommodation and sustain a successful long term tenancy."



Executive councillor for housing services George Paul

"The council already has sharing accommodation at Blackburn Homeless Unit which works well and we are pleased to be able to move forward with our plans to provide more accommodation for local people."

Tackling homelessness

Council to purchase private homes to help with homelessness

West Lothian Council has approved plans to purchase 30 private properties which will be converted into 60 temporary sharing spaces.

The sharing spaces will be used to provide temporary accommodation for local people in need of emergency or temporary housing.

The council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless applicants who require assistance with accommodation.

The council continues to experience a high demand for assistance from people who are homeless and require temporary accommodation. The position is being felt across Scotland as the demand for homeless services rises.

30 two bedroom ex-council properties will be purchased by West Lothian Council and converted into two-person temporary sharing spaces. The council estimate the project will cost £3.75 million which includes the purchase of the homes, repair costs and furniture. There is also an assumption that the homes can be converted back to mainstream council housing when required at a later date.

The council estimate that cost savings will be delivered, as the use of B&B accommodation will be reduced buy

up to 60 places. The council estimate that they will cut costs on B&B by nearly £900,000 each year which can then be invested in local council housing in future.

At the end of September, there were 9,762 applications for housing in West Lothian with over 850 homeless applications. 1,260 people are currently housed in temporary accommodation with 146 people in bed and breakfast accommodation. Around 32% of all temporary accommodation residents are under 18.

New build facility for housing young people

West Lothian Council has approved the location for a new build housing facility for young people.

The new £4million facility will be built on a vacant site at Almondvale Crescent, Livingston. It will provide accommodation for young people requiring supported and temporary accommodation.

The new unit will replace the former housing facility at Newlands House, Bathgate as well as provide additional accommodation.

The new facility will have 12 x one bedroom flats with one onsite support and up to 16 x one bedroom mainstream flats.

Detailed designs will now be developed and it is expected that work will begin towards the end of 2023.

Executive councillor for services for the community, George Paul added:

"I am pleased that these plans have been agreed and believe it is vital that we continue to support young people who are experiencing hardship and cannot find alternative accommodation.

"The site we have chosen is close to amenities with the college, hospital, transport and shopping facilities all within walking distance. These are all important factors in choosing a site that is specifically designed to help young people in need."

Construction begins on new £1.25million West Lothian Cycle Circuit



Work is underway to create a new floodlit cycle circuit in West Lothian.

The site is located at Kettilstoun Mains, Linlithgow, near Xcite Linlithgow. It is anticipated that the 1km circuit will be completed in early 2023 and will give everyone in West Lothian and beyond an opportunity to access a safe, traffic free cycling environment.

£636,000 has been provided via

the national Cycling Facilities Fund. West Lothian Council is providing £349,000 with the remaining costs being generated from a range of external funders, including community fundraising. The facility, will be leased to the Linlithgow Community Development Trust who will be responsible for the management

of the facility. Final arrangements on the lease and operational management are being finalised between West Lothian Leisure and the Linlithgow Community Development Trust.

Contractors RJ MacLeod are now on site to build the track.

The tender package was finalised in conjunction with sportscotland,

Scottish Cycling, British Cycling, and project design consultants.

The Cycling Facilities Fund aims to support cycling facility projects across Scotland through an £8million fund, made possible through a £4 million commitment from Scottish Government and £4 million from sportscotland through National Lottery funds.

The Cycling Facilities Fund aims to deliver a lasting impact from the 2023 UCI Cycling Worlds being held in Scotland next year. By working with partners to provide accessible and inclusive facilities more people will be encouraged to engage with cycling at all levels, and new and existing cyclists will be inspired to make cycling a sport for life.

Representatives from Linlithgow CDT, West Lothian Council, sportscotland, Scottish cycling and West Lothian Leisure joined cyclo-cross, road and mountain

bike cyclist, Cameron Mason at the West Lothian Cycle Circuit development site.

Executive councillor for Economy, Community Empowerment & Wealth Building, Kirsteen Sullivan said:

“We would never have reached this stage without the support of key partners and most importantly, the effort of the local community. We look forward to seeing further progress made on the delivery of the cycle circuit and the day we can hand it over to the local community.”

Ewen Fulton West Lothian Clarion Youth Section President said: “I still can’t quite believe that this world-class facility is going to be on our door step. The young people of West Lothian are the real beneficiaries of this amazing new facility, today and for generations to come.”

Keep up to date with all things West Lothian Cycle Circuit by visiting: www.westlothiancyclecircuit.org

Local Biodiversity Action plan for West Lothian



The council's Ecology and Biodiversity team is currently creating a new 10-year Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for West Lothian.

The new LBAP will outline West Lothian Council's intentions and aspirations on implementing the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and to highlight ecosystems, habitats and species unique and/or valuable to West Lothian.

It will be used as a working document to aid in protecting existing areas of high biodiversity value, identifying the benefits provided by habitats (e.g. carbon storage, water quality regulation, etc), identifying which areas should be enhanced to ensure healthy nature networks across the

area, and to identify which areas would benefit from a change in land management (e.g. changing grassland management or planting trees).

The strategy document will also help with assessing the appropriateness of development proposals and ensuring the enhancement of biodiversity throughout the area, together with nature-based solutions to help us mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

The council will involve local people in the LBAP where possible.

Whilst the LBAP is being researched and compiled, updates and information about the ecology and biodiversity in West Lothian can be found on the council's biodiversity web pages: www.westlothian.gov.uk/biodiversity



vote

in the Local Government by-election for the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward on Thursday 1 December 2022

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE

To vote for a councillor to represent you in the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward

You must register

Ensure you are registered to vote before the deadline of Monday 21 November. Register at: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote



16 DAYS OF ACTION

25 NOVEMBER–
10 DECEMBER 2022



16 days of Action is an International campaign to challenge violence against women and girls and a number of local organisations are coming together to shine a light on the topic.

A march and rally on 25 November and a survivors virgil on 9 December are just two of the planned activities that members of the public are invited to take part in.

For more on all local activity taking place over the 16 Days, please visit:
www.westlothianhscp.org.uk/16-days-of-action



West Lothian Council are seeking to recruit **local people** to become **Supported Adult Carers**

The Supported Adult Placement scheme provides a service for young people aged 16–21 who have been looked after away from home, as well as young asylum seekers.



The scheme aims to provide a safe, nurturing environment for young people enabling them to develop independent living skills.

Supported Adult Carers are enthusiastic, understanding, caring and driven people who provide a comfortable home for young people to stay in, and offer support, guidance and stability, with a view to the young person moving onto independent living when appropriate.

Supported Adult Carers are employed by the council and receive a monthly payment.

If you are interested in finding out more, please email the team at Supportedadultplacementteam@westlothian.gov.uk or call 07824529662 to arrange an informal chat



Supporting people who care for others

A recent survey carried out by West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (WLHSCP) on those who helped or cared for others identified many of the issues faced by unpaid carers across West Lothian. The results of the survey will now be used to inform our new Carers Strategy.

An outline of the main findings can be found at www.westlothian.gov.uk/carers-survey

Mum's the word for young carer Zoe.

Unpaid carers can be of any age and provide vital help for those who rely on them.

Zoe (18) from Bathgate is a young adult carer who helps support her mum Susan, who has Multiple Sclerosis.

Caring for her mum over the past nine years has been incredibly rewarding and humbling for Zoe.

Zoe is there to help her mum with cleaning, shopping, looking after the

pets, going to the pharmacy for her and anything else that is needed. Although most of the time her caring role is okay, there are times it has impacted on her life, sometimes missing college classes or struggling to get studying done.

The biggest impact on Zoe is the worry she feels about her mum's wellbeing especially if she is out and about. Zoe has received great support from Carers

of West Lothian through counselling, short breaks and simply having someone to talk to who understands. Zoe said: "I would encourage everyone to be aware that individuals may be managing a caring role that others aren't aware of and may need extra support at times. Not all young carers are visible. A lot of them will stay quiet about their caring role, so just be mindful."



Planning for **your** needs

All Carers are entitled to receive an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement.

The purpose of these is to look at the support you provide and determine your needs and outcomes as a carer. It takes into account all your own commitments – family, work, study, housing, social life, leisure activities,

your age, health, and any support already in place. If you feel you would benefit from Adult Carer Support Plan, then call 01506 284848 or e-mail adultsocialcare@westlothian.gov.uk.

For details of how to get a Young Carer Statement, please visit www.westlothianhscp.org.uk/inclusion-and-support-service



Winter Ready 2022/23

Please plan ahead and be **WinterReady**

This special *Bulletin* supplement provides you with an overview of how West Lothian Council has prepared for winter.

West Lothian Council plans to have 30,000 tonnes of salt available for the winter period. This represents three times the amount that is needed for a 'normal' winter.

It is not possible for support to be provided everywhere at the same time. Please note our priority system routes, which can be found at www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter

Winter Resource

In response to the severe weather experienced in January and February 2021, West Lothian Council put in place a £1 million Winter Resilience Fund which will help to provide extra resources over the winter period up to and including winter 2023/24.

The fund will provide:

Self-Help Salt Pick-Up Points

The self-help salt pick-up points will continue for winters 2022/23 and 2023/24:

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| ● Linlithgow – Xcite Centre, McGinley Way | ● West Calder – Business Centre, Dickson Street | ● Blackridge – Craig Inn Community Centre, Main Street | ● Bridgend – Auldhill Cottages / Community Centre | ● Livingston Village – Livingston Inn Car Park |
| ● Broxburn – Xcite Centre, Church Street | ● Blackburn – Partnership Centre, Ash Grove | ● East Calder – Xcite Centre, Langton Road | ● Newton – Rear of Community Education Centre | ● Wester Inch, Bathgate – Car Park adjacent to Play Park |
| ● Deans – Livingston North Train Station (South Car Park) | ● Whitburn – Xcite Centre, Jubilee Road | ● Fauldhouse – Eastfield Road car park near the bottle banks | ● Threemiletown – B9080 Opposite Rosebank | ● Kirknewton – Sports Pavilion, Main Street |
| ● Murieston – Livingston South Train Station Car Park | ● Bathgate – Xcite Centre, Torphichen Road | ● Torphichen – Community Centre, Bowsett | ● Westfield – North End of Strathlogie | ● Greenrigg – Polkemmet Drive Garage Site |
| ● Craigshill – Adelaide Street | ● Armadale – Xcite Centre, North Street | ● Winchburgh – Community Centre, Craigton Place | ● Ecclesmachan – Oatridge College Access Road | |
| | | | ● Wilkieston – Linburn Park | |

Road and footpath routes and actions

An extreme weather event will be considered to be an event where continuous snow is forecast and likely to give significant accumulations in excess of 10cm covering the whole of the north or south expanse within the council area.

The snow will also be expected to remain in untreated areas for a prolonged period due to low temperatures before a natural thaw disperses it.

During periods of extreme weather, treatment may be limited to primary carriageway routes and primary footpath routes or 'snow routes'.

Gritters and footpath resources will be deployed on these specified 'snow routes' continuously until satisfactory snow clearance has been achieved before resources are deployed to any secondary routes, to maintain access to key facilities and other transport needs.

Staff Dedicated to Grit Bins

The council has in the region of 2,500 public grit bins across the authority area which is understood to be the highest ratio in mainland Scotland factoring in the length of our road network.

In recognition of the role grit bins provide in assisting communities during periods of winter weather, the council will continue to employ seasonal staff to replenish grit bins on an ongoing basis for winters 2022/23 and 2023/24.

This additional resource is based on the level of demand in a normal winter period.

In periods of severe weather public grit bins can be emptied on a daily basis and it is important to appreciate that the additional resource will not have capacity to meet this level of demand.



FOR DETAILS ON GRITTING ROUTES, VISIT:
WWW.WESTLOTHIAN.GOV.UK/WINTER



Executive councillor for the environment and sustainability, Tom Conn, said: "The now council provide additional facilities for communities in the form of 15 self-help salt pick-up points. The facilities have been well received by communities and the service has been expanded to provide a total of 25 sites. This service will also help support any local groups that may wish to undertake community snow clearance."

Salt conservation

In periods of extreme weather, it may be necessary to restrict the use of salt to 'snow routes' only. West Lothian Council reaches a minimum stock level when there is only enough salt for six continuous days.

Please note: Salt is less effective at minus six degrees and has minimal impact on ice and snow below minus 10 degrees.

Heavy rain following a treatment of salt can wash the salt from the road meaning we often need to return to the beginning of the priority cycle before many secondary routes are reached. Unfortunately this familiar pattern can prevent any significant progress through the various priority levels.

Schools

Safety is a top priority for West Lothian Council and the decision to close a school or nursery to pupils is one which is not made lightly.

The Headteacher has responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment in the event of severe weather or building difficulties. There are several factors which may impact on this decision, which is made in consultation with an education manager.

West Lothian Council will provide as much notice as possible of any school closure so that you can make alternative arrangements for your children. We will contact you via Group Call, provide information to local radio stations, and update the council's website and social media channels. Many schools can also contact parents/carers by email.

Travelling to school

In extreme weather conditions, parents/carers should assess whether they consider it safe for their child to travel or walk to school, and

alert the school of their decision at the earliest possible opportunity.

Please check that your child knows how to access the online education community GLOW, where pupils can access educational material online.

Severe weather volunteer service

The service to help vulnerable members of the community is ready to be activated should this winter prove to be challenging.

If this happens information will be shared via the local media, the council's website, social media channels and the email information service.

Waste collections

During the winter, please continue to present your bin as usual. Please ensure snow has been removed from the lid. The council will only suspend the household waste collection service in extreme situations, for example, where there is widespread heavy snow which makes it impossible for the bin lorries to enter residential areas.

If the service is suspended, updates will be provided via local press and the council's website and social media channels.

Winter colds and prescriptions

Please ensure your medicine cabinet is sufficiently stocked with over-the-counter remedies so that if you become unwell you are prepared.

GP surgeries will be closed at times over Christmas and New Year.

Prepare by ordering medication to cover both Christmas and New Year holiday breaks.

Don't give COLD a chance

Protect yourself and your home



Inside your home:

Frozen Pipes:

- turn off the water supply (make sure you know where this is).
- turn off the stopcock in your cold-water tank, if you have one.
- protect everything around the frozen pipe to avoid damage; if it bursts, place buckets, basins and towels around the area.

Thawing Out:

- open the tap nearest to the part of the pipe you think is frozen, so the water can flow through when it has melted.
- thaw the ice in the pipe with a hot water bottle or hairdryer (taking care to keep it well away from any water). Start from the tap end and work back towards the cold-water tank.

NEVER use a heat gun or blowtorch – the pipe needs to be thawed out slowly and safely!

Try the following care tips:

- if your tank is in the loft, open the loft trap-door on very cold days to let heat in.
- if you're going on holiday and your home will be empty, drain down the water system. If you are a council tenant contact your local housing office who can arrange for this to be done.
- in very cold weather, if you're going out for the day, or perhaps away for a couple of days over the Christmas period, keep your heating on, or set it to come on a couple of times a day.

Following this advice should minimise the risk of having a frozen or burst pipe. However, if you are a council tenant and this happens, please report it immediately to our Customer Service Centre on 01506 280000.

Outside your home:

In very severe cold spells, care should be taken outside your property due to the formation of icicles, which can become dangerous when they grow large, especially if they have a long distance to fall.

What you shouldn't do

Don't try to knock large icicles off the gutters. Hitting icicles could cause more pressure on the guttering which in turn could cause them to collapse. Large icicles in particular are unpredictable when they fall and could cause injury or property damage.

The best thing to do

Leave them alone and monitor them. If necessary cordon off or block the area where the icicles are hanging to prevent and deter anyone from walking directly below them.



Self help – what can you do?

There is no law preventing members of the public from clearing snow and ice from public roads and footways outside their properties and businesses. However, people should exercise care and caution when attempting to undertake any snow clearing so that they do not create any further hazards through careless or inconsiderate actions.

Being a good neighbour during severe winter weather is usually welcomed. Detailed below is some advice provided by the Government on clearing roads and footways yourself:

- Do not use hot water as this could freeze, increasing the risk of injury to persons.
- If shovelling snow consider where you are going to put it to avoid shifting the problem elsewhere, for example, avoid blocking other footways and drainage features such as gullies.
- It is easier to remove fresh snow before pedestrians have compressed the snow into compacted ice.
- Clear a line down the middle of the area to be cleared first to create a safer surface to work from.
- Spread some salt on the area cleared to prevent the formation of ice.
- If there is no salt available then a little sand or grit is a reasonable substitute. It will not have the same de-icing properties as salt but will improve grip underfoot.
- Salt applied to the road or footway could be washed away by rain or snow and subsequently freeze – in this case a further application of salt should be used soon after the rain has ceased and before temperatures approach freezing.

Park sensibly:

Abandoned cars hamper access for snowploughs and diggers, emergency vehicles, bin lorries and other road users.

Have your own stock of salt

Please purchase salt for use in your own garden and paths. Remember, grit bins aren't in place to provide all residents with a means of treating their own gardens and paths each day during periods of winter weather. They are for use on the public highway and public paths in an emergency. Salt is cheap to buy and can be purchased from a wide variety of retail outlets, so please keep your own stock for use in your own property.



Winchburgh Sport & Wellbeing Hub

We are delighted to announce that Xcite West Lothian Leisure has been named as the management operator for the new Winchburgh Sport & Wellbeing Hub.

The brand new sports complex sits as a stand-alone facility on the new Winchburgh School campus and is home to: a state-of-the-art fitness suite; gymnasium (studio) and fitness/dance studio; two full sized sports halls; a 25-meter swimming pool; a full-sized grass sports pitch and two synthetic pitches suitable for hockey, football and rugby.

The complex is now open to Winchburgh school pupils, sports clubs and community organisations. A brand new timetable of Xcite Kids Coaching activities has also launched at the facility with kids football classes and

our award-winning Learn 2 Swim programme.

Access for the general public is on track for January 2023 and we are currently developing plans for a community access membership allowing local residents access to the fitness suite, swimming pool, fitness classes and racquet sports 7-days per week, including a level of access during the school day. For more information on the facility and to be the first to hear about membership options, visit www.westlothianleisure.com.



XCITE



Les Mills Virtual Fitness

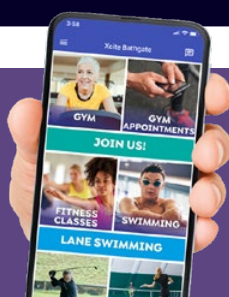
In-venue Les Mills Virtual classes - now available at Xcite!

Virtual workouts combine Les Mills world-leading fitness programs with pumping sound and motivation from some of the hottest instructors on the planet. It's a truly inspiring experience that will drive amazing results.

Classes are available in addition to our regular Xcite face to face fitness class timetables, providing you with a wider opportunity to attend more of your favourite group fitness classes - or try something new.

Virtual classes are not only a great alternative, if our live instructor lead classes are fully booked but also helps support the start of your group fitness journey or your return to fitness. It provides you with the flexibility of attending not only our scheduled timetable of virtual classes but if our studios are free, you can choose your own class from the timetable to complete in your own time.

Why not join these classes with a friend and stay motivated with our refer-a-friend offer! Existing members can claim a month's free membership when they refer a friend who stays for three months or longer. Your friend will also benefit from no joining fee when they are referred by an existing Xcite member!



Download the FREE WLL Xcite App now to instantly see the latest fitness classes times, swimming timetables, sports activities, news and offers, as well as easy access to venue information!

howden
park
CENTRE

Whether it's our great **family pantomime** or our **Hogmanay Ceilidh**, there is something for everyone to help you celebrate this festive season at Howden Park Centre.

This year's pantomime, **Mother Goose**, is brought to you by **Martin & Martin Theatre company** - the same team who presented our hugely popular 'Bairns in the Wood' pantomime in 2021, which was so well received by audiences and theatre critics alike! It runs from the **2 - 28 December**, so grab your ticket now for what will be a fab festive treat for all the family.



Festive Brass with Whitburn Brass band is a popular evening of light-hearted Christmas music from one of the world's top brass bands, Whitburn Band. A relaxing evening of current and classic Christmas favourites. It takes place on **Friday 9 December 7.30pm**.

Or join Peter Gill and his band as they return to Howden Park Centre to create the perfect kick start to the festive period with a **'Rockin' & Swingin' Christmas Evening'**. This will be another fun-filled smorgasbord of boogie woogie, rock n roll and swing classics and Christmas gems. **Sunday 18 December, 7.30pm**.

Bring in the New Year with a night to truly remember with traditional dance, food and song at our **Hogmanay Ceilidh** with the highly experienced ceilidh band **The Gallivanter**. Enjoy a welcome drink on arrival, traditional (or vegetarian) haggis neeps and tatties at 9.30pm and sparkling wine at midnight. **Saturday 31 December 7.30pm for 8pm**.



For full details on these shows and our full programme, which has something for everyone, please visit our website at www.howdenparkcentre.co.uk or get in touch with the team at box office on 01506 340700.

www.westlothianleisure.com



West Lothian Leisure (known as Xcite) is a Scottish Charity, SC027470.