

West Lothian tenants news

Informing and involving West Lothian's tenants

SPRING 2023

Housing Capital Investment Programme

Page 8



Talking Tenants

Page 3

New Housing Supply investment

Page 9

Customer Experience Improvements

Page 13

tenants news Contents

TALKING TENANTS



Talking tenants

Talking about Taking Part

3

Become a Talking Tenant Expert through Social Media



4

The Next Generation of Tenant Participation



5

HOUSING



is the easiest and most efficient way to pay your rent;

6

Housing Capital Investment Programme

New Housing Supply investment

8

9

What is Antisocial Behaviour?

10

Keep your Garden Tidy

10

CUSTOMER



11

Tell us how safe you feel & access advice and support

11

Energy Bills Support Scheme

12



Customer Experience Improvements

13

Customer Information Service (CIS)



15

Help to protect new trees



15

Summer Reading Challenge

15



Home Contents Insurance



16

BUILDING SERVICES

Keeping our Tenants **SAFE**

17

KID'S CORNER

18

Tenants Tasty Treats

19



Talking tenants

Talking about Taking Part



Hi everyone! I'm Jodie and I work as a Service Development Officer in Housing, Customer and Building Services. My role involves taking care of Tenant Participation and making sure our tenants have a great experience, among other things.

I just wanted to reach out and say that if you're looking for some positive change in your community, I highly suggest giving Tenant Participation a try. Your voice matters and can make a big impact! I've been chatting with many tenants lately, trying to understand how to encourage tenants to actively participate.

Living in social housing in West Lothian means having a say in the services you experience. Tenant participation is a big deal and is a way for tenants to have their voices heard.

Being involved in tenant participation is not just about answering surveys or going to the occasional meeting. It's about having a say in the policies and decisions that affect your daily life. It means being a part of the process in developing policies and strategies that relate to your home and community. This hands-on approach empowers tenants and encourages a more tenant-focused approach in West Lothian Council and the Scottish Housing Sector.

Getting involved in tenant participation can also bring a sense of community and belonging. By giving tenants the chance to share their opinions and ideas, West Lothian Council can make changes that reflect the needs and desires of those who live in their homes. This leads to a more satisfied and connected community, which can have a positive impact on the wider neighbourhood.

In short, tenant participation is vital for West Lothian Council and plays a big role in improving the lives of those in our homes. Empowering tenants, building community, and promoting accountability are just a few of the many benefits.

If you want change to happen, I truly encourage you all to give Tenant Participation a chance.

If you would like to know more please email tp@westlothian.gov.uk

Thank you

Jodie

Become a **Talking Tenant Expert** through Social Media



Talking Tenants – Facebook Guidelines

'Talking Tenants' is a new role within the remit of Tenant Participation.

This is an entirely voluntary opportunity, but if you are interested in helping out our Customer Participation Officers on the running of the Facebook page and being an advocate for digital Tenant Participation, here is what we will do to support you and what the role of the Talking Tenant representative entails.

What We Will Do to Support You?

- ✓ We will make you a Group Expert.
- ✓ We will provide you with training on Facebook if required.
- ✓ We will be there to support, help and guide you.
- ✓ We will provide you with a Facebook page login (if you are not comfortable using your own).
- ✓ We will provide you with a unique profile picture and banner (if you wish to use it).

What the Talking Tenant Representatives role involves?

- ✓ You will provide recipes, positive quotes, and activities (quizzes) as a Facebook post.
 - We expect at least one of the above a week to help keep our tenant engagement levels high.
- ✓ You will be aware of special days worldwide that we may wish to post about, e.g. Christmas Day, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day etc.
- ✓ You will use your own experience as a tenant representative to help encourage others to be more involved.

What does the role not involve?

- ✗ Deal with any enquiries or complaints from tenants; this is the responsibility of the Customer Participation Officer. If you see a post that requires our attention, please tag us.
- ✗ You will not approve people for the page. We need to check that they are a West Lothian Council tenant before approval.
- ✗ You will not be dealing with anything that impacts West Lothian Council or Housing, Customer, Building Services.

Facebook Admin

Caitlin Howie - Customer Participation Officer, 01506 282967

If you are interested or require further information, please email TP@westlothian.gov.uk



If you find that you are struggling to pay your rent, we can:

- Ensure you maximise your income and check that you are claiming all benefits you may be entitled to
- Help you to prioritise debts to ensure the most important are paid first

If you do fall into rent arrears we will contact you in a variety of ways such as:


Text message


Telephone


Letter

It is important you address any rent arrears as soon as possible by contacting your Housing Officer on 01506 280000.

As a tenant of West Lothian Council, you are responsible for paying your rent and managing any arrears you may have. We can help you if you are struggling if you talk to us – don't struggle alone.

The Next Generation of Tenant Participation



CALLING ALL 16-25 YEAR OLD TENANTS

We are keen to recruit young and enthusiastic individuals to join our tenant participation team. This voluntary position will provide you with excellent life skills and work experience. Our meetings are held online, so you can take part wherever you are; however, you will be paid out-of-pocket expenses if travel is required.

Being part of the next generation tenant participation focus group, you will:

- Improve your professional writing skills through reports.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Develop an understanding of Housing, Customer and Building Services, which will help you with your tenancy or if you have an interest in working in housing.
- Gain experience in participating in meetings which will help build confidence.
- Have opportunities to assist in designing marketing materials such as Tenant's News.
- Become one of our social media experts.
- Have the opportunity to take part in day events such as inspections.
- Leave your mark on high-level policies and procedures.
- Most importantly, have your voice heard within the service and help mould tenant participation for the future.

If you are looking to develop life skills, have skills to offer, or are a budding graphic designer, marketing or business student, please contact TP@westlothian.gov.uk; our friendly team is excited to hear from you.

GET INVOLVED

Don't have time to attend Tenant Participation meetings? Why not join our Facebook page!

Our Facebook page is there to allow us to consult and chat with our tenants – but not only that, it is a place where tenants can help each other. We post items relating to housing consultations, helpful hints and tips, survey feedback, and much, much more. We even have a regular segment to appoint a TP Mascot of the month, where you can get your furry friends involved. The Facebook page is run by the Housing, Customer & Building Services Customers team and tenant experts.

Search West Lothian Council Tenant Participation on Facebook

Click join and remember to provide us with your address to verify you are a tenant!

Click to join the group >



Direct debit is the easiest and most efficient way to pay your rent;

it ensures that you are up to date with your rent payments and removes the stress and inconvenience of paying by other methods. Payments made by direct debit are covered by the direct debit guarantee. This means that you are in control of your payments and your money is safe.

Payment dates are available on the 1st, 7th, 14th and 21st of the month.



There are other ways to pay your rent, however, these can take a bit longer. The table below shows how long payments can take to reach your account. If there is a delay in your payment reaching your account, and your account is put in arrears because of this, you may receive our system generated arrears communication.

Payment Method	Days to show on rent account
Direct Debit	Instant
Online or Telephone	2 days
Bank Transfer	2 days
Post Office / PayPoint	5 days

Did you know that your Housing Officer can take payments over the phone?

If you pay your rent in arrears you will receive our system generated arrears notifications. The only way to avoid this is to ensure you have a credit balance on your account; there are lots of ways to build a credit balance, such as;

- Slightly increasing your direct debit
- Making a one-off payment to the value of one weeks rent
- Contacting your Housing Officer to set up a separate small recurring payment over the phone,
- Making a payment through our Tenants Portal.

We have implemented a system called CallSecurePlus to enable Housing Officers to take rent payments over the phone, directly from tenants. This will make it easier for tenants to make quick and easy payments, and remain in control of their rent accounts. You can also set up recurring payments on the system, so it's a really simple and effective way to build a buffer of credit on your account.

It is important that you keep up to date with your rent payments; if you are struggling to pay your rent, please contact your Housing Office.

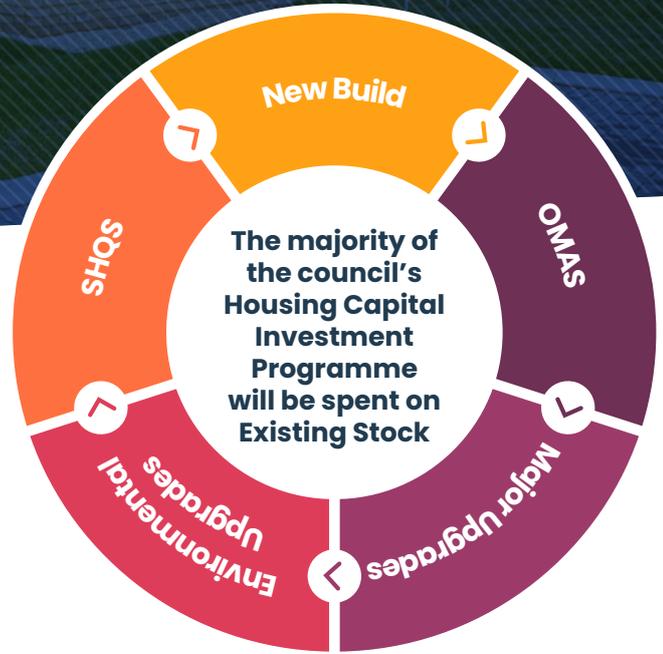
Armadale Ward	ArmadaleAHO@westlothian.gov.uk
Bathgate Ward	BathgateAHO@westlothian.gov.uk
Whitburn/Blackburn Ward	WhitburnAHO@westlothian.gov.uk
Livingston Wards	LivingstonAHO@westlothian.gov.uk
Broxburn/Linlithgow/ East Livingston Wards	BroxburnAHO@westlothian.gov.uk
Breich Valley Ward	BreichValleyArea@westlothian.gov.uk

West Lothian Council's Housing Capital Investment Programme

2023/24 – 2027/28

**Plans have
been made
and budgets
approved!**

**3.5% Rent
increase each
year to help
fund capital
works**



On Tuesday, 7 February 2023, the Housing Capital Investment Programme and Housing Revenue Account Budgets were approved at a full council meeting.

West Lothian Council is to invest more than £157 million over the next 5 years. This investment involves the development of new build houses and the purchasing of houses through the Open Market Acquisition Scheme (OMAS). In Addition, significant progress has been made in identifying and promotion of new council homes and the ongoing maintenance and improvements to the quality of existing stock

of new council homes and the ongoing maintenance and improvements to the quality of existing stock.

One of the main objectives of the Housing Capital Investment Programme is to invest in the existing housing stock to maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and achieve compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). The first part of EESH has now been incorporated within the Scottish Housing Quality Standard Energy Efficiency criteria.

This is a “Fabric First” approach using measures to improve thermal efficiency and ventilation;

- Measures that use zero emissions heating;
- Reducing energy use;
- Projects for district heating/communal heating systems;
- Projects that make a significant difference to hard-to-treat properties*;
- Projects that help to model the actual performance of new technologies and their impact.

There are certain legal standards that the council must meet and **£53.912 million will be invested in Statutory Compliance** to improve and maintain existing housing, ensuring council homes continue to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Works include;

- Central Heating Replacements
- External Wall Insulation
- Electrical Testing and repairs
- Aids and Adaptions

*Hard to treat properties are those that are difficult to make energy efficient due to their construction type. These properties are generally not considered to be traditional homes.

**A total of
£582,000 of major
refurbishment works will
be spent completing works
at the Lochs Scheme in
Whitburn and undertaking
works upgrading works
at 1-45 Almondell Road,
Broxburn .**

**Major Elemental
Upgrades Investment will
be £30.539million and
will form an important
part of the investment
programme investing in
fifteen individual projects
over the period from
2023/24 to 2027/28.**

West Lothian Council's Housing Capital Investment Programme | 2023/24 – 2027/28

The work planned from 2023/24 to 2027/28 is detailed below:

Street name/Town	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	TOTAL £'000
Auldhill Cottages, Bridgend	0	446	0	0	0	446
Belvedere/ Dundas, Bathgate	0	0	0	0	1,241	1,241
Brown Street, Armadales	0	776	0	0	0	776
Craiginn Terrace, Blackridge	0	0	0	302	0	302
Croftmalloch, Whitburn	800	821	0	0	0	1,621
Dedridge, Livingston	3,250	3,413	3,583	3,762	3,950	17,958
Eldrick Avenue, Fauldhouse	0	0	0	231	0	231
Harestanes, Armadales	0	0	1,021	0	0	1,021
Heights, Blackridge	0	0	0	880	0	880
Hillside Place, Longridge	0	0	0	0	682	682
McLeod, Ferguson, Greenykes, Broxburn	180	0	0	0	0	180
McNeil/ King Street, Armadales	0	0	0	1,021	0	1,021
Preston Area, Linlithgow	382	401	421	172	0	1,376
School Place, Broxburn	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
Seafield	880	924	0	0	0	1,804
TOTAL	5,492	6,781	5,025	6,368	6,873	30,539

£43.687 million for Planned Programmes which are works of preventative maintenance nature, and are prioritised based on condition.

Examples include:



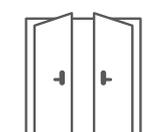
**Kitchens and
Bathrooms**
**350 installations
per year**



**Windows and Doors
Replacements**
390 homes per year



**Air Quality,
Dampness &
Ventilation**
Case by case basis



**Common Access
Door Upgrades**
7 per year

Environmental / External Upgrading, to the value of £1,520 million, will continue on general environmental improvements and external upgrading, including tenant led street improvement projects. Although many works are of a small scale, these projects can have a substantial impact on local amenities and the community.

The remaining £487,000 will be used for miscellaneous works. This budget will support the Stock Condition Programme aimed at updating the council's stock conditions information and providing cost information for future capital planning. The budget also supports detailed engineering reports on structural issues.

New Housing Supply investment of **£27.245 million**



Significant resources will continue to be invested in the creation and acquisition of new homes.

This will deliver an overall total of 384 new houses, including both new build and open market acquisition additions, over the five year period and the council will continue to support applications that meet required criteria under the Scottish Government Mortgage to Rent Scheme.

The council will deliver

384
new homes

Sites are listed below:

Site Name, Area	Number of Units	Est. Year of Completion
Deans South, Livingston	29	2022/23
Eagle Brae, Livingston	29	2022/23
Standhill, Bathgate	4	2022/23
Social Policy, Pumpherston	16	2023/24
Hopetoun Street, Bathgate	4	2023/24
OMAS 2022/23, Various	35	2022/23
Wellhead Farm, Livingston	42	2023/24
Mossend, West Calder	69	2023/24
OMAS 2023/24-2027/28, Various	38	N/A
Houston Road, Livingston	30	2025/26
Almondvale Crescent, Livingston	37	2025/26
Mossend K, West Calder	19	2025/26
Simpson Parkway, Livingston	32	2025/26
Total	384	

It is **not** just the council who build new build affordable housing, registered social landlords (RSLs) who operate in West Lothian are also planning to deliver over 500 houses in the next 5 years from 2022/23. Within the 2022/23 Financial Year, West Lothian Council has secured record levels of Scottish Government Grant Funding for new supply, which serves to support the new build programmes of both the council & our RSL Partners.

All types of social housing in West Lothian, whether council or RSL, are currently in very high demand and as a result, anyone considering applying for social housing in West Lothian is strongly encouraged to ensure that they register not just with the council, but with all Registered Social Landlords who operate in West Lothian.

[Click for more information](#)



WHAT IS ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

The Antisocial Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004 defines it as, “acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress.”

The Safer Neighbourhood Team will determine what behaviour constitutes Antisocial Behaviour following their investigation.

For behaviour to be classed as Antisocial it must be persistent, this means that “one off” incidents may not be classed as antisocial behaviour, however, these incidents could still be criminal, so it is important that you contact Police Scotland if you have been the victim of a crime.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CAN INCLUDE:

- Persistent Noise and partying
- Harassment or intimidation
- Verbal abuse
- Shouting, swearing, and fighting
- Vandalism.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR MYTH BUSTER

‘My Neighbour is causing a disturbance at night, and I have heard that the cut off is 11 pm at night for noise. What can I do?’

There is no “cut off” time for noise. However, if the behaviour is causing alarm and distress, you should report it to the police or contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

If your neighbour is persistently causing disturbances, you should contact our officers on 01506 280000 when this happens so that we can keep a record of all the incidents.

It is important to remember that domestic noise, such as people moving about their home, using a washing machine, or children playing is not antisocial behaviour.

To find out more about antisocial behaviour, please click [this link](#).

Keep your Garden Tidy

Well maintained gardens look nice and can be a great source of enjoyment for you and your family.

Overgrown gardens, on the other hand, don't look very nice and can cause problems for you and your neighbours. As part of your tenancy agreement, you are expected to look after your home and garden, and you must carry out the following maintenance work to your garden area on a regular basis:

- any grassed areas should be cut at least once every four weeks in the growing season
- hedges and shrubs should not be allowed to overhang footpaths or get excessively tall/wide
- clear away and dispose of any rubbish or dog fouling

If you have any concerns about maintaining your garden, please contact your local housing office by calling 01506 280000.

Where tenants are not maintaining their gardens to a reasonable standard, action will be taken to address any issues with the tenant concerned. This could ultimately result in a charge being made to the tenant for any work the council has to take to remedy the situation.

West Lothian Council runs a garden maintenance scheme for elderly people and for people with disabilities. If you are interested in the scheme:

Ask at your local office for an application form, or Call the Customer Service Centre on 01506 280000 for information and/or an application form.



Are you looking to improve your skills in everyday use of English, communications and numbers?

Want to feel more confident using a computer, tablet or digital device?

Is English your second language and you want to improve your communication skills?

Why not consider joining free part-time courses provided by the Adult Learning Team at West Lothian Council.

These courses are provided during the day and evenings Monday to Thursday and are in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Our programme is based in local community venues. We provide a variety of courses in literacy, numeracy, English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL), digital skills courses and other areas.

For more information please see [our webpage](#) or email us at adultlearning@westlothian.gov.uk or call free on **0800 731 1831**

71% OF WOMEN HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME FORM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN A PUBLIC SPACE

WE'RE LISTENING

Tell us how safe you feel & access advice and support @ westlothian.gov.uk/womenandgirls



We would like to remind our tenants with prepayment meters that they should have been sent vouchers each month by their supplier. The value was £66 in each of October and November, and £67 from November to March, totalling £400. The supplier will also send information with each voucher advising whether they should be taken to a Post Office or PayPoint.

Vouchers expire after 90 days but you can ask your supplier to reissue them if they are lost, not received or have expired.

Please note, all vouchers must be redeemed by 30 June 2023.



UK Government

Help for Households

Energy Bills Support Scheme

Attention prepayment meter customers!

Make sure you receive your government discount vouchers to help you pay your energy bills.



Do you top up your **energy prepayment meter** at a shop or Post Office?

Yes? You should be receiving discount vouchers from your electricity supplier.

There are **6 vouchers**. You will get one a month from October 2022 to March 2023.

Check your **post, emails** (including spam or junk) and your **text messages**.

A voucher will be in an envelope (like the one below), an email from your energy supplier (with instructions and a barcode) or a text from your energy supplier with a code.



Locate your vouchers and follow the guidance to get your discount. You will need to take your vouchers to either a **Post Office** or **PayPoint shop**.

Vouchers expire after 90 days. If a voucher is missing or expired, call your electricity supplier for a replacement. All vouchers expire by 30 June 2023 at the latest.

Act now. This is money you are owed from the government. You don't need to pay it back. **The total you are due this winter is £400.**

Beware of scams. Do not click on a link asking you to enter bank details or your personal information.

Alternatively, you may receive the discount via a **Special Action Message** when you top up. If you are not sure, ring your supplier or call Citizens Advice or a debt advice centre.

If you know people who pay for their energy in this way, check they have received and used their vouchers.



Customer Experience Improvements

Here are a list of You Said / We Did over this period:

You said...	We did
You would like to know when capital work and upgrades will be happening in your street.	We are working with our colleagues within Housing, Strategy and Development to ensure tenants receive communication about the works that are relevant and at the right time.
You would like more contact with your Housing Officers.	We are working with our Area Housing Teams to maximise our opportunities to engage with our tenants.
You were unaware of what Tenant participation (TP) was and how you could take part.	We provided the feedback to the Tenant Participation Working Group and Tenant Participation Officer. The TPDWG, created an informative video which you can find here . The TP Officers and tenants are working with the Customer Experience team to reach out to the community, to provide tenant participation pop up sessions so people can learn more about TP but also bring topics that matter to them.
When you were moving into your new build home you noticed there was limited storage.	We spoke with our colleagues in Housing, Strategy and Development, who will speak with the individual contractors regarding the provision of storage in New Build houses moving forward.
You advised that you were unsure what you could contact the Safer Neighbourhood team (SNT) about and what was defined as 'Antisocial behaviour' (ASB)	Antisocial Behaviour FAQ's have been updated on the council's website, which also provides tenants with an update on when the SNT are available as well as the different categories of ASB issues. There is also included in this Tenants News a small piece about ASB this can be found on page 10.

What to expect – customer experience

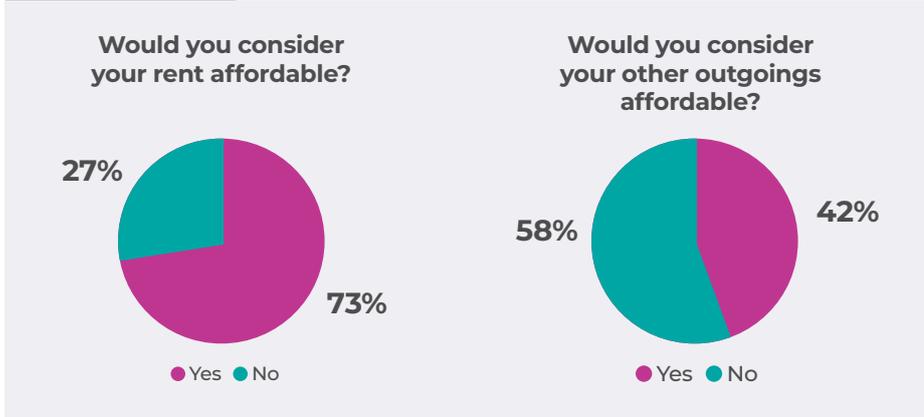


To the right is a list of upcoming surveys, if you would like to take part, please just click the project:

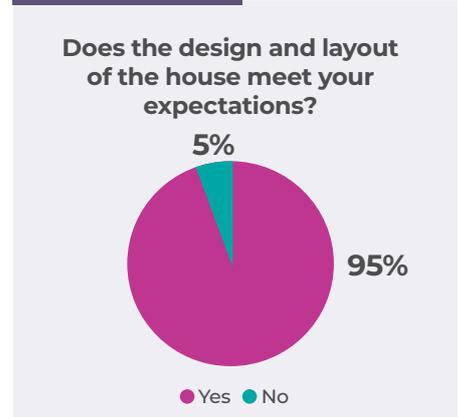
Month	Project
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFFORDABILITY • HOMELESSNESS • ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFFORDABILITY • BUILDING SERVICES • HOUSING OPTIONS
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFFORDABILITY • CUSTOMER CONTACT, SUPPORT, ADVICE AND PARTICIPATION • YOUR HOME
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFFORDABILITY • NEW BUILDS • ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Customer Experience (CX) Team reach out to 240 customers per month. Here are some stats so far...

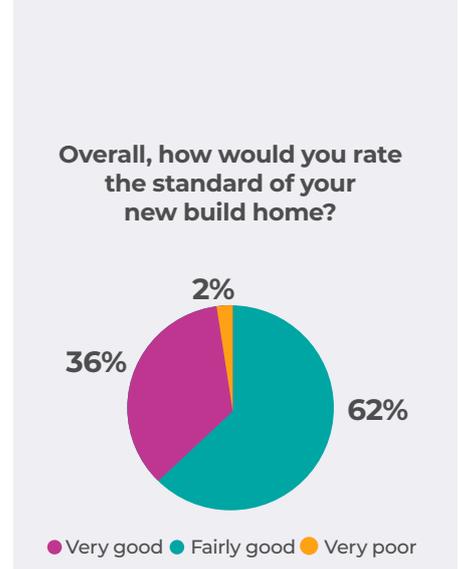
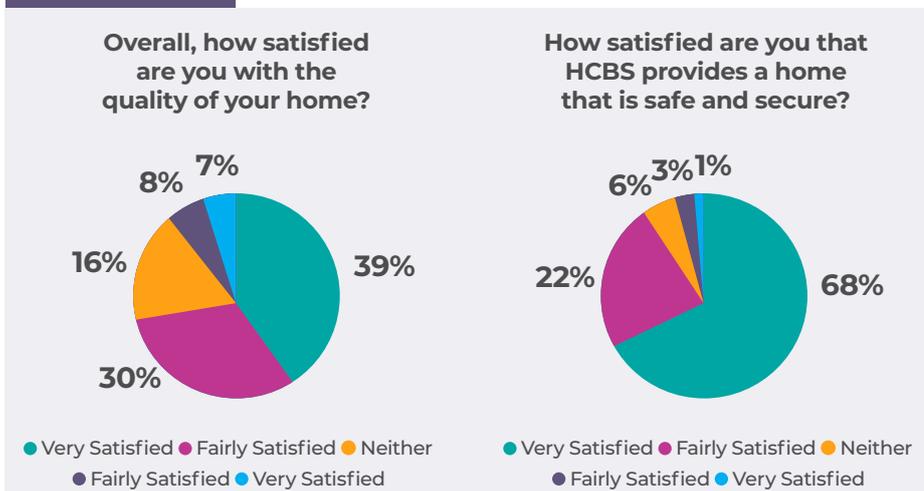
Affordability:



New builds:



Your Home:



Customer Information Service (CIS)

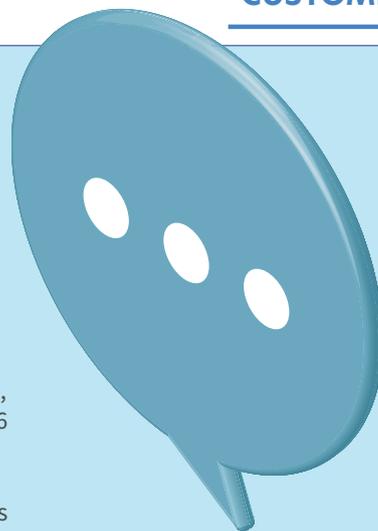
Do you have a question about a council service? Do you need some advice or support? Would you like some help filling out a council form? Our Customer Information Service (CIS) is here to help: the CIS is the council's in-person advice and enquiry service and are located within council buildings in 9 towns and villages throughout West Lothian.

We have a number of trained officers who are available to answer questions regarding a wide range of council services/issues e.g. applying for a council house, council tax queries, applying for a bus pass/Blue Badge, arranging a repair.

Attendance is by appointment only, please phone 01506 280150 to make an appointment. The phone line operates between the hours of 9am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9am - 3.30pm on a Friday

We aim to deal with your enquiry whilst you are with us, to help us do that please ensure you bring along any related paperwork or information.

CIS Offices are open Monday – Friday, please check our [webpage](#) for opening hours and further information or call our appointment line.



Help to protect new trees

The council's Ecology and Biodiversity team has recently planted thousands of trees across the area, to help tackle climate change and support wildlife.

However, many trees have been damaged, with larger trees snapped, saplings uprooted and protective tree tubes removed. It's a criminal offence to damage or uproot trees in parks and it takes valuable time and money to fix.

Communities also lose out on the benefits of mature trees in future years. We ask tenants to help protect trees in public spaces by staying away from new saplings, preventing dogs from damaging trees/tubes and reporting anyone seen vandalising trees. You can also help by popping back any tubes and stakes found lying on the ground, to protect the trees and to stop the tubes littering the landscape. Thank-you in advance for your help!



Take the Summer Reading Challenge with West Lothian Libraries!

The 2023 Summer Reading Challenge, 'Ready, Set, Read!', is all about games and sports.

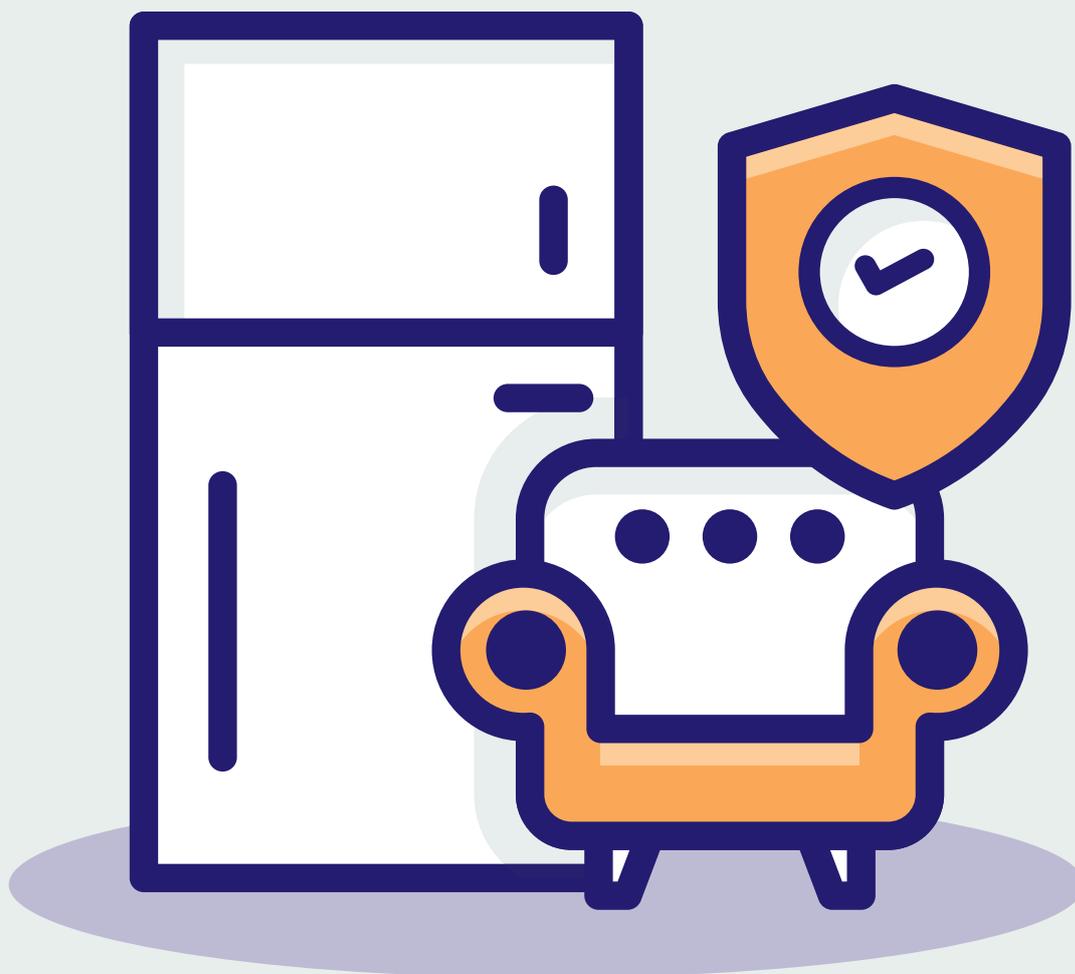
Developed in collaboration with the Youth Sport Trust, 'Ready, Set, Read!' will celebrate play and participation and will encourage primary school children to engage in games and sports in any way that best suits them.

'Ready, Set, Read!' will follow a team of six child characters as they weave their way through an obstacle course. There will be something for everyone: each character will have skills which help the team navigate the course, as well as their own motivation for being involved. The children will also be accompanied by an animal 'lucky mascot'.

The Summer Reading Challenge is free to join, open to all primary school aged children and is designed for all reading abilities. The goal is to borrow and read 6 titles, these can be whatever the children like; comic books, fact books, joke books, picture books, just as long as they are borrowed from the library. They'll also get the chance to play games, earn badges and receive special rewards.

For more information please contact your local library:
www.westlothian.gov.uk/your-library





Home Contents Insurance

Contents insurance protects your personal belongings in case of unexpected events such as fire, floods caused by burst pipes, theft, or natural disasters. We understand that many tenants may think that West Lothian Council's insurance will cover their personal belongings, but that is not the case.

As a tenant, you are responsible for insuring your own personal property, and contents insurance is an affordable and effective way to safeguard your belongings. It protects you financially in case of an unfortunate event, and provides peace of mind that your personal property is covered.

We strongly encourage all of our tenants to consider obtaining contents insurance.

[Apply online](#) | Telephone: 01506 280000 | Email: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

Keeping our Tenants



Every year, West Lothian Council undertake a number of statutory compliance projects to keep tenants and properties safe. This is done by checking electrical systems in homes and upgrading fire and smoke alarms.

Additionally, the Council have an ongoing Capital programme where they replace end of life central heating systems to ensure you have efficient and effective heating within your home.

Electrical Checks

A programme of Electrical Safety checks is carried out every five years. These checks are vital to maintain the safety of the electrical installation and this also assures compliance with the regulations. So far this year, the Council has completed 3290 electrical checks and will inspect at least a further 1220 more properties.

These checks are an inspection of the electrical wiring within the property which allows the electrician to assess the condition and arrange upgrades or remedial works if required.

Fire and Smoke Detection

Did you know - In Scotland 2021 there were 25,147 fires attended to which is up 2.6% on the previous year - 60.9% of accidental house fires started with a cooking appliance.

West Lothian Council have upgraded smoke and heat detection systems in all our properties which meet the new Scottish Government legislation and targets. However, the work doesn't stop here, there is an ongoing programme to replace smoke and heat detectors as they reach their replacement dates. Interlinked smoke and heat alarms will help to reduce accidents and help safe guard against fires and maintain fire safety.

Central Heating

In 2022/23 we are planning to upgrade around 1000 central heating systems. New central heating systems will benefit our tenants with a warmer home and help towards keeping running costs down and help properties meet current energy efficiency targets. We are currently ahead of this programme having installed over 460 new heating systems since April 2022.



If you receive notification from the Council on any of these programmes please get in touch to arrange this work. Your help is greatly appreciated in ensuring you and your home are safe.

Spring

KID'S
CORNER

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

FLOWERS

SEEDS

ROBIN

CHICKS

BEEES

EGGS

BLOOM

SUNNY

LAMB



Tenants Tasty Treats

Oreo Truffles

Ingredients

- 3 pkts Oreo Cookies/Biscuits
- 200g Cream Cheese
- 2 x large bars of Chocolate to dip in (this can vary as smaller truffles need more chocolate)
- Wee bit of white chocolate to swirl over

Method

1. Take all the Oreos out of their packet and put them into a food bag. Grab your rolling pin and give them a good bash until they are just crumbs. (You may need to double bag them, as the bag may burst.) Alternatively you can use a food processor, makes the mix smoother.
2. Put Cream Cheese in a large bowl (take out of fridge to let it soften 1st). Add the bashed Oreos to the Cream Cheese & mix it thoroughly. The more Oreo that goes in the harder it becomes to mix but ensure you add pretty much all of it. The best way to judge is if you can't see any of the cream cheese in the mixture.
3. Take approximately a tsp of the Oreo mixture and roll it in your hands to make a small ball. The truffles can be made bigger, but they are very thick and sweet so smaller ones are usually more enjoyable. Continue to roll them into balls and put them onto a sheet of baking parchment. Put in fridge to cool.
4. The Oreos ideally need at least an hour to cool, this allows them to become slightly harder and less sticky. Making them easier to dip in the chocolate. Although if longer than an hour suits it will not make a difference.
5. Just before taking the Truffles out start to melt your Chocolate. I use the glass bowl over boiling water method – remember not to let the water touch the bowl. It's best suited if you use a larger bowl so it is easier to maneuver the Truffles.
6. The longer the Truffles have been chilled, the easier the dipping usually is.
7. Once the Chocolate has completely melted get two forks, put a couple of truffles in the chocolate and gently roll until totally covered (If you have made small truffles you can use a fondue dipping stick, this is often easier but it varies depending on your technique).
8. Take a truffle out and use the other fork to help move the truffle from one to another to drain the excess Chocolate back into the bowl.
9. Put on to a tray covered with a sheet of baking parchment. Keep doing this until all the Truffles are on the paper then you have the option to either put a topping on ie more crushed up Oreo or wait until they have been in the fridge for a bit to harden then add some lines of white chocolate or even dark chocolate, its really up to you what you would like.
10. Pop back into fridge to set, then enjoy! Store them in an air tight container in the fridge

Contact West Lothian Council

The council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) lines are open from Monday to Friday, 8am to 10:30pm. Thereafter, a number of staff are on site to deal with emergency calls.

The CSC lines are also open from 10:30pm on Friday to 8am on Monday for emergency calls relating to noise, homelessness, repairs to council houses, roads, street lighting and environmental health.

MyWestLothian (Report It, Request It, Pay For It, Tenant Self Service)	my.westlothian.gov.uk
Contact us	www.westlothian.gov.uk/contactus
Homelessness	0800 0323 450
Housing, Repairs and Gas Servicing	01506 280000, select option 1
Council Tax and Benefits	01506 280000, select option 2
Customer Service Centre	01506 280000
Antisocial Behaviour	01506 282000 or the Police on 101
NETS and Land Services	0800 616 446
West Lothian Advice Shop	01506 283000 Advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop