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## Recycling: Let's sort it!



Recycling is on the ⬆️ but there's more we can all do to help West Lothian

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Lewis Capaldi sculpture unveiled at his former school

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# Active travel investment



**Infrastructure to help improve walking routes and cycle paths**

Over £1.18million is to be invested in local infrastructure with the aim of improving cycle walking and safer routes across West Lothian. West Lothian Council has received the funding from the Scottish Government for Cycling Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR), Sustrans (Scotland) for Places for Everyone and Paths for All for Smarter Choices Smart Places. The funding is specifically allocated to encourage active travel through engagement with communities and improvements to road and footway network and cannot be used for other services.

Places for Everyone will allow the progression of the design of a cycle path link from Stoneymuir to Fauldhouse, including the bridge crossing over the A706 and key links to Bathgate Town Centre as part of the Bathgate Meadows Nature Park project. This funding has also been made available for the development of a new Active Travel Plan for 2023-28. Smarter Choices Smart Places funding will allow Sustrans to continue to provide a dedicated I Bike officer who encourages, promotes and develops active travel initiatives within primary and secondary schools.

Works on Whitburn Town Walk Improvements Phase 2 are programmed to commence in July 2023 with other construction projects planned to be completed by April 2024.

**The projects funded by CWSR include:**

- A89 Junction of Newhouses Road, Broxburn - Pedestrian refuge island and footway provision
- A705, Redmill Nursing Home, East Whitburn - Pedestrian refuge island
- B8084 North Street, Armadale - Puffin Crossing

- Calder Park Road, Mid Calder - Dropped kerb crossing
- Church Street, Addiewell - Upgrade Puffin Crossing
- Hardhill Road, Bathgate - Puffin Crossing
- Kirkton South Road, Livingston - Toucan Crossing
- Lower Bathville at Heathervale Walk, Armadale - Upgrade belisha beacon with new LED lighting
- Main Street, Mid Calder - Puffin Crossing
- Muirieston West Road, Livingston - Toucan Crossing
- Preston Road, Linlithgow - Puffin Crossing, Removing Barriers to Accessibility
- Springfield Road, Linlithgow - Puffin Crossing
- Wester Inch to Whitehill Industrial Estate Cyclepath
- Whitburn Town Walk Improvements Phase 2
- B7066 Heartlands to Whitdale Roundabout
- Edinburgh Road, Guildiehaugh to Bathgate Railway Station Segregated Cyclepath
- Wester Inch to Whitehill Industrial Estate Cyclepath
- Whitdale Roundabout Connections, Whitburn



**Nature Emergency declared in West Lothian**

West Lothian Council has declared a Nature Emergency to recognise the current state of nature and our dependence on the natural world. A motion was unanimously agreed by a meeting of the full West Lothian Council recently, to add the declaration alongside the council's Climate Emergency declaration of 2019 in support of our environment. The council's Environment and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) will add the declaration into their work going forward, stressing the urgent need to act in favour of nature recovery and restoration. Leader of West Lothian Council Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "I am delighted that all elected members on West Lothian Council have supported the declaration of a Nature Emergency. "We all have a role to play in protecting nature and here in West Lothian we must continue to show our commitment to aiding in the recovery and restoration of the natural environment to help realise our climate targets."

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**Woodmuir Primary School win Litter League**



**A West Lothian school has been crowned Edinburgh and Lothians champion in an inaugural competition to tackle Scotland's litter emergency.**

Woodmuir Primary School are the winners of environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful's Litter League, an initiative aimed at getting children more involved in the litter issue across the country. In total there were more than 100 youth led Litter League competition events in 23 local authorities across Scotland. Woodmuir Primary School collected 22 bags of litter in

the Breich Village woodlands. Broxburn Primary School, another West Lothian school, came third in the category after collecting four bags of litter. All category winners received a #SpringCleanScotland trophy to keep for one year as part of our commitment to sustainability, as well as vouchers for Decathlon. All participants received a Litter League certificate to acknowledge and thank them for all their efforts.

Theresa McLaren, Woodmuir Headteacher, said: "We are delighted to be first in the Lothians area for clear ups. For a small school like Woodmuir, it's a fantastic achievement to have our efforts to improve our environment recognised by Keep Scotland Beautiful.

"At Woodmuir Primary School, our pupils are passionate about protecting our local environment and show positive attitudes towards sustainability. The school regularly use the village woodlands for 'Forest School' lessons and so the pupils have a strong connection with nature and really care about protecting it. "Thanks to all our amazing pupils for their enthusiastic participation in the clean ups, as well as our wonderful parents/carers for their strong support."



**"Huge congratulations to everyone at Woodmuir for this superb achievement. Thanks must also go to our Cleaner Communities team for all their invaluable efforts to support school and community clean ups, such as providing pickers, bags and disposing of the material collected."**

Tom Conn, Executive councillor for the environment and sustainability



# Howden Park Centre future

Steps have been agreed to help secure a future for Howden Park Centre.

Work was undertaken in relation to the request by West Lothian Leisure (WLL) for council consent to cease operation of Howden Park Centre (HPC).

The council explored alternative commercial and community options that would allow for continued provision. The council also

agreed that £140,000 of one-off revenue funding was made available until 31 March 2024 to support the operation of HPC, given that a future programme of events was required to secure its viability and that that many events could not be suitably accommodated elsewhere. A proposal has been received from Reconnect SCIO – who

currently operate the Regal Theatre in Bathgate - for the continued operation of Howden Park Centre as a theatre and arts venue, and as the permanent base for Firefly Arts.

Further work is required to support the transition from WLL to Reconnect SCIO, such as the agreement of lease

terms and obtaining Creative Scotland consent to the change but, subject to those being secured, the venue will remain open up to 31 March 2024, and operated by Reconnect SCIO.

Council officers have also been instructed to continue to explore options for operations beyond March 2024.



**“It is positive that a viable alternative has been identified through this piece of work that will enable Howden Park Centre to remain open and provide arts and theatre provision for the local community and local groups. As a priority, officer from the council will continue to help ensure that Howden Park has a successful future from April 2024 onwards.”**

Leader of West Lothian Council, Lawrence Fitzpatrick



**Police Scotland and West Lothian Council are raising awareness of the problems caused by disabled parking bays being used by motorists who do not have a blue badge.**

The campaign aims to harness support for the efforts in tackling the widespread problem.

West Lothian Council administers the Blue Badge scheme in West Lothian, but Police Scotland enforce all parking regulations.

The Blue Badge scheme is for people who are unable to walk or virtually unable to walk due to severe mobility problems. Blue Badges can be issued to children, adults and organisations if they provide care. Blue Badges can be used by either the driver of the vehicle or any passenger.

Craig Meek, Executive councillor for public and community safety said: “People with blue badges have them because they are disabled and we’d urge anyone who is doing this to reflect on their behaviour and think about how they would feel if they were prevented from parking by someone who was parked illegally.”

“The Blue Badge Scheme provides a way to help severely disabled people live independent lives by knowing that when they reach their destination, either as a passenger or driver, that they will be able to park near to the venue and therefore have

easier access to the services they need to use. Please consider those that are in need of those spaces.”

Police Sergeant Lee Brodie of the Community Policing Team said: “Our officers are actively patrolling West Lothian in a coordinated campaign to target motorists without blue-badges who park in designated disabled parking bays. This type of inconsiderate and illegal parking puts already vulnerable motorists at even greater risk and will not be tolerated. If caught this will result in an immediate fine. Please park with consideration for fellow road users.”

If anyone feels they meet the criteria for a Blue Badge, they should apply online. The criteria for a badge is set by the Scottish Government. Find out more and apply by visiting [www.westlothian.gov.uk/bluebadge](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/bluebadge) or scanning the QR code. There’s a one-off administration fee of £20 for all successful applications and all replacement badges. Blue Badges are valid for up to three years.



## Three swimming pools to close

**Three public swimming pools in West Lothian will close on 31 August 2023.**

In May, West Lothian Leisure (WLL) requested the council’s consent to cease operations at Xcite Livingston, Xcite Broxburn Swimming Pool and Xcite Armadale.

West Lothian has considerably more public swimming pools compared to other areas in Scotland, and the change will mean that the number of public swimming pools in West Lothian will reduce from 19 to 16.

West Lothian Leisure has confirmed that these three facilities currently make a significant monthly financial loss and they can no longer afford to operate them. If they do not close, WLL faces the risk of insolvency, which could mean the closure of all Xcite facilities. In addition to the running costs, each of the three pools also require significant sums of capital (one off) expenditure to ensure they are able to operate in the short term. However, no funding is available to support such expenditure.

The council looked to find alternative solutions that would have allowed for the continued operation of Xcite Livingston, Xcite Broxburn Swimming Pool or Xcite Armadale. However, consent has now been granted to West Lothian Leisure to cease operations at the three pools after work to identify credible alternative options were exhausted without success. West Lothian Leisure plan on ceasing



their operations at the three facilities from 31 August 2023.

West Lothian Leisure has, however, confirmed that the Learn2Swim programme will not be reduced and will continue to be delivered from alternative facilities.

Council officers will work with groups expressing an interest in Community Asset Transfer of these three facilities.

The council also has plans to allow for more public, community and other non-curricular use of Deans Community High School, Inveralmond Community High School, James Young High School, Broxburn Academy and Armadale Academy, from 31 August 2023. Council officers will continue to work with schools and WLL to ensure that the timetabling for these pools is done in response to demand, makes best use of resources available, and does not impact on school use.

Given that there is capacity at these pools, it is anticipated that this will help to mitigate the impact of reducing the total number of pools.

# Let's get recycling sorted



Find out more including checking your bin collection dates and what goes in each bin by scanning this QR code.



Scan me

Last year we provided you with a **new green recycling bin** for **plastics, cartons, tins and cans**.

At the same time we changed the items you could recycle in your **blue bin** to **paper and cardboard only**.

Unfortunately some residents are contaminating their bins with the wrong items - this can cause problems with the recycling process. Contamination happens when the wrong items are placed in recycling bins. It is also caused by items that haven't been rinsed properly and are covered in food residues or liquid.

If your bin contains too many of the wrong items it **will not** be emptied - we will tag it and you will be asked to remove the wrong items before putting your bin out again on your next collection day.

**NEVER place any of these items in your recycling bins:**

**Bagged recycling**

**Nappies**

**Wrappers or crisp packets**

**Food or drinks contaminated packaging**



Your **GREEN** bin is only for the following items:

- Plastic bottles**
- Cartons**
- Tins & drink cans**
- Empty plastic bags**
- Plastic pots, tubs & trays**
- Aerosols & tin foil**



Your **BLUE** bin is only for the following items:

- Newspapers & magazines**
- Large & small cardboard boxes**
- Unwanted mail & envelopes**
- Corrugated cardboard boxes**
- Office & shredded paper**
- Kitchen & toilet roll tubes**

**Make sure all your items are CLEAN ✓ EMPTY ✓ and DRY ✓ before you recycle them.**

**ABUSE is not tolerated**

If your bin is contaminated, it will not be collected. Please follow the instructions on the bin tag and remove the contaminated materials from your bin. Please remember, our Waste Operators are doing their job and we will not tolerate any abuse of our staff. Please show them the respect they deserve.



# Changes to Community Recycling Centres in September 2023



## 1 New opening hours are on the way in September 2023

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Location</b>	<b>HOURS OPEN PER DAY</b>						
<b>Oakbank</b>	10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm
<b>Whitburn</b>	10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm
<b>Blackburn</b>		10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm		10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm
<b>Broxburn</b>				10am – 6pm		2pm – 6pm	10am – 2pm
<b>Linlithgow</b>		10am – 6pm				10am – 2pm	2pm – 6pm

- All five Recycling Centres will be maintained, but they will no longer be open 7 days a week.
- At least two Recycling Centres will be open each weekday, from 10am to 6pm.
- As weekends are the most popular days to visit, all five sites will be open every Saturday and Sunday.
- 85% of all visits are made to Oakbank, Blackburn and Whitburn Recycling Centres, with just 15% choosing to visit Linlithgow and Broxburn.
- The three busier sites will be open for more days than the quieter sites when the operating hours change.

## 2 When the new opening hours are in place you must book a time slot before visiting a Community Recycling Centre in a car.



### How and when can you book a slot?

The online booking system for householders will be available before the changes to opening hours are in place in September. This will allow you to book available slots.

When the online booking system goes live, we will inform households via the council's social media channels, local press and council website. Signage will also be in place at the Community Recycling Centres.

### What you need to know:

All bookings should be made in advance of your visit.

#### Please note:

- If you turn up without a booking slot you cannot enter the site.
- You must be a West Lothian Council resident to book a visit.
- Only household waste is accepted at West Lothian's Recycling Centres.
- Vehicle registrations will be checked and only cars that have booked in advance will be allowed entry.
- Slots will be 30 minutes long. Please arrive anytime during your 30 minute slot, and please don't arrive early. If you arrive late you may not be allowed to enter.



### Find your nearest Recycling Centre:

#### 1 Livingston

Oakbank, Livingston EH53 0TP

#### 2 Whitburn

Dixon Terrace, Burnhouse Industrial Estate, Whitburn EH47 0LQ

#### 3 Blackburn

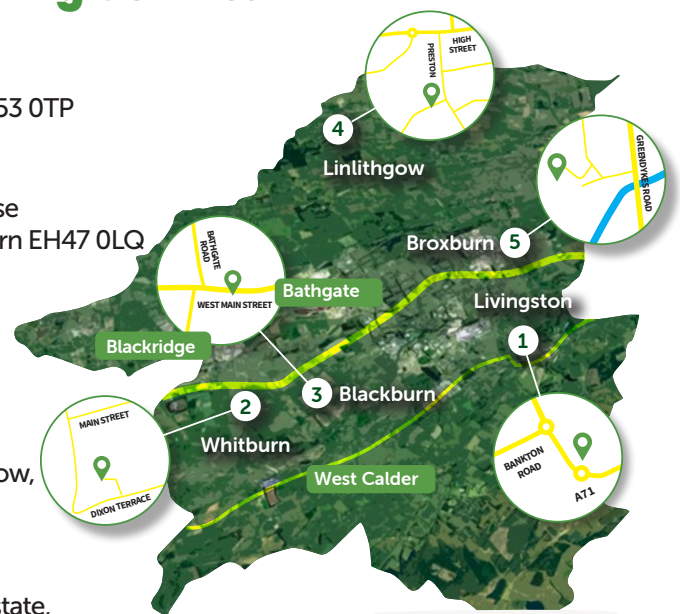
East Mains Street, Blackburn EH47 7QU

#### 4 Linlithgow

Braehead Road, Linlithgow, EH49 6HF

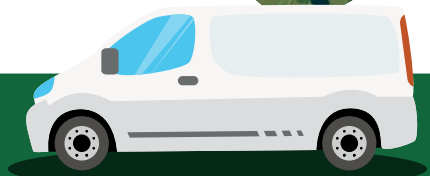
#### 5 Broxburn

Greenykes Industrial Estate, Broxburn EH52 6PG



### VANS & CAR TOWING TRAILERS

A separate booking system for vans and cars with trailers is already in place and this will continue to operate for vans, or cars towing trailers.



# Funding to improve social housing



**£164 million is set to be invested over the next five years towards the creation and acquisition of new council homes and the ongoing maintenance of quality standards across existing housing stock.**

There are a number of projects which relate to the internal environment of council homes. These include projects aimed at improving air quality, dampness and ventilation, kitchen and bathrooms

installations, windows and door replacements, installations to improve energy efficiency and central heating upgrades.

Significant resources are being invested in these projects

totalling £75.190 million over the five-year programme.

The investment ensures homes are more energy efficient and are equipped to meet challenges relating to air quality and ventilation.

There remains a strong commitment in the capital programme for the upgrades of kitchens and bathrooms and also windows and doors in order to keep properties compliant with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).

## Here are just some examples of planned programme improvements and major elemental upgrade works due to take place across this year (2023/24):

- Number of window and door replacements – **390 properties**
- Number of central heating replacements – **616**
- Number of properties set to benefit from external wall insulation upgrades – **84**
- Number of new bathrooms to be installed – **200**
- Number of new kitchens to be installed – **350**
- Periodic Electrical Inspections – **2,287**
- Smoke and Heat detection – system renewals – **1,400**
- Number of major adaptation installations – **110**
- Roof and Render – various areas – **201 properties** being upgraded

Executive councillor for housing, George Paul recently paid a visit to Burns Avenue in Armadale where he met one of the council teams carrying out kitchen and bathroom upgrades.

Councillor Paul said: “Maintaining and enhancing our existing properties is of paramount importance and a great deal of resource is being invested over the next five years. Work is well underway in a number of areas and I would like to thank staff for their continued effort to deliver the best possible homes for our tenants.”

## New Local Housing Strategy for West Lothian



A new local housing strategy for West Lothian has been approved. The West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028 sets out the key issues, actions, outcomes and recommendations for housing and related services for the next five years.

It provides a pragmatic plan for delivering more affordable homes and improving the quality of housing and neighbourhoods in West Lothian as well as aligning with key plans and strategies to address homelessness and climate change.

The strategy was informed by widespread consultation and engagement with local residents and stakeholder organisations.

You can read the strategy in full by scanning the QR code.



# Listen & Link



## Listen & Link is

an early intervention mental wellbeing self-referral support phone line for young people, parents and carers within West Lothian Council.



It supports young people who are struggling with their mental health and parents/carers who are supporting them. Listen & Link staff listen to what young people and parents feel they require to support their wellbeing and link them with resources or a service that can support them.

Listen & Link staff use an approach that gives young people and families choice and control over the service they receive, and a participatory approach is prioritised.

When you call staff will **LISTEN** to your concerns and will suggest and, with your agreement, **LINK** you with people, services or resources that may be a support to you.



Please call us on: 01506 283160  
email: [mentalhealthsupport@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:mentalhealthsupport@westlothian.gov.uk)



# Almost 1 in 4



children in  
West Lothian  
experience  
**poverty**

**If your family is feeling the pinch of high costs of living or low income, a wide range of help and support is available. A number of payments administered by Social Security Scotland are designed to help families with a low income**

## Free Breakfasts

The council provides a free breakfast to all pupils in primary schools who want it. Breakfast is also free to those entitled to free school meals in secondary schools. Please contact your child's school direct for further details of the breakfast club times. In Secondary Schools pupils entitled to free school meals will have a breakfast provision allowance included on their iPayimpact account. All other secondary pupils can purchase the same breakfast for 57p.



## School Clothing Grants & Free School Meals/Milk

If you have not already applied for the 2023/2024 academic year then help is available by way of free school meals and also towards the cost of a school uniform. A payment of £150 could be provided to help parents/carers with the costs of school uniforms for primary school pupils, and £180 for secondary school pupils.

To check eligibility and make application scan the QR code or visit [www.westlothian.gov.uk/mealsandclothing](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/mealsandclothing). Alternatively, you can contact West Lothian Advice Shop on 01506 283000 (and select option 5) for further information and details on how to apply, contact your child's school, or e-mail [educationbenefits@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:educationbenefits@westlothian.gov.uk)



## Best Start Grant/ Best Start Foods

Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods are payments that help towards the costs of being pregnant and having a child. The Best Start Grant is made up of 3 one off payments:

- **Pregnancy and Baby Payment** - £707.25 payment for your first child and £353.65 for any additional children
- **Early Learning Payment** - £294.70 payment for a child between the ages of 2 and 3.5 years
- **School Age Payment** - £294.70 payment when a child is first old enough to start school, you don't need to take up a place at school to get the payment
- **Best Start Foods** - money every 4 weeks on a pre-paid card from pregnancy until your child is 3 years old

## Young Carer Grant

A Young Carer Grant is payable to young carers aged between 16-18 years old. The grant is £359.65 and is paid once a year. You can qualify if you have been caring for one or more people for around 16 hours a week for the last 3 months or longer. The person you care for must be in receipt of a disability benefit. This grant is not payable if you are in receipt of Carers Allowance - further information is available by visiting [www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant](http://www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant) or scanning the QR code.



## Scottish Child Payment

Scottish Child payment helps towards the costs of supporting your family. It's a weekly payment of £25 for every child you look after who's under 16 years of age.

You can qualify for Scottish Child Payment as well as the best start grants and best start foods if you are in receipt of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or other qualifying benefits.

**For further information and to apply please visit:**

[www.mygov.scot/  
scottish-child-  
payment](http://www.mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment)



[www.mygov.scot/  
best-start-grant-  
best-start-foods](http://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods)



## Help with Childcare Costs

If you pay for childcare and are on a low income you can claim up to 85% of your childcare costs through Universal Credit. From 28 June 2023 the rules have changed which means you will be paid childcare costs upfront instead of after and the maximum childcare payments available will increase by 50% to £951 per month for one child and £1,629 for two or more children.

This also means if you have applied for childcare costs in the past and not been eligible you may now qualify as a result of the increase.



## Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) of £30 per week is also available to help students to stay on at school beyond the school leaving age, and is payable depending on the household income. Students estranged from parents or in care of West Lothian Council can also be paid. To check eligibility, deadlines, closing dates and make application visit [www.westlothian.gov.uk/ema](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/ema)



## Under 22 Travel

Young people aged 5 to 21, who live in Scotland for at least 6 months a year, can apply for a free bus pass. You can use this to travel on most bus services in Scotland for free. Visit [www.freebus.scot](http://www.freebus.scot) for more information.





## Sinclair Academy Headteacher appointed.

Gerry Burns has been named as the first ever Headteacher for the new Sinclair Academy in Winchburgh.



Gerry will be the first leader of the new state-of-the-art facility, which is the third and final school built as part of the Winchburgh Schools Campus project, the council's largest ever investment in education at more than £60 million.

The former principal teacher of Science, CDT and Computing at St Margaret's Academy in Livingston is returning to West Lothian, after five years as depute head at St Mungo's Academy in Glasgow.

After completing an initial degree in Electronics with Music, Dr Burns went on to achieve his Doctorate in

Semiconductor Engineering, both at Glasgow University, and carried out research work in this field there before making the move into education.

The father of four has continued his studies during his teaching career, completing both the demanding Master of Science in Educational Leadership and Into Headship programmes.

In his spare time, Dr Burns enjoys spending time with his family and two Labradors, running marathons, and is also a keen musician.

Sinclair Academy Headteacher Gerry Burns said: "It is a huge honour to be appointed as the first ever Headteacher of the superb new Sinclair Academy.

"Being able to set up a new school is a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am excited to grow our community in partnership with staff, pupils, parents/carers and the people of Winchburgh. Our

school's patron, the Venerable Margaret Sinclair was known for her hard work and dedication to her life of service and faith.

"In consultation with our school community, we have defined our school values to be Aspiration, Integrity, Mercy and Service. These reflect our school's mission to support our learners as confident learners ready for the world,

courageous young people who are willing to accept challenges, committed to developing their talents and dedicated to being the best version of themselves.

"I look forward to working in partnership with our entire school community to ensure that we make this mission a reality."



**It's great to welcome Gerry Burns back to West Lothian to become Sinclair Academy's first Headteacher. I'm confident he has all right skills, knowledge and experience to help establish the new school community and make a positive difference for Sinclair pupils."**

*Executive councillor for education Andrew McGuire*

## Is your child eligible?



West Lothian School pupils who are eligible for extra help with the costs of uniforms, lunches and staying on at school can now submit an online application to ensure they will receive their entitlement at the start of the new academic school year from 15 August.

Online applications for the academic year are now open via the West Lothian Council website for those pupils who are entitled to Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Free School Meals/School Clothing Grants.

Thousands of pupils in West Lothian benefitted from free School Meals and were awarded a School Clothing Grant.

Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is an allowance of £30 per week, depending on household income. Students on Activity Agreements (HYPE agreements), are Home Educated, attend Donaldsons or Moorehouse or estranged from parents or in care of the authority can also be paid.

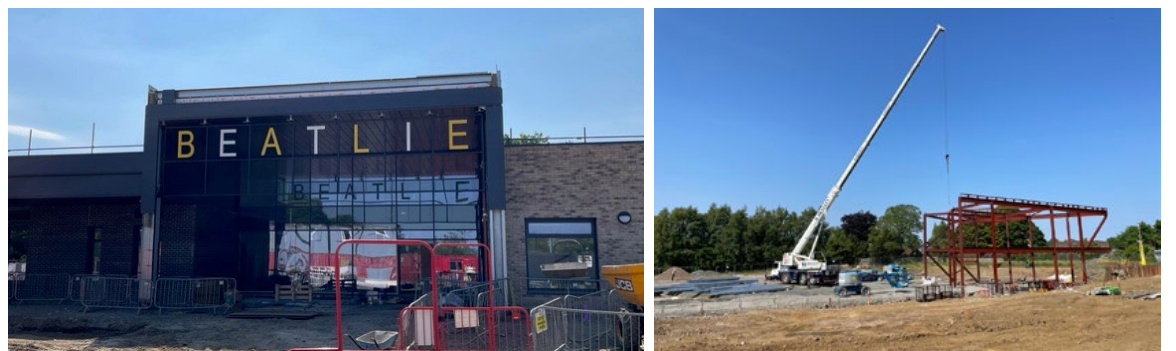
You can find details on eligibility and relevant application forms for the above benefits via the West Lothian Council website.

Please visit: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/helpwithcosts](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/helpwithcosts)

If you encounter any issues with the applications forms or have any queries regarding these benefits, please email: [EducationBenefits@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EducationBenefits@westlothian.gov.uk)



## New schools on track



### Work to deliver two schools in West Lothian is progressing on time and on budget.

As Bulletin went to press, construction work was ongoing at both the new Beatlie School Campus in Craigshill, Livingston and the replacement East Calder Primary School.

Good progress is being made to complete the fantastic new £15 million Beatlie school, which provides specialist education for pupils aged three to eighteen with severe and complex support and profound medical needs.

The new purpose-built facility will be a centre of excellence for children and young people, providing cutting-edge educational facilities when it opens later this year.

Weather conditions are aiding the construction of the external works, which will include a variety of exciting sensory experiences for the children. The internal finishes continue with the installation of the acoustic panelling and flooring, and the new kitchen is also in place. Initial construction works are taking place on the superb new £18.3 million East Calder Primary School, to replace the existing school building which is not suitable for the future delivery of high-quality education.

The ambitious project is being funded through the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP), a partnership between Scottish

and Local Government to invest in facilities for education and managed by the Scottish Futures Trust.

The foundations for the new school are nearing completion, with the steel frame for the school currently being put in place, with the new school expected to open in August 2024.

Both projects are being delivered on behalf of the council by Hub South East with Morrison Construction as the main contractor. This is the same successful partnership that recently delivered the new multi-school Winchburgh development, West Calder High School and Calderwood Primary in East Calder.



# HIGH HEDGES

Across the country, overgrown hedges and trees are thought to be one of the most common cause of neighbour disputes after noise, parking and property boundaries.

## High hedges in West Lothian

The council receives regular enquiries about fast-growing cypress hedges and also about enforcement for existing high hedge notices.

The High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013 was introduced to help with issues relating to high hedges, although its scope is limited.

After ten years the council is reviewing high hedge notices and seeking better ways of managing problem hedges and neighbour disputes.

- High hedges block daylight, warmth and views and the elderly are disproportionately affected
- The largest cypress hedge in West Lothian was measured at 40 metres in length and the tallest hedge was 15 metres high

## If you own a fast-growing Cypress hedge:

Please, please keep it under control; prune it regularly and be kind to your neighbours. As a minimum, hedges require to be cut before the end of February and the start of the bird nesting season in Scotland and when it ends as soon after 1 August as feasible. Before pruning a hedge, it should always be inspected for any nesting birds as it is illegal to harm, damage or kill them.

## If you are thinking about planting a hedge

Consider how much hedge maintenance you can undertake and afford, now and in the future. How will the hedge impact your neighbours?

Leylandii Cypress hedges are fast growing and can grow to over 15 metres high. Consider an alternative hedge & discuss any proposed fast-growing cypress hedge with your neighbour and seek an acceptable alternative.

Garden hedges can also be important for biodiversity and wildlife so consider a more natural and varied mix of hedging plants.

The council never receives high hedge complaints about typical hedging species which are easier to manage. Species such as beech, holly, hornbeam, laurel and yew. Privet is even now available in variegated and golden forms.

## If you are a neighbour to a problem hedge:

Speak with your neighbour; keep channels of communication open and try to stop the issue escalating.

You have a legal right to cut overhanging branches back to the property line but you need to advise the owner of the tree first.

## 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 and to ensure young people are fully equipped to make informed choices upon leaving school.

Employers can play a vital role in improving a young person's life chances by:

- Providing work placements for students.
- Mentoring a young person through the Career Ready programme.
- Delivering career insight, skills, or employability sessions.
- Partnering with a school to enhance the curriculum.
- Supporting the Young Person's Guarantee.

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.

Executive councillor for economy, community empowerment and wealth building, Kirsteen Sullivan, said: "This is a fantastic initiative, giving young people a brilliant opportunity to experience the workplace and pointing them on a potential career pathway which they could pursue upon leaving school."

"From a business perspective, you gain the chance to give the workforce of the future an early insight into the skills and knowledge required to work in your specific sector."

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

Visit [www.investinwestlothian.com](http://www.investinwestlothian.com) or contact [michelle.robertson@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.robertson@westlothian.gov.uk) for more information



The council can sometimes assist with overgrown highhedges. For advice, scan the QR code or visit: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/highhedges](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/highhedges)

## Survey Results

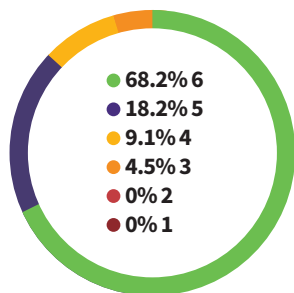
## Bulletin

Thank you to all those that completed the recent Bulletin customer survey. We will review the feedback and provide some improvement actions in the next edition. Please remember Bulletin is available online at: [news.westlothian.gov.uk/bulletin](http://news.westlothian.gov.uk/bulletin)

### 1) How would you rate the overall quality of Bulletin?



### 2) Do you find the information in Bulletin easy to understand? Where 6 is very easy to understand and 1 is very difficult to understand.



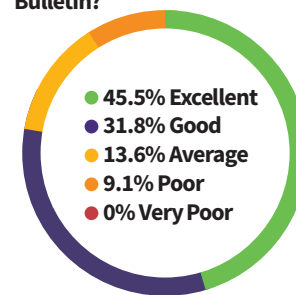
### 3) Please rate the stories you enjoy most

- 1 By far the most popular stories are ones that inform readers on the work of the council
- 2 The second most popular was education and school updates
- 3 Third most popular was Leisure, sport and open spaces

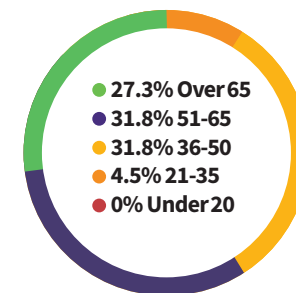
### 4) Can you suggest any changes/ improvements to Bulletin?

- "It should be done more frequently and there should be more editions to keep people up to date"
- "Any information should be on the council's website."
- "Really like the bulletin. Would like it to be more frequent."
- "I like the qr codes"
- "More stories relating to areas. Eg I live in Whitburn & so always like to read anything related Whitburn."
- "Leave copies available in supermarkets or post it online"
- "Get the people in photos to smile..."
- "More local news"
- "Personally I think you could save money but publishing the bulletin online instead of posting it out."
- "It should contain a feedback/letters page"
- "I think there should be more news about the local communities within the region. What are our local communities doing that help improve life in the area and how locals can contribute?"
- "Give an address where one can make comments or make suggestions for topics to be written about."
- "Happy with it as is! :)"

### 5) How would you rate the selection of articles in Bulletin?



### 6) What age group are you in?



## The West Lothian Schools Pipe Band competed at Gourock Highland Games on Sunday 14 March.

The band were in the combined Novice Juvenile A and Grade 4A section which has a mix of both youth and adult pipe bands. The band were awarded first place overall out of 11 bands who took part.

Pipe Major Graham Drummond said a great day was had by all and he was very proud of all the students in the band.



# We care... could you?

West Lothian  
Health & Social Care Partnership  
westlothianhscp.org.uk

Right now, there are young people in West Lothian who are never going to be able to return to the care of their birth family.

These young people are looking for a forever foster family to provide a safe, caring environment.

The children who need foster families are the same as other children, they go to school, they like the cinema, they like to play, make friends, listen to music and take part in clubs.



You could be the family we are looking for:

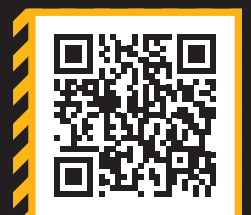
If you are interested in finding out more about young people who need a home with a loving family please contact the Family Placement Team on 07863557552 or by emailing [C&FFamilyPlacementTeam@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:C&FFamilyPlacementTeam@westlothian.gov.uk) or visit [www.westlothian.gov.uk/lovefostering](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/lovefostering).



Look after West Lothian's amazing natural environment by ensuring you dispose of all your waste responsibly.

**Fly-tipping is illegal and dangerous**  
Anyone caught could be fined up to **£40,000** or face a **jail sentence**.

Report it:



[westlothian.gov.uk/dontwaste](http://westlothian.gov.uk/dontwaste)





### A statue of Scottish singer-songwriter Lewis Capaldi has been unveiled at his former school

Pupils and teachers at St Kentigern's Academy in Blackburn created the tribute sculpture.

Capaldi, 26, was presented with the bronze sculpture at St Kentigern's Academy in Blackburn to mark the release of his second album.

Upon its unveiling, Capaldi said: "You've really captured my essence. It's pretty weird-looking but I like it."

St Kentigern's Academy Headteacher Andrew Sharkey said: "Everyone at the school is hugely proud of what our former pupil Lewis has achieved, so when his management team contacted us, we were delighted to get involved."

"The pupils were really pleased with Lewis' reaction to their hard work, and we wish him every success with his new album."

### West Lothian Cycle Circuit Opens

**A world-class community outdoor cycling circuit which was built to promote and encourage grassroots cycling and improve physical and mental health in the area has now opened.**

The West Lothian Cycle Circuit, is a 10-year vision from the local community who were at the heart of its inception.

Based at Xcite Linlithgow, the outdoor circuit is a 1km traffic-free, tarmac circuit made up of 4 loops and is fenced and flood lit for safe all year-round use.

It's taken just over a year to build the circuit in Linlithgow, but it's been over a decade in the planning after Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT) first conceived the

plan at community consultation in 2012.

A total of £1.25million was invested towards the development of the circuits with funds coming from a range of partners and extensive community fundraising over the years.

£636,000 was provided towards the circuit via the national Cycling Facilities Fund. West Lothian Council is provided £349,000 with the remaining costs being generated from a range of external funders and community fundraising.

The circuits' weekly calendar will have 'drop-in' sessions for public use and organised group activities for cyclists, runners, joggers, nordic skiers and in-line skaters.

Executive councillor for economy, community empowerment & wealth building, Kirsteen Sullivan said:

"This has been a community led initiative from the outset and everyone involved should be proud of the role they have played in delivering a facility which will bring a great deal of joy to both cycling enthusiasts and the wider community."



For details on how to book the West Lothian Cycle Circuit, please visit the West Lothian Leisure website: [www.westlothianleisure.com/current-activities/west-lothian-cycle-circuit/](http://www.westlothianleisure.com/current-activities/west-lothian-cycle-circuit/)

### Road safety schemes approved for West Lothian

**It is expected that five key casualty reduction schemes will be introduced this year on West Lothian's road network - in addition to work at the Avon Gorge.**

West Lothian Council bases the casualty reduction schemes using recorded accident data to analyse accidents which are formally recorded by Police Scotland. Investigations are then carried out before proposals for the council's casualty reduction programme is produced and prioritised. This is combined with the availability of funding to implement the schemes.

The schemes prioritised for this year to maximise the council's investment.

**The five casualty reduction schemes are:**

**A704 from A71 to A706:**

- Improve surface friction and road markings.

**A706 from boundary to Linlithgow:**

- Improve surface friction, signing and lining improvements.

**A803 junction with the M9 Linlithgow:**

- Sign alterations, road marking and coloured surfacing improvements.

**B8084 South Street, Armadale:**

- Pedestrian refuge near Bowling Green Rad and improved road markings.

**A71 from West Calder to South Lanarkshire Council boundary:**

- Central hatching to reduce carriageway with through rural sections and a 50mph speed limit throughout rural sections.

New traffic signals will also be installed at the A801 at the junction with A706 at the top of the Avon Gorge. This casualty reduction project has had additional funding approved by Transport Scotland and should be in place before the end March 2024.



# Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer is an **opportunity for communities to deliver positive outcomes through the ownership or occupation of public land and buildings.**

Community Asset transfer empowers communities and provides an opportunity for you to shape and deliver the services and facilities that you consider your community needs.

Opportunities to improve your community



Community Hub



If you are interested in using Community Asset Transfer to make a difference and improve your community, begin by scanning the QR code or by visiting: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/Community-Asset-Transfer](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/Community-Asset-Transfer)





# New Kids Coaching Courses!

We have added NEW Xcite kids coaching courses to our timetables!



We currently have spaces available for football, gymnastics, golf and our award-winning Learn 2 Swim programme! Scan the QR code to check out our latest availability and to register your interest!



## Xcite's Men's Health Week



Thank you to all of the customers who came and celebrated Men's Health Week with Xcite!

From 12th - 18th June, our venues put on a special timetable of men's only activities including a water based fitness class, outdoor Xcite FIT classes, and half price football on our 3G pitches.

The purpose of the week is to raise awareness of preventable health problems that disproportionately affect men, encouraging them to gain the courage to seek help and support if struggling.

## Xcite Ageing Well

The Xcite Ageing Well project promotes healthy lifestyles for adults over 50 in West Lothian!

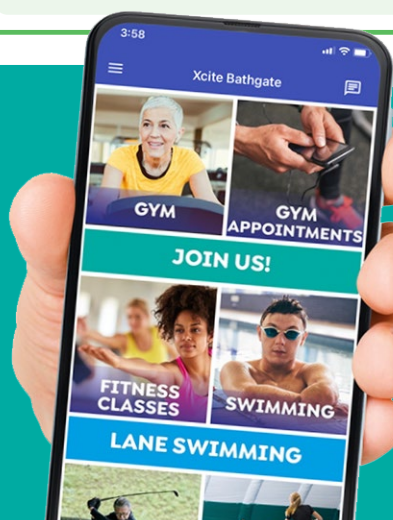


The Xcite Ageing Well project is a Lothian wide initiative and is part of the UK Ageing Well network. It aims to increase the expectation of good health in later life with activities that improve physical health, mental health and wellbeing. The emphasis is on meeting new people and making physical activity accessible and enjoyable.

The programme has over 17 years of successfully making a significant difference to the lives of those who regularly attend our activities. Volunteers and the Xcite Team help to deliver the activities, encouraging and supporting participation in physical activity such as walks, dancing, exercise, singing, knitting and much more.

As well as the many exciting classes and activities held throughout the week, the Ageing Well project organises and supports many large events for older adults including the OPAL and Xcite games, and most recently the Xcite 'Canalympic' games which took place in Xcite Craigswood this year.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the programme and to view our current timetable.



Get the latest information right at your fingertips! View activities, make bookings and stay up to date with the latest news on the WLL Xcite App now. Download today from the App Store or Google Play.

