

West Lothian



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Informing and involving West Lothian's tenants

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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

Hannah Grey - Quality Development Officer

Caitlin Howie - Quality Development Officer

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 help:

- ensure you maximise your income and check that you are claiming all benefits you may be entitled to
- you to prioritise debts to ensure the most important are paid first
- work out realistic repayment plans, taking into account your income and expenses.

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.
- Have your say on high-level policies and procedures.
- Most importantly, have your voice heard within the service and help shape 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!



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.



Payment Office Closures

A reminder that payment offices at the Jim Walker Partnership Centre (Bathgate) and Arrochar House (Livingston) are now closed. However customers continue to have a wide range of options available to make payments such as rent and council tax, and plenty of alternative options for receiving payments.

[More information](#)



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

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.

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

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

Antisocial behaviour and noise



As the better weather approaches and people are out and about and catching up with friends, the Safer Neighbourhood Team often see an increase in complaints of anti social behaviour. We are asking people to be mindful of how their daily activities affect neighbours. It is good to be neighbourly. Talking to your neighbours and looking out for those less able can improve everyone's health and wellbeing.

Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) means a person(s) behaving in a way that causes, or is likely to cause, alarm and distress to you or your community.

ASB includes noise disturbances, loud music, parties and shouting. Sometimes domestic noise can be antisocial and can include amplified noise, playing instruments, loud banging or sometimes DIY.

For anyone experiencing antisocial behaviour or noise related disturbances, contact 01506 280000. The Safer Neighbourhood Team are able to provide advice and assistance and have a noise witnessing service.

If you wish to report antisocial behaviour or seek advice or assistance, please contact The Safer Neighbourhood Team at: snt@westlothian.gov.uk or call West Lothian Council on 01506 280000

More information about antisocial behaviour and FAQs

For matters that relate more to tenancy management issues such as right of access, waste disposal issues, fire safety concerns, communal door access or garden problems.

- Call West Lothian Council on: 01506 280000
- Contact the Registered Landlord

For serious issues of antisocial behaviour or to report a crime or ongoing incident, including a Hate incident/crime or Domestic Abuse, you can also contact Police Scotland on 101 or in serious circumstances for ongoing disturbances; call 999, or you can report it anonymously via Crimestoppers on: 0800 555 111.

Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act

On 22nd October 2003 the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act came into force. It is an offence for any person who is in charge of a dog not to immediately remove, and dispose of appropriately, any excrement if the animal defecates in any public place without reasonable excuse or consent of the landowner.



This includes pavements, footpaths, roads, parks, recreational pitches, cycleways, communal land, back greens, stairs, closes, and any open land that the public has access to. Excrement should be picked up and disposed of in a responsible manner by either depositing it in the nearest dog waste bin, litter bin or in your domestic waste at home.

Fouling on land to which the public do not have access, such as gardens, cannot be dealt with under the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act. However, where it is allowed to accumulate, causing potential smell, flies or other problems, Environmental Health can intervene using the law of **Statutory Nuisance law**. It is expected that residents will clear fouling from their gardens on a daily basis.

For more information see [Dog Fouling on Private Land](#).

What can I use to clean up my dog's foul?

- You can buy poop scoop bags from most pet shops however old carrier bags are also effective.
- As a responsible dog owner, you can prevent the problem of dog fouling in public places by considering the following points.
 - If you have a garden, teach your dog to "go" there before you leave your home
 - Always carry the poop scoop bags or a carrier bag to clean up after your dog
 - Never let your dog out alone

Danny Mullen

Good Neighbour Award

Everyone needs good neighbours and we would like you to tell us about yours.

We know that there are many people living in West Lothian who deserve to be recognised for their thoughtfulness and consideration to their neighbours. We would like to give you the chance to pay tribute to someone special, either adult or young person, whose kindness has made a real difference to your life or that of another neighbour.

A good neighbour could be someone who:

- looks after your home or pet when you are on holiday
- puts out and brings your bin in

- helps out with gardening or shopping and has been there when you needed someone to talk to
- OR someone who is simply a good neighbour all the time.

Winners will be provided with a spot in our tenant’s news and a £50 voucher for Livingston Centre or a supermarket of their choice, not forgetting a certificate will be provided to those who were nominated and to the winners.

Danny was an active member of tenant participation and a member of the tenant panel for over 20 years; he made a huge contribution to Tenant Participation. He introduced the first TP Strategy in West Lothian in 1998, developed the first Tenant Led Inspections in 1999 and was heavily involved in other areas of TP, including as a tenant assessor of the Scottish Housing Regulator. Danny was well-liked and known across the service and by partners due to his exceptional contribution to participation. He sadly passed away in 2019, and it was agreed to name the good neighbour awards in his memory at that point.

Terms and Conditions:

You and/or your ‘good neighbour’ should be a West Lothian Council Tenant. Sorry, but we can’t accept nominations from a family member or someone living in the same property as you. Your ‘Good neighbour’ can be any age.

We will contact you to let you know if your entry has been successful, and we will also write to the ‘Good neighbour’ to let them know that they have been nominated.

Closing Date Monday 12th August 2024

Please nominate your good neighbour by clicking the link below:

[Danny Mullen Good Neighbour Award 2024](#)

or you can email nominations into TP@westlothian.gov.uk or post them to **TP Team, HCBS, West Lothian Council, Howden South Road, Livingston EH54 6FF** please include the following:

- your own contact details
- Name / Address / Tel number and Email address
- Your good neighbour’s contact details
- Name / Address / Tel number and Email address (if known)
- Tell us about your ‘Good Neighbour’ and why you think they should win?



Universal Credit Managed Migration – have you received a letter?

The Move to Universal Credit managed migration programme is now well underway. DWP are in the process of contacting people who currently receive benefits such as Tax Credits, Income Support, Jobseeker’s Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit with an invitation to change over to Universal Credit. Contact is being made in phases so don’t worry if you haven’t yet received a letter as this process is estimated to take up to the end of 2025.



Over 2,300 Migration Notices have been issued to people in West Lothian since September 2023 and the vast majority have received at least one reminder notice. More than 300 people have missed the deadline to claim and may have lost out on transitional protection and experienced loss of income as a result. If you have received a Migration Notice letter, it is important that you do not ignore this and that you seek advice as soon as you can before

making your Universal Credit claim. The Advice Shop can help you to understand how Universal Credit works and any differences from your current benefit, help you decide when you should claim and explain how your payments are likely to be impacted moving forward. You will have a deadline to make your claim by depending on when the notice is issued and legacy benefits will be stopped if the claim is not made in time.

The most frequently asked questions are about:

■ Transitional element
included in some circumstances as a top up payment for those moving from older legacy benefits to Universal Credit

■ Timing of claim
you must make a claim 3 months from the date the managed migration letter was sent out

■ Deadline day
is the day specified in the migration notice by which a UC claim must be made



The Advice Shop is currently offering Universal Credit Migration appointments with a dedicated advisor for anyone affected who would like to discuss their options. If you have received a migration notice letter and would like advice please

contact the Advice Shop in the following ways:

- Scan the QR code
- Email advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk
- Call 01506 283000 (option 4)



Referral form [➤](#)

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.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

West Lothian Council urges tenants to dispose of household rubbish in the appropriate bins and not to collate bags and discarded items in garden areas. This will reduce the health and safety risk that these items can cause by vermin or accidents occurring and reduces the risk of deliberate fire setting.

Safe waste disposal also reduces tenancy management breaches. [More information.](#)

BROWN BINS

You can purchase your permit by clicking the link below or by calling 01506 280000.

Once your permit arrives, please follow the instructions provided and attach it to your brown bin. A permit costs £50 per household (maximum two brown bins per household).

[Purchase a permit →](#)



GROW YOUR OWN FRUIT & VEG

Growing your own fruit and vegetables can be a fun and rewarding experience. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Choose the right location:** Find a spot in your garden that gets plenty of sunlight and has good soil drainage.
- Decide what to plant:** Consider what fruits and vegetables grow well in your area and what you and your family like to eat.
- Prepare the soil:** Before planting, remove any weeds and add organic matter, such as compost, to enrich the soil.
- Start planting:** Follow the instructions on the seed packets or seedlings to plant your fruits and veggies at the right depth and spacing.
- Water and fertilise:** Keep your plants well-watered and fertilised throughout the growing season to promote healthy growth.
- Pick and enjoy:** Once your fruits and vegetables are ready to harvest, pick them at the peak of ripeness and enjoy the delicious flavours of your home-grown produce!

We hope these tips help you get started on your own fruit and vegetable garden.



SUMMER SAFETY 2024

West Lothian Community Safety Partners would like you to have a safe summer while hopefully enjoying the better weather.

Here are a few helpful tips to keep yourself and your family safe this summer:



SUN SAFETY ADVICE FROM NHS

The safest way to enjoy the sun and protect your skin from sunburn is to use a combination of shade, clothing and sunscreen.

Here are some top tips:

- seek shelter; avoid sun exposure between 11am and 3pm when sun is typically stronger
- cover up using clothing such as a wide-brimmed hat and long-sleeved tops, closed weaved fabrics may offer better sun protection
- use sunscreen properly
- wear sunglasses with wraparound lenses or wide arms
- babies under 6 months of age should be kept out of direct strong sunlight
- infants and children should be well protected at all times
- extra care is required for those with fair skin, light coloured eyes, fair or red hair, freckles or moles.



WATER SAFETY

- If it looks like it is going to be nice weather and you may be thinking about going to the beach or having some fun at Scotland's beautiful rivers, lochs, canals and reservoirs - please stay safe and **#RespectTheWater**
 - Beaches should be treated like our streets – Keep them Clean – ‘Take your Litter Home’ or use the bins provided
 - Leave inflatable toys at home
 - Water Safety Scotland highlights the following key pieces of advice in its Water Safety Code: WSS Water Safety Code & Language translations (watersafetyscotland.org.uk)
 - Stop and think - spot the dangers
 - Stay together, stay close
 - Know what to do in an emergency
 - Even if the sun is out, it takes a lot of heat to warm up the Scottish Waters and the cold water can still shock
 - If in trouble, FLOAT to live
 - In an emergency, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard
- Learn about **Cold Water Shock and its effects**
Cold Water Shock | Water Safety Scotland description/advice
For more water safety advice, go to: [Advice Hub](#) | [Water Safety Scotland](#)

HOME SAFETY

Be aware of theft slip-ins. These can happen whilst you may be busy in the house or in the garden. By keeping your doors and windows secure or latched, you will prevent people entering, stealing, and leaving just as quick. Often people don't know thieves have been in, until it is too late.

Doorstep crime is a problem that continues to plague our communities year on year. These incidents can have a devastating and lasting effect on victims from disruption to their homes or property and financial loss that impacts heavily on their emotional wellbeing and health.

It's not easy to spot a rogue trader. They will often look genuine. They will look professional, have a branded van, a website, and business cards. They may even have their company listed on review sites, and appear to be endorsed by reputable trade associations. They may look authentic, but cowboy traders just want to scam you.

Don't let scammers in to your home. Just say no.

Further crime prevention advice

When it comes to doorstep crime

Two words that will help us beat doorstep crime "no thanks"



FIRE SAFETY

- Whether you're off camping in the countryside, barbecuing with friends or enjoying a picnic with the family, you can take some simple steps to protect yourself from danger:
- For all you budding gardeners, if you burn leaves and debris, consider alternatives like composting. Before lighting any outdoor fire, check for any restrictions, if any permits are required or permissions required by the landowner.
- Never burn if the smoke and flames are blowing towards your home or your neighbour's home.
- Here is some useful information about fires, the great outdoors and advice on how you can leave your home 'fire safe' if you plan to leave it for an extended period of time.

Click [here](#) for more information

Deliberate Fires - During the summer as the schools break-up, we often see a rise in the number of deliberate fires across Scotland. These include refuse and wheelie bin fires, fires in stairwells or derelict buildings, as well as grass and countryside fires made worse by hot and dry conditions.

If you're a parent or guardian, you can help reduce the number of deliberately set fires by discussing fire safety with young people.

Reducing deliberate fires | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (firescotland.gov.uk)

DRIVING SAFELY

- If you are drinking, have a dedicated driver who is not drinking or order a TAXI – Don't Drink and Drive – it is not worth it, and remember to drive 'like Grans in the car!'

#DRIVESMART

For more information about road safety, internet safety, safe nights out and protecting your property, and much more, you will find more information [here](#).



DOMESTIC ABUSE

Sometimes, we need a little bit of extra help and support - West Lothian Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) offers confidential and friendly support to people who experience abuse and sexual assault and support the Living In Safe Accommodation project (LISA).

- Telephone Number: 01506 281055
- Mobile / Text: 07786681238 (Mon-Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm) or 07917 582539 (Tuesday-Thursday 9.00 am – 4.30 pm)
- Email: dasat@westlothian.gov.uk or in an emergency, call 999

Free child swimming sessions at Fauldhouse Swimming Pool during school holidays



Fauldhouse Swimming Pool are offering one free swimming session per day per child, between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday during school holidays. This offer is also available on Fridays from 12.30pm to 4pm during term-time.

Please note due to the pool's capacity swim session numbers are restricted.

For more information please call 01501 773000 or visit Fauldhouse Partnership Centre and speak to a member of staff.

More information



Launching on Saturday 22nd June at a library near you

The Summer Reading Challenge is open to all primary school aged children and is designed for all reading abilities.

Children are asked to read 6 books over the summer and will receive special rewards each time they finish a book. They can read whatever they like e.g. comic books, fact books, joke books or picture books, just as long as they are borrowed from the library.

In addition, your local libraries will host a wide variety of events and activities for families to enjoy throughout the summer.

Sign up to take part in The Summer Reading Challenge in any West Lothian Library from Saturday 22nd June. For more information please contact your local library.

More information



16 DAYS OF ACTION

25 NOVEMBER – 10 DECEMBER 2024

16 Days of Action against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign to raise awareness about Gender Based Violence.

West Lothian's Gender Based Violence Committee are seeking your views about how we can best raise awareness amongst the local community and wider public.



Please complete the anonymous short survey by scanning the QR code to ensure your views are considered in planning for this years campaign activity, that starts on the 25th November 2024.



West Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership



West Lothian Council

DEALING WITH CONDENSATION IN THE HOME

Condensation is the most common form of dampness in buildings and occurs when warm moist air comes into contact with cold surfaces such as walls and ceilings.

Moisture builds during everyday living, including when you cook, dry clothes and shower. When condensation appears, wipe it dry to avoid a build-up of black mould growing on walls, curtains and woodwork. It's important you take steps to limit the moisture in the air.

There are a number of ways you can reduce condensation. Try implementing this advice at home:

- Keep ventilation vents free from obstruction.
- Where possible, use your heating system efficiently and effectively. It's more effective to have heating on a low setting for longer to maintain a minimum temperature rather than heating to high temperatures at short bursts.
- Open windows a little when cooking and showering.
- Make sure tumble dryers are vented outside.

Visit [Dampness in Homes](#) for more information.

There has been an increase in the number homes reporting issues with condensation and mould growth. Some of these may be linked to tenants turning off the electrical ventilation systems due to perceived cost of running the systems.

Sometimes we can't help making lots of moisture in the air - cooking, taking a shower, airing/drying

clothes etc. Stop the water spreading to other parts of the house by shutting the door and opening a window in the room to let the wet air escape. You should also use your extractor fans where they are fitted.

Extractor fans are used to control indoor air quality. A well-ventilated house can reduce or eliminate

surface condensation altogether by replacing humid stagnant air with fresh air.

Extractor fans works by mechanically drawing the damp air out of the building and replacing it with fresh air from outside the building.

Based on the manufacturer's literature and the average electricity price 28.62p per kWh (current average price for customers on a standard variable tariff), the running costs for bathroom and kitchen fans are as follows:

	Bathroom	Kitchen
Background Trickle	22 hours per day	22 hours per day
Boost Ventilation	2 hours per day	2 hours per day
Electricity Price	28.6p per kilowatt hour	28.6p per kilowatt hour
Annual Power	13.14kW	27.01kW
Total Annual Running Cost	£3.76	£7.72

This gives an annual running cost of only £11.48 based a two hour 'boost' per day for a typical house with 1 kitchen and 1 bathroom/shower room.

If you have an extractor fan in a wet area use it every time you bathe or shower, it costs less than you think. Other tips on controlling ventilation can be found by clicking the link:

[More information](#) →

Building Services, Repairs: who's responsible?

As your landlord, Housing, Customer and Building Services have a legal responsibility to carry out certain repairs, while others are the tenant's responsibility.

Did you know
internal doors
are the tenant's
responsibility?

Did you know
skirtings are
the tenant's
responsibility?

The table below shows tenant's and landlord's responsibilities:

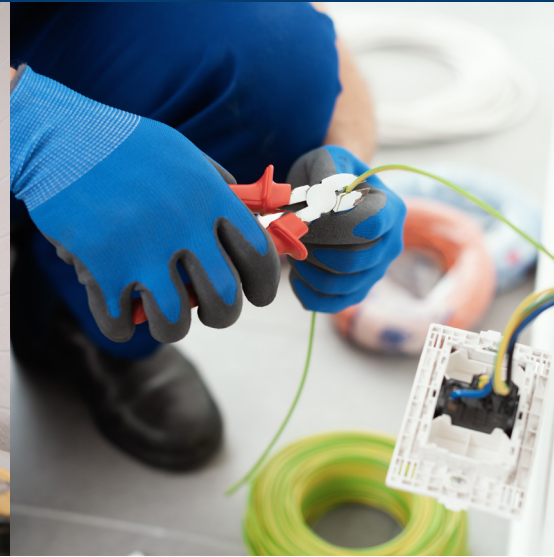
Repair Type	Whos's responsible		Comments
	WLC	Tenant	
WINDOW			
Glass in windows		✓	Unless you can show the glass was broken by vandals or similar
Sills	✓		
Window Catches	✓		
Window Sash (not open or close)	✓		
Window Handles	✓		
STRUCTURE			
Plaster Repairs to Ceilings/Walls	✓		
Damp Proof Course	✓		
Floors	✓		
Outside Woodwork	✓		
Roughcast & Plastering	✓		
Skirting Boards		✓	
Stairs	✓		
Steps to Entrances	✓		
Walls	✓		Refers to Structural Wall of Building
DOORS			
Doorbell		✓	Except for Door Entry
Door Chain	✓		
Door Nameplate		✓	
Glass on Inside Door & Screen	✓	✓	If the property type has internal doors or a vestibule door screen with a glass panel fitted, which has been damaged, this will be recharged to the tenant.
Internal Doors, including handles/latches, timber facings etc.		✓	
Lost or Broken Keys	✓	✓	WLC will replace the keys, but the cost will be recharged to the tenant.
Locking Mechanism on External Door	✓		
Outside Doors (including doors in flats)	✓		

Full details of the landlord and tenant responsibilities can be found online [here](#).

New postcode look-up service launched for council tenants



West Lothian Council has launched a post-code look-up facility for council housing tenants where they can check when their home is scheduled for improvement and maintenance works.



This service enables council tenants to search for the proposed review year for Housing Capital Investment Programme work to be carried out in their homes.

Tenants can find out when a review is to be carried out for work to take place in their property by entering their postcode into the system before selecting their address from a drop-down menu. They'll then be presented with a table detailing when capital work reviews are due to take place for their property. Such works include:

- Kitchen and Bathroom renovations
- Windows and Doors replacements
- Central heating replacements
- Electrical periodic inspections
- Smoke and heat detector installations
- Cyclical Maintenance works
- Roof and Render upgrades

While the review itself will be conducted in the designated programme year, actual installation may occur in the subsequent year depending on lead-in times for specific elements.

It's important to note that the review date provided may at times be subject to change.

The system has been developed following engagement with council tenants with feedback indicating tenants sought more ways to find out when their home was due for capital work upgrades.

Further details on the Housing Capital Improvement Programme can be found [here](#).

[Access the new look-up system >](#)



Executive councillor for housing services
George Paul said:

“The council continues to prioritise the ongoing maintenance and improvement of its social housing stock to provide quality homes for council tenants. The council carries out regular engagement with our tenants, and their views are much valued in informing the work of the Housing service. Feedback from tenants indicated a desire for accessible information on capital programme works. We therefore hope the introduction of this new look-up system will help tenants feel better informed around capital programme works for their homes.”



Surveying our Homes

School Place, Broxburn

Housing, Customer and Building Services will be carrying out their Stock Condition Surveys on West Lothian Council homes this summer.

What is a stock condition survey?

A stock condition survey is a visual inspection of the inside and outside of your home, to help give us an accurate picture of the overall condition of our properties; it takes around one hour. The surveyor collects information on the condition of your home, looking specifically at two areas:

- **Stock Condition** – the surveyor will assess the age and condition of major elements in your home such as the kitchen, bathroom, windows, doors and roofs.
- **EPC Energy Survey** – the surveyor will carry out an energy survey, collecting information on features which allow us to calculate how energy efficient your home is.

The survey will involve a visual inspection of all of the key areas and building components in your property. As this is visual only, no items of furniture or any other items need to be moved and no special arrangements need to be made. As part of the survey the surveyor might need to ask you two or three questions.

This survey does not collect information on any outstanding repairs to your home.

If you need a repair, you can request this by telephoning the Customer Service Centre on **01506 280000** or online at [Request a Repair](#).

Why are we carrying out this survey?

The data gathered from the surveys will be used to plan for repairs and future investment programmes. In the future properties will be surveyed every 5 years.

You will be contacted by a member of the Housing Strategy Team to make an appointment for one of our in-house West Lothian Council surveyors to attend; the surveyor will have an ID badge.

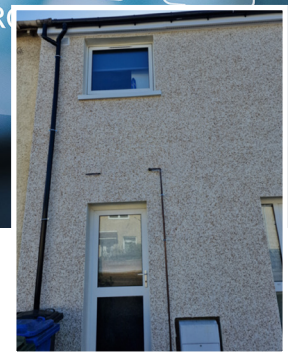
What happens after the survey?

Once we have completed all the surveys for the year, we will compile all the information together and create a report on the overall condition of the stock.

Please note that we only replace components when it is too expensive to repair them. Whilst we will have recommended re-inspection dates for elements of your home, based on recommended lifecycles, these dates are used to support financial planning only and are not a confirmed year of re-inspection or replacement dates.

West Lothian Council Leads the Way in Energy Efficiency Upgrades

West Lothian Council continues its commitment to enhancing energy efficiency in residential properties through a comprehensive annual programme. This initiative carefully balances finite resources to maximise capital investment, with a focus on improving the energy ratings of homes to ensure tenants enjoy a level of comfort at an affordable cost.



The importance of this work has increased significantly over the past four years as energy prices have more than tripled, despite government interventions to cap rates. Additionally, the ongoing cost of living crisis has pushed more people into fuel poverty, making the council's efforts even more crucial.

For the past 11 years, West Lothian Council has successfully secured funding from the Energy Efficiency Scotland Area Based Scheme (EES ABS). This has brought over £10 million in energy efficiency improvements to privately owned, hard-to-heat properties across the region. In the most recent phase (ABS11), 73 properties in Staunton Rise and Talisman Rise received external wall insulation. This work targets specific house types. The way in which they were constructed means that they had no insulation and have been historically difficult (and expensive) to heat.

In addition to external wall insulation for non-standard construction properties, the council's contractor also carried out essential

upgrades such as re-roofing, cavity extraction and refilling, loft insulation top-ups, and roughcast replacement to the standard traditional construction properties. These upgrades were implemented in 68 council-owned properties in Norman Rise, Letham Grove and Jubilee Avenue. Both private and social properties in Dedridge benefited from loft insulation top-ups and enhanced ventilation in kitchens and bathrooms to combat condensation and moisture build-up.

Looking ahead, the council is planning and applying for the 12th year of the ABS program, targeting more "hard-to-treat" properties in the most deprived areas of West Lothian.

As part of last year's capital investment program, 21 remaining Swedish Timber properties were identified for fabric and energy improvements. Many of these homes have been upgraded over the years with new roofs, glazing, doors, loft insulation, and

external wall insulation, bringing them up to modern insulation standards. The final three properties are scheduled for completion in the coming months, ensuring these homes are protected for generations to come.

In Whitburn and Blackburn, the council has made significant strides in improving its remaining Swedish Timber properties. Enhancements included the installation of external wall insulation, triple glazing, loft insulation top-ups, and new roofs, which have markedly improved the comfort and energy efficiency of 18 houses across four streets. Triple glazing alone has reduced heat loss by up to 70%, while loft insulation top-ups have cut heating bills by 25%. These measures not only enhance the durability and longevity of the properties but also contribute to lower energy bills and healthier living environments for tenants.

West Lothian Council's ongoing commitment to energy efficiency demonstrates a proactive approach to tackling fuel poverty and improving the quality of life for its residents.

DIY Windmills

Materials Tools

- Crayons or Markers
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Push Pin
- Straw



Instructions

- 1 Take your piece of paper and cut it into a perfect square.
- 2 Decorate both sides of the paper with whatever design you wish.
- 3 Fold the paper diagonally so it turns into a triangle and crease it lightly. Repeat this for the opposite direction as well. You will then unfold and have a creased "X" on the page.

- 4 Cut along the creases about halfway to the middle of the paper. Be sure not to cut all the way.



- 5 Bend each corner into the middle. Make sure to bend and not fold.

- 6 Once all 4 corners are in the middle push the push pin through them all as well as the straw. Be careful not to hurt yourself with the pin- get an adult to do this step!





Tenants Tasty Treats

No bake Lemon Cheesecake

Ingredients

- 100g butter, melted, plus extra for greasing
- 275g gingernut biscuits
- 625g full-fat cream cheese
- 140g icing sugar, sifted
- 3 lemons, zest and juice (about 80ml)
- 150ml double cream
- 75g lemon curd

Method

1. Grease and line a 22-23cm/8½-9in loose-bottomed or springform cake tin with baking paper. Blitz the biscuits to crumbs in a food processor or put into a sturdy, sealed plastic food bag and bash to crumbs using a rolling pin.
2. Tip into a bowl with the melted butter and mix thoroughly until the crumbs are completely coated. Transfer to the prepared tin and use the bottom of a glass or jar to press down firmly into an even layer over the base. Chill in the fridge for 1 hour.
3. To make the filling, put the cream cheese, icing sugar and zest from 2 of the lemons in a large bowl, and beat with an electric whisk until smooth. Reserving 2 teaspoons of lemon juice, add the rest of the juice to the cream cheese mixture. Pour in the cream and continue beating until the mixture is thick.
4. Spoon the filling into the tin and spread evenly over the biscuit base, smoothing the top with the back of a spatula or spoon. Chill overnight in the fridge to set.
5. To serve, remove the cheesecake from the tin, carefully peeling off the baking paper, and transfer to a serving plate. Place the lemon curd in a bowl and loosen with just enough of the remaining lemon juice to create a runny texture. Drizzle over the top of the cheesecake and decorate with the remaining zest.

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

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages.

For interpretation and translation services please telephone our Customer Service Centre on 01506 280000. We also use Browsealoud text speak software on our website