



WHITBURN & BLACKBURN LOCALITY PLAN

2023-2026

WHITBURN & BLACKBURN LOCALITY PLAN 2023-2026

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Introduction

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, requires Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) to develop locality plans for specific areas experiencing poorer outcomes. In West Lothian, these areas have been identified through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

The plans aim to ensure that the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) is delivered meaningfully at a local level and that local issues identified by communities can influence CPP activity.

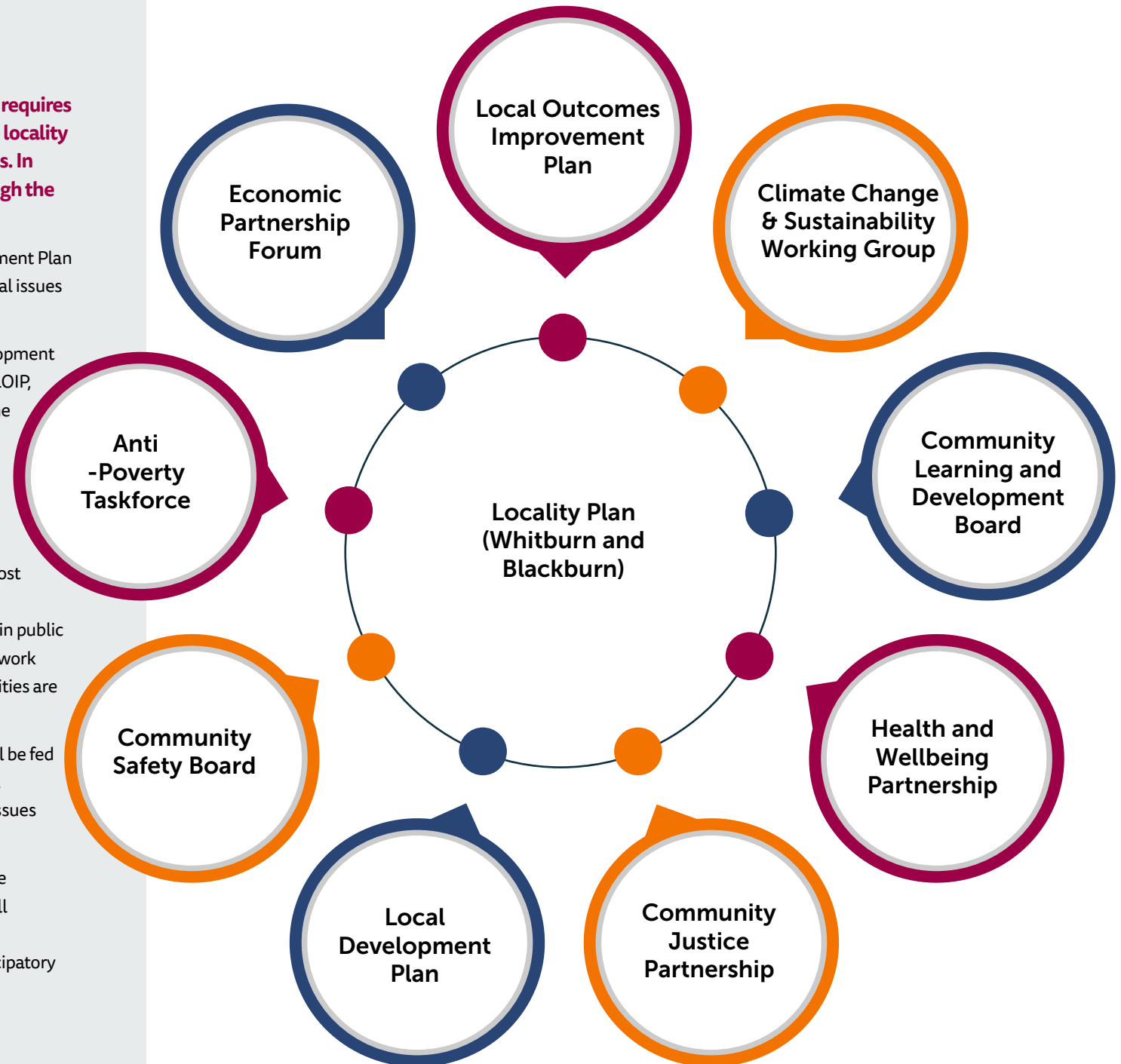
The Community Wealth Building Team manages the development and delivery of locality plans – creating a link between the LOIP, other key strategic partnership plans and structures, and the communities in West Lothian's most deprived areas.

This locality plan is one of six across West Lothian that aims to put the identified communities at the centre of its approach to tackling inequalities.

This plan has been developed against the backdrop of the cost of living crisis which is having a significant impact on local communities and their residents, coupled with a reduction in public finances. It is therefore even more important that partners work together at a local level to address the issues that communities are facing.

Priorities identified through engagement at a local level will be fed up to Community Planning partners and other key services. Services will also work with local communities to address issues identified through evidence and data.

The plan will provide a platform at a local level to deliver the key strategic themes of Community Wealth Building, as well as implementing the main mechanisms of the Community Empowerment Act such as community participation, participatory budgeting and community asset transfer.



Whitburn and Blackburn

LOCAL CONTEXT

Both Whitburn and Blackburn are ex-mining towns situated in the west of West Lothian, on the southside of the M8.

Whitburn is one of the five traditional towns in West Lothian and is the larger of the two communities, with a population of 11,900 (2021 figure). The Heartlands housing and business development, on its west side, is transforming the town and linking it more closely with Polkemmet Park.

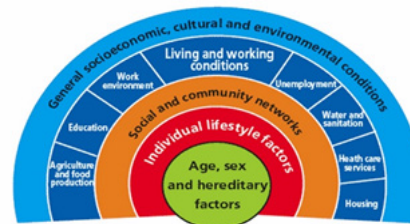
Blackburn, with a population of 5,775 (2017 figure), has also undergone transformation, with new housing developments to the south, and more planned to the west. The village centre has seen most change in recent years with the building of a new partnership centre.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and other key data

Whitburn and Blackburn have been identified as areas requiring locality plans due to both areas containing a number of data zones, or neighbourhoods, ranked in the bottom 20% in the SIMD.

The SIMD ranks data zones based on scores across the following seven domains:

- Income
- Employment
- Health
- Education/Skills
- Housing
- Geographic Access
- Crime



The social determinants of health in the diagram to the left have a greater influence on our physical and mental health than health care systems, these need to be included when looking at reducing inequalities in our most deprived areas.

FOODBANK VOUCHERS

5,882 foodbank vouchers were distributed in West Lothian in the financial year 2022/23. Of these a fifth (1,162) were distributed in Whitburn and Blackburn.

About 2.1% of the West Lothian population were beneficiaries of the foodbank vouchers. In comparison, 8.7% of the child population and 4.8% of the adult population of Whitburn and Blackburn received help in the form of a food voucher.

Source: West Lothian Food Bank

LIFE EXPECTANCY

- Average Life expectancy in West Lothian is 77.24 for males and 80.6 for females.
- Male life expectancy in Blackburn is 77.45, Whitburn central is 73.24, Croftmalloch and Greenrigg is 78.31
- Female life expectancy is 76.7 in Blackburn, 78.74 in Whitburn central and 77.2 in Croftmalloch and Greenrigg.
- The area with the highest Male life expectancy is Linlithgow North at 85.03 and female is Linlithgow south at 87.05

Source: National Records Scotland

Claimant Count - March 24

Whitburn & Blackburn	West Lothian
3.9%	2.9%

Source: Office for National Statistics

Youth Claimant Count - March 24

West Lothian	Scotland
4.5%	4.3%

Source: Office for National Statistics

Whitburn and Blackburn

LOCAL CONTEXT

Scottish Index of Multi Deprivation (SIMD)

West Lothian has 35 data zones in the bottom two deciles of the SIMD, as shown [here](#). Four are in Whitburn and five are in Blackburn as shown in these maps.



Breaking down the SIMD data further:

Whitburn - Two data zones are in the bottom 10% overall in Scotland and all four are in the bottom 10% for employment and health.

Blackburn - Two data zones are in the bottom 10% overall in Scotland, four are in the bottom 10% for health, three are in the bottom 10% for education, employment and crime.

There is one data zone in both Whitburn and Blackburn in the bottom 5%

Therefore, within Whitburn and Blackburn there are four of the most deprived areas in Scotland.

All elements are made up of a range of factors. For example health is made up of alcohol, drugs, mortality, depression, low birth weight and emergency admissions to hospital.

Children Accessing non-Universal Free School Meals- 2022/23

Whitburn & Blackburn	West Lothian
22.6%	16.8%

Children in Low Income Families 21/22

The average number of children in low income families in West Lothian is 19.9%. Within Whitburn and Blackburn 16 data zones out of 21 are above the West Lothian average of 1 in 5 children living in low income families.

The following three data zones are twice the West Lothian average:

- **Blackburn (S01013361) - 39.4 %**
- **Whitburn Central (S01013374) - 41.6 %**
- **Whitburn Central (S01013372) - 54%**

Source: Scottish Government

Alcohol-related Hospital Admissions

the West Lothian average for hospital admission is 516.5 per 100,000. the rate for Whitburn and Blackburn are show below:

- **Whitburn Central (all central data zones) 952**
- **Blackburn (all data zones) 1220**

Source: ScotPho

In West Lothian there 76.2% of P1 children who are a healthy weight however 1.5% are at risk of underweight and 22.2% are at risk of overweight and or obesity.

In decile 1 (most deprived) 88 children are at risk of overweight/obesity

In decile 5 (least deprived) 57 children are at risk of overweight/obesity

Localities Planning Achievements to date

This new locality plan follows on from previous plans in both Whitburn and Blackburn that have been in place since in 2018. Well established local steering groups in both areas, made up of key community organisations and partners, have helped to develop local structures and deliver the actions within these plans. Some achievements from the previous plan are shown below. Several of these areas of work will carry forward into the new action plan for 2023 - 2026.

Town Centre Regeneration Funding

£455,000 bid for and utilised locally on community projects

Whitburn **£338,000**

Blackburn **£117,000**

Partnerships

Creation of a range of structures has enabled successful partnership working in Whitburn and Blackburn. These relationships work towards addressing the issues/priorities in the communities.

Key Community Organisations Supported by West Lothian Council's Voluntary Organisations budget

Community Action Blackburn and Whitburn CDT supported the development and delivery of projects to the value of **£158,478** to support these local communities.

Delivery of the Heartlands Developer Contributions

£40,000 allocated to three projects in Whitburn addressing the issues/priorities in the community.

Delivery of Community Choices pilot, using a range of community engagement methods in Blackburn

£40,000 allocated to three projects in Whitburn

Supported the leveraging in of external funding by key community organisations

Whitburn Community

Development Trust **£328,000**

Community Action Blackburn

£308,000

Influencing National Legislation

Blackburn Bonfire Night Action Group (BBNAG) was involved in the Firework and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Act 2022 ([Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles \(Scotland\) Act 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)) through the communities approach to tackling issues locally in relation to anti-social behaviour around bonfires and fireworks in Blackburn.

Capacity Building

The Community Wealth Building team has worked closely with several community groups, including Whitburn Community Development Trust and Community Action Blackburn, to support the development of local projects and funding applications, liaising with a range of services to deliver projects throughout the process.

The team initiated the Aspiring West Lothian project that provided both Whitburn CDT and Community Action Blackburn with £100k between 2017 and 2020, helping to transform them into key community organisations.

Specific Projects

A Placemaking in Whitburn development plan was created after the delivery of a charrette process. This identified a number of projects and successfully supported services and local groups to obtain funding for these, including the heritage trail, cycle paths, town walk and community garden.

Other projects in the area include:

- The implementation of Community Connections - aimed at reducing barriers for people accessing services - was supported in both areas in late 2022.
- Supporting the establishment of food projects in both areas. These have developed over the period including increased activity during the pandemic.
- Supporting Type 2 Diabetes work in Whitburn through the development of a whole systems approach to reduce obesity and Type 2 Diabetes using the Leeds Becket model.

⋮ Planning Structures and Partners

In Whitburn and Blackburn there are established locality planning groups that involve local community organisations and community planning partners.

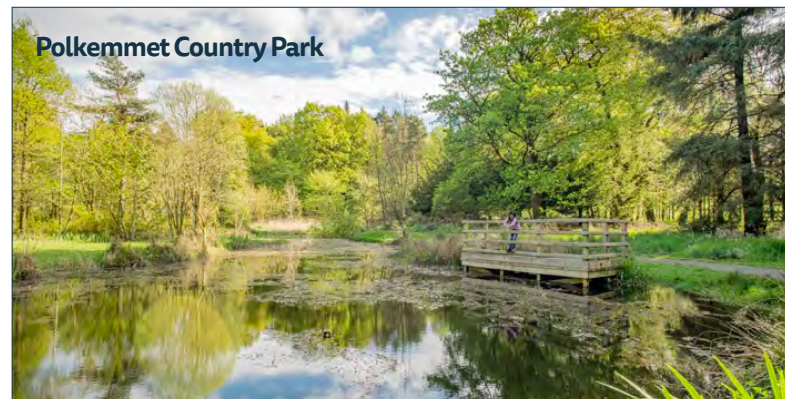
These local groups:

- sharing of information on service provision/ activities within the locality to help enhance current, and plan future, provision;
- identifying wider community needs from a services perspective;
- are a conduit for wider community engagement;
- developing collaborative working at local level; and
- working collaboratively to embed activity that aligns with community needs - where a local community led plan is established

These groups are specific to that particular area and have adapted over time to what works best. They will continue to evolve as required going forward.

⋮ Physical Assets

There are key physical assets within each area. These include:



Blackburn United Sports Club

Whitburn Community Centre

Easter Inch Moss / Seafield Law Blackburn

Blaeberry Woods and Park

Whitburn Xcite

Whitburn Community Garden

King George V Parks in Blackburn and Whitburn

Local schools

Whitburn Town Centre

Key Community Organisations

There are also key community organisations that are important to these communities. They provide a range of services and a voice for these communities and offer help to community planning partners looking to engage or deliver in these areas:

Whitburn Community Council	Whitburn Services Group	Whitburn Partnership Centre user group	Whitburn Community Education Centre Management Committee	Whitburn Community Development Trust
Community Action Blackburn	Blackburn Partnership Centre Management Committee	Change in Blackburn Group	Blackburn United Community Sports Club	Blackburn Community Council

The following services and organisations also have an important role to play in the locality planning process in Whitburn and Blackburn:

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Architecture and Design Scotland	WLC Housing	WLC NETs, Land and Countryside	Youth Action Project
Homeless services	Police Scotland	Change Grow Live	Community Wealth Building Team	CLD Youth Services
West Lothian Leisure	WLDAS	NHS Population Health	WLC Adult Learning	Local Schools and nurseries
Local Churches	Citizens Advice Bureau	Advice Shop	The Conservation Volunteers	The Larder
Cyrenians	Community facilities	Access2Employment		

📍 Developing the Action Plan

In developing the actions within the plan, consideration has been given to data gathered from a range of sources.

This includes:

- the findings from recent community engagement carried out by the Community Wealth Building team and partner organisations;
- statistical information relevant to the local areas;
- mapping of key services and organisations that deliver activity in the areas; and
- linking to priorities within the LOIP and other key strategic documents and plans.

This is a live document which seeks to build on the actions from the previous plan, continuing to develop the provision, capacity and sustainability of partners in these communities, and taking an asset-based approach wherever possible.

The plan will help to empower communities and support organisations to bring external funding into the area.

📍 Local engagement and localised data - Tools and approaches used

Various community engagement methods and tools have been utilised in both towns to help determine the community's priorities. Additional engagement carried out by partners was also used to provide a clear picture of what matters to those who live, work and visit both Whitburn and Blackburn. Examples of approaches used include:



Place Standards
utilising the
National Standards
for Community
Engagement



Face-to-face
Engagement

Online community
surveys capturing a
range of demographics
which make up the
community

Engagement



🌐 School engagement

Specific engagement within local primary schools was carried out in both towns. This sought the views from younger community members and was an important element in helping to determine the priorities for both areas.



When all the engagement materials were collated it provided a snap shot of what both communities felt were their priorities and would like to see addressed. In order to understand the level of need and to provide evidence to back up the need, further research utilising key statistical data was incorporated. The data sources analysed came from the Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPho) and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) along with local partner intelligence.

All findings were presented to the relevant steering groups that are established in each area to work on the actions within the plan. Both of these groups are made up of a range of services, organisations, third sector working groups and local community members who influence and support the work being delivered within their areas.



Identified Priorities

Following intensive engagement, analysis of local data relevant to West Lothian and Scotland and feedback from services, the following key priorities have been identified as the focus in Whitburn and Blackburn. (Further community priorities, not aligned to data and service priorities will be addressed through local community plans and joint working locally). All findings were presented to the relevant steering groups including Whitburn Services Group, Blackburn Future Group (including subgroups).

Whitburn

Poverty, work and local economy

- Addressing the impacts of the cost of living through specific local projects
- Addressing economic inactivity, unemployment, underemployment and skills needs
- Addressing Child Poverty locally
- Improve the look and vibrancy of the town centre and increase the local business base

Health and Wellbeing

- Reducing health inequalities focussing on the social determinants of health
- Working to improve mental health within the community with focus on social exclusion
- Reduce Obesity using a Whole Systems Approach to improve physical wellbeing

Blackburn

Poverty, work and local economy

- Addressing the impacts of the cost of living through specific local projects
- Addressing economic inactivity, unemployment, underemployment and skills needs
- Addressing Child Poverty locally

Health and Wellbeing

- Reducing health inequalities focussing on the social determinants of health
- Addressing substance use locally
- Working to improve mental health within the community

The Environment

- Addressing anti-social behaviour issues that arise
- Exploring green transport and community transport options
- Improve the look and vibrancy of the area

Community Development

- Building community capacity and supporting community organisations
- Improve communication channels between services and the community around key priorities
- Increase partnership working between all services and the community

⋮ Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

LOIP Pillar and Strategic Partner actions to be addressed at community level through Local Plans

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Increase the capability of local communities and services to support health and wellbeing through a preventative approach to population-level mental wellbeing.	<p>Develop and raise awareness of a specific '6 ways to Wellbeing' model in West Lothian through mapping and increase understanding in Whitburn and Blackburn and with partners.</p> <p>Map community assets/resources/ support for mental wellbeing and identify gaps and responses</p> <p>Look to develop the Whole Systems Approach as appropriate</p> <p>Deliver training to the community and practitioners on Mental Health First Aid.</p>	<p>NHS Lothian</p> <p>West Lothian Council</p> <p>Local Third Sector</p> <p>West Lothian Leisure</p> <p>Whitburn Services Group</p> <p>Blackburn Future Group</p>	LOIP Pillar Working Group	LOIP Pillar – Improving Health & Wellbeing
Develop local awareness around the impact of substance use and health.	<p>Develop a preventative approach to alcohol within the community.</p> <p>Use health intelligence for the area to inform alcohol licensing.</p> <p>Scope community need including young people, adults and staff needs.</p> <p>Awareness raising, reduce stigma and provide education to the whole community around alcohol and substance misuse.</p>	<p>NHS Lothian</p> <p>West Lothian Council</p> <p>West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Services</p> <p>West Lothian Youth Action Project</p> <p>Police Scotland</p> <p>Alcohol and Drug Partnership</p> <p>Whitburn Services Group</p> <p>Blackburn Future Group</p>	<p>LOIP Pillar Working Group</p> <p>Alcohol and Drug Partnership</p> <p>Preventative and Early Intervention Group</p> <p>Statistical data</p> <p>Local community engagement</p>	<p>LOIP Pillar – Improving Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Alcohol and Drug Partnership</p>

⋮ Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Community resilience around climate change is increased in Whitburn and Blackburn.	<p>Educate communities on the effects of climate change on biodiversity and increase related volunteering and community resilience.</p> <p>Raise awareness of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. positive action around reducing emissions and circular economy; and 2. actions that contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation that can be taken in Whitburn and Blackburn <p>Collaborate to develop briefings for key community organisations on climate issues, develop resources communities can access and create increased volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Support local organisations, groups and residents to identify what can be done locally and deliver projects linked.</p> <p>Carry out local engagement utilising resources designed around climate action.</p> <p>Raise awareness, reduce stigma and promote the use of reusable period products.</p>	<p>Community Councils</p> <p>Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian</p> <p>NatureScot</p> <p>West Lothian College</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland</p> <p>Job Centre Plus</p> <p>Whitburn Service Group</p> <p>Blackburn Future Group</p> <p>Local Schools</p> <p>Community Wealth Building Team (Regeneration)</p> <p>West Lothain Climate Action Network (WLCAN)</p>	LOIP Pillar Working Group	LOIP Pillar: Creating Net Zero Carbon Communities
Delivery of employability interventions in Whitburn and Blackburn aimed at providing access to opportunities	Target support and interventions to those who are unemployed or underemployed in Whitburn and Blackburn.	<p>West Lothian Council Economic Development Education</p> <p>West Lothian College</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland</p> <p>Department of Work and Pensions</p>	LOIP Pillar Working Group	LOIP Pillar: Creating Skills and Jobs

Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Tackling the determinants of poverty within Whitburn and Blackburn.	Integrate anti-poverty work in the area, support communities to engage with available services and provide support to deliver the Anti-Poverty Action Plan	Tackling Poverty Taskforce Local third sector organisations Community Wealth Building Team (Regeneration)	Tackling Poverty Strategy Local Community engagement	Tackling Poverty Strategy
Increased community response and support for homelessness	Reduce the stigma of homelessness by raising community awareness through local engagement sessions Develop local Third Sector role to support tenancy sustainment and integration in communities Identify and involve wider partners with front line staff who engage with the public to share the housing option message.	Housing, Customer & Building Services Community Regeneration, Health and Social Care Partnership Local Third Sector	LOIP Pillar Working Group	LOIP Pillar: Creating Affordable and Sustainable Housing
Increased community response and support for homelessness	Explore community choices for locally identified projects encouraging decision making at a local level using best practice and embedding CLD practices as part of that process. Work with local group sand schools to ensure they are involved in any decision making at a local level.	Community Wealth Building Team West Lothian Council Property Services West Lothian Council Operation Services (Open Space)	Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	Community resilience and empowerment
Increased decision making and engagement for key projects within the community Build community capacity to support the community to have a voice in decision making	Explore community choices for locally identified projects encouraging decision making at a local level using best practice and embedding CLD practices as part of that process. Work with local groups and schools to ensure they are involved in any decision making at a local level for example: 1.Derelict sites 2.Participatory budgeting	Community Wealth Building Team West Lothian Council Property Services West Lothian Planning Services	Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	Community resilience and empowerment

Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Whitburn specific actions

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Improved access to key services that support people's well-being and employability	<p>Further identification of services required locally, aligned to community needs and ensuring local provision where available focussing on tackling inequalities.</p> <p>Provision of community outreach session aligned to community need in Whitburn.</p> <p>Delivery of outreach session with a focus on the determinants of child poverty and anti-poverty interventions in Whitburn</p>	<p>Whitburn Community Development Trust</p> <p>Whitburn Services Group</p>	Community Need	<p>LOIP Pillar – Improving Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>LOIP Pillar – Creating Skills and Jobs</p>
Develop Whole Systems Approach to Diet and Healthy weight	Implementation of Whole Systems Approach action plan in Whitburn	<p>Public Health (NHS)</p> <p>Whitburn Services Group</p>	<p>NHS East Region pilot</p> <p>High deprivation and obesity statistics for Whitburn</p>	LOIP Pillar – Health & Wellbeing
Whitburn is more resilient to the impacts of climate change	Development and integration of climate actions and interventions throughout community and local service delivery in Whitburn	<p>Whitburn Services Group</p> <p>Local structures</p> <p>Climate Change lead – West Lothian Council</p>	Scottish Government/Climate Action Towns	LOIP Pillar: Creating Net Zero Carbon Communities

⋮ Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Whitburn community garden project is developed	Develop activity and volunteering within the community garden, and its links to the wider community	Whitburn Community Development Trust Whitburn Services Group Whole Systems Approach Working Group Schools TCV	Whole System Approach to reducing obesity and type 2 diabetes action plan	LOIP Pillar – Health & Wellbeing
Lower cost provision of food is available	Development of the Whitburn Community Fridge project	Whitburn Community Development Trust Whitburn Services Group	Community engagement Statistics	WL Anti-Poverty Strategy LOIP Pillar – Creating Net-Zero Carbon Communities
Whitburn's town centre is improved	Existing funds and projects for the town centre are implemented	Whitburn Town Centre Management Group	Community engagement	Economic Development

Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Blackburn specific actions

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Blackburn is more resilient to the impacts of climate change	<p>Development of Climate Action Town (CAT) pilot in Blackburn and delivery of key outcomes that are identified</p> <p>Development of a Local Place Plan for Blackburn outlining the communities aspirations for the development and use of land</p>	<p>Architecture and Design Scotland (ADS)</p> <p>Blackburn Future Group</p> <p>Community Action Blackburn</p>	Scottish Government/Climate Action Towns	LOIP Pillar: Creating Net Zero Carbon Communities
Access to key services that support people's well-being and employability are improved	<p>Further identification of services required locally, aligned to community needs and ensuring local provision where available focussing on tackling inequalities.</p> <p>Provision of community outreach sessions aligned to community need in Blackburn.</p> <p>Delivery of outreach sessions with a focus on the determinants of child poverty and anti-poverty interventions in Blackburn.</p>	Social Policy	Health and Care Partnership	<p>LOIP Pillar – Improving Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>LOIP Pillar – Creating Skills and Jobs</p>
Provision of an alcohol-free space for the community	Explore the feasibility of an alcohol-free space for people to meet and socialise without exposure to alcohol and the advertisement of alcohol	<p>Alcohol Drug Partnership (ADP)</p> <p>NHS Lothian</p> <p>West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service (WLDAS)</p> <p>The Larder</p> <p>Blackburn Future Group</p>	NHS scoping activity	<p>LOIP – Improving Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Alcohol & Drug partnership (ADP)</p>

Whitburn and Blackburn Locality Plan – Action Plan

Change/ Outcome/ Objective	Action	Lead Agency (bold) Other partners	Where does action area come from	Links
Provision of affordable healthy food available within the community	Continuation of the Community Shop (Waste Not, Want Not) Community food provision outlets to work in partnership and share resources to meet the needs of the community Support local food growing initiatives Ensure information on local food provision initiatives are shared within the community	Blackburn Future Group Community Action Blackburn Blackburn and Seafield Church The Larder	Community engagement Statistics	WL Anti-Poverty Strategy LOIP Pillar – Creating Net-Zero Carbon Communities
Additional opportunities for learning and training are available for local residents	Explore the viability of a new education and skills training hub in Blackburn	Community Action Blackburn Youth Action Project	Community engagement Partner engagement	LOIP – Creating Skills and Jobs
Reduction in anti-social behaviour associated with bonfire season and other key areas	Delivery of diversionary activities and raising awareness campaigns in Blackburn around Bonfire season	Blackburn Future Group (BFG) Blackburn Bonfire Night Action Group (BBNAG)	Anti-social Behaviour statistics Community engagement	Community Safety Board
improve community channels between services and the community	Raise awareness of the working groups in the area with potential partners and the community	Blackburn Future Group All subgroups	Community engagement Partner organisations and services	Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

WHITBURN & BLACKBURN LOCALITY PLAN

2023-2026

