

West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017

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1 West Lothian Local Housing Strategy Recommendations

1 Meeting Housing Need and Demand

- At least 1000 new affordable homes are built between 2012 and 2017.
- The affordable housing policy is reviewed in light of new guidance, and the changing economic situation to maximise the number of affordable homes that can be delivered.
- The Council will work with Housing Associations and Developers to ensure that a range of housing tenures is available.

2 Housing Options

- By providing a range of housing options in West Lothian, The Council and partners will aim to prevent the crisis of homelessness.
- The successful initiatives to provide housing support to prevent homelessness will continue. The Council will develop those services that are already in place to support people who become homeless.
- The Council will work with Registered Social Landlords to provide quality housing options for people in a range of tenures.
- The Council will work with Private Landlords to encourage housing quality in the private rented sector. We will improve services in relation to the private sector generally and make best use of resources.

3 Independent Living

- People living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so

4 Improving Communities

- The Council aims for people to have pride in their communities and will continue to support Community Safety services, regeneration projects and new build community facilities.

5 House Condition

- The Council and Registered Social Landlords will continue to work towards meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.
- The Council will continue to monitor its housing stock and identify areas that require investment and development
- The Council will continue to provide home owners with information, advice and assistance to help them to maintain their property.
- The Council will develop its approach to the private sector to ensure the appropriate regulation can be used effectively.

6 Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

- The Council will continue to provide services that will help to reduce fuel poverty and work with a range of agencies to signpost appropriate energy advice and information. In regard to Climate Change projects will be developed that are appropriate for West Lothian and that that reduce carbon emissions

West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012 -2017 – The main outcomes

- People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality housing options available to them
- Homelessness is prevented in West Lothian as far as possible. Effective advice and support is put in place for people who become homeless.
- People living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so.
- Our communities are attractive, safe places to live and work.
- House Condition in West Lothian is improved: In the social rented sector this will be achieved by investment by the Council and by Registered Social Landlords in the housing they own and manage. In the private sector, the Council will encourage home owners to take responsibility for repair and maintenance of their property.
- People in West Lothian live in energy efficient housing.
- People facing fuel poverty can access the help and support they need.
- Improve sustainability of existing housing

West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017 - The main issues

- There is high demand for housing of all tenures
- There is insufficient funding available to meet the need for affordable housing
- The private rented sector has grown rapidly, the challenge will be resourcing services to promote quality within the sector
- There is likely to be a growth in the need for housing support services in line with the projected population growth
- Rapidly rising energy prices will impact heavily upon residents and the Council and partners' ability to tackle fuel poverty
- Weather extremes linked to a changing climate will affect energy consumption of households.

Local Housing Strategy Vision

“To provide high quality affordable housing in sustainable, thriving communities that people are proud to live in”

2Context Statement

What is a Local Housing Strategy?

Housing is a basic need. Everyone needs somewhere to live. Good quality housing is good for health, education and communities. This Housing Strategy sets out the key issues, proposed outcomes and the way in which housing and related services will be developed in West Lothian from 2012-2017. The West Lothian Local Housing Strategy covers all housing and housing need across the area. It relates to home-owners, Council and Housing Association Tenants as well as tenants of private landlords and private landlords.

This local housing strategy has been produced by West Lothian Council in consultation with its key stakeholders. The Strategy covers the period 2012-2017 and outlines the key housing challenges for the area and a range of solutions to meet those challenges. In developing this local housing strategy we have consulted with tenants, housing associations, private landlords, developers, service users and service providers. Six key themes have been identified in the Strategy. These are: Meeting Housing Need and Demand, Housing Options, Independent Living, Improving Communities, House Condition and Fuel Poverty and Climate Change.

The Local Housing Strategy covers all tenures and includes an analysis of the Housing Market in West Lothian. It has links to the Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement. It has been developed in accordance with Scottish Government legislation and guidance on the provision of Local Housing strategies. A number of outcomes have been developed for the Local Housing Strategy (see page 3) and these relate to each of the key themes.

Delivering the Strategy

This Strategy will be delivered by West Lothian Council and its partners and stakeholders. An action plan that outlines our recommended actions has been developed. The Council and its partners will undertake the relevant actions to achieve the targets identified to meet the outcomes.

Equalities

Equality and fairness are central to the way West Lothian Council conducts business and is at the core of the delivery of all our services. The Local Housing Strategy must meet statutory responsibilities on equal opportunity. These arise from the Equality Act 2010 (See appendix 2). An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Local Housing Strategy and we have assessed the likely impact of our proposed strategies on particular sectors of the community in relation to equality and identified actions needed to remove or mitigate any negative impacts. The equality strands we considered include disability, race, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual

orientation, transgender. We have also set out our approach to housing support for Gypsy/Travellers and travelling showpersons.

West Lothian Facts and Figures

West Lothian Council is the 10th largest local authority area in Scotland at 427sq km. It has a population of 172,080 that is young and growing much faster than Scotland as a whole. The population of West Lothian accounts for 3.3 % of the total population of Scotland.

- In West Lothian 17.5% of the population is aged between 15-29 and people over 60 make up 19.5 % of West Lothian's population.
- From 2003 to 2010, the number of households in West Lothian increased from 67,085 to 73,158.
- On average in 2007-09 there was a net inflow of 728 people into West Lothian per year meaning that more people entered West Lothian (5,915 per year) than left (5,187) per year.

There are 74,397 houses in West Lothian, the majority of which are owner occupied.

The West Lothian Economy

The West Lothian economy is diverse. There are more than 4,500 businesses. There are 80,300 jobs based in West Lothian. The main industries are public services, retail and distribution, hotels and restaurants, manufacturing, construction and finance and IT. There has been a significant increase in the retail and wholesale sectors. Levels of employment and economic activity are similar to those in Scotland and Great Britain. More than 77.4% of West Lothian's population are economically active which places it in 17th position among the 32 Scottish Local Authorities. Overall the number of jobs in the West Lothian Council area increased significantly between 1998-2008 from 64,200 jobs to 76,300 jobs, this was primarily due to the strength of the service sector.

Although there have been positive changes in job growth, West Lothian's growth in earnings has lagged behind. There are two measures of earnings in a local economy: resident and workplace earnings. Resident earnings are those of people who live in an area, but may travel outside of the area to work. Workplace earnings are the earnings of those who work in the area, and will include those who commute in from other areas to a job in West Lothian.

Analysis of both measures of earnings indicates that West Lothian is behind the Scotland average. Indeed resident weekly earnings in West Lothian are, at £459, eighth lowest in Scotland.

Median Gross Weekly Earnings (2010)

	West Lothian (£)	Scotland (£)
Resident	459.0	486.9
Workplace	443.0	488.2

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2010

The rate of unemployment for West Lothian at September 2011 is 4.1% this is below the Scottish rate of 4.3%. The unemployment rate in West Lothian ranks 13th out of all Scottish Local Authorities. Youth unemployment (18-24 years) in West Lothian in August 2011 was 1550. In August, West Lothian had a higher proportion of youth unemployment 8.3% compared to 7.6% for Scotland. The ratio of jobseekers to jobcentre vacancies stands at 5 jobseekers for every vacancy advertised in West Lothian.

Source: <http://www.westlothian.com/media/docs/commpr/kei/wleusept2011>

Since the last local housing strategy in 2003 there has been significant investment in housing in West Lothian. 5,800 new private sector homes have been built. More than 800 Housing Association homes constructed and the Council has embarked on a major programme of new build Council housing that will see a further 800 Council homes constructed by 2014.

Despite this though there are significant challenges ahead.

- Meeting housing need and demand associated with the projected growth of 24,850 additional households by 2033
- Providing housing of sufficient choice and quality to meet the needs of a changing population
- Funding for affordable housing has been reduced
- Providing housing support to enable people to live independently
- Reducing homelessness in West Lothian
- Improving neighbourhoods through regeneration and high quality management
- Ensuring that the risk of households living in fuel poverty is minimised
- Access to mortgages is limited with high deposits required
- Benefit changes will have a significant effect on the affordability of private rented housing for some people

There has been a significant growth in the private rented sector which now accounts for approximately 10% of the housing stock in West Lothian. The private rented sector provides flexibility of accommodation but there is also a significant challenge in terms of ensuring quality provision in the sector including investment in the fabric and the quality of management.

There are increasing numbers of people with complex needs who require housing support. This requires an understanding of how best to use the resources that are available.

There has been a substantial growth in the numbers of households in fuel poverty in West Lothian. Fuel poverty is defined as a household spending more than 10% of the disposable income on fuel. A range of projects have been developed that have helped to maximise income of householders to help them combat fuel poverty. However, the rapid rise in energy prices presents a significant challenge to the Council and other organisations providing assistance to households in relation to fuel poverty.

The climate change agenda is already having significant influence on the type of housing that is built. Climate change obligations may mean additional costs in relation to the housing that is constructed but potentially lower running costs.

Six key themes have been developed in the LHS in response to these challenges;

- Meeting Housing Need and Demand
- Housing Options
- Independent Living
- Improving Communities
- House Condition
- Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

The National Policy Context

The Scottish Government have developed two key policy papers that have informed the context for this Local Housing Strategy.

Fresh Thinking, New Ideas set out a discussion on housing policy.

Homes Fit for the 21st Century focused on four housing related targets

- By December 2012, all unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation; (Housing (Scotland) Act 2003)
- By April 2015, all social landlords must ensure that their dwellings pass the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- By November 2016, so far as is reasonably practicable, nobody will be living in fuel poverty in Scotland; and
- By December 2020, improved design and energy efficiency in housing will have made a contribution to Scotland's commitment to reduce energy consumption by 12% and greenhouse gas emissions by 42%.

Homes Fit for the 21st Century identified the importance of improving housing supply across all tenures. Reference was made to the need to expand mid-range tenures including mid market rent and shared equity. There was also a need for innovative approaches to fund housing development and maximise resources. The Innovation and Investment Fund was set up to support Council housing and RSL development with an aim of delivering 18,000 new affordable homes over the next 3 years. There were also actions identified in relation to improving choice and quality in the housing system including strengthening the Private Rented Sector.

Local Housing Strategy – The key Strategic Links

The principal strategic links for the West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2012- 2017 are noted below;

Strategy/Plan	Purpose	Link to the LHS
West Lothian Community Plan 2010-2020	Sets out the priorities for the Council	Provides strategic direction for the LHS
West Lothian Single Outcome Agreement 2011	Sets out how West Lothian Council and Community Planning partners will meet the 15 national outcomes. It set out priorities, indicators and outcomes	Provides strategic direction for the LHS
South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan 2012-2032	Provides the framework for future development in the SESplan area	Provides strategic direction for the LHS
West Lothian Local Plan	Sets out the planning framework for West Lothian	Provides strategic direction for the LHS
Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2011-2016)	Sets out the future investment in affordable housing	Informs the LHS
West Lothian Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011	Set out the Council's approach to addressing homelessness	Now included in the Local Housing Strategy
West Lothian Scheme of Assistance (April 2010)	Outlines the Council's approach to provision of advice and information to homeowners on repair and maintenance of property	Informs the LHS
Social Policy Service Statements; Addiction Services Statement Learning Disability Strategy The Joint Mental Health Plan The Joint Physical and Complex Disability Strategy The Integrated Children's Plan Older People's Capacity Plan 2006-2016 West Lothian Change Plan for Older People Children and Families	Sets out the service delivery and strategy for each of the identified groups. Together these statements and strategies set out the Council's approach to Community Care	Informs the LHS

The Strategic Planning Framework

In recent years, there has been greater emphasis on the links between housing policy and planning. Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for Housing (SPP3) (2008) set out the relationship between housing need and demand assessments, the local housing strategy and strategic development plans. The legislation set out the opportunity for local authorities to conduct joint assessments of the housing market area and to establish housing market partnerships. In 2008 the South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan Authority was established (covering Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders and parts of Fife). Together the authorities developed a Housing Need and Demand Assessment that has informed this Local Housing Strategy and the South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan.

The Single Outcome Agreement

Following on from the Concordat agreed between Scottish Ministers and COSLA in 2007, local authorities are required to produce a Single Outcome Agreement based around the delivery of the Scottish Government's five strategic objectives. These are, wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger and greener

West Lothian Local Housing Strategy has been developed to complement and support wider corporate priorities and outcomes. The Community Plan 2010-2020 set out a vision of what we want to achieve;

“Overall we want to provide and improved quality of life for everyone that lives, works and does business in West Lothian”

The Community Plan sets out 6 aspirations. The two main aspirations that the Local Housing Strategy will contribute to meeting are;

“ We achieve a more inclusive community by providing housing, health and social care services in an integrated way which allows groups of people to live as independently as possible”

“ We promote safety in our homes, on our streets and in our communities by decreasing anti-social behaviour reducing preventable injuries and deaths and tackling violence and crime”

The local housing strategy also reflects the wider commitments outlined in the Council's Single Outcome Agreement 2011-2012. In particular, the Local Housing Strategy relates to 7 of the 14 outcomes identified in the Single Outcome Agreements. These are noted below.

LHS Themes and Outcomes

LHS Theme	Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome
Meeting Housing Need and Demand	<p>We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need (outcome 10)</p> <p>We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society (outcome 7)</p>	People in West Lothian have access to a range of housing types and tenures to meet their needs
Housing Options	We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society (outcome 7)	Homelessness is prevented for people in West Lothian as far as possible. Effective advice and support is in place for people who become homeless.
Independent Living	<p>We live longer healthier lives (Outcome 6)</p> <p>We have improved the life chances for people at risk (outcome 8)</p> <p>We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society (outcome 7)</p>	<p>People living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so.</p> <p>Supporting people to live more independently and avoid institutional care where not needed</p> <p>Enabling people to develop lifeskills to increase independence.</p> <p>Helping People to maintain their homes and to feel safe.</p> <p>Reduce homelessness in West Lothian</p> <p>people in West Lothian to live longer</p>
Improving Communities	We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for	Our communities are attractive, safe places to live and work

	<p>future generations (outcome 12) We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their actions and how they affect others (outcome11)</p> <p>We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger (outcome 9) We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society (outcome 13)</p>	<p>Management of housing estate Promotion of safer neighbourhoods</p>
House Condition	<p>We live longer healthier lives (outcome 6)</p> <p>We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need (outcome 10)</p>	<p>House condition in West Lothian is improved Investment through the Capital programme</p>
Fuel Poverty and Climate Change	<p>We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production (outcome 14)</p>	<p>People facing fuel poverty can access the information, advice and support they need.</p> <p>People in West Lothian live in energy efficient housing</p> <p>Improve sustainability of existing housing</p>

LHS Consultation

In May 2011, a series of consultation seminars were undertaken to develop the Local Housing Strategy. The seminars were attended by representatives from;

- Housing Associations
- Developers
- Voluntary Organisations
- Tenants' Groups
- Staff from a range of Council services

The seminars covered each of the 6 key themes as noted above. A range of comments were received at each of the seminars and many of these have been used to inform the Local Housing Strategy.

Representatives from the Tenants' Panel provided editorial comment on the draft local housing strategy to ensure that it was accessible.

Meetings were held with homeless service users, Joint Strategy Group for Homelessness and the Housing Support Providers Forum. There was also consultation with the Landlords' forum. All of these groups helped to inform the development of the Strategy and identify actions that could be included to improve housing in West Lothian.

The draft Local Housing Strategy was available on the Council's website for consultation from 8th November 2011 to 9th January 2012. It was also available through the Communities of Practice web site. Comments were received from a range of individuals, organisations and groups. The majority of comments were supportive of the outcomes identified in the Local Housing Strategy. A summary of the comments on each of the key themes is noted in Section 11.

A further seminar was carried out with RSLs in December 2011 and a summary of the feedback from that session is included in Section 11.

A Health Impact Assessment was carried on the Local Housing Strategy. This has helped to inform some of the linkages between services and identify the impact of the Strategy on the health and well being of a number of groups of people.

As noted above, an Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out and the LHS was discussed at the Wider Disability Forum where a number of significant points were raised. The draft LHS was issued to the, Gender Forum Race Equality Forum and to the LGBT Forum

Regular reports have been provided to the Council's Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on the development of the Local Housing Strategy.

3 West Lothian Key Achievements since the last Local Housing Strategy (2003-2008)

- 800 new build Housing Association homes 2003 – 2011
- More than **£59** million investment by Scottish Government to support RSL development
- New build Council housing programme of 800 units –(255 completed since 2009) £11.085 million provided by Scottish Government in support of the Council's programme
- Private sector new build house completions of 5,836 - 2003-2010
- Provision of 114 RSL properties for people with particular needs
- Provision of 17 new build Council houses specifically for wheelchair users
- Implemented an Affordable housing policy that has delivered sites for new build Council housing (87 units) and commuted sums (£500k)
- Construction of Uphall Physical Disability Centre - which is an integrated provision of a respite centre and 7 mainstream bungalows for rent.
- Provision of new build Learning Disability Centre at Craigshill
- Construction of Fauldhouse Partnership Centre incorporating health and community facilities
- Opening of Strathbrock Family Support Unit in Broxburn. A joint project with housing, social work and health services.
- Provision of Bethany Housing Project for young homeless people in Bathgate
- Housing with Care conversions of existing sheltered housing schemes at Mid Calder and Norvell Lodge and Trust Project in Dedridge, Livingston.
- Made use of Council tax from empty and second homes to support new affordable homes approximately £400,000 to date.
- 426 households assisted in purchasing property in West Lothian through the Scottish Government's Open Market Shared Equity Scheme
- Worked with neighbouring Councils to produce Housing Need and Demand Assessments for the Lothians and SESplan area
- Seventeen WLC sites sold to Registered Social Landlords for housing development and 80% now developed

- In 2006 West Lothian Council was awarded A grade ratings by the Scottish Housing Regulator for Housing Management and Property Maintenance and C grade for Homelessness services
- Tenant Participation showing an 85 % tenant satisfaction with Council's housing service
- Developed a Homeless Strategy with emphasis on prevention and presenting housing options
- Increased and promoted service user involvement by establishing a Homeless Service User Group. The group have reviewed homeless information packs, website, and surveys.
- Developed a 'Transitional Tenancy' approach in partnership with Social Policy to ensure formerly looked after young people are removed from the homeless process.
- Developed protocols with Criminal Justice to ensure ex-offenders are able to access and sustain accommodation.
- Provided advice and assistance to prisoners in preparation for their release from Addiewell Prison, in partnership with South and North Lanarkshire Councils.
- Schools Education Programme which raises awareness of homelessness, has been extended to include 4th year More Choices More Chances pupils.
- Developed the Scheme of Assistance for homeowners in West Lothian
- Set up Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing and Landlord Registration
- More than £126million has been invested in Council housing through the capital programme since 2003.
- 65% of Council stock now meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- Development of Telecare (technology to allow people to live independently)
- Over 4,000 homes have had the home safety service installed
- Provision of 209 Housing with Care tenancies
- Provision of disabled grants to over 1600 households amounting to more than £4.8million
- Provision of housing support to 10,000 individuals each year in West Lothian
- Provision of care at home packages to 2,100 households each year
- According to the Scottish House Condition Survey, 18% of property in West Lothian in 2007/09 had one or more adaptations compared to 5% in 2003/06

- Set up Community Safety Team
- Trialled air source heat pumps
- Provision of Home Insulation in significant numbers of properties across West Lothian
- Provision of advice and formal enforcement where needed on approximately 190 housing condition problems annually.

4 Meeting Housing Need and Demand

Meeting housing need and demand in West Lothian remains a key challenge. The main issues that are faced in relation to housing need and demand are

- Securing an adequate supply of housing to meet housing need in West Lothian;
- Provision of a good choice of tenure, size and type of housing;
- Ensuring that housing contributes to well balanced communities.

The key outcome we want to achieve is

“People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality housing options available to them.”

4.1 The Context

- Over 65% of households in West Lothian own their homes.
- There is a high demand for housing of all tenures in West Lothian
- In September 2011, the average house price in West Lothian was 6% higher than the previous year at £149,482. This compares to a Scottish average house price of £158,934 for the month of September 2011. (Source CHMA Local Authority Housing Market Bulletin November 2011)
- Over the past 3 years, there has been significant growth in the private rented sector increasing from approximately 4% of the housing stock to approximately 7% of the housing stock in West Lothian.
- Ongoing changes to the Benefits system including Housing Benefits are likely to have a significant impact on the use of the private rented sector. It is estimated that 70% of private rents within West Lothian will be outwith the amount which could be fully covered by housing benefit. In particular there will be a need for licensed HMOs with the single room payment being increased from 25 to 35.
- In recent years, Housing Associations have increased the pace of their new build programmes with 49 completions in 2007 increasing to 185 completions in 2010. West Lothian Council has developed 255 homes since 2009 with a further 545 being constructed by 2014.
- In the private sector (private house building) house completions have dropped dramatically. In 2007, there were 1013 market completions but in 2010 there were only 213 market completions.

4.2 Changing demographics and Housing

As noted in the Corporate Plan, a fast growing population is good for West Lothian and good for the economy. Demographic information illustrates a fast growing ageing population and an increase in numbers of households. West Lothian will continue to have a higher average household size than the Scottish average. These demographic factors are predicted to have a significant impact on future service needs, design and priorities. This requires that we plan future housing services carefully to meet the needs of the

population and hence the requirement to deliver a local housing strategy that will address future housing needs.

4.3 Population Projections

West Lothian has a population of about 171,040 and is the youngest population in Scotland. The projected population for West Lothian is 196,000 by 2024 which is the fastest growing area in Scotland.

- By 2033 the population of West Lothian is projected to be 208,364 an increase of 22.9% compared to the population in 2008. This is above the national average. The population of Scotland is projected to increase by 7.3% between 2008 and 2033.
- The highest growth rate will be in the 65+ age group. This is likely to have major implications for housing, health and care services. By 2018 West Lothian is forecast to experience the highest rise (+64%) of any local authority in Scotland in people aged 75 and over, with the second highest increase in those aged 60-74 (+45%). By 2014 one in three people in West Lothian will be over 50.
- The population aged under 16 is projected to increase by 16.2% over the 25 year period to 2033. West Lothian is one of only eight local authorities with a growing 0-15 age band population and third highest growth rate.
- West Lothian has the highest percentage of under 18s in mainland Scotland. 25% of West Lothian's current population is 0-18.
- By 2024, numbers of adults of working age in West Lothian will increase by 17%.

(Source: West Lothian A Profile)

The proportion of people in West Lothian who are of working age is the same as the Scottish average of 66%. West Lothian's proportion of people aged over 65 years, at 12%, is significantly lower than the Scottish average of 16%.

The projected growth by age group in West Lothian and Scotland for the period 2008 – 2033 and shows that West Lothian's population is expected to grow across all age groups. The under 15s will increase by 16.2%, adults of working age by 15.9% and people of pensionable age by 59.5%.

The rate of increase in the older people's age group in West Lothian needs to be highlighted in the context of strategic commissioning. From 2008 to 2033, the number of 65 – 74 year olds will increase by 80% in West Lothian, compared to a 48% increase in Scotland. The number of 75+ year olds will increase by 151% in West Lothian compared to 84% in Scotland.

Ethnic Communities

In 2001 there were 4,900 people from minority ethnic communities living in West Lothian. This represented 3.1% of West Lothian's population. Since the

2001 Census there has been an increase in migration following the expansion of the European Union to include Eastern European countries.

Projected Changes to Household Composition

The total number of households is projected to increase by 34% between 2008 and 2033. Household projections for West Lothian show that the largest increases in terms of household formation 80% and 79% respectively will be for smaller households of 1 adult or 1 adult and 1 or more children but a reduction in 2 adults with 1 or more children households of 22%.

4.4 Assessing Housing Need and Demand

To achieve an understanding of the housing market area for the Lothians and the South East Scotland, West Lothian has worked with the 3 neighbouring Lothian authorities¹ to develop a housing need and demand assessment for the Lothians (Lothian HNDA Update 2009). The Centre for Housing Market Analysis assessed the Lothian HNDA update as robust and credible in March 2009. The Lothian HNDA update informed the development of a housing need and demand assessment for the South East Scotland strategic development plan (SESplan) which in turn informed the Main Issues Report of SESplan and the Proposed Plan. The Main Issues Report includes options for the provision of housing to support economic growth and recovery. The conclusion from both of these studies is that there is a high demand for all tenures of housing in West Lothian. In particular though, the affordable housing sector is pressured. SESplan identifies a total shortfall of 34,100 units across the SESplan area between 2009 and 2032.

4.4.1 SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)

The South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (SESplan)². A Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) was developed for SESplan to inform the Main Issues Report. The HNDA aimed to merge and reconcile the housing need and demand assessments undertaken by all the SESplan member authorities including the Lothian HNDA, the Fife HNDA and Scottish Borders HNDA. It comprised the development of needs and demand estimates for the SESplan area. The SESplan HNDA received robust and credible assessment from the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis in June 2011.

¹City of Edinburgh Council, East Lothian Council and Midlothian Council

² SESPlan covers the four Lothian Councils, South and Mid Fife and Scottish Borders administrative areas

Affordable Housing

The table below from the SESplan HNDA estimates total housing net need by calculating current housing need and future housing need. The estimated current supply from existing stock turnover is then deducted to provide net housing need. An estimated 371 households per annum in West Lothian are required to need affordable housing over the next 10 years net of turnover. **(See Table 1, Appendix 3)**

4.4.3 Housing Demand

- Waiting lists for Council and RSL housing are rising steadily each year and there are currently 8,946 applicants for Council housing in West Lothian.
- Across West Lothian the highest need for social rented housing is for 1 and 2 bedroom properties. There is an imbalance in the current stock profile with a shortage of 1 bedroom units.
- In 2010/11 there were 1935 homeless presentations in West Lothian compared to 1760 in the previous year.

If we can't meet the need identified in the SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment, the likely implications will be

- The backlog of housing need will persist; and
- The 2012 target regarding homelessness will be difficult to achieve.

4.5 Meeting Housing Need and Demand – Tenure specific issues

4.5.1 Home Ownership

- Limited availability of mortgages
- High deposits required for first time buyers of around 25%

4.5.2 Affordable Housing

- Significant reductions in subsidy levels from Scottish Government - the likely impact will be less social rented housing and more mixed tenure as this requires lower levels of subsidy
- Move to competitive funding for projects rather than area based allocations for programmes
- Changes to housing benefits which limits the size of property that people will receive benefit for and will impact on rents. Benefit changes will mean more people will have to share accommodation and possibly have to move. There will be a greater need for smaller properties and single occupancy HMO rooms.
- Prudential borrowing by Councils is likely to become more difficult as the availability of this is limited.

4.5.3 Private Rented Sector Housing

- Limited availability of buy to let mortgages
- Some landlords in negative equity
- Ensuring the sector is of high quality
- Changes to housing benefits may make the sector less affordable for tenants and landlords.

4.5.4 Equalities Issues and the SESplan HNDA

As part of the development of the SESplan HNDA, there was an assessment of groups with housing support needs. These are households that contain people with mobility impairment or other specific support needs living in unsuitable dwellings. It was identified that approximately 1000 households in West Lothian have support needs that cannot be met in the market or in situ.

A summary of the housing related issues for particular needs groups was undertaken as part of the development of the SESplan HNDA. These groups are.

- Older people, people with dementia and their carers
- People with physical disabilities
- People with learning disabilities
- Homeless people
- People at risk of domestic violence
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- Minority ethnic communities and migrant workers
- Gypsy Travellers

As noted throughout the Strategy, we aim to meet the needs of people with these requirements in a variety of ways. Through the development of commissioning plans and the provision of appropriate housing support, through making best use of existing housing stock and where appropriate, bespoke new build property.

<http://www.sesplan.gov.uk/assets/files/docs/supporting-studies-and-docs/SESplan%20HNDA%20May%202011.pdf>

4.6 Housing Supply

Strategic Context

Under the terms of Scottish Planning Policy (Feb 2010), the Scottish Government want local authorities to allocate a generous supply of housing land to enable communities to prosper and to increase the rate of house building. The Scottish Government expect Councils to develop housing need and demand targets at the sub-regional and regional level.

Housing Land Supply

The Council has identified a generous supply of land that will meet the demand for housing over the coming years. West Lothian Council's Housing Land Audit 2010 has established a land supply of 22,300 houses to 2032. A need for a further 1,750 units between 2009 and 2024 in West Lothian has been identified through emerging Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Further allocations may be required for the period 2024-2032 to meet the SESplan housing land shortfall in full up to 2032. The implication is that no significant

additional housing land allocations are required for the area over the short to medium term i.e. to 2024. Current local plan allocations provide for enough housing land to accommodate development requirements to 2020 within the Core Development Areas at Armadale, Livingston, & the Almond Valley and Winchburgh/East Broxburn/Uphall in addition to the strategic land allocation at Heartlands Whitburn.

The Proposed SDP is not site specific. This will be a matter for the future West Lothian Local Development Plan to consider. The SDP only indicates broad directions for accommodating the requirement, identifying these as “strategic development areas”. However, there may be some potential for modest additional growth in committed development areas, which include existing core development areas and other strategic sites to accommodate all or part of the additional housing that will be required. Similarly, smaller settlements in West Lothian may be able to accommodate growth, linked to community regeneration and taking advantage of enhanced transport infrastructure.

In all cases however this would be subject to consideration of any environmental and infrastructure considerations.

Specific allocations would be identified through the Local Development Plan and would be the subject of full consultation. Preliminary work has already commenced on the preparation of the Local Development Plan.

Constraints

There are a number of constraints that must be taken into account when considering the number and timescale for new build housing and the number of units that could realistically be constructed. These are

- Infrastructure – motorway junctions, road capacity and public transport availability e.g. rail;
- Education constraints – where schools are at or nearing capacity;
- Provision of health services – availability of funding to support communities;
- The land supply relies heavily upon development in the Core Development Areas (CDAs). Due to the economic downturn, the pace of development has slowed considerably and there is uncertainty about the ability of the house building industry to deliver even the more modest forecast outputs.
- Is development land in the right place – e.g. land is allocated across West Lothian but demand may be higher in the east of the area.
- Shops and community facilities are also important and require to be located within the settlement as this avoids more journeys to the town centre however, there is pressure to centralise facilities and a balance is required with the need to retain and promote local town centres.

4.6.1 Housing Supply Issues

There are a number of issues that were raised at the stakeholder consultation seminar in relation to housing supply (stock availability) and housing land supply in West Lothian. These are:

- An imbalance in housing being developed in both the market and RSL sector – 1 bed flats are needed but can be costly to construct;
- Mismatch in housing stock between demand and location of houses and type of houses;
- Sustainability of existing housing in certain areas/streets;
- Identifying resources to address housing that is in serious disrepair, often communal properties such as blocks of flats.
- Provision of sufficient accessible homes & housing support;
- Increased demand for temporary accommodation but insufficient social rented housing to provide permanent rehousing so causes blockage in the system;
- SHQS 2 – Likely increased standards on energy efficiency will add to costs ;
- Enhanced building regulations in relation to energy efficiency in 2013 could add £10k per unit to new build;
- The slowdown in private sector development impacts on the delivery of affordable housing sites through the Council's affordable housing policy;
- The severe financial restrictions on public expenditure affects the ability of the Council and its partners to fund new build housing;
- Understanding and providing a range of housing options e.g shared equity, mid market rent;
- The cost of materials rising and tender prices may rise too;

4.6.2 Housing Supply Targets

In developing housing supply targets, several factors have been taken into account;

- SESPlan housing land requirements
- SESplan and Lothian Housing Need and Demand Assessments;
- The West Lothian Local Plan;
- The annual Lothians Housing Land Audit;
- The likely availability of funding for affordable housing;
- Analysis of housing completions since 2003 across all sectors;
- Affordable housing policy.

SESplan analysis indicates that there is high demand for housing of all tenures. In West Lothian, it is estimated that there is a total demand for 23,848 units between 2009 and 2032 (SESPlan HNDA). The SESplan housing land requirement indicates land supply of 22,306 units in West Lothian 2009-

2032 plus a further 1750 units 2009 -2024 providing a net total of 23,056. The majority of the 1750 units will be required after 2019. Further allocations may be required over the period 2024-32 in order to meet the SESplan housing land requirement up to 2032. **(See Table 2, Appendix 3)**

With regard to house completions, according to the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan Annual Housing Monitor 2010, there was an average of 937 completions in West Lothian per annum between 2001 and 2010. However, house completions in West Lothian slowed considerably from 1175 in 2005-2006 to 543 in 2009-10. **(See Table 7, Appendix 3)**

Affordable Housing Target

Over the next 5 years (2012-2016), according to the SESplan HNDA there is demand for 1499 affordable housing units and 4,235 units of market housing. The SESplan HNDA indicates a need for 371 affordable homes for each of the next 10 years (this includes backlog need). The housing need figure of 1855 equates to 5 times the annual need figure of 371. However, it is clear that funding levels are unlikely to permit this level of affordable housing to be constructed over the duration of this Local Housing Strategy. Housing Supply Targets for affordable housing have been developed to reflect the likely availability of funding and in accordance with previous Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIP) The Council currently has a large programme of new build planned until 2014. There is considerable pressure on funding for the RSL programme, nonetheless it is anticipated that approximately 70 units per annum of RSL Housing will be built. The RSL housing is likely to be a mix of tenures including social rent, shared equity and mid market rent. There is also a limited opportunity for unsubsidised affordable housing to be built. It is considered that 209 affordable homes per annum (including some open market shared equity) is likely to be more achievable between 2012 and 2016/17. **(See Tables 3, 4 , 5 and 6, Appendix 3)**

Looking beyond 2016/17, the target for affordable housing remains 1000 for each 5 year period as it is likely the there will still be high levels of housing need. This will be reviewed over time.

As noted above, there is sufficient land supply to meet the targets outlined for both affordable and market housing.

Market Housing Target

Market housing figures are sourced from the demand for market housing noted in the SESplan Housing Technical Note and from the Lothian Housing Land Audit 2010. The Market Housing Supply Target is an estimate of likely completions based on past trends and possible market recovery later in the period 2027-2031. For market housing, the economic downturn has had a major impact on completions. Between 2003 and 2008 there was an average of 894 completions in this sector. Since 2009 the average level of completions is 234 units. Meeting the demand for market housing of 847 units per annum (SESplan Housing Technical Note) over the next 5 years will be a challenge and one which is considered difficult. We have therefore set a target of 260 units per annum for the first 5 years, 400 per annum for years

2017 -2021 and 500 per annum for years 2022-2032. **(See table 3,Appendix 3)**

Housing Market Partnership and Housing Supply Targets

As part of the consultation on the development of the Local Housing Strategy, developers and RSLs were invited to seminars in May. Initial discussions were held on developing Housing Supply Targets at these seminars. The Draft Local Housing Strategy contained provisional Housing Supply Targets was made available through the Communities of Practice website as a source of information for Housing Market Partners. Developers were also notified of the Draft Local Housing Strategy being available on the Council website. A seminar was held in December for RSLs and the affordable housing supply target was discussed in some detail there.

Review of Housing Supply Targets

Housing supply targets for affordable and market housing will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with the Housing Land Audit. For affordable housing the review will also be influenced by any changes to the availability of funding.

Housing Supply Targets – Area Priority for Affordable Housing

To further develop housing supply targets, the demand for affordable housing in each of the nine local wards in West Lothian was examined. It is clear that there is a high demand in all wards with some areas having very little or no turnover of Council housing year on year. However, given constraints on the availability of funding for affordable housing, consideration needs to be given to how investment is prioritised. By examining the waiting list, it is clear that some wards have much higher demand for housing than other wards. This is a key factor in determining how investment should be prioritised.

In some settlements, in recent years there have been significant levels of new build by both Housing Associations and the Council, notably, Bathgate, Livingston and Whitburn. However, there remains significant demand for affordable housing in these areas. In addition, the Core Development Areas of Armadale, Livingston and the Almond Valley, Broxburn/Uphall and Winchburgh together with the strategic allocation at Heartlands, Whitburn present development opportunities through the affordable housing policy, provided there is significant housing market recovery. Levels of demand in the Fauldhouse and Breich Valley are not as high for affordable housing but there may still be a requirement to provide limited development.

Area Priority for Investment
Priority1 Broxburn, East Livingston & East Calder, Linlithgow, Livingston North, Livingston South, Uphall ,and Winchburgh
Priority 2 Armadale & Blackridge, Bathgate, Whitburn & Blackburn,
Priority 3 Fauldhouse & Breich Valley,

This priority for investment will be reflected in the ongoing review of the Council’s affordable housing policy.

(Link to ward map <http://webwest1.app.westlothian.gov.uk/promotions/wardmap2007.pdf>)

4.7 West Lothian's Strategic Approach to Meeting Housing Need and Demand

4.7.1 The Council as a Provider of New Affordable Housing

West Lothian Council has embarked on a major programme of new build council housing. Since 2008, 255 units have been constructed in phase 1 with a further 545 units to be built in phase 2. Scottish Government have committed to this programme through the provision of more than £11 million. A further phase of new build Council housing is being considered however, funding for this will have to be secured. The Council would like to continue to provide new affordable housing and will work with the Scottish Government to examine opportunities for new funding models to enable more new build housing to be built.

To ensure West Lothian has suitable homes for older people and those with physical disabilities occupational therapists assist with the ergonomics at the planning stage. They work with housing staff to consider general accessibility of properties at pre-build and assist with incorporating changes to the property layout for individual disabled people.

4.7.2 Council Housing – Making Best Use of Existing Stock

The Council offers incentives to tenants to downsize property where their current home no longer meets their needs. A relocation grant of £1,000 is offered to tenants moving to a smaller house. The purpose of this is to encourage tenants to move to more suitable property and to maximise the availability of 3 and 4 bedroom houses.

4.7.2.1 The Housing service funds an occupational therapy post to assist with Property Needs Assessments. This allows Housing Allocation to make best use of existing stock matching needs of people with disabilities to suitable homes.

4.7.3 Housing Association Provision

The Council has supported developments by RSLs in West Lothian to meet housing need in a variety of settlements. The majority of the new build housing provided has been for social rent. However, it is clear that in light of funding restrictions, a wider range of tenure options will be required to enable affordable housing to be developed at reduced levels of subsidy. The SESplan HNDA identifies that approximately 35% of households currently in housing need would be able to access low cost home ownership or mid rent housing options. A significant number of households in West Lothian have received support to access housing through the various Government supported shared equity schemes) LIFT (Low Cost Initiative for First Time buyers) such as Shared Ownership, Open Market Shared Equity Programme (OMSEP) and New Supply Shared Equity. There is a clear demand and need for these tenures. In addition, some RSLs are developing proposals for mid market rent in West Lothian and again there is need and demand for this form of tenure.

4.8 Funding Mechanisms

4.8.1 Scottish Government Assistance

Scottish Government has an important role to play in helping us to tackle housing need and demand in West Lothian.

- Provision of funding to support housing investment by RSLs, Developers and the Council
- Supporting partnership working to enable delivery of innovative development solutions
- Providing guidance - support for Affordable Housing Policies

4.8.1 Prudential Borrowing

We will continue to use prudential borrowing as a funding mechanism as long as capacity permits and it is sensible to do so.

4.8.2 The Affordable Housing Policy

The Council's Affordable Housing policy has delivered some limited success in relation to the delivery of sites for affordable housing. The policy was approved in June 2006. The policy states that on all sites with over 20 homes, 15% of the capacity of the site must be transferred for affordable housing. In addition to the 15% contribution for socially rented housing developments within the Core Development Areas identified through the approved Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan and the adopted West Lothian Local Plan will be a requirement to make an additional contribution equating to a minimum of 10% fully complete affordable houses available in a range of tenures.

The SESplan Proposed Plan proposes a benchmark figure of 25% of the total number of units on site to be provided for affordable housing. This will depend on the Local Development Plan area's characteristics and need. Local Development Plans will set out an appropriate approach to the provision of affordable housing, taking account of local housing waiting lists and HNDA evidence. Due to the economic downturn, it is unclear to what extent sites and/or funding can be relied upon in the future and can be secured. The Council's Affordable Housing Policy is being reviewed in light of new guidance, and the changing economic situation.

The key areas being reviewed are

- Possibility of a differential approach on a ward basis in relation to acceptance of land or commuted sum
- The levels of affordable housing contributions required in different wards.
- Compliance with the policy to achieve sites, completed units or commuted sums.
- Consideration of the range of tenures that can be used to meet the affordable housing requirement.
- Ensuring that funding is available so that affordable housing

commitments can be realised.

- Working in close partnership with developers on the nature and levels of affordable housing contribution. This could include deferred payments.

Consultation will be undertaken on the Affordable Housing Policy following submission of the LHS.

4.8.3 The Private Rented Sector

Growth

The relatively large increase in the private rented sector in West Lothian is significant for the Local Housing Strategy. It is estimated that since 2007, it has grown from 4% to 10% of the housing stock. There are now more than 7,000 registered properties in West Lothian. (although some properties are still unregistered)

In terms of housing supply, the private rented sector presents an opportunity for a range of house types and locations to be considered that would previously only have been available to those wishing to purchase property. It allows people to move relatively easily, provided they have funding available. It is therefore important that people seeking housing advice are provided with the right information and advice about private rented housing. In recent years, the use of the private rented sector has been used to meet the needs of homeless families where appropriate.

The impact of Housing Benefit changes as noted in the Housing Options may have a significant impact on this sector. There may be greater need for shared accommodation and high quality licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

4.8.4 Encouraging Quality of Provision

There is a need for the Council to encourage quality within the Private Rented Sector generally and regulate where necessary. Analysis of housing condition complaints received by Environmental Health shows a greatly disproportionate number relative to the size of the sector. A key issue is the resourcing of support to this sector. Through consultation it was established that there is a need for the Council to develop a more joined up approach in regard to the private rented sector. There are currently several services within the Council with responsibility for private housing ranging from advice and information to tenants and landlords to enforcement measures in regard to private housing that is in poor condition. Key actions will be to ensure private landlords receive the support and encouragement they require to improve the quality of private rented property and to ensure that appropriate action is taken against those landlords that are failing in their responsibilities. The Council will examine how these services can be developed to ensure a more co-ordinated approach.

5.0 Housing Options

Addressing homelessness is a priority for West Lothian Council. A range of approaches are being taken in an attempt to meet the 2012 Scottish Government target to provide permanent accommodation for all homeless people by 2012

The West Lothian Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011 set out the way in which the Council tackles homelessness. This Strategy set out the Council's vision in addressing homelessness and recognises that focussing on prevention is key to meeting the challenges of 2012. The provision of good housing advice, *before* crisis is reached, is fundamental to the prevention of homelessness.

The strategy while having achieved much has now been reviewed but the focus is still very much on prevention of homelessness and provision of advice and support to access housing options available to all people seeking housing. This updated strategy has been developed in consultation with a range of partners including stakeholder agencies, the voluntary sector, users of homelessness services and West Lothian tenant representatives.

The approach to Homelessness has four main aims

- Maximise the housing options available for people in housing need, and empower them to make the choice that is right for them
- The prevention of, and as a result the reduction in, the number of people who experience homelessness
- Efficient, effective and supportive services for those who experience homelessness.
- Support for vulnerable customers to sustain settled accommodation and minimise the level of repeat homelessness.

There is broad agreement that there are 3 main stages where intervention, which includes the provision of good quality housing advice, can prevent homelessness:

- Early intervention: where those potentially at risk are identified and services provided to support the person and their environment before incipient problems or disputes escalate beyond repair
- Pre-crisis intervention: which can take the form of advice services, mediation, negotiation with landlords to avoid imminent loss of home and targeted services at known risk points such as those leaving the looked after system, prison or the armed forces
- Preventing recurring homelessness: tenancy sustainment is seen as key to preventing recurring homelessness where there are problems that cannot be resolved by re-housing alone

Modelling carried out by the Scottish Government using a range of assumptions and projections indicates that an increase in prevention activity will have the greatest impact on achieving the 2012 target.

5.1 Linking with other Strategies and Plans

The Community Planning Partnership included homelessness as one of the challenges in the Single Outcome Agreement. Through the Single Outcome Agreement, the number of homeless presentations is monitored and the proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured.

Within the context of Single Outcome Agreement West Lothian's approach to homelessness has been designed to support the development of a set of robust and measurable quality of life outcomes, and provides processes and tools to support the integration and alignment of cross-cutting quality of life activity across the Community Planning Partnership. Awareness of the impact of homelessness, which cuts across all life stages, will influence service provision in recognition of the vulnerability of this client group.

As part of the commitment to reducing health inequalities, the health needs of homeless people have been included within National health policy. Our National health: A Plan for Action a Plan for Change (Scottish Executive 2000) made a commitment to issue guidance to NHS Scotland on its role in improving health and health care services for homeless people.

Health & Homelessness Guidance (Scottish Executive 2001) emphasises to NHS Boards the importance the government attaches to delivering services to people whose life circumstances undermine their access to stable, continuing care.

The Guidance and the appointment of a Health & Homelessness Coordinator aims to support NHS Boards in their efforts to address the health needs of homeless people, and required NHS Boards to develop a Health & Homelessness Action Plan as an integral part of the Local Health Plan, in partnership with the Local Authorities, Voluntary Sector, and homeless people.

By linking Health & Homelessness Action Plans with Homelessness Strategies and Community Plans this helps to develop constructive engagement with each local Authority covered by individual NHS Boards. Health and Homelessness Standards (Scottish Executive 2005) require NHS Boards to re-state and further refine their commitment to meeting the health needs of homeless people. West Lothian's approach is consistent with national objectives and Moving into Health continue to work within the framework of the Health and Homelessness Standards, in a reflective and creative way to ensure that a quality service is achieved and the areas which continue to prove challenging are tackled and improved.

5.2 The Challenges for West Lothian in meeting the 2012 Homelessness target

- Based on the numbers of applicants currently presenting as homeless and the modelling the main challenge, is a lack of supply of social rented housing or private rented housing for settled accommodation for those who are homeless.
- As a result of the abolition of Priority Need, even if numbers of homeless applications remain static the demand for temporary accommodation will increase in line with our duty to offer permanent accommodation to all those assessed as homeless. This increase in the need for temporary accommodation may have an impact on the council's ability to offer permanent solutions from its own housing stock unless other sources of temporary accommodation are available.
- The challenges of assisting those with multiple and complex needs are likely to become more frequent. These are the clients who slip through nets of other services. By the nature of the legislative changes in regard to intentionally homeless households, homeless teams could be the only service with a duty to continue to provide some form of accommodation and support. The needs of this client group, although small in number, may have a significant resource implication.
- The impact of the suspension of Local Connection could have in the numbers of ex prisoners presenting as homeless to WLC from the prison in Addiewell
- Changes in Housing Benefit may present a significant challenge for the Council in relation to providing accommodation for homeless people. These changes could lead to increased numbers of people in housing crisis.
- There may be an increase in approaches from young people as they can no longer continue to reside in the family home due to the increase in non dependant deductions.
- For others it may lead to the loss of rented accommodation as the reduced housing allowance makes it no longer affordable.
- The increase in the age band for the single room rate from 25 to 35 year olds will significantly impact on affordability for some in the private rented sector. This will also impact on the council's ability to source accommodation for those in that age group who wish to take that option.
- The use of the private rented sector Houses in Multiple Occupation may be problematic for lone parents with shared care of children as they will only be eligible for the single room rate yet are living in shared accommodation which may not be suitable for families.
- It is estimated that 70% of private rents within West Lothian will be outwith the amount which will be fully covered by housing benefit.
- The change to 30th percentile Local Housing Allowance rate is likely to affect 1931 households in the private rented sector in West Lothian.

- The withdrawal of the £15 per week excess will affect 669 cases in West Lothian
- Local Housing Allowance will be capped at four bedroom rate. It is estimated that 4 households will be affected by this in West Lothian.
- The impact of this will limit the use of 5 bedroom properties in the private rented sector as a source of housing for larger families in receipt of housing benefit.
- There will be a need for more shared accommodation and the Council will have to consider how this need can be met. This is a sector where well managed Houses in Multiple Occupation could contribute to meeting housing need.
- The financial cost of the homeless service in providing good quality furnished temporary accommodation and emergency other accommodation where required. Given the current financial climate the cost of the continued provision of quality temporary accommodation will be a challenge.
- Ensuring that where possible all households are offered temporary accommodation within West Lothian.
- Providing sufficient housing of the size and type required to meet the housing needs of homeless people. There is limited supply of social rented one bedroom properties and providing accommodation for larger families requiring more than 4 bedrooms is also difficult.
- Developing realistic housing options to help people resolve their housing needs. This will include a review of the Council's Allocations Policy to ensure that where possible housing need can be met in a planned manner and people do not feel that the only way to get their housing needs met is to present as homeless.
- The current economic climate which has led to an increase in homelessness presentations because of affordability problems.
- The reduction in Public Sector funding and funding available to the voluntary sector may impact on the support services available to help support vulnerable people.

5.3 Homelessness in West Lothian

Meeting 2012 Target - Priority Need

When measuring our position and progress in meeting the target in 2012, our performance demonstrates an increase in positive permanent outcomes for people, a reduction in repeat homelessness, good sustainability of tenancies and most importantly an increase in the percentage of people accepted as homeless from 78.9 in 08/09 to 89.8% in 2010/11. **(See Table 16, Appendix 3)**

Homeless Presentations

In 2010/11 1935 households presented as homeless In 2009/10, 1762 households presented as homeless which is an increase of 9% on the previous year. **(See Table 17, Appendix 3)**

Homeless Households

Analysis identifies that the majority of existing applicants are either single persons or single parent households, with fewer presentations from couples and families with children. As we move to 2012 and our statutory duties increase, it is expected that single households will increase by a further 3%. Analysis identifies that by far the greatest shortfall in accommodation size is 1 bedroom properties. **(See Table 18, Appendix 3)**

Reasons for Homelessness

The main reasons for presenting as homeless are noted below. The main reason for presentation for presenting as homeless is “family/friends no longer able to accommodate”, followed by “relationship breakdown”. There are various underlying reasons for the type of relationship breakdown including overcrowding, financial difficulty, unemployment, anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, substance misuse, mental ill health or physical impairment. **(See table 19, Appendix 3)**

Repeat Homelessness

The service has placed a greater emphasis on prevention, which is reflected in the decrease in the percentage of cases reassessed within 12 months. **(See Table 20, Appendix 3)**

Outcomes

There has been an improvement in positive outcomes for homeless people since 2008/09. More homeless people are securing accommodation in Council, Housing Association or the Private Rented sector. In 2009/10 there were 954 Council lets of these 641 were allocated to homeless people representing 67% of vacancies.

Tenancy Sustainment

The proportion of those provided with permanent accommodation in council stock who maintained their tenancy for at least 12 months in 2010/11 is 82%. The tenancy sustainment rate has not significantly changed over the last three years and has increased by 1% from 09/10. It is worth noting that a proportion of some tenancies not sustained are because the tenant chose to

do a mutual exchange, move into another tenancy or were offered new build property.

The Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011 has had significant achievements **(See Appendix 2)**. As noted in the Action plan, many of the initiatives developed will continue over the 5 years of the Local Housing Strategy.

5.4 Key Achievements of The Homelessness Strategy 2008-11

There have been significant achievements with regards to the Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011. As noted in the West Lothian Housing Need Action Plan many of the initiatives developed will continue over the 5 years of the Local Housing Strategy.

- The Joint Strategy Group reviewed its remit to promote good communications between all partner agencies.
- Introduced personalised Housing Options Advice, to enhance homeless prevention through provision of a proactive and planned approach to housing advice.
- Restructured the Housing Need Service to establish a Housing Options Team. The team has been established, training programmes are in place and processes are being redeveloped to ensure the restructured service is proactive rather than reactive.
- Increased and promoted service user involvement by establishing a Homeless Service User Group. The group have reviewed homeless information packs, website, and surveys. In June 2011, the team won the prestigious Frances Nelson 2011 Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the customer involvement.
- A customer led inspection of the customer's journey through the homelessness process has been carried out by the homeless Service User Group. Areas for improvement were identified and an action plan agreed and implemented.
- Introduced Sleep Tight Packs to help settle young children moving into emergency accommodation.
- Staff have been trained on Social Networks, and a befriending scheme, 'Passing the Baton', has been introduced in partnership with Bethany Christian Trust.
- Piloted 'My Home For Keeps' pre-tenancy course for homeless service users and those in permanent tenancies who are struggling to sustain them.
- Carried out Domestic Abuse training on awareness, prevention strategies and protocols.
- Developed a partnership with Adult Basic Education to help staff recognise clients who would benefit from help with their literacy and numeracy skills, and to make referrals and provide support.
- Developed of a 'Transitional Tenancy' approach in partnership with Social Policy to ensure formerly looked after young people are removed from the homeless process.

- Developed protocols with Criminal Justice to ensure ex-offenders are able to access and sustain accommodation.
- Provided advice and assistance to prisoners in preparation for their release from Addiewell Prison, in partnership with South and North Lanarkshire Councils.
- Carried out a high profile campaign to raise awareness of the help available to people falling behind with mortgage or rent payments.
- Introduced prevention assistance for home owners including Mortgage to Rent, Council Buy Back, and Shared Equity scheme.
- Set up 'Homechoice' working with registered and accredited landlords/letting agents to enhance the use of the private rented sector in providing alternative options and solutions to people's housing needs.
- Developed and published a healthy eating/recipe resource 'Beating the Budget' by and for people who are experiencing homelessness.
- Members of Moving into Health are trained as trainers in Safetalk and Suicide First Aid, which is delivered to stakeholders and users of the service.
- Regular football sessions are made available to clients, with health promotion activities offered to those attending.
- Introduced 'Girl Power' Sexual Health event for young females and health drop in sessions.
- Developed a protocol for communicating with primary care colleagues about children who move into homeless accommodation

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799479/1985585/HomelessStrategy2008>

5.5 West Lothian's Strategic Approach – Developing Housing Options

The Council strives for continuous improvement in its approach to meeting housing need and homelessness. As noted in the 2008-2011 strategy, Homelessness is not a lifestyle choice that people make. It is something that can happen to anyone in society.

The solution to homelessness lies in a person centred approach and will require involvement from a range of agencies including housing providers, professionals, in health, social work, education and the voluntary sector.

West Lothian Council has recently adopted a Housing Options approach. This approach helps people to understand the full range of realistic options available to them, and start to plan how best to meet their housing needs. People are offered Housing Options Advice, a 'housing health check' at any change point in their lives, not just when they reach the crisis of homelessness. People are given clear, impartial advice and empowered to make the choice that is right for them.

This is in line with Prevention of Homelessness Guidance jointly issued by the Scottish Government and COSLA in June 2009.

Developing a housing options approach that offers routes into a wider range of tenures will reduce pressure on scarce affordable housing at the same time as giving applicants access to properties of a size, type or location which would not otherwise be available to them.

The Government is promoting this approach, and providing funding to facilitate shared learning in this area and obtain best value for money. West Lothian Council is an active member of the 'Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders Hub'. The key achievements of the Hub to date are;

- Mediation training- staff from each of the six local authorities in the Hub attended a 5 day Accreditation Advanced Mediation Skills course hosted by West Lothian Council
- Private Rented Sector Research – to explore the challenges, perceptions, access routes and best practice to enable maximum access to private rented accommodation (City of Edinburgh Council).
- Co-ordinated Hub-wide Media Project – to raise awareness and encourage people to be in contact as early as possible, using posters, websites, radio and newspaper (East Lothian Council).

5.5.1 Housing Advice

Housing Advice is provided by a range of organisations in West Lothian.

The Council provides Independent Housing Advice through the Advice Shop in Bathgate.

The aim and objectives of our strategy are to:

- Ensure appropriate access to accurate, comprehensive and good quality housing information and advice to anyone in West Lothian
- Prevent homelessness by providing advice before the point of crisis
- Improve information sharing and knowledge management between housing advice providers in West Lothian
- Promote public awareness of housing advice services
- Maximise choice by providing advice on housing options
- Recognise the importance of the provision of housing advice as part of a

holistic approach to addressing individual's needs

The Council will explore ways to make use of new technologies in relation to the provision of information and advice.

5.5.2 Housing Options Team

The restructured Housing Needs Service will be proactive rather than reactive. The target being a reduction in the need for applicants to present as homeless as the team works with them to assist the customer either to remain in their current accommodation or to identify alternative housing options which the applicant can consider in preference to making a homeless presentation.

5.5.3 Review of the Allocations Policy

The council will be carrying out a review of our allocations policy to ensure it continues to assist those in greatest housing need and to address the needs of new forming households. The review will ensure that where possible housing need can be met in a planned manner and people do not feel that the only way to get their housing needs met is to go down the homelessness route.

The possibility of designating some properties for amenity use will be considered as part of the allocations policy review.

Working with partners in the common housing register to examine the possibility of introducing a common allocations policy.

5.5.4 Pressured Area/Pressured house type Status

There is the opportunity to restrict the Right to Buy by applying for pressured area/ pressured house type status as permitted by the Housing Scotland Act (2010). The options for this will be further investigated.

5.5.5 Partnership Working Homelessness Joint Strategy Group

The homelessness joint strategy group is made up of senior representatives in the statutory and voluntary sector. The main aim of the group is to take forward the direction of homeless services in West Lothian. The Group also shares information and good practice.

Working with Health

The Health and Homelessness Management Group develop the strategic direction for the Health and Homelessness service (see 6.6.10)

Registered Social Landlords

Housing Associations in West Lothian have a key role in providing information, advice and accommodation to homeless people. In 2007/08, 7.8% of homeless presentations were housed by a Registered Social Landlord in 2009/10 this had risen to 14%. This represents a significant improvement. The Council will continue to support RSLs to improve their contribution to addressing homelessness in West Lothian.

5.5.6 Private Landlords

The Council is developing its approach to working with private landlords to help provide a range of options for homeless people and people in housing need.

Current activity

- A series of Landlord Accreditation training sessions in partnership with

Landlord Accreditation Scotland

- Development of Landlord Forums
- Development of Web Based Property Portal so that private landlords/letting agents properties can be accessed along with other tenures.
- Working with over 3,600 private landlords offering advice and assistance on landlord registration, regulation, housing benefits, adaptations and legal requirements
- Deposit Saving Scheme - to enable West Lothian Home Choice to provide written deposit savings agreements between landlords and tenants to the value of 1 months rent. It would encourage landlords to provide private rented accommodation for people in housing need they would normally not offer accommodation to.

The criteria for customers to access this Scheme will be:

- At risk of homelessness and
- Unable to afford the full amount of a deposit

5.6.6 Increasing Housing Supply

We have already completed 255 units of new build Council housing with a further 545 to follow in the second phase. RSL programmes have averaged approximately 100 units pa over the last 5 years with 123 units completed in 2010/11. However, the future of the RSL programme is less certain due to the reduction in the funding available and a more competitive approach being taken to the award of subsidy. It is likely that future projects will involve a greater degree of mixed tenure including some mid market rent properties.

5.5.7 Mortgage to Rent Scheme

This scheme has become an increasingly important preventative measure in relation to homelessness. Since 2009 over 100 cases have been dealt with by the Advice Shop. The Council has purchased 40 properties through the scheme. There are a further 29 applications in progress. The mortgage to rent scheme has proved a popular and successful mechanism to prevent homelessness. In addition, the Council operates its own buy back scheme for people who have bought their Council houses but have significant difficulty meeting their mortgage repayments.

5.5.8 Housing Support and Homelessness (See Independent Living)

Housing support is an integral part of a variety of care packages with a focus on intervention and sustainment. It has a key role to play in helping to reduce homelessness. This is achieved in a number of ways:

- Prevention – by helping to sustain people in the community and identify problems before they become crises. Promoting Independence – by supporting people to enable them to make their own decisions and live their own lives.
- Alleviating Crisis – by helping people to manage crisis situations.
- Resettlement – helping people to establish themselves in a new home and community, and prevent them becoming homeless again. It is particularly important for those who have become homeless as a result of addiction or mental health issues.
- Assisting applicants to sustain their accommodation represents not only a

financial saving to the Council but also in terms of emotional or financial costs to the applicant.

- Inclusion – supporting people who may not be seeking support, who may have challenging behaviours or have multiple needs.

A key aim is to strengthen the range of support services and develop an early identification system in partnership with our stakeholders to identify those who may be at risk of becoming homeless.

5.5.9 Transitional Tenancies

To continue to develop our transitional tenancies approach to housing young care leavers, preventing them from being forced down the homeless route as the only means of securing accommodation.

5.5.10 Gypsy / Traveller Community Service Provision in West Lothian

West Lothian Council has spent the last year reviewing the services we provide to Gypsy / Traveller Community following on from a consultation process with stakeholders and service providers. This had been ongoing with Police, Health, Scottish Government and local businesses, Housing Construction & Building Services and with over 30 Gypsy Travelling families over an 18 months period.

The outcomes of the consultation were:

- Gypsy / Traveller Community felt there was no longer any demand for pitches on the council run permanent site which resulted in occupancy rates falling to an average of 30% however, prior to the site closing on 31 August 2010 this got worse and the site remained empty for months at a time.
- The site was in a relatively poor condition. Units used for kitchen and bathroom facilities were damaged and suffered from high levels of condensation. The electric supply and water supply for the whole site was inadequate for the number of pitches..
- Although the occupancy rate of the site had decreased over the years it is worth noting that the number of unauthorised encampments had also decreased over the last 3 years.
- An outreach service has been operating since the Travelling Persons Site was built and has grown over the years with the establishment of strong partnership links with Police and Health. A Focus Group was set up with 13 internal / external agencies keen to work with Gypsy / Travellers Community to further enhance the service. The proposal was to further develop this joint partnership approach offering support, advice and assistance, with West Lothian Council retaining the lead role.

The conclusion to the consultation was that West Lothian Council would continue to deliver quality services to Gypsy / Traveller Community living in West Lothian. With the permanent site no longer available it was appropriate that resources are directed to improved outreach services.

Through the recent restructure process within Housing Needs Service it is proposed to have a permanent dedicated Gypsy Travellers Liaison Officer in post. They will take the lead to ensure access to health, education, support, housing and assist in tackling discrimination and ensure inclusion in relevant consultations. They will build on relationships already established.

5.5.11 Health and Homelessness

West Lothian was one of the first areas in Scotland to recognise the importance of housing and health working together, a unique partnership between West Lothian Council and NHS Lothian was established in 2000. Today The Homeless Health Team, is made up of 3 nurses who working in partnership with West Lothian Housing Needs Service and lead on health and homelessness. Moving into Health is the overarching multi-agency approach to tackling health inequalities of homeless people in West Lothian under the auspices of the West Lothian Community Health & Care Partnership (CHCP).

The Health & Homelessness Interest Group (HHIG) was established in 2005 and includes representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations with an interest in homelessness. The group aims to identify gaps in service and determines ways to address these gaps through joint working and streamlining approaches to health delivery to improve the health of those experiencing homelessness. It also identifies opportunities for homeless people to engage in activities with an aim to improve mental health and well-being.

Moving into Health's (MIH), Homeless Health Team currently provide a flexible, responsive, person centred model of care to people identified with health needs, who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness and who are not currently engaged in mainstream Health Services. The ideology which supports the homeless health team within the housing needs service is the ability to assess and determine ways to reduce impacts of poor health on people managing to sustain/access tenancies and/or the impact of unsuitable housing on people's health. The service works in an outreach model to promote good engagement, need is prioritised to support short waiting times and opportunistic contact with those in need. Concurrently the service looks at supporting mainstream health to work with housing to address the impact of housing need on health.

The team aims to improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness, by providing interventions to improve their health and linking them to mainstream health services. The service also tries to establish working relationships between housing needs and mainstream health services, as well as employ health initiatives which are offered within West Lothian to the homeless population. There are strong links with addictions services in West Lothian and a great recognition of the cross-cutting issues which arise and demonstrate partnership approaches to tackle addictions and homelessness are imperative. The team liaise between health and housing services to promote streamlined communication and early intervention, which may prevent further deterioration of health and contribute to homeless prevention.

The types of practical assistance undertaken by the team include ensuring homeless people have access to outreach mental health assessments, physical health screening and signposting to mainstream health services. As well as widely promoting dental care, health education, and health resources (such as The Guide to Good Health) for homeless people and those who are supporting them.

5.5.12 Temporary Accommodation

There are development proposals for a new Assessment Centre and re provisioning of other emergency accommodation to meet the Unsuitable Accommodation Order.

5.5.12 Diagnostic Triggers

The Council has identified a need for a diagnostic triggers tool for use by all staff across the Council and partners, which would flag up homeless risk factors at the very earliest stages. This would enable the provision of advice or support that could prevent them from becoming homeless further down the line.

5.5.13 Staff Development

The Council recognises that to be effective staff need to have a thorough knowledge of all housing and support options, and the skills to give the appropriate advice. A training matrix and extensive training programme is being developed to support the new Housing Options Team.

5.5.14 Legislative Changes

The removal of priority need assessment is a key legislative change and will have significant effect impact on the use of temporary accommodation.

The Council will work with partners and service users to revise processes to fully comply with the abolition of the priority need test with changes to the Intentionality duty and to implement the duty to carry out a support assessment, once the details of the requirements are known.

6.0 Independent Living

6.1 Introduction

In West Lothian, there are a wide range of care and support services delivered to people living in their own homes to enable independent living. Care and support services are either provided by the public sector or are commissioned from providers working in the voluntary or private sectors. The primary aim of these services is to enable people to live independently in their own homes, preventing homelessness and avoiding admission to more costly institutional settings. A definition of independent living agreed by Independent Living in Scotland (ILiS) in 2008 is '*disabled people of all ages having the freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, at work and in the community. It does not mean living by yourself or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life*'. For the purpose of this chapter this definition is used for all care client groups.

West Lothian Council, West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) and their strategic partners have successfully developed and mainstreamed innovative models across all the care client groups which enable people to live independently. This includes the use of equipment, adaptations, packages of telecare technology and the delivery of more holistic care and support services.

Both nationally and locally there is a greater emphasis on delivering outcomes for individual people and local communities which are based on need and preferences. Alongside an outcome based approach to service delivery, future demographic and financial pressures will continue to shift the commissioning of health and care service from institutional care to services which achieve prevention and early intervention. This will have significant implications on the need for housing and the care and support services outlined within this chapter.

6.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that the future strategic planning of independent living services are not undertaken in isolation from the physical development and planning of housing in West Lothian. In particular, new build planning across all tenures in West Lothian needs to take into account the requirement for accessible/barrier free housing to enable people to stay at home. To achieve this, the Independent Living Chapter will outline the national and local policy framework for care and support services and as well as the strategic context. This is to demonstrate that the outcomes and actions agreed in the Local Housing Strategy are aligned with other relevant outcomes and are consistent with the themes of prevention and early intervention. The care and support services which are outlined in the Independent Living Chapter are Housing Support, Telecare Technology, Care at Home, Aids and Adaptations, Care and Repair and the Home Maintenance Service

6.2.1 Legislation and National Policy Direction

This section considers the relevant national policy and legislative context for housing support and other services which enable independent living.

Local authorities are responsible for deciding the allocation of grant to meet housing support priorities and are required to outline the housing support needs of its areas within the local housing strategy demonstrating the links to other services which enable independent living.

The former Supporting People programme which ended in April 2008 was based on the provision of 21 housing support tasks, which encourage and assist daily living and enable vulnerable people to continue to live in their own homes while developing lifeskills. A number of research papers have been published recently which stress the continued need for housing support and the cost benefits realised. Housing support is enshrined in various social care and housing legislation including:

- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 local authorities have a duty to promote social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance on a scale appropriate to their area.
- The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Public Services Reform Act 2010.
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 reinforces this requirement to access provision of housing and related service services within the LHS.
- The Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2010 requires local authorities to assess the housing support needs of homeless people.

Single Outcome Agreement: Although housing support and other services which enable independent living are not specifically identified within the 15 high level outcomes and 45 indicators agreed between the Scottish Government and COSLA, they have an important role in achieving them and assisting in the delivery of the Scottish Government's 5 strategic objectives. These are: **WEALTHIER AND FAIRER, SMARTER, HEALTHIER, SAFER AND STRONGER and GREENER.**

There are a number of other reports that inform and influence the Council's approach to Housing support. These are

- Changing Life's Report
- The Christie Commission
- The Reshaping Care for Older People's Programme
- National Strategy and Proposed Legislation on Self Directed Support (SDS)
- National Strategy on Housing for Older People

These are detailed further at Appendix 3, Independent Living Section

6.3 West Lothian Strategic Context

This section considers the local strategies and planning documents which services identified within the Independent Living Chapter should be aligned with. Across the strategic and planning documents the main focus of early intervention and prevention is at the core of the Council's and its strategic partners' planning.

West Lothian SOA/Life Stages/Community Planning

West Lothian has just finalised its 4th Single Outcome Agreement. There are 5 key outcomes which the independent living chapter should be aligned with identified in Table 1 below. During 2010/2011 the Council has further defined its approach to the SOA using the lifestages as a framework for demonstrating change. The main priorities of the lifestages framework are:

- Targeting service to reduce inequalities
- Shifting resource upstream to deliver preventative services
- Ensuring that we obtain maximum impact from our expenditure

Table 1 below identifies the local planning outcomes which should be aligned with the outcomes of the Independent Living Chapter and how these are linked with the Community Planning themes and Lifestages outcomes.

Local Outcome	Community Plan Theme	Lifestage
1. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.	Economic	Young People in transition
2. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.	Health and Wellbeing	Early Years
3. We live longer and healthier lives.	Health and Wellbeing	Older People
4. We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian Society.		All
5. We have improved the life chances for people at risk.	Health and Wellbeing and Community Safety	All

Strategic Planning for Independent Living

Following on from an extensive consultation process West Lothian Social Policy, Service Statements were finalised in 2009 for each care group and were aligned with relevant service area strategies including

- The Joint Learning Disability Strategy,
- The Joint Mental Health Plan,
- The Joint Physical and Complex Disability Strategy,
- The Integrated Children's Plan,
- Older People's Capacity Plan 2006-2016,
- West Lothian Change Plan for Older People
- West Lothian's Local Housing Strategy
- West Lothian Homelessness Strategy

The main purpose of the service statements is to provide information on current care and support services and identify future service direction to assist and guide Social Policy planning and service development process over a 3 year period 2009-2012.

In line with SWIA's self assessment 'Guide to Strategic Commissioning' 2009 West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership is developing a Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for West Lothian 2011-2021. This 10 year Commissioning Strategy provides an overarching approach to the strategic commissioning of health and social care services with the vision being to **'commission a range of high quality health and social care services to meet the needs and outcomes of the people living in West Lothian and the communities which they live in'**. (West Lothian CHCP, Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy 2011-2021). To help achieve this vision West Lothian CHCP will commission services which focus on prevention and early intervention and which enable people to live independently in their own homes where they chose to do so.

The strategic commissioning approach will include the development of joint health and social care commissioning plans for each of the care groups for the period Dec 2011 – Dec 2014 and will provide the link between the strategic commissioning process and strategic plans for health and social care services which enable independent living.

Homelessness Strategy

The West Lothian Homelessness Strategy 2008/11 sets out the way in which the Council tackles homelessness and how it will meet the Scottish Governments target to provide permanent accommodation for all homeless people by 2012. The current homelessness strategy has been reviewed and updated with Chapter 6, Housing Options, of this Local Housing Strategy. The focus is still on early intervention and prevention of homelessness through the provision of advice and guidance on housing options available to all people seeking housing. Housing Support and other social care services are identified as having a key role in reducing homelessness through the delivery

of person centred packages of support and care focuses on prevention, interventions and resettlement.

Re-Shaping Care for Older People

To achieve the Scottish Governments vision of its 10 year re-shaping Care for Older People Programme local transition plans have been agreed to be developed and driven forward by Local Partnerships. The Scottish Government has also created a £70million Change Fund to provide bridging finance to address the difficulties of investing in new community care and support services before being able to de-commission existing institutional settings.

The West Lothian Partnership Local Transition Plan was developed and agreed in March 2011 with allocated funding of £1.5million. The key partners are WLC, NHS Lothian, the voluntary sector, Scottish Care and senior Peoples forum.

There are 5 thematic areas which will assist further with the transition in West Lothian from institutional care to care and support at home. These are the development of an integrated universal care at home and reablement service, development of a comprehensive out of hours crisis response service, supporting investment in safe at home technology, and building capacity within the community.

6.4 Demographic Pressures

When analysing the future demand for services which enable independent living in West Lothian it is important to consider future population trends. Section 4.3 of this document provides information in West Lothian's population and population projections by age group. The key points to note are:

- Projected growth by age group in West Lothian and Scotland for the period 2008-2033 and shows that West Lothian's population is expected to grow across all age groups. The under 15's by 16.2%, adults of working age by 15.9% and people of pensionable age by 59.5%
- The rate of increase in the older people's age group in West Lothian needs to be highlighted in the context of strategic planning. From 2008-2033, the number of 65-74 year olds will increase by 80% in West Lothian, compared to a 48% increase in Scotland. The number of 75+ year olds will increase by 151% in west Lothian compared to 84% in Scotland.

Key facts about West Lothian's population

- West Lothian's older population is expected to grow rapidly over the next two decades.
- It is estimated that 11% of children in West Lothian are living in severe poverty.
- Alcohol related illness and smoking are higher in West Lothian than the Scottish average.
- Over half of West Lothian's Citizen Panel members say that they had given some form of unpaid help in 2010/11.
- Youth unemployment in West Lothian is higher than the Scottish average.
- There were 2070 domestic abuse incidents in 2010 which is an increase of 4% compared to the average for the three previous years.
- There has been a slight increase (0.45%) in the number of homeless applications since 2008/09 to 2010/11. At 46% West Lothian has a higher percentage of under 25 years of age homeless applications compared to the Scottish average of 39%

6.5 Independent Living Service Provision in West Lothian

Housing Support and Telecare

In 2010/11, approx 7,000 individuals benefited from a housing support service in West Lothian which enabled them to live independently in their own homes. This figure includes external and in-house service provision across all the main social care client groups but excludes the provision of telecare technology. Since the ending of the Supporting People programme in April 2008, West Lothian Council has continued to collate information on the levels of housing support service delivered. **(Table 21, Appendix 3)** provides a breakdown of the number of service users per client group in 2010/11.

Individual service users can access a range of housing support services to meet their individual needs including accommodation based services, core and cluster models, sheltered housing and visiting housing support services.

The Council's Social Policy Service currently has in place contracts for all the external housing support services with the majority of contracts ending on 30th September 2011 with an option to extend for a further year. These have been largely extended to September 2012. This is to ensure that future contract decisions are aligned with national and local strategic outcomes and priorities as earlier in this chapter. In particular, the future commissioning of housing support services will be integrated within the Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy 2011 – 2021 with future commissioning intentions identified within care group commissioning plans.

To achieve the vision and principle of the Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy housing support services and contracting arrangements will need to be more outcomes focused with consideration

given to a more holistic approach to service delivery and flexibility to enable SDS agenda.

Telecare Technology

The provision of telecare technology to support people in their own homes continues to grow in West Lothian supporting older, disabled and vulnerable people in over 4000 homes. **Table 22 Appendix 3** identifies that since 2007/08 a further 1000 packages of telecare technology have been installed in service users homes through the council's Home Safety Service which enables service users to remain longer in their own home and contributes to West Lothian's zero delayed discharge figure by facilitating speedy hospital discharge. Telecare equipment can support service users and their carers with improved confidence and safety to continue living as independently as possible.

Care at Home

In 2009/10 approximately 2,276 individuals received a Care at Home package from both external and internal providers. 731 of these individuals had both a care at home and housing support service at some point within 2009/10. **(See Table 23, Appendix 3)**

At present the council is changing its in-house care at home service to a more specialised reablement service in line with its Change Fund plans for 2011/12. The Council has also tendered for a framework agreement for care at home services in Summer 2011 **and new arrangements are now in place.**

Equipment and Adaptations

Adaptations provide supportive and preventative solutions, facilitate hospital discharge and support the Scottish Government aim to shift the balance of care into the community. In their wider plans for an ageing population the Scottish Government is 'committed to enabling older people to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible in homes adapted to meet mobility needs'.

According to the Scottish House Condition Survey 2007-09, 36% of households in West Lothian have at least one member with a long term illness or disability. This affects 52% of households in public sector housing and 28% in private sector housing. 18% of households have adaptations. Adaptations are more prevalent in the public sector (27%) compared to (14%) in the private sector. 6% of households reported that they needed an adaptation in their home.

Adaptations are a very cost effective way of supporting older people and people with physical disability at home. In 2009 it cost £27,000 to treat a fractured hip when a handrail to prevent a fall costs £200. A curved stairlift

costing £6,000 will allow a person access to essential facilities instead of moving into a care home placement costing £34,000 per year.

Adaptations are carried out following an assessment of need by an occupational therapist who arranges for work to be carried out with the home owner. There is an agreed eligibility criteria for accessing this service. This work is done in agreement with WLC building services for council properties, WLC grants section and Care and Repair for owner occupied properties or with the respective Registered Social Landlords, a West Lothian approach which ensures equity across tenures.

We deliver over 18,000 pieces of equipment each year ranging from toilet frame to hospital beds. This contributes to reducing bed blocking (in West Lothian there is zero delayed discharge from hospital).

Approximately 3,500 adaptations are completed (**See Table 24, Appendix 3**) in West Lothian per year costing around £2.5 million allowing older people, people with physical disabilities and those with dementia to remain longer in their own homes. About 200 ramps and stairlifts are installed each year to improve access and mobility around the home. These large provisions help to support very disabled people to remain in their own homes and in their own communities.

A well established service in West Lothian is self selection adaptations. This is a model that has been replicated across Scotland. The process is agreed with all housing partners and allows simple handrails and banisters to be fitted without the need for an assessment within a target of 2 weeks from request. 47% of recipients state they had made the request for a rail following a fall. This service is the simplest, most positive contribution in reducing falls and in increasing confidence, allowing people to continue living at home

The Council continues to work hard to manage and maximise finite resources. It has an efficient process of equipment re-use and recycling based on an effective stock tracking and management system. In 2010, 47% of the stock was reissued, exceeding the target of 40%.

Care and Repair

Care and Repair West Lothian provides advice and assistance to help people in the private housing sector remain in their own homes. A range of services are provided including advice and information, co-ordination of work required to adapt homes, a small repairs services and handy person service. Key safes, and telecare uplifts and safety sockets. In the last 3 years Care and repair have provided advice to over 1500 customers and carried out over 500 disabled adaptations and undertaken more than 2,300 small repairs In 2010/11 Care and Repair provided assistance to over 1600 service users. including repairs and improvements and adaptations. . The Council has provided funding to Care and Repair to allow them to co-ordinate work to owners' properties

6.6 Key Achievements of Independent Living Services

- Enabled approximately 7,000 people per annum to continue living in their own home through the delivery of housing support services
- Continued investment and growth in the number of packages of telecare technology installed in people's homes to enable independent living across all care groups and assist in achieving West Lothian CHCP's figure of 0 delayed discharge.
- The successful tendering of independent living services such as, housing support substance misuse services.
- The development of innovative housing support and care models including the provision of 7 housing with care developments for older people in West Lothian.
- Expansion of the Care and Repair Service to include arrangement of additional services such as the Handy Person Service, fitting of key safes and telecare technology uplifts.

6.7 Summary of Current Issues Facing Independent Living

Significant local demographic pressures alongside national and local policy directions aimed at prevention and early intervention will increase the future need for services which enable people to continue to live in their own homes or in a homely setting. Services such as housing support, care at home and aids and adaptations as well as the use of telecare technology are proven to be cost effective in delivering national and local strategic outcomes particularly in relation to prevention and early intervention by creating independence rather than dependence. Alongside the need to continue with the provision of preventative services is the need to provide services to a growing number of people with complex and multiple needs.

Following on from consultation process with stake holders and service providers the following areas were identified as being the main issues

- There is a need to quantify and evidence the future need for independent living services which are being predicted to rise due to the demographic pressures across all the age groups in West Lothian.
- The complex strategic context of independent living services and the need for a strategic over view of all the relevant policies and legislation and the alignment of relevant strategies.
- Given the pressure on financial resources, how to provide a balance between lower level preventative services and the need for higher level more intensive care services.
- There is a need for better information sharing and sign posting between services.

- Impacts of changes to housing benefit legislation on supported accommodation.
- The need to develop a more holistic approach to assessments and undertake regular reviews to ensure that an individual's needs are identified.

6.8 Strategic Approach to Independent Living

The strategic approach of intervention, prevention and sustainment is clearly embedded throughout West Lothian's strategic planning approach. Services which enable independent living have an important role in achieving the aims and outcomes identified within West Lothian's Single Outcome Agreement and other strategic planning documents.

To meet future demographic and financial pressures, national and local policy direction will continue to shift resources to services which focus on prevention and sustainment. Alongside care and support services which are commissioned by local authorities there is a need to be consistent with the personalisation agenda and demonstrate the delivery of outcomes at both an individual and service level.

To ensure that the strategic planning of services outlined within this chapter is aligned with other relevant strategies the following strategic approach will be taken.

6.81 Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy

Following the longer term strategic approach outlined in the Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy 2011- 2021, West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) will develop joint care group Commissioning Plans for health and social care services. The overall aim of the Commissioning Plans is to provide the link between strategic planning and future commissioning intentions for health and social care services. Where relevant, the commissioning plans will include the independent living services identified within this chapter and will enable the analytical work to be undertaken to determine the gaps in current service delivery to meet identified strategic need. Commissioning Plans will be developed for each of the main care groups for 2012 – 2015.

In relation to the services which enable independent living the development of the commissioning plans should consider

- Analysis and evidence of future demand for independent living services.
- The range of accommodation available to people needing support and is this sufficient for future needs.
- The most effective balance of services required to meet the preventative agenda but also providing service to meet complex need.
- The need for accommodation based services.
- The need for floating support services.
- The role of assessment and care management arrangements

- The role of telecare and the development of telehealthcare technology in assisting people to remain living independently in their own homes.

6.8.2 Homelessness and Housing Support:

Housing support services have a key role in West Lothian's strategic approach to Homelessness particularly in meeting the aims outlined in Chapter 6, Housing Option of the LHS. These include

- The prevention of, and as a result the reduction in the number of people who experience homelessness
- Efficient, effective and supportive services for those who experience homelessness.
- Support for vulnerable customers to sustain settled accommodation and minimise the level of repeat homelessness.

The strategic planning and commissioning of housing support services and other support services will be aligned with the relevant aims and objectives outlined in Chapter 6 to ensure the strategic approaches are not undertaken in isolation.

6.8.3 Review of Allocations Policy:

As part of the council's strategic review of its allocations policy ensure that individual housing need and housing support need are not addressed in isolation.

6.8.4 Transitional Tenancies:

To continue working jointly with Housing and Building Services to develop a transitional approach to supporting and housing young care leavers to prevent them from being forced down the homelessness route as the only means of securing accommodation.

6.8.5 Adaptations Service Improvements

Close partnership working with Building Services resulted in the development in April 2011 of agreed procedures with a target timeline of 91 working days for major adaptations and a register of adapted property. The procedure is accessible on Housing and Occupational Therapy web pages with outcome measures

Occupational therapists work closely with Grants Section and Care and Repair improving processes to adapt homes for owner occupiers using as detailed in the Housing Scotland Act 2006. Contributing to publicity material ensures shared aims and practice in service delivery.

By working with Registered Social Landlords OTs ensure equity across housing tenures by using the same practice and procedures agreed with council Building Services, and supplemented with regular meetings.

7.0 Improving our Communities

West Lothian is generally regarded as a good place to live by its residents. According to the Scottish Household Survey, the key aspects that West Lothian residents like about their neighbourhoods that make it a good place to live are in regard to the sense of community and the pleasant environment.

The West Lothian Citizens' Panel was set up to help identify local people's views on a whole range of issues relating to life in West Lothian. The Panel currently has approximately 2,900 members from across West Lothian. Membership is voluntary and Panel members have the opportunity to participate in surveys and focus groups. The main activity of the Panel is the Quality of Life Survey. The last one was carried out in 2010 - this was the fifth survey of its kind to be carried out in the last 11 years. The Quality of Life Survey undertaken by the West Lothian Citizen's Panel found that;

- 87% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with West Lothian as a place to live compared to 2% who were dissatisfied.
- The majority of respondents are happy with their neighbourhood with 80% saying they satisfied or very satisfied.
- The top two priorities in each of the nine wards were Good Health followed by Feeling Safe
- Perceptions of community safety are much improved from the 2007 survey with 95% of respondents stating that they feel very or fairly safe at home during the day and 87% saying that they feel very or fairly safe at home after dark.

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799465/lcp/QoL2010Results>

There are significant variations between and within neighbourhoods though. One source of information available that can help to provide a general picture of deprivation at a local level is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The SIMD measures deprivation across themes such as income, employment, health, education, housing, crime and access to services. Each Local Authority area is divided into datazones (based on postcodes) of approximately 750 people in each datazone. West Lothian has 211 datazones. Employment and income are weighted most heavily and therefore have the most impact on rankings.

As deprivation is based on datazones rather than individuals, if an area has some streets that are affluent and some that are deprived this will average out and show as an area of limited deprivation. West Lothian's datazones tend to be more mixed in terms of deprivation as the area does not have many large estates of single tenure. SIMD therefore should be used alongside other data to provide a balanced picture.

The SIMD for 2009 identified that

- West Lothian no longer has any datazones in the most deprived 5% banding across Scotland
- West Lothian's share of the most deprived 15% of datazones has increased from 14 in 2006 to 19 in 2009.
- 39 of West Lothian's datazones are ranked as being in the most deprived 20% of datazones. This is an increase of 9 since 2006.
- 15 datazones are in the most income deprived across Scotland

In West Lothian only 18% of income deprived people can be found in the 15% most deprived datazones. This compares with a Scotland wide figure of 34% income deprived people living in the 15% most deprived datazones.

7.1 Improving Communities – The challenges

Consultation events were carried out with stakeholders in relation to improving communities. A number of issues were identified for the Council and its partners

- Communication – It is important to keep residents updated about the actions that are being taken to address issues such as anti-social behaviour or property disrepair.
- Important to encourage resident participation and to acknowledge the commitment that many existing residents provide to help improve their communities
- Making use of social networking sites to encourage a range of people to participate
- There should be consultation before key decisions are made that affect neighbourhoods
- The appearance of a neighbourhood is very important in attracting people to live in the area. Resources should be directed to this (a good example given was the cleaning of UPVC panels at houses in Blackburn and painting of the houses)
- All owners need to understand their responsibilities in regard to property repair and maintenance.
- Need to make best use of Community facilities due to funding pressures

7.2 Improving Communities – A strategic Approach

A number of policies and approaches have been developed to assist in making West Lothian's communities better places to live and work.

These include

- Community Involvement
- Community Safety
- Area Regeneration/New Community Facilities

7.2.1 Community Involvement

In West Lothian there are a number of ways in which residents can engage in decisions about their neighbourhoods.

Local Area Committees

There is opportunity for communities to get involved in decision making through the 9 local area committees (one for each ward). They are chaired by a local member and Head of Service. They have the opportunity to discuss local matters in depth and to identify local issues. The issues which arise in the wards tend to be around unemployment, health, young people and early years. For each of the wards, there are identified priorities in terms of the Lifestages model. Community Regeneration officers work within each of the wards to facilitate community engagement and to develop projects that will address the key issues. A key issue particularly in times of limited resources is to ensure a balanced approach so that interventions that assist one group do not disadvantage another group.

Community Councils – there are currently 36 Community Councils in West Lothian and they provide input to Housing and related services by expressing their views of the community to the Council and to other public bodies. Their role is to take action which they consider to be in the interest of the Community.

Tenant Participation

West Lothian Council understand the importance of involving their customers in improving service delivery and have an excellent reputation for participation. Within Housing, Construction and Building Services Section, Tenant Participation is fundamental to the success of delivering first class services. It requires mutual trust, respect and partnership working between those who use services, staff and elected members – working together towards a common aim of better housing conditions and housing related services.

West Lothian is proud of the achievements customer involvement has made and their efforts have been recognised both nationally and locally.

Staff have embraced the concept of Tenant Participation and recognises that supporting customers reaps great reward in improving services. The Tenant Participation Strategy sets out the many ways customers can get involved. Here are some examples:-

Registered Tenants Organisations (RTO)

As a member of a RTO tenants work with other like minded service users to tackle housing and other related matters that are of the interest to them in their local community. Housing Construction and Building Services will work in partnership with tenants and consult on any changes or developments to the services they deliver.

Housing Networks

These are made up of group members, individual tenants and service users to work in partnership with Housing, Construction and Building services to gather views on housing and other related matters. The Networks will present these views to the council, ensuring that any decisions made are informed and shaped by the people who use our services.

Tenant Led Inspections

With the onset of the new Scottish Housing Regulator, housing providers will require customers input to help self assess the services they provide.

Tenant Led inspections are recognised as best practise throughout Scotland and West Lothian Council pride itself in being the first to introduce this concept 11 years ago. The inspection process allows customers the opportunity to carry out an in-depth inspect into the policies and processes of services they provide and make recommendations for improvement. The success of this process has encouraged inspectors to visit or play host to several other local authorities to give practical demonstrations on how the process works. To help others understand the process a 'taster session' has been developed with our Tenant Led Inspectors, and the Tenant Participation Team are working on the production of a training kit for new inspectors

To complement the very successful Tenant Led Inspection process, the Council has implemented a pilot programme to invite customers to participate in the first Citizen Led Inspections to assist with improving other services.

Street Environmental Improvement Programme

This project allows local communities to benefit from additional improvement work to areas owned by Housing Services. Customers can submit ideas on how to improve communal areas and have a say in how the budget for this scheme is spent. Tenants will be involved in identifying projects not covered within the Capital Programme and the eligible projects will be prioritised by members of the Tenants Panel and Senior Managers. The budget available is spread across the nine multi-member wards and is in addition to other budgets that cover routine repairs, maintenance and other major works.

Estate walkabouts

Allow residents the opportunity to talk directly with council staff and elected members about work that may be required to ensure neighbourhoods are

safe, clean and well – maintained. This initiative has seen improvements in several areas of West Lothian. From the removal of dangerous and dated street furniture to increasing street cleaning rotas and the introduction of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Information Day

This event is held annually in the centrally located Civic Centre. It is proven to be very popular with customers and allows many services and partners to come together to offer the citizens of West Lothian the opportunity to access information and advice in an informal and relaxed setting.

The aim of this event is to help customer see what is available to them from council and voluntary services, seek advice and for us to gather their opinions on certain key changes to policy and procedures to ensure we deliver the most appropriate services we can.

Tenant Participation in West Lothian is constantly developing to make sure we are at the forefront of delivering services our customers require. We recognise the importance of asking our customers how can we make services better and carry out an annual satisfaction survey and pride ourselves in responding to their suggestions. It is only by working together that we can improve and manage the communities they live in.

7.2.3 Community Safety

Nationally, Community Safety has been defined as: “An endeavour to ensure that people are safe from crime, disorder, danger and free from injury and harm, communities are socially cohesive and tolerant; and are resilient and able to supply individuals to take responsibility for their well-being”.

The Community Safety priorities fit into the following Scottish Government Outcomes:

Outcome – 8 We have improved the life chances for people at risk
This outcome also sits under the Community Safety theme

Outcome - 9. We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger

Outcome - 13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society
This outcome also sits under Core Values

The Scottish Government and COSLA national framework ‘promoting Positive Outcomes’ is about partnership working and community engagement to prevent antisocial behaviour. Our Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategies reflect this framework.

7.3.3 West Lothian’s approach to Community Safety **Community Safety Unit**

The West Lothian Community Safety Unit was formed in April 2010, bringing together all Partnership staff including the Fire Service as equal partners, in one Unit dedicated to making West Lothian safer. The Community Safety Team approach is intended to better co-ordinate resources through

prevention, intervention and diversion, work to assess and manage potential risk, increase partner agencies' focus on current problems and improve information-sharing and greater accountability.

It is this unique partnership that gives Housing, Construction & Building Services the opportunity to deal effectively with Antisocial Behaviour and listen to the needs of the resident, employers and visitors alike. The Unit has seen early success with a reduction in youth calls, vandalism and hate crime in this financial year.

The establishment of the Community Safety Unit was seen as an integral part in coordinating resources more effectively as well as the prevention of crime and antisocial behaviour within West Lothian's communities.

The remit of the Community Safety Unit is to address: deliberate fires, driver behaviour, environmental anti-social behaviour, hate crime, neighbourhood complaints and vandalism. Partnership working on a daily basis is facilitated by Daily Tasking documents, which are prepared by the Partnership Analysts.

West Lothian Community Safety Partnership is committed to listening to, and working with, our local communities to deliver sustainable reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour. The ongoing engagement with residents and our local communities is essential in the development of a continuous learning approach allowing us to know what people think about our priorities, our performance and assisting in reviewing our plans for improvement

In West Lothian, 'Community' roles are carried out by Community Beat Officers (CBO's) and twenty-seven Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Officers, twenty-one of which are funded by West Lothian Council and placed within the nine Wards. There are currently three full time School Link Officers (SLO'S), one of which is funded by West Lothian Council attached to three of the eleven Secondary Education establishments within the county.

Community Safety Priorities

The five key Community Safety priorities were identified as:

- Antisocial Behaviour,
- Fire and Road Safety,
- Public Protection,
- Substance Misuse
- Violence.

Action plans have been developed for each of the five priority areas that partners continually work towards, and some of which deliver outcomes towards the higher strategic priorities. The Cross-cutting and under-pinning issues that have been identified are: Alcohol, Persons at Risk and Young People.

Focusing on these priorities has enabled the Community Safety Partnership to co-ordinate activity to better meet the needs of the local community.

The Community Safety Officers are responsible for dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) related offences. They assess and intervene quickly and robustly to resolve incidents of antisocial behaviour, remove neighbourhood tensions and strengthen community cohesion. This works as a preventative measure to stop incidents from escalating and if treated properly to a positive satisfactory outcome, has the scope of preventing further incidents occurring.

Lothian and Borders Police are committed to building Safer Communities through preventative policing and partnership working. It is the role of all officers to work towards this strategic aim and those with "Community" roles have a significant part to play. In addition, they liaise with communities to assist them in deciding what their community safety priorities are.

Police Community Safety Unit Officers

The Community Safety Officers are responsible for delivering Crime Prevention, Architectural Liaison, CCTV Liaison, Road Safety and Drugs Awareness.

- Crime Prevention
- Architectural Liaison
- CCTV Liaison
- Road Safety
- Drugs Awareness

Areas for Development

Improving Architectural Liaison

Since safety and security are essential to sustainable communities, an area for development would be to have more ALO input and perhaps for the Architectural Liaison Officers to attend monthly or bi-monthly meetings with a technical officer within Housing Construction and a planner within the Planning Department. The aim would be to have more contact with the planning department officers and increase the opportunity for discussions around designing out crime. Making more links in crime reduction and being more involved in the creation of long-term sustainable communities, would maximise the opportunity to create environments that discourage antisocial behaviour and crime. It will enhance open space areas that people can enjoy, feel safe in doing so, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

Private Rented Sector and Anti Social Behaviour

Landlord Registration is an important part of interventions to improve communities and neighbourhoods. There is now greater accountability on the part of landlords in relation to their business and their tenants. There is a clear link here in relation to the opportunities to improve communities and neighbourhoods by engaging with private landlords in relation to their responsibilities.

There are significant options under the Antisocial Behaviour Act for addressing issues in the Private Rented Sector in respect of Private Landlords who do not deal with the Antisocial Behaviour of their tenants and for those landlords who fail to register their properties and act as fit and proper landlords in a wide range of respects. This is currently an area for

significant improvement

7.4 Area Regeneration

The condition of housing and neighbourhoods is monitored by the Council and residents on a regular basis. There are a number of ways in which improvements to neighbourhoods can be made. This can be housing led regeneration or it can be through the development of new facilities such as partnership centres, community centres or play facilities. Some examples of the approach to area regeneration are noted below.

7.4.1 High Density Housing

Four areas of high density housing were identified (in Bents, Winchburgh, Armadale and Fauldhouse) where there were significant issues either in meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard or in the general environment. A feasibility study was undertaken in 2010 and options are being developed for all of these areas of high density housing. For the affected blocks at Bents and Winchburgh this will mean demolition and potential new build. For Armadale the refurbishment option is being proposed and there are proposals for new build Housing Association properties at an adjacent site. Consultation is ongoing at Fauldhouse in regard to any possible improvements to the area. Whether new build or refurbishment, a key consideration is security. In any housing area that is to be improve we will seek to reduce the amount of communal space and increase the number of individual front and back gardens where possible. For any new build Council housing we seek to achieve secured by design accreditation.

7.4.2 Empty Homes

The Council is working with Shelter to develop its approach to dealing with empty homes (see section 9.16) Bringing empty homes back into use should assist in improving neighbourhoods.

7.4.3 Developing Community Facilities

There are a number of good examples of the Council working in partnership with other stakeholders to develop community facilities.

- New Partnership centre at Fauldhouse (developed in conjunction with NHS Lothian)
- Refurbished community Centres such as Winchburgh
- New park at Eliburn in Livingston
- Improvements to town centres at Bathgate and Armadale
- A new partnership Centre is being developed for Blackburn

8.0 House Condition

House condition in both the private and public sectors in West Lothian is performing relatively well. One reason for this is that housing in Livingston is all relatively new with the majority of the private sector housing being constructed since the 1970s. According to the Scottish House Condition Survey 2007-09, 69% of private sector dwellings have disrepair but this includes all disrepair (irrespective of the extent of disrepair). Urgent disrepair is defined as any disrepair which if not rectified would cause the fabric of the building to deteriorate further. In West Lothian 28% of private sector housing has urgent disrepair (14,000 properties). This is a lower level than most other Scottish Local Authorities. The performance of private sector housing in terms of NHER (National Home Energy Rating) is also better than most Local Authority areas with 77% of private sector housing stock being in bands 6-10

8.1 West Lothian's Strategic Approach – Assisting Homeowners

The Council aims to ensure that housing in the private sector is of high quality and fit for purpose. The Council's Scheme of Assistance seeks to assist homeowners by providing advice and information and unfortunately in some cases there may be a need for enforcement action to improve the condition of private sector property.

8.1.1 The Scheme of Assistance

In 2010, West Lothian Council published its Scheme of Assistance for homeowners and Section 72 Statement. (The Section 72 statement sets out the way in which the Council will provide information, advice and assistance to homeowners.) This was a new approach to encourage owners to take responsibility for the repair and maintenance of their homes. West Lothian Council now offers advice, information and assistance to homeowners to help them with repair and maintenance of their property. There is generally no grant assistance provided to owners now to help meet the costs of repairing or improving their property. While enquiries continue about the availability of grant, these are reducing. (Grants continue to be available for disabled adaptations). The challenge will be to monitor whether the absence of grants has any effect on the numbers of properties in the private sector falling into disrepair.

A key future action will be to monitor the impact of the change from the provision of grant based assistance to advice and information.

8.1.2 Regulation

Where owners are failing to repair their property the Council can use a range of enforcement measures. These include measures in Planning, Housing, Environmental Health or Civic Government law. Historically, works in default notices which were not complied with were carried out by the Council. However, this has largely ceased due to insufficient resources to address disrepair in the private sector and the financial risk to the Council of not recovering expenses incurred.

One option could be the creation of a self sustaining fund that would enable the Council to intervene where housing is in disrepair or where the amenity of a property or area is affected. This would allow necessary works to be paid

for up front by the Council, with expenses (including interest) being recovered when the property is sold. The types of interventions that could be considered, should funding be made available are:

- Carrying out communal repairs where a statutory notice has been served but not complied with.
- Requiring maintenance plans to be put in place for properties which are deteriorating or which have been repaired but are likely to deteriorate without maintenance.
- To secure improvements to the appearance of eyesore properties and their gardens.
- To carry out works in default of a Repairing Standard Enforcement Order issued by the Private Rented Housing Panel, but not complied with by the landlord.

8.1.3. Housing Renewal Areas

There is regular contact between Council teams such as Environmental Health and Housing Strategy and Development to discuss the condition of property in the private sector. Should clusters of properties be identified by Environmental Health Housing or by other teams or individuals the Council could consider developing a Housing Renewal Area to address disrepair.

Currently, there do not appear to be significant area difficulties across West Lothian in housing stock that is predominantly private sector. As noted above, the evidence supports the view that private sector housing in West Lothian is in relatively good condition. However, there are notable exceptions at individual building level. Around 120 complaints are received by Environmental Health each year about housing conditions, mainly relating to private rented sector properties or communal disrepair in mixed private sector buildings. Where there is serious disrepair we propose to use the Scheme of Assistance to encourage individual owners to maintain and repair their property. If required, enforcement powers to encourage individual owners to maintain and repair their property.

We will continue to monitor information available on property condition including the existence of eyesore homes in the private sector. If there is evidence that there are significant concerns about an area, we will consider using an HRA.

8.1.4 Below Tolerable Standard Housing

From 2004/05 to 2009/10 an average of 60 grants a year were awarded to address house condition in the private sector that was below the tolerable standard (BTS). Due to resources, it is not intended to undertake a Private Sector Housing Condition survey. The Council does receive information or discovers BTS properties on an ongoing basis. BTS properties are most often found in the older housing stock but changes under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, will increase the likelihood of more modern properties failing. Depending on the circumstances, interaction on BTS properties may involve some or all of the following:

- Advice to owners provided under the Scheme of Assistance, advice and assistance will be offered to those who have property that is in

disrepair

- Inspection to determine what elements of the Tolerable Standard are not met.
- Enforcement action to improve or close properties that are in disrepair
- Ongoing monitoring of complaints regarding properties in disrepair to identify clusters.
- Feed into the proposed empty homes strategy

8.1.5 Developing a Trusted Traders Scheme

West Lothian Council is working with other Councils in East Lothian, Midlothian and Dundee to develop a Trusted Trader scheme. The Scheme will be developed to enable customers to access approved contractors from a range of trades. It is envisaged that the scheme could be in place in 2012/13.

8.1.6 Empty Homes in the Private Sector

Empty homes present a significant cost to the local community in terms of the risk of vandalism and arson. GROS estimates indicate that 98% of homes in West Lothian are occupied, 2% are vacant and 1% are second homes. These figures are below the Scottish average. Initial research into the numbers of empty properties in West Lothian suggests that this is not a major problem with 268 properties identified as long term empty at 1st August 2011. The majority of these are in the private sector. It is acknowledged though that further research is required to identify empty homes and to assist owners to bring them back into use. This will be done through the Scheme of Assistance. It is proposed that better linkages are made between the Council, Police and Fire service to identify empty homes and to seek solutions with the owners. The Council is a member of the Scottish Empty Homes Officer Network set up by Shelter. The Network has proved particularly useful in identifying best practice when dealing with empty homes. The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership is committed to helping West Lothian develop an action plan for engaging owners of empty properties. West Lothian Council is working with Shelter and other Councils to develop a shared services pilot for empty Homes. An empty homes officer will be shared between the Councils and they will aim to bring empty properties back into use through the provision of advice and information to homeowners.

8.2 The Private Rented Sector

There has been a large increase in the number of privately rented properties in West Lothian over the last 5 years. There are currently 4107 landlords registered with West Lothian Council with 7893 properties (Jan 2012). A key issue is to ensure quality of provision within this sector. Few blocks of flats or streets remain entirely Council, Housing Association or owner occupied. In some areas, notably, new build flats in Livingston and Wester Inch, Bathgate, owner occupiers can be in a minority. In former Council estates, many areas are now mixed tenure with a number of former Council houses now being owned and rented by private landlords.

The maintaining of the Register of Private Landlords is the responsibility of the Licensing Team in Legal Services. They have access to resources for enforcement through the Licensing Standards working in Legal Services, and have links already in place with other statutory agencies (such as the police and Environmental Health Services) which have a role to play in the Scheme.

There are four long-term aims in the running of the Scheme:-

1. A consistent approach to allowing public access to the information in the Register.
2. The development of a system for consultation with other agencies with an interest in the Scheme.
3. A more rigorous approach to the vetting of applicants against the "fit and proper person" test by building on existing arrangements with these agencies and public bodies.
4. A more active role in enforcement and use of enforcement powers in the legislation. For instance, a delegated power has now been given by the council to the Chief Solicitor to allow her to serve rent penalty notices in cases where a landlord refuses or fails to register, and she is also authorised to refer cases to the Procurator Fiscal for prosecution as a criminal offence, in extreme cases.

8.2.1 West Lothian's Strategic Approach – Private Rented Sector

The Council has the responsibility for landlord registration and for encouraging the raising of management standards within the sector. To date, the focus has been on getting landlords registered and this has been relatively successful.

However, it is clear that there are a number of landlords that are not yet registered and that early applicants now require to be re-registered. Landlord Registration now sits with Legal Services and there will be an increased emphasis on ensuring that all landlords meet the following requirements:

- Register with us as a landlord

Meet the Fit and Proper Person Test – this means

- Have the relevant gas and electrical safety checks in place and that they have the relevant Energy Performance Certificates
- Ensuring that there are the appropriate links with the private rented housing panel
- Comply with notices issued under the Antisocial Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004
- Take their share of responsibility for communal maintenance and repairs.
- Take enforcement action against landlords that fail to register
- Ensure that there are appropriate links with the Private Rented Housing Panel

8.2.2 Encouraging Quality within the Private Rented Sector to meet housing need

The Council is developing its approach to working with private landlords

Current activity

- A series of Landlord Accreditation training sessions in partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland
- Development of Landlord Forums
- Working with over 3,600 private landlords offering advice and assistance on landlord registration, regulation, housing benefits, adaptations and legal requirements
- Tenants that have complaints about serious disrepair to private rented properties can obtain information from the Advice Shop or Environmental Health on the work of the Private Rented Housing Panel. However, depending on the nature and severity of the problems, Environmental health may intervene using other powers.

Future Development

- Ensure that all Council systems for recording complaints and enquires about private sector homes are integrated so that issues can be flagged up when landlords are seeking registration.
- Developing further the Council's approach to dealing with repairing standard enforcement notices

8.2.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation

Houses in Multiple Occupation are properties that are shared by 3 or more individual occupants who are not related. HMO landlords must have a licence from the Council to ensure the property is properly managed.

There are 29 licences in force for Houses in Multiple Occupation in West Lothian. The majority are for houses with 5 occupants and are for flats or houses rather than hostels. In 2010 there were 2 licences awarded and no renewals. In 2010/11, 7 applications were granted. As noted previously, it is likely that there will be increasing demand for high quality HMOs due to changes in Housing Benefits.

Actions: Publicise and promote HMO licensing

8.3 Council Housing Scottish Housing Quality Standard

This directive, from the Scottish Ministers places a duty on all registered social landlords to ensure that all their social rented housing meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015. To meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, all houses should be compliant with the Tolerable Standard; free from serious disrepair; energy efficient (have an energy rating of at least NHER 5); provided with modern facilities and services; and healthy, safe and secure. The service is well on the way to achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by the target date of 2015 with 65% of our council houses meeting the standard at June 2011.

In 2009/10 we ranked 8th of 26 Scottish Local Authorities who have a council house service. The Scottish average for the percentage of council houses meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) was 42.4% in 2009/10.

The majority of the Council stock in West Lothian was built post 1945 with 20% in the New Town of Livingston.

Investment in Council housing since 2003

- New kitchens and bathrooms have been installed in all houses
- Full central heating to all houses
- £6million spent on adapting houses for health living
- External wall insulation and pitched roofs to all point blocks of flats
- CO detectors to all gas and solid fuel houses
- £100,000 per annum spent on community play areas
- All lead mains removed and replaced
- Upgrades have been undertaken to non-traditional house types
- £430,000 per annum spent on energy efficiency measures

8.3 West Lothian Council Housing – Strategic Approach to Investment

West Lothian Council carried out a 100% Stock Condition Survey which was reported in 2007. The survey identified that the Council housing was in good condition relative to the SHQS but that large numbers of housing failed on insulation and in having sufficient light at the house and garden. Most failures relating to the condition of the houses was due to water penetration through roofs.

Since the report there has been investment of many millions of pounds in roofs, insulation and lighting. The housing stock has risen from 11% compliance with the SHQS to over 65% and is on target for all houses to meet the SHQS by 2015.

Obviously houses will continue to deteriorate over time, and ongoing investment will continue after 2015.

The Ten Year Housing Capital Investment Strategy 2008/09 to 2017/18 was approved in December 2008. It includes meeting the investment needs of

current stock, and building new council houses.

Investment also continues in other areas of the stock to maintain and upgrade houses.

Substantial investment goes in year after year into electrical upgrades where we carry out periodic testing and associated repairs: hard wired wifi smoke detectors and connected wifi carbon monoxide detectors and external lights. We fit heat recovery ventilation systems where condensation is an issue after insulation is fitted. Families cannot help but produce moisture in a warm house with good draught proofing and the construction gaps sealed. All this investment ensures as far as possible that we maintain our houses as being among the most electrically safe anywhere.

We fit handrails as standard where there are more than two steps at any house door.

We invest heavily in render and external wall insulation to repair and upgrade tired and defective render.

We also invest in environmental improvements to improve the areas around our houses visually and with increasing amenity. This includes removing or upgrading garage sites and bin stores; upgrading stairwells; external painting of tired facades; secure access doors to common entrances, play areas and home security.

To West Lothian Council, house condition means much more than SHQS. It means improving the living conditions of our tenants, internally and externally supporting them in old age and their children's safe play areas; reducing the risks to their health through household accidents and fires. We invest in Homes not Houses.

8.3.1 Council Housing Regeneration

Four areas of high density housing were identified (in Bents, Winchburgh, Armadale and Fauldhouse) where there were significant issues either in meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard or in the general environment. A feasibility study was undertaken in 2010 and options are being developed for all of these areas of high density housing. For the affected blocks at Bents and Winchburgh this will mean demolition and potential new build. For Armadale the refurbishment option is being proposed and at Fauldhouse, options are still being considered.

In Livingston, there has been a major programme of rehousing existing tenants at Deans South due to property being in poor structural condition. There are a number of homeowners in the area and unfortunately it has not been possible to agree a plan the long term future of the area. However, discussions are ongoing.

8.3.2 House Condition - Registered Social Landlords

Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) are also required to ensure all their homes meet the SHQS by 2015. Statistics published by the Scottish Housing Regulator show that 73.2% of RSL stock in West Lothian met the SHQS in 2010. Projections from the Scottish Housing Regulator indicate that 99.9% of RSL stock in West Lothian will meet SHQS in 2015.

9 Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

Fuel poverty is a risk for a wide range of households, so what is fuel poverty? Households are in fuel poverty when they have to spend around 10% or more of their disposable income on fuel.

Households are in extreme fuel poverty when they have to spend 20% of their income on fuel.

The Scottish Government is committed to eradicating fuel poverty by 2016 (as far as reasonably practicable). West Lothian Council is committed to achieving this outcome. The provision of advice along with practical assistance to help people make their homes energy efficient is the optimum approach.

The number of UK households in fuel poverty has been increasing since 2003 when only two million households were in fuel poverty. Due to massive cost increases in 2008 and 2009 it rose again in 2009 to 5.5 million, according to new figures from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in its Fuel Poverty Statistics 2011 report. In 2009 gas costs rose 14 per cent and electricity by 5 per cent. In 2011, Consumer Focus believes the number of households in fuel poverty will be as high as 6.4 million, or 12 million people, in 2011 after this year's price increases.

The Scottish House Condition Survey estimates that 28.6% of households in West Lothian are in fuel poverty. This is slightly below the Scottish average of 29%. There has been a steady rise in this figure since 2007.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1035/0108160.pdf>

The rate of fuel poverty is increasing because of rising fuel prices despite all the action being taken to try to combat it. It is important to provide as holistic a service as possible so that income maximisation and energy efficiency measures can be delivered in tandem. Solutions that work best are those that combine income maximisation with direct provision of energy efficiency improvement measures e.g. insulation, new boilers etc.

The household groups at risk from fuel poverty include older people, people in rural areas, people with physical or mental disability. West Lothian with its partner agencies will aim to target advice and information to those groups.

The plan is to consider ways in which the energy efficiency of all housing stock can be further improved whenever most effective, without compromising access to housing.

People in West Lothian can access help and support to minimise the risk of experiencing fuel poverty through the number of partners and organisations that the council works with on energy efficiency and income maximisation. These include Adult Basic Education, Bathgate Advice Shop, Home Energy Scotland, Energy Action Scotland and Changeworks.

9.1 Fuel Poverty Issues – these issues were raised at the stakeholder consultation seminar

Fuel poverty and health

- Self regulation of energy use – people not using the heating adequately and some rooms not being heated.
- Temperature of rooms in household – If rooms too cold to use it can impact on ability for children to do homework and consequently life chances.
- Often people come to the Council/Advice agencies at crisis point so makes their issues more challenging to address
- Utility companies have to be more aware of their clients and provide them with the correct tariffs.
- Literacy difficulties means that information on fuel poverty needs to be easy to read and understand – and avoid jargon
- Lack of education on issues relating to fuel poverty and financial management – not included in the school curriculum –could help better prepare young people when taking on tenancies.
- There is a need to ensure that information is available to Council tenants and to homeowners on energy efficiency

Fuel poverty and Property condition

- Failure to heat houses properly can result in burst pipes – costly to address
- New build – plastic pipes not being lagged
- Issues of dampness. The Council has procedures in place to respond as do other RSLs but there is concern about private landlords and homeowners.

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard

In the Social Rented Sector, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard sets out energy efficiency standards. By 2015, all social housing stock must have at least 100mm of loft insulation, lagged hot water tanks and pipes and cavity wall insulation and achieve an NHER rating of 5 or SAP of 50. In 2011 65% of West Lothian Council housing meets SHQS.

Scottish Government Assistance

Scottish Government provides a range of assistance in relation to Energy Efficiency

- Energy Assistance Package (energy advice, benefits advice and advice on switching to low cost tariffs)
- Home Insulation Scheme (how many have we done through this?)
- Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) requires energy suppliers to provide energy saving measures in people's homes.

HEED Database

The Energy Savings Trust has developed the Home Energy Efficiency database (HEED) that collects information on energy efficiency measures and related property survey data. HEED is collated from a range of sources from

energy suppliers, fuel poverty schemes such as warm deal and other sources such as SCHRI. HEED holds data for approximately 38% of West Lothian's housing stock. The majority of the installations have been for loft insulation and cavity wall insulation. The majority of the installations were installed in owner occupied housing. The largest proportion of Installations of cavity wall and loft insulation was in Livingston South and the lowest proportion in Armadale and Blackridge. 96% of the loft insulation measures were in lofts with less than 150mm insulation. This information helps to inform how the Council will target energy efficiency measures in line with the funding that is available. A key action from this information is that further work needs to be undertaken to identify where there has been a lower take up of energy efficiency measures e.g. Armadale and Blackridge. It is also clear that there the lowest level of take up of energy efficiency measures has been in the Private Rented Sector in West Lothian and this too requires to be addressed.

9.2 A Strategic Approach to Fuel Poverty

9.2.1 Advice and Information

The Council provides a wide ranging service via the **Advice Shop** to assist those in fuel poverty. The advice shop provides a holistic service with multiple links that meets the needs of the local community. The aim of the Advice shop is to serve the West Lothian Community by tackling poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage. Through income maximisation, debt counselling and employment advice as well as assisting with housing and fuel poverty the staff endeavour to help all people in West Lothian.

Independent Energy Advice and information is available on the following

- Disputed/high bills
- Heating use
- New tenant advice
- Availability of grants
- Supply disconnection
- Reading meters
- Dampness/condensation
- Running costs
- Consumption
- Payment methods
- Arrears
- White goods packages

The service includes advice, benefit checks and signposting to other agencies, income maximisation, debt advice, energy efficiency, housing advice, advocacy and representation. Face to face advice, outreach sessions and home visits are made available. In 2009/10 there were over 76,000 customer contacts.

Energy Advice and guidance are provided on fuel prices and supplier switching and social tariffs. This includes face to face advice, telephone advice, community awareness days and referrals. In 2009/10 Energy advice

staff dealt with 5,542 customer enquiries and brought in £797,350 in saving and grants to West Lothian. Their advice has meant that the amount of CO2 has been reduced by 1664 tonnes.

Alleviation of fuel poverty relies primarily on income maximisation rather than on specific energy measures but the two in tandem is even more effective.

The Advice shop is working in partnership with Adult Basic Education to help target those who need assistance in a number of areas including fuel poverty, money advice and literacy

The Advice Shop can offer a role of advocacy by encouraging tenants of private landlords to go to the Private Rented Housing Panel if their property is in poor condition in terms of energy efficiency.

Key Successes

In the three years since April 2007 we have advised people from groups liable to be in fuel poverty on 14,292 occasions, increasing their total income by £1.9m.

Success in maximising income more than £30m in 2009-10 to customers at risk of fuel poverty shows that the West Lothian model is particularly effective. From 2006-2010 the Advice shop has helped customers gain £101m mainly through maximising entitlements to benefits and tax credits

9.2.2. Energy Advice for People over 60

People over 60 are targeted for energy advice. In 2009/10 664 people received advice, savings of over £84,505 were made, insulation grants worth £234,540 were made with 630 tonnes less carbon dioxide has been released in to the atmosphere.

The Council also works with Changeworks and Home Energy Scotland to provide advice, information and practical assistance such as insulation. We aim to continue working with these agencies and continue to monitor the outcomes for people receiving advice and assistance. A range of energy advice is also provided by the Energy Saving Scotland advice Centre to West Lothian residents. This includes advice and information, home energy checks, access to home insulation schemes and the energy assistance package, benefit and tax checks, home loans.

9.2.3 Physical Improvements to Property

Installation of physical measures to improve energy efficiency – rolling insulation programme covering WLC stock including cavity wall insulation EEC/CERT schemes are made available in partnership with the energy suppliers

West Lothian Council has successfully secured £570,000 of funding from the Universal Home Insulation Scheme for two wards in West Lothian. These are Fauldhouse and Breich Valley and Livingston South. The funding that has been made available will enable the Council to work in partnership with Scottish and Southern Energy, Everwarm and Changeworks to make available energy advice and energy efficiency measures. The measures will

be targeted at homeowners and include cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, insulation to pipes and tanks, radiator panels and enhanced draught proofing. Levels of fuel poverty are historically higher in Fauldhouse and Breich Valley as some of the properties have solid fuel heating and are off the gas grid. In Livingston South, in some cases there may be pockets of fuel poverty masked by the relative affluence of the area. All 16,360 households will be contacted to ensure that they are aware of the measures available.

Two Home Insulation Schemes have been carried out in the Whitburn and Blackburn wards. These offer cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and loft insulation top up to households in these areas.

Council Tax Rebate Scheme for Energy Efficiency Measures- The council introduced a Council Tax Energy Efficiency Discount Scheme from 14 February 2011. The discount is a one-off reduction of up to £75 to install energy efficiency measures in your home under the scheme. The Energy Saving Scotland Advice Centre works with West Lothian Council and a contractor to deliver discounted energy efficiency measures such as loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and loft insulation top up. Between April and June 2011 there were 209 referrals with 69 insulation measures installed.

Families Energy and Savings Team

FEAST (Families Energy And Savings Team) which was funded via the Scottish Power Energy People Trust and is in partnership with the West Lothian Credit Union Forum. This project offers income maximisation, energy advice and access to affordable financial products via the 3 credit unions in West Lothian in order to remove the target groups from the door step lending trap. The target audience is young adults aged 16-25 & families with children under 16.

One action that will be considered is to gather Advice Shop client income and fuel costs at first contact as this would identify if people were in fuel poverty, then following any Advice Shop interventions we could revisit this data to see how many were then removed from fuel poverty.

9.2.4 Future Actions

- We will encourage improvement in energy efficiency in the private rented sector
- Assess the feasibility of developing a warm and well scheme at doctor's surgeries to target people with respiratory problems who are living in damp homes.
- Addressing fuel poverty in areas that are off the gas grid such as Breich and Westfield.
- Need to consider preventative measures – target individual areas
- Making sure we have information systems in place that are joined up

so that we can target energy advice effectively

- We will fit passive ventilation to new build Council houses
- We will continue to monitor and where appropriate, participate in any new funding arrangements that are available.
- The Council is actively considering how the “Green Deal” can best work for homes of all tenures in West Lothian.

Case Study – Advice Shop

M&Mrs W came in for energy advice as they had cold home issues and large bills. A home visit was carried out for heating use and got them access to their fuel supplier’s total tariff and priority register. As the property had foam filled cavity, we managed to source funding to have this extracted and then refilled alongside remedial brickwork repairs and loft insulation top up. This alone saved in the region of £1,850. The social tariff registration will save Mr & Mrs W roughly £150pa. The heating use advice and improved property insulation will also save £30pm or £360pa.

9. 4 Climate Change

The Scottish Government has set ambitious targets to cut carbon emissions within the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The Council is required to comply with the public sector duties in the Act including reducing carbon emissions and acting sustainably. West Lothian Council is also a signatory to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration under which it annually reports on actions taken to comply with the public sector duties in the Act including reducing carbon emissions and acting sustainably.

In 2008, carbon emissions were of 8.6 tonnes of CO₂ per person. This has decreased from 8.9 tonnes in 2005.

Impact of domestic profile on carbon emissions

Approximately 25% of all emissions come from domestic homes. The majority of homes that are with us today are likely to be with us in 2050. In any given year new build housing accounts for less than 1% of the stock. For energy consumption in domestic properties to reduce and carbon targets to be met, adaptations to existing properties will be required alongside measures to ensure new build developments consider energy efficiency.

New Build Housing

Building standards which came into force in October 2010 mean that new homes must emit 70% less carbon dioxide than those built under 1990 building standards. This will be achieved through increased levels of insulation and improved efficiencies in heating and hot water systems. Local Development Plans must offset projected emissions through small scale on site renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, biomass and heat pumps.

For the second phase of new build Council housing the developer has committed to providing designs that contribute to an extra 15% reduction in carbon emissions beyond 2007 building regulations. In relation to sound transmission, the new housing should meet the 2010 draft for changes to the building standards in relation to noise. The new build housing will promote lower water consumption through the use of SUDS (sustainable urban drainage systems). Solar PV panels have now been installed to 10 homes in Blackburn in the second phase of new build Council housing.

Registered Social Landlords (RSL) Properties

RSLs in the area are also working towards addressing energy efficiency measures in the fabric of their buildings and the majority will meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.

Tackling Climate Change – The Role of the Council

Local authorities have a wide role, including leadership, in tackling climate change to meet ambitious carbon reduction and renewable energy targets. The council is concerned with reducing the carbon footprint of its own domestic housing and housing within the wider council area.

The council has a direct responsibility for the building fabric of its own council housing and will work in partnership with other responsible bodies to encourage the uptake of energy efficiency measures by private households. Under the council's Carbon Management Board there is an established Community Education and Business Group which meet bi-annually and provides a forum for engagement with RSL's, private landlords and the private rented sector to share best practice on carbon reduction.

Measures to tackle Climate Change

The council has a duty under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to not only reduce carbon emissions but also act in the way it considers most sustainable and adapt to climate change. The council does this through working in partnership with others to ensure that housing is an integral part of a sustainable community. For example all housing within the council receives a recycling service and there are a number of projects taking place to encourage sustainable living. In 2010, 41.8% of all household waste was recycled.

Work to adapt to climate change includes flood prevention programmes and works. A number of flood prevention measures have been carried out across West Lothian. These include works at Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn and Fauldhouse.

Further to working alongside partnership agencies there are a number of measures that the council and its partners may consider to support the development of domestic housing programmes to address climate change. Some of these are outlined below:

CESP – Community Energy Savings Programme – CESP is a £350million programme that will target households in designated areas of deprivation across Great Britain. This is a whole-house approach to energy efficiency and will be funded by the energy suppliers and generators.

Extending the Gas Network – Scottish Gas Network's Assisted Connections scheme offers free or significantly reduced price connections to the gas grid to customers in fuel poverty.

Communities and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) – This provides funding for the installation of renewable energy technologies up to a maximum of £150,000.

Financial Incentives for renewable energy generation - The UK Government has implemented a range of financial incentives to encourage renewable energy.

The three main financial incentives are:

1. Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) - payment for the generation of heat
2. Renewables Obligation (RO) – payment for the generation of electricity on a large scale
3. Feed in Tariffs (FITs) – payment for the generation of electricity on a small scale.

Home Insulation Schemes (HIS) and Universal Home Insulation Schemes (UHIS) – In Whitburn and Blackburn, the council co-ordinated HIS projects funded by the Scottish Government to allow access to energy assessments, free/discounted loft or cavity wall insulation. The council is currently preparing a bid for UHIS.

Climate Challenge Fund – This Scottish Government fund gives communities the ability to implement actions to reduce their carbon emissions. Groups in West Lothian who have benefited from the fund include Transition Linlithgow and Fauldhouse Development Trust.

Future

The Green Deal proposed for 2013 will replace the existing Carbon Emissions Reduction Target and the Community Energy Savings Programme. It is proposed to provide up front energy efficiency improvements funded by a third party with costs recovered through charges on electricity bills over the long term. Measures funded must ensure that bills would be no higher than would have been the case without improvements. As many of the interventions to address fuel poverty and climate change are funded through CERT, there is a risk that the Green Deal may affect the take up of insulation measures. The Council will be monitoring how the Green Deal is developed and the outcomes it delivers over the longer term.

Energy Company Obligations (ECO) – Energy companies will be required to support the installation of energy efficient improvements to homes. It is proposed that ECO will support those households that are fuel poor who cannot afford Green Deal and those homes that are hard to treat.

9.4.1 Issues

New Technologies

The council has experience of a number of different technologies to improve the supply of low carbon energy to domestic properties. Air source heat pumps have been trialled but the success has been limited. However, heat recovery ventilation systems have proved to be of benefit.

The capital investment cost in low carbon technologies can be high and as the technologies change rapidly some remain untested on a large scale. West Lothian Council is working with a consortium of Councils to explore the potential of a collective approach to renewable energy projects to make the most of the Government's Feed in Tariffs where it is envisaged that a collective approach may be more successful.

The Council has had solar PV panels fitted to 10 new build Council homes at Blackburn and the results of this will be monitored.

Public Engagement

A significant challenge for homeowners is understanding the funding available for new technologies and the implications of installing them in terms of repair and maintenance obligations. This may be a future area for the Scheme of Assistance to be developed to help owners in terms of signposting.

9.4.2 A Strategic Approach - Climate Change

The council's strategy to addressing the impact of housing on climate change involves the following;

- Programme of works to Council property including Council housing to mitigate the impact of climate change
- Making best use of available resources to undertake measures to address climate change;
- Signposting householders to relevant information/advice about climate change and energy efficiency measures.
- The Council will develop a Renewables Strategy

Survey

A survey of Council properties will be undertaken to assess their potential for solar energy. This will include Council housing and other Council buildings. The Council will seek accreditation for the Microgeneration Certification scheme. A project will be developed and Council staff will develop the necessary skills to install renewable technology. The Council will develop a Renewables Strategy to support the Council's commitment to achieving ambitious national climate change, carbon reduction and renewable energy targets.

Council Properties

We will aim to ensure that Council properties and RSL properties have a low environmental impact with the aim of reducing fuel use and fuel costs. This will be achieved by

- Meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) for energy efficiency (NHER5) for all West Lothian's Council stock by 2015. Currently 65% of Council stock meets the SHQS and the average NHER rating for Council housing is 7.2)
- We are focussing on finding any houses missed in previous programmes and completing the whole package of measures on them, which include cavity insulation, where there is a cavity; loft insulation, where there is a loft; full draught proofing, including all holes and gaps in exposed timber and walls; reflective radiator panels which change the heat stratification in the room, reduce draughts and increase perceived heat levels.
- Investigating options for improving insulation
- Working with partners to encourage energy efficiency measures in private, rented and private ownership sectors.

Drainage

We have made very significant investment in housing areas where drainage or excess water has been identified. This investment has significantly reduced the repair spend on the solums of individual houses, which often cost £10k per house.

Sustainable Design

We want to encourage high quality design to improve the sustainability of housing and neighbourhoods.

The key principles we consider are

- A choice of high quality housing of different designs
- Secured by Design principles are used to enhance community security
- The needs of residents with disabilities are considered
- The built environment, services and public spaces are accessible by all residents
- Community involvement in planning and design stages of new projects

The Council and RSLs have “Design Guides” which inform the development of new social housing. These guides promote the sourcing of local materials, maximising solar gain, recycling of construction materials.

A project which has been successful is doing a door knocking campaign to target specific streets in Fauldhouse for energy advice. This was done by the Fauldhouse Development Trust using funding from wind turbines.

10 Summary of outcomes from LHS consultation

Draft LHS consultation available on Council web site 8th November 2011 – 9th January 2012

Meeting Housing Need and Demand

- There is a need for larger homes suitable for disabled families
- There is a need to prioritise the funding available for affordable housing

Housing Options

- Build relations with private landlords. The Council could consider building a dedicated service to deal with all aspects of the private rented sector ranging from information and advice to private landlords and regulation of the private rented sector.
- Monitor the private rented sector for quality
- Importance of providing clear advice and making support readily available
- Importance of making best use of existing stock and providing information on housing options and incentives for downsizing
- The need for the Council to work closely with Third sector organisations to provide housing options for young people

Independent Living

- More outreach work to schools, youth groups and health centres.
- Put support in place for people who are having difficulty managing their money
- Ensure the website is kept up to date.
- Ensure there is sufficient support in place for those in dispersed tenancies
- Provision of information to groups on the types of adaptations that are available.

Improving Communities

- The majority of respondents agreed that there were sufficient opportunities for people to get involved
- The early signs that a community is in decline were identified as empty homes and shops and the area is untidy.
- More involvement of Community Councils to encourage participation
- More informal routes for people to get involved can be effective

House Condition

- Encourage people to save for major repairs
- Raise awareness of options for empty properties
- Greater use of enforcement powers to raise the quality of housing by private landlords

Fuel Poverty

- The consultation response showed that the majority of people who responded wanted financial incentives to be offered for the take up of energy efficiency measures.
- It was identified that targeting fuel poverty measures by house type can be effective.

Climate Change

- The preference was to retrofit existing homes with new technologies.
- High levels of insulation should be incorporated in new build.

A seminar for Housing Providers was held on 12th December 2011 and a number of points were raised.

- Funding constraints
- Identifying ways in which the Council can assist RSLs in the provision of new build housing
- Further research is required in relation to the demand for mid market rent housing in relation to the West Lothian housing market
- Making best use of existing stock – the Council and RSL partners will share information regarding incentives for tenants to move to accommodation where it better meets their needs. This could be a future joint working project.
- The Council should consider how to map out potential affordable housing sites that are likely to become available over the duration of the Strategy.
- The Council and RSL partners should investigate ways in which the Change Fund could be used to develop housing support services that are appropriate to the needs of elderly people.
- There is opportunity for the Council and RSLs to work more closely together where their properties are adjacent. There should be greater sharing of information on new technologies so that best practice can be developed across West Lothian's housing stock.
- In regard to climate change – RSLs and the Council should share information and experience on new technologies and make use of opportunities offered by the Green Deal in 2011.

Equalities Impact Assessment

As noted above, an Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Local Housing Strategy. A number of key points were identified as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment these include

- The impact of changes to welfare benefits is likely to have a significant effect on a range of people but particularly those with disabilities. Any review of the Local Housing Strategy should take into account the impact of welfare benefit changes.
- The need for people with disabilities to be allocated an additional bedroom for a carer should be taken into account as part of the allocations policy.

Appendix 1 - Outcomes , Indicators and Actions

1 Meeting Housing Need and Demand Outcomes and Action Plan

National Outcome	WLC Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Indicator	Data/Frequency/Type	Baseline	Target/Timescale
We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.	We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need	People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality housing options available to them.	Number of new homes built in West Lothian	Annual completions	800 affordable homes completed 2003-2010	1000 new Affordable Homes by 2017
Action Plan			Responsibility	Timescale		
Provide Affordable Housing		Build a minimum of 1000 new affordable homes		By 2017		
Policy Interventions		Review the Affordable Housing Policy	WLC	By end 2012		
		Zone land specifically for affordable housing	WLC	TBC		
		Council Infrastructure Fund	WLC	ongoing		
		Develop projects to facilitate flat sharing	WLC and other agencies	TBC		
New Sources of Finance		More mixed tenure developments – encourage greater cross subsidy of developments by Registered Social Landlords	WLC	TBC		
		Evaluate new models of	WLC and RSLs	Ongoing		

	affordable housing that become available	WLC	
New build Council Housing	Continue to support new build Council housing through prudential borrowing	WLC	Phase 2 to complete 2014
	Regeneration – demolition and new build where there are significant issues with the condition of Council stock or where there is low demand.	WLC	Ongoing
Assistance to Housing Associations	Look at ways to assist Housing Associations to deliver affordable housing	WLC	Ongoing to 2017

2 Housing Options LHS – Outcomes, Indicators and Actions

National Outcome	WLC Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets/Timescale
We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society	We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society	Homelessness is prevented for people in West Lothian as far as possible. Effective advice and support is in place for people who become homeless.	Number of homeless presentations within West Lothian		1930	1935 2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16
			The proportion of unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured	(% of cases (closed) where the Council had a duty to secure permanent accommodation, for whom permanent accommodation was secured) (Annual HL1 Returns	67%	67% 2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

Action Plan	Action	Commitment by Partners	Timescale
Information and Advice	Make use of new technologies in relation to information and advice		Dec 2012 (provisional)
Legislative Changes	Abolish the priority need test and revise processes accordingly		April 2012
	Implement the duty to carry out a support assessment		Once details of the requirement are known
	Implement changes to the Intentionality Duty		As above
	Implement any outcomes of consultation on relating to Affordable Rented Housing: Creating Flexibility for Landlords and better outcomes for communities		Once details of the consultation are known
Allocations Policy Review	Examine possibility of introducing targets for lets- WL list to get target of lets to allow those setting up home to have possibility of an allocation		Autumn 2012 (provisional)
	Examine possibility of introducing points category for new forming households		As above
	Review the policy to give choice and promote prevention of homelessness to separating spouses		As above
Increase Housing Supply	Complete second phase of Council new build programme Support RSL development		By 2014 ongoing
Temporary Accommodation	Development of Assessment Centre. Review other models of accommodation.		2014
Partnership Working			
RSL	Encourage and support RSLs in their duties regarding Homelessness Working with partners in the common	RSLs and the voluntary sector	Autumn 2014 Autumn 2012 (provisional)

	housing register to examine the possibility of introducing a common allocations policy.		
	Develop Performance Monitoring Systems to demonstrate RSL role in meeting Housing need	RSLs	July 2012
Voluntary Organisations	Strengthen links with voluntary sector through the Joint Strategy Group	Voluntary organisations	ongoing
Private Landlords			
Improve knowledge and understanding of the private rented sector	Work with Landlord's Forum Develop staff training on private rented sector	Private Landlords	Winter 2012
Improve Quality in the Private Rented Sector	Publicise and Promote Landlord Registration and HMO Licensing Provide Landlords with access to Landlord Accreditation Training Encourage the use of longer leases		Ongoing
	Implement west Lothian homechoice for housing applicants to allow applicant to choose whether housing in the PRS would be preferable		Winter 2012
	Examine possibility of extending WL homechoice to shared accommodation for single under 35 (due to HB regulations) in HMO licensed properties.		Winter 2012
	Examine possibility of expanding property portal to resident landlords who wish to rent a room or rooms in their home-(not necessarily HMO).		2014

	Set up web portal to bring together likeminded people who want to find and share a rented property.		2014
Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Carry out full review of current scheme and examine alternative forms of delivering this to assist homeless applicants with deposits for PRS accommodation		By April 2012
Mortgage to Rent	Continue to make use of mortgage to rent in the prevention of homelessness.		Ongoing
Access to Legal Advice	Examine possibility of forming links with solicitors specialising in family law who we could then refer client to for assistance with matrimonial homes actions-legal advice could also be given to clients facing mortgage repossession	TBC	Ongoing
Financial Interventions	Examine the possibility of creating a homeless prevention fund which could be used to a) make payments to PRS landlords to assist potentially homeless applicants and prevent eviction and b) to assist those at risk of home loss due to mortgage arrears		Dec 2012
	Develop protocol with revenues to facilitate access to Discretionary Housing payments (DHP) for those at risk of losing their PRS accommodation		Dec 2012
Housing Support			
Domestic Abuse	Examine possibility of providing a Safe at Home service for women fleeing domestic violence	TBC	Autumn 2012
	Review of specific accommodation		Autumn 2012

	and support provided to women fleeing domestic violence		
	Examine possibility of scheme of assistance to support clients to take legal action to exclude perpetrators of domestic violence		
Health & Homeless Action Plan	Continue to deliver actions and monitor outcomes of Health and Homeless Action Plan		For the lifetime of the plan
Employability/Life Skills	Strengthen our Strategic and operational links with Access 2 Employment Improve options for delivering programmes which combine life skills, social skills and employability training.	Access2Employment	ongoing
Gypsy / Traveller Community living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of support services enabling them to live independently.	<p>We will work with our strategic partners to deliver support services which assist in achieving outcomes at both an individual and community level. To achieve this we will develop an Action Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Liaison Officer takes the lead to ensure access to health, education, support, housing, life skills, advice and assistance. • Ensure inclusion in relevant consultations to improve service delivery. • Tackle discrimination • Improve performance information to ensure needs are met • Keep up to date with relevant 	TBC	By 31 st March 2013

	legislation including equalities Investigate opportunity to share services with other local authorities across Central Scotland		
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3 Independent Living Outcomes, Indicators and Actions

National Outcome	Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets/Timescale
Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it We have tackled the significant inequalities Scottish society	We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothia Society	People living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so. People to live more independently and avoid institutional care where not needed	Number of people receiving free personal care at home.	WLC/ Annual	To be developed in line with commissioning plan	As detailed in the Commissioning plans
			Number of people receiving a housing support service	WLC/Annual	As above	As above
			% of people aged 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home.	WLC/Annual	As above	As above
			% of people with intensive needs receiving personal care.	WLC/Annual	As above	As above
			Number of adaptations to houses in West Lothian to assist people with disabilities	WLC/Annual	3,500	3,500 per annum to 2017
	We have					

<p>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.</p> <p>Our children the best start in life and are ready to succeed.</p> <p>We live longer, healthier lives</p>	<p>improved the life chances for people at risk</p> <p>Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.</p> <p>Our children and have the best start in life and are ready to succeed</p> <p>We live longer and healthier lives</p>	<p>Enable people to develop lifeskills to increase independence.</p> <p>People to maintain their homes and to feel safe.</p> <p>Reduce homelessness in West Lothian</p>	<p>To be developed</p> <p>To be developed</p> <p>See Housing Options indicators</p>	<p>WLC/Annual</p>		
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		people in West Lothian to live longer				
Action			Commitment by partners		Timescale	
We will work with our strategic partners to deliver care and support services which assist in achieving outcomes at both an individual and service level.			WLC/West Lothian CHCP		On going	
Commissioning Plans will be developed.			WLC/West Lothian CHCP		2012	
Complete review of OT adaptation procedures to ensure consistency across housing tenures of service delivery for adaptations			WLC		2012	

4 Improving Communities - Outcomes, Indicators and Actions

National Outcome	WLC Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets/Timescale
<p>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others</p> <p>We live our lives safe from crime disorder and danger.</p> <p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity</p>	<p>We have strong resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their actions and how they affect others</p> <p>We live our lives safe from crime disorder and danger.</p> <p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society(outcome</p>	<p>Our communities are attractive, safe places to live and work</p>	<p>Community Safety activity No of cases – Safer Neighbourhood Team</p> <p>Number of referrals to victim support</p> <p>Resident satisfaction levels with the out of hours noise nuisance service</p> <p>Landlord Registration Nos registered</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>On line survey night noise team</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>2011/12 stats to be confirmed</p> <p>2011/12 stats to be confirmed</p> <p>2011/12 stats to be confirmed</p> <p>3,553 Jan in 2011</p>	<p>Aim to reduce reported number of incidents of antisocial behaviour over the 5 years of the LHS. Aim to increase the numbers of referrals to Victim Support over the 5 years of the LHS</p> <p>Aim to increase levels of satisfaction with out of hours noise nuisance service over the 5 years of the LHS</p>
Action Plan				Commitment by partners	Timescale	
Improve architectural liaison between the Police and				To be developed	Over the durations of the Strategy	

planning on new developments			
Examine the options for dealing with antisocial behaviour in the private rented sector and consider appropriate interventions.		To be developed	To be confirmed
Develop projects to address the appearance of neighbourhoods		Ongoing through the Capital Programme	Ongoing

5 House Condition Outcomes and Actions

National Outcome	Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets/Timescale
We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.	We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need	Improve Housing Quality in West Lothian	% of private sector properties requiring urgent repairs	SHCS	28%	Maintain or reduce by 2017
			Number of private sector empty homes	WLC	276	Maintain or reduce by 2017
			% of WLC Housing meeting SHQS	WLC	65%	100% by 2017
			% RSL meeting SHQS	Scottish Housing Regulator	73%	100% by 2017
Action Plan				Responsibility	Timescale	
Owner Occupied Housing			Review the Private Sector Approach including enforcement activity	WLC	To be agreed	
			Continue to monitor complaints in regard to property condition to identify BTS properties	WLC	Ongoing	

Making Best Use of Existing stock	Examine options for bringing empty properties back into use	WLC	Empty Homes Shared Service project to commence 2012/13
Private Rented Sector	Promote and encourage landlord registration including application of all relevant requirements. Effective co-ordinated regulation of the Private Rented Sector in West Lothian	WLC	Ongoing
	Promote and encourage HMO licensing	WLC	Ongoing
	Improve the coordination between Council services dealing with the private rented sector and join up reporting systems	WLC	Ongoing
Council Housing	Meet SHQS by 2015	WLC	2015
RSL Housing	Meet SHQS by 2015	RSL	2015

6 Fuel Poverty – Outcomes, Indicators and Actions

National Outcome	WLC Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets/Timescale
We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production	We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.	People facing fuel poverty can access the help and support they need.	% of households in extreme fuel poverty	Available annually from SHCS	7% (SHCS 2007-2009)	Maintain Or decrease By 2017
			% of households in fuel poverty	Available annually from SHCS	30% (SHCS 2008-2010)	Maintain or decrease by 2017
			Money saved through energy advice interventions via the Advice shop	Annual monitoring	£30,000 per month	
			Meet targets set in 2011 UHIS bid for Fauldhouse and Breich Valley and Livingston South		F& BV 205 enquiries in 2010 Livingston South 150 enquiries	Loft Insulation TBCCavity Wall Insulation TBC Loft Top ups TBC
			Improve the energy efficiency of	Proportion of Council stock and RSL meeting SHQS	65% (Council) 73% RSL	99% by 2015 99% by 2015

			Council and RSL homes	standard on energy efficiency		
			Cavity wall insulation to Council homes	Annual monitoring	3685 since 2003	680 per annum
			Loft insulation	Annual monitoring	4282 since 2003	600 per annum
			Improve the energy efficiency of private sector homes	Council tax rebate scheme No of measures installed (annually from Changeworks)	69 in 2011/12	80 per annum
			Number of loft insulation measures installed 150mmm or more Owner Occupied Private Rented	HEED database annually	5235 79	250pa to 2017 25pa to 2017

			Number of cavity wall Insulation measures installed to private homes Owner Occupier Private Rented Energy Assistance Package Referrals	HEED Database annually Changeworks annually	5353 59	216 pa to 2017 10 pa to 2017 1600 per annum
Action Plan				Commitment by partners	Timescale	
Monitor installations to identify areas of low take up				To be agreed	Ongoing	
Identify take up of energy efficiency measures in the private rented sector				To be agreed	Ongoing	
Monitor the impact of West Lothian Advice Service on fuel poverty				To be agreed	Ongoing	

6a Climate Change Outcomes, Indicators and Actions

National Outcome	WLC Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	Relevant Indicators	Data/frequency	Baseline	Targets	Timescale
We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production	We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production	People in West Lothian live in energy efficient housing.	Average energy rating (all tenures)	SHCS	NHER 6.7	NHER 8	2017
			Average energy rating private sector	SHCS	NHER 0-5 23% NHER 6-10 77%	NHER 0-5 – 20% NHER 6-10 – 80%	2017
			Average energy rating (social rented sector)	SHCS	NHER 0-5 13% NHER 6-10 87%	NHER 0-5 – 5% NHER 6-10- 95%	2015
		Improve sustainability of existing housing	Carbon Saving from energy efficiency measures and advice Installed renewables	Annually from Changeworks Annually from advice shop Annually from Changeworks		13320 42 per annum	2017

Action Plan	Action	Commitment by partners	Timescale
Advice and information	Signposting to relevant agencies via the Scheme of Assistance for Information on renewables		ongoing
New Build Council Housing	<p>SAP ratings in excess of 85 for 545 units</p> <p>Reduction of carbon emissions 15% above that required by Building Regulations</p> <p>Sustainable Urban Drainage on systems to be used on five of the eight sites.</p>	Lovell Partnerships to develop the new build Council housing	Completion by 2014
	Energy Advice Projects at Fauldhouse		Ongoing
	Monitor requirements on drainage		Ongoing

Appendix 2 – The Legislative Context

Meeting Housing Need and Demand – The Legislative Context

Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

Local Housing Strategy Guidance

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/25093503/11>

Housing Need and Demand Assessment Guidance

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/guidance/guidance-info>

Housing Options The Legislative context and the 2012 target

The Legislation implemented in Scotland which gives all homeless households a right to settled accommodation came about as a result of the adoption of 5 of the 59 recommendations made by the Homelessness Task Force.

The Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 took the following 5 recommendations from the Task Force report into legislation , namely:

- No- one need sleep rough
- Existing homelessness becomes more visible
- Sustainable resettlement is secured for people who become homeless
- Fewer people become homeless in the first place
- The duration of homelessness is reduced

The 2003 Act, to be implemented in phases amends part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. The target is 31st December 2012 for the parts of the Act that will mean anyone found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness will be entitled to settled accommodation.

The main aspects of the legislation are as follows

- The categories of those to be found in priority need were extended in 2004.
- The Priority Need assessment will be removed.
- The requirement to have a “Local Connection” with a council in order to be entitled to settled accommodation within that council’s area will be suspended. Councils will have the ability to request that this is reinstated for their area if they can show that this suspension has caused extreme pressure.
- The duty to investigate whether a household is homeless intentionally will be replaced by a power to do so- effectively giving councils the ability to choose to investigate intentionality. In addition if a household is found to be intentionally homeless the duty to that household will be changed to the provision of a Scottish Short Secure tenancy with support. If this tenancy is successful the household will then be given a Scottish Secure Tenancy. If this tenancy fails the council will still have a duty to provide ongoing, non secure accommodation, the type of which is still to be prescribed in legislation.
- The requirement of landlords and creditors to notify the relevant Council when they raise repossession proceedings(“Section 11”), which came into effect 1st April 2009.
- The introduction of Health and Homelessness standards in April 2005. Health boards are assessed against these standards. The progress in improving health services for homeless people is monitored annually by the Scottish Government.
- The Unsuitable Accommodation (Scotland) Order came into effect in December 2004.

This detailed certain types of accommodation as unsuitable for households with children or pregnant women. The main effect of this is to prevent councils placing these households in bed and breakfast accommodation or any accommodation which is outwith the Councils area

- the Government's commitment to giving every unintentionally homeless household the right to settled accommodation, the limited supply of social rented housing in West Lothian and the importance of private rented housing

An updated code of guidance on homelessness was issued in May 2005. The code will continue to be updated as the remaining sections of the Act are implemented.

In 2007 the Scottish Government reinforced their commitment to the legislative framework by specifically including a target on Homelessness as one of the 45 national targets set out in the Concordat:

"All unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012"

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010:

Section 158 of this Act further amends the 87 Act by inserting section 32b which prescribes that for those found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness a Council must carry out a support assessment and if prescribed support needs are identified either for the applicant or anyone residing with the applicant the local Authority must ensure that support services are provided.

Independent Living: The Legislative Framework

Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 local authorities have a duty to promote social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance on a scale appropriate to their area.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 reinforces this requirement to access provision of housing and related service services within the LHS.

The Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2010 requires local authorities to assess the housing support needs of homeless people

Improving Communities: The Legislative Framework

Civic Government Scotland Act (1982)

Environmental Protection Act (1990)

Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act (1993)

Environmental Act (1995)

Anti Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004

Housing (Scotland) Act 2006

**House Condition : The Legislative Framework
Private Sector**

The Civic Government (Scotland Act) 1982 (Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation).
Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004
Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
The Tolerable Standard is detailed in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (section86), amended by Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (section11)
Landlord Accreditation Scotland , Scottish Core Standards for Landlords
Social Rented Housing House Condition - The Legislative Framework
Scottish Executive Development Department (2004), Letter to local authorities
And registered social landlords Scottish Housing Quality Standard

Fuel Poverty and Climate Change - The Legislative Framework

Home Energy Conservation Act (1995)
The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001
The Scottish Fuel Poverty Statement 2002
Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
Local Government Scotland Act 2003
Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires public bodies to take action under the three broad headings of adaptation, mitigation and sustainability.
The Government has set a statutory target to reduce emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and an interim target of 42% by 2020.
Building Regulations - 2010 Technical Handbook provides guidance on achieving the standards set out in 2004 Building Regulations. This aims to ensure effective measures for the conservation of energy are incorporated into buildings.
The Energy Efficiency Action Plan – outlines actions to achieve the Scottish Government Climate change agenda. It seeks to create employment through the promotion of new technologies.
Scottish Housing Quality Standard – sets minimum standards for energy efficiency in social rented housing

Equalities

The new public sector equality duty is part of the UK Government's Equality Act 2010. The new duty brings together the previous three duties on race, gender and disability and extends coverage to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. Like the previous duties, this new duty has two parts – a public sector duty in the Act itself, often referred to as the general duty, and provision for specific duties to be made through Regulations.

The general duty came into force on 5 April 2011. In summary, the general duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful conduct, which is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity across relevant protected characteristics; and
- Foster good relations across relevant protected characteristics.

Specific duties are intended to offer a clear framework to public authorities to help them deliver the general duty. The Act provides powers to Scottish Ministers to impose specific public sector equality duties on Scottish public authorities. Enforcement of the public sector duty is by judicial review or through the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The Scottish specific duties have been delayed, however, they are almost certain to contain a specific duty on the need to conduct equality quality Impact assessments (EQIA) on the council's relevant functions and policies. This was a legal requirement under the previous public sector equality duty legislation since 2005. As the new legislation seeks to replace and strengthen this duty it is anticipated that EQIA will contain a condition to conduct EQIA across all the protected characteristics.

Appendix 3 – Data Book

Meeting Housing Need and Demand

SESplan HNDA statistics

Table 1

West Lothian Total Household Need (net of turnover)– average applying to the next 10years.

	West Lothian	SESplan Area
Households currently in need	210	1908
Newly Arising Need Annual	850	6116
Supply from stock turnover	689	5265
Net Need excluding turnover	371	2807

(Source- SESplan HNDA Final Report 2011)

Table 2: Demand for New Houses Net of Turnover

	Years 1-5 (2009-14)	Years 6-10 (2015-2019)	Years 11-15 (2020-2024)	Years 16-20 (2025-2029)	Total Demand 2009 - 2032
Affordable	268	321	152	154	4987
Market	847	847	866	774	18,861
Total	1115	1168	1018	928	23,848

Source:SESplan Housing Technical Note)

http://www.sesplan.gov.uk/docs/Proposed_Plan_Package.pdf

Table 3 Housing Supply Target to 2032

West Lothian	Affordable Housing (new build housing need)	Private (or Market) Housing (new build demand)	Affordable Housing Supply Target	Private (or Market) Housing Supply Target
2012-2016	1855	4235	1000	1300
2017 - 2021	1855	4292	1000	2000
2022-2026	1855	4146	1000	2500
2027-2032	1855	3870	1000	2500
Total	9275	16543	4000	8300

Table 4 Annual Housing Supply Target for LHS 2012-2017

West Lothian	Affordable Housing (new build housing need)	Private (or Market) Housing (new build demand)	Affordable Housing Supply Target	Private (or Market) Housing Supply Target
2012/13	371	847	200	260
2013/2014	371	847	200	260
2014/2015	371	847	200	260
2015/2016	371	847	200	260
2016/17	371	847	200	260
Total	1855	4235	1000	1300

Table 5: Affordable Housing Annual Target WLC and RSL

Year	RSL	WLC	Affordable Housing Policy	Total
2012/13	70	119	11	200
2013/14	70	119	11	200
2014/15	70	119	11	200
2015/16	70	119	11	200
2016/17	70	119	11	200
Total	350	595	55	1000

Table 6: Affordable Housing Supply Targets by Tenure

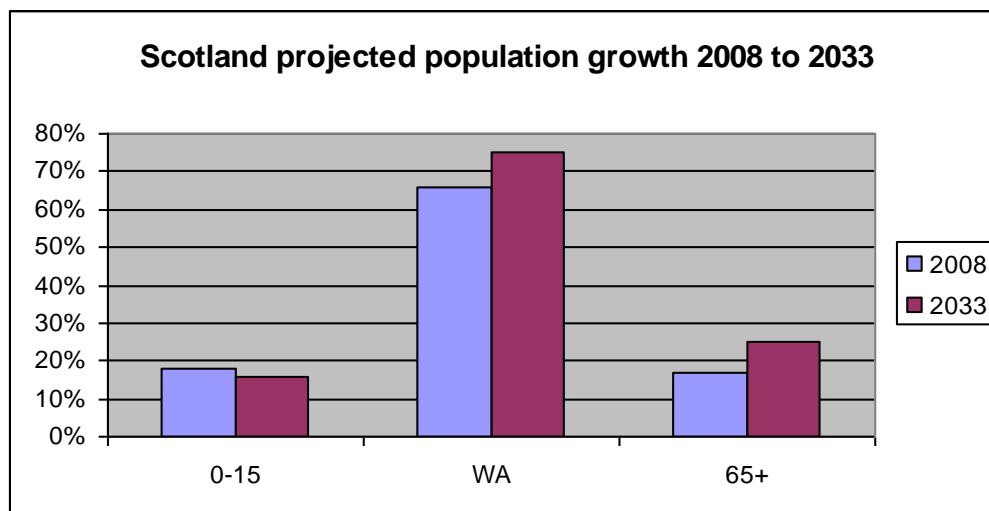
Single Outcome Agreement	LHS Outcome	LHS Indicator	Source	Baseline	Targets 2012/13 - 2016/17	Average Per annum
We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need	People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality housing options available to them."	No of private/market completions	Scottish Government WLC Housing Land Audit	250 (per annum)	1300	260 per annum
		No of affordable housing units delivered by private sector via the affordable housing policy without subsidy	Scottish Government	0	25	5 per annum
		No of affordable housing units delivered by private sector via the affordable housing policy with subsidy	Scottish Government	0	25	5 per annum(approx)
		Open market shared equity	Scottish Government	71 (per annum)	50	10 per annum
		Commuted sum	Scottish Government	£27,000	£50,000	£10,000 per annum
		Affordable Housing Completions by Social Landlords				1000 by 2016/17
		West Lothian Council affordable rent	Scottish Government	255	595	119 per annum
		RSL affordable rent	Scottish Government	50 (per annum)	250	50 per annum
		RSL shared equity	Scottish Government	10 (per annum)	50	10 per annum
		RSL mid market rent	Scottish Government	0	50	10 per annum
		Total Affordable Housing Completions by Social Landlords 2012-2016			995	
		% subsidised investment programme provided for specific needs clients	Scottish Government	100 over 5years	130	130 over 5years

Table 7: House completions (all tenures) in West Lothian 2001-2010

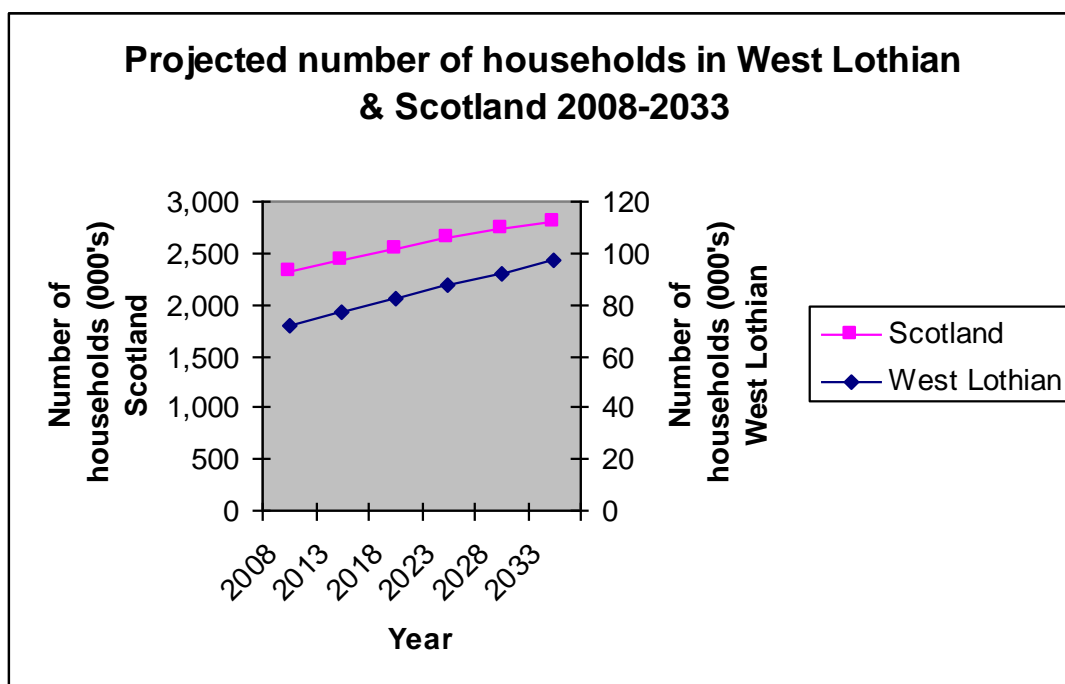
	West Lothian
Annual Requirement	1,150
2001-2002	1281
2002-2003	925
2003-2004	1158
2004-2005	1288
2005- 2006	1175
2006-2007	714
2007-2008	928
2008-2009	422
2009-2010	543
Total	8434
Average	937

(Source: Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan 2015: Annual Housing Monitor 2010)

Figure 3 West Lothian Demographics:



(WA – Working Age)



(Source GROS)

Table 8 Main Town Population Estimates

Main Town Population	2008 Midyear estimates
Livingston	54,750
Bathgate	18,770
Linlithgow	13,360
Armadale	11,410
Whitburn	11,830
Broxburn	14,650
Blackburn	5,140
East Calder	5,610
Fauldhouse	4,920

(Source: West Lothian a Profile)

Table 9 Household Composition Projections

Household Type	Base Year	Projected Number of Households					%change in West Lothian 2008-2033	%change in Scotland 2018-2033
		2013	2018	2023	2028	2033		
	2008	2013	2018	2023	2028	2033		
1 adult	22,120	25,510	29,380	33,040	36,380	39,810	80%	49%
1 adult with 1 or more children	5,450	6,070	6,770	7,670	8,740	9,770	79%	46%
2 or more adults	27,940	29,730	31,700	33,110	33,900	34,430	23%	12%
2 or more adults with 1 or more children	16,740	15,440	14,240	13,470	13,160	13,090	-22%	-27%
Total Households West Lothian	72,250	76,750	82,090	87,280	92,180	97,100	34%	
Total Households Scotland	2,331,250	2,440,440	2,549,930	2,645,300	2,731,760	2,812,520		21%

(GROS Council Profiles <http://gro-scotland.gov.uk/files2/stats/council-area-data-sheets/west-lothian-factsheet.pdf>)

Household Information
(Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 10
 % Household Size

	1 Person	2 person	3 Person	4 + Person
WLC	31	39	12	18
Scotland	32	36	15	17

Table 11
 % Household Type

	Families	Pensioners	Other
WLC	35	30	35
Scotland	35	31	34

Table 12
 % Household Number of Children

	None	1	2+
WLC	71	15	14
Scotland	75	12	13

Table 13
 Household Size by Income

	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 +Person	All Households
WLC	10,500	19,500	25,000	27,400	18,000
Scotland	11,400	19,000	24,200	30,800	18,000

Table 14
 Household Type by Income

Median Annual Household Income by Type of Household			
	Families	Pensioners	Other
WLC	24,700	13,600	18,200
Scotland	26,100	12,300	18,200

Table 15
 Tenure Profile

	Households by Tenure			
	Owner Occupier	LA/other public	HA/Coop	Private Rented
WLC	61	22	10	7
Scotland	62	15	12	11

Housing Options Data

Table 16 Priority Need

Assessments	08/09	09/10	10/11
Total Assessments	1780	1741	1940
Assessments – Priority Need	08/09	09/10	10/11
Homeless or Potentially Homeless Cases	1318	1350	1500
Of which this number are in priority need	1040	1148	1347
Percentage in priority need	78.9%	85.0%	89.8%

Table 17 Homeless Presentations

Applications	08/09	09/10	10/11
Total Applications	1752	1762	1935

Table 18 Homeless Households

Applications by household type	08/09	09/10	10/11
Single Person	985	986	1088
Single Parent	501	497	518
Couple	76	113	126
Couple with Children	101	90	107
Other	43	47	57
Other with Children	46	29	39

Table 19 Reasons for Homelessness

Reasons for Homelessness	08/09		09/10		10/11	
Family/friends no longer able to accommodate	797	45%	804	46%	863	45%
Relationship breakdown (violent)	187	11%	172	10%	179	9%
Relationship breakdown (non violent)	191	11%	248	14%	273	14%
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on payments	100	6%	105	6%	105	5%
Action by landlord	147	8%	161	9%	229	12%
Others combined	330	19%	272	15%	286	15%
Total	1752	100%	1762	100%	1935	100%

Table 20 Repeat Homelessness

Repeat Homelessness	08/09	09/10	10/11
Number	75	69	67
Percentage	5.7%	5.1%	4.5%

Independent Living – Key documents that influence West Lothian’s approach

Changing Lives Report: This sets out the Scottish Government’s vision of more personalised services based upon enabling and building the capacity of individuals, families and communities to exercise more choice and control. The main message from the report was that more of the same will not do in provision of social work services. (Report of the 21st Century Review of Social Work ‘Changing Lives’ Scottish Executive 2006). The Scottish Government has subsequently published a paper which provides guidance on a personalised approach to the commissioning of services. This reflects a wider public sector approach to personalisation through outcomes based commissioning. (Personalisation: A Shared Understanding Commissioning for Personalisation Scottish Government 2009).

The Christie Commission: The commission was established in November 2010 to develop recommendations for the future delivery of public sector services. The Commission completed its findings and its recommendations were reported in June 2011. The report identifies that there is a need to reform the delivery of public services to meet future challenges. The priorities identified to take forward this process of reform include

- Recognising that effective services must be designed with and for people and communities
- Working closely with individual and communities to understand their needs, maximise talents and resources, support self reliance and build resilience.
- Prioritisation prevention measures to reduce demand and lessen inequalities.
- Driving continuing reform across all public services based on outcomes, improved performance and cost reduction.
- Implementing better long-term strategic planning, (Source Commission on the future Delivery of Public Services June 2011)

The Reshaping Care for Older People’s Programme: This outlines the Scottish Governments vision and outcomes required for older people services in Scotland over the next 10 years. Older people’s preference to continue living in their own homes or in a homely setting is not new. However it is the proposed rate of change in shifting the balance of care from institutional settings to care at home to meet demographic and resource pressures which is important to note. The national vision of the Reshaping Care for Older People Programme is that older people in Scotland are valued as an asset, their voices heard and older people are supported to enjoy full and positive lives in their own homes or in a homely setting. The key outcomes which need to be aligned with the independent living chapter of the LHS are

- Services focusing on preventions, maintenance of independence, recovery and reablement.

- More older people living in housing which suits their own needs and helps maintain independence.

National Strategy and Proposed Legislation on Self Directed Support

(SDS): A national strategy on SDS has been developed to assist taking forward the personalisation of care and support services in Scotland. Although the outcome of the SDS (Scotland) Bill consultation process is being finalised it is likely that the proposed Bill will have a significant impact on the commissioning and contracting of services by local authorities as individual service users will be able to exercise choice and control over how their services and support are provided and who provides them using individual budgets.

Age, Home and Community: A Strategy for Housing Older People 2012-2021:

This Strategy has been developed that sets out a vision for housing for and housing related support for older people. The focus is on preventions and giving older people choices they need to live the best possible lives. There are a number of examples of good practice outlined in this document that West Lothian Council will consider as it develops its approach to housing for older people.

Table 21: Housing Support Services Provision in West Lothian 2010/11

Client Group	Number of Service Users 2010/11	% of Total Service Users
Domestic Violence	95	1.4%
Homeless/Sleeping Rough	1091	15.5%
Learning Disabilities	94	1.3%
Mental Health	539	7.6%
Older People	2246	31.9%
People who use Alcohol	218	3.1%
People who use Drugs	81	1.2%
People with Acquired Brain Injuries	1	0.01%
People with Sensory Impairment	24	0.3%
Physical Disabilities	124	1.8%
Poor Social Skills/Disruptive Behaviour	2096	29.7%
Psychological Trauma	15	0.2%
Risk Of Offending/Re-offending	15	0.2%
Vulnerable due to Young Age	409	5.8%
TOTAL	7048	100%

Table 22: Number of Telecare Technology Packages in West Lothian

Financial Year	No of Telecare packages
2007/08	3139
2008/09	3356
2009/10	3701
2010/11	4145

Table 23 : Care at Home Service Provision 2009/10

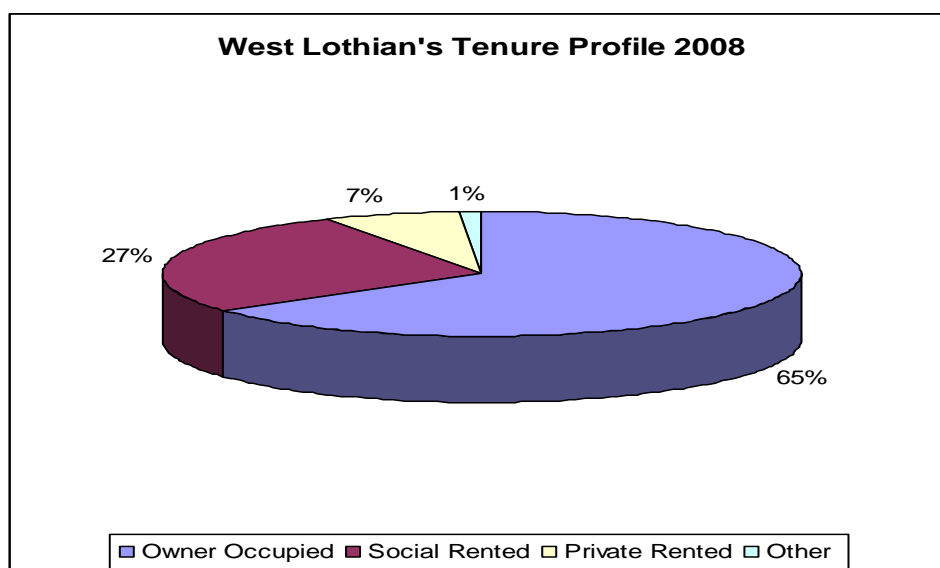
Care Group	No of clients
Children and Families	11
Older People	1727
Learning Disabilities	115
Mental Health	91
Physical Disability	332
Totals	2,276

Table 24: Independent Living - Adaptations 2010/11

Type of Adaptation	Tenure				
	Owner Occupier	Private Rented Housing	West Lothian Council	Housing Association	Total
Rails	1358		541	136	2035
Service/Repair	383		268		651
Key Safe	386		0	0	386
Showers	121		83	96	300
General Equipment	225		0		225
General Adaptation	108		58	35	201
Stair lift	94	1	40	14	149
Ramp	31		27	5	63
Ceiling Track Hoist	2		0	2	4
Automatic toilet	1		1	1	3
Through Floor Lift	1		2		3
Toilet	2		0		2

(Source: WLC)

**House Condition –
Figure 2 Tenure Breakdown**



Data published by Scottish Household Survey 2010

	Number	Percentage
Owner Occupied	48,625	65
Private Rented	5081(registered properties)	7
Council Owned	12,866	17
Housing Association	7,239	10
Total	74,397	

(Source WLC 2010)

Disrepair West Lothian and Scotland

Table 25 Dwellings with Disrepair

Dwellings with no disrepair		Dwellings with Disrepair	
West Lothian %	Scotland%	West Lothian%	Scotland%
27	21	73	79

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 26 Dwellings with Urgent Disrepair

Dwellings with no urgent disrepair		Dwellings with urgent disrepair	
West Lothian	Scotland	West Lothian	Scotland
69	64	31	36

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 27 Dwellings with any disrepair by Tenure

Private		Public	
West Lothian	Scotland	West Lothian	Scotland
68	77	84	85

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 28 Dwellings with urgent disrepair by Tenure

Private		Public	
West Lothian	Scotland	West Lothian	Scotland
26	35	43	39

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 29 Dwellings with Adaptations

	No Adaptations Present	One or more Adaptations
WLC	88	12
Scotland	85	15

(Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 30 West Lothian Council Housing by Type

House Type	Number
Houses	7522
Tenement	1442
4 in a block	3080
Other flats	822
Total	12,866

Housing Affordability Council Housing

West Lothian Council's rents are above the Scottish average. However, the rent increase for 2011/12 was below the Scottish average.

Table 31

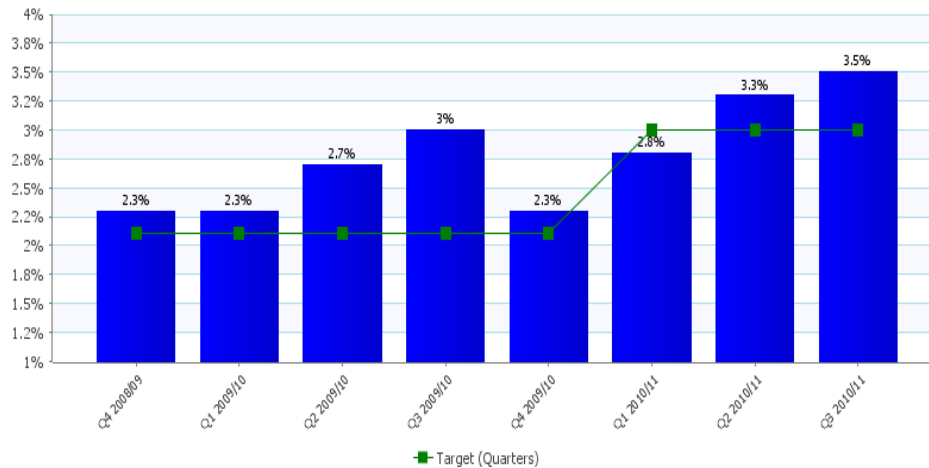
Scottish Local Authorities Average weekly rent levels 2011/12

Council	Average Weekly Rent		INCREASE	
	2010/11	2011/12	Amount	%age
	£		£	%
Aberdeen	57.58	60.29	2.71	4.7
Aberdeenshire	52.14	55.01	2.87	5.5
Angus	47.61	49.90	2.29	4.8
Argyll & Bute*				
Clackmannanshire	52.54	56.01	3.47	6.6
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar*				
Dumfries & Galloway*				
Dundee	57.64	60.23	2.59	4.5
East Ayrshire	52.38	55.13	2.75	5.3
East Dunbartonshire	56.47	59.24	2.77	4.9
East Lothian	43.12	44.97	1.85	4.3
East Renfrewshire	51.90	54.44	2.54	4.9
Edinburgh	69.58	74.87	5.29	7.6
Falkirk	51.57	53.43	1.86	3.6
Fife	51.87	54.05	2.18	4.2
Glasgow*				
Highland	59.22	60.99	1.77	3.0
Inverclyde*				
Midlothian	48.45	51.35	2.90	6.0
Moray	41.91	43.55	1.64	3.9
North Ayrshire	55.54	58.60	3.06	5.5
North Lanarkshire	52.37	53.16	0.79	1.5
Orkney	53.12	58.75	5.63	10.6
Perth & Kinross	51.87	54.52	2.65	5.1
Renfrewshire	60.27	62.98	2.71	4.5
Scottish Borders*				
Shetland	58.69	61.04	2.35	4.0
South Ayrshire	52.45	54.97	2.52	4.8
South Lanarkshire	53.86	56.01	2.15	4.0
Stirling	53.90	56.15	2.25	4.1
West Dunbartonshire	52.13	54.48	2.35	4.5
West Lothian	57.68	59.99	2.31	4.0
Scotland	54.56	56.95	2.38	4.4

* - no housing stock

West Lothian Council Rent Arrears

Percentage of tenants owing more than £250 and 13 weeks rent



The current economic climate has obviously had an impact on our tenants' income levels and has resulted in an increase in those owing more than £250 and 13 weeks rent. We have a robust arrears process in place, focusing on early interventions and prevention.

Our annual performance for 2009/10 was 2.3%, and we were ranked 4 of 26 Scottish Local Authorities who have a council house service. The Scottish average for the percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent was 4.2%.

Housing Association Rents

Housing Association average rents in West Lothian for 2011/12 for general needs housing range from £55 per week to £76 per week.

Private Rented Housing

Estimates of affordability in the private rented sector are difficult to achieve. One way of examining affordability is by looking at the Local Housing Allowance rates from March 2011 based on the median rents. These figures show that the median rent for a 1 bed private rented property was £425.01 per month. Housing costs are deemed to be affordable if they do not exceed 25% of household income. The table below indicates the level of income required for affordability of property assuming housing costs do not exceed 25% of income.

Table 32 Median Private Rents and Income Affordability

Property Size	1 room	1 bed	2 bed	3bed	4 bed	5 bed
Weekly Median Rent March 2011	£65.77	£98.08	£121.15	£138.46	£190.38	£207.69
Monthly Median March 2011	£285	£425.01	£524.98	£599.99	£824.98	£899.99
Household Income	£13,680	£20,400	£25,199	£28,759	£39,599.04	£43,199

In April 2011, changes were made to the way Local Housing Allowance Rates was calculated. It is now based on the 30th percentile of median West Lothian rents rather than the 50th percentile which was used previously. Rates are now capped at the 4 bed rate. There are currently 2,600 claimants of housing benefit in Private Rented sector properties. This represents about 50% of all registered private rented properties in West Lothian.

Table 33 Local Housing Allowance September 2011

Property Size	1 room	1 Bed	2Bed	3 Bed	4 bed
Weekly LHA Rate	£57.69	£98.08	£115.38	£173	£173.08
Monthly LHA rage	£249.99	£425.01	£499.98	£574.99	£750.01

**Table 34
Average House Prices in West Lothian and Scotland**

	Average House Prices		
	April 2009	April 2010	April 2011
West Lothian	£133,410	£128,109	£124,312
Scotland	£140,329	£151,539	£151.466

(Source: Centre for Housing Market Analysis Local Authority Housing Bulletin – June 2009, June 2010, June 2011)

Table 35: Household annual income percentiles

	10 th Percentile		20 th Percentile		50 th Percentile	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
West Lothian	11409	9545	16354	14247	29700	28870
Scotland	10738	8738	15310	13021	27652	26232

(Source CACI paycheck data Centre for Housing Market Analysis)

Table 36: Median annual household income by household type

Median Annual Household Income by Type of Household			
	Families	Pensioners	Other
WLC	24,700	13,600	18,200
Scotland	26,100	12,300	18,200

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 37: Household Size by Income

	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 +Person	All Households
WLC	10,500	19,500	25,000	27,400	18,000
Scotland	11,400	19,000	24,200	30,800	18,000

(Source Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010)

Table 38: Council Tax Bandings

Area	Council Tax Band Dwellings 2011		
	A -C	D-E	F-H
West Lothian	68	21.5	10
Scotland	62	26	12

(Source: Scottish Assessors General Statistics

http://www.saa.gov.uk/general_statistics.php?&REPORT_NAME=ct_band#report_list)

Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2008-2010
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS/LA0810>

Table 39: Households in Fuel Poverty

	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor
WLC	68	30
Scotland	70	28

Table 40: Households in Extreme Fuel Poverty

	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor	Extreme Fuel Poor
WLC	68	21	9
Scotland	70	20	8

Table 41: Fuel Poverty by Tenure

	Private		Public	
	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor
WLC	73	27	61	39
Scotland	72	28	69	31

Table 42: Fuel Poor Households by Household Type

	Families		Pensioners		Other	
	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor	Not Fuel Poor	Fuel Poor
WLC	89	11	47	53	69	31
Scotland	85	15	50	50	77	23

Table 43: NHER by Tenure

	Private		Public	
	NHER		NHER	
	0-5	6-10	0-5	6-10
WLC	19	81	15	85
Scotland	34	66	16	84

Draft Local Housing Strategy Summary Questions Meeting Housing Need and Demand Questions

What do you think the Council should do to help meet the shortfall in the provision of affordable housing?			
Option	Yes	No	comment
Build more Council housing			
Support Housing Associations to build more affordable Housing			
Support the development of a wide range of tenures including shared equity, mid market rent and low cost home ownership			
Encourage developers to provide unsubsidised affordable housing through the affordable housing policy?			

There is very high demand for affordable housing in some areas of West Lothian. Do you think we should prioritise the funding that is available for affordable housing for these areas or should the investment be spread across West Lothian?

What support should the Council put in place to enable the provision of a high quality private rented sector?

Proposed Outcome - Meeting Housing Need and Demand

“People in West Lothian can find a suitable place to live and have quality housing options available to them.”

What do you think of this outcome? Are there any others we should seek to achieve?

Housing Options Questions

How should the Council ensure that there is appropriate advice and information on the housing options available in West Lothian?

Are there any other forms of Housing Support that could be put in place to help prevent homelessness?

How can housing associations and other stakeholders contribute more to preventing homelessness?

Proposed Outcome for Housing Options: Homelessness is prevented for people in West Lothian as far as possible. Effective advice and support is in place for people who become homeless.

What do you think of this outcome? Are there any other outcomes we should seek to achieve?

Independent Living Questions

Do you have any comments on the housing support services which are

available in West Lothian?

Do you have any comments on Equipment and Adaptations?

Do you have any comments on the use of telecare technology to assist independent living?

Proposed Outcomes for Independent Living

People living in West Lothian can access the appropriate range of care and support services enabling them to live independently in their own homes where they choose to do so.

What do you think of this outcomes? Are there any other outcomes we should seek to achieve?

Improving Communities - Questions

Do you consider neighbourhoods in West Lothian to be safe , clean and well managed?

If not, what do you think could be done to improve neighbourhoods?

What should the Council and its partners be doing to make homes and neighbourhoods more attractive to people

Are there any early signs the Council should look out for where a community

or area may be in decline?

Are there sufficient opportunities for residents to get involved in their neighbourhoods through Tenants' groups, Community Councils, Local Area Committees, Citizen's Panel? If not, what else should be developed?

Proposed Outcome: Our communities are attractive, safe places to live and work

What do you think of this outcome? Are there any other outcomes we should seek to achieve?

**House Condition Questions
Owner Occupied Housing**

- 1 How can the Council encourage owners to repair and maintain their homes more regularly?
- 2 What do you think the Council should do to encourage homeowners to bring empty properties back into use?

Private Rented Housing

What role should the Council have in relation to the private rented housing?

- Provision of advice and information to private landlords to encourage them to improve good quality housing
- Greater use of the Council's enforcement powers to raise the quality of housing provided by private landlords

Council and Housing Association Homes

What do you think the Council and Housing Associations could do to improve the condition of the housing that they provide?

Proposed Outcome: House Condition in West Lothian is improved

What do you think of the proposed outcome? Are there any others that we should seek to achieve in relation to Owner Occupation, Private Rented Council and Housing Association housing?

Fuel Poverty Questions

How can people be encouraged to improve the energy efficiency of their homes?

- Information and advice to maximise income and improve understanding of energy efficient measures
- Practical Assistance to install energy efficient measures such as loft insulation
- Financial incentives to encourage people to take up energy efficiency measure

What is the best way to target fuel poverty measures?

- By area
- By tenure
- By house type

What other initiatives could the Council and its partners do to address fuel poverty?

Proposed Outcome: People facing fuel poverty can access the information, advice and support they need.

What do you think of this outcome? Are there any others we should seek to achieve?

Climate Change - Questions

How should the Council focus its investment in housing to limit carbon emissions and climate change?

- Invest in new technologies in new build such as xxx
- Retrofit existing homes with new technologies such as xxx

What assistance should the Council offer to homeowners in regard to measures to address climate change?

Proposed Outcomes:

People in West Lothian live in energy efficient housing.

Improve sustainability of existing housing

What do you think of these outcomes? Are there any others we should seek to achieve?

Appendix 4 References

Context Statement

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The Joint Mental Health Plan

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The Integrated Children's Plan

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Mental Health

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Appendix 5: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Affordable Housing: Housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes

AHIP: Affordable Housing Investment Programme

BTS: Below Tolerable Standard

Care and Repair: Service to help older or disabled people with repairs and adaptations to their homes.

CERT: Carbon Emissions Reduction Target

CESP: Community Energy Savings Programme – whole house energy efficiency funding focusing on areas of deprivation

Commissioning: Deciding what services are needed, procuring these services and entering a contract.

Complex Needs: People with multiple issues in their lives

Extreme fuel poverty: Where a household spends at least 20% of their income on fuel.

Fuel Poverty: A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if it spends more than 10% of income on household costs.

Green Deal: UK Government's framework to enable customers to undertake energy efficiency improvements to their homes at no upfront costs and recoup payment through their energy bills.

HNDA: Housing Need and Demand Assessment – study of the need and demand for housing in an area which follows Scottish Government Guidance

Housing Demand: Housing which households wish to buy or rent

Housing Market Areas: Self contained geographical areas of housing demand

Housing Market Partnership: Local Authorities and relevant organisations working jointly to plan for housing within a Housing Market Area

Housing Need: Households lacking their own housing or living in housing which is unsuitable who are unlikely to meet their needs in the housing market without assistance

Housing Renewal Area: Where the Council decides that a significant number of houses in a certain area are substandard, or the state of repair of the dwellings have a negative impact upon the area.

Indicator: Measures that should evidence whether an outcome is being achieved

Intermediate Housing Products: Housing options below full market value cost to meet an identified need including low cost housing for sale (discounted, shared ownership or shared equity); low cost housing without subsidy; mid market renting (levels between social rent and private rent)

LDP – Local Development Plan

LHS – Local Housing Strategy

Low Cost Initiatives for First Time Buyers (LIFT): A scheme which assists people on low to moderate incomes to buy homes.

National Home Energy Rating (NHER): Indicator of energy efficiency based on the thermal efficiency of the building . It is a scale from 0-10 with 10 being the most efficient.

MIH – Moving into Health

New Supply Shared Equity: Grants given by the Scottish Government to Housing Associations and Developers to buy or build new homes for sale for shared equity.

Open Market Shared Equity (OMSEP): The Open Market Shared Equity scheme allows people on low to moderate incomes to buy homes that are for sale on the open market where it is affordable for them to do so.

Outcome: The result or impact of actions

Particular Needs Housing: Housing built for people with specific needs either specially built or adapted housing.

Right to Buy (RTB): Legislation which enables people to buy a house where they have a Council or Housing Association tenancy

Registered Social Landlord (RSL): A not for profit housing association of housing cooperative that is registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator

SHCS: Scottish House Condition Survey

Scheme of Assistance: Information, advice and practical assistance for private owners as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS): Scottish Government standards for the quality and condition of housing

Scottish Planning Policy: The Scottish Government's approach to planning

SDP: Strategic Development Plan

Single Outcome Agreement(SOA): The Community Planning Partnership's priorities and outcomes for the local authority

Voids – empty properties