

Area Services Report

2010-2011



Performance Highlights

By delivering quality services locally, we support individuals, families and communities to grow, achieve and succeed.

Introduction	2
Organisational Chart	3
Adult Basic Education	4
Advice Shop	5
Community Facilities	6
Adult Learning	7
Community Arts	8
Community & Leisure	9
Community Youth	10
Regeneration & Employability	11
Sport and Outdoor Education	12
Customer Information Services	13
Branch Library Services	14
Library Central Services	15
Partnership Centres	16
Registration Services	17
Customer Service Centre	18
Customer Service Development	19

Introduction

Area Services was established in June 2010 and brought together the service groupings of Cultural, Communities & Economic Development Services, Advice Shop (formally Social Policy), Customer Information Services (CIS), Customer Service Centre (CSC), Registration Services and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) - all formally Customer Services

A detailed organization chart is overleaf.

The work of the Service is varied and complex but at core remains focused on two key areas:

Community Regeneration and Customer Service

Against an unfavourable economic environment which creates increasing demand and customer expectations, the Service has achieved significant progress since its establishment and developed new and exciting ways of working which bring services together with an objective of creating improved outcomes for individuals at lower cost around two key themes:.

- Transactional Activity: including Libraries, Customer Service Centre, Council Information Services, and Registration
- Engagement Activity: Community Regeneration, Learning and Development, Employability, Advice Shop, Adult Basic Education, and the use of Community Sport and Arts to underpin quality of life improvements in addition to promotion of excellence through role models.

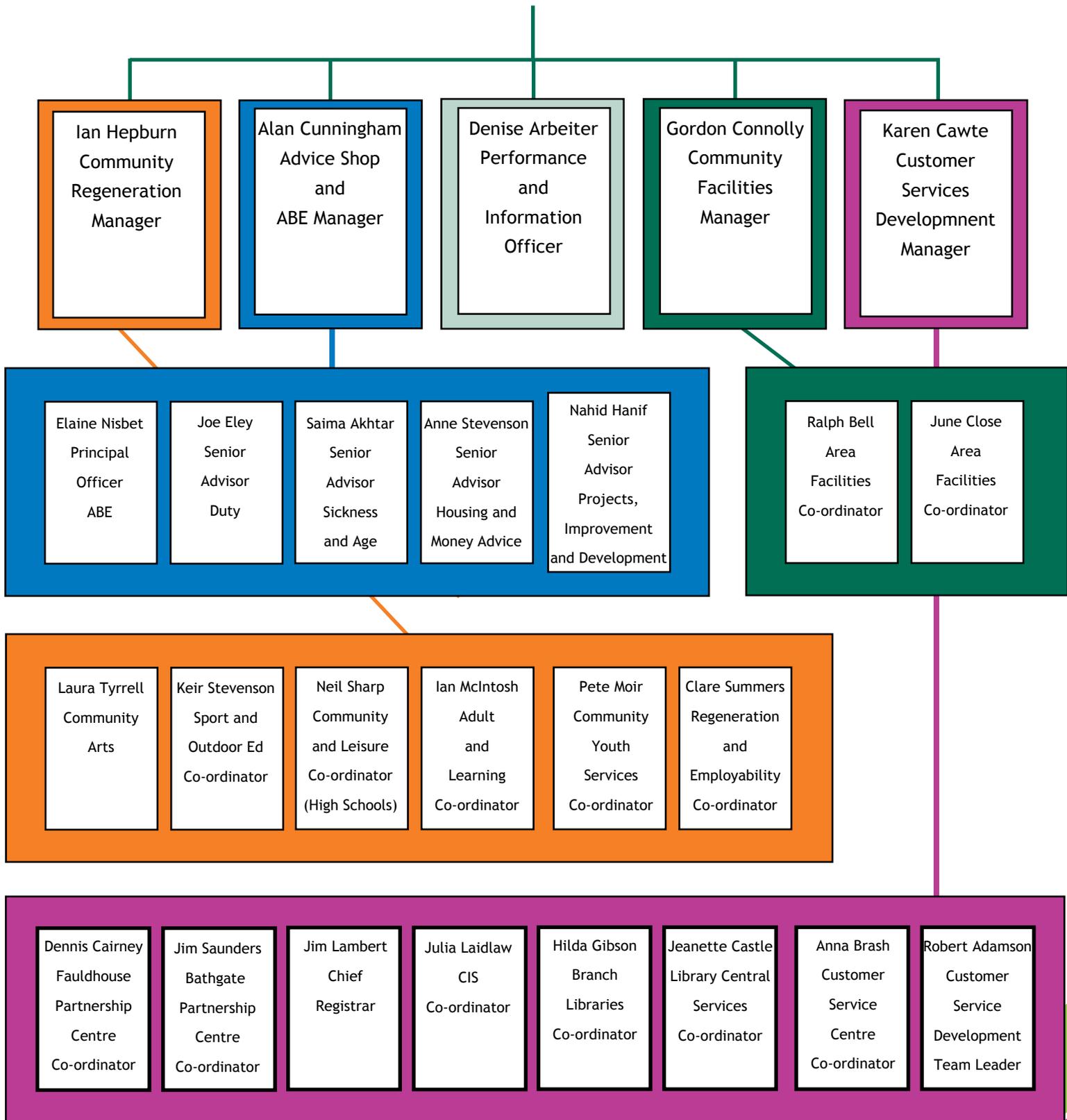
Increasingly services will be grouped and integrated to ensure maximum impact at the point of service delivery and co-located where possible through partnership centres and similar arrangements allowing increased efficiency and improved customer service.

This report details our successes during 2010/11.

Alistair Shaw
Head of Area Services

Organisational Chart

Alistair Shaw
Head of Area Services



Adult Basic Education



Adult Basic Education works with adults who can set goals to improve their reading, writing or number skills or develop lipreading skills. This year we worked with 566 learners; 78% of which successfully achieved at least one goal and 12% achieved a relevant qualification.

ABE look for innovative ways for learners to engage with their own literacies. This year we were one of a handful of organisations to gain funding from the Scottish Book Trust to produce a learner publication.

The Inked project supported learners to explore their own reading practices through creative processes.

60 students took part in workshops relating to tattoos, graffiti and clothes branding.

As a result, they produced their own pieces of personal artwork which were then photographed and collated to form the basis of the book.

In response to participant evaluation, the project was extended to include song-writing workshops and the songs produced were showcased at the book's launch. 3000 copies of the publication have been printed and distributed to literacies learners throughout Scotland and the workshops will now be rolled out as a short course.

ABE regularly run lip reading courses for deaf or hard of hearing people. However, communication is a two-way process so we have developed a new short course for deaf and hearing friends or partners. The 4 week course is delivered in partnership with Deaf Action and promotes the understanding of deafness from the viewpoint of both deaf and hearing people. The sessions have provoked plenty of discussion about strategies for communication and coping with the psychological effects of deafness on all concerned. Each set of partners have completed the course with an increased understanding of each other's needs.

2011 was census year and ABE worked in partnership with the Community Regeneration team and Scotland's Census to raise awareness and support people to participate. This involved targeting groups who were historically least likely to complete the census. We raised awareness to 65 people looking at the content of the form and discussing what happens to the information collected. In addition, 20 people received one-to-one support to complete their form during census week.

Advice Shop



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, we endeavour to help all people in West Lothian.

The Advice Shop had another very busy and successful year.

Our key outputs were:

- dealt with 79,478 customer contacts (up 5% from last year)
- generated £33,944,300 of extra income (up 10% from last year)
- 99% of our customers rated our service as very good or good (98% last year).
- dealt with 12,295 enquiries involving total debts of £12,320,000 and successfully managed £6,485,643, 53% of this total
- reduced by advice the amount of CO2 (the main greenhouse gas affecting global warming) by 1,244 tonnes.
- helped prevent 825 potential evictions

Our welfare rights service costs in total £583,000. This year this part of the service brought in £21,540,000 giving a leverage figure of £37:1 (2010, £37:1 2001, £23:1)

“The Advice Shop is a practical way in which we can help people in West Lothian affected by low incomes and by fuel poverty. This is even more important at the moment, as the effects of the recession continue to affect many people and businesses in West Lothian. The number of people helped by staff in the Shop continues to rise, while customers continue to give high marks for the service it provides”.

Councillor Isabel Hutton

Our service that helps drug users and prisoners won the Provost’s Award at the Councils “Celebrating Success” event on the 19th November. In the last 6 months, working with partners such as Criminal Justice and in Addiewell prison, the worker, Peter, has advised 65 prisoners and ex prisoners, helping them to keep a home, and making sure that their income is correct and stable (£411,223 extra for the customers).

In March five of our customers were able to retain their family home through the successful completion of their mortgage to rent application. This stopped them being made homeless, which will save West Lothian Council approximately £105,000.

Community Facilities



In 2010/11 significant funds were secured to enhance Community Facilities and user groups and individuals are now reaping the benefits of these investments.

The Fauldhouse Partnership Centre cost £8.2 million is now operational housing a variety of services and Bathgate Partnership Centre costing £7 million opens in September 2011.

Over the past 12 months a number of centres were refurbished and new builds are now complete:

- Livingston Station Community Centre (£1.2 million)
- Ladywell/Forestbank Community Centre (£1 million)
- Broxburn Old Town Centre (£130 K)
- Longridge Community Centre (£1.5 million)
- Armadale Community Centre / Library (£1.3 million)

These facilities which complement the existing property portfolio house appropriate resources for our partners to engage with both young people and adults offering effective programmes to meet their needs.

New learning suites have been established in centres with modern equipment allowing the services to raise standards of achievement for our learners.

Over the past year we have also worked closely with Management Committees establishing partnership agreements setting out stakeholders roles and responsibilities. These have proved to be of positive benefit to the council and partners in promoting the principle of community self management. We continue to work with the voluntary and statutory agencies to provide services that will address the needs of young people and adults and local communities.

The delivery of the Community Facilities Service was met within the allocated budgets and whilst appreciating the financial constraints ahead we are confident that the service will continue to deliver quality programmes from excellent facilities.

Adult Learning



Over the past year Adult Learning has continued to deliver a wide range of learning experiences that have helped people from community and voluntary organisations, as well as individual learners, to take part in community based courses and classes.

Involvement in these programmes has helped people and community groups to improve their skills and knowledge and be more confident and capable in family, work and community settings. This has happened because of the way that community learning and development works with people and communities by:

- Building upon what people already know
- Helping people share their experiences and expertise to help others
- Encouraging people to expect to achieve more, for themselves and their communities
- Helping individuals and communities become more able to do things by themselves

An example of a project that brings all this together is the Dedridge Environment Ecology Project (DEEP). This is a community group that formed in 2007 and who wanted to address environmental issues associated with the Dedridge Pond, woodland and surrounding area.

Members of the group shared their own experiences and expertise with each other, recruiting new members, and asking for help from West Lothian Council.

Community Learning and Development also helped individual group members to access courses from the 'Get Into Learning' programme and 'Voluntary and Childcare Organisations Training Calendar'.

This learning supported the group to:

- Develop a plan of action on the issues they identified
- Include a wide range of people in their work
- Access funding and experts to work on the issues important to the group

The work undertaken has resulted in DEEP receiving a good practice award for adult learning 2010 from Scotland's Learning Partnership and most recently, picked up the top prize at this year's Scotland's Finest Woods Awards - 'The Community Woodland Award'.

Get Into Learning

The Get Into Learning programme of community based adult learning delivered 106 courses involving 1576 adult learners. This included over 200 learners whose first language was not English.

Courses included; English as a Second or Other Language, Welcome to computing, So you want to be a DJ?, Working with young people, Childcare skills, Catching confidence and Preparing for employment.

Community Arts



The aim of the Community Arts team is that everyone in West Lothian should have the opportunity to experience the social, economic, educational, environmental, health and creative benefits of the arts. Our aim is to bring the benefits of the arts to as many people in West Lothian as possible, whatever their age and circumstance.

Some of the highlights of the year include:

- 35,577 people have participated in the Arts Education programme, projects, Continuing Professional Development opportunities and Arts Development projects
- Our Instrumental Music Service taught 9,254 pupils
- Howden Park Centre received a Bronze Award in the Best Bar None Awards 2010

Howden Park Centre, West Lothian's premier arts venue, has continued to exceed our expectations by attracting over 74,000 customers in 2010-11, a 25% increase from previous year. We have also received excellent feedback from our customers with 99% rating the facilities at Howden Park Centre as excellent or good and 98% rating the arts programme as excellent or good.

Curriculum Dance Programme

The curriculum dance programme has been established for 9 years and provides opportunities for pupils who attend a West Lothian secondary school to study for Intermediate level 2 dance units and Performing Arts Higher Dance Practice course. This year over 100 pupils at Inveralmond Community High School, Bathgate Academy and Armadale Academy studied the Intermediate level 2 dance course.

Public Art Programme

The Grassroots Public Art Grant Scheme was developed to support arts, health and environment-based projects that would lay the foundations for future public art work in West Lothian. Four West Lothian communities - Boghall, Uphall and Broxburn, Armadale and Dedridge - were awarded Grassroots Public Art grants totalling £90,300.

Connect 'Home Project'

The Connect arts programme improves health and wellbeing for young people aged 14 to 25 in the throughcare/aftercare service or at risk of homelessness through regular participation in the arts. Community Arts and the Youth Inclusion Project facilitated a ten week furniture restoration project led by Impact Arts. Participants worked with an interior designer transforming pieces of second-hand furniture into vibrant works of art to sell or furnish their own tenancies. 10 participants were initially engaged with 8 sustaining regular involvement. A range of transferable creative and life skills were developed including confidence and self belief, team working, decision making, concentration, sense of achievement, time keeping, furniture design, soft furnishing, decoupage, paint, preparation and finishing techniques.

Community & Leisure



Community and Leisure services in Inveralmond and Deans Community High Schools make a significant contribution to the quality of life for numerous communities, families and individuals in West Lothian.

The number of people visiting Deans and Inveralmond Community High Schools to take part in sport, leisure and community activities increased to over 370,000. Annual income increased to £284,000. The schools ran 86 adult learning courses. Over 700 children enrolled for swimming lessons at the schools. Both schools continued to support dozens of community clubs and youth work programmes and provide popular crèches for under-5s. Services are provided to both targeted groups and to the public as a whole.

Crèche usage increased for the third year running with the drop-in sessions proving popular with parents, carers and toddlers alike.

User numbers were boosted by the opening of a new Synthetic Turf Pitch at Deans Community High School. Both schools are now major providers of swimming lessons at all levels and stages including children's, adult, women only and parent and baby classes. The number of community sports clubs based in the schools continued to rise providing opportunities for children and adults to get involved in handball, swimming, badminton, football, hockey, athletics and basketball as well as dance and several martial arts. Both venues accommodated a range of performances and special events held in the Theatre at Deans and the Assembly Hall at Inveralmond.

A record number of adult learners took advantage of Individual Learning Accounts - providing up to £200 towards the cost of course fees- to access a wide range of classes and courses including Jewellery Making, Spanish, Digital Photography, Cooking, Hair-dressing, First Aid and English For Speakers Of Other Languages. The British Sign Language course at Deans was very popular and the work of Course Tutor Alan Sanders was recognised with a national teaching award.

Use of fitness gyms and classes also grew with many new customers being attracted to the schools' fitness gyms and Zumba, yoga, keep-fit and pilates classes.

Community and Leisure staff supported diversionary youth work programmes in both schools aiming to divert young people away from alcohol abuse and risky or anti-social behaviour.

Deans Community School became one of the first organisations to be awarded full compliance in all 57 categories for Customer Service Excellence.

Community Youth Services



The Community Youth Service is a new team which brings together the Work with Young People Team and More Choices, More Chances Team (MCMC). The team aims to increase opportunities for young people so that they can develop and reach a positive destination. We had 116,726 engagements last year with young people.

West Lothian Council Skills Training

The skills programme is for unemployed young people aged 16 or 17 and who require additional support to help them move in to mainstream work or training. The programme provides up to 26 weeks of work experience in a council department, learning the employability and vocational skills required to be competent in the workplace. It also provides support in the workplace via a workplace mentor who will instruct and support the young person. The trainee is supported by a key worker to find employment or training on completion of the placement. The young person is paid a training allowance of £55 per week.

During April 2010 to end of March 2011, 89 young people have been offered a work placement in West Lothian Council. 26 service areas have provided real work experiences for young people who have left schools in the area. The type of experiences includes working in offices, with the roads or garden maintenance teams, in kitchens or working with children. 33 trainees are currently on placement. Of the 111 who have completed the programme, 25 have progressed into employment, 5 moved in to Modern Apprenticeship, 18 trainees moved on to a college course or training programme. 3 will complete voluntary work to gain skills which can help them move on to work in which they are interested. There has been successful an impressive progression rate of 46% into positive outcomes.

Museum of Poverty

The Museum of Poverty was a joint exhibition and workshop between the Work with Young People Team and Save the Children. It took place in the Forestbank community centre on 16th June. In attendance at the exhibition were; MSP and Children and Young People's Minister Angela Constance, the council leader and several key practitioners and local community champions.

The young people explored poverty issues in the weeks running up to the event. This focussed on poverty and how it effects their community. They created 2 characters to represent child poverty and wrote a narrative of their day to day lives. Two large rag dolls were then purchased and dressed in old clothes. The young people then wrote their issues on pieces of cloth and attached them to the dolls. This gave a strong visual feel to the issue.

The results:

- The young people and the community raised their awareness of poverty
- The CLD service developed a partnership with Save the Children
- The young people used a powerful visual approach to tackling a serious issue
- Demonstrated young people's ability to articulate themselves well

Regeneration & Employment



Comprising of Community Regeneration, Access2employment and support for the Voluntary Sector. The Service has been working in our most disadvantaged communities, with a particular focus on promoting work as a route out of poverty including improving skills, health and financial awareness.

West Lothian Connected

West Lothian Connected is a one stop shop based in The Centre in Livingston. The building opened in 2000 and operates in partnership with Job Centre Plus, HMRC and West Lothian Council to offer customers a seamless, joined up service which deals with a range of issues for individuals at one time.

Over the last ten years, West Lothian Connected has become the Council's busiest Council Information Service.

Given the changing economic climate, and the way this is impacting upon services and on vulnerable groups in our communities, partners felt that now would be a good time to re-visit the aims and objectives of West Lothian Connected and review how we can meet the changing needs of our citizens.

Over the three days, 17 members of staff surveyed 467 people, which gave a representative sample of the Livingston population. The engagement highlighted a number of key opportunities for improving service delivery and customer experience within the facility. Partners have developed an action plan outlining opportunities; this is currently being implemented in order to offer the best possible service to West Lothian Connected customers over the coming year.

In 2010 /11 we supported:

- 1321 Parents to engage in educational and community activity
- 357 Young people to engage in community activity
- 1007 People to access health initiatives
- 1375 clients with Access2employment
- 670 clients to employment, training or full time education

Access2employment - Future Jobs Fund

The FJF encourages the creation of job opportunities for young people for six months. Back in Autumn 2009, the Department of Work and Pensions awarded West Lothian Council funding to create 211 jobs for young people each for a period of six months. The challenge was taken up by the council's main provider of employability services, Access2employment.

The first job was created and the first employee recruited in December 2009 and the last place was filled in March 2011 resulting in the 211th young person moving into work.

The FJF employees received employability skills training from Access2employment advisers ensuring a much stronger position to obtain a permanent long term job. Around 70% of the young people going through FJF have left and moved into another job which was the highest rate in Scotland.

Sport & Outdoor Education



The Sport & Outdoor Education Service strives to develop and support participation in physical activity, outdoor education and sport, for every person in West Lothian. We aim to maximize the contribution physical activity and sport can make to the overarching health, community regeneration and education agendas.

Delivered Outdoor Education to:

- 40 West Lothian Primary and Special Schools
- 7 West Lothian Secondary Schools
- 26 Non West Lothian Schools
- 64 non school group bookings

Outdoor education Holiday Programmes:

- Summer 2010 - over 2500 participant sessions (1/2 day) taken up
- 160 places booked for wraparound care
- 466 journeys on free minibus pick up
- February 2011 pilot programme - 50 participant sessions

1st Aid courses:

- 32 candidates attended HSE Initial 1st Aid at Work Training
- 85 attended HSE 1st Aid at Work Requalification courses
- 235 attended HSE Emergency 1st Aid at Work training

Kids of Steel

More than 650 pupils from 32 schools across West Lothian, took part in a fully equipped mini-triathlon event held at Armadale Academy in June. The pupils, aged 9-12, swam 50m of the school pool before hopping onto a bike outside for a 1km lap followed by a 400m run to the finish line. The children were encouraged across the line by a number of elite Scottish triathletes, including current World Duathlon Champion, Catriona Morrison.

Midnight League/Street Football

Midnight League and Street Football are initiatives for 12 - 17 year old youths. A small amount of funding from the Scottish FA was received to deliver these initiatives however a successful application for funds from the WLC Strategy for Tackling Underage Drinking programme allowed us to greatly increase the volume of activity we could offer. In total there were 1,837 participant sessions over the 24 week period Midnight Leagues were delivered from October 2010 - April 2011.

Craigswood Athletics Track

This joint project with West Lothian Leisure, completed in May 2011, delivers upgraded athletics facilities at the site. The Sports Centre now has a new blue athletics track and refurbished field facilities including new hammer/discus cage and upgraded shot-putt and long jump facilities. The new facilities will host club training nights and aim to attract additional training squads and competitions back to the site. Already, the Scottish Athletics regional Hammer training squad is now based at the facility including high performance athletes from across Central Scotland.

Customer Information Services



The Customer Information Service (CIS) forms part of Customer Services and ensures that the public has easy local access to a wide range of services and information. We give advice, provide information, assist with form filling, liaise with service areas on behalf of our customers and make referrals to appropriate departments and external agencies.

Our most common enquiries are related to: housing, council tax, benefits, waste management, concessionary travel and environmental services.

There are 7 CIS centres throughout West Lothian employing approximately 37 FTE staff. 2011 saw a service restructure which has resulted in the service going from 4 managers to 1 Co-ordinator and 3 Team Leaders are to be appointed later this year. Once in post, they will be responsible for the day to day running of the offices while the CIS Co-ordinator will have a more strategic and developmental role.

There is a national target which requires us to resolve 75% of enquiries and service requests at the first point of contact rather than passing on to other services. In 2010/11 we achieved 74% so we are wanting to work on increasing that percentage and ensuring our customers are receiving a more effective and efficient service.

In 2010/11 we dealt with over 113,000 enquiries and upheld 5 complaints.

We also manage the council's payments offices and in the last financial year we dealt with over 226,000 payment transactions resulting in over £20million being paid in through our offices.

In the last year:

- CIS staff have taken part in a number of Rapid Improvement Events (homelessness and repairs)
- our office in County Buildings has had a significant refurbishment and now operates alongside the Local History and Information Library
- we are part of the team moving to the new Bathgate Partnership Centre and look forward to working within a new customer service delivery model
- our office in West Lothian Connected is part of a wider review of this partnership building which hopes to ensure a more welcoming, seamless and relevant service centre for our customers

Branch Library Services



14 static libraries and 2 library vehicles provide council services in West Lothian. No two communities are the same and it has been long recognised that one size library does not fit all and services are tailored to meet the needs of the communities served.

The recession has seen the demand for books, information and Internet use increase. Libraries provide these free of charge and in June 2010 Access to Employment moved into Almondbank and Whitburn libraries. This integrated approach brings added benefits to customers wishing to access information, employment advice and learning opportunities under one roof.

This builds on successful projects in Blackburn and Carmondean Connected where Council Information Services and Library Services joined up to embrace the council ethos of “The customer is never in the wrong place”. Carmondean became the busiest library with over 95,000 visitors and nearly 117,000 items issued. 1400 people have benefitted directly from the Carmondean Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service since it’s opening in 2009.

Fauldhouse library opened within a new partnership building extending opening hours and providing access to council information via a video link to the Customer Service Centre. Customers can browse in the library with a cuppa or pick up their GP “prescription” from the Books on Prescription service.

Armadale library also moved to new premises attached to the refurbished community centre. Issues in the 4th quarter of the year saw a 9% increase on the 1st quarter.

East Calder library staff provide Registration Services and achieved a 96% accuracy rate. 224 births deaths and marriages were registered and 827 copy certificates issued.

Further Performance:

- 10% more book items were purchased than in the previous year
- Audio visual/electronic acquisitions increased by 9%
- Book issues were up by 2%
- Enquiries increased from 79,677 to 121,000
- There were 126,616 visits to the web site
- Active borrowers increased by 4%
- 12% more PCs available for public use
- 37 complaints received, all answered within 3 working days
- 1303 children’s activities were held including class visits, Bookbug sessions, storytelling and author visits
- 1411 adult activities were held including author visits, reading groups and ICT tuition
- 18 school pupils completed work placements
- 7312 pupils from 50 schools entered Young Writer of the Year

Library Central Services



Library and Heritage Central Support Services exist to both support the front line library service, deliver outreach services through mobile libraries and homebound services, and to promote the heritage of West Lothian to people who live, work and have an interest in our area.

Museums Services

Museums Services mounted 21 exhibitions across five venues as well as five community displays. The “West Lothian and the Forgotten War” project was highlighted at the national press launch of the “Remembering Scotland at War” online museum at Edinburgh Castle on June 2010. Both Korean veterans and school pupils from our project were interviewed for press and TV. Delivered “Putting on the Ritz”, an intergenerational heritage/arts project in partnership with Arts Services. Organised and managed the West Lothian History and Heritage Fair in May 2011. Curated a new touring exhibition “Making Tracks: Railways in West Lothian” to celebrate the railway history of West Lothian and coincide with the re-opening of the new Airdrie-Bathgate line and stations at Armadale and Blackridge.

Archives and Records Centre

Archives and Records Centre have been successful in getting through to Stage 2 of the National Cataloguing Grants programme. The service also used social media sites to promote the archives to a wider audience, hosted 3 successful work experience placements, developed links with local primary schools and embarked upon two digitisation projects. In our Records management service, technological developments have had a significant impact on working practices and greatly increased the efficiency of the service.

Local History Library and Information Service

Local History Library and Information Services have joined forces with CIS to create a new public facing facility in the County Buildings. Throughout the year they ran an oral history project interviewing residents of Blackburn past and present, resulting in the book, Blackburn Voices. Local History was also instrumental in the launch of a project to mark the 25th anniversary of the closure of British Leyland. Information Services are part of the new online enquiry service Ask Scotland and are operating a public reference library function from within the County Buildings.

Mobile Libraries and Outreach Services

Two new mobile libraries were introduced in April 2010. The service served both Broxburn and Fauldhouse when they were closed for refurbishment and relocation. Outreach Services support the Homebound Service matching readers to volunteers and supplying library services to nursing homes.

The School Resource Service

We support the School Resource Service by managing several special collections: support for learning, multicultural (religious, cultural, and dual language) and secondary school resources. We also offer professional advice to schools on literacy and library development.

Partnership Centres



West Lothian has a long history of developing co-located facilities and Partnership centres. The most recent examples are Fauldhouse Partnership centre and Bathgate Partnership centre (due to open in Sept 2011). Partnership centres are designed to deliver “open-stop shop” services based on the needs of the community it serves.

Fauldhouse Partnership Centre

The building represents which a significant investment in the village of Fauldhouse opened in October 2010. The project aimed to integrate service delivery within the Fauldhouse area by bringing together 4 buildings into once single point of contact.

Funding partners for the project were West Lothian Council, NHS , Community Health and Care Partnership, Sportscotland and European Regional Development Fund.

Benefits of co location are two fold - Partnership working makes financial sense and it provides us with the opportunity to share facilities and information. From the prospective of the community it provides a seamless transition between services to help address the needs of residents.

Services located within the Building:

- Two GP practices and associated community services
- Co-op pharmacy
- Refurbished swimming pool with additional sauna and steam room
- Library
- Learning suite
- Community Café
- Link to Council Information Service through the new TellyTalk system
- Refurbished sports hall
- Community space for group activities and organisations
- Lothian and Border Police

In addition to the services previously mentioned the Partnership Centre is being used as a hub for regeneration. Drawing on Partnership working services are being provided with the opportunity to provide outreach sessions to some of the more disadvantaged residents in the area.

Outreach provision has been matched to the needs of the community. One such example is the provision of JobCentre Plus session.

JobCentre plus are now operating 5 days a week from the Partnership Centre offering customers a full range of JobCentre plus services, including fortnightly signing, to help tackle the high levels of unemployment in the area.

In addition to NHS services co - location brings the opportunity to offer additional services such as books on prescription and sign posting opportunities towards healthy lifestyle choices such as swimming, sport and health and fitness activities.

The package the partners have put together is hugely beneficial for families and all the community groups who can use the partnership centre as the focal point for meetings and events. The Fauldhouse Partnership Centre Association manages the community aspect of the facility and has been formed from the previous Community Centre Management Committee and other local community groups and associations.

Registration Services



Registration services in West Lothian provide access to all those who need to use the service, including people from West Lothian, people from other areas of the UK and those from abroad.

Registration delivers an efficient and professional service to meet the needs of our customers especially those who are dealing with a bereavement.

The service is always looking at ways to improve the service to the benefit of those who use it, distributing information leaflets to hospitals, GP surgeries, nursing homes etc, providing an appointment system for sensitive registrations, (still-births, sudden deaths etc) or adapting to meet the requests of those customers using our ceremony services.

Registration in West Lothian

The service is currently delivered through 2 full-time dedicated offices in Bathgate and Livingston, through 4 CIS offices in Broxburn, Linlithgow, West Calder and Whitburn by appointment by a full time dedicated registrar and through library services in East Calder.

Legislation

Registration Services is a statutory function provided in Scotland through its 32 local authorities, known as Local Registration Authorities.

The level of customer satisfaction with the Registration Service is always very good so our target is set at a very high 98% of customers rating the service as excellent.

The cost per registration for births deaths, marriages and civil partnerships fell from £39.36 in 2009/10 to £20.24 in 2010/11. The sharp reduction in unit cost in 2010/11 occurred due to Registration Services being moved from Lammermuir House to the Civic Centre which is less costly to the service.

Tell us Once

“Tell us Once” is a major project being led by the Department for Work and Pensions which involves partnership working between Local Authorities and Central Government transforming the way in which people can tell Government both central and local about changes in their circumstances particularly when registering a bereavement or a birth.

The project allows accurate and relevant information to be collected and shared with central government and local authority departments.

Following a bereavement with the customers consent, the registration service will collect the relevant information and notify the Department for Work and Pensions.

DWP will in turn share this information with relevant local authority services such as Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Libraries, Electoral Registration Service etc.

Customer Service Centre



The Customer Service Centre is responsible for all communication via telephony, email, and tellytalk to all citizens of West Lothian. Within the Customer Service Centre there is also the Careline Community Alarm Monitoring service which is responsible for emergency responses to all West Lothian citizens with community alarm technology.

The main services provided by the Customer Service Centre include Telephone/Email/Telly Talk contact interactions for the following service areas:

- Housing, Corporate & Building Services, including
- Homelessness
- Repairs - Specialise Team
- General Enquiries
- Allocations
- SNT & Noise Complaints
- Out of Hours Repairs
- Gas Servicing
- Estate Management
- Revenues including Council Tax & Benefits - Specialised Team
- Direct Payments
- Pupil Placement
- Waste Management
- Operational Services including Street Lighting, Roads Maintenance
- Planning & Development
- Environmental Health & Trading Standards
- Nets & land Services
- Member Services
- Registration
- West Lothian Careline monitoring 6300 clients via Community Alarm Technology within individual citizens homes and within Sheltered/Housing with Care developments.
- Lone Working Technology

Calls to Customer Service Centre 2010/11

- 332,633.

E-mails to Customer Service Centre 2010/11

- 14,441

Telly Talk 2010/11

- 1,651

Calls to Careline 2010/11

- 255,892

Due to the severe weather conditions at the end of 2010, CSC and Careline's call volumes doubled, along with the email traffic. We responded to this by working longer hours and drafting in staff from other services to handle the calls. We are working on a plan to react to any future emergency conditions that will enable staff from across the Council to take and respond to calls when needed.

Customer Service Development Team



Over the past year the Customer Service Development Team (CSDT) have been involved in many projects relating to the Corporate Customer Relationship System (CRM). Our knowledge and experience in developing the system to meet the requirements of Services provides a platform for effective and efficient recording of both internal and external enquiries.

One of our success stories in the last year relates to the launch of CRM within the Advice Shop:

The Advice Shop identified a need to replace their existing database used to record customer-based enquiries. After an initial scoping exercise involving the CSD Team and staff/management from the Advice Shop CRM was identified as the obvious replacement. Working alongside staff from the Advice Shop, the CSD Team developed new processes and case recording forms within CRM ensuring that the needs of the Service were being met at all times.

During the development process the Advice Shop required a method of managing customer visits to the office. Although CRM was not designed to provide this function the CSD Team saw potential in the existing functionality within the system to achieve this. The result was the creation of a “Visit List” utilising the existing queue functionality, which allows reception staff to capture customer details and the reason for their visit to the office. This information is allocated to a CRM queue and activates an email alert containing the details captured, which is sent to all staff. The appropriate member of staff then knows that a customer is waiting to be seen as well as the nature of their enquiry.

CRM continues to be an important tool for all Services within the Council from dealing with simple customer interactions through to complex freedom of information enquiries. The CSD Team will continue to find new and innovative ways of utilising the functionality of CRM to meet needs of customers and services alike.