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SHOP LOCAL
this Festive Period



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**Winter
Ready**
2019/20

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RECYCLING ON THE RISE



West Lothian among best in Scotland for recycling, read more on page 3

UK's largest rock ramp opens in West Lothian

The official opening of the 85m by 50m ramp construction at Howden Bridge Weir took place recently.

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Spotlight on pupils at Stellar Awards

The Stellar Awards celebrate educational excellence in West Lothian, with awards handed out in categories recognising achievements covering all aspects of the education curriculum.

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Changes to food and garden waste collection reminder

West Lothian householders are being reminded that food waste should now be placed into brown bins along with their garden waste.

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Please do not dispose of artificial
Christmas trees in the **blue bin**

Find out more : www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste





Connor Waldron and Douglas West

Apprentice on board with helping others

A West Lothian Council Modern Apprentice is set to use his experience to help others with their careers.

Connor Waldron, a Modern Apprentice in HGV vehicle maintenance with Fleet Services, has recently been named on West Lothian's Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Board.

DYW West Lothian work to connect businesses to education in order to improve the employment position for young people. Connor will be able to call upon his own experience to inform the work of the group.

He first started working with the council in 2014 as part of a Foundation Apprenticeship.

Still attending school, he split his time between working in Fleet Services and learning with West Lothian College.

A Foundation Apprenticeship provides young people with the opportunity to gain work experience and the chance to develop core skills which help them to make a smooth transition into the world of work.

Connor successfully completed his course whilst being named as the Foundation Apprentice of the Year at the 2016 Scottish Apprenticeship Awards and has continued into full employment with West Lothian Council through a Modern Apprenticeship.

Connor said: "I would recommend a Foundation Apprenticeship to anyone whether you know exactly what you want to do or are still unsure. The experience it provided allowed me to get to where I am today and hopefully my story will help other young people decide which path they want to take."

Fleet Services Coordinator, Douglas West said: "It's fantastic to see Connor get such recognition. He acknowledges the hard work that is required on a daily basis and takes information on board. It's a privilege to have him here with us in Fleet Services and I'm sure the DYW group will find his input invaluable."

Contact West Lothian Council

For general enquiries:

The council's Customer Information Services (CIS) centres offer face-to-face advice, information and assistance on council services, including: council tax and benefits; housing; concessionary travel; and waste and recycling.

CIS centres in Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn, Carmondean Connected (self-service kiosk only), Livingston Arrochar House and Whitburn also offer payment facilities for rent, council tax and service accounts.

The council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) lines are open from Monday-Friday, 8am to 10.30pm. Thereafter a number of staff are on-site to deal with emergency calls. The CSC lines are also open from 10.30pm on Friday to 8am on Monday for emergency calls relating to noise, homelessness, repairs to council houses, roads, street lighting and environmental health.

➔ www.westlothian.gov.uk/contactus

☎ Call the CSC on: **01506 280000**

✉ customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

There are other direct numbers for specialised services as follows:

- Antisocial Behaviour **01506 282000** or contact the Police on **101**
- Gas servicing **01506 280000**
- NETS and Land Services **0800 616446**
- Pupil Placement **01506 280000**, select option 4
- Council Tax and Benefits **01506 280000**, select option 2
- Social Care Emergency Team (SCET) **01506 281028** or **281029**
- Crisis Care Team **01506 418784**
- Textphone for hard of hearing **01506 454427**
- Homelessness **0800 0323 450**

If you have an emergency, and need to contact the council outwith normal business hours (between 10.30pm and 8am) then please dial **01506 280000**.

Other useful contacts:

West Lothian Advice Shop, Bathgate Partnership Centre

☎ **01506 283000**

✉ advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk

➔ www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop

Options for bridging budget gap

West Lothian Council is set to consider potential options to bridge an estimated budget gap of £6.7 million between 2020/21 and 2022/23.

Council officers have identified a range of potential savings measures which could help the council deliver a balanced budget to meet its legal obligations. Over £31 million of saving measures have already been identified for the next three years, in addition to the £121 million of savings that have already been delivered since 2007.

These measures will be considered by members of the relevant Policy Development Scrutiny Panels (PDSPs) at meetings taking place over the next three months up to the end of 2019. Any feedback from at the PDSPs will be used to inform the council's budget planning, with the Scottish Government confirming their funding allocation to West Lothian in December 2019.

The council's budget for 2020/21, which includes any Council Tax increase, will be set at a meeting of the full West Lothian Council in February 2020.

Leader of West Lothian Council Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "It's unfortunate that we are still in the position of looking at options to enable us to balance our books

for a 12th consecutive year.

"The funding we receive from the Scottish Government has not been sufficient to cover the costs of providing essential services for our growing population of younger and older people, creating a substantial budget gap. This means we have no choice but to look at options for creating efficiencies, reducing costs and changing services.

"I call on the Scottish Government to provide us with a fair budget settlement for 2020/21 that will prevent the need for further cuts to local services.

"It's important to stress that the potential savings identified by officers are only options at this point, and any decisions on these options will not be made until next year. However, we are required by law to set a balanced budget so alternatives will need to be found if these potential measures are not agreed.

"The lack of funding for local government for the last 12 years means that councillors have a huge responsibility of agreeing where our budget is spent. With over £150 million worth of savings

already delivered or identified since 2007, it is now extremely challenging to find any more that do not have a major impact on local residents and our agreed priorities."

As well as the savings measures, council officers have also been considering other steps to help close the budget gap.

Council tax in West Lothian is the tenth lowest of Scotland's 32 councils, with Band D £533 per year less than the average in England. The current budget model assumes an increase of 3% per year for the next three financial years. The maximum allowable level set by the Scottish Government is currently 4.79% per year, with higher council tax increases a potential option to help close the budget gap.

A review of the council's Loan Fund and Insurance Fund has also identified potential measures, such as re-profiling repayments and reviewing insurance liabilities, that if agreed would allow one-off resources to be re-allocated to priorities such as the council's Modernisation Fund



Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Alison Baker from the Forth Rivers Trust and Francis Hayes, SEPA pictured with a replica fish

UK's largest rock ramp opens in West Lothian

The official opening of the 85m by 50m ramp construction at Howden Bridge Weir took place recently, connecting the lower and upper reaches of the River Almond so fish species can travel upstream and enrich the wildlife ecosystem of the river.

Over 9,000 tonnes of rock, much of it recycled from other developments in West Lothian has been crafted to facilitate a fish pass, one of eight capital projects on the River Almond designed to reinvigorate the ecosystems of these rivers to the benefit of the wildlife and communities connected to them.

At Howden Bridge, the weir was originally built to power the New Calder Paper Mill, which produced wrapping paper from the 1800s. Over three months, the ramp was built between existing islands across the face of the weir to form a waterfall-like structure made up of pools, runs and easy leaps to help fish over the weir. This easing solution will help preserve this piece of industrial heritage and taking into account the length of river involved is the largest rock ramp in the UK.

The project was delivered by RiverLife: Almond & Avon is a partnership project between the Forth Rivers Trust, West Lothian Council & City of Edinburgh Council, which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, The Scottish Government, SEPA

Water Environment Fund, West Lothian & City of Edinburgh Councils.

Leader of the Council Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "The wellbeing of our rivers is not just about the quality of water, but also about the extent to which they support healthy populations of wildlife.

"I am delighted to formally acknowledge a milestone in the project to assist the migration of salmon and other species up river with completion of a new rock ramp here at Howden Bridge."

Director of the Forth Rivers Trust Alison Baker added: "The completion of this key work for the improvement of conditions for migratory fish on the River Almond is momentous and the progress made on other projects this year is very exciting.

"The RiverLife project has only been delivered due to 10 years of hard work by the Trust, SEPA and other organisations including West Lothian Council. The Howden Rock Ramp is an opportunity for the local community to engage with the river which is at the heart of Livingston."

“Completion of the rock ramp at Howden Bridge is another step in a long term project to improve fish migration, wildlife habitats and community engagement along the River Almond.

"This new route for fish is positive proof of what can be achieved in local rivers by good partnership working and we look forward to the project's next exciting phase."

Francis Hayes, SEPA's Water Environment Fund (WEF) spokesperson

Please do not dispose of **foil** or **glitter** wrapping paper in your **blue bin**

Find out more : www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste

Recycling on the rise - West Lothian among best in Scotland

(from front page)

Local residents are thanked for their efforts that have once again seen West Lothian named as one of the top areas for recycling in the country.

West Lothian has been named as the second best council area in Scotland for recycling 65.2% of all waste during 2018, being one of only two Scottish local authorities to achieve a recycling rate of over 60%.

This continued the positive trend from last year when it was announced that West Lothian recorded the largest rise in household waste recycling rates in the whole of Scotland for 2017 with local rates increasing again by a further 3.9% in 2018.

Executive councillor for the environment Tom Conn said: "Thank you to all the West Lothian residents for their continued participation in our recycling schemes.

"Everyone can ensure they are contributing by checking that they are disposing of items correctly by placing them into the



appropriate bin in order to prevent contamination.

"Recycling more has huge benefits for everyone. These include less damage to the environment and keeping money for essential local services in West Lothian, through sending less material to landfill and reducing the costs of recycling at a time where council budgets continue to be under pressure.

"There have been many changes to our recycling and waste services in recent years and with further changes, such as bringing food and garden waste together into one brown bin collection earlier this, we'd hope that more people can participate in our recycling services."

For tips on how to recycle visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste.

Seventh year of improving exam results



Early indications show that the results from S5 pupils across West Lothian's 11 secondary schools have improved across a number of key indicators at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 6, which includes Highers or equivalent qualifications.

93.3%
of West Lothian
pupils went onto
positive destinations

Those achieving five or more passes at this level rose by nine percentage points this year to 41%, and those with three or more passes rising by six percentage points to 58%.

Executive councillor for education, David Dodds, said: "It's another fantastic set of exam results

for West Lothian, and a just reward for all the hard work from pupils to achieve them.

"I'm delighted to see a record seventh consecutive year of improving exam results, as we aim to do all we can to support our young people to succeed."

Whitburn Academy S5 pupils were among those who performed exceptionally well this year at Higher or equivalent level, with an 11 percentage point increase in those achieving five or more passes and a 12 percentage point increase in those achieving three or more

passes.

Whitburn Academy Headteacher Tracey Loudon said: "I am incredibly proud of the outstanding achievements of so many of our pupils receiving their exam results today.

"I am so pleased that the hard work, commitment and dedication of both staff and pupils is reflected in our brilliant results."

A total of 71% of S5 pupils in West Lothian now achieve one or more Higher or equivalent level qualification, an incredible rise of 17 percentage points since 2014. Those achieving three or more passes at this level have also risen by six percentage points in the last year to 58%, a 24 percentage point rise over the last five years.

The number of S5 pupils achieving five or more Higher or equivalent level passes has more than doubled over the last five years to an impressive 42% in West Lothian.

Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick added: "It's vital we support their achievements by giving them the best possible platform for learning, such as continuing to invest in our school estate to ensure it remains one of the best in Scotland.

"A total of 93.3% of West Lothian pupils went onto sustained positive destinations after leaving school last year, such as education, training or employment, and we hope this will also continue to improve again this year."

New Beatlie School on the way

Plans are progressing for a new specialist school to replace Beatlie School Campus in Livingston.

Beatlie currently provides specialist education for pupils aged 3 to 18 with severe and complex medical needs from their campus in Craigshill.

The proposed new purpose-built facility will be a centre of excellence for children and young people, providing cutting-edge educational facilities alongside partner health and wrap around support for children and families.

The new school is being developed as part of phase one of the Scottish Government's new School Investment Programme.

Executive councillor for education David Dodds said: "I'm delighted that we are moving forward to replace the current Beatlie building with a state-of-the-art facility.

"Detailed plans will be developed to deliver the new cutting-edge facility, which is appropriate for the delivery of high-quality services to our young people with severe and complex medical needs.

"We will engage with the school and local community over the detailed proposals for the new Beatlie School.

"West Lothian already has one of the best school estates in Scotland and this new addition will help ensure our young people have the best possible platform for learning."

New school for East Calder



West Lothian Council has approved plans for a new primary school to be built at Calderwood, East Calder.

The council will spend over £14.5 million on the school and propose to have the school opened by August 2021. Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2020. The new primary will also include a new Early Years nursery school. West Lothian Council is committed to supporting new housing to be delivered through Core Development Areas (CDAs) such as Calderwood, East

Calder. The new school and its additional school capacity will help to support new local housing.

The Council Executive has approved the formal submission of a New Project Request to Hub South East Territory Partnership for the delivery of the new primary school, who will take forward the build project on behalf of the council.

As with all new school projects where there are changes to school catchments, a formal statutory education consultation is undertaken. The council has approved the commencement on formal public consultation to review admission arrangements to establish the catchment area of the school and review the admission arrangements arising from a variation of the

catchment area of East Calder Primary School.

Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "Many of our communities are growing and more and more people are choosing to make West Lothian their home. The council is committed to ensuring that we have sufficient education capacity for our area and that we deliver modern and innovative schools to ensure that our children are provided with the possible environment and opportunities for quality learning and life chances."

Executive councillor for education David Dodds said: "This is a very exciting time in Education within West Lothian. Despite huge financial challenges that the council faces we are choosing to focus on resources that matter most to our communities, and we are investing heavily in our school buildings and education resources. We are delighted at the progress being made on this large-scale project."



Spotlight on pupils at Stellar Awards

The Stellar Awards celebrate educational excellence in West Lothian, with awards handed out in categories recognising achievements covering all aspects of the education curriculum.

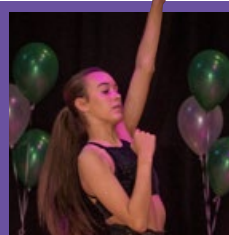
Pupils and students were joined by teachers, council staff, carers and parents for an afternoon of entertainment and achievement at West Calder High School. On the day, prizes were handed out in categories including, academic achievement, foundation apprentice of the year, STEM, literacy, the creative arts, numeracy, sport, health and wellbeing, with groups and community heroes also acknowledged. This year's ceremony featured a new category for West Lothian's Young Writer of the Year.

Executive councillor for education, David Dodds said: "The Stellar

Awards allow us to turn the spotlight on the excellent work taking place in schools across West Lothian and are undoubtedly the highlight of the year.

"Huge congratulations to all the pupils and students who won trophies at this year's Stellar Awards, they are a credit to their families and school communities

and all should be very proud. "We would also like to thank everyone involved in running the event and a say a special thank you to the pupils and staff of West Calder High School for being such magnificent hosts. "They all helped to make the Stellar Awards a very special afternoon for our pupils and students."



The show included a stunning dance performance by pupil **Ellie Fergusson** who won the Greatest Dancer TV show earlier this year.

Summer schools programme of works

Over £5 million of improvement work to West Lothian schools took place over the summer holiday period.

The council used the extended break for school pupils to carry out essential works on the school estate across the whole of West Lothian. Some projects were large, some small, but they all contribute to improving the school estate for pupils.

Executive councillor for education David Dodds said: "Continuing to improve settings across our education facilities will provide the best possible environment for students to learn. I hope pupils, staff and local communities will come to enjoy the upgrades and new facilities."

The programme - which comprised of over 150 individual projects - involved work to support the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare from August 2019, and included refurbishment and extension work at the Polkemmet Primary School nursery (Whitburn), refurbishment work at Carmondean, Deans (both Livingston), Dechmont, Bridgend and St Nicholas (Broxburn) primary schools and the installation of new kitchens at Simpson (Bathgate) and St John the Baptist (Fauldhouse) primary school.

Work took place at schools across the county including: significant investment in refurbishment and internal works at Ogilvie School Campus (Livingston); toilet refurbishments at Our Lady's Primary School (Stoneyburn), Williamston Primary School (Livingston) and Springfield Primary School (Linlithgow); roof replacement works at St Ninian's Primary School (Livingston) and St Nicholas Primary School (Broxburn); and phase four of the science lab refurbishment at Linlithgow Academy.

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS 2019/2020



LAST DAY OF TERM

All break	Friday, 20 December 2019
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TERM 2

Staff resume (Additional In-Service Day)	Monday, 6 January 2020
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All pupils resume	Tuesday, 7 January 2020
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FEBRUARY HOLIDAY

All break	Thursday, 13 February 2020
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Staff resume	Tuesday, 18 February 2020
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All pupils resume	Wednesday, 19 February 2020
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LAST DAY OF TERM

All break	Friday, 3 April 2020
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TERM 3

All Resume	Monday, 20 April 2020
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MAY HOLIDAY

All break	Friday, 1 May 2020
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Staff resume	Tuesday, 5 May 2020
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All pupils resume	Wednesday, 6 May 2020
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1 DAY LOCAL HOLIDAY DURING TERM 3 AS DETAILED BELOW

a) All schools except those at b) and c) below	Spring Day- Monday, 18 May 2020
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b) Bathgate Academy and feeder primary schools plus St Mary's, Bathgate & St Columba's (excluding Blackburn and Murrayfield Primary Schools)	Newlands Day - Monday, 8 June 2020 (subject to confirmation)
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c) Linlithgow Academy and feeder primary schools plus St Joseph's Primary School, Linlithgow	Linlithgow Marches - Tuesday, 16 June 2020 (subject to confirmation)
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LAST DAY OF TERM (PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS)

All break	Friday, 26 June 2020
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Nearly 2,000 turn out to celebrate **Pride 2019**

A crowd of over 1,900 people came to celebrate and support West Lothian's lesbian, gay, bi and transgender (LGBT) people at the fifth annual West Lothian Pride event.

It was a fun-filled day with information stalls, merchandise stalls, face painting, balloon modelling and live entertainment.

Guests heard inspiring speeches from Kirsteen Sullivan, Depute Leader of West Lothian Council, Jackie Galbraith from

West Lothian College and James Morton from the Scottish Trans Alliance

Councillor Sullivan said: "West Lothian Pride continues to grow into an even more colourful and diverse event with every passing year.

"It was fantastic to see so many

people out celebrating a fabulous occasion full of entertainment and enthusiasm. Huge credit has to be given to the organisers and sponsors for once again putting on a vibrant event to remember."

West Lothian Pride is organised by a dedicated team of volunteers and organisations

from within and around West Lothian, with support from West Lothian Council, West Lothian College, as well as many local businesses.

Organisers would like to thank everyone who helped make this year's event the biggest and best event yet, including all the speakers, guests, musical acts and especially their sponsors.



Picture courtesy of Xpression Photography.

New members sought for Livingston Youth Trust

The Livingston Youth Trust are seeking new trustees to join them in deciding how best to support local young people.

The trust was set up to give financial support for facilities for sport, recreation, cultural or leisure for young people, or assist with the further education of any young person in a career connected with the oil industry, within the Livingston area.

Additional trustees are being sought to help decide on applications to the trust for funding.

The trust meets a minimum of once per year for an AGM, with further meetings set if applications for funding are received. West Lothian Council provides committee and financial management services for the trust.



For more information, or to apply to become a member, please contact Committee Officer Val Johnston on

Val.Johnston@westlothian.gov.uk or 01506 281604

west lothian
college

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change
your life**

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Visit www.west-lothian.ac.uk for more information



**FULL-TIME
COURSE
APPLICATIONS
OPEN IN
DECEMBER
2019**

SHOP LOCAL this Festive Period



West Lothian stores and businesses are gearing up to participate in a nationwide shop local campaign.

Small Business Saturday 2019 takes place this year on Saturday 7 December, with local shoppers urged to show their support for small and local independent businesses, such as those that can be found located throughout West Lothian's traditional town centres and villages.

With a unique selection of retailers and services that can't be found anywhere else, West Lothian's traditional town centres such as Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn and Uphall, Linlithgow and Whitburn, as well as local villages, offer an alternative and more personal shopping and leisure experience than large shopping destinations.

Shopping purchases made locally support your town and

help to keep the High Street vibrant and attractive. Shopping local also means that more of your money stays here in West Lothian, in turn helping to protect employment in our communities.

Independent and small traders across our traditional towns offer unique gifts and products, to help you in your choice for that special festive present. Local butchers, fishmongers, greengrocers, bakers and

delicatessens provide local, good quality produce to cater for all tastes and help you create great tasting, traditional festive meals.

The nationwide event will also coincide with local festive celebrations being held on the first Saturday in the month of December featured on these pages.

Local small businesses are also being encouraged to register their business online via the 'My Small Business' tool, which is

searchable by consumers via the 'Small Business Finder', at www.smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com. It's relatively simple and quick to complete, free of charge and will help to promote their business to a nationwide audience.

If you should have any questions on Small Business Saturday 2019 then please contact in the first instance: Nairn Pearson, BID & Town Centre Manager, at nairn.pearson@westlothian.gov.uk

FESTIVE EVENTS 2019

- Bathgate - Saturday 7 December
- Linlithgow - Saturday 30 November
- Whitburn Christmas Cracker – Saturday 7 December
- Broxburn/Uphall – Saturday 7 December
- Armadale - Date TBC

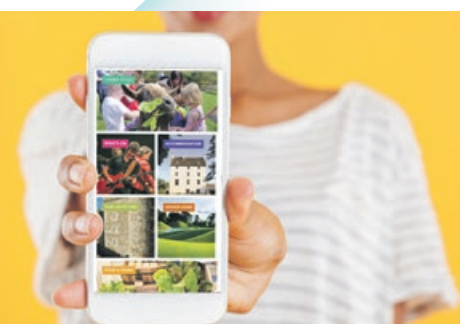
Keep checking West Lothian Council's social media channels for up to date information on festive events in your local community.

Bulletin special offers

In association with



Visit **West Lothian**
visitwestlothian.co.uk



One free child with an adult ticket.
Can be used on Saturday 30 November or
Sunday 1 December

Terms and conditions: Photocopies will not be accepted. Voucher can only be used alongside a paying adult. Slots must be reserved online and voucher presented upon arrival.
Jupiter Artland, Bonnington House Steadings, Near Wilkieston, EH27 8BY
01506889900 | www.jupiterartland.org | enquiries@jupiterartland.org



Niddry Castle Golf Club

Free Soup and Roll with every round

Visit one of the friendliest clubs around and enjoy our 18 hole golf course for only £16.00. With fantastic greens, tremendous panoramic views and historic Niddry Castle situated in the middle of the Golf Course, we know you'll enjoy your round.

Terms and conditions: Bookings must be made in advance by calling the club. Once voucher per person and must be presented to the steward on arrival. Photocopies will not be accepted. Offer valid until 31/03/2020
EH52 6RQ | 01506 891097 | www.niddrycastlegolfclub.co.uk
enquiry@niddrycastlegolfclub.co.uk



WILLIAMSCRAIG HOLIDAY COTTAGES

£50 OFF EACH BOOKING MADE BEFORE 31 JANUARY 2020

Seven comfortable and stylish self-catering holiday cottages in one of the cosiest retreats, with some of the best views in the land. Cottages come with a Jacuzzi hot tub, badger cam and bird-cam, and are close to a large swing park and woodland walks.

Voucher must be presented on arrival. Photocopies will not be accepted. Offer valid until 31 January 2020. The Horsemill, Williamsraig, Linlithgow, EH49 6QF, 07795040608. www.holidaycottageslinlithgow.co.uk



Military Museum Scotland

20% discount off an Adult Entry

An award-winning museum offering a fascinating insight into Scotland's military past. Visit before 24 December to receive a 20% discount on the cost of Adult Entry. Recently awarded "Scottish tourist attraction of the year".

Terms and conditions: Offer not valid on event days or for group bookings. Valid until 24 December 2019. No photocopies accepted.
EH27 8DU. Tel. 07799 565243 milmusco@aol.co.uk





Please plan ahead and be **WinterReady**

This special Bulletin supplement provides you with an overview of how West Lothian Council has prepared for winter.

West Lothian Council plans to have 30,000 tonnes of salt available for the winter period. This represents three times the amount that is needed for a 'normal' winter. In addition, we have pre-arranged contracts with suppliers if we need them in periods of prolonged snowfall. It is not possible for support to be provided everywhere at the same time. Please note our priority system routes, which can be found at www.westlothian.gov.uk/winter

TRUE GRIT

West Lothian's fleet of gritters and their dedicated drivers are ready to make every effort to keep everyone moving during severe weather.

The council's fleet of 96 vehicles available for winter work includes eight dedicated fixed body gritters, which were named by local school children last winter. The names chosen were: Sir Chilly Connolly; Han Snowlo; Elvis Spreadly; West Snowthian; Alba Gritting Ye; Meltin John; Obi Wan Gritobi; and Salt-tyre.

Local residents can see the progress of these gritters, and any other vehicles out treating the roads in severe weather, on the council's website at www.westlothian.gov.uk/grittertracker



Road and footpath routes and actions

An extreme weather event will be considered to be an event where continuous snow is forecast and likely to give significant accumulations in excess of 10cm covering the whole of the north or south expanse within the council area. The snow will also be expected to remain in untreated areas for a prolonged period due to low temperatures before a natural thaw disperses it.

During periods of extreme weather, treatment may be limited to primary carriageway routes and primary footpath routes or 'snow routes'.

Gritters and footpath resources will be deployed on these specified 'snow routes' continuously until satisfactory snow clearance has been achieved before resources are deployed to any secondary routes, to maintain access to key facilities and other transport needs.

Grit bins



There are over
2,500
grit bins across
West Lothian

Grit bin policy

In times of an extreme weather event it is not always possible to service and replenish grit bins due to their location and the deployment of resources in higher priority areas.

In the event that the grit bin service is suspended, the council will provide temporary grit bags and grit heaps at locations across the area for use by the public. The locations will be advertised on the council's website and social media pages.

Many shops also sell salt/grit for domestic use.

Primary routes (snow routes)

These are important principal roads, major scheduled bus routes, routes to fire stations, hospitals, ambulance depots and local danger spots on roads and major industrial estates.

Actions

Gritting and/or snow ploughing 24 hours a day on all days. Pre-grit if required - in advance or if snow falls.

Secondary road routes - Level 1

Other classified routes, distributor routes and connecting routes between centres, minor bus routes, main accesses to schools, medical centres and residential areas.

Actions

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours from 8am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. Pre-grit if resources allow.

Secondary road routes - Level 2

Residential areas, culs-de-sac and other unclassified roads.

Actions

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours 8am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.

Secondary road routes - Level 3

Surfaced areas within schools, roads within industrial estates, routes to car parks and car park surfaces.

Actions

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours 8am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.

Primary footpath (snow routes)

Urban shopping areas and precincts. Routes to schools, accesses to health centres and medical centres, hospitals, main routes to residential areas and bus stops.

Actions

During November and March, gritting of widespread ice/snow clearing takes place from 5am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. During December, January and February the service will be extended to cover weekends and public holidays (5am to 3.05pm). Reactive treatment only.

Secondary footpath routes - Level 1

Other routes to schools, residential areas and housing areas in general.

Actions

Gritting/snow clearing from 8am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.

Secondary footpath routes - Level 2

Footway links to car parks, community centres, day centres etc and cycle routes.

Actions

Gritting/snow clearing from 8am to 3.05pm, Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.

Salt conservation

In periods of extreme weather, it may be necessary to restrict the use of salt to 'snow routes' only. West Lothian Council reaches a minimum stock level when there is only enough salt for six continuous days.

Please note: Salt is less effective at minus six degrees and has minimal impact on ice and snow below minus 10 degrees.

Heavy rain following a treatment of salt can wash the salt from the road meaning we often need to return to the beginning of the priority cycle before many secondary routes are reached. Unfortunately this familiar pattern can prevent any significant progress through the various priority levels.

Schools

Safety is a top priority for West Lothian Council and the decision to close a school or nursery to pupils is one which is not made lightly.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment in the event of severe weather or building difficulties. There are several factors which may impact on this decision, which is made in consultation with an education manager.

West Lothian Council will provide as much notice as possible of any school closure so that you can make alternative arrangements for your children. We will contact you via Group Call, provide information to local radio stations, and update the council's website and social media channels. Many schools can also contact parents/carers by email.

Travelling to school

In extreme weather conditions, parents/carers should assess whether they consider it safe for their child to travel or walk to school, and

alert the school of their decision at the earliest possible opportunity.

Please check that your child knows how to access the online education community GLOW, where pupils can access educational material online.

Severe weather volunteer service

The service to help vulnerable members of the community is ready to be activated should this winter prove to be challenging.

If this happens information will be shared via the local media, the council's website, social media channels and the email information service.

Waste collections

During the winter, please continue to present your bin as usual. Please ensure snow has been removed from the lid. The council will only suspend the household waste collection service in extreme situations. For example, where there is widespread heavy snow which makes it impossible for the bin lorries to enter residential areas.

If the service is suspended, updates will be provided via local press and the council's website and social media channels.

Winter colds and prescriptions

Please ensure your medicine cabinet is sufficiently stocked with over-the-counter remedies so that if you become unwell you are prepared.

GP Surgeries will be closed at times over Christmas and New Year.

Prepare by ordering medication to cover both Christmas and New Year holiday breaks.

Don't give COLD a chance

Protect yourself and your home

Inside your home:

Frozen Pipes:

- turn off the water supply (make sure you know where this is).
- turn off the stopcock in your cold water tank, if you have one.
- protect everything around the frozen pipe to avoid damage; if it bursts, place buckets, basins and towels around the area.

Thawing Out:

- open the tap nearest to the part of the pipe you think is frozen, so the water can flow through when it has melted.
- thaw the ice in the pipe with a hot water bottle or hairdryer (taking care to keep it well away from any water). Start from the tap end and work back toward the cold water tank.



NEVER use a heat gun or blowtorch – the pipe needs to be thawed out slowly and safely!

Try the following care tips:

- if your tank is in the loft, open the loft trap door on very cold days to let heat in.
- if you're going on holiday and your home will be empty drain down the water system. If you are a council tenant contact your local housing office who can arrange for this to be done.
- in very cold weather, if you're going out for the day, or perhaps away for a couple of days over the Christmas period, keep your heating on, or set it to come on a couple of times a day.

Following this advice should minimise the risk of having a frozen or burst pipe. However, if you are a council tenant and this happens, please report it immediately to our Customer Service Centre on 01506 280000.

Outside your home:

In very severe cold spells, care should be taken outside your property due to the formation of icicles, which can become dangerous when they grow large, especially if they have a long distance to fall.

what you shouldn't do

Don't try to knock large icicles off the gutters. Hitting icicles could cause more pressure on the guttering which in turn could cause them to collapse. Large icicles in particular are unpredictable when they fall and could cause injury or property damage.

The best thing to do

leave them alone and monitor them. If necessary cordon off or block the area where the icicles are hanging to prevent and deter anyone from walking directly below them.



We will have 30,000 tonnes of salt available for the winter period



How can you help?

- Consider the steps you can take to protect your home and business.
- Living with severe weather is frustrating – please be patient with council staff who are trying to work in challenging situations.
- Consider volunteering.
- Keep an eye on your neighbours and

share information.

- Make sure that your child's school has up-to-date contact details for you.
- Follow the council's social media channels for updates.

Clearing snow:

There is no law preventing members of the public and businesses from clearing the

snow and ice from public roads and footways outside their property. However, please take care when attempting to undertake any snow clearing so you don't create any further hazards.

Park sensibly:

Abandoned cars hamper access for snowploughs and diggers, emergency

vehicles, bin lorries and other road users.

Travel:

Check your travel arrangements before starting out and leave extra time for your journey.

Prepare your car for winter now.



Croftmalloch Primary school pupils with Financial Inclusion Manager Nahid Hanif, Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick and Acting Head teacher Laura Bailie

Challenge Poverty Week

A number of events were held throughout West Lothian to mark Challenge Poverty Week.

The Week is a national campaign designed to show that poverty exists in Scotland and affects us all, that people can work to end it, that it restricts people's ability to take part in society and that it can be solved by boosting incomes and reducing costs of living.

Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick visited Croftmalloch Primary School in Whitburn to hear about their work being undertaken to tackle poverty.

Acting Head teacher Laura Bailie and P5 pupils spoke about some of the work taking place to tackle poverty and reduce the cost of the school day for families on a daily basis. This includes: work to reduce the cost of uniforms, breakfast clubs, subsidised school trips and a food and welly boot bank.

The average level of child poverty in West Lothian is 22% which is comparable to the Scottish level. This means that 8,551 children in West Lothian live in relative poverty after housing costs are taken into account. The national Child Poverty Act set out that by 2023 less than 18% of children

should be living in relative poverty. Whilst the West Lothian average is 22% this figure is higher in some areas of West Lothian (i.e. Whitburn & Blackburn is 32%).

West Lothian Council is developing a Local Action Report to tackle child poverty.

“Too many people are trapped in the grips of poverty and don't have the means to escape. Challenge Poverty Week gives us an opportunity to highlight that there is help and support available and the chance to talk about what we can all do to address this growing issue. Hopefully our events will mean that individuals who are suffering the effects of poverty can get the appropriate support and advice to help unlock their full potential. It was lovely to meet the pupils and staff at Croftmalloch Primary and hear about the wonderful work that they undertake to help people.”

Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Leader of West Lothian Council

Affordable Credit project shortlisted for award

A project set up to help keep West Lothian communities away from high-cost credit lenders is in the running for a national award.

The Community Development Finance Initiative (CDFI) project, developed and implemented by a consortium of Falkirk, Fife and West Lothian Councils, has been nominated for an Excellence award by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA).

The project aims to meet the needs of those in their communities who

are most at risk from high-cost credit lenders and provide a wraparound service which also helped to build greater financial resilience.

The COSLA Excellence award recognises and champions the most innovative and passionate developments, and helps to roll out to the country and beyond.

The CDFI service in West Lothian is delivered by Conduit Scotland, who support families and communities by offering lower cost, affordable loans as an alternative to high cost credit lenders regardless of credit history. Conduit Scotland works closely with local services to signpost customers for further help, support and advice in the community.

For more information visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/Affordable-Credit



**talk
money
week**

Talk isn't cheap

Talk Money Week is the annual celebration of the work thousands of organisations are doing to improve money management across the UK.

Between 12 and 18 November, organisations will encourage their customers to talk about money, showcase their services and lead the charge to make their work more effective.

The aim of the week is to get more people talking about money including using #TalkMoney on social media.

On behalf of West Lothian Council, the Anti-Poverty Service are leading on the week and events will range from Financial Capability Roadshows, Social Media Campaigns and Welfare Reform/Poverty Awareness Training sessions.

There will also be an opportunity for communities / partners to consult with officers about how to address poverty locally.

However we are still keen to hear from organisations who would like to be involved or members of the public who would also like to help or be involved with any of the events during Talk Money Week 2019.

For more details please contact the Advice Shop on Advice.Shop@westlothian.gov.uk or 01506 283000.

Benefits team is fastest in Scotland for processing claims

West Lothian Council's Benefits Team is officially the quickest in Scotland at processing housing benefit claims.

Figures from the Department of Work and Pensions show that it processed claims within 13 days against an average across Scotland of 20 days.

The council's benefits team is the highest performing team in Scotland and is part of the council's Anti-Poverty Service, which is working with a range of partners to support those who are experiencing the impact of poverty.

West Lothian Council Leader Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "It is important households who are applying for a benefit get a decision and it is processed as quickly as possible to reduce any financial burden they may be facing.

"The Benefits Team work tirelessly to ensure that applications are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner to minimise stress for applicants, limiting the potential for them to fall into rent arrears.

"They must be congratulated for the service they are providing for the people of West Lothian and encouraged to continue the excellent work."

Please phone the Advice Shop on 01506 283000 to find out if you are eligible for housing benefit or any other entitlement.



Changes to food and garden waste collection reminder

West Lothian householders are being reminded that food waste should now be placed into brown bins along with their garden waste.

It is important that householders do not put plastic bags into their brown bins, with food in compostable bags, or simply placed in the brown bin loose.

This is because the national limits for the amounts of plastics allowed in compost have reduced and are reducing further. Each council has to meet the limits for plastics that are stated in SEPA's regulations and guidance.

The council has a new contract which allows garden and food waste to be disposed of together which should help increase the amount of food waste recycled in West Lothian.

There are a number of benefits to 'co-mingling' food and garden waste, including:

- It's easier and more straightforward for customers to recycle, which should help to increase the amount of food waste being recycled
- Brown bins will be emptied fortnightly all year round
- There will be fewer bins for residents to manage/store

Collecting food and garden waste together already takes place in a number of other Scottish council areas including Aberdeen City, East Renfrewshire, Fife, Glasgow City, Moray, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Perth & Kinross.

For more information, please visit available on www.westlothian.gov.uk/brownbins



Festive recycling and waste collection changes

Householders are advised to make sure they find out when their bins will be collected over the festive period.

Check www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins in December 2019 for details of recycling and waste arrangements over the Christmas and New Year period.



The holiday period means collections could be liable to change from Monday 16 December onwards. Collections times could also differ from usual, so residents are also reminded that bins should be put out by 7am on the morning of collection and kept out until they are emptied.

Changes will be advertised on the council website at www.westlothian.gov.uk/festivebins in December as well as on the council's social media

channels and in the local press. Householders can use our on line service, which allows you to check bin collection days and subscribe to E-mail reminders to find out about planned changes to your bin collection days over the festive period, or set a reminder, such as marking a calendar, to make sure they don't miss any collections. Note that unlike email reminders, when you download PDFs or ICALENDARS the collection dates are fixed and will not

update when there are day changes.

Recycling and refuse can also be taken to West Lothian's five Recycling Centres at Blackburn, Broxburn, Linlithgow, Oakbank in Livingston and Whitburn.

For more information on recycling, please visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling

Bulky uplifts will be temporarily suspended over the Festive period to give priority to householders' wheeled bin collections.

Using your brown bin



✓ Composting - Yes please

- Flowers, plants and garden weeds
- Grass and hedge cuttings
- Twigs and leaves
- Meat, fish and bones
- Tea bags and coffee grounds
- Cooked and uncooked food

- Pasta, rice and dairy products
- Bread, cakes and pastry
- Fruit and Vegetables

Please do not place materials inside plastic bags or overfill the bin.

For information on any of West Lothian's recycling services, please visit: www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling
E-mail: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk or call us on: 01506 280000



Protecting West Lothian's trees

A number of trees and woodlands across West Lothian are protected through legislation.



Local residents are reminded to check the status of any trees on their land before carrying out works such as felling and pruning. Any tree works carried out on protected trees without the appropriate permission will be subject to investigation, enforcement and potential prosecution.

Trees and woodlands are important features for landscape character in West Lothian, as well as for townscapes of historic, existing and emerging settlements, providing environmental value and amenity to residents, businesses and visitors.

In West Lothian, there are over 80 tree preservation orders (TPOs) in force, with fines of up to £20,000 for anyone found guilty of damaging a tree without permission. For more details of TPOs, please visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/tree-works or email DPgeneral@westlothian.gov.uk.

West Lothian's nine conservation areas also provide protection for trees, and prior approval must be sought in writing from the council as planning authority for any work to trees. For more information, please visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/conservation-areas or email DPgeneral@westlothian.gov.uk.

When granting planning consent, planning conditions may be applied in order to retain existing trees. Planning

conditions may also be applied which require new tree planting to be provided.

In advance of carrying out tree works you can check if a tree is affected by planning conditions by emailing details to planning@westlothian.gov.uk

Anyone looking to fell more than five medium trees on their land in a year should seek permission from Scottish Forestry (previously Forestry Commission) before proceeding. More info at www.forestry.gov.scot

Trees and woodlands provide habitat for birds, bats, badgers and other species many of which are protected by legislation. Please note that it is an offence to disturb any birds during the breeding season. It is also an offence to capture, injure, kill, harass or disturb bats or to damage or destroy breeding sites and resting places.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are important sites designated to protect nationally significant habitats. There are currently 15 sites in West Lothian.

Certain operations which could damage the natural features of a SSSI would require the consent of SNH.

More information on SSSIs or protected species is available from Scottish Natural Heritage at www.nature.scot

RAGING WITH RODENTS?



WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL'S PEST CONTROL SERVICE CAN DEAL WITH A WIDE RANGE OF NUISANCES, INCLUDING RODENTS AND INSECTS

The expert service is available at reasonable rates to everyone, with discounts available for those in receipt of certain benefits. Council tenants receive the service for free.

For more details please visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/pestcontrol or call **01506 280000** to book an appointment.



Investment in three rural bridges

West Lothian Council is investing £50,000 to repair three rural bridges.



Essential repair work is planned on: Balderston Bridge, north of Linlithgow Bridge; Plantation Bridge, east of Winchburgh; and Woodend Bridge, north of Armadale.

Routine inspections of all three bridges identified essential repairs that were required to ensure the long-term durability of the structures, with a modern safety barrier also to be installed at Woodend Bridge.

All three projects will involve

road closures for a maximum of four weeks to allow them to be safely completed. It is hoped that the projects can be completed within a shorter

timescale if conditions allow, with Chemcem (Scotland) Ltd carrying out the work on behalf of the council.

“It's essential we continue to invest in our road network and I'm delighted to see the £50,000 investment ensuring these rural bridges can be used for many years to come.

“We would like to thank road users for their patience while these works are completed. In all three cases, the restricted road width means a road closure is required to ensure the safety of road users and the workers carrying out the repairs.”

Tom Conn, Executive councillor environment

New build housing site at **Drumshoreland** completed

West Lothian Council tenants have started to move into brand new, council homes at Drumshoreland Road, Pumpherston.

McTaggart Construction have built 86 properties on the site, consisting of a mixture of cottage flats, houses and amenity bungalows designed in accordance with Housing for Varying Needs.

The development exists near local amenities and there are a range of house types including bungalows, cottage flats, terraced and semi-detached homes.

Executive councillor for services for the community, George Paul visited the site with West Lothian Council Community Based Housing Officer, Alison Laing to meet tenant, Mrs Elaine Urquhart who has moved into a bungalow on the site.

Councillor Paul said: "It's pleasing

that the site at Drumshoreland is now complete and it was a pleasure to meet Mrs Urquhart and to hear that her family are enjoying their new home. I wish them many years of happiness living here.

"West Lothian Council is one of Scotland's top councils in terms of building new council homes with the council delivering over 1,200 homes since the beginning of 2012.

"There is a need to continue to increase the number of affordable homes across West Lothian and a significant amount of investment will continue to go towards a target of delivering 3,000 affordable homes in West Lothian over the 10 year period to 2022."



Elaine Urquhart, Councillor George Paul and Alison Laing

West Lothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan Update

Plans for further opportunities for social housing have been revealed.

A meeting of West Lothian Council Services for the Community Policy Development Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) heard details on the updated West Lothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

The Scottish Government has requested that all Local Authorities submit a five year Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which will augment their current Local Housing Strategies.

The major objective of the SHIP is for Local Authorities, in conjunction with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), to ascertain the viability of current and future social housing investment opportunities.

The PDSP heard that RSL partners have identified a number of development opportunities and the council also has an ambitious programme of new build council housing which aims to see a total of 3000 new homes for rent delivered

from 2012-2022.

West Lothian Development Alliance (WLDA), Places for People/ Castle Rock Edinvar, the Wheatley Group (West Lothian Housing Partnership and Dunedin Canmore Housing Association), Cairn Housing Association, Home Group and Ark Housing Association have all identified potential sites.

Meanwhile West Lothian Council has approved development for 168 affordable homes across the area as part of its own new build programme which will aim to deliver 250 new homes in the next phase.

Council sites will include: Vion, Broxburn; Standhill, Bathgate; Brucefield, Livingston; Mossend, West Calder, and Eagle Brae, Livingston.

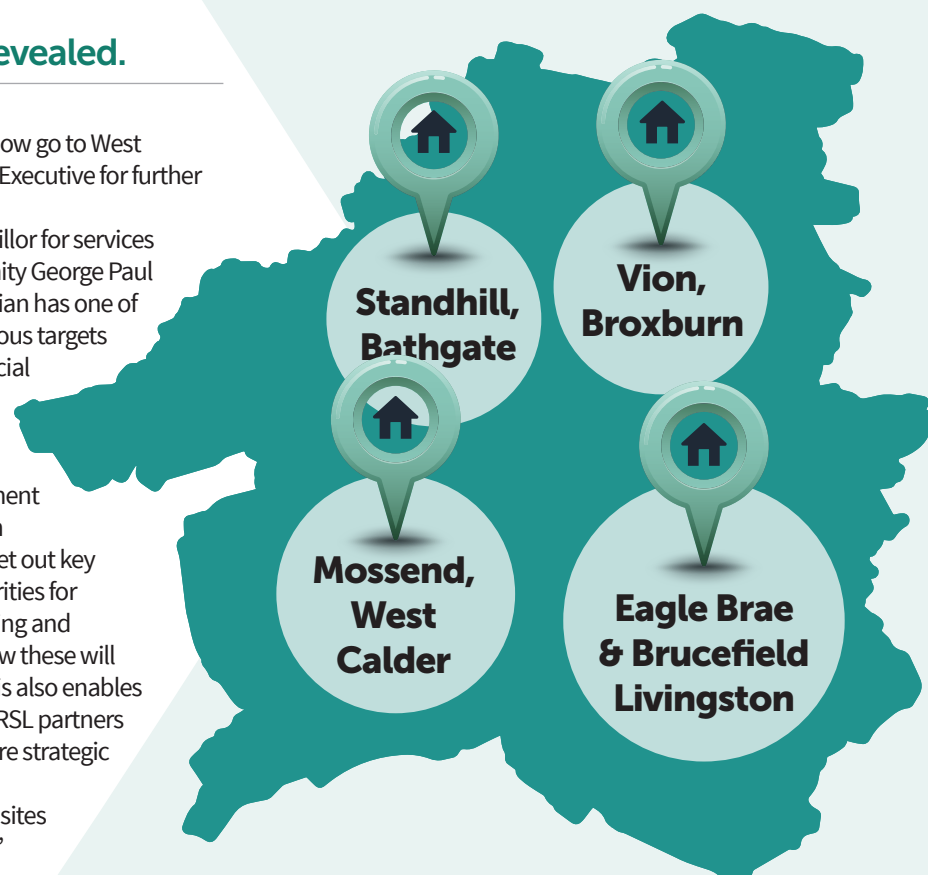
Further sites for up to 82 properties have been identified in Bathgate and a site for specialist housing provision at Cawburn Road has also been included for people with complex

needs.

The SHIP will now go to West Lothian Council Executive for further consideration.

Executive councillor for services for the Community George Paul said: "West Lothian has one of the most ambitious targets for delivering social housing in the country. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan presents an opportunity to set out key investment priorities for affordable housing and demonstrate how these will be delivered. This also enables the council and RSL partners to develop a more strategic approach to the development of sites in West Lothian."

NEW SITES FOR COUNCIL HOMES





Drumming up success for Rachel

A talented West Lothian musician has been recognised for becoming the first female to win a prestigious pipe band drumming competition.

Livingston's Rachel Thom (18) is understood to be the first female to lift the sought-after Under 18 World Solo Champion Pipe Band Drummer prize.

The former Deans Community High School pupil and West Lothian

Schools Pipe Band member was honoured for her achievements by West Lothian Council at a civic recognition event recently.

Provost Tom Kerr said: "Many congratulations to Rachel on her amazing achievement."

"It takes hard work, dedication and talent to become the best in your field, and Rachel has earned her place in the history books by becoming the first female to win the Under 18 World Solo Champion Pipe Band Drummer prize."

New Director of West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership appointed

Allister Short has been appointed Director of West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership and Depute Chief Executive of West Lothian Council.



The joint role between the council and NHS Lothian will also see Mr Short take up the position of Chief Officer of the West

Lothian Integrated Joint Board (IJB).

Allister had previously been in a similar role in Midlothian

Lothian Council and replaced Jim Forrest who recently retired.

Allister added: "I am delighted to have been appointed to this role. West Lothian has a number of challenges and opportunities in terms of health and social care and I look forward to working with colleagues, partners and customers to ensure the delivery of high quality services across West Lothian."



Executive councillor for Health and Care Harry Cartmill

"On behalf of the council, I'd like to welcome Allister to West Lothian. He has made a significant contribution to the integration agenda in Midlothian and will bring a wealth of leadership experience to the role. I look forward to working with Allister to help improve local services here in West Lothian."

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL AND THE WEST LOTHIAN RACE FORUM TOOK PART IN AN ONLINE CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS OF AND CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH RECENTLY.



Black History Month is celebrated every October in the UK to celebrate, recognise and value the inspirational individuals and events from within black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

The local campaign shared information on the importance of Black History Month, the various events being held across Scotland and highlighted local information in relation to our BME

communities and events from the past and present.

The Race Forum aims to promote diversity and equality and enhance understanding and awareness of race and race equality in an increasingly culturally diverse West Lothian. Anyone is welcome to join the group, who meet on a regular basis and hold events to celebrate diversity and promote integration within the community.

For further information, please email communityraceforum@hotmail.co.uk or follow them on social media [Twitter](#) race_west or [Facebook](#) WLCommunityRaceForum

On-board with bus changes

Operating hours for some town centre bus routes changed from Monday 30 September.



The Linlithgow Town Service (1), Bathgate Town Service (5), Armadale Town Service (6) are fully subsidised by West Lothian Council. They previously operated Monday to Friday until 6pm.

Additional time limited funding, which extended the town centre bus routes from 3pm until 6pm, has now expired meaning that the services will operate fewer hours. Each service now operates until 3pm Monday to Friday and until 12pm on a Saturday. Whilst each town centre is serviced by other bus operators and alternative buses are available, residential areas will be affected.

In other bus news, the council has approved a funding package worth nearly £400,000 per year to ensure that the 31 bus service continues.

The 31 service is an important service locally as it provides the only direct link from the Bathgate and Livingston areas to Torphichen, Philpstoun and Linlithgow. The 31 service is the only bus service available in both Torphichen and Philpstoun.

The 31 service is fully subsidised by West Lothian Council. The council's subsidy did provide additional stops in Ladywell and Dechmont. However, time-limited funding (as mentioned above) for the additional stops has now expired, meaning that the 31 service will no longer serve either Ladywell and Dechmont.

The 31 service is now operated by ?? after E&M Horsburgh handed back their contract for the service.

The 31 service is operated over two separate subsidised contracts. One for an hourly service Monday - Saturday and one for a 2 hourly service on a Sunday. The Sunday service is contracted with E&M Horsburgh and has not been cancelled and will continue to be operated by E&M Horsburgh. It is recognized that in order to maintain consistency for passengers across the two contracts any changes made to the Monday- Saturday service should be replicated in the Sunday service. All other parts of the route will remain the same.

Please do not dispose of
Christmas lights in your **blue bin**

Find out more : www.westlothian.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste

Art links growing Winchburgh to village history

Two art projects linked to the fascinating history of the rapidly expanding community of Winchburgh have been launched.

A joint launch event was held recently to mark the completion of both the 'It's a Bing Thing' public art installation and the 'Kitchen Conversations' oral history and creative writing project.

The public art work was a joint project from West Lothian Council and Winchburgh Developments Ltd, while Winchburgh Community Development Trust managed the Kitchen Conversations project with funding support from the National Lottery's Awards for All grants.

'It's a Bing Thing' public art installation is a playful sculpture that doubles as a seating area for the new civic square. It was inspired by the landscape of Bings around Winchburgh and the disappearing Niddry Castle

Bing and includes a poem inscribed around the edges of each tier of the artwork by Scottish poet William Letford.

It was designed and created by architects and artists team Dallas Pierce Quintero as the first step in an overall strategy for public art in the area.

Executive councillor for culture and leisure Dave King said: "It's great to see another fascinating piece of public art for West Lothian."

"Winchburgh is a growing community thanks to a landmark deal involving the council that will deliver massive investment in new schools, new homes and vital infrastructure to transform the village.

"Developers are required to make a contribution to public art in the area, which pays for



art works such as this. The combined sculpture and practical seating area should improve both the look and amenity of the Winchburgh's civic square for the whole community."

The 'Kitchen Conversations' project offered women living in Winchburgh the chance to come together and share life stories which they crafted together to create an original publication.

The women come from a range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and experiences, all interested in making Winchburgh a great place to live for current and future generations.



West Lothian pupils were the stars of a new campaign aimed to get children cycling

Pupils from Toronto Primary in Livingston were the face of the Bikeability Scotland programme, which was seen a record increase in schools offering free cycle training for pupils.

The percentage of Scotland's primary schools offering on-road cycle training has increased from 42% to 47% in 2018-2019). Cycling Scotland are urging the remaining 53% are urged to follow their path and take advantage of free cycling training for pupils.

Leader of West Lothian Council Lawrence Fitzpatrick said: "We were delighted to welcome Cycling Scotland to

Toronto Primary in Livingston, and showcase the good work taking place in the school to encourage safe cycling, which is an important life skill."

Mrs Black, Acting Principal Teacher, Toronto Primary School said: "It's been great having the Bikeability Scotland team support our delivery of this training for our pupils. It was such an easy process and the children have loved it.

"We would love to offer this each year going forward, so all our primary sixes are equipped with the right knowledge and confidence to be safer cyclists."

Bikeability Scotland is the national cycle training programme for school children, which is delivered in tandem with local authorities. It is funded by national cycling charity Cycling Scotland, through grant funding by Transport Scotland.

The programme is free for schools and pupils, and surveys found that 65% of children were more confident cycling after

Bikeability training and 82% of parents were more in favour of letting their children cycle as a result.

"Cycling Scotland provides funding to support delivery of Bikeability Scotland training to all primary children aged 7-11yrs. "We've done all we can to make the process of accessing the free training for instructors and grant funding as easy as possible. All materials - including pupil's guides, certificates, badges and information for parents - are provided, even bikes can be supplied for the training period. "

David Collins, Cycling Scotland Bikeability Development Officer



Total Wellness Journey

At Xcite, we understand that Wellness is not just about the body but also about the mind and your general wellbeing. Our TOTAL WELLNESS JOURNEY has three steps, START WELL, FEEL WELL and STAY WELL. Each step has a different focus but has one thing in common; to improve your quality of life through regular physical exercise, healthy nutrition and positive mental wellbeing!

Going to the gym for the first time can be daunting but there really is no need to worry! The Xcite Team are here to

welcome you and take you through each step. We look at the overall journey and spend time with you so we know your fitness goals, we want you to build a relationship with exercise that is challenging but also enjoyable! We are here to help motivate and

encourage you throughout the highs and lows as we know becoming fitter can be hard work.

The team are fully qualified to give advice, educate, support and help you through your wellness journey and are on hand from open to close, seven days a week!

Wellness is unique to each and every one of us but the Total Wellness Journey always put's you first!

Download the WLL Xcite App to view availability for **START WELL, FEEL WELL and STAY WELL** appointments - It's the quickest and easiest way to book. Select 'Gym Classes' under your venue, it's included in your membership!

Ballroom & Latin Dance Classes

Have you been inspired to start dancing since Strictly Come Dancing returned to our TV screens? Then look no further, Xcite Ageing Well project is excited to offer a Ballroom and Latin dance class for beginners.

The class includes practicing the Waltz, Quickstep, Foxtrot, Tango and Viennese Waltz along with the Cha Cha Cha, Jive, Rumba, Samba and Paso Doble. It is jam packed! The dance sessions are delivered by United Kingdom Alliance (UKA) Qualified instructors, Frederico & Nuno of Dance4Passion. **All classes are suitable for beginners and there is no need to have a partner.** Come along and join in the fun relaxed session! The Ageing Well project promotes a healthy lifestyle for adults over 50's in West Lothian. It aims to increase the expectation of good health in later life with activities that improve physical health, mental health and wellbeing. The emphasis is on meeting new people and making physical activity accessible and enjoyable!

To find out more, please contact the Ageing Well Co-ordinator on 01506 237950 or email aclerkson@westlothianleisure.com

Available every Wednesday at Xcite Craigswood and Friday at Xcite Bathgate. Both classes start at 15:30. £3.50 per class. *Please note, this class is not included in any Xcite Memberships*



Can you keep a secret?

I've heard a terrible story. Poor, wee Cinderella's evil step-mum, the vicious, evil and jealous Ruth Bumstep and her even uglier twin sisters, Tina and Tweena, ACTUALLY made Cinder's Ballroom Champion parents ACTUALLY disappear... but that's 'strictly' between you and me.

It's almost as if evil aunty Ruth got rid of poor wee Cinders' folks on purpose just so she could have The International Pan-Lothian (and Shotts) Prize in advance. Will Cinders discover the truth? Will she win the hand of the gar-gee-oose Prince Ken, ken? Will you come and help her out?

Join us at Howden Park Centre this Christmas for a rip-roaring, riotous, raving, rhumba-inspired dance spectacular of a show from the same team that brought you last year's hit panto, Jack and the Beanstalk!

9 December - 28 December

Ticket Price: £8.00 - £16.50

Tickets on sale now at www.howdenparkcentre.co.uk or contact the Box Office on 01506 340700

Book your tickets to avoid disappointment!

For more info about our activities visit

www.westlothianleisure.com or download the WLL Xcite App!

View timetables and make bookings now! You can also check out our news and offers and you'll have easy access to venue info!

We have a range of payment options from pay-per-visit, memberships and the Concession Scheme.

