Poverty Profile of West Lothian - 2019

1 Introduction - Poverty in West Lothian – A changing picture

The West Lothian Anti-poverty Strategy and Action Plan was launched in 2012 and it is appropriate, therefore, to review the changes in the key indicators that help to map the nature and scale of poverty in West Lothian.

West Lothian Trend data					
Indicator	**2012**	**Previous**	**Latest**	**Change since 2012**	**Direction of travel**
Children and families					
Children in out of work families (1)	7,000	6,200	5,720	-1880	↓
Children in working households receiving Working Tax Credit (1)	8,700	7,900	5,700	-2000	↓
Number of secondary school pupils registered for free school meals (3)	1,616	1,743	1,710	+94	↓
% of secondary school pupil registered for free school meals (3)	14.6%	16.4%	16.0%	+1.4%	↑
Working age people					
People in Work (4)	86,500	88,800	90,000	+3,500	↑
Employment rate – aged 16-64 (4)	74.2%	76.4%	76.1%	+1.9%	↑
% aged 16-64 who are employees (4)	67.3%	68.2%	66.6%	-0.7%	↓
% aged 16-64 who are self-employed (4)	6.8%	7.8%	9.5%	+2.7%	↑
% residents earning below The Living Wage* (5)	18%	19%	16.7%	-1.3%	↓
Estimated number of residents earning below The Living Wage (5)	16,000	16,700	14,700	-1300	↓

Indicator	2012	Previous	Latest	Change since 2012	Direction of travel
Out of Work benefits					
ILO (International Labour Organisation) unemployment estimate (4)	7,000	3,600	4,000	-3,000	⇩
Claimant count (6)	4,010	1,835	3,345	-665	⇩
18-24 Claimants (2)	1,310	445	695	-615	⇩
ESA and IB recipients	8,800	9,130	9,130	+330	⇧
Lone Parents (IS) (2)	1,440	1,200	1,150	--290	⇩
Main out of work benefits	14,620	12,720	11,670	-2,950	⇩
Pensioners					
Beneficiaries of top-up benefit (2)	8,660	5,870	4,590	-3,730	⇩
% of beneficiaries of pension credit top-up (2)	31%	20%	16%	-15%	⇩

*Sources: (1) HMRC 2016 (2) DWP benefit claimants - working age client group; (3) Scottish Government, School Meals Survey; (4) ONS annual population survey; (5) ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; (6) ONS Claimant Count *the Living Wage of £9.00 as per the Living Wage Foundation.*

These figures reveal a complex pattern of change. Between 2012 and 2016 there was a sustained reduction in the number of working age people claiming out-of-work benefits. The ILO estimate of unemployment has also fallen. There are signs however that the reduction in unemployment may have bottomed out – the latest (March 2019) claimant count figures are slightly higher than a year ago, but still low by historic standards.

The latest estimates for people in work suggest that employment has increased by 3,500 since 2012.

There is some evidence of in-work poverty shown by the estimated rate and number of residents earning below the living wage level.. The number of children in households receiving Working Tax Credits has also fallen since 2012.

There had previously been a small (1%) but noticeable increase in the number of secondary school pupils registered for free school meals, this may have been as a result of efforts to encourage registrations and uptake to those children who are eligible and has now stabilised since the last poverty profile.

The numbers and percentage of pensioners relying on top-up benefits has noticeably decreased in West Lothian over the period 2012 to 2018. The reasons for this might include:

- Lack of awareness of pension credit entitlement
- Equalisation of state pension age, which results in the Pension Credit qualifying age increasing
- Changes to the Savings Credit element of Pension Credit
- The introduction of new State Pension

Post retirement working, however, may also extend the length of time a person spends in in-work poverty or be an indication that some post retirement age workers cannot afford not to work due to any number of reasons from guarding against poverty in old age to providing a supplementary income (a ‘wage top up’) towards an inadequate pension provision.

2 West Lothian in Context

West Lothian is in the centre of Scotland and has a mix of urban and rural communities, a significant jobs base in its own right and is well located relative to other parts of Scotland (especially Edinburgh) for jobs and services. The area’s recent economic history has been one of industrial change. In addition, the area has experienced significant population growth, which is set to continue over the next 15 years. Housing development and associated population growth has benefited all parts of West Lothian.

Despite this generally positive local context, material poverty is still a significant issue for many households and communities. West Lothian, like many other parts of Scotland, experienced the impact of the credit crunch and subsequent recession – with substantial job losses and a rise in local levels of unemployment. The headline unemployment level has fallen since 2013, though the level may have bottomed-out. There is a concern that the medium term prospects might be less positive given the uncertain business climate and likely economic headwinds that are predicted in the next few years.

A common theme in relation to poverty and related indicators is that West Lothian as a whole is usually at or just below the Scottish average. This is illustrated by the summary statistics below.

Table1: Summary Statistics	
Population (1)	181,300
Area (2)	42,733 hectares
Households (8)	80,000
Businesses (2)	5,965
Total Jobs (4)	78,200

	West Lothian	Scotland
Population growth 2001-2016 (1)	13%	7%
Population not white Scottish/British (3)	6.3%	8.2%
Population qualified to SVQ4 and above (5)	45,000 39.3%	43.7%
Population qualified to SVQ2 and above(5)	84,500 73.8%	75.5%
Population with no qualifications (5)	10,400 9.1%	9.9%
Residents in work (5)	89,100 76.0%	73.9%
Unemployment level (ILO based estimate) (5)	3,700 3.9%	4.3%
Average hourly wage levels residents (FT) (7)	£12.62 per hour	£13.54 per hour
Average hourly wage levels workplaces (FT) (7)	£12.44 per hour	£13.50 per hour

Sources: (1) National Records of Scotland mid-year estimates 2016; (2) ONS IDBR; (3) Census 2011; (4) BRES 2015 ONS; (5) Annual Population Survey ONS; (6) DWP benefit claimants data; (7) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; (8) Scottish House Condition Survey 2016.

There are still underlying issues of poverty and deprivation – with a core of individuals and households experiencing extreme hardship and wider groups experiencing financial difficulties and challenges. Low pay and underemployment as well as unemployment are key factors.

A number of indicators are presented in this report, including direct measures of poverty including, for example, levels of benefit dependency. Other indicators are proxy measures e.g. the prevalence of low skilled employment.

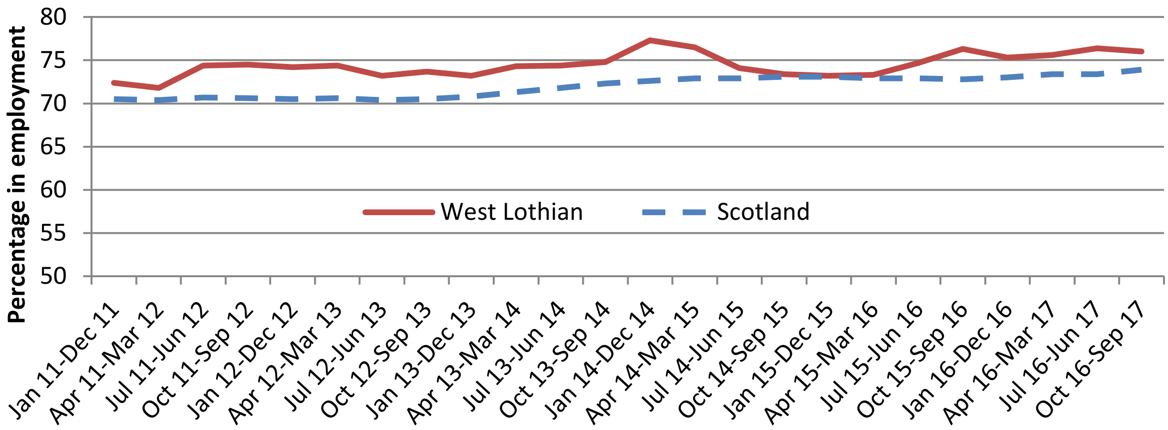
Analysis of a range of indicators suggests that West Lothian as a whole has levels of poverty that are generally just below the levels for Scotland as a whole. However, this general picture masks variations within West Lothian.

3 Economy and Employment

The population of working age in West Lothian of 116,600 has continued to increase since 2011 and its is likely to increase by 5.9% up to 2029 (Scotland will increase by 4.4%). This does not take account of changes to the retirement age.

The employment level (the proportion of working age residents who are economically active and in-work) is slightly higher for West Lothian than for Scotland as a whole. This is in part due to the demographic factors and young people moving to university cities and towns.

Chart 1: Employment Rate



Source: ONS annual population survey

Latest estimates indicate that 89,500 or 76.1% of the working age population are in employment (compared to 74.1% for Scotland). Within this total there are 78,200 employees and 11,400 self-employed. As noted above the total number of residents in work (as estimated in the ONS annual population survey) had fallen between 2015 and early 2016 but subsequently increased. The increase in employment is consistent with the reduction in the unemployment level.

West Lothian is not a self-contained economy or labour market. In 2011 (the 2011 census being the latest data), 61% of in-work residents were employed in West Lothian, 39% commute out to mainly neighbouring areas – the largest proportion to the Edinburgh area. It is likely that commuting into and from West Lothian will increase over the next few years as CDA developments attract additional residents from Edinburgh.

Table 2: Pattern of commuting for West Lothian residents (2011 census)		
Work at home or nearby	8,000	8%
Work in other parts of West Lothian	42,000	53%
Work in Edinburgh, Mid/East Lothian	20,000	25%
Work in other neighbouring local authority areas	5,400	9%
Work in Glasgow area	1,800	2%
Work elsewhere in Scotland/UK	2,000	2%

Source: Census 2011

Employment

Employment by occupation according to the Standard Occupational groupings shows the following pattern:

Table 3: Employment by Occupation – West Lothian Residents		
Occupational Group 2016/17	West Lothian	Scotland
Group 1-3 (Managerial, professional and technical)	40%	43%
Group 4-5 (Administration, skilled trades)	18%	21%
Group 6-7 (Personal and customer services, sales)	22%	18%
Group 8-9 (Elementary and process operators).	20%	17%

Source: Annual Population Survey 2016

Whilst groups 1-3 make up the largest occupational group, in comparison to the national level West Lothian has a lower level of employees in groups 1-3 and 4-5 and higher relative representation in lower skilled occupations.

This pattern is also reflected in the overall picture in terms of skills and qualifications. West Lothian is slightly under the national average for basic and intermediate level qualifications – e.g. 74% of adults are qualified to SVQ level 2 (compared with 76% for Scotland). West Lothian also lags behind Scotland for higher-level qualifications.

The gap has been narrowing in recent years as a result of demographic change and the outcome of interventions to promote attainment and progression into higher education.

Pay and in-work poverty

Table 4a: Earnings by place of residence			
	West Lothian	**Scotland**	**% difference**
Gross weekly pay full time workers	519.0	547.7	-5.5%
Gross weekly pay p/t workers	194.7	189.5	+2.7%
Hourly pay (f/t)	13.36	13.95	-4.4%
Hourly pay (p/t)	9.77	9.35	4.3%

Source: Annual survey of Hours and Earnings 2017

Table 4b: Earnings by workplace			
	West Lothian	**Scotland**	**% difference**
Gross weekly pay full time workers	538.1	547.3	-1.7%
Gross weekly pay p/t workers	202.4	189.3	+6.5%
Hourly pay (f/t)	13.61	13.98	-2.7%
Hourly pay (p/t)	9.76	9.40	+3.7%

Source: Annual survey of Hours and Earnings 2017

Gross wage levels for West Lothian (both residence and workplace) are generally below the Scottish levels. The exception to this is part-time employment where weekly pay for both residents and within the local job market are marginally higher. There remains a significant wage gap between Males and Females, as illustrated below, although West Lothian wage levels are below the Scottish level, the pay gap is the same with females in full-time employment earning 86% of males.

Table 4c: Gross weekly pay by place of residence – male and female		
	West Lothian	Scotland
Male Full-time Workers	£554.70	£580.20
Female Full-time Workers	£479.10	£498.30
Female pay as % of Male	86%	86%

Source: Annual survey of Hours and Earnings 2017

Part time jobs in West Lothian (based on 2016 data) represent 31.6% of total jobs (compared with 28% in 2009 and 29% in 2012). The West Lothian level of part time jobs is also lower than the 33.5% recorded for Scotland and 32.3% for GB.

Other facets of low pay

- An estimated 16.7% of West Lothian working residents earn below the living wage level of £8.75 per hour compared to 22% for Scotland as a whole.
- Similarly, approximately 20% of jobs located within West Lothian pay hourly rates below the living wage level compared to 22% for Scotland.
- Approximately 5,700 children are found in West Lothian working households that are in receipt of Working Tax Credit.

Table 5: Employment and wage levels – low paying sectors in West Lothian				
	number	%	Median wage	Lowest 10%
I : Accommodation and food service activities	3,800	4.9	7.50	5.99
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	15,400	19.9	9.25	7.20
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	200	0.3	9.37	7.20
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	1,700	2.2	9.40	6.90
N : Administrative and support service activities	5,900	7.6	9.60	7.20
S : Other service activities	1,200	1.6	10.62	7.20

Source: Annual survey of Hours and Earnings 2017& BRES 2016

Precise local data is not available on self-employment and zero hours contracts. However, there is evidence that self-employment has increased in line with the general UK and Scottish trend, which would imply that more than 50% of recent self-employment growth has been part-time. At a UK level, zero hours contracts (i.e. contracts that do not guarantee a specific number of hours) are estimated to apply to 2.8% of the labour force and be particularly prevalent in health and care, education, accommodation and food. This might translate into approximately 2,500 West Lothian residents experiencing zero-hours contracts.

Unemployment

- The headline Claimant Count based unemployment is currently 3,345 or 2.9% (March 2019) As universal Credit Rollout has progressed the claimant count definition has widened and the rate has increased from 2017 when it only included JSA claimants.
- The International Labour Organisation based unemployment estimate is 4,000 (4.0%) (average for the year Jan 2018-Jan 2019).
- The Youth unemployment level based on 18 to 24 year-olds claiming JSA and Universal Credit is 695 (4.8%) (March 2019).

- With the reduction in the Claimant count, an increasing proportion of the remaining jobless population will be more likely to experience multiple barriers and be more difficult to reach. At the same time entry-level jobs now require higher developed core skills than might have been the case previously – including, for example, enhanced customer and communication skills and computing capacity. The process of job search and submitting applications to prospective employers is now mainly IT based.

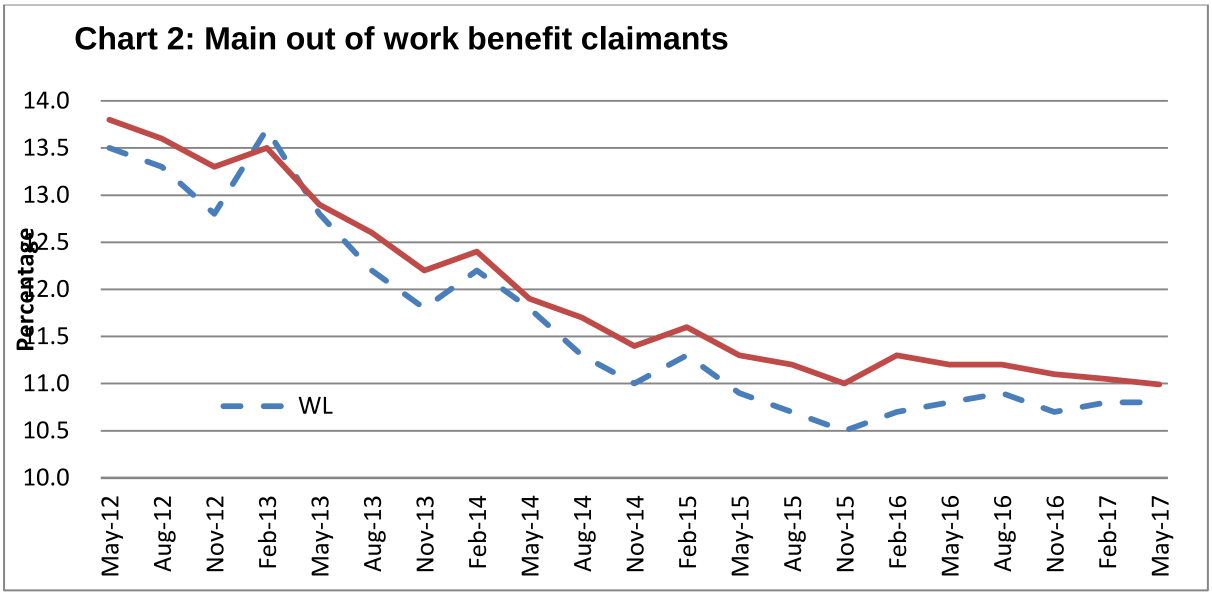
Table 6: Working Age Benefits

Working-age client group - main benefit claimants (November 2016) discontinued

	West Lothian (numbers)	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
Job seekers plus Universal credit	2,200	1.9	2.4	2.2
ESA and incapacity benefits	9,100	7.7	7.6	5.9
Lone parents	1,210	1.0	0.9	0.9
Others	210	0.2	0.2	0.2
Key out-of-work benefits†	12,720	10.8	11.1	9.1

Source: DWP benefit claimants - working age client group
† Key out-of-work benefits includes the groups: job seekers, ESA and incapacity benefits, lone parents and others on income related benefits. Note: % is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64

DWP no longer provide updated summary statistics for working age clients, however, their final available figures (November 2016 – DWP) show that there are 15,610 benefit claimants of working age (16-64) in West Lothian, of whom 12,410 are in receipt of key out of work benefits. The estimates above have been developed from other individual benefit data to enable trends to be monitored going forward.



Source: DWP benefit claimants - working age client group

This reduction in Key out of work benefit claimants has mainly been as a result of a fall in the number of claimants and this trend accelerated from 2013, but has bottomed-out since early 2016. The picture is mixed for other benefit data. The number of lone parents on Income Support has fallen by almost 530. However, the number of ESA and Incapacity claimant has remained static at around 9,130.

4 Household Income Estimates

Latest estimates for average gross disposable household income (after housing costs) suggests that median income per household in West Lothian in 2014 was approximately £634 per week (almost £33,000 per annum). These averages obviously mask considerable variations between areas and households. An estimated 14% of West Lothian Households had income of 60% less than the Median (i.e. households with an income under 60% of the median value of £550 per week after adjusting for size of household).

Table 7: Median Household Income Estimates – 10 DZs with lowest

Datazone Names	Median Weekly income
Livingston Craigshill Streets East & Mall	£390
Bathgate Cochrane Street	£397
Bathgate Centre Station	£417
Armadale Mayfield	£417
Broxburn Greendykes Road	£419
West Calder Central & Mossend	£421
Fauldhouse Langrigg	£422
Blackburn Centre North	£423
Fauldhouse Centre	£429
Armadale McNeil Crescent	£431

(Source: Scottish Government, Small Area Income Estimates 2014)

5 Children and Families - Measuring Child Poverty at a Local Level

The Campaign to End Child Poverty has published an updated report on May 2019 which analysed the relative level of child poverty.

The report provides an estimate of the number of children in poverty in each council ward, local authority and parliamentary constituency in the UK. These estimates are not accurate counts of how many children are in poverty in each area. Rather, they use local level data to give an indication of where child poverty is particularly high, and, therefore, where there need to be the strongest efforts to tackle it. http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/poverty-in-your-area-2019/

Estimates of local child poverty rates show that it is the highest in large cities, particularly in London, Birmingham and Manchester. The report does not include a specific estimate for Scotland. However based on aggregating the Scottish Local Authority data in the report, the Scottish rate once housing costs are deducted is approximately 24%.

West Lothian's level for 2018 is 26% after housing costs. Our ranking in Scotland puts West Lothian in a joint 4th position alongside North Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire. Glasgow (37% after housing costs) has the highest level of child poverty. Most of the ward areas with higher levels of child poverty can be found in the west of Scotland. The picture within West Lothian appears to reflect the pattern for other measures of deprivation. The Whitburn figure of 33% after housing costs places the ward in the 10% of wards across Scotland with the highest rates of child poverty.

Table 8: Percentage of children in poverty, 2017	**Before HC**	**After HC**
Whitburn and Blackburn	25.7%	33%
Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley	24%	31%
Livingston South	24.4%	30%
East Livingston and East Calder	19.8%	26%
Bathgate	22.4%	27%
Livingston North	23.8%	26%
Armadale and Blackridge	19.8%	26%
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	17%	22%
Linlithgow	13.1%	11%
West Lothian	**21.4%**	**26%**
Scotland		**24%**

Source: Campaign to End Child Poverty

The Campaign to End Child Poverty published this updated report on May 2019 which analysed the relative level of child poverty. Households are living in relative poverty if their household income is less than 60% of the average household income. This is one of the preferred measures of poverty employed by UK and Scottish Government, using national income survey data. This data is not available at a local authority level or for smaller geographic areas. So a modelling exercise has been undertaken using in-work and out-of-work benefits data to provide comparable local estimates.

Free School Meals

With the introduction of free school meals for all pupils in P1 to P3, primary school data does not provide a particularly accurate picture of the incidence of disadvantage. However, free school meal data at secondary demonstrates a pattern of deprivation that we see in other measures of poverty such as SIMD and Benefit claimant statistics. EG Inveralmond with the highest level of FSM registrations has a catchment which includes Craigshill and Ladywell.

Table 10: Free school meal entitlement 2018		
Secondary School	**Pupils registered for Free School Meals**	**% registered for Free school meals**
Armadale Academy	154	16%
Bathgate Academy	140	17%
Broxburn Academy	142	16%
Deans Community High School	159	17%
Inveralmond Community High School	240	24%
Linlithgow Academy	104	8%
St Kentigern's Academy	208	18%
St Margaret's Academy	155	15%
The James Young High School	134	12%
West Calder High School	99	14%
Whitburn Academy	175	23%
West Lothian	1,710	16%

Source: Scottish Government, School Meals Survey 2018

Table 11: Foodbank vouchers distributed in West Lothian by Multi Member Ward

	No vouchers	**Adults**	**Adults as % of adult popn.**	**Children**	**Children as % of child popn.**	**Total**	**Total as % of ward popn.**
Armadale & Blackridge	298	383	1.51%	238	7.19%	621	3.96%
Bathgate	361	446	1.60%	217	4.44%	663	2.81%
Broxburn Uphall & Winchburgh	342	444	1.68%	155	4.34%	599	3.09%
East Livingston & East Calder	263	347	1.42%	218	5.61%	565	2.63%
Fauldhouse & Breich Valley	267	354	1.74%	250	8.67%	604	3.77%
Linlithgow	119	152	0.59%	55	1.79%	207	1.26%
Livingston North	185	242	0.78%	248	5.13%	490	2.09%
Livingston South	296	409	1.41%	255	5.15%	664	2.77%
Whitburn & Blackburn	517	645	4.81%	352	8.73%	997	4.68%
West Lothian	2,925	3,767	2.66%	2,118	5.35%	5,885	3.25%

Source: West Lothian Council, 2019

The number of foodbank vouchers distributed in West Lothian's wards in the financial year 2018/19 totalled 2,925. Of these, almost a fifth (517) were distributed in Whitburn and Blackburn, followed by 361 in Bathgate and 342 in Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh.

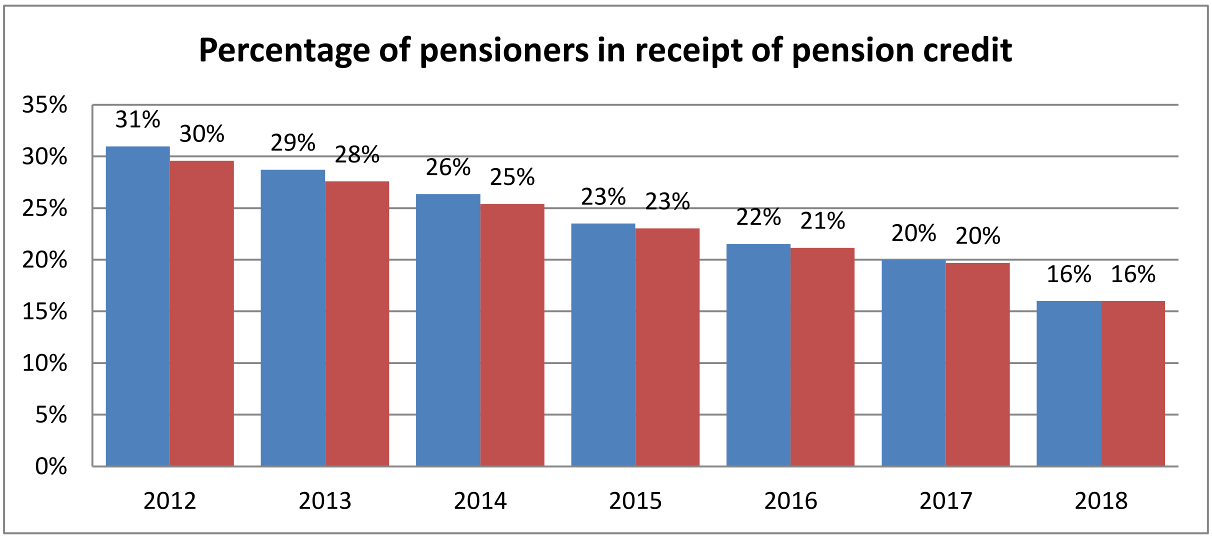
5,885 residents (3,767 adults and 2,118 children) - about 2.1% of the West Lothian population - were the beneficiaries of the food vouchers.

Within Whitburn and Blackburn, for example, 8.7% of the child population and 4.8% of the adult population received the help in the form of a food voucher.

6 Pensioners on Fixed/Low income

There are 29,210 people in West Lothian receiving the state pension. Of these, 4,590 (15.7%) receive Pension Credits to ensure a minimum income. This rate is equal to the Scottish level. The percentage has been falling both for West Lothian and Scotland since 2012. This might be due to a number of factors including:

- Lack of awareness of pension credit entitlement
- Equalisation of state pension age, which results in the Pension Credit qualifying age increasing
- Changes to the Savings Credit element of Pension Credit
- The introduction of new State Pension and general increases in the value of the basic state pension at a higher rate than benefits.



Source: DWP benefit claimants data

7 Housing Tenure and Benefits

Figures from 2016 show that West Lothian has approximately 20,000 affordable social rented sector homes, of which there are 13,106 council houses.

The pattern of housing tenure in West Lothian is generally similar to that for Scotland for social rented with a lower level of private rented accommodation and higher level of owner occupation. Generally, private rented is highest in cities where there is a large student resident population or market for young people. Nevertheless, in West Lothian the private rented sector has increased from 4% of households in 2008. The incidence of poverty amongst private rental residents has been noted at UK and Scottish level research. Increased rental levels mean that for working households on a modest net income of £20,000 might be paying 50% of that income towards housing costs.

Table 12a: Housing Tenure - households		
	West Lothian	Scotland
Owner occupied	67.0%	61.0%
Social rented	21.0%	23.0%
Private rented	11.0%	15.0%

Source: Scottish House Conditions survey 2013-15

In considering the general pattern of poverty in West Lothian there appears to be a close relationship between housing tenure and economic status – social rented sector housing is much more likely to be occupied by people who are not in employment – unemployed, post retirement and others who are economically inactive through caring commitment or ill-health.

Table 12b: Housing Tenure and Economic status – adult population			
	% of adults In work	% of adults Unemployed	% adults Inactive
Owner occupied	69.8%	3.0%	27.2%
All Social rented	41.4%	10.9%	47.7%
Private rented	64.5%	8.3%	27.2%

Source: Census 2011

Table 12c: Housing Benefit Recipients (as % of tenancies)				
	Feb 2012		Feb 2017	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All Social rented	12,374	64%	11,598	61%
Private rented	3,047	33%	2,697	34%
Total	15,421	54%	14,295	53%

Source: DWP 2017

The majority of social rental tenants and over one-third of private rented tenants are in receipt of housing benefit. West Lothian's has a higher proportion of households in receipt of housing benefit than Scotland as a whole where 58% of social rented and 27% of private tenancies receive this benefit.

8 Area based deprivation 2016 SIMD in Relation to West Lothian

The latest version of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation was published in September 2016 and is based on both updated data and revised datazone boundaries, therefore providing a much more valid picture on the current spatial dimension to deprivation.

Income, Employment, Health and Education are the main drivers of deprivation in West Lothian. Crime is a factor insofar as the higher scoring datazones tend to have town centre locations where there is more reported crime.

In terms of headlines from the SIMD:

- West Lothian's relative position in terms of its share of areas in the most deprived 15% and 20% categories has not changed.
- West Lothian does not have the acute and extensive pattern of area deprivation that is evident in Glasgow and other parts of the west of Scotland.

- The number of datazones in the most deprived 15% located in West Lothian is 16. However a further 23 datazones are found within the 15 to 20% range.

The picture in West Lothian is one of clusters of deprived datazones in some localities e.g. in Craigshill, Blackburn and Whitburn. However, elsewhere a more diffuse pattern with datazones in the most deprived 20% often sitting next to areas with low deprivation levels. There are also a number of outlier datazones – in Uphall and Bridgend.

Changes to overall number and more logical boundaries of datazone alongside changes to the methodology for the domains means that comparisons should not generally be made with previous iterations of the SIMD. A number of areas including two datazones in Carmondean for example show up as being moderately deprived due to more logical datazone boundaries being introduced.

Nevertheless, the overall pattern of area deprivation in West Lothian is similar to that evidenced in previous SIMD exercises. The 2016 map is close to that derived from the deprivation mapping exercise 25 years ago. However, there also appears to be some positive change in that some areas where regeneration activity has been focused most notably Boghall no longer feature within the most deprived group of datazones.

The following link enables the Scottish Government interactive map to be accessed: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/SIMDInteractive

Regeneration area data

Regeneration areas in West Lothian have been selected through analysis of SIMD and other sources of intelligence. Regeneration areas have been defined to include coherent local communities and therefore extend beyond the tight confines of the most deprived datazones as defined by SIMD. The table below provides a selection of indicators to describe the differences in poverty levels between the identified regeneration areas and in relation to the West Lothian as a whole. When considered alongside other data, it is evident that Whitburn and Blackburn have particularly high levels of poverty and deprivation

Table 13: Selected poverty indicators in the regeneration areas

Regeneration Areas	Income Deprivation (1)		Employment Deprivation (1)		Relative Child Poverty Rate (2)	Median Household Income (3)		Social rented Housing (4)	Private Rented Housing (4)
	Number	%	Number	%	%	£ per week	WL =100		
Armadale	1,555	13%	875	12%	19%	651	102	29%	6%
Bathgate	2,570	12%	1,530	11%	22%	643	101	28%	12%
Blackburn	1,200	21%	640	18%	32%	500	79	42%	6%
Bridgend	180	19%	95	19%	NA	533	84	58%	4%
Craigshill	1,445	17%	780	17%	23%	489	77	48%	9%
Fauldhouse & BV									
Fauldhouse	835	17%	495	16%	26%	507	80	36%	8%
Stoneyburn	275	14%	165	13%	26%	485	76	40%	7%
Addiewell	300	15%	150	10%	26%	605	95	47%	6%
Polbeth	455	16%	230	16%	26%	525	82	41%	5%

Livingston Central									
Dedridge	1,105	16%	625	14%	24%	591	93	32%	12%
Ladywell	1,030	21%	515	16%	19%	551	87	51%	7%
Knightsridge	740	19%	390	15%	19%	604	95	38%	8%
Whitburn	2,250	20%	1,105	17%	32%	502	79	38%	7%
Regen Areas Total	11,637	15%	6,340	15%	NA		NA	39%	8%
West Lothian	**21,350**	**12%**	**11,885**	**10%**	**22%**	**634**	**100**	26%	9%

Source: 1 SIMD 2016; 2Campaign to End child Poverty; 3 SG Small area income Estimates; 4 SG Scottish House Conditions survey 2013-15

9 Comparisons with other parts of Scotland

As noted in relation to a number of indicators, West Lothian as a whole tends to have slightly lower levels of material poverty to Scotland, ie typically 1 to 3 percentage points below the Scottish rate. West Lothian has similar levels of poverty to a number of other central Scotland local authority areas, which have been our traditional bench mark areas**.** Glasgow, continues to be the local authority with the highest number and proportion of households and individuals experiencing poverty.

Table 14: Comparator data – benchmark areas

	Claimant Count 1	**ILO Unemployment** 2	**Residents below living wage** 3	**Estimated children in poverty** 4	**Pensioner Credits** 5
Clackmannanshire	4.2%	4.5%	28%	25%	15%
City of Edinburgh	1.3%	4.0%	17%	22%	13%
Falkirk	2.7%	3.8%	20%	21%	16%
Fife	3.3%	4.5%	22%	24%	13%
Midlothian	2.6%	3.7%	18%	22%	13%
North Lanarkshire	3.1%	4.4%	20%	25%	24%
South Lanarkshire	3.1%	4.1%	20%	22%	19%
West Lothian	2.0%	4.0%	20%	22%	16%
Scotland	**2.6%**	**4.3%**	**22%**	**23%**	**17%**
GB	**2.2%**	**4.2%**	**23%**	**28%**	**16%**

Sources: 1) ONS Annualised Claimant count Dec 2017-18; 2) Annual Population Survey; 3) ASHE 2016 & WLC Economic Development: 4) DWP Benefit Claimants Working Age Client Groups Nov 2016; 5) DWP Benefits Data 2017

10 Conclusions

The overall poverty picture outlined in this report suggests that overall West Lothian has slightly lower levels of poverty and deprivation than Scotland and Great Britain. Nevertheless a significant segment of the population experience challenging financial and material circumstances. Approximately 20% of the population overall experience some form of relative hardship with a smaller core of people and households (maybe around the 5% mark) in more extreme poverty. The picture varies across West Lothian and between demographic groups (being more extensive amongst young people and families with children than pensioners).

Whilst unemployment and economic inactivity as a result of ill health, disabilities or caring responsibilities is a key driver, the reduction in unemployment over the last five years has been accompanied by an increase in the number of “working poor” and growth in insecure jobs and underemployment.

In terms of relative levels of poverty, the pattern across West Lothian evidenced through the SIMD provides a basis for informing the targeting of interventions. Not surprisingly, the Whitburn and Blackburn area has the highest apparent levels of poverty (and the Linlithgow area having significantly lower levels than the West Lothian average). There are however local pockets of deprivation across West Lothian where higher levels of income deprivation are present.

April 2019

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