



Homeless & Housing Options

Information Pack



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Homeless & Housing Options



Welcome to West Lothian Council's Homeless and Housing Options Information Pack!

We understand that finding a home can be a difficult and overwhelming process, but we are here to support you every step of the way.

This information pack has been designed to provide you with all the necessary information and resources to help you find a home. Whether you are experiencing homelessness, at risk of becoming homeless, or simply looking for support and guidance, this pack has everything you need.

Inside, you will find information about the various housing options available to you, including social housing and private renting. We have also included details about the financial support that may be available to you, such as housing benefit and the assistance you could be eligible for through the Scottish Welfare Fund.

In addition, this pack includes guidance on your rights as a tenant and how to access support services if you are struggling with other issues impacting your housing situation such as mental health, substance abuse, or domestic abuse.

At West Lothian Council, we are committed to helping you find a safe, secure and sustainable home. We understand that this can be a challenging time, but we are here to support you and provide you with the information and resources you need to make informed decisions about your housing situation.

We hope this information pack will be a valuable resource which will encourage you to take advantage of the many support services available.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need further assistance.

Your Housing Options Officer



Name

Telephone

E-Mail



What should I do if I become homeless or think that I am about to become homeless?

You should contact **01506 280000** to discuss your situation. Your enquiry will be passed to the Housing Options Team who will advise you on the next steps you need to take based on your personal circumstances.

What if the office is closed and I have nowhere to stay that night?

You should call the out of hours service on 01506 280000 where they will provide immediate assistance. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What is the homeless process?

When you contact us to advise you are homeless, you may be asked to attend our drop-in service where a full homeless assessment interview will be performed. The purpose of this interview is to determine if the council has a statutory duty to provide you with permanent accommodation.

What happens at the interview?

During the interview, the Housing Options Team will explore your circumstances and the nature of your housing need to find a solution to the issues you are facing. We will discuss how you came to be homeless and the circumstances surrounding that in order to identify the correct support suitable to you. We will ask questions regarding your previous address history, family details and your financial situation. We may suggest referring you to other advice agencies to provide you with holistic support. The [Housing Options Officer](#) has **28 days** to make inquiries into your homelessness and obtain supporting evidence to decide on your case.

Do I need to provide any evidence?

We require the following information to decide on your homeless case and request that you bring this along to your interview:

- ID for all applicants
- Evidence of why you have become homeless.
- Other evidence to support your application. E.g. Medical evidence to support restrictions on any accommodation you're offered.

What if I need emergency accommodation?

If you need emergency accommodation you must contact us right away on 01506 280000. Depending on availability, you may be offered a place at our assessment centre to determine your levels of support requirements, or depending on availability, a hotel or bed & breakfast in West Lothian. There is a charge for temporary hotel and B&B accommodation which is currently £182.00 per week or £26.00 per day. You may be able to claim housing benefit to help cover the cost of this if you are on a low income. This will be discussed with you at the time you are offered this accommodation.

You will remain in hotel accommodation until a suitable temporary tenancy becomes available. Please be aware, any temporary accommodation offered to you could be a sharing space or a placement in one of our homeless accommodation units. Temporary accommodation can be anywhere in West Lothian and there is no option to choose a particular area for emergency and temporary accommodation.

Which hotels do you use?

We use a wide range of hotels, B&Bs and homeless accommodation. This changes regularly as it is wholly dependent on availability. We endeavour to keep you within West Lothian however this may not always be possible. If you are placed out with West Lothian we will aim to move you to a hotel or B&B within West Lothian as soon as one becomes available.

What if my children go to school?

If you are placed out with your school area and have no means of transport, the council will offer support so your children can remain at their existing school. Speak to your [Housing Options Officer](#) who can discuss School Transport or visit our website for more information.

Please note: This only applies if you have been offered a temporary tenancy and does not apply to hotel accommodation.

How do I pay for my emergency accommodation?

You can pay for your accommodation in the following ways:

- Online: Log on to the Tenants Self Service Portal at www.westlothian.gov.uk/tenants-selfservice
- Online: Log on to www.westlothian.gov.uk and click <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/47580/Housing-Rent>
- Direct Debit: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32596/Set-up-or-change-a-Rent-Direct-Debit>
- Telephone: using your debit or credit card on 01506 280000

How do I apply for housing benefit?

When you are signed up for any temporary or permanent accommodation you will be given support to ensure you have made an application if applicable. However, you can also apply online by visiting the following links:



<https://westlothian-hbnewclaim.egovhub.net/HBNewClaim/launch>

What if I have furniture?

If you have nowhere for this to go, we can uplift your furniture and place this into storage for you. We will complete a storage request form and confirm which items can be stored. You may wish to keep some items with you in your temporary accommodation. There is a charge for using furniture storage and your officer can explain what these costs are.

What if I don't want the temporary accommodation that has been offered?

You can request a review of this offer however it is not guaranteed you will be offered anything else and you may be asked to stay in that accommodation if you have nowhere else to go until the council can decide whether the offer is unreasonable.

I have pets, can I take them with me into temporary accommodation?

The current council's policy is that we cannot accept pets into any temporary accommodation. You will need to explore alternative options such as speaking to a friend or family member to take them in while you are in temporary accommodation or look into pet fostering. Below are QR codes to the Hope Project through Dogs Trust and also Pet Service Fostering Scotland.



Pet Fostering Scotland

<https://www.pfss.org.uk/>



Dogs Trust

<https://www.dogstrusthopeproject.org.uk/>

I'm having issues in my Temporary Accommodation. Who do I contact?

If you are having issues within your temporary accommodation, you will need to speak to our accommodation team or your housing officer who will be able to support you with the issues you are facing. Call 01506 280000 to speak with an adviser who will put you in touch with the correct person.

Will the council have to find me somewhere permanently to live?

If you are considered unintentionally homeless, yes, the council has a duty to provide you with one offer of permanent accommodation. You will be asked to pick a minimum of 3 wards in West Lothian and will be considered for any type of property, on any level, unless there is a medical reason not to do so. If this applies to you, you should discuss this with your case officer. If you have not received an offer within 9 months of your homeless application, the council will ask you to increase your areas to a minimum of 6 wards. This is to keep the length of time you spend in temporary accommodation to a minimum. If you are not unintentionally homeless with a local connection there are different duties the council will have. This will be discussed in detail with you by your officer.

Can I choose where I live?

Yes, as a homeless applicant, the council's policy is that you should select 3 wards that you would be happy to live in as well as stating your preferred area. If after 9 months we have not reached you with an offer, we will ask that you open up your area choices to at least 6 wards. We have included a Ward Area Selection Form in this pack which you can complete and send to your housing options officer. You are currently unable to make changes to your area choices online.

What should I do to better my chances of getting a house?

You should be as realistic as possible when choosing your areas for housing. You should also apply to as many housing associations as possible to maximise your chances of being rehoused as quickly as possible. If you want to know any more information about Housing Associations you can refer to the list of [local housing associations](#) or speak to your [Housing Options Officer](#).

What if I disagree with the permanent offer that has been made to me?

You have the right to request a review of the offer, however, if the offer is deemed as being reasonable, you will not be offered anything else and will be asked to leave the temporary accommodation. If this happens your officer will give you advice and assistance to explore other housing options that may be suitable to consider. You can request a review verbally by notifying your Housing Options Officer or in writing and you will be asked for evidence to support your refusal.

What if I disagree with my Homeless Decision?

When you make a Homelessness Application your Housing Needs Options Officer will carefully consider all the facts you provided. When your Housing Needs Options Officer has made a decision on your application, they must write to you and explain the reasons for this decision. You can request 'reviews' of our homelessness decision, your offer of temporary accommodation or, of your permanent home. You have to request a review within 21 days of getting the written decision letter. You can request a review verbally by notifying your [Housing Options Officer](#) or in writing and you will be asked for evidence to support your appeal.

Right of Review/Appeal



You have a legal right to ask for a review if you think that our decision is wrong, you can request a review on the following factors;

- ▶ You have been found not homeless or threatened with homelessness
- ▶ You have been found intentionally homeless
- ▶ You don't have a local connection to this area
- ▶ You have been found to have a local connection to a different area to West Lothian

Temporary / Permanent accommodation that is:

- ▶ overcrowded
- ▶ in an unreasonable condition
- ▶ does not meet any special needs you or your family may have
- ▶ The accommodation is not reasonable in terms of what vacancies the we can reasonably predict.

The review will be carried out by the Housing Need Appeal Panel not directly involved with decision making on your case. We will notify you of the result and aim to write within four weeks with the outcome of your review. Once the review has been carried out, you cannot appeal this decision. Should you remain dissatisfied with our decision the next step is applying for a Judicial Review.

Judicial Review

A Judicial review is a specialised type of court procedure that can be used to challenge the way we have made a decision that affects you. By going down the route of judicial review, you're asking the Court of Session to:

- ▶ look at how the decision was made (and not whether the decision itself was right or wrong)
- ▶ check that we did not abuse our powers
- ▶ check that we acted lawfully.

To do this, you have to raise a 'petition for judicial review' If your case gets to this stage, we recommend seeking legal advice.

Homeless Decisions Explained

We have referred to the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 for the information on this leaflet.

Once you receive your decision on your homeless application, the letter we provide to you will state one of the following reasons:

› Unintentionally Homeless

This means the council has accepted your homeless application and therefore has a duty to provide you with one suitable offer of permanent housing.

› Threatened with Homelessness – Unintentional

This means West Lothian Council has a duty to provide you with help and assistance to keep your current housing. If you become homeless West Lothian Council's duty will be to provide you with suitable permanent accommodation and temporary accommodation should you need it.

› Intentionally Homeless

This means that the council has determined that your household has done or failed to do something which has led to the loss of your accommodation, knowing that these acts will have led to you becoming homeless. e.g. Selling a Property that was reasonable for you to continue to occupy. This means the council has no legal duty to provide you with permanent accommodation however it does have a duty to provide you with advice and assistance on your housing situation.

› Threatened with Homelessness – Intentional

This means, West Lothian Council has a duty to provide you with help and assistance to keep your current housing. If you become homeless, the Council's duty is to provide you with temporary accommodation for a reasonable period with help and advice during this period to find your own accommodation.

› Neither Homeless nor Potentially Homeless

This means the council has determined that you are not currently threatened with the loss of your current accommodation.

› Ineligible for Assistance

This means that the council has determined that you have no right to reside in the UK and/or have no recourse to public funds therefore not entitled to homelessness assistance.



I need to discuss my housing options, who do I contact?

Our Housing Options Team can offer you an appointment to discuss your Housing Options. You should call us on 01506 280000 and your details will be passed to the team who will arrange a suitable appointment time with you. We will go over your current housing situation and the options available to either remain where you are or move to another property that is more suited to your needs. We can discuss things such as affordability issues, eviction, rent arrears and maximising the points on your current housing application.

I am over 55 and require supported accommodation. What do I do?

When we carry out your housing options appointment we will discuss the options of Sheltered Housing, Housing with Care and Assisted Living with you. Your housing options officer will assess which option is best based on your needs and assist you with applying via the correct channels. The largest providers of Assisted Living are Bield, Hanover and Trust Housing Associations. Please see the link below to their joint application form:



Bield, Hanover and Trust

<https://www.homeforyou.org.uk/Pages/ApplyNow.aspx>

I'm having issues with my landlord. Who can help?

You may be experiencing difficulties with your landlord for a number of reasons such as repairs, difficulty paying rent or deposit queries. You can reach out to West Lothian Council's Landlord Registration Team, who can be contacted by [email](#). You can also contact the Scottish Association of Landlords who can also provide you with advice and assistance or Shelter Scotland.



Scottish Association of Landlords

<https://scottishlandlords.com/advice/>



Shelter Scotland


<https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/>

West Lothian Council Landlord Registration – landlordregistration@westlothian.gov.uk

What is the difference between a homeless application and a housing application?

A housing application or mainstream application for social housing can be made by the general public in any situation. You can accumulate points based on your personal circumstances and choose property types and area selections more freely. You are given an unlimited number of offers for properties meaning you do not have to accept any offer of housing and a refusal would not affect your application. A homeless application is only for those who are or about to become homeless. You must present to the council as homeless before you can be considered for a homeless application. If found unintentionally homeless, you will be awarded 750 points on your application which are **non-accumulative** and the council has a duty to provide you with one offer of permanent accommodation. You will be restricted on your area choices and are unable to change the property type you are offered unless there are exceptional circumstances requiring a property needs assessment to be completed (PNA).

Please see below a table which shows you the advantages/disadvantages of Mainstream Applications vs. Homeless Applications.

	<i>Housing Options</i>	<i>Mainstream</i>	<i>Homeless</i>
	<i>One offer of Housing</i>		X
	<i>Unlimited Offers</i>	X	
	<i>Choice of Area</i>	X	
	<i>Choice of 3 Wards</i>		X
	<i>9 Month Rule – 6 Wards</i>		X
	<i>Choice of Property Type</i>	X	
	<i>Choice of Property Level</i>	X	
	<i>PNA Restrictions</i>	X	X

You can discuss with your Housing Options Officer which type of application may best suit your needs.

I have received a notice to quit, what do I do?

If you have received notice from your landlord to end your tenancy, you must contact us without delay. We can offer you a housing options appointment to discuss your options and give you advice tailored to your situation. Call us on 01506 280000 to arrange an appointment with the housing options team.

What is the eviction process?

Your landlord must apply to the Housing and Property Chamber following your notice to quit date to evict you from your property. Your landlord may be either a local authority, housing association or a private landlord. The processes vary depending on who your landlord is and as the eviction process is ever changing, we recommend that you visit the [Scottish Government website](#) to view the current eviction process in Scotland. Your [Housing Options Officer](#) will also discuss the process with you during your appointment.

How do I apply for council housing?

You can apply on the council's website for a council property or visit your local CIS office who can support you with a paper application. When you apply to West Lothian Council, you have the option of also applying to Almond Housing Association and LINK at the same time, this is called the Common Housing Register. You can apply online on our Website – <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk>

How long will it take to get a council house?

Due to the complexity of a needs-based points system for housing applications we cannot provide a waiting time or discuss your list position. Our housing offer process would not consider any notes of interest in a property so we have discontinued recording these notes. If you wish to view our stock report which highlights properties allocated based on the number of points for each application and may give you an indication of your application position, please visit: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/housingfaq>

Who else can I apply to for housing?

There are many options for you to consider such as:

- [Mid-Market Rentals](#)
- [Private Lets](#)
- [Other Housing Associations](#)

If you are uncertain about your suitability for any of the above, speak with your Housing Options Officer.

I have found a private let, is there any support available to me?

If you are looking to secure a private let, the council currently offers a flexible fund as part of our RRTP funding which can assist with the deposit and the first month's rent. Your housing options officer will complete a financial assessment to determine if you are eligible for any support with this fund. We can also refer you on to our Private Rented Sector Officer who can offer support with liaising with landlords, attending viewings and supporting you into private sector rented accommodation. Speak to your housing options officer for more information. You can also contact West Lothian Council's Advice Shop who will be able to discuss maximising your income to ensure affordability for any private lets. They can also discuss Local Housing Allowance which can help towards payments to your rent.

I would like to discuss the points on my mainstream housing application. Who do I speak to?

In the first instance you can speak to allocations regarding your current mainstream application. They can be contacted on 01506 282754. If you feel that your current points are incorrect, you can discuss this with your housing options officer, area housing office or allocations who can check your points entitlement based on your current needs. If you are unsure who your officer is, please contact us on 01506 280000.

What is Mid-Market Rent?

Mid-Market Rent (MMR) is an initiative that aims to provide a solution for the housing problems that have arisen in the last few years.

By offering an option that is in between social and private housing, the government and housing associations are giving a solution to people who were potential first-time buyers, but can no longer afford or apply for a mortgage. Rents are generally lower than private lets and higher than social housing. As such there can be specific eligibility criteria when applying for these properties.

Rent for mid-market rent homes is usually in line with or below the Local Housing Allowance rates for particular areas, so mid-market rent is usually cheaper than the average private rents in an area (though higher than council or housing association rent).

What kind of housing is offered?

Mid-market rent homes could be provided by a council, housing association or co-operative and may be a house or flat.

Can I apply for mid-market rent housing?

Anyone can apply for mid-market rent homes, but they are let – or allocated – using ‘prioritisation models’ developed by each organisation. These models may include conditions such as being in work or restrictions on how much you earn.

What kind of tenancy agreement will I get?

If you rent a mid-market rent home, you will get a Private Residential Tenancy. This is the same type of tenancy you would get in the private rented sector.

Will I need to pay a deposit?

Mid-market rent providers often ask for a deposit – often one month’s rent in advance. If a deposit is taken, it MUST be paid into a [Rent Deposit Guarantee scheme](#) within 30 working days of starting the tenancy and they must inform you that they have done so. If the landlord does not handle your money correctly, you may be entitled to compensation.

For more help and information, you should contact your housing options officer.

Where to find Mid-market rents?

Each landlord will have their own eligibility criteria for available mid-market rented properties and they can be contacted through the following:

- [Citylets](#)
- [Rightmove](#)
- [Lettingweb.](#)
- <https://curb.scot/>
- <https://www.lowtherhomes.com/>

Housing Providers in West Lothian

You are strongly advised to contact the below housing providers and complete a housing application to join their waiting list. This *may* speed up your waiting time for rehousing.

<i>Name and Address</i>	<i>Areas</i>	<i>Family, General needs</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Elderly and/or amenity</i>	<i>Wheel chair</i>
Ark Housing Association The Priory, Canaan Lane, Edinburgh EH10 4SG, Tel: 0131 447 9027 https://www.arkha.org.uk	Linlithgow, Uphall	✓	✓		
Barony Housing Association Ltd. Canal Court, 40 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1LT Tel: 0845 140 7777 www.myhousing.org.uk	Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn, Polbeth	✓	✓	✓	
Bield Housing Association Ltd. 79 Hopetoun Street Edinburgh EH7 4QF, Tel: 0131 273 40000 www.homeforyou.org.uk	Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn, Broxburn, Fauldhouse, Livingston, Linlithgow, Uphall, W.Calder, Whitburn, Winchburgh		✓ Minimum age 56 yrs	✓	✓
Cairn Housing Association Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh, EH7 4GH Tel: 0800 990 3405 https://www.cairnha.com	Bathgate, E. Whitburn	✓		✓	
Wheatley Homes East 8 New Mart Road, Edinburgh EH14 1RL Tel: 0800 561 0088 https://www.wheatleyhomes- east.com/	Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn, Blackridge, Craigshill, Knightsride, Polbeth, Stoneyburn, Torphichen, Uphall, W.Calder	✓	✓	✓	✓
Places for People Scotland 1 Hay Avenue, Edinburgh EH16 4RW, Tel: 0131 657 0600 http://scotlandhomesearch.co.uk	Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn, Blackridge, Broxburn, Deans, Dedridge, E.Calder, Eliburn, Fauldhouse, Uphall, Carmondean, Knightsridge, W.Calder, Winchburgh	✓	✓	✓	✓

Name and Address	Areas	Family, General needs	Single	Elderly and/or amenity	Wheel chair
<p>Horizon Housing Association Ltd. Leving House, Fairbairn Place Livingston EH54 6TN Tel: 0330 303 0089 https://www.horizonhousing.org</p>	Blackburn, Fauldhouse, Livingston, Whitburn, Winchburgh	✓		✓	✓
<p>Trust Housing Association 2 Newmart Road, Edinburgh EH14 1RL Tel: 0131 444 1200 www.homeforyou.org.uk</p>	Blackride, Dedridge, E.Calder, Winchburgh	✓		✓	
<p>Link Housing Association Watling House, Callendar Business Park, Falkirk FK1 1XR 0845 1400100 https://findahome.scot/</p>	Addiewell, Bathgate, Breich, Linlithgow Bridge, Uphall, W.Calder	✓	✓		
<p>Blackwood Homes 77 Craigmount Brae Edinburgh EH12 8XF 0131 317 7227 www.blackwoodgroup.org.uk</p>	Armadale, Broxburn, Deans, Mid Calder, W. Calder	✓			✓
<p>West Lothian Housing Partnership 3 Michaelson Square, Livingston EH54 7DP 01506 416 438 www.myhousing.org.uk</p>	Bathgate, Blackburn, Boghall, Craigshill, Stoneyburn, W.Calder, Whitburn	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Home Group The Approach, Glasgow Business Park, 321 Springhill Pkwy, Baillieston, Glasgow G69 6GA Tel: 0345 141 4663 https://www.homegroup.org.uk</p>	No information provided				

Letting Agents and Private Lets in West Lothian



Name	Website	Telephone
24.7 Property Letting	www.247propertyletting.co.uk	01506 414243
Almond Letting	info@almondletting.co.uk	01506 631016
BG Property Services	info@bgpropertyservices.co.uk	01506 237348
Brown & Co Properties	www.brownandcoproperties.co.uk	01506 741222
Central lets	www.centrallets.com	01506 828282
City Lets	www.citylets.co.uk	
D J Alexander	www.djalexander.co.uk	0131 5583000
Davidson & Robertson Rural	www.drrural.co.uk	0131 4496212
Easy Roommate	www.easyroommate.com	0800 0832881
Gumtree	www.gumtree.com/flatshare	
Houses for sale or rent	www.housesforsaletorent.co.uk	
Lets 4 U	www.homes4u-scotland.com	01506 630434
Letting Solutions Ltd	www.Letting-solutions.co.uk	01506 496006
Letting Web	www.lettingweb.com	
Martin & Co (Livingston)	www.martinco.com	01506 676306
Newman Properties	www.newman-properties.co.uk	01506 635800
On The Market	www.onthemarket.com	
Open Rent	www.openrent.co.uk	
Prime Location	www.primelocation.com	
RCP Properties	www.rcpproperties.co.uk	01506 633013
RE/MAX Property Livingston Lettings	www.remax-scotland.net	01506 636348
Rent Locally	www.rentlocally.co.uk	0845 643 6142
Rettie and Co	www.rettie.co.uk	0131 2204160
Rightmove	www.rightmove.co.uk	
S1Homes	www.s1homes.com	
The Key Place	info@thekeyplace.co.uk	01506 828096
Turpie & Co	www.turpies.com	01506 668448
Woodstar Property Management	chris@woodstarpmp.co.uk	0131 6675410
Your Move Ltd	www.your-move.co.uk	01506 655183
Zoopla	www.zoopla.co.uk	

Condensation

What is condensation?

When moist air comes into contact with a cool surface water droplets form. This is the same effect as when you breathe on a mirror. On a window, the glass mists up and drops of water trickle down. On a wall, the wall soaks up the moisture and becomes damp. Mould then tends to grow on the damp areas.

Where does the moist air come from?

We all give off water from our bodies all the time, when we breathe and from our skin. We also put lots of water into the air when we use a tumble drier, when we air or dry clothes indoors, take a bath or shower, and even when we cook, or wash the dishes. Bottled gas heaters and paraffin heaters particularly produce large amounts of water vapour.

Moist air can travel through our homes and cause condensation if it comes into contact with a cool surface like a window or an outside wall.

Why is it only in certain areas?

Condensation tends to occur on outer walls, which are cooler. It often shows as a dark patch next to the ceiling, or next to the skirting, and especially in corners. External walls with windows are often affected, as they can be even colder.

Areas which have poor ventilation can be very prone to condensation. This might be behind and inside cupboards, dressers and wardrobes, or behind the bed if this is against an outside wall.

It can happen in any room, but tends to be more of a problem in bedrooms and stairwells, as these are cooler. Bathrooms have most condensation of all - especially on tiles. Wiping the tiles down and airing the bathroom after showers or baths can help. Continued build-up of condensation may lead to mould growth.

Why does mould grow and is it harmful?

Mould is formed from general household dust. It normally causes no harm because the intensity in the air is very low. If it lands on a cool damp area of wall the mould will start to grow. After a while the mould becomes visible as a dark coloured patch. This is often black, but can be other colours.

At that stage the mould begins to release millions of new spores into the air inside your house. These new spores can very quickly spread the mould to other areas of the house. If they get into clothes then you will notice a fusty smell.

On some rare occasions prolonged exposure to mould may aggravate existing conditions including asthma so it is very important to deal with mould patches as soon as possible.

What can I do, and where do I start?

Rooms like those mentioned earlier need more precautions than normal to stop condensation forming due to humidity levels- but the things you have to do are quite basic and easy to do.

If you have mould growing, then deal with that first. It is usually quite easy to kill and there is no need to scrub, or to use strong chemicals. If we have provided you with an Anti Mould Kit, use this to wash and treat the affected area. Wipe over the area every day, for 5 consecutive days. Alternatively, use a proprietary mould remover or a mixture of 1 part bleach to 5 parts water to wash the area. It is normal for staining to remain after this process so don't be alarmed if staining remains.

After dealing with any mould you can deal with the condensation.

The traditional answer of turning up the heating to dry up the damp, and opening the windows to blow the moist air out can work, however uses huge amounts of energy and can be very expensive.

Nowadays, we suggest a range of measures that work together to cure the problem and we suggest starting with the cheapest and easiest solutions first:-

- Think about where you produce moisture into the air, and try to reduce it. For example, if you use a tumble drier in the house, use a ducting kit to take the wet air outside, or a self-condensing attachment. Cook with lids on pans
- Sometimes we can't help making lots of moisture in the air - cooking, taking a shower, airing/drying clothes etc. Stop the water spreading to other parts of the house by shutting the door and opening a window in the room to let the wet air escape
- If you have an extractor fan in a wet area use it every time you bathe or shower
- Mould spores hate fresh air, so it is vital to keep damp rooms well aired. Ventilating the full property to improve air circulation and prevent condensation build up is a must. It is even more important than keeping it heated. If you have double-glazing, keep the air vent above the window open all the time - unless the wind is too strong and cold. Try to have the window open a little for an hour every morning when you get up. On fine days open the window wider, if you can do so safely

- Bedding, clothing and other textiles stored in drawers and wardrobes can hold cold air and become fusty quite quickly due to poor ventilation. Leave wardrobe doors open to let fresh air in. If a room is particularly damp, then you might want to keep clothes stored in a different room
- Any damp areas that are also poorly ventilated will tend to allow mould to grow. This often happens behind wardrobes and cupboards, and at the side of the bed. Try to have a gap behind and around furniture to allow air to circulate. Try not to put furniture against a cold outside wall
- Try not to let the room get chilled. There is no need to keep the room particularly warm, however a little steady heat is better at keeping the humidity levels steady. If you can only have the heating on for short periods, then early evening and early morning are the best times
- Reduce the amount of household items and textiles (e.g. Clothing, Bed Linen etc.) stored within rooms and prevent clutter which could trap moist air and lead to mould growth

How can West Lothian Council Help You?

If you continue to experience problems relating to condensation and mould growth you should report this to West Lothian Council by [requesting a repair](#). Our Building Services Team may take the following actions depending on the case and will make judgments to progress to the next section depending on the outcome of inspections:-

- Carry out a Property Inspection to determine any actions required
- Provide expert guidance on condensation and how this can be managed
- Provide a Hygrometer to support you in managing the temperature and humidity level within the property. This will allow you to track and understand how lifestyle changes can assist in managing condensation. On arrival you will be advised how to use and get the best out of the device
- May provide an Anti Mould Kit to allow you to wash and treat the affected area
- Review of existing ventilation within the property and the potential installation of extractor fans in kitchen and bathroom or whole house ventilation systems dependant on property needs
- Help you to find the right advice on heating, ventilation, and condensation as well as energy efficiency measures including loft and cavity wall insulation through an energy advice referral
- Surveying of existing radiator sizes to ensure these are sufficient for the room size
- In certain cases we may install insulated plasterboard to rooms which may be prone to high condensation levels and low room temperatures.

Advice on decoration and treatment

As black spot mould is a surface mould the following steps will be required in certain circumstances to treat and re decorate the affected area:-

- Affected area will need to be stripped back to the plaster/painted surface e.g. removal of wall paper
- Mould growth should be washed down with a mixture of 1 part bleach to 5 parts water. This should be done every day over a 5 day period. It is normal for staining to remain after this process so don't be alarmed if stain ing remains.
- Affected area should be sealed with anti-fungal paint, or oil based paint i.e. kitchen or bathroom type to seal any staining
- Wall should then be re decorated as normal.

More Information

More detailed information can be found in a Scottish Government [Keep your home free from damp and mould leaflet](#). In some cases you may be able to get a grant towards the cost of some of the measures. More information is available on [Home Energy Scotland](#) and [Change Works website](#).



Tel: 01506 280000

Email: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk

Ward Area Selection Form

Ward Areas Selection to Be Returned: (minimum 3* wards)

Name Date of Birth

Application Ref No.

Armadales Blackridge Ward	Broxburn Uphall Winchburgh Ward	East Livingston East Calder Ward	Fauldhouse Breich Valley Ward	Linlithgow Ward	Livingston Ward	Whitburn Blackburn Ward	Bathgate Ward
Armadales	Broxburn	East Calder	Addiewell	Bridgend	Deans	Blackburn	Ballencrief
Blackridge	Craigshill	Kirknewton	Breich	Linlithgow	Eliburn Co-op	East Whitburn	Bathgate
Torphichen	Dechmont	Mid Calder	Fauldhouse	Linlithgow Bridge	Eliburn Kirkton	Greenrigg	Boghall
Westfield	Ecclesmachan	Pumpherstoun	Longridge	Newton	Knightsridge	Seafield	Whiteside Birniehill
	Uphall	Uphall Station	Polbeth	Philipstoun	The Riggs	Whitburn	
	Winchburgh	Wilkieston	Stoneyburn	Threemiletown	Bellsquarry		
			West Calder		Dedridge		
					Howden		
					Ladywell		

Section 5 Area (Preferred area e.g Uphall/Greenrigg etc)

My Selection:

Example Selection

Selection 1.....

Selection 1: Linlithgow Ward

Selection 2.....

Selection 2: Bathgate Ward

Selection 3.....

Selection 3: Livingston Ward

Selection 4.....

Selection 5.....

Selection 6.....

Selection 7.....

Selection 8.....

Signed Dated



What is the Homeless Health Team?

The Homeless Health Team is a team of Mental Health Nurses who are employed by NHS Lothian to work within West Lothian Council's Housing Needs Service.

We aim to identify the needs of individuals through mental health assessments in order to provide you with support to reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression and other mental health difficulties of those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

Am I eligible for help from this service?

The service is available to people in West Lothian who are aged 16 and over and homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and not engaging with any other mental health services

How do I get in touch with the service?

With your prior consent, referrals can be made to our service by Housing Services, Criminal Justice, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Team (DASAT), your GP, Health Visitor, Consultant Psychiatrist or friends and family. You can also refer yourself to our service. Our contact details are provided later in this leaflet.

What happens after the referral is made?

We will contact you to arrange an appointment at a suitable and accessible venue. Your first appointment is usually carried out by 2 members of staff.

Can I bring a friend or Support Worker to the appointment?

Yes, if you would like to bring someone along to the appointment with you for support you are welcome to do this.

Will the appointment be confidential?

The appointment will take place in a private area to ensure the conversation is confidential. We understand that it is often very difficult to discuss sensitive or complex situations. You will be treated with respect and in a non-judgemental way.

We will only pass on information about you if professionals involved in your care have a genuine need for it. This will be discussed with you at your first appointment.

Also, if English is not your first language, or you have a visual or hearing impairment, please let us know before your appointment so we can arrange to have the appropriate service available.

What will happen at my appointment?

Initially, we will complete a full mental health assessment with you. From this assessment, we will agree with you the most appropriate service that will meet your individual needs. We will develop a suitable care plan and agree on how many appointments that will initially be required.

Visit www.westlothian.gov.uk or call 01506 280000 for more information

Can my care plan be amended?

Yes, regular reviews of your care plan will take place throughout your engagement with the Homeless Health Team and changes can be made depending on your circumstances. When you reach your last appointment, if required, further support can also be agreed. We may also refer or signpost you to other services if we feel the support they can provide you would be more suitable to your needs.

Other information

Please be aware that the Homeless Health Team is not an emergency service, so if you need to speak to someone urgently regarding your mental health please contact your duty GP, NHS 24 by calling 111, or you can also attend Accident and Emergency.

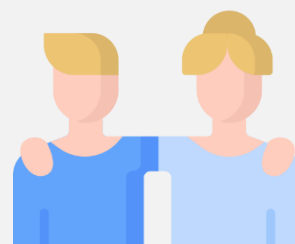
Homeless Health Team Contact Details

Contact Numbers:

01506 282809 / 01506 282810

Address:

Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH54 6FF





Emergency Assistance



SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND – CRISIS/COMMUNITY CARE GRANT

This discretionary scheme provides two types of grant - Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants. These grants do not need to be paid back and provide financial help to people in West Lothian.

<https://westlothian.gov.uk/article/31036/Scottish-Welfare-Fund>

You can apply online by completing the form or by phoning the Council on 01506 280 000 and selecting the option for Scottish Welfare Fund.

FOODBANK REFERRAL - ADVICE SHOP

The Trussell Trust and West Lothian Foodbank provides emergency food and support to local people who are referred to them. Referral must be completed before collection via an approved organisation.

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/31076/Advice-Shop>

You can complete an online referral for a call back or book appointment for form filling.

Tel: 01506 283 000

Jim Walker Partnership Centre, Bathgate EH48 1TL, Open Mon – Fri 8:30am till 5pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

FOODBANK REFERRAL - CITIZENS ADVICE

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAB) will be able to provide help and support with Benefits, Work related questions, Debt and Money, Consumer Rights, Family, Housing, Law and courts, Immigration and Health.

[Citizens Advice Scotland \(cas.org.uk\)](https://www.cas.org.uk) (National site)

For West Lothian CAB:

Tel: 01506 432977 or 01506 436132

Shiel Walk, Livingston EH54 5EH, Open Mon – Fri 10am till 3pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

WEST LOTHIAN FOODMAP

A number of organisations and projects exist across West Lothian with the aim of addressing food insecurity. Innovative community initiatives such as communal fridges and pantries, shared meals and community gardens are helping to provide an invaluable lifeline to people struggling to keep their head above water.

Visit the site for details on all organisations and projects running around your area:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/48304/Access-to-Food>

You can zoom in on the map and click the yellow markers to see opening times and locations for each project.

Help with Domestic Abuse (Call 999 in an Emergency)



DASAT (Domestic and Sexual Assault Team)

Provides specialised service to adults and children in West Lothian who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/44932/Domestic-Abuse>

Tel: 01506 281055 or email dasat@westlothian.gov.uk for confidential and friendly support. They provide tailored support for adults and children survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault. Living in safe accommodation (LISA) - Call: 01506 281055 You can also call 0808 2000 247 for the National Domestic Abuse Helpline 24 hours a day 365 days per year.

SCOTTISH WOMEN`S AID

24/7 National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Work with a network of 34 specialist local Women's Aid groups toward a shared vision of a Scotland where domestic abuse is not tolerated.

TEL: 0800 027 1234 or [Chat online](#)

<https://womensaid.scot/>

SCOTLAND`S DOMESTIC ABUSE & FORCED MARRIAGE HELPLINE

(Managed by Scottish Woman's Aid and in partnership with Respect)

Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone with experience of domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends, colleagues, and professionals who support them.

TEL: 0800 027 1234 E-mail: helpline@sdafmh.org.uk or [Chat](#)

<https://www.sdafmh.org.uk/en/>

RESPECT

The Respect Phonenumber is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are harming their partners and families.

TEL: 0808 802 4040 open Mon-Fri 9am – 8pm + webchat available

<https://respectphonenumber.org.uk/>

RESPECT (MEN`S ADVICELINE)

Offers advice and help for man who are experiencing domestic violence or abuse.

TEL: 0808 8010 327 open Mon-Fri 9am – 8pm

<https://mensadviceline.org.uk/>

REFUGE

24/7 National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Provide a range of [life-saving and life-changing services](#), and a voice for the voiceless.

TEL: 0808 2000 247 365 days a year

<https://www.refuge.org.uk/>

Financial Help and Advice



MONEY AND HOUSING - ADVICE SHOP

The Advice Shop is a free, impartial and confidential service to help the people of West Lothian with a focus to alleviate poverty and to promote inclusion and equality through advice, assistance and advocacy.

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/31076/Advice-Shop>

You can complete an online referral for a call back or book appointment for form filling.

Tel: 01506 283 000

Bathgate Partnership Centre, Bathgate EH48 1TL, Open Mon – Fri 8:30am till 5pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

CITIZENS ADVICE SCOTLAND – DEBT ADVICE

Citizens Advice will be able to provide help and support with Benefits, Work related questions, Debt and money, Consumer, Family, Housing, Law and courts, Immigration and Health.

[Citizens Advice Scotland \(cas.org.uk\)](http://cas.org.uk) (National site)

For West Lothian Bureau:

Tel: 01506 432977 or 01506 436132

Shiel Walk, Livingston EH54 5EH, Open Mon – Fri 10am till 3pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

STEPCHANGE

They provide the advice and support people need to achieve long-term financial control. Helps with debt management, mortgage advice, bankruptcy advice or equity release.

TEL: 0800 138 1111 open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 8am-4pm

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

THE BRIDGE

The Bridge Community Project seeks to improve the everyday wellbeing of the people of West Lothian. They do this by providing practical and relational support.

TEL: 01506 238 980, Bridge Wellbeing Hub 20 Shairps Business Park Livingston, EH54 5FD

<https://bridgecommunityproject.org.uk/>

NATIONAL DEBTLINE

Give free and independent advice regarding debt and budgeting over the phone and online

<https://www.nationaldebtline.org/>

Webchat available

Helpline: 0808 808 4000 Mon-Fri 9am-8pm

Provides help and advice with finances, debts and managing money.

Webchat / WhatsApp available online

www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk

TEL: 0800 138 7777 open Mon-Fri 8am-6pm

Help with Mental Health



SAMH

Whether you're seeking support, are looking for more information for you or someone you love, or if you just want to have chat about mental health, we're here to help.

Available: 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, Phone: 0344 800 0550, Email: info@samh.org.uk

<https://www.samh.org.uk/>

THE SAMARITANS

Help via unique 24-hour listening service, email, letter, face to face and through Welsh language service. They give people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others.

TEL: 116 123 Open 24/7, 365 days a year.

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

BREATHING SPACE

A confidential out of office hours telephone line for people over 16 experiencing low mood, anxiety or depression.

TEL: 0800 83 85 87, Open: Mon-Thu 6pm to 2am Fri-Sun 6pm to 6am

<https://breathingspace.scot/>

NHS 24

NHS24 is a 24-hour health service for Scotland

TEL: 111

<https://www.nhs24.scot/>

HEALTH IN MIND

All of our services aim to support people who experience mental health difficulties and their carers to achieve a positive quality of life.

West Lothian office: Office 3/6 Bathgate Business Centre, 6 Whitburn Road, Bathgate, West Lothian EH48 1HH

T: 01506 637 572 E: contactus@health-in-mind.org.uk

<https://www.health-in-mind.org.uk/>

SANELINE

Saneline is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them.

TEL: 0300 304 7000 open:4:30pm-10:30pm 365 days a year

www.sane.org.uk

SHOUT (Text service)

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. TEXT: 85258

For Children and Young Families



THE MIX for 13-25

The Mix provides judgement-free information and support to young people aged 13-25 on a range of issues including mental health problems.

Webchat available / Crisis manager chat 24/7

TEL: 0808 808 4994 open 4pm-11pm 365 days a year

www.themix.org.uk

CHILDLINE for up to 19

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can contact a ChildLine counsellor for free about anything - no problem is too big or too small.

TEL: 0141 420 6546 E: scotlandpressoffice@nspcc.org.uk

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/Scotland/C>

NSPCC

Provide services across Scotland to help give children and young people the support they need to thrive. We work with children, families and professionals. We support parents and families in caring for their children and provide therapeutic assistance to help children move on from abuse.

TEL: 0800 1111 open 9am-Midnight + Webchat available

www.childline.org.uk

CHILDREN`S HEALTH SCOTLAND

We offer a range of services to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland.

TEL: 0131 553 6553 E: enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org

<https://www.childrenshealthscotland.org/childrens-healthcare-rights/mental-wellbeing-in-children-and-young-people/>

MINDED FOR FAMILIES

Safe and reliable advice about young people's mental health, created by experts and parents together.

TEL: 0131 553 6553 E: enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org

<https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/>

Help with addictions and drug use



WLDAS (West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service)

WLDAS provide high quality, evidenced based, accessible services aimed at reducing the harm caused by drugs, alcohol and tobacco to West Lothian residents and communities.

T: 01506 282844, Email: enquiries@wldas.org

<https://www.wldas.com/>

CAS (Community Addiction Services)

The Community Addictions Service (CAS) aims to enable individuals and families to take positive steps to recover from problematic alcohol and/or drug use.

T: 01506 282844 / 01506 282845 , Email: socialworkaddictionsteam@westlothian.gov.uk

<https://westlothianhscp.org.uk/article/29287/Community-Addictions-Service-CAS>

RECOVERY

Recovery.org.uk rehab live search shows every alcohol and drug rehab in West Lothian. We will provide you with comprehensive information about each facility and help you make the most informed decision on what is best for your recovery.

TEL: 0203 553 0324

<https://www.recovery.org.uk/rehab-areas/scotland/west-lothian/>

ACTION ON ADDICTION

A registered charity with treatment centres throughout England. Providing treatment and support for people who find themselves in the grip of addiction and struggling to access the help they need.

TEL: 0300 330 0659

www.actiononaddiction.org.uk

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (AA)

12 step fellowship with meetings held all over the country

TEL: 0800 9177 650

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

COCAINE ANONYMOUS

12 step fellowship with meetings held

TEL: 0800 612 0225 (free from landlines only)

www.cauk.org.uk

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS UK (NA)

12 step fellowship with meeting held all over the country

TEL: 0300 999 1212

www.ukna.org

Help with Housing



WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

The Guide to Housing Options covers the main types of housing solution that is potentially available in West Lothian.

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/44313/Housing-Options-Guide>

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL ADVICE SHOP

The Advice Shop is a free, impartial and confidential service to help the people of West Lothian with a focus to alleviate poverty and to promote inclusion and equality through advice, assistance and advocacy.

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/31076/Advice-Shop>

You can complete an online referral for a call back or book appointment for form filling.

Tel: 01506 283 000

Jim Walker Partnership Centre, Bathgate EH48 1TL, Open Mon – Fri 8:30am till 5pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

SHELTER

Help people, struggling with bad housing or homelessness through advice, support and legal services

TEL: 0808 800 4444 Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat-Sun 9am-5pm 365 days a year

<https://www.shelter.org.uk/>

CITIZENS ADVICE – DEBT ADVICE

Citizens advice will be able to provide help and support with Benefits, Work related questions, Debt and money, Consumer, Family, Housing, Law and courts, Immigration and Health.

[Citizens Advice Scotland \(cas.org.uk\)](http://cas.org.uk) (National site)

For West Lothian bureau:

Tel: 01506 432977 or 01506 436132

Shiel Walk, Livingston EH54 5EH, Open Mon – Fri 10am till 3pm (please call or visit site for exact times)

Help with Animals When you are Homeless



PFSS (Pet Fostering Service Scotland)

Pet Fostering Service Scotland provides short term emergency care for pets, when their owner is unable to do so through illness, homelessness or domestic abuse and cannot arrange any alternative care.

TEL: 0344 811 9909 (9am to 7pm daily) E: east@pfss.org.uk

<https://www.pfss.org.uk/>

DOG TRUST FREEDOM PROJECT

Many refuges can't accept dogs, which can make it harder when fleeing domestic abuse. Knowing your dog is safe and being cared for leaves you free to get the support you need.

TEL: 0808 169 4315 E: freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk

<https://www.dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk/>

Legal Advice



SHELTER

Shelter can give free, independent and confidential advice on all housing matters. Tel: 0808 800 4444

LOCAL SOLICITORS

Local solicitors with knowledge of housing law can be found by contacting: The Law Society of Scotland, 26 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh EH3 71R

Other Help available



AGE SCOTLAND

Too many older people feel they have no one to turn to for support. They exist to help older people when they need it most. <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/> free, confidential line 0800 678 1602, Open 8am-7pm 356 days a year.

DISABILITY RIGHTS UK

Helping people with disabilities, working for equal participation for all. Can help with independent living, career change and opportunities, education and skills. <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>

Helplines:

Equality Advisory Support service: 0808 800 0082 Mon-Fri 9am-7pm, Saturday 10am-2pm

Disabled student helpline: 0330 995 0414 (open 11 am- 1 pm Tuesday and Thursday)

Personal Budget Helpline: 0330 995 0404 (open 9:30 am-1:30pm Tuesday and Thursday)

BHF (British Heart Foundation)

British Heart Foundations provide help and advice to people with heart conditions.

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/>

Hear Helpline: (for medical enquiries) 0300 330 3311 open: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Saturday 10am-4pm

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

They provide physical, financial and emotional support to people diagnosed with cancer.

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/>

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/44643/Macmillan-services-in-West-Lothian>

Helpline: 0808 808 0000 open 7 days a week 8am-8pm



We want your views!



West Lothian Council strive to provide a quality service to you, and continually look at ways to develop and improve services. We want to know how you feel about your personal experience of our Housing Needs Service.

Feedback

It would be helpful if you could complete this short survey to give us this information. If you feel strongly about anything in particular, please use the comments box to write your thoughts.

To complete the survey, please visit - <https://www.surveyhero.com/s/2023HOOV2>

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received from Housing Options you can complete an online complaint form or call 01506 280000 to make a direct complaint which will be dealt with by the Housing Options Manager.

To log a complaint visit - <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/45309/Make-a-Complaint>



This document is available on request as a paper copy, including in large print and easy read, in braille, and BSL DVD.

Please contact the Housing Options Team on 01506 280000

