Housing, Customer and Building Services

Landlord Report

2026

West Lothian Council

Introduction

Welcome to West Lothian Council's latest edition of our Landlord Report. This covers the performance of Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS) from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026; this is referred to throughout this report as the 'reporting year'.

Over the past year, our combined efforts have resulted in substantial improvements across all aspects of our service, demonstrating our dedication to ensuring tenant satisfaction. These achievements extend to our exceptional performance in meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), which underscores our commitment to providing safe, energy-efficient, secure, and well-maintained social housing in Scotland. Furthermore, we have observed that for 2025/26, the overall satisfaction of our tenants remains the same.

As we move into the next reporting year, our service will continue to adapt, innovate, and collaborate to improve tenant satisfaction and commit to improving services to meet our tenants' needs.



Julie Whitelaw
Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

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Background

The Scottish Social Housing Charter (The Charter) is a requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and sets out the standards and outcomes which social landlords should aim to achieve when performing housing activities.

The Charter applies to all local authorities and social landlords in Scotland, with each landlord being required to submit an annual return on their performance to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by 31st May each year.

The SHR is an independent regulatory authority which monitors progress against these standards; this is known as the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).

Within the Charter there are six standards:

- The Customer Landlord Relationship
- Housing Quality & Maintenance
- Neighbourhood & Community
- Access to Housing and Support
- Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges
- Other Customers *(Standard 6 applies only to those that are responsible for managing sites for gypsies/travellers. As we do not currently have any sites, this standard does not apply to West Lothian Council).*

Under each standard, there is a clear statement of what tenants and service users can expect from their landlord, and underpinning each standard there are Performance Indicators which each landlord must report on each year.

For 2025/26, the SHR have made several changes to the information that landlords are required to report through the ARC. New Indicators have been introduced, some have been removed and/or changed.

This year, the council was required to report performance against each of these indicators to the SHR and publish a Landlord Report to tenants. Some sections of this year's report will look different from previous years due to the changes to the indicators.

Information in this report shows how well the council has performed against each of the standards that apply to them as a landlord. This report is produced in association with the members of the Tenants Panel, to ensure the information is clear and of interest to tenants and service users.

The SHR's website shows performance information from all local authorities and social housing landlords from across Scotland. If you would like to compare the Council's performance with up to four other social landlords, you can do so using the Landlord Comparison Tool, which can be found here:

https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance

Landlord Information

Council housing in West Lothian is managed by Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS). The service is managed by Julie Whitelaw, the Head of Service, with the support of a Senior Management Team.

HCBS are made up of the following service areas:

- Building Services
- Housing Need
- Housing Operations
- Housing Strategy and Development
- Performance and Change
- Customer and Community Services *

The council aims to offer an effective service, managing, maintaining and improving homes whilst delivering an excellent value-for-money service

* Please note that whilst Customer and Community Services is within our service structure in West Lothian Council, it is not funded by the Housing Revenue Account.

Housing Customer and Building Services employs around **588** officers to provide quality homes for rent.



Our Housing Stock

In the reporting year, the weekly rent was increased for all properties by 3.5%, as agreed by tenants as part of the five-year strategy in February 2023.

As of 31 March 2026, the council had 14,348 homes for rent, an increase in our housing stock of 68 houses from 2024/25.

Here we show the size and average weekly rent for our housing stock:

Type of Property Available for Rent	No. of Properties Available for Rent	Average Weekly Rent per Property Type
Bedsit	15	£90.33
One Bed	2,638	£89.09
Two Bed	6,776	£92.40
Three Bed	4,265	£96.13
Four+ Bed	654	£103.05



Performance Against The ARC for 2025/26

Standard 1 - The Customer Landlord Relationship

Every tenant and customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Tenant Satisfaction

We have developed a customer engagement and feedback approach designed to maximise opportunities for collecting the lived experiences of our tenants and service users. This ensures we are capturing valuable insights to continuously improve our services based on real-life experiences.

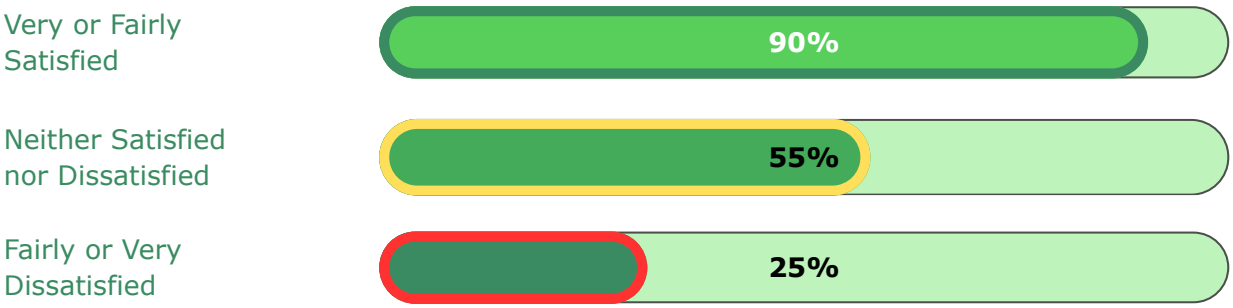
We are pleased that tenant satisfaction levels have remained stable over the past year, with most indicators continuing to perform at the same level. Maintaining this consistency demonstrates our commitment to delivering services that meet the needs of our tenants.

This reflects our commitment to enhancing the tenant's experience through a multifaceted approach.

Our Customer and Communication team have been working hard to understand our tenants' journey and involve them in shaping our services, resulting in a more tenant-centric approach. We will continue to work with tenants to improve their experience and ensure that we communicate with them about what matters to them at the right time.

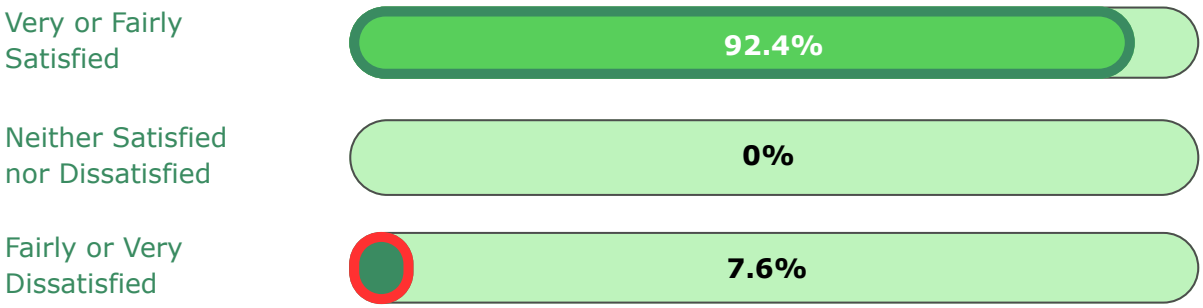
Throughout this report, we provide information from the survey showing how tenants feel HCBS performed against certain charter indicators. We also show the number of tenants who responded to each question.

These are shown as bars which represent:



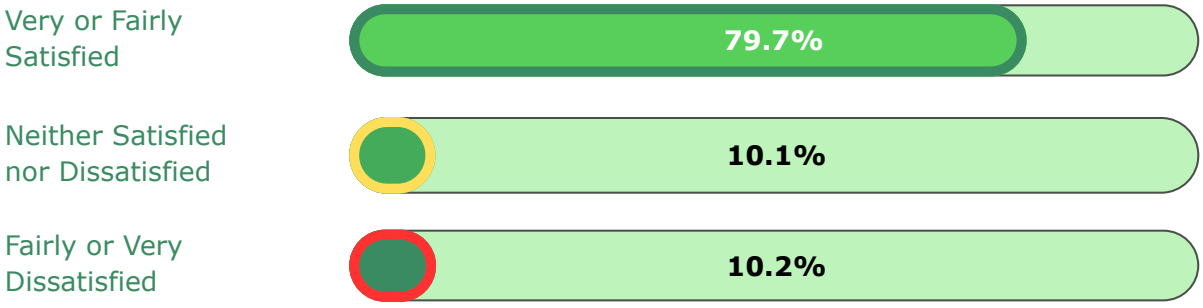
Overall Satisfaction: 794 responses Received

Q. Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by your landlord?



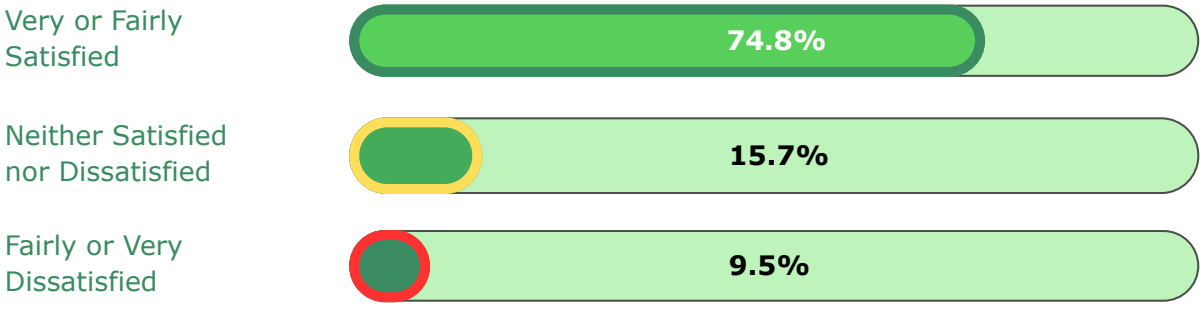
Communication Satisfaction: 794 Responses

Q. How good or poor do you feel your landlord is at keeping you informed about their services and decisions?



Participation Satisfaction: 794 Responses

Q. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities given to you to participate in your landlord's decision-making process?



Standard 2 - Housing Quality and Maintenance

Tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated; are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.

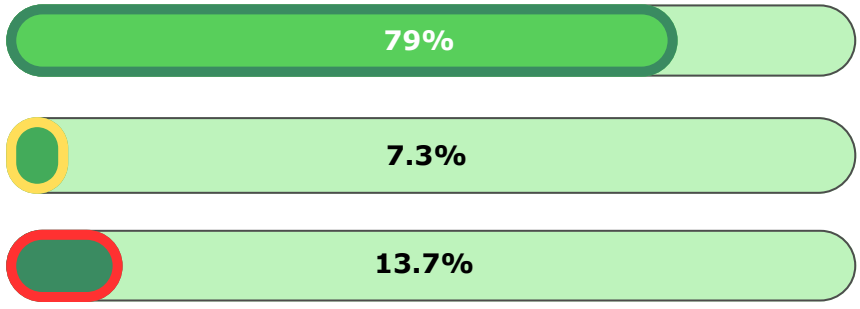
Tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

Scottish Housing Quality Standard

The Scottish Government introduced the SHQS in February 2004. At the end of the reporting year, 13,746 properties met the quality standards of the SHQS. Our compliance figures have slightly declined, not because the stock is deteriorating, but because our identification methods are more rigorous. We are actively capturing and programming work for issues that previously would have gone undetected.

Quality of Home Satisfaction: 794 Responses

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?





Repairs

The council offers scheduled appointments for routine repairs, so there is a choice of a morning or afternoon slot(anytime between 8 am and 4:30 pm).

To help the council manage each reported repair, these are categorised based on the type and the urgency of the repair. It is important for you to know this, as each category has different timescales for when the repair must be completed.

There are five different categories of repair which should be reported as soon as possible. There are different ways to report different categories of repair, depending on whether these are emergencies or non-emergencies.

More information on the different repair categories can be found online at:
www.westlothian.gov.uk/request-a-repair

Booking A Repair

Tenants have the option and flexibility to book routine repair appointments online, by telephone or in person.

You can do this by:

- Online through 'Housing Online'
- Through the online interactive tool Request a Repair Online
- Online at Contact Us
- By telephone on: 01506 280000

Repairs Performance

In West Lothian, repairs to our housing stock are carried out by our own Building Services operatives.



Repairs Performance

Here we show a breakdown of the type and number of repairs carried out, with the average time to complete and the average cost of each repair.

Category 1 - Emergency and Out-of-hours Repairs Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Total no. of repairs	22,730	24,344	21,875
Average time to complete (hours)	6.06hrs	5.91hrs	6.04hrs
Average cost of repair	£118.56	£114.12	£107.75

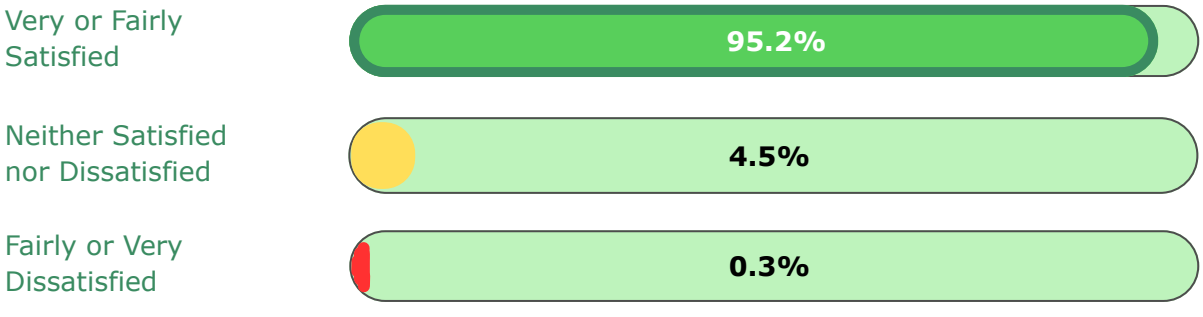
Category 2 and 3 Repairs - Urgent and Non-Urgent Repairs Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Total no. of repairs	13,871	12,762	12,337
Average time to complete (days)	6.64 days	11.69 days	9.23 days
Average cost of repair	£128.58	£129.81	£114.98

The average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs and the average cost of repairs have both improved on the previous reporting year. Following the temporary suspension of non-urgent repairs in 2023, the service experienced a backlog of outstanding work; however, a proactive approach to addressing this backlog has contributed to improved performance.

Repairs Satisfaction: 5,476 Responses

Thinking about the LAST time you had repairs carried out, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the repairs service provided by your landlord?



Gas Servicing

By law, we must carry out an annual gas safety check and service to our homes with gas heating systems. This keeps our systems in good working order and gives tenants peace of mind knowing that everything is being done to keep them safe and warm. It is also a legal requirement that these checks are carried out, and failure to allow us into a property can result in our operatives having to force entry to a property. In the reporting year, the service achieved completion of all but one gas service. The service did attend the property to undertake compliance works within the anniversary period. However, work did not progress as planned due to risks to our staff. The service was completed within one month of the anniversary date.



Gas Servicing and Safety Check Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Total no. of properties requiring a gas safety certificate	14,038	14,018	14,008
No. of certificates renewed by their anniversary date	14,037	14,014	14,007
Average cost of gas service	£64.73	£65.15	£62.58

Damp and Mould

In the reporting year, new indicators have been introduced by the Scottish Housing Regulator for landlords in reporting cases of damp and mould. This year, we are reporting new information about how we respond to damp and mould, including how quickly cases are resolved, whether issues reoccur and the number of cases we still have open at the end of the year.

These new reporting methods will help us to monitor how quickly issues are resolved and help us to support the upcoming increased requirements and legislation changes coming into force in October 2026, to investigate and respond to reports of damp and mould within a set timescale.

What we measure	Our performance
Total number of resolved cases of damp and/or mould in the reporting year. (The total number of cases include damp and/or mould caused by condensation, structural or other issues)	1,961
Average length of time taken to resolve cases of damp and/or mould	31.62 days
The number of open cases of damp and/or mould at the year end	364

The 364 cases still open at year end included repairs progressing through agreed stages or timescales, reopened or recently reported cases, and cases awaiting a final inspection before closure.



*These cases required no further repairs, including burst pipes already addressed and condensation or damp issues where advice and preventative measures had been provided. In some cases, guidance on using ventilation, keeping extractor fans on or maintaining adequate heating had not been followed.

By carrying out more dampness surveys, we have identified more homes with poor ventilation. This active tracking has directly identified 48 mechanical extractor fans requiring installation to prevent condensation and dampness.

Standard 3 - Neighbourhood and Community

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.

Working Together

In West Lothian, we work in partnership with tenants, service users, partner agencies and other council services to manage our neighbourhoods.

Antisocial Behaviour

We record the number of antisocial behaviour complaints made to the council. These can include neighbour complaints, vandalism/damage, street drinking or problems with unoccupied houses.

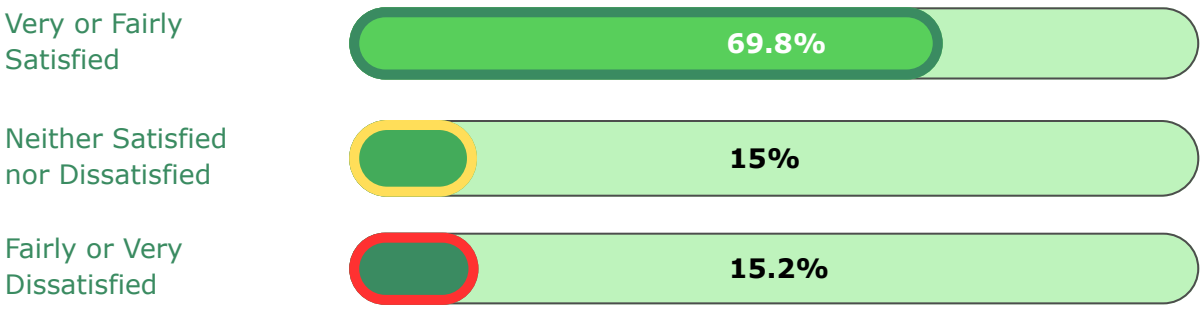
85.09% of reported cases were resolved in the reporting year.

Antisocial Behaviour Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Reported cases of antisocial behaviour	290	243	240
Reported cases resolved	274	206	197

Neighbourhood Management Satisfaction: 794 Responses

Q. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood you live in?



One of the most important things you can do to improve safety in your community is to report antisocial behaviour. With your help, we can stop antisocial behaviour before it escalates into something more serious.

To report antisocial behaviour:

- Contact the council
- Police Scotland on 101. (calls to this number are charged at the local rate)
- Police Scotland on 999, if it's an emergency.
- CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111.

Complaints Performance

In the reporting year, HCBS received a total of 1,067 Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints. This has decreased compared to 2024/25, when 1,134 complaints were recorded.

Complaints Performance	Stage 1	Stage 2
Complaints received in the report year	662	405
Complaints carried forward from the previous reporting year	1	9
Total number of complaints received and carried forward	663	414
The percentage of all complaints responded to in full during the reporting year	98.49%	97.83%
Average time in working days for a full response being issued for each individual complaint	3.48 days	8.30 days
Number of complaints responded to in full by the landlord in the reporting year	653	405
Time taken in working days to provide a response for the total number of complaints over the reporting year	2,275 days	3,363 days

Complaints allow us to look at where things have gone wrong and make improvements in the future. HCBS would like tenants to tell us if they have had a problem with any service they received. Through customers telling us where problems have been experienced, the service is able to identify where issues lie and work on making service improvements for tenants.

Complaints are broken down into separate categories to help us identify where improvements to our procedures may need to be made in order to prevent similar complaints occurring in the future.

Reasons for complaints responded to in full during the reporting year	Number	Percentage
Standard of Service	430	40.6%
Poor Communication	144	13.6%
Waiting Time	238	22.5%
Policy Related	136	12.9%
Employee Attitude	67	6.3%
Missed Appointments	43	4.1%
Totals	**1,058**	**100%**

Standard 4 - Access to Housing and Support

Those looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.

Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.

Those at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

Those looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.

Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.



Housing List Performance

The council allocates properties to those with an active housing application. Applications are assigned to a group, and points are awarded based on applicants housing need.

Information on applying for a house can be found here.

Information shown provides details of how we managed our housing list in the reporting year.

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Applicants added to the housing list	3,395	3,670	5,094
Applicants cancelled from the housing list	1,784	4,089	3,480
Applicants on the housing list	10,189	10,871	11,269
Offers of housing made*	1,467	1,928	1,663
Offers of housing refused*	403	1,126	908

*offers of housing can count multiple refusals on one property. Please note offers of housing made and offers of housing refused are no longer reported on the ARC.





4.22%
of our lettable housing stock became available for re-let.

Letting our Houses

When a property becomes empty, we do our best to re-let it as quickly as possible; maximise the rental income and provide much-needed accommodation for those with housing needs.

Letting Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Properties that became vacant (excluding mutual exchange)	609	662	726
Properties abandoned	53	60	40
Average time to re-let properties	70.95 days	79.65 days	88.21 days

How we Let Our Houses

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Existing tenants (transfers)	80	72	97
Housing list applicants	124	211	190
Mutual Exchanges	154	173	176
Other Sources	7	14	13
Homeless applicants	372	494	449
TOTAL	**737**	**964**	**925**

In 2025/26, the average re-let time reduced by 8.7 days from last year. In April 2025, the council re-structured how void properties were managed, with the introduction of the Central Void Management Team. Throughout 2025/26 we continued to review our void processes with a view to increasing the number of properties available for letting and reducing the overall backlog of void properties. Performance continued to be affected by several factors, including property condition, utility issues, delays with suppliers, materials and specialist contractors. The council is aiming to deliver further improvements in our re-let times in 2026/27 and continue to reduce the overall backlog of void properties.

Homelessness

The council provides a 24-hour practical support and assistance service for people who are homeless or potentially homeless. Our homeless accommodation includes both emergency and temporary accommodation.

Homelessness Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Average time homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation	144.6 days	147.7 days	141.7 days
How many households stayed in temporary accommodation	1,536	1,677	1,796
How many houses in West Lothian were used for temporary accommodation	702	662	641
How many people contacted the council's prevention service for help and support	433	737	937
The total number of homeless households to whom the council has a statutory duty to secure permanent accommodation	896	913	911

Medical Adaptations

At some stage in life, tenants may find their home is no longer suitable for them. This may be because the layout of the house is difficult due to illness, disability, mobility issues, or if a tenant is elderly. We can carry out alterations to a property (as approved by an Occupational Therapist), based on a tenant's medical needs.

These adaptations are to help the tenant continue to live more independently in their own home. Adaptations can include grab rails, ramps or wet-floor showers.

Medical Adaptations Performance

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Medical adaptations completed in the reporting year	695	416	398
Average time to complete approved applications	34.72 days	45.45 days	20.08 days

Within adaptations, there are two categories: Major and Minor.

In 2025/26 there has been a significant improvement in the average completion time for Major Adaptations, which has driven an overall improvement in performance.

We completed **95%** of approved medical adaptations in the reporting year

Standard 5 - Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges

Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

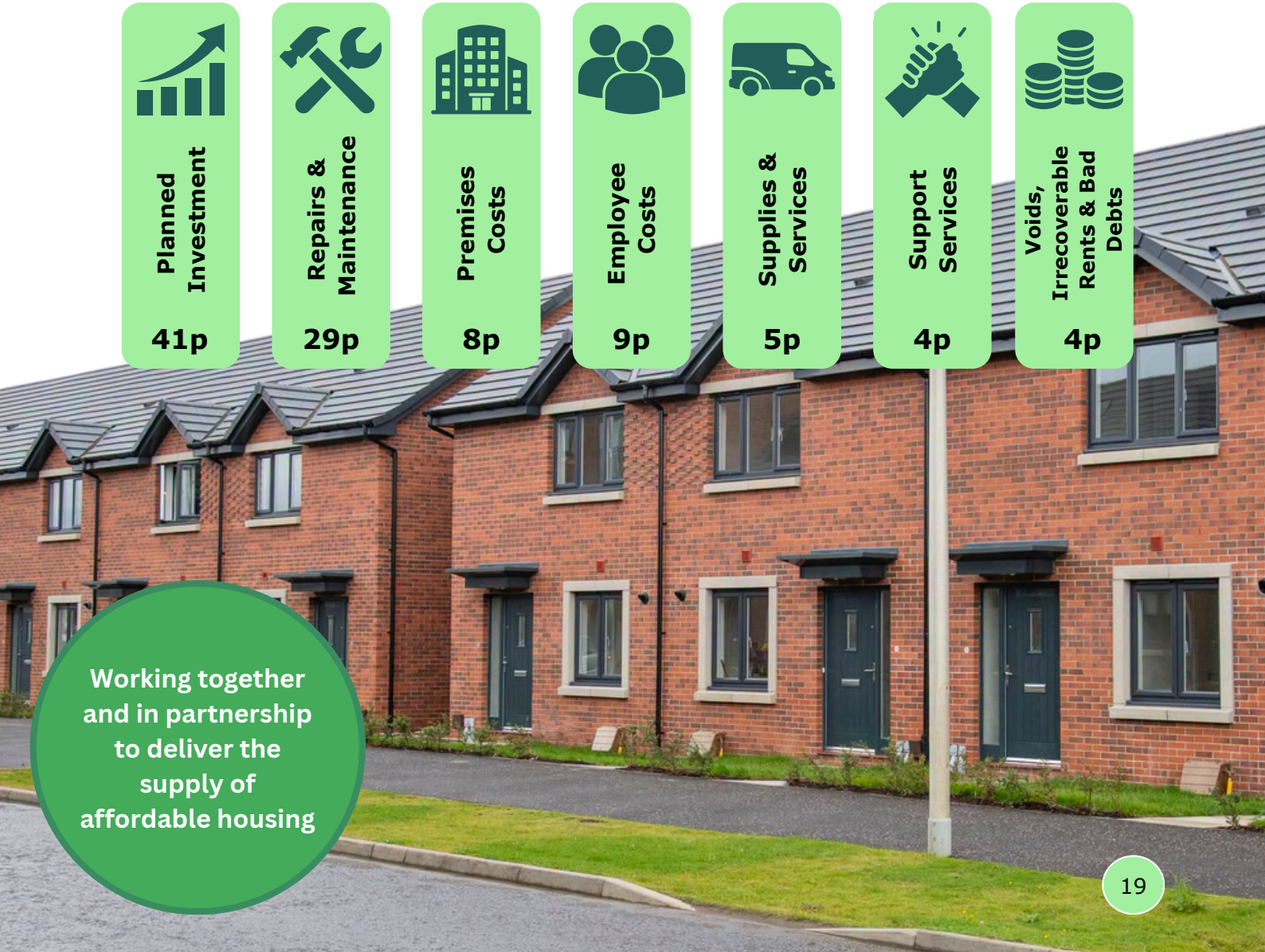
A balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and other customers can afford them.

Tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including any details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.

Where does your rent money go?

Rent money is used to fund the repair service, improvements to tenants' homes and house projects. It is, therefore, very important that tenants pay their rent to ensure the council is able to deliver these vital services. In 2025/26, we invested £25 million in improving council homes.

The graphic below shows where every penny in the pound goes from your rent payments. You can see how the rental income is being spent, with 70 pence in every pound collected being spent on Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Investment work on tenants' homes.



Working together and in partnership to deliver the supply of affordable housing



Rental Income

As a landlord, we have a duty to collect as much rental income as possible so we can provide a good value for money service to all of our tenants.

Paying Rent

Paying rent is part of your tenancy agreement, and it is important that rent is paid on time and in full. If you are having difficulty paying rent, please contact your housing officer for help and advice.

Tel: 01506 280000 or

visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/contactus

If you wish to pay your rent online, click here:
https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/47580/Housing-Rent

Income and Arrears Performance

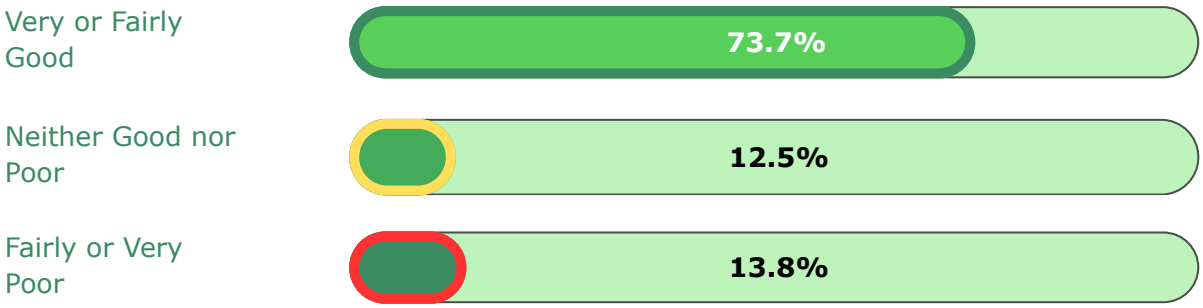
In the reporting year, 5,541 households had their housing benefit paid directly to the Housing Revenue Account, amounting to £11,360M.

Reporting Years	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Rent due	£66.026M	£62.480M	£60.569M
Rent collected	£65.754M	£62.865M	£59.554M
Rent arrears (gross)	£5.762M	£5.303M	£6.002M

The performance information shown above also includes figures for former tenant arrears. When a tenant leaves a council property with rent arrears, we keep a record of these and work with our colleagues in Revenues to collect the money owed.

Rent Satisfaction: 794 Responses

Q. Taking into account the accommodation and the services your landlord provides, do you think the rent for your property represents good or poor value for money?





Rent Loss Due To Empty Properties

When a property becomes empty, we do our best to re-let it as quickly as possible; however, sometimes this can take longer than we would like due to improvement work being carried out on the property.

Priorities for Improvement 2026/27

West Lothian Council complies with the regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Framework. Regular scrutiny of service performance and improvement plan are undertaken via the council's governance structure of committees and tenant scrutiny. This assurance includes that the council:

- Achieves all of the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services.

- Collects data relating to each of the protected characteristics for our existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists and staff. We also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to us as homeless.

- Complies with all legal obligations related to housing and homelessness, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.

- Has considered the Scottish Government's minimum site standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites and confirms that the council does not provide or manage, nor does it plan to have any Gypsy/Traveller sites. Therefore, the requirement to provide specific assurance on compliance with these standards is not applicable.

- Recognises the significant risks and pressures associated in delivering on the standards, achieving statutory compliance, and the difficulty in securing good outcomes in relation to homelessness. This led to the announcement of a Housing Emergency in May 2024.

- Recognises it cannot address the systemic drivers of the emergency position; however the service has undertaken to react positively to the challenges in relation to homelessness at a local level. The development and launch of the West Lothian Homeless Strategy in 2025 focuses the council's planning and operational activity on the 3 key priorities of prevention, supply and support.

- Builds on the good joint working with all partners and agencies which was established throughout the lifetime of the RRTP and with private sector landlord focussed teams to improve our reach in terms of utilising the whole sector, across tenures, to mitigate the threat of homelessness at a community partner level.

- Understands the ongoing impacts of UK Government welfare reforms and cost of living increases on our tenants, and in particular, those most vulnerable to social deprivation. The council has made practical support and guidance a cornerstone of our service development programme, in order to help mitigate future impacts and pressures on tenants and our ability to respond.

- Is focussing on improvements in void performance in order to maximise housing stock availability to relieve pressures felt in the service in terms of turnover.

- Has an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) improvement plan in place to ensure continuous improvement is a key focus for all service areas.

- Has a 100% completion rate for Electrical Installation Condition Reports and Gas Servicing compliance for all our properties at the time of submission.

- Has a comprehensive rolling stock condition survey programme and planned maintenance programme, which ensures good quality data on homes, including information on the construction, components and condition of our homes. Further work is progressing for a new IT system for the service which will enhance this stock data further and implementation of this is planned for late 2027.

Equality & Human Rights Provisions

The council is working towards having appropriate systems and practice in place for the collection and the use of equalities data to inform decision making, policy making, and day to day service delivery. The council provides a diverse range of services to people throughout West Lothian, and the council wants to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to access services and that the services provided meet the needs and value the diversity of all our customers.

This approach to equalities has been developed in accordance with the principles of the council's 'Policy for Equality in Service Provision' and commitments within the accompanying action plan, performance reporting and Equality Impact Assessment conducted on key policy developments.

Housing, Customer and Building Services has a remit and commitment to the collation of key equality and personal data from our customers and service users in order that our strategies and future planning is based on the reality of customers circumstances and lived experiences.

We confirm that we have seen and considered sufficient evidence to give us this assurance.

The council’s Annual Assurance Statement was approved at the meeting of our Council Executive on 1st September 2026.



TAKING PART

The Housing (Scotland) Act gives tenants legal rights in relation to participation and places a duty on Local Authorities and Registered Landlords (RSLs) to consult with tenants on a range of housing issues.

In West Lothian, we have a Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy that sets out how the council will communicate, consult and most importantly, take on board and use the views of tenants to influence decisions that shape our service.

There are many ways in which any tenant or service user can take part, either as an individual or as a member of the various groups in a way that suits them.

We have various initiatives and activities available that provide a means for tenants to come along and find out about changes or improvements to services such as rent levels, repairs or any other housing related service.

If you would be interested in taking part, please contact us by:

Email: **TP@westlothian.gov.uk**

Complete our online form: **Taking Part**

Or join us on Facebook by searching:
West Lothian Council Tenant Participation