



Linlithgow Local Area Committee

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

27 October 2021

A meeting of the **Linlithgow Local Area Committee** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **MS Teams Virtual Meeting Room** on **Tuesday 2 November 2021** at **9:30am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business, declarations of interest in any urgent business and consideration of reports for information.

The Chair will invite members to identify any such reports they wish to have fully considered, which failing they will be taken as read and their recommendations approved.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Committee held on 24 August 2021 herewith).
5. Police Ward Report - report by Police Scotland (herewith).
6. Fire Service Ward Report - report by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (herewith).
7. Housing, Customer and Building Services - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).

8. Report on Progress of Regeneration Planning - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration (herewith).
9. Anti-Poverty Service Update - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).
10. Pensioners Groups Christmas Fund Allocations 2021/22 - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith).
11. Workplan (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Lorraine McGrorty on 01506 281609 or email lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk**



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27 October 2021

The following additional item(s) of business will be dealt with at the meeting of the **Linlithgow Local Area Committee** to be held within **MS Teams Virtual Meeting Room** on **2 November 2021** at **9:30am**.

for Chief Executive

BUSINESS

12. Service Update: NETS, Land & Countryside - report by Head of Operational Services (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Lorraine McGrorty on 01506 281609 or email lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk**

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

This form is to help members. It is not a substitute for declaring interests at the meeting.

Members should look at every item and consider if they have an interest. If members have an interest they must consider if they have to declare it. If members declare an interest they must consider if they have to withdraw.

NAME	MEETING	DATE

AGENDA ITEM NO.	FINANCIAL (F) OR NON- FINANCIAL INTEREST (NF)	DETAIL ON THE REASON FOR YOUR DECLARATION (e.g. I am Chairperson of the Association)	REMAIN OR WITHDRAW

The objective test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor.

Other key terminology appears on the reverse.

If you require assistance, please ask as early as possible. Contact Julie Whitelaw, Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, julie.whitelaw@westlothian.gov.uk, James Millar, Governance Manager, 01506 281695, james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk, Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor, 01506 281626, carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk, Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621 committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF KEY TERMINOLOGY FROM REVISED CODE

The objective test

“...whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor”

The General Exclusions

- As a council tax payer or rate payer or in relation to the council's public services which are offered to the public generally, as a recipient or non-recipient of those services
- In relation to setting the council tax.
- In relation to matters affecting councillors' remuneration, allowances, expenses, support services and pension.
- As a council house tenant, unless the matter is solely or mainly about your own tenancy, or you are in arrears of rent.

Particular Dispensations

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- Specific dispensation granted by Standards Commission
- Applies to positions on certain other public bodies (IJB, SEStran, City Region Deal)
- Allows participation, usually requires declaration but not always
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

The Specific Exclusions

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- The position must be registered by you
- Not all outside bodies are covered and you should take advice if you are in any doubt.
- Allows participation, always requires declaration
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

Categories of “other persons” for financial and non-financial interests of other people

- Spouse, a civil partner or a cohabitee
- Close relative, close friend or close associate
- Employer or a partner in a firm
- A body (or subsidiary or parent of a body) in which you are a remunerated member or director
- Someone from whom you have received a registrable gift or registrable hospitality
- Someone from whom you have received registrable election expenses

MINUTE of MEETING of the LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE held within VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 24 AUGUST 2021.

Present – Councillors Tom Conn (Chair), Tom Kerr and David Tait

In attendance -

Graeme Struthers, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Dougie Grierson, Community Regeneration Team Leader, West Lothian Council
Sergeant Iain Wells, Police Scotland
Gordon McGuire, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Paul Harvey, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Andy Johnston, Service Manager, West Lothian Council
Lorraine Donnelly, Housing Manager, West Lothian Council
Robert Smith, Housing, West Lothian Council
Gordon Brown, Network Manager, West Lothian Council
David Armstrong, Newton Community Council
John Kelly, Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Conn declared an interest in agenda Item 9 as he was a Trustee of the Korean War Memorial Board and agenda Item 13 as he was a Trustee of the Peace Garden Group.

Councillor Kerr declared an interest in agenda Item 13 as he was a Trustee of the Peace Garden Group.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 11, the Chair agreed to bring forward agenda Item 7, Fire Service Ward Report, and hear it immediately after following consideration of the minute to allow Gordon McGuire to be available for an ongoing incident in Edinburgh.

Councillor Tait left the meeting immediately prior to Agenda Item 12. As no reports required a decision, the meeting was able to continue with two ward members present despite being inquorate.

3. MINUTE

The Committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 4 May 2021. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE WARD REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Scottish Fire & Rescue Service providing an update on activity across the ward to 31st March 2021.

The committee was asked to note the content of the report.

Decision

To note the content of the report

5. NEWTON TRAFFIC CONCERNS

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing an update of a survey and investigation work undertaken in response to a presentation made by Newton Community Council's (Roads Group) on 22 March 2021.

It was recommended that the committee note the:

1. speed and volume data recently collected at eleven sites around the village;
2. accident analysis for the area around the village;
3. current feasibility work that was being undertaken on potential path access links;
4. plan to extend the taxi car service to Abercorn, Woodend and Newton area as detailed in the report;
5. future installation of traffic signals at the Woodend junction as part of the Winchburgh core development area; and
6. potential for officers to work up, in association with the community council and other stakeholders, a trial traffic scheme centred around the existing village traffic signals.

Decision

- (a) To note the terms of the report.
- (b) To note that the Network Manager would determine whether noise monitoring could be carried out in the village and would seek data on traffic numbers pre/post building of the Queensferry Crossing from Transport Scotland to facilitate ongoing discussions with the community.

6. POLICE WARD REPORT

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated)

by Police Scotland which provided an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period to 4th July 2021.

The Committee was invited to note the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

7. GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance providing an update on general services capital investment in the ward during 2020/21 and planned investment for the seven year period 2021/22 to 2027/28.

The Committee was invited to note:-

1. The progress made in delivering the approved general services capital programme within the Linlithgow ward in 2020/21;
2. The approved capital projects planned for the ward in 2021/22 to 2027/28;
3. That detailed allocations of block budgets for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 to specific programmes attributable to individual wards will not be undertaken until 2022;
4. Progress in delivery of the 2021/22 programme will be reported to Council Executive following detailed budget monitoring exercises during the course of the year;
5. An updated capital investment programme will be presented to Council for approval in February 2022

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8. SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services advising members of the recent activity of the NET's, Land and Countryside teams for the period 1 April 2021 –30 June 2021.

It was recommended that the Committee:

1. Notes the work carried out by the service within the local area; and
2. Advise of any areas that required further information or

investigation.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES UPDATE -

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an overview of the service activities within Linlithgow ward for the period Quarter 1 1st April to 30th June 2021.

The committee was invited to note the service activity as details in the ward report for the period 1st April to 30th June 2021.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

10. LINLITHGOW HIGH STREET GAP SITES

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration providing an update on the current position with respect to the gap sites at the former Victoria Halls and the former bus depot office.

It was recommended that the committee:-

- i. Notes the actions officers had taken with respect to both sites; and
- ii. Notes the actions which the owners of both sites were progressing.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11. COMMUNITY REGENERATION REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration which provided an update on regeneration activity within the ward.

It was recommended that committee note the content of the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report

12. TOWN CENTRE FUND UPDATE 2019/20 & 2020/21

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration updating committee on progress of delivering the Town Centre Capital Projects agreed by Council Executive on 22 October 2019 and 15 December 2020.

It was recommended that the committee notes the updates for Town Centre Fund 2019/20 and 2020/21 projects for the ward.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

13. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.

OFFICIAL



POLICE
SCOTLAND

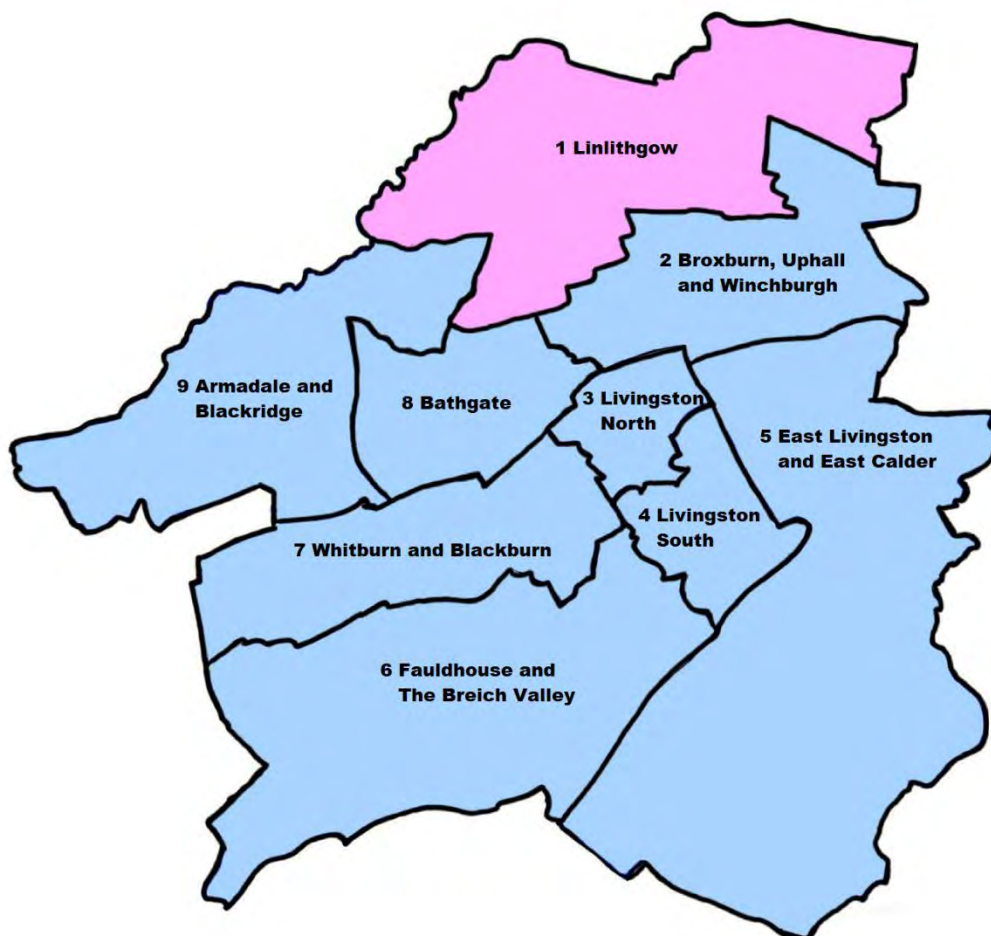
Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA



West Lothian Area Command

Lothian and Scottish Borders



Ward 1 Linlithgow Multi Member Ward Report

Quarter 2 – 2021/2022

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an update on performance, activities and issues across the Ward for the period up to 3rd October 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Local Area Committee notes the content of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Performance relative to the same period in 2020; set out in the report.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger; we take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII	Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Introduction:

This document is intended to provide a summary of the performance of West Lothian Area Command for the reporting period of Quarter 2 2021/2022. The report references the police priorities within the Local Police Plan for West Lothian 2020-2023, namely:

- Protecting The Most Vulnerable People
- Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reducing Acquisitive Crime
- Improving Road Safety
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

The data provided in this report is for information purposes to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities.

Linlithgow Community Engagement Priorities:

- Violence, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Substance Misuse
- Acquisitive Crime
- Road Safety

Linlithgow Community Officers

PC Christopher Ashley

Executive Summary:

Officers in West Lothian have been focused on delivering, with our key partners, our Local Policing Priorities, and meeting our commitment to Keep People Safe.

- **Protecting the most vulnerable people**

Domestic abuse crimes is an area of focus in terms of providing confidence to report, undertaking professional investigations, providing victim support, pursuing perpetrators and managing offenders. Although West Lothian has an increased number of domestic incidents reported, strong links have been established with both internal and external partners allowing increased confidence to report along with excellent support services for victims.

During Q2, Medics Against Violence, in partnership with Police provided further online ASC (Ask Support Care) online training sessions to major employers within West Lothian in conjunction with DAPDG. At the time of writing, over 100 individuals have been trained allowing additional support and guidance to be given to victims of crime, complementing the response from officers. All major employers in West Lothian have been made aware of this training and the uptake has been positive. Further training sessions are being planned.

As has been described in previous papers, our officers have had cause to deal with an increasing number of people who have been experiencing mental health crisis. With thanks to our partners in NHS Lothian, since 2020 we agreed protocols allowing operational officers to access the Acute Care and Support Team (ACAST) in West Lothian, a Mental Health Community Triage System. The ACAST system frees up capacity at A&E/Out of Hours, whilst ensuring that those people who met the criteria, receive the most appropriate support at source. During this process, officers remain with the individuals ensuring support is provided throughout. In Q2, ACAST was utilised over 59 times by officers.

The Herbert protocol has been rolled out within West Lothian with officers being made aware of this initiative and the benefit of it. We have now part of the pilot scheme for the Autism Protocol which is a further development to ensure that police are focused on protecting vulnerable people.

- **Reducing Violence and Anti-Social behaviour**

Recent patterns relating to Anti-Social Behaviour continue with incidents of Vandalism and Fireraising - continue to fall following the 5 year average.

Through the work of the West Lothian Community Safety Partnership, (Police, SFRS, WLC SNT, Housing, WLYAP and Criminal Justice) we identify emerging trends, problematic areas, repeat ASB locations and establish strategies to deal with issues. This frequently involves joint visits and follow up disclosures to enable partner interventions, ASBO applications etc.

In identifying problematic areas, officers are tasked with high visibility patrols to provide reassurance to the local community. We have also ran a series of "pop-up" engagement events which allow communities the opportunity to approach and engage with officers about any concerns they have in their communities. Further "pop-up" events are planned over the next few months.

There continues to concerns raised about the use of off-road bikes in both urban and rural settings. This is an issue across the whole of Scotland. This is being assessed at the Community Safety Partnership to identify an overall partnership approach to address the issue. There has been a number of media requests to identify those responsible however there has been very little community intelligence coming through naming the persons involved.

There has been significant work with partners in relation to Bonfire season with SFRS taking the lead. This includes joint patrols between SFRS / Police and policing plan for the weeks running up to the 5th November and close links to various other WLC depts. And other agencies.

Since West Lothian schools returned after the summer break, School Link Officers have positively engaged with pupils at Whitburn, St Kents, St Margarets, Inveralmond and the Inclusion and Support services. These officers delivered various prevention inputs including knife crime, drugs and alcohol. The funding for these posts comes direct from each of the schools.

Police are working closely with WLC Housing and SNT in relation to three addresses in the ward area where there are repeat incidents of ASB. This has included joint intervention visits and disclosures to enable further action to be considered by the local authority under ASBO legislation.

- **Reducing Acquisitive Crime**

Dealing with Acquisitive Crime to Protect People by reducing the financial and personal pressure on individuals and communities remains a priority.

Recently, there has been numerous Housebreakings reported with various high powered vehicles stolen. Local and National resources have been investigating and a number of arrests have been made. We have utilised social media to highlight this type of crime and to share preventative messages.

Rural Crime - West Lothian Partnership against Rural Crime (WLPARC), in conjunction with Police Scotland and West Lothian PSYV, held an information event at Beecraigs Country Park to highlight rural crime, partnership approaches and reporting methods in relation to

suspicious activities within rural and urban areas. This was extremely well received and WLPARC will be developing their remit further over the coming months.

West Lothian Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV), have assisted in providing prevention advice across West Lothian. The young people completed 168 hours of voluntary work assisting in various activities including letter drops in relation to off-road bikes, inconsiderate parking, rural crime, delivering Keep Safe packs and working alongside WLPARC. An application process for new youth volunteers members has now closed with multiple applicants.

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is increasing in numbers with 1400 members. Police Scotland continue to utilise social media to encourage members of the community to sign up for regular updates. <http://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/>. Police Scotland provide regular updates for the online alerts, to highlight crime trends and local issues.

During Q2, our Prevention and Intervention Officer conducted 7 Crime Prevention Surveys to victims of crime providing advice and guidance on keeping themselves and their property safe. Officers have also been working in conjunction with the WLPARC to share information and identify prevention opportunities.

- **Improving Road Safety**

Road safety is a priority for the police and local authority. Officers in West Lothian work in partnership with the council address road safety issues and educate the public to prevent incidents from occurring.

Officers in the West Lothian area work closely with partners to prevent collisions from occurring. During Q2, Roads Policing officers continued with Local and National Campaigns including National Motorcycle Safety Campaign, National Speeding Campaign and National Drug Driving Campaign. Preparations have also commenced for the yearly festive Drink Drive Campaign.

Between July and September 2021, Road policing officers undertook proactive speed checks in 27 locations, resulting in 32 offences detected, including 41 warnings in relation to manner of driving and construction and use defects.

Consultation is continuing with partner agencies regarding the delivery of Westdrive 2021, however due to Covid restrictions, final decisions are still to be made as to what format this may take.

In relation to 20 mph speed limits, Police Scotland will continue to monitor this trial with WLC. Such limits should be 'self-enforcing' and sustainable, either as a result of the current road layout, existing vehicle speed data or through the addition of appropriate physical speed reduction measures. Deployment of resources must prioritise sites which represent the greatest risk and should only be undertaken where considered necessary and in the interests of casualty reduction.

There is no data around pre/post 20 mph in relation to accident statistics or enforcement, however Roads Policing officers work closely with the highways department to identify "hotspots" for them to consider road engineering solutions to improve safety.

- **Tackling Serious and Organised Crime**

Reducing Drug supply, Production and Cultivation linked to Organised Crime is a policing priority for the West Lothian local authority area and the wider Lothian & Scottish Borders Division of Police Scotland.

During Q2, 25 General evidence / Misuse of Drugs Act Warrants were executed which resulted in multiple drugs seizures and a substantial amount of money recovered. Seized cash usually

forms part of criminal cases and further investigation under Proceeds of Crime legislation to disrupt organised crime. If applicable, police will disclose information with registered social landlords in relation to MDA enforcement action at their properties to enable follow up in relation to breaches of tenancies.

Operation Phantom (OCG disruption) executed simultaneous warrants at two West Lothian addresses in relation to the supply of controlled drugs. During this, two West Lothian males were arrested and charged with MDA offences. Nearly £37,000 worth of drugs were seized along with a quantity of cash.

Any drug supply/possession offences are due to proactive police work which is greatly assisted by intelligence from local residents. This can be reported to the police via 101 or anonymously via the charity "Crimestoppers" on 0800 111 555.

During Q2, officers working on Operation Hutchen commenced an enquiry into recent Transit van thefts in both Lothian and Scottish Borders and Forth Valley Divisions. During this enquiry, a 26 year old male was identified as being responsible. This was due to excellent forensic work by detectives and resulted in him being reported for 24 vehicle related offences.

We continue to focus our activity on disrupting Organised Crime groups, particularly referencing drugs supply, larger scale cultivations and class A drugs.

We continue to develop drugs intelligence from the local community. Drugs enforcement requires information from sources to build a picture and fill in the pieces of the jigsaw and the use of community intelligence in this cannot be underestimated.

Reporting Period July 2021 – September 2021			
Linlithgow	Recorded		
Crime Type	YTD	LYTD	% Diff
Robbery	1	3	-66.6%
Serious Assault	3	4	-25.0%
Sexual Crimes	12	6	+100.0%
Housebreaking dwelling	11	3	+266.6%
Housebreaking non-dwelling (sheds/garages)	1	4	-75.0%
Housebreaking Other Premises	7	2	+250.0%
Theft of motor vehicle	5	7	-28.5%
Theft from motor vehicle (OLP)	2	0	+200.0%
Vandalism	27	39	-30.7%
Total drugs supply	2	1	+100%
Possession of Drugs	7	5	+40.0%
Common Assault	43	45	-4.4%
Common Assault - emergency worker	1	0	+100.0%
Total Crimes and Other Offences	304	310	-1.9%

Through local engagement we will continue to work with communities and partners to deliver a quality service which responds to their needs.

Together we can increase community resilience and prevent crime.

Data Label: Public



**West Lothian
Council**

LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

LINLITHGOW MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT BY SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Linlithgow Local Area Committee on the activity within Linlithgow Multi-Member Ward for the period up to 30th September 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That Committee Members are invited to note and provide comment on the Linlithgow Multi-member Ward Performance Report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being honest, open and accountable• Focusing on our customers' needs• Making best use of our resources• Working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Quarterly reports on the Multi-member Ward Operational Plans are being produced to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan, which is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	WL CPP SOA Performance indicators.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 100,000 population SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes to directly and in partnership to the delivery of the Ward Plan
VII Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII Consultations	West Lothian Citizen's Panel Survey, July 2014.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Quarterly reports on the Multi-Member Ward Operational Plans have been produced by SFRS to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, which is a requirement under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 41E.

D.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Linlithgow Multi-member Ward Quarterly Report

Following the publication of the Linlithgow Multi-member Ward Operational Plan, the Local Senior Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian has produced a Performance Report detailing activity against the key priorities.

The seven key priorities within the Linlithgow Ward area are as follows:

Continuous Priority

- Local Risk Management and Preparedness.

High Priority

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Medium Priority

- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Reduction of Fires in Non-Domestic Property
- Reduction in Casualties from Special Services (excluding RTC's).
- Reduction in RTC Fatalities and Casualties

E. CONCLUSION

The Linlithgow Multi-Member Ward Performance Report aligns to the key priorities of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, the West Lothian Strategic Assessment of Community Safety and continues with the excellent partnership working on Community Safety, which is evident in West Lothian.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Gordon McGuire

Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

October 2021

Appendix 1 - Linlithgow Multi-Member Ward Performance Report



West Lothian Council Area

Ward Performance Report

Quarter 2 2021

Linlithgow

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

Introduction

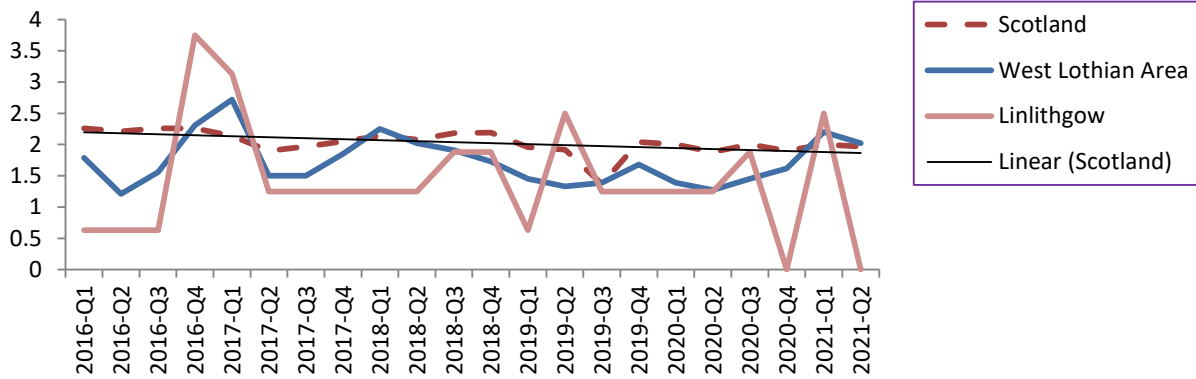
Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Ward Performance Report. This performance report is designed to provide citizens, stakeholders and partners with information relating to ward based activity undertaken by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

In addition to historical ward based activity, this performance report provides information on the historic activity in the West Lothian Council area and Scotland. To allow benchmarking to be undertaken, the units of measurement in the performance graphs in the report are based on incidents/events per head of population.

Whilst using historic statistical benchmarking data, consideration must be taken of the somewhat random nature of fire related incidents and events, and how this can pose difficulties in interpreting emerging patterns and trends. This is of specific relevance where ward level data is analysed due to the relatively small number of actual incidents/events that occur in ward areas.

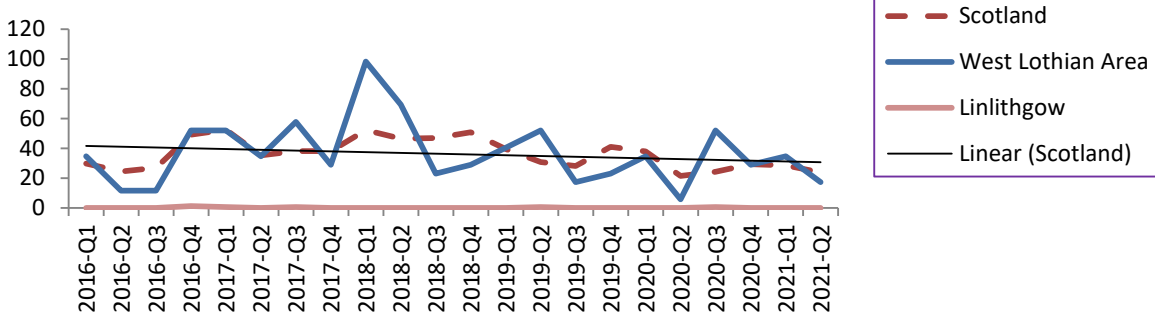
However, regardless of statistical anomalies, emerging patterns and trends in fire related incidents and events can assist the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Community Planning Partners plan and implement preventative intervention initiatives to target reducing fire related incidents and events.

Accidental Dwelling Fires Per 10,000 head of population



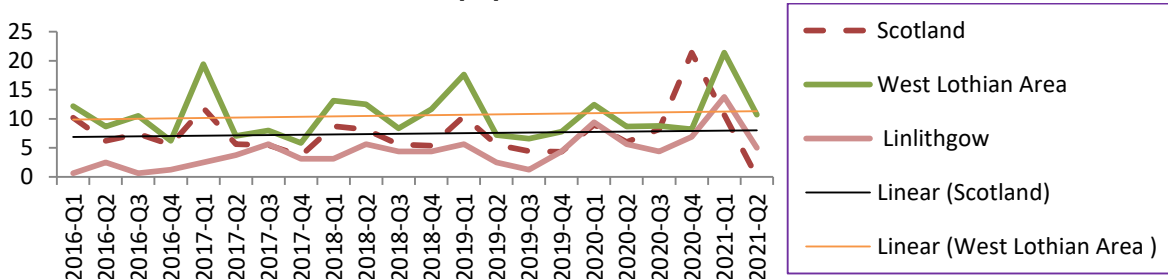
During the 2021-22 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 0 accidental dwelling fires in comparison to 2 during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Fire Casualties and Fatalities Per 1,000,000 head of population



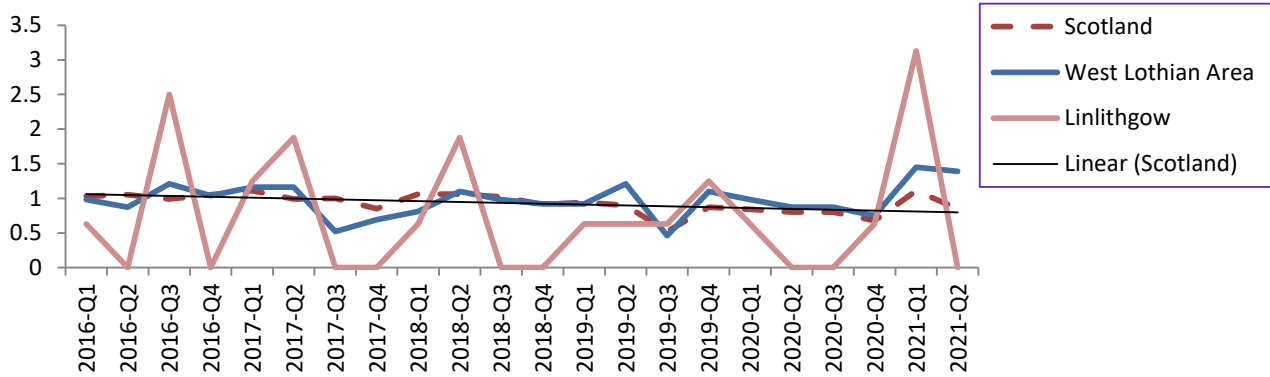
During the 2021-22 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 0 Casualties and Fatalities due to fire in comparison to 0 Casualty and Fatalities during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Deliberate Fires Per 10,000 head of population



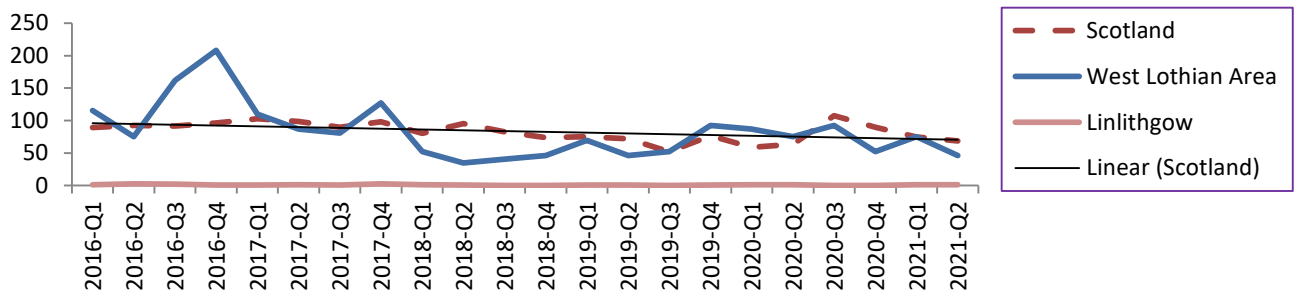
SFRS have dealt with 08 Deliberate fire incidents during 2021-22 year to date reporting period in comparison to 09 during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Fires In Non Domestic Property Per 10,000 head of population



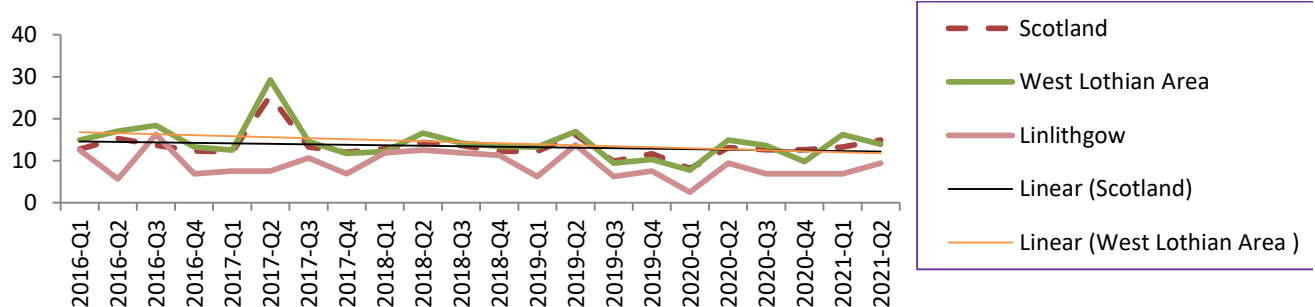
SFRS have dealt with 0 non domestic fire incidents during 2021-22 year to date reporting period in comparison to 0 during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Special Services Casualties (excluding RTC's) Per 1,000,000 head of population



SFRS have dealt with 2 casualties from Special Services during 2021-22 year to date reporting period in comparison to 2 casualties during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Per 10,000 head of population

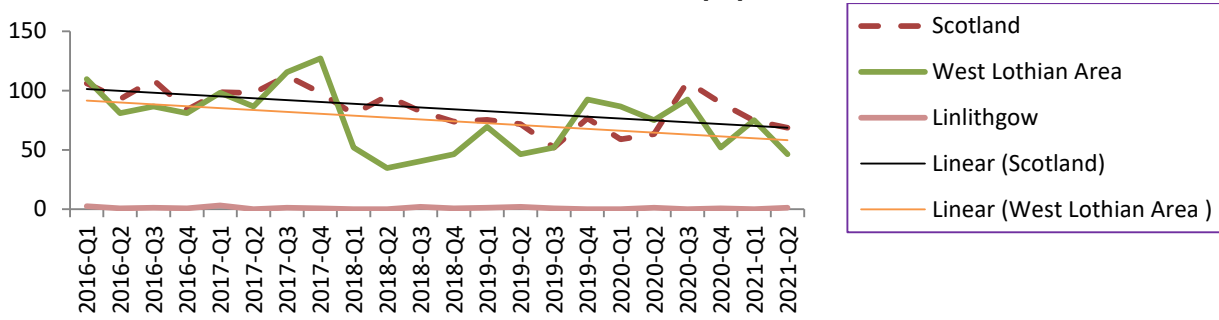


SFRS have dealt with 15 UFAS incidents during 2021-22 year to date reporting period in comparison to 15 during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

Additional Comments

SFRS is committed to 'Working Together for a Safer Scotland' and to engage with business partners to reduce demand from Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).

RTC Casualties and Fatalities Per 1,000,000 head of population



During the 2021-22 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 2 Casualties and 0 Fatalities from RTC's in comparison to 2 Casualties and 0 Fatalities during 2020-21 year to date reporting period.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the service activities within the Linlithgow ward.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period Quarter 2 - 1st July to 30th September 2021.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Providing equality of opportunities. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no impact
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	There are positive impact on the following SOA indicators: SOA4 – we live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities SOA8 – we make the most effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII Consideration at PDSP	Yes
VIII Other consultations	N/A

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Housing Performance Information

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the activities of Housing, Customer and Building Services, specific to the Linlithgow ward for quarter 2 of 2021/2022.

To ensure that our properties are being re-let and that we were meeting our duty under homeless legislation, the Housing Team has continued throughout the Covid19 pandemic prioritising resources to complete the letting process for both temporary and mainstream properties.

Property Void & Let Performance: Mainstream Tenancies

Void Period	Jul 2021	%	Aug 2021	%	Sep 2021	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	55%
2-4 weeks	2	40%	0	0%	1	33%	30%
4+ weeks	3	60%	2	100%	2	77%	15%
Total Lets	5	100%	2	100%	3	100%	100%

Property Void & Let Performance: Temporary Tenancies

Void Period	Jul 2021	%	Aug 2021	%	Sep 2021	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	55%
2-4 weeks	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	30%
4+ weeks	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	15%
Total Lets	1	100%	0	0%	1	100%	100%

Delays in re-letting can occur for a variety of reasons. The type or location of the property, the completion of void work or the identification of additional works not visible during the initial inspection. Ensuring that vulnerable persons are appropriately supported through the viewing and sign up process can also add to timeframes. Some of our applicants have specific support requirements which require detailed planning and co-ordination by both social work and housing services prior to tenancy commencement. There were 5 policy voids in the ward for this period.

Void period	Number of properties	PV reasons
<4 weeks	0	
4 – 12 weeks	2	Asbestos and upgrade
13 – 26 weeks	3	Asbestos, decant, upgrade
26+ weeks	0	

D.2 Linlithgow - Financial Summary

For the Linlithgow ward the collection rate for the YTD in Q2 remains excellent at 96.1%. Linlithgow has collected £1,432,352 vs a charge of £1,489,939.

The overall increased arrears in comparison to last year are as a result of Full-Service Universal Credit being introduced in West Lothian from May 2018, along with other Welfare Benefit reforms and the current economic climate.

In the same week last year Linlithgow ward had 130 Universal Credit (UC) households in arrears. Since then the number of UC households in arrears has increased by 10.0%.

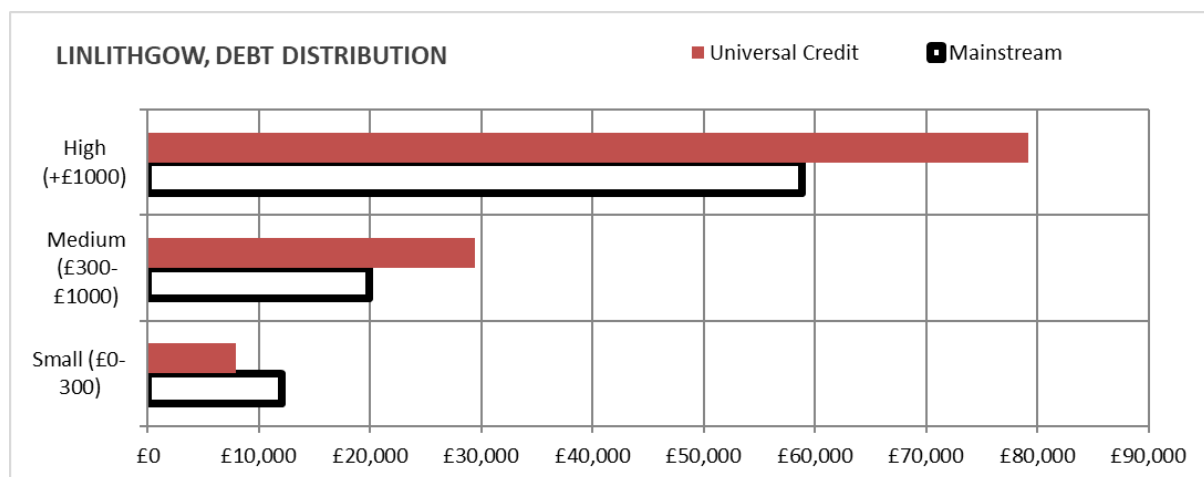
The number of tenancies in arrears in this ward has increased by 9 since last year. Small debt cases (£300 or less), account for 51.5% of households.

There are 57 serious arrears cases (+£1000 in arrears). These cases are 18.9% of all households in arrears in this area, containing 66.5% of the debt.

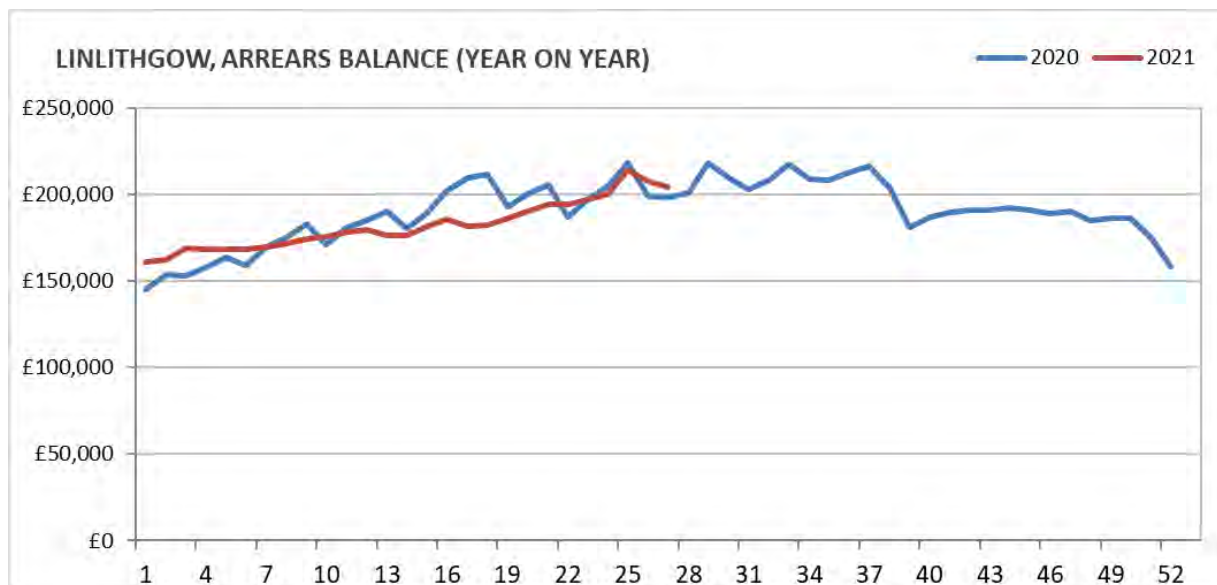
The arrears position for Linlithgow Q2 is £207,533. This is an increase of £8,271 on last year's position. The West Lothian overall position is currently £4,150,768.

During the course of this year we plan to focus on the following:

- Making best use of resources by considering communicating more with customers through SMS, email and telephone
- Benchmarking with other local authorities to ensure we identify and consider implementing any best practice
- Performance Monitoring and Reporting will be reviewed and where appropriate streamlined to ensure information is meaningful and robust to assist with improving rent arrears due.
- Promote Alternative payment methods, particularly the Tenant's Self-Service Portal



Arrears Banding	2020/21 (WK26)				2021/22 (WK26)			
	Mainstream		UC		Mainstream		UC	
	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases
£0.01 to £99.99	£2,046	46	£651	10	£2,000	43	£686	14
£100.00 to £299.99	£11,643	62	£4,505	21	£10,084	59	£7,268	39
£300.00 to £499.99	£7,188	19	£7,165	18	£5,631	14	£10,930	28
£500.00 to £749.99	£3,465	5	£16,551	27	£10,938	18	£7,299	12
£750.00 to £999.99	£5,380	6	£11,286	13	£3,417	4	£11,238	13
£1000.00 to £1999.99	£22,223	16	£30,162	22	£9,301	7	£26,332	20
£2000+	£25,447	8	£51,550	19	£49,545	13	£52,863	17
Group Total	£77,392	162	£121,869	130	£90,915	158	£116,617	143
Movement					(+) £13,523	(-) 4	(-) £5,252	(+) 13
Overall Total			£199,262	292			£207,533	301
Overall Movement							(+) £8,271	(+) 9



D.3 Linlithgow Area Team Activity

Over the period Q2 officers in the team have continued with a blended working approach, predominantly working from home but also out in the ward on a duty basis or as required undertaking essential tasks, such as letting properties, supporting vulnerable customers and dealing with priority issues which have arisen. We continue to work with our Health & Safety Advisor and Trade Unions to ensure we have safe operating systems, risk assessments and personal protection equipment so that we are safe guarding our staff whilst undertaking key essential tasks at this time.

The focus on rent arrears activity continues to be a weekly priority task for the team and officers will continue to work with all our tenants in offering support, advice and assistance. Such assistance includes referrals for money and debt advice, benefit health checks, completion of income and expenditure to help set up a sustainable payment plan and where appropriate, assist with applications for Discretionary Housing Payments.

Officers have also been working to resolve disputes between tenants, tenancy management issues including arranging decants to allow repairs to be carried out and providing assistance and support to help tenants sustain their tenancies.

D.4 Capital Programme and New Build Council Housing

Ward 1 – Linlithgow

WLC completions 25

RSL New Build Activity	Site	No of Units	Site Start	No of Houses Handed Over	Site Completion
West Lothian Housing Partnership	Blackness Road, Linlithgow	14	Feb 21	0	TBC

Local Capital Upgrades

Street	Contract	Site Start	Update
The Cross & The Vennel	Waterproofing & Flat Roof Repairs & Maintenance Works	06/09/2021	All Residents notified and contract is on site progressing well.

D.5 Tenant Participation

The TP Team continued to carry out the schedule of meetings with tenants using online resources to ensure Tenant Participation remains high on the services agenda. The tenants take a well-earned rest during July and come back in August refreshed and ready to scrutinise service performance and share their views on service delivery.

Tenants Panel

Tenant members take part in monthly meetings with senior managers and the Head of Service, discussing service improvements and developments as well as receiving updates from each service area on any changes to service delivery. Members have also been involved in performance and financial scrutiny, questioning information on spend, budgets, performance targets and results.

Capital & Repairs Working Group (CAR's)

Managers from Building Services and the Strategy & Development Team met with tenant members to discuss major improvement works, update them on the various projects being carried out and share benchmark information. Members were updated on Capital Programme projects and spend, the launch of HCBS Community Choices within the west of the county and updates on various projects including the Central Voids Team and Estates Management.

Tenant Participation Development Working Group (TPDWG)

Members meet to ensure TP stays high on the services agenda, looking at ways of engaging with more tenants. They continue to review the current TP Strategy with an emphasise on digital engagement and inclusion. They have recently received updates from the new CX Team on tenant engagement and how the team ensure they promote traditional tenant participation, with the aim of encouraging more tenants to get involved.

Editorial Panel

Members are in the process of producing the Annual Landlord Report and the winter edition of Tenants News. With the use of Adobe Reader, members are now able to review publications and propose changes online prior to meeting up to finalise all articles.

TP Facebook Group

The FB Group Page has around 360 members. The TP Officer posts useful information from various sources such as Scottish Government, NHS and the Council's Corporate websites as well as HCBS information and consultation matters. Recently, the Tenant Participation Development Working Group (TPDWG) have committed to review the FB content at regular meeting and propose articles of interest to post, thus keeping tenants well informed.

Learning & Development Sessions for customers

Tenants and service users continue to meet online to hear about various topics in our learning and development sessions. Within this period, senior managers and staff have given presentations on changes to the Scheme of Assistance (Tenement Management Scheme). Tenants were also asked to share their views and contribute to the consultation from the Scottish Government on the Scottish Social Housing Charter review.

D.6 Safer Neighbourhood Council Officer Ward Information

The Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers are based in West and East zones but continue to work across the nine multi member ward areas as an integral part of the Community Safety Unit, as part of their working remit to reduce noise and antisocial behaviour (ASB). Officers continue to add their details of enquiries/incidents and ASB cases onto the Open Housing system.

During the ongoing safety precautions following the Covid 19 restrictions, officers have continued to work a blended model of working, carrying out some home working as well as office and community-based work for enquiries. From home, officers continued to provide a telephone service were able to telephone complainants and alleged perpetrators as well as corresponding with written letters and e-mails. They have provided advice and assistance, telephone mediation, issued warning letters where there was evidence to do so and increase partnership working.

Partnership working involves the local housing team, council officer with the SNT and officers from Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service all working together to tackle antisocial behaviour. When necessary, the partners will liaise with partners from the voluntary organisations including West Lothian Youth Action Project, Mental Health advisory workers and private landlords in order to reduce antisocial behaviour.

The outcomes that officers still managed to achieve throughout the lockdown for Quarter 2 – July, August and September 2021 are detailed below:

Outcomes

Joint Working	Several reports of issues were received involving privately rented property in Linlithgow. A Letter Drop was completed. The Landlord was contacted who initially said there was nothing he could do, however when advised of his legal responsibilities he stated he would act and have the issue dealt with. No further reports received.
Social Work	Joint working with Police and the AHO continues in relation to progressing a casefile where further incidents at an address in the ward area have resulted in a final warning being served. Social work involvement has also now been included in this investigation and matters are currently under review.

Warnings

Joint working with Police and AHO continued in relation to a number of ongoing complaints within the ward area. A Case was opened regarding a repeat perpetrator who required a second warning notice to be issued re persistent ASB at a property in the ward.

A First, Second and Third stage warning notice was served against a tenant in Linlithgow. The case is now being prepared for legal services for consideration of an ASBO application to the Court.

Also a Final warning notice was also served on another tenant in Linlithgow and similarly, the case has been prepared for sending to legal services. Requests such as these only occur when alleged perpetrators do not heed the warnings and advice given, refuse to accept support and continue to display antisocial behaviour.

Advice

A call was received from a tenant's support worker regarding harassment from local youths. SNT gave advice on reporting issues to SNT and Police.

Noise Calls

Safer Neighbourhood attended calls relating to noise and it was either found to be off on arrival or the householder was asked to turn the volume down so as not to be hard by neighbours.

Report of regular loud parties at private let in Linlithgow. Contact made with landlord who agreed to speak to his tenant re issues. No further reports received.

Linlithgow Ward Data

<i>Cases and Incidents</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>
Number of new cases per month	0	4	6	3	0	1						
Number of open cases (Active)	4	5	9	9	8	6						
Number of resolved cases	0	1	2	2	1	6						
No of All ASB Incidents	13	32	25	26	39	45						

Incident Types	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>
ASB Part 2 Complaint	5	24	13	15	27	33						
ASB Part 5 Noise Complaint	2	8	8	10	5	4						
Dog Barking	1	0	0	0	0	0						
ENV Health Complaint	1	0	1	0	2	1						
Non ASB Noise Complaint	1	0	0	0	0	0						

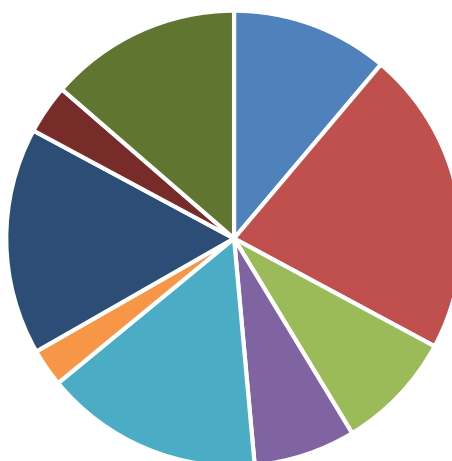
SST Section 3 Tenancy Management	1	1	2	1	5	5						
Youth Disorder	2	1	1	1	0	0						
Unauthorised Encampment	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Grand Total	13	34	25	27	39	43						

Number of ASBO's current	0	0	0									
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West Lothian Ward Data

<i>CASES OPENED – All WARDS</i>	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Armadale and Blackridge	5	9	6	7	1	3						
Bathgate	6	5	10	6	0	5						
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	0	8	10	9	1	6						
Livingston East & East Calder	0	0	2	3	1	1						
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	5	2	2	12	4	3						
Linlithgow	0	4	6	3	0	1						
Livingston North	2	0	2	1	2	0						
Livingston South	0	2	8	7	2	0						
Whitburn and Blackburn	4	5	4	6	2	3						
<i>Grand Total</i>	22	35	50	54	13	22						

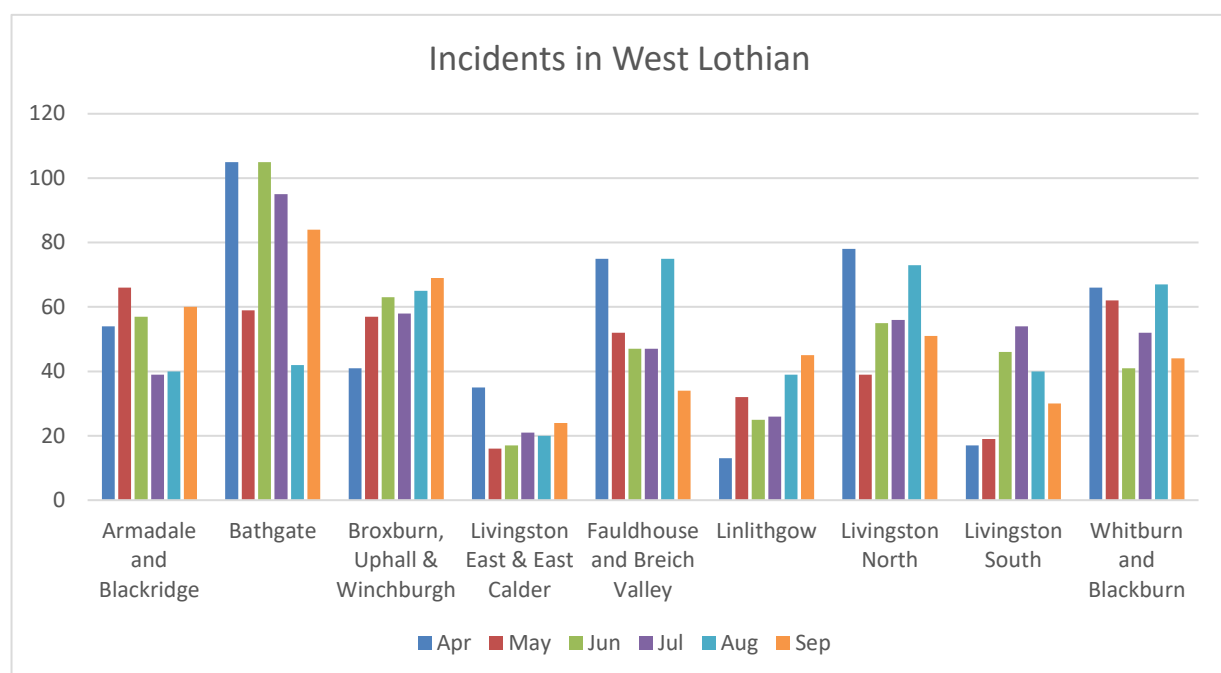
Cases in Linlithgow - Green



- Armadale and Blackridge
- Bathgate
- Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh
- Livingston East & East Calder
- Fauldhouse and Breich Valley
- Linlithgow
- Livingston North
- Livingston South
- Whitburn and Blackburn

West Lothian Ward Data

INCIDENTS – ALL WARDS	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Armadale and Blackridge	54	66	57	39	40	60						
Bathgate	105	59	105	95	42	84						
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	41	57	63	58	65	69						
Livingston East & East Calder	35	16	17	21	20	24						
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	75	52	47	47	75	34						
Linlithgow	13	32	25	26	39	45						
Livingston North	78	39	55	56	73	51						
Livingston South	17	19	46	54	40	30						
Whitburn and Blackburn	66	62	41	52	67	44						
Grand Total	484	402	456	448	461	441						



E. Conclusion

The void and let turnover remains low and officers continue to provide advice and assistance to customers on their housing options. The team have had a number of challenging situations to deal with over the second quarter and are providing support and assistance to customers as best as possible given ongoing restrictions and taking into account safe operating procedures.

Income management continues to be one of our main focuses of work to ensure customers are supported and that officers maintain good income collection.

Officers within the overall service have been continuing work engaging with customers through tenant participation and capital programme works.

Joint working has continued with police colleagues and wider community safety partners in dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour.

F. Background References

None

Appendices/Attachments:

None

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Marjory Mackie

Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

2nd November 2021

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

REPORT ON PROGRESS OF REGENERATION PLANNING

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform the Local Area Committee of progress on partner activities, regeneration planning and other activities in within the ward.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the committee notes the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Appropriate assessments will be carried out as required.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None, although the report sets out a one-off delegate for the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration to approve and disburse grant funding in April 2021.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The proposal does not raise any matters of conflict with the single outcome agreement.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Funding and staffing resources in the COVID-19 response are detailed in the body of the report.
VII Consideration at PDSP	The Voluntary Organisations PDSP considered a similar COVID-19 response report in September 2020.
VIII Other consultations	Extensive consultation has been carried out with the third sector and communities in framing the council's response.

D. TERMS OF THE REPORT

D.1 Background

The report updates the committee on the work of the Economic Development and Regeneration Team and its partners to support communities in Linlithgow, with a particular focus on the village of Bridgend, one of 13 areas covered by the local plans required by the Scottish Government as part of their Community Empowerment approach and reported through the Community Planning Partnership.

These areas were identified as priority areas due to being within the bottom 20% of data zones in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

D.2 Partnership support in Bridgend

D2.1 Linlithgow Young People Project (LYPP)

With the end of the summer programme LYPP have relaunched activities both in the community and in schools and a programme has been developed for the coming months.

A fourth edition of the Bridgend Newsletter was produced and distributed for the Autumn. This provided updates or promotion of a range of services including: 1st Step, Access to Employment, Advice Shop, Bridgend Community Centre, Bridgend Primary School, Cyrenians, Linlithgow Young People's Project, Police Scotland, Access 2 Employment, Challenge Poverty Week, West Lothian Council's consultation on Women's safety, Pardovan, Kingscavil and Winchburgh Parish Church, and the young people of Bridgend. This is attached as Appendix 1.

D2.2 1st Step Development Ventures

The 1st Step Bridgend Eco-Hub pilot has been running now for nearly 2 months and has proved to be extremely popular with local people of all ages. It is currently open on Wednesdays and Fridays 10-1pm.

They are on average supporting around 15 households each day, with over 20 during one session. Due to space restrictions only one customer is allowed in at a time so this keeps the larder busy. As Covid-19 cases are rising this is something that is being monitored and they are very cautious about.

They have recruited 8 volunteers. 6 local volunteers who live in Bridgend and another 2 that used to live in Bridgend.

The feedback from the community has been extremely positive. One mum said that as a result she could now also have lunch herself as well as feed the kids. An older retired gentleman was so relieved that he did not have to travel into Linlithgow and that his pension would stretch so much more now. He also enjoyed the social interaction.

The local community has really got behind the hub and are planning fundraisers to support the hub. 1st Step is slowly growing surplus food networks and hope to increasingly be able to offer more food as they identify more food partners to support the hub. Due to restrictions they have not fully launched but are looking to do this in the new year with a facebook page for the hub to let people know what's on offer each day. They are also looking at setting up flowers and vegetable plants just outside the hub door, the metal shutter will protect them when the centre is closed.

D.2.3 Playbase - Broxburn Family Centre

Since the summer the Stay in Play sessions for families in Bridgend Community Centre have been reintroduced. Encouraging the community aspect, this session helps to target insular lifestyles and bringing the community together again to understand the value of play and feel happier and healthier.

The Zippy Kids sessions are a provision of enriching outdoor experiences and benefits our nursery and primary Bridgend children. Its purpose is to get kids moving and exploring their wider community. This also allows parents to get some time to themselves as well.

They continue to work with the older girls Walking and Talking group and some recently attended a residential in Ardgour, near Glencoe. This group is a celebration of positive peer support with the added health benefits of getting out and walking.

Due to the success of the 6000 Steps to Summer, parents have requested that this continue. Its aim during Covid restrictions was to improve the health and wellbeing of parents by achieving half of the daily WHO daily steps in a session. Again, the focus was in bringing together families to not only get moving but strengthen family relationships within the village.

One of the big lockdown successes was the online zoom Monday Night Munch. Working with Foodbank West Lothian, they would drop a recipe and its ingredients to families and all cook together. With the darker nights the zoom Monday Munches has restarted and aim to have a Monday Night Munch in the community centre in November.

Individual family work is also available to those families that are particularly struggling.

D.2.4 Bridgend Partners Group

As lockdown eases new meetings of the Partners Group will be scheduled to get back into a regular pattern in late 2021 and 2022. With the increased interaction from the partners detailed in this report there are new possibilities to build on and increase involvement of local community members.

D.3 Business Gateway Support

Business Gateway provides confidential and impartial support to residents looking to start-up in business, local firms, new and existing 3rd sector organisations and our major employers. All engagement with Business Gateway is client-led. Support is provided to individual clients and business owners/decision makers. Business Gateway also work closely with the West Lothian Social Enterprise Network to ensure network members receive the business support they need.

The team's key outcomes include helping residents to start their own business, enabling local firms to grow in a sustainable and inclusive manner and providing a single point of contact for our strategic employers.

As part of Council's long-term commitment to retain and attract the best businesses and to grow our value-added sectors, a commercially-focused website, <https://www.investinwestlothian.com/why-west-lothian/> has been developed to

highlight the range of support available. It also sells West Lothian as an inward/mobile investment destination. Initial feedback from stakeholders has been positive with work on-going to ensure the site remains relevant and compelling.

Economic challenge has always been considered as a driver of new start businesses. In the half-year to September 2021:

New Business Starts Linlithgow Ward	New Business Starts West Lothian
14	146
Businesses engaged with in Linlithgow Ward	Businesses engaged with in West Lothian
36 (inc 4 Social Enterprises)	412 inc. 42 Social Enterprises (19 operate across WL)

The 146 new businesses started trading with help from Council's Business Gateway advisers. Customer feedback remains consistently positive as the team continue to deliver the range of start-up services remotely. The vision and commitment of local people to start their own business, especially in such challenging circumstances, is commendable. These new start firms have created over 188 new jobs. The main business sectors are personal, professional and local services. Around 20% of all early stage firms go on to take premises, employ staff and grow the scale of the business. New starts are worth over £10.5 million to the local economy every year.

The Business Gateway team also includes advisers who deal with existing, growing and relocating firms to West Lothian. The advisers provided direct support to over 400 local firms in the half-year to September 2021. Our priority sectors include Life Sciences, Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction and enabling technologies. As restrictions were eased during the year, West Lothian firms engaged with us around new premises, new markets, working capital, Research & Development, export regulation, digital marketing and carbon reduction projects. Council's Business Gateway advisers support firms who have combined annual sales in excess of £1.41 Billion per annum. While these businesses employ over 8,300 staff, it is only 11% of total jobs in West Lothian. However, they account for more than 30% of the annual gross value add (GVA) of the West Lothian economy.

With the end of the furlough scheme at the end of September and higher unemployment than pre-pandemic, we have focused on creating demand among local firms for additional staff. Our "Volume Job Grant" is funded with £1 million approved by Council Executive in June 2021.

<https://www.investinwestlothian.com/business-support/develop-your-business/job-creation-fund/> Support is targeted at viable local firms. Success will be the creation of at least 300 new jobs. Each new role must be permanent and pay a starting salary of approximately £21k+ pa. The new recruits must be currently unemployed and aged 25+. Support for our younger people aged 16-24 will see an additional 100 places offered as part of the successful Steps N2 Work programme.

In summarising the work to date of the Business Gateway team, it is not all about sales and wider economic impacts. The advisers have the trust of local people,

working with them to find solutions often in complex circumstances.

D.4 Employment support

Access2employment provides employability support to residents throughout West Lothian. Support is provided to residents who are unemployed and who are in employment but are in uncertain employment or are struggling financially to make ends meet. Support is provided via 1 to 1's with individual clients and through the delivery of a range of courses including one day specific courses to 6 week personal development and employability courses, Women n2 Work and Men n2 Work.

Advisers will work with clients until they have meet their individual goals to secure sustainable employment including better paid employment and education opportunities.

In March 2020 the service moved supported remotely during the pandemic with 1 to 1 support and courses being delivered remotely via video calls, web-based platforms, emails and the telephone. The service was expanded to provide support in the evenings and weekends to meet the needs of clients whose life circumstances had changed as a result of the pandemic. The service developed a weekly bulletin that contain information on the latest local vacancies for West Lothian Job seekers. This is sent weekly to job seekers and services supporting clients. The service also introduced a service offer to support parents who are currently unemployed or in work but in insecure employment or financially struggling. This is the delivery model that is still in place for the service during 2021.

From the 1st April 2021 – 30th September 2021 the service delivered the following:

	West Lothian	Linlithgow Ward
Number of new registrations to the service	392	8
Number of clients supported into employment education or training	194	7

Overall 1136 new and existing customers were supported over the six months with 60 workshops and 4 short terms N2W courses delivered.

The service was also successful in securing 200 Chromebooks and internet connections to give to unemployment clients seeking work that currently did not have any digital connectivity.

D.5 Town Centre Capital Fund 2019/20 and 20/21

As previously reported the Community Regeneration Officer continued to support the delivery of the previously committed projects in the ward. A final completion report will be brought to the all Local Area Committees at a future meeting.

D.6 Community Council Elections 2021

The Community Planning and Regeneration Team is currently supporting the delivery of the inaugural meetings of the newly elected Community Council's across West Lothian including the Linlithgow Ward.

The Committee should note that two Community Council's in the ward, Bridgend and Philipstoun, will not be inaugurated following a lack of nominations during the

election. There will be a second call after 6 months.

E CONCLUSION

Economic Development and Regeneration continue to deliver and support the work of partners in the ward. The report highlights some of the areas of work and in particular the activities of partners in Bridgend.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 LYPP Community Newsletter4

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Craig McCorriston

Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

02 November 2021

FREE

BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

**Autumn
2021**

WELCOME ALONG

Hello and welcome along to the fourth edition of the Bridgend Community Newsletter!

We hope that as you receive this through the door you'll find the information in it useful and enjoyable to read. I am aware that there may be organisations working within the village (or which offer services to the village) that may not currently be included but want to be. If you do know of any such group then please let me know so that we can get them involved.

As we enter a new season we see the days getting shorter, the leaves turning colour and the weather getting cooler. But as the world around us moves from one season to the next we also see transitions taking place in our own lives. We see the restarting of a new school term, clubs and activities returning and a new freedom from restrictions. As exciting as these things are, we mustn't forget to move forward as a community, and continue to look out for our each other as we've been so good at doing over the past 18 months.

I hope you enjoy this edition again,

Graeme

Thank you to everyone who has made this 4th edition of the Bridgend Community Newsletter possible!

1st Step, Access to Employment, Advice Shop, Bridgend Community Centre, Bridgend Primary School, Cyrenians, Linlithgow Young People's Project, Police Scotland, West Lothian Council, Pardovan, Kingscavil and Winchburgh Parish Church, and the young people of Bridgend.



The Bridgend Community Newsletter is produced by the young people of Bridgend with the support and assistance of Linlithgow Young People's Project.

If you would like anything included in future editions highlighting information or events for the village then please submit them to:

 bcn@lypp.org.uk

 LYPP Linlithgow

 LYPP_lounge

Whilst we will do our best to include everything as you've sent it, we may need to adjust it by adding or subtracting pictures and editing the content to fit the pages.

FIRSTLY, A THANK YOU

'Thank you' are two words we use every day however they are so important to say, and even more important to hear. Whether that's thank you for something huge, or something small, those two little words help to build community and each other.

So in each edition of the BCN, we want to say **thank you** to someone who is part of the Bridgend Community for what they have done. If you want to say 'thank you' to someone please let us know by emailing bcn@lypp.org.uk

TO SCOTT MARSHALL AT WINCHBURGH PARISH CHURCH THANK YOU!

"Thank you to the Rev Scott Marshall for his service to the community for the past 21 years. Scott helped launch the 'The Ark' kids club, run community lunches, and even brought Santa and his sleigh! Scott also spent untold hours supporting individuals and the school."

*Community
member*



**TO FIND US
SIMPLY SEARCH:**

BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

**MAKE SURE YOU LIKE OUR
PAGE TO KEEP UP TO DATE
WITH EVERYTHING GOING ON!**

In the last edition of the 'Bridgend Community Newsletter' we let you know about the start of the 'Bridgend Community Noticeboard' on Facebook!

This is an additional source of information for those living and participating in the life of the Bridgend Community.

If you are part of a group, or know of one that operates in the community or serves it, then we'd love to hear from you so that we can add your details to the board. We hope this will be of benefit to the whole community and will be a useful tool to make use of. Please remember that in order to make the page as community friendly as possible, it will initially run as a noticeboard rather than a discussion forum.

If you have suggestions to help us run this site, please feel free to contact us at bcn@lypp.org.uk or search for us at 'Bridgend Community Noticeboard' on Facebook.



Experienced advisers are here to offer one to one support, to help you recognise the range of skills you have to offer potential employers.

Our advisers can help you develop an employment action plan which includes help with online applications, CV preparation, mock interviews, and assistance to identify suitable vacancies. The service is currently available online, however we are hopeful in addition to this, that the team will soon be back out again across West Lothian at its community locations.

If you are currently seeking new employment, a useful starting point is recognising your transferable skills gained through education, employment and your personal life. Our advisers will work with you to identify these, not only strengthening your CV and job applications, but also expand the opportunities available to you.

To book a telephone or online appointment you can contact the team on

access2employment@westlothian.gov.uk

or phone for free on

0800 032 9768

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PAST 18 MONTHS HAS CHANGED ALL OF OUR LIVES IN WAYS WE COULD NOT HAVE IMAGINED: AFFECTING OUR RELATIONSHIPS, OUR FINANCES AND OUR MENTAL HEALTH.

For families living on a low income though, the daily stresses of getting by were unfortunately nothing new, but the pandemic only made matters worse. Due to the fact we were all staying at home more, many families had to face an increased cost in their food and energy bills.

New evidence shows that those in the greatest financial difficulty going into the pandemic are more likely to have reported mental health problems.

Families can speak to an adviser who can check benefit entitlement, provide help with claims, assist with budgeting support, energy and debt advice.

The removal of the Universal Credit £20 weekly uplift at the end of October will mean even more families may be pushed to the brink struggling to stay afloat however ***West Lothian Council's Advice Shop are here to help.***

To speak to an adviser contact us via:



01506 283000



advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk



www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop

Pardovan, Kingscavil & Winchburgh Parish Church

Covid is still restricting much of what we used to do, but things are beginning to get back to some degree of normality and the Kirk Session and Board will soon be looking at what we can restart safely.



As you may know, the Rev Scott Marshall retired at the end of June and I have now taken over as the locum minister covering the parish and available to deal with pastoral situations. Although I am only working two days and Sundays each week, I will do my best to respond. Every blessing, Derek

To contact Rev Derek R Henderson his details are:

dhenderson@churchofscotland.org.uk or 01506 844787

Bridgend Nursery & Primary School



As a school we are delighted to welcome back all the children for this next session! As we start this school year, we continue to focus on the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child', and understand how they impact not just the school values but also our lives. As a school, we are trying to raise awareness of what bullying behaviour is and what that might look like, as highlighted recently in the sporting world. We have also recently developed our 'Positive Relationships Blueprint' and will be updating our anti-bullying policy. If you would like to be included in this discussion and process, please contact the school office to find out how!

Nursery - The children in our early years provision have been enjoying the sunny weather and visiting different areas of the local community. The children are continuing to learn how to risk assess their own play and identify potential dangers to help keep them safe in the nursery and at home.

P1/2 have been busy over the last few weeks getting to know their classmates, making new friends and adjusting to new routines. They have been developing their team work skills by following instructions, solving problems and compromising with others. We started the term by reading 'Rainbow Fish' and have since been looking at creatures which live under the sea and investigating them.



P3/4/5 began the term by learning about the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child' which cover all aspects of their life and explains how adults must work together to make sure all children can enjoy them. After this they'll start to consider the 'UN Sustainable Development Goals' (Global Goals) with a focus on 'Life Under Water' and plastic pollution using the heading 'Our Planet, Our Home'. To coincide with the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021, their topic will then change to 'Climate Action'.

In the Hive, as well as literacy and numeracy the children have been focussing on developing their social skills through teamwork and challenges. They are talking about their strengths and how they can develop their skills through their own personal interests and linking these to their learning. Throughout this session there will be a focus on ECO schools and how they can improve their school environment.

P5/6/7 have been hard at work since returning to school, enjoying working with 'Kids Gone Wild' as well as completing Level 1 of 'Bikeability'. There have been lots of discussions about school rules and considering how each of them can be a role model. This has tied in very well with the class novel, 'Wonder', however we think Mr McKechnie is the only one not to have seen the film yet!



Bridgend Community Centre

This summer we were delighted to host 'Action for Children's' summer programme within the community centre and see other groups start including the food larder which is now in place and is running well.

From the 9th August 2021 we were once again able to have groups return to the building, and all previous let holders have been contacted to invite them back. We are hoping the programme for 2021/2022 will start to filling up so look out for our updated programme which will be advertised soon. If you are looking to return to using the centre, please get in touch as soon as possible or if you would like to start a new group at the centre, we would love to hear from you!

You are now able to hire the Community Centre hall for parties and other functions, so if you are interested in a date please speak to

julie.witherwick@westlothian.gov.uk

or Christine.paxton@westlothian.gov.uk



Free bike maintenance workshop and advice

Got a bike that needs a little bit of a tweak? Flat tyre? Brakes not working properly? Squeaking?

Why not bring it along to one of our FREE bike maintenance workshops for a repair and advice?



**1 - 3pm
Bridgend Park
Friday 1st October**

THE NEW 1ST STEP PILOT PROJECT IS NOW OPEN AND OPERATING FROM THE BRIDGEND COMMUNITY CENTER EVERY WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY FROM 10 AM TO 1PM.

The '1st Step Bridgend Eco-hub' is here to help individuals and families gain access to essential items and food, including some staples. The availability of items will be dependent on donations of excess food from local businesses and supermarkets. It is our hope however to build up a good network of suppliers in order to avoid good food from going to waste whilst also helping you save money and the planet!

To make this project possible we are grateful for the generous support from West Lothian Council, who are giving us a dedicated room for the Hub. We are also receiving support from the West Lothian Food Insecurity Network which is funded by West Lothian Council and FARESHARE.

We have already shared lots of pre-loved toys and clothes that have found new homes and we hope to build this up to also offer school uniforms (only if in very good condition) and other items that the local community say are needed!

The Hub is open to everyone including those on a low income, and anyone who wants to prevent food waste. We are happy to receive donations which will go back into the project helping it stay sustainable.



Our hope is that over time, the hub will grow into something that is really well used and valued by the local community! We are hoping to take things slowly, and grow with the number of people using the hub in order to sustainably respond to the needs of our local community.

As the Eco-Hub is still in its pilot stage, any and all suggestions are welcome!

If want to find out more you can drop in when it is open, or email:
firststepdevelopment@gmail.com

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK



CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK TAKES PLACE FROM THE 4TH TO THE 10TH OF OCTOBER THIS YEAR AND AIMS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HOW THE TIGHTENING GRIP OF POVERTY RESTRICTS PEOPLE'S LIVES IN SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS AND HOW IT CAN FEEL IMPOSSIBLE TO BREAK FREE.

We all feel the pressure of increasing costs and rising bills, but for some who live with a low income, it can be difficult just to stay afloat. The Advice Shop is:

Friendly, knowledgeable advisors can carry out a benefit check to make sure you are getting your full social security entitlement and can help when things go wrong with your benefits

A team of specialist debt advisors can help you to get on top of debt and find a solution that works best for you. They can also offer support with money management and budgeting.

Energy advisors can help you to make sure you are on the best rates and not paying more than you need to for gas and electricity. They can also help you with any problems with bills or if you have fallen behind with your payments

Housing advice and support is available for any housing issues including exploring your housing options, help if you are facing homelessness and support if you have rent arrears

Bridgend is known as a tight knit community, where residents know and want to support their family, friends and neighbours. If you know anyone who might be struggling with money worries, pass along the Advice Shop contact details or encourage them to get in touch for support.

To speak to an adviser contact us via:



01506 283000



advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk



www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop-referral



AFTER OVER A YEAR OF NOT BEING ABLE TO RUN OUR USUAL HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES WE WERE DELIGHTED TO BE ABLE TO RUN A FULL SUMMER OF EVENTS AGAIN!

Thanks to funding gained through West Lothian Councils 'Get into Summer' initiative and through previous funding from Stewart Investors we were able to launch a unique summer of activity and opportunity. Every young person attending these events received a FREE 'Get into summer' hoodie and water bottle at the end and were provided with lunch, fresh fruit, water and snacks throughout.

Each Tuesday young people from Bridgend and Linlithgow set off on day trips to various activities and this time together helped forge new relationships and break down barriers between the groups. This was particularly important for those making the transition from primary school to the Academy and we're pleased that 75% of those making that move chose to be a part of what was going on. One area we wanted to improve the uptake of Bridgend young people in being part of wider LYPP activities and were therefore delighted that 49% of young people were from Bridgend.



On a Thursday afternoon we brought various inflatable activities in to the village along with the opportunity to try Nerf Wars and take on a leader in the football panna cage. We saw an amazing 72 individuals take part in these afternoons with an average of 28 attending each session giving us the opportunity to connect and reconnect with many of the young people we were separated from over the past year. In addition to this by spending more time in the village we were able to meet many of the young people's families and get to know them better.

With the increase in funding this year we were also able to provide two trips for those of primary age and went one day to Gullane beach and another day to outdoor laser tag. Both of these events were popular with the young people and we appreciated the additional partnership and support from Leigh and her team at 'Playbase'.

From our end evaluation forms we found that because of our summer programme, of those in Primary School 100% felt more active and 100% felt they'd been given the opportunity to try something new while those in secondary 93% felt happier and 81% more confident.

All this was made possible by the work and patience of our dedicated team of staff, sessional staff, volunteers and funders and it's to them that we can thank for this summers massive success.



As we leave the summer behind we are looking forward to restarting many of the activities that we had to put on pause when covid hit. We are excited about starting some new ones in this coming term when we'll be running various activities including:

- 'Adventure Club' and 'Lego Club' after school for Bridgend Primary School
- A lunch time P6/7 'Games and Craft club' in Bridgend Primary School
- A youth volunteering programme designing and creating a 'Youth Space' in the Community Centre with funding from West Lothian Council
- Wednesday evening 'Football and Games Project' for those of primary age
- Wednesday evening 'Football and Drop in Project' for those of secondary age
- 1 to 1 mentoring and small group trips for both primary and secondary aged young people

For more information on any of our events please contact:



LYPP Linlithgow



LYPP_lounge



mail@lypp.org.uk

Cyrenians

OPAL has several new services starting this season:

Shop2gether provides support for those people finding it difficult to get out to the shops after having to stay at home for so long.

Mates & Meals brings people together to enjoy a meal at a local restaurant whilst forming friendships. The first meal will be on Tues 12th October (6pm) at Leonardo's in Bathgate.

We also plan to restart our popular weekly digital support group plans on 21st September at the OPAL office. Join us to improve your skills on your computer, phone or tablet.

OPAL (Older People, Active Lives) is a West Lothian based charity. We help people aged 60+ to remain independent and connected. Our services are delivered by a team of skilled volunteers and staff, with years of experience of supporting older people in the community.

'Wanderers'

Our 'Wanderers' walking groups in Bathgate and Linlithgow continue this autumn. Both groups meet fortnightly and are suitable for people of varying walking ability.

To join any of these activities or to find out more about our services please contact us on:

**Tel: 01506 815 815 Email: opal@cyrenians.scot
www.cyrenians.scot/opal
facebook.com/OPALCyrenians**

POLICE SCOTLAND

Meeting Date - 2 November 2021
Item No. 8



As autumn sets in, keep intruders out!

We are approaching that time of year again when the nights start getting darker, and as a result it may be time for you to review your home security.

Below are a few simple tips that could help deter any thieves looking at your property.

- Use timer switches on lights and radios to make it look as if your home is occupied.
- Ensure all doors and windows are secure when you leave and when you go to bed.
- If possible use security lighting at the front and rear of your property.
- Make sure all garden tools and ladders are locked away and not left outdoors.
- Use good quality locks on your sheds.
- Make a note of all makes, models and serial numbers of your property.

You can get further advice on this and a range of topics on the Police Scotland website or by emailing us on:

Westlothiancommunityeast

@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

or pop into your local station in Linlithgow and ask to speak our Community officer, PC Chris Ashley.

Website: scotland.police.uk

Twitter: @policescotland

Facebook: PoliceScotland



**WE WANT
TO HEAR
FROM
YOU**

West Lothian Council are launching a public consultation, open to women and girls, to find out how safe they feel in public spaces . This is open until the 22nd of October and they want to hear from you!

At the meeting of West Lothian Council on 25 May 2021, the Council recognised that the onus of keeping women safe should not rest with women and that a wider conversation was needed around the safety of our public places and spaces.

Council officers were instructed to conduct a consultation with women in West Lothian to include but not be limited to:

- General concerns about safety in public places and spaces
- Concerns about particular areas
- How fears may manifest in changes to their own behaviour

If you would like to take part in this survey you can take part by going to:

www.westlothian.gov.uk/safety-of-women

Thank you for continuing to wear a mask in the shop! By wearing a mask you protect everyone!

*Masks are available for **FREE** from the shop courtesy of Linlithgow Young People's Project. We would encourage you to take one for use while shopping or where required.*

Meeting Date - 2 November 2021
Item No. 8

Wear a mask show you care



Now available FREE in the shop!

Autumn **COMPETITION!**

Thank you to everyone who sent us their entry to for our Pizza competition! This time we've teamed up with Dominoes who are providing an amazing prize of a family meal voucher consisting of 2 large pizzas, 2 sides, 2 desserts and 1 bottle of juice! All young people needed to do to enter was design their own pizza - toppings, sauce and layout. We were looking for young people to only to create a delicious pizza but also be creative with their entry. Not only will the winner get the Dominoes voucher - but one of the pizzas will be their design! Every young person who entered will also receive a poppet fidget toy!

We were delighted to see so many young people get involved and all of the entries look delicious! This time Gage from 'Dominoes' helped us pick the winner and we're excited to announce that **Lexi Morton** has won!



Lexi's pizza

A little cheese

Pepperoni

Red pepper

Orange pepper

Yellow pepper

and Chorizo

Lexi's entry stood out, not only because she thought outside of the (pizza) box by using a computer generated image, but she also filled up her design with healthy vegetables.

Keep an eye on social media for next editions competition!

Well done to all our entries!

Zach Simpson

Thin & crispy,
Tomato sauce,
Mozzarella, Ham,
Peppers, chicken



Cody Simpson

Classic crust,
Tomato sauce,
Mozzarella,
Pepperoni, Ham,
Bacon, Hot dog



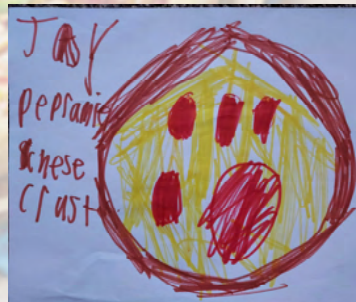
Cullen Innes

Tomato sauce,
cheese,
mushroom,
olives, sausage



Jay Simpson

Stuffed crust,
Tomato sauce,
Cheese,
pepperoni



Sophie Callaghan

Cheese, peperoni,
mushroom, pineapple



Faith Morrin

Tomato sauce, cheese,
pepperoni

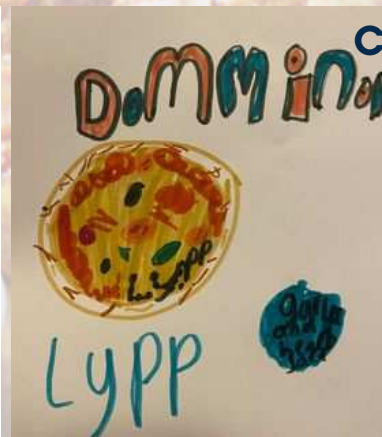
Georgia Morton

'Cheesetastic'
Tomato sauce,
mushroom,
cheese,
sweetcorn



Carly Henderson

Cheese,
pepperoni,
mushroom,
pineapple



Word search

H S T L T E
R D E N M U U L J K G L
Y H M D D Z L Y P J R A H E H M Q X
O J A C Y G I H J T F E Z B C I J M
L I T F L Y E F O R B D F E I H L I W E
A J T L A W T H Q K X S Z R B S I D L Q
H P M Y N M J F O G L E M Q L I O C K G K X
I Q F A I B T V G W Q X W E W Z R S S R Y W
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Y K W P A D X T Q Q L B V Z D
G M I K F C O D Y
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I P U I R U P F N D Z D Q S D
S V M A F E G H T A Y N I K S Z E R F
C X Z O U Z K I R Y Z S M D D D G X V J B
A N H P A X O E T Z X O V W M W Y L M A T
K L M S D A O K F Z K X C H A R V E S T S E M
O S U B Y E N Y M N A T E S N S X Y A Y L
G F T R O O N B K Z J P S Y D N I W E J Y
A W U O C M J L D L J S X R T C K L I
E Q A W T Y A L E P Z H P Q F F S
C I N Q R C X J V X X Z Z
V X F K L L O R M
J J P
A R L

autumn	leaves	fall	harvest
pumpkin	bonfire	cosy	frost
hedgehog	brown	windy	conker

Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

F

Face coverings



A

Avoid crowded places



C

Clean your hands regularly



T

Two metre distance



S

Self isolate and book a
test if you have symptoms



nhsinform.scot/coronavirus
#WeAreScotland

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

ANTI-POVERTY SERVICE UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Local Area Committee of the work undertaken by the Anti-Poverty Service from April 2020-March 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the committee notes:

1. The Anti-Poverty Service provision in the ward; and,
2. The impact provision is having in terms of supporting the outcomes of the Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018-23.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The activity contained in the report contributes to service KPIs.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities. We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society.

VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Activities delivered from approved budgets supplemented by external funding from Macmillan Cancer Support, European Social Fund and Scottish Legal Aid Board.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII	Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Anti-Poverty Service provides services to help the most vulnerable households in West Lothian. The service contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan priority "Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality" by providing comprehensive advice, support and assistance to people in West Lothian who are:

- Without work or in low paid work
- Are poor and / or fuel poor
- Have money / debt issues
- Have been affected by cancer or other long term conditions
- In crisis
- In receipt of benefits and /or have an entitlement to payments managed by the service
- Being assessed for social care services

The service aims to help these groups increase their disposable income, manage their debt, improve their budgeting skills, remain in their home and to appeal decisions made by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The service also utilises the skills and knowledge of volunteers who provide a valuable role in supporting customers to access services and provide a listening ear which can offer a network of support and information.

The service is responsible for the administration of Housing Benefit, the Council Tax reduction scheme and the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF). It also has the responsibility of administering and improving the uptake of free school meals, school clothing grants, education maintenance allowance and blue badges. It provides a front-line service to recipients of benefits, which includes assessing eligibility, processing claims, assessing benefits, processing discretionary housing payments, self-isolation grants as well as other payments to claimants.

All activity across the service is informed and prioritised by the Community Planning Partnership Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018 to 2023. The overall purpose of this strategy is to reduce the inequalities gap and tackle the causes of inequality to ensure that people are not financially excluded and minimises the impact of poverty on the people of West Lothian.

D.2 Provision

Over the past year the service has:

- Fully supported customers throughout the covid-19 pandemic through using pro-active and reactive measures and successfully adapting to challenges and restrictions ensuring all customers who required support received this.

- Digitalisation of areas of the service, improving efficiencies and offering more choice to customers at a time which suits them. This has included online forms, self-help tools and video conferencing software adding a new service delivery channel increasing accessibility to the service.
- Developed and implemented new software to improve accessibility and processing timescales for Blue Badges.
- Worked with Housing, Customer and Building Services to implement the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan particularly focussing on preventions and early intervention.
- Introduced PayPoint as a cash pay-out service for SWF Grants which significantly improved reach and reduced traveling costs for vulnerable customers.
- Implementation of the FORT referral and tracking system to allow internal and external services and organisations to easily refer customers ensuring customers receive the support required at the earliest point. 48 partners are currently using the system which resulted in 3910 referrals being received in the 2020/21 period.
- The service recorded our best ever Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction performance with new housing benefit claims being processed on average within 11 days against a Scottish average of 17 days.
- Completed implementation of a revised Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction verification policy and the ability for customers to provide evidence in support of applications digitally.
- Developed and implemented processes to improve uptake on Free School Meals and Milk, Clothing Grants and Education Maintenance Allowance.
- Payment of an additional School Clothing Grant in January 2021 totalling £622,080 and supporting 7,776 children.
- Application for Education Maintenance Allowance was fully digitalised with all applications made online.
- Supported 436 households experiencing fuel poverty by paying £48,650 in grants.
- Working with customers and partners to increase uptake of the Discretionary Housing Payment. This supported 180 households with payments amounting to £119,011.
- Development and introduction of the Improving the Cancer Journey service offering a holistic service to those affected by cancer alongside the Macmillan@WestLothian and Macmillan Benefits teams.

We continue to embed services into the local community and to support customers to help mitigate poverty, to enable and empower people and work collaboratively with partners to maximise the benefits of our service at a customer's time of need.

Local Provision

The below section shows the number of people the Anti-Poverty service has worked with over the last year in the Linlithgow area and further information on the Anti-Poverty Service.

The Advice Shop has helped 616 customers to manage their money and to resolve benefit problems within the Linlithgow ward. This is a 24% increase from the previous year and resulted in 3,253 additional enquiries and contacts from these customers. As a result, customers have a better understanding of their situation and options available to them. Feedback shows this has a positive impact on individuals by increasing knowledge and understanding and ultimately improving the customer journey and empowering customers.

Anti-Poverty Service

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic West Lothian Council's Anti-Poverty Service has continued to offer help and support to constituents across West Lothian. The service has pro-actively adapted to the current situation to maximise the help and support on offer to individuals and the information and results of this support is detailed below;

Advice Shop

In 2020/21 The Advice Shop has supported 14,258 individuals resulting in 72,540 additional enquiries and contacts from these customers, covering money and debt, energy, housing and welfare benefits. This is a 26% increase from the previous year.

The Advice Shop generated £30,026,258 in extra income and successfully managed £5,334,196 in debt.

163 appeals were lodged to help customers appeal a DWP benefit decision. 88% of appeals had their decisions overturned. This is a 63% decrease in the number of appeals compared to the previous year.

83% of money advice customers debt was successfully managed in 2020/21 which is a 10% increase on the previous year. Total debt amounted to over £4.1million.

1,707 customers were provided money and energy advice to help improve household income. This is a 14% increase from the previous year. 17% of these customers were aged 60 years and over.

A range of targeted support and campaigns have been delivered over the period to support self-employed, those who may have been entitled to Discretionary Housing Payment, increasing uptake in new Social Security Scotland payments and, help and advice relating to energy. Advisors were able to support customers to engage with charities and third sector organisations which had received additional, one-off funding to help the most vulnerable as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic; this included access to white goods, one off payments for energy or transport costs.

Service Delivery has also had to adjust to the current restrictions and new requirements. Implementation of new digital outreach sessions and appointments have been well received by customers and staff.

Improved processes and system digitalisation has also meant that we have managed to continue to fully support customers. This includes the benefit check and budgeting calculator which is freely available to customers. Self-help guides and information continues to be developed and publicised by the service which information such as the West Lothian Food Map. The service has continued to provide face to face appointments where alternative options are not suitable.

Benefits

In 2020/21, 1,103 Housing Benefit applications have been received and 18,362 change of circumstance notifications. Despite the demand, performance remains high and within the target, new housing benefit claims were processed within 11 days and change of circumstances within three days.

There were 4,623 applications received for Council Tax Reduction and 38,385 change of circumstance notifications. Again, despite the demand performance remains within the target with new Council Tax Reduction claims processed within 10 days and change in circumstances within 3 days.

Scottish Welfare Fund

In 2020/21 there was a significant increase in the number of Crisis Grant applications received compared to pre Covid-19 levels. There were 12,789 crisis grant application received between 1 April 20 and 31 March 21, compared to the 8,647 in 2019/20. The total financial support provided via Crisis Grants for this period in 2020/21 is £1,022,126 compared to £375,801 in 2019/20. There is a significant increase in the cost of the grants due to households requiring increased grant amounts to cover the impact on the loss of household income due to furlough and redundancies.

2,872 Community Care Grant applications were received during the same period which resulted in £1,084,269 in Community Care Grant payments.

Self-Isolation Grant

This grant was introduced on 12 October 2020 to provide financial assistance to individuals who are required to self-isolate. Individuals are awarded a £500 payment if they are working, unable to work from home during self-isolation and will lose income as a result. Individuals also have to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit. In 2020/21 from mid-October to 31 March 2021, 1,409 applications were received and 404 individuals awarded a grant.

In 2021/22 from 1 April to 22 October 21, which covers roughly the same number of months as the analysis for 2020/21, 2,461 applications have been made to the fund with 997 individuals awarded a grant.

School Clothing Grants/Meals

In 2020/21, over 4,943 children were awarded free school meals and school clothing grants were awarded to 8,594 pupils.

Children eligible for Free School Meals have also benefited from financial support during the school holidays. In the summer of 2021/22, a total of £729,570 was paid to parents to help with the purchase of food during school holidays and in the October school break, a total of £92,070 was paid. In total 3,303,482 was paid throughout the 2020/21 period.

Discretionary Housing Payments

In 2020/21 the service has made 6,105 awards for discretionary housing payments amounting to £3,411,751.

1146 awards amounting to £632,989 were awarded for financial hardship and 4,959 awards amounting to £2,778,762 for under occupancy.

Family Pandemic Payments

The service administered the Scottish Government Family Pandemic Payments of £100 per child paid in December 2020 to children in receipt of Free School Meals based on low income. This resulted in payment amounting to £608,200

Priorities 2021/22

The Anti-Poverty Service has identified the following priorities for development over the 2021/22 year, which are:

- Continuing to work with partners and customers to mitigate the effects of the Covid 19-Pandemic for customers, including targeted advice and support to those who have been affected in areas such as furlough, redundancy and Cancer.
- Supporting customers affected by debt through Improving the Debt Journey to improve understand and maximise tailored support for long term benefits.
- Supporting the roll out of the Child Disability and Adult Payment.
- Supporting payments for the Tenants Grant Fund
- Payment of Scottish Governments Low income Pandemic payment of £130 to approximately 16,000 eligible households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or qualifying Council Tax exemption.
- Retain Scottish National Standards for Information Advice Providers.
- Meal payments during school holiday periods with payments already made in the summer and October 2021 amounting to £1,042,625
- Payment of the Scottish Government Family Pandemic Payment of £100 per child.
- Automation of Education Benefits starting with School Clothing Grants and Free School Meals followed by Education Maintenance Allowance
- Introduction of a new operating system by the National Entitlement Card Production Office.
- New Under 22 travel scheme for all those with a Young Scot card.

E. CONCLUSION

The report summarises the work of the Anti-Poverty service in the Linlithgow ward area and provide an overview of the service as a whole. The Local Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and to consider how the service could better target its resources in this area. It is the intention to report on activity in the ward area on an annual basis.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None.

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Anti-Poverty and Welfare Advice Manager

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Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 02nd November 2021

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

PENSIONERS GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2021/22

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform the Local Area Committee of the final allocations that were made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2021-22 to groups in the Linlithgow ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups. The committee is asked to note the continuing impact that COVID – 19 has had on the application and allocation process regarding the fund. The panel is also asked to note that applicants were offered, as they were in 2020, an additional option of a pre-prepared meal as an alternative to a direct grant award.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the committee notes:

1. The effect of COVID-19 on the arrangements regarding the Pensioners Groups Christmas Fund in 2021-22
2. The continued inclusion of a pre-prepared meal option and
3. Four groups in Linlithgow ward are being supported through the Pensioner's Christmas Fund 2021-22

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The report does not raise any health or risk assessment issues. No strategic environmental assessment is required.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration Services has the delegated authority to make the final allocations and payments.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	This will be reported against indicator EDR061_9b.1b; Number of community organisations funded or supported through funding managed or administered by Community Planning and Regeneration.

V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Older people are able to live independently in the community with an improved quality of life.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	£29,000 agreed by the Council with £1,073.20 allocated to groups in Linlithgow
VII	Consideration at PDSP	The Voluntary Organisations PDSP is updated annually.
VIII	Other consultations	A similar report will be made to all Local Area Committees

D. TERMS OF THE REPORT

D.1 Background

Each year the Council approves the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund. In 2021-22 the total fund amounts to £29,000 which is allocated through an application process. Funding is paid out on the basis of a pro-rata allocation based on the beneficiary numbers identified by the applicants. In 2020/21 this saw 4 organisations and 159 beneficiaries supported with an allocation of £8.64 per head.

D.2 2021 and the ongoing effect of COVID-19

In 2021, as was the case in 2020, due to ongoing effect of COVID-19, many groups will not be delivering support in the same manner as usual if at all, at Christmas 2021.

In 2020, the council in partnership with the West Lothian Food Network, offered applicants the option of a pre-prepared chilled Christmas meal as an alternative to a direct grant award as a contribution towards the costs an event or activity, this option was offered again to applicants in 2021.

The meal will be prepared and delivered to groups with support from the Council's Anti-Poverty Service. The meal will be delivered to groups to deliver to their members. The value of the meal is equivalent to the amount that groups receive per capita in a grant payment.

D.3 Applications 2020/21

Officers contacted all previous recipients of the fund in Linlithgow Ward, Livingston Wide and West Lothian Wide by email or phone to ask if they were intending to provide a service this year and if so would they be interested in the provision of a pre-prepared meal or would they prefer a direct grant payment. Two further groups, Boghall Drop In Centre and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Whitburn Conference) when contacted, indicated that they deliver to beneficiaries across multiple wards. The two groups have been moved to the West Lothian Wide list.

As a result of this work:

Linlithgow Ward

- Four groups in Linlithgow Ward were contacted and applied to the fund
- All four Linlithgow groups requested a grant payment

Livingston Wide

- One Livingston Wide group was contacted and applied to the fund
- The group requested a grant payment

West Lothian Wide

- Two West Lothian Wide groups were contacted and applied to the fund
- Both groups requested a grant payment
- Two groups were added to the West Lothian Wide list
- One group requested a grant payment
- One group requested both a grant payment and a meal option to be delivered to the groups they support across two wards

All applicants will be supported.

As in previous years the fund is divided equally by the total number of beneficiaries of the fund, which in 2021-22 will see £6.71 per head allocated to recipients in the Linlithgow ward, Livingston Wide and West Lothian Wide.

Appendix 1 shows the overall breakdown by ward, Livingston Wide and West Lothian Wide.

Letters and e-mails will be issued to groups advising them of the amount of funding they are to receive in a grant payment or its equivalent in the form of a pre-prepared meal. Payments will be made to the bank accounts of groups via Pecos or BACs for those groups not on PECOS.

This will also advise that they must follow Scottish Government guidelines with regard to the delivery of hampers, gift packs and / or meals, for example, around minimising contact with individuals, car sharing, shopping and visiting care homes etc. and that if they were unable to follow guidelines they would be required to return all funding received to the council.

E CONCLUSION

The report asks the committee to note the continuing effect of COVID-19 on the uptake and allocation of the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund in 2021-22 and the continued inclusion of the pre-prepared chilled meal option this year.

The report advises of the allocations that will be made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2021-22 to groups in the Linlithgow ward, Livingston Wide and West Lothian Wide.

Letters and e-mails will be issued to groups advising them of the amount of funding they will receive in a grant payment or its equivalent in the form of a pre-prepared meal. Payments will be made to the bank accounts of groups via Pecos or BACs for those groups not on PECOS.

A satisfaction survey will be conducted with all applicants in January 2022.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 Pensioners Groups Christmas Fund Allocations 2021-22

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Craig McCorriston
Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

2 November 2021

LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2021/22

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

Appendix 1: 2021/22 Allocations to groups in the Linlithgow ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

Linlithgow Ward Organisations

Group	Provision	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount Awarded
Bridgend Over 60's Group	Grant Payment	80	£536.80
Linlithgow Day Care Centre (formerly St Michaels Day Care Centre)	Grant Payment	35	£234.85
Linlithgow Link	Grant Payment	25	£167.75
Springfield Carpet Bowling Club	Grant Payment	20	£134.20
Totals		160	£1,073.60

Livingston-Wide Organisations

Group	Provision	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount Awarded
Braid House Day Centre	Grant Payment	67	£449.57
Total		67	£449.57

West Lothian-Wide Organisations

Group	Provision	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount Awarded
Boghall Drop-In Centre	Grant Payment	200	£1,342.00
Society of St Vincent De (Paul (Whitburn Conference)	Grant Payment and Meal Option	135	£940.95
West Lothian 50+ Network	Grant Payment	388	£2,603.48
West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network	Grant Payment	100	£671.00
Total		823	£5,557.43

Notes: Four groups in Linlithgow Ward were contacted and invited to apply to the fund. All four groups applied to the fund. One Livingston Wide group was contacted and applied to the fund. Two West Lothian Wide groups were contacted and applied to the fund. Two groups that indicated that they delivered a service across multiple wards applied to the fund and were added to West Lothian Wide List.



Linlithgow Local Area Committee Workplan November 2021

ISSUE		LEAD OFFICER	MEETING DATE
Standing Reports			
1	Police Ward Report	Iain Wells	All meetings
2	Fire Scotland Report	Stuart McNiven	All meetings
3	Housing, Construction and Building Services	Phyllis McFadden	All meetings
4	Nets and Land Services Update	Andy Johnston	All meetings
5	Locality Regeneration Update	Douglas Grierson	All meetings
Other Items			
1	Pensioners Christmas Treat Allocation Final	Douglas Grierson	November 2022
2	Kettleston Update	Alan Colquhoun	TBC
3	Newton Traffic	Gordon Brown	March 2022
4	Town Centre Capital Fund 2019/20 & 2020/21	Douglas Grierson	March 2022
5	Advice Shop Annual update	Christopher Nelson	November 2022
6	Vennel Update	Robert Smith	TBD

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



LINLITHGOW LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the recent activity of the NET's, Land & Countryside Services teams for the period 1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to:

1. Note the work carried out by the service within the local area.
2. Advise of any areas that require further information or investigation.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Relates to items 9 - We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger & 12 – We value and enjoy our built environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	In line with available revenue and capital budgets
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D1 Terms of Report

The report covers the activity for the period 1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021.

D2 Grounds Maintenance Routine Works

Grounds staff have completed 10 grass cycles up to 30 September 2021 and will complete one further cut in October before the end of the cutting season.

Weed Spraying will cease mid-October with 2 cycles having been successfully completed within the ward.

One off cuts and garden tidy ups for Housing Services are on course to be completed.

Enquiries and Councillors request are being dealt with on a daily basis.

We have recently recruited three new Apprentices Horticulturists/Gardeners on a three-year contract.

Burgh Beautiful

Officers would like to congratulate Burgh Beautiful on their fantastic achievement of receiving the Gold Award in this year's Britain in Bloom competition. The council continued to provide support to the group and town this year despite facing challenges due to reduced financial resources and staff shortages resulting in the suspension of the Grounds Maintenance service for a period due to the impact of COVID.

Grounds Maintenance Enquiries

In total 57 grounds maintenance related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period.

	2021	2020
Ball Game Enquiries	2	0
Bench or Seat Enquiries	1	3
Burns or Watercourses	0	1
Complaint Grounds Maintenance	2	2
Drainage Flooding Grass Areas	0	1
Emergency Tree Out of Hours	0	1
Fencing Enquiries	1	0
Flower Bed or Bulb Displays	1	1
Grass Area Damaged	0	2
Grass Cutting Enquiries	6	6
Grass Cutting Missed Not Cut	1	1
Grass Highway Verges	9	2
Grass Left On Paths or Roads	1	0
Ground Ownership Enquiries	1	2
Grounds Planning Applications	1	0
Grounds Property Vandalised	1	1

Hedge Cutting Enquiries	2	4
Illegal Adverts Estate Signs	1	0
Neighbourhood Env. Teams	0	1
Public Park Enquiries	1	3
Shrub Bed Enquiries	2	1
Shrub Bed Overhanging Path	12	12
Shrub Beds Not Maintained	1	0
Shrub/ Vegetation Sight Lines	4	0
Sports Facility Enquiries	0	1
Weeds General Enquiries	3	3
Weeds on Paths or Roads	4	1
Total	57	49

D3 Garden Maintenance Routine Works

The Garden Maintenance Scheme will meet their target of eleven cuts.

Garden Maintenance Enquiries

In total there were five garden maintenance related enquiries received and dealt with during this reporting period.

	2021	2020
Complaint Garden Maintenance	0	1
Garden Maintenance General Enquiries	4	5
Garden Maintenance Grass Not Cut	1	8
Garden Maintenance Standard of Cut	0	2
Total	5	16

D4 Cleaner Communities Routine Works

During this period staff have continued to empty street litter and dog waste bins on a regular basis and carry out routine works in the area. Also, litter picking footpaths/ open spaces and road verges and dealing with enquiries as they arise. The street orderly has also continued with their duties over the period clearing litter and emptying litter bins in and around the town centre.

The compact mechanical street sweeper has continued to sweep footpaths and kerb edges and we have two HGV sweepers that are used to clean roads and channels during this time.

Resources have been redirected when required during this period to deal with leaf fall.

We continue to have lots of volunteer's litter picking in the Ward and we have assisted with the uplift of bags and debris that have been collected.

Solar Compactor Litter Bin Pilot Scheme

West Lothian Council has approved £150k of additional funding for the procurement of new smart compactor litter bins. A trial of various supplier's bins is being used to determine the preferred bin model and manufacturer. A working group has been setup to look at quantities required, locations (mapping), bin sizes/weights, manual handling requirements for emptying, procurement and community engagement, as well as overseeing the implementation of the Litter Bin Plan.

10 solar compactor bins have been ordered from four different suppliers for an eight-week trial, with delivery expected at the end October/start November (installation by West Lothian Council to follow soon after). Each supplier/product will be assessed on set criteria (e.g. spec/cost/quality/after sales/software/accuracy of notifications).

Suppliers for the trial are: British Bins; Egbert Taylor; PEL; Wybone.

The proposed locations for the trial are: - Linlithgow Loch, Hillview Car Park near Bathgate, Eliburn Park, Bankton Mains Park, Murieston South Train Car Park and Beecraigs Visitor Centre.

Following completion of the pilot and once a preferred supplier has been identified, the roll out of further bins will take place and will include further community engagement.

Cleaner Communities Enquiries

In total 76 cleaner communities related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period.

	2021	2020
Complaint Street Cleansing	1	1
Dead Animals	6	7
Dog Fouled Grass Open Space	0	1
Dog Fouling on Path Roads	3	4
Fly Posting	1	1
Fly Tipping Dumping	32	58
Glass on Paths or Open Spaces	1	1
Graffiti Non-Offensive	3	0
Graffiti Racist or Offensive	6	1
Litter Bin Burnt Damaged	0	1
Litter Bin New Request for Bin	2	1
Litter Bin Overflowing	1	4
Litter Paths Roads Verges	2	1
Street Sweeping Enquiries	8	7
Vehicle Abandoned	10	3
Total	76	91

Fly Tipping Enquiries (January - December)

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Illegal Fly Tipping/Dumping	168	97	75	55	76

Environmental Community Action

The Education, Engagement and Enforcement team have continued to deal with enquiries as they are logged following COVID-19 guidance.

The team engaged with members of the public within the area as they assisted with Community participation survey for Grounds maintenance.

In dealing with abandoned vehicles, Officers have gained compliance from vehicle owners with said vehicles getting removed from the streets and where appropriate, requests have been sent to WLC contractors for removal.

Throughout West Lothian, officers continue to engage with volunteering groups, attend regeneration group meetings and render the necessary assistance needed to encourage the exercise they currently perform.

There has been an increase in the amount of equipment supplied to facilitate litter picking volunteers, which has increased in line with activity.

There has been no Fixed Penalty Notices issued in Ward 1 for the period of 1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021. For the same period in 2020, there were also no Fixed Penalty Notices issued within the Ward.

Costs for fly tipping for the period 1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021

Fly tipping is covered by the NETs teams who also carry out other non-routine works for Grounds. We are unable to split costs over specific ward areas or from the other works they carry out, but can give the yearly cost for the NETs teams with an estimate of their time spent on fly tipping which we currently estimate as 70% of their time. For 2020 the estimate was 80% of their time.

Weights for fly tipping brought into the transfer station are provided as a weekly total Monday – Sunday.

Fly tipping costs:

1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021	59.8 tonnes
Cost of disposal including costs for NETs team/vehicles	£39,406.41
Contractor removal of fly tipping	£0.00
Removal of asbestos	£0.00
TOTAL	£39,406.41

The number of enquiries received between 1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021 for the Ward was 32 out of 525 enquiries for the whole of West Lothian equating to 6.10% of fly tipping enquiries relating to Ward 1.

Percentage wise this would equate to an approximate cost for the Ward of £2,403.79 for disposal of fly tipping between 1 July 2021 and 30 September 2021 including cost for Staff/vehicles. (This does not include the removal of asbestos by the Councils asbestos team).

Costs for fly tipping for the period 1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020

1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020	83.88 tonne
Cost of disposal including estimated costs for NETs team/vehicles	£55,274.40
Contractor removal of fly tipping	£0.00
Removal of asbestos	£0.00
TOTAL	£55,274.40

The number of enquiries received between 1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020 for the Ward was 58 out of 613 enquiries for the whole of West Lothian equating to 9.5% of fly tipping enquiries relating to Ward 1.

Percentage wise this would equate to an approximate cost for the ward of £5,251.06 for disposal of fly tipping between 1 July 2020 and 30 September 2020 including cost for Staff/vehicles. (This does not include the removal of asbestos by the Councils asbestos team).

D5 Park and Woodland

Tree and Woodland Enquiries

In total 39 Parks and Woodland related enquiries were received during this reporting period.

	2021	2020
Tree Advice or Consultations	4	1
Tree Blocking Light	1	0
Tree Branches Overhanging	15	12
Tree Broken Damaged or Dead	1	5
Tree Conservation Areas	1	1
Tree Dangerous or Unsafe	3	5
Tree Enquiries General	14	20
Total	39	44

	2021	2020
Access Rights Way Core Paths	10	3
Complaint Country Parks/ Trees	0	1
Country Park General Enquiries	3	8
Ranger Service Beecraigs	4	1
Ranger Service Education	1	0
Ranger Service General Enquiry	1	1
Total	19	14

Ranger Service Update

No. Rights Of Way / Core Path / Patrols carried out (hours)	94.5
No. Access Enquiries	12
No. Conservation Surveys / Tasks	5
No. Volunteer hours	62

Beecraigs has been extremely busy this summer. With an attendant short, the ranger service has been undertaking attendant / caravan site duties as needed.

Two Assistant Rangers and two Assistant Operatives have been employed from 28 June 2021, funded by NatureScot as part of their Better Places Green Recovery Fund. The Assistant Rangers have carried out patrols in hotspot areas, run six pop-up events engaging the public on a range of access related issues, SOAC (Scottish Outdoor Access Code) and responsible dog walking behaviour. They have worked with Police, Fire and Rescue, and NFU Scotland at the West Lothian PARC (Partnership Against Rural Crime) event at Beecraigs, and ran a guided walk for local scouts on the subject of responsible access.

Duke of Edinburgh volunteers have continued their programme of work at Beecraigs, helping the rangers to: clear the main drainage ditch in the park of logs and other debris; de-berming (to prevent waterlogging) the mountain bike Skills Area; cutting back some of the overgrown grass paths at Hillhouse; constructing natural barriers between the mountain bike trail and Purple route at Beecraigs; and cutting back the summer growth from the narrower parts of the Purple route.

The Ranger Service have been gathering photo evidence and survey data to support the Parks & Woodlands application to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, for upgrading and modernising of the toilet facilities at Beecraigs (Balvornie and Lochside)

We had a virtual meeting with Yellow Book Ltd, at the recommendation of the Economic Development team, to provide information from an access and park capacity perspective for their report on the economic potential of the Bathgate Hills. We advised them to contact NFU (National Farmers Union) Scotland to canvass their opinion for their report.

We had a meeting with Beecraigs Farm to see about re-establishing the on-site chalk boards, to improve farm education and the overall visitor experience.

Forest management work started at Beecraigs on 23 August. This took up much of the rangers' time in August, meeting with the Tree & Woodland Officer, printing signage, producing on-site interpretation, compiling maps for diversions, liaising with Media and Comms to update the Council website and Facebook pages.

The Ranger Service had a second meeting with the Lyme Resource Centre, to discuss how we can collaborate on a Tick/Lyme Disease awareness-raising project in the new year, and to report back on progress so far. We have put the new tick awareness posters in every notice board in the three country parks, and the Assistant Rangers have incorporated tick awareness into their public engagement 'pop up' events across West Lothian. More than 300 people have been directly spoken to about ticks so far at these events. We've also spoken to Media about supporting the collaboration when we have something to share.

Officers attended the quarterly West Lothian Cycle Forum, updating from an access perspective on district-wide issues.

Officers attended Forth & Borders Ranger meet up (virtual) to discuss Rangering during Covid and our recovery plans, the challenges land managers and ranger services are facing, and different ways of tackling issues seen on sites across the wider countryside.

Officers have been gathering photo evidence and survey data to support the Parks & Woodlands application to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, for upgrading and modernising the toilet facilities at Beecraigs Country Park.

Officers have also been assisting Green Action Trust (GAT) by reviewing their map of potential 'missing link' habitat sites across the district and providing additional biodiversity / access information.

Hannah Crow left the Ranger Service at the end of September to work in one of the new Biodiversity and Ecology Officer posts within West Lothian Council. Her ranger position will be advertised in late October but until it is filled, the service will be reduced from four rangers to three, with Hannah's responsibilities and outstanding projects distributed around the remaining team.

Access

Unauthorised mountain bike trails were dismantled from Rosemount Park as they are being built on an active badger sett. As this is the second time this has happened, signage has been put up regularly to explain that this is an offence under the Scottish Badgers Act. Both Police Scotland and Scottish Badgers have been informed.

The Ranger Service helped coordinate the fire service response to a smouldering abandoned campfire at Beecraigs, and damped it down afterwards. A second campfire (and abandoned camping gear) was subsequently found smouldering near the Refuge Stone at Witchcraig. Three rangers walked buckets of water up from the Korean War Memorial car park to douse, and walked out with abandoned camping gear. We put a post out on the council's Facebook page about the high fire risk, which was seen by 21,000 people, with active engagement from 1,300 people.

A new fire site was reported at Hillhouse. Assistant Rangers cleared it away and patrolled the area on subsequent evening patrols.

Officers patrolled and inspected the southern half of core path WL07 (Fisher's Brae) after public enquiry about path being overgrown and flanked by giant hogweed. No giant hogweed found (though plenty of common hogweed), but the overgrown section is in Falkirk so we passed this over to their access officer.

An enquiry was received about the use of electric bikes within Beecraigs and the speeds used on multiuser paths. It was explained that E-bikes are considered non-motorised so have access rights, but responsible access still applies. Travelling at speed either where it could cause injury or alarm to other users is not responsible access.

Unwelcoming 'STOP' signage was reported. The ranger service liaised with Hopetoun Estates, who helped resolve the issue and asked for advice on the legality of such signage.

Advice was sought by Hopetoun Estates with regards to practical application of access legislation. We met with the factor on site to explain in context.

Guidance slabs for visually impaired people in the Beecraigs Visitor Centre car park, had adjacent surfacing raised so that there was no trip hazard. This was after a member of the public reported to the ranger service that they were causing them problems.

Officers received a public enquiry about core path WL12 between Threemiletown and Union Canal being impassable due to overgrowth. Hopetoun Estates cut this path back recently so we will need to get back to take another look.

The Ranger Service met with contractors to discuss the upgrade of two paths at Beecraigs – on the Green waymarked trail – involving the upgrade of paths to Cockleroy and replacement of the old wooden boardwalk. The path from the Caravan & Camping site down to Lochside car park will follow later in the autumn.

Ecology and Biodiversity

A new team has been developed to address growing biodiversity and climate change issues across West Lothian. Becky Plunkett and Hannah Crow have recently been appointed as Ecology and Biodiversity Officers, with a third person to be recruited this autumn.

More information on the officers' roles and responsibilities will follow, and updates will be regularly provided in the local area committee reports.

D6 Open Space and Cemeteries

Open Space Routine Works

Linlithgow Loch District Park, Linlithgow. Upgrade of Lady Park footpath pending. Compulsory Purchase Order application is being progressed by Property Services in discussion with Legal Services. There is a high risk of legal challenges and public inquiry. This may delay any subsequent construction beyond Spring/Summer 2022.

Justinhaugh Drive Green, Linlithgow. The play area refurbishment is ongoing. Existing equipment will be repaired and additional swings and toddler equipment will be added.

Dovecot Park/Springalong Play Area, Linlithgow. The play area refurbishment is ongoing. Existing equipment will be replaced and additional swings will be added. Furniture will be replaced. Stone access steps will be repaired. Surfaces will be upgraded and additional footpaths will be added to allow wheeled access to new swing area and toddler/junior play area.

Open Space Enquiries

There were seven Open Space enquiries for this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Childrens Play Enquiries	7	6
Play Area Property Vandalised	0	1
Total	7	7

Cemeteries Routine Works

Routine grass cutting and weed control tasks have been completed. Seasonal maintenance works and lair reinstatement and burial duties are ongoing across the cemetery estates.

Cemeteries Enquiries

There were 60 Cemeteries enquiries for this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Bench Donations	1	0
Cemeteries General Enquiries	7	4
Lair Enquiries	6	6
Lair Sunken or Uneven	2	6
Memorial/ Headstone Works	15	20
New Interment Booking	20	14
Purchase of Interment Lair	9	14
Total	60	64

E CONCLUSION

The Education, Engagement and Enforcement team have continued to deal with enquiries as they are logged following COVID-19 guidance.

The Open Space Capital Programme is progressing as scheduled.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Open Space Strategy

Capital Programme

Appendices/Attachments: none

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Jim Jack

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02 November 2021