



Community Planning Partnership Board

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

15 February 2022

A meeting of the **Community Planning Partnership Board** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **MS Teams Virtual Meeting Room** on **Monday 21 February 2022 at 10:00am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest - Members must declare any interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda items and the nature of their interests.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business
4. Confirm Draft Minutes of Meeting of Community Planning Partnership Board held on Monday 15 November 2021 (herewith)
5. Economic Review - Report by Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer (herewith)
6. Thematic Forum Updates - Presentation (herewith)
7. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan - Report by Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer (herewith)
8. CPP COVID-19 Dataset - Report by Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer (herewith)
9. Dates of Next Meetings (to be agreed):

DATA LABEL: Public

14 June 2022 2pm
22 August 2022 10am
21 November 2022 10am

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

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD
held within VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 15 NOVEMBER 2021.

Present –

Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan (Chair)	West Lothian Council
Councillor Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
Councillor Chris Horne	West Lothian Council
Councillor Andrew McGuire	West Lothian Council
Councillor Moira Shemilt	West Lothian Council
Elaine Cook (Depute Chief Executive)	West Lothian Council
Graeme Struthers	West Lothian Council
Donald Forrest	West Lothian Council
Sarah Kelly (substituting for Marjory Mackie)	West Lothian Council
Alice Mitchell	West Lothian Council
Alison White	Integration Joint Board
Katie Dee	NHS Lothian
Jackie Galbraith	West Lothian College
Jim Stewart	Sestran
Greig Robertson (substituting for Dave McCallum)	Skills Development Scotland
Jonathan Pryce	Scottish Government
Tim Dent	West Lothian Leisure
Alan McCloskey	Voluntary Sector Gateway
Brenda Cumming	West Lothian Chamber of Commerce
Karen Morrison	NatureScot
Gill Jardine	Jobcentre Plus

In Attendance –

Mark McAteer	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Ashley Goodfellow	NHS Lothian
Susan Gordon	West Lothian Council
Laura Murray	West Lothian Council
Jim Henderson	West Lothian Council
Claire Stewart	West Lothian Council

Apologies –

David Sharp	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Graham Hope (Chief Executive)	West Lothian Council
Chief Inspector Alun Williams	Police Scotland
Lynne Cooper	Scottish Enterprise
Dave McCallum	Skills Development Scotland
Marjory Mackie	West Lothian Council
Neil Christison	VisitScotland

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that Mark McAteer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, was due to attend the meeting at 11am for Agenda Item 6 and the order of business would be varied to accommodate Mark's attendance.

3. MINUTE

The Board confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 30th August 2021. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP SCOPING WORKSHOPS

The Board received a very informative presentation from Ashley Goodfellow, providing an overview of the West Lothian Public Health Partnership and Place Team, the way in which it planned to build public health capacity at place, an overview of where the Team would fit into the Directorate of Public Health and Health and Policy and the Team's planned approach. The presentation also set out the National Public Health Priorities, the Local Priorities, contained information on progress and opportunities and concluded with reflections on what could be achieved by the new Team.

The Board then considered a report giving an update on two workshops held by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership (HWP) to review the current position in relation to delivery of the national public health priorities in West Lothian.

The HWP would meet in November to explore workshop themes further and identify shared priorities for action, being cognisant of the forthcoming refresh of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. In addition to the establishment of a local public health team to support the work of the HWP and wider CPP, the Department of Public Health and Health Policy was establishing a health intelligence function that would support and inform the work of the partnership going forward. This would include the development of a health inequalities core data set and commissioning of a population health survey across the Lothian area.

It was recommended that the Board:

- a. Note the information provided in the HWP workshop report and the themes and priority areas emerging from discussions
- b. Request a further report once the HWP had considered the output from the workshops in more detail and identified its shared priorities and actions.

Decision

To note the terms of the presentation and report.

5. BUSINESS SUPPORT AND LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

The Board considered a report the provided the Board with an update on the work of the Economic Development & Regeneration Service with a particular focus on targeted business support and employability.

It was recommended that the Board:-

- a. Notes the updates on the local labour market, the range of impacts made by the Business Gateway team, progress through the Jobs Task Force and closer partnership working with Heriot-Watt university; and
- b. Request a further report on outcomes in mid-2022.

Arising from discussion, the Board requested that a report on the findings of the Job Task Force analysis of unemployment figures against job vacancy rates be presented to a future meeting.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and agree that a report on the Job Task Force analysis of unemployment v's job vacancy rates be presented to a future meeting.

6. REFOCUSING THE LOIP AND CPP

The Board received a report providing an update on the status of the review of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and advising on the work being carried out at national level which highlighted the contribution that CPP's had made throughout Covid-19 and the role of CPP's in recovery and renewal going forward..

It was recommended that the Board note:-

- (i) Progress to date with the new LOIP;
- (ii) That work to recommence the review of the LOIP would be taken forward.
- (iii) The work at national level on the role of Community Planning Partnerships in recovery and renewal and consider this from a West Lothian perspective.

The Board then received a verbal report from Mark McAteer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, on some of the key findings from recent research carried out by the Community Planning Improvement Board (CPIB). Community planning had flourished during the COVID response and there was an opportunity to harness the momentum and ensure community planning was at the heart of COVID recovery plans in Scotland. The gains made in the last 20 months should not be lost and given the anticipated inequalities and associated demand from COVID, national and local priorities should be rebalanced to support a more targeted approach.

Mark concluded his report by setting out the areas identified by the CPIB for Community Planning to focus on to meet future expectations and invited partnership to reflect on whether these resonated with West Lothian's experience.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mark undertook to feed back the Board's comments on the impact of limited financial resources available to CPPs to advance improvements identified through community planning; the need to find new ways of working to avoid burnout of local partnerships/volunteers who had worked throughout the pandemic; and the need for green to be a running thread through everything to the National Board.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and verbal report from Mr McAteer.

7. COVID-19 DATA SET

The Board considered the Covid-19 sentinel dataset as at October 2021 which identified a range of indicators used to track the impact of Covid-19 on communities. The dataset was updated monthly and provided an early indication of changes to West Lothian society.

Work had been undertaken to review the indicators within the dataset to ensure that wider societal harms of Covid-19 were included. As a result, a number of additional indicators had been agreed and were included in the dataset appended to the report.

It was recommended that the Board note the updated dataset.

Decision

To note the Covid-19 dataset update.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Board would take place on Monday 21 February 2022.

Economic Review

1. Purpose of Report

To update the Board on the current Economic Review that is being conducted to assess the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the West Lothian economy.

2. Recommendations

The CPP Board is asked to

- Note the development and outcome of the Economic Review 2021/22

3. Discussion

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, local economies throughout the UK have been impacted – with West Lothian seeing an increase in claimant counts and unemployment rates over the course of the last 21 months. In order to assess the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, an economic review has been undertaken to gain a well-rounded picture of the West Lothian economy.

The review highlights current trends within West Lothian and throughout the UK as a result of the pandemic. The main findings suggest that, within West Lothian, out of work claimant count is falling but is above pre-pandemic levels and, conversely, in-work claimant count has been steadily rising since the beginning of the pandemic. The Economic Review was presented to the Jobs Taskforce in mid-December 2021. It is expected that the Economic Review document will be updated continuously throughout the year to assess the state of the West Lothian economy as it recovers from the pandemic.

The economic review also outlines the economic forecast for West Lothian to determine the status of the local economy in both the short and long-term. This will allow the partnership to assess the predicted long-term impacts of factors such as the end of the furlough scheme on the economy, as well as providing an insight into when West Lothian is expected to return to an economic state similar to that of February 2020, pre-pandemic.

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	ALL
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Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	ALL
Resources	The Economic Review will be undertaken within existing resources
Link to prevention/community engagement	The Economic Review will be informed by engagement with key stakeholders and partners
Impact on inequalities	The Economic Review seeks to gain intelligence and understanding in order to address economic and social inequalities in West Lothian
Key risks	N/A

5. Consultations

The Economic Review has been discussed at the Jobs Task Force, and key partners and stakeholders have been involved in its development.

6. Conclusions

In order to assess the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, an economic review has been undertaken to gain a better understanding of the West Lothian economy at this time, particularly around the disconnect between the number of vacancies available and unemployment figures.

Report written by/contact details/date

Susan Gordon, - Community Planning Development Officer, February 2022

Susan.gordon@westlothian.gov.uk

References

N/A

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Economic Review Report

Appendix 2 – Economic Review Slides

West Lothian Economic Review Updated Report – February 2022

1. Economic Outlook

GDP

Short Term Outlook

The UK economy experienced significant growth in 2021, largely driven by the rebound in consumer spending as restrictions were removed, reaching pre-Covid levels by November 2021. GDP had grown by 0.9%, exceeding the pre-pandemic level for the first time by 0.7% (baseline February 2020). Similarly, the Scottish Economy had grown by 0.8% in November, with GDP higher by 0.6% than February 2020. Consumption was supported by rising vaccination rates and a rundown of some of the additional savings accumulated during the pandemic, and as business investment growth was boosted by the super deduction announced in the March 2021 Budget.

The emergence of the Omicron variant is expected to have depressed activity over the December and January period. But its economic impact is expected to be limited and of short duration, and UK GDP is predicted to start to recover from February / March with output returning to a pre-pandemic level once again by the end of the first quarter.

Although growth rates were historically high throughout most of 2021, growth momentum was dampened by the spike in coronavirus numbers and the persistent disruptions in the labour market and to supply chains, especially during Q3 and throughout most of Q4.

Supply chain disruption, alongside the rapid pace at which global demand for goods has risen, have led to bottlenecks, which have exerted pressure on inflation globally, including in the UK. Inflation has also been boosted by higher energy prices, which have risen significantly in recent months. In the UK, as a result, consumer price inflation (CPI) is projected to rise further in the near term, peaking at around 7% in the second quarter of 2022. Temporary supply chain disruption will also weigh on UK output in the near term.

These issues are expected to persist into 2022 and continue to dampen growth momentum at least for the first half of the year.

Long-term Outlook

Projected % GDP growth over the next 5 years, from various institutions:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
OBR (OCT 21)	6.5	6.0	2.1	1.3	1.6	1.7
BoE (FEB 22)	7.25	3.75	1.25	1.0	-	-
NIESR (NOV 21)	6.9	4.7	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.3
IMF (OCT 21)	6.8	5.0	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.5

Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), Bank of England (BoE), National Institute of Economic & Social Research (NIESR) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The OBR set out their long-term forecasts for UK GDP in the Autumn Budget and Spending Review in October 2021:

Overall GDP growth in 2022 is expected around 6%. As we move through the year, quarterly consumption growth should drop back to historically more normal rates. On an annual basis, GDP

growth of 6% is below the 7.3% that was projected in March 2021, reflecting the slowdown towards the end of 2021. Although annual growth in 2022 is projected to remain high, quarterly consumption growth starts to drop back to historically more normal rates.

Growth in 2022 and 2023 will be partly driven by business, supported by the continuing economic recovery and temporary uplifts to capital allowances announced in March 2021 that run until March 2023*. Annual growth then returns to more normal rates, falling to 2.1% in 2023, 1.3% in 2024 and 1.6% in 2025, as the boost to output from the fiscal loosening fades and as the super-deduction* ends. It then settles at 1.7% at the forecast horizon (2026) with consumption, investment, and government spending providing steady contributions to growth.

* From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023, companies investing in qualifying new plant & machinery assets are able to claim: 130% super-deduction capital allowance / 50% first-year allowance for special rate assets

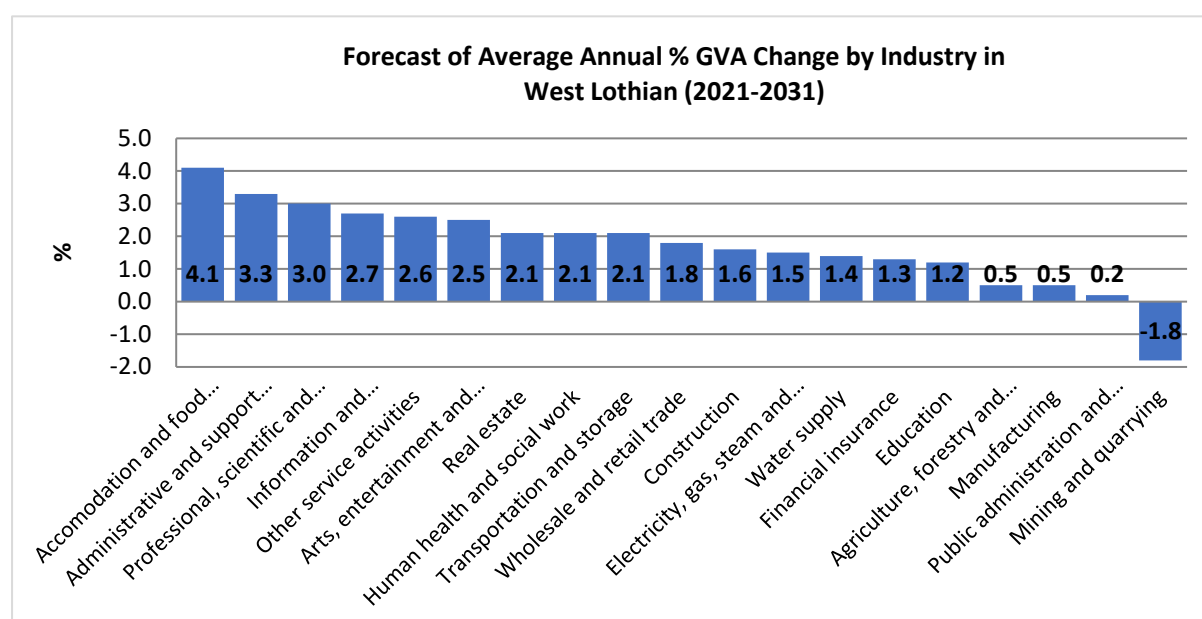
The medium to longer term impact on the economy caused by a major economic shock (economic scarring), is still expected to depress GDP by around 2% by the Office for Budget Responsibility i.e. UK GDP will be lower than it otherwise would have been, without the advent of the pandemic.

GVA

The latest total West Lothian gross value added (GVA) is £4.929 bn (2019) and accounts for the 3.3% of the total Scottish output. In the 10 years between 2009-2019, GVA in West Lothian increased by £388m (9%).

A mid-term forecast for average annual growth, produced by Skills Development Scotland, predicts that over the course of 2021-2024 growth will be at a rate of 3.1% for West Lothian, 3.1% for Scotland and 3.4% for the United Kingdom. In a longer-term forecast, it is predicted from 2024-2031 that the average annual growth for West Lothian will be 1.3%, with a rate of 1.2% for Scotland and 1.4% for the United Kingdom.

It is forecasted that accommodation and food support services in West Lothian will experience the largest growth in GVA (4.1%) between 2021-2031, while conversely, mining and quarrying face a decline in GVA at a rate of -1.8%.



Consumer Prices Index - Inflation

Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rose by 5.4% in the 12 months to December 2021, up from 5.1% in November, which is the highest rate in almost 30 years.

The spike in inflation has been driven by several factors. Firstly, as economies across the world reopened, the rapid increase in global demand for goods coincided with global supply chain disruptions, labour shortages and in the UK, new trade barriers following Brexit. This caused bottlenecks and consequently lead to shortages of certain goods, such as building materials and computer chips, which pushed up prices. Energy markets have been significantly affected by these supply and demand issues and have been a key driver of inflation. Wholesale gas prices in the UK have hit record highs (up 250% from January 2021 to November 2021) due to high demand in Asia, last year's cold winter driving down European gas inventories, and a shortfall in wind-powered electricity supply. Finally, the increase in inflation can in part, be attributed to unusually low prices the year earlier, which have affected calculations where annual comparisons are used.

Inflation is expected to continue to rise, peaking at around 7% in the second quarter of 2022. The expected further increase in inflation can again mainly be attributed to rising energy costs. Consumers have been protected from immediate increases in gas prices by Ofgem's default tariff cap. There was an increase in this cap in October 2021, which was 12% higher than the previous one, and is set to rise by 54% in April 2022. On typical use, costs are set to increase from £1,277 per year to £1,971 – adding £693 per year to the average household bill. The cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages, restaurants and hotels, furniture and household goods, and clothing and footwear have been other main contributors to the recent increase in inflation.

Inflation is expected to remain high until the third quarter of 2022 and average out at 6.25% for 2022. Thereafter, inflation should gradually decline and return to the 2% target by 2024, as energy prices stabilise, supply bottlenecks ease, and the modest tightening in monetary policy counteracts the extra stimulus from the fiscal package. However, this judgement may prove too optimistic, and inflation may prove more durable, especially if people come to expect high inflation to continue and businesses raise prices to protect their profit margins or workers demand larger wage increases to maintain their purchasing power.

Interest Rates

In response to high inflation, the Bank of England increased the bank rate to 0.5% on 3rd February 2022. This most recent rise comes relatively quickly after the initial rise in December 2021, when the bank rate was increased from 0.1% to 0.25%.

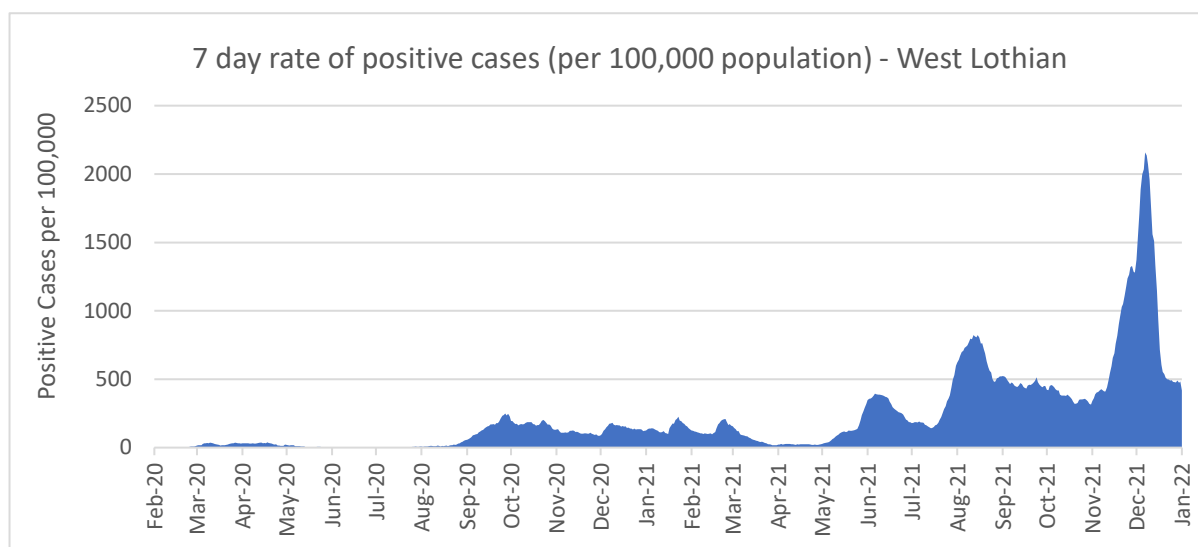
One of the main consequences of rising interest rates is an increase in mortgage repayments. At the current interest rate, just under 2 million people (not on fixed rate mortgages) will see an immediate increase in their mortgage repayments of around £15-£25 per month. 74% of mortgage borrowers have a fixed-rate mortgage, and will not see an immediate increase in their bills. However, about 1.5 million people are expected to be impacted later this year when their fixed rate deals expire.

The Bank of England have stated that they are willing to increase interest rates even further to control inflation. The next meeting to determine if interest rates will change again is on the 17th March.

COVID Outlook

Given that COVID has had a significant impact on the economy over the last two years, there is still the risk that it may have further impact in the future. We are providing an update regarding the current case rate and vaccine uptake in West Lothian. Overall, the situation appears to have improved significantly since the start of December, with case rates falling rapidly and vaccine uptake continuing to rise.

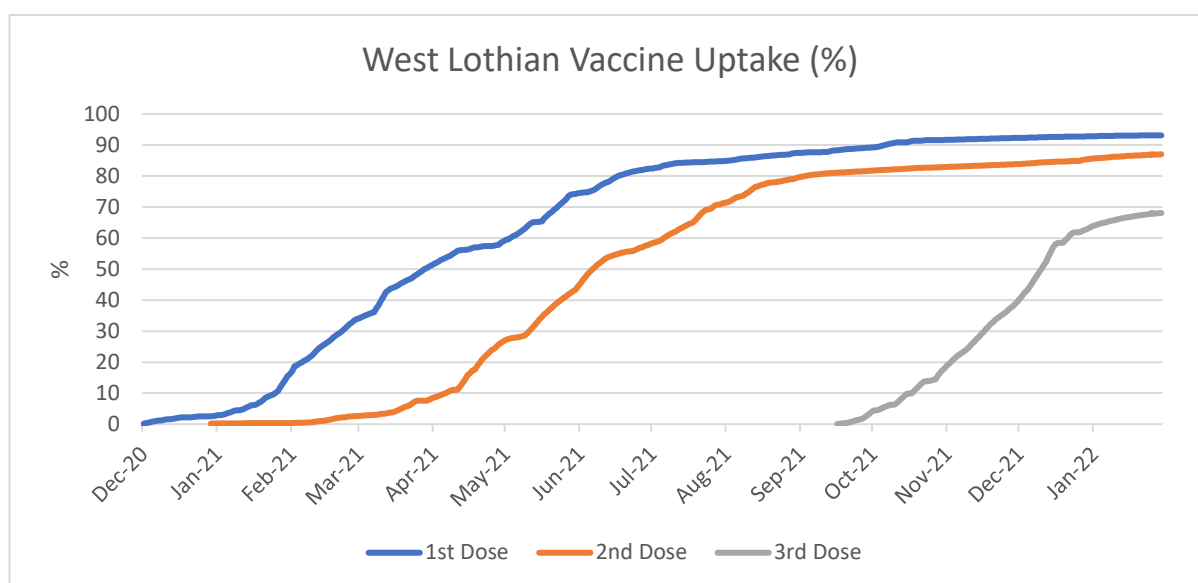
Covid Case Rates



As of 8th February 2022, the 7-day Case Rate per 100,000 people:

- UK: 893
 - Northern Ireland (1527), England (938), Wales (476) and Scotland (442)
- West Lothian: 454

Vaccines - Percentage of those eligible (Aged 12+) who have received a COVID-19 vaccine, by dose

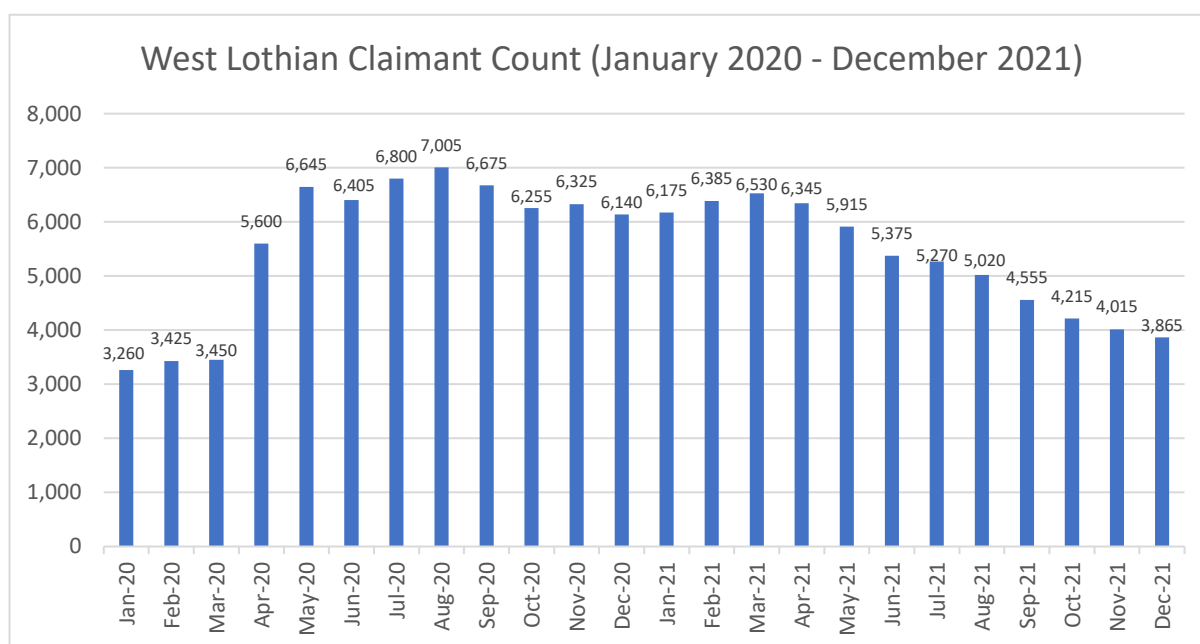


As of 8th February 2022:

- **93.1%** of those eligible have received a first dose of the vaccine.
- **87.0%** have received a second dose.
- **68.1%** have received a booster dose.

2. Labour Market/Employability

Claimant Count



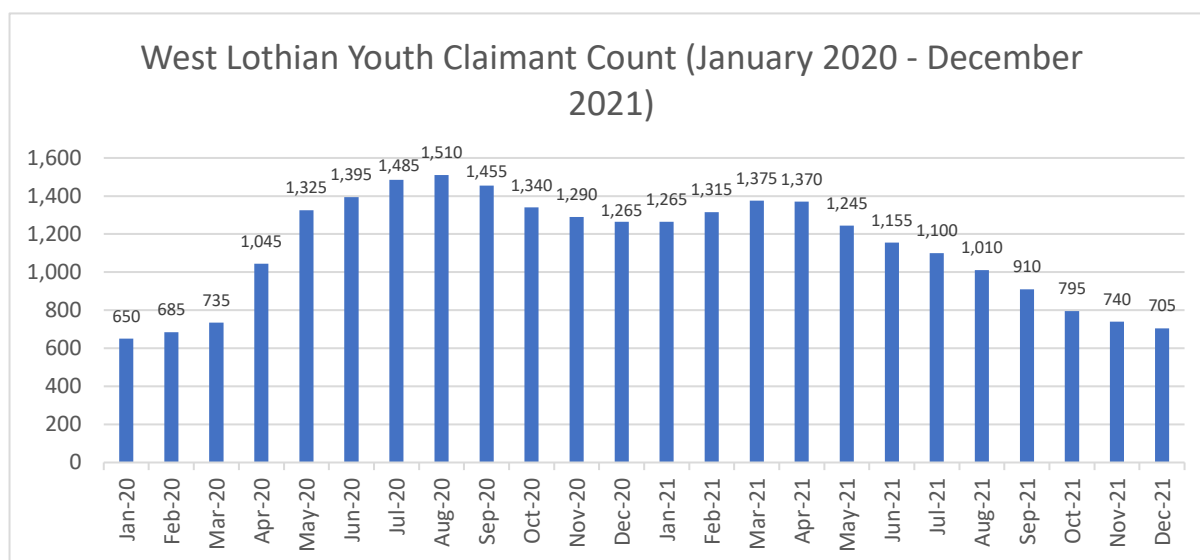
Claimant count for West Lothian is 3,865 at 3.3% for December 2021, which is lower than the Scottish rate (4.0%) and the British rate (4.4%). The latest rate is lower than November (3.4%) which was 4,015 count. The unemployment rate has continued to drop towards levels seen at the start of the pandemic, but is not yet back to the pre-pandemic level remaining 0.5 percentage points above the level for December 2019 / January 2020.

The latest out-of-work claimant figures continue to show little impact of the end of the furlough scheme in September, with continued recovery in the labour market: a quarterly increase in the employment rate, while the unemployment rate has continued to decrease for the ninth month in a row. Additionally, there may be some positive impact with increasing employment levels due to the availability of seasonal work over the holiday period, and a buoyant jobs market.

It is worth noting that West Lothian, comparative to the national situation, is also seeing an increase in the number of people becoming economically inactive – those aged 16 to 64 who are not available for work. ONS suggests a legacy of the pandemic appears to be a rise in individuals with long term sickness, particularly pronounced in those over the age of 50. In West Lothian we have seen a rise in this particular group of economically inactive UC claimants rising from 2,207 in January 2020, to the latest estimate of 5,014 for Dec 2021.

At the end of September, the Job Retention Scheme closed, after paying a proportion of wages to allow continued employment. According to the ONS [UK Business Insights and Conditions Survey](#), reporting at UK national level, businesses with employees still on furlough at the end of the CJRS reported: 65% employees returned to work on the same hours, while 16% went back with reduced hours and 6% went back with hours increased. Another 6% were either laid off or left their jobs voluntarily. The latest figures still do not appear have seen much impact from the ending of furlough. The ONS has cautioned the full effect of furlough closing on September 30 may yet be felt, with some workers still potentially working out their notice and on redundancy pay.

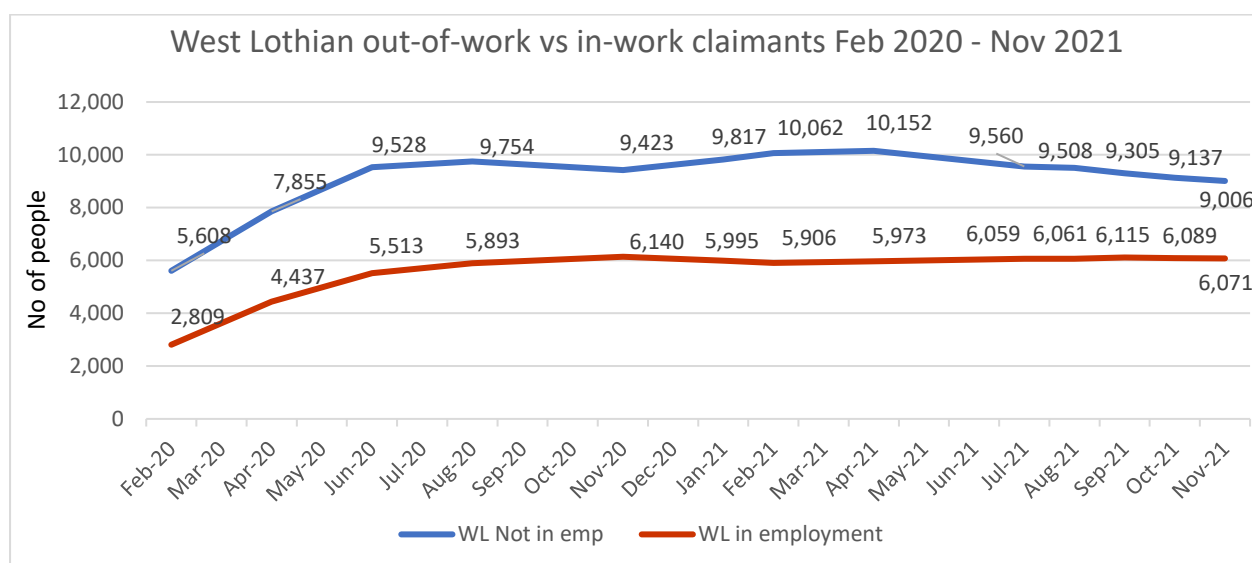
Youth Claimant Count



As of December 2021, youth unemployment figures for West Lothian were 705 (5.1%), higher than Scotland (4.8%) but lower than Britain (5.3%). The latest rate is lower than November 2021 (5.3%) returning to a level last seen in March 2020. Youth claimant figures for West Lothian have seen a gradual reduction since March 2021.

Young people were affected most by large-scale job losses in sectors such as hospitality, retail and administration through the Covid lockdowns. These sectors have returned back to work, and are undertaking large recruitment drives. The continued increase in employment rates during summer through to the end of 2021 has been partly attributed to increased part-time work and an increase in zero-hour contracts. These changes, in addition to increased uptake of employees within sectors employing larger proportions of young people, supports the continued reduction of youth unemployment figures.

In-work v Out-of-work Claimants



*Note that the total for out of work claimants includes both claimants actively seeking, and not actively seeking work.

Between February 2020 and the initial peak in August 2020, the out-of-work claimant figures for West Lothian rose by 73%. Since August 2020, the out-of-work claimant figures remained high until April 2021, when it began to steadily decline.

The most significant percentage increase has been for those that are in employment and claiming UC. There was a 110% increase in in-work claimants in West Lothian, between February 2020 and the initial peak in August 2020. Since this peak, the number of in-work claimants remained at an elevated level.

For the last year between December 2020 to November 2021, with lockdown easing after the January to April period, jobs vacancies began to rise, and the rate of unemployed claimants decreased by 5.1% (compared to the region which decreased by 7.5%). The rate of those in employment and claiming universal credit has also finally started to decrease, after a long trend of increasing rates throughout 2021, with a decrease at November of 2.2% on the previous year (compared to the regional decrease year on year of 4.2%).

In the most recent figures reported, for the month between October and November 2021, the rate of unemployed claimants has continued to drop in West Lothian (-1.4%). This is comparative with the overall regional picture where the rate dropped -1.6%. The number of in-work claimants has dropped by a small amount (-0.3%) over the last month, compared to the city region (-0.7%). Overall, recovery is now being seen both among out-of-work and in-work claimants in West Lothian and across the city region.

The trend to Autumn 2021, showed in-work claimants steadily increasing January to October. Only in the last month has this trend begun to decrease. Based on feedback from West Lothian Advice Shop, increasing numbers of individuals had been seeking advice and support related on money issues and budgeting. These were attributed to the effects of the removal of the UC £20 uplift, reduced working hours (Covid related), or a drop in income levels due to reduced wages. It may well be that we are starting to see a slow recovery in salary levels and increasing hours for those in employment, however this should be carefully monitored given the anticipated squeeze on household income through inflation, increased prices, and upcoming changes in tax and NIC.

*Note that there is a lag of a month behind latest claimant count figures in ONS when reporting the split out between in-work and out of work claimant rates.

Claimant Count Across the City Region

		Feb-20	Aug-20	Dec-20	Jul-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	% Change Feb 20-Jul 21 (18 months from baseline)	% Change Dec 20-Nov 21 (last 12 months)	% Change Oct 21-Nov 21 (last month)
City of Edinburgh	Not in emp	9,041	21,276	21,578	20,826	19,551	19,040	130.4	-11.8	-2.6
	In employment	4,644	14,062	15,348	15,228	14,430	14,209	227.5	-7.4	-1.5
East Lothian	Not in emp	3,725	5,922	5,726	5,455	5,310	5,226	46.4	-8.7	-1.6
	In employment	2,118	3,801	3,777	3,678	3,598	3,567	73.5	-5.6	-0.9
Fife	Not in emp	14,794	23,128	22,362	22,851	21,674	21,463	54.5	-4.0	-1.0
	In employment	6,465	12,233	13,103	12,856	12,781	12,837	98.8	-2.0	0.4
Midlothian	Not in emp	3,173	5,186	5,123	5,020	4,746	4,679	58.2	-8.7	-1.4
	In employment	1,741	3,321	3,372	3,400	3,247	3,198	95.3	-5.2	-1.5
Scottish Borders	Not in emp	2,874	5,129	5,042	4,955	4,736	4,683	72.4	-7.1	-1.1
	In employment	1,546	3,130	3,203	3,295	3,289	3,260	113.1	1.8	-0.9
West Lothian	Not in emp	5,608	9,754	9,486	9,560	9,137	9,006	70.5	-5.1	-1.4
	In employment	2,809	5,893	6,206	6,059	6,089	6,071	115.7	-2.2	-0.3
City Region	Not in emp	39,224	70,393	69,318	68,673	65,155	64,094	75.1	-7.5	-1.6
	In employment	19,326	42,429	45,003	44,519	43,437	43,135	130.2	-4.2	-0.7

Looking at the city region as a whole, across the 18 months between February 2020 and July 2021, there was an increase of 75.1% in out-of-work claimants and an increase of 130.2% of in-work claimants. By comparison, West Lothian rates in the same time period also saw an increase in out-of-work claimants (70.5%) and an increase of in-work claimants (115.7%) - both figures lower than the region's average.

Over the 12 months to November 2021, in the city region, out-of-work claimants fell by 7.5% whilst the in-work claimants dropped by 4.2%. In comparison, the out-of-work claimants in West Lothian decreased by 5.1% and the in-work claimants in West Lothian decreased by 2.2%. This suggests that whilst West Lothians in-and out-of-work claimants didn't spike at the start of the pandemic as much as the rest of the city region, West Lothian exhibit signs that it has been recovering slower than the rest of the region.

Between October 2021 and November 2021*, the rate of unemployed claimants in West Lothian continued to drop (-1.4%), closer to the regional average which decreased by 1.6%. The number of in-work claimants declined by 0.3% in West Lothian between October and November 2021, whilst the city region decreased by 0.7% in the same period.

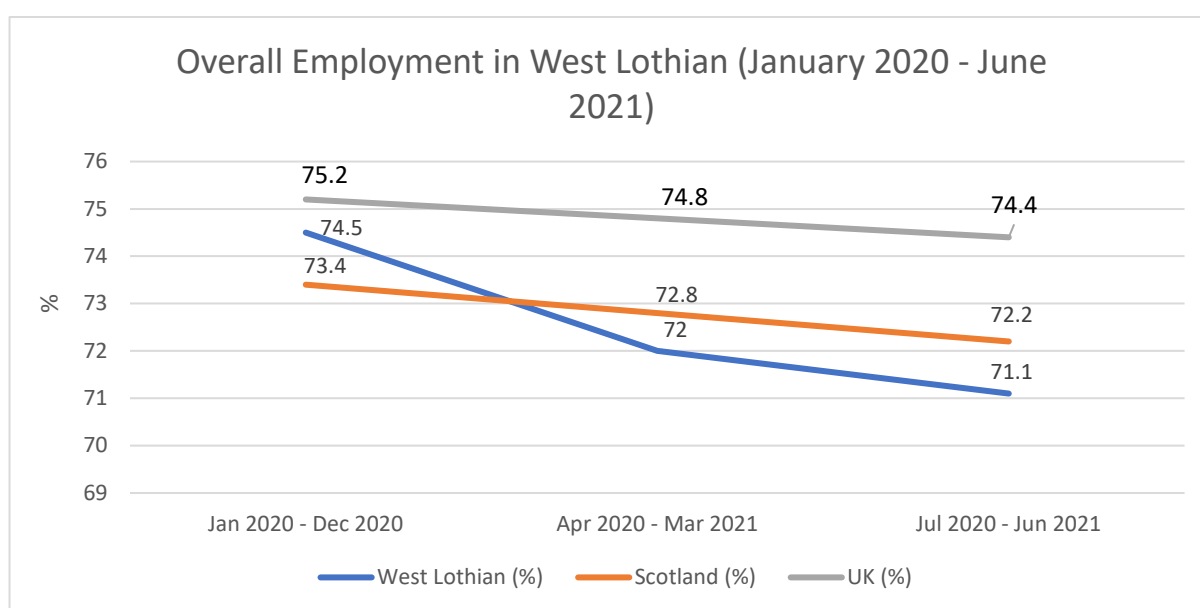
*Note that there is a lag of a month behind latest claimant count figures in ONS when reporting the split out between in-work and out of work claimant rates.

Employment Levels

UK Labour Market Overview - January 2022

- UK Employment Rate: 75.5%
 - o This represents an increase of 0.2 percentage points on the previous quarter, but also 1.1 percentage points (~600,000 people) below the pre-covid employment rate.
- UK Inactivity Rate: 21.3%
 - o Up 0.2 percentage points on the previous quarter and represents an increase of 1 percentage point (~410,000 people) compared to February 2020.
- UK Job Vacancies: 1.25 million.
 - o An increase of 128,000 on the previous quarter and 462,000 more than pre-covid levels.

Trends in West Lothian Labour Market



In the year January 2020 (pre-pandemic) to December 2020, West Lothians total employment rate stood at 74.5%, higher than Scottish rate (73.4%) and just below the British rate (75.2%). During the first year of the pandemic, employment rates fell throughout the UK, and between April 2020 and March 2021 the recorded rate of employment in West Lothian dropped to 72%, falling slightly below both Scotland (72.8%) and Britain (74.8%). Employment rates have continued to decline throughout 2021 both at regional and national levels. Latest employment figures indicate that the West Lothian employment rate 71.1%, still slightly below both the Scottish (72.2%) and British (74.4%) rates.

Employees				
Date	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	UK (%)
Jan 2020 - Dec 2020	79,000	65.5	65.2	65.1
Apr 2020 - Mar 2021	78,400	64.6	64.8	65
Jul 2020-Jun 2021	77,800	64.2	64.3	64.7

Looking at those who were classed as in employment (discounting those classed as self-employed, or business owners), in 2020, January to December, the proportion of individuals in West Lothian in employment stood at 65.5% - higher than both Scotland (65.2%) and UK (65.1%). From the start of the pandemic, the number of employees in West Lothian declined between April 2020 and March 2021 to a rate of 64.6%, slightly lower than Scotland (64.8%) and UK (65%) rates. The most recent data from July 2020 to June 2021 showed that those working as employees has fallen further, with West Lothian at 64.2% still behind both the Scotland (64.3%) and UK (64.7%).

Self-Employed				
Date	West Lothian	West Lothian (%)	Scotland (%)	UK (%)
Jan 2020 - Dec 2020	11,600	8.7	8	9.9
Apr 2020 - Mar 2021	10,100	7.4	7.7	9.6
Jul 2020-Jun 2021	9,400	7	7.6	9.4

The proportion of those who were self-employed between January 2020 and December 2020 in West Lothian (8.7%) were higher than Scotland (8%), lower than the UK (9.9%). Between April 2020 and March 2021, as the pandemic began to have an impact on the economy and local businesses as a result, the proportion of self-employed individuals in West Lothian fell to 7.4% in comparison with 7.7% in Scotland and 9.4% in the UK. Between July 2020 and June 2021, there was a further reduction to 7% self-employed in West Lothian, compared with 7.6% for Scotland and 9.4% in the UK.

Economic Inactivity

Much of the fall in employment has been accompanied by rising economic inactivity rather than unemployment. Taking account of the pre-pandemic trend of a growing labour market overall, the total level of national economic activity (i.e. those either in work or looking/ available for work) is now 1.1 million *below* pre-pandemic. It is estimated that approximately just over one third (38%) of this 'missing million' is explained by a smaller population, reflecting both lower net migration (than pre-pandemic levels) and demographic changes, which could include the impact of the increased death rate due to Covid-19. The remainder (62%) is explained by higher economic inactivity.

The rises in UK economic inactivity are very clearly concentrated among older people (who account for 57% of the total participation gap), and in particular by older women. The main reasons for the rise in inactivity for older people appears to be a combination of ill health (estimated around 230 thousand higher than pre-pandemic levels, compared with 20 thousand above pre-pandemic levels in April-June 2021). Additionally, this cohort appears also have been taking early retirement.

Participation is also lower than pre-pandemic for younger people, driven particularly by more young people staying in education (at its highest last year, there were 400 thousand more people economically inactive in the UK due to studying than pre-pandemic; this has now fallen back to 190 thousand higher). Lower participation can also be attributed to lower population (i.e. net migration)

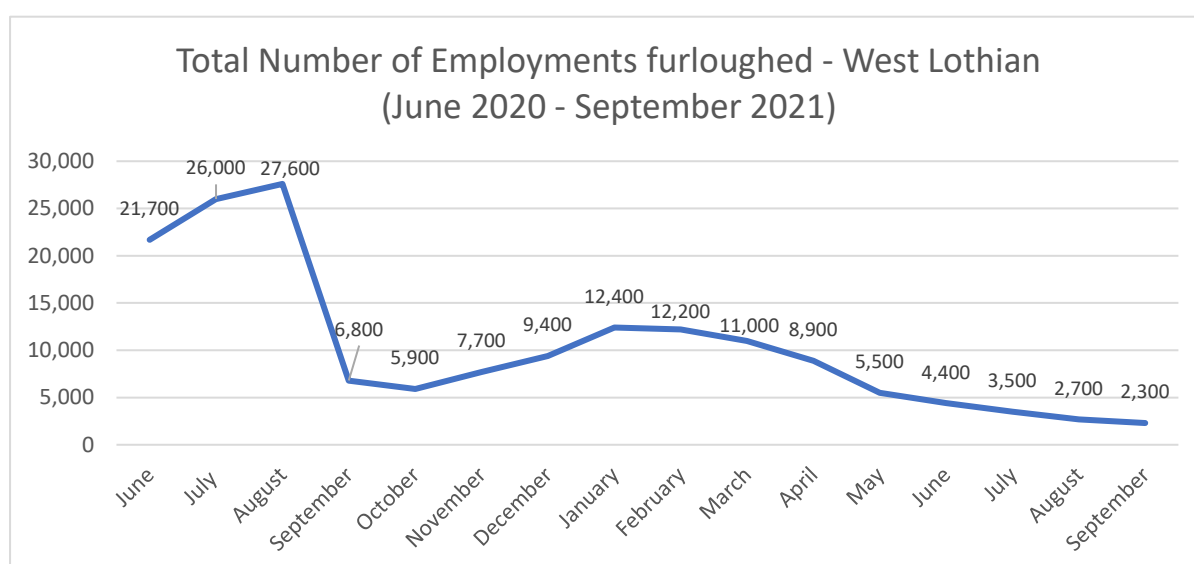
and increased levels of ill health. Of further concern, the number of young people not in full time education nor in employment also appears to be rising again, after falls earlier in the year. Overall 9.1% of all young people are economically inactive and not in full time education.

[The Institute for Employment Studies](#) states that a new 'Plan for Participation' is required, to:

- Mobilise government, employers and those services that work with people who are out of work, to help those who can work and who may want to work to get back in.
- Extend our public employment services and support to all of those who are out of work and want help (not just those on the right type of benefit), and that can focus on working better with older people, health services, social and childcare, local partners, welfare services and employers.
- Encourage employers to do more and work better: through more inclusive recruitment, better job design (particularly around shift notice, patterns and flexibility), improved induction and in-work training, and workplace support with health, caring and wider needs.

*Note that a further update will be provided for Trends in West Lothian Labour Market once final figures are released for the July to December 2021 period.

Furlough



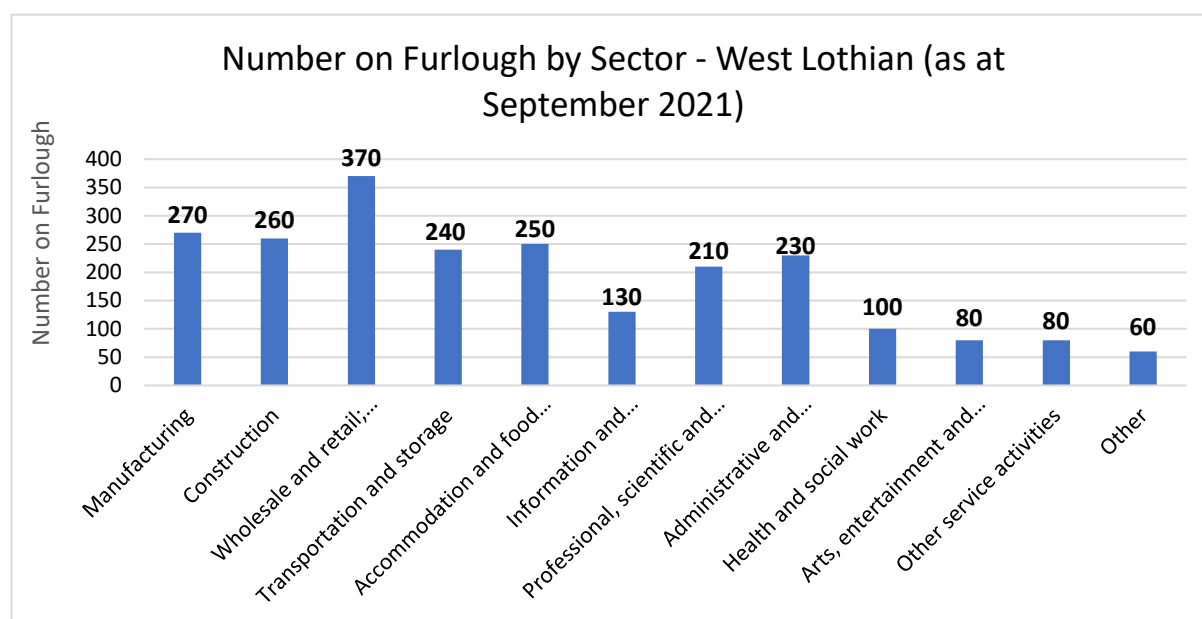
The first wave of the pandemic saw the largest percentage of furlough uptake in West Lothian, with figures starting at 25% uptake of those eligible in June 2020 and rising to 31% in August 2020. From August 2020, there was a significant drop in take-up rate as the following months report a rate of 8% in September, with 2020's lowest rate since the beginning of the pandemic being recorded in October (7%). (Note the delay in drop between July, August and September can also be attributed to the method by which CJRS furlough support was paid after a claim was made for the previous month). The drop in claims is in line with easing of lockdown restrictions and the opening of businesses. The furlough take-up rate then began to steadily increase over the winter months, with the peak in January and February 2021 (14%) in line with the second wave of Coronavirus and the subsequent lockdown. The furlough take-up rate steadily declined from March 2021 (13%). Scotland moved out of the COVID-19 levels system in August and moved beyond Level 0 restrictions.

A further observation is that many people coming out of furlough support may not have been active in a job for up to 18 months, and may not be job ready. If these individuals do not return to a job, they will be re-entering the jobs market and likely to need access to reskilling / upskilling training. Job seekers may take differing routes through Employability, Advice Shop, CAB, College, or Third sector.

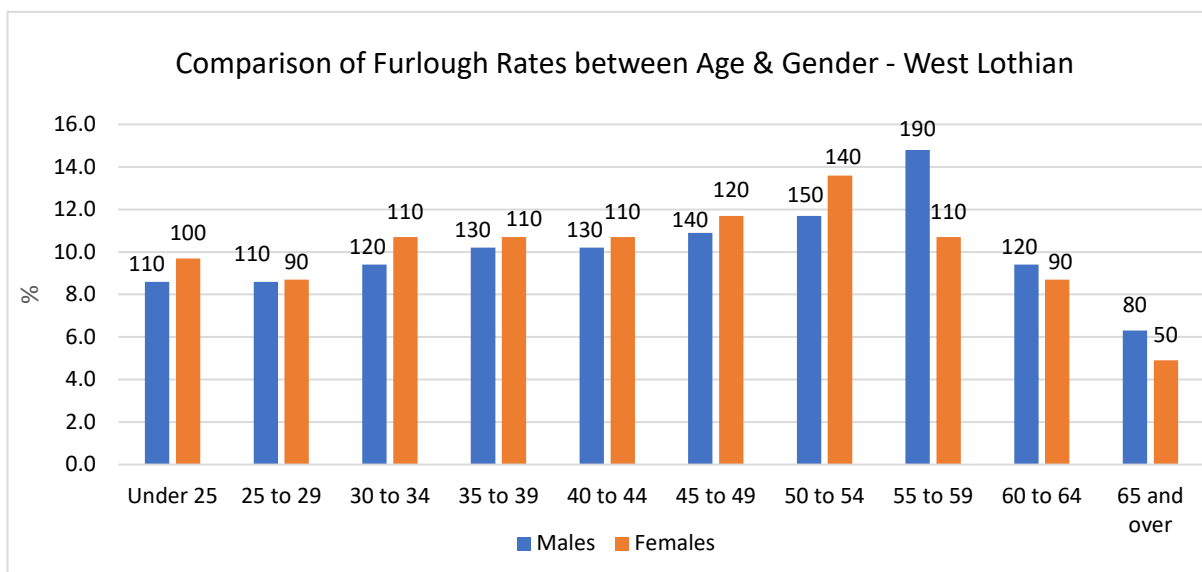
Furlough Breakdown

Furlough by Sector (West Lothian)

At the end of the furlough scheme (30th September 2021), the wholesale and retail sector had the highest percentage of employees on furlough (16.2%), followed by the manufacturing (11.8%), construction (11.8%) and accommodation and food services (10.9%).

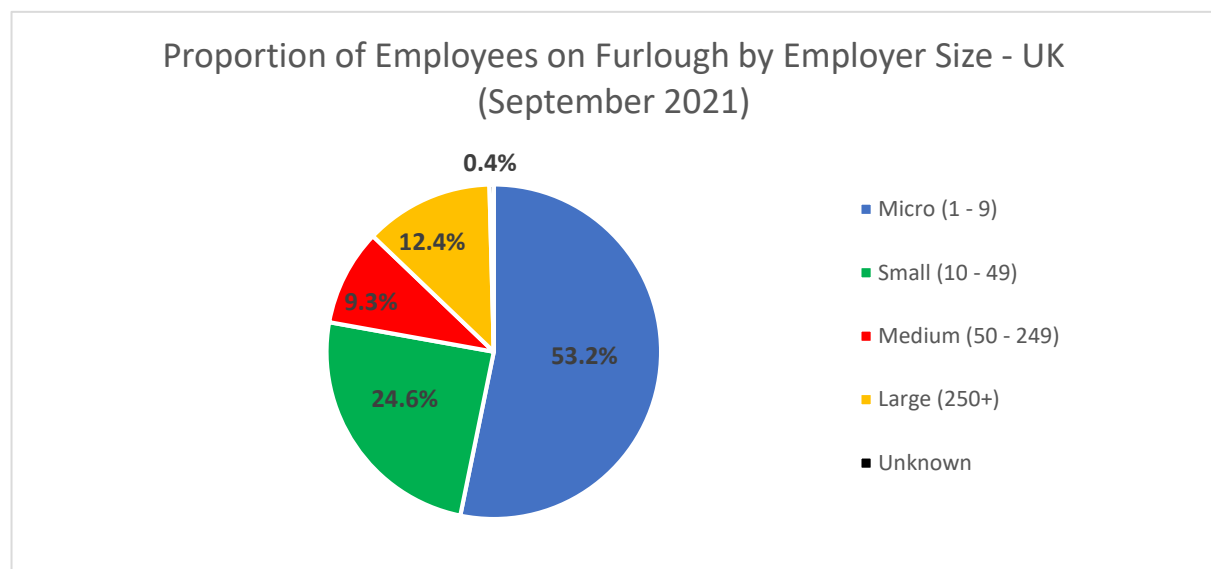


Furlough by Age and Gender (West Lothian)



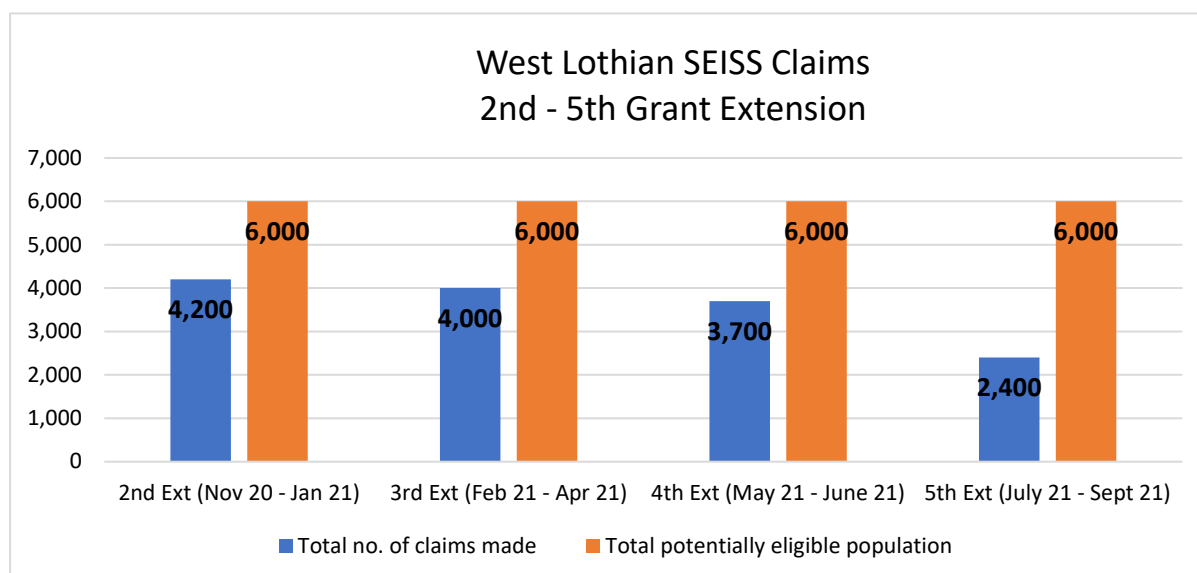
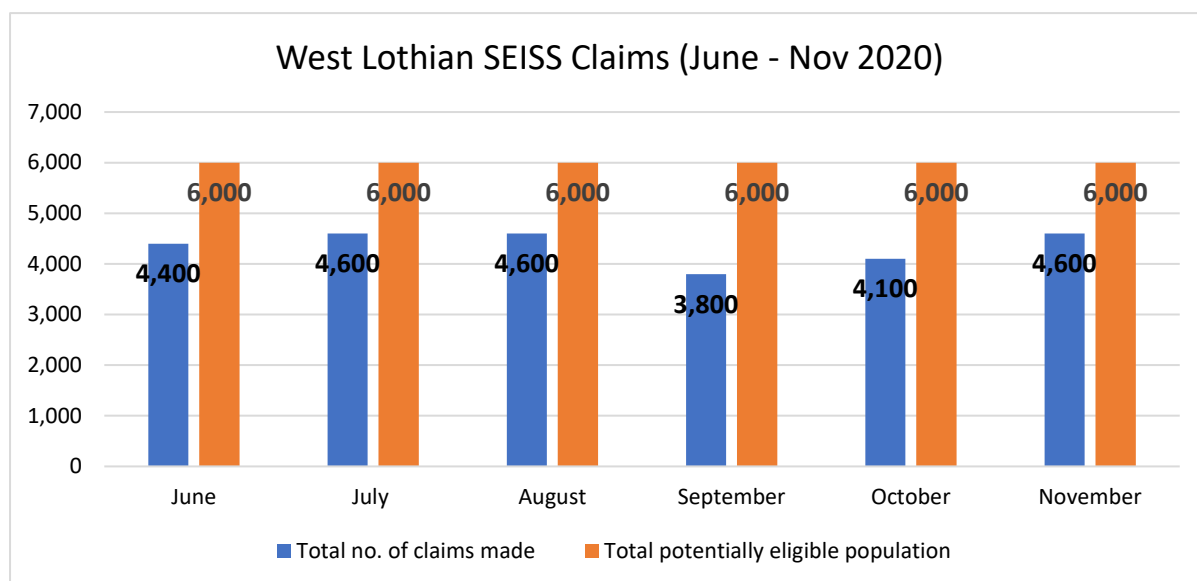
In West Lothian, the highest ranges of those on furlough at the end of the CJRS support were between the ages of 30 and 59 for women, and 35 and 59 for men. The largest proportion of females were between the ages 50 to 54-years (13.6%) in comparison to females in all other age categories. For men, this was an older age range, with the highest proportion between the ages 55 to 59-years (14.8%). Throughout the pandemic, emphasis has been put on the impact of COVID-19 on the younger population, however, these figures suggest that more support may be required for those aged 30 and over residing in West Lothian.

Furlough by Employer Size (UK)



In the UK, the majority of staff supported on furlough could be found within SMEs (86.7%). Over half were employed by microbusinesses (52.8%). (Small businesses (24.6%), medium (9.3%) and large (12.8%) businesses).

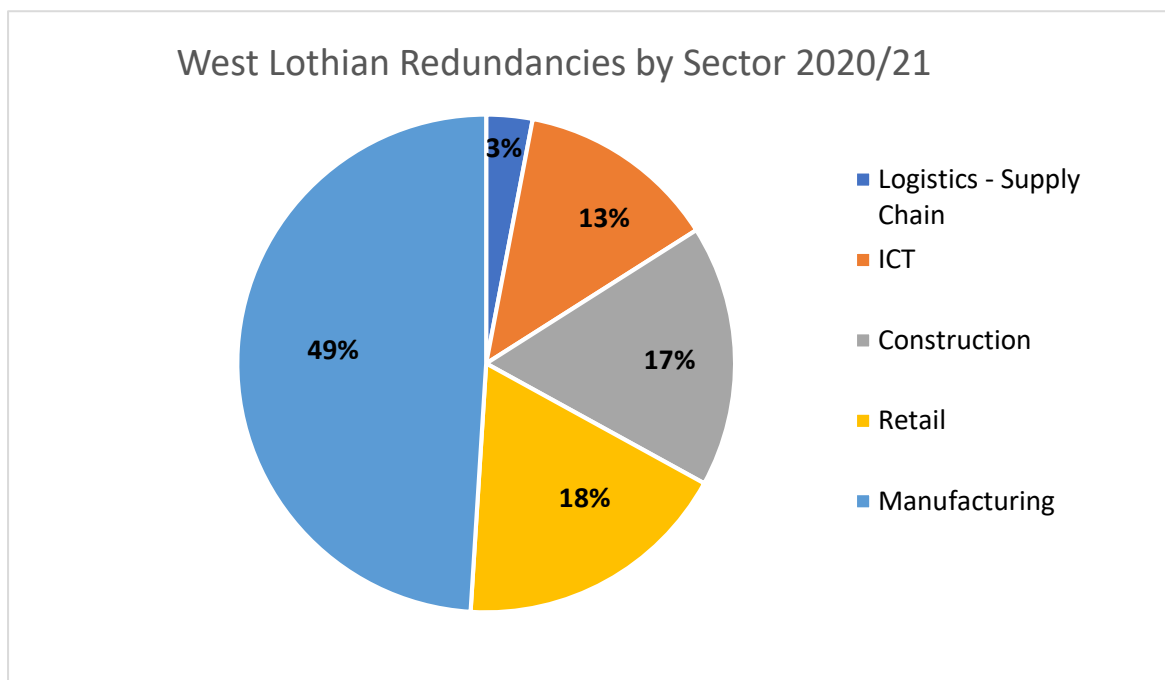
The Self-Employment Income Support Grant Scheme (SEISS)



SEISS began on 13 May 2020 and provided support to the self-employed. Original take up rate was substantial, with 73% initial take up to June '20 (4,400), peaking in July and August at 76% (4,600). The average value of grant claims for the first support scheme was £2,700. SEISS was then extended in the form of four further grants, each available for 3-month periods. There was a 71% take up rate for the second grant extension (average claim of £2,500), a 67% take up rate for the third grant extension (average claim of £2,800), a 62% take up rate (an average claim of £2,800) for the fourth extension and the fifth, and final extension covering July to September saw a 26% take up rate (average claim of £1,600) – notably a reduction by over half from the previous grant extension period.

Note that in the run up to the end of furlough support, some self-employed may have become self-reliant again with the advent of Scotland moving out of the COVID-19 levels system and pick-up of the economy. Other self-employed individuals would need to consider the viability of their business going forward from the end of September, and possibly opted out of self-employment.

Redundancies – PACE



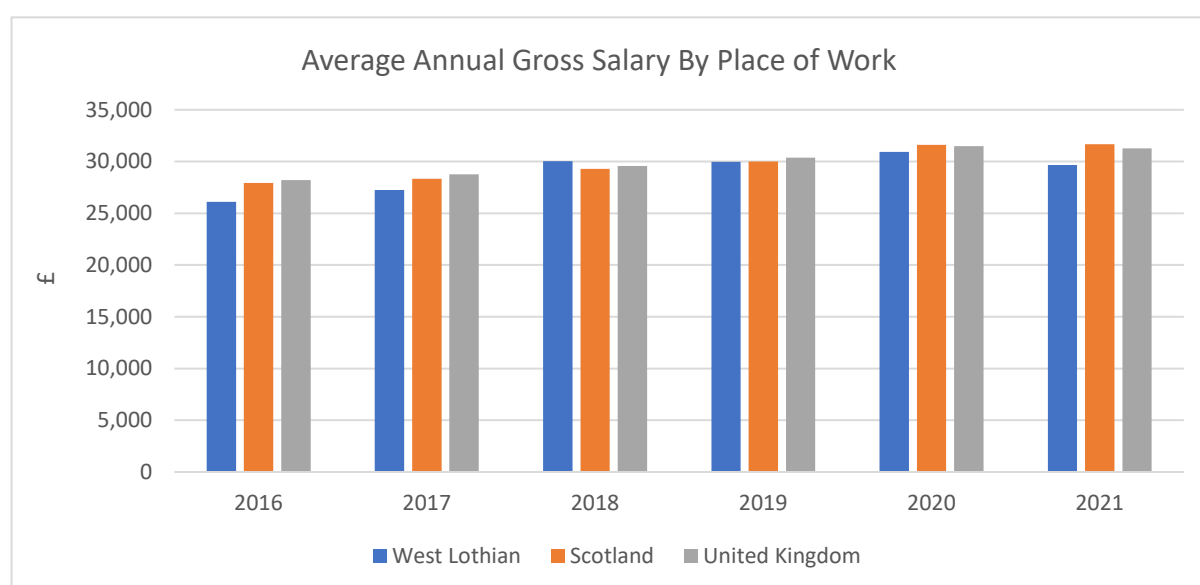
Skills Development Scotland's PACE scheme works with local economic development teams to support employees who face redundancy in companies. Within West Lothian, estimated redundancies have totalled around 400 jobs between Jan 2020 to Dec 2021. Around half within manufacturing sector (49%), followed by retail (18%) and construction (17%) which were all significantly impacted by the first lockdown of 2020. The other industries where redundancies were recorded were ICT (13%) and Logistics (3%).

3. Living Standards

Salaries

Historical Annual Average Gross Earnings by Place of Work in West Lothian:

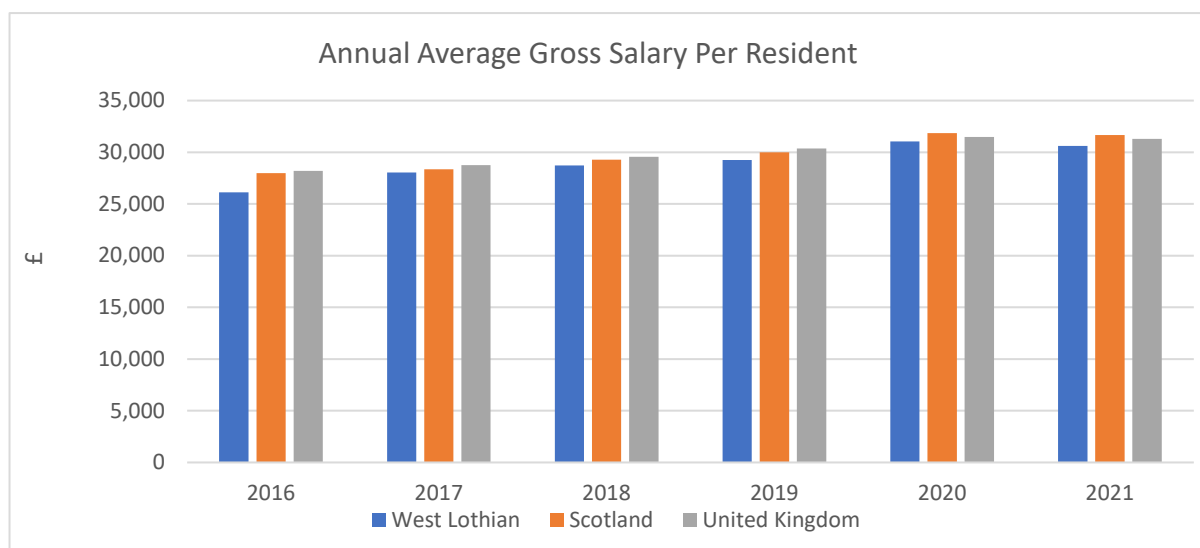
Date	West Lothian	Scotland	United Kingdom
2016	26,102	27,925	28,195
2017	27,249	28,335	28,759
2018	30,023	29,289	29,559
2019	29,984	30,000	30,378
2020	30,931	31,604	31,487
2021	29,647	31,672	31,285



The average gross annual salary for *jobs located in West Lothian* for 2021 is £29,647. The average gross annual salary for jobs located in West Lothian had caught up with Scotland, as the 'pay gap' between West Lothian and Scotland narrowed between 2016 and 2020. However, for 2021, we have seen a slight drop between West Lothian and the Scottish national average. It is worth noting that the UK also saw a drop in the average wage from the previous year.

Historic Annual Average Gross Earnings per Resident in West Lothian:

Date	West Lothian	Scotland	United Kingdom
2016	26,124	27,998	28,195
2017	28,034	28,365	28,759
2018	28,723	29,275	29,559
2019	29,245	30,000	30,378
2020	31,044	31,840	31,487
2021	30,623	31,659	31,285



The average gross annual salary *per resident living in West Lothian* for 2020 is £30,623.

The average gross annual salary for jobs located in West Lothian had caught up with Scotland, as the 'pay gap' between West Lothian and Scotland narrowed between 2016 and 2020. Again, however, the latest figures show the annual average salary for those living in West Lothian has dropped slightly, increasing the gap between West Lothian and the Scottish national average. It is worth noting that both Scotland and the UK also saw a drop in the average wage from the previous year.

National Living Wage

Following the recommendation of the Low Pay Commission (LPC), the National Living Wage is set to increase 6.6%, from £8.91 to £9.50 per hour for those aged over 23. In addition, the National Minimum Wage for people aged 21-22 will rise 9.8%, from £8.36 to £9.18 per hour, for people aged 18-20 and 16-17 will increase 4.1%, from £6.56 to £6.83 per hour and from £4.62 to £4.81 per hour, respectively, and the Apprentice Rate will increase 11.9%, from £4.30 to £4.81 per hour.

Average Weekly Earnings

Growth in Average Weekly Earnings including bonuses (AWE) was 4.2% in the 3 months to November 2021, compared to the previous year. However, with inflation forecast to be substantially above target, real earnings are only set to grow by 0.6% in 2022. Increased NI contributions increase companies' overheads and may result in lower wages being offered. Higher corporate taxes in future, resulting from the March Budget, may also increase employer resistance to granting higher pay increases. On the other hand, the current imbalance between supply and demand for labour is leading to increases in pay for new recruits, in certain sectors.

Changes in Spending Patterns Throughout COVID-19

In the year to March 2021, the average household reduced spending by 18.6% (£109.10) per week. The decrease in household spending was not the same for all households, as those who have a higher income saw greater decreases in spending compared to those on lower incomes. The lowest income households only managed to decrease spending by 12.5% (£41). The highest earning households were able to cut spending by 20.6% (£193.10).

Income Quintile	% Change	Absolute Change (per week)
1 (Lowest)	-12.5%	-£41
2	-15.5%	-£67.10
3	-18.4%	-£101.50
4	-20.7%	-£142.60
5 (Highest)	-20.6%	-£193.10
All	-18.6%	-£109.10

Reduced spending on restaurants and hotels, recreation and culture and transport contributed most to the decline in overall spending for all income groups. Much of reduced spending across all income groups was due to households not travelling abroad.

Changes in overall spending for the year to March 2021:

Area of Spending	Poorest 20%	Richest 20%
Food & non-alcoholic drinks	+1.5%	+0.9%
Housing, fuel & power	-0.3%	+0.6%
Transport	-2.4%	-5.0%
Recreation & Culture	-3.7%	-5.3%
Restaurants & Hotels	-4.6%	-6.6%
Other contributions	-3.0%	-5.3%

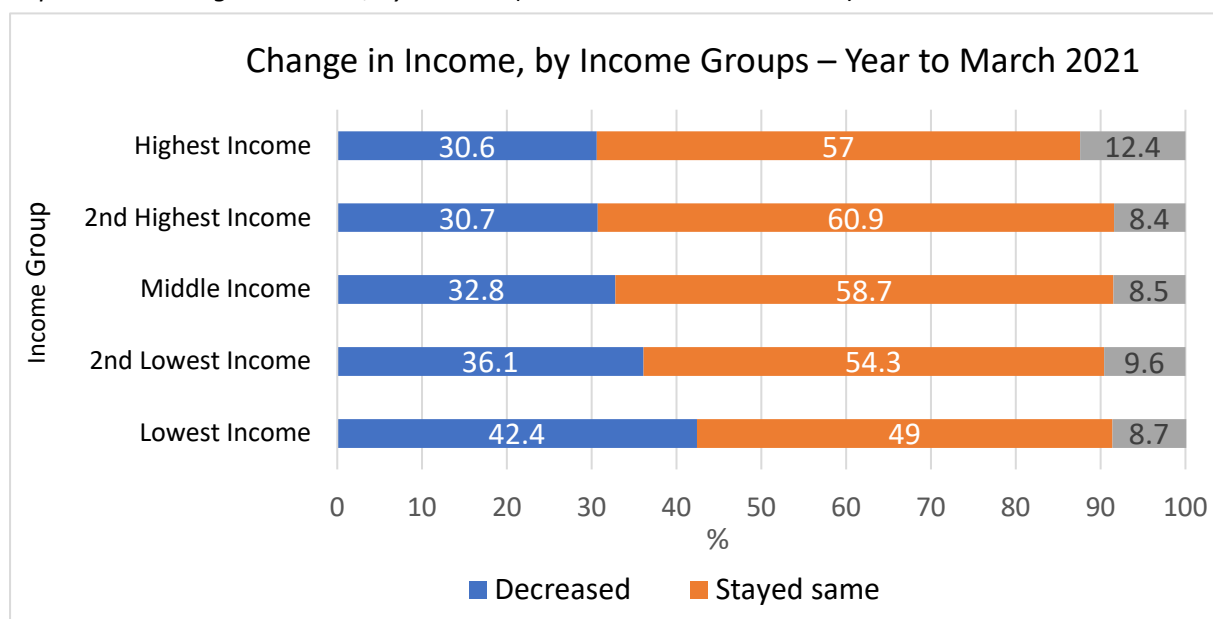
The highest income households, whose working members were more likely to work in jobs that could be carried out from home, saw spending on housing, fuel, and power rise during the pandemic. On the other hand, spending on international holidays accounted for half of reduced spending on average in the highest income households. In addition, falling demand for transport contributed more to drops in spending among the richest fifth of households, with spending on international flights and personal vehicles both seeing large falls. Higher income households also saw the largest spending drops on non-essentials such as restaurants.

Increased spending on food and non-alcoholic drinks had a larger impact on expenditure in the poorest households. The poorest households saw spending in housing, fuel, and power fall. Among lower income households, travel abroad accounted for a third of reduced spending.

While many households saw their spending fall during the pandemic, substantial covid induced changes to working arrangements, meant that many also saw their income fall. Workers on lower incomes were more likely to report decreases in income in the year to March 2021 compared to the previous financial year.

Workers on lower incomes were more likely to report decreases in income in the year to March 2021 compared to the previous financial year. 42% of those on the lowest income reporting a decrease, compared with 31% for those on the highest incomes.

Reported % Change in Income, by Quintile (March 2020 to March 2021):



There is likely to be significant impact to those who are in the lowest income group. This in the context of the loss of the UC uplift, reported drops in income levels due to reduced wages or reduced hours, with no alternative support available to help cope with the rising cost of living. West Lothian Advice Shop have identified the increased need for monetary advice to households on low income / experiencing in-work poverty.

Universal Credit (UC)

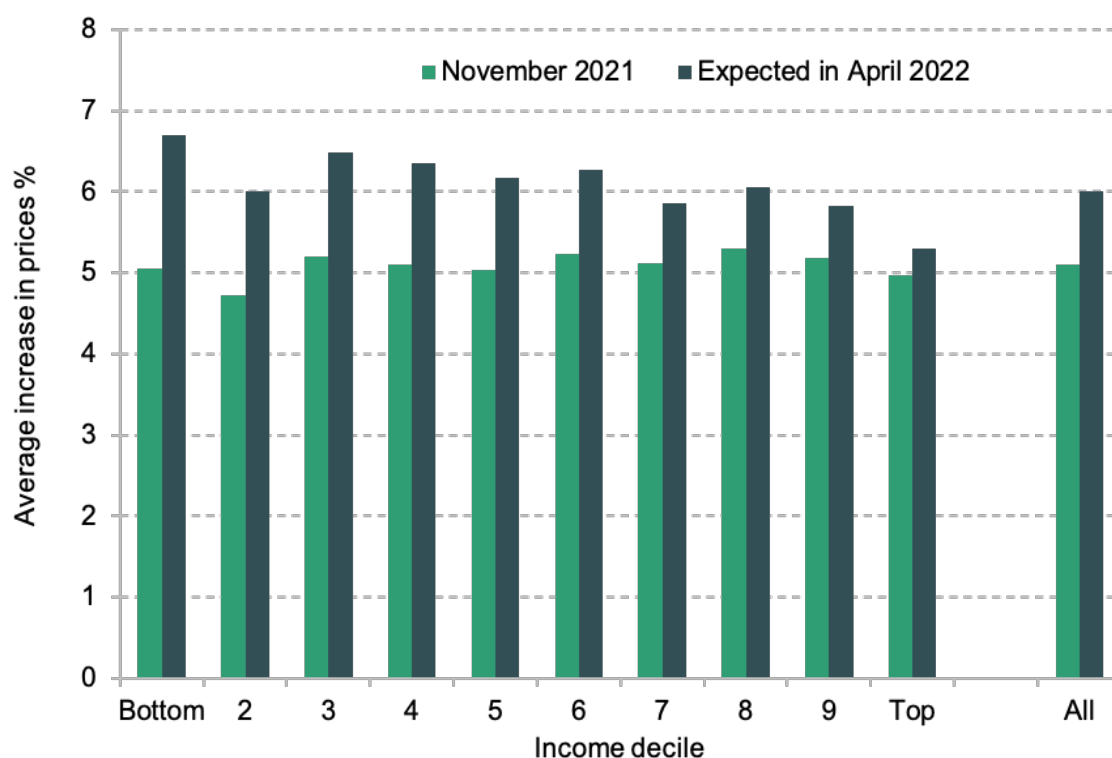
There were a number of significant changes made to the UC system in the UK Autumn Budget. Firstly, there was a slight increase in the work allowance (the amount of money that can be earned before the taper starts), which will go up by £500. There will also be a reduction in the taper rate (the rate at which UC is withdrawn as income from work rises), which has been reduced from 63p to 55p from every £1 earned through work. These changes will enable people who are on UC and in work to keep more of their earnings and increase their incomes. Additionally, more people will also be eligible for UC. The (taper rate) cut will make about two million families in the UK better off by about £1,000 a year compared with the current arrangement.

However, for the majority of people on UC who don't work, these changes will not help them in any way, and they will be worse off. Almost 6 million people lost £20 per week when the Universal Credit uplift was cut in early October. As an early analysis by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows, only about 1.7 million of those nearly 6 million people will stand to gain some benefits from this taper rate cut. On average they will gain about £5.60 per week, substantially below the UC uplift that was worth £20 per week. Only an estimated 100,000 nationally will fully recover what they lost when the uplift was taken away. The rest will not benefit as they either cannot work or do not earn enough to qualify. The squeeze on household incomes from rising prices and withdrawal of the Universal Credit uplift will lead to a doubling of destitution: despite the reduced taper rate, neither the recovery nor the increase in the minimum wage will be enough to make up for this squeeze.

Cost of Living (Impact of Inflation)

Combined with high inflation and rising interest rates, taxes are increasing to their highest rate since the 1950s, which will further erode disposable income across society. Increased National Insurance Contributions (NICS) of 1.25% as a result of the new Health & Social Care Levy, will take effect from April 2022 whilst the freeze to the personal allowance and the higher tax rate until April 2026 will pull more people into the tax system due to inflation.

Inflation (CPI) is currently at 5.4%, the highest rate in almost 30 years, and is expected to increase further to around 7% by Spring 2022. The impact of inflation, however, will be felt unevenly across society. The figure below shows the likely impacts of inflation on different households, given the different sets of things that they typically spend their money on.



The graph shows two sets of inflation rates. The first (light green) are the latest annual rates of inflation (i.e. comparing prices in November 2020 and November 2021) for each tenth of the income distribution. This highlights that there were only small differences between the cost increases seen for goods and services that poorer households buy compared to richer households.

The second series (dark green) shows the likely annual rate of inflation by April (comparing prices in April 2022 and April 2021), assuming that prices of gas and electricity continue to grow at the rate predicted by the Bank of England, and that the prices of other goods increase such that the overall rate of inflation is around 6%.

Implications for Real-Term Disposable Income in 2022

Households without someone in paid work are likely to find the coming months especially difficult. Prices are set to continue rising relatively quickly over the winter period, while benefits stay the same, and many will still be adjusting to the removal of £20 per week UC uplift. Eventually, real

income levels for those out-of-work will return to something similar to pre-pandemic, but spending power is set to be eroded by inflation before benefit rates 'catch up' in April 2022 and April 2023.

Many low earners will see increases in income, but inflation and tax rises will make those increases modest. Before tax, about half of the 6.6% increase in the minimum wage will be affected by inflation over the next year, meaning a real-terms rise of about 3.2%. After tax, this will become a 1.2% real increase in take-home pay for a full-time minimum wage worker.

A middle earner is likely to be worse off next year, as high rates of inflation and tax rise further, and negate small average wage increases. Over the next year their pre-tax pay will just about outpace inflation, but after extra income tax and NICs, their take-home pay will fall by about 1%, or £180 per year, in real terms.

Higher earners have been able to save more throughout the pandemic and they also tended to be less affected by economic uncertainty during the pandemic. These individuals are more likely to draw down accumulated savings slowly as the economy recovers. Going forward, as a result of the NI rise and tax allowance cuts, there will also be small losses for higher earners, but low impact in terms of standard of living.

4. Skills - Upskilling/Retraining

West Lothian College, Heriot Watt University and Voluntary Sector Gateway provided data regarding the uptake of upskilling and reskilling courses offered to individuals prior to the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic to present. West Lothian Councils Access 2 Employment service also provided data on the outcomes of their new registrations between April and September 2021.

West Lothian College

West Lothian College identified 3 main funded opportunities offered to individuals in the academic year between August 2020 and July 2021 – these include the National Transition Training Fund, the Young Persons Guarantee and the Flexible Workforce Development Fund.

West Lothian College (20/21)	
Programme	No. Places
National Transition Training Fund	169
YPG	328
Flexible Workforce Development Fund	>2500 offered a place

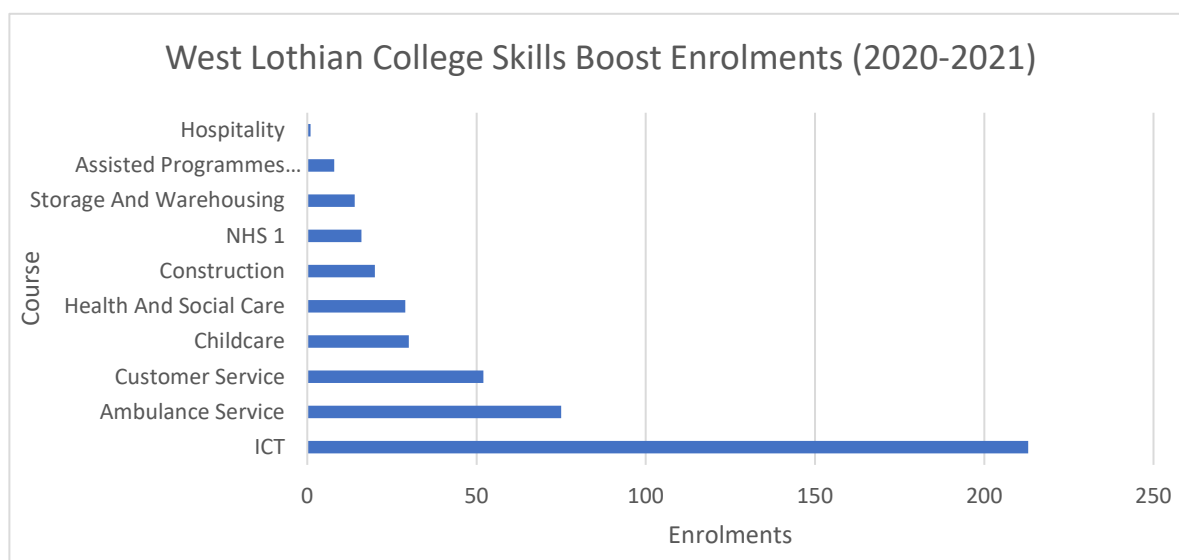
The National Transition Training Fund assisted those over the age of 25 who had been affected by the pandemic (furlough, unemployment etc.) through short skills-boost workshops. In the reported time period, 169 eligible individuals participated in these workshops.

The Young Person's Guarantee fund provided employment to individuals under the age of 25 who may have been affected by the high unemployment within this age group. In the 2020/21 academic year, 328 individuals were assisted into employment by the YPG.

The Flexible Workforce Development Fund allowed companies to claim up to £15,000 to upskill and reskill their existing staff. The college worked with 31 levy paying businesses and 35 small- to medium-sized enterprises to provide training to more than 2,500 existing members of staff.

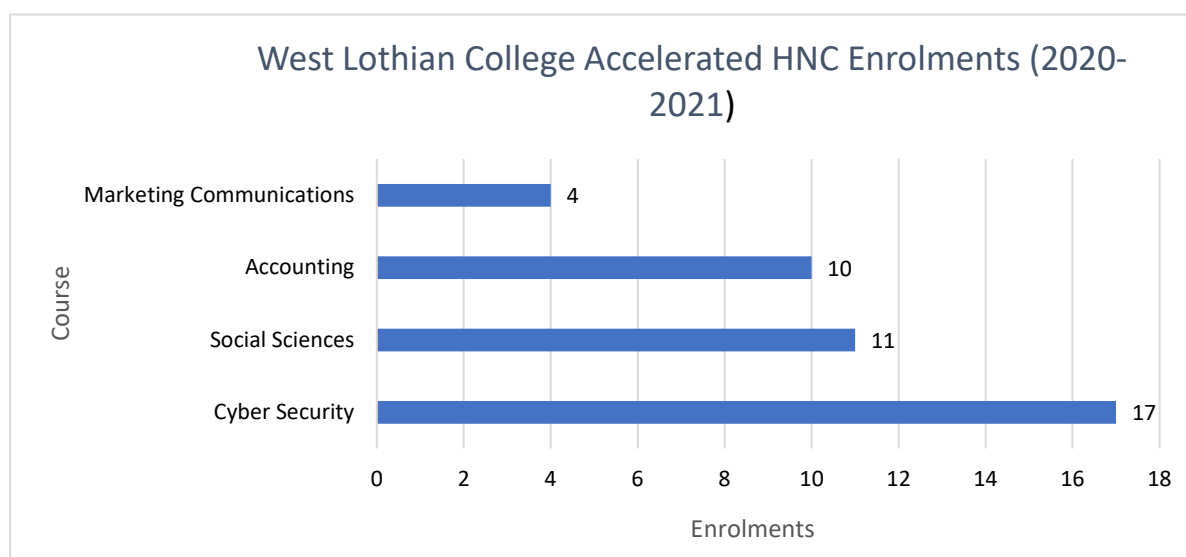
West Lothian College Skills Boost Courses

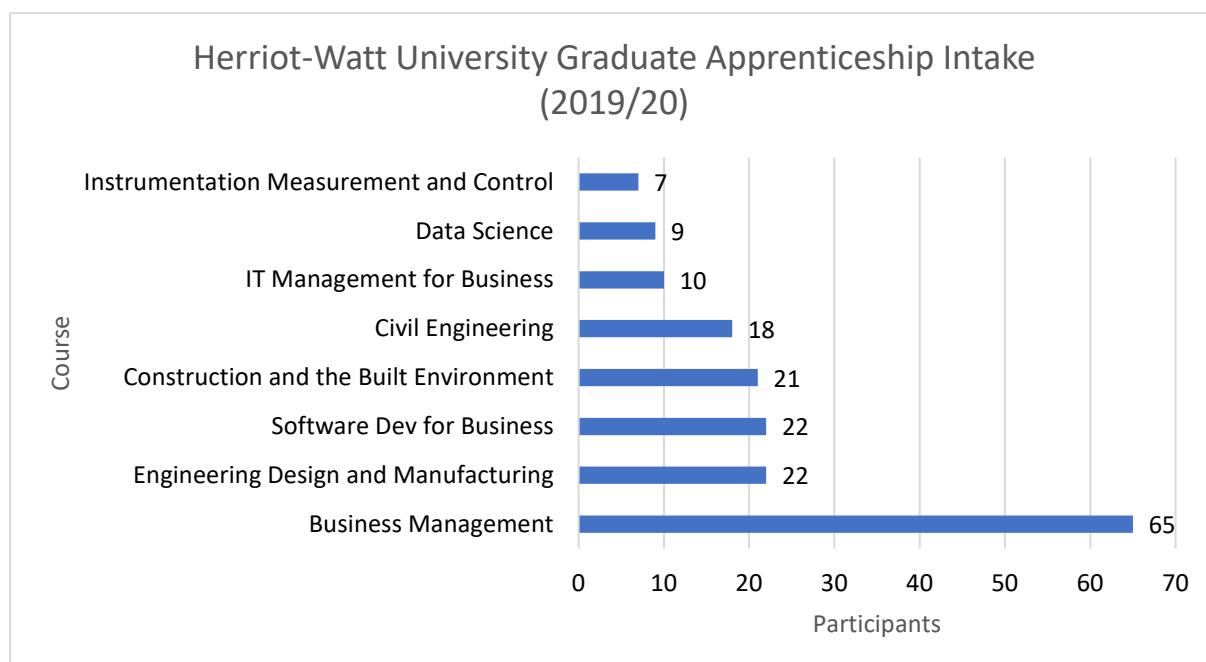
Additionally, West Lothian College provided data surrounding skills boost courses that ran in the 2020/21 academic year. Overall, 458 individuals participated in the courses offered, with the largest uptake in courses such as ICT (213), ambulance service (75) and customer service (52).



West Lothian College HNC Enrolments

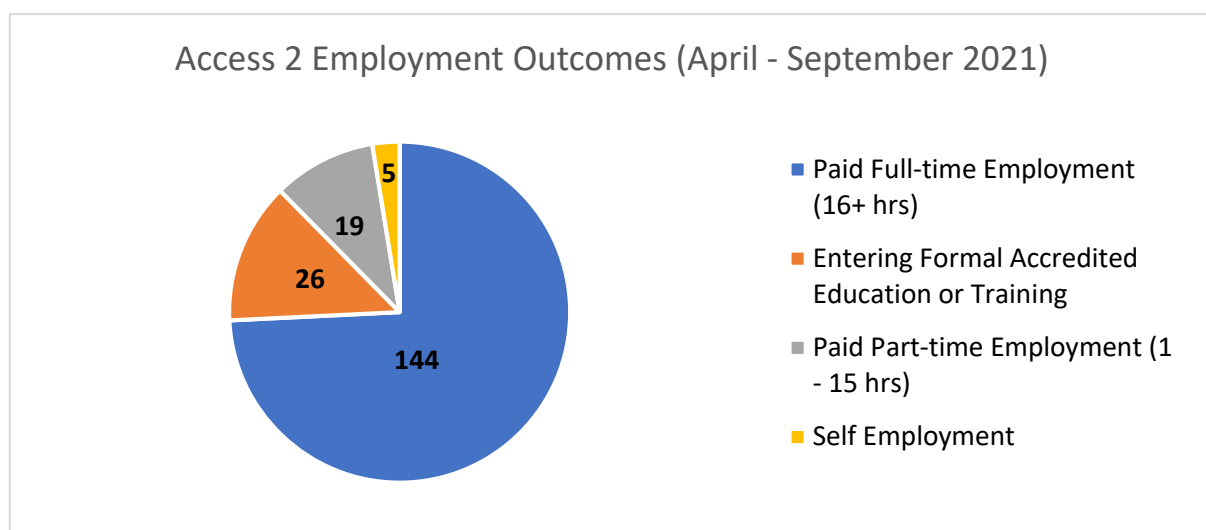
Finally, the college provided information regarding accelerated HNC courses that ran in the 2020/21 academic year. Overall, 42 individuals enrolled in accelerated HNC courses. The college offered courses in marketing communications, accounting, social sciences and cyber security.





Heriot-Watt University provided data surrounding the graduate apprenticeship courses that ran during the 2019/20 academic year. In total, 174 individuals participated in these courses, with the largest uptake in Business Management (65). There were also 61 enrolments in engineering/construction related courses and 41 enrolments in IT related courses. In the 2019/20 round of Upskilling Scotland, 134 courses were allocated to individuals (B2C) and 130 participants participated via their employer (B2B).

Access 2 Employment

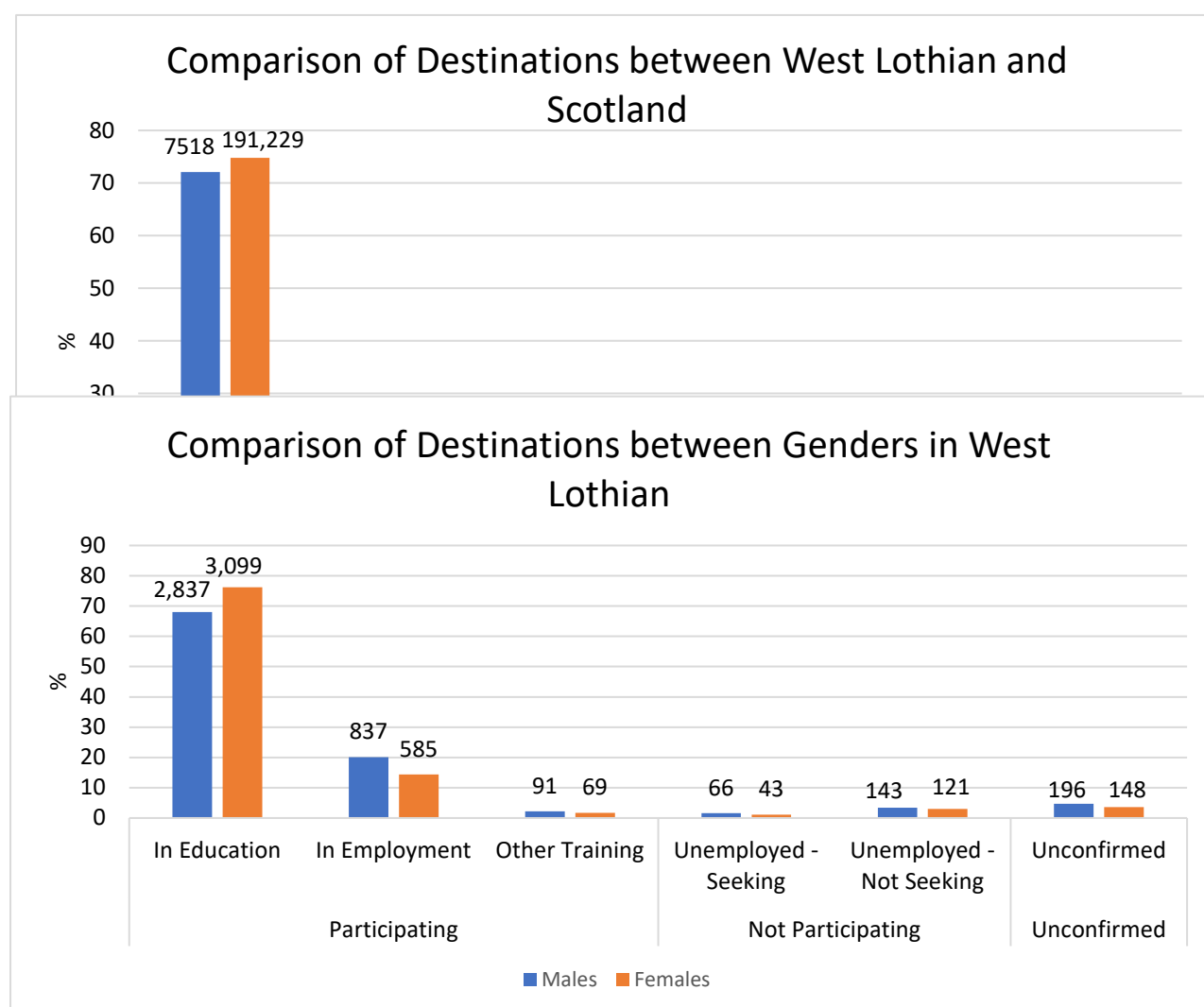


West Lothian Council's Access 2 Employment service provided data surrounding the outcomes of individuals who approached the service for employability assistance between April and September of 2021. Of the 392 individuals who registered with the A2E service between April and September 2021, 194 outcomes were noted – with the majority of individuals entering into full-time employment (74%). Furthermore, 26 people (13% of all recorded outcomes) entered formal accredited education or training, 19 people (10% of outcomes) started paid part-time employment and 5 other people became self-employed (3% of all recorded outcomes).

Third Sector: West Lothian Voluntary Sector Gateway

Although many volunteering opportunities had not been available due to the pandemic, in the past 12 months between November 20 – November 21, over 1,200 individuals signed up to volunteer following the Ready Scotland Campaign. Over 232 individuals were recruited to help directly with the vaccination rollout programme at the Pyramids, and contributed 5,844 volunteering hours over a 6-month period. Additionally, 60 individuals express interest in working as trustees on boards. Many other individuals were referred to other third sector organisation during the pandemic, including Carers of West Lothian, St John's Hospital and food banks.

SDS – WL school leaver destinations (FE / HE / employment / other)



Number of school leavers by follow-up destination and local authority (2019/20)

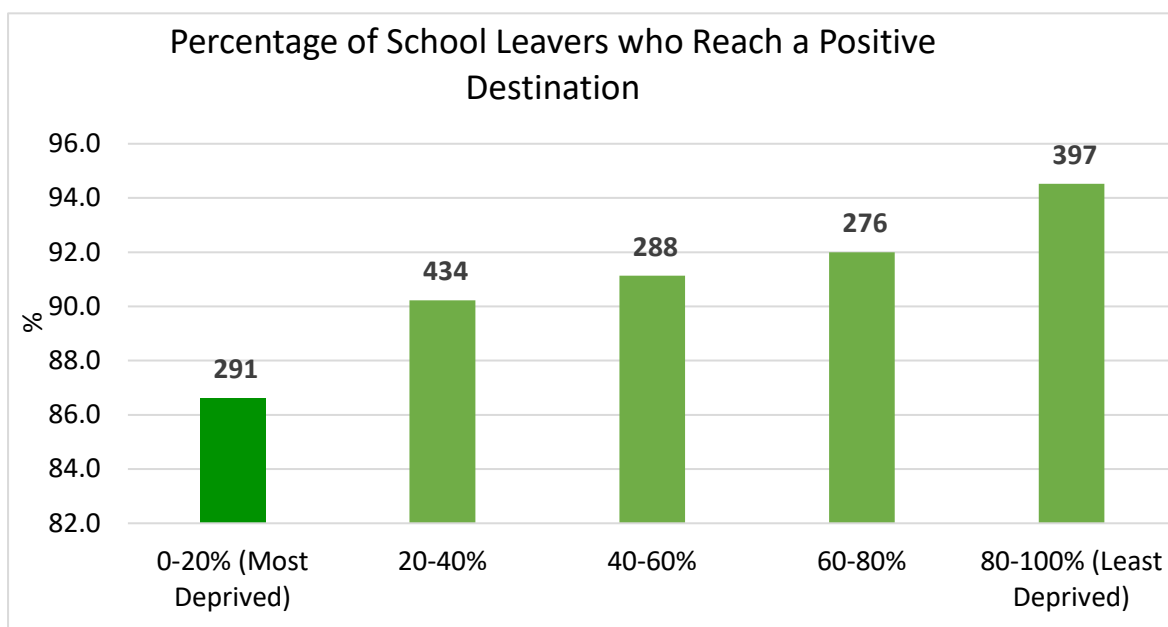
	West Lothian		Scotland	
	No.	%	No.	%
Number of Leavers	1,853	100	47,351	100
Positive Destination	1,686	91.0	43,653	92.2
Higher Education	783	42.3	20,308	42.9
Further Education	390	21.0	11,194	23.6
Training	59	3.2	1,509	3.2
Employment	423	22.8	10,101	21.3
Voluntary Work	11	0.6	156	0.3
Personal Skills Development	20	1.1	385	0.8
Unemployed Seeking	c	c	1,965	4.1
Unemployed Not Seeking	95	5.1	1,264	2.7
Unknown	c	c	469	1.0

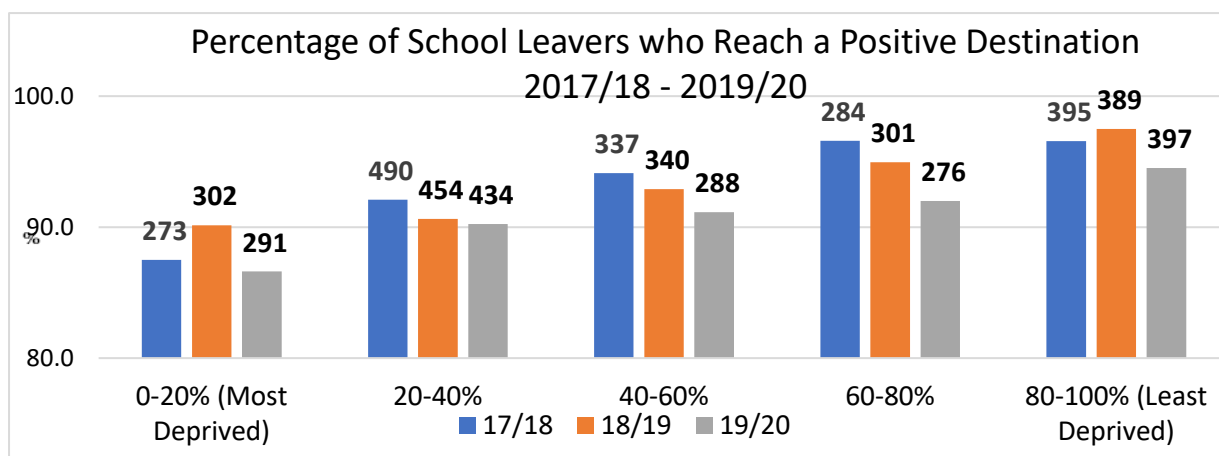
In West Lothian, 91% of school leavers in 2019/20 entered into a positive destination such as higher/further education, training, employment, volunteering or personal skills development. This is in comparison to the Scottish average, which indicates that 92.2% of school leavers entered into positive destinations.

The data for the number of school leavers unemployed and seeking in West Lothian is unavailable, however, it can be noted that the percentage of school leavers who are unemployed and not seeking in West Lothian (5.1%) is notably higher than that of Scotland as a whole (2.7%). This may be due to school leavers residing with parents, therefore having fewer financial restraints.

Number of WL School Leavers by Follow-up Destination and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

	Number of leavers	West Lothian 19/20 Positive Destination (Number)	Positive Destination (Percentage)
0-20% (Most Deprived)	336	291	86.6
20-40%	481	434	90.2
40-60%	316	288	91.1
60-80%	300	276	92.0
80-100% (Least Deprived)	420	397	94.5
Total	1,853	1,686	91.0





By breaking down school leaver destination by areas of deprivation in accordance with SIMD, a notable trend arises. The most deprived areas of West Lothian see the lowest percentage of school leavers entering into positive destinations (86.6%). The percentage of individuals entering into positive destinations rises as we enter out of the most deprived areas, with school leavers in the least deprived areas being most likely reach positive destinations (94.5%).

Note that the proportion of school leavers was increasing in the most deprived quintile from 2017/18 to 2018/19, but dropped again during the academic year running into the pandemic 2019/2020.

Annual Participation Measures: 16 - 19 Year Olds

SDS Annual Participation Measures: 16 - 19 Year Olds (August 2021)

West Lothian		
Total Cohort	8,236	100%
Participating	7,518	91.3%
Participating in Education	5,936	72.1%
Participating in employment	1,422	17.3%
Participating in Other Training & Development	160	1.9%
Not Participating	374	4.5%
Not Participating Unemployed - Seeking	109	1.3%
Not Participating Unemployed - Not Seeking	265	3.2%
Unconfirmed Status	344	4.2%

Scotland		
Total Cohort	207,529	100%
Participating	191,229	92.2%
Participating in Education	155,229	74.8%
Participating in employment	32,233	15.5%
Participating in Other Training & Development	3,837	1.8%
Not Participating	6,693	3.2%
Not Participating Unemployed - Seeking	2,724	1.3%
Not Participating Unemployed - Not Seeking	3,969	1.9%
Unconfirmed Status	9,537	4.6%

Data provided by SDS regarding the annual participation of individuals aged 16 to 19-years has highlighted that 91.3% of those in this age range in West Lothian, as of August 2021, were participating in education (72.1%), employment (17.3%) and other training and development (1.9%). The West Lothian rate of participation is only slightly lower than the Scottish rate (92.2%).

The rate of individuals not participating in West Lothian (4.5%) is substantially higher than the Scottish rate (3.2%). Additionally, in West Lothian, a larger percentage of those aged 16 to 19 unemployed and not seeking (3.2%) in comparison to the Scottish average (1.9%).

5. Business Feedback

Fraser of Allander Scottish Business Monitor – Q3 2021

According to the latest Scottish Business Monitor for the third quarter of this year, the net number of firms reporting an increase in their volume of business over the past three months has continued to be large and positive for the third quarter in a row. However, the general business outlook on growth in the Scottish economy has worsened in the latest quarter, with only 1 in 10 businesses expecting strong or very strong growth in the coming 12 months compared to 17% in the previous quarter.

Firms were asked whether their operations were likely to be affected by increasing energy prices. Around three quarters said there would be no changes to their operations as a result of an increase in energy prices. As many as one in four businesses expect to reduce their operations due to higher energy prices. However, the majority of these firms reported that the reduction would only be to a small or moderate extent.

84% of businesses expected prices to increase more than normal in the coming 12 months. Only 1% of firms anticipated a decrease in the price of their goods and services. Furthermore, 44% of businesses said that their debt burden had increased during the pandemic, of which 1 in 3 businesses reported that it had increased by a large amount.

Around 60% of businesses currently had vacancies for new staff, a 9% increase on the previous quarter. The vast majority of these responding businesses said that they were finding it difficult or very difficult to fill vacancies (86%). Almost 50% said it was very difficult. The most common factor making it difficult to fill vacancies continued to be a lack of required skills or experience (34%), followed by a lack of applications (26%).

Recruitment – Burning Glass Data

Burning Glass Technology recorded 8,470 job postings in West Lothian, between July – December 2021.

Industries

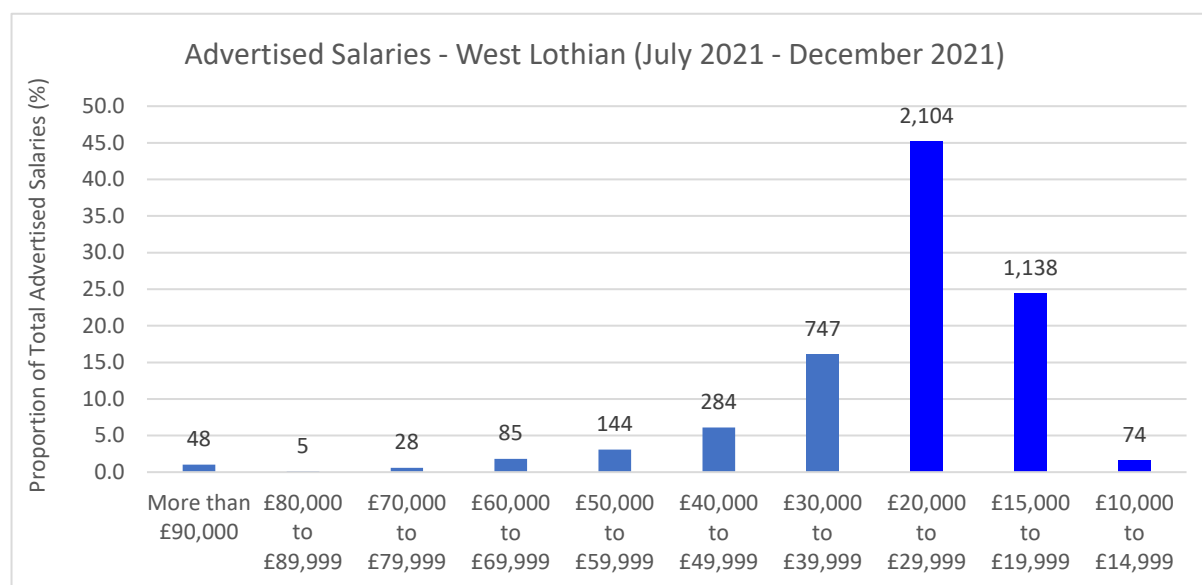
The industries identified as having the highest share of vacancies: Retail (13.9%), Accommodation & Food Services (13.0%) and Health (10.5%). Public Administration and Defence (9.9%), Information & Communication (8.2%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical (8.1%) also made up a significant proportion of industries advertising for jobs. (3,894 eligible job listings).

Occupations

The most advertised occupations: Professional (17.3%), followed by Elementary Operations (15.1%) and Associate Professional and Technical (14.6%). Sales and Customer Service (13.2%), Administrative and Secretarial (10.3%) and Skilled Trade (8.5%) also made up a significant proportion of advertised roles. (8,174 eligible job listings).

Salaries

A significant proportion of job vacancies identified between July and December offered salaries between the 15k - 30k range: over two thirds of all salaries were at, or below the 30K mark. There is a significant gap between the average real time average salary on offer being £23,600 and the average job salary in West Lothian estimated at £31,214. Vacancies advertising salaries over £40K constitute 13% of all vacancies. Vacancies advertising salaries 30 – 40K are a similar proportion at 16%. The largest proportion of jobs advertised appeared in the 20 – 30K range (45%). A further quarter in the lower ranges £15 – 20K (24%). A nominal amount in the lowest paid range £10 – 15K (2%).



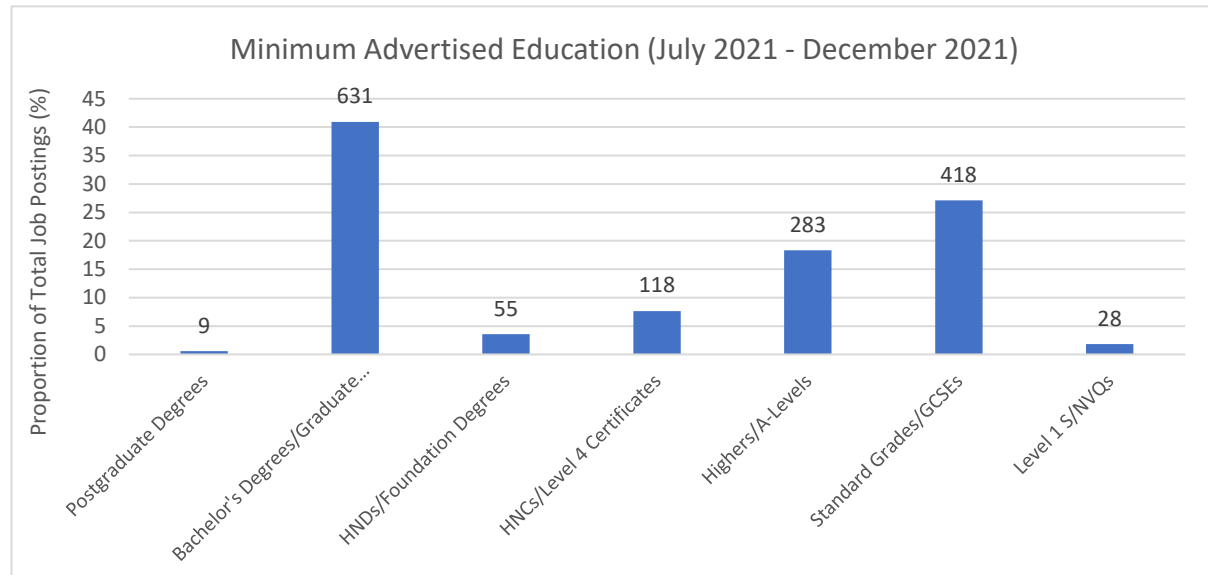
Source: SDS Burning Glass

Note: 45% (3,813) of records have been excluded because they do not contain salary information.

There appears to be a mismatch between low employment levels and a high number of job vacancies, both in West Lothian and the UK as a whole. The data provided by Burning Glass may offer an insight into why there is a low uptake of job vacancies in West Lothian. With a large percentage of job vacancies in West Lothian offering lower-level salaries, it may be suggested that high-skilled individuals who may have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic are choosing not to apply for these roles.

Education

Of the eligible job postings which advertised for certain education/qualifications, 41% advertised for at minimum a Bachelor's degree, 27% were looking for at minimum standard grade qualifications and 18% were looking for minimum qualification at Scottish Higher-grade level. (1,542 eligible job listings).



Source: SDS Burning Glass

Note: 78% of records have been excluded because they do not include a qualification level. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Certifications

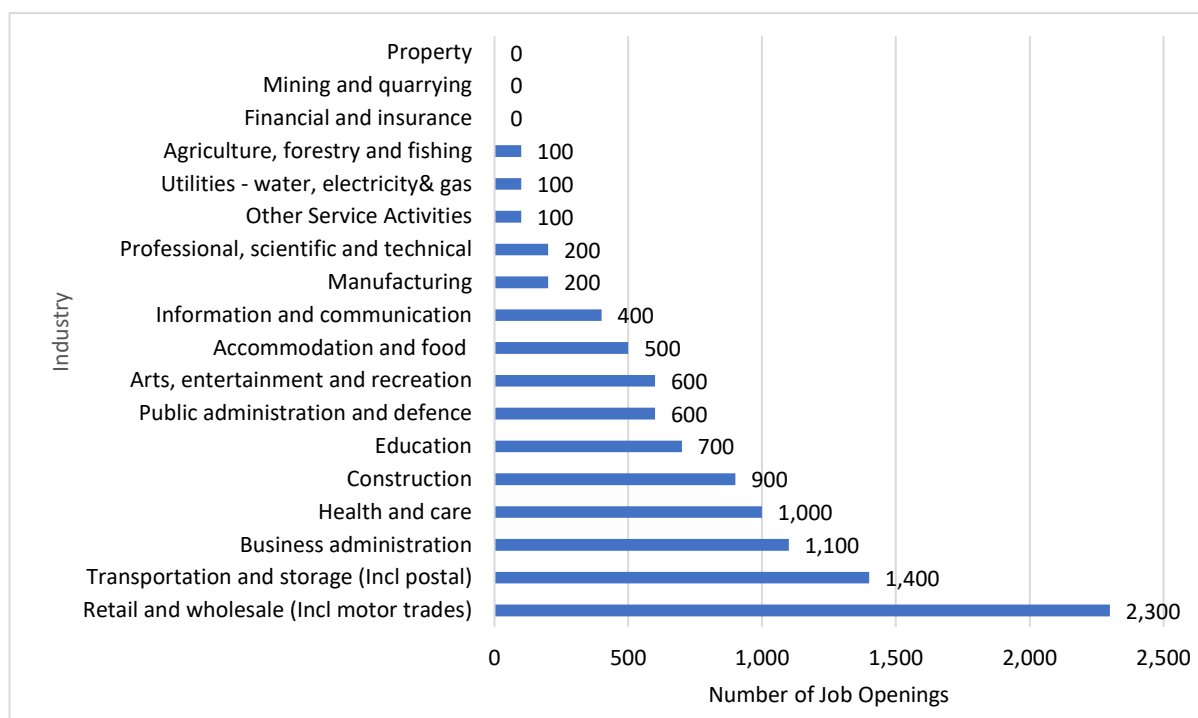
The most commonly sought-after certifications were: Construction Safety Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards (17%), Forklift Truck Licence (13%), Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) Licence (7%) and Food Safety Certificates (7%).

Skills

Of the job postings which asked for 3 or more skills, the most sought-after skills were: Basic Customer Service Skills (8.6%), General Sales Skills (5.7%) and Teamworking Skills (5.1%). Other notable skills required were Cleaning (3.7%), General Administrative and Clerical Tasks (3.0%) and Food and Beverage Service (2.8%).

Employment Forecasts

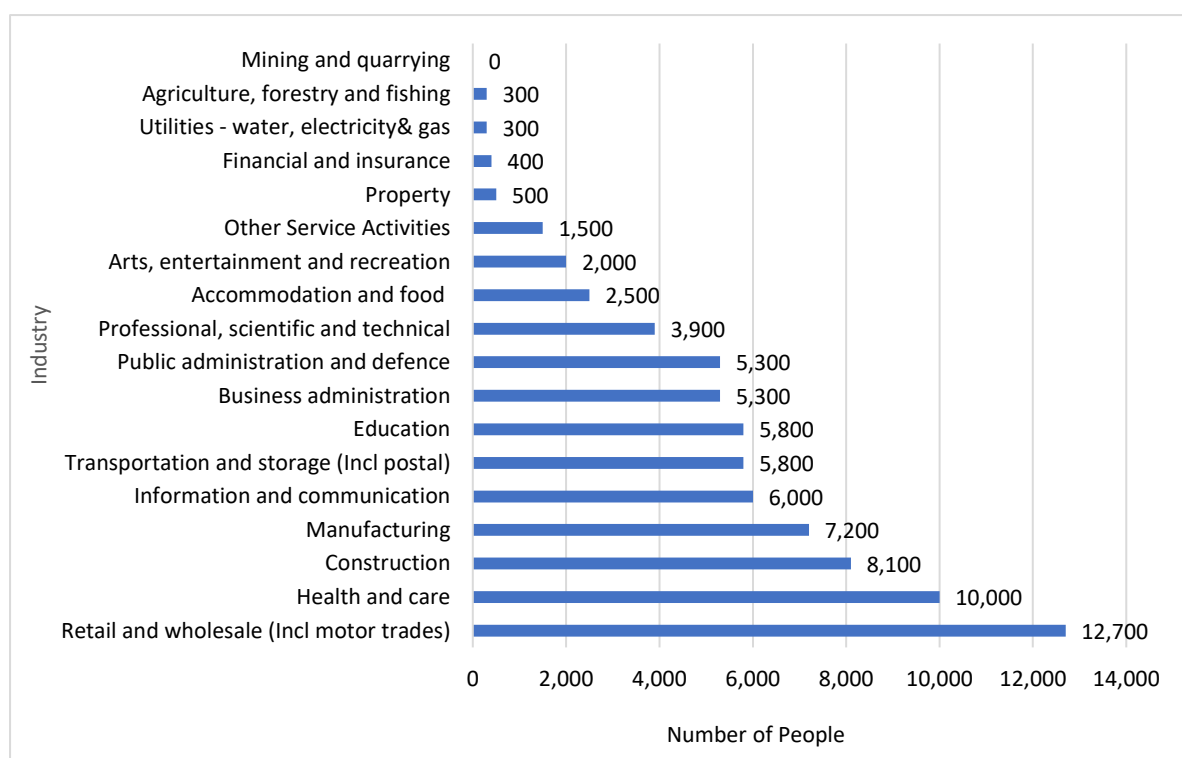
Forecast Total Requirement by Industry – West Lothian (2021 – 2024)



Source: SDS Regional Skills Assessments Data Matrix / Oxford Economics Forecast data

In the latest projection by SDS, the sectors with the highest projected requirement for recruitment is within the Retail and Wholesale sector, expecting the need for an uptake of around 2,300. Other key sectors expected to need a significant uptake of employees, includes Logistics (Transportation and Storage), Business Administration, and Health and Social Care. Those sectors that are associated with the primary activities such as Agriculture, Mining and Quarrying, as well as Finance and Property are the least likely to create vacancies.

Employment Forecast by Industry – West Lothian (2024)



Source: SDS Regional Skills Assessments Data Matrix / Oxford Economics Forecast data

SDS have forecast that by 2024, the largest sectors by employment within West Lothian will be within the Retail and Wholesale, Health and Social Care, Construction, Manufacturing, ICT and Logistics industries. This confirms the suggested direction for our current focus in terms of training, both reskilling and upskilling.

Investment

Despite the difficulties that have been experienced over the pandemic period, West Lothian has still attracted significant investment.

Valneva -The European Commission has approved its eighth contract with Valneva with a view to purchasing its potential vaccine against COVID-19. The contract with Valneva provides for the possibility for all EU Member States to purchase almost 27 million doses in 2022, the possibility to adapt the vaccine to new variant strains, and for Member States to make a further order of up to 33 million additional vaccines in 2023 (November 2021).

Mitsubishi - is to invest £15.3m in its Scottish manufacturing operations, in Livingston, to overhaul heat pump manufacturing to address both UK and European demand for low carbon systems. The money will be used to increase productivity and efficiency for the production and research of heat pump systems. Both technologies are expected to see increased demand as governments look to shift away from fossil fuel heating up to 2050 to meet net zero targets (November 2021).

Pyramids Business Park - has been sold for an undisclosed sum, and will become the new home of a £2 million film studio. Private equity company London & Regional intends to redevelop the site premises into a platform for film and TV production. Deals have recently been agreed with BBC and Amazon. (November 2021)

SAICA - A new £50 million factory in West Lothian will be ready by the end of the year. The Spanish packaging firm SAICA Group is behind plans for the new plant in Livingston. SAICA Pack will decommission its current sites in Edinburgh and Milngavie as it consolidates its Scottish operations (June 2021).

Q2/IQVIA - Ambassador Group has announced the official ground-breaking on a £15 million “landmark” development at the Q2 Solutions building site, at the Alba Campus in Livingston. An extension of 50,000 square feet will lead to an increase testing laboratory capacity, as well as providing extensive climate-controlled sample storage, warehousing, and associated office facilities (November 2020).

6. Funding

Overview of existing and future funding support initiatives:

Current

Ventilation Fund: The Scottish Government’s Business Ventilation Fund will help businesses improve ventilation and air quality on their premises to help reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission. The fund will allow businesses to claim back costs to improve ventilation of up to £2500. Support will target small to medium-sized businesses in Scotland, that are deemed ‘high risk’, where people come into close proximity, such as in the hospitality and leisure sectors

Job Creation Fund:

Volume Job Grant: West Lothian Council is making £1 million available to viable local firms to create 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. Council and its partners can help firms with recruiting.

StepsN2Work Programme: West Lothian Council is offering wage subsidy positions, this is a grant aimed at small and medium sized businesses in West Lothian. Funding is available for local businesses to create 100 new jobs for 16 - 24-year-olds. Where possible young people being supported through the Wage Subsidy programme will have access to Modern Apprenticeship opportunities.

Future

Levelling Up Fund: The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. The Fund will focus investment in projects that require up to £20m of funding, however, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, by exception. The Fund will set aside at least £800 million across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over four years from 2021-2022 to 2024-2025. First round ended in October 2021. Timeline yet to be announced for the next round.

Community Ownership Fund: The £150 million Community Ownership Fund aims to strengthen community rights and support community groups to protect and take over assets of community value. Community groups will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses. The fund will run over a total of 4 years until 2024/25. There will be at least 8 bidding rounds in total, round 2 opens in December 2021, round 3 will open in May 2022.

Shared Prosperity Fund: As EU structural funds tail off after 2022-23, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will succeed them and help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need in a manner distinct but complementary to the Levelling Up Fund, through investment in skills, enterprise and employment. Worth over £2.6 billion over the next three years. Funding will rise to £1.5 billion a year by 2024-25. Prospectus and timeline yet to be announced, but expected to launch in April 2022.

Scot Gov - The Covid Recovery Strategy: The strategy aims to address systemic inequalities made worse by Covid, improve people's wellbeing, and remobilise public services to be more focused on people's needs, building on lessons learned during the pandemic. Actions to deliver the strategy include: investing £200 million in adult upskilling and retraining opportunities to help retrain and reskill workers in areas of the economy particularly impacted by the pandemic; providing £15 million to local authorities in 2021-22 to deliver locally-based mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people aged 5 – 24; assisting long-term unemployed people to gain fair work through the No One Left Behind approach with Local Government and the third sector with £20 million funding over the next 12 months.

7. Risks

- Continued difficulties in recruitment of labour, and supply chain issues impacting on sectors such as manufacturing, construction, retail and hospitality.
- A fourth wave of rising COVID-19 cases – new Omicron variant spreading quickly, too early to predict impact on economy / potential lockdown.
- New variants of COVID-19 that the current vaccines do not provide enough protection against.
- Longer term impacts of Covid – Long-term Covid affecting workers ability to return to FT work / impact on educational achievement on young people.
- Circuit Breaker - reintroduction of COVID-19 restrictions/another national lockdown, which could hinder economic recovery.

8. Conclusions

- The Scottish and UK economy returned to pre-pandemic levels of output in November 2021. The emergence of the Omicron variant is expected to have depressed activity somewhat in December and January. However, GDP is expected to recover in February and March such that output returns to its pre-pandemic level once again by the end of the first quarter.
- CPI inflation was 5.4% in the 12-months to December 2021 and is predicted to continue to rise, peaking at 7% before returning to lower, pre-Covid levels by 2024.
- BoE increased interest rates to 0.5% on 3rd February. The Monetary Policy Committee, the group who decide any changes to interest rates, meet roughly every 6 weeks. The next meeting is on 17th March and the bank has stated they are willing to increase interest rates even further to control inflation.
- Out of Work Claimant count is falling but still higher than pre-pandemic levels. Impacts of end of furlough scheme are not yet evident, as the full effect of furlough closing may yet be felt, with some workers still potentially working out their notice and on redundancy pay.
- In-work claimant count has been steadily rising since the beginning of the pandemic. Could be attributed to reduced working hours, reduced wages, or gig economy / zero hours contracts.
- Much of the fall in employment has been accompanied by rising economic inactivity rather than unemployment:
 - o Older people (account for 57% of the participation gap), and in particular by older women. Main reasons are a combination of ill health and retirement.
 - o Young people, and in particular younger men. Young people appear to be exiting the labour market overwhelmingly into full-time education.
 - o Workers with serious health conditions have been forced to 'shield'.
 - o Low migration levels mainly due to Brexit and Covid limiting movement.
- Only 3% of West Lothian businesses utilising CJRS furlough support by the end of September 2021.
 - o Most individuals in manufacturing, construction and retail were still on furlough.
 - o Smaller businesses have had a higher percentage of employees on furlough.
 - o Higher % of women aged 50-54 were on furlough at the end of support period.
 - o Higher % of men aged 55-59 were on furlough at the end of support period.
- The largest percentage decrease in income (over the course of the pandemic) was reported by those in the most deprived areas. Those on lowest income have reduced spending by the least. There is likely to be significant impact by the loss of the UC uplift, drop in income levels due to reduced wages or reduced hours, and no alternative support with rising living costs. This verifies Advice Shop observations that there is an increased need for monetary advice to households on low income / experiencing in-work poverty.
- There is a slightly lower percentage of West Lothian 16-19-year olds participating than for Scotland. The majority of young people are currently opting to stay within the education system while the pandemic impacts on better paid job opportunities.
- Young people living in areas of deprivation are much less likely to enter into positive destinations. This has become worse over the pandemic period.
- The general business outlook on growth in the Scottish economy has worsened in the latest quarter, with only 1 in 10 businesses expecting strong or very strong growth in the coming 12 months. Many link this to supply chain issues, debt incurred during the pandemic period, and difficulties in recruitment.

- Around two thirds of Scottish businesses have vacancies for new staff, the vast majority of these responding businesses said that they were finding it difficult or very difficult to fill vacancies.
- The largest proportion of the latest job vacancies are offering salaries in the 20 - 30k range: over two thirds of all salaries are at, or below the 20 - 30K mark. The average real time salary on offer being £23,900 - given that the average job salary in West Lothian is £29,647, there is a significant gap between the two.
- It would appear that employers are still seeking at least Standard or Highers qualifications, with Degree level qualification being the most sought after.
- The largest sectors by employment within West Lothian will be within the Retail and Wholesale, Health and Social Care, Construction, Manufacturing, ICT and Logistics industries. This confirms the suggested direction for our current focus in terms of training, both reskilling and upskilling.
- There is a further need for tracking supported participants in courses, training or Third sector volunteer work, following completion, to establish if they have entered into a positive destination.

9. Recommendations

- Full engagement with local employers through the revised Employers Engagement Strategy.
- Further research among businesses is required to gather insight into local needs – focussing on issues such as supply chain, recruitment, growth support. Identify any gaps in provision of support to businesses in West Lothian.
- The Retail and Wholesale, Health and Social Care, Construction, Manufacturing, ICT and Logistics industries are identified for potential growth to 2024. Ensure existing and future courses are targeted to growth sectors. Continue engagement with Construction sector through the newly established Construction Forum.
- While training provision for young people aged between 16 – 24 has been developed under Young Person’s Guarantee and Kickstart – there is a need to extend and promote a range of training and support for people in the older age ranges (particularly in early 30’s to 50’s). Courses to be funded by both the National Transition Training Fund and the Flexible Workforce Development Fund and other funding streams due to come online over the coming few years under the Scottish Government’s Covid Recovery Strategy.
- Continued support of long-term unemployed people to gain fair work through the No One Left Behind approach, working with Third sector partners.
- Monitor future support from Scottish Government under proposed allocation of £200 million in adult upskilling and retraining opportunities to help retrain and reskill workers in areas of the economy particularly impacted by the pandemic and the transition to Net Zero.
- Young people appear to have been exiting the labour market overwhelmingly into full-time education. For the purposes of future employment engagement, there should be targeted drives for future graduate apprenticeships and graduate recruitment.
- Difficulties with recruitment remains a significant issue for employers – however, their approach to the recruitment process appears to be the same as it was pre-pandemic, with too strict a filtering process preventing potential candidates from reaching interview stage. Advisers should encourage local employers to consider a more flexible approach to their recruitment and screening process, and to consider direct engagement through jobs fairs.

- Many employers have been experiencing short staffing issues, and as a result are do not have the resources (or funds) available to train up new employees themselves. Vocational training and Graduate Apprenticeship courses to create highly qualified candidates should be targeted to key growth sectors – and where possible supported by training and development funds.
- Lower income households impacted by the loss of the UC uplift, drops in income levels, and rising living costs will need continued, tailored monetary advice and support by Advice Shop over the winter period and through into the second quarter of 2022.
- There is a minimum or a lack of client destination data – available data is basic. In order to ensure that the courses and services provided to individuals in West Lothian are best targeted, and identifying client needs accurately, it is recommended that destinations should be tracked.

West Lothian Economic Review

Economic Outlook

- UK economy saw significant growth in 2021, mainly driven by a rebound in consumer spending as restrictions lifted: reaching pre-Covid levels by Nov 2021
 - Scottish Economy grew by 0.8% in Nov 2021, GDP 0.6% higher than pre-pandemic (Feb 20)
- Overall GDP growth in 2022 is expected around 6%
 - During 2022 consumption growth should drop back to historically more normal rates
 - Business will drive growth with continuing economic recovery and temporary uplifts to capital allowances
- 2021-2024 forecast for West Lothian economy predicted average annual growth (GVA) rate of 3.1% – same rate as Scotland. (3.4% UK)
 - Longer-term 2024-2031 average annual growth for West Lothian projected rate 1.3%, compared to 1.2% Scotland (1.4% UK)
- Inflation rose by 5.4% 12 mths to December 2021, (5.1% November) - highest rate in almost 30 years. Expected peak in Q2 around 6.5% - 7%
 - Increases due to rising energy costs, global supply chain disruptions, labour shortages and in the UK new trade barriers following Brexit
 - Inflation expected to decline by Q4 2022 as BoE interest rate increases (target 1.5% by 2023), energy prices stabilise, supply bottlenecks ease, and modest tightening in monetary policy

West Lothian Economic Review

Labour Market/Employability

- WL Claimant count for December 2021 was 3,865 at 3.3%, lower than Scotland (4.0%) and UK(4.4%). (Nov 2021 3.4%)
 - Unemployment rate has continued to decrease for the ninth month in a row, dropping towards pre-pandemic levels (0.5% above Dec 19 / Jan 20)
 - Little impact shown by the end of the furlough scheme in September
- West Lothian also increased number of people becoming 'economically inactive' (16 - 64 not available for work). Inactive claimants rose 2,207 in Jan 2020 to 5,014 for Dec 2021 (by 140%)
 - Legacy of pandemic: rise in long-term sickness, possibly Long-Covid. By Dec 2021 - Highest proportion among women 62% vs men 38%. Highest occurrence in middle age (30-50) and older age ranges (50-65)
- Youth unemployment in West Lothian for December 2021 was 705 (5.1%), higher than Scotland (4.8%), lower than UK (5.3%). (Nov 5.3%)
 - Youth claimant figures for West Lothian continued decreasing since March 2021
 - Young people most affected by large-scale job losses in hospitality, retail and administration. Sectors now recovering and undertaking large recruitment drives. Increased P/T work
- In-work claimants saw dramatic rise from pre-pandemic: 2,809 Jan 2020 – peaked at 6,115 Sept 21. Numbers now starting to fall.
 - West Lothian Advice Shop feedback: increased numbers of individuals seeking advice and support related on money issues and budgeting

West Lothian Economic Review

Living Standards

- Salaries:

- Avg annual salary for *jobs located in* West Lothian for 2021 is £29,647 (2020: £30,931)
- Avg annual salary *per resident living in* West Lothian for 2020 is £30,623 (2020: £31,044)
- Average salaries have dropped slightly since previous year - both Scotland and the UK have also seen a decrease.

- Changes to Universal Credit:

- Recent changes made to the Universal Credit (UC) system will mainly benefit those who are in-work and claiming UC (reduction in taper rate reduced to 55p for every £1 earned)
- Majority on UC who are out of work but actively seeking, will not benefit from changes - loss of £20 uplift in October 2021

- Rising cost of Living:

- Combined with high inflation and rising interest rates, taxes are increasing to their highest rate since the 1950s; will erode disposable income
- Increased National Insurance Contributions (NICS) of 1.25% as a result of the new Health & Social Care Levy from April 2022
- Freeze to personal allowance and a higher tax rate until April 2026

West Lothian Economic Review

Skills – Upskilling/Retraining

- West Lothian College: identified 3 main funded opportunities offered to individuals in the academic year between August 2020 and July 2021
 - National Transition Training Fund assisted 169 individuals aged 25+ through short skills-boost workshops.
 - Young Person's Guarantee fund: employment for 328 individuals under 25
 - Flexible Workforce Development Fund allowed companies to claim up to £15,000 to upskill/reskill their existing staff. Worked with 31 levy paying businesses and 35 SME businesses to provide training to more than 2,500 existing members of staff
- Access2Employment: of 392 individuals registered with A2E between April - September 2021, 194 positive outcomes
 - Majority entered into full-time employment (74%). 13% entered formal accredited education or training; 10% entered P/T employment.
- Herriot Watt University: in 2019/20 academic year, 174 individuals participated, with the largest uptake in Business Management
 - In 2019/20 round of Upskilling Scotland: 134 courses were allocated to individuals (B2C) and 130 participants participated via their employer (B2B)
- Third Sector: Over 1200 individuals signed up to volunteer following the Ready Scotland Campaign.
 - 232 individuals in the vaccination rollout programme at the Pyramids
 - Many other individuals referred to other third sector organisations

West Lothian Economic Review

Business Feedback

- Recruitment – Burning Glass: 8,470 job postings in West Lothian, July to Dec 2021
 - Industries recruiting: Retail (13.9%), Accommodation & Food Services (13.0%), Health (10.5%) Public Administration & Defence (9.9%), ICT (8.2%) Professional, Scientific & Technical (8.1%)
 - Occupations in demand: Professional (17.3%), Associate Professional and Technical (14.6%). Lower paid jobs also in high demand - Elementary Operations, Sales and Customer Service, Administrative and Secretarial
 - Significant proportion of job vacancies offered salaries between 15k - 30k range. Over two thirds of all salaries were at, or below the 30K mark. Significant gap in avg salary on offer at £23,600 and avg job salary in West Lothian est at £29,647
- Fraser of Allander Scottish Business Monitor - Q3 2021:
 - Net number of firms reporting an increase in their volume of business over the past three months continued to be large and positive for the 3rd quarter in a row
 - Around 60% of businesses had vacancies for new staff - up 9% on previous quarter
 - Majority of businesses were finding it difficult or very difficult to fill vacancies (86%)
 - Most businesses expect prices to increase more than normal in the coming 12 months (84%)
 - 2 in 5 businesses said their debt burden had increased during the pandemic (44%), of which 1 in 3 businesses reported that it had increased by a large amount
 - Only 1 in 10 businesses are expecting strong or very strong growth in the coming 12 months

West Lothian Economic Review

Questions

Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Board

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES
AND PROTECTING PEOPLE AT RISK
Plan 2019-2022



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Outcomes: achieved and delivered

- 14 completed actions, within the areas of Community Wellbeing, ASB, Violence and Counter Terrorism with CSP's working towards satisfactory conclusions by the end of plan.
- CSP meetings ensuring swift, effective, proportionate and combined response / interventions from the CS partners, ensuring community needs met as well as delivering on Plan
- Incorporated Community Engagement
 - Successful Firework and Bonfire Prevention in Blackburn as recognised by Ash Denham, Minister for Community Safety



Lessons learned

- CSP commitment from all sectors is essential - Increased Mental Health + Well Being issues, affecting all CSP's.
- Too many priorities. Needs more targeted focus and use of action planning to drive development and service delivery
- Remove duplication; Business As Usual (BAU) reporting is already taking place via scrutiny process
- Maintain a current CSP overview of Community Safety issues

CSP Priorities 2022 onwards

1. New CS Priorities currently under discussion
2. Targeted focus on main areas of crucial business affecting all
3. Reporting and monitoring on deliverable actions
4. Time and Resources used in Prevention = long term savings
5. Utilising shared resources + creating new opportunities
6. Increased knowledge - support and signpost
7. Place based communities: shared assets, strong local resilience, achievable goals



Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Ashley Goodfellow

Consultant in Public Health, NHSL

21 February 2022



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Objectives

The Health and Wellbeing Partnership brings partners together from across the Community Planning Partnership to work together to take forward the inequalities and prevention agenda at a strategic level by;

- a) Embedding a preventative focus in the core work of the CPP and providing a platform for preventative efforts to be developed across the partnership.
- b) Ensuring health inequalities and prevention is taken forward as a shared priority as part of a wider 'whole system' CPP approach to issues like poverty, housing, education, employment and transport.

What has been achieved?

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION – NOT FOR ONWARD DISTRIBUTION



Planned housing development in West Lothian investigation

Measuring impact on GP practice populations

Date: 20/08/2021

- Building relationships with partners and laying the foundations for a 'health in all policies' approach
- Exploratory work – whole systems approach to MHWB
- T2D whole systems approach
- Planned housing development report
- Covid-19 dataset
- Breastfeeding project (evolved from a request from the CPP)

Lessons learned

- Relationships and collaboration
- Covid-19 pandemic and resilience
- Shared objectives – focus on a limited number of priorities
- Clear action plan
- Avoid lifestyle drift
- Short-term projects vs. resource for sustained input



Context for future work

- Place and wellbeing
- Covid-19 recovery
- National Public Health Priorities
- Develop approaches and deliver action to support LOIP priorities and outcomes
- Local scoping workshops

Future priorities (provisional)

- Preventative, whole systems approach to good mental health and wellbeing
- Development of a prevention strategy for alcohol and drugs
- Use of place and planning tools to improve the food and physical activity environment (linked to T2D and supporting breastfeeding)

Governance of business support

- Economic Partnership Forum
- Economic Growth Plan 2013 -2018
- Jobs Task Force 2018 onwards



Making a difference

- Jobs after redundancy
- Higher-value jobs and careers
- Training and upskilling
- Social inclusion – grant conditionality
- Driver of partnership working
- Catalyst for mobile inward investment
- Enabling low/net zero sustainable growth



Case study examples

- Q2 Solutions
 - Scotland's largest life sciences employer
 - Bio-pharma and professional careers
- Calnex
 - Software development for telecoms industry
 - Floated on London Stock Exchange
- Glenhaze
 - Sustainable manufacturing
 - Family-friendly working



The ways forward

- Shared Prosperity Fund
 - Maximise the opportunities
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation
 - Incl. Productivity and Skills
- Net Zero Carbon
 - As part of key economic/societal objectives



Environment & Climate Change

Achievements

- Climate Emergency Declaration September 2019
- Significantly exceeded council's emissions reduction targets
- Focus on delivering a new Climate Change Strategy:
 - Agreed by Council Executive in October 2021
 - Commits to further engagement with CPP and other partners
- High Level Actions and Commitment to be Net Carbon Zero by 2045

Lessons Learned

- Rapidly changing priorities and objectives require flexibility in approach
- Significant challenges in decarbonising buildings and transport
- Focus should be on areas where partners can directly influence outcomes

Areas of Focus & Future Priorities

- Reducing transport emissions (incl. active travel)
- Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies – Partner co-ordination
- Wider behaviour change at a local level
- Development and formalisation of CPP Climate Change Action Plan
- Identify key areas where collaboration can add most value
- Aligning objectives to existing net-zero targets, plans and strategies
- New focus for Steering Group
 - Council
 - Partners: Government, Education, Third Sector, Communities, Private Sector

Monitoring

- Climate Change & Sustainability Working Group
- Environment PDSP
- CPP

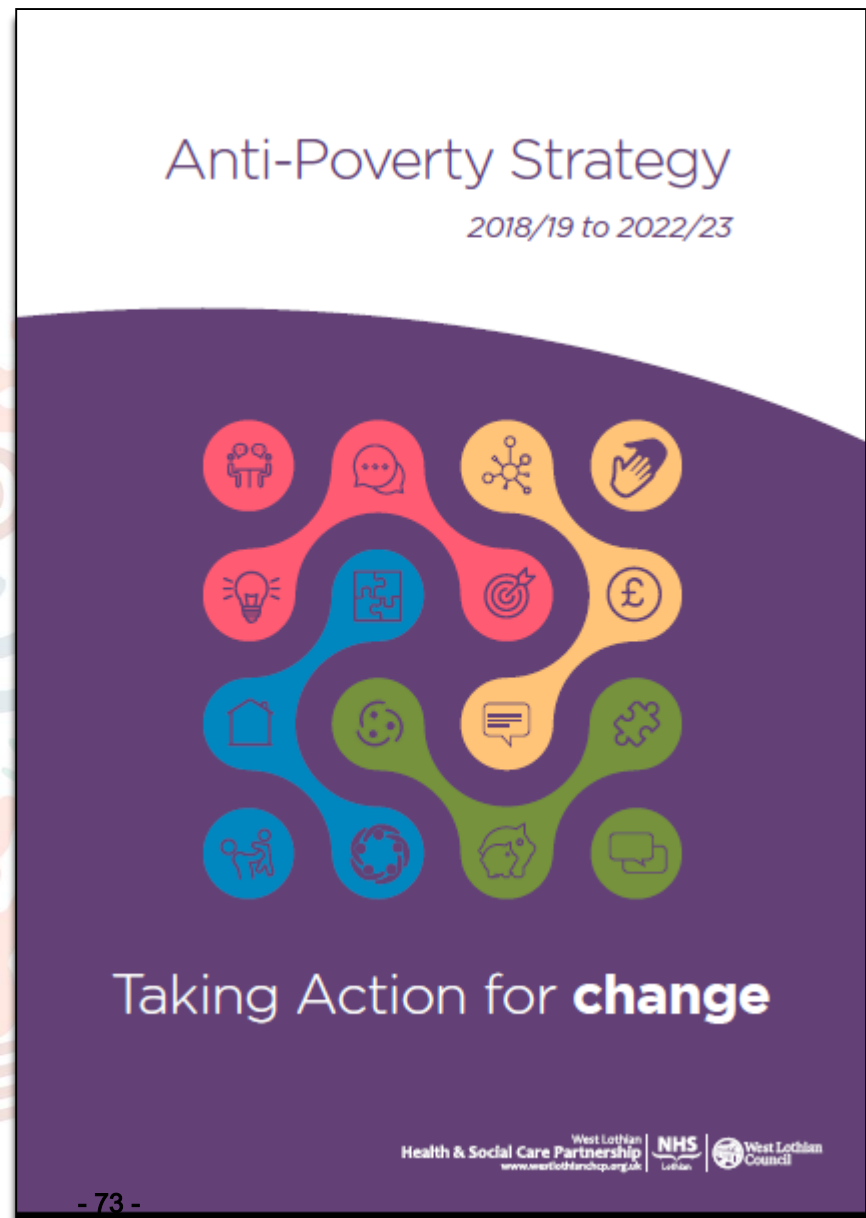


West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Nahid Hanif Anti-Poverty Manager



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

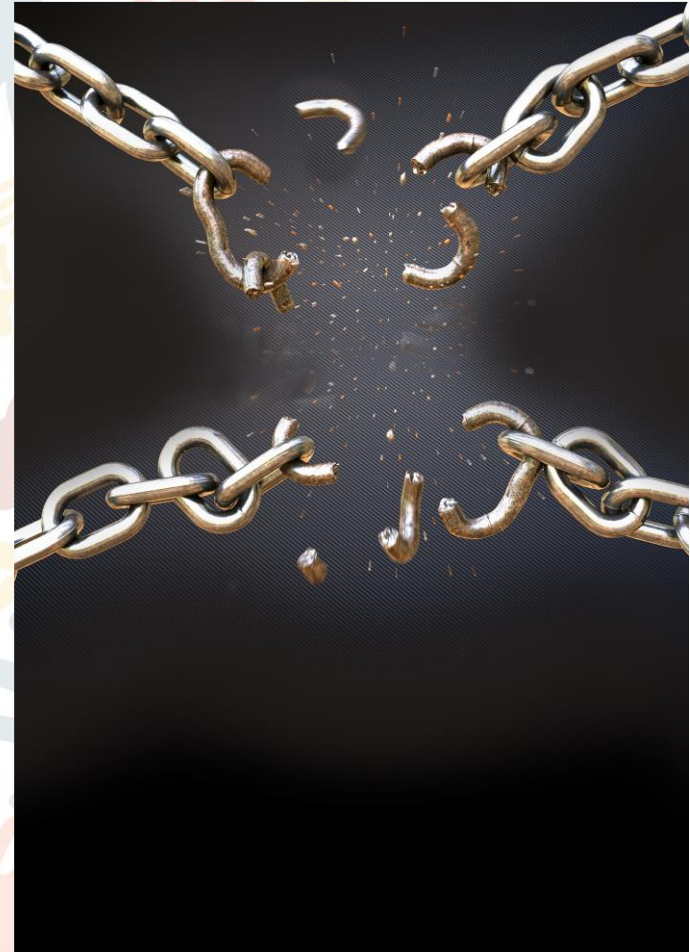


Aims of Our Strategy

- protect people in West Lothian from the worst extremes of poverty and deprivation
- enable and empower people to access opportunities to become financially resilient
- tell a different story about poverty and increase understanding and reduce the stigma
- work collaboratively with partners, and use our collective voice to lobby Scottish and UK Government to bring about change

Breaking the chains of Poverty

www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/17285/Breaking-the-Chains-of-Poverty-report/pdf/Breaking_the_Chains_of_Poverty.pdf



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

What have we achieved & delivered

- **Reducing Stigma**
- **Digitalisation**
- **National Initiatives have been localised**
- **Partnership Working**
- **Co-Production**

Lessons Learned

- **Embedding Change**
- **Working Collaboratively**
- **Relationships**
- **Trust**
- **Sharing Information**
- **Shared Objectives**

Priorities

- **Recovery from COVID-19**
- **Refresh of the Anti-Poverty Strategy**
- **Targeting Resources**
- **Funding**
- **Using our collective voice**
- **Data Analysis**
- **Lived Experience**



CPP Locality Plans

Douglas Grierson, Regeneration Team Leader, Community Planning and Regeneration

1. What outcomes have been achieved and delivered
2. Lessons learned over the last few years
3. Where there is still work to do
4. Priorities going forward



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

What outcomes have been achieved and delivered

- 13 plans established on 2017/18 (Council initially then adopted by CPP)
 - Steering Groups in each area;
 - Community Organisations strengthened (some examples)
 - Polbeth Hub (funding, development/asset transfer);
 - BBNAG – Nationally recognised partnership work
 - Transform Craigshill Community Action Group formed into a SCIO
 - Asset Transfer process in (Polbeth and Fauldhouse)
 - COVID recovery has strengthened networks
 - Funding (WLC and external)

Lessons learned over the last few years

- COVID and poverty – Communities are well placed to respond (often faster and more agile than many CPP partners);
- Partnership working has increased and better linked up;
- ‘Regeneration’ areas very different;
- COVID has changed things ways of working; and
- Groups continue to need support around key areas such as funding.



Where there is still work to do

- The existing plans are based on community engagement and fairly narrow in scope; local community development plans;
- There needs to be stronger link and vision for '**regeneration**' of these communities and what that looks like;
- How this can be integrated better with other strategic plans and the LOIP;
- Need to build in the commitment to support with CWB, Asset transfer, Community Choices and approaches to funding; and
- Community structures are stronger in some areas than others.



Priorities going forward

- Embed the CPP overview and responsibility for the locality plans;
- Look at a workable consistent approach to localities;
- Agree clear outcomes for the CPP for the plans, in particular the areas of multiple deprivation;
- Align all strategic plans and area based priorities, so plans 'talk to each other'
- Embed communities role in this process.
- Funding



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

1. Purpose of Report

To update the CPP Board on the review process of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

2. Recommendations

The CPP Board is asked to:

- Note the update on progress with the new LOIP; and
- Note and agree the considerations as part of the review process
- Consider and discuss the questions circulated prior to the Board to inform the development of the LOIP

3. Discussion

Background

It was agreed at the Steering Group held in November that work should resume on the review of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The review process which started in 2019 was postponed in early 2020 due to COVID-19.

It is important that the LOIP is informed by a full understanding and analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on the CPP and communities, and that it aligns with other recovery plans. The LOIP should demonstrate the added value that can be delivered by the CPP over and above individual partner recovery plans and should contribute to longer term recovery planning. It is important to avoid duplication and better align partnership plans. The LOIP should fill any gaps identified and focus on the partnership activities that are not already being delivered.

It is intended that the significant work already carried out to develop the draft LOIP and LOIP Delivery Plan should be built on, rather than develop a new LOIP from scratch. The work that was developed by the CPP in relation to COVID recovery will also be used to help refocus the LOIP as this highlights where key areas of partnership work are required in relation to dealing with impact of COVID-19. Through this process, 5 themes for COVID recovery were identified (Income and employment; Economy and business; Physical and mental health and wellbeing; Housing and homelessness; and Developing & strengthening partnership working between public, third sector and business sector). These themes do align with the priorities and outcomes in the draft LOIP. The original focus areas and outcomes can be found below in Appendix 1.

LOIP Review Process

Resuming the development of the LOIP will involve discussions with key partners and officers in relation to the existing focus areas and outcomes to assess if these should remain and if so, with the same focus or by taking a different approach. These discussions will also help to identify if new areas or issues have emerged that need to

be drawn in to the LOIP. This will also be driven by data and intelligence to ensure that any change or new areas of focus are supported by a robust evidence base and that ultimately the new LOIP reflects an up to date understanding of local needs and opportunities.

This was discussed at the Community Planning Steering Group on the 9th February. It was agreed that more consideration needs to be given in exploring the collaborative gain that can be achieved as a result of the CPP, and the LOIP. It would be useful to understand how the LOIP connects to individual partner plans, what the LOIP means to partner agencies and what the areas of commonality are across the partnership. A number of questions were circulated prior to the meeting for partners to consider in order to inform today's discussion.

A number of initial discussions with partners and services have now taken place. So far, discussions have acknowledged that much of what is in the current revised version is still very much relevant. There is broad agreement that the focus areas are still appropriate, however there are a number of themes and issues that may now feature more consistently through the LOIP and potentially provide more focus for activity of the CPP than originally anticipated as a result of COVID-19. The guiding principles of prevention, inclusiveness, community resilience and empowerment, and tackling inequalities are even more significant in the present context. Key themes and considerations arising out of discussions to date are briefly outlined below. These reflect approaches or themes that will be added to or strengthened in the LOIP, but also reflect considerations in relation to the wider functioning of the CPP.

Community Wealth Building: West Lothian are currently developing their Community Wealth Building approach. This approach will be a key way that the CPP can achieve the long-term vision and outcomes that will be set out in the LOIP, particularly around tackling inequalities and building local economic resilience. The CWB Action Plan that is being developed will support and enable services, partners and communities to work in partnership to build a strong and resilient local economy – a key focus of the LOIP. This approach will be threaded through the revised version of the LOIP.

Place: Discussions have also highlighted the importance of Place. This originally featured under the 'Sustainable Places' focus area however, it has been recognised that 'Place' plays a central role in all of the focus areas that feature in the LOIP and therefore should be reflected in that way.

Poverty: COVID-19 has exacerbated poverty and the wide-ranging impacts that it has on our communities. Poverty has been a central theme for the CPP prior to COVID-19 however, the significant impact that the pandemic has had on individuals and families in all areas of their daily lives means that this will be even more of a focus of activity in the longer term.

Governance: Given that the LOIP will set out the long-term vision of the Partnership, and those key issues that can only be achieved by working collaboratively, it is vital that there is robust governance arrangements and delivery mechanisms to ensure that the outcomes and actions set out in the LOIP delivery plan are delivered and achieved. It is important that the structure fits the requirements of the LOIP, rather than the LOIP fitting into the existing structures. This may involve looking at the roles and remits of

the groups within the structure, ensuring that there is consistency and clarity on the role of sub-groups in relation to the LOIP, and clear accountability and reporting arrangements in order to monitor activity on a regular basis.

Locality Planning: The review of the LOIP is also an opportunity to ensure that the Locality Plans are fit for purpose, meet the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act and are a mechanism for delivering the LOIP at a local level. It is also an opportunity to ensure there is consistency across the board about what we mean by 'Locality' and that these plans reflect partnership activity.

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	ALL
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	ALL
Resources	The new LOIP will be developed within existing resources
Link to prevention/community engagement	The new LOIP will be informed by robust community engagement and will have a focus on preventative activity that can only be achieved in partnership
Impact on inequalities	The LOIP's key focus will be to tackle inequalities
Key risks	N/A

5. Consultations

Engagement with both partners and communities is currently being undertaken to ensure the LOIP reflects an up to date understanding of local needs and opportunities.

6. Conclusions

There has been a great deal of activity across the partnership to both respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to look at how the CPP may plan for recovery. Work to further progress the development of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is now being taken forward which will involve a process of engaging with partners and officers to examine and review the current focus areas, identify any new areas as a result of COVID and building in the work that has been undertaken over the last 18 months in relation to recovery.

Report written by/contact details/date

Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer, February 2022

susan.gordon@westlothian.gov.uk

References

N/A

Appendices: Appendix 1 - LOIP Focus Areas and outcomes

APPENDIX 1 – LOIP FOCUS AREAS & OUTCOMES (at March 2020)

Focus Area	Outcome	Specific Focus in Draft LOIP
Sustainable Places	Everyone has access to appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing which meets their needs	Housing meets the needs of communities (affordable, right kind of housing); local people are aware of all housing options and support available; there is joined up and consistent support and advice available to prevent homelessness; we take a joined up, collaborative and participative approach to designing places (placemaking approaches)
	Everyone who lives, works and delivers services in West Lothian builds a sustainable, nature rich, net zero carbon community	Developing a partnership approach to achieving net zero carbon; improved engagement with communities, business and third sector – take on a leadership role; nature-based solutions, carbon off-setting and energy generation
Improved Health & Wellbeing	Everyone experiences improved mental wellbeing	Preventative approach to improving population level mental wellbeing (whole systems approach); shared understanding of mental wellbeing; engaging with the third sector and building community resilience
	We have reduced the negative impact of too much alcohol in West Lothian	Improved links between ADP/CPP to develop preventative agenda around alcohol; improved understanding of the impact of alcohol; change in culture around alcohol consumption; demand/availability of alcohol
Skills & Jobs	West Lothian delivers sustainable, inclusive and diverse economic growth enabling businesses to create good quality jobs that everyone can access	Attracting good quality jobs to the area, reducing the skills gap (focus on qualifications/training for young people as well as upskilling/retraining the existing workforce) and in-work poverty
Guiding Principles: Prevention, Tackling Inequalities, Inclusiveness, Community Resilience and Empowerment		

CPP COVID-19 Dataset

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to present the latest data within the CPP COVID-19 sentinel dataset, for information.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the dataset.

3. Discussion

The CPP has developed a sentinel dataset, identifying a handful of indicators in order to track the impact of COVID-19 on communities. The dataset is updated monthly and provides an early indication of changes to West Lothian society. The indicators are listed below:

- Claimant Count
- Furloughed jobs data
- Key business status
- Food parcel distribution
- Scottish Welfare Fund grants
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- Free School Meals and Free Clothing Grant
- Rent Arrears
- Council Tax Arrears
- Gender Based Violence
- Adult/child protection
- Homelessness
- Anti-social behaviour
- Fire Crew Resilience
- Delayed Discharge

Appendix 1 provides the latest data for each of these indicators. Appendix 2 provides further contextual information.

It is important that the information included in the dataset is relevant, meaningful and attributable to COVID-19, allowing the partnership to understand and measure the impact that the pandemic has had, and is currently having on our communities. It is also important that the right measurements are used and the dataset provides a rounded picture of the current situation.

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	ALL
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	ALL
Resources	N/A
Link to prevention/community engagement	The dataset will help the CPP to shape future activity which will have a focus on prevention
Impact on inequalities	The dataset will help the CPP identify areas of inequality in relation to the indicators that are included.
Key risks	N/A

5. Consultations

The CPP Board were consulted in the development of the dataset. Partners have been involved in discussions around potential additional indicators for inclusion.

6. Conclusions

The COVID-19 dataset has been updated to reflect current data. The Board is asked to note the updated dataset.

Report written by/contact details/date

Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer, February 2022

susan.gordon@westlothian.gov.uk

References N/A

Appendices

Appendix 1: COVID-19 Dataset – Latest Data

Appendix 2: COVID-19 Dataset Narrative

COVID-19 Sentinel Data Set

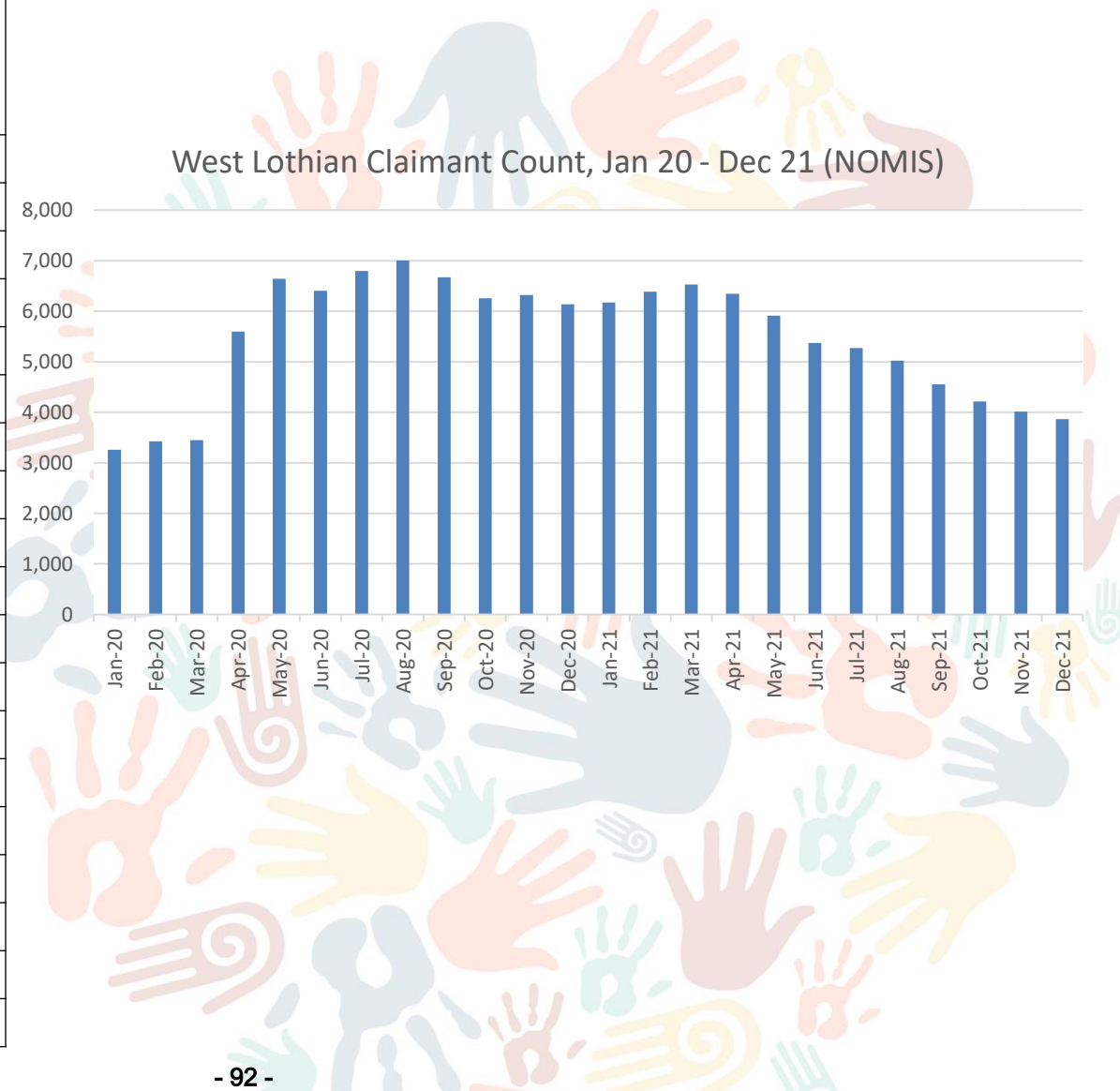
February 2022



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Claimant Count

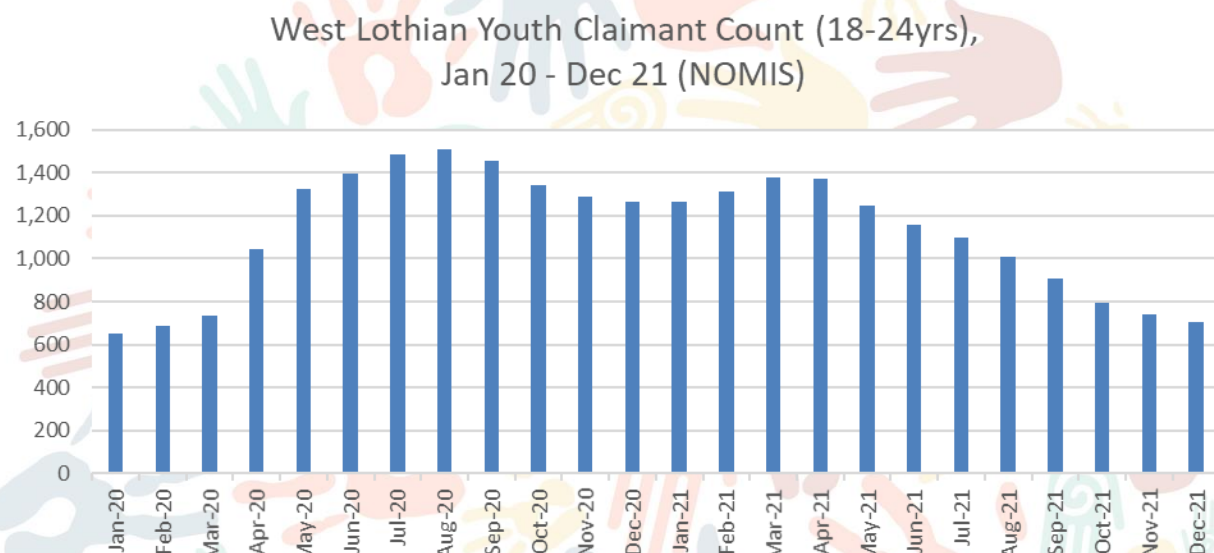
	West Lothian claimant count	West Lothian Claimant Rate	Scotland claimant rate
Jun-20	6,405	5.5	6.1
Jul-20	6,800	5.8	6.3
Aug-20	7,005	6.0	6.4
Sep-20	6,675	5.7	6.2
Oct-20	6,255	5.3	5.9
Nov-20	6,325	5.4	6.0
Dec-20	6,200	5.3	5.9
Jan-21	6,175	5.3	5.9
Feb-21	6,385	5.4	6.1
Mar-21	6,530	5.6	6.1
Apr-21	6,345	5.4	5.9
May-21	5,915	5.0	5.5
Jun-21	5,490	4.7	5.2
Jul-21	5,270	4.5	5.0
Aug-21	5,135	4.4	4.9
Sep-21	4,555	3.9	4.5
Oct-21	4,215	3.6	4.2
Nov-21	4,015	3.4	4.1
Dec-21	3,865	3.3	4.0



Youth Unemployment

Number of claimants aged 18 -24 in West Lothian

Youth Claimant Count (18-24)	West Lothian claimant count	West Lothian claimant rate	Scotland
Jun-20	1,395	9.9	9.1
Jul-20	1,485	10.6	9.7
Aug-20	1,510	10.7	9.6
Sep-20	1,455	10.3	9.1
Oct-20	1,340	9.5	8.6
Nov-20	1,290	9.2	8.4
Dec-20	1,265	9.0	8.3
Jan-21	1,265	9.0	8.2
Feb-21	1,315	9.4	8.4
Mar-21	1,375	9.9	8.7
Apr-21	1,370	9.9	8.5
May-21	1,245	9.0	7.9
Jun-21	1,170	8.4	7.4
Jul-21	1,100	7.9	7.1
Aug-21	1,040	7.5	6.9
Sep-21	910	6.6	5.8
Oct-21	795	5.7	5.3
Nov-21	740	5.3	5.0
Dec-21	705	5.1	4.8



Furlough Scheme

Month	Total number of employments furloughed	Eligible employments	Take up Rate
June*	21,700	88,400	25%
July	26,000	88,400	29%
August	27,600	88,400	31%
September	6,800	88,400	8%
October	5,900	88,400	7%
November	7,700	88,400	9%
December	9,100	88,400	10%
January	12,400	88,000	14%
February	12,100	88,000	14%
March	11,000	85,700	13%
April	8,600	85,700	10%
May	5,500	83,900	7%
June	4,300	83,900	5%
July	3,500	83,900	4%
August	2,700	83,900	3%
September	2,300	83,900	3%

Note: Figures are now finalised and furlough support stopped at the end of September 2021.

SEISS

	Month	Total no. of claims made	Total potentially eligible population	Average value of claims	Take up Rate
WL SEISS 1 Claims to 31st Oct	June	4,400	6,000	2,800	73%
	July	4,600	6,000	2,800	76%
	August	4,600	6,000	2,800	76%
	September	3,800	6,000	2,500	64%
	October	4,100	6,000	2,500	69%
	November	4,600	6,000	2,800	77%
WL SEISS 2nd grant extension Claims received up to 31 Oct 2020	November - January	4,200	6,000	2,500	71%
WL SEISS 3rd grant extension Claims received up to 31 Jan 2021	February - April	4,000	6,000	2,800	67%
WL SEISS 4th grant extension Claims received up to 30 Jun 2021	May – June	3,700	6,000	2,800	62%
WL SEISS 5th Grant Extension Claims received up to 7 Oct 2021	July – September	2,400	6,000	2,300	39%



Food Support

Month	No. Food Support Provided
May	3,830
June	4,137
July	4,097
August	3,516
September	3,021
October	3,759
November	4,044
December	4,828
January	4,620
February	4,553
March	4,374
April	4,218
May	3,951
June	3,939
July	3,533
August	3,793
September	3,875
October	4,021
November	4,104
December	4,664

Food support provided weekly

Scottish Welfare Fund

Scottish Welfare Fund

	Crisis Grants		Community Care Grants	
01 March – 31 December 2020	10297	778,499.78	2348	830,742.04
01 January-31 March 2021	3605	371,431.43	732	312,963.81
01 April – 30 September 2021	5933	533,706.42	1389	601,560.72
01 October 2021 – 31 December 2022	2987	231,339.61	688	174,679.83



West Lothian
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Self Isolation

Self Isolation Support Grant

Date	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr- 21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sept-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21
Self Isolation Applications	205	219	280	105	79	382	764	406	508	283	271	704
Granted	36	107	124	41	27	217	344	137	39	34	170	40
Refused	169	105	147	61	49	160	420	166	73	41	101	35
Outstanding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	103	396	207	0	629
Reconsideration	11	7	9	3	3	4	18	1	1	1	5	2
Awarded	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
Refused	11	7	9	3	3	4	11	1	1	1	5	2
Applied for a Crisis Grant	45	20	34	16	16	16	36	23	48	19	25	30
Awarded a Crisis	24	13		9	11	9	24	15	35	15	15	22
Refused a crisis	21	7	10	7	5	7	12	8	13	4	10	8
Awaiting Decision	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Schools Support

Education Maintenance Allowance

Academic year	EMA payments
2019/20	701
2020/21	685
2021/22	534 (05/01)

Clothing Grants

Academic year	Children
2019/20	7035
2020/21	7921
2021/22	7247 (05/01)

Free School Meals

Academic year	Children
2019/20	5637
2020/21	6373 (FSM only)
2021/22	5398 (05/01)



Council Tax

Comparative cumulative percentage collection rates of the total amount due for the year at the end of each month.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019/20 Cumulative Collection Rate	88.51%	92.91%	95.90%	11%	19.35%	27.83%	36.35%	44.84%	53.87%	62.51%	71.13%	79.59%
2020/21 Cumulative Collection Rate	87.36%	92.07%	95.26%	11.55%	20.22%	28.83%	37.39%	45.99%	54.82%	63.45%	72.51%	81.03%
Movement in 2020/21 to 2019/20	-1.15%	-0.84%	-0.64%	0.55%	0.87%	1%	1.04%	1.15%	0.95%	0.94%	1.38%	1.44%

Council Tax Reduction Caseload

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019/20 Council Tax Reduction Caseload	14,493	14,566	14,499	15,497	15,645	15,433	15,533	15,496	15,411	15,416	15,420	15,321
2020/21 Council Tax Reduction Caseload	15,199	15,173	15,117	15,104	14,998	15,000	14,748	14,570	14,387	14,387	14,260	14,215
Movement in caseload	706	607	618	-393	-647	-433	-785	-843	-1006	-1029	-1160	-1106

Rent Arrears

Current Arrears Overall (Mainstream + Temporary Accommodation)

	Total
November	£3,988,322
December	£3,300,988
January	£3,516,718
February	£3,677,837
March	£2,978,530
April	£3,156,370
May	£3,306,635
June	£3,488,182
July	£3,730,450
August	£3,917,470
September	£4,150,768
October	£4,252,776
November	£4,371,137
December	£3,833,032

Gender Based Violence

Measure	Q4 18/19	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22
Number of DASAT referrals	381	373	443	400	383	403	488	401	481	535	537	438
Number of Police Incidents		593	568	558	571	738	768	551	578	662	667	
Percentage of incidents becoming a crime							42% (323)	45% (247)	45% (261)		51% (342)	



Adult Protection

Adults at risk

	Adult Protection Referrals and Outcomes												
	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sept-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Total
Further AP Action	75	60	77	67	101	83	55	90	91	128	113	92	1,577
Further Non-AP Action	23	18	20	31	29	21	26	29	31	10	10	12	468
No Further Action	3	3	2	1	1	4	3	0	1	3	2	1	63
Not Known	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	9	0	3	3	2	25



West Lothian
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Child Protection

	Q1 2020/21	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Q3 2021/22
Number on CP register at end of quarter	89	105	94	108	94	113	96
Number added to CP register in the quarter	30	42	27	51	37	50	27
Number added to CP Register where Domestic Abuse was a concern	15	26	15	37	24	41	15
Number deregistered from CP register in the quarter	30	26	38	37	51	31	46
Number of Looked after children at end of quarter	428	410	391	378	377	381	382
Number becoming looked after during quarter	13	17	20	25	31	28	27
Number ceasing to be looked after during quarter	10	35	39	38	32	24	22
Number in receipt of aftercare at end of quarter	148	125	110	105	116	133	121

Homelessness

Number of homeless applications

	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Total 20/21	Total 21/22
Homeless Presentations	362	383	294	425	330	317	263	1464	910

Average length of stay in temporary accommodation which has ended

Temporary accommodation average length of stay (days)	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Total 20/21	Total 21/22
Total (ALL)	75.6	97.9	104.2	95.1	111.1	108.3	131.7	93	116.9



Anti-Social Behaviour

No. of ASB Incidents Reported to WLC, Safer Neighbourhood Team

Table 1

Year	Complaints Received Monthly									Total Number of Complaints
2021/ 22	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
	483	401	456	448	461	442	299	254	203	3247

Table 2

Year	Complaints Received Monthly									Total Number of Complaints
2020/ 21	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
	421	396	437	549	507	378	341	298	359	3686

Crew Resilience

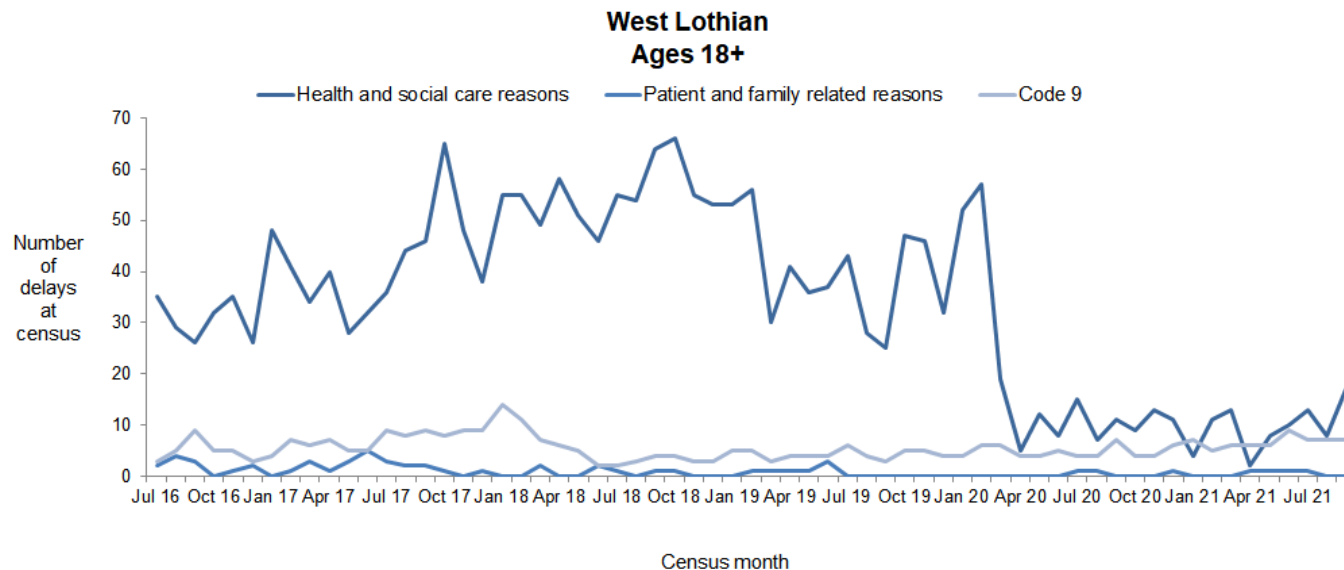
SFRS Crewing Resilience

Period Measured	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22
Anticipated Crewing Levels	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual Crewing Levels	100%	98%	96%	97%	97%	96%	96%+	96%+

Delayed Discharge

Type of Delay	Reason for delay	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21
All delays ²	Total delays at census point	9	15	20	21	15	24	25	22

Delayed Discharge Census by Delay Reason



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

West Lothian COVID-19 sentinel dataset commentary

February 2022

Key Messages

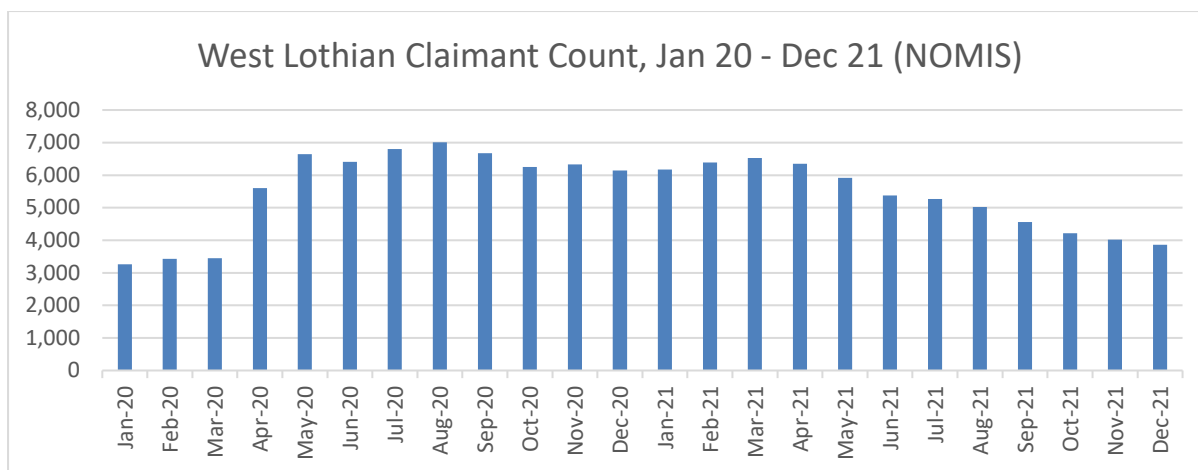
- Claimant count has decreased to 3.3%. and remains at a lower rate than both Scotland and UK.
- Youth unemployment remains slightly higher than the Scottish average.
- Latest out-of-work claimant figures continue to show little impact of the end of the furlough scheme in September.
- There is concern about the proposed withdrawal of increased Universal Credit payments on the most vulnerable citizens in West Lothian.
- There have been changes implemented to the criteria for COVID self-isolation support grants. This will potentially reduce the numbers able to apply.
- Scottish Welfare Fund made payments to 10,696 people in 2020/21 up from 6,635 in 2019/20. To date, there has been no reduction in applications to the fund.

Claimant Count

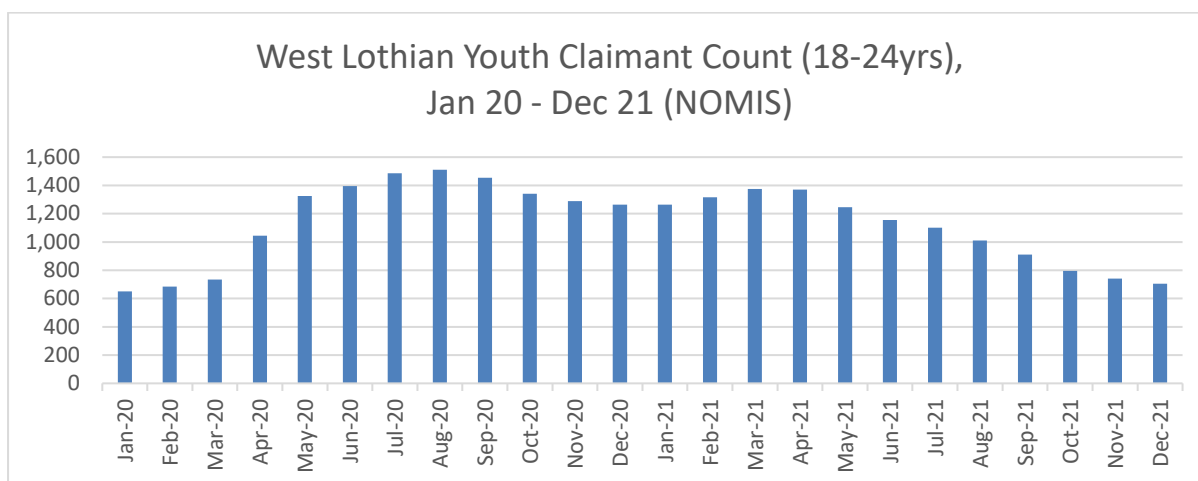
Claimant count for West Lothian is 3,865 at 3.3% for December 2021, which is lower than the Scottish rate (4.0%) and the British rate (4.4%). The latest rate is lower than November (3.4%) which was 4,015 count (revised). The unemployment rate has continued to drop towards levels seen at the start of the pandemic, but is not yet back to the pre-pandemic level remaining 0.5 percentage points above the level for December 2019 / January 2020. The latest out-of-work claimant figures continue to show little impact of the end of the furlough scheme in September, with continued recovery in the labour market: a quarterly increase in the employment rate, while the unemployment rate has continued to decrease for the ninth month in a row. Additionally, there may be some positive impact with increasing employment levels due to the availability of seasonal work over the holiday period, and a buoyant jobs market.

It is worth noting that West Lothian, comparative to the national situation, is also seeing an increase in the number of people becoming economically inactive – those aged 16 – 64 who are not available for work. ONS suggests a legacy of the pandemic appears to be a rise in individuals with long term sickness, particularly pronounced in those over the age of 50. In West Lothian we have seen a rise in this particular group of economically inactive UC claimants rising from 2,207 in January 2020, to the latest estimate of 5,014 for Dec 2021.

Generally, figures show a continued recovery in the labour market, but recruitment levels could still be impacted by such factors as higher inflation, increasing competition to fill skilled vacancies, or any further pandemic lockdowns.



Youth unemployment figures for West Lothian in December were 705 (5.1%), higher than Scotland (4.8%) but lower than Britain (5.3%). The latest rate is lower than for November (5.3%) returning to a level last seen in March 2020. Young people were affected most by large-scale job losses in sectors such as hospitality, retail and administration through the Covid lockdowns. These sectors have returned back to work, and undertaking large recruitment drives. The continued increase in employment rates during summer through to the end of 2021 has been partly attributed to increased part-time work and an increase in zero-hour contracts. These changes, in addition to increased uptake of employees within sectors employing larger proportions of young people, supports the continued reduction of youth unemployment figures.



Job Retention Furlough Scheme and Self-Employment Income Support

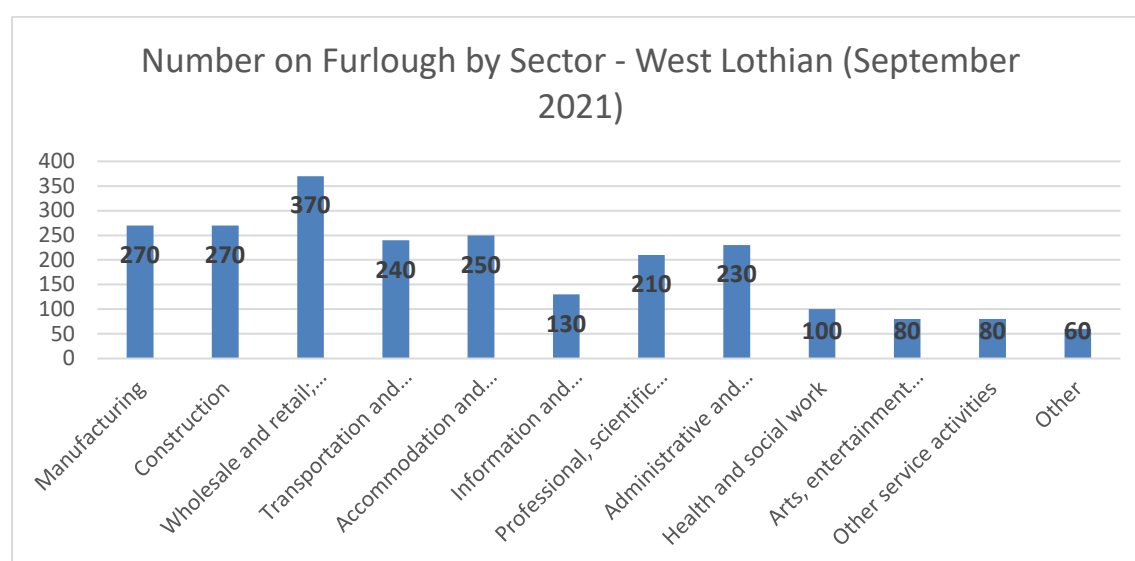
The first wave of the pandemic saw the largest percentage of furlough uptake in West Lothian, with figures starting at 25% uptake of those eligible in June 2020 and rising to 31% in August 2020. From August 2020, there was a significant drop in take-up rates as the following months report a rate of 8% in September, with 2020's lowest rate since the beginning of the pandemic being recorded in October (7%). (Note the delay in drop between July, August and September can also be attributed to the method by which CJRS furlough support was paid after a claim was made for the previous month).

The drop in claims is in line with easing of lockdown restrictions and the opening of businesses. The furlough take-up rate then began to steadily increase over the winter months, with the peak in January and February 2021 (14%) in line with the second wave of Coronavirus and the subsequent lockdown. The furlough take-up rate steadily declined from March 2021 (13%). Scotland moved out of the COVID-19 levels system in August and moved beyond Level 0 restrictions. We have seen a slow recovery in the jobs market, particularly as hospitality, retail, wholesale and logistics, and administrative and support service sectors have now returned to a more normal working situation.

The share of workers on furlough continued to fall. By end of July, 4% of West Lothian workforce were furloughed compared to 5% of the Scottish workforce. At the end of furlough support in September, this had further reduced to 3% compared to Scotland also at 3% of the workforce.

The latest claimant figures do not appear have seen much impact from the ending of furlough. However, some workers may still potentially be working out their notice or on redundancy pay. It remains to be seen whether the labour market will show further impact for the coming couple of months. A further observation is that many people coming out of furlough support may not have been active in a job for up to 18 months, and may not be job ready. If these individuals do not return to a job, they will be re-entering the jobs market and likely to need access to reskilling / upskilling training. Job seekers may take differing routes through Employability, Advice Shop, CAB, College, or Third sector.

Across most industries, people who were employed as corporate managers, directors, or in professional occupations were less likely to have been furloughed. Individuals in third skill level jobs (skilled trades occupations, associate professional occupations, and other managers and proprietors), second skill level jobs (service occupations and administrative and secretarial occupations) and lowest skill level jobs (elementary occupations) were more likely to have been furloughed. In West Lothian, at the end of furlough support, the wholesale and retail sector had the highest percentage of employees on furlough (16.2%), followed by the manufacturing (11.8%), construction (11.4%) and accommodation and food services (11%).



Self-Employment Income Support Grant Scheme

The Self-Employment Income Support Grant Scheme began on 13 May 2020 and provided support to the self-employed in West Lothian. Original take up rate was substantial, with 73% initial take up to June '20 (4,400), peaking in July and August at 76% (4,600). The average value of grant claims for the first support scheme was £2,800 ending in November 2020. SEISS was extended in the form of three further grants, each available for 3-month periods covering November 2020 to January 2021, February to April 2021, and a final period covering May to September 2021. There was a 71% take up rate for the second grant extension (with an average claim of £2,500), a 67% take up rate for the third grant extension (with an average claim of £2,800). The fourth grant extension, covering May to June saw a 62% take up rate with an average claim of £2,800. The fifth, and final extension covering July to September there has been a 26% take up rate so far (claims made up until 15th August) with an average claim of £1,600 – notably a reduction by over half from the previous grant extension period. Note that in the run up to the end of furlough support, some self-employed may have become self-reliant again with the advent of Scotland moving out of the COVID-19 levels system and pick-up of the economy. Other self-employed individuals would need to consider the viability of their business going forward from the end of September, and possibly opted out of self-employment.

Total Employment

The economic development team has been monitoring key employers in West Lothian. These 207 businesses employ almost 21,000 people in the area. 103 companies provide no cause for concern; 66 businesses are at amber status and 28 businesses are showing cause for concern. There is no information on the other 10 companies. There has not been much change in the status of these companies over the last few months.

There are signs of business growth in the pharmaceuticals and life sciences sector.

PACE data

Through the PACE scheme, Skills Development Scotland works with local economic development teams to support employees who face redundancy in companies with any number of employees. It is, however, difficult to monitor the economic wellbeing of smaller businesses as there is no system to identify their difficulties. It is possible that companies make redundancies below a level that instigates support so therefore not visible within PACE statistics. The West Lothian Business Gateway support team has identified some smaller companies that have made redundancies and is providing support to staff in these organisations. In addition, a local employability helpline via West Lothian Council's contact centre has been introduced. We are not seeing as many redundancies as other areas; however as noted above, job losses in surrounding areas may impact on job losses in West Lothian. The recent announcement on the cancellation of the UK Government's contract with local employer Valneva, has raised concerns for the potential loss of around 200 jobs. No formal HR1 notification for redundancy has been received, and Valneva continues to explore contract opportunities with the EU. There is now a local PACE contact in place and work is being carried out to review relevant redundancies in surrounding areas to report to the weekly economic recovery group.

Food Support

From May 2020 to the end of October 2021, the West Lothian Food Network has provided a total of 2,187,276 meals. There has been an increase in people accessing food support and this is expected to continue to increase as a result of the end of furlough, the removal of the Universal Credit uplift and the continuing increasing cost of living. It is worth noting that the 'nature' of the need relating to food has changed. During lockdown periods the need arose from the fact that people could not access food however now over 80% of those accessing the food network were financially at risk on low income, unemployed and eligible for free school meals. Over the course of the pandemic the food network has fed an average of 4,006 people per week. The Food Network has experienced challenges in obtaining food most notably fresh produce. This reflects what is happening across the whole of the system with distribution challenges in moving produce into and across the country. Organisations within the West Lothian Food Network are working near to capacity and anticipate that this increased demand will continue on their services.

Evidence shows that integrating money advice with food helps customers to gain entitlement to benefits and to access other help and support. Further work is needed to support all members of the food network to sign up and actively participate in the FORT platform. It is also important that volunteers are trained to identify and refer customers so that there is one-to-one advice from a money adviser to support those who are repeat users of crisis food bank intervention. A benefits/money advisor will be employed on a 12-month fixed term contract to work closely with the food network to integrate money advice with food.

Scottish Welfare Fund

Scottish Welfare Fund made payments to 10,696 people in 2020/21 - up from 6,635 in 2019/20. This is just over a 60% increase and to date there has been no reduction in applications to the fund. Scottish Government funding has returned to pre-Covid levels however West Lothian Council has committed £1m to the fund for 2021/22 and £1m for 2022/23 to support the increasing levels of applications.

There are currently 1278 Self Isolation Support Grant claims outstanding and to date 6134 applications have been processed. There is a reduction in the numbers of applications being received however there is a significant backlog to work through.

Changes to Self-Isolation rules should impact on the number of grants being received. The full impact of this will not be seen for the next few weeks as applicants have 28 days from testing positive to apply for a grant.

Schools: Education Maintenance Allowance, Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

Applications have been received for Education Maintenance Allowance which is now available as an online application. Payments cannot commence until a learning agreement is in place between the school and pupil and this is usually agreed in the first weeks of the new term with payments backdated to the beginning of the term. As at the 5th of January 2022, 534 pupils have received at least one payment of Education Maintenance Allowance. Education Maintenance Allowance figures will increase from the 15 January 2022 once those born between October 2005 and end of February 2006 are paid.

The main reason for the reduced number in the report is because Education Grants are applied for and awarded at the end of the academic year i.e. end of June 22. The previous year's figures are not an 'as at' but reflect the total number of awards for the whole academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21.

In December a bridging payment of £160 was made to low income families in receipt of free school meals. This payment was made to 3,176 families, that covered 5,347 pupils.

Pupils who are eligible for free school meals due to low income and, who are self-isolating, will be paid £3 per day in lieu of free school meals for the duration of the self-isolation period. There is an online form to apply and this information has been cascaded to all schools and parents. Payments are underway.

The Scottish Government committed to increase the School Clothing Grant to £120 to commence in this academic year. West Lothian Council further committed to raise the school clothing grant to £150 for primary and £180 for secondary school pupils.

For the 20/21 Academic year, the council took the decision to transfer all cases over from the 19/20 academic year and automatically award both SCG's and FSM's therefore as well as all the new applications, at the equivalent point last year, the whole of the 19/20 case load for FSM's for P4 and above was sitting on SEEMiS records for 20/21 which was around 4000 records.

This year that has not happened and cases are added as they apply. The council are still accepting applications for the current 2021/2022 academic year, but as of 17/01/2022 there are 3036 pupils from P6 to S6, and 2324 pupils from P1 to P5 entitled to free school meals through qualifying benefit. As of 06/01/2022 P5s are now included under universal entitlement, previously that was P1 to P4 with P4s added in August 2021. Currently 7277 pupils have received a clothing grant.

To encourage applications, a number of steps have been taken;

- Emailed all parents who received FSM for their children in the 20/21 academic year and requested they apply by giving them the link to the form.
- Fortnightly FB and twitter posts were issued
- Reports from SEEMiS were run to identify those that were awarded School Clothing Grant only, provided them with the qualifying conditions for Free School Meals and encouraged them to apply if appropriate
- Follow up emails sent to those who have asked for information
- Group call messages issued to encourage take up of FSM's

Low Income Pandemic Payment

A £130 Low Income Pandemic Payment was paid to households who are in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or are within agreed groups exempt from Council Tax. Payments were completed in November 2021 with £2,104,050 paid to 16,185 households.

The Scottish Government announced a Winter Support Fund for those likely to experience hardship, such as people who may have been impacted by the recent changes to Universal Credit. Analysis of available data of people experiencing hardship has identified the following groups in West Lothian;

lone parents, disabled pensioners, people with limited capability. An £80 payment will be made to everyone in these groups who were in receipt of a disability premium within their Council Tax Reduction (CTR) entitlement or in receipt of a disability benefit as at the 31 December 2021. 4692 applicants have been identified as meeting the criteria.

Due to the economic impact of Covid-19 there has been an increase in the Council Tax Reduction case load with more people making claims for CTR. Changes to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) legislation is also being introduced from April 2022 for CTR recipients in receipt of Universal Credit (UC). The policy intention of these changes is to better align CTR awards for applicants in receipt of UC with that of applicant in receipt of legacy benefits.

Rent and Council Tax Arrears

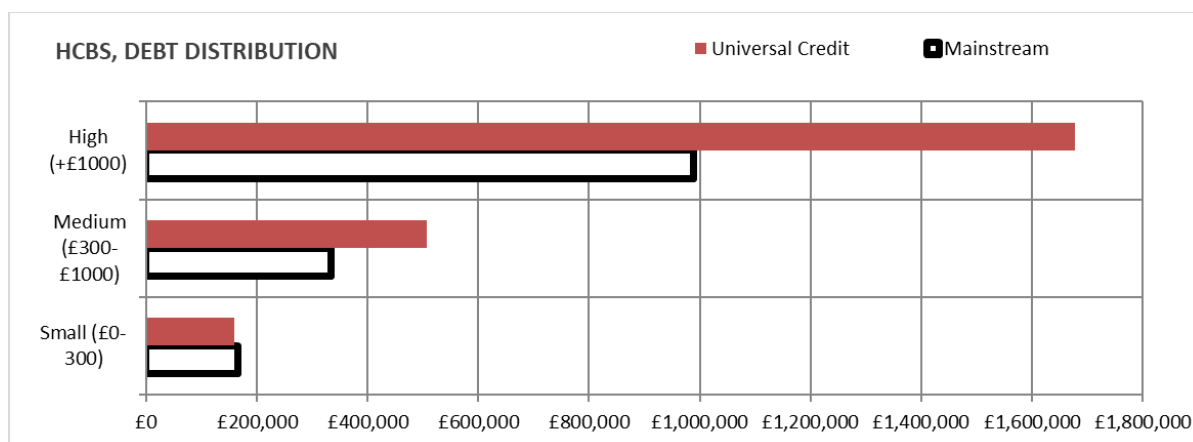
For HCBS, the collection rate for the YTD as of week 39 remains excellent at 97.8%. HCBS has collected £44,549,527 in revenue vs a charge of £45,533,813. The current position is within forecast and targets for the service. As expected, due to the non-collection weeks at Christmas and New Year debt has reduced significantly by nearly £600k. The arrears figure will rise again before its final correction in the non-collection weeks at the end of March.

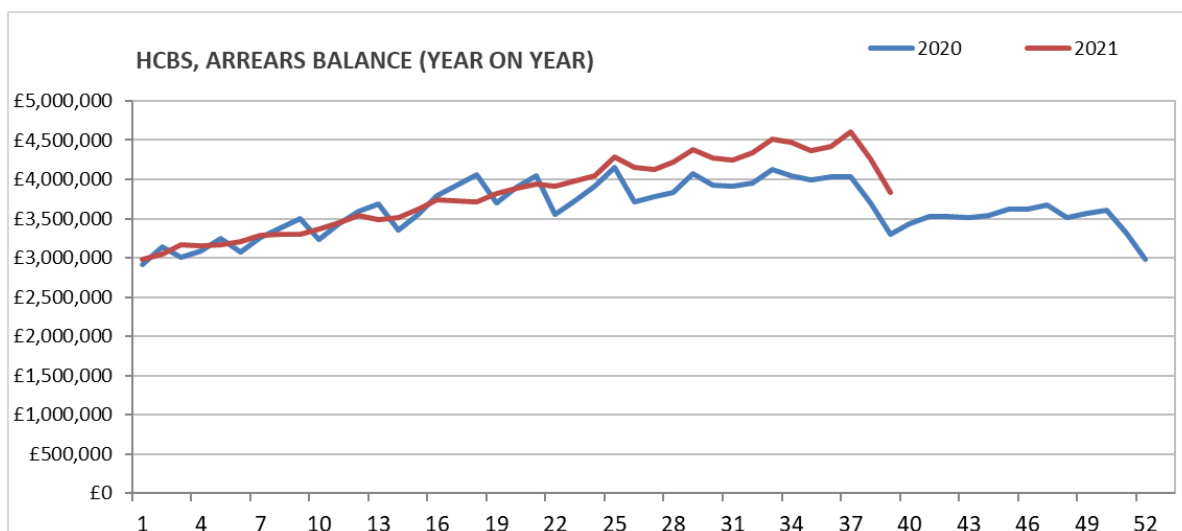
The overall increased arrears in comparison to last year are as a result of Full-Service Universal Credit being introduced in West Lothian from May 2018, along with other Welfare Benefit reforms and the current economic climate.

In the same week last year HCBS had 2482 Universal Credit (UC) households. Since then the number of UC households has increased by 10.6%. The number of tenancies in arrears has increased by 82 since last year. Small debt cases (£300 or less), account for 51.9% of households. Small debt is likely to be the natural movement of balances for customers on monthly payment cycles

There are 1074 serious arrears cases (+£1000 in arrears). These cases are 20.0% of all households in arrears in this area, containing 69.6% of the debt.

The arrears position for HCBS is £3,833,032. This is an increase of £532,044 on last year's position.





Housing has made no evictions since the start of lockdown, and as any eviction process can take many months there is a low likelihood of any evictions for the rest of the financial year. Maximum debt on accounts has increased largely due to the removal of eviction actions as persistent non-payers who would have been evicted have remained with larger than normal outstanding balances with the largest single balance as of week 39 at £15,143.

The largest real debt driver continues to be the transition of customers from legacy Housing Benefit onto Universal Credit due to the break in benefits during the initial Universal Credit assessment period.

Council Tax income collection has increased in the first 4 months of the year compared to the same months in 2020/21 and is also tracking at a higher rate for the same months in 2019/20.

Council Tax arrears - Due to a one-off cash posting of Low Income Pandemic Payments in November 2021 this year collections have been positively impacted by 0.49%. If we were to ignore this one-off cash posting we are trending around pre-pandemic collection levels.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme - As we continue to emerge from the pandemic we have seen a gradual and sustained reduction in CTRS caseload to pre-pandemic levels. This reduction in caseload has been assisted by further changes to legislation (e.g. the removal of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit).

Gender Based Violence

Domestic abuse incidents have increased largely when lockdown measures have eased. Increases have shown in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2020-21 and in Quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2021-22.

Incidents becoming a crime have also remained steady over the course of the pandemic.

High levels of referrals to DASAT have followed police incidents. 2021-22 saw a 15% increase on the previous year. Quarter 1 of 2021-22 saw the largest ever number of referrals to DASAT. Quarter 2 remained high but there was a reduction in the rate of referral in quarter 3.

Adult Protection

An Adult Support & Protection (ASP) referral is when an adult has been referred to a Council ASP Team when the adult is known or believed** to be at risk of harm as defined in Part 1 section 3(1) of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. If the referral is made by an organisation or agency, and they have defined the referral as ASP, the referral should be counted. All police referrals marked as relating to vulnerable persons indicating the person may be an adult at risk of harm should be counted and where there are disagreements over the marking then these should be discussed with the police. (**If in any doubt, the adult should be referred to the Council)

An increase in ASP referrals recorded year on year. Due to:

- Communication and engagement approach to tell people in WL how they can make a referral.
- Strong and robust cooperation between the Police and the ASCET Team Manager to discuss any iVPD where there is a disagreement about how to count and record it.
- A process review and clarification issued to practitioners about how to count and record an ASP referral
- Regular circulation of AIS training notes to practitioners about how to record an ASP referral
- A dedicated mailbox for Older Peoples referrals
- New ASP Referral form – AP 1 completed by any organisation or agency making a referral
- Investment in a Team Manager who is a trained Council Officer in ASCET. Pilot in ASCET (Oct21 – December 21) to monitor and manage the monthly performance Report for Unknown Referral Outcome. This quality assurance approach has reduced the no. of Unknown Referral Outcomes.
- Each ASP referral with the outcome Further AP Action is sent to the Practice Team for a Duty to Inquire to be done for the person who the referral is for.
- Each ASP referral with the outcome Further non-AP Action is managed or signposted in another way to ASP.

Child Protection

The numbers on the child protection register have been slightly higher than normal over the last year but signs are that these will start to reduce again. Domestic abuse remains one of the key reasons why a child may be entered onto the register.

In terms of numbers of looked after children, there has been a gradual overall downward trend in this for the last 12 months.

There was a small rise in the number of young people in receipt of aftercare which may be a sign of young people taking advantage of support opening up.

Homelessness

The number of homeless applications has declined since the last quarter which is positive however the length of stay in temporary accommodation has increased. At the start of lockdown there was significant impacts on the amount of available lets due to restrictions in lettings and trades, lets were therefore significantly reduced meaning homeless applications ended up staying longer periods in

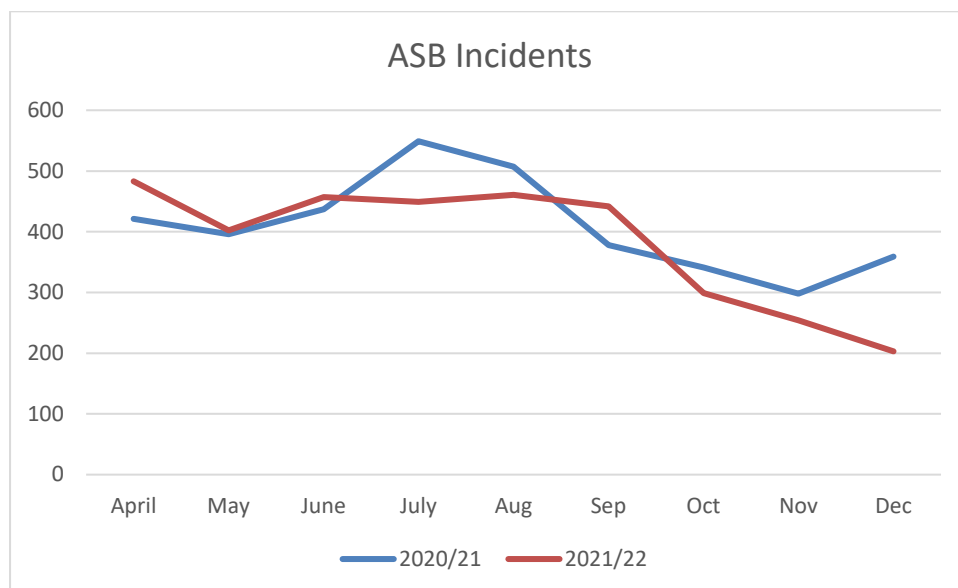
temporary accommodation. COVID is still very much impacting on services and there are significant backlogs of homeless applicants waiting for permanent housing. Prior to COVID there were already significant supply pressures however COVID has now exacerbated that. Mean length of stay in temporary accommodation continues to rise.

Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents

WLC Safer Neighbourhood Officers provide antisocial behaviour advice and assistance to members of the public making enquiries to the Safer neighbourhood Team (SNT). Where possible, officers are able to also provide signposting assistance to other agencies that may be able to support the complainant or send a referral on their behalf.

When advice is insufficient to resolve an ongoing situation and more than two complaints have been made with further enquiry required, the officers progress the incident to an 'open' case. This then enables the officer to carry out their enquiries and record the work being undertaken in order to alleviate the problem and remove or help solve the issue for the complainer. Interventions at this stage often prevent further incidents from escalating. Some of the interventions that require to be delivered include mediation, joint visits, monitoring, data gathering and reports to Legal Services for Court action. Once the enquiry is complete, the officers close the case. Officers make all attempts to close an enquiry within the locally agreed 3-month target period.

For the cases that are not closed within the target period, this could be due a number of reasons. Often, due to the nature of the enquiry, there needs to be additional inputs from colleagues in other departments or there are other issues which cause a case to require a higher or longer degree of intervention, investigation or support. Often, where there are added complications in a case, it can take longer to help resolve it. Sometimes, cases requiring input from a number of services and when behaviour is more sporadic, require a longer than 'normal' period of evidence gathering before a case can be considered for Legal action. The impact of COVID 19 Restrictions has led to some cases being held open longer to enable officers un to complete enquiries and close cases.



Regarding the number of incidents reported to the SNT, the data figures are shown in the graph above for 2020/21 and comparison data for 2021/22 for Q1, Q2 and Q3 in both years.

In both years, the trend shows a dip through quarter 1 before a rise during Q2 over the summer period where there is generally more ASB incidents being reported. This is generally due to the summer weather, with more people socialising, resulting in SNT receiving more complaints of ASB, some alcohol related and with a lot of noise/music and parties being reported at this time.

Throughout Q3 and as the warmer weather reduces, the numbers of complaints are often reduced in numbers. During 2021/22, the numbers of complaints of antisocial behaviour in general has dipped to the lowest numbers recorded, emphasizing this downward trend. Some of this will be in relation to the further COVID restrictions imposed prior to the Festive period curtailing social events and alcohol fuelled parties and social events resulting in reduced complaints of antisocial behaviour.

SFRS Crew Resilience Levels

The SFRS crew resilience levels indicator measures the impact on local resource availability within West Lothian and the SFRS's ability to maintain service delivery to the communities across West Lothian from both a prevention/protection and response perspective.

Community Fire stations were risk assessed, adapted and certified as COVID secure and crews created protected groupings. These measures, along with the use of enhanced protocols and PPE allowed SFRS to provide a normal response. To further support staff, mental health and employee support strategies are also in place.

All of the measures implemented enhanced resilience and supported SFRS ability to respond accordingly meeting the demands of the local communities. Analysis over the previous 18-month period highlights the effectiveness of this approach, with a resource availability of 96% and above across the West Lothian area through the highest reported infection periods of the pandemic to date. When required, support from surrounding SFRS resources were allocated into the area to maintain our service delivery.

Delayed Discharge

The beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic saw a significant reduction in delayed discharges in West Lothian and across Scotland and this improvement was sustained for a significant period of time. From around June 2021, however, the number of people delayed in hospital when medically fit to leave has continued to rise. This is in the main caused by insufficient care at home provision to meet demand and challenges in securing admission to care homes across West Lothian. Our internal services and those we commission from the independent sector have been impacted by increased COVID transmission rates and requirements around self-isolation which resulted in higher than usual levels of staff absence. Staff from across the partnership continue to meet to monitor the ongoing situation and to identify actions to improve flow through the health and social care system.

Ongoing Work on the Dataset

Work is being carried out to ensure the dataset captures the wide range of societal harms of the pandemic. Any approved additional indicators will be incorporated into the dataset and will be measured and reported to the CPP going forward.