

Topic Paper – Placemaking and 20-minute neighbourhood

Issue No 018

Context: Relevant NPF policies

This Paper deals with all matters dealing with Placemaking in a general sense. All area or site-specific discussions are dealt with under the spatial strategy or area partnership sections of the Evidence Report.

LINKS TO EVIDENCE

ELC 051	East Lothian Local Economy Strategy https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site_search/results/?q=economy+strategy
ELC 427	East Lothian Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2023 https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-vacant-and-derelict-land-survey---site-register/
ELC 087	East Lothian Council Poverty Plan East Lothian Partnership Poverty Plan 2024-28 East Lothian Council
ELC 429	Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian East Lothian Council Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian East Lothian Council
ELC 091	Local Housing Strategy Approved Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-2029 East Lothian Council
ELC 431	SIMD - SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)
ELC 047	Population trends (ONS 2023) East Lothian (S12000010) - ONS
ELC 049	Housing Land Audit 2023 East Lothian Housing Land Audit 2023 East Lothian Council

ELC 435	Energy System and Just Transition – (part of supporting documents of Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan) Energy system and Just Transition: independent analysis - gov.scot
ELC 436	Analysis of transport hubs in East Lothian On EL GIS systems - available on request
ELC 437	Accessibility maps (tier 1 and 2 settlements) to facilities that are essential to maintaining and creating 20-minute neighbourhoods On EL GIS systems - available on request
ELC 438	Place Standard Surveys (June - September 2023)
ELC 439	Dunbar and East Linton Area Plan East Lothian Council Dunbar and East Linton Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 440	Fa'side Working Area Plan East Lothian Council Fa'side Working Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 441	Haddington and Lammermuir Area Plan East Lothian Council Haddington and Lammermuir Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 442	Musselburgh Area Plan East Lothian Council Musselburgh Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 443	North Berwick Coastal Area Plan East Lothian Council North Berwick Coastal Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 444	Preston Seton Gosford Area Plan East Lothian Council Preston Seton Gosford Area Plan East Lothian Council
ELC 445	Area walks and core paths leaflets East Lothian Council Area walks and core paths leaflets East Lothian Council
ELC 447	ELC LBS Site Condition Monitoring Guidance 2024 and 2025 Electronic version provided

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 18.1 Planning Authorities are required to provide details within the Evidence Report of how their places can support local living, and where places do or do not meet the definition of a 20-minute neighbourhood.
- 18.2 Local living should mean that people do not, ideally, have to go very far from their home or leave their settlement in order to meet their daily needs for service access. The concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods, where a range of services should be within no more than a 20-minute round trip (10-minutes walk or cycle

each way) applies to both urban and more rural places. However, the Scottish Government admits that the local living concept may be more suitable to urban locations “It is an approach likely to be more readily achievable in urban places, towns, villages, and cities. It is designed to be applied flexibly, in response to local circumstances”¹. Cities are best placed to meet the needs of more people with typically shorter travel distances for services. However, local living should be aimed for in towns and some villages in order to meet the needs of their population, reduce the need to travel, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

18.3 The published Scottish Government Planning Guidance on Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods states that:

“Local communities are best placed to determine what works for them based on their specific context and must be involved from the outset.

Daily needs can be defined in terms of the services, amenities and facilities required for daily living. How people’s daily needs are met in dispersed, rural and island communities, small towns, or larger towns, or cities, is likely to look quite different depending on the context. Some core daily needs are universal, such as the need to access good quality work, affordable and healthy food, sustainable transport, education, training, and health and social care services, to participate in leisure and cultural activities, spend time outdoors, and access local shops, irrespective of the settlement size and location. However, the extent and type of access required will vary depending on the particular needs of communities and groups within them.”

18.4 In 2022, over 71% of the entire population of East Lothian lived in the following settlements: Musselburgh (21,479), Tranent (12,237), Prestonpans (10,620), Haddington (11,354), Dunbar (10,777), North Berwick (8,310) and Cockenzie & Port Seton (5,234). These are the largest settlements in East Lothian and because of the diverse services and facilities which are available there, these settlements can be considered as largely meeting daily needs of their residents. In principle the residents of the above towns benefit from having local access to (see Policy 16 of NPF4):

- sustainable modes of transport including local public transport and safe, high quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks;
- employment;
- shopping;
- health and social care facilities;
- childcare, schools and lifelong learning opportunities;
- playgrounds and informal play opportunities, parks, green streets and spaces, community gardens, opportunities for food growth and allotments, sport and recreation facilities;
- publicly accessible toilets;
- affordable and accessible housing options, ability to age in place and housing diversity.

18.5 Due to good provision of services and facilities within and outwith the town and local centres in these settlements, and due to good accessibility levels to these services, the above towns should be considered as

¹ Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, 2024

falling into the highest tier (tier or level 1) of settlements in East Lothian where most of their residents live within 20-minute neighbourhoods.

- 18.6 In addition to these largest towns, there are a number of medium-size settlements which have relatively good levels of services and facilities. These include: Wallyford, Gullane, Longniddry, Ormiston, East Linton, Whitecraig, Gifford and West Barns.
- 18.7 In contrast to tier 1 settlements, these smaller settlements do not have designated town centres and/or health and social facilities. Nevertheless, they still support local living, including 20 minute neighbourhoods and are generally characterised by high-quality, accessible, mixed-use neighbourhoods which support health and wellbeing. Within these 2nd tier settlements live over 20% of the population of East Lothian.
- 18.8 Altogether, within Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements live over 90% of all residents of East Lothian.

Tier 1 Settlements	Population	Tier 2 Settlements	Population
Musselburgh	21,479	Wallyford	4,475
Tranent	12,237	Gullane	2,910
Haddington	11,354	Longniddry	2,599
Dunbar	10,777	Ormiston	2,586
Prestonpans	10,620	East Linton	1,881
North Berwick	8,310	Whitecraig	1,253
Cockenzie & Port Seton	5,234	Gifford	783
		West Barns	547
		Aberlady	1,365
		Pencaitland	1,675
		Macmerry	1,437

Table 18.1 Tier 1 and 2 by population (Census 2022).

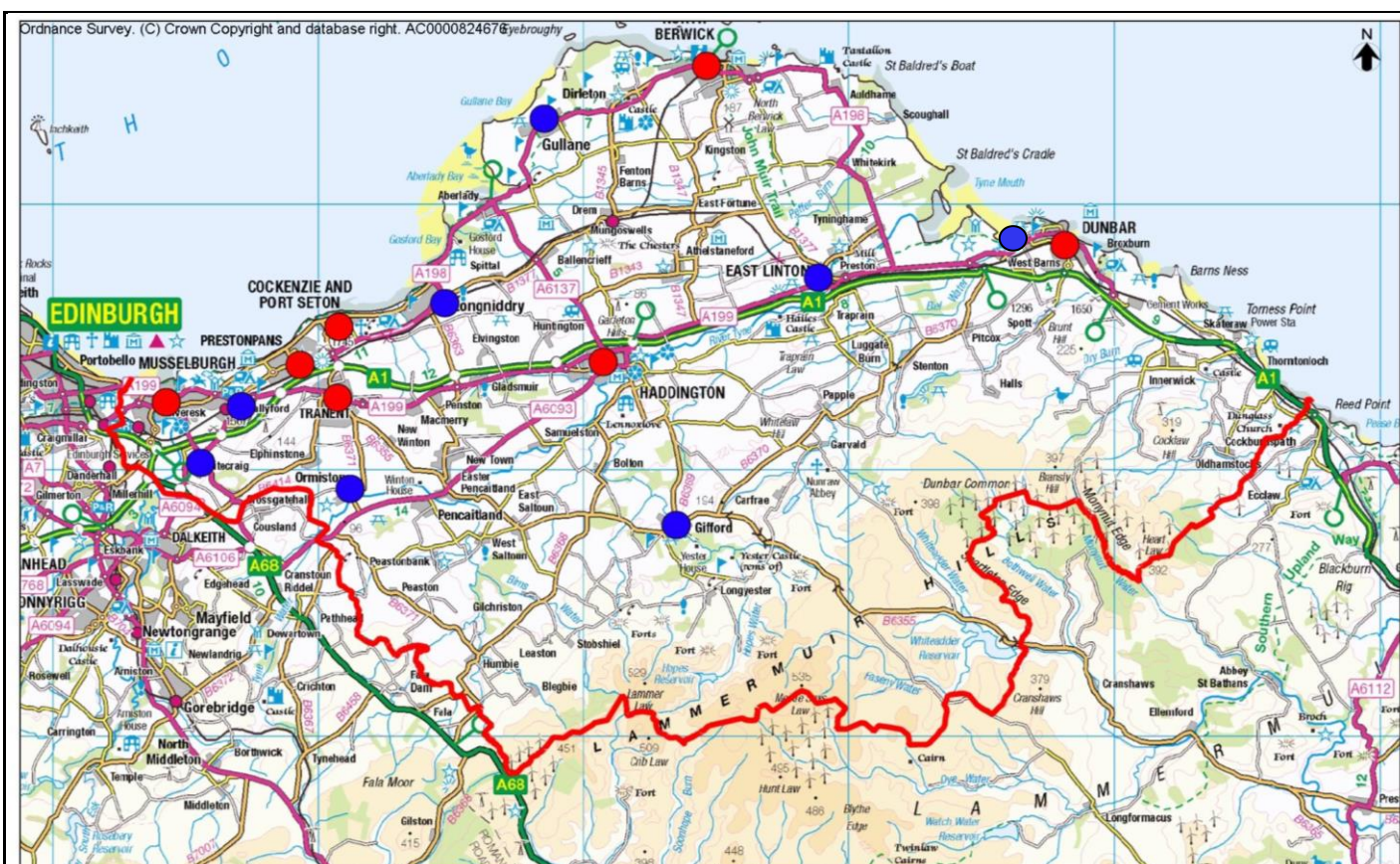


Fig. 18.1 Tier 1 and 2 by locations.

- 18.9 East Lothian is divided into six Area Partnership areas, each with at least one medium to large settlement. This means that large parts of the population already have good access to services. Others will need to travel to the nearest larger settlement for their service needs. However, travel is frequently within Area Partnership boundaries or between adjacent areas. By improving linkages between settlements, we can reduce the distance required to travel, help people to stay within the county, and improve health and wellbeing through greater uptake of sustainable travel options such as walking, cycling and wheeling.
- 18.10 Each of the above settlements have been analysed in terms of availability of services and facilities and their accessibility (800m walking distance). Quantitative data was mapped using GIS and analysed to explore key components of 20-minute neighbourhoods such as schools, health services, open space, employment sites etc. The results for each Area Partnership are available to access via the Evidence Report. An example is provided below, with the full results for each Area Partnership included in the Story Map of the Evidence Report.

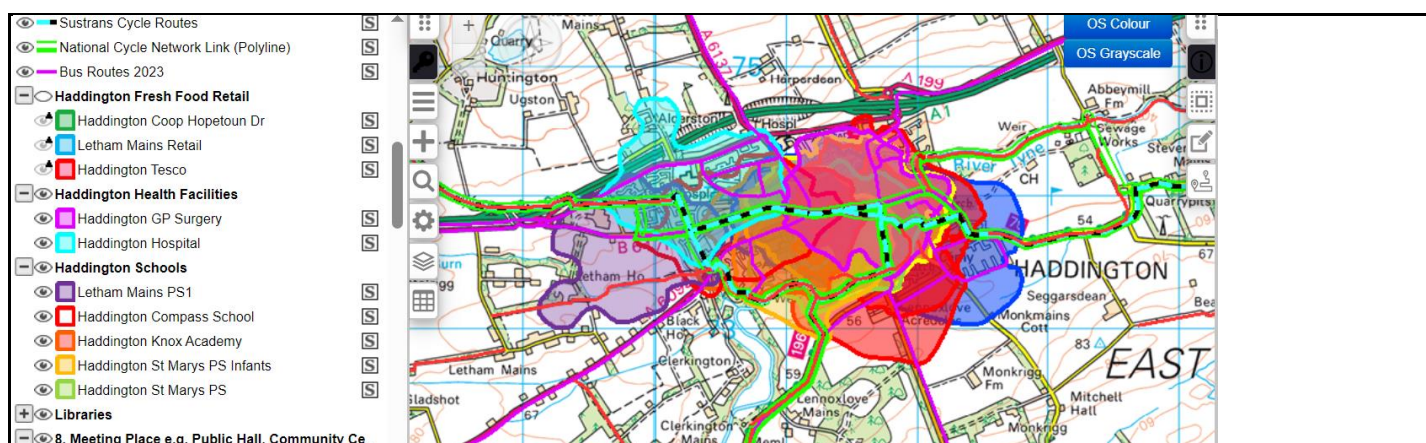


Fig 18.2. An example of the GIS maps showing walking catchments to various facilities.

Tables of facilities and services to be available via ArcGIS maps

Examples of some key data on service availability

Pharmacies and Post Offices

Area Partnership	Settlement	Pharmacy Y/N	Address	Post Office Y/N	Address Services near you Royal Mail Group Ltd
MUSSELBURGH EAST WEST and CARBERRY	Musselburgh	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. M&D Green Eskside Pharmacy; 165 High St 2. Well Pharmacy; 123 North High St 3. Boots Pharmacy; 164 High St 4. Gordon Chemists, 105 High St 5. Boots Pharmacy, 106 North High St 	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fisherrow Post Office 119-121 North High Street, Musselburgh, EH21 6JE 2. Royal Mail; 41 High St 3. 80 High Street, Musselburgh, East Lothian, EH21 7BX 4. 55-57 Delta Drive, Musselburgh, East Lothian,

	Wallyford	Y	Wallyford Pharmacy; 121 Salters Rd	Y	Wallyford Post Office; 136 Salters Rd
	Whitecraig	N		Y	Whitecraig Gardens, Musselburgh, East Lothian,
PRESTON SETON GOSFORD	Prestonpans		1. Bankton Pharmacy; Hawthorn Rd 2. Prestonlinks Centre, High St 3. Well Pharmacy; 176 High St	4. Y	1. Scotmid Building, High Street, Prestonpans, East Lothian, 2. Hawthorn Road, Prestonpans, East Lothian 3. Prestonpans Delivery Office; 1 Ayres Wynd, Prestonpans,
	Port Seton	Y	Well Pharmacy; 42 Links Rd	Y	41 Links Road, Port Seton, Prestonpans, East Lothian,
	Cockenzie	N		N	
	Longniddry	Y	Longniddry Pharmacy; 27 Links Rd	Y	29A Links Road, Longniddry, East Lothian,
FA'SIDE	Tranent	Y	1. Well Pharmacy; 115 High St 2. Dear Pharmacy, 53 High St	3. Y	1. 22B Winton Place, 4. 2 Civic Square, Delivery Office
	Ormiston	Y	Well Pharmacy, Ormiston Medical Centre	Y	Main Street, Ormiston, Tranent, East Lothian,
	Pencaitland	N		Y	West End Service Station, Pencaitland, Tranent, East Lothian,
	Macmerry & Gladsmuir	N		Y	11A Main Street, Macmerry, Tranent, East Lothian, EH33 1PA

NORTH BERWICK COASTAL AP	Gullane	Y	Gullane Pharmacy; 7 Rosebery Place	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gullane Village Hall, Hall Crescent, Gullane, East Lothian, EH31 2HA 2. Aberlady Community Hall, Sea Wynd, Aberlady, Longniddry, East Lothian, EH32 0RA
	North Berwick	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Smith's Pharmacy; 66 High St 2. Boots Pharmacy; 80 High St 	3.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Royal Mail North Berwick Delivery Office; 2 Westgate, North Berwick, EH39 4AA 2. 7 High Street, North Berwick, East Lothian, 3. The Castle Inn, Dirleton, North Berwick, East Lothian,
DUNBAR EAST	East Linton	Y	East Linton pharmacy; 1 The Square		Station Road, East Linton, East Lothian, EH40 3DN
	Dunbar	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aitken Pharmacy; 67 High St 2. High Street Pharmacy; 25 High St 3. Asda Pharmacy; Spott Rd; EH42 1LE 	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dunbar Delivery Office; 32 High Street, Dunbar, EH42 1AA 2. 17A High Street, Dunbar, East Lothian,

HADDINGTON LAMMERMUIR	Haddington	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market Street Pharmacy; 22 Market St, Haddington EH41 3JE 2. Right Medicine Pharmacy; 20 High St, Haddington EH41 3ES 3. Boots Pharmacy; 35-36 High St, Haddington EH41 3EE 	Y	Haddington Delivery Office 50 Court Street, Haddington, EH41 3AA
	Gifford	N		Y	High Street, Gifford, Haddington, East Lothian.

- 18.11 ONS **data** (various datasets are available and relatively easy to compare by using ONS tools eg Subnational indicators explorer [Subnational indicators explorer - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://statistics.gov.scot) also statistics.gov.scot | [East Lothian](#))
- Gross median weekly pay – East Lothian £516.4 (City of Edinburgh £560.8; Midlothian £530.3; Scottish Borders £477.4).
 - Gross disposable household income per head - East Lothian £23,372 (City of Edinburgh £23,001; Midlothian £20,228; Scottish Borders £20,289).
 - Gigabit capable broadband – East Lothian 67.2 % coverage (City of Edinburgh 89.1%, Midlothian 77.6%, Scottish Borders 26.9%).
- 18.12 The 2022 Census shows that East Lothian from 2001 to 2022 has had the biggest rise in population of any local authority area in Scotland – 24.6% compared with the % increase in Scottish population of 7.4%. In 2022, East Lothian had a population of 112,284 (2022 Census).

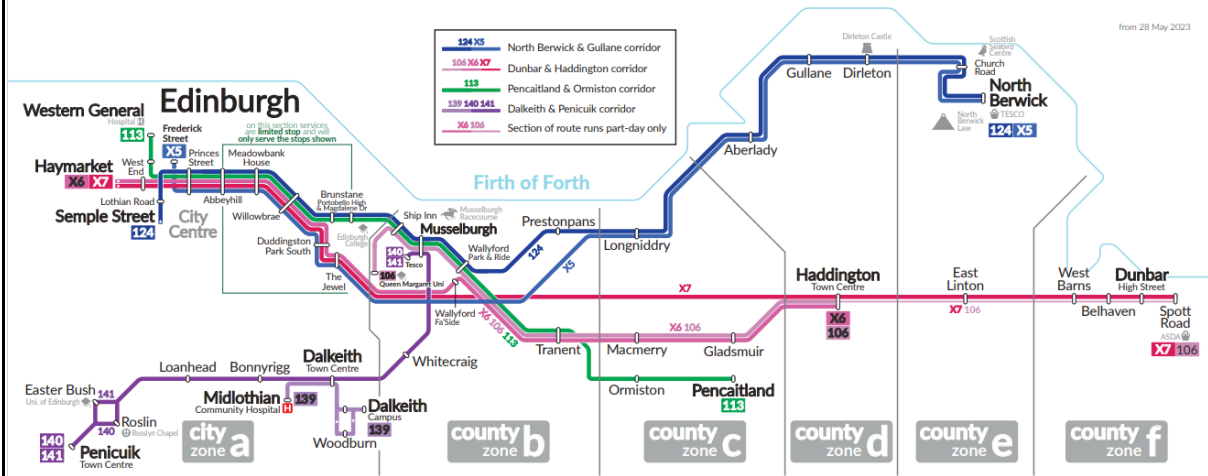
[Area walks and core paths leaflets | East Lothian Council](#)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT and ACTIVE TRAVEL

- 18.13** The Planning Guidance on Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods acknowledges that “efficient, affordable, and integrated public transport can provide people with important access to daily needs and to other destinations and activities further afield”. The information below includes some quantitative data on access to transport and connectivity. More information on transport provision and connectivity within and outwith our tier 1 and 2 settlements is provided through our GIS mapping.

BUSES

1) Lothian Buses

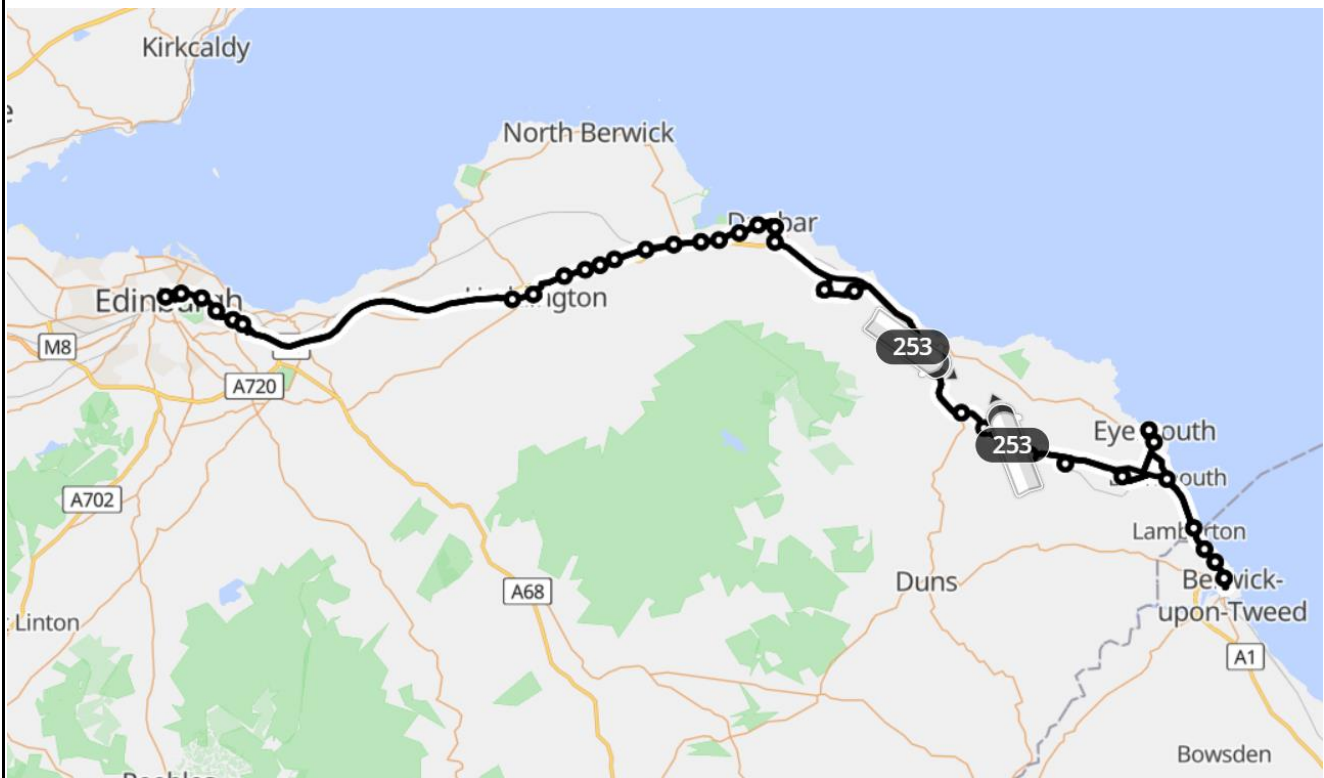


[230528 ECB NETWORK MAP WEB \(lothianbuses.com\)](http://230528.ECB.NETWORK.MAP.WEB(lothianbuses.com))

Lothian Buses Timetable is available at [230528 ECB Network-Guide INSIDE.indd \(airtableusercontent.com\)](http://230528.ECB.Network-Guide.INSIDE.indd(airtableusercontent.com))

2) Borders Buses

[253 - Berwick-Upon-Tweed to Edinburgh | Borders Buses](#)



TRAINS

The train stations in East Lothian are:

- Musselburgh

Musselburgh to Edinburgh 26 trains - between 6.36am and 22.54pm (Monday)

- Wallyford

Wallyford to Musselburgh 25 trains between 6.26am and 22.50pm (journey time 4 minutes)

- Prestonpans

Prestonpans to Musselburgh 20 trains on Monday between 6.23am and 22.47pm (journey 6 to 7minutes)

- Longniddry

Longniddry to Musselburgh 20 trains between 6.18am to 22.42pm Monday (journey time 11-12 minutes)

- Drem

Drem to Longniddry 20 train services per day (6.12am to 22.36pm) – journey time 5 minutes

Drem to North Berwick 18 train services per day (7.34am to 23.39pm) – journey time 9 minutes

- North Berwick

North Berwick to Edinburgh 21 trains per day (6.04am to 22.29pm) journey time 30 minutes

- East Linton

East Linton to Musselburgh 8 trains per day (journey time 16 minutes)

East Linton to Dunbar 12 trains per day (between 5.49am to 23.31pm) journey time 13 minutes

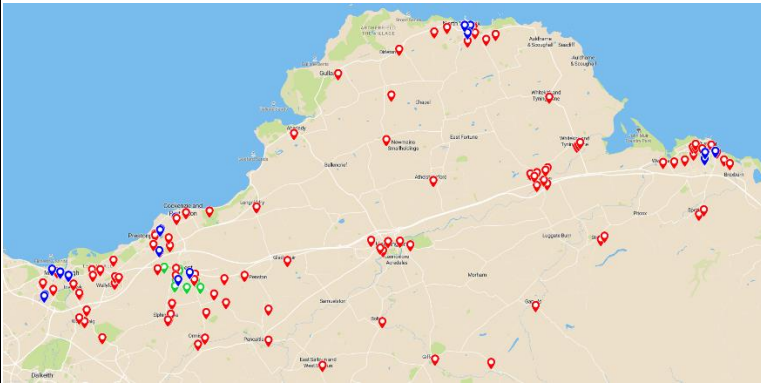
- Dunbar

Dunbar to Edinburgh 19 trains 6.51am to 22.20

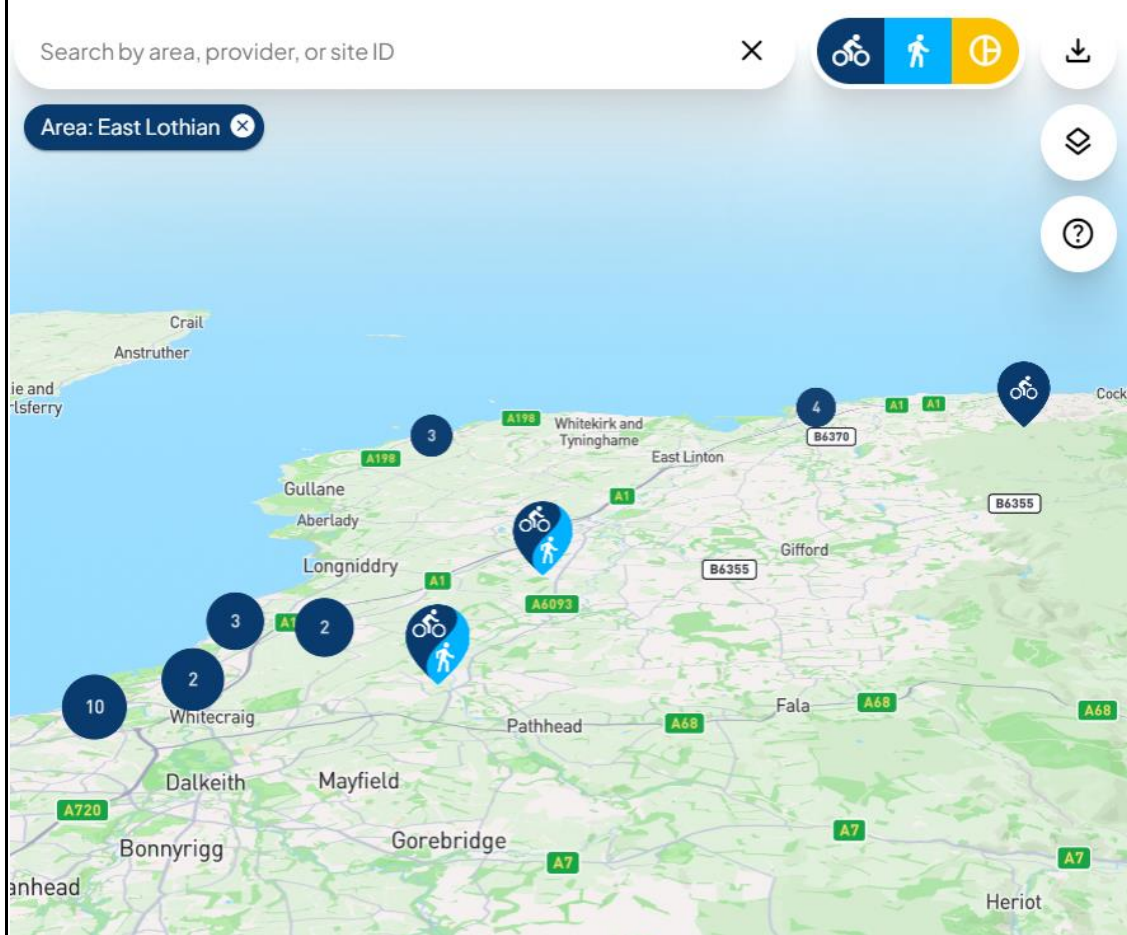
DATA FOR CYCLING ([uSmart](#))

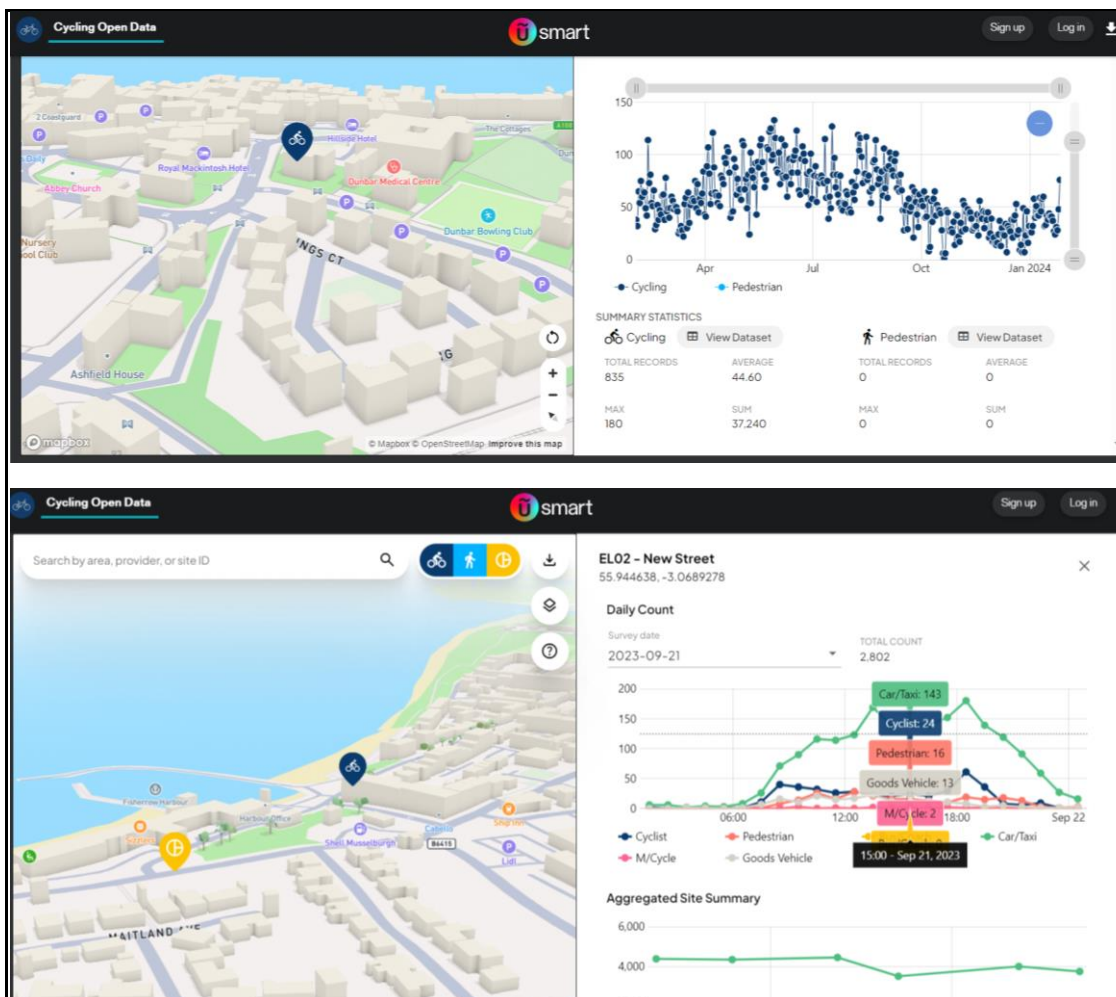
- 39% of all cycle journeys in East Lothian were below 3km long (2018) based on 420 sample size. Data from the Transport and Travel related questions asked in the Scottish Household Survey 2018.

Examples of data monitoring spots are included below:



ELC has got access to cameras collecting data continuously at around 25 sites and will shortly install a further 5, including one in Haddington which is under-represented at present. Examples of Usmart data are included below:





18.14 Further work to gather and analyse qualitative and quantitative data relating to public transport, active travel including walking, wheeling and cycling is necessary for tier 1 and 2 towns and villages as well as some rural settlements. This work will be carried out using various desk-top methods and available tools eg Network Planning Tool (<https://nptscot.github.io/#/clos/#10.15/55.9183/-2.82>) as well as site visits and surveys in the largest new residential developments and town and local centre locations. Qualitative and quantitative data gathered through the Open Space Strategy audit that was carried out in early 2025 will also be used. This further in-depth work will be carried out in the final quarter of 2025 and first quarter of 2026.

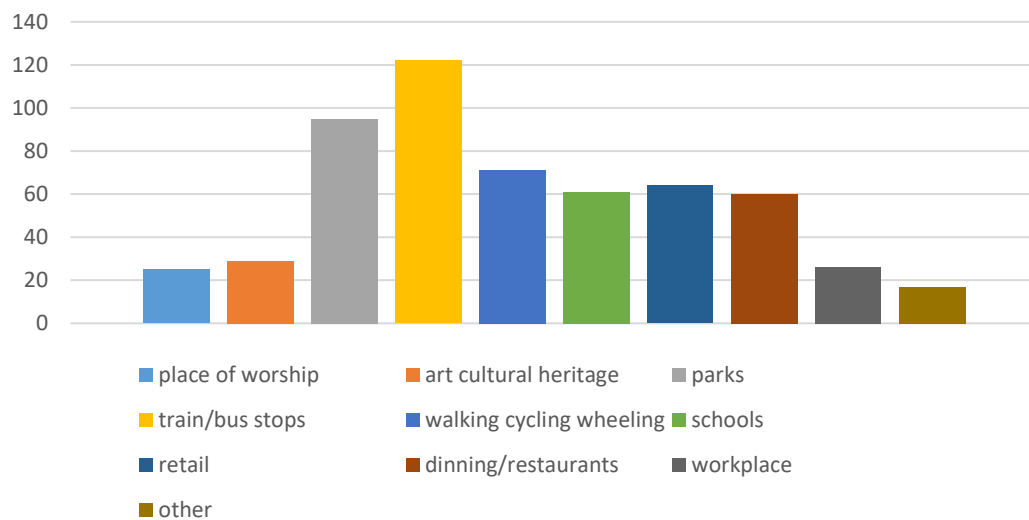
SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Story Map responses

- 18.15 The consultation responses indicate that the main services or elements which have been identified as necessary to support local living are:
- Train and bus stops
 - Parks
 - Walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure
 - Retail
 - Schools

- Dinning/restaurants

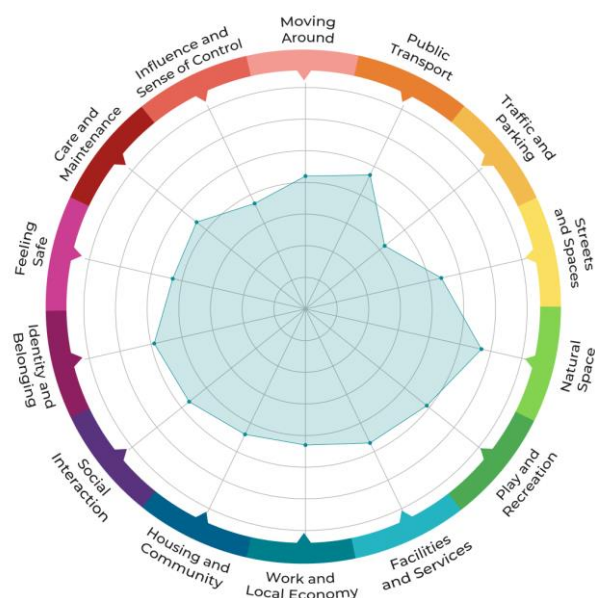
Which services do you think it is most important to be able to access within 10 minutes of your house?



18.16 As part of our consultation we used **Place Standard Tool** surveys to collect qualitative data from towns and main villages of our six Area Partnerships.

The key findings are included below:

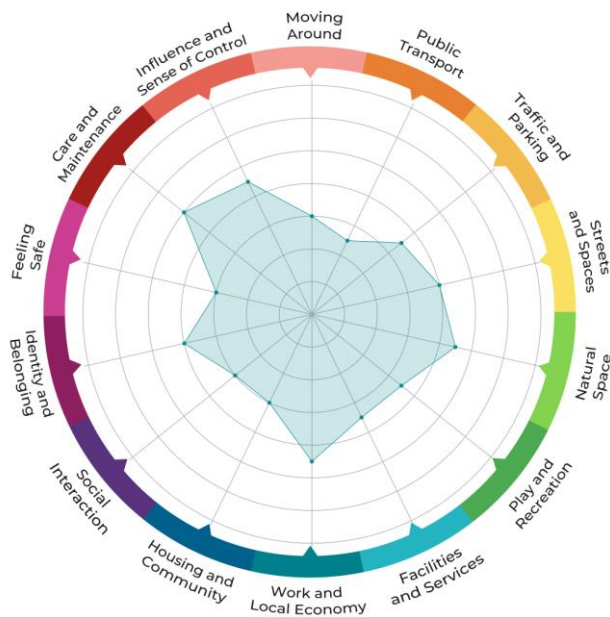
MUSSELBURGH



Moving Around	4.2
Public Transport	4.7
Traffic and Parking	3.2
Streets and Spaces	4.4
Natural Space	5.7
Play and Recreation	4.9
Facilities and Services	4.7
Work and Local Economy	4.3
Housing and Community	4.4
Social Interaction	4.7
Identity and Belonging	4.9
Feeling Safe	4.3
Care and Maintenance	4.4
Influence and Sense of Control	3.7

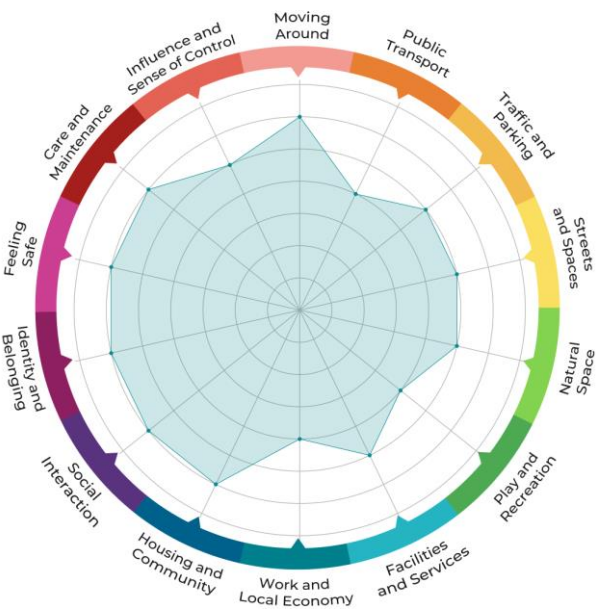
More information on the issues identified through this consultation is available here [Place Standard Survey Musselburgh](#)

Tranent (Fa'side)



Moving Around	3
Public Transport	2.5
Traffic and Parking	3.5
Streets and Spaces	4
Natural Space	4.5
Play and Recreation	3.5
Facilities and Services	3.5
Work and Local Economy	4.5
Housing and Community	3
Social Interaction	3
Identity and Belonging	4
Feeling Safe	3
Care and Maintenance	5
Influence and Sense of Control	4.5

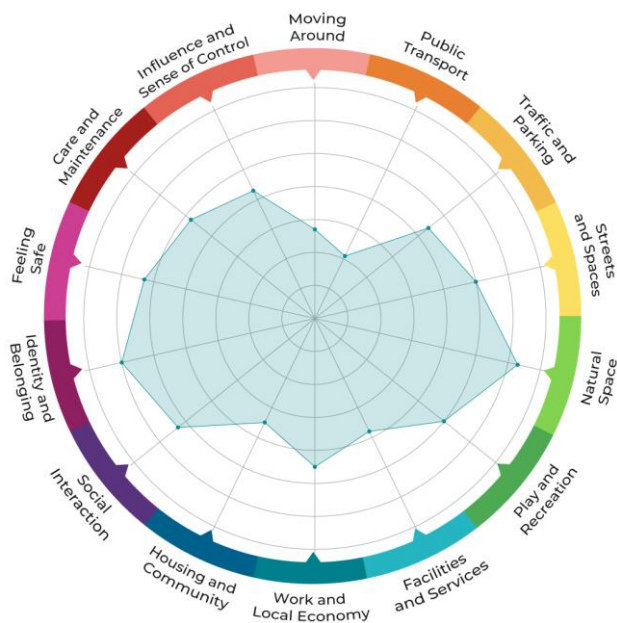
Prestonpans, Seton, Gosford



Moving Around	6
Public Transport	4
Traffic and Parking	5
Streets and Spaces	5
Natural Space	5
Play and Recreation	4
Facilities and Services	5
Work and Local Economy	4
Housing and Community	6
Social Interaction	6
Identity and Belonging	6
Feeling Safe	6
Care and Maintenance	6
Influence and Sense of Control	5

More information on the issues identified through this consultation is available here [Place Standard Survey Longniddry](#)

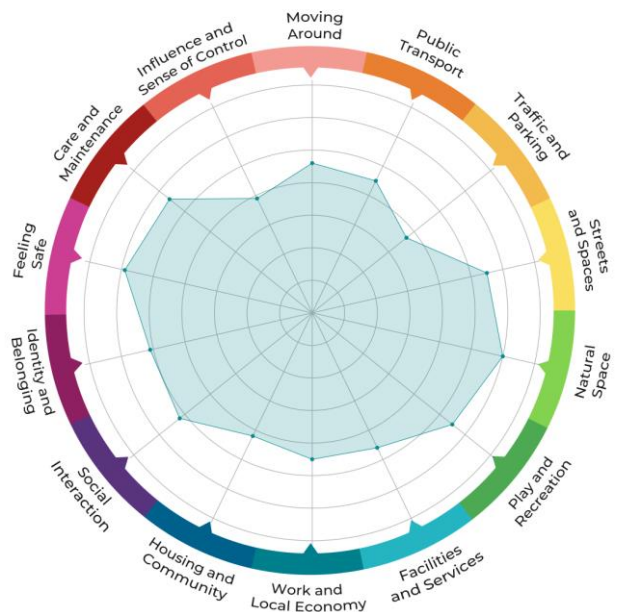
Haddington & Lammermuir



Moving Around	2.7
Public Transport	2.1
Traffic and Parking	4.4
Streets and Spaces	5
Natural Space	6.3
Play and Recreation	5
Facilities and Services	3.8
Work and Local Economy	4.5
Housing and Community	3.5
Social Interaction	5.3
Identity and Belonging	6
Feeling Safe	5.3
Care and Maintenance	4.8
Influence and Sense of Control	4.3

More information on the issues identified through this consultation is available here [Place Standard Survey Haddington & Lammermuir Area](#)

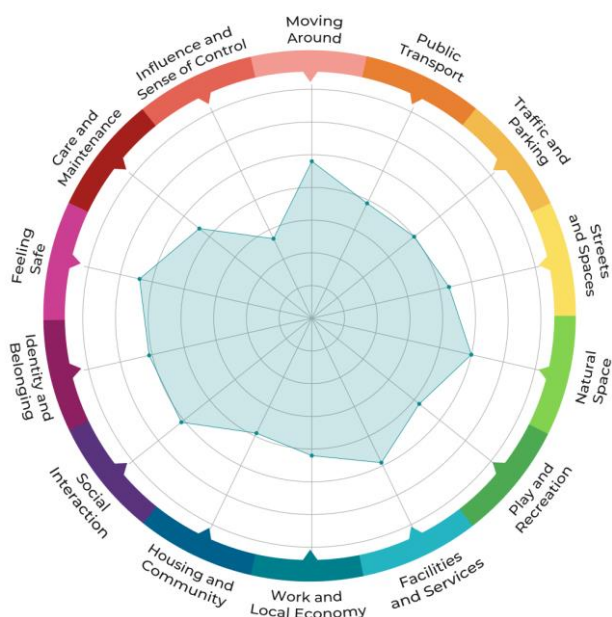
North Berwick



Moving Around	4.6
Public Transport	4.5
Traffic and Parking	3.7
Streets and Spaces	5.5
Natural Space	6
Play and Recreation	5.5
Facilities and Services	4.6
Work and Local Economy	4.5
Housing and Community	4.2
Social Interaction	5.2
Identity and Belonging	5.1
Feeling Safe	5.9
Care and Maintenance	5.6
Influence and Sense of Control	3.9

More information on the issues identified through this consultation is available here [Place Standards Tool Survey North Berwick Area](#)

DUNBAR



Moving Around	4.8
Public Transport	3.9
Traffic and Parking	4
Streets and Spaces	4.3
Natural Space	5
Play and Recreation	4.2
Facilities and Services	4.9
Work and Local Economy	4.2
Housing and Community	3.9
Social Interaction	5.1
Identity and Belonging	5.1
Feeling Safe	5.4
Care and Maintenance	4.4

- 18.17 More information on the issues identified through this consultation is available here [Place Standards Tool Survey Dunbar Area](#)

CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT

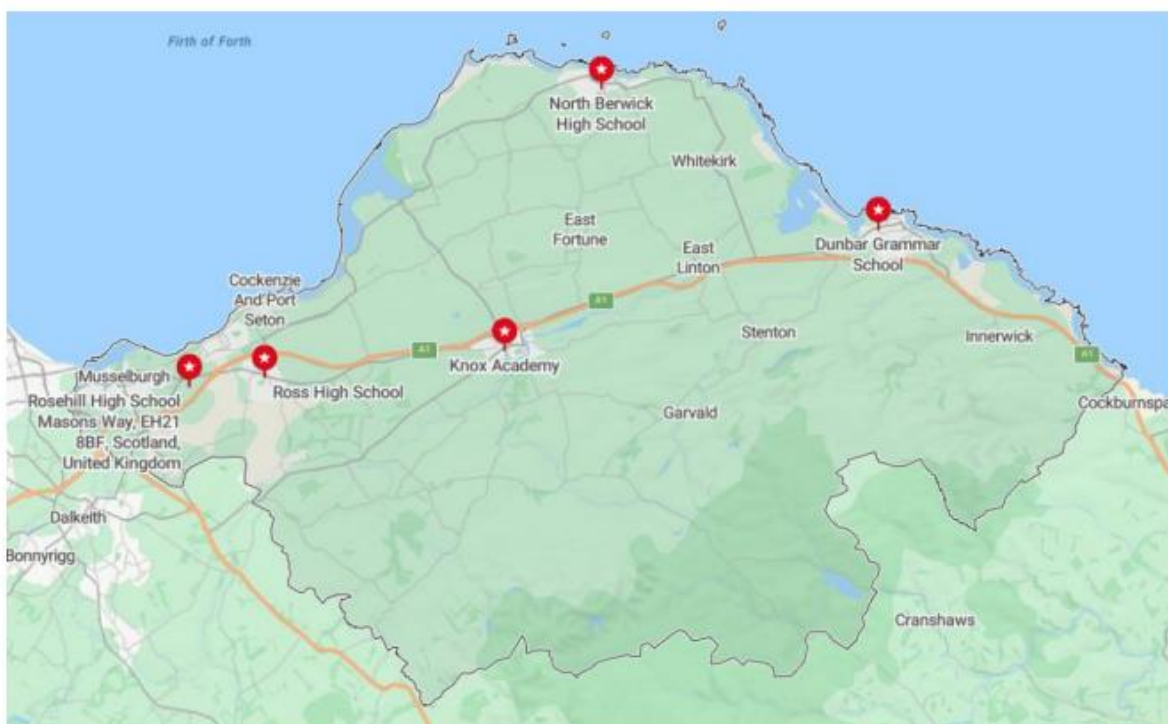
- 18.18 Play Scotland, in partnership with Planning Aid Scotland, facilitated five engagements with Secondary Schools throughout East Lothian in September 2023. A further two Secondary Schools were invited to attend but did not have capacity to participate at this time. The tool used to engage at the sessions was The Place Standard tool, A Version for Young People.
- 18.19 Young people were asked to score themes on a scale of 1 – 7, to fit with the adult version of the tool (see image below). These scores were then plotted on a graph (from the core Place Standard tool) which can be seen in each individual report.

Please score on a scale from 1 to 7



East Lothian overall results

- 18.20 Every secondary school in East Lothian was invited to participate in the engagements. Positive responses were received from five of the secondary schools, and a range of age groups were engaged with during the sessions. The spread of the secondary schools engaged with can be seen below:



- 18.21 108 young people from different parts of the local authority participated in the engagements with representatives from every year group within secondary schools (11 – 17 year olds).
- 18.22 The scores for the schools were aggregated to give an overall score for East Lothian. The results are shown in the figure below. The green shading shows the themes that were chosen for discussion by young people in each school.

	Haddington		North		Ross	East
	Knox	Dunbar	Berwick	Rosehill	High	Lothian
Walking, wheeling, cycling	6	4	6	5	6	5
Public Transport	4	4	5	5	5	5
Traffic and Parking	5	3	3	3	4	4
Streets, squares & buildings	4	4	5	4	4	4
Nature - parks, woods, hills, beaches	5	6	7	6	5	6
Play, hang out, games and hobbies	5	4	5	5	3	4
Schools, libraries, shops, services	5	4	5	5	5	5
Jobs and places to work	5	5	5	5	3	5
Homes, friends and neighbours	6	6	5	6	6	6
Meeting and talking with people	4	5	5	5	4	5
Feeling proud and part of a place	4	4	5	4	3	4
Feeling Safe	4	4	6	4	4	4
Fixed, clean and managed	5	4	5	3	3	4
Having our say and being listened to	4	4	4	5	4	4
Average scores across all themes	4.71	4.36	5.07	4.64	4.21	4.64

- 18.23 Key issues for young people in East Lothian:

- The availability, reliability and safety of public transport. Those who commented were keen to use environmentally friendly options for travel, however they needed to feel safe when they were on board and for the service to be reliable and regular.
- All young people who commented on the subject appreciated the free bus pass that allowed them to travel free of charge on the bus service, “Bus pass is very good so you can go out with your friends”.
- Some commented that they would like this free travel pass extended to other forms of public transport particularly trains, “Train should be free on young Scot card too”.
- Young people appreciated the access to nature they had in much of East Lothian. They were able to identify lots of places that they could go to hang out. However, they had particular suggestions for improvement in their own local areas, including the repair and maintenance of play facilities.
- The need for more facilities for older children (teenagers) was raised as some felt that there were lots of places for young children to go, but fewer places for young people to have recreation time with their friends, “Teenagers have to use parks etc as spaces to hangout as there is nowhere else to go”.
- Cost of recreational services was an issue for young people who responded on this theme, “We have to have subscriptions/memberships to play sport at local facilities (not just one-offs), and it costs money”.
- Young people want to feel safe getting around where they live. Some young people identified places that they would avoid in the dark as they felt unsafe, “Unsafe walking in the dark”. Young people named particular places where more lighting might help them feel safer when walking in the dark.
- Other situations, like being on buses in the late evenings, were identified as times when they might feel unsafe.
- Traffic safety, including feeling safe as a pedestrian and as a cyclist was also raised. Young people wanted speed limits to be observed, “Grammar school (has) lots of traffic. Speed limit is not followed”. To encourage active travel, young people wanted safe routes to cycle that were free from cars, as currently they felt that “Cyclists need to be wary of drivers”.

18.24 Recommendations for improvement from young people in East Lothian

- More cycle paths and active travel options
- Improvements to recreation options for young people that are free
- More support for mental health issues that are accessible for young people
- Lighting to improve safety on routes regularly used by young people
- More public transport options that are free for young people, and increased reliability,
- regularity and safety of the bus service.

PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 18.25 During the process of developing our Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA), we undertook an extensive consultation and engagement process in which we sought and included the views of children and young people across East Lothian, from a range of ages and abilities. They contributed their thoughts and ideas into the PSA, in order to enable the future planning and provision of play spaces across East Lothian, including both existing formal and informal play spaces, and influencing proposals for future play spaces through the forthcoming Local Development Plan.
- 18.26 Following our consultation and engagement with children and young people and their parents and carers, we then undertook a further round of public consultation on our draft findings. We aimed to present the key findings, including key positive messages, key development messages, and key recommendations, to our local communities, to enable everyone to have their say on our proposed PSA. The consultation was sent to all Community Councils; and was sent via schools to all parents/carers on our primary and secondary school

mailing lists, and via our Local Area Partnerships to all of the contact groups, organisations and individuals on their mailing lists. In addition, the consultation was available online on the Consultation Hub and as paper copies in libraries, and was promoted through the Council's communications and publicity channels. We have received over 290 responses to this part of the consultation.

18.27 The findings from all of these stages of consultation and engagement across our communities have informed and been incorporated into the final draft of East Lothian Play Sufficiency Assessment.

18.28 The key findings from the PSA are as follows:

Quantity of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces

- East Lothian has 121 Council-owned or managed formal outdoor play spaces distributed across the entirety of the local authority area.
- Most residents in the six largest settlements have at least one formal outdoor play space within a 5-minute walk.

Quantity of Informal Outdoor Play

- East Lothian has a wealth of informal outdoor play opportunities across a wide range of natural settings, including woodland and forests, coastal areas and beaches, and grasslands and wetlands.
- Most East Lothian residents live within a 5-minute walk of their nearest useable green space.

Quality of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces

- Outdoor formal play spaces in East Lothian are generally attractive, clean, and well-maintained sites which are free from dog mess, vandalism, and traffic and noise pollution. Most play spaces are green and are overlooked by houses and offices.
- There is a lack of nearby or signposted cycle racks and public toilets and a lack of natural features within formal play spaces.
- Most formal play spaces provide a range of opportunities for physical and risky play for younger children. There are significantly fewer opportunities for physical and risky play for the 12–17-year-old age ranges.
- Formal play spaces offer opportunities for a variety of physical play experiences, including running, skipping, hopping, jumping, swinging, sliding, spinning and rocking. There are minimal opportunities for crawling, balancing or bouncing and limited formal opportunities for bike or scooter riding, skateboarding or roller skating within formal play spaces.
- Opportunities to engage in creative, sensory, and nature-based play in formal play spaces are extremely limited across all age ranges.
- There are opportunities for social play across different ages, although this reduces in the older age ranges. There are minimal opportunities for children with differing abilities to play together.
- Some formal play spaces offer calmer spaces to be on your own or with a small group of friends, however these are usually for the younger age groups and inaccessible to anyone using a mobility aid or wheelchair.

Quality of Informal Outdoor Play

- East Lothian residents highly value the range of informal outdoor play opportunities offered in natural and green settings across East Lothian.
- Most East Lothian residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their nearest open and green spaces.
- All PSA target groups identified access to green and natural spaces as important to ensuring the quality of their informal outdoor play opportunities.
- Accessibility to natural and green spaces can be challenging for disabled families.

Accessibility of Formal Outdoor Play Spaces

- There are minimal play opportunities for disabled children, young people and families in formal outdoor play spaces across East Lothian. This includes children with Additional Support Needs (ASN).
- No play spaces are fully accessible or inclusive, and where accessible equipment is included within the play space this offers a limited play experience and is often located on the periphery of the main play space.
- There is minimal inclusive infrastructure to support access into and around play spaces.

18.29 More information on our PSA is available here [Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)

Open Space Strategy (draft 2025)

18.30 In 2025, East Lothian Council's officers conducted site visits and an analysis of publicly accessible open spaces and greenspaces in towns and villages across East Lothian to inform an Open Space Audit. The Audit is a mandatory part of our next Open Space Strategy. The purpose of this exercise was to review the provision, quantity, quality and accessibility of the public parks, greenspaces and open spaces within and on the edge of East Lothian's towns and villages. Draft findings from this exercise, maps of audited open space areas and the Council's initial thoughts on the future planning for parks and open spaces have been subject of a [public consultation in June and July 2025](#). It is anticipated that the Open Space Strategy will be finalised in the third quarter of 2025.

18.31 Once finalised the Strategy will inform the Proposed LDP and will provide further quantitative and qualitative information on areas of open space and sports facilities that will feed in the work on Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE PROPOSED PLAN?

- 18.32 Apply a standard approach to setting out what the evidence gathered means for the proposed plan and delivery programme
- 1) improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure within tier 1 and 2 settlements and improvements to active transport options between tier 1 and 2 and smaller settlements;
 - 2) improvements to open space and play areas and access to wider green networks – its impact on mental wellbeing and health;
 - 3) public transport bus and rail and its role in supporting existing 20 minute neighbourhoods and supporting smaller rural settlements;
 - 4) impact of new housing on existing infrastructure;
 - 5) impact of new housing sites (housing densities and design layout) on human health and climate change.

Next steps

- 1) Conduct more in-depth analysis of tier 1 and 2 settlements including;
 - % of households outwith specific catchments
 - Gain better qualitative information on specific types of facilities eg corner shops / village shops
 - Information on quality of main pedestrians and cycling routes
 - Information and project development from other council services

- Gain better understanding of quality and accessibility (use information from the 2025 Open Space Strategy and Open Space Audit);
- 2) Conduct further analysis of smaller rural settlements (possibly identified as tier 3).

AREAS WHERE THERE IS AGREEMENT OR DISPUTE ON ISSUES AND POSSIBLE APPROACHES.

There are no areas of dispute as much of the information is factual about the settlements of East Lothian.