

Local Outcome Improvement Plan

Engagement Report August 2025 Version 2

Background to Community Planning

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 ¹(the Act) aims to enhance the power of communities by giving them a greater role in local decision-making and direct influence over how public services are delivered. The Act covers various areas, including community planning, asset transfer, and participation requests, enabling communities to have a stronger voice and more opportunities to shape their local environment and services.

Part 2 of the Act focuses on Community Planning, a process that requires public sector partners to collaborate with communities to plan and deliver better services, and brings public sector partners, third sector organisations, and communities together to identify and address local inequalities. The Act establishes a statutory framework for Community Planning, requiring public bodies to work collaboratively to improve outcomes, particularly for those facing the greatest inequalities:

Community Planning Duty to Participate in Community Planning:

- Public sector partners, including local authorities, health boards, fire service, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, and police, are required to work together and with communities to plan and deliver better local outcomes. Collectively referred to in this Part of the Act as a Community Planning Partnership.

Focus on Inequalities:

- Community Planning prioritises tackling inequalities and focuses efforts on communities experiencing disadvantage.

Local Participation:

- Communities must be actively involved in identifying local priorities and developing plans to address them. Public sector partners are expected to support and enable meaningful participation.

Local Outcomes Improvement Plans:

- Community Planning Partnerships are responsible for preparing and publishing Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (LOIP), which set out priority outcomes and how they will be achieved. Plans should be evidence-based and responsive to local needs.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/contents>

Locality Plans:

- Community Planning Partnerships are required to develop Locality Plans (or similar) for areas experiencing significant inequalities.

Leadership:

- Public sector partners involved in Community Planning must demonstrate leadership, share responsibility, and coordinate efforts effectively to deliver agreed outcomes.

Accountability and Reporting:

- Community Planning Partnerships must regularly review progress on their plans and report on outcomes.

Engagement Report

The Engagement Report presents the data gathered from March – July for the development of a new East Lothian Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

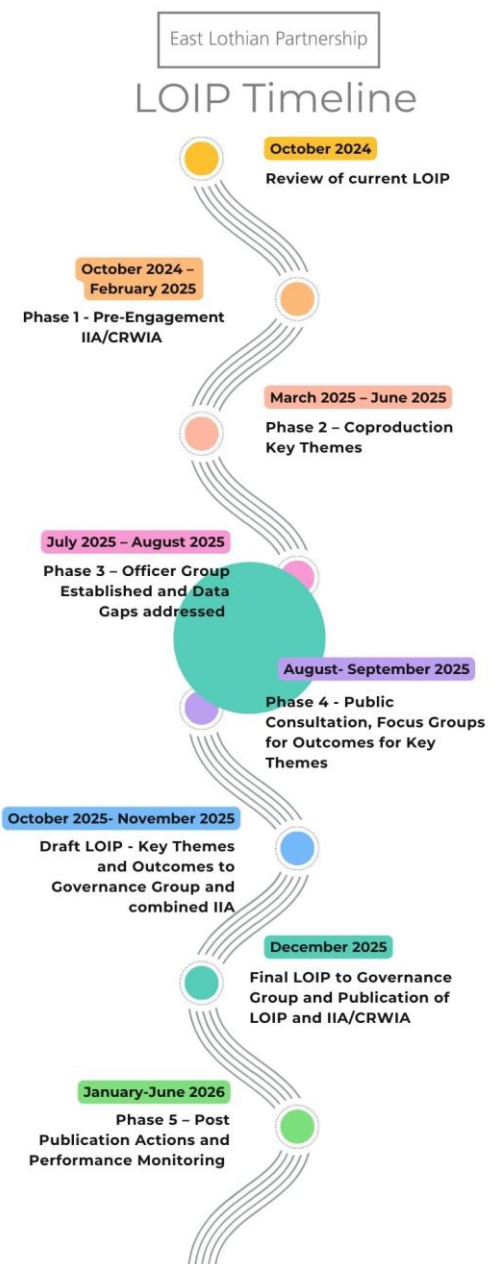
The report summarises 144 pieces of evidence data, representing 24,371 voices from across East Lothian who have been involved in the local participation and coproduction of this phase of development of the plan.

The data includes specific sessions run explicitly about the LOIP, as well as surveys and coproduction sessions from partners carried out which is relevant and strategies and plans.

The timeline for the development of the new local outcome improvement plan is provided in the diagram to the right.

The Engagement Report is split into 4 sections;

1. Results of engagement with Children and Young People (1)
2. Results of engagement with Communities (2)
3. Recommendations (3)
4. Link to Strategic Priorities of Partners and Scottish National Performance Framework (4)
5. Peer Review of Engagement Report (5)



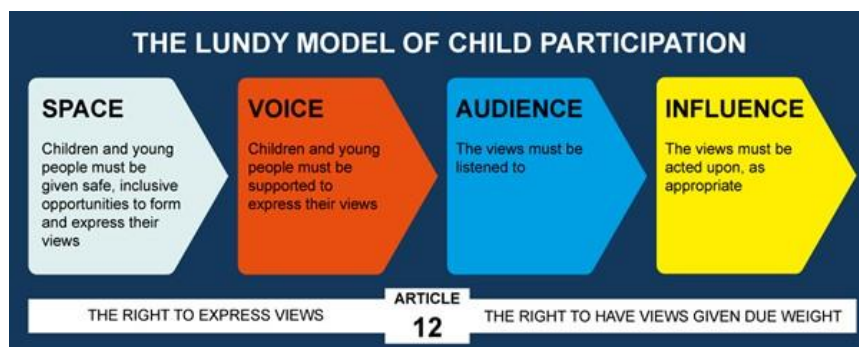
1. Results of Engagement with Children and Young People

1.1 Introduction

This report summarises the findings from the engagement activities conducted with children and young people for East Lothian Partnership's LOIP. The aim was to gather insights into their experiences, needs, and priorities to inform future planning and service delivery to reduce inequalities.

1.2 Methodology

The Lundy Model of Child Participation² was used to frame discussions with Children and Youth Organisations to plan engagement. Creating a safe space, with people that children and young people trust, was fundamental to being able to express their views



We worked with Children and Youth Organisations to support them by designing an engagement pack with easy-to-use resources to have discussions with children and young people.

East Lothian Partnership

Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2026-2036
Children and Young Person Facilitation Guide

Creative resources for use with children, young people or any settings where they would help!



The engagement involved various activities within the designed facilitation pack and other formats such as surveys, cue cards, and discussion sessions conducted by multiple organisations.

Bespoke sessions were run by children and youth organisations and we embedded the 'only asking once' in response to communities' apathy to the amount of consultation that has been undertaken recently. This meant we have been able to draw from studies and reports which have already taken place.

² <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/guidance-assemblies-lessons/the-lundy-model-article-12-in-practice/>

Engagement data has been collected from a total of 9,592 individuals through 64 different sets of data from 45 representative groups/areas. This includes data from parents/maternity, which crosses over with the community data.

1.3 Representation of Engagement with Protected Characteristics

Through our Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) process we have been seeking to ensure there is representation from protected characteristics, as well as easy to ignore voices³. The engagement included representation from the following protected characteristics:

- Age - Early Years, Primary, Secondary, 16+
- Gender
- Parental/Maternity
- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability
- Care experienced
- Sexual Orientation
- LGBTqia+

We also received feedback from partners and professionals who were supporting these groups and are therefore confident in the range of data collected.

This represents engagement with groups across the age ranges and protected characteristics, though we have identified data gaps to continue to focus on throughout the development of the new LOIP (Section 1.6).

We are following closely the developments of a project from Aberlour which looks out how we record Baby's voices, which is being undertaken in the autumn.

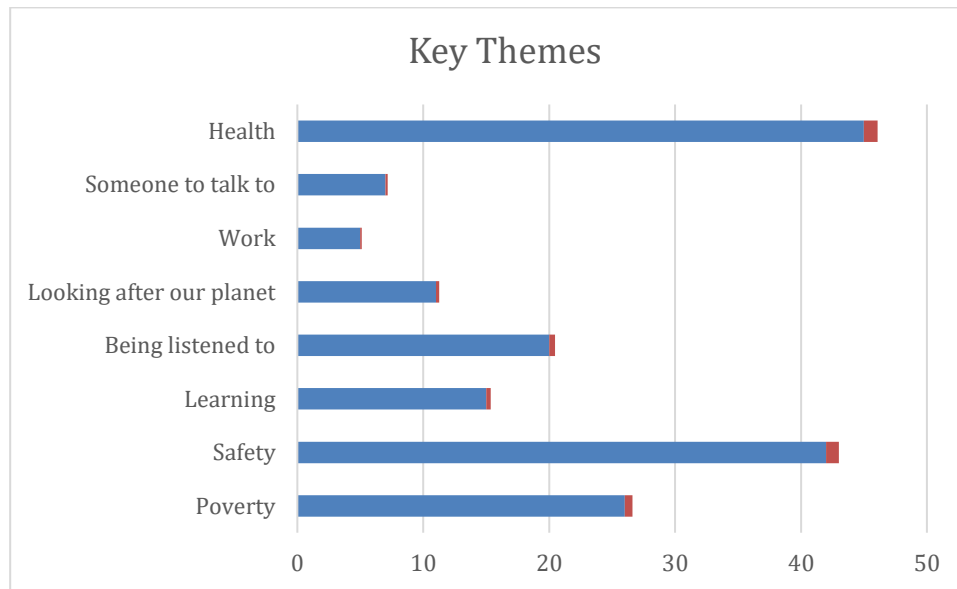
1.4 Key Themes

The key themes used in this phase for discussion were taken from the Children's Commissioner positioning statements as a starting point to work with organisations to create a simpler language and visuals. ⁴ A subgroup of the Children and Young Persons Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) included; central education, Bridges Project, Heavy Sound and Who Cares Scotland

The following key themes emerged from the engagement activities.

³ Marginalised voices

⁴ <https://www.cypcs.org.uk/positions/>



- **45** out of 64 highlighted **health** with mental health (with key topic through SPA Anxiety), peer support, substance misuse, domestic abuse, neurodivergence, LGBTQia+ particularly access to trans healthcare, male carers (dads), activities, social isolation (and Mental health) of unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers and social isolation (and Mental health) for peri and neonatal mothers and those with younger children.
- **41** out of 64 highlighted **safety at home (crossing over with health) or community** with domestic abuse, the prominence around feeling safe in their community and having safe places for young people to go. LGBTQia+ members commented on trans inclusive spaces and transphobia. There was a large proportion of feedback around areas with poor lighting, walkways, maintained or dirty areas feeling less safe by most youth groups. Some groups such as Young Police Volunteers commented that more police on the streets made them feel safer and others such as Recharge said for them seeing police makes them feel less safe, as there must have been trouble. Issues around youth homelessness and safety in communities was highlighted by Action for Children. There was points raised on use of electric bikes etc on pavements or roads in an unsafe manner from Dads Work.
- **26** out of 64 highlighted **poverty** either with food, warm homes or cost of living including transport this varied from families through to students (childcare costs were also high feature). The issues of studying and managing work and bills was raised by students. Access to cheap and healthy foods as opposed to takeaway was highlighted. There was also feedback around financial education such as opening a bank account through See Survey in Schools, Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, Care experienced young people and Olivebank, with the need for life skills. Cost of transport/access to transport was raised by parents and those living more rurally.
- **20** out of 64 highlighted **being listened to** with children and young people feeling their opinions were not respected, dads were not equals to mum's voices and a lack of tangible ways of including babies

and early years voices. There were issues around a lack of control and sense of involvement in local communities.

- **14** out of 64 highlighted **learning** as a key issue with young carers issues around school attendance/time for home study, the gap between learning in high SIMD and low SIMD areas, digital skills for unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers, young people being supported by Specialist Youth Workers and See Survey data showing a reduction achievement outside of schools being recognized in senior phase. Voting and democracy rights was highlighted by North Berwick Pupil Council along with digital skills (and access to equipment) for unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers. LGBT Scotland around bullying in schools affecting learning.
- **11** out of 64 highlighted **looking after our planet** as an issue raised by youth parliament, schools See Survey/MSYP survey/LDP survey and Growing and Changing's Spring Fest event with highlights around biodiversity, reuse, recycling, adapting to heavy rain and flooding and sustainable travel.
- **7** out of 64 highlighted issues of **having someone to talk to** was raised as a high priority by Mental Health and Wellbeing professionals at a recent event, but not as prominent in young people's responses. The school See Survey, results from discussions with Recharge, Pennypit Stay and Play and Queen Margaret University rated this as a top 3 issue. It would appear being heard, listened to and respected were widely more prominent to children and young people.
- **4** out of 64 highlighted **work** as an issue and this was particularly apparent in the early years setting (Home Start, Thrive, Families Together) and could also be reflected by issues detailed elsewhere around childcare costs which could be contributing towards people not being able to return to work or it being cost prohibitive. Action for Children in New Horizons housing project for 16+ also mentioned issues of getting into workplaces with wages which could balance the costs of independence. Access to work with issues of cost of transport/access to transport was raised by parents and those living more rurally. There were comments around workplaces needing to be more trauma informed to support people in the workplace from Who Cares Scotland.
- Other issues which were raised but not within these themes especially raised from early years, parents/carers, and the professionals working with them were; parental rights, neglect, childcare costs (could fit within poverty), public transport/moving around/parking (which could also fit within poverty).

1.5 Organisations, Partner Agencies, Departments, Policies and Plans Incorporated

Aberlour Perinatal and Neo Natal Befriending Service	North Berwick Pupil Council
Action for Children	Olivebank
Bridges Project	Pennypit Community Development Trust

Can Do	Pennypit Special Needs Youth Club
Circle	Place Making returns from Young People
Dads Work	Port Seton ASN
Early Child Development transformational change programme	Pennypit Community Development Trust
Edinburgh College	Port Seton Centre Youth Club
ELCAN report	Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership
Families Together	Queen Margaret University
Families Together: Dads Work	Recharge
FaSide Women and Girls	Schools See Survey
Growing and Changing	Specialist Youth Workers
Haddington Bridge Youth Club	Spring Fest – Growing and Changing
Health Visiting Team	Skills Development Scotland
Home Start	Stay and Play Pennypit
LGBT Youth Scotland	Team United
Local Development Plan – ELPA, Play Scotland and MSYPS, Edubuzz survey	Thrive CIC
MELDAP scoping report	Tiny Rights Detective
Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioners	Unaccompanied Minors and Asylum Seekers
Mental Health Youth Workers - Single Point of Access	Who Cares
MSYPs	Young Carers
MYPAS	Young Police Volunteers
My Voice Matters - Children's Services ELC	Your Vision: Support for Young Women in East Lothian – YWM, Edinburgh Rape Crisis and Women's Aid
NB Youth Project	Youth Vision

1.6 Challenges or Data Gaps

We are aware in the stage of engagement and co-production that there are gaps where layering data would show a fuller picture of need. During the CRWIA in June we identified the protected characteristics areas and groups to follow up with. We appreciate many agencies are managing their capacity and time to support the process and will continue to add engagement data as we receive it.

Area	Organisation
LGBTQia+	Knox/High Schools, New VCEL Group
Disability	Sight Scotland, Deaf School, Branch Out Together, STAND, , ZAP youth clubs, Meadowpark, Hub Sandersons Wynd, Woodside Wingygoul, Dunbar ASN and The Core, Neighbourhood Networks, Edinburgh Sick Kids

Care Experience	Blue Triangle
Race/Ethnicity	Polish School, Polish Café, Project Esperanza, Tabernacle at MECLC
Easy To Ignore Voices	Heavy Sound, The Ridge and Justice Social Work

2. Results from Engagement with Communities

2.1 Introduction

This section summarizes the findings from the engagement activities conducted with adults and the wider communities for the East Lothian Partnerships Local Outcome Improvement Plan. As with the Children and Young People's engagement, we layered specific engagement with data collected as part of previous consultation and engagement exercises to avoid duplication. The aim was to gather insights into communities' experiences, needs, and priorities to inform future planning and service delivery to reduce inequalities.

2.2 Methodology

The Place Standard Tool was used to frame discussions with communities, linking this engagement exercises with those undertaken by other East Lothian Partnership and Council consultations.

The Place Standard Tool is a framework designed to assess and improve place. This was used in conjunction with an exercise to imagine a future East Lothian that was designed and widely used by the East Lothian Climate Action Network.

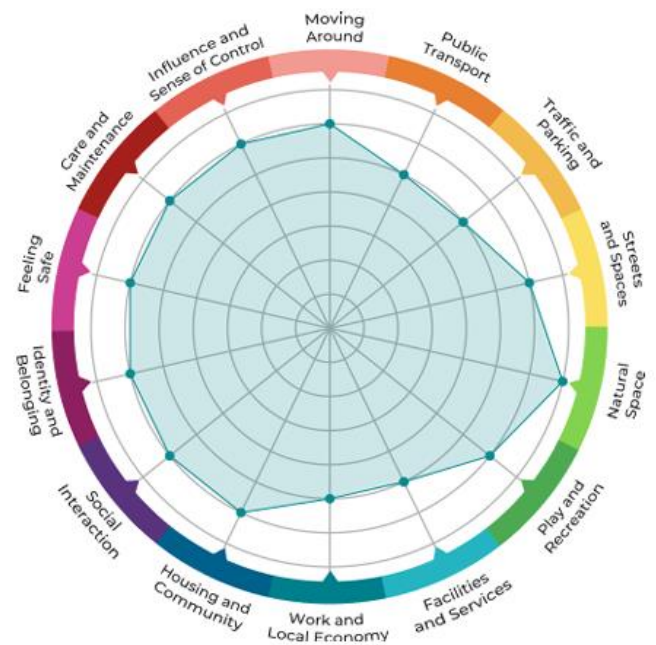
Alongside these returns we included in our analysis a broad review of existing research, consultation results, strategies, Area Plans, Local Place Plans, Ward Profiles and other engagement with communities.

The key themes in this discussion were taken from the review of the current LOIP and identification of ongoing actions requiring Partnership action. These were:

- The economy (including workforce planning and attracting jobs to the area)
- Tackling poverty and inequality (including food insecurity, digital inclusion)
- Climate change and infrastructure for the future

Partners agreed with this approach but recommended a broadened conversation that took on a wider perspective of these issues. This informed the development and the use of the Place Standard tool

Engagement data has been collected from a total of **15,007** individuals through **80** different sets of data.



2.3 Representation of Engagement with Protected Characteristics

Through our IIA process we have been seeking to ensure there is representation from the protected characteristics as well as easy to ignore voices. The engagement included representation from the following protected characteristics:

- Age

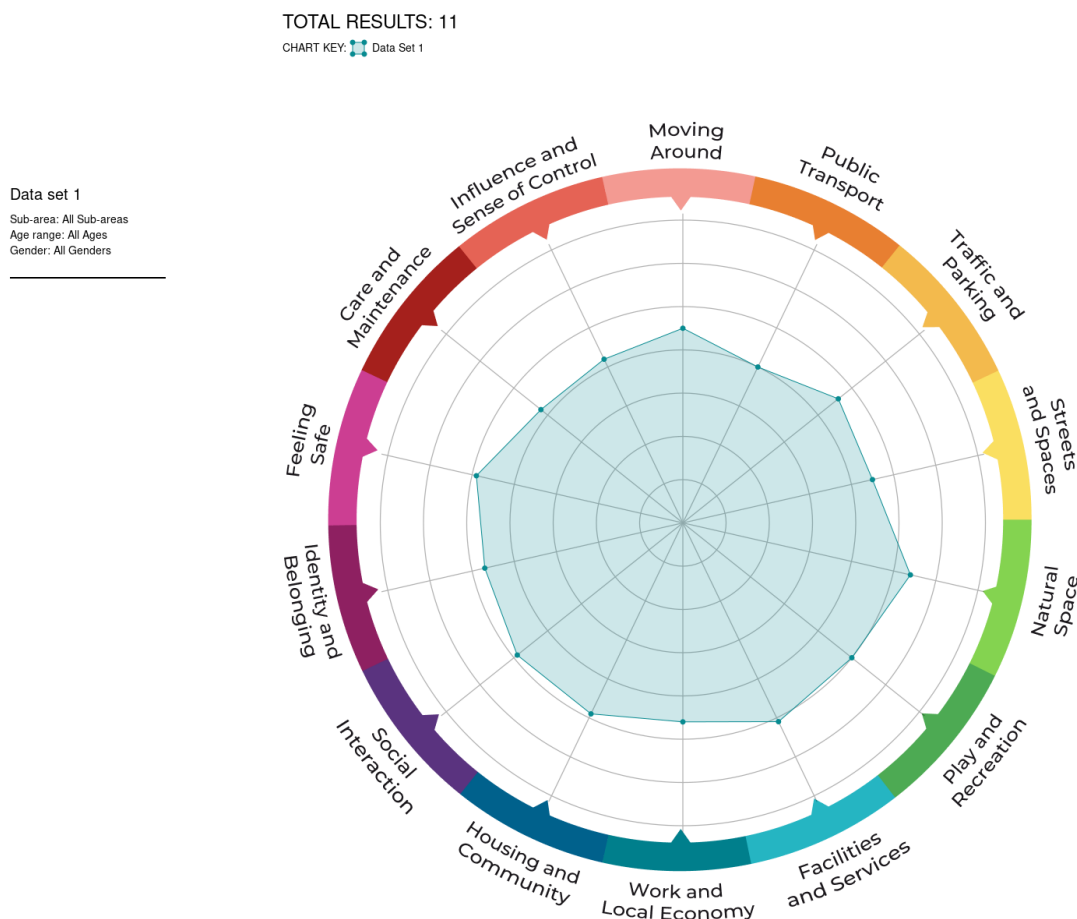
- Gender
- Parental/Maternity
- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability

This includes data from parents/maternity, which crosses over with the community data.

At an IIA session on 30th June 2025 we analysed gaps in our data collection and areas where further engagement is required. Further data around race, ethnicity and gender was identified and added to our analysis. Disability was another gap, and we have included further data from Sight Scotland.

We are expecting further data from the Housing Strategy and Deaf Action which will provide further data around disability. Further data is expected through SIGNAL platform.

2.4 Key Themes



What is good now?

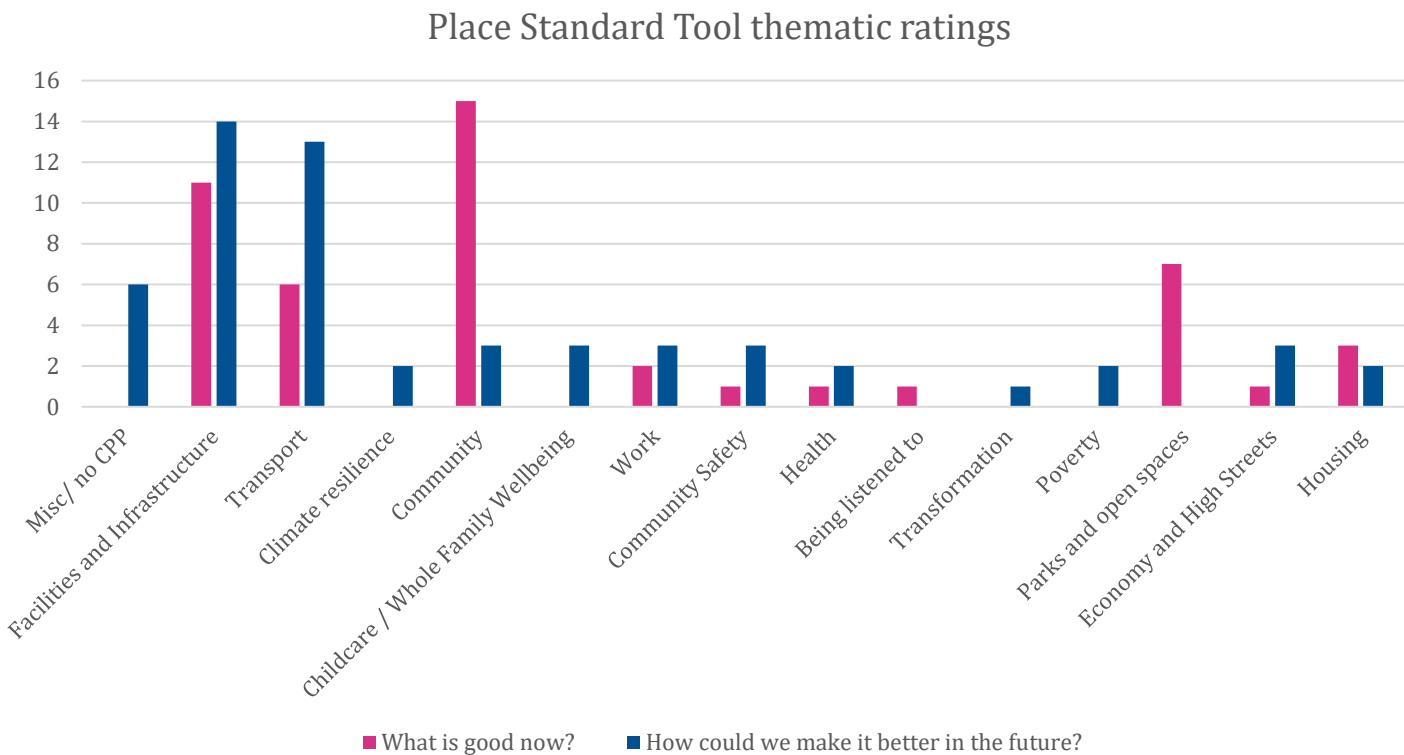
We analysed the qualitative responses from the Place Standard Tool. The **community** was identified as our biggest strength, with people highlighting volunteer, leisure and sporting opportunities, children's clubs, groups and other opportunities to connect.

Other strengths highlighted our natural spaces and parks, and our well-kept pathways, accessibility, pleasant streets and high streets.

How could we make it better in the future?

Facilities and infrastructure were identified as a future improvement, with improvements to buggy and wheelchair access, more leisure facilities, and infrastructure to meet a growing population highlighted. **Positive facilities and infrastructure** comments highlight the work that has already been done in this area.

Transport was also identified as needing improvements, with rural communities facing particular challenges, increased transport to hospitals and health settings, adaptable buses that connect villages, and support for people on a low income being key changes. **Positive transport** comments were around the good train connections, some bus travel, and active travel improvements that have been made.



2.5 Organisations, Partner Agencies, Departments, Policies and Plans Incorporated

As well as the Place Standard Tool we analysed 80 pieces of engagement. This includes submissions from organisations engaging on LOIP themes who used a different format from the participation packs, as well as reports and surveys already undertaken with communities.

Document	Organisation
Meetings	
1. Antisocial Behaviour Overview Group	East Lothian Partnership
2. Sight Scotland LOIP conversation - issues facing Blind population	Sight Scotland

3. National Gender Identity Healthcare Reference group	Scottish Government
4. RSABI	RBASI
5. Migrant Worker Support	Musselburgh CAB
6. CAPP	PSG
7. CAPP	Musselburgh
8. CAPP	Dunbar
9. Kinship Carers	East Lothian Council
10. Deaf Action Scotland	Deaf Action Scotland
Engagement	
11. CAPS East Lothian drug & alcohol collective advocacy group's feedback on EL services Session 1	CAPS
12. CAPS East Lothian drug & alcohol collective advocacy group's feedback on EL services Session 2	CAPS
13. "Lived Experience: Can You Hear Us?" – CAPS People's Conference 2024	CAPS
14. Blindwells Community Audit	Blindwells Beacon team
15. Community Conversations: Real stories, Real Struggles and a Call for Change	East Lothian Foodbank
16. East Lothian Residents Survey	East Lothian Council
17. LDP Evidence Report Engagement	East Lothian Council
18. LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LOIP) 2025	Thrive East Lothian CIC
19. PSG Computer Club	Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership
20. Walkers and Talkers	Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership
21. Musselburgh Area Partnership	Musselburgh Area Partnership
22. Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership	Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership
23. Growing and Changing	Growing and Changing
24. Your Vision: Support for Young Women in East Lothian	YWCA Scotland – The Young Women's Movement
25. Our voices Our future	Acorn ARC
26. Briefing Paper	FaSide Women and Girls
27. Open Spaces Consultation	Scottish Womens Budget Group
28. Briefing Paper	FaSide Women and Girls
29. Planning Older Peoples Services	HSCP
30. Report on Consultation responses/findings – Tree and Woodland Strategy 2023	East Lothian Council
31. Older Persons Pilot Signal	VCEL
Strategies	
32. Draft East Lothian Open Space Strategy Refresh 2025	East Lothian Council
33. EAST LOTHIAN CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK (ELCAN'S) RESPONSE TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL'S CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY	ELCAN

34. East Lothian-Wide Vision for a Thriving, Sustainable Future	ELCAN
35. Review of the East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan – Report to IJB	HSCP
36. Scotland's Population Health Framework 2025–2035	Scottish Government
37. Specialist Public Health System Offer to Community Planning Partners	Public Health Scotland
38. Antisocial Behaviour - Whose responsibility? Towards a more effective response to antisocial behaviour in Scotland	Independent Working Group on Antisocial Behaviour
39. Review of East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan	East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership
40. Lothians and Scottish Borders Local Policing Plan 2023–2026	Police Scotland
41. Community Wealth Building - a progressive economic model	East Lothian Council
42. East Lothian Council's Background Paper on Placemaking and 20-Minute Neighbourhoods	East Lothian Council
43. East Lothian Poverty Plan 2024-2029 engagement	East Lothian Partnership
44. Carers Strategy	East Lothian Council
Wider data – informing plans	
45. East Lothian Council Business Base Survey 2023	East Lothian Council
46. East Lothian Advice Consortium	East Lothian Advice Consortium
47. Enjoy Leisure Physical Activity Referral Programme	Enjoy Leisure
48. Trends in DNA (did not attend appointments)	Public Health Survey
49. IJB Paper - Prevention	Public Health
50. The Christie Commission 10 years on	Scottish Government
51. IJB Engagement Feedback 2022-25	IJB
52. EMPCC Annual Report 2024-2025	East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee
Area Plans	
53. NBCAP data from various plans	North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership
54. NBC HWA	North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership
55. NBC OTM	North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership
56. NBC Climate Action Workshop	North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership
57. DELAP Area Plan	Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership
58. NBCAP Area Plan	North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership
59. Preston Seton Gosford Area Plan	Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership
60. Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership input	Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership
61. Musselburgh Area Plan Engagement	Musselburgh Area Partnership
Research	

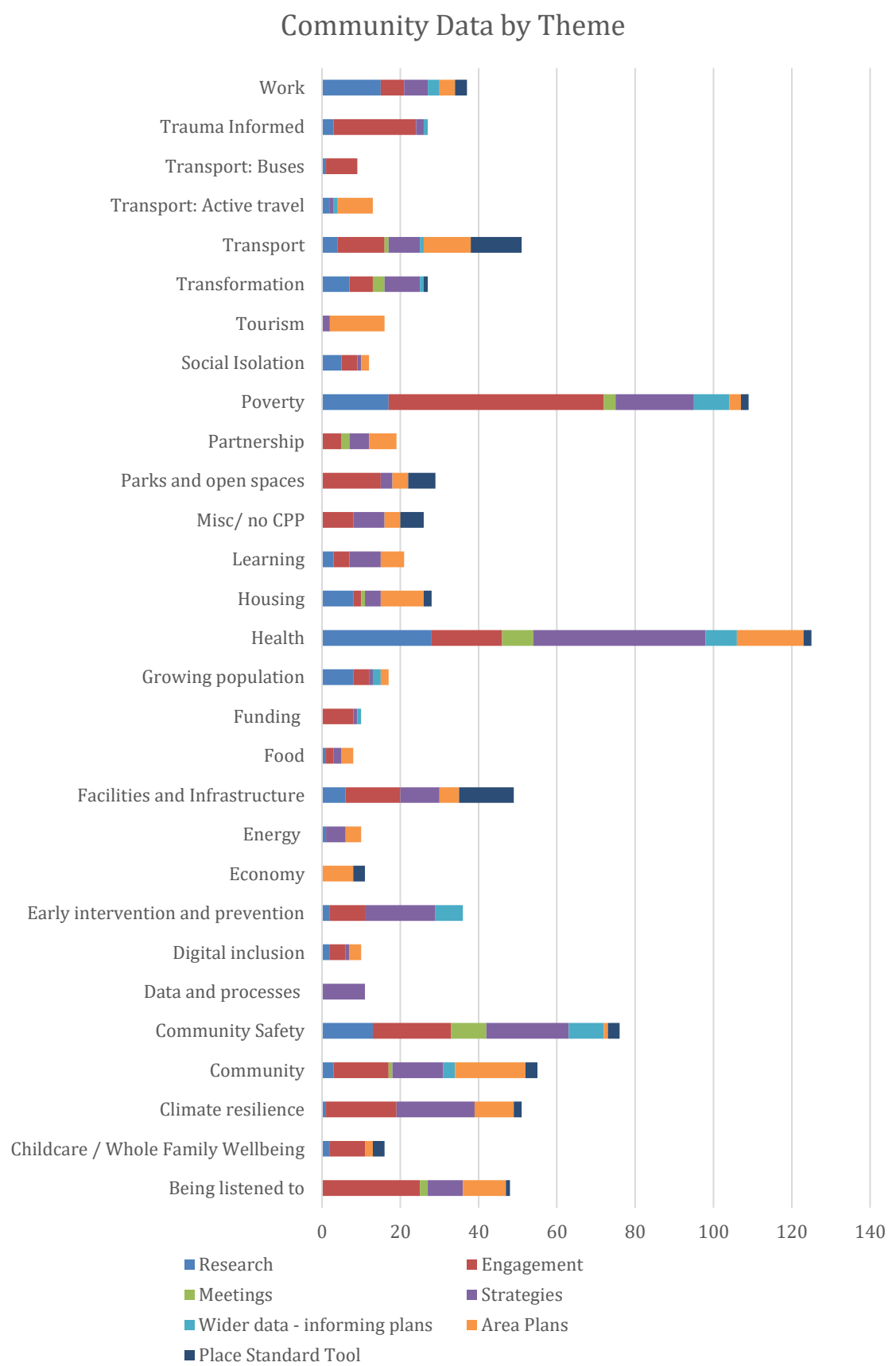
62. Rainbow Britian (2002)	Stonewall
63. Polling on trans people	Stonewall
64. LGBT in Scotland - Work Report (2018)	Stonewall
65. LGBT in Scotland - Work Report (2018)	Stonewall
66. Gender Inequality and Poverty	Scottish Womens Budget Group
67. Climate Change and Community Safety	Scottish Community Safety Network
68. Support for Gypsy's and Travellers	See Me
69. Prevention for mental health questions	Mental Health Foundation
70. Improving the Lives of Scotland Gypsy/Travellers 2	Scottish Government
71. Compelled Conformity	LGB Alliance
72. SNA Wheelchair and Specialist housing 2021	East Lothian Council
73. Scottish Housing Conditions Survey	East Lothian Council
74. Public Health Data by SIMD	NHS Lothian
75. Rural Housing Survey	East Lothian Council
76. Rural Welbeing: Geography of opportunity	OCED
77. Presentation of Emerging Findings 2023	STANTEC
Place Standard Tool	
78. Tenant Involvement Group x4	East Lothian Housing Association
79. Mothers and Carers x 5	Home Start East Lothian
80. Fathers x 5	Dads Work

2.6 Challenges or Data Gaps

We are aware in the stage of engagement and co-production that there are gaps where layering data would show a fuller picture of need. During the IIA in July we identified the protected characteristics areas and groups to follow up with.

Area	Organisation
Rural	Young Framers, NFU and Rural Economy Group
Maternity/Parental	One Parent Families
Easy to Ignore	Veteran Groups, Fishermans Mission
Disability	CWIC Data
People who are married, unmarried, civil partnership	Single Person Households
Poverty and Income Inequality	Financial Inclusion Data

2.7 Results of Data



The three largest themes relate to health, tackling poverty, and community safety. Community, climate resilience, facilities and infrastructure and transport are all highlighted as key areas of focus for East Lothian, within an early intervention and prevention lens that promotes listening to our community.

Improving equity and applying an equalities lens was a golden thread throughout, with communities and groups keen to see broadened access and tailored support for people with disabilities and additional support needs.

Many of the themes have significant overlap, for example actions around transport incorporate climate resilience and infrastructure changes; Climate resilience includes action on food and healthy eating that incorporate poverty and health themes.

125 comments or outcomes were related to **health**, with strong calls for coordinated and early action on mental health, shifting towards community care from acute care, and developing strategies for managing long-term conditions and frailty. Community responses highlighted GP access and local care as a key health priority, as well as increasing opportunity for physical activity and data showed how health outcomes deteriorate for those in high SIMD. The need for culturally appropriate services for our ethnic minority, migrant workers, gypsy and traveller and LGBT communities. Supporting our elderly population with mobility, frailty and falls.

- 109 comments or outcomes were related to **poverty**, with strong calls for further investment in local advice and advocacy, gypsy and traveller communities needs around low literacy for benefit support, migrant workers and other on low incomes, access to the essentials and support with the cost of living, fuel poverty, more targeted use of resources, and actions on housing. Kinship carers are often living in poverty due to their additional responsibilities, people in rural areas struggling with the expense of private housing costs and older adults dealing with income stability.
- 76 comments or outcomes were related to **community safety**, with calls for a wider range of early intervention and preventative work, including for example the expansion of mediation and restorative justice, and development of a Youth Work Strategy that would see investment in diversionary projects and safe spaces. The safety of our ethnic minority and LGBT communities was commonly raised.
- 55 comments or outcomes were related to **community**, including actions to promote volunteering, to increase or expand the number of community events, and promote policies that connect communities. The more equitable use of community assets was highlighted, with spaces for young people a clear priority.
- 51 comments or outcomes were related to **climate resilience**, with strong calls for investment in our green spaces, biodiversity, as well as infrastructure actions including flood defences and housing adaptations. The creation of wastewater strategies and better response to wastewater spillages were highlighted. The opportunity in new energy sectors and to improve the energy efficiency of our homes.
- 51 comments or outcomes were related to **transport**, with concerns raised about the impact of parking charges on local economies and groups. Traffic calming, road upkeep and improved signage were all highlighted, as well as accessible paths to public transport. Transport for those in rural areas was a particularly issue for accessing work, and health care.
- 49 comments or outcomes were related to **facilities and infrastructure**, with calls for more adaptable community spaces that are equitably accessible. Infrastructure resources should be in place before any

development proceeds.

- 48 comments or outcomes were related to **being listened to**, with calls for stronger mechanisms for community feedback and scrutiny, as well as participatory decision-making and empowered community councils. People feel excluded from funding decisions and fear being used to justify cuts.
- 37 comments or outcomes were related to **Work**, including apprenticeships, green jobs and skills. Further attention was called to increasing work opportunities in rural settings. There are clear barriers presented around health conditions, skills and job sectors and ability/access to work opportunities, in rural areas with a lack of land to develop to create new jobs.
- 36 comments or outcomes were related to **early intervention and prevention**, with calls for investment in services that help people maintain their health and wellbeing, prioritising prevention and good health, and training staff to recognise early signs of distress and respond before crises escalate.
- 29 comments or outcomes were related to **Parks and open spaces**, calling for equitable and protected access to parks and green spaces, preservation of existing space, and support for biodiversity and mixed-use woodlands.
- 28 comments or outcomes were related to **Housing**, with calls to prioritise social, low cost and affordable housing. Further comments relate to the retrofitting of existing unused buildings, and short term let control in areas with high tourism.
- 27 comments or outcomes were related to **Transformation**, related to whole system changes and frameworks that could underpin this transformation, including for example how services are planned to meet the changing population's needs.
- 27 comments or outcomes were related to **trauma informed**, with calls for coordinated action to make services more trauma informed, with non-judgmental staff that are trained in trauma-informed and neurodiverse-aware approaches.
- 26 comments or outcomes were related to **miscellaneous/ not CPP**, were seen to be out of scope of the Community Planning Partnership, for example related to changing national legislation and definitions, development of new train transport links, or creation of major new infrastructure/community spaces.
- 21 comments or outcomes were related to **Learning**, including actions around upskilling organisations and statutory services, to further learning/adult learning in the community as a route to employment, and to increasing access to climate education and green skills.
- 19 comments or outcomes were related to **Partnership**, related to better partnership and network working, reducing duplication and exploring new structures that would better support this.
- 17 comments or outcomes were related to **Growing population**, and the need for expanded services for growing populations.
- 16 comments or outcomes were related to **Childcare / Whole Family Wellbeing**, Childcare: Limited availability and high costs of childcare were barriers to work and wellbeing. Whole-Family Support: Staff advocated for

holistic, early intervention approaches.

- **16** comments or outcomes were related to **Tourism**, including actions for active tourism infrastructure, and focuses on the sustainable growth of tourism.
- **13** comments or outcomes were related to **active travel**, with actions related to the creation or extension of active travel routes, linking them with wider transport options. There are further calls for pedestrian upgrades and improved signage.
- **12** comments or outcomes were related to **social isolation**, calling to support initiatives that tackle social isolation and encourage people to become more involved in the community. The pilot of VCEL's SIGNAL system highlighted social isolation as a key issue with request for support with access to recreation and group activities and transport.
- **11** comments or outcomes were related to **Data and processes**, relating to calls for improved collation and sharing of data, actions to improve monitoring and evaluation of actions that is more community-led. The pilot of the Signal database through VCEL offers opportunity for following life mapping of individuals with live active data – it is a **tool for action, empowerment, and system change**.
- **11** comments or outcomes were related to **economy**, calling for community wealth principles, retail and business opportunities, and regeneration and development of high streets.
- **10** comments or outcomes were related to **Digital inclusion**, prioritising accessibility and options for those who are digitally excluded, as well as using technology in more creative ways.
- **10** comments or outcomes were related to **Energy**, with calls for improved energy efficiency of new housing, expansion of solar and renewable energy, and exploration of community energy and heating systems.
- **10** comments or outcomes were related to **funding**, calls to prioritise funding for early intervention and community-based services, acknowledging that short-term funding undermines long-term engagement and trust.
- **9** comments or outcomes were related to **Transport: buses**, with calls for better north/west bus links, that connect people to employment and social activity, and that reduce rural isolation.
- **8** comments or outcomes were related to **Food**, calling for actions around community growing opportunities, allotments, and protection of agricultural land.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Key Themes for Local Outcome Improvement Plan

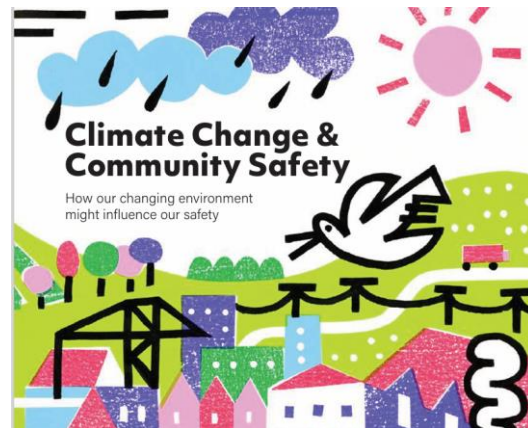
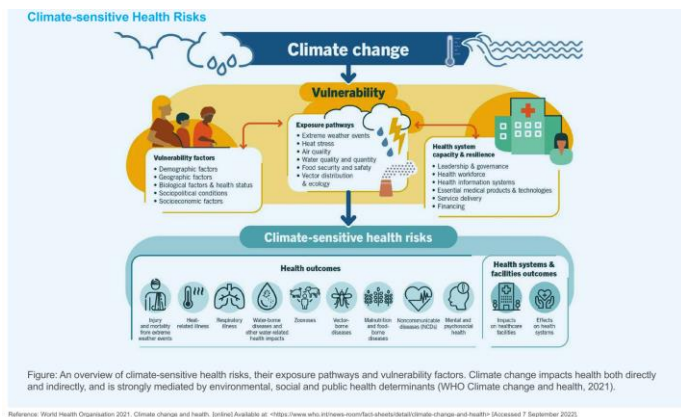
The Local Outcome Improvement Plan focuses on where partners' collective efforts and resources can add the most value to their local communities, with particular emphasis on reducing inequality. Consideration of single agency strategies.

Based on the findings we recommend concentration of the LOIP on the following three areas:

Health; safety (at home and community); and poverty.

3.2 Other Key Themes

There is recognition that **Climate Resilience** featured highly in the engagement data, however it is felt the points which address inequality can be better addressed through inclusion with a health, poverty or community safety lens. The Poverty Working Group currently has a subgroup for Climate Change and it is important any points raised out with the remit of the LOIP, are fed into this working group and the Climate Change Strategy work. Climate Change was also identified in the ELC Business Base Survey (2023) as one of their top three issues, along with cash flow and rising costs which will be reflected in the Local Economy Strategy.



Being listened to and heard were recurring themes when visiting community groups, in engagement data with all age groups and through the self-assessment carried out with the Improvement Service. This was also highlighted in the Residents Survey with residents wanting more involvement in Council decisions (49%) but feel they lack influence (49%) and that the Council doesn't listen well (52%). Strengthen local democracy through



GET DECISION MAKERS TO
MAKE PROMISES FOR HOW
TO IMPROVE THINGS FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE (PLACES TO
GO AND THINGS TO DO)

participatory budgeting and planning was also identified in ELCAN’s East Lothian-Wide Vision for a Thriving, Sustainable Future.

These were the 4th theme from children and young persons data and 7th in community data. It is recognised there are links in community data gathered around being trauma informed, early intervention and community themes which could raise it higher. This data will be a strong foundation for the work to develop the new East Lothian Partnership Participation and Engagement Strategy, which is featured in the Improvement Plan, undertaken with the Improvement Service.

Responding to data in the See Survey we are also progressing discussions with Quality Improvement colleagues within Education about the potential to embed community planning within the democracy curriculum. The work of the Children’s Service Plan, Youth Vision and the Participation and Engagement Strategy will be key to embedding the voice of children and young people across the East Lothian Partnership. Within the work of developing a new Youth Work Strategy, Youth Vision, the three key themes continue to emphasise young people’s experience in wanting to feel; Safety, Heard and Included

Access to **Transport** was a key priority from the community engagement. Whilst the Place Standard Tool highlighted many positives including our rail links and some of the bus services, improving links between services (e.g. linking rail arrival/bus departure), improving transport infrastructure including cycling and active travel infrastructure, connecting new housing developments in safer ways, and generally improving bus service quality, accessibility and cost.

Improving equity in travel was a key ask, with communities seeking better transport for older people, connecting to hospitals and other health settings, and better alignment with employment opportunities. The high cost of transport was highlighted as a barrier to people experiencing poverty.

Community data highlighted the importance of **Community**, with a desire to see more asset transfer and equitable access to community spaces. Community resilience was seen as a key strength in the Place Standard Tool, and respondents highlighting the importance of volunteering opportunities and public spaces. The role of communities in early intervention and prevention was highlighted as a key area for focus which could increase physical activity, reduce social isolation, improve mental health etc.

3.3 Consideration of Existing/Developing Strategies and Assessments

3.31 Strategic Needs Assessment

5

Results in the Schools See Survey show young people’s view of being listened in their neighbourhood to P6 73.9%, S2 50.7%, S4 48.8%

The Strategic Needs Assessment (2024)⁵ which the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group approved in October 2024, highlighted key issues for East Lothian. These included climate

[-planning](#)

change, poverty related attainment and health inequalities, but sets them within the challenging context of population growth and extreme budget pressures;

- **population growth** is projected with an increase of in the population of 15.1% from 2018-2043 with 121,743 new residents. The largest growth will be the older population; 40.8% increase in the 66+ population and 93.4% increase in 75+ age group. This rapid increase is putting a lot of pressure both on the council and all other partners – infrastructure, services and costs.
- all partners are facing **extreme budget pressures**
- **climate change** is a much more pressing concern than at the time of the previous assessment lack of affordable housing continues to be a major concern across East Lothian’s communities
- the disruption in education due to COVID lockdowns has contributed to increases in the **poverty related attainment gap**
- COVID contributed to increases in **health inequalities**.

3.32 Single Agency/East Lothian Partnership Strategies and Plans

Within the context of Health, Poverty and Safety, consideration will need to be given to the single agency/ELP strategies and objectives which already exist, those being developed and where additionality can be identified by ELP **(4)**.

Key considerations include;

- HSCP and NHS Lothian have clear objectives around reducing health inequalities and the HSCP are currently developing a new strategic plan on the same timeline as the LOIP.
- East Lothian Partnership Poverty Plan⁶ 2024-2028, has a functional working group and subgroups with key objectives.
- East Lothian Councils Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030 ⁷
- A new Open Spaces Strategy, Children Services Plan and ASB Strategy are being developed by ELC.
- Local Development Plan 2 is under consultation with communities and partners, with a focus on infrastructure.

Identifying lead agencies within the East Lothian Partnership for the key themes of Poverty, Safety and Health will ensure a focused drive to target additional actions, along with tying into existing agency aspirations.

3.32 The Scottish Programme for Government (2025)

The Scottish Programme for Government (2025) sets clear key priorities for community planning partnerships; **(4)**. The Programme is designed to address pressing social issues, enhance economic resilience, and ensure that public services are equipped to meet the needs of the population. The government

⁶ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210705/elp_poverty_plan

⁷ https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/13283/climate_change_strategy_2020-25

emphasizes collaboration and cooperation across various sectors to achieve these goals, reflecting a commitment to the well-being of all Scots.

The focus for 2025-2026 is; Growing the Economy, Eradicating Child Poverty, Tackling the Climate Emergency, Healthcare Improvements and High Quality and Sustainable Public Services. Community Wealth Building (CWB) was highlighted as a key approach to economic development and vehicle for eradicating child poverty, and to facilitate the SG committed to progressing the CWB legislation which had been introduced in 24/25.

3.4 Local Outcome Improvement Plan - Key Themes

3.4.1 Health

The feedback on **health** from children, young people and communities includes;

- The wait for diagnosis or provision of support for neurodivergence and mental health. There was comment on the need for peer and community-based support during this period;
"Meet the person where they are at" CAPS Advocacy Report
"Neurodiversity support and Free children's activities" Families Together ASN Report
"50% of neurodivergent children go on to develop anxiety and/or depression according to recent research with onset in primary school. Early intervention to support neuroaffirmative approaches can reduce mental health difficulties. We should be working together to identify and support those at Risk" MHWB Event LOIP Feedback
"Investing in services that help people maintain their health and wellbeing". Review of the East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan
"I think if anyone was on a waiting list like myself I think they should give out other resources local to you that could help if you are struggle while waiting. The only reason I found out about resources to use was my doctor. I think there should be more leaflets on the situation or even posters on the toilet doors from the inside with a list of organisations from phone numbers to emails to get the support and help you need". Your Vision for Support for Young Women
"Develop a National Social Prescribing Framework". Population Health Framework
"Work with doctor's surgeries and public health to expand opportunities on options for social prescribing for particularly for parents linking with physical activity strategy" PSG AP Plan
"Mental Health: Lack of early and accessible mental health support for children and young people." Thrive CIC
"MSYP campaign EL Schools 1st most popular issue was to increase mental health training"
"Health Visiting Team identified Mental Health as the top issue affecting families they support, which is also reflected by peri natal health services"
- A call to support initiatives that tackle social isolation and those with long term health conditions (and frailty) to support people to become more connected in the community. This is reflected in the IJB Review of Strategic Plan; *"Shifting care from hospital to community settings"* and also

through data gathered through life mapping work VCEL has undertaken with Signal Older Persons Pilot, which has shown how targeted support has helped reduce isolation;

Margaret, 82: "At first, I didn't think anything could change. Now, I'm joining a weekly group and planning ahead."

John, 74: "I used to feel invisible. With support, I've gained confidence and can speak to services without fear."

VCEL, Signal Data

"Provide in-person alternatives for online services to reduce digital exclusion" CAPS Advocacy Report

"Provide opportunities for intergenerational activities". NB AP Health & Wellbeing Association

- The need for dads to be recognised as having rights equal to mums across professionals and given support.

"Its great mums have support but what about dads"

"Every time we have to tell our stories"

Families Together & Dads Work Session

- The creation or extension of active travel routes, linking them with wider transport options. There are further calls for pedestrian upgrades and improved signage;

"More buggy and wheelchair access" "

Too many people park on pavements, impacting buggies and wheelchair users."

Place Standard Tool Home Start Family

"Poor public transport, especially in rural areas, limited access to services." Thrive CIC

Anne, 67: "Transport is still a big issue, but I know where to get help now. I'm less isolated." VCEL Signal Data.

- Proactive and trauma informed support for substance misuse, 3rd top issue in Health Visiting Team Assessments, issues around shoplifting due to increased drug use in CAPP's

"Services should engage before crisis points and be more attuned to subtle signs of distress".

"Offer evening and weekend support for recovery services".

"Improve trauma-informed care and reduce stigma in GP and housing services".

"Respecting lived experience and avoiding diagnostic overshadowing".

CAPS Advocacy Report

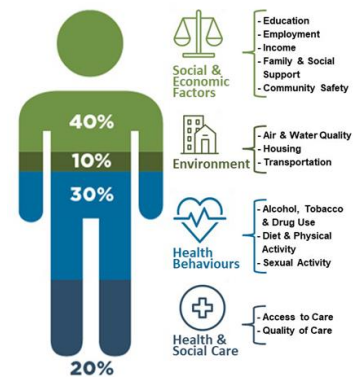
"Young people expressed concerns about overdoing and running out of supply or money but did not consider their use problematic".

"The higher use of substances in areas with lower socioeconomic status (SIMD 20 areas) is a critical concern. It emphasises the importance of addressing health inequalities and providing targeted interventions and support to vulnerable populations".

MELDAP

"Encourage better and wider understanding of links between substance use, mental and physical health" NB Health & Wellbeing Association

- The Drivers for Health and wellbeing ⁸identify that “As much as 80% of what affects health happens outside the health and care system”. Including people with ‘protected characteristics (under the Equality Act of 2010⁹) but also groups who are disadvantaged for a range of other reasons, including deprivation. The Population Health Framework ¹⁰(June 2025) co-designed by the Scottish Government, COSLA, and Public Health Scotland. This partnership approach reflects the need for a collaborative, whole-system approach to population health, emphasising primary preventative action.



“We need a system that works for the whole person” CAPS Advocacy Report

“Implement a “health in all policies” approach.” Population Health Framework.

“Parents valued wraparound services that addressed emotional, financial, and social needs.” Thrive CIC

- Health is mentioned most frequently in relation to staying active going to pitches, parks, sports centres and swimming pools, walking and cycling – *LDP ELPA Report*
“More free fitness. Funding in the arts. Workout equipment in parks”. NB Youth Project
- Less identified groups of face health inequalities; *“The fishing community, gypsy/roma/traveller people, seasonal workers, migrant workers, people re-joining the community from custodial sentences, homelessness or long hospital stays”. HSCP Equality Outcomes*
- *Leisure and recreational spaces for all and encouraging alternative use of green space*
“Leisure facilities and blue & green spaces must be accessible to all”. Dunbar AP Pla
“Work with tourism, amenities, countryside rangers to improve beach and shore access for the community while advocating for concerns around erosion and protection measures”. PSG AP Plan

3.4.2 Safety (at home and in communities)

The feedback on **safety (at home and in the community)** from children, young people and communities includes;

- Calls for a wider range of early intervention and preventative work, including for example the expansion of mediation and restorative justice.
“It is not solely a criminal justice issue but a public health and social justice concern”.
“ASB is deeply linked to poverty, inequality, housing instability, mental health issues, and service cuts”.

⁸ <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/determinants-of-health>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-population-health-framework/documents/>

"Emphasis on upstream prevention through investment in youth services, mental health, and community infrastructure"

Anti Social Behaviour as a Societal Issue

- Safety and behaviour on buses/in neighbourhoods MSYP Survey in Schools, Dads Work and Families Together Tranent Video
"Youth Gangs and youth violence, ASB, Violence and Vandalism featured highlighted in MSYP discussions with EL Schools. With gender-based violence being the 3rd most popular issue for campaigning" MSYP Survey
"Pavements are frequently made unsafe by teenagers speeding on motorbikes and electric bikes, creating a real fear for pedestrians. There is a visible lack of police presence to challenge this dangerous antisocial behaviour, leaving residents feeling vulnerable and unsupported." Dads Work
- Development of a Youth Work Strategy that would see investment in diversionary projects and safe spaces;
"Somewhere safe where young people can go and stop them hanging around the flats." Families Together
"A place to go where we don't just have to walk the streets." Haddington Youth Club
"I like being with my friends in a safe place with nice adults" LDP Youth Group Feedback
"Importance of safe spaces, youth work, and prosocial behaviour promotion." Anti Social Behaviour as a Societal Issue
MSYP campaign EL Schools 2nd most popular issue was safe places indoor and outdoor for young people
- The importance when young people face domestic abuse of feeling safe in their community and having safe places/people to go. Domestic Abuse was identified as the 2nd top issue for Health Visiting Team when supporting families.
"It's not just about young women getting support. It's about, stopping men from doing things, men and other people stopping them from doing the things that mean that women need support."
"I would like a safe and confidential service to speak to, perhaps a specific named person at a service to ensure continuity of care. I would want to know what resources are available in my local area, and how best to access them confidentially".
Your Vision: Support for young women
- There was a high proportion of feedback around areas with poor lighting, walkways not maintained or dirty areas feeling less safe;
"I feel reasonably safe but probably wouldn't wander at night by myself". Place Standard Tool HomeStart Family
"39% of people were not happy with Street cleaning".
"77% feel safe from crime; 72% feel safe walking alone after dark".
Residents Survey 2024
"Issues with alleyways and street lighting". Families Together – Animation Tranent Young People

- Some groups such as Young Police Volunteers commented that more police on the streets made them feel safer and others such as Recharge said for them seeing police makes them feel less safe, as there must have been trouble.
“Adults need to take young people’s safety seriously. Without feeling safe, without safety, we cannot feel respected, valued, included happy, heard, or healthy” Youth Vision
- Issues around youth homelessness and safety in communities was highlighted by *Action for Children*.

3.4.3 Poverty

The feedback on **poverty** from children, young people and communities includes;

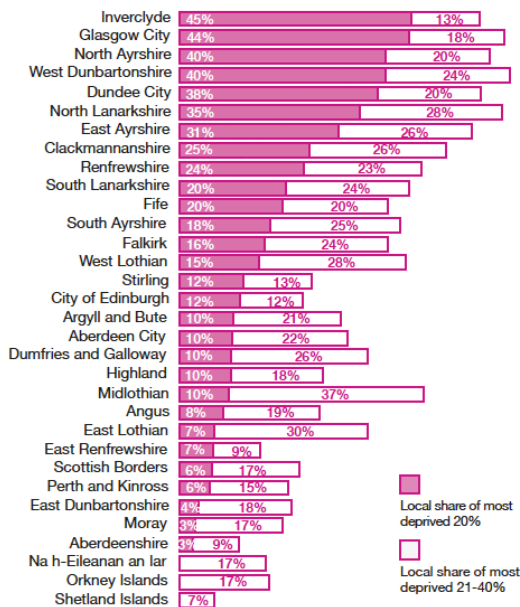
- Childcare was an issue raised consistently by Families both the limited availability and the cost
“Limited availability and high costs of childcare were barriers to work and wellbeing” Thrive CIC
“Not enough nurseries, eligible 2's”. Olivebank
“Need more childcare options, cheaper childcare”. Families Together
- Transport was a large discussion topic; accessible paths to public transport, cost of bus services, links with rural areas (north/west) where services are not located. Of particular concern was the impact on people connecting with employment and social activity which links with health inequalities;
“Some areas of East Lothian can be quite isolated, e.g. Macmerry has had significant cuts to buses, which are impacting people being able to easily and affordably travel”.
“The different services are not always well linked, e.g. a connection from an East Coast Bus route to a smaller Eve or Prentice route can mean long waits for people, and often those people using the buses aren’t in good health” Place Standard Tool Home Start Family
“Invest in active travel and rural public transport infrastructure”. ELCAN East Lothian-Wide Vision for a Thriving, Sustainable Future
- All ages commented on access to fresh healthy food shops and young people mentioned this as opposed to takeaways;
“More access to fresh food shops not supermarkets which are affordable would be good” Place Standard Tool HomeStart Family
- Being able to buy food, keep your house warm and your car running;
“Constantly feeling cold, don’t feed myself, prioritise kids, depressed and hungry and lonely. No one cares, nowhere to go, panicking, going to be excluded”. EL Foodbank Community Conversations
“Support community-led housing, food, and energy projects”. ELCAN East Lothian-Wide Vision for a Thriving, Sustainable Future
“Expand income maximisation support in healthcare settings”. Population Health Framework

- The issues of studying and managing work and house bills was raised by students;
“Stressful as I became homeless in September 2024, didn’t have a place to go until October. Now 2025 is here I am in supported accommodation receiving government funding to pay the £350/week cost; however, I am going onto an HNC course which will strip me of my funding, and I won’t have adequate money to pay for the accommodation”. Edinburgh College Student
- Affordable and available housing;
*“A preference for houses being built rather than flats, feel that East Lothian has had too many flats built in recent years and that most people would prefer a house”.
“Concerns about holiday lets in some places, e.g. North Berwick, which make house prices go higher and difficult for local people to buy”.
“Help for first time buyers with a connection to the more expensive East Lothian areas – feel East Lothian is made more expensive with people from other wealthy areas selling expensive properties to move to EL and driving up prices further” Place Standard Tool HomeStart Family*
- Cost of living in terms of wages;
*“Affordable food stores, minimum wage, doesn’t match increase in prices. Cost of baby basics, milk and nappies”. Olivebank
“ Out of 13 burden people identified they carry essential costs dominated with 64% of responses”.
“70% of UK food bank users are on Universal Credit”.
Community Conversations EL Foodbank
“Better insulation in houses, cheaper heating costs” Police Young Volunteers
“It has been a struggle to keep a job that will work around my college schedule and also pay enough for me to afford my expenses”. Edinburgh College Student*
- There was also feedback around financial education such as opening a bank account through See Survey in Schools, Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, Care experienced young people and Olivebank, with the need for life skills.
“More Life and social skills training” Dunbar AP Plan
- An inequality in work skills and access to work or training including apprenticeships and green jobs. Further attention was called to increasing work opportunities in rural settings and in the meta skills needed for the future.
*“Partner with training providers to address skill gaps”.
“Promote apprenticeships and upskilling in digital and customer service”.
East Lothian Council Business Skills Survey 2023
“Training opportunities to meet the needs of local employers”. Dunbar AP Plan*
- Need to develop Community Wealth Building to invest in and empower communities
*“Advance community wealth building strategies”. Population Health Framework
“We commit to harnessing and growing local wealth” East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter*

- It is important to bear in mind that SIMD give some of the picture of poverty, but it does not highlight the 'hidden poverty' individuals face, shown in the **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020: introduction¹¹** and the clear way SIMD cannot identify all people who are experiencing deprivation in Scotland – not everyone facing disadvantage lives in a deprived area.

People who live in the most deprived areas are most likely to experience conditions which limit their opportunities in life.

However, people who live in less deprived areas may also experience disadvantage.



SIMD identifies deprived areas - not people.
The box below shows why.



Not all people experiencing deprivation live in deprived areas. About two out of three people on low income do not live in deprived areas.

Not everyone in a deprived area is experiencing deprivation. About one in three people living in a deprived area are on low income.

In this example, 'deprived area' means among the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland. We are using people on low income to represent people who are facing multiple deprivation.



Change map

- Decrease in deprivation (dark blue)
- Increase in deprivation (red)
- Change in deprivation less than 2 pp (grey)

Council areas with the largest decrease:

- Glasgow City
- Renfrewshire
- City of Edinburgh

Council areas with the largest increase:

- Aberdeen City
- North Lanarkshire
- Moray
- East Lothian
- Highland
- North Ayrshire



3.5 Review of LOIP 2017-2027

¹¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-multiple-deprivation-2020/pages/5/>

In reviewing the priorities raised in the review of East Lothian Partnerships Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-2027 in October 2024, the following issues were raised as remaining relevant for the new LOIP under; **Health, Safety and Poverty**;

Area	Priority	Section in 2017 - 2027 LOIP
Health	<p>Social Isolation - Survey responses gathered as part of this review have highlighted that social isolation is still relevant, the missing persons priority requires updating to understand the needs and introduce preventative work, and further discussion is required on the priority of road safety and work within ELP's scope. The work around assisting blue light services with defibrillators appears embedded in communities and therefore may no longer be required as an ELP priority. The priorities under the CJOIP 2021-2024 have all been completed and a new CJOIP has been produced in 2024 which will feed into a new LOIP.</p> <p>Activities for Teenagers - In the Residents Survey (2024) activities for teenagers were in the top three priorities scoring 33% from respondents. A new Youth Work Strategy has been drafted to seek to address the needs identified by young people across the county and focus on early intervention and prevention. New Child Planning Framework Locality Teams have assisted schools and communities to better work together to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils, who are not yet supported by statutory services.</p> <p>Better connection and inclusion across community groups and plans - Improvements that were highlighted through survey responses included engaging a better cross section of the community and Third sector groups in already established groups such as Aps, CCs and CAPPs, driving a more self-sustaining approach to problems of youth ASB, incorporating the CLD plan and that the poverty plan should be embedded in a LOIP. There was feedback about specific mention of how the LOIP would seek to make East Lothian a more inclusive county for BME groups, people with physical and learning disabilities, BSL users etc.</p> <p>Heritage - An area highlighted through ELTRP survey which is not in the current LOIP is around the rich heritage in East Lothian; <i>Celebrating and preserving local culture and heritage can strengthen community identity and promote tourism. Support local arts programs and events that showcase the cultural diversity of East Lothian. Develop initiatives that encourage heritage conservation and storytelling around East Lothian's history. Foster partnerships with schools to integrate local history and culture into the curriculum.</i></p> <p>Armed Forces Covenant - The current LOIP does not detail any priorities around Armed Forces work. The EL Armed Forces Covenant has been stood down, but they still have a live action plan which a council officer oversees.</p> <p>Roads and Pavements - In the Residents Survey (2024) road and pavement repairs was within the top three priorities for improvements in their local area with the highest ranking 75%. A collective response to improve active travel routes would seem a key priority with this priority rising by 22% from the Residents Survey (2021).</p>	Community Minded
	<p>Health - Many of the health indicators in the current LOIP have not met target and in some cases have worsened, no doubt impacted by COVID and cost of living crisis. The community response to Cardiac Arrests with the installation of Defibrillators and training has been</p>	Fair

	<p>embedded and therefore it was suggested this may not need to be a priority for the partnership, but rather is now being managed locally. The Scottish Government Programme for Government 2024 highlights that <i>the reforms to social care, including the National Care Service and innovations in healthcare access, will necessitate Community Planning Partnerships involvement in ensuring that health and social care services are integrated and delivered effectively in the community.</i></p> <p>In the Residents Survey (2024) health services were within the top 3 priorities for improvements in their local area with the second highest ranking 55%. This rose 2% from the Residents Survey (2021) and would indicate the need for holistic services at targeted and universal levels, to best address health needs and inequalities. From Area Partnerships there was specific feedback updating and reviewing what healthy choices means for communities who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. All partners have commented on the important of co-delivery, the key role of the voluntary sector to build capacity, whilst working in difficult financial context to bring the best outcomes for our communities. Concerns around funding have been highlighted.</p> <p>Mental Health - The Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic subgroup of the Childrens Strategic Partnership has identified the Suicide and the Voice of Lived Experience as key priorities for their work going forward. They have also been looking at waiting list times. A Critical Incident Planning group has also been formed to ensure a joined-up approach to support young people, families, schools, and communities.</p> <p>Substance Misuse - There is an indication from Community Safety members that there needs to continue to be a focus on work to reduce drug related deaths, a renewed focus on Alcohol Specific Deaths and reducing harm to individuals, families and communities from both alcohol and drugs.</p> <p>Volunteering - Encourage increased levels of volunteering across our communities and community partners remains an objective which was carried over from ELC's Recovery and Renewal Plan</p> <p>Stronger Data Segmenting for communities - The responses also highlight data and monitoring needs for the future LOIP, including monitoring around decreasing the gap between those employed in low to high SIMD areas, data on specific targeted groups, e.g. disability and long-term health conditions.</p>	
Safety	<i>Some areas could cross over with Health and Poverty, but no specific actions under safety.</i>	
Poverty	<p>Workforce Plan - Survey responses gathered as part of this review show that development of a workforce plan is still required, with updates needed to the current version. A representative from an East Lothian charity remarked, "Our collaboration in the Workforce Plan is vital to ensure that the voices of those facing in-work poverty are heard. However, without sustained funding, our ability to contribute effectively is limited".</p> <p>In work poverty - Survey responses highlight the ongoing importance of tackling in work poverty to the new LOIP, but updates would require new specific actions. Partners note that data on poverty, in-work poverty and the number of people working under zero hours contracts would be important. Addressing Zero Hours Contracts and Child Poverty remain</p>	Prosperous

	<p>other priorities. All the dimensions of fair work namely effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect should be promoted.</p> <p>Broadband and Wifi Coverage in rural areas - Responses received as part of this review highlight that Broadband provision remains relevant, with ongoing challenges in providing high-speed internet to rural areas.</p> <p>New Jobs from large strategic sites - Partnership around large strategic sites and attraction of jobs to these sites require consideration in the future LOIP. More realistic analysis about the number of jobs that will be provided on these sites is needed, as well as updated and realistic timelines for sites including the QMU Hub. There was also a reflection however of why farming and other rural community businesses are not included with the LOIP. There was particular comment on this due to the employment of migrant workers and the level of fair payment for this workforce.</p> <p>Growing Population - All future LOIP actions, including those around the economy, should bear in mind the impact of the growing population and the additional pressures this will place on infrastructure, job availability and workforce needs. Many of these areas are included within the new Local Economy Strategy (2024-2034).</p> <p>Digital Learning - A priority identified in the Recovery and Renewal actions which was to be carried forward into the LOIP - <i>Provide digital learning and capacity development opportunities within the community.</i> Responses received as part of this review highlighted that we require targeted digital inclusion initiatives <i>programmes to enhance digital literacy and access, particularly for vulnerable groups in vital.</i> A representative from a digital inclusion charity stated, <i>"Bridging the digital divide is critical for our rural communities. Without it, we risk leaving behind those who are most vulnerable."</i></p>	
	<p>Climate Change - Survey responses gathered as part of this review highlighted that indicators around Climate Change which are meaningful are currently missing from the LOIP and should cut across all levels and priorities in the LOIP. The new Climate Change Strategy will better inform this. Specific feedback from ELTRP suggested that <i>with the increasing impact of climate change and the council-declared climate emergency, and the increasing interest the community has in climate issues the LOIP should play a role in fostering environmental resilience and support community-led environmental projects, such as rewilding, renewable energy initiatives, and biodiversity preservation.</i> With the development of the East Lothian Climate Hub, there priorities will focus on some of these areas.</p> <p>The Scottish Government Programme for Government 2024 highlights two areas for Community Planning Partnerships CPP's; 1) <i>The emphasis on reducing emissions, restoring peatlands and woodlands, and expanding Community Climate Hubs aligns with local climate action plans that the CPP is responsible for. Likely increasing need for the CPP to work with environmental bodies and communities to address these objectives.</i> 2) <i>CPP will need to coordinate local employment and development opportunities, particularly in relation to the renewable energy and green industry sectors, ensuring communities benefit from the transition to a net-zero economy.</i></p> <p>Cost of Transport - In the Residents Survey (2024) highlighted that residents <i>Over half of respondents said cheaper bus or train fares (61%) and more recycling facilities (53%) would definitely encourage them to address their own impact on climate change. On the other hand,</i></p>	Community Minded

	<p><i>only 25% said that more electric vehicle charging points would definitely encourage them to address their own impact on climate change.</i></p> <p>Community Wealth Building (CWB) - needs to be embedded in a new LOIP, with the introduction of the new Charter adopted by key agencies and the work to create a local circular economy. The increase in investment for local community groups should assist in meeting the needs within communities, whilst balancing a challenging wider funding climate. A new subgroup of the CEG has been formed to focus on CWB.</p>	
	<p>Poverty - Partner responses indicate that having an integrated Anti-Poverty Strategy combines efforts from various plans to tackle poverty holistically, but that structural challenges that perpetuate poverty despite ongoing interventions. A poverty action charity highlighted, <i>“Addressing poverty requires a coordinated effort across sectors. We need to ensure that our strategies are not just reactive but proactive in preventing poverty.”</i></p> <p>The CPP will need to align with the government's focus on eradicating child poverty, especially through the investment in family support services.</p> <p>Support for vulnerable groups such as carers and those receiving pension-age disability payments will impact local welfare provision.</p> <p>Targeting services - A priority was identified in the Recovery and Renewal plan, which was to be carried forward into the LOIP, to <i>Target services and resources, led by data and evidence, to those people and areas that need it most.</i> With reducing financial resources across all partners, the aim to target services and resources to where they are most needed is vital.</p> <p>Initiatives like Fairer Futures Partnerships and place-based approaches that target family well-being and poverty reduction will require work with local partners to tailor services and resources to specific community needs, ensuring alignment with national priorities.</p> <p>Community Wealth Building - Responses highlight the need to include new NHS Lothian and East Lothian Council priorities around a Community Wealth Building approach which will require a fundamental change in the way that we work and live in East Lothian.</p> <p>Investing in Communities, Small Business and Third Sector for prevention approach - Other council priorities that should be included in the new LOIP include collaborating with communities, small businesses, and the Third Sector (including appropriate levels of funding) that would enable them to provide local support on an early intervention and prevention basis, as council services reduce. This would reduce pressure on already straining core and statutory services.</p>	Fair

4. Link to Strategic Priorities of Partners, Scottish Performance Framework and National Standards of Community Engagement

4.1 Strategic Priorities of Partners

In reviewing the strategic priorities of partners in line with the Section 15 of Community Empowerment Act ¹² of Local Outcome Improvement Plan it highlights links with **Health, Safety and Poverty**;

Agency	Strategic Priorities				
East Lothian Council	Ensure the financial sustainability of the Council through the delivery of approved savings and transforming the way we deliver services	Target resources on statutory services and focus on the highest risks and those most in need	Deliver key infrastructure, economic development and environmentally sustainable projects within available Council resources and maximising external funding.		
Edinburgh College	People	Place	Performance		
HSCP	Transformation and Change	Early intervention, prevention and self-management	Reducing Health Inequalities		
National Park Authority	Working to protect and enhance their natural and cultural heritage	Promoting responsible access to nature	Supporting local economies and communities	Managing Millions of visitors annually	
NHS	Citizens live longer, healthier lives, with better outcomes from the care and treatment we provide	We connect health and social care services seamlessly, wrapping around the citizen in their home	We improve performance across our system, with better experiences for citizens and those who work for and with us		
Police Scotland	Protecting Vulnerable People	Tackling Crime in a Digital Age	Working with Communities	Support for Operational Policing	

¹² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/schedule/1>

Agency	Strategic Priorities				
Population Health Framework	Prevention	Access	Person-Led	Quality	
Queen Margaret University	Health and Rehabilitation	Sustainable Business (including hospitality, food and drink)	Culture and Creativity		
Scottish Enterprise	To create internationally competitive renewable energy industry in Scotland	To scale the impact of Scotland's innovation strengths in high growth industries for the future	To drive capital investment to deliver a step-change in Scotland's productivity		
Scottish Fire and Rescue	Safer communities through prevention	Safe and effective response	Investing in people	Improving Performance	Innovation and Investment
Scottish Natural Heritage	Secure the conservation and enhancement of nature and landscapes	Foster understand and facilitate the enjoyment of nature and landscape	Advise on sustainable use and management of nature and landscape		
Scottish Sports Council (Sport Scotland)	Making an impact together	Making sport more accessible	Progressing to your level of sport	Contributing to an active Scotland	Celebrating the benefits of sport
Skills Development Scotland	Industry Focused Skills	Inclusive Talent Pool	Invested Employers	Intelligence-led skills system	Impactful Organisation
The Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Rigorous Stock Selection	Trend following and breakout	Risk Management	Technical Analysis Tools	
The Scottish Programme for Government	Growing the Economy	Eradicating Child Poverty	Tackling the Climate Emergency	High Quality and Sustainable Public Services	
Transport for Scotland	Reduces Inequalities	Takes Climate Action	Helps deliver inclusive economic growth	Improves our health and wellbeing	
VCEL	Strengthened local voluntary sector	Volunteering	Cross-sector working		
Although Scottish Ambulance Service isn't mentioned in the legislation their strategic priorities are also key;					
Scottish Ambulance Service	Saving more lives	Reduce inequalities	Improving Health and Wellbeing		

4.2 Scotland's National Performance Framework

Scotland's National Performance Framework¹³ is Scotland's wellbeing framework and sets the vision for the kind of Scotland we all want to live in; it highlights links with **Health, Safety and Poverty**;

- **Children and Young People** - We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.
- **Communities** – we live in communities which are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- **Culture** – We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- **Economy** - We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
- **Education** - We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- **Environment** - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- **Fair work and Business** - We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
- **Health** - We are healthy and active
- **Human Rights** - We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
- **International** - We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally
- **Poverty** - We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

4.3 National Standards for Community Engagement

In reviewing the engagement that has been undertaken we have been mindful of the National Standards for Community Engagement¹⁴. The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) are Scotland's good- practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement, and improve what happens as a result.

- There are seven standards:
 - **Inclusion**: we will identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement – *through IIA/CRWIA process, visiting and meeting with community partners and presenting to strategic and delivery groups.*
 - **Support**: we will identify and overcome any barriers to participation – *feedback from communities to design engagement pack, working with community partners who have trusted relationships and ensuring we target groups with protected characteristics (through IIA/CRWIA) to ensure their voices are represented.*

¹³ <https://www.gov.scot/collections/national-performance-framework/?via=https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/participation-handbook/pages/5/>

- Planning: there is a clear purpose for the engagement, which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions – *engagement pack designed with community partners with clear information and short video on what we were seeking to achieve.*
- Working together: we will work effectively together to achieve the aims of the engagement – *work within IIA/CRWIA and working groups formed has ensured*
- Methods: we will use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose – *offering a range of engagement methods to enable community partners to use what is most relevant*
- Communication: we will communicate clearly and regularly with the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement – *monthly update provided and update of Community Planning pages.*
- Impact: we will assess the impact of the engagement and use what we have learned to improve our future community engagement – *using learning to inform the East Lothian Partnership Participation and Engagement Strategy.*

5. Peer Review of Engagement Report

A draft of the engagement report was provided to **VCEL** and **NHS Lothian Partnership and Place Team, East Lothian** to conduct a peer review of the presented data and recommendations.

5.1 VCEL

Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL) welcomes the opportunity to provide this peer review. As East Lothian's Third Sector Interface, our statutory role includes enabling the voluntary sector, supporting volunteering, strengthening community participation, and contributing to strategic partnership working.

- The Engagement Report reflects a robust and well-evidenced approach to participation.
- VCEL welcomes the prioritisation of health inequalities, safety, and poverty, but calls for stronger recognition of the third sector as a strategic delivery partner.
- We recommend clearer actions on community power, long-term sustainability, participatory governance, and third-sector integration in LOIP implementation.

This Engagement Report demonstrates a commendable commitment to inclusive participation and meaningful engagement across East Lothian. We recognise the scale of the engagement, the diversity of voices captured, and the thoughtful layering of data. It offers a strong foundation for shaping a new Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) that truly reflects the needs of our communities.

However, if the LOIP is to realise its ambition to reduce inequalities and improve local outcomes, the third sector must be embedded not only in its development but also in its delivery, monitoring, and strategic governance. VCEL is committed to supporting and co-leading this work, and we outline below a series of recommendations to enhance the impact and equity of the next phase.

- **Strengths of the Engagement Report**
 - **Scale and Methodology:** Engagement with over 14,000 children and young people and nearly 5,000 adults through diverse formats and trusted partners. The use of the Lundy Model, Place Standard Tool, CRWIA, and IIA frameworks exemplifies good practice.
 - **Inclusive Practice:** Active efforts to reach underrepresented voices, including asylum seekers, neurodivergent young people, care-experienced individuals, and fathers.
 - **Strategic Alignment:** Strong connections to Scotland's National Performance Framework, the Community Empowerment Act, the Strategic Needs Assessment, and other key policy drivers.
 - **Third Sector Engagement:** Meaningful inclusion of data and insight from organisations such as Recharge, Thrive CIC, Olivebank, CAPS, Women's Aid, and others, demonstrating the sector's reach and relevance.

Suggestions

- **Clarify the Third Sector's Role in Delivery**

The third sector is fundamental to addressing health inequalities, poverty, and community safety. The LOIP should explicitly recognise this by:

- Naming VCEL and other third-sector partners as equal contributors to thematic priorities.
- Establishing LOIP Thematic Delivery Groups (Health, Safety, Poverty) with third-sector co-leads.
- Embedding third-sector leadership within LOIP governance structures.

- **Embed Infrastructure for Volunteering and Community Action**

Volunteering is central to early intervention, prevention, and community wellbeing. Suggestion:

- Recognising volunteering as a delivery method, not only a social outcome.
- Supporting the infrastructure that enables volunteering (e.g. coordination, training, safeguarding, quality assurance).
- Linking volunteering into pathways for employability, wellbeing, and inclusion.

- **Prioritise Sustainable Investment and Long-Term Funding**

The community sector's ability to contribute meaningfully is undermined by short-term and precarious funding. Suggestion:

- Linking LOIP actions to commissioning and funding strategies that enable longer-term, flexible funding.
- Committing to preventative spend, community wealth building, and community-led delivery.
- Ensuring alignment between LOIP objectives and funding mechanisms (e.g. Participatory Budgeting, procurement).

- **Strengthen Participatory Governance and Local Democracy**

There is a clear call from communities to be more meaningfully involved in decisions. We suggest:

- Establishing a LOIP Community Participation Panel, supported by VCEL, to oversee ongoing engagement and scrutiny. Signal would also inform the LOIP
- Resourcing third-sector and community capacity to participate in governance and monitoring.
- Embedding participatory budgeting and co-production within LOIP implementation.

- **Integrate SIGNAL and Real-Time Data Tools**

VCEL's SIGNAL Scotland platform offers live, community-generated data on emerging needs and service gaps. Suggestion:

- Adopting SIGNAL as a core LOIP monitoring tool.
- Using SIGNAL data in quarterly learning loops to inform action and adapt delivery.
- Linking SIGNAL to the new Participation and Engagement Strategy.

- **Advance Community Power and Asset-Based Approaches**

Community empowerment is a central theme of the Community Empowerment Act. We recommend:

- Including a commitment to enabling equitable access to community spaces.
- Supporting asset transfer and community ownership in line with local aspirations.
- Building community-led infrastructure as part of long-term prevention and resilience.
- **Additional Suggestions (some are already underway)**
 - Develop a **LOIP Partnership Compact** setting out mutual expectations and contributions of all partners, including the third sector.
 - Ensure the new **Participation and Engagement Strategy** includes support for community governance, capacity-building, and inclusive engagement.
 - Recognise the role of TSIs in supporting trauma-informed practice, volunteering infrastructure, and governance development.

VCEL welcomes this report as a vital step toward a more inclusive and effective LOIP. However, if East Lothian is to shift the system from crisis response to prevention, and from service-led to community-led, then the third sector must be fully embedded as an equal delivery and learning partner. We are committed to supporting/co-leading with this work and look forward to continued collaboration across the East Lothian Partnership.

5.2 NHS Lothian – Partnership and Place Team

We welcome the opportunity to review and contribute to this engagement report. It reflects a positive and encouraging trajectory for community engagement across East Lothian with a clear commitment to inclusive practice. The insights gathered offer a valuable foundation for action to reduce inequalities and improve population health through collaborative, evidence-informed planning. X4 To fully realise the potential of this engagement, it will be important to ensure that the insights gathered are translated into clear, measurable actions within the LOIP. Continued collaboration with underrepresented groups and third sectors partners as well as utilisation of robust data in a coordinated and systematic way will be essential to maintain momentum, address identified gaps and ensure that future planning is both impactful and inclusive. The prioritisation of prevention, inequalities and poverty is to be welcomed and positive. Framing work in relation to health with regard to the Population Health Framework is helpful.

There are several notable strengths of this Engagement Report and associated activity:

- The methodology and engagement approach reflect several established and well evidence-based principles for engagement which is positive and enhances robustness and validity
- Inclusive- focus on underrepresented groups which supports the LOIP to target interventions where they are needed most- helping reduce disparities and improve population health.
- Partnership working is evident- engagement and evidence gathering/insights from third sector organisations is meaningful and important in order to more accurately reflect and represent variety of views whose insights will help ensure that the LOIP reflects diverse lived experience especially from groups who face systemic barriers and supports our contextual understanding of local challenges.

- Support and learning- plans for peer review and feedback loops supports continuous improvement
- Impact- the scale of the engagement (13626 individuals) demonstrates a commitment to meaningful engagement and data collection
- Use of evidence tools for example the Place Standard Tool- strengthens findings and supports place-based public health approaches.
- Integration with existing strategies and frameworks eg Review of Area Plans, Local Place Plans, Ward Profiles and needs assessments and alignment with Community Empowerment Act reflects local needs and supports the identification and tackling of inequalities

There are some general areas that could be enhanced and strengthened for improved reach/impact:

- Impact and outcomes could be clarified and articulated more clearly.
- Description/overview or example of any thematic analysis and how that was done would be helpful
- Noted that engagement with some groups has not been possible-supporting info/data would be helpful in this case to address gaps
- Strengthen governance and accountability: a description of how community voices will be embedded in ongoing governance structures and mechanisms for feedback and accountability to participants is important. This supports the 'Governance' standard and the Community Empowerment Act's requirement for public accountability
- Cultural competence to support inclusive engagement- any actions taken to address/support this so far could be included and outlined for future.
- Expand on evaluation plans- a logic model or evaluation framework could be included
- Defining metrics for success (e.g., reduction in inequality indicators, improved service access) will be important in the development of the LOIP