

Homefront

The newsletter for East Lothian Council tenants

SUMMER 2024

New housing handover at Burgh Gate



In this issue:

Corporate Parenting

Local Housing Strategy update

Help with rent payments

Tenant Participation Strategy



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Homefront is East Lothian Council's newsletter for its tenants. Follow us on

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Rent Increase Consultation Outcome

Thank you to all our tenants who took part in our rent increase consultation, which took place in November and December last year.

Tenants' views are very important to us. They help us to understand the areas of our service that are important to you and to make sure we are using your rent money in a way that meets our tenants' priorities.

All the feedback received during the consultation was used to prepare a report, which was provided to local councillors. A total of 1657 tenants responded to the consultation, which is 18% of our total number of tenants.

The table below (**Table 1**) shows, of those who responded, what they thought the annual rent increase should be next year, from the options of 5%, 6% or 7%.

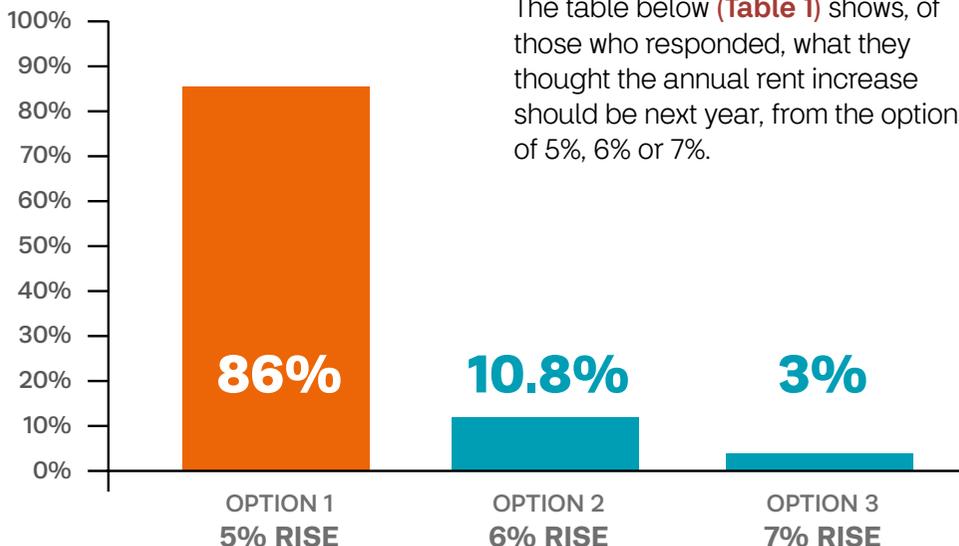
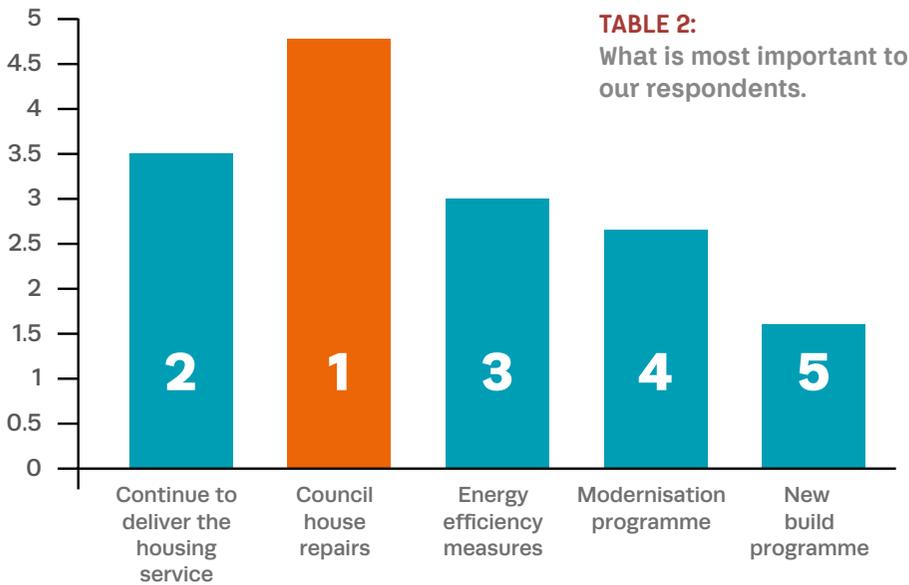


TABLE 1:
What respondents think next year's rent increase should be.



We also asked tenants about the money you pay in rent, which is used to pay for delivering the housing services, and which of these services is most important to you.

The table above (Table 2) shows what tenants told us, with 1 being the most important and 5 the least important.

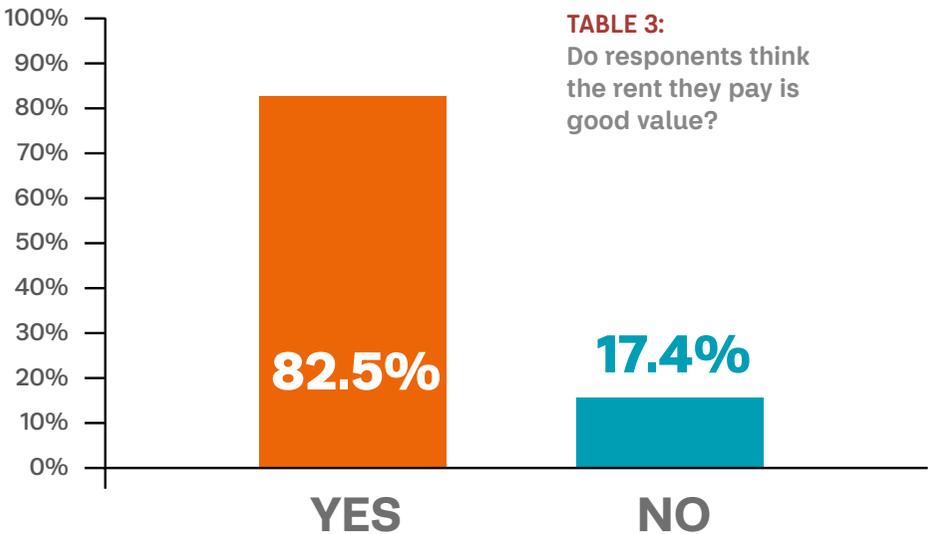
Another question included in the consultation asked tenants if they thought that the rent they pay is good value for money and most who responded told us that they think it is good value. (Table 3, opposite)

The information presented in

the outcome of the consultation highlighted the financial climate was still very challenging for the council and although a 5% rent increase was included initially as a feasible option, it was clear that an increase at this level would be difficult because of a number of pressures on the Housing Revenue Account.

Some of these pressures are increasing interest rates and continued increases in material and labour costs for repairing, maintaining, and improving tenants' homes. In addition to these, the Scottish Government announced in December 2023 that its investment

The results of the consultation can be found on the council's Consultation Hub at www.eastlothian.gov.uk



in our affordable housing programme was to be reduced by 26% in East Lothian. This was a significant blow to the council as we were already committed to projects across East Lothian.

Taking all of this into account, the rent level for 2024/25 was agreed at a meeting of the Council on 20 February – a 7% rent increase from the 1st April 2024.

This was the only feasible option if the council is to continue to improve our existing stock and meet our statutory requirements. The decision was an extremely difficult one,

with councillors having to strike a balance between the outcome of the consultation, other financial challenges, and the need to make sure the housing service can continue to deliver those services that are a priority for our tenants.

The new rent level has come into effect from Monday 1st April 2024 and all tenants have received a letter advising them what their new rent charge will be. Anyone struggling to pay their rent should contact our **Rent Income Team** on **01620 827 528** as early as possible for confidential advice and support ■

The results of the consultation can be found on the council's Consultation Hub at www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Tenant Participation Strategy 2024–2027

We have launched our new Tenant Participation Strategy for the next three years, which sets out how we plan to involve tenants and make sure they can influence and scrutinise the housing services we deliver.

We reviewed our last strategy, drafted a new one and consulted with tenants, tenants groups and partnered with East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel to make sure it reflected their views.

We want to continue to build on our achievements over the last few years, supporting tenants and working in partnership with them, local tenants groups and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel.

We will provide resources for tenants to get involved with us and remove any barriers to participation.



If you would like to get in touch and find out more about tenant participation please contact us at:

E tenantconsultation@eastlothian.gov.uk

T 0800 413 721 or

East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel

E tenantspanel@hotmail.com

T 0131 665 9304

Local Housing Strategy sets actions for the next five years

East Lothian Council's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-29 was adopted in April, following Scottish Government sign-off.

The LHS is a five-year strategic plan for housing of all tenures and housing services and is available to view on the council website at [eastlothian.gov.uk](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk)

It outlines the main housing challenges faced in East Lothian and actions to be taken to address them.

Actions focus on:

- 🏠 Supporting communities
- 🏠 Increasing the supply of affordable housing and making best use of our existing housing
- 🏠 Preventing and responding to homelessness
- 🏠 Ensuring people can live in homes that meet their needs
- 🏠 Tackling fuel poverty and improving the quality of homes

To oversee the LHS and help direct actions, a Housing Board will be established. The Board will have representatives from East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP), the council and Health and Social Care services, Housing Associations and charity organisations.

The Board will prioritise the actions within the LHS, taking into account current financial pressures and legal obligations. This will make sure that key actions are delivered.

The LHS will be monitored and reviewed each year to track the progress of actions and ensure that any significant changes, such as new laws and data, can be added to the LHS.

How Housing is supporting the council's responsibility to be a Corporate Parent

A corporate parent is an organisation or individual who has special responsibilities for looked after children and care-experienced young people.

Corporate parenting responsibilities extend to all looked after children, from birth to when they cease to be looked after, and when they leave care. Corporate parents should do as much as they can to make sure children and young people feel in control of their lives and are able to overcome the barriers they face.

We want to work in partnership with young people to ensure that all care-experienced children and young people have the same access and opportunities as other children and young people. Housing plays a large part in helping our looked after and care-experienced children to move on after their care.

Both the Housing Service and Children's Services face many challenges due to the very high demand for housing and the limited supply. As the population of East Lothian continues to grow, so does the demand for good quality housing

options. We have developed a range of ways to help young people to find the most appropriate supported accommodation.

These include a Housing and Support Panel that meets monthly and, where possible, works with young people before they transition into a safe and permanent home. Demand has risen recently but the panel continues to discuss with young people the type of support & accommodation available and to discuss what's needed to make their housing option a success. The support also looks at being a good neighbour and what learning may be required around relationships and skills.

The East Lothian Champions Board wants to:

Give a voice to young people in care

Change the care system

Help care-experienced young people to access all the support systems available

Make sure young people are treated with respect and get positive help from professionals

Change young people's lives in care

The Champions Board was set up in 2015 and is supported by East Lothian Council and Who Cares? Scotland. It provides a platform for care-experienced young people to talk directly to council staff, local councillors and service providers to make sure that decisions which affect their lives are informed by their own experiences. Through the board, care-experienced young people themselves can influence improvements in the services and support available to them.

Currently, Housing staff are working with the Champions Board to produce a new resource that will provide young tenants with support on a wide range of housing-related questions, issues and queries to help them navigate their way around the housing system and all the challenges that becoming a tenant for the first time involves.

What is a Community Housing Officer?

Community Housing Officers (CHOs) manage our tenancies and provide support to our communities.

We have four Community Housing Teams: Musselburgh, Prestonpans, Tranent and the East (Haddington, Dunbar and North Berwick areas). Our CHOs help with the management of their 'patch', often with support from other teams such as Community Protection and Amenity Services. They help with:

- Tenancy changes including adding or removing a joint tenant or on the death of a tenant
- Subletting – when you ask for permission to let your tenancy to someone else
- Taking in a lodger
- Assignment – this is when you ask for permission to pass on your tenancy to someone else
- Advice on moving home including transferring to another house, mutual exchanges and Housing Panel referrals
- Antisocial behaviour issues
- Tenancy support referrals
- Signposting to other services e.g. East Lothian Works (for

help with employment, education and career choices) and East Lothian Financial Inclusion Team (to help apply, or check if you are entitled to or getting the right amount of benefits or grants)

CHOs also take part in estate inspections, which help tenants develop or make improvements in their local area. You can contact your local CHO on **01620 827 827** or email:

housingmusselburgh@eastlothian.gov.uk
housingdunbar@eastlothian.gov.uk
housingnorthberwick@eastlothian.gov.uk
housinghaddington@eastlothian.gov.uk
housingtranent@eastlothian.gov.uk
housingprestonpans@eastlothian.gov.uk

Please note, CHOs do not deal with repairs. These should be reported to our Property Maintenance Team on **01875 824 311**.

Affordable Housing Programme

East Lothian Council continues to deliver its extensive affordable housing programme.

East Lothian Council continues to deliver its extensive affordable housing programme. Over the last year we have seen a number of completions throughout East Lothian, with 226 new build houses and flats, together with 25 purchases from the open market, providing much needed accommodation.

At the [Windygoul](#) site in Tranent, Springfield has completed 60 new affordable homes for the council. These include three wheelchair accessible bungalows and 14 ground floor flats for older people.

Stewart Milne completed the affordable housing part of the development at [East Linton](#), providing 28 new council homes with a mix of one, two and three bed cottage flats and houses – four units being available for older people, along with two wheelchair accessible bungalows.

At our [Letham Mains](#) site in Haddington, Taylor Wimpey has completed 37 new homes including two amenity homes for older people and three homes suitable for wheelchair users. In addition to these, Taylor Wimpey commenced on a further site at Letham that will provide a further 35 new



New council homes at Craighall

homes including four flats for older people. To date, 21 homes have been handed over with the next 14 homes scheduled to hand over in September.

Persimmon Homes has completed 45 new homes for the council at **Craighall North** (also known as Burgh Gate), including 10 ground floor flats for older people along with two wheelchair accessible bungalows.

At **Ravensheugh** in Musselburgh, Hadden completed 12 new homes for the council including four properties for older people.

At **Lempockwells**, Pencaitland, Cruden Homes has recently completed and handed over 30

homes including four ground floor flats for older people.

Works recently started at **Fa'side Lodge**, Tranent where JR Group is building 28 units for the council, including six wheelchair accessible units and four flats for older people. Handovers are scheduled for early next year.

Works have commenced at **Longniddry South**, where Cruden Homes is building 31 properties for the council. These include four ground floor flats for older people and one wheelchair accessible property.

In addition, the council has also bought 25 houses and flats across East Lothian off the open market since April 2023, which will be provided as new council homes.



Cllr Forrest & Wendy McGuire (right) with Springfield Partnerships Project Manager Diana Boreman at new council homes at Windygoul, Tranent.

Our affordable housing partners also continue to develop within East Lothian. Over the past financial year, a total of 111 new properties have become available for social rent and 69 for mid-market rent.

LAR Housing Trust has provided much needed mid-market rental housing in Prestonpans at their developments in **Jim Bush Drive** and **Preston Works** – 42 units with a mix of two bed flats and three bed houses.

Wheatley Homes East (formerly Dunedin Canmore) has seen a number of completions for social rent at their Wallyford development, with Cruden Homes building 22 homes and 15 completions for Mid Market Rent.

There will be three bed houses on the **Wallace Park** development in Wallyford delivered by Wheatley Homes East's mid-market housing arm called Lowther Homes. These properties will be advertised on Rightmove for mid-market rent and available mid 2024.

Wheatley Homes East, with Balfour Beatty, have completed 36 homes for social rent in **Macmerry**, which has delivered one, two and three bed houses and flats.

Castle Rock Edinvar, which is part of Places for People Scotland,

have provided the first phase of completions at **Whitecraig** with Miller Homes completing 24 units for social and 12 for mid-market rent with a mix of two and three bed houses. The final phase of 27 social rent properties with a mix of two, three and four bed houses and flats continues to be completed through 2024 and 2025

The second development of affordable housing at **Blindwells** has completed at Phase three, with Persimmon Homes providing 30 two, three and four bed houses and flats for social rent with Castle Rock Edinvar.

Finally, the **Newton Manor** development by Robertson Homes in Dunbar has completed 29 units. These are homes for social rent through East Lothian Housing Association, providing much needed two, three and four bed houses and flats.

Further information on new developments within East Lothian can be found on our website or by speaking to your local housing office. It's important to note that if you are offered a new build property your move-in date may be subject to change due to global issues within the construction industry meaning that completion dates can be affected. We would ask for your understanding and patience if this does happen.



East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel Update



ELTRP continues to be grateful for the fantastic work carried out by individuals and tenants and residents groups throughout East Lothian. The contribution they make to their communities makes a real impact on people's lives.

To honour the amazing work that happens in East Lothian, ELTRP held its **Annual Sparkle Awards** to recognise the individuals and groups who contribute so much on a voluntary basis.

This year's awards were held in the Maitlandfield House Hotel, Haddington where tenants enjoyed a delicious Christmas meal followed by fantastic entertainment provided by Donna Glass.

The following awards were presented:

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION to the local community by a Tenants and Residents Group

Presented by Cllr Andy Forrest

There were two winners of this award:

Brunton Court Tenants Group, Musselburgh

The Covid-19 pandemic brought with it a very worrying and isolating time for all of us. Sheltered housing complexes were particularly affected as a lot of the tenants live on their own so were isolated within their complexes.

BCTG worked extremely hard with their tenants to identify ways of reducing isolation and fear and, when it was safe to do so, they created a programme of outings for all of the sheltered housing complexes in East Lothian in order to create a safe space to meet neighbours and people from other complexes – and to have some fun and get out and about.

With the support of ELTRP, Sheltered Housing Officers and local Area

Partnerships, the group sourced funding to organise five trips. They discussed and agreed activities, organised venues, buses, appropriate support, meals and they monitored and recorded all the finances – a lot more work than they anticipated!

Visits included:

- **Dunbar Garden Centre and a meal**
- **A meal at the Orient Express in Leith**
- **Visiting Queensferry and Peebles**

Everyone had a lovely time! This has helped to strengthen relationships within the sheltered housing community.

The other winner of this award was...

Harkness Crescent TRA

Harkness Crescent TRA (Tranent) have been very proactive when it comes to improving their local community and their amenity properties.

This group have worked tirelessly with ELTRP and various council departments to:

Improve the back garden – instead of stones and fences, it is a beautiful green area with washing lines, benches and planters. Members of the group keep it looking wonderful and it is so much better for all the tenants who live there. It has been commented upon on Facebook and in the wider community too!

The group have also had gates and fencing put up, addressed some issues relating to the nearby school as well as having the front area cleaned and repaired, with bollards being taken down, creating a nicer space for all. They also have their Christmas lights which go up in the front green area and which look wonderful at that time of year! Members of the group have looked after the trees at the front and planted many bulbs and flowers.

More recently, the group have addressed some issues with heating and windows in the properties. To date, all windows should now have been replaced and heating issues resolved. New doors have also been installed. While there are still some outstanding issues which the group will continue to take forward, they have achieved so much over the years, while supporting each other and working together as a community.

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Presented by Sharon Donohoe from the Tenants Information Service

The award recognises an individual who has shown leadership within their group and tried their very best to work for the benefit of their community.

The winner was Susan Forgie from Haddington Central Tenants and Residents Group.

Susan has been a member of both Haddington East TRA (HETRA), supporting their Mental Health Peer Support Group, then becoming Secretary; and is now an office bearer with Haddington Central TRA (HCTRA).

Susan held a lead role within the Mental Health Peer Support group, developing new forms of communication during the pandemic to ensure everyone was supported. The group went from strength to strength and Susan was then able to hand over the reins to other organisations who now provide the service.

She has worked passionately with the Chair, Stuart Pe-Win, and the rest of the Committee members at HCTRA to find out more and support the community during the current plans for redevelopment at Hermandflatt.

NEW LOCAL GROUP AWARD

Presented by Cllr Shamin Aktar

This award recognises innovative ways of getting people involved and the commitment needed to keep a new group going in the first difficult stages.

The winner was Well Wynd Tenants Group, Tranent

They have only been up and running since early 2023 but in this short space of time they have pushed

forward painting the communal areas in the sheltered housing complex and having new carpets laid, with the group being involved in choosing colours. A new bin store has been installed via the Local Housing Partnership and a new conservatory/summer house will be installed during this financial year. They are looking at setting up a lunch club as well as organising other activities in response to feedback from the tenants. They have done incredibly well with passion, determination and the will to improve their environment for everyone.

SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Presented by ELTRP Chairperson, Jim Herron

This award recognises an individual member of staff who has demonstrated a commitment to empowering tenants, residents, and community groups to work together and/or supported the actions of local groups.

The winner was Wendy Neill & East Lothian Council's Print Unit

Wendy has been a blessing to ELTRP in their time of need! The group did not have access to a printer in their office for some time, and Wendy stepped in to help, sometimes handling more than 3000 leaflets/posters a week at busy times, along with other requests. Wendy and her



Some ELTRP members enjoying their evening at the Sparkle Awards



Donna Glass who provided fantastic entertainment and hosted the event



Susan Forgie being presented with the Leadership Award by Sharon Donohoe from the Tenants Information Service



Some tenants and ELTRP members enjoying the event

team have always responded quickly, always delivered on time and always with a smile! Wendy has also spent time with ELTRP staff to source old documents so they can be updated. A big 'thank you' to Wendy and her team for all their support.

JEANETTE BOYD AWARD

Presented by Wendy McGuire,
Head of Housing, East Lothian Council

This award recognises an outstanding Individual, as was Jeanette herself. She was an inspiration to everyone who knew her. Jeanette worked tirelessly in her own community of Windsor Park in Musselburgh, and also volunteered on the Tenants Panel with the Scottish Government and was on the Board of the Tenants Information Service. Jeanette died in May 2020 and continues to be missed by all who knew her.

The winner was Alan Dunton

Alan has been the Chair of Haddington East TRA for a number of years and has worked tirelessly with the group and the wider community, steering the group in a supportive and proactive way. Alan supported the Mental Health and Wellbeing group over many years and sourced Area Partnership and other funding to enable the group to continue. He has also been a loyal supporter and campaigner for ELTRP and has provided the group with so many memories with his wisdom and wit, even writing some memorable plays! He was also a Board Member of the Tenants Information Service where he represented East Lothian admirably, alongside Cathie McArthur and of course Jeanette Boyd.

Alan is involved in many community activities across the area. He is an inspirational individual, has been a great mentor to other groups and individuals and is thoroughly deserving of the Jeanette Boyd Award.



Brunton Court Tenants
at the Sparkle Awards

ELTRP Annual General Meeting & Burns Supper

ELTRP's AGM was held on Thursday 25 January. The agenda included the AGM and an opportunity to comment on the council's Tenant Participation Strategy, followed by a Burns Supper.

Members voted to re-elect the previous Executive Committee; Jim Herron as Chair; Susan Forgie as Vice Chair; Linda Finlayson as Secretary and Julie Hayward as Treasurer, along with Grace Stirton, Christine Schaffer and a welcome addition of Viv Towsey from Harkness Crescent and Lyndsay Scott from Haddington Central.

The committee has already started to work hard to ensure tenants are at the heart of decisions made by East Lothian Council. They are currently considering which representatives will sit on each of the many subgroups ELTRP are involved in.

Committee members are also part of the scrutiny group that will be carrying out scrutiny activity on ELC's void properties with the aim of improving the process, which will see empty houses being turned around faster and an increase in income due to the houses being let quicker.

Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs)

We currently have 25 groups across East Lothian. All TRA members are volunteers who work extremely hard to promote community participation. They are always happy for more people to become involved, so please have a look at our website or contact us to find out if there is a TRA in your area.

www.eltrp.co.uk

East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP) are also here to help start a TRA in your area if there isn't already one, so please contact us to find out more or have a chat with Sue, our Outreach Officer
scairns@tis.org.uk.

Areas currently without a TRA include Blindwells, Macmerry, some Tranent areas, Aberlady and Longniddry.

The success of the TRAs comes with members of the community working together, identifying concerns, issues and improvements and working with the relevant people to address these and find a solution. The community has a louder voice when they come together as a group.

As always, the TRAs have been working behind the scenes for the benefit of their local communities.

Here is a brief update of some of what the groups are doing:

Ormiston West TRA are becoming more active and want to work not only in their area, but expand to the wider Ormiston village. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please contact Grace at mrsstirton@yahoo.co.uk.

Harkness Crescent TRA

Harkness Crescent TRA (Tranent) are a vibrant, active group endeavouring to address the issues that affect them – parking, speeding, water ingress, repairs. The group are working hard with ELTRP, the council and councillors to address these issues. For more information, please contact Viv at vtowsey@gmail.com

Cockenzie Port Seton TRA

This group have held meetings to find out more about how to improve their local community. Issues that have been raised to date are speeding, parking and antisocial behaviour. The group are working with ELTRP and the council to address these issues. For more information please contact Diane at cpstra23@gmail.com

Sheltered Housing complex Tenants Groups

All the East Lothian Sheltered Housing complexes now have a Tenants Group and are working hard to improve where they live for all of their tenants.

Mansfield Court (Musselburgh)

are organising fabulous outings for their tenants and this will continue as the weather improves.

Brunton Court (Musselburgh)

are addressing ongoing issues with the council and organising exciting outings for tenants too.

Well Wynd (Tranent)

will have a brand new conservatory/summer house soon and they are working together to create a welcome pack for new and settled tenants alike, making it easier for new tenants to feel at ease and for everyone to know how things work!

For more information about any of the groups, call Sue Cairns, Outreach Officer on **0131 665 9304** or email scairns@tis.org.uk or Patsy King, Development Officer pking@tis.org.uk

For more information e: tenantspanel@hotmail.com

www.eltrp.co.uk  [f @EastLothianTRP](https://www.facebook.com/EastLothianTRP)  [t twitter.com/ELTRP1](https://twitter.com/ELTRP1) 



Do you have home contents insurance?

Why do council tenants need to cover their home contents?

The council does not insure your house contents as part of your tenancy agreement. It is a good idea for you, as a tenant, to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for, to help you make an informed decision on whether you need one.

Contents insurance is designed to help protect your possessions. No matter how careful you are, there can be a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen, so home contents insurance can help to provide peace of mind.

To help you decide whether home

contents insurance is right for you, East Lothian Council has teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks and Great Lakes Insurance UK who provide specialist Tenants Contents Insurance policies. This pay-as-you-go home contents insurance scheme can offer you insurance for the contents of your home, including cover for items such as furniture, carpets, curtains, clothes, bedding, electrical items, jewellery, pictures, and ornaments.

If you would like more information, ask your local housing office for an application pack or email insurance@eastlothian.gov.uk

(Thistle Tenant Risks is a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority Firm Reference Number 310419. Registered in England under No. 00338645. Registered office: Rossington's Business Park, West Carr Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 7SW. Thistle Insurance Services Ltd is part of the PIB Group.)

Their Data Protection Privacy Policy is online at <https://www.thistleinsurance.co.uk/Privacy-Policy>

Is it a **GP** you need to **see**?

Across East Lothian there are a wide range of health, medical and care services that can be accessed by getting in touch with the most appropriate health professionals first time around.

GO DIRECT!

Did you know that your GP Practice does not have to be your first point of contact? You can **GO DIRECT** to a variety of Primary Care services including:

NHS Inform

An online portal offering a wide range of health information, advice, and resources, including symptom checkers, to self-manage illness / ailments at home. www.nhsinform.scot

Pharmacy First

Your local pharmacy can provide you with expert help for treating various common conditions such as sore throats, earache and cold sores, along with clinical conditions such as urinary tract infections. No appointment is needed, and you can request a private conversation with the pharmacist if preferred.



Experiencing back, joint or muscular pain?

GO DIRECT to the MSK Physiotherapy Service

Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions affect the bones, muscles, tendons, and joints, such as back pain, sports injuries, arthritis, sprains, and strains.

Available to East Lothian residents over 16 years, contact the MSK Service directly to arrange a consultation by calling

0300 369 0680

Mon-Fri 9am-11.30am.

Mental Health Service

The CWIC Mental Health Service offers support, treatment, and advice to help individuals develop plans to manage ongoing mental health concerns, support mental wellbeing and refer / signpost to other services.

Available to East Lothian residents over 17yrs 9 months, contact the CWIC Mental Health service by calling

0300 790 6292 (option 2)

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm.

Specialist Services:

Getting the right care, from the right professional means you can get the care you need as quickly as possible.

Go direct to access:

- Dental Care
- Eye Care
- Podiatry Care
- Vaccination Services
- Sexual Health Services
- Maternity and Health Visiting Services



For more information, and full details of the Primary Care Services available in East Lothian visit www.eastlothian.gov.uk/health-services

Rehabilitation Service

Comprising Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Exercise Specialists and Technology Enabled Care Services, the Rehabilitation Service can provide advice and support to enable you to stay active and independent, as well as take charge of your own health and wellbeing.

Visit us online:

www.eastlothian.gov.uk/elrs

or call **0300 369 0680**

Mon-Fri 9am-2pm.

If you require urgent care and attention, but it is not life threatening, contact **NHS 24 by calling 111**

Life Threatening Emergencies:

DIAL 999

- Suspected heart attack or stroke
- Severe breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding
- Severe injury



Changes to the East Lothian Council website

We have been making some changes to the information on our website for our housing services.



We have looked at the layout of our pages and the information on them as we are trying to reduce the number of files that have to be downloaded. We are hoping to have more information available to view on screen, making it easier for you to access and read.

This work is ongoing and East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel are helping us by testing how easy the information is to read and making sure all the information that tenants need is available. We will keep you updated as we plan to make more information and services for tenants available on the website.

You can see some of the changes we've already made by visiting the housing pages at www.eastlothian.gov.uk



Are you a council tenant looking for some advice on your rent payments or rent arrears?

Then drop in to one of our Rent Advice Surgeries at for a friendly chat.

You don't need an appointment but you can make one if you want to.

Surgeries will be held throughout East Lothian. Dates and times can be found on our website at www.eastlothian.gov.uk/rentadvice

Surgeries are currently being held at:

Musselburgh Jobcentre Plus
Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar
The Ridge Centre, 88 High Street, Dunbar
Pennypit Centre, Prestonpans
The George Johnstone Centre, Tranent

For more information or to book a specific time just call **01620 827528** in advance or email rentadvice@eastlothian.gov.uk

Summer Gardening

During spring, summer and autumn, many of us have been getting back into the garden.

Many of our tenants take great pride in their gardens and keeping them tidy. However, we do at times receive complaints about untidy gardens. It is the tenant's responsibility to keep their garden tidy and it is a condition of your council tenancy agreement.

Sometimes complaints may be about rubbish or items of furniture being left in gardens or communal areas. We have a Serious Tenancy Breaches Policy for tenants who have been contacted by their Housing Officer to tidy their garden or dispose of rubbish. This may sometimes result in the council having to clear the items, cut the grass and recharge the tenant for this.

We understand that some tenants who cannot look after their garden themselves anymore may struggle.

We have a Garden Aid Scheme which can help tenants who find themselves in this situation and who, because of their disability or age (over 60) are no longer able to maintain their garden.

If you think you may need some help to maintain your garden, please contact your local Housing Officer or visit www.eastlothian.gov.uk for more information.



Communication by email

We are constantly trying to improve on the ways we communicate with tenants and are looking to send out more of our housing information, like **Homefront** and tenant consultations, to you by email and text message. We will also promote our services on social media.

However, we know that technology is not suitable for everyone and we will still provide paper copies of our information where we don't have an email address or mobile phone number for you – or if you ask to keep receiving paper copies.

If you would like to start receiving your copy of Homefront and other information by email, please contact your area housing office and ask that your contact details be updated to include your email address and mobile phone number.

Get in touch

AREA OFFICES

Call 01620 827 827, email us, or visit your nearest housing office.

MUSSELBURGH

The Brunton, Ladywell Way
housingmusselburgh@eastlothian.gov.uk

HADDINGTON

John Muir House, Brewery Park
housinghaddington@eastlothian.gov.uk

TRANENT & PRESTONPANS

George Johnstone Centre
Winton Place
housingtranent@eastlothian.gov.uk
housingprestonpans@eastlothian.gov.uk

NORTH BERWICK

Library & Customer Services, School Road
housingnorthberwick@eastlothian.gov.uk

DUNBAR

Bleachingfield Centre,
Countess Crescent
housingdunbar@eastlothian.gov.uk

Benefits
01620 827730

Council tax
01875 824314

Housing
01620 827827

Homelessness
01620 827536

Repairs
01875 824311

Scottish Welfare Fund
01620 828790

Social work
01875 824309

Special uplift
01875 824305

Switchboard
01620 827827

Welfare Rights
01620 827827

Antisocial Behaviour
01875 824 307

Gas Leaks
0800 111 999



If you need Homefront in another format e.g. Large Print, audio, or in your own language, please call 01620 827827.

Spotted a broken street light?
Pothole? Fly tipping?
01875 824 305
www.eastlothian.gov.uk/reportit