

# East Lothian Partnership

## **East Lothian by Numbers**

A Statistical Profile of East Lothian

### **Summary**

2025

# East Lothian by Numbers: Summary

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## Population & Demography

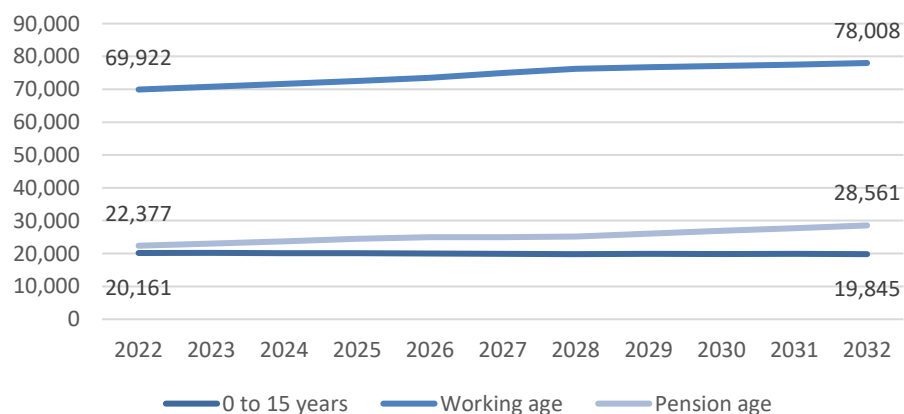
In 2024, East Lothian had an estimated NRS population of 115,180 the 18<sup>th</sup> highest of the 32 council areas in Scotland. The population is projected to increase by 12.4% (2022 based) to 121,238 by 2032. The 2<sup>nd</sup> highest increase in Scotland.

NRS projections, which do not take into account local policy such as new housing developments show a 1.6% decrease (2022 based) for the 0 to 15 age group by 2032. The working Age population is projected to increase by 11.6% to 2032, the third highest increase in Scotland. Pensionable age is projected to increase by 27.6%, the largest increase in Scotland.

### Did you know?

**East Lothian is projected to have the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest percentage population increase in Scotland between 2022 and 2032 (National Records of Scotland).**

East Lothian Population Age Group Projections



### Summary:

- The 2024 mid year population estimate for East Lothian was 115,180, the 18<sup>th</sup> highest population out of the 32 Scottish local authorities.
- In 2024 The Under 16 age group accounted for 17.6% of the overall population, with 60.6% working age, and 21.8% pensionable age.
- The 2022 based NRS population projections for East Lothian show an overall increase of 12.4% to 121,238 in 2032, the second highest increase in Scotland.
- The 2022 based population projections for East Lothian show a 1.6% decrease in the 0 to 15 age group to 2032. This equates to 15.7% of the overall population in 2032, less than the 17.9% in 2022.
- The 2022 based population projections for East Lothian show a 27.6% increase to those of pensionable age in 2032. The largest increase in Scotland. This equates to 22.6% of the overall population in 2032, more than the 19.9% in 2022.
- East Lothian's working age population is projected to increase by 11.6% to 2032, the third highest in Scotland. This equates to 61.7% of the overall population in 2032, less than the 62.2% in 2022.
- The population density in East Lothian is increasing, and has risen from 152 persons per square kilometre in 2015 to 170 in 2025.
- The 2024 East Lothian fertility rate was 1.46, higher than the Scottish rates of 1.25.
- Of the net 7,613 projected increase to 2028 in East Lothian, 7,272 (95.5%) were from other Scottish Council areas.
- In 202/23, 4940 people migrated into East Lothian, and 3,350 migrated out, giving a net migration of 1,590 people.

## Deprivation

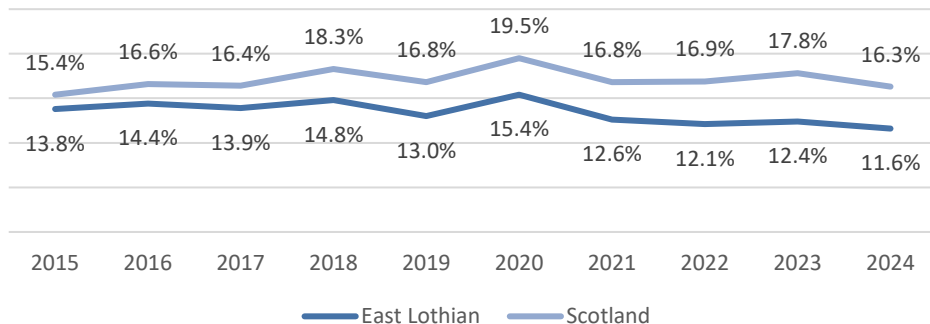
The principal measure of deprivation in Scotland is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The Index consists of measures of income, employment, education, health, housing, crime and geographic access to services. The Index identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. East Lothian has lower levels of deprivation than most local authorities in Scotland. There are however, small areas in Prestonpans, Tranent and Musselburgh that fall within the most 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

The SIMD is not the only measure of deprivation, in 2024, 11.6% of children in East Lothian aged under 16 were in relative low income families before housing costs, lower than the 16.3% across Scotland as a whole. However Children in Poverty after housing costs measure shows that 22.1% of children were living in poverty, similar to the 23% for Scotland.

### Did you know?

**The % of children living in relative low income families has been below the Scottish figure for the last 10 years.**

**Percentage of Children (aged under 16) living in Relative low income families, before housing costs**



### Summary:

- In SIMD 2020, 2 of the 132 data zones in East Lothian (located in Prestonpans and Tranent) were within the most deprived 10% of areas in Scotland, 8 data zones were in the 20% most deprived. In SIMD 2016 there were no data zones in the 10% most deprived and 6 in the 20% most deprived.
- All of the most deprived data zones in East Lothian lie within the west of the county, in TWM, PSG and Musselburgh.
- In 2020, 1.3% of East Lothian's population resided in the most deprived decile. 5.2% of East Lothian's population resided in the most deprived SIMD quintile, more than the 3.7% in 2016.
- In 2024, 11.6% of East Lothian under 16s were in relative low income families before housing costs (Scotland 16.3%).
- In 2023/24, 22.1% of East Lothian children were identified as living in poverty after housing costs (Scotland 23%).
- East Lothian received 5,105 Crisis Grant applications during 2023/24, down 20.2% from the previous year, there was a national decrease of 10.1%.
- In 2023/24, 41% (2,100) of Crisis Grant applications were awarded in East Lothian (62% across Scotland). The average Crisis Grant award in East Lothian was £115 (Scotland £115).
- In 2017-2019, after housing costs, 24% of East Lothian households were in fuel poverty (Scotland 24.4%)
- In 2023/24 East Lothian Foodbank received 5,722 requests. 124,893 meals were provided. Demand for services increased by 12% from the previous year, making it the busiest in the foodbanks's history.

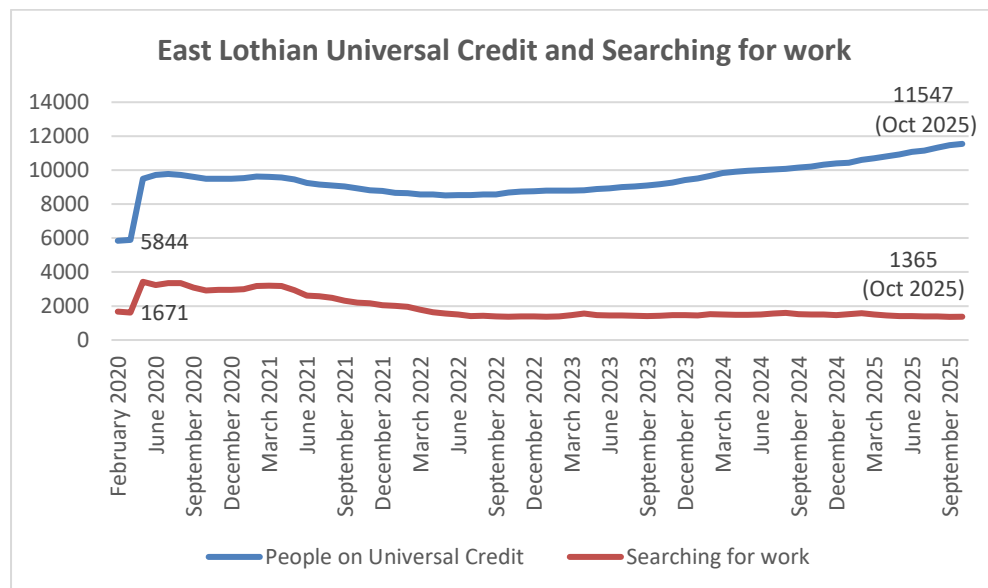
## Economy & Income

Although East Lothian is considered to be an area of high employment and general affluence there is considerable variation in economic activity, unemployment and the financial position of households between and within East Lothian's wards.

The 2024 average wage for East Lothian residents was lower than the wage for East Lothian as a place of work.

### Did you know?

**In 2023/24, 84.4% of people in East Lothian were in employment, higher than the Scottish figure of 74%.**



### Summary:

- In 2024, East Lothian had a full time gross weekly earnings as a place of residence of £737, lower than the Scottish figure of £740. Females in East Lothian and Scotland earned less than males.
- In 2024, the full time gross weekly wage in East Lothian as a place of work figure of £644.1, was lower than the place of residence wage of £737.
- In 2023, East Lothian had a job density of 0.61, this was the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest rate in Scotland (national average 0.83).
- In 2023/24, 84.4% of people in East Lothian aged 16-64 were in employment, higher than the 74% for Scotland. East Lothian has a smaller % of FT employees, and a greater % of PT workers when compared to Scotland.
- In 2023, Human Health and Social Work Services was the largest employment sector (15.6%). East Lothian had a larger % in Arts, Professional Scientific & Technical, Education and Accommodation/Food Services, than the national level.
- In 2020, 2 of East Lothian's 132 data zones were within the 10%, and 7 data zones were within the 20% most income deprived in Scotland.
- East Lothian has no data zones in the 10%, and 14 data zones in the 20% most employment deprived in Scotland.
- There were 11,547 UC claimants in East Lothian in October 2025, 97.6% higher than the Feb 2020 pre Covid figure of 5844 (Scotland 166.2% higher).
- 11.8% (1,365) of claimants were searching for work in the immediate future, which was 18.3% lower than the pre Covid figure of 1,671 (Scotland 3.4% higher the pre Covid figure).

## Education & Lifelong Learning

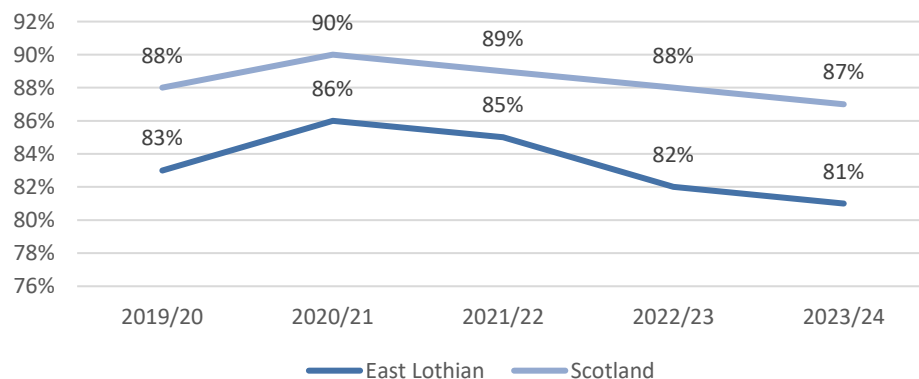
In East Lothian the rate of pupils who leave school with 1 or more SCQF level 5 or above has been lower than the national average for the last 5 years. The P1, P4 & P7 combined scores for Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking, Literacy and Numeracy were lower than the national average.

Over the last 10 years, a lower percentage of East Lothian school leavers enter higher and further education and a higher percentage enter employment, when compared to Scotland. Less people of working age in East Lothian have a degree, but less have no qualifications when compared to the Scottish average.

### Did you know?

In 2025, 84% of Queen Margaret University students were in high skilled work 15 months after graduation, placing QMU 3<sup>rd</sup> top among Scottish higher education institutions.

**School Leavers achieving 1+ award at SCQF Level 5 or better**



### Summary:

- In the SIMD 2020, 5 of the 132 data zones in East Lothian were within the 10% most educationally deprived in Scotland, and 20 data zones were within the 20% most educationally deprived.
- In 2024, the school pupil teacher ratio was 17.7 for primary and 13.2 for secondary, compared to 15.5 and 12.6 for Scotland respectively.
- 81% of East Lothian school leavers attained 1 award at SCQF level 5 or above in 2023/24, compared to a national figure of 87%.
- In East Lothian in 2023/24, the percentage of P1, P4 & P7 pupils combined scores for Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking, Literacy and Numeracy were lower than the national average.
- In 2023/24 Attendance at East Lothian was 93.2% (primary) and 86.5% secondary compared to 92.5% and 87.6% respectively for Scotland as a whole.
- In East Lothian in 2022/23, there were 10.1 primary and 35.5 secondary cases of exclusion per 1,000 pupils, compared to 4.5 and 31.5 respectively for Scotland.
- In 2023/24, 94% of East Lothian school leavers had a positive destination (Scotland 96%).
- 48% of East Lothian Resident 2024 survey respondents were satisfied with local schools, compared to 40% in 2021.
- 16% of East Lothian Resident 2024 survey respondents felt schools were a priority for improvement, compared to 3% in 2019 and 15% in 2021.

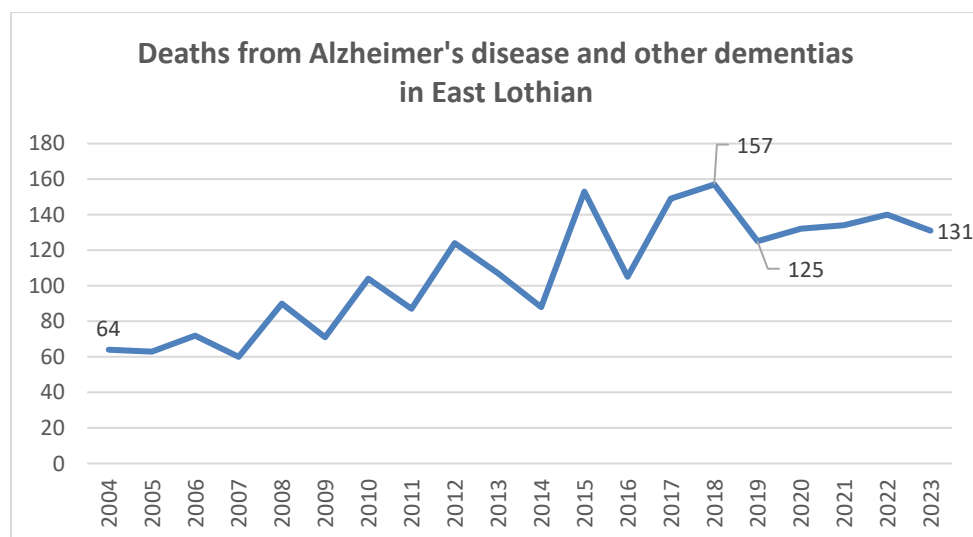
## Health & Social Care

In East Lothian male and female life expectancy is higher than the Scottish average, resulting in a growing older population in the area. However life expectancy varies across the wards, highlighting the significant health inequalities that persist across East Lothian.

East Lothian has higher levels of care needs for people aged 65 and over when compared to Scotland. Cognitive health (e.g. dementia) is therefore a growing issue as the population ages, presenting an expanding health and social care concern.

### Did you know?

**The number of deaths where dementia or Alzheimer's was the underlying cause in East Lothian has more than doubled over the last 20 years. (NRS)**



### Summary

- The 2024 East Lothian Residents survey showed that 63% of residents felt that their physical health was very good/good and 71% of residents felt that their mental health was very good/good.
- Life expectancy for males and females in East Lothian was higher than in Scotland for the 2021-2023 period.
- The 2024 East Lothian Residents survey showed that 55% of residents felt that the health service was a priority for improvement (higher than the 53% in 2021 and 12% in 2019).
- The 2024 East Lothian Residents survey showed that 29% of residents felt that care of the elderly was a priority for improvement (higher than the 27% in 2021 and 5% in 2019).
- East Lothian has significantly higher levels of care need than Scotland for people aged 65 and over who need cared for at home.
- Behaviours: East Lothian has significantly lower rates than Scotland for alcohol related hospital admissions, drug related hospital admissions and smoking attributable deaths.
- Ill Health: East Lothian has significantly lower rates than Scotland for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patient hospitalisations, coronary heart disease (CHD) patient hospitalisations and emergency patient hospitalisations.
- East Lothian has significantly lower rates than Scotland for the population prescribed drugs for anxiety/depression/psychosis.
- East Lothian has significantly better rates than Scotland for child dental health and babies exclusively breastfed.
- East Lothian has significantly higher immunisation uptakes than Scotland for bowel screening and MMR.

## Housing

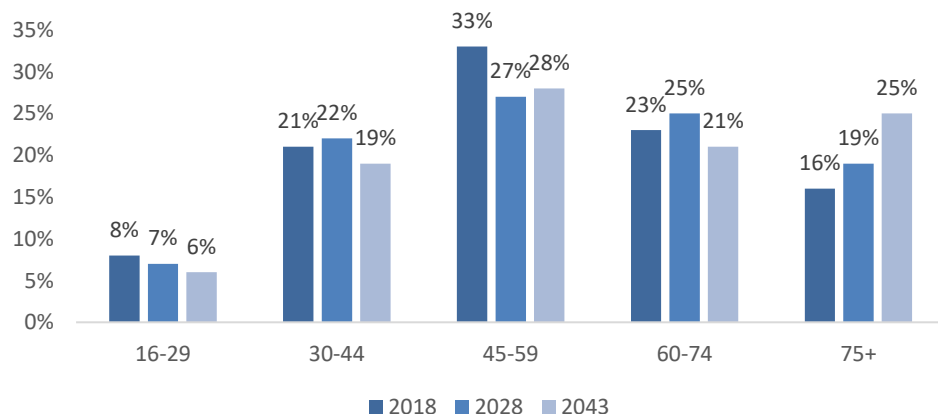
As East Lothian's population grows, new housing estates have been built to accommodate the increase. A major phased housing development which could see as many as 10,000 new homes, 25% of which would be affordable housing, is planned for Blindwells over the next 30 years. Homelessness issues are key for authorities to tackle. Changing issues around how housing benefit is provided also creates different demands and pressures on East Lothian's housing situation and the population.

Homes are more expensive in East Lothian than the Scottish average. North Berwick has a relatively high proportion of dwellings that are used as second homes. By contrast, Musselburgh has relatively high proportion of student housing.

### Did you know?

**The median house price in East Lothian was the 2nd highest of the 32 local authorities in Scotland.**

Projected percentage of households by age group



### Summary:

- In 2024, the number of households in East Lothian was 50,562. This is a 1.8% increase from the previous year (national increase 0.7%).
- Since 2001 the number of households in East Lothian has increased by 32.3%, the highest increase in Scotland.
- The 2018 based household projections for East Lothian show an overall increase of 11% to 2028, and 24% to 2043, the 2nd highest increase in Scotland.
- The 75 years and over age group accounted for 16% of households in 2018, this is projected to increase to 19% in 2028 and 25% in 2043.
- The 2018 based projections for households with children show a 14.3% increase to 2028, and 33% increase to 2043.
- The 2018 based projections for one person households show a 5.6% increase to 2028, and 11.5% increase to 2043.
- In 2023, 66.1% of dwellings in East Lothian were owner-occupied, 18% were Council owned, 9% privately rented and 5% were with a housing association.
- In 2023, the median house price in East Lothian was £283,998, the second highest in Scotland.
- In 2024/25, the estimated average Local Authority weekly housing rent in East Lothian was £79.44, the fifth lowest in Scotland.
- In 2024/25, 116 per 10,000 households were assessed as homeless lower than the rate of 133 for Scotland.



## Community Safety

East Lothian is a relatively safe place to live, however the 2024 East Lothian Residents survey showed that 24% of respondents felt threatened by crime a great deal or a fair amount, compared to 24% in 2021 and 4% in 2019.

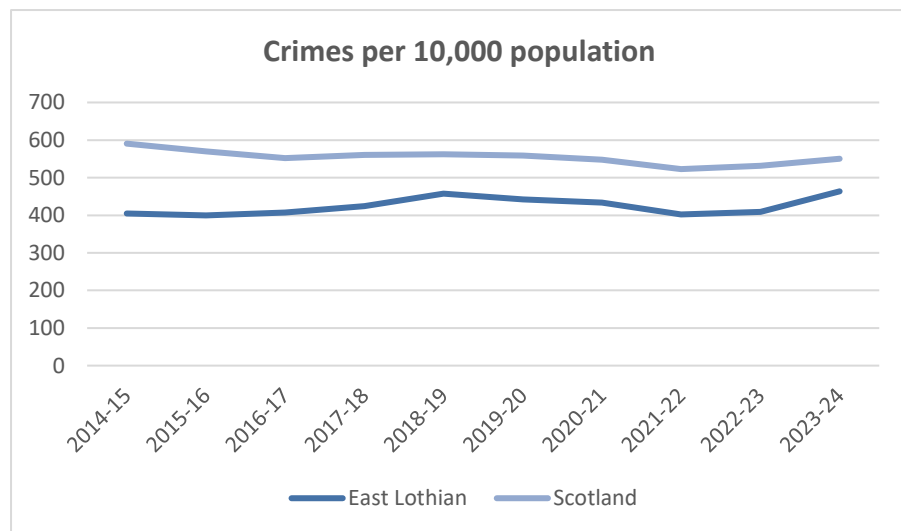
18% of respondents felt that the level of crime in their area was a priority for improvement compared to 17% in 2021 and 1% in 2019.

Overall crime groups and offences were below the Scottish average. However housebreaking was above the national average.

The number of road accidents and fatalities has decreased over the last 3 years, although the number of those seriously injured has increased.

### Did you know?

**Over the last 10 years the overall level of crime in East Lothian has been below the Scottish average.**



### Summary:

- In 2023/24 the number of crimes per 10,000 population was less than the national rate, but 1.4% higher than the previous year. However housebreaking was above the national average.
- In Quarter 4, 2024/25, there were 19 hate incidents and 99 hate crimes, compared to the 5 year average of 23.4 and 84 respectively.
- In Quarter 4, 2024/25 there were 1296 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in East Lothian, 452 of which resulted in a crime or offence (5 year average: 1,182 and 474 respectively).
- The new Domestic Abuse crime generated three crimes in 2023/24, two in 2022/23 and two in 2021/22.
- In 2024/25, there were 509 Adult Support and Protection referrals in East Lothian.
- In 2024/25 there were 112 people referred to Marac, 108 of whom were female. Children were involved in 76.8% of cases.
- During 2023/24 in East Lothian there were 1,803 anti-social behaviour complaints made to East Lothian Council, compared to 1,759 the previous year.
- In 2024, 74 people were injured on East Lothian's roads, less than the 113 in 2023 and 142 in 2022. In 2024, 22 people were seriously injured, and 2 people were killed.
- In 2022/23 there were 118 prison arrivals from East Lothian. This is 1.1 per 1,000 population (Scotland 1.8 per 1,000 population).
- There were 184 accidental and 218 deliberate fires in 2024/25, compared to 170 and 226 respectively in 2023/24.

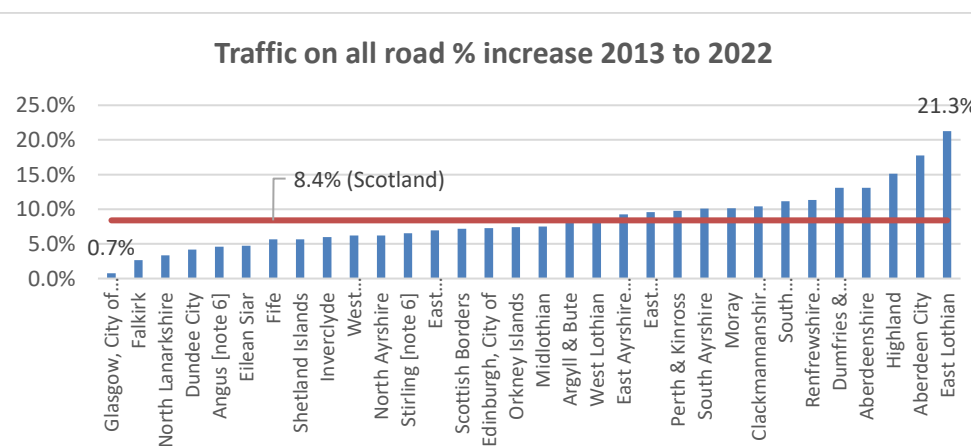
## Transport & Travel

Access to transport is fundamental to maintaining today's lifestyles, whether it is for work, education, leisure or to attain the goods and services people rely on in their daily lives. The dispersed, rural nature of many of East Lothian's settlements also increases the need for travel, with 30 of the 132 data zones in East Lothian falling within the 20% most access deprived in Scotland.

Traffic on East Lothian roads is increasing, the county has a higher number of cars per 1,000 population and a higher rate of petrol consumption than Scotland. One of the key ways for East Lothian to reduce its carbon footprint would be to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport.

### Did you know?

**Traffic on East Lothian roads increased by 21.3% between 2013 and 2022, the highest increase in Scotland (Transport Scotland)**



### Summary:

- SIMD 2020 showed that, 9 (11 in SIMD2016) out of the 132 data zones in East Lothian are within the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland with regard to access to services. 30 (24 in SIMD 2016) data zones are amongst the 20% most access deprived.
- Scotland's Census 2022 showed that 33.9% of East Lothian residents worked from home (Scotland 31.6%).
- Scotland's Census 2022 showed that of those who did not work from home in East Lothian 72.7% commuted by car/motorcycle /taxi, 10.3% on foot/bicycle and 15.9% used public transport (Scotland 73.5%, 12.6% and 12% respectively).
- In 2024, in East Lothian, 64.2% of primary school and 58.5% of secondary school pupils walked, cycled or scooted to school (Scotland 52% and 39.4% respectively).
- Traffic on all East Lothian roads increased by 21.3% from 2013 to 2022, the highest increase in Scotland (national increase 8.4%).
- In East Lothian there were 502 cars registered per 1,000 population aged 17 and over in 2022, higher than the 463 for Scotland as a whole.
- In 2023, East Lothian had 107 electric vehicle charge points.
- In 2023, the number of Blue Badge holders in East Lothian was 6659, 25.8% higher than the 5,293 in 2014 (Scotland increase 24.3%).

## The Environment

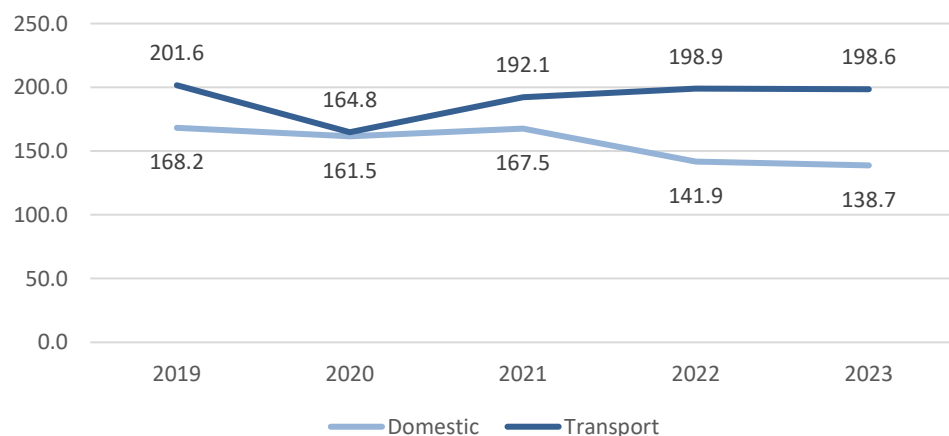
Across the county communities have access to a wide range of public open/green spaces including coastal and countryside sites, woodlands, parks, amenity open spaces, green corridors, village greens, play areas, school grounds and civic spaces which offer positive benefits to the health and well-being of local communities.

The growing population, increase in traffic and the building of new housing developments such as Blindwells may result in an increase in transport carbon emissions. Transport carbon emissions have not been decreasing in line with industry and domestic emissions. However, employer working from home policies may have a positive impact on the environment by reducing commuting.

### Did you know?

**East Lothian had 10.8 tCO<sub>2</sub> per capita carbon emissions in 2018, the second highest rate in Scotland. (UK Govt).**

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions estimates within the scope of influence of local authorities 2019-2023 (kt CO<sub>2</sub>e)**



### Summary:

- The 2023 East Lothian greenhouse gas emissions estimate was 1,253.8 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, 14% lower than the 1,458.3 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2014.
- The 2023 East Lothian greenhouse gas emissions per capita was at 11 tCO<sub>2</sub>e compared to a national average of 6.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.
- At 458.9 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, Blue Circle Cement at Dunbar was the 5<sup>th</sup> highest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> in Scotland in 2023. This is outside of council influence.
- Within the scope of council influence East Lothian's carbon emissions per capita was 4.1 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023, similar to the 4.0 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for Scotland.
- Overall East Lothian's (under council influence) carbon emissions reduced by 9.2% from 509.1 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e 2019 to 462.2 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023. However Transport carbon emissions have remained at a similar level.
- Recycling rates in East Lothian are the third highest in Scotland. East Lothian recycled 55.3% of its waste in 2024, a rise on the figure of 53.1% recorded during the previous year. Across the whole of Scotland, the average household waste recycling rate was 44.3% in 2024.
- In 2024, 49% of East Lothian residents stated that they were satisfied with waste and recycling services, compared to 60% in 2021.
- Large areas of East Lothian are classified as Prime Quality Agricultural Land. 87ha of land was classed as being vacant or derelict in 2024.
- 4 of the 13 beaches in East Lothian monitored by SEPA received an excellent rating in 2025, 6 were good, 2 sufficient and 1 poor.

## Neighbourhood & Place

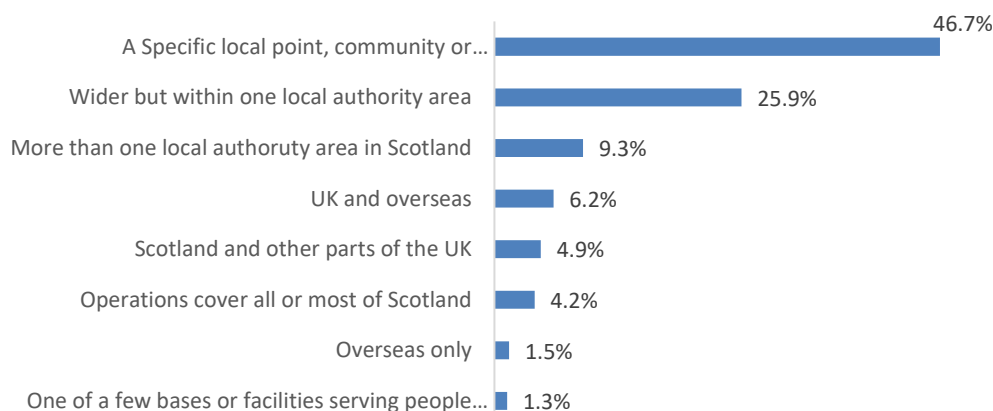
The rural nature of much of East Lothian means that the majority of the population live in geographically distinct towns and villages – each with their own strengths and differing needs.

While each of the East Lothian wards is geographically clustered around one of six major towns it does mean that people across the county have different levels of access to local services and facilities. These variations not only impact on local quality of life and the opportunities available to local residents, but also on the strength and resilience of local communities. As to how people feel about their own neighbourhoods can also influence how much they choose to become involved.

### Did you know?

**There were 452 registered charities in East Lothian in 2025.  
47% of these have a local outreach (OSCR 2025).**

Percentage of East Lothian charities by their outreach 2025



### Summary:

- In 2024, 93% of East Lothian residents felt that their neighbourhood was a very/fairly good place to live.
- In 2024, the top 3 priorities for improvement were road and pavement repairs (75%), health services (55%), and activities for teenagers (33%).
- In 2021, residents felt that safer paths/cycle ways (47%) and more paths (36%), were the changes most likely to encourage them to increase their levels of exercise.
- In 2024, 23% of people in East Lothian had volunteered in the last year, (Scotland 25%).
- In East Lothian, there were 417,382 library visits in 2023/24, which was 23% less than the pre Covid figure of 541,830 in 2019/20.
- The 2021 East Lothian residents survey showed that, 95.6% had internet access, 94.5% used it for looking up information, 92.5% for sending emails, 88.6% for online banking, and 88.6% for online shopping.
- Enjoy Leisure provides 6 sports centres across East Lothian with swim & gym facilities, 1 climbing area, 1 athletics track, 25 locations with playing fields and 2 golf courses.
- Voter turnout in East Lothian remains higher than in Scotland.
- 451 charities were registered with OSCR in East Lothian in 2025 compared to 429 in 2015.

## Council Services

East Lothian Council is the principle service provider within the area and has a responsibility for providing many of the services and facilities that residents rely on in their daily lives.. With an increasing younger and older population, and differing demographic challenges across the area, the Council will have to provide for its service users in dynamic and innovative ways.

### Did you know?

In 2024/25 East Lothian Council provided 23,315 hours of care at home per week to vulnerable adults and older people.

### How money was used by East Lothian Council in 2024/25

Provided 4.7 million household waste collections

Provided over 9,400 council dwellings and 1,100 garages

Looked after 87 vulnerable children in care and foster homes

Maintained 290 parks/pitches/play areas, 1147 km of roads, 647km of footways and Repaired 3,599 potholes

### Summary:

- In 2024, 40% of residents felt that the council provided high quality services, lower than the 43% on 2021.
- In 2024, 40% of residents felt that the council does the best it can with the money available, lower than the 44% in 2021.
- In 2024, 13% of residents felt that the council was good at listening to local people's views before it takes decisions, the same as in 2021.
- In 2024, 12% of residents felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area, and 49% said they would like to be more involved in the decisions.
- The 2024 Residents Survey showed that satisfaction was highest for: Pharmacy (80%), Parks & gardens (73%) and Local bus services (62%).
- The 2024 Residents Survey showed that dissatisfaction was highest for: Roads maintenance (75%), GP services (46%), Waste & recycling (41%) and Street cleaning (39%).
- When compared to the 2021 East Lothian Residents survey, the 2024 survey showed decreases in satisfaction in the following areas: Roads maintenance (-12%), Waste & recycling (-11%), and Dental services (-5%).
- When compared to the 2021 East Lothian Residents survey, the 2024 survey showed increases in satisfaction in the following areas: Libraries (+12%), local buses (+11%), Children's play areas (+10%), Local schools (+8%), Parks & gardens (+6%).

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