



East Lothian Poverty Profile 2026

Version 2: January 2026

The data contained in this version of the Poverty Profile is generally the latest available as at January 2026. Later versions of the Profile may contain more up-to-date data where available.

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Introduction and Summary

This Poverty Profile draws together in one place data from national and local sources to provide a comprehensive analysis of poverty in East Lothian.

These are some of the headlines from the January 2026 profile.

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy at birth for males in East Lothian is 78.8 years compared to 76.8 for males in Scotland and it is 82.0 years for females in East Lothian compared to Scottish average of 80.8 years.

Female life expectancy in North Berwick South is 87.3 years but only 79.0 in Wallyford/ Whitecraig. Male life expectancy is 83.6 years in North Berwick North but only 75.8 in Haddington South.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

Eight (6%) of East Lothian's 132 data zones were ranked in the 20% most deprived in Scotland whilst 26 (20%) were in the 20% least deprived in Scotland. Four of these data zones are in Tranent, three are in Prestonpans and one is in Musselburgh.

More than twice as many people in East Lothian live in data zones that are in the least deprived 20% data zones in Scotland than in the 20% most deprived.

The disparity between wards is evidenced across almost all of the data that goes into developing the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. For example, 13.4% of the Musselburgh's population and 12.5% of Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry was deemed to be income deprived compared to only 4.8% of North Berwick Coastal and 7.9% of Dunbar & East Linton wards.

Child Poverty

Using the most commonly used measure of child poverty – the percentage of children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs – East Lothian was around the Scottish average from 2014 to 2020. However, in the last three years for which data has been reported it fell below the Scottish average, in 2023/24, the East Lothian figure was 22.1% compared to a national average of 23.0%.

Other Child Poverty measures based on before housing costs suggest East Lothian has lower rates of child poverty than the Scottish average. The 2023/24 estimates show that 11.6% of East Lothian children live in families in 'Relative' poverty and 9.1% are in 'Absolute' poverty compared to the Scottish averages of 16.3% and 13.3%.

The child poverty statistics that is available at a ward level show clear and significant disparity between wards. For example, the percentage of children living in 'Relative'

poverty and 'Absolute' poverty varies from 15.6% and 12.5% in the Musselburgh ward to 6.2% and 5.2% in the North Berwick Coastal ward.

Homelessness

East Lothian has a lower level of homelessness than the Scottish average – 116 per 10,000 compared to 133. A lower proportion of homeless people in East Lothian are in temporary accommodation – 61 per 10,000 compared to 68.

Free School Meals

The percentage of secondary pupils registered for free school meals in East Lothian has been consistently below the Scottish average for the last 5 years.

Economic Activity and Earnings

In 2024/25, 87.9% of East Lothian's working age population were economically active compared to the Scottish rate of 76.9%.

In 2024/25 the East Lothian unemployment rate was 2.8%, compared to the Scottish rate of 3.7%.

The hourly rate of pay for people who reside in East Lothian is £19.67, lower than the Scottish rate of £20.23. Males in East Lothian earned £19.74 compared to £18.99 for females. The hourly rate of pay for people who work in East Lothian (£17.50) is lower than the rate of pay for people who reside there (£19.67).

Food and fuel

The last few years have seen significant increases in both food and fuel poverty as a result of the 'cost of living crisis'. There was a 30% reduction in foodbank donations compared to the previous year with purchased items showing an 85% increase.

The latest available national figures for fuel poverty (2017-2019) show that 24% of East Lothian households were estimated as being in fuel poverty, which was the same as the Scottish average.

Health

East Lothian is above the Scottish average for child healthy weight, child dental health, immunisation uptake, and babies breastfed.

Key indicators of adult health – Bowel Screening Uptake, Asthma patient Hospitalisations, COPD patient hospitalisations and CHD patient hospitalisations – are all more positive in East Lothian than the Scottish averages.

However, when compared to Scotland, fewer adults in East Lothian have a healthy weight, 30% compared to 32%.

Universal Credit

The number of Universal Credit claimants in East Lothian increased from 5,842 (Feb 2020) to 11,697 (November 2025) – an 100.2% increase. Across Scotland the increase was 169.4%. In November 2025, 10.4% of East Lothian's population were in Households receiving Universal Credit compared to the Scottish average of 12.7%

In February 2020, 1,668 Universal Credit claimants were seeking work. The number and percentage of working age population seeking work rose from 1,668 (2.5%) to 3,370 (5.1%) in August 2020 then fell to 1,379 (2.1%) in January 2023 but rose slightly through 2023. In November 2025, there were 1,573 Universal Credit claimants in East Lothian seeking work – 2.0% of the working age population. By comparison in February 2020, 2.8% of the Scottish working age population was seeking work, 5.6% in August 2020 and 2.8% in November 2025.

So What?

Having all this data and statistics pulled together in one place is hopefully interesting and useful, but what does it tell us about poverty in East Lothian?

The profile shows that on almost all measures East Lothian has lower levels of poverty than most other parts of Scotland. But the relative 'affluence' of East Lothian masks significant levels of poverty in some parts of the county.

The data consistently shows that Musselburgh, Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry wards have higher levels of poverty than other areas. A plethora of indicators can be used to measure/ compare the relative levels of poverty across East Lothian. The table below provides a general estimate of the proportion of poverty levels across East Lothian's six wards based on various actual and proxy measures provided by SIMD 2020 and the other sources summarised in this profile.

Estimate of proportion of East Lothian's poverty across six wards

Ward

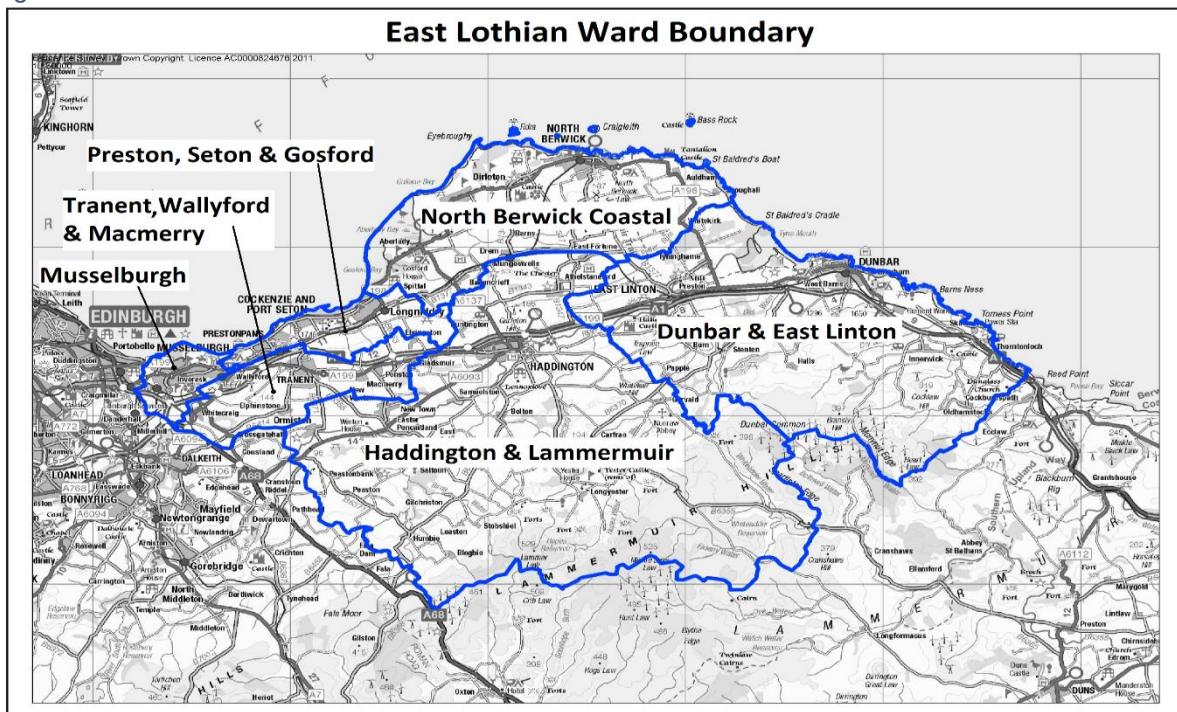
Musselburgh	24%
Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry	24%
Preston Seton Gosford	18%
Haddington & Lammermuir	16%
Dunbar & East Linton	10%
North Berwick Coastal	8%

This profile is up-to-date as at January 2026. But data is being updated at different times and for different periods. Some data in this profile is already several years old (e.g. the latest Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation was published in February 2020 but was based on data from 2019 or even earlier, some going back to the 2011 census). To keep the profile as current and relevant as possible we hope to be able to provide updates twice a year.

Population

East Lothian covers 679 Km² and is largely rural. There are 6 main towns, Musselburgh, Tranent, Prestonpans, North Berwick and Haddington. It is bordered by Edinburgh and Midlothian to the west and the Scottish Borders to the south. East Lothian is divided into 6 Wards shown in the map below.

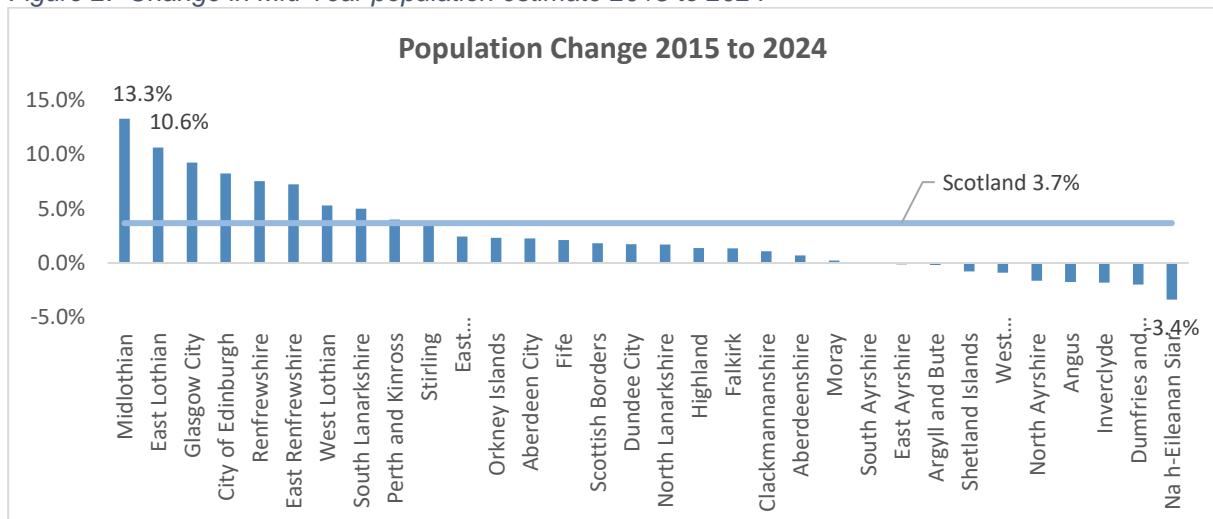
Figure 1: East Lothian Council Ward Boundaries



Source: Earthlight GIS, East Lothian Council

Between 2015 and 2024, East Lothian has had the second highest increase in population of any Scottish local authority. Between the 2015 and 2024, East Lothian's population increased from 104,110 to 115,180 – an increase of 10.6%.

Figure 2: Change in Mid Year population estimate 2015 to 2024



Source: National Records of Scotland, Mid-Year Population Estimates

The 2023 & 2024 mid-year population estimates are not yet available at ward level. The 2022 mid-year population estimates have been used for Table 1 which shows that there was estimated to be 20,161 children aged 0-15 years in East Lothian accounting for 17.9% of the overall population. This proportion is higher than the Scottish estimate of 16.4%.

The Dunbar and East Linton ward has the highest percentage of 0 to 15 year olds as a percentage of its overall population (19.8%), whereas North Berwick Coastal has the highest percentage of 65 and over (28%).

Table 1: 2022 Mid-Year Population Estimates

Mid-Year Population Estimate 2022	0 to 15	16 to 64	65 and over	All	0 to 15	16 to 64	65 and over
Dunbar & East Linton	3101	9175	3356	15632	19.8%	58.7%	21.5%
Haddington & Lammermuir	3772	12297	4709	20778	18.2%	59.2%	22.7%
Musselburgh	3082	12298	3975	19355	15.9%	63.5%	20.5%
North Berwick Coastal	2638	8119	4178	14935	17.7%	54.4%	28.0%
Preston Seton Gosford	2931	10890	3917	17738	16.5%	61.4%	22.1%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	4637	15633	3752	24022	19.3%	65.1%	15.6%
East Lothian	20161	68412	23887	112460	17.9%	60.8%	21.2%
Scotland	891830	3457768	1097402	5447000	16.4%	63.5%	20.1%

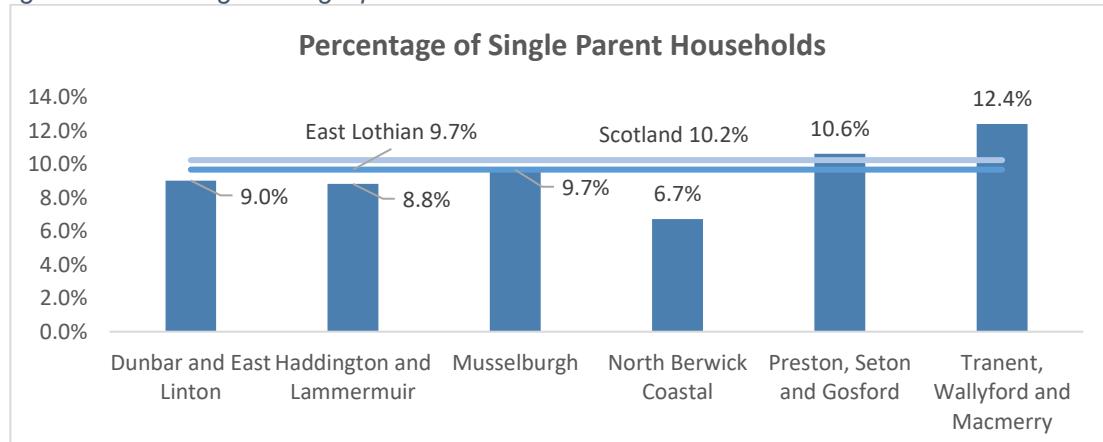
Source: National Records of Scotland, 2022 Mid-Year Population Estimate

Households

Scotland's Census 2022 showed that the number of lone parent households in East Lothian to be 4,877; an increase of 160 (3.4%) from Census 2011.

9.7% of households in East Lothian are single parent households, lower than the Scottish figure of 10.2%.

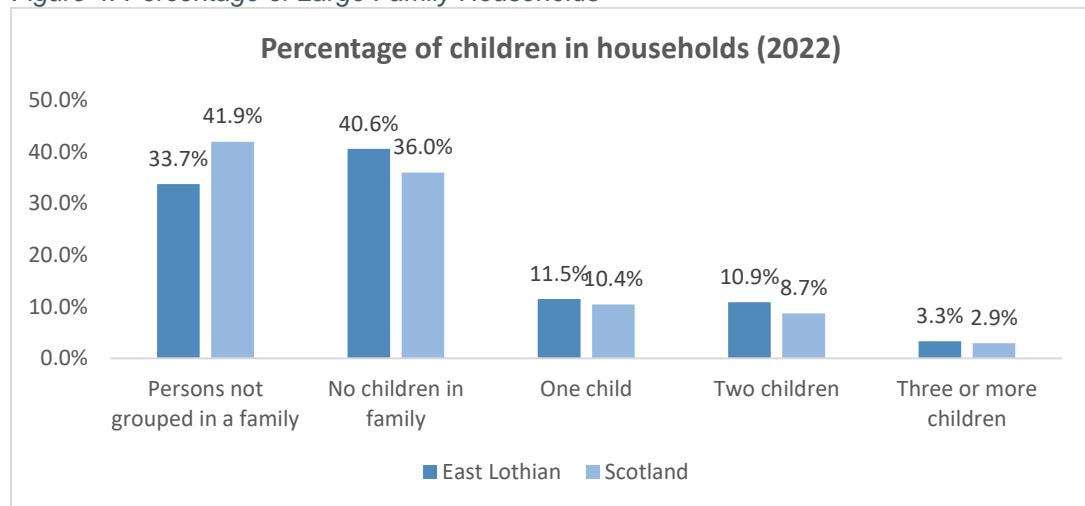
Figure 3: Percentage of single parent households



Source: Scotland's Census 2022

Scotland's Census 2022 showed that 25.7% of households in East Lothian had dependent children, lower than the 28.7% in the 2011 census. Figure 4 shows the percentage of households with dependent children.

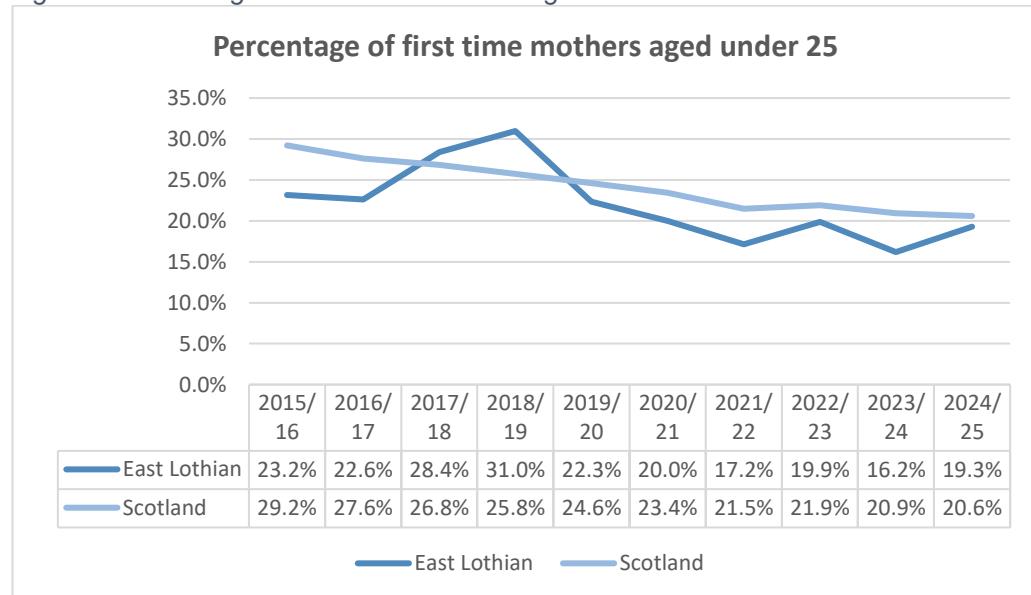
Figure 4: Percentage of Large Family Households



Source: Scotland's Census 2022

Figure 5 displays data on first time mothers aged under 25 years as a percentage of all first mothers. The chart shows data for each financial year and is based on date of mother's discharge from hospital. In the period 2024-24, 19.3% of first-time mothers in East Lothian were aged under 25 years; lower than the Scottish figure of 20.6%.

Figure 5: Percentage of First Time Mothers Aged Under 25 Years



Source: Public Health Scotland – Open Data Scottish Morbidity Record (SMR02) – Number of maternities for first births and non-births by deprivation and mothers age group.

Ethnicity

The 2022 Census shows that just 2% of East Lothian's population is from non-white minority ethnic groups and 1% are from mixed or multiple ethnic groups.

Table 2: Non-White Minority Ethnic - % of total population

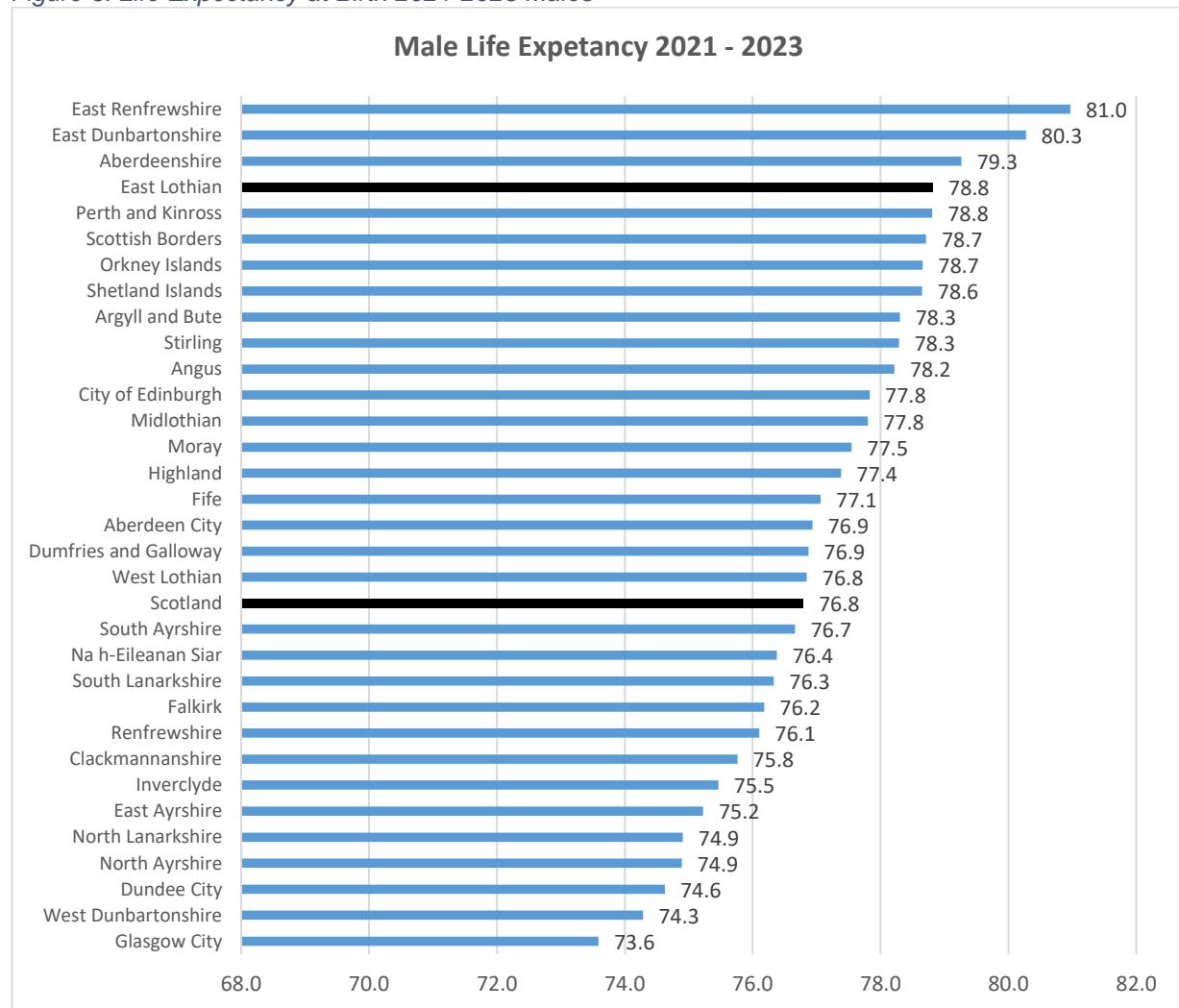
	White Total	Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group	Asian Total	African Total	Caribbean or Black Total	Other Ethnic Groups Total
Number	108,844	1,164	1,368	315	99	496
% of total pop	96.9%	1.03%	1.22%	0.28%	0.09%	0.44%

Source: 2022 Census

Life Expectancy

Figure 6 shows that East Lothian has a male life expectancy at birth of 78.8 years, which is the fourth highest in Scotland and higher than the national average of 76.8 years.

Figure 6: Life Expectancy at Birth 2021-2023 Males

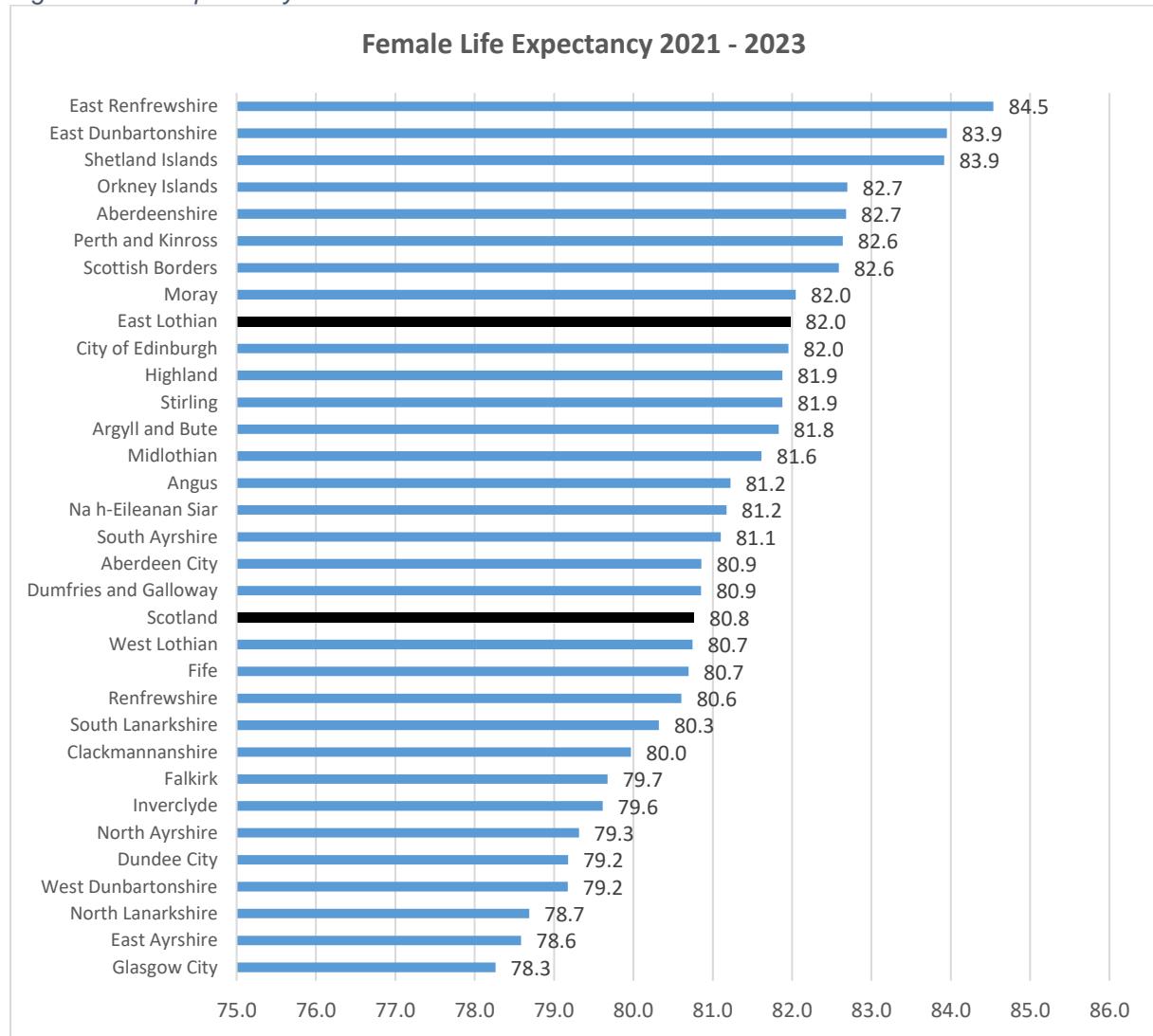


Source: National Records of Scotland – Life Expectancy in Scotland 2021-2023

Figure 7 shows that East Lothian has a female life expectancy at birth of 82 years, which is the 9th highest in Scotland and higher than the national average of 80.8 years.

Female life expectancy in East Lothian is 3.2 years higher than the male life expectancy. Across Scotland as a whole females have a life expectancy 4 years higher than males.

Figure 7: Life Expectancy at Birth 2021-2023 - Females



Source: National Records of Scotland – Life Expectancy in Scotland 2021-2023

Healthy Life Expectancy is defined as the average number of years of life that people spend in good health. This measure is 60.7 years for males and 68.4 for females in East Lothian. This is higher than the Scottish average of 60.4 and 61.1 respectively.

It is important to note that the life expectancy and healthy life expectancy figures can mask inequalities, as some areas within East Lothian have significantly lower life expectancy than others. For example, female life expectancy in North Berwick South is 87.3 years but only 79 in Wallyford/ Whitecraig. Male life expectancy is 83.6 years in North Berwick North but only 75.8 in Haddington South.

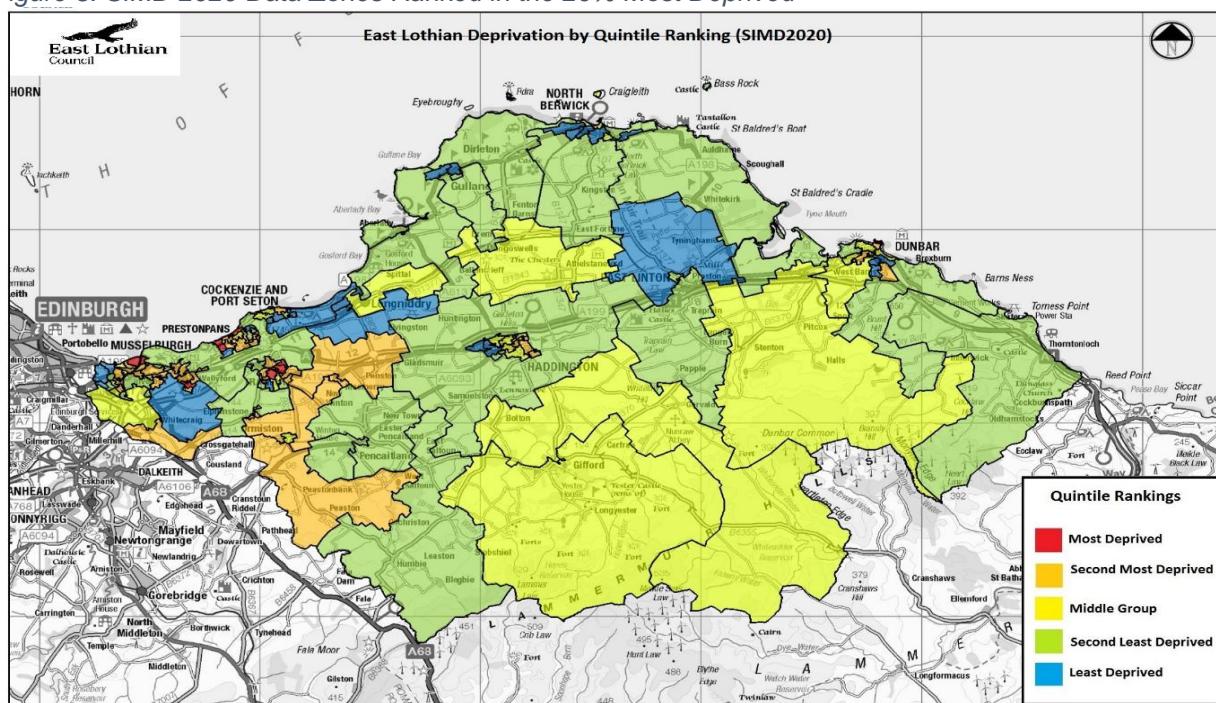
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's tool for measuring relative deprivation and identifying the most deprived areas in Scotland. The SIMD 2020 splits Scotland into 6,976 small areas, called 'data zones', with roughly equal populations.

A total of 34 indicators of deprivation are grouped into seven 'domains - income; employment; health; education, geographic access to services; crime; and housing. Each domain is ranked and an overall SIMD ranking is produced using a weighting of all seven domains with higher weighting given to the income and employment domains. The 6,976 data zones in Scotland are ranked from 1 (most deprived) to 6,976 (least deprived). The Scottish Government uses 20% as a marker for the "Most Deprived".

The SIMD 2020 reported that eight of East Lothian's 132 data zones were ranked in the 20% most deprived in Scotland but 26 data zones in East Lothian are in the 20% least deprived in Scotland. The map below shows the location of the data zones in East Lothian. The 8 East Lothian data zones in the 20% most deprived in Scotland are found to the west of the county (four in the Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry ward, three in the Preston Seton Gosford ward, and one in the Musselburgh ward).

Figure 8: SIMD 2020 Data Zones Ranked in the 20% Most Deprived



Source: East Lothian Council

The Scottish Government used the 2017 mid-year population estimates for the 2020 SIMD calculations. The following table shows the population living in each Ward and the breakdown of people who live in data zones ranked in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

The Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry ward has the greatest proportion of its population (12.7%) living in the 20% most deprived data zones, followed by Preston Seton Gosford (11%) and Musselburgh (3.3%).

Table 3: Ward – Population (mid-year estimate 2017) living in data zones ranked in the 20% most deprived in the SIMD 2020

Ward	Total / Working Age Population	No of data zones in 20% most deprived	Population in 20% most deprived	%	Working Age population in 20% most deprived	% of Population who live in 20% most deprived who are of working age
Dunbar & East Linton	14,406 / 8620	0	0	0.0%	0	0%
Haddington & Lammermuir (H & L)	17,915 / 10,928	0	0	0.0%	0	0%
Musselburgh	19,491 / 12,581	1	652	3.3%	410	62.9%
North Berwick Coastal (NBC)	13,226 / 7,370	0	0	0.0%	0	0%
Preston Seton Gosford (PSG)	18,030 / 11,291	3	1,979	11.0%	1,253	63.3%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry (TWM)	21,772 / 14,143	4	2,770	12.7%	1,709	61.7%
East Lothian	104,840 / 64,933	8	5,401	5.2%	3,372	62.4%

Source: Scottish Government, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

According to SIMD 2020 1,151 children (aged 0-15 years) in East Lothian live within the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland, this accounts for 6% of children in that age group in East Lothian overall. Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry has the highest proportion of 0 to 15 year olds (14.7%) in the 20% most deprived data zones.

Table 4: Child (0-15) population within 5% and 20% most deprived

Ward	0 to 15 years (All)	0 to 15 within 20%	%
Dunbar & East Linton	2876	0	0.0%
Haddington & Lammermuir	3194	0	0.0%
Musselburgh	3202	141	4.4%
North Berwick Coastal	2257	0	0.0%
Preston Seton Gosford	3196	375	11.7%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	4326	635	14.7%
East Lothian	19051	1151	6.0%

Source: Scottish Government, SIMD 2020

Table 5 compares the number of children living in Scotland's 20% most deprived data zones between the 2016 and 2020 SIMDs. Overall the proportion of East Lothian children living in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland increased from 4.4% to 6%. Whilst there were no children in the Musselburgh ward were living in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland in SIMD 2016 there were 4.4% in SIMD2020. Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry showed an increase from 9.9% to 14.7%, whilst Preston Seton Gosford remained at a similar level.

Table 5: Comparison of child population within the 20% most deprived – SIMD 2016 and 2020

Ward	SIMD2016	SIMD2020
	0 to 15 year olds within 20%	0 to 15 year olds within 20%
Dunbar & East Linton	0.0%	0.0%
Haddington & Lammermuir	0.0%	0.0%
Musselburgh	0.0%	4.4%
North Berwick Coastal	0.0%	0.0%
Preston Seton Gosford	11.9%	11.7%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	9.9%	14.7%
East Lothian	4.2%	6.0%

Source: Scottish Government, SIMD 2016 and 2020

SIMD 2020 Employment and Income Domains

The two SIMD domain that have the greatest weighting in determining overall SIMD rankings are the Employment and Income domains.

The employment domain in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation examines unemployment claimant counts averaged over 12 months, working age incapacity benefit or employment support allowance recipients and working age severe disablement allowance recipients.

Table 6 shows the number of people estimated to be in employment deprivation in East Lothian. 5,265 people accounting for 8.1% of the working age population in East Lothian were classed as being employment deprived in SIMD2020, compared to 9.3% across Scotland as a whole. Within East Lothian the proportion of working age population ranged from 10.2% in Musselburgh to 4.2% in North Berwick Coastal.

Table 6: SIMD 2020 – Percentage of the working age population who are classed as employment deprived

Wards	Working age population	Count of people who are classed as employment deprived	%
Dunbar & East Linton	8620	564	6.5%
Haddington & Lammermuir	10928	835	7.6%
Musselburgh	12581	1279	10.2%
North Berwick Coastal	7370	307	4.2%
Preston Seton Gosford	11291	1016	9.0%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	14143	1264	8.9%
East Lothian	64933	5265	8.1%
Scotland	3494791	324791	9.3%

Source: Scottish Government, SIMD 2020

The income domain in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation examines adults and children in Income Support or Income-based Employment Support Allowance households, adults in Guarantee Pension Credit households, adults and children in Job Seekers Allowance households and adults and children in Tax Credit families.

Table 7 shows the number of people estimated to be income deprivation in East Lothian, 10,711 people, 10.2% of the total population in East Lothian, were classed

as being income deprived in SIMD2020, compared to 12.1% across Scotland as a whole. Within East Lothian the proportion of the population ranged from 13.4% in Musselburgh to 4.8% in North Berwick Coastal.

Table 7: Percentage of the population who are classed as income deprived

Ward	Total population	Count of population classed as Income deprived	%
Dunbar & East Linton	14,406	1,132	7.9%
Haddington & Lammermuir	17,915	1,639	9.1%
Musselburgh	19,491	2,614	13.4%
North Berwick Coastal	13,226	632	4.8%
Preston Seton Gosford	18,030	1,968	10.9%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	21,772	2,726	12.5%
East Lothian	104,840	10,711	10.2%
Scotland	5,424,800	654,561	12.1%

Source: Scottish Government, SIMD 2020

Child Poverty

There are various measures used to determine levels of Child Poverty. The most commonly used is the Percentage of Children in Poverty (After Housing Costs). This estimates the percentage of children living in households with below 60% median income after housing costs. The data is published by End Child Poverty in June of each year with a one-year time lag.

The latest data available (Table 8), which is for 2023/24 was published in June 2025.¹ This shows that the percentage of children living in poverty after housing costs in East Lothian increased from 21.3% in 2022/23 to 22.1% in 2023/24. The national figure decreased from 24% to 23%.

Table 8: Child Poverty Rates After Housing Costs across East Lothian and Scotland

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
East Lothian	21.9%	22.5%	23.4%	24.7%	22.7%	24.5%	18.9%	21.1%	21.3%	22.1%
Scotland	21.6%	22.8%	23.4%	24.2%	23.2%	24.3%	24.6%	24.5%	24.0%	23.0%

Source: End Child Poverty, Child Poverty in your area, 2014/15-2023/24

The large variations in East Lothian's figure whilst the Scottish average remains around the same level suggests that the local authority level data may be liable to sampling and other statistical influences. The End child Poverty report includes the caveat that: *"Due to sampling issues during 2021/22 related to the Covid-19 pandemic, additional caution may be required in interpreting these statistics. While the data for full year ending 2021 and full year ending 2022 has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication, users exercise additional caution when using the data for these years, particularly when making comparisons with previous years and for local areas across countries. We further recommend particular caution in interpreting year-on-year*

¹ <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>

changes in local areas and advise focussing on longer-term trends when looking at change over time.”

Two measures are used to estimate the percentage of Children in Low Income Families Before Housing Costs: relative and absolute low income.

Relative low income is defined as a family in low income Before Housing Costs (BHC) in the reference year. A family must have claimed Child Benefit and at least one other household benefit (Universal Credit, tax credits or Housing Benefit) at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics.

Absolute low income is defined as a family in low income Before Housing Costs (BHC) in the reference year in comparison with incomes in financial year 2010/2011. A family must have claimed Child Benefit and at least one other household benefit (Universal Credit, tax credits or Housing Benefit) at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics.

Table 9 shows that 11.6% of children (0 to 15 years) in East Lothian were estimated to be in relative poverty in 2023/24, compared to 16.3% across Scotland as a whole. Based on the absolute poverty measure, 9.1% of children in East Lothian were in living in absolute poverty in 2023/24, compared to 13.3% across Scotland as a whole.

Both these measures show consistent trends across East Lothian’s six wards with Musselburgh having the highest levels of relative and absolute poverty – 15.6% and 12.5% - whilst North Berwick Coastal has the lowest in both measures – 6.2% and 5.2%.

Table 9: The number and percentage of children (Aged Under 16) – Living in Relative and Absolute Low Income Families (before housing costs)

% of 0 to 15 year olds in Low Income Families 2023/24 by ward					
Ward	Relative Poverty	Absolute Poverty	0 to 15 population 2022	% of 0 to 15 population (Relative)	% of 0 to 15 population (Absolute)
Dunbar & East Linton	270	213	3101	8.7%	6.9%
Haddington & Lammermuir	423	342	3772	11.2%	9.1%
Musselburgh	480	384	3082	15.6%	12.5%
North Berwick Coastal	164	138	2638	6.2%	5.2%
Preston Seton Gosford	398	308	2931	13.6%	10.5%
Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry	607	449	4637	13.1%	9.7%
East Lothian	2341	1838	20,161	11.6%	9.1%
Scotland	145804	118341	891,830	16.3%	13.3%

Source: Stat x-plore Children in low income families (Relative and Absolute)

Table 10 shows that in East Lothian 54.8% of children (0 to 15 years) in Relative Low Income families were in lone parent households, compared to 55.5% across Scotland.

The East Lothian figure ranges from 53% in Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry to 57.9% in North Berwick Coastal.

Table 10: The number and percentage of children (Aged Under 16) – Living in Relative Low Income Lone Parent and Couple Families (before housing costs) 2023/24

Children (0 to 15 years) in Relative Low income Families Before Housing Costs (2023/24)					
	Lone Parent	Couple	Total	Lone Parent %	Couple %
Dunbar and East Linton	153	113	270	56.7%	41.9%
Haddington and Lammermuir	228	195	423	53.9%	46.1%
Musselburgh	264	214	480	55.0%	44.6%
North Berwick Coastal	95	68	164	57.9%	41.5%
Preston, Seton and Gosford	220	173	398	55.3%	43.5%
Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry	322	287	607	53.0%	47.3%
East Lothian	1284	1056	2341	54.8%	45.1%
Scotland	80898	64905	145804	55.5%	44.5%

Source: Stat x-plore Children in low income families (Relative)

The data (Table 11) also shows that 580 East Lothian children (aged 0 to 15) in relative low income (before housing costs) were in non-working families/ households. This also shows that in East Lothian just under 83.3% of children in non-working families were within Lone Parent households, higher than the 74.5% across Scotland.

Table 11: Percentage of children (aged under 16) – Living in relative low income families within non working families (before housing costs) 2023/24

Not in Working Families (2023/24)					
	Lone Parent	Couple	Total	Lone Parent %	Couple %
Dunbar and East Linton	33	6	40	82.5%	15.0%
Haddington and Lammermuir	89	24	113	78.8%	21.2%
Musselburgh	121	14	135	89.6%	10.4%
North Berwick Coastal	38	8	44	86.4%	18.2%
Preston, Seton and Gosford	70	9	82	85.4%	11.0%
Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry	129	33	167	77.2%	19.8%
East Lothian	483	97	580	83.3%	16.7%
Scotland	37190	12723	49912	74.5%	25.5%

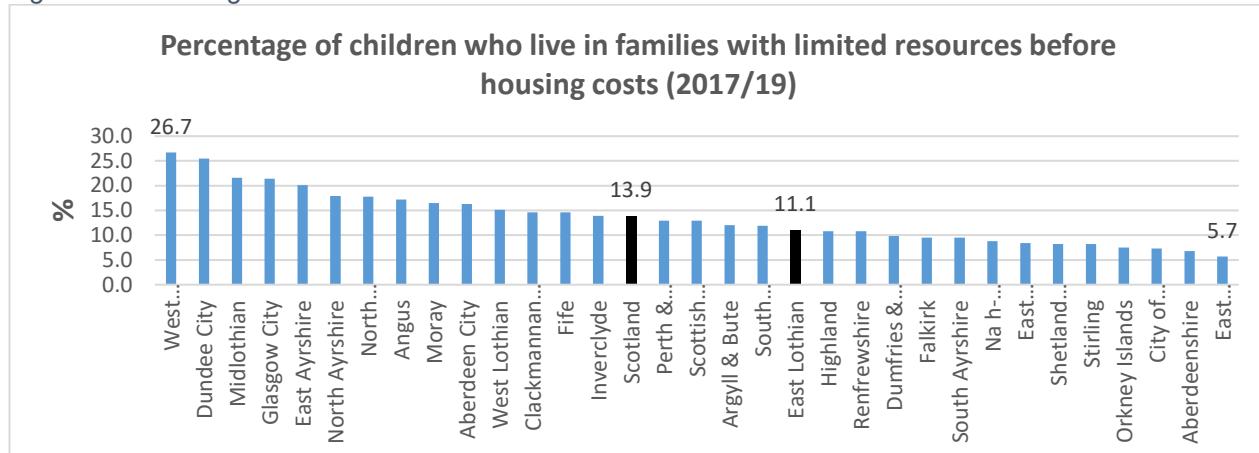
Source: Stat Xplore – Children in relative low income families –work status (totals may not sum due to disclosure control applied)

Another measure of child poverty which has been trialled by the Scottish Government to inform one of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act targets is Children in Families with Limited Resources. The Scottish Government published a report on this measure for the years 2017-19 in September 2021². The limited resources measure looks at children in families that have both low income and cannot afford three or more out of a list of 22 basic necessities. The list of necessities was developed for a Scottish context and is based on what stakeholders and the public agree is a basic necessity and what satisfies statistical requirements for a robust measure of limited resources.

² The statistics in this publication are experimental statistics meaning that the data and methodology used to collate the figures are being developed for future updates

Families are defined as being on a low income if the household income is below 70% of the Scottish median income (this may be calculated before or after housing costs). As is shown in Figure 9, the Scottish Government estimated that in 2017-2019 11.1% of children in East Lothian were living in families with limited resources before housing costs, compared to the Scottish average of 13.9%.

Figure 9: Percentage of children who live in families with limited resources 2017-2019



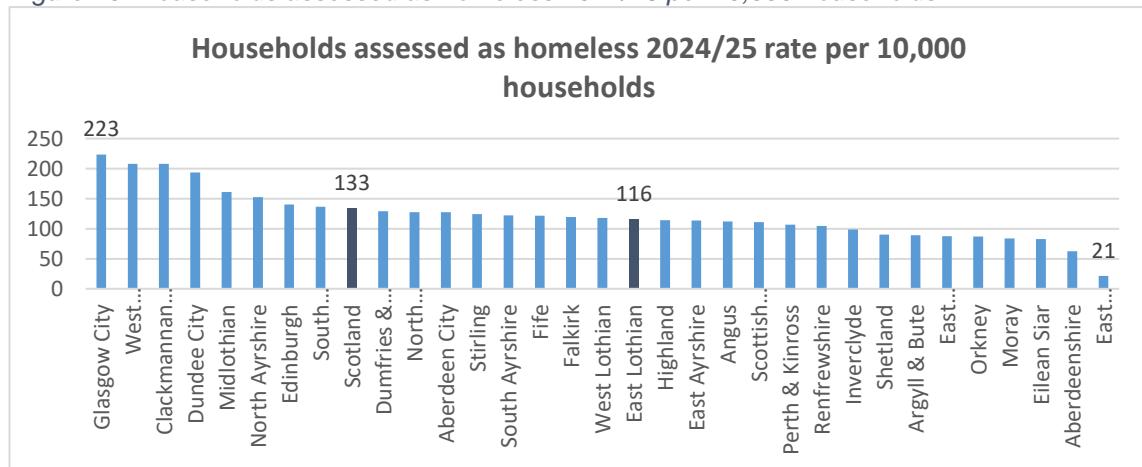
Source: Scottish Government, Children in Families with Limited Resources across Scotland (2017-19) (Experimental statistics)

However, as with some of the other child poverty data, it needs to be used with caution. The limited resources local measure is not strictly comparable to the national-level statistics. This is based on data from the Family Resources Survey which does not allow local breakdowns due to sample sizes.

Homelessness and People in Temporary Accommodation

In 2024/25, there were 585 applications that were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in East Lothian. This equates to 116 per 10,000 households, less than the national rate of 133. There were 903 people associated with these applications – 661 adults and 242 children. Figure 10 shows the number of households assessed as homeless across all local authorities in Scotland.

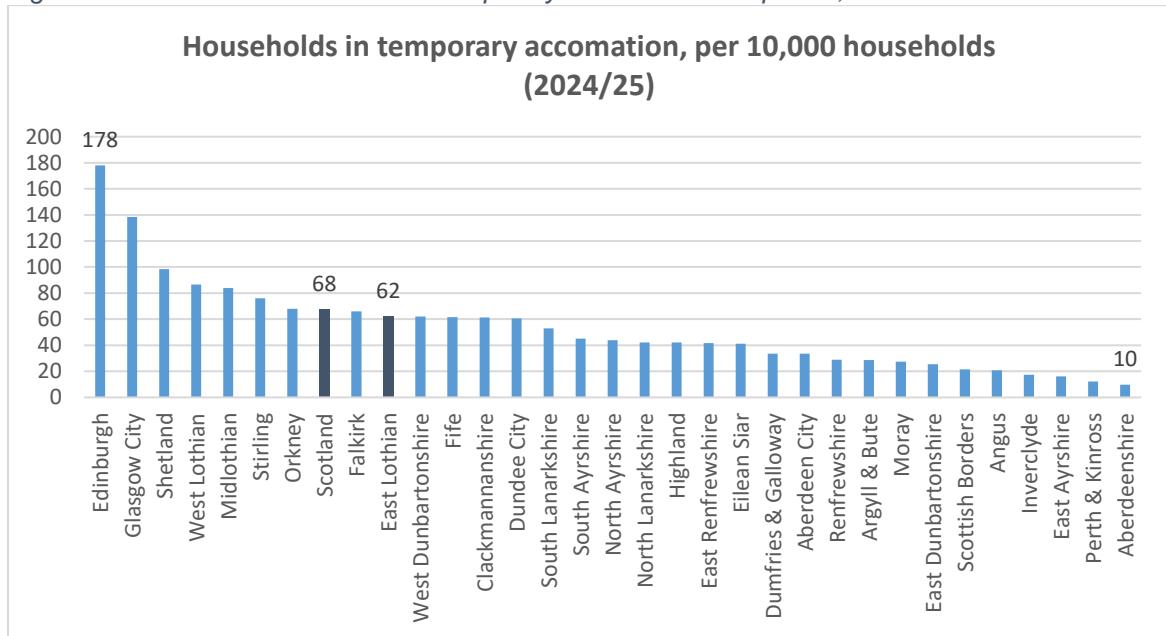
Figure 10: Households assessed as homeless 2024/25 per 10,000 households



Source: Scottish Government, Homelessness in Scotland 2024-2025

In 2024/25, there were 315 households in temporary accommodation in East Lothian. This is 62 per 10,000 households, which is lower than the national average of 68. Of these households, 45 were households with children or a pregnant woman. 90 children were in temporary accommodation.

Figure 11: Number of households in temporary accommodation per 10,000 households

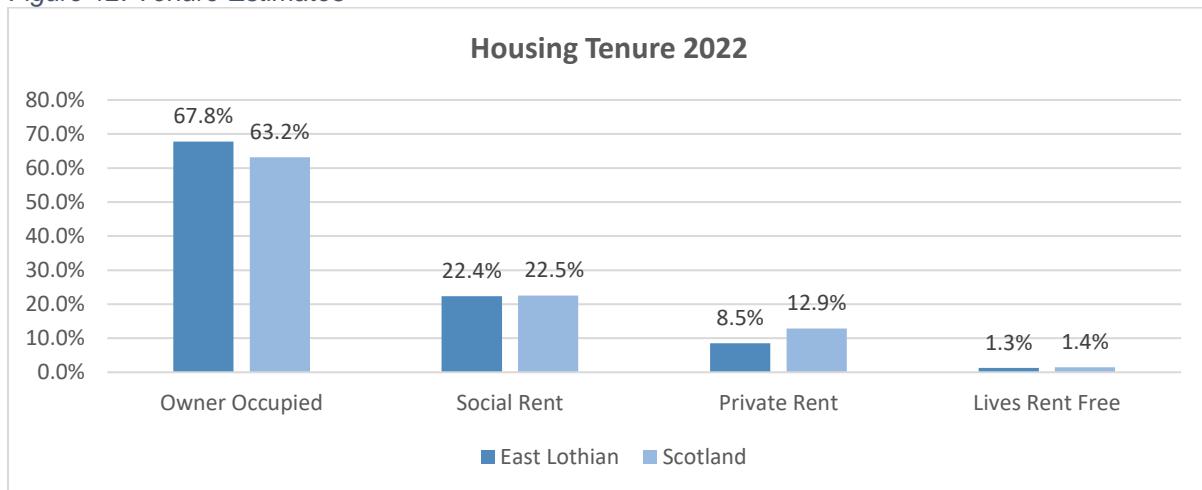


Source: Scottish Government, Homelessness in Scotland 2024-2025, Number of households in temporary accommodation per 10,000 households

Housing costs

Figure 12 shows that private rentals accounted for 8.5% of housing in East Lothian, lower than the 12.9% across Scotland as a whole.

Figure 12: Tenure Estimates



Source: Scotland's Census 2022

The Scottish Government Private Rent Statistics 2010-2025 publication reported that in 2025 the mean monthly rent of private rented properties in Lothian (Edinburgh,

East Lothian and Midlothian) was £1057 for a one bedroom property, £1356 for a two bedroom property and £1802 for a three bedroom property, the highest in Scotland for all three categories.

The average weekly rent for council houses in East Lothian is significantly lower than for private rented properties.

In 2024/25 the average weekly rent for a council house was £79.44 (c. £344 per month). This was the 5th lowest of any local authority in Scotland and lower than any of the three other Lothian authorities – Edinburgh (£106.44), Midlothian (£87.20) and West Lothian (£86.13).

Vulnerable Children

In 2023/24 there were 193 children looked after in East Lothian, this represents 0.8% of the 0 to 17 year old mid-year 2023 population estimate compared to the Scottish average of 1.2%.

Table 12 shows the looked after children by the type of accommodation, 43.5% of looked after children in East Lothian were at home with parents or with friends/relatives compared to 54.1% across Scotland as a whole.

Table 12: Children looked after by type of accommodation 2023/24

Local authority	At home with parents	With friends / relatives	With foster carers provided by LA	With foster carers purchased by LA	In other community	In local authority home/ Voluntary Home	In other residential care	Total
East Lothian No,	40	44	62	7	8	10	22	193
East Lothian %	20.7%	22.8%	32.1%	3.6%	4.1%	5.2%	11.4%	100.0%
Scotland %	19.5%	34.6%	21.6%	9.5%	3.6%	5.1%	6.0%	100.0%

Source: Scot Govt. Children's Social Work Statistics 2022-23 Looked After Children

School Pupil Numbers and Free School Meals

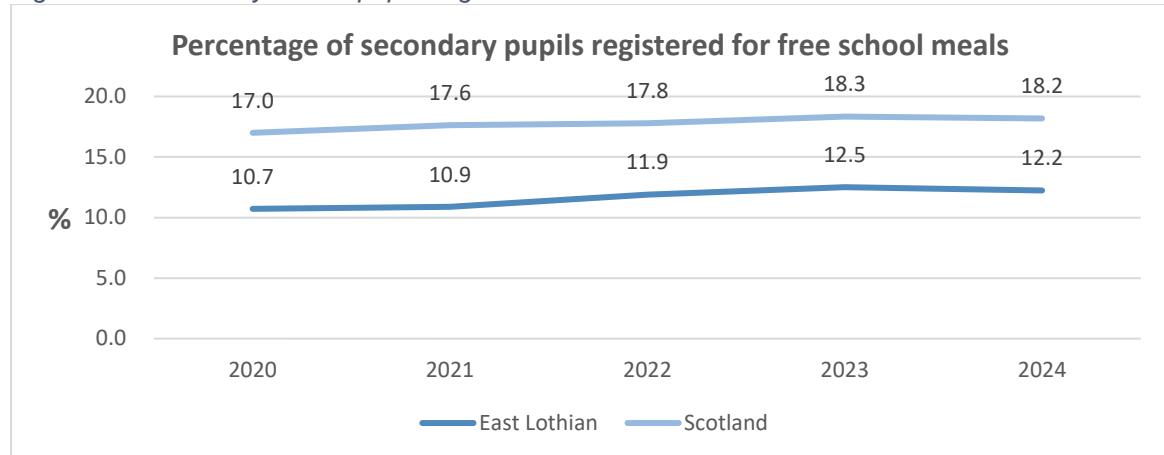
In East Lothian there are 34 Primary schools and 7 secondary schools. The Scottish Government Pupil Census reported that:

- In 2025 there were 8,402 Primary School pupils and 6,837 Secondary School pupils in East Lothian.
- In 2024, 929 pupils were assessed or declared as having a disability. This equates to a rate of 109.6 per 1,000 pupils, the 3rd highest rate in Scotland. (Scottish average of 37.1 per 1,000 pupils).
- In 2024, 69 (0.5%) pupils were refugees, which is half of the Scottish average of 1.0%.
- In 2024, 871 (5.8%) pupils were of an ethnic minority, which is less than half of the Scottish average of 12.4%.

- In 2024, 32.8% of primary pupils and 44.0% of secondary pupils have Additional Support Needs, compared to the Scottish average of 34.6% and 46.1 %respectively.

The percentage of secondary pupils registered for free school meals in East Lothian has been consistently below the Scottish average for the last 5 years. In 2024 12.2% of East Lothian secondary school pupils were registered for free school meals, lower than the 18.2% across Scotland.

Figure 13: Secondary school pupils registered for free school meals 2020-2024

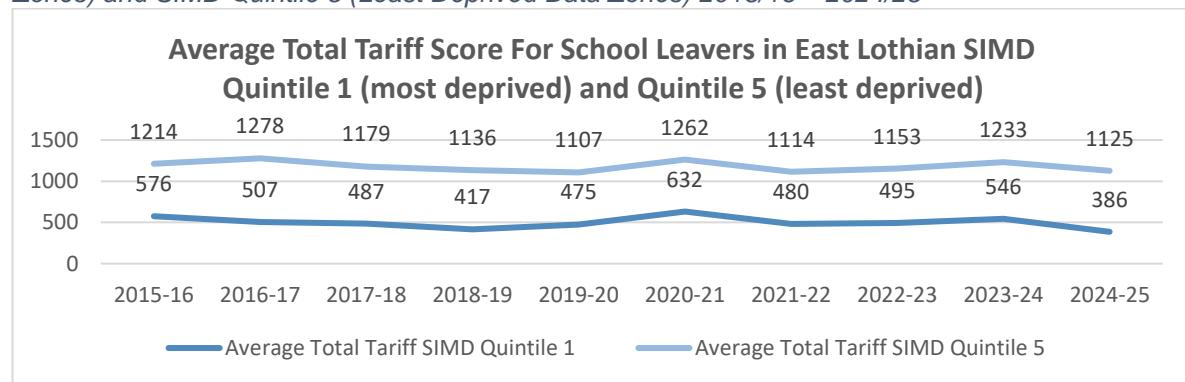


Source: Scottish Government – Pupil Census 2024 Supplementary statistics – Table 7.14 – Secondary pupils registered for free school meals by local authority 2019-2024

School Attainment

Figure 14 shows that in 2024/25 the average total tariff score for school leavers in East Lothian living in SIMD Quintile 1 (20% most deprived data zones) was 386, compared to 1,125 for school leavers in SIMD Quintile 5 (20% least deprived data zones).

Figure 14: Average Total Tariff score for school leavers living in SIMD Quintile 1 (Most Deprived Data Zones) and SIMD Quintile 5 (Least Deprived Data Zones) 2015/16 – 2024/25

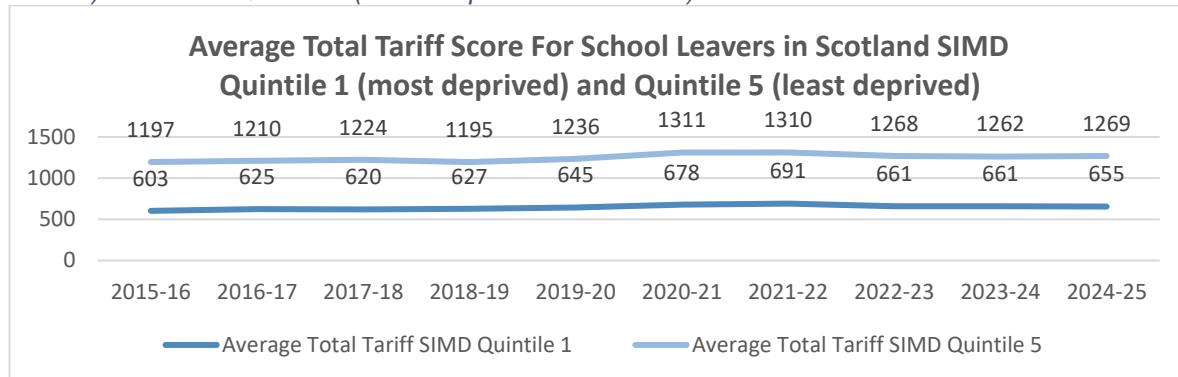


Source: Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF) – 2024-25 LGBF Raw Data. Caution should be taken when comparing results over time as different assessment approaches were undertaken in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic

Caution should be taken when comparing attainment levels across SIMD quintiles between East Lothian and Scotland as there are relatively small numbers of East Lothian pupils in areas that fall within SIMD quintile 1 taking exams in any one year.

However, figure 15 shows that in 2024/25 the average total tariff score for school leavers in Scotland living in SIMD Quintile 1 stood at 655 compared to 1,269 for those in SIMD Quintile 5.

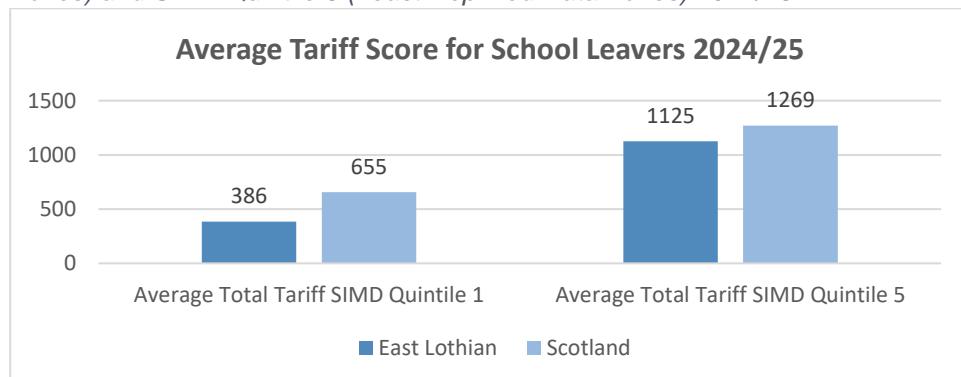
Figure 15: Average Total Tariff Score for School leavers living in SIMD Quintile 1 (Most Deprived Data Zones) and SIMD Quintile 5 (Least Deprived Data Zones) – Scotland 2015/16 – 2023/25



Source: Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF) – 2024-25LGBF Raw Data.

The Average Tariff scores in East Lothian in 2024/25 were lower than the Scottish figure for both SIMD Quintile 1 and SIMD Quintile 5. The attainment gap in East Lothian between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 was 739, which was higher than the 614 Scottish average.

Figure 16: Average Total Tariff Score for School leavers living in SIMD Quintile 1 (Most Deprived Data Zones) and SIMD Quintile 5 (Least Deprived Data Zones) 2024/25



Source: Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF) – 2024-25LGBF Raw Data. Caution should be taken when comparing results over time as different assessment approaches were undertaken in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic

The “Percentage of young adults (16-19 year olds) participating in education, training or employment” (Annual Participation Measure - APM) has replaced the school leaver destination follow up indicator as the principal measure of positive destinations for school leavers. In 2025, the APM in East Lothian was 94.8%, compared to the Scottish average of 93.3%.

Economic Activity and Earnings

In 2024/25, 87.9% of the working age population in East Lothian were economically active, which was greater than the Scottish rate of 76.9%. East Lothian has a higher percentage of people who are self-employed when compared to Scotland.

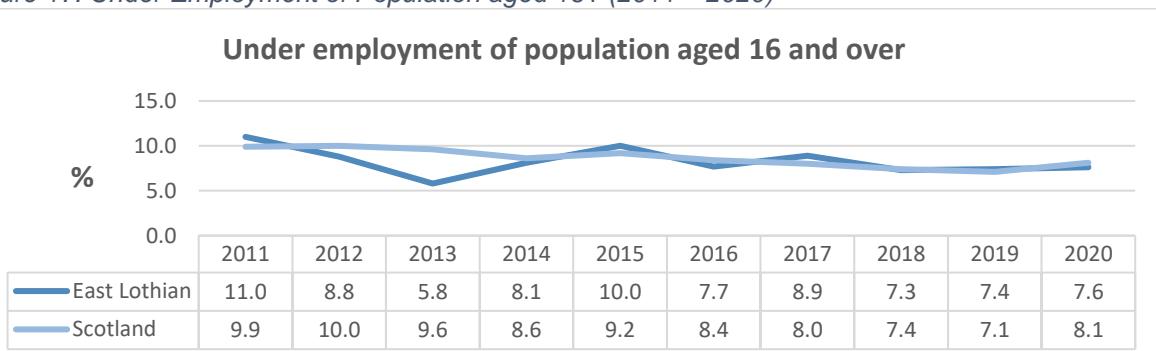
Table 13: Economically Active

Jul 2024 to Jun 2025	East Lothian No.	East Lothian %	Scotland %
Economic activity rate - aged 16-64	61,400	87.9	76.9
Employment rate - aged 16-64	59,500	85.5	74.1
% aged 16-64 who are employees	51,500	75	65.9
% aged 16-64 who are self employed	7,900	10.5	7.8
Unemployment rate - aged 16-64	1,600	2.8	3.7

Source: NOMIS, ONS Annual Population Survey

Under employment refers to those who are in work but would prefer to work more hours for the same rate of pay, an additional job (to supplement their existing job) or a different job with more hours. This provides a measure of under-utilisation of labour. The 2020 Annual Population Survey estimated that 7.6% of the working age population in East Lothian was under employed (Scottish average of 8.1%).

Figure 17: Under Employment of Population aged 16+ (2011 – 2020)



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, Scottish Government – Scotland's Labour Market – People, Places and Regions Annual Population Survey 2020 web tables. Table 1.15 Underemployment of population aged 16 and Over, 2004-2020 Respondents who would like to work longer hours given the opportunity

Table 14 shows the employment occupations of East Lothian's workforce in 2024/25 this shows that 25.3% of those in employment in East Lothian were employed in "lower paid" occupations (Major Groups 6 to 9) compared to 32.5% for Scotland.

Table 14: Employment Occupations (Jul 2024 to Jun 2025)

Employment by Occupation (Jul 2024 to Jun 2025)	East Loth (No.)	East Loth (%)	Scotland (%)
Soc 2020 major group 1-3	34,800	58.6	49
1 Managers, directors and senior officials	6,300	10.5	8.4
2 Professional occupations	19,600	33	26.1
3 Associate professional occupations	9,000	15.1	14.3
Soc 2020 major group 4-5	9,600	16.1	18.5
4 Administrative & secretarial occupations	7,500	12.6	8.9
5 Skilled trades occupations	2,100	3.6	9.5
Soc 2020 major group 6-7	8,400	14.2	16.6
6 Caring, leisure and Other Service occupations	5,300	9	9.8
7 Sales and customer service occs	3,100	5.2	6.8
Soc 2020 major group 8-9	6,600	11.1	15.9
8 Process plant & machine operatives	#	#	5.8
9 Elementary occupations	5,000	8.4	10.1

Source: NOMIS, ONS Annual Population Survey. Percentage of all those in employment in Occupations (SOC2010) major group of employment

The Office for National Statistics' Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings provides comparative data on earnings for people who live in East Lothian (Place of Residence) and people who work in East Lothian (Place of Work) and comparison with Scottish figures. As with other national survey based data, since these figures are based on national surveys with relatively small samples in East Lothian there is a lower level of confidence attached to the local data, which could also show greater variance across years. The 'Confidence Intervals' have been included in Tables 15 & 16. Confidence intervals of 5% or lower are deemed to be 'precise'; 5% to 10% are 'reasonably precise'; over 10% to 20% are 'acceptable but use with caution'.

Table 15 (Place of Residence) and Table 16 (Place of Work) both show that the Full Time mean hourly rate is higher than the Full Time median hourly rate in both East Lothian and Scotland, indicating that high earners are skewing the data. The mean shows the average of all earnings whilst the median shows the hourly rate of the person in the middle of all earners. So the very high earnings of a relatively small number of people can create a 'bias' in the data and increase the mean figure. Although the mean figure is of interest more weight should be given to the median figure.

Table 15 shows that in 2025 the overall Full Time median hourly rate of pay in East Lothian as a place of residence was £19.67 compared to £20.23 across Scotland as a whole. The median hourly rate of pay for males in East Lothian was £19.74 compared to £18.99 for females.

Table 15: Hourly Pay FTE – Place of Residence (2025)

Hourly Pay - Excluding Overtime (2025) Place of Residence	Median				Mean			
	East Lothian n (£)	East Lothian (conf %)	Scotland (£)	Scotland (conf %)	East Lothian n (£)	East Lothian (conf %)	Scotland (£)	Scotland (conf %)
Male Full Time Workers	19.74	7.0	20.50	1.1	26.64	8.2	24.58	1.1
Female Full Time Workers	18.99	8.3	19.76	1.6	24.28	6.3	22.54	0.8
Full Time Workers	19.67	4.9	20.23	0.9	25.56	5.4	23.70	0.7

Source: NOMIS, ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Resident Analysis earnings for employees living in the area

There is an even greater disparity between pay rates when comparing earnings of people working in East Lothian. Table 16 shows that the Full Time East Lothian median hourly pay for people working in East Lothian is £17.50 compared to £20.13 for Scotland, and that the median hourly pay for males is £17.43 compared to £17.93 for females. However, the hourly rates for females should be treated with caution due to the high confidence intervals.

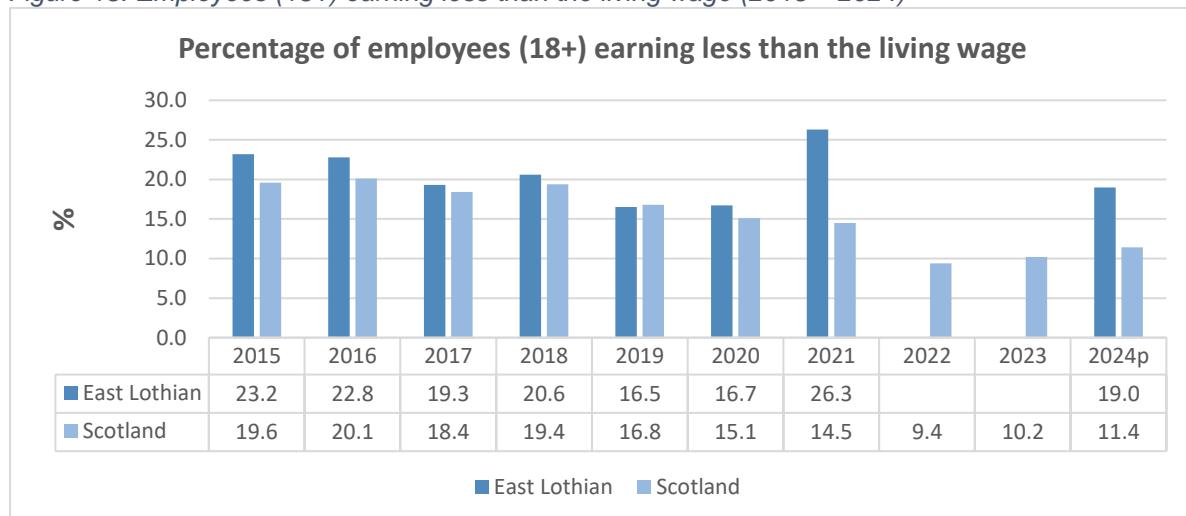
Table 16: Hourly Pay FTE As a Place of Work (2025)

Hourly Pay - Excluding Overtime (2025) Place of Work	Median				Mean			
	East Lothian (£)	East Lothian (conf %)	Scotland (£)	Scotland (conf %)	East Lothian (£)	East Lothian (conf %)	Scotland (£)	Scotland (conf %)
Male Full Time Workers	17.43	5.6	20.44	1.2	20.48	6.0	24.38	1.1
Female Full Time Workers	17.93	9.1	19.73	1.5	21.65	7.2	22.43	0.8
Full Time Workers	17.50	6.0	20.13	1.0	20.97	4.6	23.54	0.7

Source: NOMIS, ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Workplace Analysis Median earnings for employees working in the area

Figure 18 shows the percentage of East Lothian employees aged 18+ earning less than the living wage each year between 2014 to 2024. The East Lothian rate has been consistently above the Scottish rate with the exception of 2019. No East Lothian figures were available for 2022 and 2023.

Figure 18: Employees (18+) earning less than the living wage (2015 – 2024)



Source: Scottish Government, ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Tables – OCEAES – Economic Statistics Labour Market Statistics Estimates for employees aged 18+ on the PAYE system on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence. 2020 and 2021 include employees who have been furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Hourly earnings excludes any overtime payments. Local authority estimates are 'workplace' based and include all those working in each local authority regardless of where they live.

It should be noted that the largest variation between the East Lothian and Scottish average in any year in the period 2012 – 2020 was 3.6% the variation in 2021 rose to 11.8%. It should be noted that noted that the estimates for 2020 and 2021 are subject to more uncertainty than usual as a result of the challenges faced in collecting the data under government-imposed public health restrictions. Therefore, the large rise in the difference between the East Lothian and Scottish average could be down to a statistical 'glitch', rather than a systemic issue in the labour market.

Best Start Grant & Best Start Food and Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Government has been introducing new benefits and social security payments since 2019.

Best Start Grant consists of three different benefit payments: Pregnancy and Baby Payment (applications taken from 10th December 2018), Early Learning Payment (applications taken from 29th April 2019) and School Age Payment (applications taken from 3rd June 2019). Best Start Foods is a recurring four weekly pre-paid card payment, which replaced Healthy Start Vouchers for new claims in Scotland from 12th August 2019.

Figures published by the Scottish Government show that in 2024/25 there were 805 processed Best Start Grant and Best Start Food applications in East Lothian, 520 (65%) of which were authorised. Nationally there were 47,615 processed applications 30,835 (65%) of which were authorised.

Scottish Child Payment was introduced by Social Security Scotland for low-income families with children aged under 6. It is intended to provide regular, additional financial support for families already in receipt of qualifying benefits to assist with the costs of caring for a child. Social Security Scotland invited clients to apply from 9th November 2020 in advance of the benefit being launched on 15th February 2021 to help manage the expected demand.

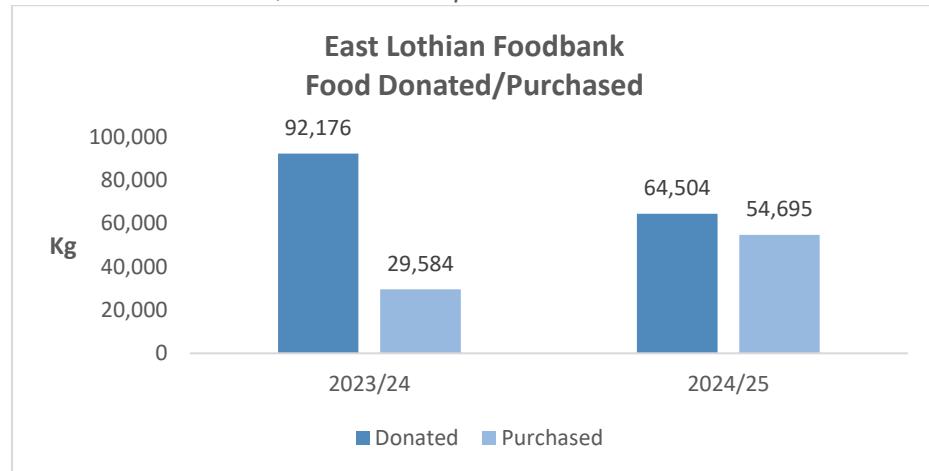
In 2024/25 a total of 755 Scottish Child Payment applications from East Lothian were processed, of which and 70% (545) were authorised. Nationally there were 43,765 applications processed and 71% (30,935) were authorised.

Food and Fuel Poverty

The last few years have seen significant increase in both food and fuel poverty as a result of the 'cost of living crisis' - steep rise in inflation and earnings and benefits not keeping pace with the rise in the cost of essentials.

East Lothian Foodbank reported that there were 5,697 requests fulfilled in 2024/25 with 4,639 children and 8,746 adults receiving support. There was a 30% reduction in foodbank donations compared to the previous year with purchased items showing an 85% increase.

Figure 19: East Lothian Foodbank, food donated/purchased

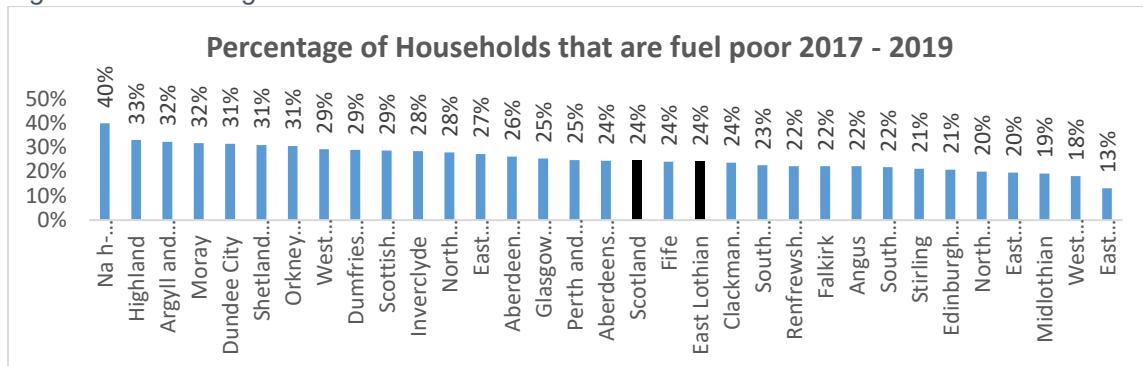


Source: East Lothian Foodbank

The Scottish Government's, Scottish House Condition Survey definition of fuel poverty is: *a household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, total fuel costs necessary for the home are more than 10% of the household's adjusted net income (after housing costs), and if after deducting fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. The remaining adjusted net income must be at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard to be considered an acceptable standard of living, with an additional amount added for households in remote rural, remote small town and island areas.*

The latest available national figures (2017-2019) for fuel poverty shows that 24% of East Lothian households were estimated as being in fuel poverty, which was the same as the Scottish average.

Figure 20: Percentage of households that are Fuel Poor 2017-2019 – Local Authorities and Scotland



Source: Scottish Government - Scottish House Condition Survey 2017-2019 Local Authority Tables

As well as providing overall fuel poverty estimates, the Scottish Government, Scottish Households Condition Survey 2017-2019 also provides estimates of households that are fuel poor by household attributes. The report estimated that 36% of households with older people in East Lothian were fuel poor. This was higher than the Scottish estimate of 27%.

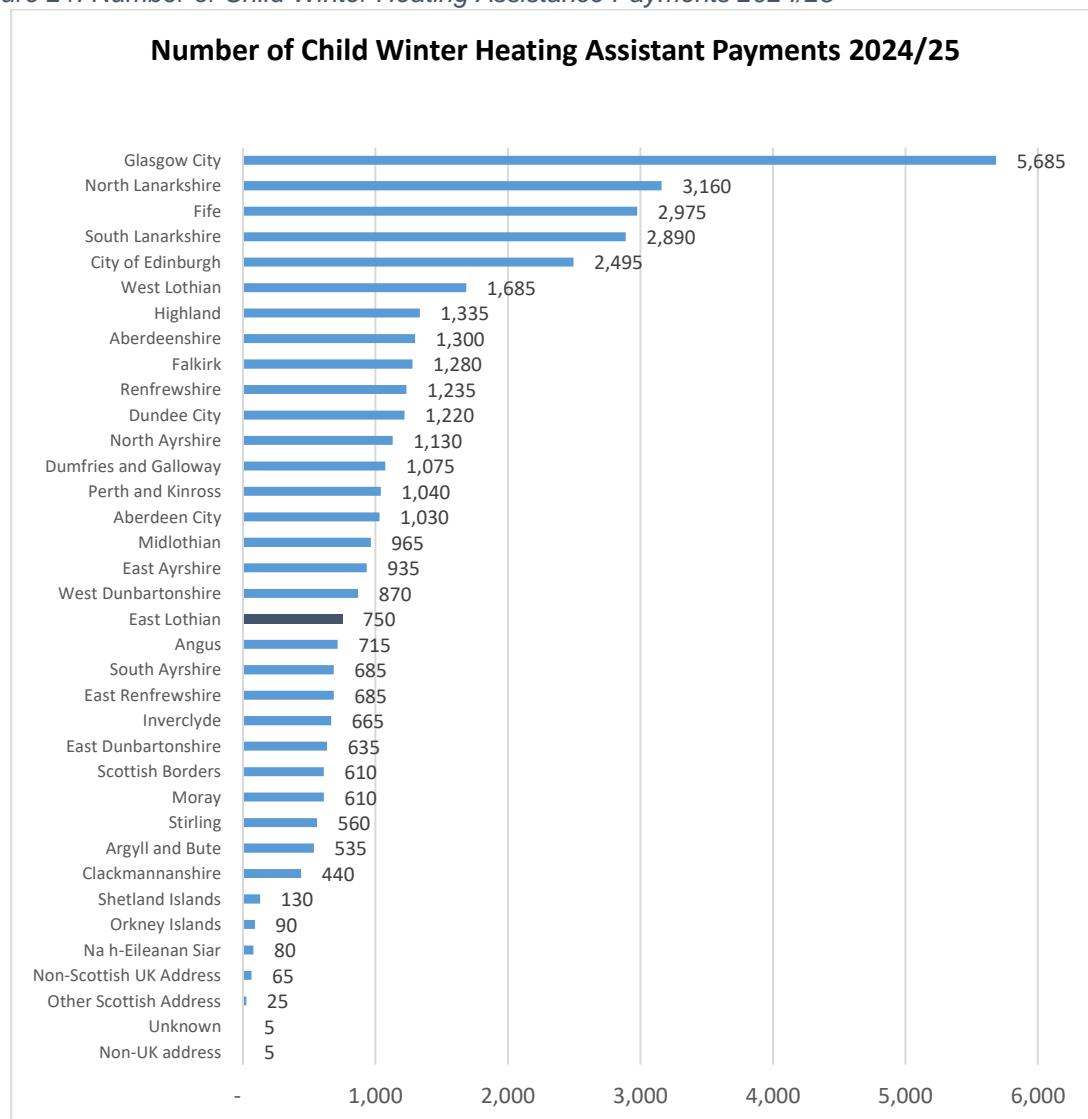
Given the steep rise in energy costs in 2022 and 2023 it is safe to assume that fuel poverty levels will have increased since 2019.

Child Winter Heating Assistance

To be eligible for Child Winter Heating Assistance, children and young people must receive the highest rate of the care component of Child Disability Payment or Disability Living Allowance, or the enhanced rate of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment. From winter 2022/2023, young people in receipt of the enhanced rate of the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment were also eligible for the payment.

In 2024/25 a total of 39,590 Child Winter Heating Assistance payments were made across Scotland with a total value of £9.957m. Figure 21 shows the number of winter payments made in 2024/25 by local authority. This shows that 750 Child Winter Heating Assistance payments had been made in East Lothian with a total value of £188,000. This compared to 585 payments totalling £138,000 made in winter 2023/24.

Figure 21: Number of Child Winter Heating Assistance Payments 2024/25



Source: Scottish Government, Social Security Scotland Statistics, Child Winter Heating Assistance Statistics Winter 2024/25

Health

Child Health

Table 17 shows that East Lothian is above the Scottish average for Child healthy weight, child dental health, immunisation uptake, and babies breastfed.

Table 17: Dental Health, Healthy Weight, Breastfeeding, Immunisation Uptake

Indicator	Year	East Lothian	Scotland
Child healthy weight in primary 1	2023/2024	78.4%	76.5%
Child dental health in primary 1	2023/2024	80.8%	73.9%
Immunisation uptake at 24 months - 6 in 1	2022 to 2024	96.7%	96.2%
Babies exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks	2021/22 to 2023/24	38.0%	32.3%

Source: Scotpho Jan 2026

A slightly lower proportion of East Lothian children are overweight. Public Health Scotland Body Mass Index statistics 2023/24, show that 85.7% of East Lothian P1 pupils were of a clinically healthy weight, 8.1% were clinically overweight, 3.2% were clinically obese and 2.9% were clinically severely obese. This compares with Scottish average figures of 84.0% of pupils were of a healthy weight, 8.8% were clinically overweight, 3.8% were clinically obese and 3.1% were clinically severely obese.

Adult Health

Key indicators of adult health – Bowel Screening Uptake, Asthma patient Hospitalisations, COPD patient hospitalisations and CHD patient hospitalisations – are all more positive in East Lothian than the Scottish averages.

Table 18: Bowel Screening Uptake, Asthma, COPD and CHD patient admissions

Indicator	Year	East Lothian	Scotland
Bowel Screening Uptake (%)	2021 - 2023; 3 year rolling average	69.9	66.4
Asthma Patient Hosp. Adm. (Age standardised per 100,000)	2021/22 to 2023/24 financial years; 3-year aggregates	67.6	76.2
COPD patient hosp. adm. (Age standardised per 100,000)	2021/22 to 2023/24 financial years; 3-year aggregates	129.9	210.1
CHD patient hosp. adm. (Age standardised per 100,000)	2021/22 to 2023/24 financial years; 3-year aggregates	253.4	326.8

Source: Scotpho Jan 2026

In 2023/24 East Lothian has a significantly lower rate of alcohol related hospital admissions (337 per 100,000) than the Scottish average (548.5 per 100,000).

When compared to Scotland, fewer adults in East Lothian have a healthy weight, 30% compared to 32%.

Table 19: Healthy Weight, Overweight, Obese, Severe Obesity (2021-2024)

	East Lothian	Scotland
Healthy Weight	30%	32%
Overweight (including obesity)	69%	66%
Obese	30%	31%
Severe Obesity	4%	4%

Source: Scottish Health Survey data for percentage of population that are a healthy weight in Scotland and East Lothian (3-year aggregated 2021-2014)

In 2023 East Lothian has a similar rate of mental health prevalence to that of Scotland. Slightly more people in East Lothian have dementia, but fewer people have depression when compared to Scotland as a whole.

Table 20: Mental Health, Dementia, Depression 2025

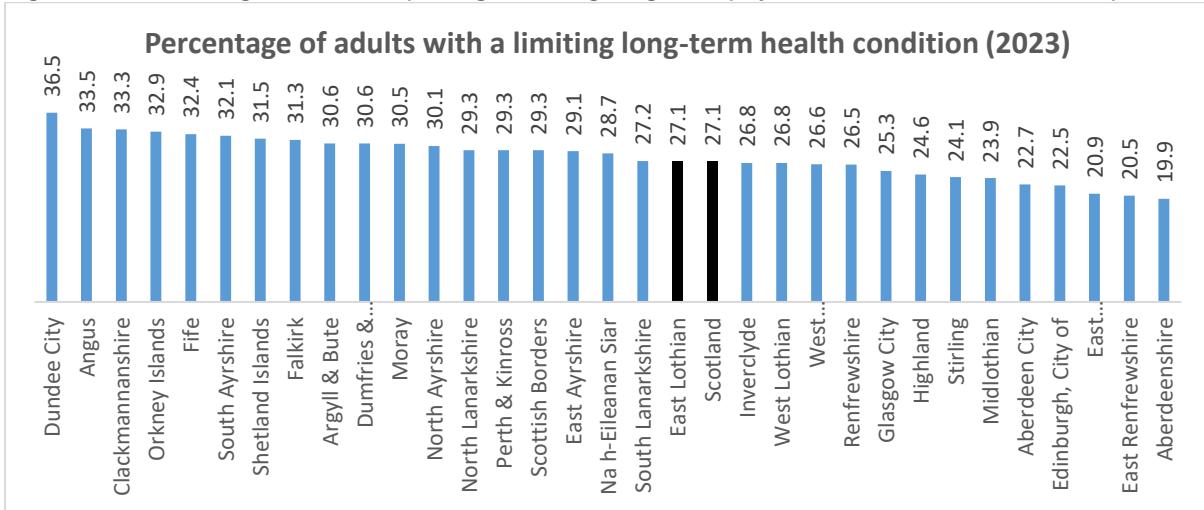
	East Lothian	Scotland
Mental Health (per 100 patients)	1.3	1.1
Dementia (rate per 100 patients)	0.9	0.7
Depression (rate per 100 patients)	17.5	15

Source: <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/general-practice-disease-prevalence-data-visualisation/general-practice-disease-prevalence-visualisation-8-july-2025/dashboard/>

The suicide rate in East Lothian is lower than that of Scotland as a whole – 16.2 compared to 16.8 per 100,000 population. (2020 to 2024 average).

In 2023, 27.1% of adults aged 16 and over in East Lothian and had a limiting long-term physical or mental health condition /illness, the same as the average across Scotland as a whole.

Figure 22: Percentage of adults reporting a limiting long-term physical health or mental health problem

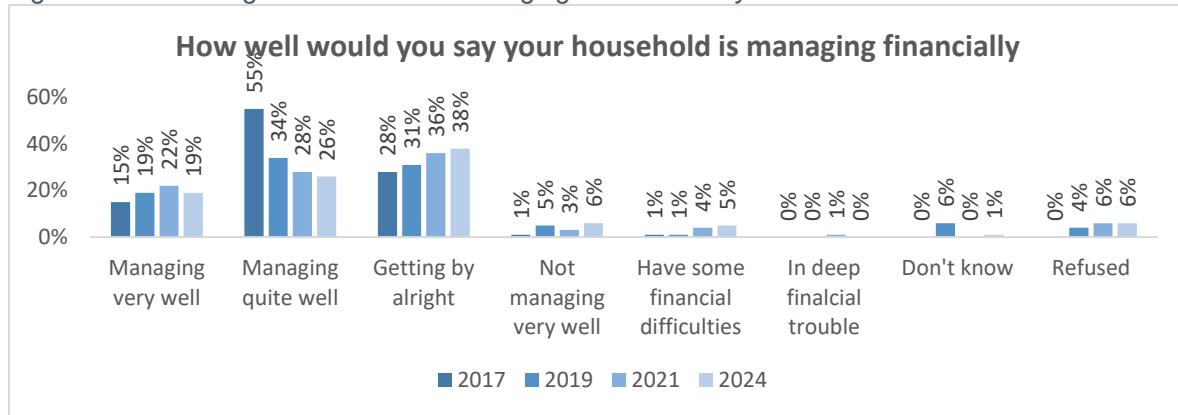


Source: Statistics.gov.scot – Scottish Government Scottish Surveys 2023 Core Questions

Standard of Living

The 2024 East Lothian Residents Survey asked households how they were managing financially, 19% of respondents said they were managing very well. This is less than the 2021 survey where 22% were managing very well. The combined percentage of respondents managing either very or quite well has decreased from 54% in 2019 to 50% in 2021 and again to 45% in 2024.

Figure 23: Percentage of households managing well financially



Source: East Lothian Residents Survey 2024

Further analysis of the results of the survey found that only 28% of respondents from areas of high levels of deprivation stated that were managing financially very or quite well.

The survey found that 25% of respondents did not have access to £500 to cover an unexpected necessary expense compared to 19% in 2021 and 22% did not have enough money to save regularly or make regular pension payments compared to 16% in 2021.

Table 21: Percentage who cannot afford each necessity

Percentage who cannot afford each necessity	ELC Residents Survey 2021	ELC Residents Survey 2024
Enough money to save regularly (of at least £20) for rainy days	16%	22%
Enough money to replace/ repair broken electrical goods	14%	22%
Enough money to make regular payments into an occupational or private pension	16%	22%
All recommended dental work/ treatment	14%	25%
Money to keep your home in a decent state of decoration	15%	21%
Money to take part in a hobby or leisure activity	12%	22%
Home contents insurance	9%	5%
Access to £500 to cover an unexpected, but necessary, expense	19%	25%

Source: East Lothian Residents Survey 2024

The results to this question varied significantly by area. For example, 27% of respondents from Tranent Wallyford and Macmerry ward said they could not afford

£500 to cover an unexpected, but necessary expense, while those living in Dunbar and East Linton were least likely to say they could not afford this (7%).

Universal Credit

Universal Credit combines six benefits: Working Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit; Housing Benefit; Income Support; Income based Jobseekers Allowance; and, Income related Employment Support Allowance. Not all Universal Credit claimants are seeking work; i.e. they may be in work but require financial assistance through Income Support, Housing Benefit and Working or Child Tax Credit.

Analysis of the latest Credit Claimants data (mid-November 2025) shows stark comparison with the pre-COVID data (mid-February 2020). Figure 24 and Table 21 show that the claimant count rose to 9,777 in July 2020 before decreasing to a post lockdown low of 8,506 in May 2022. However, the claimant count has increased steadily since then to 11,697 in November 2025, the highest since lockdown. The number of Universal Credit claimants in East Lothian increased from 5,842 (Feb 2020) to 11,697 (November 2025) – an 100.2% increase. Across Scotland the increase was 169.4%. The ward breakdown (Table 22) shows that the North Berwick Coastal and Haddington & Lammermuir wards had the highest increases at 124.7% and 120.1% respectively.

10.4% of East Lothian's population are in households receiving Universal Credit compared to the Scottish average of 12.7%. North Berwick Coastal ward has the lowest proportion of its population on Universal Credit – 5.7%, compared to Tranent Wallyford & Macmerry and Musselburgh wards with 13.9% and 12.2% respectively.

There has not been a significant change in the proportion of Universal Credit claimants across the wards. The proportion of the total claimants in East Lothian in North Berwick Coastal ward increased from 6.5% to 7.2%, with Haddington & Lammermuir increasing from 14.7% to 16.1%. Tranent, Wallyford & MacMerry (24.5%) and Musselburgh (22.7%) are the wards that have the highest proportion of Universal Credit claimants in East Lothian.

In February 2020, 1,668 of the 5,842 Universal Credit claimants were seeking work. The number and percentage of working age population seeking work rose from 1,668 (2.5%) to 3,370 (5.1%) in August 2020 then fell to 1,379 (2.1%) in January 2023 before rising slightly through 2023. In November 2025, there were 1,380 Universal Credit claimants in East Lothian seeking work – 2.0% of the working age population. By comparison, in February 2020, 2.8% of the Scottish working age population was seeking work, 5.6% in August 2020 and 2.8% in November 2025.

Tables 23 and 24 show the changes in Universal Credit seeking work claimants across the wards. NBC increased by 47.5% (from 80 to 118). The other wards all showed decreases of between 13.5% to 24.4%. However, the proportion of job seekers still remains low in NBC at 1.5% of the working age population, compared to 2.4% in Musselburgh and Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry.

Figure 24: Universal Credit Claimant Count by Ward (Feb 2020 – Nov 2025)

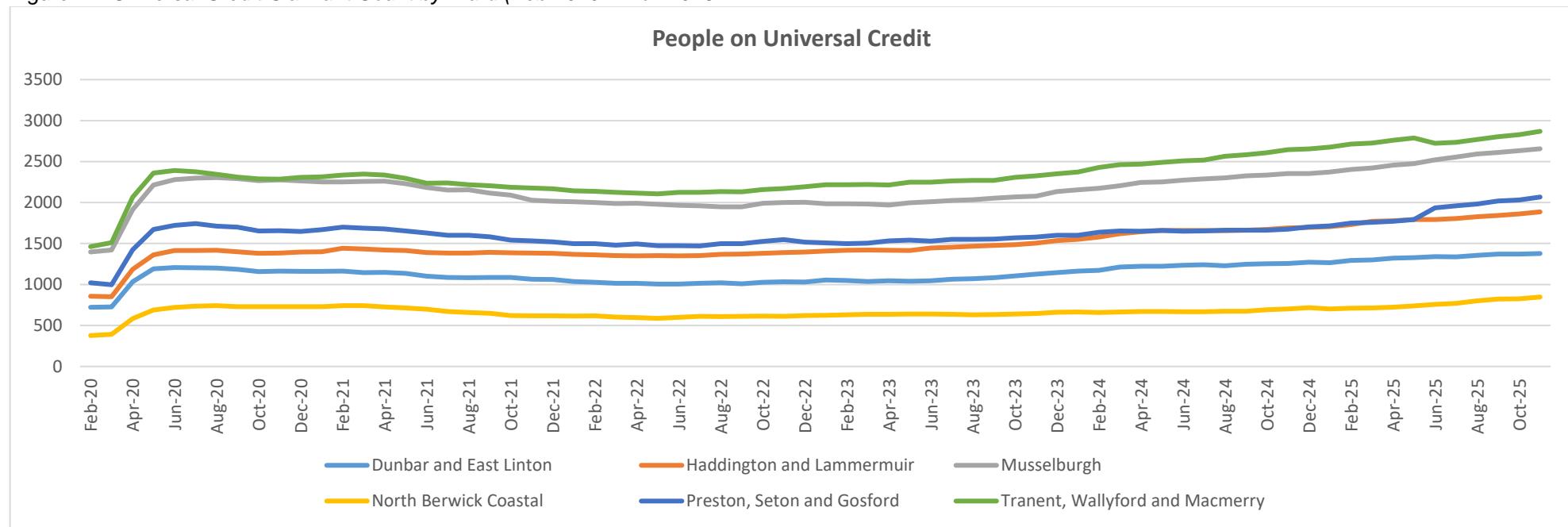


Table 21: Universal Credit Claimants by ward and month (Feb 2020- Nov 2025)

People on Universal Credit	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Oct-20	Feb-21	May-22	Mar-25	May-25	Jul-25	Sep-25	Nov-25
Dunbar and East Linton	722	726	1033	1191	1207	1203	1158	1162	1004	1300	1328	1336	1372	1378
Haddington and Lammermuir	857	851	1186	1363	1415	1416	1381	1441	1352	1770	1793	1805	1843	1886
Musselburgh	1397	1422	1914	2214	2281	2299	2266	2251	1980	2421	2476	2554	2612	2656
North Berwick Coastal	377	392	584	690	719	737	728	742	588	713	739	770	821	847
Preston, Seton and Gosford	1020	997	1424	1673	1722	1744	1654	1700	1474	1760	1792	1961	2020	2067
Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry	1462	1510	2066	2361	2390	2377	2289	2336	2107	2727	2787	2734	2804	2869
East Lothian	5842	5894	8205	9497	9724	9777	9492	9627	8506	10689	10914	11154	11470	11697
Scotland	256083	264117	373526	439424	456564	466417	467512	482549	447696	610355	628439	653664	673534	689951

Table 22: Universal Credit Claimants – (Feb 2020 – Nov 2025)

	Feb-20		Nov-25			Feb 20 to Nov 25		
	UC	% of East Lothian	UC	% of East Lothian	% of whole pop	% of working age pop	Increase	Increase %
Dunbar & East Linton	722	12.4%	1378	11.8%	8.7%	14.9%	656	90.9%
Haddington & Lammermuir	857	14.7%	1886	16.1%	9.2%	15.5%	1029	120.1%
Musselburgh	1397	23.9%	2656	22.7%	12.2%	18.8%	1259	90.1%
North Berwick Coastal	377	6.5%	847	7.2%	5.7%	10.4%	470	124.7%
Preston Seton Gosford	1020	17.5%	2067	17.7%	11.0%	17.8%	1047	102.6%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	1462	25.0%	2869	24.5%	13.9%	21.7%	1407	96.2%
East Lothian	5842	100.0%	11697	100.0%	10.4%	17.1%	5855	100.2%
Scotland	256083	na	689951	na	12.7%	20.0%	433868	169.4%

Table 23: Universal Credit Claimants and UC Claimants Seeking Work – (Feb 2020 – Nov 2025)

	Feb-20					Nov-25				
	UC	% of East Lothian	Seeking Work	% of East Lothian	Seeking Work as % of UC	UC	% of East Lothian	Seeking Work	% of East Lothian	Seeking Work as % of UC
Dunbar & East Linton	722	12.4%	192	11.5%	26.6%	1378	11.8%	166	12.0%	12.0%
Haddington & Lammermuir	857	14.7%	247	14.8%	28.8%	1886	16.1%	200	14.5%	10.6%
Musselburgh	1397	23.9%	428	25.7%	30.6%	2656	22.7%	337	24.4%	12.7%
North Berwick Coastal	377	6.5%	80	4.8%	21.2%	847	7.2%	118	8.6%	13.9%
Preston Seton Gosford	1020	17.5%	290	17.4%	28.4%	2067	17.7%	244	17.7%	11.8%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	1462	25.0%	426	25.5%	29.1%	2869	24.5%	322	23.3%	11.2%
East Lothian	5842	100.0%	1668	100.0%	28.6%	11697	100.0%	1380	100.0%	11.8%
Scotland	256083	na	98265	na	38.4%	689951	na	96246	na	13.9%

Table 24: Universal Credit Claimants Seeking Work by Ward as % of working age population (Feb 2020 – Nov 2025)

	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	Aug-20	Mar-21	Jan-23	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Increase in UC searching for work Feb 20 to Nov 25
East Lothian	1668	1620	2959	3347	3212	1379	1386	1390	1363	1365	1380	-288 -17.3%
Dunbar & East Linton	2.1%	2.0%	4.1%	4.4%	3.9%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	-26 -13.5%
Haddington & Lammermuir	2.2%	2.1%	3.9%	4.4%	4.3%	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.6%	-47 -19.0%
Musselburgh	3.4%	3.4%	5.8%	6.9%	6.7%	2.8%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	-91 -21.3%
North Berwick Coastal	1.1%	1.2%	2.8%	3.7%	3.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%	38 47.5%
Preston Seton Gosford	2.6%	2.5%	4.4%	4.9%	5.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	2.1%	-46 -15.9%
Tranent, Wallyford & Macmerry	3.0%	2.9%	5.2%	5.4%	5.2%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%	-104 -24.4%
East Lothian (%)	2.5%	2.5%	4.5%	5.1%	4.9%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	-288 -17.3%
Scotland	2.8%	2.8%	4.7%	5.6%	5.4%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	2.8%	2.7%	2.8%	-2019 -2.1%

Appendix

East Lothian Poverty Profile January 2026 (Updates from July 2025)

The following figures, tables and corresponding descriptions have been updated from the East Lothian Poverty Profile July 2025:

- Figure 2: Mid year population updated with 2024 figures
- Figure 5: Percentage of first time mothers aged under 25 updated with 2024/25 figures
- Figure 10: Households assessed as homeless updated with 2024/25 figures
- Figure 11: Temporary accommodation figures updated with 2024/25 figures
- Page 18: Private Rent figures updated with 2024/25 figures
- Page 19: School pupil numbers updated
- Figure 14, 15 & 16: School attainment updated with 2024/25 figures
- Table 13: Economically active updated with figures to June 2025
- Table 14: Employment occupations updated with figures to June 2025
- Table 15: Hourly Pay by residence updated with 2025 figures
- Table 16: Hourly pay by place of work updated with 2025 figures
- Page 24: Best start grant and food updated with 2024/25 figures
- Page 25: Scottish child payment updated with 2024/25 figures
- Page 25: Foodbank figures updated for 2024/25
- Figure 19: Foodbank sources graph replaced by donation/purchased graph
- Figure 21 Child winter heating assistance payments updated with 2024/25 figures
- Table 17, Dental Health, Healthy Weight, Breastfeeding, Immunisation updated
- Table 19: Healthy Weight, Overweight, Obese, Severe Obesity updated
- Table 20: Mental Health, Dementia, Depression updated
- Page 29: Suicide rate updated
- Page 31: Universal Credit figures updated to November 2025