



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

**TUESDAY 26 AUGUST 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON
AND VIA HYBRID MEETING FACILITY**

1a

Committee Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar
Councillor E Allan (R)
Councillor R Bennett
Councillor L Bruce (R)
Councillor C Cassini
Councillor A Forrest
Councillor N Gilbert (R)
Councillor N Hampshire
Councillor L Jardine
Councillor C McFarlane

Councillor C McGinn (R)
Councillor G McGuire
Councillor S McIntosh
Councillor K McLeod
Councillor J McMillan (Convener)
Councillor L-A Menzies
Councillor B Ritchie (R)
Councillor T Trotter
Councillor C Yorkston

Council Officials Present:

Mr L Rockey, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services
Ms S Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources
Ms H Barnett, Head of Corporate Support
Ms L Byrne, Head of Children's Services (R)
Mr K Dingwall, Head of Development
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance
Mr D Hood, Head of Operations – Health & Social Care
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education (R)
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Mr J Baker, Service Manager – Economic Development (R)
Ms E Barclay, Democratic Services Assistant
Ms M Cockburn, Service Manager – Transformation and Digital Portfolio
Mr S Cooper, Service Manager – Communications
Ms A-M Glancy, Service Manager – Corporate Accounting
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance
Mr D Henderson, Service Manager – Service Accounting
Ms L Kerr, General Manager – Planning and Performance (Health and Social Care) (R)
Mr G Marsden, Service Manager – Planning
Ms C Pegg, Project Manager – Transformation (R)
Mr A Stubbs, Service Manager – Roads (R)

(R) = remote participant

Visitors Present:

None

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies:

Councillor D Collins
Councillor F Dugdale
Councillor J Findlay

The Convener advised that the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting, as provided for in legislation; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. He noted that the Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded the attendance of Members by roll call.

Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement:

Item 7: Transparency statement – Councillor Menzies stated that she was a Council-appointed member of the Board of EnjoyLeisure.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Provost announced that Dunbar Royal British Legion Pipe Band had achieved second place in the Grade 3A category of the recent World Pipe Band Championships, and that they had also achieved second place at the recent European Championships. The Provost also announced that Preston Lodge High School Pipe Band had retained their title of top state school pipe band in the world at the World Pipe Band Championships. On behalf of the Council, the Provost congratulated both pipe bands on their successes.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the following meetings of East Lothian Council were approved: East Lothian Council, 24 June 2025.

2. ACTION LOG

The Council agreed to note the list of actions and to close those actions recommended for closure.

As regards Action 25/01, it was agreed that childcare arrangements for children with disabilities would be reported to PPRC.

As regards Action 25/03, it was noted that a report on LHEES would be presented to Council in October 2025, and that this action should remain open until then.

In response to a suggestion that any letters issued as a result of a Council action should be published online, the Head of Corporate Support undertook to consider this, but noted that it may not always be appropriate to publish responses in the public domain.

3. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE, 9 JUNE – 11 AUGUST 2025

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources noting the reports submitted to the Members' Library since the meeting of the Council in June 2025.

Officers responded to questions from Members on the reports relating to the Community Intervention Funding Allocations (Ref. 62/25), the Creation of Modern Apprenticeships in Roads Services (ref: 70/25), the Integration Joint Board Directions (Ref: 77/25), and the Lease of Office Space within the Fisherrow Centre (Ref: 84/25).

Decision

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 9 June and 10 August 2025, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

4. ACCOUNTS COMMISSION – BEST VALUE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing Members with an update on the key findings from the Accounts Commission – Best Value Controller of Audit report.

The Director for Council Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Sarah Fortune, advised that since the publication of the Council papers, senior officers and a number of Members had met with Accounts Commission representatives to discuss the findings of the report and the process, noting that the meeting had been open and positive, with addressing the financial challenges facing the Council being highlighted as a priority.

The report was welcomed by Members, as was the progress made to address the actions. The importance of cross-party working to address the financial challenges was highlighted.

The Provost asked the Council to note the recommendations, which were duly noted.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the key findings from the Accounts Commission review of Controller of Audit's report on Best Value in East Lothian Council, as set out within Appendix 1 to the report; and
- ii. to note the Council's response and summary of actions detailed within Appendix 2 to the report, and summarised at Section 3.4 of the report.

5. COUNCIL PLAN ACTION PLAN UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval of updated Council Plan actions, based on the three overarching priorities which were adopted in 2024.

Following a presentation of the report from Stewart Cooper, Service Manager for Communications, officers responded to questions from Members on support for young carers, improving access to GPs, the alignment of the Council Plan to the budget development process, progress made in reducing the use of temporary accommodation for homeless people, and the importance of partnership working to deliver the East Lothian Poverty Plan.

During the debate, Members highlighted the need to continue delivering key services and addressing growth, despite the significant financial challenges facing the Council. The importance of partnership working was also stressed.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the revised/updated actions in support of the Council Plan 2022-27 (set out in Appendix 1 to the report); and
- ii. to note the intention to initiate development work on a new Council Plan for 2027-32, including work to review overarching priorities.

6. DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2024-25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on the draft unaudited accounts for the Council and Group entities for the year ending 31 March 2025, in accordance with regulations that stipulated that the unaudited accounts must be formally scrutinised by Members by 31 August 2025.

The Service Manager for Corporate Accounting, Ann-Marie Glancy, advised that Audit Scotland would begin the audit process in September and should be signed off in November.

In response to questions from Members, officers advised of the arrangements for public scrutiny of the accounts.

There followed a debate which focused on the use of reserves to balance future years' budgets.

The Provost asked the Council to note the recommendations, which were duly noted.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note that the draft annual accounts for the Council and its wider group, and the Dr Bruce Trust, had been submitted to External Audit prior to the statutory deadline of 30 June 2025. The draft accounts had been submitted without the adjustment for

operating and non-operating asset valuations, as these were not available ahead of the submission deadline due to delays in finalising the 2023-24 audited accounts; however, the valuation report had since been received and an adjusted version of the draft accounts would be submitted to External Audit ahead of the statutory audit; and

- ii. to note that the accounts would remain in draft pending finalisation of the statutory audit, expected to be complete by November 2025.

7. Q1 FINANCIAL REVIEW 2025/26

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on the in-year financial position at the end of June 2025.

Following a presentation by the Service Manager for Service Accounting, David Henderson, officers responded to questions from Members regarding the Council's financial contribution to the City Region Deal, additional funding for recycling, the additional support for EnjoyLeisure, the proposed extension of Aberlady Primary School, tenant arrears, the use of additional funding to the Integration Joint Board, and the relocation of the Olivebank Centre.

The report was welcomed by Members, particularly the additional funding that had been provided to the Council from the Scottish Government. It was recognised, however, that there were ongoing financial challenges, especially in social care services. The benefits of the City Region Deal to East Lothian were also highlighted. It was noted that 84 new council houses had been built this year. The relocation of Haddington Day Centre and the Olivebank Centre was welcomed, as was the additional support for EnjoyLeisure.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the outcome of Quarter 1 financial performance against approved budgets, including progress towards delivering agreed budget efficiencies;
- ii. to note the risks and other factors that may impact that position by year-end and the range of ongoing intervention measures approved by Council;
- iii. to note the additional Scottish Government funding received since Council approved the budget in February 2025;
- iv. to note the update on the Integration Joint Board position;
- v. to approve the creation of an earmarked reserve to offset future pressures within waste and recycling services;
- vi. to approve uplifting the subsidy payment to Enjoy Leisure by £250,000, as detailed in Sections 3.42 to 3.47 of the report; and
- vii. to note the key performance information for council tax collection, rent collection and Scottish Welfare Fund spending.

8. BUDGET DEVELOPMENT 2026/27 ONWARDS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing Members with updated budget projections, scenario planning and a revised funding gap, and to highlight the key assumptions with these. The report also outlined the process and next steps for setting the financial strategy and budgets for 2026/27 onwards.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report, drawing particular attention to the ongoing financial pressures and scenario planning for the next five years.

There followed questions from Members on how the budget development would be aligned with the priorities set out in the Council Plan, engagement with communities, longer-term financial planning, income generation, and the continued financial challenges facing the Council.

The ongoing work to deliver efficiency savings was welcomed by Members, and it was suggested that the Council should do more to invest in energy generation in order to reduce its energy costs.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the financial outlook, revised budget projections and key assumptions for financial planning for 2026/27 onwards, as set out within the report;
- ii. to note the significant risks which the Council continues to face to financial sustainability and balancing the budget over the medium term;
- iii. that the measures to deliver the further budget savings detailed within Section 3.18 (Table 1) of the report would be implemented from 1 April 2026; and
- iv. to approve the next steps to developing the budget and financial strategy for 2026/27 onwards, as set out in Section 3.40 of the report.

9. RICHARDSON BEQUEST FUNDING, COMMON GOOD AND HERDMANFLAT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place seeking approval to allocate monies from the Haddington Common Good Fund for the delivery of six affordable housing units within the Herdmanflat development.

The report was presented by the Head of Housing, Wendy McGuire, who, together with Carlo Grilli (Service Manager for Governance) went on to respond to questions from Members on the tenure of the six houses to be built and the use of the remaining funds from the bequest.

The report was welcomed by Members, who felt that the proposed solution was a fitting way to recognise the bequest. It was suggested that a street in the new Herdmanflat development could be named after Mr Richardson.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note that the purpose of the Richardson Bequest was to provide a sum of money for the erection and conditioning of six cottages, including the payment of rent and taxes for all time coming;
- ii. to note the decision by the Court of Session to determine that the original purpose of this fund was not capable as intended and that this fund should be invested in the Common Good Fund for Haddington;
- iii. to note that the proposal to allocate a proportion of these funds to deliver six units at Herdmanflat sought to provide a similar arrangement as that sought by the Richardson Bequest, without the rent and taxes;
- iv. to approve the allocation of £1,620,000 from this fund to deliver six units within this development which would be held for the benefit of the Common Good Fund for Haddington; and
- v. to delegate authority to the Head of Infrastructure to agree the details and enter into a lease with East Lothian Mid-Market Homes LLP (ELMMH), to provide an income to the Common Good Fund for Haddington.

10. BRUNTON HALL REPLACEMENT PROJECT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place reaffirming the Council's commitment to the accommodation of the arts in Musselburgh and seeking approval to explore development opportunities that could achieve this.

The Head of Infrastructure, Tom Reid, presented the report, highlighting the feedback from the public and the petition calling for a replacement building. He stressed that if Historic Environment Scotland were to list the building, then it would be difficult for the Council to replace it, and this would have an adverse impact on Musselburgh, the wider community and the arts.

Mr Reid responded to a series of questions from Members on the potential costs of a replacement building, the purpose of a Prior Information Notice (PIN), community involvement in the project development, and the ongoing deterioration of the building.

Members expressed their support for the proposed strategy and the commitment to provide a venue for the arts in Musselburgh.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the continuing commitment to ensuring accommodation of the arts in the town of Musselburgh through the exploration of opportunities to finance the replacement of the Brunton Hall;

- ii. to approve the development of a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to test the market for the redevelopment of the Brunton Hall site to include a theatre and performance space; and
- iii. to approve the establishment of a project development team to further progress this proposal.

11. PROPOSED REDETERMINATION ORDER: BANKTON JUNCTION SOUTH ROUNDABOUT OF THE A1

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place seeking approval for the promotion and making of a redetermination order in respect of the conversion of a section of carriageway at the Bankton Junction South Roundabout of the A1.

Following the presentation of the report by the Head of Infrastructure, Tom Reid, and the Service Manager for Roads, Alan Stubbs, officers responded to questions relating to improvements for pedestrians and cyclists as well as traffic flow, the scrutiny of the proposals, the costs of the project, proposals for further improvements at the Bankton Junction, and the public consultation.

A number of Members highlighted current road safety issues, particularly for pedestrians travelling between Tranent and Blindwells, and welcomed the proposals for improvements. Some Members expressed their disappointment about the lack of consultation at an earlier stage with local residents.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations:

For (18): Councillors Akhtar, Allan, Bennett, Bruce, Cassini, Forrest, Gilbert, Hampshire, Jardine, McFarlane, McGinn, McGuire, McIntosh, McMillan, Menzies, Ritchie, Trotter, Yorkston

Against (0):

Abstentions (1): Councillor McLeod

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the preparation of a redetermination order under Sections 1(1) and 152(2) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, to redetermine the exercise of the public right of passage along a section of the circulatory carriageway of the existing roundabout to grass verge and footway to form a 'teardrop' gyratory, as further outlined in Appendix A of the report. The aforementioned redetermination would be carried out in accordance with processes under The Stopping Up of Roads and Private Accesses and the Redetermination of Public Rights of Passage (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1986;
- ii. to approve the making and confirmation of the order if no representations are received by the Council in response to the publication of the proposals, or if representations are received but are subsequently withdrawn.

- iii. to instruct the Head of Infrastructure to report back to the Cabinet if representations to the proposed order are received and are subsequently not withdrawn.

12. TRANSFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources updating Members on the delivery of the Council's Transformation Strategy and Action Plan, and providing a high-level overview of the transformation process, key achievements and strategic direction.

The Transformation and Digital Portfolio Manager, Michelle Cockburn, presented the report, highlighting the progress made and noting that most actions outlined in the action plan had been closed or were on target.

Members raised questions in relation to the impact of transformation projects on staff, expenditure on projects to date, projected savings/benefits, and alignment with the customer strategy.

The work underway to deliver efficiencies and introduce new technology was welcomed by Members.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note progress, key achievements and strategic direction;
- ii. to note the plans for development of future transformational change within the Council;
- iii. to note the management information provided in Annex 1-5 (with Annex 2 being subject of a report to the Members' Library in due course); and
- iv. that future annual reports and progress updates would be reported to the Members' Library.

13. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking formal approval of the appointment of Graeme Marsden as East Lothian Council's Chief Planning Officer.

The Head of Corporate Support, Hayley Barnett, reported that Graeme Marsden had been appointed to the post of Service Manager for Planning in July 2025, and recommended that he be appointed to the statutory post of Chief Planning Officer.

Keith Dingwall, Head of Development, provided a summary of the duties of the Chief Planning Officer, highlighting in particular their leading role in the development of the Local Development Plan.

Members welcomed Mr Marsden's appointment.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed to appoint Graeme Marsden to the statutory post of Chief Planning Officer.

14. NOTICE OF MOTION: IMPACTS AND CONSENTING OF RENEWABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IN EAST LOTHIAN'S COMMUNITIES

A motion was submitted by Councillors McIntosh and Hampshire:

Preamble

For over 20 years, East Lothian Council has supported the energy industry to deliver significant change in our energy supply. We are continuing to consider every opportunity that will help the nation reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, reduce energy demand, and lower costs for businesses, householders and public services.

The Seventh UK Carbon Budget was recently published by the UK's Committee on Climate Change, and represents the official scientific advice to the UK Government. This budget lays out the need for rapid expansion of renewable infrastructure in order to meet our legally binding emissions pathways. The electrification of our heat and transport sectors will mean the UK requires twice as much electricity by 2040 as we used in 2023. To meet this demand, the UK Climate Change Committee recommends a six-fold increase in offshore wind capacity, doubling of onshore wind, and increase of solar capacity to 82Gw (all by 2040).

The Carbon Budget report underlines the economic benefits this transition will bring with upfront investment soon leading to paybacks in cheaper bills and protection from volatile international fossil fuel markets. Other multiple benefits identified include skilled jobs, opportunities for green finance, health benefits from reduced air pollution, and restoration of nature.

However, the benefits of this transition have so far not been felt by all, with Councillors from all parties being told by constituents that they are frustrated that the profits of the new infrastructure appear to flow mainly to large companies and a small number of local landowners. In East Lothian, many communities, especially in the east of the county, derive little benefit from this development and yet suffer many impacts of construction, traffic and change in land use which they feel have been inadequately consulted upon.

Councillors hear that, while energy developers have paid staff and significant budgets for each project, small communities (often represented by volunteers) are struggling to engage and respond meaningfully to the burgeoning number of development applications. This is a burden over and above the construction and operation impacts of projects. This is increasingly contributing to people feeling overwhelmed and under threat.

This motion is a cross-party attempt to recognise the feelings of the community and to indicate what actions East Lothian Council will take, alone or in

partnership, and what changes we will call for at Scottish and UK government level.

Motion

1. Spatial planning

It is noted that currently development applications come in on a speculative and profit-driven basis and that the assessment of these, whether done under local planning regulations or by the Energy Consents Unit, cannot include the question of the strategic need for the particular development, nor whether its proposed site is in fact the right location. For example, the independent energy agency NESO (National Energy System Operator) recently found that far more Battery Energy Storage Systems have been consented than will be required between now and 2030. This suggests many projects with consents will not ultimately go ahead – but this uncertainty creates even more stress for communities and leaves all stakeholders unable to proceed with alternative uses for the land which may be more environmentally and socially beneficial.

- This Council therefore agrees to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the UK and Scottish Governments, calling for greater strategic planning of renewables development, with greater devolution of power to local authorities to determine suitable sites for development within their areas.
- This letter should also go to both UK and Scottish Governments commending the joint commissioning of National Energy System Operator (NESO) to carry out a Strategic Spatial Energy Plan. This plan will identify all the infrastructure required to deliver the green, affordable energy capable of meeting our future energy needs. It should also ensure that such infrastructure is distributed fairly and equitably across all regions of the United Kingdom. However, the letter should also convey Council's concern that while we wait for the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan, many applications are being determined with no overarching strategy, and that further cooperation between local, Scottish and UK government is needed to address this lack of oversight.
- The letter will also ask the UK and the Scottish Governments to investigate whether a system similar to the Housing Land Requirement could be operated, with each local authority given a target for renewable capacity and applications within their authority be assessed against that target, to ensure a fair distribution of the burden of development between areas.
- Council also notes the fact that a landscape capability study is being produced to inform LDP2 as a way of directing development to appropriate areas, and that local communities will be consulted on sites in the proposed statutory plan making process.

2. Energy Consents Unit

The current limit for local planning determinations is set at 50 mW – this is now an outdated threshold as many developments currently exceed this threshold despite not being of national strategic importance, and are therefore passed to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU), with limited local

authority input into the decision. Council recognises that many of our constituents have voiced concern that the ECU is not subject to the same transparency or accountability as other planning authorities, and they only very rarely turn down development.

- This Council therefore agrees that in the letter to the Scottish Government requested above, the Leader of the Council will also specifically call for a review of the Energy Consents Unit, giving local planning departments the power and resources to determine more applications, and reviewing both the threshold for ECU determination and the transparency and processes of the ECU.

3. Community benefits

The current model of community benefits is outdated and does not offer enough to communities.

Some recent examples of local good practice in community benefits have included developers offering communities shares of the development (usually 1-2%).

Community ownership is in line with our agreed Community Wealth Building strategy and has been proven to increase community acceptance of renewable development elsewhere. Denmark's legal requirement for 20% of renewables to be community owned has in practice resulted in a sector in which more than 50% of wind capacity is owned by communities.

Council notes that the Scottish and UK Governments have both recently run consultations on community benefits and that ELC has responded to these arguing for all renewable developments to be mandated to provide community benefits.

- Council agrees that the Leader of the Council, when writing to the Scottish and UK Governments, should request a change in legislation so that all development must include community benefit, including a minimum of defined shares for community ownership which should be set at an ambitious threshold.

4. Other community concerns

Planning policy needs to be stronger to allow the consenting authority to impose conditions on energy development, ensuring meaningful engagement with local communities, for example on traffic controls, fire risk mitigation, and biodiversity enhancement plans, and to include a presumption of responsibility for the capture of waste heat and use for local heating purposes, unless it can be comprehensively shown that such a use is not possible.

- Council directs ELC officers to report on what policies could be included in LDP2 to give maximum strength to these types of conditions under current legislation, with a report to come back to a future Council as soon as is feasible.

- Council asks the Leader of the Council to write to the UK Government requesting that more powers are delegated under the Planning Act, and to the Scottish Government to then request more powers to local authorities under National Planning Guidance, both of which changes would strengthen the powers of local authorities to impose conditions to mitigate development impacts and risks.

Councillor McIntosh presented the motion, focusing on the need for renewable developments to deliver more by way of community benefit and community ownership. She advocated that communities should have a greater role in deciding how community benefits should be used.

Councillor Hampshire seconded the motion, noting that he was supportive of renewable developments in the right locations. However, he was of the view that the current approvals process required to be reviewed, and did not deliver for communities. He agreed with the points made by Councillor McIntosh regarding the use of community benefits, and suggested that residents living close to windfarms should receive free electricity. He undertook to share the content of the proposed letter with Group Leaders.

There was broad agreement for the motion, with Members expressing concerns about the current system for approving renewable developments, and there being general support for greater community powers regarding the use of community benefits. It was recognised that East Lothian had made a significant contribution to energy production, and that many jobs had been created in this sector in the county.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the motion.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION:

A motion was submitted by Councillors Hampshire and Aktar:

Council notes:

1. Torness Power Station has played a critical role in the UK's energy generation and has been a key local employer for decades.
2. The station is expected to cease operations in the early 2030s, raising important questions about the future use of the site and the local economic impact of decommissioning.
3. The UK Government has expressed support for new nuclear as part of its net zero and energy security strategies.
4. A just transition to clean energy must include a mix of technologies and safeguard skilled jobs in communities like East Lothian.

Council believes:

5. The Torness site could be well-placed to host new nuclear infrastructure, and that early assessment of the site's characteristics is essential for informed decision-making.
6. Any decision on future use must be evidence-based and take into account environmental, technical, and community considerations.
7. Public investment in site feasibility studies is a necessary first step to secure a long-term plan for energy generation and employment in the region.

Council resolves:

8. That the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, requesting UK Government funding to undertake a full and independent survey of the Torness Power Station site characterisation that will establish its suitability for a new nuclear power station.
9. That the purpose of the survey be to assess the site's suitability for a new nuclear power facility, including geological, environmental, infrastructure, and community factors.
10. That East Lothian Council engages with all relevant stakeholders – including the Scottish Government, the current site operator EDF, local trade unions, and the local community – to ensure any future development is transparent, inclusive, and delivers long-term benefits.
11. That the Council reaffirms its commitment to a just transition, where communities are supported with good, secure jobs as the UK moves to net zero.

Councillor Hampshire presented the motion. He highlighted the important contribution made by Torness to low-carbon energy production and to the local economy, and was of the view that nuclear power must be considered alongside renewables in order to meet future energy demands. He claimed that there was space at the existing site to establish a modular nuclear facility, and was of the view that a characterisation study would determine if such a facility is viable.

Councillor Akhtar seconded the motion, suggesting that a new nuclear facility would benefit the local economy and provide jobs for young people. She believed that nuclear energy was essential to achieving a just transition to net zero.

Whilst recognising the significant contribution that Torness had made to East Lothian, the SNP and Green Members were opposed to a new nuclear facility, on the basis that there were other, lower-risk ways of creating green energy. There were also concerns about disruption to the community during the construction of such a facility, about the risks around nuclear waste, and about the costs involved. It was argued that the decommissioning of Torness would take many years and that the loss of jobs would be gradual. Members speaking in favour of the motion believed that it was important to include nuclear power in planning future energy

generation, noting that Torness had an excellent safety record and that it had provided many jobs in the local area.

Summing up, Councillor Hampshire stressed that it was Labour policy to support renewables, hydrogen and nuclear energy, and that there was a risk in relying solely on renewables. He believed that the loss of Torness would have a significant impact on the East Lothian economy.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the recommendations:

For (12): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Bruce, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McGuire, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (7): Councillors Allan, Cassini, Gilbert, Jardine, McIntosh, Menzies, Trotter

Abstentions (0):

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the motion.

Sederunt: Councillor Ritchie left the meeting.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS – EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Council agreed to exclude the public from the following business containing exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Cockenzie Power Station Site Update

A private report submitted by the Executive Director for Place regarding the former Cockenzie Power Station site was approved.

The webcast for this meeting will be available at the link below for five years from the date of the meeting: https://eastlothian.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1009989

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**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL**

**TUESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON
AND VIA HYBRID MEETING FACILITY**

1b

Committee Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar
Councillor E Allan (R)
Councillor R Bennett
Councillor L Bruce (R)
Councillor C Cassini
Councillor D Collins (R)
Councillor F Dugdale
Councillor J Findlay
Councillor A Forrest
Councillor N Gilbert (R)
Councillor N Hampshire

Councillor L Jardine
Councillor C McFarlane
Councillor C McGinn
Councillor G McGuire
Councillor S McIntosh
Councillor K McLeod (R, pm)
Councillor J McMillan (Convener)
Councillor L-A Menzies
Councillor B Ritchie (R)
Councillor T Trotter
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Council Officials Present:

Mr L Rockey, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services (R)
Ms S Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources (R)
Ms H Barnett, Head of Corporate Support
Mr K Dingwall, Head of Development
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance (R)
Mr E John, Head of Communities
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education (R)
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing (R)
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure/Project Senior Responsible Owner
Ms E Barclay, Democratic Services Assistant
Mr S Cooper, Service Manager – Communications
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance/Project Legal Adviser
Mr C Price, Senior Project Manager
Mr A Stubbs, Service Manager – Roads/Project Executive

(R) = remote participant

Visitors Present:

Mr J Baxter, Senior Supplier's Manager, Jacobs

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies:

None

The Convener advised that the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting, as provided for in legislation; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. He noted that the Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded the attendance of Members by roll call.

Transparency Statement: Councillor McIntosh advised that her children attended Pinkie St Peter's Primary School.

1. MUSSELBURGH FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME: PRELIMINARY DECISION ON PROPOSED SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for place advising that in accordance with the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 ('the Act') and the Flood Risk Management (Flood Protection Schemes, Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 (as amended) "the Regulations", full Council was required to consider all valid objections, late objections that had been accepted, and Environmental Impact Assessment (the "EIA") representations received in relation to the notification of Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme ('the Scheme') on 21 March 2024. The report also sought a preliminary decision by the Council.

The Provost announced that three amendments to the report recommendations had been submitted.

Tom Reid, the Head of Infrastructure and Senior Responsible Owner for the project, presented the report. He highlighted the need for a flood protection scheme for Musselburgh given the risk of flooding to the town, and he set out the progress made to date in devising such a scheme. He drew particular attention to public interest in the proposed Scheme and the process for dealing with objections. He updated Members on recent developments, noting that Historical Environment Scotland had now withdrawn its objection to the proposed Scheme, and that it was expected that agreement would be reached with Nature Scot. Mr Reid stressed that the Council was not being asked to approve the Scheme at this stage, noting that it would come back to Council for approval on conclusion of a Public Local Inquiry.

There followed a series of questions from Members, in response to which officers advised of the implications for Musselburgh in terms of flood risk should the Scheme not go ahead; the costs associated with the Scheme, the funding arrangements, and opportunities for other funding contributions; the project timetable; the procurement process; addressing the objection of NatureScot; the implementation of the fifty-four changes to the Scheme; the potential disruption to residents during the construction phase; the proposed defences to the rear of homes on Edinburgh Road; and the impact of the Scheme on biodiversity, trees and wildlife.

The Provost invited Councillor McIntosh to present her amendment (Amendment 1):

Delete Recommendation 2.3 and replace with: Makes a preliminary decision to refuse the proposed Scheme and for officers to bring forward a new proposed Scheme which would change the climate change allowance on the coast to

Scenario 2; instructs the project team to make arrangements as required under Schedule 2 of the FRM (Scotland) Act 2009, to notify all objectors and other relevant people of this decision and give them the chance to make representation; and instructs officers to arrange a date for this Council to reconvene to consider any further representations made in response to this modification, to then take a decision on confirming the Scheme with or without that modification.

Delete Recommendations 2.4 and 2.5
Renumber Recommendation 2.6 as 2.4

Councillor McIntosh presented the amendment. She stated that it had not been her intention to refuse a flood protection scheme, but that she had wanted to modify the Scheme as proposed, in particular Scenario 4 for the coastal defences. She was disappointed that she was not permitted to put forward a significant modification at this time. Councillor McIntosh was of the view that the existing Scheme was not a sustainable solution, would generate significant emissions during the construction phase, and did not protect nature. She was also concerned about the potential costs of the Scheme.

Councillor Bruce seconded the amendment. He voiced his disappointment that there was no opportunity at this stage to propose modifications. He was critical of the process and concerned about the increased cost of the project.

The Provost then invited Councillor Jardine to present her amendment (Amendment 2):

Recommendations 2.1–2.6: as set out in the officer report.

Add new recommendations, as follows:

2.7 Instructs officers to commission an independent cost and benefit review of the Scheme, to be completed prior to contract award, with findings reported to Full Council to ensure compliance with Best Value duties.

2.8 Further instructs officers to prepare and present to Full Council, prior to contract award, a Managed Adaptive Approach Plan, building on the Managed Adaptive Approach referenced in the report, to include:

- Defined decision triggers (e.g. sea-level rise, fluvial thresholds, asset condition) that will prompt review of future adaptation measures;
- A monitoring programme and arrangements for publication of data to support transparency and decision-making;
- Design-for-future provisions within the confirmed footprint, enabling later heightening or adaptation without further land requirements;
- Safeguarding of space required for possible future increments;
- A five-year review cycle and governance arrangements for considering adaptation options.

2.9 Requests that officers provide regular update reports to Full Council at key design gateways, to assure members and the community of progress against these commitments.

2.10 For the avoidance of doubt, confirms that these requirements shall not reduce the standard of protection delivered by the confirmed Scheme, and any future option that would materially alter the confirmed works shall be brought forward through the appropriate statutory process.

Councillor Jardine presented the amendment, which she believed would strengthen the accountability and scrutiny and would avoid any delays to the process. She noted that the SNP Group recognised the importance of the Scheme and the need to act with urgency. She called on the Council to demonstrate leadership and responsibility and support her amendment.

Councillor Menzies formally seconded the amendment.

The Provost then invited Councillor Hampshire to present his amendment (Amendment 3):

Replace Recommendation 2.5 with: To ask the Scottish Ministers to consider this proposed Scheme in accordance with Paragraph 7 of Schedule 2 of the Act, which will involve a Public Local Inquiry being held, and thereafter the Scottish Ministers taking the final decision.

Councillor Hampshire presented the amendment. He stressed the need for the views of the community to be heard, given the number and range of objections submitted, and he noted that it was unlikely that any further modifications would address those objections. He felt that a Public Local Inquiry would provide an opportunity for the community to contribute their views and would also provide the required transparency and scrutiny of the Scheme. He added that his amendment would not result in a delay.

Councillor Bennett seconded the amendment, pointing out that the proposed Scheme offers a solution to manage the flood risk to Musselburgh. He agreed with Councillor Hampshire that the community should be given an opportunity to put forward their views on the Scheme by way of a Public Local Inquiry.

There followed a debate, with Members recognising the need for a flood protection scheme for Musselburgh. There were concerns raised about the increasing costs of the proposed Scheme, and some Members expressed their disappointment at not having the opportunity to propose modifications at this stage. The concerns of the public were also highlighted. However, the proposed Amendment 3 added scrutiny around process, and this was welcomed, as was the opportunity for the community to put forward their views should there be a Public Local Inquiry.

Members of the Administration suggested that they would be happy to combine their amendment (Amendment 3) with Amendment 2. However, the SNP Group declined this offer, on the basis that they felt there was no need to request a Public Local Inquiry and that it should be the Council rather than Scottish Ministers who should take the final decision on the Scheme.

The Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the report recommendations versus the three amendments:

In favour of report recommendations (0)

In favour of Amendment 1 (5): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire and McIntosh

In favour of Amendment 2 (6): Councillors Allan, Cassini, Gilbert, Jardine, Menzies and Trotter

In favour of Amendment 3 (11): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (0)

Abstentions (0)

With the original report recommendations receiving no votes, and Amendment 1 receiving the lowest number of votes, both proposals fell, and the Provost then moved to the roll call vote on the two surviving amendments:

In favour of Amendment 2 (6): Councillors Allan, Cassini, Gilbert, Jardine, Menzies and Trotter

In favour of Amendment 3 (11): Councillors Akhtar, Bennett, Dugdale, Forrest, Hampshire, McFarlane, McGinn, McLeod, McMillan, Ritchie, Yorkston

Against (4): Councillors Bruce, Collins, Findlay, McGuire,

Abstentions (1): Councillor McIntosh

Amendment 3 was therefore carried.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the progress to date following approval of the outline design by full Council on 23 January 2024, and notification of the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme on 21 March 2024;
- ii. to confirm that it had considered all valid objections (unless withdrawn), late objections (unless withdrawn), and representations in respect of the EIA received, together with any other matters it considers relevant, and which includes the minutes of record of the meetings and all as detailed in paragraph 3.19 of the report;
- iii. to make a preliminary decision to confirm the proposed Scheme without modifications, as detailed in paragraph 3.25 of the report;
- iv. to note that, having made a preliminary decision to confirm the Scheme without modifications, the Council must notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision, as detailed in paragraph 3.26 of the report;
- v. to ask Scottish Ministers to consider the proposed Scheme in accordance with Paragraph 7 of Schedule 2 of the Act, which will involve a Public Local Inquiry to be held, and thereafter the Scottish Ministers taking the final decision; and
- vi. to confirm that the project team, working in consultation with the planning authority, should seek to deliver the fifty-four proposed changes to the proposed Scheme as detailed in paragraph 3.32 of the report.

Signed

Provost John McMillan
Convener of the Council

The webcast for this meeting will be available at the link below for five years from the date of the meeting: https://eastlothian.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1014651

East Lothian Council
Action Record, February – September 2025

2

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
25/02	25 02 25	08 Motion: Global Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty	Motion Motion continued (under SO11) pending further discussion at Cross-party Group on Climate Change and Sustainability	Cllr McIntosh	n/a		To be considered at the next Cross-party Group on Climate Change and Sustainability meeting
25/03	25 02 25	09 Motion: Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy	Motion Motion continued (under SO11) to allow for consideration of detail and impact	Cllr Jardine	n/a		
25/05	29 04 25	13 Motion: Security of Nation's Energy Supply	Motion Motion continued (under SO11) pending further discussion at Cross-party Group on Climate Change and Sustainability	Cllr Hampshire	n/a		Considered at the Cross-party Group meeting in Sept 25; in progress
25/09	26 08 25	05 Council Plan Action Plan	Additional question: to provide information on what is being done to improve access to GPs and how this will be reported to Members	Head of Operations (Adult Social Care)			Response provided by the Head of Operations (issued to Members on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/10	26 08 25	05 Council Plan Action Plan	Additional question:	Service Manager, Communications			Response provided by the Head of Children's

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			to provide information on how the East Lothian Poverty Plan is monitored/scrutinised				Services (issued to Members on 21 10 25) Members' Library on outcomes and measures to be published later in 2025, and possible report to PPRC. Recommended for closure
25/11	26 08 25	07 Q1 Financial Review 2025/26	Additional question: to provide an update on waiting lists re. holiday clubs for children with disabilities	Head of Children's Services			Response provided by the Head of Children's Services (issued to Members on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/12	26 08 25	07 Q1 Financial Review 2025/26	Additional question: to provide further detail regarding the additional £250k of support for EnjoyLeisure from the Amenities Service budget	Head of Infrastructure			Response provided by the Head of Infrastructure (issued to Members on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/13	26 08 25	11 Redetermination Order: Bankton Junction South Roundabout	Additional question: To provide further information on the proposed improvements to the roundabout	Service Manager – Roads		27 08 26	Scope of works provided to Members (issued to Members on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/14	26 08 25	14 Motion: Renewables Infrastructure	Motion:	CLlr Hampshire			In progress

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			Council Leader to write to Scottish and UK Governments: • seeking greater authority for councils to determine suitable sites • requesting that NESO carries out a strategic spatial energy plan, and noting the Council's concern that applications are being determined without a strategy in place • seeking the setting of targets for each local authority to ensure a fair distribution of the burden of development • seeking a review of the Energy Consents Unit, to give planning authorities power and authority to determine more applications, to review the threshold for ECU determination and the processes/transparency of the ECU				

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			requesting a change in legislation so that all developments must include community benefit, including a minimum of defined shares for community ownership Council Leader to instruct officers to report to Council on LDP2 policies as soon as is feasible Council Leader to write to the UK Government requesting the delegation of more powers under the Planning Act to local authorities, and to the Scottish Government requesting more powers for local authorities under National Planning Guidance Council Leader to share letter(s) with Group Leaders				
25/15	26 08 25	14 Motion: Torness Power Station – Characterisation Survey	Motion: Council Leader to write to Secretary of State for Energy	Cllr Hampshire		28 08 25	Letter from Cllr Hampshire issued to Secretary of State for

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
			Security and Net Zero requesting the UK Government to undertake a full and independent survey of the Torness Power Station site for a new nuclear power station, in order to assess the site's suitability for a new nuclear power facility				Energy Security and Net Zero on 28 August 2025 (issued to Group Leaders for information on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/16	26 08 25	16 PRIVATE Cockenzie Power Station Site Update	Additional question: Confirmation on information that local Members can share with the community	Head of Development		26 08 25	Information provided to Local Members by Head of Development following the meeting (issued to all Members for information on 21 10 25) Recommended for closure
25/17	30 09 25	01 Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Preliminary Decision on Proposed Scheme	Amended report recommendation: 2.5 to ask Scottish Ministers to consider this proposed Scheme in accordance with Paragraph 7 of Schedule 2 of the Act, which will involve a Public Local Inquiry being held, and thereafter the Scottish Ministers taking the final decision	Head of Infrastructure			Letter to Scottish Ministers from Cllr Hampshire in progress

Action Ref.	Meeting Date	Item Number and Title	Action(s) Agreed	Action Owner(s)	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments/Responses/ Additional Information
25/18	30 09 25	01 Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme – Preliminary Decision on Proposed Scheme	Additional question: To provide Members with further information on the increased costs of the proposed Scheme, in particular how much of this is due to inflation and how much is due to the larger project	Head of Infrastructure			Response provided by the Head of Infrastructure (issued to Members on 21 10 25) The full breakdown of costs won't be available until the detailed design phase.

COMMITTEE: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 28 October 2025

BY: Executive Director for Council Resources

REPORT TITLE: Submissions to the Members' Library Service, 11 August to 12 October 2025

REPORT STATUS: Public

3

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service since the last meeting of Council, as listed in Appendix 1.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 11 August and 12 October 2025, as listed in Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Standing Order 3.4, the Chief Executive will maintain a Members' Library Service that will contain:
- (a) reports advising of significant items of business which have been delegated to Councillors/officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation or officers in conjunction with Councillors, or
 - (b) background papers linked to specific committee reports.
- 3.2 All public reports submitted to the Members' Library are available on the Council website.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: None

5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

X

or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Bulletin of business submitted to the Members' Library, 11 August – 12 October 2025

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 East Lothian Council Standing Orders: Standing Order 3.4

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Lel Gillingwater
Designation	Team Manager – Democratic & Licensing
Tel/Email	lgillingwater@eastlothian.gov.uk / 01620 827292
Date	13 October 2025

Head of Service Approval

Name	Hayley Barnett
Designation	Head of Corporate Support
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Confirmed
Approval Date	20 October 2025

**MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE RECORD FOR THE PERIOD
11 AUGUST – 12 OCTOBER 2025**

Reference	Originator	Document Title	Access
86/25	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Land, Wallyford	Private
87/25	Head of Education	Update to Policy – Included, Engaged & Involved: Managing Distressed & Challenging Behaviour 2018	Public
88/25	Head of Education	Update to Policy – A Positive Approach to Improving School Attendance	Public
89/25	Head of Education	Update to Policy – Additional Support for Learning	Public
90/25	Head of Education	Update to Policy – Child Protection & Safeguarding	Public
91/25	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Land, Musselburgh	Private
92/25	Head of Infrastructure	Review of Transport Services - Additional Staff Resources and Vehicles to Support Delivery of Transport for ASN Pupils	Private
93/25	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly Customer Feedback Reporting	Public
94/25	Head of Children's Services	Funding for CS S10 Grants 2025-2026	Public
95/25	Head of Infrastructure	Tackling the Nature Emergency: Update on Actions to Protect and Enhance Nature	Public
96/25	Executive Director for Council Resources	Staffing Report: Development Officer – Leadership Development Post	Private
97/25	Head of Infrastructure	Building Warrants Issued Under Delegated Powers – August 2025	Public
98/25	Head of Corporate Support	Changes to Establishment – August 2025	Private
99/25	Head of Corporate Support	Creation of Post of an Elections Officer	Public
100/25	Head of Education	Sustainable Hourly Rate for Funded Providers Delivering Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian – August 2025	Public
101/25	Head of Infrastructure	Sale of Land – Port Seton	Private
102/25	Head of Infrastructure	Proceeds from Sale in Line with Obligation Under Feu Disposition, Musselburgh	Private
103/25	Executive Director for Place	Review of Team Leader – Bus Operations	Private
104/25	Executive Director for Place	Lothian Esk Catchment Partnership (LECP) – Update	Public
105/25	Executive Director for Place	Coastal Change Adaptation Plan – Update	Public
106/25	Executive Director for Council Resources	Deletion of Posts at Musselburgh Grammar School	Private
107/25	Head of Infrastructure	Building Warrants Issued under Delegated Powers between 1 st and 30 th September 2025	Public
108/25	Head of Corporate Support	Establishment Changes for September 2025	Private
109/25	Head of Communities & Partnerships	Review of Library Fines and Charges	Public

110/25	Executive Director for Council Resources	Staffing Report for the Creation of a Play Technician within Amenity Services	Private
111/25	Head of Communities & Partnerships	East Lothian Partnership Annual Review 2024-2025 and End of LOIP Report	Public
112/25	Executive Director for Council Resources	Creation of Temporary Strategic Lead - Prevention Post within Education	Private
113/25	Head of Infrastructure	Grant of Servitude Rights for Pedestrian Access, Pencaitland	Private

13 October 2025

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 October 2025
BY:	Executive Director for Place
REPORT TITLE:	Asset Review – Place Making Project Proposals
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present key findings from the Place Making project engagement and to seek approval for proposals aimed at securing and enhancing service delivery. These proposals introduce a financially sustainable service delivery model that also promotes resilience, addresses inequalities, and empowers local communities. The report highlights the extensive public and stakeholder engagement undertaken to date, demonstrating strong community support for existing facilities and the services provided. It also acknowledges concerns raised regarding challenges with room bookings, inconsistent fee structures, and restricted opening hours, which are largely attributed to current Council budget constraints.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Instruct the Head of Infrastructure to develop an Outline Business Case to present options and costings for the creation of six core Library & Area Hubs. This includes undertaking a range of feasibility studies as outlined in the report.
- 2.2 Agree that officers consider alternative service delivery models at various libraries in partnership with local communities.

- 2.3 Agree that officers engage with local communities to assess the feasibility of implementing a revised operating model at various community centres, village halls, Haddington Town House and Dunbar Town House.
- 2.4 Instruct the Head of Infrastructure to develop a Community Benefits Subsidised Lease Policy to provide clarity and transparency around the process for applying discounts on rent for community organisations.
- 2.5 Agree to establish the feasibility of relocating North Berwick Youth Project to the former nursery adjacent to North Berwick Community Centre which arose from the place-based engagement.
- 2.6 Note the decision by Council on 24 June 2025 as part of 'Learning Estate Paused Capital Projects' to incorporate the Elphinstone Community Centre into the Primary School to address future pupil roll requirements.
- 2.7 Agree that officers should engage with community representatives to investigate the feasibility and benefits of greater commercialisation of Dunbar Town House.
- 2.8 Agree to assess the feasibility of creating a publicly accessible list of all community facilities available in East Lothian, in conjunction with our community partners.

3 BACKGROUND

Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan 2024 to 2028

- 3.1 The East Lothian Council Property Asset Strategy & Management Plan, approved in June 2024, outlines the Council's vision for its property portfolio and the guiding principles for asset strategy, management, and investment. These principles are:
 - Effectively manage property assets
 - Meet immediate savings targets and bridge affordability gap
 - Meet demographic need for services
 - Generate income and encourage economic development
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
 - Work with communities and partners to maximise shared opportunities.

A comprehensive review of property assets is central to delivering an efficient and effective estate. The Asset Review Programme has already delivered measurable savings and service improvements. The Place Making Project forms part of this programme and aligns with the strategic principles set out in the approved plan.

Place Making Project Summary of Engagement

- 3.2 East Lothian Council has undertaken a comprehensive Place Making review of properties that currently, or could potentially, support face-to-face public services such as customer advice, libraries, and community spaces. Community engagement was a key part of this process, and the feedback gathered will inform the long-term property asset strategy.
- 3.3 Following Executive Management Team approval in October 2024, Clear Futures was appointed to lead a programme of engagement under the Place Making project. This work supported the development of proposals for future delivery of face-to-face services and included:
- Asset performance scorecards
 - Public engagement proposal
 - Conduct early engagement
 - Recommendations report for submission to Council.

Council officers worked closely with Clear Futures to ensure the programme was delivered effectively and captured a broad range of views.

- 3.4 Staff participation was actively encouraged. Two town hall-style briefings were held on 19 and 27 March 2025 to raise awareness of the project and its objectives. Staff were invited to share feedback via an online survey hosted on the East Lothian Consultation Hub, with regular updates provided through Inform articles.
- 3.5 Key building stakeholders and community groups were invited to a series of workshops as part of “Phase 1a” which took place from the 2 April to 15 April 2025. They were given the opportunity to review summary asset information as well as express their views on the opportunities and challenges faced for each of the buildings within their area.
- 3.6 “Phase 1b” was a wider public engagement using an online survey on the East Lothian Consultation Hub. This ran from the 19 May to 29 June 2025. This was supplemented by drop-in sessions in each area where members of the public were able to review the engagement information, ask questions and provide feedback. The online survey generated 894 responses. A version suitable for children and young people generated an additional 109 responses. A breakdown of the number of responses per building from both surveys can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Heads of Service and Service Managers have assisted in collating a detailed list of face-to-face services currently delivered and have identified where these services could be redesigned and incorporated into a hub.

- 3.8 The project team also worked closely with fellow community planning partners such as NHS Lothian, East Lothian Integrated Joint Board/Health & Social Care Partnership, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh College, Volunteer Centre East Lothian, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service to ensure that they could contribute to the engagement.
- 3.9 Key themes emerging from the engagement include:
- Communities provided positive feedback in favour of keeping all assets as they are all important and deliver valuable services.
 - There are operational issues at some buildings such as restrictions to opening times, difficult-to-use booking systems and inconsistent charging.
 - Concern over lack of agreed plans for several important landmark assets.
- 3.10 A summary of feedback is provided in Appendix 2.
- 3.11 The feedback from the engagement has been analysed and proposals for “Library & Area Hubs” and “Community Hubs” have been developed. This approach aims to balance the delivery of the East Lothian Council Plan objectives and the needs of communities while delivering premises cost savings for the Council. It also aligns with the East Lothian Partnership Poverty Plan priorities on reducing inequalities and improving community resilience and the Community and Learning Development Plan around building capacity and skills in communities.
- 3.12 A summary of the proposals for each area can be found in Appendix 3.

Library & Area Hubs

- 3.13 This section outlines the proposal to establish a network of Library & Area Hubs for core Council service delivery, including recommended locations and required facilities. It also includes the opportunity to consider redefining and producing alternative library provision in rural areas working in partnership with our communities
- 3.14 It is proposed that the Council establish six strategically located Library and Area Hubs, each designed with a multi-sector focus to integrate face-to-face and information services under one roof. This approach aims to reduce duplication, enhance collaboration, and improve service accessibility. These Hubs could host services delivered by key public sector partners – including NHS, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership, and Police Scotland – as well as third sector organisations and community groups. Opportunities for social enterprise activity linked to the Hubs should also be explored.
- 3.15 Library and Area Hubs should generally be situated in the largest town within each locality and be owned and managed by East Lothian Council. Council library services would be consolidated into these Hubs to

maximise efficiency and community benefit. The remaining library premises should be made available for use by community organisations, encouraging local stewardship and continued public value with the express intent of considering collegiately delivering alternative library service provision in partnership.

- 3.16 The Council has embraced the shift towards digital engagement, as reflected in our Customer Strategy, which prioritises innovation in online service delivery. While digital channels remain the preferred method of interaction, community engagement has highlighted the continued need for accessible, in-person services. The Bleachingfield Centre and George Johnstone Centre have served as models, informing the development of Library and Area Hubs across East Lothian.
- 3.17 Library and Area Hubs should be configured to have the following facilities as a minimum:
- Customer information point
 - Library
 - Hot Desks
 - Interview room(s)
 - Private booths with screens/MS Teams, where customers can speak to members of council staff.
 - Meeting room capable of hosting confidential meetings
- 3.18 East Lothian Council aspires to create trauma-informed services by embedding the five core principles of trauma-informed and responsive practice – safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment – across all its services. The Council recognises that trauma can affect individuals at any stage of life and is committed to ensuring that staff understand the impact of trauma and respond in ways that prevent further harm. The Library & Area Hubs approach aims to foster environments where people feel safe, respected, and supported to access services. This project will not only look at how trauma informed spaces are designed but also how services are delivered.
- 3.19 The proposed Library & Area Hub locations have been selected with consideration for town centre accessibility and proximity to public transport, supporting increased footfall to local businesses alongside access to face-to-face services:

Area	Number of Library & Area Hubs	Location
Dunbar & East Linton	1	The Bleachingfield Centre
Fa`side	1	The George Johnstone Centre
North Berwick Coastal	1	North Berwick Library & Coastal Communities Museum
Preston Seton Gosford	1	Prestonpans Library
Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig	1	Conduct feasibility work into developing Musselburgh Old Town Hall into the Area Hub to incorporate the library and Museum and any wider benefit opportunities. See paragraph 3.27 for further details. This projected pressure on local services should be carefully monitored and addressed within the feasibility study to ensure that, if needed, additional capacity can be supported through coordinated access to services across these three distinct communities
Haddington & Lammermuir	1	John Muir House - with a feasibility study to consider incorporating the Council Chambers and the library services on the ground floor of John Gray Centre Services into the Courts and explore wider benefit opportunities. See paragraph 3.30 for further details

- 3.20 To encourage use as multi agency information hubs, hot desks, interview rooms, and meeting room facilities should be available for other public sector partners based on a cost recovery model.

3.21 All facilities and services currently delivered from these existing buildings will remain, but the following additional services could be delivered subject to further engagement with partners including:

- Multi agency information hubs
- Clinics/equipment services (NHS/ East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership)
- Police Scotland local officer drop-in sessions.

3.22 There are service delivery benefits to co-located services, but further opportunities may exist, and these should continue to be explored both internally and with public sector partners.

Dunbar & East Linton Library & Area Hub

3.23 It is proposed that The Bleachingfield Centre in Dunbar be designated the Library & Area Hub for the Dunbar and East Linton area, and some reconfiguration works may be required to achieve this. Community feedback from both engagement phases strongly supported the value of library services. As a result, it is proposed that core library services for the area be delivered from the Bleachingfield Centre, and consideration be given to working with the community to implement an alternative delivery model at East Linton Library.

Fa`side Library & Area Hub

3.24 It is proposed that the George Johnstone Centre be designated as the Library & Area Hub for Fa`side. The George Johnstone Centre requires the office area to be upgraded to the Council's New Ways of Working standard layout and soundproofing improvements to interview rooms to be carried out. Community feedback from both engagement phases strongly supported the value of library services. As a result, it is proposed that core library services for the area be delivered from the George Johnstone Centre and to continue supporting Lily's Ormiston CIC who are currently operating in the community rooms at Ormiston Library. This will support the local aspiration of it becoming a Community Hub.

North Berwick Coastal Library & Area Hub

3.25 It is proposed that North Berwick Library be designated as the Library & Area Hub for North Berwick Coastal area. Some existing library/museum floor space in North Berwick Library & Coastal Communities Museum will require to be reconfigured to provide a hot desk area. A feasibility study will be required to establish the options and costs for achieving this. Community feedback from both engagement phases strongly supported the value of library services. As a result, it is proposed that core library services for the area be delivered from North Berwick Library & Area Hub and consideration be given to working with the community to implement an alternative delivery model at Gullane Library.

Preston Seton Gosford Library & Area Hub

- 3.26 It is proposed that Prestonpans Library be designated as the Library & Area Hub for Preston Seton Gosford area. Some existing library/museum floor space in Prestonpans Library will need to be reconfigured to provide a hot desk area. A feasibility study will be required to establish the options and costs for achieving this. Community feedback from both engagement phases strongly supported the value of library services. As a result, it is proposed that core library services for the area be delivered from the Prestonpans Library & Area Hub and consideration be given to working with the community to implement an alternative delivery model at Port Seton and Longniddry East Linton Libraries.

Musselburgh Library & Area Hub

- 3.27 In August 2025, the Council approved a Public Information Notice to gauge market interest in redeveloping the Brunton Hall site to include the provision of a theatre and performance space. This approach aims to attract potential commercial partners to support the continuation of arts services in Musselburgh.
- 3.28 While market engagement could provide a potential pathway for The Brunton Hall, uncertainty surrounding the future of Musselburgh Old Town Hall remains a concern for the community. Throughout the engagement process, Musselburgh Conservation Society has expressed a willingness to collaborate with the Council to identify a sustainable solution, including securing funding to bring the building back into use. As a Grade A listed building and one of Scotland's most complete examples of a tolbooth, its preservation and reuse are of significant cultural importance.
- 3.29 Musselburgh Library is not currently considered suitable for long-term service delivery due to the absence of public toilets, accessibility challenges, and ongoing condition issues that frequently disrupt operations, particularly in winter. Substantial investment would be required to maintain the current service model. Consequently, it is proposed that a feasibility study be undertaken to explore the development of Musselburgh Old Town Hall as the town's Library & Area Hub. This would secure a long-term future for the building and establish it as a central location for Council service delivery in Musselburgh.

Haddington & Lammermuir Library & Area Hub

- 3.30 The library for the Haddington & Lammermuir area is currently based in The John Gray Centre. Customer services for the area are currently based in John Muir House. It is proposed that this arrangement continue but that a place-based development project be undertaken to look at the feasibility of co-locating the library and customer services in a single building.

- 3.31 There was no public consensus in feedback on the future of the former court building at John Muir House. However, given its location and potential strategic importance it should form part of the Haddington place-based development project.
- 3.32 Elected Members are currently located in various parts of John Muir House. A project is underway to consolidate working spaces into a single area within the building including the council chambers. This will free up Block C for redevelopment as a commercial venture in partnership with East Lothian Land. Relocating elected members from the office on the northwest of John Muir House will also free this part of the building for disposal if not required.
- 3.33 There is concern in the community regarding the future of Haddington Town House. By moving the Council Chambers to John Muir House, the Town House would be completely vacant and operationally surplus. Given the significant community value of this building, it is proposed the Council engage with community organisations to assess the viability of Community Asset Transfer of the building.
- 3.34 Feedback from the Phase 1a workshops indicated that some third sector organisations were interested in relocating within Haddington. The opportunity to create space for the third sector should be included in the place-based development project based on the principle of a community benefit lease, with premises costs recovered.

Alternative Library Development Opportunities

- 3.35 Community feedback from both engagement phases strongly supported the value of library services. To meet required savings targets, it is proposed that the following libraries be considered for alternative service delivery models in partnership with communities. This would consider alternatives such as utilising space within community buildings to potentially offer self-service access to lending along with a staffed presence for part of the week. They are:
- East Linton Library
 - Ormiston Library
 - Gullane Library
 - Longniddry Library
 - Port Seton Library
- 3.36 The Council acknowledges that libraries continue to serve as one of the few free, safe, and stigma-free public spaces available. In recognition of their value, we are committed to working collaboratively with communities to explore alternative service delivery models prior to any proposed closures. Communities will be given the opportunity to assume responsibility for these library premises Alternative library and book

lending opportunities will be considered in partnership with local stakeholders to ensure continued access to essential resources.

- 3.37 Gullane and East Linton Libraries are based in shared premises with lease agreements involving third parties. The Council will work with these parties when considering alternative service delivery models.
- 3.38 Ormiston Library occupies a prime location with revenue generating potential. There is also strong community interest in using the building to deliver a range of valuable services including a cafe.
- 3.39 Prior to making any final decisions, the Council will conduct a statutory consultation specifically concerning these libraries. This process will evaluate the potential impact of any proposals or expressions of interest submitted by community groups, including those related to asset transfer or alternative models of service delivery for the library buildings.

Wallyford & Blindwells

- 3.40 The anticipated growth in Wallyford, Whitecraig, and the Musselburgh expansion at Craighall necessitates a review of service demand, particularly in relation to the Musselburgh Hub. Wallyford alone is projected to reach a population of approximately 7,000, based on development approved in the 2018 Local Development Plan (LDP), positioning it as the seventh largest town in East Lothian. This projected pressure on local services should be carefully monitored and addressed within the feasibility study to ensure that, if needed, additional capacity can be supported through coordinated access to services across these three distinct communities.
- 3.41 Blindwells has a future population of approximately 3,700 based on the 1,600 houses identified in LDP 2018. It is proposed that residents would use the Library & Area Hubs at Prestonpans and Tranent. However, should the population increase significantly as a result of further development in Blindwells then consideration could be given to designating an additional Library & Area Hub for the area.

Community Hubs

- 3.42 Feedback on community centres and village halls has been overwhelmingly positive. While the Council remains committed to maintaining access to these facilities, ongoing financial pressures necessitate a shift in approach. It is proposed that communities assume greater responsibility for the ownership and operation of these assets, supported by revised operating models such as:
 - Full repairing and insuring leases
 - Community Asset Transfers (CAT)
 - Recharging premises costs to management committees or community groups.

- 3.43 Under all proposed models, premises costs would be borne by the community. A combination of income from lets, fundraising and grant funding not available to the Council could allow communities to sustain these facilities
- 3.44 Where no existing management committee or community group is in place, the Council will work with local stakeholders to establish appropriate governance structures. This may include support for new management committees, assisting with the creation of community development trusts to oversee one or more buildings, or partnering with existing community groups.
- 3.45 To encourage financial viability, a Community Benefit Subsidised Lease Policy will be developed. This framework will enable rent discounts based on community impact. Leases will be long-term to encourage access to external funding not normally available to the Council.
- 3.46 The Council recognises the invaluable contribution of volunteers and their critical role in the success of revised operating arrangements. However, it is acknowledged that the management and operation of facilities may fall outside the current skill set of many community groups. To address this, Community Development Officers will work in partnership with organisations such as Volunteer Centre East Lothian to support communities in building the necessary capacity and skills. This support will also include guidance on accessing programmes such as the Community Ownership Support Service, enabling communities to take on greater responsibility with confidence and sustainability.
- 3.47 Community engagement on the revised operating models will take place with a view to implementing them as soon as agreement is reached. Those where agreement cannot be reached by December 2026, will be reported to Council thereafter, as part of projected Asset Review savings for 2027/28.
- 3.48 The list of properties within the scope of implementing a revised operating model:
- Macmerry Village Hall
 - Ormiston Community Centre
 - Trevelyan Hall
 - Nungate & Haddington Community Centre
 - Haddington Town House
 - Whitecraig Village Hub
 - North Berwick Community Centre
 - Gullane Recreation Hall

- Longniddry Community Centre & Library
 - Pennypit Centre
 - Port Seton Centre & Library
 - Prestonpans Community Centre
- 3.49 Revised operating models cannot be applied to Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre and Wallyford Learning Campus due to existing PPP/FM contracts. However, feedback from both phases of engagement have indicated that the community use arrangements at Wallyford requires review and this is in progress. Feedback received from the Dunbar engagement on Bleachingfield, requires further discussion with the management committee. No other feedback relating to buildings where management committees operate was received which required a follow up.
- 3.50 Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre is part of the Council's PPP contract covering several high schools. Its future should be considered within the broader PPP hand-back strategy, noting it is not designated as an Area Hub

Other Property Proposals

- 3.51 North Berwick Youth Project (NBYP) are currently based in the Hope Rooms and have been for around 20 years. They use dedicated space within the building to provide a range of youth services through a service level agreement in place with East Lothian Council. The remaining parts of the building are available for let using the councils room booking system. NBYP indicated a potential interest in being relocated to the former nursery building at North Berwick Community Centre. This would provide them with the dedicated space required for the services they deliver. This would allow the Hope Rooms to be declared surplus. Officers should progress the feasibility of undertaking this. This requires further engagement and exploration.
- 3.52 East Lothian Council recently agreed to reinstate several previously paused Learning Estate projects. This included a project at Elphinstone Primary School to address a forecast breach in capacity. A number of options have been prepared detailing the alterations required, but the most cost-effective option was to repurpose the spaces currently used as the community centre to school use. This has resulted in protecting community access to the building being limited to outwith school operating hours, similar to arrangements at other primary school and in addition, Elphinstone Miners Welfare is currently providing community use and has benefited from recent council support to do this.
- 3.53 Feedback regarding Dunbar Town House has indicated a community desire to unlock benefits from greater commercialisation of the building. The space and location offer tremendous potential for visual arts which should be explored further with local community groups.

Non-Property Proposals

- 3.54 A key theme emerging from the engagement was lack of visibility and promotion on the range of facilities that are available for community use. No single list of both council-owned, and community-owned facilities and their available facilities exist. Improving access to this information could encourage greater use of facilities and help support their future. As a result, it is proposed the feasibility of creating a publicly accessible list of all community facilities in East Lothian should be developed.
- 3.55 Feedback from the Phase 1a engagement highlighted a perception that the booking system used by the council was difficult to use. A project is currently underway to implement a new room booking and payment system as part of the councils Transformation Programme.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report proposes that a Community Benefits Subsidised Lease Policy be developed to allow consistent and transparent decision to be made on discounts available to voluntary groups, registered charities, community groups and other community-based organisations as tenants of East Lothian Council assets.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance:

In February 2024, East Lothian Council approved a budget that includes a £3.6 million revenue savings target from the Asset Review project. An additional £1.598 million from the previous year remains outstanding, bringing the total savings target to £5.198 million over the next five years. The current phasing of these savings is outlined in the table below.

Financial Year	Asset Review Revenue Savings Target (£'000)
Previously agreed/not yet delivered	1,598
2026/27	1,000
2027/28	1,100
2028/29	1,000
2029/30	500
Total	5,198

In addition to revenue savings, a capital receipts target of £20 million has been set by Council, primarily through land and property sales. To date, £3.550 million has been achieved, leaving a balance of £16.450 million to be delivered by the end of 2027/28. While the Place Making project will contribute to this, additional workstreams will be required to achieve the full target.

5.2 Human Resources:

An alternative service delivery model in some libraries and greater community operation and management of some community centres and village halls could have an impact on some staff. This will be assessed as more detailed proposals are developed and individual service reviews are undertaken to address the impact on staffing requirements.

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT):

A statutory consultation will be required to be carried out before making any changes to library provision.

A statutory consultation will be required should there be any significant changes to Common Good assets. This includes:

- Dunbar Town House
- The Bleachingfield Centre
- Haddington Town House
- The Brunton Hall
- Musselburgh Old Town Hall
- Port Seton Community Centre & Library

5.4 Risk:

As set out within the body of the report.

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 ***Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.***

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.



or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

☐

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Number of Survey Responses per Building
- 7.2 Appendix 2: Summary of Emerging Themes (Clear Futures)
- 7.3 Appendix 3: Summary of Proposals per Area

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 East Lothian Council 26 August 2025 – Brunton Hall Replacement Project
- 8.2 East Lothian Council 18 February 2025 – Budget, Council Tax and Rent Setting 2025/26 Onwards
- 8.3 East Lothian Council 24 June 2025 – Learning Estate Paused Projects (Elphinstone Primary School)

- 8.4 East Lothian Council 29 October 2024 – The Brunton Hall RAAC Update, Proposals for Closure and Alternative Service Delivery.

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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Head of Service Approval

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Designation	Head of Communities & Partnerships
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	13 October 2025

Place Making Project Proposals

Appendix 1: Number of Survey Responses per Building

Total number of Respondents: 1003 (respondents could respond on one or more of the buildings within scope).

Building	Number of Responses
Dunbar & East Linton Area	
The Bleachingfield Centre	69
Dunbar Town House	36
East Linton Library	57
Fa`side Area	
Elphinstone Community Centre	11
The George Johnstone Centre	35
Macmerry Village Hall	25
Orniston Community Centre	42
Ormiston Library	38
Trevelyan Hall	35
Haddington & Lammermuir Area	
Haddington Town House	32
The John Gray Centre	61
John Muir House including former Court	26
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre	23
Musselburgh, Wallford & Whitecraig Area	
The Brunton Hall & Theatre	279
Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre	40
Musselburgh Library	94
Musselburgh Old Town Hall	59
Wallyford Learning Campus	25
Whitecraig Village Hub	18
North Berwick Coastal Area	
Gullane Library	68
Gullane Recreation Hall	51
The Hope Rooms	86
North Berwick Community Centre	92
North Berwick Library & Coastal Communities Museum	95
Preston Seton Gosford Area	
Longniddry Community Centre & Library	108
Pennypit Centre	76
Port Seton Community Centre & Library	124
Prestonpans Community Centre	78
Prestonpans Library	29
Total	1812

East Lothian Council

Asset Management & Engagement Support

Final Report

5th September 2025

Prepared by
Clear Futures

About Clear Futures

This report is an independent review carried out by Clear Futures commissioned by East Lothian Council. Clear Futures works with public sector organisations who need a flexible, collaborative partnership to overcome built environment challenges and drive change in their communities faster, smarter and sustainably. Combining the skills of our industry experts with those of the council's team, we enable organisations to strategically address local priorities and plan value-based routes to delivering energy-efficient and sustainable infrastructure and services.

All asset data analysed as part of this report and engagement process belongs to East Lothian Council.

This report does not represent binding recommendations. Further council decision-making and feasibility assessment is required.

SECTION 1

Executive Summary

1.1 Executive Summary

This report summarises the work undertaken by Clear Futures to provide an independent review of 29 buildings identified by East Lothian Council (ELC) as part of its Place Making Project, an asset review programme that aims to reduce costs and increase revenue to help the council address pressing financial challenges.

The report does not provide definitive answers. It outlines a set of potential pathways to help ELC determine future plans for the properties. The findings are grounded in available data and meaningful public input but constrained by data gaps and the need for further work.

Buildings reviewed

The 29 properties reviewed are distributed across six areas within East Lothian and are all owned and operated by ELC except for common good buildings. All the buildings currently deliver, or have the potential to deliver, face-to-face services to the public.

The review undertaken by Clear Futures involved three stages of data gathering:

Building data assessment

At the end of 2024, Clear Futures reviewed data held by ELC on each of the 29 properties to assess each building's suitability based on current usage and investment required to meet future needs. A red, amber, green (RAG) rating was used to summarise the buildings' performance against a series of criteria.

Phase 1A stakeholder workshops

The outcomes of the initial building data assessment were taken to six workshops attended by over 80 people either working in or with an interest in the 29 properties. Facilitated discussions were used to test the building data and gain further insights on the buildings' use as well as opportunities and challenges specific to each.

Recurring themes raised during the workshops were:

- Lack of affordable booking options and access issues impacting the use of buildings and services
- Use and occupancy challenges stemming from lack of awareness
- Staffing inconsistency and volunteer fatigue in the community

- Interest in Community Ownership/Management but nervousness around the uncertainty of process and costs
- Need for a stronger council-community relationship and support
- Need for future proofing of a long-term strategy for each area

Phase 1B public engagement

Following the workshops a phase of public engagement was held to seek the views of local communities and other interested parties on the current use and suitability of the 29 buildings.

Over 1500 responses were received to the public engagement exercise. Headline themes identified in the feedback received were:

- Most of the buildings under consideration are seen as community anchors, playing an important role in supporting wellbeing, social connection and inclusion
- Underuse of buildings is largely caused by limited access, poor promotion and operational barriers such as limited hours or staffing issues.
- Management and governance gaps are driving stronger interest in more local or community-led management.

Operating / delivery model identification

Following the review of building data and analysis of the insights gained from the two engagement exercises, the following four operating / delivery models were identified as potential pathways to managing service delivery and achieve savings in a more nuanced way:

1. Council hubs: A place to access face-to-face advice, information, books, help, support, resources & sanctuary (council's vision for a council hub on next page)
2. Develop as a community node (via a council-community shared ownership model): buildings offering services important to the community and have shown vested community interest, managed largely by the community with some or no council management
3. Redevelop to maximise site use
4. Disposal / sale of surplus

1.1 Executive Summary

Potential pathways

Each of the 29 buildings was aligned to one of the potential pathways based on the operating / delivery models – summarised in the table opposite. Further feasibility studies and additional data is required to establish suitability of the delivery models. These have been identified on page 15.

A detailed summary of the building data assessment and insights gained from the engagement exercises is presented by area on pages 17 to 66 in the main body of this report.

Next steps

A number of risks were identified as part of the review related to data quality (accuracy, consistency and current gaps) and the current council – community relationship both of which require further work as they have potential implications for decision making and the effectiveness of place making strategies and services going forward.

It is recommended that the council addresses the areas for further investigation identified in this report before determining any final plans.

*Feasibility study required

** BH&T – Brunton Hall & Theatre
MOTH – Musselburgh Old Town Hall

Develop as Council Hub	A central area hub from where all face-to face council services will be delivered to its local Area (including statutory library provision)	Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar & East Linton George Johnston Centre, Fa'side John Muir House (including Former Court)* and John Gray Centre Haddington & Lammermuir North Berwick Library & Museum, North Berwick Coastal Prestonpans Library*, Preston Seton Gosford **BH&T (post repair/redevelopment) or MOTH identified as potential hubs – further investigation required
Develop as a Community Node	Buildings prioritised for community led ownership/management	Dunbar Townhouse, Dunbar & East Linton East Linton Library, Dunbar & East Linton Elphinstone Community Centre, Fa'side Ormiston Community Centre <u>or</u> Ormiston Library, Fa'side Macmerry Village Hall, Fa'side Haddington Town Hall, Haddington & Lammermuir Nungate & Haddington Community Centre, Haddington & Lammermuir Musselburgh Old Town Hall, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig Wallyford Learning Campus, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig Whitecraig Village Hub, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig North Berwick Community Centre, North Berwick Coastal Gullane Recreational Hall, North Berwick Coastal Gullane Public Library, North Berwick Coastal Port Seton Community Centre & Library, Preston Seton Gosford Longniddry Community Centre & Library, Preston Seton Gosford Prestonpans Community Centre, Preston Seton Gosford Pennypit Community Centre Facility, Preston Seton Gosford
Redevelop to maximise use of site	Redevelop to optimise existing use or redevelop for an alternative use	Brunton Hall & Theatre, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig
Consider sale options	Buildings found to be surplus to the service needs of the community, or unsuitable for continued use	Trevelyan Hall, Fa'side Hope Rooms, North Berwick Coastal Ormiston Community Centre <u>or</u> Ormiston Library, Fa'side

SECTION 2

Main Report

Potential Pathways
By Area, per building

Content

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3	SECTION 3: APPENDICES.....	72
SECTION 2: MAIN REPORT.....	6	Response Rates.....	73
Purpose of this document.....	9	Phase 0 Asset Performance Data Review.....	75
Project overview, Approach & programme timeline.....	10	Phase 1A Development & Delivery.....	83
Methodology.....	12	Phase 1B Development & Delivery.....	90
Glossary.....	14		
Delivery Models & Council Vision.....	15		
Dunbar & East Linton.....	17		
Fa’side.....	24		
Haddington & Lammermuir.....	33		
Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig.....	40		
North Berwick Coastal.....	49		
Preston Seton Gosford.....	58		
Engagement Overview.....	67		
Risks & Limitations.....	70		
Next Steps.....	71		



Review findings by area of asset

Dunbar & East Linton.....	17	Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig.....	40
Bleachingfield Centre		Brunton Hall & Theatre	
East Linton Library		Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre (MECLC)	
Dunbar Town House		Musselburgh Library	
Fa'side.....	24	Musselburgh Old Town Hall	
Elphinstone Community Centre		Wallyford Learning Campus (WLC)	
George Johnson Centre		Whitecraig Village Hub	
Macmerry Village Hall		North Berwick Coastal.....	49
Ormiston Community Centre		Gullane Public Library	
Ormiston Library		Gullane Recreational Hall Facility	
Trevelyan Hall		Hope Rooms	
Haddington & Lammermuir.....	33	North Berwick Community Centre	
Haddington Town Hall		North Berwick Library & Museum	
John Muir House (including former Court)		Preston Seton Gosford.....	58
John Gray Centre		Longniddry Community Centre & Library	
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre		Pennypit Community Facility Centre	
		Port Seton Community Centre & Library	
		Prestonpans Community Centre	
		Prestonpans Library	

Purpose of this document

This report summarises the outcomes of an independent review, carried out by Clear Futures (CF), of the 29 buildings in 6 areas of East Lothian identified by ELC*. It intends to serve as guidance to help the council identify opportunities for cost savings in the ownership and use of the buildings it owns, which are used to deliver essential services to the community.

It outlines potential pathways based on the review and analysis of building data provided by the council and engagement data captured in sessions conducted by CF and ELC.

The document also makes recommendations on further investigation required around specific areas of the process and addressing any risks before conclusions can be made on the future of the buildings under consideration.

**29 buildings that fulfilled the criteria of offering face to face customer services*

Project overview

What?

ELC is going through a Place Making initiative as part of a wider asset review programme. **29 properties** across the **6 'Areas'** (as shown on the right) that currently deliver, or have the potential to deliver, face-to-face services to the public have been identified for asset rationalisation.

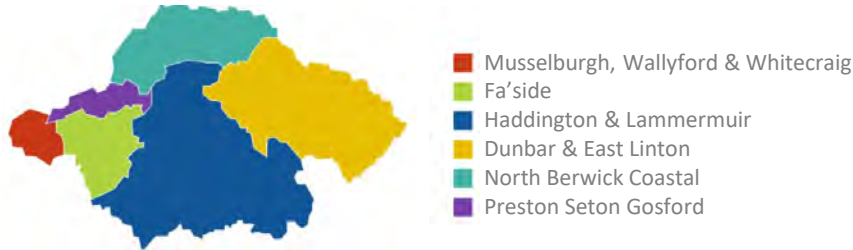
The council is exploring the potential for a new approach based on centralised council hubs, which would bring together customer service facilities, library and community meeting spaces into a single building in the largest towns in each local area.

Why?

The council is facing financial challenges and requires to make savings and raise capital receipts. The asset review programme was identified as one of the means to contribute to these savings.

How?

This review is **driven by evidence-based data analysis** and **informed by a programme of targeted stakeholder and open public engagement** to help identify surplus properties and opportunity for closure of some buildings. Part of the project will look at how the impact of this could be minimised.



Key Deliverables

1. ***Refine asset performance data:** quantitative assessment of the 29 assets
2. **Refine public engagement proposal:** recommendations around tactics for effective engagement: *an initial phase of targeted stakeholder engagement* and an *open public engagement*.
3. **Conduct early engagement:** targeted stakeholder and wider public engagement
4. ****Develop a report outlining the 'potential pathways' for submission to council**

**Originally noted as "Refine asset performance scorecard" on the main project briefing document agreed between ELC and Clear Futures*

***Originally called a Recommendations Report*

Approach and programme timeline



We are here

**engagement to commence post budget approval & EMT clearance*

Publish report for council committee review scheduled for Oct 2025

Methodology – A Phased Approach

The project followed a phased, evidence-led methodology that integrated data analysis with stakeholder and wider community engagement. This layered approach supported the insights with both quantitative asset data and qualitative feedback from a wide range of community voices.

Phase 0: Asset Data Review

The process began with a detailed review of building and contextual data provided to Clear Futures by the council. This included information on each building's:

- Condition
- Utilisation*
- Suitability/Fitness for purpose
- Adaptability to Net Zero Carbon targets
- Future Condition Investment Cost (originally referred to as 'Lifecycle Replacement Cost' and in Phase 1A and 1B)
- Climate Resilience: flood plain risk**

This data was summarised in the form of a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) study. The data was also assessed for consistency in type, source, and time of capture. To enrich this evidence base, site visits were also conducted, allowing for added contextual understanding of each location. Findings from this review were used to develop initial hypotheses around fitness for use and the broad level of investment needed to shape the direction of subsequent engagement activities.

**Utilisation data analysed in Phase 0 was excluded from Asset Data Review summaries and final recommendations due to inconsistencies in the data available for each building*

***Climate Resilience: flood plain risk data originally analysed as part of Phase 0, omitted due to inconsistencies identified during Phase 1A – ELC have reviewed further and provided updated information available for Phase 1B's Building Index Cards*

Phase 1A: Stakeholder Engagement

Insights from the asset data review informed a targeted stakeholder engagement phase. Invited stakeholders represented various groups and include community councils, area partnerships, local community organisations, Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL), and building management committees for each area.

A series of workshops were held with key local and regional stakeholders to:

- Validate findings from the asset data
- Identify any gaps or contextual factors not captured in the data
- Explore current building use, opportunities, challenges, and potential future roles
- Understand stakeholder interest in building management or asset transfer

A summary of Phase 1A was published publicly on the council's consultation hub to promote transparency and awareness of the process.

Phase 1B: Wider Public Engagement

Building on the insights from Phase 1A, a broader public engagement exercise was conducted to gather input from the wider community in each area. Publicity routes for the public engagement included: Press releases; social media linking to ELC hub website with uploaded info; posters on buildings under consideration with QR codes linking to ELC hub website.

The overall engagement took place over six weeks and included:

- Online questionnaires hosted on the East Lothian Council consultation hub
- Six drop-in sessions (one in each area), hosted by the council

- Information deposit points where residents could complete hardcopy surveys or access the online version via QR code
- Youth engagement sessions facilitated by council officers

The engagement focused on community use, perceived value, frequency of use, service satisfaction, and perspectives on financial efficiency for each building.

Responses were analysed and categorised under the following themes:

- Current value and strengths
- Potential future use
- Challenges
- Suggested actions

Phase 2: Development of Delivery Models

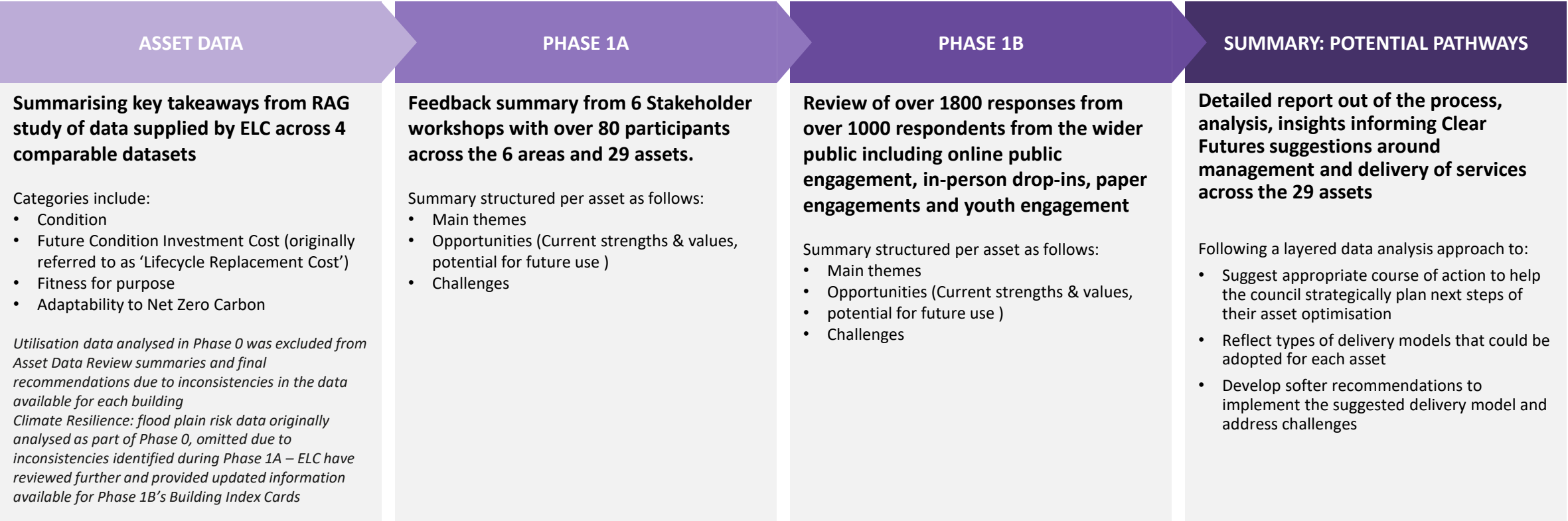
Following the engagement phases, the Clear Futures team analysed all findings to inform the development of potential operating and delivery models for the 29 buildings. These models were designed to support future decision-making by:

- Aligning with community needs and aspirations
- Meeting statutory responsibilities
- Ensuring financial sustainability
- Maximising long-term value from the council's estate

Each building was allocated a recommended delivery model, along with commentary explaining how and why the model aligns with the building's assessed role, condition, and community relevance.

Methodology – A Phased Approach

The layered approach illustrated below has been adopted to develop findings for each of the 6 areas and make suggestions around potential pathways. The next 6-sections of the report are broken down by each council area, detailing the findings at each stage of the project process.



Glossary & Definitions

Terminology	Description
ALEO	An organisation set up by the council to run services or manage buildings separately from the council, but still owned or controlled by the council
Asset	A building / place the council owns that can be used by the community or for council services, and that needs to be looked after so it stays useful in the future
Asset rationalisation	Reviewing buildings the council owns and deciding which ones we still need, which ones could be used differently, and which ones we might no longer keep, so we can make the best use of our resources
Building Index Cards (BIC)	Asset data and information detailed for each of the assets in scope – available to support and inform participants during phases 1A and 1B
Co-locating services	Putting different council or community services together in the same building, so people can access more in one place and the space is used more efficiently
Condition	Building condition refers to the current state of a building’s structure, systems, and components, indicating how well it is maintained and if repairs or upgrades are needed
Common Good	Buildings owned by the council that are held for the benefit of the local community, often with historical or cultural importance, and which must be used in ways that support the community’s interests.
Community Asset Transfer (CAT)	When the council transfers ownership, lease or management of a building or land it owns to a community group, so the community can run it for local benefit
Community Benefit Policy Lease	A Community Benefit Policy Lease is a subsidised lease given to a community group that requires them to provide benefits—like services or activities—that support local people and public priorities.
Community node	A community node is a building or space that acts as a central point where people in a community gather, connect, and access local services or activities
Council Hub	See Council Vision on page 16

Delivery model	Proposed approach to ownership, management and operations of building and services
Feasibility study	An investigation to check if an idea or plan is practical, affordable, and likely to work before any big decisions or spending are made
Future Condition Investment Cost	Future Condition Investment Cost is the estimated amount of money needed to repair or maintain an asset to keep it in good condition over time.
GVA	Gullane Village Association
Keyholder status	A person or group is given approved access to a council-owned building, usually outside normal hours, because they are trusted to use and look after the space responsibly
Net Zero Carbon (NZC)	Balancing the amount of greenhouse gases produced with the amount removed from the atmosphere, so the overall impact on climate change is zero
NBYP	North Berwick Youth Programme
Public Private Partnership (PPP)	When the council works with a private company to design, build, finance, or run something — like a building or service — sharing the risks, costs, and benefits
Quartile	One of four equal parts used to split a set of numbers or results, so you can see how something compares within the group
RAAC – Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete	A lightweight type of concrete used in some buildings between the 1950s and 1990s. It can weaken over time, so buildings with RAAC may need extra checks, repairs, or replacement to make sure they stay safe
Red Amber Green Rating (RAG)	A simple colour system used to show how well something is doing and compare against others - green means good, amber means there are some concerns, and red means there’s a problem that needs attention
Service rationalisation	Reviewing and changing the way services are delivered—such as merging, reducing, or stopping some services—to improve efficiency, cut costs, or better meet current needs
Service suitability / fitness for purpose	Service suitability or fitness for purpose means how well a service meets the needs and expectations of its users, effectively doing what it’s intended to do

Delivery Models

The following asset high-level delivery models have been developed to help the council classify buildings to support effective decision-making around their future use, ownership, and management. These models aim to align with community needs, statutory obligations, and financial sustainability, while maximising value from the council’s estate.

Develop as Council Hub	Develop as Community Node			Redevelop to Maximise Use of Site	Consider Sale Options
	Retain as Existing	Council – Community Shared Model	CAT or Sale to Community Group Options & Suitability		
One council service hub per area. Council owned. Council led. A place to access face-to-face advice, information, books, help, support, resources & sanctuary (council’s vision for a council hub on next page) A centralised area hub, with all public facing (digital and in-person) council services consolidated and delivered in its local area (including council library provision). This could be consolidated to one building or served by several buildings in a ‘campus’ style.	Building and services identified as important and indispensable with no clear option for re-location, repurpose or community ownership such as public private partnership (PPP) contracts.	Possible shared model considerations include but are not limited to: - Community Benefit Policy, spaces leased to community groups for exclusive use/management (possible discounts to rent depending on community benefit offered) - Arms Length External Organisation (ALEO) independent body owned or controlled by public authority that delivers public services - Trusted Key Holder Status, insurance for non-council key holders - Corporate Landlord models in the context of community buildings	This model applies to buildings where the community has expressed interest in sale or long-term lease of the entire building However, ahead of any transfer, this model recognises the need to build the necessary support for the community to be able to carry out such a transfer and operate successfully and sustainably	Maximise site potential. Disposal/redevelopment of current building, site or asset. Considering council revenue/savings: - Redevelop to optimise existing use - Redevelop to an alternative use - Demolition to market for sale options	Buildings that have been revealed as surplus to the needs of the community, or unsuitable for continued use, to be considered for potential sale to generate capital receipts.

Council Vision

The Council Hub is envisioned to be a **welcoming and inclusive community space**. It will offer **face-to-face access to council services (in person and/or digital)**, along with a fully functional library. The hub could also provide **basic NHS and Police drop-in services, payment facilities, and support from public and third sector partners**.

It will follow a **“no wrong door” approach**, helping people access the right support—whether that’s from the council or another organisation.

The space will be **warm and safe**, where people are treated with understanding and kindness (i.e. trauma-informed staff). It will **help reduce social isolation, encourage community interaction**, and meet local needs.

Facilities provided as a minimum will include:

- **Hot Desks** (for council and public sector partners. Priority given to the services that are being offered that day e.g. today is money advice day.)
- **Interview room(s)**
- **Customer information point**
- **Library space**
- **Private booths** with screens, where customers can speak to members of council staff
- **Meeting rooms** capable of hosting confidential meetings

All services will be delivered in a realistic way, considering the limited space available.

Dunbar & East Linton

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: Dunbar & East Linton

Summary of data received as of 28th March 2025

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Bleachingfield Centre	Based on the available data this building is performing very well compared against all 29 assets and is fit for continued use with minimal corrective action required - it is reported to be fit for purpose, its predicted 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' fall in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope. The condition is found to be 'satisfactory' with some signs of deterioration - investment required to improve. Data suggests this building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Dunbar Townhouse	Based on the available data this building is fit for continued use but only with some investment/intervention - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon. The building's fitness for purpose is still reported to be 'good' - performing as intended and operating efficiently, however the condition has been reported as 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration - investment required to improve. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' costs are comparatively low (2nd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to be 'unachievable'.
East Linton Library	This building requires significant investment/intervention in order to make it fit for continued use - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and its comparatively high 'Future Condition Investment Costs'. The building's condition and fitness for purpose have both been reported as 'satisfactory' - with some signs of deterioration and some minor problems affecting operations. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively high against all assets in scope (3 rd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to require 'major work' but it has been suggested it may well be 'unachievable' - further investigation required.

Phase 1A Workshop : Dunbar & East Linton

DATE: 16th APRIL 2025 (12 participants) LOCATION: BLEACHINGFIELD CENTRE, DUNBAR

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 12 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix.

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Bleachingfield Centre	- Services and facilities should complement rather than replicate services already offered by independent or third sector organisations - Collaborate and co-ordinate with other services and third-party organisations to source support workers to build a more efficient and a better supported network - Recognised need for a broad range of services that respond to the varied needs of the community	- Interest in bringing together public services to improve convenience and reduce duplication - Clearer promotion of the facilities and opportunities available could attract new users, and support better coordination between services such as Dunbar Townhouse with its historic context and being a landmark building Bleachingfield centre seen as potential council hub Bleachingfield centre is the only building in Dunbar with Changing places toilet , 24x7 access and fully fenced play areas and must be leveraged in future plans	- Accessibility and user experience - including reduced public computer access, poor acoustics and limited privacy in some areas - Current booking system seen as complex and unclear - Restricted opening hours has led to reduced availability of space and services especially East Linton Library - Suitability of the buildings – considering buildings' age, physical condition and access limitations - Caution raised, as we identify a potential hub to be aware of duplicating facilities or competing with 'The Ridge' which is seen as a good example of a community hub
Dunbar Townhouse			
East Linton Library			

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Dunbar & East Linton Page 1 of 2

DATES: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS and YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS – total number of responses: 160

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Bleachingfield Centre	- Well-used, multi-purpose hub for community and public services - Hosts wide range of activities – from children’s groups to bereavement support - Key role in reducing isolation and supporting wellbeing - Only ‘Changing Places Toilet’ in Dunbar, supports accessibility	- Reopen café as a youth or community social space - Use hall for indoor sports, events, and exhibitions - Convert small rooms into co-working or flexible workspace - Attract public service partners (e.g. CAB, NHS, DWP) - Create a local board to guide future planning and programming	- Parking charges and high hire costs limit community access - Café is closed and poorly located - Building layout lacks flexibility; small rooms underused - Booking system is complex and internet is unreliable - Not enough support or services for teenagers

“It’s a central hub for many people for a variety of reasons. The community needs a space where it can come together when needed and to also have the option of speaking face to face to the council without going to Haddington”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Bleachingfield Centre

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Dunbar & East Linton page 2 of 2

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Dunbar Townhouse	- Prominent civic landmark and focal point on Dunbar High Street - Flexible, accessible spaces used for civic, charitable, and community activity - Holds cultural and historical significance – regarded as part of the “Spirit of Dunbar” - Underutilised but valued for its role in community identity and connection	- Develop as a creative and cultural hub with diverse exhibitions and events - Improve promotion to raise awareness and attract wider community and tourist use - Expand use of venue for weddings, youth programmes, and community-led initiatives - Extend gallery opening hours year-round, including evenings and winter - Use outdoor space creatively and explore Community Asset Transfer for sustainable stewardship	- Low visibility and awareness within the local community - Limited and seasonal opening hours restrict access and impact artists - Outdated infrastructure – small rooms, old toilets, and physical limitations - Under-promotion and lack of compelling exhibitions reduce visitor interest - Need for clearer communication of services and more inclusive programming
East Linton Library	- Trusted and a well-used community facility, particularly by families and older adults - The only free and accessible ELC community resource in East Linton - Provides a safe, warm, and welcoming space – important for those experiencing isolation - Shared with Lynton Day Centre, which is a vital service for vulnerable residents	- Extend library opening hours and enable access on more days of the week - Increase use by community groups and expand programming (e.g. exhibitions, lessons) - Use space for other council services and Police Scotland community presence - Enable community-led activities when staff are not present - Maximise shared use with the Day Centre and consider nursery or school partnerships	- Extremely limited opening hours restrict impact and usage - Residential accommodation above may limit development potential - There are no local alternatives - Layout constraints limit rental opportunities - Limited parking and reduced staffing affect flexibility - Future Condition Investment costs perceived as high for the size and scope of the building

“This unique building is the very spirit of Dunbar and its long history. A great tourist attraction with many overseas visitors.”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Dunbar Town House

“There should be more local engagement as to how the building could possible be used outwith Library hours”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for East Linton Library

Summary Overview: Dunbar & East Linton

Dunbar & East Linton is seen as an area rich in community spirit, but many feel let down by poor management, lack of promotion, and missed opportunities to turn existing assets into thriving, inclusive spaces for all ages. There is strong desire for improvement, not closure.



Develop as Council Hub

Bleachingfield Centre
(Note: This is a Common Good asset)

Already functioning and valued as a hub but is currently underperforming in terms of community experience, access, flexibility and service innovation

Develop as Community Node

Dunbar Town House
(Note: This is a Common Good asset)

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT to develop as Heritage/Cultural Community Facility
Suggestion of some community interest

East Linton Library

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT to develop as a Wellbeing/Social Community Facility
Begin conversations with community groups to gauge interest and capacity for long-term stewardship

Summary: Dunbar & East Linton

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Bleachingfield Centre		- Used for library, toilets, council services, and socialising (café). - Hosts children's groups, community events, school visits, and crafting clubs - Supports work/study (hot desking), voting, and disability services. - Used for vaccinations and housing appointments. - Richmond's Hope runs bereavement sessions twice weekly. - Flyer stands aid accessibility - Usage varies from frequent to unknown	Develop as Council Hub	- Already functioning and valued as a hub but is currently underperforming in terms of community experience, access, flexibility and service innovation - Only building in Dunbar with Changing places toilet , 24x7 access and fully fenced play areas - Fit for purpose - Low future investment costs
Dunbar Town House		- Used for exhibitions, meetings, and book groups. - Regularly used by Quakers (2–3x/month), history society (daily), and local charities. - Kitchen facilities are adequate. - Some respondents were unaware of the venue	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT	- Some community interest seen to develop as Heritage/Cultural/ Creative Community hub - Prominent civic landmark and focal point on Dunbar High Street - Seen as part of the “Spirit of Dunbar”
East Linton Library		- Regularly used for borrowing books, mainly by families with young children. - Weekly use common; some visit every open day. - Used by Lynton Day Centre (half the ground floor). - Activities: book club, after-school groups, school visits, BookBug, Lego, colouring. - Services: IT access, printing, council info, hearing aid batteries, event info, research. - Space also used by crafters, walkers, and book lovers	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT Begin conversations with community groups to gauge interest and capacity for long-term stewardship	- Some community interest seen to develop as a Wellbeing/Social Community Facility - The only free and accessible ELC community resource in East Linton - Provides a safe, warm, and welcoming space – important for those experiencing isolation

Fa'side

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: Fa'side

Summary of data received as of 28th March 2025.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Elphinstone Community Centre	Available data suggests this building requires significant investment/intervention to make it fit for continued use . Both the condition and fitness for purpose has been reported as 'satisfactory' with some deterioration showing and minor problems effecting efficiency of operations. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively high against all 29 assets in scope (3rd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to require 'major work' but it has been suggested it may well be 'unachievable' - further investigation required.
George Johnson Centre	Based on the available data this building is performing very well compared against all 29 assets and is fit for continued use with minor intervention . It is reported to be in a 'good' condition and fit for purpose, its 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' fall in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope (1 st quartile). This building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Macmerry Village Hall	Based on the available data this building requires substantial investment/intervention to be fit for continued use and is performing poorly compared to all assets in scope. The fitness for purpose is reported as 'bad' - does not support the delivery of services. The condition is reported to be 'poor' with major defects showing and/or not operating as intended. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' for the building are in the highest quartile compared with all other 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). Notably this building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Ormiston Community Centre	This building is fit for continued use with some investment/intervention ; its 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are reported to be in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope. Both the condition and fitness for purpose are reported to be 'satisfactory' with some deterioration showing and minor problems effecting efficiency of operations. This building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Ormiston Library	This building is fit for continued use but requires some intervention/investment . The condition is reported to be 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration, while the fitness for purpose is reported to be in the highest category of 'good'. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are reported to be comparatively high (3rd quartile) against all other assets in scope. This building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Trevelyan Hall	This building requires substantial investment/intervention to be fit for continued use - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and its current condition. The fitness for purpose of the building has been reported to be 'satisfactory', with some minor problems, however the condition has been rated 'poor' - showing major defects and/or not operating as intended. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively high against all other assets in scope (3rd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to require 'major work' but it has been suggested it may well be 'unachievable' - further investigation required.

Phase 1A Workshop : Fa'side

DATE: 9th APRIL 2025 (20 participants) LOCATION: ROSS HIGH SCHOOL, TRANENT

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 20 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Elphinstone Community Centre	- Recognition of the value of working with local organisations, schools, businesses and other community groups to support shared goals - Food related initiatives such as a community cafes seen as important to community support and engagement as seen in the case of Ormiston Library with the current temporary larder/pantry tent - Adapting to demographic and social change – importance of staying relevant to a changing population with diverse needs and expectations	- Emphasis on accommodating different age groups and needs - Strategic development, consideration of long-term investment in purpose-built or renovated facilities - Greater youth engagement – welcoming and equipped space to engage with young people - Exploration of funding opportunities: Trevelyan Hall identified as a potential sale option (due to its condition and underutilisation) and to ringfence the proceeds towards a suitable purpose-built facility for the community	- Limited transport links hindering access to community spaces and services - Poor communication between council and community impacting co-ordination and progress regarding community use of Ormiston Library - Reduced community use due to restrictive hours or unclear booking systems across all buildings
George Johnstone Centre			
Macmerry Village Hall			
Ormiston Community Centre			
Ormiston Library			
Trevelyan Hall			

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Fa'side page 1 of 3

DATE: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via **ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS** and **YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS** – total number of responses: 154

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Elphinstone Community Centre	- Valued locally but underused and underpromoted - Perceived as serving only Elphinstone residents - Low visibility limits its broader community role - Elphinstone Miner's Club increasingly used by community - Increased population placing pressure on school places	- Potential to become a versatile event and activity space - Could serve wider area including Tranent - Strong strategic opportunity to engage a wider audience through targeted promotion and inclusive positioning	- Low public awareness and narrow perception of purpose - Limited usage and restricted engagement from non-local residents - Lack of visibility hinders growth and community impact
George Johnston Centre	- Well-used, multi-purpose community and public service hub - Inclusive, safe, and welcoming for a diverse range of users - Central to delivering face-to-face council and support services	- Introduce co-working and hot-desking to activate underused space - Expand use of meeting rooms for pop-ups, events, and exhibitions - Extend evening and weekend hours to meet community demand - Improve service promotion and public navigation within the building	- Limited parking and restricted hours hinder access - Library layout, tech issues, and lack of study/work space reduce utility - Underused internal areas and poor visibility of information (e.g. noticeboards) - Confusing access to services affects user experience

"For people who need to book a hall or host an event this would be a good alternative to Tranent."

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Dunbar Town House

"It's a go-to hub not just for Tranent but also for those in the surrounding villages"

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for George Johnson Centre

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Fa'side page 2 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Macmerry Village Hall	- Valued primarily for the Men's Shed, which supports mental health and social inclusion, reported to be one of the most successful examples of a 'Men's Shed' in Scotland - Previously a vibrant multi-user space, now underused and perceived as dominated by one group - Building condition is very poor, affecting usability and safety	- Potential to redevelop into a multi-use community hub for learning, youth work, remote working, and events - Opportunity to expand Men's Shed's role while making space more inclusive - Physical accessibility of the building - Could serve wider community needs through refurbishment and clearer booking processes - Increased use of Macmerry Miner's Club by the community	- Severe building disrepair: broken facilities, poor heating, mould, outdated infrastructure - Perceived exclusivity and cleanliness concerns linked to Men's Shed use - Lack of promotion, limited transport access, and high hire costs deter wider use - Absence of clear management and booking pathways limits community engagement
Ormiston Community Centre	- Only dedicated community space in Ormiston; modern, safe, and valued - Strong local ownership and pride in the facility - Current use is limited due to access barriers and administrative constraints - Presence of Day Centre noted as being a primary user of the community centre	- Resume private hires (e.g. birthday parties) and expand community events - Coordinate shared programming with local groups - Introduce co-management or advisory models to improve access and flexibility - Provide booking training and support for local users	- Low usage despite strong community value - Cluttered shared spaces and lack of janitorial support - High hire costs and administrative hurdles (e.g. booking system, unhelpful processes) - Poor communication and limited online promotion reduce awareness and reach

"Age Scotland use our Men's Shed as a template for all other Men's Sheds in Scotland"

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for MacMerry Village Hall

"Consider forming a community advisory board to help oversee use and accessibility."

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Ormiston Community Centre & Ormiston Library

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Fa'side page 3 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Ormiston Library	- Strong community asset supporting education, wellbeing, and inclusion - Strategically located near school and park, making it a natural hub for families - Underutilised due to limited hours, facility gaps, and lack of promotion	- Expand into a multi-use hub with café, toilets, co-working, and events - Integrate with school library to improve reach and efficiency - Position as a base for wider council and community services - Provision of café and public toilets to generate income and footfall from those visiting park/playground - Offer private hire and outdoor programming linked to the park	- Limited and inconsistent opening hours restrict access for working families - Facilities in need of upgrade (e.g. toilets, doors, workspace setup) - Unwelcoming exterior and lack of promotional activity - Inconsistent staffing limits user experience and familiarity
Trevelyan Hall	- Only publicly owned community space in Pencaitland with regular multi-age group use - Plays an important role in wellbeing, early years support, and community events - Widely recognised as poorly maintained and in need of significant investment - Presence of Pencaitland Day Centre noted – used on a weekly basis	- Could become a vibrant local hub for events, co-working, and pop-up services (e.g. visiting library) - Strong local use and location make it a good candidate for redevelopment or replacement - Existing user base and central position support potential for expanded community function	- Poor internal condition: heating, toilets, and general maintenance are inadequate - Inaccessible layout and no dedicated parking - Booking is unreliable due to lack of janitorial staff - Competition from alternative venues due to the hall's current state and image - Concern that loss of this asset, combined with parking charges, worsens rural isolation and diminishes community spirit

“People have talked for ages about making the library more of a community hub”

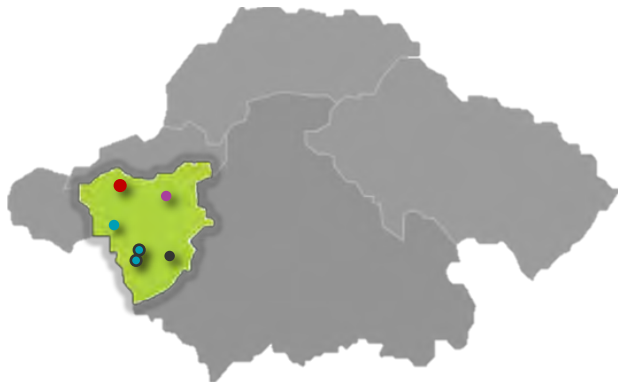
Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Ormiston Library

“It would require considerable money, time and imaginative use of the whole building to create a workable, helpful ‘centre of the community’”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Trevelyan Hall

Summary Overview: Fa'side

Strong community desire and need for well-maintained, accessible, and locally managed spaces – currently undermined by poor infrastructure, unclear booking systems, and perception of neglect. The feedback reflects a community rich in energy and ideas but constrained by systemic underinvestment and operational obstacles. There is a real risk of losing vital community connections unless spaces are made fit for purpose and easier to access.



Develop as Council Hub

George Johnston Centre	Already functioning as a successful, cost-efficient, and inclusive community hub that plays a key role in delivering both statutory and voluntary services
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Develop as Community Node

Elphinstone Community Centre	Explore viability of shared school-community model to maximise use and provide family and youth community support
<i>Ormiston Community Centre (OCC)</i>	Considering asset proximity, engage with community to explore viability of co-locating community services to either OCC or OL Potential for CAT but operational change and support needed to make viable
<i>Ormiston Library (OL)</i>	
Macmerry Village Hall	Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT with the <i>Men's Shed</i> – if no community interest, then explore redevelopment potential for income generation opportunities

Consider Sale Options

Trevelyan Hall	Suggestion for proceeds to be ringfenced for community benefit - contingent upon legal review of common good status and sale restrictions Note: historically, no appetite for Community Asset Transfer
<i>Ormiston Community Centre (OCC)</i>	Assuming co-location of community led services is possible this would render either OCC or OL as surplus and available for sale
<i>Ormiston Library (OL)</i>	

Summary : Fa'side Page 1 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
George Johnston Centre		- Used for library, toilets, council services, and socialising (café). - Hosts children's groups, community events, school visits, and crafting clubs - Supports work/study (hot desking), voting, and disability	Develop as Council Hub	- Already functioning as a successful, cost-efficient, and inclusive community hub that plays a key role in delivering both statutory and voluntary services - Performing very well compared to the 29 assets - Fit for continued use with minor intervention
Elphinstone Community Centre		- Valued locally but underused and underpromoted - Elphinstone Miner's Club increasingly used by community	Develop as Community Node: Explore viability of shared school-community model	- Some community interest seen - To maximise use and provide family and youth community support - Increased population placing pressure on school places - Condition is reported to be 'satisfactory'
Macmerry Village Hall		- Previously a vibrant multi-user space - Now underused and perceived as dominated by one group: The Men's Shed used few times a week - Used for community council meetings and annual gala week in June	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT with the <i>Men's Shed</i> otherwise Redevelop	- Some community interest seen - Men's Shed deeply valued resource for the community and needs a dedicated space based on feedback - This building requires substantial investment/intervention to be fit for continued use
Trevelyan Hall		- Only publicly owned community space in Pencaitland with regular multi-age group use - Plays an important role in wellbeing, early years support, and community events	Consider Sale Options: Suggestion for proceeds to be ringfenced for community benefit	- Historically, no appetite for Community Asset Transfer - Widely recognised as poorly maintained and in need of significant investment - NZC has been reported to require 'major work' and could be unachievable

Summary : Fa'side page 2 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Ormiston Community Centre		- Once a year for flower show - Art classes and elections - Toddler classes during term time	Develop as Community Node	- Some community interest seen - fit for continued use with some investment/intervention - Potential for CAT but operational change and support needed to make viable
			Consider Sale Options:	Assuming co-location of community led services is possible this would render either OCC or OL as surplus and available for sale
Ormiston Library		- Strong community asset supporting education, wellbeing, and inclusion - Underutilised due to limited hours, facility gaps, and lack of promotion - Temporary larder/pantry tent	Develop as Community Node:	- Some community interest seen - condition is reported to be 'satisfactory' - Potential for CAT but operational change and support needed to make viable - Considering asset proximity to OCC, engage with community to explore viability of co-locating community services to either OCC or OL
			Consider Sale Options:	- Assuming co-location of community led services is possible this would render either OCC or OL as surplus and available for sale - condition is reported to be 'satisfactory'

Haddington & Lammermuir

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: Haddington & Lammermuir

Summary of data received as of 28th March 2025.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Haddington Town House	Based on the available data this building is not fit for continued use without significant investment/intervention - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and improvements required in terms of condition and fitness for purpose. For both condition and fitness for purpose the building is reported to be 'satisfactory' with some signs of deterioration and problems effecting the efficiency of operations – investment required to improve. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively low against all 29 assets in scope (2nd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to be 'unachievable'. Please note: This building is currently mothballed and as a result not available to the public
John Gray Centre	The John Gray Centre is the most fit for continued use compared to all other assets in this area, however, it still requires some interventions/investment . The building's condition is reported to be 'satisfactory', performing as intended with minor signs of deterioration. The fitness for purpose is reported to be 'good' - performing well and operating efficiently. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively low against all of the 29 assets in scope (2nd quartile). Notably this building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
John Muir House Including Former Court	Based on the available data this building is not fit for continued use without significant investment/intervention - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and costs associated with condition. The fitness for purpose is reported to be 'good' - performing well and operating efficiently. The condition is 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration (some investment required). The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively high against all 29 assets in scope (3rd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to require 'major work' but it has been suggested it may well be 'unachievable' - further investigation required. Please note: the Former Court is currently mothballed
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre	Based on the available data this building is not fit for continued use without substantial investment/intervention . The fitness for purpose of the building has been rated highly (good) - performing well and operating efficiently. The condition of the building has been reported as 'poor' with defects showing. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are in the highest quartile compared to all 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). Notably this building requires 'major work' (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.

Phase 1A Workshop : Haddington & Lammermuir

DATE: 2nd APRIL 2025 (20 participants) LOCATION: CORN EXCHANGE, HADDINGTON

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 20 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Haddington Town House	- Ambition to make Haddington a destination and attract more visitors - Community capacity – Community Asset Transfer only possible if sustainable for the people to manage - Consideration of physical access, transport links and connectivity to surrounding areas - Haddington Town Hall and the Court at John Muir House are both mothballed – no current use	- Opportunity for community to collaborate and explore options for shared ownership or community asset transfer. Some 3rd party organisations have shown interest. However, needs further exploration - Support for local enterprise and services - Improved visibility, awareness and accessibility of available facilities and services - Multi-use spaces – creating adaptable environments that can serve a variety of functions and user groups	- Difficult to find and book available meeting space in the area - More clarity and support needed regarding Community Asset Transfer processes and opportunities - Restricted opening hours limiting out of hours use and access - Ongoing issues relating to maintenance, repair needs and physical limitations of the space
John Gray Centre			
John Muir House including former Court			
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre*			

*Nungate representation only. No representation from the Tynebank Centre

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Haddington & Lammermuir page 1 of 2

DATE: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS and YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS – total number of responses: 140

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Haddington Town House	- Central, historic building with strong symbolic and civic value - Seen as a potential community and cultural hub for Haddington and beyond - Currently underused and closed to the public, despite strong local interest - Pressure to meet unmet demand for events, education, and social activities	- Host diverse events: ceilidhs, weddings, lectures, exhibitions, festivals - Provide space for U3A, third sector, and local business functions - Generate income through hires and overflow use from other venues - Reinforce Haddington's role as a regional centre through strategic repurposing	- Currently mothballed and seen as a wasted civic asset - Requires investment to address condition, comfort, and accessibility - Differing public views: some support revitalisation, others favour mothballing - High expectations due to limited alternative venues in town
John Gray Centre	- Well-used, inclusive community hub with strong social impact - Offers cultural, educational, and intergenerational activities - Multipurpose facility supporting a wide range of public use - Faces barriers due to limited accessibility and inconsistent hours	- Expand wellness, family, and educational programming - Connect with tourism (e.g. walking tours, farmers markets) - Boost room hire, co-working, and explore café or donation models - Strengthen visibility through improved promotion and community engagement	- Poor disabled parking management and limited opening hours - Disruptive issues with temperature, acoustics, and fire alarms - Confusing booking process, especially for repeat users - Undermarketed services leading to underutilisation

"It is in a dominant position in the town and should be a building which provides a focus for the cultural life of the community"

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Haddington Town House

"It is a hub in Haddington providing a wide range of services to the community. It is in a good central location for this."

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Haddington Town House

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Haddington & Lammermuir page 2 of 2

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
John Muir House (including former court)	- Used sparingly and only when in need for council services - Poor accessibility, confusing layout, and fragmented services - Significant underutilisation and inefficient internal environment - Strong local interest in repurposing and future transformation - Recognition of heritage value in the Old Court House	- Transform the Old Court House into a community hub or venue - Introduce flexible workspace, small business units, or pop-up services - Consolidate and streamline council services for greater efficiency - Explore partial redevelopment or relocation of council HQ - Improve access and visibility to increase public use	- Lack of lift and poor signage hinder accessibility - Inadequate parking and poor transport links deter use - Building is cold, uncomfortable, and seen as outdated - Dispersed service points reduce operational efficiency - Perception that the building is unwelcoming or irrelevant in its current form
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre	- Vital and inclusive hub for diverse community needs - Strong accessibility and convenient location - Flexible, warm space suited to a wide range of uses - Only community facility serving the Nungate area	- Increase bookings through improved promotion and digital presence - Attract new user groups (e.g. arts, wellness, parties, classes) - Extend availability beyond current usage hours - Introduce professional venue management or volunteer coordination	- Building exterior in poor condition (leaks, rotting fixtures) - Operational issues with caretaker and lack of Wi-Fi/screen access - Not listed on council website — low visibility despite high potential - Limited storage space and modernisation needs

“It’s important only as a centre of local government for the council but not specifically to the community”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for John Muir House

“It has a lot of potential and could be used a lot more”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Nungate & Haddington Community Centre

Summary Overview: Haddington & Lammermuir

The overall sentiment for the Haddington & Lammermuir area, is mixed but cautiously optimistic, with a clear desire for better use of community assets and improved accessibility (Bus links should be reviewed for all four assets in this area to allow people from across the area to access via public transport) . The community is engaged and invested in the future of its public buildings. While there's frustration with current access, use, and communication, the sentiment is hopeful and solution-focused, indicating strong civic interest and potential for revitalisation if action is taken.



Develop as Council Hub

John Muir House (incl. Former Court)

Explore feasibility of converting Former Court into a multi-use hub for Haddington & Lammermuir and retaining other parts - feasibility study required to assess viability and accessibility concerns
Opportunity to **consider sale options** or **redevelop** the rear of the site to support capital generation to fund conversion

John Gray Centre

Consider including John Gray Centre in campus style of council hub due to proximity and overlap of services already on offer. The building is reported to already be operating as a vibrant community hub, offering essential services for all ages with some suggested improvements for community value.

Develop as Community Node

Haddington Town Hall
(Note: This is a Common Good asset)

Reopen and develop as a creative, cultural community facility with community engagement and involvement – **already interest in lease opportunities**
Community interest in ownership but concern exists around capacity and leadership — **CAT could be explored longer term**

Nungate & Haddington Community Centre

Continue current offering and **explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT**
The building requires works done before it can be fit for continued use - transitional support along with a clear asset condition disclosure is critical for community ownership

Summary Overview: Haddington & Lammermuir

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
John Muir House (incl. Former Court)		- Former Court building currently mothballed - Used for council services such as registrations, interviews - Used by council staff working from the building	Develop Partially as Campus style Council Hub: Explore feasibility of converting Former Court into a multi-use hub Consider Partial Sale Options: rear of the site to support capital generation to fund conversion Or Partial Redevelopment	- Recognition of heritage value in the Old Court House - Strong local interest in repurposing and future transformation - Desire to transform the Old Court House into a community hub or venue - Used sparingly and only when in need for council services (registrations) this is not a particularly community valued 'building'. General feedback is to move to the courthouse - Strong local interest in repurposing and future transformation
John Gray Centre		- Well-used - Offers cultural, educational, and intergenerational activities - Multipurpose facility supporting a wide range of public use	Develop Partially as Campus style Council Hub due to proximity and overlap of services already on offer.	- Reportedly already operating as a vibrant community hub, offering essential services for all ages - Inclusive community hub with strong social impact
Haddington Town Hall		Currently underused and closed to the public, despite strong local interest	Develop as Community Node: CAT could be explored longer term	- Already interest seen in lease opportunities - Seen as a potential community and cultural hub for Haddington and beyond
Nungate & Haddington Community Centre		Used by Friday Friends	Develop as Community Node: explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT	- Community interest seen in engagements - Already running at full capacity and managed by the community - Could be taken over by the community fully or partially with council support to transition roles

Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig

Summary of data received as of 28th March 2025

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Brunton Hall & Theatre	Based on the available data this building requires substantial (potentially unaffordable) investment/intervention to be fit for continued use . Both the condition and fitness for purpose of the building are reported as 'poor' with signs of major defects/problems. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are the highest against all 29 assets in scope (4 th quartile) – significantly so, this is likely due to the discovery of RAAC. This building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre	This building is fit for continued use and is performing well against all assets in scope - it is reported to be in a good condition and fit for purpose and its 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' fall in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope (please note this building is under a PPP contract). This building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Musselburgh Library	Based on the available data this building requires substantial investment/intervention to be fit for continued use . Both the fitness for purpose and the condition of the building have been reported as 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration and problems effecting the efficiency of the operations. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are in the highest quartile compared with all 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). Notably this building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Musselburgh Old Town Hall	Based on the available data this building requires substantial investment/intervention . Both the fitness for purpose and the condition have been reported as 'poor' - showing major defects and not operating optimally. Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to be 'unachievable'. Please note: no data available for 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs', please also note this building is currently mothballed and not available to the public
Wallyford Learning Campus	This building is fit for continued use and is performing well against all assets in scope - it is reported to be in a 'good' condition and fit for purpose. Its 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' fall in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope. Please note this building is under PPP contract with BAM responsible for the management of the building. This building may be easily adaptable or require minimal work (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks - further investigation required.
Whitecraig Village Hub	This building is fit for continued use and is performing well against all assets in scope - it is reported to be in a good condition and fit for purpose, its 'Future Condition Investment Costs' fall in the lowest quartile compared to all other assets in scope. This building requires 'minimal work' (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.

Phase 1A Workshop : Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig

DATE: 3rd APRIL 2025 (13 participants) LOCATION: MUSSELBURGH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MUSSELBURGH

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 13 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix.

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Brunton Hall & Theatre Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre Musselburgh Library Musselburgh Old Town Hall Wallyford Learning Campus Whitecraig Village Hub	- Importance of asset location, connectivity and accessibility - Value of historically and culturally significant assets especially Musselburgh Old Town Hall - Ensuring relevance to both long-standing and new community members - Musselburgh Old Town Hall and Brunton Hall & Theatre are mothballed – no current use but need suitable replacement as these have been deeply valued by the community - Desire to have a purpose-built community hub and theatre in place of the now mothballed Brunton Hall & Theatre building	- Build on assets’ historical value, celebrate local identity and heritage - Flexible use - creating multifunctional spaces - Explore horticultural opportunities – utilise surrounding area and gardens - Using buildings as a venue to foster community engagement - Economic sustainability and regeneration – exploration of ways to generate income and contribute to broader renewal of the area	- Overcoming the buildings current unused state - Addressing accessibility and condition issues - Operational constraints and resource limitations - Long term uncertainty – need for clear vision and viable business models

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Musselburgh, Whitecraig & Wallyford page 1 of 3

DATE: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS and YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS – total number of responses: 505

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
The Brunton Hall & Theatre	- Deep cultural and civic importance to the community - Closure due to RAAC has created a major service and identity gap - Strong desire for an inclusive, multi-use venue that serves all generations - Support for integrating public services to improve access and efficiency - Emphasis on sustainability, income generation, and cultural legacy	- Redevelop or rebuild as a modern civic and cultural hub - Include theatre, rehearsal, exhibition, café, meeting and event space - Co-locate services like library, council desks, or health provision - Generate income through ticket sales, hire, café revenue, and partnerships - Re-establish Brunton as the cultural heart of Musselburgh and a driver for local pride and footfall	- Major structural issues due to RAAC, with unclear repair costs - Outdated internal spaces and limited versatility in current layout - Accessibility and navigation concerns (e.g., parking, disabled access) - Risk of losing cultural identity in redevelopment if not handled carefully - Long-term uncertainty about funding, timescales, and project scope with concerns over lack of clear future plans
Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre	- Well-used, accessible, and positively regarded facility - Plays an important role in community support and inclusion - Valuable for council services, events, training, and food provision - Limited public awareness and external visibility hinder broader use - Some affordability and space-use challenges	- Expand promotion and signage to raise local awareness - Increase flexible and affordable room hire for groups and events - Enhance café offer and operating hours - Develop surrounding outdoor space for community use - Position the centre as a broader, more visible community hub	- Limited awareness of services and purpose among residents - High hire costs for some community groups - Inconsistent café opening times and rising prices - Insufficient small/private meeting spaces - Difficult access for those without transport; limited parking

“I feel strongly that we need either the Brunton Hall and Theatre as it was or an equivalent venue if replacement is a more viable option”

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Musselburgh, Whitecraig & Wallyford page 2 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Musselburgh Library	- A well-used, inclusive, and valued community space seen as an essential Musselburgh asset - Offers wide-ranging services beyond traditional library use - Highly praised staff and atmosphere - Recognised need for modernisation and investment - Important civic and social role in the town centre - Relocate with other services to form a council hub	- Potential to expand services and programming (e.g., tech classes, early-years, arts/wellbeing) - Scope to integrate with other services or co-locate in a future hub - Income generation through event hire, room rental, and community café - Garden space could be developed for community use	- Poor building condition (roof, heating, lighting, pests) - Accessibility issues: unreliable lift, awkward internal layout for wheelchair and buggy users - Lack of public toilets and limited quiet/private or children's spaces - High running costs and limited hours/staffing
Musselburgh Old Town Hall	- Unclear accessibility and poor communication about building use and plans - Deteriorating condition, with overdue repairs (e.g., roof) - Importance as a listed heritage asset requiring sensitive adaptation - Strong community recognition of its civic and historical value - Desire for a community-led or co-managed future	- Repurpose as a multi-use cultural and community venue - Highlight and leverage heritage and historic significance (Tolbooth, courtroom, cells) - Support local pride, tourism, and economic regeneration - Use outdoor space (e.g., garden, market area) to broaden community offer - Foster collaborative management with local stakeholders to ensure sustainability - Community interest expressed in taking on the operation	- Unclear or limited accessibility, including lack of lift - Poor condition, especially urgent maintenance needs like roof repairs - Lack of clarity and transparency on future plans and funding - Heritage listing may constrain alterations or upgrades - Currently mothballed, with no active use or visible progress

“Not necessarily this building, but a library is crucial. There are people who need the facilities and need them to be central in the town”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Musselburgh Library

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Musselburgh, Whitecraig & Wallyford page 3 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Wallyford Learning Campus	- Modern, well-equipped facility with strong community potential - Serves a central role in local identity and wellbeing - Hosts diverse educational, cultural, and social activities - Access and inclusion are limited by operational structures and perceptions impacting utilisation - Communication gaps reduce community awareness and engagement	- Expand public access to spaces like the gym, café, outdoor areas, and library - Promote youth activities, community health services, and flexible event use - Develop stronger school–community integration - Improve marketing and visibility within the wider council area - Use the building as a model for a multi-service community hub	- Building often feels inaccessible or unwelcoming to the public - Limited access during school hours and confusing entry processes - Inconsistent café and library hours; poor external promotion - Practical issues: parking, lack of event storage, uncomfortable seating - Perception of high hire costs and underused facilities
Whitecraig Village Hall (Low representation with 10 responses and under 10 responses for some of the questions)	- Reported to be a vital local hub in a community with limited other facilities - Hosts a variety of social, civic, and support services - Strong local value and sense of ownership - Awareness and visibility of the hall's offer remains limited - Space constraints limit capacity for wider programming	- Increase visibility and promotion to engage wider community - Develop youth-focused activities and more evening/weekend use - Expand social support services such as warm spaces and pantry provision - Adapt programming to meet the needs of a growing local population - Build on success as a model local community hub	- Many residents unclear about purpose or offer of the building - Small building footprint restricts expansion of services or activities - Limited opening hours, particularly at weekends - Low local amenities and poor public transport limit access and reach

“As Whitecraig continues to grow and expand with new housing and school I am sure the Whitecraig Village Hub will continue to have a demand for its use in providing services and a place for people to meet and socialise...”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Whitecraig Village Hub

“The Learning Centre is predominantly a school and campus so as such we feel that the community side of it has taken a back seat as far as not having our own space

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Wallyford Learning Campus

Summary Overview: Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig

The Brunton Hall and Theatre, Musselburgh Town Hall, and Musselburgh Library are seen as central to community identity, with strong support for modern, inclusive better replacements or upgrades. Residents call for improved accessibility, extended opening hours, and multi-use spaces that bring services together under one roof. Responses highlight the need for better community access, communication, and investment – notably in the case of Wallyford Community Learning Centre a better integration between community and school is required. Note that demand is anticipated to rise as the population grows (particularly for Whitecraig and Wallyford).



Develop as Council Hub

Feedback from engagement has identified both Brunton Hall & Theatre (if redeveloped or repaired) and Musselburgh Old Townhall for use as potential Council Hub. Further investigation required.

Develop as Community Node

Musselburgh Old Town Hall
(Note: This is a Common Good asset)

Community appetite to develop building and site as a mixed-use community hub and interest expressed in taking over conservation and operation of the building - preserving civic and cultural value while unlocking economic and social potential. **Explore public-private partnerships and external funding opportunities.**

Whitecraig Village Hub

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT

This is a well functioning local hub/centre and a valued local resource which has benefited from recent investments.

Redevelop to Maximise use of the site

Brunton Hall & Theatre
(Note: This is a Common Good asset)

Community sees Brunton Hall as symbolically and functionally irreplaceable. Desire to redevelop the site to rebuild a flexible, integrated arts venue that maximises usage, income, and inclusion in place of the existing Brunton Hall & Theatre
Suggestion to **develop a masterplan with community input to balance heritage, civic and development goals**

Retain as existing

Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre

Strong community support and the building hosts important council and employability services. With no immediate alternative 'Council Service Hub' within this area we suggest **retaining this as existing with a view to reassess prior to close of PPP contract (2035)**

Wallyford Community Learning Centre

Continued council ownership with community and school co-delivery. This requires a shift in operation and perception – a more cohesive approach to build a stronger community-school integration to maximise potential

Consider Sale Options

Musselburgh Library

Strong public support for the building and its services – however **not sustainable to retain as-is due to rising costs and risks. Explore relocating** within another hub or **redeveloping** the site to improve existing facilities. The library is highly valued and would benefit from being relocated to the appointed council hub

Summary: Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig Page 1 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Brunton Hall & Theatre		- Closure due to RAAC has created a major service and identity gap - Deep cultural and civic importance to the community - Accessing council services, attending work-related meetings, paying bills, or using the public toilets - Provided important council services and community meeting spaces, serving as a central point for public engagement. - Box office to buy cinema tickets. Council services. Customer service desk. Toilets. Jazz and music concerts. Local council meetings.	Redevelop to Maximise use of the site: develop a masterplan with community input to balance heritage, civic and development goals	- Majority of the responses from engagements agreed that the Brunton Hall & Theatre should be repaired or replaced with a modern, multi-purpose venue that serves as a vibrant community hub - Unless a new, fit-for-purpose venue is created, Musselburgh risks losing a vital part of what makes it a thriving and proud town. - Convenient location, excellent accessibility, and affordable facilities.
Musselburgh Old Town Hall		Mothballed	Develop as Council Hub	- Cultural and civic heart of Musselburgh. - Feedback from engagement has identified both Brunton Hall & Theatre (if redeveloped or repaired) and Musselburgh Old Townhall for use as potential Council Hub. Further investigation required.
Whitecraig Village Hub		- Lunch clubs, councillor surgeries, council meetings - Planning applications for new or proposed building works and meeting up with the staff	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT	Reportedly, a thriving hub in the Whitecraig community and well used.

Summary: Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig Page 1 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre		- Well used by the community - Diverse range of groups use the space - Used for polling, council meetings, and regular ELC team activities (Mon–Fri). Hosts community groups (writing, children’s activities, birthday parties, gardening). Facilities used for café visits, bistro, blood donation, and work training. - Used by East Lothian Counselling Network	Retain as existing	- This is a PPP contract reassess prior to close of contract (2035) - Provides a much-needed space for community groups - Strong community support and the building hosts important council and employability services. With no immediate alternative ‘Council Service Hub’ within this area we suggest retaining this as existing
Wallyford Community Learning Centre		- Provides an alternative performance space now Brunton Theatre is no longer available - Public library and community meeting spaces	Retain as existing: Continued council ownership with community and school co-delivery	- Better integration between community and school is required - Demand is anticipated to rise as the population grows
Musselburgh Library		- A well-used, inclusive, and valued community space - Offers wide-ranging services beyond traditional library use	Consider Sale Options: Explore relocating within another hub or redeveloping the site to improve existing facilities	- Strong public support for the building and its services – however not sustainable to retain as-is due to rising costs and risks. - The library is highly valued and would benefit from being relocated to the appointed council hub - Poor building condition (roof, heating, lighting, pests) - Recognised need for modernisation and investment

North Berwick Coastal

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: North Berwick Coastal

Summary of data received as of 28th March 2025.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Gullane Public Library	This building is fit for continued use but requires significant intervention/investment , most significantly costs related to its condition. The fitness for purpose is reported as 'good', performing well and operating as intended while the condition has been rated as 'satisfactory' with some deterioration beginning to show. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are in the highest quartile compared to all 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). This building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Gullane Recreational Facility Hall	Available data suggests this requires substantial investment/intervention to be fit for continued use - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon, and costs associated with its condition. The fitness for purpose has been reported as 'satisfactory' with some problems impacting operational efficiency. The condition has been reported as 'poor' - showing major defects. The projected running costs are high compared to the other 29 assets in scope (3rd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to be 'unachievable'.
Hope Rooms	Based on the available data this building requires substantial intervention/intervention to be fit for continued use - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and costs relating to condition investments. The fitness for purpose has been rated the highest rating of 'good' - performing well and operating efficiently. The condition has been reported as 'satisfactory' with some signs of deterioration (investment required). The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are in the highest quartile compared to all 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). Notably this building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
North Berwick Community Centre	The available data suggests this building is fit for continued use but requires significant investment/intervention . The condition and fitness for purpose are both reported as 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration and problems effecting the efficiency of operations. Notably this building requires 'major work' (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks. Please note: No data has been provided for the 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs'.
North Berwick Library & Museum	This building is fit for continued use with some investment/intervention required - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon. Both the condition and fitness for purpose have been rated the highest (good) - performing well and operating efficiently. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively low compared against all 29 assets in scope (2nd quartile). Notably, adapting this building to achieve NZC has been reported to require 'major work' but it has been suggested it may well be 'unachievable' - further investigation required.

Phase 1A Workshop : North Berwick Coastal

DATE: 8th APRIL 2025 (17 participants) LOCATION: NORTH BERWICK COMMUNITY CENTRE, NORTH BERWICK

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 14 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Gullane Public Library	- Emphasis on inclusive planning that reflects a wide range of local voices, interests and needs - Desire for a clear, community driven vision reflective of local needs and aspirations - Further exploration and clarity on what a community hub concept might look like for this area	- Consideration of opportunities to generate income and create long-term financial viability - Shared use and collaboration between different community groups - Greater youth engagement and participation as seen in Gullane library, Hope rooms - Leverage an already engaged community and support opportunities for community ownership	- Representatives of one of the buildings unable to attend workshop – views still to be captured - Activities are restricted to opening hours limiting further opportunities - Volunteer frustration and fatigue (especially in NBCC and Gullane Recreational hall) - need for improved collaboration and support structure with council - Concern about perceived value – community value may be overlooked if the focus is solely on cost-saving
Gullane Recreational Facility Hall			
Hope Rooms			
North Berwick Community Centre (NBCC)			
North Berwick Library & Museum*			

**no stakeholder representation from North Berwick Library & Museum
However, ELC met directly with Coastal Communities Museum representatives following the 1A stakeholder session*

Phase 1B Public Engagement : North Berwick Coastal page 1 of 3

DATE: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via **ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS** and **YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS** – total number of responses: 368

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Gullane Public Library	- Essential community lifeline supporting mental health, social connection, and early learning - Highly inclusive and trusted space, especially for children, elderly, and newcomers - Wide range of valued services including Bookbug, tech access, exhibitions, and home delivery - Strong emotional and civic connection — integral to village identity and cohesion - Building used by playgroup next door, consideration required when exploring options	- Expand opening hours and programming, particularly during school holidays - Introduce practical add-on services (e.g. parcel lockers, banking, café) - Promote space for rentals, events, and exhibitions - Use as a local access point for public services and community partnerships - Improve garden and explore online order collection options	- Limited and unpredictable opening hours; difficult for working people to access - Poor public transport access and local awareness of services - Garden and interior need upgrades; signage is inadequate - Booking process for activities lacks flexibility - Funding and staffing limitations restrict consistent delivery
Gullane Recreational Hall	- Well-used for diverse activities across age groups. - Serves as an essential overflow space when the village hall is at capacity. - Centrally located and widely recognised as an important community asset.	- Expand programming for children, youth, and fitness. - Upgrade kitchen and add new facilities (e.g., paddle court). - Host more events to generate income. - Consider Community Asset Transfer to GVA for better funding and management.	- Outdated condition, poor heating, and limited accessibility. - Inadequate storage and poorly maintained outdoor areas. - Slow council response to improvement needs; GVA bridging gaps. - Confusing booking process (managed by GVA) and mixed views on necessity alongside village hall.

“Gullane is growing but has very few public amenities or places to take children. The friendly staff provide community connection.”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Gullane Public Library

“This a much need facility in an ever-growing community. It's location at the centre of the village makes it accessible for people and feels like the heart of the community.”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Gullace Recreation Hall

Phase 1B Public Engagement : North Berwick Coastal page 2 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Hope Rooms	- Valued community asset used for exhibitions, youth clubs, and local events - Important intergenerational role, serving both older adults and young people - Centrally located with strong historical and emotional ties to the community - Flexible and affordable size, making it suitable for small group activities	- Expand use for adult learning, arts, music, and beach-related activities - Add amenities like a café, toilets, or partitions to improve functionality - Reinvigorate community engagement through broader programming and clearer access - Explore alternate models - consider relocation of youth services to support multi-use potential	- High room hire costs restrict wider community use - Poor accessibility and facilities (toilets, kitchen, disabled access) - Low visibility and unclear booking process hinder usage by the community - Post-COVID underuse and uncertainty over the building's future reduce momentum
North Berwick Community Centre	- Vital community resource used regularly by a wide range of local groups - Inclusive and accessible space serving all age groups - Strong social impact, particularly in mental health, family support, and intergenerational connection - Central location with parking, viewed as an important civic and cultural asset - Undervalued due to poor visibility and management, despite high potential	- Reintroduce and expand programming, including adult learning, music events, and youth/family activities - Activate underused spaces, such as the garden and mothballed nursery, for community use - Establish a café or social hub to increase daily footfall and informal engagement - Improve digital access – online bookings, calendars, and promotion - Strengthen identity as an inclusive, daily-use community hub with diverse services and better outreach	- Poor management and communication, including unclear booking processes and limited staff knowledge - Physical condition issues – heating problems, gloomy interiors, outdated facilities, and poor signage - Underutilisation due to lack of promotion and a perception of exclusivity - Insecure tenures for key user groups, limiting planning and investment - Transport and access barriers, particularly for those outside walking distance or reliant on public transport

“It is vital for giving young people a place to gather with their friends. It is also the centre of youth activities in North Berwick and plays a vital role in helping youth of all ages spend their free time productively and safely.”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Hope Rooms

“The community centre is at the centre of so many great projects that are meaningful to some of the town's most vulnerable groups of people”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for North Berwick Community Centre

Phase 1B Public Engagement : North Berwick Coastal page 3 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
North Berwick Library & Museum	- Well-used, trusted community hub offering books, digital services, family groups, and council support - Strong social and educational value, especially for families and early learning. - Museum seen as an important cultural asset, led by volunteers and benefiting residents and tourists - Safe, inclusive, and welcoming space, particularly in poor weather and school holidays. - Helpful, knowledgeable staff and a space valued for recent improvements and community impact	- Expand events and cultural programming (talks, readings, music) - Reintroduce a café or tearoom to attract more visitors - Increase use of museum and meeting rooms for rentals and exhibits - Add tourism-related services (e.g. merchandise, visitor info) - Introduce small-fee classes while keeping core services free - Improve signage and visibility to boost awareness and footfall	- Inconvenient opening hours and seasonal closures - Car park congestion during busy periods - Poor signage and limited visibility in town - Accessibility issues: unreliable lift and restricted building upgrades due to conservation status - Competition for meeting space rentals and underuse of museum during closure periods - Inefficient temperature control and lack of café reduce comfort and visitor dwell time

“At a time when local communities are losing face to face services, local museums, together with other services situated together in the centre of communities, provide an exceptionally useful resource and meeting place for local communities”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for North Berwick Library & Museum

Summary Overview: North Berwick Coastal

Despite challenges around funding, management, accessibility, and infrastructure, there is strong local sentiment to keep these facilities open due to a lack of affordable alternatives and risks of an eroding a sense of community. There is demand for enhanced community-led planning, better resource allocation, clearer management, and targeted investment to future-proof decision making for a growing population. Community groups emphasise the importance of free and low-cost access for local clubs, charities, and social initiatives.



Develop as Council Hub	
North Berwick Library & Museum (NBLM)	NBLM-Currently well used as a free community resource and seen as a symbol of community care. Develop as the council service hub for North Berwick Coastal. Feasibility study recommended to confirm viability of co-location of council services alongside existing library and museum facilities.
Develop as Community Node	
North Berwick Community Centre (NBCC)	Explore a full CAT or suitable council-community shared model allowing for long leases maximise on community led management.
Gullane Recreational Facility Hall	Currently, partly leased to GVA (currently short lease but desire expressed for a long-term lease). Seen as an important community asset. Potential for a full CAT with initial support Currently criticised for appearance, maintenance and upkeep with the GVA already using own funds. Going to a community managed model will allow the community group to be self sustainable with initial set up support from the council.
Gullane Public Library	Explore a full CAT or a council-community shared model. If neither feasible, consideration for sale is suggested (consideration must be given to playgroup next door who use part of this building). Suggest repurposing services offered to meet community demands. Suggest further engagements.
Consider Sale Options	
Hope Rooms	Relocate the NBYP (potentially to NBCC building) and explore sale of the building for the proceeds to be reinvested back into the community. Currently, while important for the Youth Program the building is not used by wider community groups.

Summary: North Berwick Coastal page 1 of 2

*NBYP – North Berwick Youth Programme

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Gullane Public Library		- Essential community lifeline supporting mental health, social connection, and early learning - Wide range of valued services including Bookbug, tech access, exhibitions, and home delivery - Building used by playgroup next door, consideration required when exploring options	Develop as Community Node: Explore a full CAT or a council-community shared model. If neither feasible, consideration for sale is suggested	- Strong emotional and civic connection — integral to village identity and cohesion - Highly inclusive and trusted space, especially for children, elderly, and newcomers
Gullane Recreational Facility Hall		- Well-used for diverse activities across age groups. - Serves as an essential overflow space when the village hall is at capacity. - Centrally located and widely recognised as an important community asset.	Develop as Community Node: Potential for a full CAT with initial support	- Already partly leased to GVA - Currently short lease but desire expressed for a long-term lease - Seen as an important community asset
Hope Rooms		- Valued community asset used for exhibitions, youth clubs, and local events - Important intergenerational role, serving both older adults and young people	Consider Sale Options: Relocate the NBYP* (potentially to NBLM building) and explore sale options	- Currently, while important for the Youth Program the building is not used by wider community groups. - Being a community good building, proceeds to be reinvested back into the community - Poor accessibility and facilities (toilets, kitchen, disabled access)

Summary: North Berwick Coastal page 2 of 2

*NBYP – North Berwick Youth Programme

Building name		Current Use	Proposed Direction	Reasoning
North Berwick Community Centre		Vital community resource used regularly by a wide range of local groups	Develop as Community Node: Explore a full CAT or suitable council-community shared model	Strong social impact, particularly in mental health, family support, and intergenerational connection
North Berwick Library & Museum (NBLM)		- Well used as a free community resource - Safe, inclusive, and welcoming space, particularly in poor weather and school holidays - Well used especially by families and for early learning	Develop as Council Hub: Feasibility study recommended to confirm viability of co-location of council services alongside existing library and museum facilities	- Well-used, trusted community hub offering books, digital services, family groups, and council support - Seen as a symbol of community care - Strong social and educational value - A space valued for recent improvements and community impact

Preston Seton Gosford

DATA ANALYSIS

PHASE 1A OVERVIEW

PHASE 1B OVERVIEW

SUMMARY / POTENTIAL PATHWAYS

Asset Data Summary: Preston Seton Gosford

Summary of data received as of March 2025.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Summary
Longniddry Community Centre & Library	This building is fit for continued use but requires significant intervention/investment - the most significant issue being its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon and projected condition investment costs. The building has been reported to be fit for purpose and in 'satisfactory' condition with some signs of deterioration showing (investment required). The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively high against all assets in scope (3 rd quartile). Notably this building requires 'major work' (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Pennypit Community Facility Centre	This building is fit for continued use with some investment/intervention required . The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively low compared with all 29 assets in scope (2nd quartile). Both the condition and fitness for purpose have been reported as 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration/problems (some investment required). This building requires minimal work (feasible with minimal structural changes) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Port Seton Community Centre & Library	This building is fit for continued use with some investment/intervention required . The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are the lowest compared to all other assets in scope (1 st quartile). Both the condition and fitness for purpose have been reported as 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration/problems (some investment required). Notably this building requires major work (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Prestonpans Community Centre	Based on the available data this building is fit for continued use but requires significant investment/intervention . The fitness for purpose has been reported as 'good' - performing as intended and operating efficiently. The condition is reported to be 'satisfactory' with signs of deterioration. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are in the highest quartile compared to all 29 assets in scope (4th quartile). Notably this building requires 'major work' (substantial investment required and may face structural limitations) to achieve NZ benchmarks.
Prestonpans Library	This building is fit for continued use however will require significant investment/intervention noting that its adaptability to Net Zero Carbon has been reported to be 'unachievable'. The building is reported to be 'satisfactory' in terms of both condition and fitness for purpose with some signs of deterioration and minor problems effecting the efficiency of operations. The 'Future Condition Investment Required Costs' are comparatively low against all other assets in scope (2nd quartile).

Phase 1A Workshop : Preston Seton Gosford

DATE: 10th APRIL 2025 (14 participants) LOCATION: PRESTON LODGE HIGH SCHOOL, PRESTONPANS

Considering the stakeholder workshops represent a small group of 14 stakeholders, the workshop summary below outlines the main themes that emerged. Detailed building specific engagement insights from the workshop can be found in Appendix

Please note this is an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Longniddry Community Centre & Library	- Ensuring affordability and accessibility while maintaining building upkeep and staffing levels - Recognising non-monetary value – sharing successes and beneficial impacts beyond financial or quantitative measures - Collaboration across different centres, sharing resources, learnings, and building a networked support system	- Exploring heritage as part of place-based regeneration and local identity - Bridging divides between established and newer communities - Community identity - building pride and recognition through sustained collaboration and shared vision - Build on success of 'Positive Prescriptions' - Prestonpans Community Centre actively pursuing leaseholder status and increased community ownership	- Avoiding fragmented decision-making that may weaken existing support systems - Frequent reviews and reductions in staffing impacting service consistency, and overall delivery - Restrictions around insurance, leases, and bureaucratic processes delaying or limiting new opportunities - Fixed or reduced operating hours limiting community access and discouraging potential users
Pennypit Community Centre Facility			
Port Seton Community Centre & Library			
Prestonpans Community Centre			
Prestonpans Library			

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Preston Seton Gosford page 1 of 3

DATE: 19th May – 29th June 2025

Feedback collected via **ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS, DROP-IN SESSIONS, INFORMATION DEPOSIT POINTS** and **YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS** – total number of responses: **302**

Summary of the **main themes raised**, **Opportunities Highlighted**, and **Challenges Identified** for each of the assets in this Area according to the public engagement phase of the project. For a more detailed breakdown of the responses please review the appendices. As with phase 1A please note this was an engagement, not a consultation.

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Longniddry Library & Community Centre	- Valued community hub, used regularly for a wide range of social, educational, and wellbeing activities for all ages - Inclusive and welcoming, with friendly staff and volunteers - Essential library services actively supporting literacy, learning and child development - Improves wellbeing through physical activity, connection, reducing isolation and helping to build community cohesion	- Extend opening hours to include evenings and weekends to meet needs of working families - Better utilise space for private events, performances, and health-related activities - Improve promotion through signage, local advertising, and clear communication - Enable community access via key-holder schemes and ELC funded 'trial hours' to encourage community-led programming	- Outdated systems (e.g. cash-only payments) and underpromotion of programming and services reduces uptake - Building issues including heating control, flood risk, and access - High hire rates and group eligibility rules perceived as restrictive - Limited staff capacity affects what can be offered and when

"It works. It genuinely works. People use it. And not just one group or another — it cuts across generations and backgrounds."

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Longniddry Library & Community Centre

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Preston Seton Gosford page 2 of 3

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Pennypit Community Centre Facility	- Acts as a vital and inclusive community hub supporting wellbeing, social connection, and family life - Offers a wide range of activities for all ages, including fitness, baby groups, arts, and mental health support - Welcoming staff and atmosphere highly valued; users feel respected and supported - Café plays a key social role, offering affordable, relaxed space for interaction - Clean and generally well-maintained, with strong local identity and reach into underserved areas	- Extend opening hours (evenings/weekends) and increase keyholder access to meet broader demand - Expand youth and teen programmes, sensory and elderly services, especially in colder months - Use space more flexibly for council services, events, and business use after hours - Improve digital access and communication — online booking forms and clearer signage - Support community-led activity and fundraising events to boost engagement and sustainability	- Accessibility limitations including poor wheelchair access, steep kerbs, and broken lift - Inadequate heating and fragmented layout reduce comfort and usability - Limited internet access and outdated paper-based booking systems - Lack of evening/weekend opening restricts working families and isolated individuals - Poor transport links and limited parking reduce access for some, particularly elderly residents - Youth activity gaps and age-misaligned programming in school holidays
Port Seton Community Centre & Library	- Serves as a vital community anchor, supporting social inclusion, health, education, and wellbeing - Broad and inclusive programming for all ages, with a well-used library, valued café, and strong staff presence - Adaptable to community needs, including specialist provision like sensory spaces and hybrid meetings - Offers some of the best facilities in the area, including strong AV setups and accessible spaces	- Expand evening/weekend activities and add practical workshops (e.g. DIY, cooking, budgeting) - Repurpose underused areas such as the library or changing rooms for more flexible services - Improve physical infrastructure: soundproofing, seating, lighting, and energy efficiency (e.g. solar panels) - Strengthen community sport and youth provision by using the sports centre more actively - Consider asset transfer as a long-term strategy for community-led development and sustainability	- Inconsistent maintenance and heating issues reduce comfort and usability - Staff shortages lead to unpredictable opening hours; centralised controls limit flexibility - Library underutilised, and some internal spaces not optimised for demand - Poor evening/weekend transport and car park lighting hinder access - Anti-social behaviour flagged as a concern; stronger youth engagement could help - Perception of inefficiencies compared to other centres; need for better cross-centre collaboration

“This building provides so much more than what people think”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Pennypit Community Centre Facility

“Extremely important and vital facility at the heart of the community. Used by a wide demographic of ages and ensures local access for a wide range of purposes”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Pennypit Community Centre Facility

Phase 1B Public Engagement : Preston Seton Gosford

Buildings under consideration in this area	Main themes raised	Opportunities highlighted	Challenges identified
Prestonpans Library	- Seen as the social and cultural heart of Prestonpans – a focal point for the community - Hosts a wide mix of activities for all age groups, from youth clubs to social groups for older adults. - Youth engagement: young people co-designed youth space - Contributes to reducing isolation among elderly residents and supports informal learning and cultural engagement.	- Increase evening and weekend opening hours to accommodate working individuals and private hire - potential to use the outdoor and upstairs spaces more effectively — e.g. heritage engagement or income-generating uses - Strong local investment in heritage (e.g. Preston Tower, civic square) presents opportunities to connect the library through initiatives like “heritage passports” - Some appetite to explore relocation or consolidation of library services to free up space and increase flexibility of use	- Physical access limitations (i.e. lack of dropped kerb and mobility access through the carpark) - Concern about overloading the building with additional services particularly ones that might conflict with its current peaceful and safe atmosphere - Infrastructure is ageing, with heating and lighting needing improvement; noted to be uncomfortable in winter conditions
Prestonpans Community Centre	- Essential community hub offering a wide range of social, cultural, and wellbeing activities - Strong youth and older adult engagement, supporting life skills, inclusion, and social connection - Valued café and civic role, contributing to affordability, health, and local democracy - Busy, inclusive atmosphere with flexible multipurpose spaces	- Extend opening hours to evenings and weekends for classes, events, and private hire - Host more cultural events like concerts, comedy, and exhibitions - Consolidate local services (e.g., police, council support) under one roof - Support working-age groups with tailored programming - Repurpose as replacement for Brunton Hall to absorb displaced activity	- Accessibility issues (no dropped kerb, blocked facilities) - Outdated infrastructure (cold, dark interior; poor Wi-Fi and payment systems) - Limited schedule and staffing reduces flexibility and consistency - Poor transport and parking limit access - Lack of communication on programmes and services reduces engagement

“I use the library for books. I do not use the library for any business, you do not have adequate rooms to discuss things”

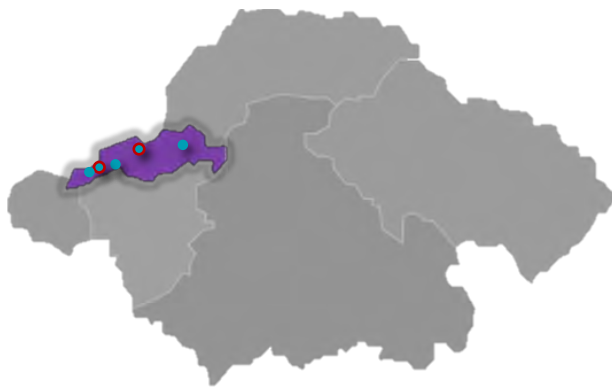
Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Prestonpans Library

“Without open and warm spaces like this, the elderly and vulnerable in our community would face more social isolation”

Phase 1B Public Engagement – response for Prestonpans Community Centre

Summary Overview: Preston Seton Gosford

The Preston Seton Gosford area relies heavily on its community centres and libraries, which serve as hubs for social connection, learning, wellbeing, and support. These spaces host a wide range of activities for all ages but face challenges including reduced access, ageing infrastructure, and bureaucratic restrictions. As the population grows, residents call for greater investment, more flexible use, and integrated services that reflect local needs. Strong staff and volunteer contributions are widely valued, and there's a shared ambition to protect these assets while building a more inclusive, future-ready model of community support.



Develop as Council Hub

Port Seton Community Centre & Library

Develop as a campus style Council service hub – collocate overlapping services where possible. Explore opportunities for Port Seton Community Centre to accommodate face-to-face council services and enquiries to mitigate privacy concerns and the potential overburdening of Prestonpans library. Prestonpans Library to deliver library provision and associated services, and build on local heritage

Prestonpans Library

Develop as Community Node

Port Seton Community Centre & Library

If only part of the building is required as a council service hub, explore opportunities to identify parts of the building to explore suitable council-community shared models allowing for long leases to maximise community led management

Longniddry Community Centre & Library

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT A highly valued facility at the heart of a rapidly expanding village. It serves as the only large indoor community space in the area – it plays a key role for community cohesion

Prestonpans Community Centre

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT (through leaseholder status or similar arrangement) to align with the ambition of residents and partners to pursue lease holder status. Already functioning as a critical, high-demand community hub with strong civic, social, and recreational functions

Pennypit Community Centre Facility

Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT A vital, inclusive, and much-loved community asset, central to health, wellbeing, family support, and social cohesion in Prestonpans. It already functions informally as a hub. Wheelchair access needs to be addressed

Summary: Preston Seton Gosford page 1 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Prestonpans Library		- Seen as the social and cultural heart of Prestonpans – a focal point for the community. - Hosts a wide mix of activities for all age groups, from youth clubs to social groups for older adults. - Youth engagement: young people co-designed youth space - Contributes to reducing isolation among elderly residents and supports informal learning and cultural engagement.	Develop as a campus style Council Hub: co-locate overlapping services between the two buildings where possible	- Explore opportunities for Port Seton Community Centre to accommodate face-to-face council services and enquiries to mitigate privacy concerns and the potential overburdening of Prestonpans library. - Prestonpans Library to deliver library provision and associated services, and build on local heritage
Port Seton Community Centre & Library		- Offers some of the best facilities in the area, including strong AV setups and accessible spaces - Broad and inclusive programming for all ages, with a well-used library, valued café, and strong staff presence - Serves as a vital community anchor, supporting social inclusion, health, education, and wellbeing	Develop as Community Node:	- If only part of the building is required as a council service hub, explore opportunities to identify parts of the building to explore suitable council-community shared models - allowing for long leases to maximise community led management
Longniddry Community Centre & Library		- Used regularly for a wide range of social, educational, and wellbeing activities for all ages - Essential library services actively supporting literacy, learning and child development	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT	- A highly valued facility at the heart of a rapidly expanding village - the only large indoor community space in the area – it plays a key role for community cohesion

Summary: Preston Seton Gosford page 2 of 2

Building name		Current Use	Potential Pathway	Reasoning
Prestonpans Community Centre		- Essential community hub offering a wide range of social, cultural, and wellbeing activities - Strong youth and older adult engagement, supporting life skills, inclusion, and social connection - Valued café and civic role, contributing to affordability, health, and local democracy - Busy, inclusive atmosphere with flexible multipurpose spaces	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT (through leaseholder status or similar arrangement)	- To align with the ambition of residents and partners to pursue lease holder status and increased community ownership - Already functioning as a critical, high-demand community hub with strong civic, social, and recreational functions
Pennypit Community Centre Facility		- Offers a wide range of activities for all ages, including fitness, baby groups, arts, and mental health support - Café plays a key social role, offering affordable, relaxed space for interaction - Offers a wide range of activities for all ages, including fitness, baby groups, arts, and mental health support	Develop as Community Node: Explore a suitable council-community shared model or full CAT	- A vital, inclusive, and much-loved community asset, central to health, wellbeing, family support, and social cohesion in Prestonpans - It already functions informally as a hub

Asset Data: Overview

The building asset data overviews below are organised by building facet in no particular order. All data was received from ELC and analysed as part of Phase: 0 (Nov’24 – Mar’25). For breakdown per area and asset please find detailed analysis in the appendix.

*Utilisation data analysed in Phase 0 was excluded due to inconsistencies in the data available for each building. **Climate Resilience: flood plain risk data** analysed as part of Phase 0, omitted due to inconsistencies identified during Phase 1A – ELC have reviewed further and independently provided updated information available for Phase 1B’s Building Index Cards*

Summary of main themes per data category

Condition Overview

A measure of the physical condition of the building, taking into account the overall structure and components, such as the roof, walls, floors, electrical and mechanical systems.

Most community buildings are in **satisfactory condition** (69%), operating as intended but with some minor deterioration. A smaller proportion (17%) are in **poor** or **bad condition**, showing major defects or at risk of imminent failure – with the most serious case being **Brunton Hall in Musselburgh**. Only **10%** of buildings are rated as **good**, all located in Musselburgh. This suggests targeted investment may be needed in specific sites to address risks and preserve asset quality across the estate.

Future Condition Investment Required Costs Overview

An estimate of the amount of investment required over the next 10 years to address current or anticipated condition issues.

Future Condition Investment costs for buildings vary widely, from **£0 to over £6,000**, with a few high-cost outliers (notably **Brunton Hall** and **Gullane Library**) raising the overall average. **Musselburgh** has the highest average cost, despite two sites reporting zero due to PPP contract coverage. By contrast, **Dunbar & East Linton** has the lowest average. This suggests uneven investment needs, with some buildings requiring significantly more future expenditure than others.

Fitness of Purpose Overview

An assessment of how ‘fit for purpose’ the building is based on an assessment of its ability to provide an effective and efficient means of supporting the delivery of the service provided from it.

Over half of the buildings (55%) are considered **fit for purpose**, performing well and effectively supporting service delivery. A further third are performing satisfactorily with minor issues. Just one building – **Macmerry Village Hall** – is rated as unfit for purpose. This suggests that while most assets are well-aligned with their intended use, a small number may require attention to better meet community needs.

Adaptability to Net Zero Overview

An assessment of the potential for the building to be adapted to help meet Net Zero Carbon (NZC) targets by, for example, incorporating a local low carbon heat source or improved insulation, thermal performance and ventilation.

Most buildings will require **significant upgrades** to meet Net Zero Carbon (NZC) targets. None are currently NZC-ready, and only **8 out of 29 assets** require minimal work. Over **70%** of buildings need either **major investment (11 assets)** or are considered **unfeasible to upgrade (10 assets)**. This highlights the **scale of retrofitting challenges** across the estate and the need for strategic prioritisation of investment based on feasibility and impact.

Phase 1A workshops summary: Overview

Six workshops were held between 2nd – 16th April 2025 in the following areas across East Lothian: Haddington & Lammermuir, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig, North Berwick Coastal, Fa'side, Preston Seton Gosford, and Dunbar & East Linton.

Below is a summary of the main themes raised across the six workshops. The following slides provide a more detailed summary of the matters raised in each workshop.

Summary of main themes raised across all workshops

Utilisation & occupancy challenges:

Affordability & access issues impacting the use of buildings and services

- Availability and lack of affordable booking options are restricting community access to space
- Many existing booking systems are difficult to use and need improvement
- Underutilisation is tied to lack of awareness, accessibility, and system inefficiencies
- Lack of publicity and awareness about available facilities and activities limits community use

Staffing issues & volunteer fatigue impacting availability

- Staff shortages are limiting opening hours
- Limited opening hours means current use is not reflective of demand or opportunities
- Volunteer fatigue and burnout is widespread; council support for volunteer networks is needed

Need for community nodes & social infrastructure

- Food-related amenities (cafés, food banks) are seen as potential opportunities to be leveraged acting as hubs for bringing people together
- Culturally significant buildings serve as important local landmarks for the community and as community interaction nodes
- Some buildings have potential as destination spaces with investment, upgrades and promotion

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) interest with nervousness around uncertainty around process and funding

- Interest exists in CAT for community-led space management
- Lack of clarity around CAT processes and funding remains a barrier
- Ideas include income-generating uses like local businesses or cafés to support space viability

Community-council relationships & greater support needed

- Community workshops reveal some strained relationships with the council (such as North Berwick Coastal, Fa'side and PSG)
- Need for better council support in facilities management, staffing, booking systems, and communication

Need for inclusion & future-proofing

- Ensuring community spaces stay relevant to expanding communities
- Early intervention dementia strategy by building on or establishing 'dementia-friendly' spaces to support an ageing population
- Future strategy should be sustainable with clear direction and purpose reflective of community needs

This summary has been updated in phrasing since publishing on the ELC consultation hub during Phase 1B public engagements in May 2025

Phase 1B public engagement: Overview

Public online survey with questions for each of the 29 assets available via East Lothian Council’s Online Consultation Hub from 19th May – 29th June 2025. Six in-person drop-in sessions offered between 10th – 19th June 2025 in the following areas across East Lothian: Haddington & Lammermuir, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig, North Berwick Coastal, Fa’side, Preston Seton Gosford, and Dunbar & East Linton. Further engagement was carried out to seek the views of local youth.

Below is a summary of the main themes raised as part of this public engagement.

Summary of main themes raised across all public engagements

Buildings under consideration are community anchors with deep local value

- Nearly all buildings are described as valuable for wellbeing, social connection and inclusion
- Spaces support a wide demographic – from toddlers to older adults with strong civic, cultural and emotional ties
- There is equal interest and value in informal gathering spaces like cafes, libraries and drop-ins, as there is for more formally booked spaces

Underuse associated with access and operational barriers

- Short or inconsistent opening hours (especially evenings/weekends) limit community engagement
- Poor promotion, hard to navigate booking systems and lack of digital presence reduces visibility and potential participation
- Awareness of what is available remains low in many places – even among local residents

Facilities in decline or poorly adapted

- Heating, toilets, kitchens, Wi-Fi, audio visual equipment and accessibility infrastructure are often reported as being outdated or inadequate
- Several centres noted as feeling unwelcoming or unfit for modern uses like hybrid meetings and inclusive programming
- Physical access issues (e.g. lack of dropped kerbs, broken lifts and narrow doors) persist in multiple venues

Staff, management & governance gaps flagged

- Lack of on-site or consistent staffing limits service delivery and user experience
- Frustrations with unclear leadership, single keyholders and confused governance models are common
- Strong support for more local or community-led management through asset transfer or partnership models

Potential opportunities for integration and sustainability

- Suggestions to explore co-locating council, health, youth, library and wellbeing services under one roof
- Opportunities to explore include: community cafes, donation schemes, volunteer programmes, funding and rental income to boost viability
- Sustainability upgrades (e.g. solar panels, digital systems, heating improvements) are widely supported

Asset data improvements flagged

- Request for Building Information Cards to include accessibility details such as lifts, induction loops, or accessible toilets
- Respondents challenged utilisation figures and cost estimates, citing outdated or incomplete data and unclear rating criteria
- Feedback highlighted that informal and unrecorded activities were often overlooked, underrepresenting the true value buildings provide to local communities.

Risks & Limitations

Several risks were identified during the review. These relate to data quality (accuracy, consistency, and current gaps) and the current council–community relationship. Both areas need further work as they could affect decision-making and the success of future place-making strategies and services.

Key risks summarised below:

Missing or inconsistent data

- Gaps in usage data - current information on how spaces are used is inconsistent, incomplete, and sometimes inaccurate, making it hard to judge true demand or efficiency
- Confusion between occupancy and utilisation - these are different measures and shouldn't be compared directly
- Concerns about data accuracy - community feedback questioned figures on footfall, room use, running costs, and how ratings (e.g. condition) were determined
- Accessibility information unclear - details on features like lifts, induction loops, and accessible toilets are often missing or unclear
- Limited opening hours affect data - reduced hours or closures can make buildings look less used than they really are

Legal and strategic considerations

- Clarity needed on categorisation of 'Common Good' buildings and any potential sale restrictions to evaluate the eligibility and impact of sale
- Buildings currently under Public Private Partnership (PPP) contracts (i.e. Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre & Wallyford Learning Centre) will require further investigation to align with area strategy prior to end of contract (2035)

Gaps in representation

- Some buildings were not well represented during engagement impacting understanding of use, opportunities and challenges
 - Limited representation from Elphinstone Community Centre during Phase 1A Stakeholder workshops
 - No representatives available for North Berwick Library & Museum during Phase 1A workshops, it is noted ELC met with Coastal Communities Museum Trustees directly following the workshop for comment
 - Elphinstone Community Centre and Whitecraig Village Hub were underrepresented in the feedback received to the 1B engagement
 - Elphinstone Community Centre, Fa'side: 11 out of 110 total responses for the area
 - Whitecraig Village Hub, Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig: 10 out of 470 total responses for the area

Next Steps

Community ownership is a key component of the potential pathways outlined, but many groups need more support, clearer guidance, and initial investment to take this on successfully. It is recommended that the council addresses the risks and areas for further investigation identified in this report before determining any final plans.

Working together for sustainable community services

- Look into council–community shared operating models that work financially, match community capacity, and suit building conditions
- If council services (including libraries) are moved into one hub, explore ways to keep serving remote communities, such as community-run or mobile libraries
- Community ownership is key, but more clarity, support, and initial council investment are needed to overcome volunteer fatigue and build trust for community-led management or asset transfer

Comprehensive asset data for informed decisions

- Comprehensive data will support fair, transparent, and evidence-based choices for the future of local services
- Share key findings openly to build trust and confidence in how decisions are made
- Continue to combine quantitative data (e.g. footfall, costs) with community feedback to reflect both numbers and lived experience
- Feasibility studies are recommended for certain buildings, including: John Muir House including former Court, Musselburgh Old Town Hall, Prestonpans Library and Port Seton Community Centre & Library to explore viability of potential opportunities outlined

SECTION 3

Appendices

1. Response Rates
2. Asset performance review data
3. Phase 1A development and delivery
4. Phase 1B development and delivery

Linked Excel documents:

1. Asset Performance Data Review
2. Phase 1A and 1B – Engagement insights

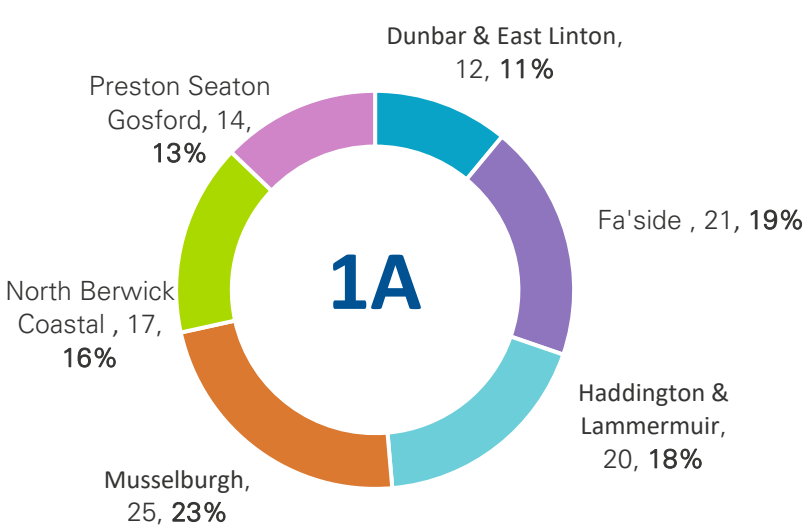
Engagement Response Rates – Overview

Figures below show the proportion of responses and participation from each area across both Stakeholder and Public engagements

80+ Stakeholders

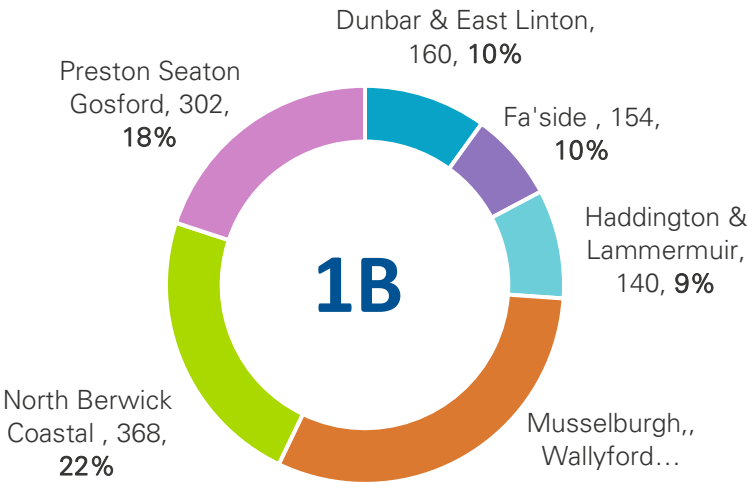
850+ Respondents*
0.80 % of area pop 112,450

1600+ Responses*



1A Stakeholders participant breakdown

6 - Stakeholder workshops



1B Public Engagement Participants

Online engagements 19th May – 29th June 2025
6 - Drop-in sessions
Youth Engagement
Paper hard copies

*Data received as of 01/07/2025 includes online engagements, paper forms submitted at deposit centres.

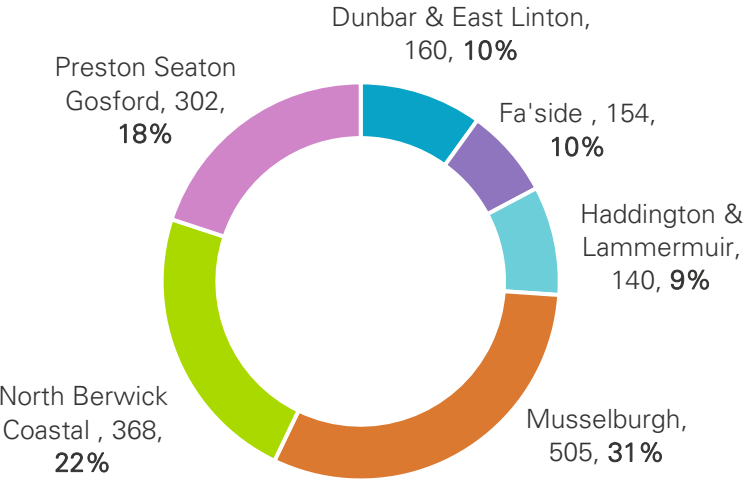
Engagement Response Rates – 1B

TOTAL

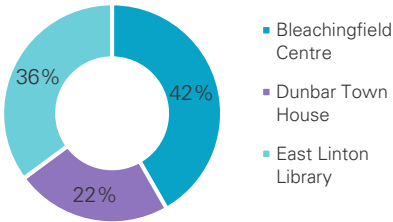
850+ Respondents
0.8% of area pop 112,450

1600+ Responses

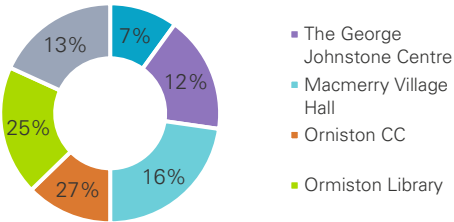
- 6 -Drop-in sessions
- x –Online engagement responses
- x –Deposit point responses



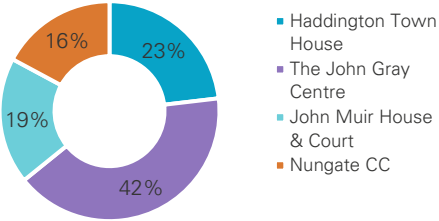
1B Public Engagement Responses



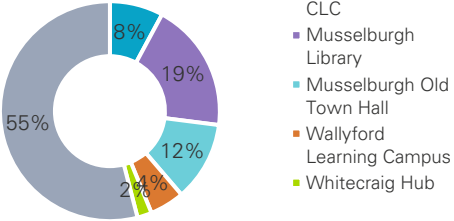
Dunbar & East Linton



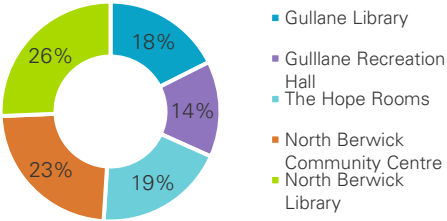
Fa'side



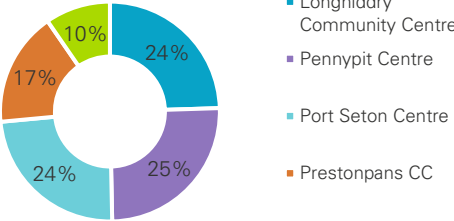
Haddington & Lammermuir



Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig



North Berwick Coastal



Preston Seton Gordon

Phase 0:

Asset Performance Data Review

Asset Performance Data Review:

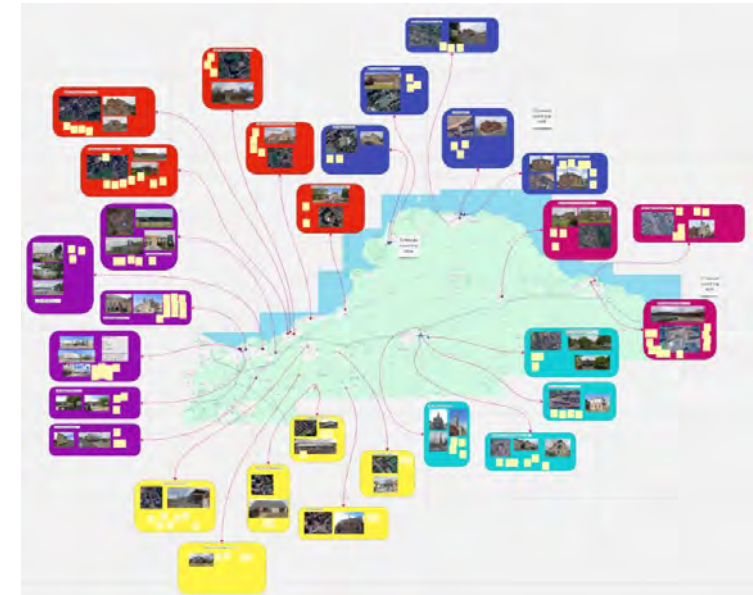
Context building

Site visit

CF completed a 'Drive by' site visit of 5 of the 6 East Lothian Areas and 19 of buildings in scope on 9th December 2024. This was an opportunity to build more contextual understanding of the buildings, the surrounding areas, the council's aspirations for the Areas and other buildings not in scope – all of this contextual information inform the engagement phase of this project.

Utilisation data

Utilisation data received to date is not comparable across all 29 assets; it is inconsistent in format, timeframe and measure and as a result has not been included as part of the data analysis review. Further insights will be gathered throughout the engagement phase of this project.



Assets mapped out and annotated following 'drive by' site visit

Asset Performance Data Review:

Six Facets

We reviewed each of the 29 buildings in relation to the 6 facets listed below, based on the data received from the council (all data owned by the council). These were reviewed for comparable useful data that can be translated to RAG ratings. As of now - We have full data sets for 28 / 29 assets (no Future Condition Investment Costs available for Musselburgh Old Town Hall).

1. **Condition**
2. **Utilisation***
3. **Lifecycle Replacement Cost** (formerly referred to as Lifecycle Investment Costs)
4. **Fitness for purpose / Suitability**
5. **Adaptability to Net Zero Carbon**
6. **Climate Resilience (Floodplain Risk)****

**Utilisation data analysed in Phase 0 was excluded from Asset Data Review summaries and final recommendations due to inconsistencies in the data available for each building*

***Climate Resilience: floodplain risk data originally analysed as part of Phase 0, omitted due to inconsistencies identified during Phase 1A – ELC have reviewed further and provided updated information available for Phase 1B's Building Index Cards*

Area	Asset	CONDITION	FUTURE CONDITION INVESTMENT COSTS Cost per m2 (pre 2024 - post 2028)	FITNESS FOR PURPOSE / SUITABILITY	ADAPTABILITY TO NET ZERO CARBON
Dunbar & East Linton	Dunbar Town House Museum	B	£ 259.87	A	D
	East Linton Library (Prestonkirk Library)	B	£ 786.49	B	C/D
	The Bleachingfield Centre	B	£ 138.02	A	B
Fa'side	Elphinstone Community Centre	B	£ 669.28	B	C/D
	Ormiston Community Centre	B	£ 180.46	B	B
	Trevelyan Hall	C	£ 749.59	B	C/D
	Macmerry Village Hall Macmerry	C	£ 877.93	D	C
	Ormiston Library	E	£ 369.88	A	B
	George Johnstone Centre	B	£ 170.76	A	B
Haddington & Lammermuir	John Muir House (including former court)	B	£ 482.45	A	C/D
	Nungate & Haddington Community Centre	C	£ 828.03	A	C
	Haddington Town House	B	£ 236.09	B	D
	John Gray Centre	B	£ 230.79	A	C
Musselburgh	Musselburgh Old Town Hall	C	NO DATA	C	D
	Musselburgh Library	B	£ 1,027.91	C	C
	Brunton Hall and Theatre	B	£ 1,081.53	C	C
	Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre	A	£ -	A	B
	Whitecraig Village Hub	A	£ 86.95	A	B
	Wallyford Learning Campus	A	£ -	A	A/B
North Berwick Coastal	North Berwick Community Centre	B	£ 465.25	B	C
	Gullane Public Library	B	£ 2,898.35	A	C
	Hope Rooms Forth Street North Berwick	B	£ 919.38	A	C
	Gullane Recreational Facility Hall	C	£ 591.81	B	B
	North Berwick Library and Museum	B	£ 301.44	A	C/D
Preston Seton Gosford	Longdiddy Community Centre & Library	B	£ 615.69	A	C
	Prestonpans Community Centre	B	£ 385.23	A	C
	Prestonpans Library	B	£ 304.17	B	D
	Port Seton Community Centre & Library	B	£ 81.09	B	C
	Pennyhit Community Centre Facility	B	£ 351.75	A	B

Asset Performance dataset including RAG ratings

Asset Performance Data Review: Navigating the excel file

To navigate the document, open the 'Overview' tab

OVERVIEW

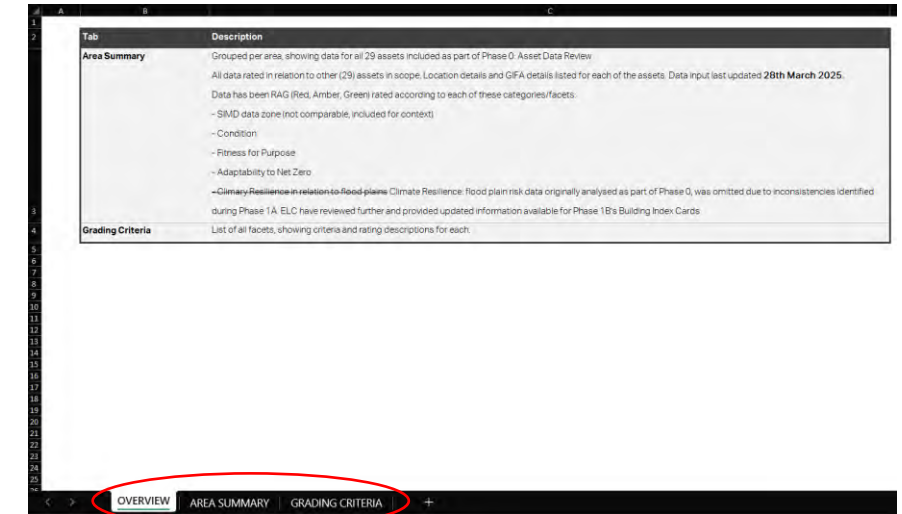
this shows a description for each of the following tabs in the document

AREA SUMMARY

Summary of all data per asset, broken down per 6 East Lothian Areas

GRADING CRITERIA

Qualitative grading criteria per facet including descriptions of each of the ratings



Tab Titles

Qualitative Grading Criteria per Facet

SIMD

Included in scorecard/dashboard dataset

quintile source: <https://simd.scot/t/simd2020/BTTTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/>

5	Least deprived - lowest quintile according to East Lothian's SIMD database
4	second quintile according to East Lothian's SIMD database
3	third quintile according to East Lothian's SIMD database
2	fourth quintile according to East Lothian's SIMD database
1	Most deprived - fifth quintile according to East Lothian's SIMD database

Condition Rating Description (ELC Criteria)

Included in ELC issued dashboard dataset

A	Good - Performing as intended and operating efficiently
B	Satisfactory - Performing as intended but showing minor deterioration
C	Poor - Showing major defects and/or not operating as intended
D	Bad - Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure

Future Condition Investment Costs (pre 2024 - post 2028)

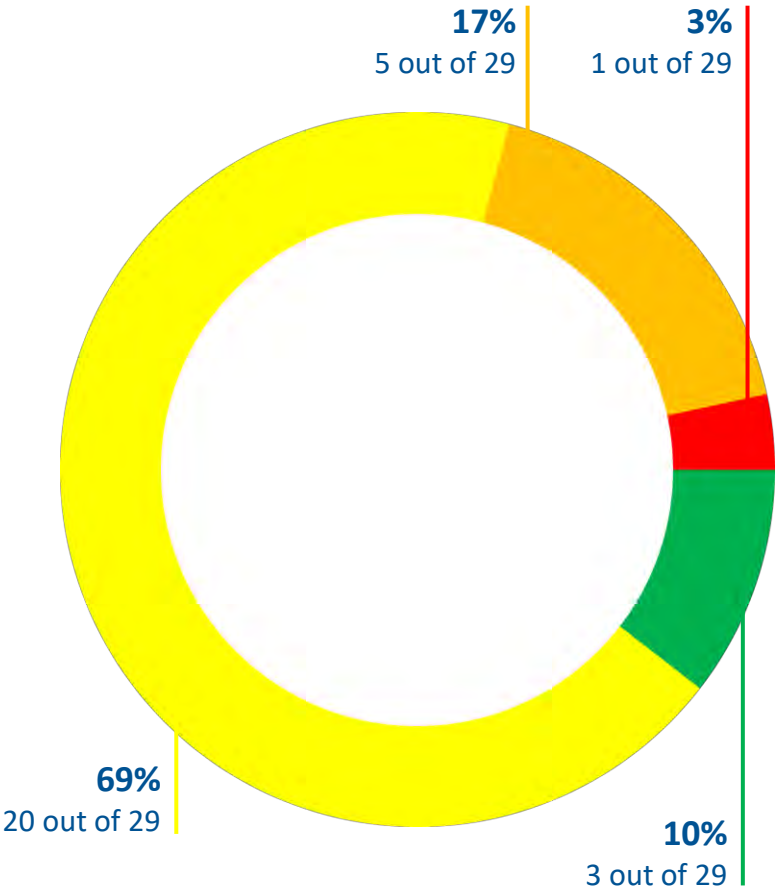
Included in ELC issued dashboard dataset, formerly referred to as 'Future Lifecycle Costs'

A	Total projected (post 2028) lifecycle replacement costs per m2 is in lowest quartile in relation to 29 assets in scope
B	Total projected (post 2028) lifecycle replacement costs per m2 is in second quartile relation to 29 assets in scope
C	Total projected (post 2028) lifecycle replacement costs per m2 is in third quartile relation to 29 assets in scope
D	Total projected (post 2028) lifecycle replacement costs costs per m2 is in fourth quartile relation to 29 assets in scope

Qualitative Grading Criteria per Facet

Asset Performance Scorecard:

Analysis headlines - Condition



- **A - Good**
Performing as intended and operating efficiently
- **B - Satisfactory**
Performing as intended but showing minor deterioration
- **C - Poor**
Showing major defects and/or not operating as intended
- **D - Bad**
Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure

‘Condition’ Overview

Whilst only one of the assets (Brunton Hall, Musselburgh) has been rated to be in a ‘bad’ condition, posing a serious risk of imminent failure, 4 out of 29 are showing major defects. The majority of the assets (69% - 20/29) are rated as ‘B’ i.e. satisfactory, performing as intended but showing minor deterioration. 3 out of 29 of the assets under consideration are shown to be in a ‘good condition’, performing as intended and operating efficiently – all 3 of which are located in the Musselburgh Area.

No. Of assets



Dunbar & East Linton

100% of the buildings under consideration in this Area are in ‘satisfactory’ condition, performing as intended but showing minor deterioration.



Fa’side

4 out of 6 of the buildings in scope in this Area are in a ‘satisfactory’ condition with the remaining 2 (Trevelyan Hall and Macmerry Village Hall) rated as ‘poor’ - showing major defects.



Haddington & Lammermuir

1 out of 4 of the in scope buildings in this Area (Nungate & Haddington Community Centre) is in ‘poor’ condition, showing major defects. All others are reported be in a ‘satisfactory’ condition.



Musselburgh

3 out of 6 of the assets under consideration in this area, are rated as ‘good’ - this is the most of any of the other areas. The only building rated as ‘bad’ across all 29 assets, - and at serious risk of imminent failure - is located in this area: The Brunton Hall.



North Berwick Coastal

1 out of 5 buildings under consideration in this area is in ‘poor’ condition, showing major defects (Gullane Recreation Hall). All others are reported to be in ‘satisfactory’ condition, performing as intended but showing minor deterioration.



Preston Seton Gosford

100% of the properties in scope in PSG are in a ‘satisfactory’ condition, performing as intended but showing minor deterioration.

Asset Performance Data Review:

Analysis headlines – Future Condition Investment

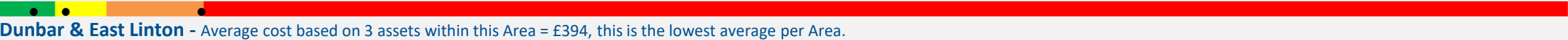
4 th Quartile	Highest cost
£6,081.52	£6,081.52
3 rd Quartile	Lowest cost
£794.71	£0.00
2 nd Quartile	Average cost
£417.57	£734.13
1 st Quartile	
£218.21	



‘Lifecycle Costs’ Overview

Predicted Lifecycle Replacement Costs from 2024-2028 range from £0.00 (Wallyford Learning Campus (WLC) and Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre (MECLC) – both of which are located in the Musselburgh area) to £6,081.52 (Brunton Hall, also located in Musselburgh). The data has been rated per quartile, dividing the dataset into four equal parts, each containing 25% of the data which show the distribution and spread of the data and highlight any outliers. Gullane Public Library, *North Berwick Coastal* (£2,668) and Brunton Hall, *Musselburgh Wallyford & Whitecraig* (£6,082) are the two notable outliers, drastically raising the average across all assets.

Please note data missing for Musselburgh Old Town Hall, the inclusion of these could alter the quartile metrics for all 29 assets.



Dunbar & East Linton - Average cost based on 3 assets within this Area = £394, this is the lowest average per Area.



Fa'side - Average cost based on 6 assets within this Area = £518



Haddington & Lammermuir - Average cost based on 4 assets within this Area = £452



Musselburgh Wallyford & Whitecraig - Average cost based on 6 assets within this Area = £1,475. This is the highest average per Area, despite 2 out of 4 of the assets showing £0.00. Please note there is no data available for Musselburgh Old Town Hall, additionally total costs for both WLC and MECLC are shown to be £0.00, this is because they both fall under PPP contracts with all maintenance responsibilities included until 2035.



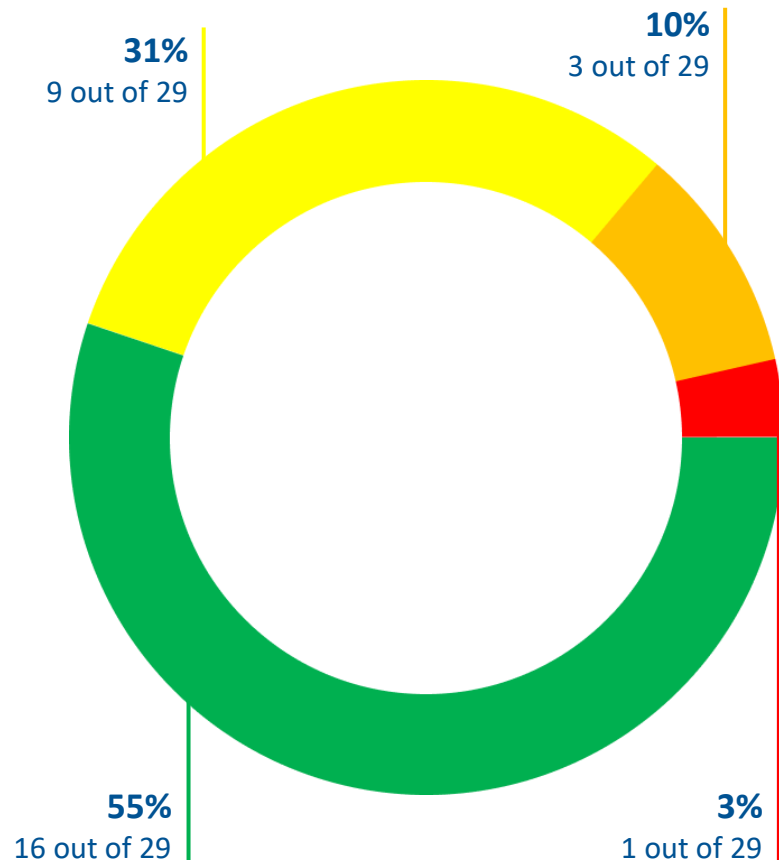
North Berwick Coastal - Average cost based on 5 assets within this Area = £970



Preston Seton Gosford - Average cost based on 5 assets within this Area = £447

Asset Performance Date Review:

Analysis headlines – Fitness for Purpose



- **A - Good**
Performing well and operating efficiently
- **B - Satisfactory**
Performing well but with minor problems
- **C - Poor**
Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally
- **D - Bad**
Does not support the delivery of services

'Fitness of Purpose' Overview

More than half of the assets (55%, 16/29) under consideration are rated as 'good', performing well and operating efficiently to support service delivery. **Macmerry Village Hall is the only asset across all 29 that is shown to not support the delivery of services.**

Note: Fitness of purpose ratings are not rated per service provided at each of the assets but collectively, based on how the building supports the delivery of its collective services

No. Of
assets



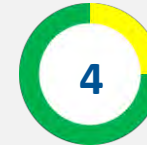
Dunbar & East Linton

2 out of 3 buildings in scope in Dunbar are rated as 'good' regarding their fitness for purpose. East Linton Library is the outlier, noted to be 'Satisfactory' with minor problems



Fa'side

Ormiston Library & George Johnstone Centre are rated as 'good'. Macmerry Estate is the worst performing building in Fa' Side and across all 29 assets, rated as 'bad' and does not support delivery of services. 3/6 buildings are 'satisfactory' (Ormiston, Elphinstone community centre and Trevelyan Hall)



Haddington & Lammermuir

3 out of 4 buildings in the Area (John Muir House, John Gray & Nungate & Haddington CC) are rated as 'good'. Haddington Town House is 'satisfactory' performing well with minor problems.



Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig

50% of the buildings under consideration in this Area are performing well, rated as 'good' (MECLC, Whitecraig village hub & Wallyford Learning Campus). All others are reported as 'poor' and noted to be not operating optimally.



North Berwick Coastal

3 out of 5 buildings under consideration in this Area are performing well and rated as 'good' (Gullane Library, Hope Rooms & North Berwick Library). North Berwick Community Centre & Gullane Recreational Hall have 'satisfactory' ratings.

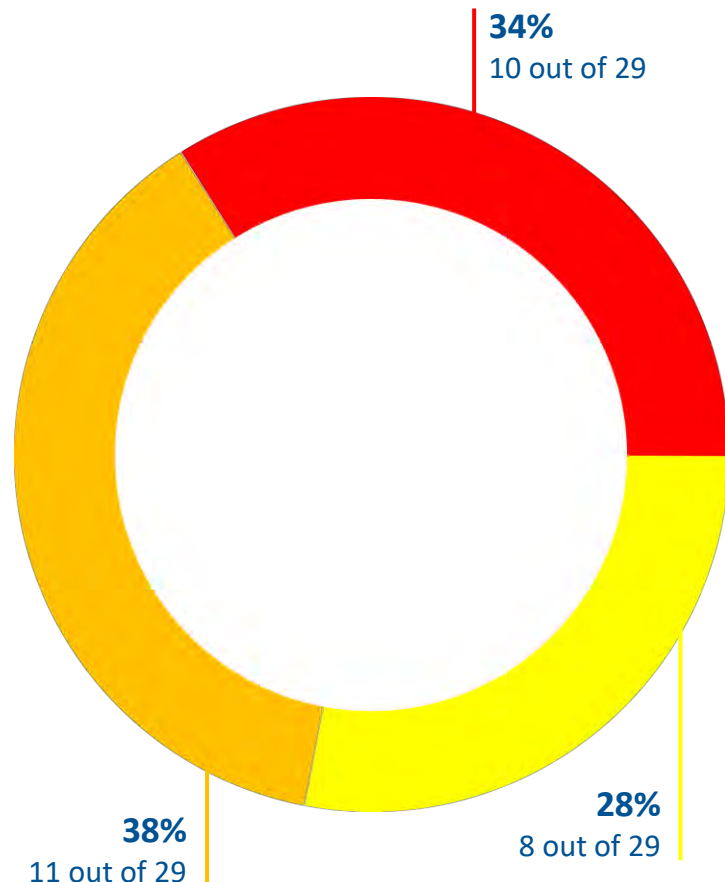


Preston Seton Gosford

3 out of 5 buildings under consideration in PSG are performing well and rated as 'good' (Longniddry Community Centre, Prestonpans & Pennypit CC Facility). Prestonpans Library & Port Seton Community Centre have 'satisfactory' ratings, performing well but with minor problems.

Asset Performance Data Review:

Analysis headlines – Adaptability to Net Zero



- **A – easily adaptable**
Little or no work required: building already performs below operational carbon targets and requires minimal modifications to achieve NZC status.
- **B – minimal work required**
The building has some energy efficient features but lacks comprehensive systems to support NZC. Modifications/upgrades are feasible without significant structural changes.
- **C – major work required**
The building is energy inefficient, possibly due to outdated construction materials, poor insulation, or reliance on fossil fuels. These efforts involve substantial investment and may face structural limitations.
- **D – NZC unachievable**
Unfeasible to achieve NZC due to structural or cost limits: Not possible to meet operational or embodied carbon thresholds, or no space for renewables

'Adaptability to Net Zero' Overview

None of the buildings under consideration are currently found to be easily adaptable to net zero. 8 out of 29 buildings (across Dunbar, Fa' Side, Musselburgh & PSG) have some energy efficient features and upgrades are feasible without significant structural changes. 72% of the assets under consideration are unfeasible (10 buildings) or require major work to make them adaptable to net zero (11 buildings).

No. Of
assets



Dunbar & East Linton

Adaptability to NZC has been found to be unachievable for 2 out of 3 of the buildings in scope in this Area (Dunbar Town House Museum and East Linton Library). The Bleachingfield Centre has some energy efficient features and requires minimal modifications/upgrades to support NZC.



Fa'side

3 out of 6 of the buildings under consideration in this Area require minimal work in order to adapt to NZC (Ormiston CC, Ormiston Library and George Johnson Centre). Major work is required for Macmerry Village Hub and potentially unfeasible work required for Elphinstone CC and Trevelyan Hall.



Haddington & Lammermuir

As a minimum, all 4 buildings under consideration in this Area require Major work requiring substantial investment. The work required for 2 of these buildings has been deemed unfeasible (John Muir House (including former court) and Haddington Town Hall).



Musselburgh

'Minimal' work is required to upgrade 3 of the 6 in scope buildings in this Area to achieve NZC (MECLC, Whitecraig Village Hub and Wallyford Secondary School). The work required for Musselburgh Town Hall to adapt to NCZ has been noted to be unfeasible.



North Berwick Coastal

'Major' work and substantial investment would be required for all 5 buildings in scope in this Area, however the work required for Gullane Recreational Hall and North Berwick Library and Museum to be able to achieve NCZ, has been found to be unfeasible.



Preston Seton Gosford

1 out of 5 buildings under consideration in this Area requires 'Minima' work in order to achieve NZC (Pennypit CC). 3 out of 5 require 'Major' work (Longniddry CC & Library, Prestonpans CC and Port Seton CC & Library). The work required for Prestonpans Library has been noted to be unfeasible.

Phase 1A:

Development & Delivery

- *Session setup*
- *Session structure*
- *Workshop questions, format of feedback gathering*

Engagement workshops 1A: Purpose

- Targeted stakeholder engagements were carried out via six in-person workshops (one per area). Local and regional stakeholders were invited, by the council, to participate in a 3 hrs workshop. The purpose of these sessions was to:
- Validate findings from the asset data
- Identify any gaps or contextual factors not captured in the data
- Explore current building use, opportunities, challenges, and potential future roles
- Understand stakeholder interest in building management or asset transfer
- The outcomes from these sessions would be used to shape the next phase of engagements (Phase 1B – Public Engagement)

Engagement workshops 1A: Session structure

Each of the six stakeholder workshops were conducted based on the following structure. Workshops were conducted in the evening after work hours and varied from 2.5-3.5 hrs. The workshop was led by Clear Futures representatives. ELC representatives were present to introduce the workshop, close out the session and answer any council specific queries that came up in discussions.

Part 1: Overview and context for discussion

- 1. Introductions and scene setting**
 - i. Introductions*
 - ii. Background and Purpose*
- 2. Programme information**
- 3. Context and data: presenting information collated**
 - i. List of the buildings under consideration for the area under consideration*
 - ii. The 6 facets:*
 - *what they mean*
 - *why are they important*
 - *How have we rated them – RAG ratings*

BREAK

Part 2: Discussion & Input

- 1. Discussion & feedback**
 - i. Understanding current building & service use*
 - ii. Exploring opportunities and challenges*
 - iv. Gauging community interest*
 - v. Exploring opportunities and challenges*
 - vi. Any further input on information collated*
- 2. Session wrap up**
 - i. Next steps (including how will we feedback output to them)*
 - ii. Contact for further comments*

Engagement workshops 1A: Questions

The following questions were covered in the six workshops. Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig – had two additional questions due to the status of Brunton Hall & Theatre.

Building & Service Use – Live Poll

- Which of the following buildings in [insert name of area] are you familiar with?
- What do you use the building for and what are other uses the building offers?

Discuss the following in breakout groups

Read through the prompts on your table to support the discussion. Make notes on the flip-chart provided on your table

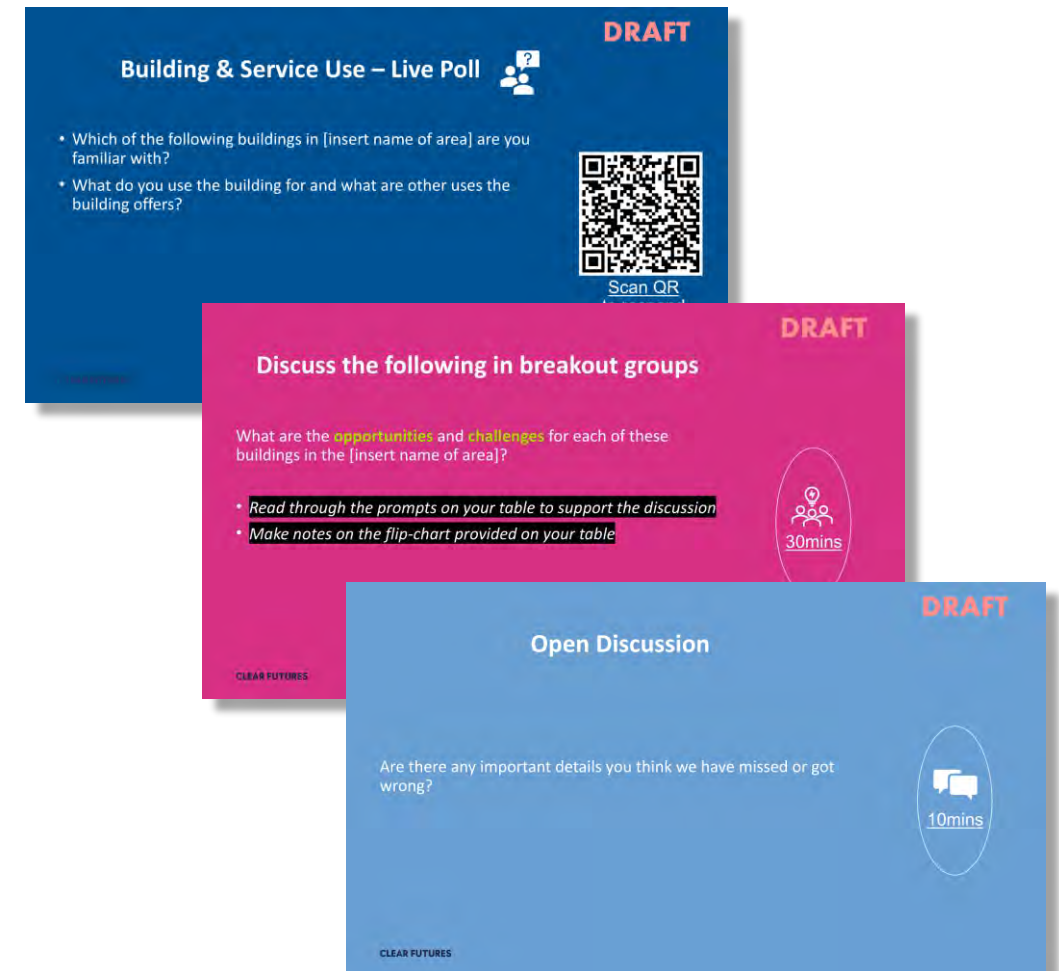
- What are the opportunities and challenges for each of these buildings in the [insert name of area]?
- When considering opportunities: do any buildings lend themselves to the Hub model?*

Open Discussion

- Are there any important details you think we have missed or got wrong?

Additional questions for the Musselburgh workshop

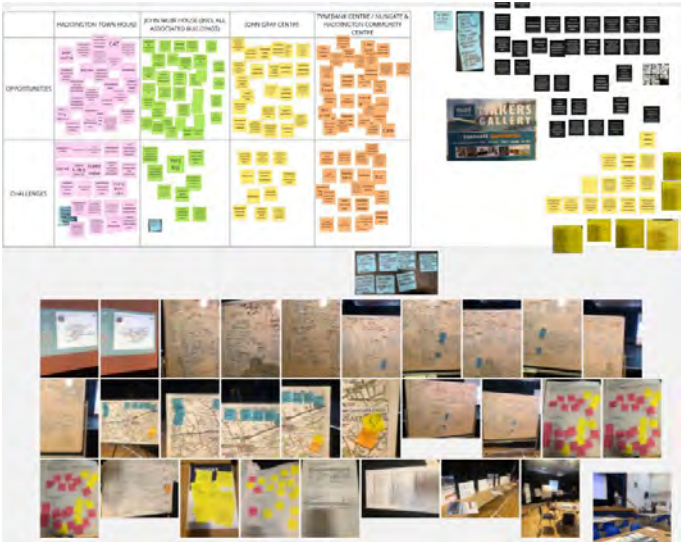
- What is needed in Musselburgh for the arts to replace Brunton Theatre?
- What are your thoughts on how this could be delivered?



Engagement workshops 1A: Set Up

Photos from various workshop settings – a mix of digital engagement (with Clear futures presenting; running digital polls via Microsoft forms and live data shown on screen) and participants brainstorming ideas in groups on paper and presenting back to the room for an open discussion.

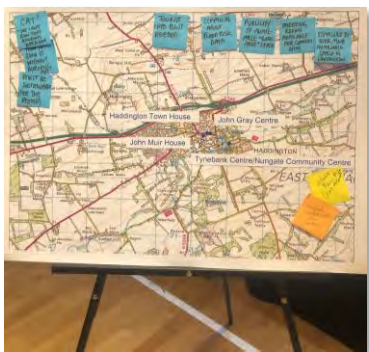
Discussions in the room were captured by a CF representative on a digital board displaying feedback in real time for the participants to see how these were being interpreted and captured. This also gave the stakeholders the opportunity to add or correct any noted being captured.



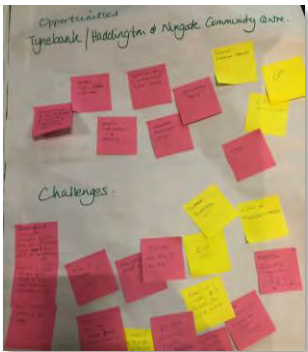
Digital board collecting real time feedback



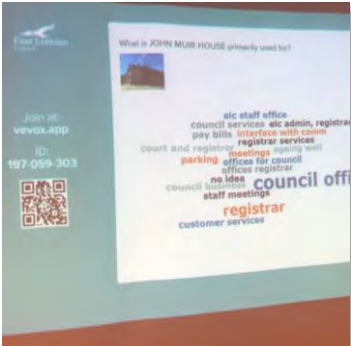
Building information cards laid out for participants to read



Area map



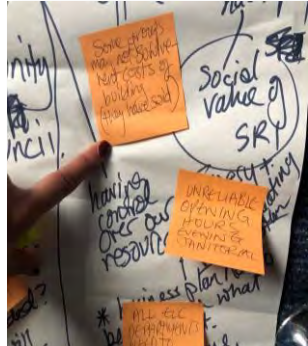
Stakeholder Engagement Workshop



Engagement data show in real time



Worksheet of one engagement group



Worksheet of one engagement group

Engagement workshops 1A: Workshop Collateral

A series of building information cards were prepared to be used in the workshop discussions (One Card per building). Each card presented:

- a) Building name, photo, area name
- b) Description with current use and list of services offered
- c) Size (Square meters)
- d) 'Red Amber Green' rating with commentary for facets including Condition; Suitability; Lifecycle Costs; Flood Plain Risk*

Flood plain risk data updated by ELC following early stakeholder feedback

Building information cards per area

PHOTO OF ASSET

EAST OTTOMON COUNCIL AREA
BUILDING NAME

Two with front elevation of asset to contact

Services & Facilities provided

Size (SqM)

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

***Condition**

A measure of the perceived condition of the asset, taking into account the age, the state of repair, the quality of the materials and the extent of any deterioration. The condition is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

****Suitability**

A measure of the perceived suitability of the asset for its current use, taking into account the layout, the design, the materials and the extent of any deterioration. The suitability is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

*****Adaptability to Net Zero Carbon**

A measure of the perceived adaptability of the asset to net zero carbon, taking into account the energy efficiency, the renewable energy sources and the extent of any deterioration. The adaptability is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

******Climate Resilience**

A measure of the perceived resilience of the asset to climate change, taking into account the flood risk, the heat risk and the extent of any deterioration. The resilience is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

*******Lifecycle cost**

A measure of the perceived lifecycle cost of the asset, taking into account the initial cost, the maintenance cost and the extent of any deterioration. The lifecycle cost is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

*******Utilisation**

A measure of the perceived utilisation of the asset, taking into account the occupancy, the usage and the extent of any deterioration. The utilisation is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 being the worst.

Instructions on
'How to read'

DRAFT

Dunbar & East Linton

THE BLACHING FELD CENTRE

Size (SqM) 1,029.6 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

Haddington & Lammermuir

JOHN LIBBY CENTRE

Size (SqM) 1,008.1 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

North Berwick Coastal

NORTH BERWICK LIBRARY & MUSEUM

Size (SqM) 975.9 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

Preston Seton Gosford

PENNYPT COMMUNITY CENTRE FACILITY

Size (SqM) 1,017.7 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

Fa'side

CHRISTIAN LIBRARY

Size (SqM) 1,017.7 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

Musselburgh

WHITECRAID VILLAGE HUB

Size (SqM) 1,017.7 m²

Condition

Suitability

Climate Resilience

Lifecycle cost

Utilisation

Phase 1B: Development & Delivery

- *Drop-in sessions, online questionnaire, information deposit points and youth engagement*
- *Question set, format of feedback gathered*

Public Engagement 1B: Purpose

Building on the insights from Phase 1A, a broader public engagement exercise was conducted to gather input from the user and community perspective from wider community (engagement open to local residents) specifically seeking insights on:

- Reach a wide audience
Involve residents from across each area, not just key stakeholders, so the council could hear from a broad range of voices
- Understand community experience
Find out how people currently use the buildings, how important they are to local life, and how satisfied people are with the services and facilities provided
- Compare and Validate
Review findings against phase 0: asset data review and phase 1A: stakeholder engagements to highlight recurring insights or contradictions
- Gather ideas for the future
Ask for suggestions on new or different ways the buildings could be used to better meet community needs
- Identify issues and barriers
Learn about any problems with the buildings, such as access, condition, or suitability, that might affect how people use them
- Capture actionable feedback
Collect practical ideas and proposals from the public that could help guide decisions about each building's future

What we did: Online and in-person public engagements

The overall engagement took place over six weeks and included:

Online questionnaires hosted on the East Lothian Council consultation hub

The questionnaires (Question set on following pages) were supported by briefing and supporting documents including:

- The purpose of engagement and background around why ELC has identified a reduction in spending on assets as part of the solution and what it's looking to achieve.
- Introduce the 29 buildings under consideration and why these have been identified;
- A summary of the data collated to date on each building in the form of building information cards
- A Phase 1A stakeholder workshop summary;
- Next steps and timings setting out what we'll do with the information provided and when we'll feedback on outcomes

6 x Public Drop-in sessions

Drop-in events were hosted by the council, where people were given the opportunity to review building information and provide feedback, in hardcopy or via the online engagement platform. These were held at:

- Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar: Tuesday, 10 June from 2-5pm
- John Gray Centre, Haddington: Wednesday, 11 June from 2-5pm
- Prestonpans Library: Friday, 13 June from 2-5pm
- Musselburgh Library: Monday, 16 June from 2-7pm
- George Johnstone Centre, Tranent: Tuesday, 17 June from 2-5pm
- North Berwick Library: Thursday, 19 June from 2-7pm

Each session had up to 4 council officers in attendance to answer questions and to assist completing the questionnaire. There were 2 pull up banners with key project information that we used for each drop in session

Information Deposit points where residents could complete hardcopy surveys or access the online version via QR code

These were points where, members of the public could collect and return paper copies of the questionnaire at all libraries in East Lothian.

As well as paper copies of the questionnaire, each library had a display board with the Placemaking project posters and the building information cards for that area.

Outwith the drop-in sessions, library staff were able to answer questions. This would mostly be about how to fill in the questionnaire rather than technical questions about the building.

Youth engagement sessions facilitated by council officers as part of their ongoing contact / programme with local youth groups

A number of youth specific engagement sessions took place. These were facilitated by the Connected Communities team and the results were uploaded to the East Lothian Consultation Hub.

How we delivered: Online and in-person public engagements

Publicity:

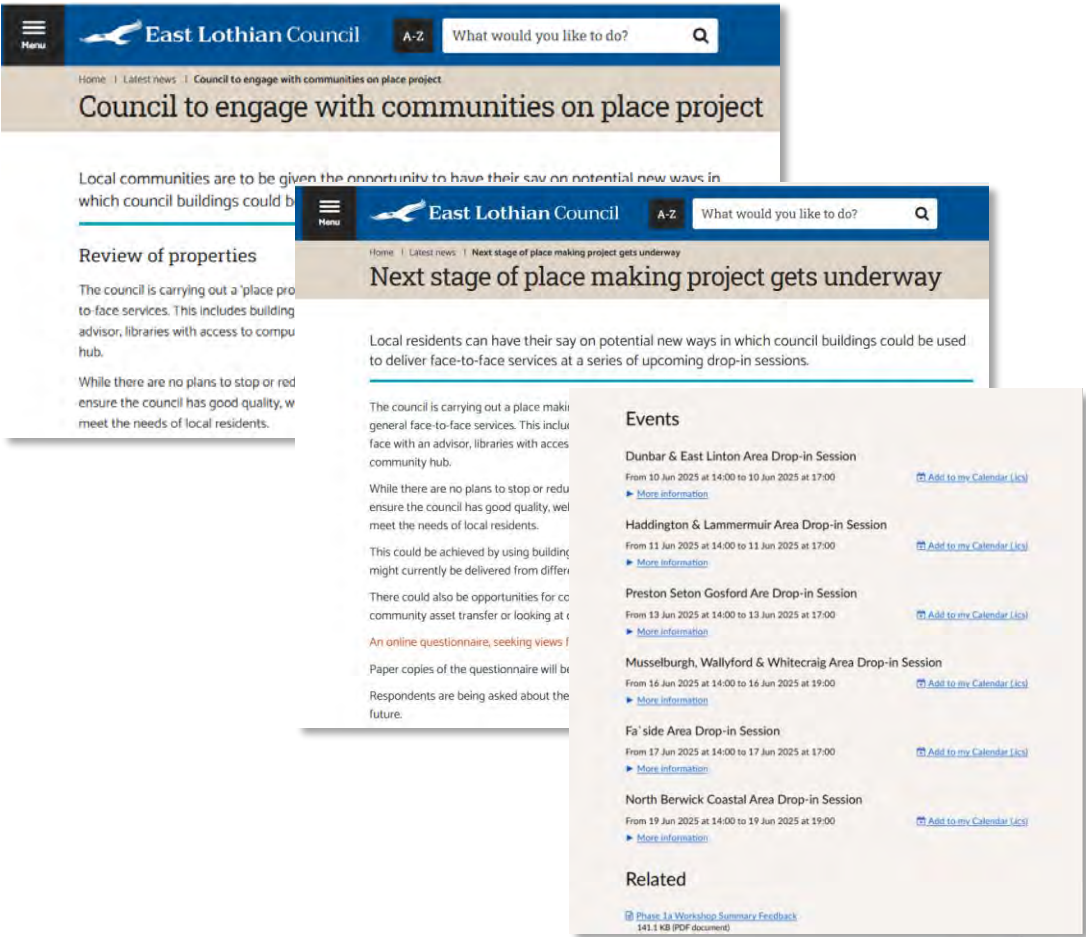
Two press releases were made in 2025 announcing the placemaking project and the council’s plan to engage with communities ahead of Phase 1A workshops on the 12th March 2025 and again on 19th May 2025 ahead of Phase 1B public engagements

Published 12th Mar 2025:
<https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/news/article/14475/council-to-engage-with-communities-on-place-project>

Published 19th May 2025:
<https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/news/article/14517/next-stage-of-place-making-project-gets-underway>

Other publicity initiatives include:

Social media linking to ELC hub website with uploaded info; posters on buildings under consideration with QR codes linking to ELC hub website. Additionally, advert taken out in East Lothian Courier publicising the drop in sessions



Phase 1B standardised question set per building

The question set below was used for engagements on all buildings excluding Brunton Hall & Theatre and those that are mothballed.

Q1. How often do you use the building and what for?

Q2. Why is this building important to you and your community? Consider what is working well and what value it provides.

Q3. Are there any particular problems you have encountered when using this building and services it provides? If so, do you have ideas for how things could be improved?

Q4. In your opinion, are there any ways of making savings or increasing / generating income at this building that could be explored?

Q5. Do you have any other comments about this building and the services it currently provides or could provide in the future that you think we should take into consideration?

Q6. Do you have any comments on the information we have collected to date and presented on this building and the services provided? Are there any details you think are important that we have missed or got wrong?

Phase 1B Mothballed building question set

Applies to:

- Musselburgh Town Hall
- Haddington Town House
- John Muir House Former Court (floorplan highlighting mothballed area to be included)

Q1. What uses should the council consider for this building?

Q2. How would you describe the value this could bring to you and the local community?

Q3. Do you have any comments on the information we have collected to date and presented on this building and the services provided? Are there any details you think are important that we have missed or got wrong?

Phase 1B Brunton Hall & Theatre question set

The questions below were used for Brunton Hall & Theatre

Q1. Prior to some services being relocated due to the presence of RAAC, - how often did you use the building and what for?

Q2. Do you still use the building? If so, what for?

Q3. Does the Brunton Hall and Theatre provide value to you and your community? If so, how? If not, why not?

Q4. Were there any particular problems you encountered when using this building and services it provides? If so, do you have ideas for how things could be improved?

Q5. Do we need to replace the Brunton Hall & Theatre? If yes, with what?

Q6. If you answered yes to the above question, what are your thoughts on how this could be delivered? Consider how this could be funded and ways of generating income from the building

Q7. Do you have any comments on the information we have collected to date and presented on this building and the services provided? Are there any details you think are important that we have missed or got wrong?

Phase 1B Optional demographic questions

Q1. Your Details – Name & Postcode

Q2. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Q3. If you are answering on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of it?

▼ [Why we need this information and how it will be used](#)

The Council uses this information to ensure responses to this survey are genuine and that each person is submitting only one response.

The Council will publish all responses received to this survey, but will not publish individual names or postcodes. We will publish the names of organisations.



East Lothian
Council

Place Making Project Proposals

Appendix 3: Summary of Proposals per Area

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
Dunbar & East Linton	Dunbar Town House	Community Hub	Officers should engage with community representatives to establish the feasibility and benefits of asset transfer/greater commercialisation of Dunbar Town House
	East Linton Library	Community Library/Hub	Core library services delivered from Dunbar Library (Bleachingfield Centre). Work with community partners and adjacent lease holders to consider alternative service delivery model for library.
	The Bleachingfield Centre	Library & Area Hub	Proposed Library & Area Hub
Fa`side	Elphinstone Community Centre	Return to school	Re-designate community centre space In Elphinstone Primary School to school provision to address future pupil roll increases.
	George Johnstone Centre	Library & Area Hub	Proposed Library & Area Hub
	Macmerry Village Hall	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	Ormiston Community Centre	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
			the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	Ormiston Library	Community Library/Hub	Core library services delivered from Tranent Library (George Johnstone Centre). Work with community partners to consider alternative service delivery model for this library. Continue supporting Lily's Ormiston CIC who are currently operating in the community rooms at Ormiston Library
	Trevelyan Village Hall	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
Haddington & Lammermuir	Haddington Town House	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model. Council Chambers relocated to John Muir House.
	John Muir House & Former Court Building	Area Hub/ Possible Library & Area Hub	Future development considered as part of Haddington Place Based Development Project feasibility. Council Chambers relocated to John Muir House.

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
	John Gray Centre	Library/ Possible Library & Area Hub/ Possible commercial opportunity	Future development considered as part of Haddington Place Based Development Project feasibility exploring relocation of library to John Muir House (adjacent to current customer services). Vacated ground floor library space could be used for commercial purposes to generate revenue income.
	Nungate Community Centre	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
Musselburgh, Wallyford & Whitecraig	Brunton Hall	Arts Facility	Future considered as part of Musselburgh Place Based Development Project but proposed location for arts facility. Council agreed carry out initial market testing to identify potential opportunities to deliver this.
	Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre	Community Hub	Future of this asset should be considered as part of the PPP hand-back strategy.
	Musselburgh Library	Library	Future considered as part of Musselburgh Place Based Development Project. Possibly surplus if it can be integrated into the Library & Area Hub within Musselburgh Old Town Hall.

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
	Musselburgh Old Town Hall	Possible Library & Area Hub	Future considered as part of Musselburgh feasibility study to determine costs, opportunity and multiple benefits of creating Library & Area Hub in this building.
	Wallyford Learning Centre	Community Hub	The current community use arrangements at Wallyford Learning Centre require to be reviewed and improved. This projected pressure on local services should be carefully monitored and addressed within the Musselburgh feasibility study to ensure that, if needed, additional capacity can be supported through coordinated access to services across these three distinct communities
	Whitecraig Village Hub	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model This projected pressure on local services should be carefully monitored and addressed within the Musselburgh feasibility study to ensure that, if needed, additional capacity can be supported through coordinated access to services across these three distinct communities

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
North Berwick Coastal	Gullane Library	Community Library/Hub	Core library services delivered from North Berwick Library. Work with community partners and adjacent lease holders to consider alternative service delivery model for this library.
	Gullane Recreation Hall	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	North Berwick Community Centre	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	North Berwick Library & Museum	Library & Area Hub	Proposed Library & Area Hub
	The Hope Rooms	To be determined following feasibility study	Officers should engage with community representatives to establish the feasibility and benefits of relocating NB Youth Project to former nursery at NB CC.
Preston Seton Gosford	Longniddry Community Centre & Library	Community Hub/Community Library	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model for Community Centre.

Area	Property	Proposed Asset Designation	Proposal
			Core library services delivered from Prestonpans Library. Work with community partners to consider alternative service delivery model for library.
	Pennypit Centre	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	Port Seton Community Centre & Library	Community Hub/ Community Library	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model for Community Centre. Core library services delivered from Prestonpans Library. Work with community partners to consider alternative service delivery model for library.
	Prestonpans Community Centre	Community Hub	Engage with management committees and/or representatives of the community to establish the feasibility and benefits of implementing revised operating model
	Prestonpans Library	Library & Area Hub	Proposed Library & Area Hub

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 October 2025
BY:	Executive Director for Place
REPORT TITLE:	Energy Report and Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Delivery Plan Update
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Council with an update on the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) Delivery Plan and on energy related matters, and to seek agreement on next steps.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note progress made on the actions in the LHEES Delivery Plan;
- 2.2 Agree the amendments to the actions in the LHEES Delivery Plan that are set out in paragraph 3.8 of this report;
- 2.3 Agree that officers should continue to explore the potential for district heat networks across the authority, noting the particular opportunities on the potential for a district heat network at Cockenzie using waste heat from a data centre, and the potential of utilising minewater geothermal energy for the Blindwells development and surrounding area;
- 2.4 Agree that officers continue to work regionally, in partnership with other Councils, to further develop the Regional Energy Masterplan, and ensure that the full potential of regional infrastructure is utilised effectively and efficiently and for this work to explicitly include the potential from heat networks;
- 2.5 Agree the principle of a partnership with Lothian Heat Community Interest Company, which should be aligned with regional discussions, and subject to officers developing an MOU to be agreed at a future Council meeting;

- 2.6 Note that the principle of developing Heat Networks in the Council is not dependent on capital resources from the Council given our financial position and wider demands on resources; and
- 2.7 Ask officers to write to SGN Ltd to confirm that the Council in principle supports the Caledonia H2 project.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local authorities, under the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Order) 2022, are required to prepare a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) with an accompanying five-year Delivery Plan. These should set out a long-term plan for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat in all domestic and non-domestic buildings within each Local Authority area. LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland's statutory targets for fuel poverty and greenhouse gas emissions reduction, including:

- By 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty; and
- A reduction in net zero emissions by 2045, with carbon budgets that decrease every five years until Scotland reaches net zero.

- 3.2 The heat and energy efficiency environment in which this report has been prepared is rapidly moving in terms of policy, legislation and technology.

- 3.3 Members will recall that the LHEES and its Delivery Plan were approved by Council on 29 October 2024. One of the main reasons why LHEES is split into a Strategy and a Delivery Plan is to enable successful monitoring against actions that have been developed through the process.

- 3.4 The approved Delivery Plan contains 42 actions. Council officers have been working to deliver those actions. A RAG Assessment showing progress on the actions is contained in Appendix A to this report. The assessment shows that 8 actions are green, meaning that they have been completed, 17 are amber, meaning that some progress has been made, and 17 are red, meaning that progress has yet to be made.

- 3.5 Actions 12 to 14 relate to council homes. The Council is still awaiting details from the Scottish Government on the Net Zero Standard for council housing. Despite this, the following progress has been made in the last year on council homes:

- 104 properties have had loft insulation installed;
- 58 properties have had cavity wall insulation;
- 3 properties have had external wall insulation;
- 475 properties have had energy efficient windows installed; and

- 236 properties have had insulated doors installed.
- 3.6 Actions 19 to 22 relate to Council-owned non-domestic properties. Progress remains aligned to the ongoing review of Council assets with current progress to non-domestic properties summarised below:
- Improvements to building fabric and energy efficiency measures during routine maintenance operations;
 - Installation of low energy and renewable technologies including photovoltaics, battery storage, heat pumps, LED lighting replacements and building energy management system improvements; and
 - Programme of automated meter reading installation underway to monitor trends in energy and utilities consumption for trend analysis and early detection of issues.
- 3.7 Proposals to further decarbonise and meet the aims of LHEES are regularly discussed within the Climate and Nature Emergency Group, the Joint Members Climate Group, and the Energy Board, and these groups provide effective forums to both share ideas and to provide governance on energy related matters.
- 3.8 The Delivery Plan is a live document that may need change to some of the actions within it. Having reviewed the Plan, it is recommended that the following changes are made to the existing actions:
- a) 'Action 22 - Extend the preparation of Council assets to those that are leased to other businesses.' It is proposed that this action be deleted, as Action 21 already requires that net zero plans are prepared for Council assets currently using LPG or oil for heating;
 - b) 'Action 32 - Secure funding to undertake a regional energy masterplan study.' It is proposed that this action be deleted, as this issue is already covered by Action 24 - Work with Midlothian, Edinburgh, West Lothian and Fife Councils through the City Region Deal on a regional heat masterplan, exploring the potential demand for heat and heat network connections across the region;
 - c) 'Action 41 - Explore opportunities with credit unions to develop local loan solutions for retrofit work'. It is proposed that this action be amended to, 'Explore opportunities for loans and grants to develop local loan solutions for retrofit work,' as there may be opportunities for grant funding, as well as local loan solutions.
- 3.9 At the meeting of 29 October 2024, Council also agreed that officers should continue to explore all opportunities to undertake feasibility studies where funding is available to assess the technical and financial viability of district heating and smaller-scale local heat solutions.
- 3.10 An example of this happened earlier this year, when Pencaitland & District Community Council (P&DCC) approached the Council seeking our support to seek funding to assess the technical and financial viability of a district heating scheme to supply residential and commercial properties in the village of Pencaitland. This was discussed initially

through the cross-party Climate and Sustainability Group, who expressed in principle support, noting that whilst not a decision-making forum, that this remained aligned to the Council decision to explore opportunities to progress with feasibility studies where opportunities aligned. As such, Council officers submitted an application to the Scottish Government Heat Network Support Unit (HNSU) seeking funding for this feasibility work.

- 3.11 Unfortunately, in August 2025, the HNSU informed the Council that the application had been unsuccessful. The HNSU decision is set out in Appendix B.
- 3.12 Discussions at a national level have continued between Council officers and the HNSU. The HNSU is sponsored and managed by the Scottish Government, with partners Scottish Futures Trust and Zero Waste Scotland providing a range of support services. It supports the development of new low or zero emission heat network projects in Scotland through grant funding and expert advice. All HNSU funding is subject to availability and is offered on a first-come-first-served basis. In discussions, the HNSU advise that applications for funding would only be supported where, amongst other things, there was clear support from a Committee of the Council, and where the HNSU was satisfied that there was a clear pathway to development in the short to medium term. The HNSU have also advised that the Council would need to demonstrate that any proposed project would have sufficient resourcing from the Council, in the form of proposed governance, including representation from senior Council officers.
- 3.13 Council officers at both senior and officer level have been successful in starting regular discussions at a regional level with colleagues from Midlothian and Edinburgh Councils. Officers have agreed that regular collaboration and sharing of intelligence is crucial in discussions over heat networks that could potentially cross local authority boundaries.
- 3.14 Through the City Deal, work has commenced on a Regional Energy Masterplan (REMP). REMP is a strategic initiative aimed at advancing the region's transition to a low-carbon energy system. It seeks to consolidate local energy-related data into a unified regional repository, facilitating informed decision-making across innovation, investment, policy, and regulation. By modelling the interdependencies within the energy system, the plan aims to assist regional partners in identifying optimal pathways to achieve deep decarbonisation cost-effectively, while promoting clean, sustainable, and inclusive growth.
- 3.15 Early exploratory discussions have taken place with regional colleagues to discuss opportunities to further collaborate on heat networks and wider heat solutions, maximising the full potential of existing infrastructure within the region.
- 3.16 Members may also be aware that in 2020, Midlothian Energy Limited (MEL) was formed, a 50/50 joint venture between Midlothian Council and Vattenfall Heat UK. MEL has an energy centre that captures low carbon heat from the Millerhill Recycling and Energy Recovery Centre. The new

MEL Energy Centre will then use this captured heat to supply around 3,000 homes, education and retail properties in a district heating network supplying the new settlements at Shawfair and Craighall village. A number of new homes have already been connected to this network.

- 3.17 MEL advise that they are looking to provide low carbon energy infrastructure to the region, and whilst this is initially focussed on using the waste heat at Millerhill, they intend to add further waste heat sources over time. They advise that the difficulty in taking heat over larger distances is that it is more costly. To offset this cost, demand assurance is needed to ensure that they do not have a stranded asset. The longer the heat network spine network, the bigger the demand needed to cover the capital cost.
- 3.18 The new MEL Five-Year Business Plan, which MEL hope will be endorsed by Midlothian Council in December, will continue to reference opportunities to expand into the east of East Lothian, including the potential to connect at the Queen Margaret University and build out a network from there. While they advise that this activity will not be a priority at present, MEL is ready to engage with potential partners in East Lothian. MEL confirm that there is no single structure for projects that they will be prepared to take forward and this may ultimately, in East Lothian, be influenced by the approach East Lothian Council takes in terms of facilitation or direct delivery of district heating.
- 3.19 Officers are continuing to work closely with colleagues from City of Edinburgh Council, who are continuing to develop their heat network proposals, and a delivery model for them. Earlier this month, officers from City of Edinburgh Council informed Council officers that they had engaged consultants who are about to undertake work on spinal routes for supplying large-scale heat to heat networks in Edinburgh. This work will further evaluate route options, including evaluating strategic options for bringing heat into heat network zones in Edinburgh from primary heat sources. While these could potentially include those in East Lothian and Midlothian, the consultants have suggested that their initial focus with respect to neighbouring local authorities would primarily be on access to electricity, rather than heat sources, given challenges around long distance transmission of heat, and on the basis that access to low-cost electricity will help unlock heat network development. Officers have requested that they be consulted on this work, in order to ensure that the consultant's work reflects the opportunities within East Lothian.
- 3.20 In June 2025, a feasibility study report entitled 'East Lothian Heat – A community energy network' was published. The report was written by Dr. Gemma Bone Dodds, as Chair of the Community Heat Network Steering Group, and is based on a feasibility study carried out by Viegand Maagøe, a Danish company with expertise in district heat solutions. The charity East Lothian Community Benefits partnered with East Lammermuir Community Council to raise funds for the feasibility study, with Community Wind Power funding the study alongside a contribution from Scottish Enterprise. A copy of the feasibility study report is set out in Appendix C.

- 3.21 A county-wide heat network is proposed, which the report concludes is technically and economically feasible. The heat network is proposed in four phases.
- Phase 1 would utilise the existing heat supply from MEL from the Millerhill Energy Centre and connect it to existing homes and buildings within Musselburgh and nearby areas.
 - Phase 2 would capture waste heat from the Viridor energy from waste facility at Oxwellmains and from the Tarmac cement works. Phase 2 aims to integrate these sources, along with innovative thermal storage, to supply heat locally and feed into the wider network. Phase 2 would likely include a transmission pipe westward from Dunbar.
 - The anchor for Phase 3 would be a data centre that could potentially be developed on part of the former Cockenzie Power Station site. Phase 3 would develop a heat network to communities in the Cockenzie–Prestonpans–Tranent corridor, and potentially further into inland villages like Longniddry and Ormiston. Phase 3 would also incorporate a seawater source heat pump at the Cockenzie site.
 - Phase 4 would involve extending the heat network into Edinburgh and Midlothian, potentially serving 28,000 customers in Edinburgh and 28,000 customers in Midlothian.
- 3.22 The ownership and delivery model was not part of the feasibility study, nor is it possible for the community group to determine this outside of bigger regional conversations. The Community Steering Group do however advise that ownership models that work well for the end consumer elsewhere trend toward a public-community partnership: a non-profit transmission operator (likely owned by a consortium of community, Council, and potentially regional public bodies) and local distribution companies or co-ops serving consumers. In the UK, policy tends to expect a larger role for private investors, and the Community Steering Group believe this could be integrated by looking at an increasing community ownership stake over time. They further advise that the evolving legal structure will continue to be clarified (for instance, the merits of a Community Benefit Society vs. a Community Interest Company vs. a Council-owned company are being weighed), testing a short-list of models with investors aiming for a final recommendation to emerge alongside the next phase of work.
- 3.23 In a recent letter to Council officers, the Community Steering Group advise that they have recently established the Lothian Heat Community Interest Company (LHCIC), which has been set up to provide a development vehicle to serve the interests of those living and working in East Lothian, Midlothian, and Edinburgh the following charitable objectives:
1. To explore solutions for minimising waste heat and delivering clean, affordable heat to homes across the Lothians and Edinburgh.

2. To maximise community ownership of and benefit from future heat solutions.
- 3.24 The LHCIC wish to enter into a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding with East Lothian Council to collaborate on finding heat solutions to support the people, Council, and businesses of East Lothian. The LHCIC letter also sets out a framework for collaboration, which includes suggested commitments for both the Council and for LHCIC. A copy of the letter from LHCIC is set out in Appendix D.
- 3.25 The feasibility study report sets out an ambitious proposal, which has been successful in focussing discussions on the need to decarbonise. Officers are grateful to members of the Steering Group for the time they have put into advancing this work. Offering an efficient, environmentally friendly way to heat homes and businesses, it is recognised that heat networks will play a key role in achieving our climate change targets. They can also lead to fuel savings, helping to reduce fuel poverty.
- 3.26 To progress a project of this scale would be significant, both in terms of the financial resource required and the significant skills and expertise needed to unlock this in an ever-changing environment. The Council has been clear as to the scale of current and financial challenges facing East Lothian whilst at the same time pressures and demands are increasing across Council services, and the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council remains a critical priority. As well as facing significant financial challenges, the Council is already progressing a number of major strategic projects, including the redevelopment of the former power station site in Cockenzie, the Innovation Park at Queen Margaret University, and the new settlement at Blindwells. These projects are not only strategically important, but also required significant officer resource across many Council services to make them happen. As noted later in this report, these projects may also present opportunities for alignment with our LHEES.
- 3.27 More broadly, local authorities in Scotland do not have all of the necessary powers or revenue streams similar to the successful European examples of heat networks in Europe, such as in Denmark. It is simply not possible for a local authority alone in Scotland to bring forward a heat network of the type proposed in the feasibility study report, nor take on the proposed financial liability and associated risks of delivering and energy project of this scale.
- 3.28 Council officers are clear that a district heat network proposed in the feasibility study is a national scale project that requires support from the Scottish Government. It is not a project that could be delivered in the short to medium term, and it is unlikely that feasibility for the entirety of the scheme would be funded by the HNSU. It is also worth noting that in July 2025, the Council leader wrote to the Scottish Government inviting Gillian Martin MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, to meet with him and the Chair of the East Lothian Community Benefits organisation to discuss the potential for scaling up heat networks across East Lothian and the wider Southeast Scotland region. This has been

passed to Màiri McAllan MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Housing, as this falls under her portfolio interests. Unfortunately, due to significant diary pressures, the Cabinet Secretary was unable to accommodate a meeting at this time. A copy of the letter of response is set out in Appendix E.

- 3.29 What is also crucial is the need for the Council to continue to work regionally on this, in partnership with Edinburgh and Midlothian Councils. Continuing to develop the Regional Energy Masterplan, and ensuring that the full potential of regional infrastructure is utilised effectively and efficiently, should help the Councils to identify the optimal pathways to achieve deep decarbonisation most cost-effectively.
- 3.30 The letter from the Steering Group was only recently received, and officers will explore the request from them. Council officers are in principle supportive to ongoing engagement with the Steering Group and to the concept of some form of partnership. It is therefore recommended that a further report be brought back to Council recommending whether the Council should enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with LHCIC.
- 3.31 In February 2025, Council agreed to select Social Development Capital LLP (SDCL) as the preferred supplier to deliver a Data Centre on the land of the former coal store at the former Cockenzie Power Station site. The aim is to explore the opportunity of developing a joint venture between both parties and will be subject to further Council determination. Before any development can take place, the plans would need to be assessed fully through the normal planning application process, and members of the public would have the opportunity to comment on the proposal. Data centres consume vast amounts of heat. This waste heat could potentially be used as the backbone for a district heat network. Discussions with SDCL, who have experience of such technology, on this potential have already begun. Whilst it is too early for a funding application to be made, it is recommended that officers should focus on the potential for a district heat network at Cockenzie using waste heat from a data centre.
- 3.32 It is also clear that delivering a heat network for new build development is significantly easier than retrofitting to existing buildings, and the Council should continue to explore opportunities where this can be achieved.
- 3.33 In line with the current Local Development Plan 2018, the Council has carried out concept and pre-feasibility studies across the former East Lothian coalfield in collaboration with the Mining Remediation Authority to explore the potential for utilising mine water geothermal energy. A number of potential locations where such potential exists has been identified at Musselburgh, near Craighall, and at Wallyford and Tranent, as well as at Meadowmill, Cockenzie, and Blindwells.
- 3.34 Given existing public assets there, the proximity of potential mine water resources, and future development ambitions in this wider area, a focused piece of work has been developed by the Council to explore

opportunities in greater depth that are accessible via public assets; this is alongside feasibility work carried out and under development by the owners of the Blindwells Development Area in respect of the current allocated site and potential expansion.

- 3.35 In this context, the Scottish Government's Heat Network Support Unit has indicated that there may be an opportunity for the Council and private sector partners to explore these opportunities further through feasibility opportunities and it is recommended that Council officers continue to further explore this.
- 3.36 Taken together, there could be around 10 MW of energy potential within the Cockenzie, Blindwells and Meadowmill area where major sites are undergoing redevelopment. It is therefore recommended that officers should also focus on exploring this opportunity further, together with the Mining Remediation Authority and the prospective developers of Blindwells.
- 3.37 There are a range of energy efficiency and decarbonisation opportunities and technologies available to reduce building emissions and support net zero. Council officers will continue to explore such opportunities, including hydrogen, which could be used to decarbonise many parts of our economy, including industry and transport.
- 3.38 EDF advise that they are exploring the potential for low carbon energy projects on the land around Torness. Some potential developments could include a data centre, battery storage, or a hydrogen project. On the topic of hydrogen specifically, EDF advise that Torness has available land and a grid connection, as well as close proximity to sources of biogenic CO₂, which Hynamics (EDF's consultants) feel makes it strategically well positioned for e-fuel production. EDF stress that they have not yet concluded on the 'chosen' technology to promote for this land.
- 3.39 Officers also met recently with colleagues from SGN Ltd. They provided details of their H₂ Caledonia project, which aims to provide a hydrogen network to connect producers to industrial and commercial and offtakes in the region, helping to support decarbonisation and de-risk development projects. They are currently developing a needs case report for the project, which they hope will demonstrate the potential and value of a hydrogen ecosystem in supporting decarbonisation across Scotland. Further details of their project are given in Appendix F. SGN Ltd have requested that the Council provides a letter of support, and this would be referred to in their final report. It is recommended that a letter is sent to SGN to confirm that the Council in principle supports this project, and gives consent for the Council logo to be used in the final report.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report builds upon the Council's approved LHEES and supports the Council's roles in relation to the development of heat networks in East Lothian.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

X

or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix A – RAG Assessment showing progress on LHEES Delivery Plan Actions
- 7.2 Appendix B – HNSU decision in respect of the Pencaitland District Heating Scheme
- 7.3 Appendix C – Feasibility Study Report entitled 'East Lothian Heat – a community energy network', by the Community Heat Network Steering Group, June 2025
- 7.4 Appendix D – Letter from Lothian Heat Community Interest Company, dated 10 October 2025
- 7.5 Appendix E – Letter sent on behalf of Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Housing, dated 18 August 2025
- 7.6 Appendix F – Details of the H2 Caledonia Project, December 2024

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

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Date	16 October 2025

Head of Service Approval

Name	Sarah Fortune
Designation	Executive Director for Council Resources (Chief Financial Officer)
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	20 October 2025

East Lothian Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan - 2024-2028

Ref	Intervention	Outcome	Target dates	Lead Service	Indicator	Baseline	RAG Tracker	Notes
Outcome 1 - Property owners are engaged with the need to reduce carbon emissions and empowered to make decisions on energy efficiency and heating solutions								
Key Priority Area 1: Raising Awareness								
1	Increase awareness among home and business owners of the urgent need to plan for changes to how their property is heated	Campaigns to raise awareness	ongoing	Scot Gov / Community	Change in survey responses	Determined by community surveys		Scot Gov public communication plan was shelved due to lack of funding. Local community led plan being developed with East Lothian Climate Action Network as part of National Lottery partnership bid. The scope would be dependant on heat network decisions. The intention is that this will link in with any national programme that is subsequently developed.
2	Increase awareness among home and business owners of available funding resources and support for installing energy efficiency improvements	Funding secured for retrofit		Community / HES / BES	HES enquiries, Grants awarded - quantity and value	2023 statistics		Several meetings with Home Energy Scotland to ensure their advisory teams can provide targeted information for East Lothian homes. Broad agreement on approach that will be tested in East Lammermuir and Pencaitland.
Key Priority Area 2: Building Community Leadership								
3	Identify action groups and volunteers in each community to take a local leadership role	Key groups identified	end 2024	Community	No. of groups / volunteers committed	Existing ELCAN network		Community Heat Teams in place in Dunbar, Musselburgh, East Linton, Garvald/Morham with one in planning for Cockenzie - 20 volunteers in total. 67 surveys carried out last winter - mainly testing approach and for training
4	Establish data management and sharing procedures to facilitate data collection and community-based activities	Agreement process in place	end 2024	Community/ LHEES	Data agreements in place	New initiative		Rural projects have received data via Local Energy Scotland to make data sharing easier.
5	Agree action plans for each community to support energy efficiency drive and where appropriate, preparation for heat networks	First by June 2024	ongoing	Community	No. of plans in agreed	New initiative		Will form part of the programme covered by the proposed Lottery bid - see Intervention 37
6	Undertake a programme of resident surveys and thermal imaging work to raise awareness and improve data on energy use and heating	Increasing accurate data coverage	ongoing	Community	Survey responses Properties imaged	New initiative		Work underway with Community Heat Teams trialling heat surveys ahead of site surveys - preparing plans for winter 25/26
Outcome 2: East Lothian's homes and buildings are as energy efficient as possible								
Key Priority Area 1: Conservation Areas								
7	Agree advice on energy efficiency measures that can be provided to all owners of properties in Conservation Areas	Website updated	end 2024	Planning / LHEES		New initiative		Delayed due to implementation of new Article 4 direction
8	Deliver free pre-application advice for Conservation Area properties with proposals for renewables and/or energy efficiency measures to encourage early action	Increase in adaptions in Cons. Areas	ongoing	Planning / Community	No. of enquiries received	New initiative		Agreed and promoted via Council website - though need to know where to look
Key Priority Area 2: Solar PV Installations								
9	Track number of properties with solar PV and batteries, prioritising those suitable for communal and individual heat solutions	10000 PV, 500 Batteries	2028	LHEES / Community	MCS registrations	SPV 5116 at end 2023, 1106 new PV in 2023, 14 new batteries (no accurate record of earlier battery installations)		981 PV and 60 new batteries installed during 2024. 740 PV and 89 battery up to end Sept 2025. Totals of 6,837 PV and 163 batteries. Rate closely linked with the slowing of new developments though many will be retrofit. Data is not available on the split between new and older properties.
Key Priority Area 3: Owner-occupiers								
10	Ensure Scot Gov EES:ABS funding for vulnerable households is targeted effectively and aligns with any heat network expansion timeline	Full budget spent annually	ongoing	Housing	Annual plan to spend all funds available	£1.1m in 2022/23 and 2023/24		£1.1m on track to be spent in 24/25 though late decision - 15 Solar PV & battery properties, 12 properties for external wall insulation and a cavity wall insulation project in Wallyford. Plans in place for £1.1m in 25/26 to ensure efficient spend
11	Working with community action teams, deliver community driven programme promoting improved insulation, building on survey work and highlighting potential savings	To be decided		Community / HES	HES enquiries	509 enquiries in Q4 2023		Limited ability to be proactive until major heating decisions are made. East Lammermuir project being established working with ELC Housing and community groups. Funding coming from Community Benefits linked with EGL1 project.
Key Priority Area 4: Council Homes								
12	Continue to deliver a rolling programme of fabric upgrades to improve energy efficiency	Targets to be determined - see below	ongoing	Housing	EPC and condition reports			Application to Social Housing fund for £400,000 was unsuccessful - targeting solar PV and battery instalations. Interim Energy Retrofit Policy being prepared while the Social Housing Net Zero Standard and the Local Heat Energy Efficiency Strategy take shape. Feeding into 2030 housing investment plan that is being prepared to highlight value of district heating approach.

Ref	Intervention	Outcome	Target dates	Lead Service	Indicator	Baseline	RAG Tracker	Notes
13	Monitor the outcome of the Scottish Government consultation on Net Zero Standard and the implication for fabric improvement priorities		end 2024	Housing	To be confirmed			Still waiting for details from Scot Gov before a baseline and response can be prepared. Interim Energy Retrofit Policy being prepared by Housing colleagues to provide guidance until further national ghuyidance is forthcoming.
14	Promote Solar PV and battery options for properties that may be suitable for communal and individual heat solutions		ongoing	Housing				Priority areas will be assessed when heat network proposals are further developed though it will form part of the East Lammermuir project to test the approach. This is covered in the interim policy outlined above.
Key Priority Area 5: Private Rented and Short Term Lets								
15	Agree procedure and responsibility for enforcing new legislation on minimum EPC standards		End 2024	LHEES / Licensing / Housing	Home Analytics and Private Landlord Register	772 without EPC and 2179 rated below EPC C		No clear timeline yet from Scot Gov on the expectations for enforcement. There was some communication from the government's legal team in late 2024 but its gone quiet. It might be included within the much delayed Heat in Buldings Bill.
16	Proactively target owners of poor performing with warnings and energy efficiency advice ahead of EPC changes	To be set in late 2024 based on Scot Gov advice		EST / LHEES / Licensing / Housing	EPC quarterly updates and Private Landlord Register	As above		Offer of a free thermal imaging survey from the CHT was made to Musselburgh landlords via email - Private Landlord Register. Unclear yet if there was any direct response. Review and promote in autumn 2025. Again East Lammermuir project provides an opportunity to test the messaging to engage landlords.
Key Priority Area 6: Social Rented								
17	Engage all Housing Associations regarding interest in potential heat network connection opportunities		decided following feasibility	LHEES / Housing		ELHA and Homes for Life engaged		Paused until key decisions are made regarding heat networks. Places for People still not engaging - waiting for district and local heating proposals to then will attempt to generate interest.
18	Explore options for socially rented properties that may be suitable for communal heat network/pump connection	To be decided		LHEES	Number of properties connecting	New initiative - 125 with electric heating		Small number of properties within the areas covered by rural projects under development, mainly in Pencaitland and East Lammermuir
Key Priority Area 7: Council-owned Non-domestic								
19	Identify assets that could be served by a heat network, following the Asset Review	Property list	End 2024	LHEES / Assets	Number of properties	77 on-gas sites prior to the review		Will be revisited on completion of Asset Review. Heat in Buildings Bill is expected to make public sector connection to heat networks compulsory so the Council has a strong incentive to engage in project development.
20	Prioritise energy efficiency investment for these properties with a pipeline of possible projects to take advantage of funding opportunities		ongoing	Assets	HNR tracker / Annual gas use	Initial list produced in 2023		No suitable projects were identified for 25/26 funding call - very short timescale. Progress being made on solar PV and battery options for key assets using confirmed Climate Action funding.
21	Prepare net zero plans for Council assets currently using LPG or oil for heating		mid 2025	Assets	Number remaining to convert	7 properties outstanding		Likely to be fewer properties following the Review outcomes
22	Extend the preparation of Council assets to those that are leased to other businesses			LHEES / Estates	Number requiring action	Unknown - still being explored		No progress on this
Key Priority Area 8: Other Non-domestic								
23	Encourage all businesses to explore and prioritise energy efficiency measures	Improvements in EPCs	Ongoing	Econ Dev / Community / BES	Businesses engages with BES	Projects already completed		All funding currently committed through to end Mar 2026. No grant funding currently available beyond that date so awaiting further news to enable proactive work to continue.
Outcome 3 - Heat solutions are delivered to tackle fuel poverty and meet 2045 net zero target								
Key Priority Area 1: Heat Network Opportunities								
24	Work with Midlothian, Edinburgh, West Lothian and Fife Councils on a regional heat masterplan, exploring the potential demand for heat and heat network connections across the region	Phase 1 completed	Mar-25	LHEES	Report and GIS visualisation	LHEES reports		Funding agreed between regional partners for further work to prepare a Regional Energy Investment Prospectus and consider potential regional delivery models for heat transmission. This phase is scheduled to be completed by end Mar 2026.
25	Subject to securing funding, undertake strategic feasibility work on a range of local heat solutions	Report completed	mid 2025	LHEES	Report completed	New Initiative		Steering Group established leading a community-led study funded by East Lothian Community Benefits. Work commenced Jan 25 with report published June 25. The Council is to review this and respond. A Pencaitland application was submitted to the Heat Network Support Unit in June but was rejected Aug 25. A revised approach to Pencaitland is being considered based on the feedback provided.
26	Maintain contact with all relevant external partners and stakeholders related to heat network opportunities while feasibility studies are being carried out	regular communications	ongoing	LHEES	List of engaged stakeholders	List from LHEES report		Ongoing contact is being maintained with stakeholders kept informed of progress with feasibility study and subsequent Council review.
27	Determine any phases of heat network development based on the outcomes of feasibility studies	Early phase options agreed	TBC	LHEES / Community	Number of phases under consideration	New Initiative		ELC work on phases has not commenced
Key Priority Area 2: Communal and Individual Heat Solutions								

Ref	Intervention	Outcome	Target dates	Lead Service	Indicator	Baseline	RAG Tracker	Notes
28	Identify groups of properties that might be suitable for communal heat networks such as shared air source or ground source	Will be clarified by end 2024		LHEES / Community	No. of identified leads	Biomass solutions already operational		Initially starting with communities that are showing local leadership. First proactive effort will form part of the East Lammermuir project, targeting villages such as Innerwick, Oldhamstocks, Spott and Stenton. Lack of funding via Local Energy Scotland for other areas may limit the ability to be proactive in other parts of East Lothian.
29	Engage residents and refer community groups to Community Energy Scotland for targeted advice		ongoing	Community / CES	Successful applications for CES funding	Pencaitland, Innerwick and Tynninghame		Tynninghame, Crowhill and Mainhill have had studies undertaken by ReHeat, funded by CARES programme. Reports circulated in March 2025. Decision on next steps for Tynninghame and Crowhill will be influenced by district heating decisions as they could possibly connect to the district network.
30	Refer decision makers for individual solutions to Home Energy Scotland for targeted advice		ongoing	Community	HES quarterly reports to ELC			Processes agreed with HES in Mar 2025 to ensure appropriate advice is given to property owners. East Lammermuir will be the first major test of proactive efforts.
31	Track the levels of air source and ground source heat pump installations	Quarterly reporting	ongoing	LHEES	MCS registrations	ASH - 458 total at end 2023, 69 new in 2023 GSH - 53 total at end 2023, 1 new in 2023		126 ASH in 2024 and 5 new GSH. 88 ASH up to end Sept 2025 and 5 GSH. 10 new ASH fitted as part of technology trail into thermal storage with Sunamp during 2025. Totals - 672 ASH and 63 GSH.
Outcome 4 - Investment and grant funding is secured to deliver net zero projects								
Key Priority Area 1: Feasibility Studies								
32	Secure funding to undertake a regional energy masterplan study	Funding secured from UKSPF	Jul-24	LHEES / Fife / Edin / Mid	Funding secured			Phase 1 approved and carried out. Agreement reached with 6 LAs for work on regional energy investment portfolio in 25/26 and consultants procured in Sept 25. This is preparing ground for future City Region Deal funding and other investors.
33	Secure funding from Heat Network Fund for a strategic level feasibility study on Heat Network proposals		May-24	LHEES	Funding secured			Application delayed due to 24/25 budget spent. Intervention overtaken by decision by East Lothian Community Benefits to fund a feasibility study with £90,000 from their funds and £5,500 from Scottish Enterprise. Application relating to a Pencaitland heat network were submitted but rejected in Aug 25.
Key Priority Area 2: Infrastructure Investment								
34	Develop business plans for each phase of heat network development	Plans produced and agreed	TBC	TBC	Plans prepared			Can only proceed when Council takes a formal decision relating to heat network development and phases subsequently agreed.
Key Priority Area 3: Grant funding from Scottish and UK Governments								
35	Secure annual funding from Scottish Government for ongoing energy efficiency programmes	April each year		Housing	Budget approved	£1.1m secured in 2023/24		£1.1 spent in 24/25 and a similar sum secured for 25/26
36	Develop a pipeline of ELC projects that can apply for ongoing rounds of capital funding via the Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund	Revise list by end 2024		Assets	Number of applications made and grants secured	New initiative		Ongoing Assets Review meant that timing was wrong for application for 25/26 round
Key Priority Area 4: Community Funding								
37	Support an application to the National Lottery Climate Action Fund to support Community Heat Team expansion	Phase 1 Submission	TBC	Community / LHEES	Application success	New initiative		Application is being considered by East Lothian Community Benefits and East Lothian Climate Action Network to support the communications activities relating to future heat projects including the Community Heat Team - targeting submission by the end of 2025.
38	Support efforts by the Association of East Lothian Community Councils to coordinate community benefits from energy companies that support the development of local heat solutions	Ongoing		Community / LHEES	Number of agreements and annual value	New charity established in Feb 2024		First element funded the feasibility study. Estimate of annual income over next 5 years to be made by mid-2025 to enable development budget for a community-led activity to be prepared. £3m secured in East Lammermuir for heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.
Outcome 5 - A significant proportion of the benefits of net zero investment remain within the East Lothian economy								
Key Priority Area 1: Community Wealth Building								
39	Subject to feasibility studies, investigate and decide on the most appropriate corporate structure to develop and manage East Lothian's heat networks and other energy infrastructure	Timing dependant on feasibility work	end 2025	LHEES / HNSU / Community	Delivery model agreed	Early investigations into Community Benefit Company / Cooperative		Not-for-profit models being explored by Steering Group with the potential of a regional structure also under consideration. Needs Council engagement and input from the National Wealth Fund to reach an agreed position.
Key Priority Area 2: Tackling Fuel Poverty								

Ref	Intervention	Outcome	Target dates	Lead Service	Indicator	Baseline	RAG Tracker	Notes
40	Aim for a delivery model for heat networks with no connection costs to ensure all customers can benefit from lower costs and net zero solutions		end 2025	LHEES	Delivery model agreed			Range of opportunities are being documented that could help meet fuel poverty objectives. This was explored as part of the East Lothian Community Benefits feasibility study though will require further testing.
41	Explore opportunities with credit unions to develop local loan solutions for retrofit work		end 2025	LHEES	Number of applications made	New initiative		Will be actioned in late 2025 or early 2026 when district heating plans are clearer
Key Priority Area 3: Developing the Local Supply Chain								
42	Increase the number of skilled installers in the region, to help towards closing the skills gap for both energy efficiency and any future heat network installation	To be decided following feasibility		Econ Dev	Number of companies involved	Output from Regional project on skills		Scottish Enterprise's contribution to the heat network feasibility study was linked to job creation potential. Training courses accessed via UKSPF at the Energy Training Academy in Dalkeith in 24/25. East Lothian Housing Association and R3 supported to get advice from Scottish Enterprise on preparing for retrofit and actively engaged with East Lammermuir Project. Some corporate interest has been expressed in locating to Cockenzie site if heat network development progresses.

Lead Service Key:

HES - Home Energy Scotland; **BES** - Business Energy Scotland; **CES** - Community Energy Scotland; **LHEES** - LHEES Officer at East Lothian Council

From: Alastair.Robertson@gov.scot
To: [Hayman, Martin](#)
Cc: HeatNetworkSupport@gov.scot; [Dingwall, Keith](#)
Subject: HNSU40 - Pencaitland - Outcome
Date: 01 August 2025 13:10:43
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Martin,

Thank you for submitting an application to the HNSU. We regret to inform you that following a panel evaluation, the application has been unsuccessful in receiving funding for a feasibility study.

Due to constrained budget and capacity, applications for HNSU funding must clearly demonstrate that proposals have a strong enough basis to result in the deployment of a heat network.

The panel noted that the project is well-researched and the rationale for conducting a full feasibility study is clear following the pre-feasibility work. However, the application did not demonstrate that the project would be likely to progress to outline business case and delivery in the near term. Consequently, it is not clearly demonstrated that providing funding for a feasibility would represent value for money.

The reasoning for this summarised below:

- The project relies on domestic properties to be viable, but the application has not demonstrated that there is sufficient interest from homeowners to provide demand assurance and therefore confidence that this project can reach delivery.
- Based on review of panel documentation, the heat density is anticipated to be very low. Despite Pencaitland being present in the ELC LHEES, it is not one of the areas identified as having high heat demand, risking poor financial viability.
- The distance of the Glenkinchie Distillery from the village means it is not clear that this is a viable waste heat source, even if picking up other domestic loads en route. This combined with the anticipated low heat density, poses a significant risk in the viability of the project.

Please also note that the proposals for the project team and governance do not meet expectations set out in application guidance. In particular, the time committed by senior council staff and representation from wider services (housing, finance etc). Governance structures and procedures would also require further consideration and detailing.

Kind Regards,

Alastair

Alastair Robertson (he/him)

Head of Heat Network Delivery

Heat in Buildings Delivery Division

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This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the

East Lothian Heat

A community energy network

“No heat is wasted,
no home is cold”

Feasibility Study Report
June 2025

Executive Summary

East Lothian Heat is a visionary infrastructure project to deliver clean, affordable heat across the Lothians by capturing local waste heat and renewable energy in a heat network, under a community-led, not-for-profit model. The project's guiding vision is *"a community where no heat is wasted and no home is cold,"* reflecting our commitment to eradicate fuel poverty and use energy more efficiently.

A volunteer steering group of local experts and community leaders formed in 2024 to explore this opportunity, commissioning a professional feasibility study with support from charitable funds. This study, delivered by consultants Viegand Maagøe, has confirmed the technical and economic viability of a county-wide heat network, including detailed modeling of heat demands, capital and operating costs, heat distribution, and socio-economic impacts.

Early results are highly encouraging: even **without subsidies**, the proposed heat network could deliver heat **at lower cost per unit than the leading low-carbon alternative (individual heat pumps)**. Moreover, an integrated **regional approach – extending supply to neighbouring Edinburgh – further reduces costs for East Lothian consumers** by leveraging economies of scale. These findings demonstrate that the East Lothian Heat Network can be both **feasible and cost-competitive**, unlocking local economic benefits, long-term price stability, and significant carbon reductions.

The recommended strategy is to implement the network in **four phases** over the coming decade, starting with a **Phase 1** project centered on Musselburgh in western East Lothian and progressively expanding eastwards and into the wider region. Each phase will build momentum, connect major heat sources (from industrial waste heat to a new data centre and renewable sources), and deliver heat to homes, businesses, and public buildings. By **Phase 4**, the network would form a **"heat transmission highway"** spanning East Lothian and feeding into the Edinburgh heat system. This phased delivery allows early wins at local scale while laying the groundwork for a transformative regional heat infrastructure.

The project's **ownership and delivery model** is evolving with a clear principle: to maximise community benefit and public value. International best practice shows that the most successful heat networks feature strong community or municipal ownership, ensuring affordable and reliable heat supply. In East Lothian's case, a not-for-profit operating model is envisioned for the primary heat transmission network, so that **any surplus value is reinvested or passed on as lower heat prices**.

The project team is exploring models that emphasise community ownership and wealth building, such as cooperative and community-interest company structures, with the possibility of creating a regional community-owned energy company (provisionally referred to as **"Lothian Community Energy"**) to own and operate the network in the public interest (*Note: This is an emerging concept outside the provided feasibility documents for future governance.*). This approach would allow East Lothian Council, communities, and potentially regional partners to share ownership and governance, similar to the Danish heat networks owned by municipalities and operated on a commercial-but-not-profit-maximising basis.



The ruin of 13th century Dirleton Castle and gardens
on a sunny day. East Lothian, Scotland

While **significant challenges** are acknowledged – including securing the estimated £40+ million capital investment for phase 1 and up to £1.2bn needed for the entire regional approach, establishing the legal entity and risk-sharing arrangements, and aligning with current government policy – the project has made substantial progress in de-risking and defining the path forward. A broad coalition of stakeholders is already engaged: local industry has signaled interest in supplying and using heat (e.g. *letters of intent* from a major heat network operator to serve thousands of homes in Musselburgh, and public-sector partners are involved in planning and technical support.

The community-led team has proactively sought government support mechanisms, requesting Council facilitation to tap into the Scottish Government's **Heat Network Support Unit** and the UK **National Wealth Fund** for expertise and financing options. These partnerships will be critical to overcome policy hurdles (national criteria historically favor smaller local heat schemes by demonstrating the viability and national benefit of the regional model).

A phased business case development is the next key milestone, if development funding is available, then we would aim for a Phase 1 Final Investment Decision by mid-2027.

In summary, the East Lothian Heat Network is technically **feasible, economically sound, and socially compelling**. It offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to harness East Lothian's abundant waste heat and renewable resources to deliver affordable warmth, local jobs and climate action.

The following report details the project vision and origins, the proposed ownership model, the feasibility study findings, the phased delivery plan and supporting appendices with key maps and illustrations.



East Lothian Heat Solution

Acknowledgements

Our first thanks go to the generosity of the Trustees of East Lothian Community Benefits. CWP Energy, Scottish Enterprise, East Lammermuir Community Council and the Association of East Lothian Community Councils, without whom this work would not have been possible.

The whole project has grown from the vision and leadership of Martin Hayman who through his approach to LHEES preparation, brought together a diverse set of stakeholders and got us so motivated and excited by the potential we have within our own community.

This report has been written by Dr. Gemma Bone Dodds as Chair of the Community Heat Network Steering Group, based on the feasibility study carried out by the expert team at Viegand Maagøe. The report presents the results to a wider audience of stakeholders and should be seen to go hand in hand with the detailed modelling and reporting from the team at VM. Our thanks go to Peter Maagøe Petersen, Jakob Byg Hornbek, Emil Kruse Sørensen and Astrid Estrup Enemark who went above and beyond for us, truly bringing life to the concept of partnership working.

One thing we have in East Lothian in abundance is expertise, generosity and enthusiasm - our people are our key resource and so immense thanks go to the following for their invaluable support throughout:

Steering Group: Ralph Averbuch, Philip Revell, Dr Mike Edwards, Chris Bruce and Dr. Gemma Bone Dodds (Chair).

Expert Advisory Group and Quality Assurance Reviewers: Simon Kerr, Lukas Fabricius, Chris Bruce, Dr. Ruth Bush, Bobby Pembleton, Simon Gill, John Maslen, Simon Thompson, Tim Hetherington, Prof. Jan Webb, Charlie Blair, Kira Myers, Michael King, Chris Yendell, Dr Simon Shackley, Fiona Burnett, Dame Susan Rice, Kirsty Hamilton OBE, Sarah Bronsdon, Gaynor Allen, Amanda Grimm, Andy Long, Ben Morse, Bobbie Milligan, Dave Pearson, Hamish Martin*, Hilary Blackman*, Ian Malcolm, Isaac Whitelaw, Mark Burns, Ruaidhri Higgins-Lavery, Russell McLarty, Steven Findlay, Andrew Sudmant. Fraser Stewart, Dr. Tanja Groth, David Walker, Adam Ben-Hamo.

We also couldn't finish without extending a huge thanks to SAV Systems for so generously hosting us at their offices and SAV and EnergiRaven for supporting the publication of this report with their amazing marketing team.

We are actively seeking conversations with partners who can help us bring this to life. Please email the team at eastlothianheat@gmail.com

* Please note that Hamish Martin and Hilary Blackman solely provided quality assurance input to the technical aspects of the study.



The Old Mill wheel and stream at East Linton.
East Lothian, Scotland

1. Vision, Origins & Who We Are

Vision: “No heat is wasted and no home is cold.” This simple statement encapsulates the community’s driving vision for the East Lothian Heat Network. The ambition is to create an integrated, county-wide heating system that captures heat from wherever it can be found – industry, data centres, wastewater, renewable sources – and delivers it efficiently to meet local needs.

At its core, this vision is about **ending fuel poverty and eliminating energy waste** simultaneously. East Lothian has an unprecedented opportunity to leverage its unique assets: a **wealth of potential heat sources** (ranging from waste heat at industrial sites to proximity to offshore wind power) and a community of innovators with energy sector expertise.

By tapping into these resources, the project aims to tackle some of the county’s biggest challenges: high rates of fuel poverty, dispersed rural communities hard to serve with traditional grids, and the urgent need to transition off natural gas to meet climate targets. The vision draws inspiration from world-leading heat networks which are often **owned by communities or municipalities**, delivering reliable, low-cost and consistent heat as a public service. East Lothian’s heat network seeks to follow this model – **putting community benefit, long-term affordability, and sustainability first** in every aspect of its design and operation.

Origins:

This project began as a grass-roots initiative in late 2023, during East Lothian Council’s consultation on its Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). With the Council’s LHEES draft identifying the need for heat decarbonisation but constrained by funding to pursue it, a group of concerned residents and professionals came together to ensure the idea of a county-scale heat network was fully examined.

We were short on one kind of resource - money - but what we had in abundance was a different, and perhaps more important resource - our people - experts in finance, energy systems, heat technicalities, community engagement, policy and beyond. What we found was a groundswell of enthusiasm and the willingness to explore what is possible together.

In early 2024, this informal coalition crystallised into a dedicated **community steering group**, driven by the belief that East Lothian could pioneer a new approach to green heat. The group members include volunteers from academia, energy industry, finance, and community development – all **East Lothian citizens** bringing their expertise to the table.

With no initial public funding available for feasibility work, the community took the lead: the charity *East Lothian Community Benefits* (chaired by a steering group member) partnered with East Lammermuir Community Council to raise funds for a feasibility study, with Community Wind Power funding the study alongside a contribution from Scottish Enterprise.

By May 2024, the group had secured expert consultants (Viegand Maagøe, from Denmark’s renowned district heating sector) to carry out a comprehensive feasibility study, demonstrating remarkable initiative and commitment at the community level. East Lothian Council’s LHEES Project Officer, Martin Hayman, joined the effort as a key advisor, ensuring access to data and alignment with council strategies. This collaboration between community and council from the outset exemplifies the project’s ethos: **working in partnership** to achieve shared climate and social goals.

Who We Are:

The East Lothian Heat project is spearheaded by a **volunteer Steering Group** and a wider Expert Advisory Group, all serving in a personal capacity as local citizens. This team boasts an impressive range of skills relevant to delivering a heat network. For example, the steering committee includes:

The Steering Group* and Expert Advisory Group are volunteering in their personal capacities as citizens of East Lothian. Their professional expertise has been invaluable in ensuring the quality and design of the project.	
Dr Gemma Bone Dodds* Director of Insight and Policy at the Scottish National Investment Bank. Scottish Government's Green Heat Finance Taskforce. Expertise in participatory and systems approaches to finance. More	Ralph Averbuch* Vice Chair, Association of East Lothian Community Councils. Vice Chair, Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers. Chair, East Lothian Community Benefits. More
Dr Philip Revell* Independent researcher and community activist. Board member, Sustaining Dunbar, Scottish Communities Climate Action Network and East Lothian Climate Hub. Ex Chair of Community Energy Scotland. More	Dr Mike Edwards* Heat Networks, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Technical and regulatory expertise. More
Chris Bruce* Chair, East Lothian Community Council, Trustee and Director for other local groups and community association and community benefits SCIOs and Companies. Active in the social care and independent living sector.	Martin Hayman LHEES Officer, East Lothian Council. Providing access to data and alignment with ELC's LHEES strategy.
Expert Advisory Group: Simon Kerr, Lukas Fabricius, Chris Bruce, Dr. Ruth Bush, Bobby Pembleton, Simon Gill, John Maslen, Simon Thompson, Tim Hetherington, Prof. Jan Webb, Charlie Blair, Kira Myers, Michael King, Chris Yendell, Dr Simon Shackley, Fiona Burnett, Dame Susan Rice, Kirsty Hamilton OBE, Sarah Bronsdon, Gaynor Allen, Amanda Grimm, Andy Long, Ben Morse, Bobbie Milligan, Dave Pearson, Ian Malcolm, Isaac Whitelaw, Mark Burns, Ruaidhri Higgins-Lavery, Russell McLarty, Steven Findlay, Andrew Sudmant.	

This diverse volunteer coalition is united by a common purpose: to design a heat solution that works for **East Lothian's people and businesses**. As a testament to the project's collaborative spirit, a broad network of supporters has coalesced around the core team – from members of East Lothian Climate Action Network (ELCAN) to academic partners at University of Edinburgh and Queen Margaret University who are advising on technical and social aspects. Together, “who we are” is an expert and engaged community empowered by expertise and passion, **driving forward an innovative project for public good**.

Viegand Maagøe

Viegand Maagøe (VM) were our consultants for this piece of work. They were chosen for their expertise in project development and feasibility studies within utilising waste heat sources for economically viable and sustainable district heating solutions. VM during the past decade has been a frontrunner in developing such solutions in Denmark and globally integrating data centres, waste incineration plants and large industries into district heating solutions. As such, VM possesses comprehensive data (CAPEX, OPEX etc.) from solutions already built and commissioned as well as significant experience in organizational structures and governance models surrounding this important area.

2. Ownership & Delivery Model

From the outset, East Lothian Heat has been conceived not just as an engineering project, but as a **community enterprise** that delivers lasting local value, fully in line with East Lothian Council's [Community Wealth Building Charter](#), [LHEES](#) plan, and [Climate Change Strategy](#).

The **ownership and delivery model** will therefore be critical to its success. It is important to note that the model was not part of the feasibility study, nor is it possible for the community group to determine this outside of bigger regional conversations, but as it will be important for the further development of the project we would like to share some background to our thinking alongside some learnings we have gathered during this process.

The emerging model should be grounded in the principle of **community and public ownership for public benefit**, balancing non-profit motives with professional, commercial-quality operation. The goal is to keep heat prices as low as possible and ensure any financial surplus is reinvested or returned to the community, rather than extracted as private profit over the long term.

We do however recognise and accept that investors will be seeking a return for taking risk, especially at the outset of the project and we recognise that this risk will need a return to pay off their investment. We have been having several productive exploratory conversations with some investors, and our model needs to fairly balance long-term community ownership with the needs of investors and funders where we will face capital heavy construction costs but stable and long-term economic returns.

We are investigating models that would allow any public subsidy, public resources other than money, or philanthropic capital available at the outset to be used to provide a meaningful stake for the community at the capital table. To enable some participation in risk sharing with private investors through the development and construction phases is important but we recognise this is likely to be a smaller proportion compared to other investment stakes. Therefore we are looking at models that can grow the initial community stake over time, pragmatically recognising current constraints whilst actively seeking to grow the communities ownership stake over time.

To deliver a fair, resilient and cost-effective heat network, the project draws on proven ownership models from international and UK community energy practice. Central to this is a **public-interest approach** that balances community, local authority, and private sector roles while protecting long-term affordability and public value.

Some models that work well elsewhere are:

Not-for-Profit Transmission Company

A central proposition is the creation of a **not-for-profit entity to own and operate the primary heat transmission infrastructure** (the large pipelines and pumping systems). This could be jointly owned by local authorities and/or community interests, inspired by Denmark's **TVIS model**—a multi-municipal transmission company legally obliged to operate commercially but without profit maximisation. Tariffs are set annually to cover operating costs and reinvestment needs only, with an obligation to stay competitive compared to alternative heat delivery models.

This model ensures that no single heat supplier or operator can dominate pricing, fostering a competitive, transparent, and stable market. In line with Danish precedent, the transmission company would aim to secure low-cost public finance—such as loans guaranteed by councils, the Scottish Government, or UK infrastructure banks—enabling low-cost heat over the long term. The principle is clear: **when the community assumes development risk, it captures long-term benefits.**

Local Distribution Companies

At the local level, heat distribution would be managed by companies responsible for town - or neighbourhood-scale networks. These **local distribution companies** could be established as community-owned enterprises, cooperatives, or joint ventures with councils and trusted private partners.

The **Phase 1 Musselburgh scheme** may form an early prototype, potentially under an “East Lothian Heat Company” structure. Governance and ownership models under discussion include majority community or public ownership, or a joint venture with a specialist operator to bring delivery expertise. In all cases, **local accountability and cost control** are key principles.

Community Cooperative & Regional CIC

As the network expands, a **county-wide cooperative or Community Interest Company (CIC)** is being explored. This could serve as an umbrella entity integrating multiple phases and local operations—possibly under a **“Lothian Heat Cooperative”** model or through the creation of a **regional body like “Lothian Community Energy”**.

Such a structure would enable **community membership, regional scale, and long-term governance continuity**, following examples like Energy4All and community infrastructure financiers such as Abundance Investment. It could align governance and financing across East Lothian, Midlothian, and Edinburgh—supporting integration and interoperability across council areas.

Private Sector and Joint Ventures

The model **welcomes private sector participation** where aligned with community objectives. For instance, discussions with **Vattenfall Heat UK** suggest interest in co-developing the Phase 1 project under a structure that protects fair pricing and community benefit through concession agreements or shareholder terms.

North Berwick Law, a volcanic plug (and crag and tail),
in North Berwick, East Lothian.



Industrial actors—such as **Viridor, Tarmac**, and **Glenkinchie Distillery**—may become anchor heat suppliers. In such partnerships, they receive long-term revenue and public value benefits in exchange for supplying heat at regulated, fair rates. If the transmission system is set up to only allow the cheapest source access to the transmission system, this can ensure the operation of a commercial and competitive heat market.

Development Phase Entity

To move from feasibility to delivery, a **dedicated Project Development SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle)** may be established. This would enable the project to raise early-stage finance—covering legal, engineering, and project management work—without exposing council budgets or volunteer groups to financial risk.

Potential funders include **social investment funds and specialist infrastructure investors** aligned with the project's community-first ethos. Future capital investment will likely blend public grants, institutional debt (e.g. via the UK's National Wealth Fund or Public Works Loan Board), and strategic private equity. The project will develop a **balanced delivery and financing model**, combining early-stage public and community de-risking with private capital mobilisation to deliver large-scale infrastructure.

Summary

In summary, ownership models that work well for the end consumer elsewhere trend toward a **public-community partnership: a non-profit transmission operator** (likely owned by a consortium of community, Council, and potentially regional public bodies) and **local distribution companies or co-ops** serving consumers. In the UK, policy tends to expect a larger role for private investors, and we believe this could be integrated by looking at an increasing community ownership stake over time.

East Lothian is effectively **building a community utility from the ground up**, learning from European exemplars but tailoring it to the Scottish context. The evolving legal structure will continue to be clarified (for instance, the merits of a Community Benefit Society vs. a CIC vs. a Council-owned company are being weighed), testing a short-list of models with investors aiming for a final recommendation to emerge alongside the next phase of work. The project team acknowledges that getting the governance right is as important as the engineering – and they are committed to a model that endures and benefits residents for decades to come.

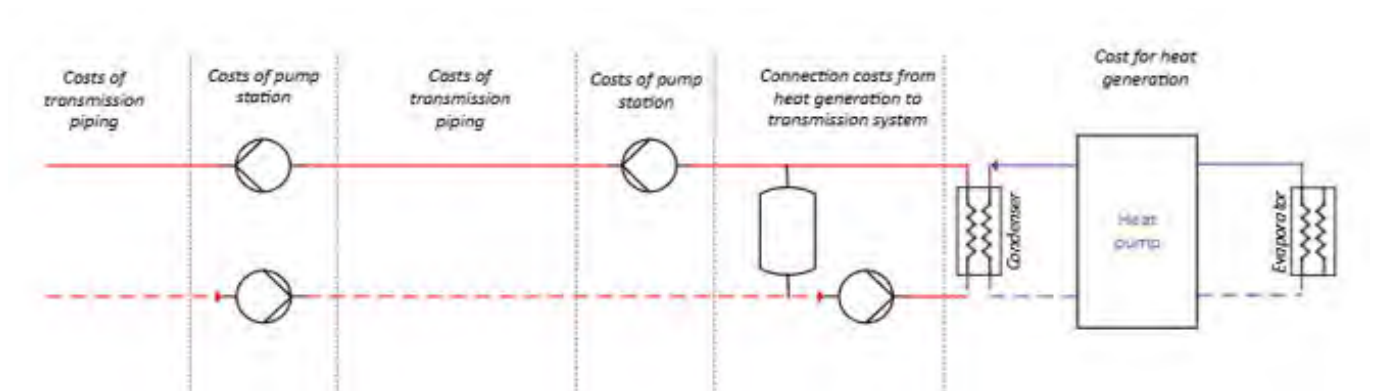
3. Feasibility Study: Key Findings

A comprehensive feasibility study for the East Lothian Heat Network was undertaken between late 2024 and June 2025 to answer a fundamental question: *Can a district heating network for all of East Lothian be technically and financially viable?* The scope was intentionally ambitious, with the aim of shaping a credible pathway to a large-scale low-carbon heat solution for the county and beyond.

Methodology

The consultants, Viegand Maagøe, were asked to produce conservative estimates for both the Heat Network and the alternative low carbon heat alternative air source heat pumps (ASHPs). They were asked if the model was financially viable without taking into account any subsidisation or grant funding.

As such, a detailed CAPEX- and OPEX-model has been established modelling all elements of a regional heat network solution as illustrated in the figure below (only illustrates elements in transmission CAPEX-model):



A 25% contingency was modelled due to the nature of the complexity of the project. We believe that the numbers presented are extremely robust and that we expect that there will be significant upsides, which are not presented here but should be explored in the next phases of the project.

Scenarios Explored

The study examined three network configurations:

- **Western Scope:** Focused on Musselburgh and nearby towns, this system was to be powered by seawater-source heat pumps at Cockenzie.
- **Eastern Scope:** Designed to harness waste heat from major industrial emitters — Viridor's Energy-from-Waste plant and Tarmac's cement works in Dunbar — to supply towns like Dunbar, Haddington, and East Linton.
- **Regional Scope:** A combined model, connecting both east and west networks and enabling constant export of **100 MW** of heat to Edinburgh and Midlothian — positioning East Lothian as a regional heat supplier.

Technical and Financial Modelling

Each scope was modelled in detail for:

Capital Expenditure (CAPEX): Including heat generation (e.g. heat pumps or industrial waste heat exchangers), transmission and distribution pipes, pumping stations, and customer connection costs (Heat Interface Unit's or HIU's).

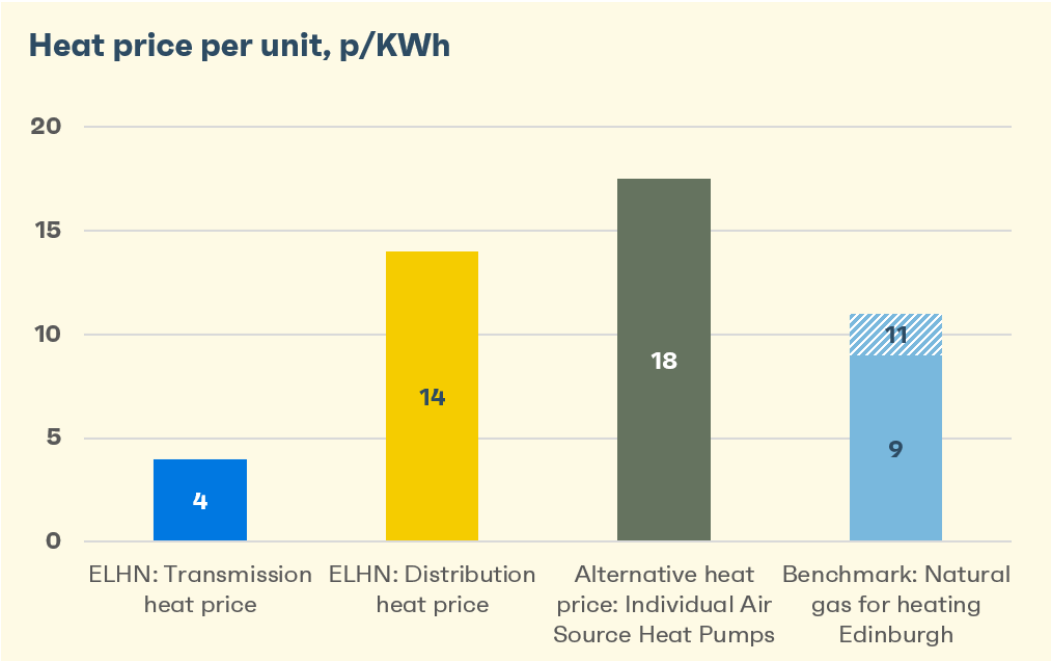
Operational Expenditure (OPEX): Covering electricity for pumps and top-up boilers, maintenance, administration, and reinvestments in key assets over a 50-year lifespan.

Temperature profiles of 90°C/47°C (transmission) and 80°C/40°C (distribution) were chosen to ensure compatibility and future flexibility. For transmission pipes, DN600 size was used in the regional scope to accommodate high flows and future expansion, such as a heat corridor towards Edinburgh.

Heat Price Modelling

A cost-recovery model was used to calculate the delivered heat price per kWh, under three electricity price scenarios: £200/MWh (base case), £110/MWh (curtailed renewable energy), and £83/MWh (private wire option). Even under the base case, heat from the network was shown to be cheaper than from individual Air-Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), which cost between **£16.0–18.5 p/kWh**¹, depending on dwelling type and efficiency assumptions.

The concluded heat prices are summarized in the illustration below:



¹ ASHP costs based on £13k per property, accounting for the heat pump and a small amount of radiator work, using local housing association data on smaller properties. Larger homes cost more but we have stayed with the more generous lower figure. Current available subsidies of £7.5k have not been modelled because these are unlikely to be available for such volumes of homes in the future and to enable a fair comparison of the levelised cost of heat between ASHPs and Heat Network over the long-term.

This outcome is significant: *even with conservative assumptions and no subsidies*, the network remains competitive with ASHPs, which would also be impacted by electricity price volatility. The modelling also assumed **20% heat loss** in distribution systems and did not include potential cost offsets from avoided electrical grid upgrades or new policy incentives.

It should be added, that any other alternative heat delivery model, by example hydrogen, is known to produce heat at much higher prices than concluded above.

Advantages of Scale: Regional Scope

Among all scenarios, the **Regional Scope** emerged as the most cost-effective. It achieved the lowest levelised heat prices due to higher utilisation of infrastructure and the ability to deliver 100 MW of constant base-load heat to Edinburgh and Midlothian. This improved capital efficiency and enabled better use of large-scale, low-cost sources such as:

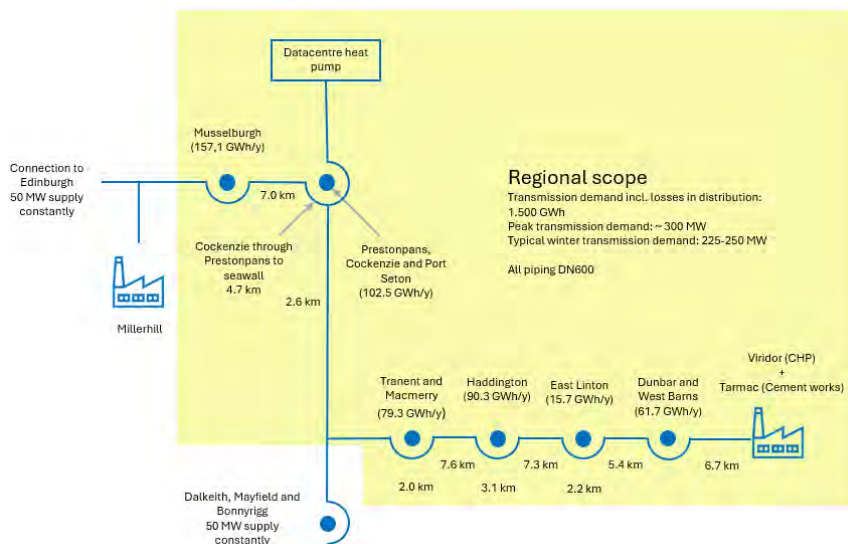
- **Datacentre waste heat** at Cockenzie (delivering up to 800 GWh/year),
- **Viridor and Tarmac (co-located)** industrial heat (up to 700 GWh/year combined),
- **Offshore Wind:** East Lothian is set to become a major hub for offshore wind energy. Several projects are planning to bring power ashore at Cockenzie, and the 4.1 GW Berwick Bank offshore wind farm will connect to the grid near Torness. The development of a region-wide heat network in East Lothian presents opportunities to better coordinate the use of energy from these wind farms. This would represent a shift in the way the electricity system, and wider energy system, is planned and how the energy market operates².
- Potential long duration and even interseasonal pit **thermal storage** at Tarmac, to store industrial process heat during periods of lower heat demand, further alleviate grid constraints and wasted electricity, and avoid constraint payments by bill-payers by taking advantage of curtailed wind.

² planning, including Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs) and, at the national level, the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP).

New and final Regional Scope

Modelling assumptions

Viegonde Moogae



- A combination of eastern and western scope allowing also for constant heat export to:
 - Edinburgh – 50 MW
 - Midlothian – 50 MW
- Seawater heat pump replaced by datacentre heat pump
- Networks designed to deliver base load of 100 MW of heat all year thus increasing total amount of delivered heat significantly
- 2 networks not interacting on the short-term – but allows for enhancement/flexibility in the future
- Peak-load and back-up partly delivered by electric boilers

Notably, the regional design also introduces **future-proofing**: even if local heat demand fluctuates, external demand (e.g. from Edinburgh) ensures continued high throughput, enhancing financial and operational resilience.

System Design and Phasing

The proposed layout features a **backbone transmission pipe**, running broadly along the A1 corridor, with branches into local towns. The network design incorporates:

- **Heat blending** from multiple sources,
- **Thermal storage** to decouple supply and demand,
- **Flexible temperature optimisation**, balancing CAPEX/OPEX trade-offs and minimising losses,
- **Redundancy** through multiple sources and electric backup boilers to ensure resilience.

Phasing is anticipated over a **10-year construction window**, with heat exports to Edinburgh expected from 2035 onward, due to dependencies such as the Musselburgh Flood Protection Scheme.

Socio-Economic Value

The socio-economic assessment was rigorous and applied Treasury Green Book methodology. It quantified “hard” benefits (cost savings, reduced emissions, avoided infrastructure investments). In the figure below, a summary of the socio economic benefits of an East Lothian Heat Network is shown as compared to a counterfactual scenario (individual air source heat pumps – ASHP).

Net present value over 50 years Approx. £ million <i>Treasury's Green Book Methodology</i>	East Lothian Heat Network	Alternative: Individual ASHPs	Difference
Investments (Transmission and distribution incl. necessary reinvestments)	1,300	1,000	-300
Operation and maintenance	325	225	-100
Energy costs (Including GHG emission and air quality damage costs)	1,650	2,950	1,300
Socio-economic cost	3,275	4,175	900

It is a key finding that an East Lothian Heat Network over a 50-year period can demonstrate a significant socio-economic benefit for the region – **more than £900 million**.

There are also many additional benefits (health, equity, resilience) compared to individual ASHP deployment that need further work to outline in detail. These include:

- **Potential substantial benefits** from integrating heat into the local energy supply, creating savings from the avoidance of grid reinforcements and providing solutions to avoid curtailment of local wind and solar.
- **Local Employment:** A multi-phase, multi-decade construction and operation schedule will generate significant jobs across engineering, supply chain, and O&M.
- **Community Wealth Building:** Revenues from heat sales stay local, reducing reliance on imported fuels and creating a circular local economy.
- **Fuel Poverty Alleviation:** The network will offer long-term, stable tariffs for vulnerable households.
- **Environmental Impact:** By replacing fossil heating with waste heat and renewables, the project will contribute meaningfully to East Lothian's climate goals. CO2 reductions and air quality improvements are especially impactful in dense residential areas.
- **System Resilience:** With distributed sources and large storage, the network enhances heat security, reducing exposure to gas market shocks or single-source failures.

The feasibility strongly recommends exploring additional socio-economic benefits in terms of saved electricity grid enforcements, employment, health and other parameters further and is in active discussions with partners to advance our understanding of further savings and benefits. UK-based studies have demonstrated that the societal benefits of low-carbon measures can greatly outweigh their financial benefits, particularly when implemented in an integrated, joined-up manner³. For example, a recent study found that connecting neighbourhoods to heat networks across Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian generated an average of **£13,000 per household** in social benefits⁴.

Quality Assurance:

The feasibility results have undergone a peer review. A panel of external volunteer experts was invited to **sense-check the assumptions and findings** during May-June 2025. The reviewers examined things like the assumed costs and performance of alternatives (e.g. the **heat pump baseline costs**), the future **electricity price scenarios** used, the engineering design choices around **transmission and distribution losses**, and the accounting of “soft” benefits (e.g. health improvements from better heating). Their feedback has been incorporated to refine the final feasibility report.

Notably, no major flaws have been identified – the consensus is that the study’s approach is solid and conservative. Some areas for further analysis include exploring possible **market mechanisms for heat** (since the regulatory environment for third-party heat sales is evolving) and any **subsidy opportunities** that might be on the horizon (such as the UK’s Green Heat Network Fund or Scottish Government support, which were not included in the base case).

Conclusion and Next Steps

The feasibility study makes a clear case: **a district heat network for East Lothian is both technically sound and economically attractive** — especially under the Regional Scope. It can offer consumers a cleaner, cheaper, more secure heat supply than individual electrification routes.

3 Sudmant, A., Boyle, D., Higgins-Lavery, R., Gouldson, A., Boyle, A., Fulker, J. and Brogan, J., 2024. Climate policy as social policy? A comprehensive assessment of the economic impact of climate action in the UK. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, pp.1-15.

4 Sudmant, A. and Higgins-Lavery, R., Brogan, J. 2025. The Socio-Economic Impact of Realising Zero Carbon Heat in the LHEES Zones of Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian. Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, University of Edinburgh.

Next steps include:

- Locking the preferred scope and delivery model,
- Refining pipe routing and sizing,
- Clarifying governance and financing options,
- Assessing further socio-economic benefits including avoided grid upgrades, health and other forms of savings,
- Securing strategic partnerships (e.g. with data centres or developers),
- And mobilising community and policy support for the next project phase.

The feasibility study has provided the foundations for further refinement to enable regional discussions bringing together East Lothian, Midlothian and Edinburgh City Council. The further scope refinement should enable an **Outline Business Case** to be developed, which the team hopes to undertake with formal support from the Heat Network Support Unit (HNSU). Recognising that the project is now moving from concept to planning, the community group has appealed to East Lothian Council to formally engage with HNSU and the UK National Wealth Fund – for their **expert advisory services and financial modeling support**, which come at no cost and no risk to the Council. Gaining this support is considered crucial to align the feasibility study with the latest government policy thinking and to prepare for funding applications in the next stage.

In summary, the feasibility work to date has **proven the concept**: it is technically and economically feasible to build a county-scale heat network in East Lothian that meets social, economic, and environmental objectives. The study provides a strong evidence base – from heat density maps and engineering schematics to financial models and impact assessments – to proceed confidently to the development phase. The project's focus now shifts from “can we do this?” to “**how do we deliver it?**” The next section outlines the roadmap for delivery in four coordinated phases.



Aberlady bay in East Lothian, Scotland lies between Aberlady and Gullane.
Is a part of the John Muir Way, a long distance footpath from Musselburgh to Dunglass.

4. Next Steps: Delivery in Four Phases

Delivering a project of this scale requires a phased approach. East Lothian's heat network will be rolled out in **four major phases**, which are supportive of one another, and could be explored in parallel or when resource allows, to gradually achieve the full vision of a regional heat highway. This phased strategy allows for manageable project segments, early benefits, and the flexibility to adapt and incorporate lessons learned along the way. Below we describe each phase – what it entails, its current status, and the next steps needed to bring it to fruition.

4.1 Phase 1 – Musselburgh (Western Network)

Overview: Phase 1 focuses on East Lothian's westernmost communities (Musselburgh and nearby areas), which border the City of Edinburgh. This phase is essentially the **pilot heat network** that will kick-start the wider project. The goal is to connect the initial **anchor heat demand** of roughly 2,000–2,500 homes in Musselburgh – including social housing and public buildings – and supply them with low-carbon heat.



Figure 1 - Phase 1

By demonstrating success at this local scale, Phase 1 will attract further investment and build public confidence. It will also establish the operational framework (customer billing, maintenance regimes, etc.) under real-world conditions. Crucially, Phase 1 sets down part of the **physical and organisational infrastructure backbone** that later phases will extend. The target timeline is to complete detailed design and business case development by 2026, reach a Final Investment Decision (FID) by mid-2027, and begin construction thereafter. This aligns with the council's ambition to see tangible progress before the end of the decade.

Heat Sources and Network Configuration: Phase 1 will utilise the existing heat supply from Midlothian Energy from the Millerhill Energy Centre and connect it to existing homes.

Demand and Customers: Musselburgh offers a dense heat demand area ideal for an initial network. The focus is on connecting **social housing complexes, council facilities (schools, libraries), and new development sites** first, since these can often be aggregated under single ownership or funding streams. Indeed, local housing associations and the Council have shown strong interest – the project has had conversations exploring heat offtake specifically for **social housing in Musselburgh**, including willingness to contribute to connection costs. The subsidy this creates for those customers would take 2p off the heat supply. It would also reduce the long-term maintenance costs for social housing as Heat Exchange Interfaces have less maintenance and last longer than gas boilers and ASHPs.

This indicates that from day one the network could have a guaranteed customer base that ensures revenue. The intention is to quickly expand service to surrounding private residences and businesses once the core spine is operational. Notably, heat network operator **Vattenfall** has signaled interest in this area, suggesting, subject to further discussions, to deliver connections to the 2,000+ homes and manage customer service, in line with our community ambitions. In practice, Phase 1 might start with a few hundred homes in a pilot cluster, then scale up to the full target as pipelines extend through Musselburgh's neighbourhoods.

Progress and Next Steps: During 2025 and going into 2026, the immediate task is to complete an **Outline Business Case (OBC) for Phase 1** – effectively a detailed project plan and investment proposal. This will refine Phase 1's engineering design, firm up costs (now that feasibility gives a baseline), and structure the delivery and funding approach for this phase. The community team plans to leverage external support for the OBC: as mentioned, applying to the Scottish Government's Heat Network Support Unit for expert assistance with the business case and commercial structure.

The OBC will also detail the **Phase 1 delivery vehicle** (likely establishing the East Lothian Heat (Musselburgh) Company as discussed in Section 2) and any partnerships (e.g. with Vattenfall or other private partners). Define the Council's role and appetite, and consider funding and finance sources for the project.

The team will continue **stakeholder engagement in Musselburgh**, including public consultations with residents about roadworks and the benefits of heat networks, to build local buy-in. By the end of Phase 1, expected outcomes include: hundreds of households receiving low-carbon heat, a fully operational initial segment of the heat highway, and a blueprint for scaling up in subsequent phases.

4.2 Phase 2 – Dunbar (Viridor/Tarmac Waste Heat Cluster)

Overview: Phase 2 shifts attention to East Lothian’s eastern flank, around the town of Dunbar. This area hosts **some of the county’s largest industrial heat sources**, making it a logical next phase to develop. The centrepiece of Phase 2 is capturing waste heat from the **Viridor Energy Recovery Facility** at Dunbar.



Figure 2 - Phase 2

This modern waste-to-energy (WtE) plant processes municipal waste and in doing so generates a continuous output of heat (in the form of steam or hot gases) as a byproduct of electricity generation. Currently, that heat is largely **vented as waste**, but it could be harnessed for district heating. In tandem with Viridor, the **Tarmac cement works** at Dunbar (a heavy industry site) also emits substantial waste heat from its kilns and processes. Phase 2 aims to integrate these sources, along with innovative thermal storage, to supply heat locally and feed into the wider network. Essentially, Phase 2 will establish an **“Eastern Heat Cluster”** that can later be linked to Phase 1’s infrastructure, creating a county-spanning system.

Heat Sources and Innovations: The Dunbar cluster is remarkable for the **quantity and high grade** of heat available. The Viridor WtE plant alone can potentially provide in the order of 20–30 MW of heat continuously (enough for thousands of homes), and since it runs year-round, it offers a stable baseload. The feasibility study highlighted this as a prime candidate for integration. Close by, Tarmac’s operations release high-temperature exhaust that could be recovered via heat exchangers. Together these constitute **“waste heat from industry”** that Phase 2 will utilise.

A key proposal in Phase 2 is to construct a **Seasonal Thermal Storage facility**, potentially using a repurposed quarry near Dunbar. This concept, labeled “**Excess Power-to-Heat (Seasonal Quarry Storage)**” involves converting surplus renewable electricity (for instance, when winds are strong at night and turbines might otherwise be curtailed) into heat and storing it in a large insulated volume of water or stone underground.

- 1** An excavated section of a quarry could be insulated and filled to act as a giant thermal battery.
- 2** During periods of excess wind or other electricity, heating elements or large heat pumps would store heat in the quarry;
- 3** then during peak heat demand (e.g., cold winter days), that stored heat can be released into the network.
- 4** This not only balances the network and reduces the need for fossil backup, but also provides a **valuable grid service** by using up excess renewable power that would otherwise be wasted at the expense of all UK energy bill payers.

Another future-proofing element in this cluster is the proximity to the **Torness Nuclear Power Station** (just east of Dunbar). Torness is scheduled for decommissioning by 2030, but until then it’s a potential heat source (nuclear plants reject vast amounts of low-carbon heat). Moreover, the site may host a **Hydrogen Production Plant** in the future or even become a potential site for future **small scale nuclear** energy production. If that should occur, both of these would be large sources of future waste heat that could be captured. Phase 2 design will keep a watching brief on these developments, ensuring the network routes and capacities could handle a future connection from Torness or a hydrogen facility.

Network and Demand: The immediate use of the Dunbar heat will be to supply **local needs in Dunbar town and environs**. This includes residential areas (Dunbar, West Barns), local schools, and potentially sites like Dunbar Leisure Pool (a high heat demand site that could significantly benefit). **Haddington**, the county town located midway between Dunbar and Musselburgh, is another demand centre that Phase 2 could start to serve by extending the pipeline westward as far as that town. By phasing, the project may first build the cluster around Dunbar and a trunk line from Dunbar toward Haddington. Phases 3 and 4 would join Haddington to Musselburgh, closing the loop. However, some initial “island” operation is possible: Dunbar’s cluster might operate on its own network to begin with, if linking to Phase 1’s pipe immediately is not feasible.

For now, Phase 2 demand will comfortably be met within East Lothian. The network build-out will likely include a **transmission pipeline westward** from Dunbar. An interesting aspect under discussion is utilising existing corridors for this pipeline – one proposal is to coordinate with a **new cycle route** planned in East Lothian. By laying the heat main along the same route (possibly an old rail line being converted to a path), the project can minimise new land disturbance and deliver a dual benefit (improved active travel infrastructure alongside heat infrastructure).

Status and Next Steps: As of mid-2025, Phase 2 is in a conceptual stage. The feasibility study's data indicates strong viability, but **detailed engagement with the industrial partners** and **strategic regional energy planning with SPEN and NESO** is the next step.

Both Viridor and Tarmac have been approached; their initial responses are positive, seeing this as an opportunity to improve their environmental performance and potentially receive some financial return for heat provision. In parallel, technical teams will need to perform **heat offtake studies** at these sites – assessing how to technically extract the heat (e.g., where to tap the steam cycle at Viridor, what heat exchanger or heat pump is needed to integrate Tarmac's heat). Funding for these specific studies may come from grants aimed at industrial decarbonisation or through partnerships with Zero Waste Scotland.

On the community side, **Sustaining Dunbar** (a local community development trust) and other local groups will be engaged to begin discussions about the network's impact and benefits in the Dunbar area. The project recognises that building trust and enthusiasm locally is key, especially as Dunbar would see construction activity and a new energy facility (for pumping/storage). The presence of community champions on our steering and expert advisory groups ensure strong local outreach.

For Phase 2 financing, initial estimates suggest it will require significant capital. The timeline for Phase 2 will hinge on Phase 1 progress but could follow a few years behind. If Phase 1 construction starts ~2027, Phase 2 might ambitiously achieve FID by 2028–29 and commission in the early 2030s. Notably, some enabling work for Phase 2 can occur in parallel with Phase 1: for instance, **obtaining pipeline route permissions** east of Haddington could be started early, and even laying oversized pipes in certain sections during Phase 1 (future-proofing connections) is an option. By the end of Phase 2, East Lothian will have two major heat generation hubs (Musselburgh-west and Dunbar-east) ready to be linked, covering both ends of the county with low-carbon heat supply.

4.3 Phase 3 – Cockenzie (Data Centre Integration)

Overview: Phase 3 centres on fully developing the heat network assets around **Cockenzie and the former Cockenzie Power Station site**, roughly in the middle of the East Lothian coast. The anchor of this phase is the potential for a **new Data Centre** being developed on that site. Any large data centre that will produce substantial waste heat is a significant opportunity for the local community.



Figure 3 - Phase 3

While Phase 1 intends to tap into this data centre to supply Musselburgh, Phase 3 involves expanding and optimising that integration as the data centre grows, and extending heat distribution to communities in the Cockenzie–Prestonpans–Tranent corridor. In essence, Phase 3 turns the **Cockenzie area into a robust second heat supply hub** (in addition to Dunbar's in the east). This phase is also about **connecting the dots**: it likely involves laying the remaining sections of the trunk transmission pipeline to join Phase 2 and Phase 1 segments, creating a continuous line from Dunbar through Cockenzie to Musselburgh. Once Phase 3 is complete, East Lothian will have an integrated county-wide network ready for regional connection.

Heat Source – Data Centre Waste Heat: Data centres are energy-intensive facilities that convert nearly all the electricity they consume into heat. The planned Cockenzie data centre is expected to have an electrical load in the tens of megawatts. Without a heat recovery system, all that energy would be dissipated via cooling towers to the atmosphere. Instead, this project will capture it for the community. The data centre at Cockenzie is expected to use liquid cooling or air cooling that can be intercepted with heat exchangers. **Low-temperature waste heat (around 30°C)** from the servers can be upgraded via large heat pumps to around 75–80°C for the heat network. One can view the data centre as effectively a giant **heat source** that runs 24/7.

By Phase 3, we anticipate the data centre is fully operational (possibly expanded in stages) and capable of providing a **backbone heat supply to the western half of the East Lothian network**. For reliability and peak capacity, Phase 3 will also incorporate the **Seawater Source Heat Pump** at the Cockenzie site (if not already built in Phase 1). This additional source can cover periods when the data centre load (and thus waste heat) might dip or when demand spikes beyond what the data centre alone can supply.

Our heat network would ensure that we would be open to other industries that may locate in the redeveloped Cockenzie/Prestonpans area (the site is part of an Enterprise Zone with potential for more businesses) either as a heat supplier or heat offtaker. If any such future industries materialise (for example, manufacturing or large food processing), their waste heat would be integrated as well. A heat source on site may encourage high heat users to be encouraged to invest in the other parts of the Cockenzie site, further supporting East Lothian's economic development ambitions.

Distribution Expansion: Phase 3 will extend heat distribution networks to **Prestonpans, Cockenzie, Port Seton, and Tranent**, and potentially further into inland villages like Longniddry and Ormiston. These communities lie between the Musselburgh area and Haddington, and currently rely mostly on individual gas boilers or electric heating. By laying distribution pipelines here, the project captures another large tranche of customers. Tranent, being one of the larger towns in East Lothian, is a notable target – it has a mix of social and private housing, schools, and a mining museum (which interestingly sits above old mine workings that could even provide *geothermal heat* with further exploration).

Figure 3 shows Prestonpans, Port Seton, and Longniddry along the route of the heat highway, indicating anticipated network branches in those locations. The distribution in these towns will branch off from the main transmission line. A careful hydraulic design will ensure that when Phase 2's heat comes from the east and Phase 1's from the west, they meet seamlessly in this central sector, maintaining pressure and temperature for all connected loads. Phase 3 may also involve installing additional **thermal storage tanks** at Cockenzie (shorter-term storage to buffer daily variations, complementing Dunbar's seasonal storage).

Infrastructure and Integration: As noted, one of Phase 3's critical tasks is to **join the networks built in Phase 1 and Phase 2**. If Phase 1 built from Musselburgh towards Cockenzie and Phase 2 built from Dunbar towards Haddington, Phase 3 likely covers the middle segment (around Haddington to Cockenzie). By completing this, East Lothian achieves a contiguous heat transmission route. This integrated pipeline allows heat to flow as needed: for example, excess heat from Dunbar's Viridor plant in summer could be sent west to supply any Edinburgh demands or charge a thermal store there, and conversely in winter, if Dunbar's industry can't meet peak, the data centre and other sources can send heat eastward. Such flexibility greatly enhances **energy security** for the network. The control systems and telemetry to manage this will be implemented in Phase 3 – a central control centre might be established (perhaps co-located with one of the energy centres) to monitor temperatures, flows, and dispatch decisions across the county.

Status and Next Considerations: Phase 3 is somewhat dependent on external timelines, particularly the **data centre development schedule**. If the data centre is constructed earlier than expected, the project might accelerate part of Phase 3 (i.e., building the connection to it in Phase 1) to utilise that heat as soon as possible. Conversely, if its development is delayed, the network may rely more on interim sources in Phase 1 until Phase 3 can be executed. The project team has been in dialogue with the data centre developers via the Council's economic development channels (as the Cockenzie site is a key regeneration project for the area). So far, the developers are cooperative – they see the benefit in being part of a green flagship project, and it may help with planning permissions if they can demonstrate climate-friendly design by reusing heat.

An **agreement in principle** to capture heat from the data centre will be needed. Technical studies on how to integrate the cooling systems will follow. On the community side, Phase 3 will entail engagement in the communities of Prestonpans, Cockenzie, etc. These areas have their own community councils and local concerns, so the outreach done in Phases 1 and 2 will extend here, ensuring residents are informed about the project plans (especially important if roads will be dug up for pipe-laying).

Financing for Phase 3 may be independent or could be packaged with either Phase 2 or Phase 4, depending on strategy. Since Phase 3 essentially “completes” the East Lothian core network, it could be financed as part of the expansion to region. The **National Wealth Fund** and other public sources might be more inclined to fund the main transmission backbone, which Phase 3 would finalise, as it has the larger strategic value. The timeline for Phase 3 could be in the early 2030s, aiming to coincide with or soon follow Phase 2. There is some flexibility – if the data centre is ready and waste heat is being vented, there will be a strong incentive to capture it sooner. Thus, Phase 3 could even run partly in parallel with Phase 2 if resources allow, to connect Cockenzie and then progress eastward. Ultimately, by the conclusion of Phase 3, East Lothian will have a **fully interconnected heat network from east to west**, with multiple supply points and most major towns connected. This paves the way for the final and most outward-looking phase: regional integration.

4.4 Phase 4 – Regional Expansion (Heat for Edinburgh and Beyond)

Overview: Phase 4 represents the culmination of the project’s vision: extending the East Lothian Heat Network beyond the county’s boundaries to become a **regional heat network**, exchanging heat with the City of Edinburgh (and potentially Midlothian).

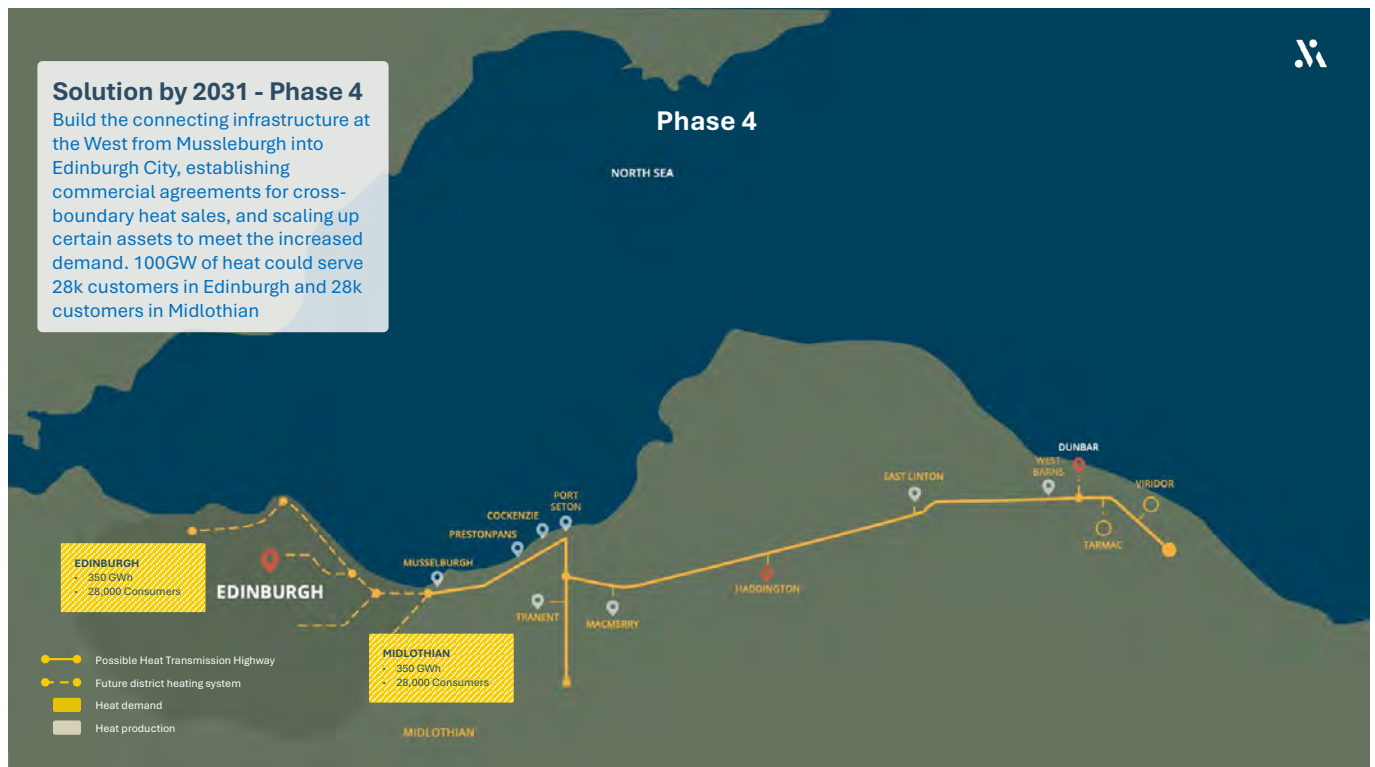


Figure 4 - Phase 4

In this phase, the network effectively becomes a **two-way “heat highway”** – not only distributing East Lothian’s waste heat to local consumers, but also supplying surplus heat into Edinburgh’s urban heat networks, and possibly taking advantage of any excess heat or storage capacity that larger city systems can offer. The feasibility study showed that integrating with Edinburgh can significantly improve the economics for East Lothian, by accessing a larger customer base and fully utilising the heat sources available. Phase 4 will involve building the connecting infrastructure at the western end (from Musselburgh into Edinburgh city zones), establishing commercial agreements for cross-boundary heat sales, and potentially scaling up certain assets to meet the increased demand. By doing so, East Lothian transitions from a local project to a key player in the region’s net-zero infrastructure, helping decarbonise not just one county but the wider Lothian area.

Connection to Edinburgh: Practically, Phase 4 would see the construction of **insulated pipeline connections from Musselburgh into Edinburgh**. There are a few possible routes, which may tie into existing or planned heat networks in the capital. One likely link is towards the **Edinburgh Waterfront** areas, where significant redevelopment is underway and a series of low-carbon **heat networks are planned**. By feeding East Lothian's heat into this, it substitutes or reduces the need for gas CHP or other less green sources the city might use. Another connection could be southward to the **Shawfair/Millerhill area** on Edinburgh's outskirts, where a new town (Shawfair) has an existing small district heating system and the Millerhill waste plant (which East Lothian already sends waste to) operates – synergy here could allow sharing heat between the two waste plants (Millerhill and Dunbar) or simply add redundancy. Additionally, the network could branch towards central Edinburgh – the **Holyrood area (Scottish Parliament) and surrounding public buildings** have been mooted as a candidate for district heating. If an opportunity arises to supply that, East Lothian's trunk line could extend a spur in that direction.

Supply Capacity: The regional phase envisions providing in the order of **100 MW of heat export** to Edinburgh. To put this in perspective, 100 MW could heat tens of thousands of homes. East Lothian's identified sources (Viridor, Tarmac, data centre, etc.) combined have this scale of output, especially when supplemented by the innovative storage and power-to-heat systems in Phase 2. Phase 4 might require some **capacity upgrades**: for example, adding more heat pump modules at Dunbar or Cockenzie to draw even more heat from sources during peak times, or increasing pumping capacity for higher flow rates to the city. These technical enhancements would be determined during the detailed design for regional supply.

The Danish analogy is apt here – just as Denmark built “transmission highways” moving heat between towns, East Lothian's network will effectively become a branch of a future **Scottish heat super-grid**. By being an early mover, East Lothian stands to benefit from this integration through economies of scale and possibly financial support (since supplying a city could attract investment from city authorities or others).

Policy and Agreements: Phase 4 is heavily dependent on **cross-authority collaboration and supportive policy frameworks**. One major challenge identified is that current Scottish Government heat network policy did not originally envision a regional scheme. For Phase 4 to happen, it's likely that the success of Phases 1–3 will need to demonstrate the viability and benefit, thereby encouraging government to back regional expansion. We want to prove the model, build the infrastructure and expand to maximise the benefits – taking everyone with us along the way.

The project team has been proactive in this regard: they pose the “**East Lothian Question**” – essentially asking national policymakers to reconsider if net zero can be achieved without utilising our plentiful waste heat, as East Lothian proposes to do. There are encouraging signs: East Lothian Council is working with the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal on a **Regional Energy Masterplan** that is studying such cross-boundary energy opportunities. If that masterplan endorses a regional heat network, it will provide political momentum and possibly funding to Phase 4. Additionally, East Lothian Council, Midlothian Council and Edinburgh City Council should investigate their appetite and models for a regional approach at the earliest opportunity.

Commercially, Phase 4 will involve **heat offtake agreements** with large customers in Edinburgh. These could be with a city-owned energy company (if Edinburgh sets one up for its networks) or directly with developers of large housing schemes. The structure might resemble a utility purchasing agreement: Edinburgh buys X MW of heat per year from East Lothian at an agreed price which guarantees a market for East Lothian's heat. Meanwhile, East Lothian's network guarantees supply (with contractual penalties if not delivered, etc.). These are new territory contracts in Scotland, but examples exist in Scandinavia for inter-city heat trade.

Benefits to East Lothian and Region: By exporting heat, East Lothian **increases throughput on its network**, which spreads fixed costs and can actually lower tariffs for everyone in East Lothian and Edinburgh. Any surplus from selling heat to Edinburgh would be reinvested to lower prices further or to fund network extensions to any remaining unserved villages or wider heat solutions. For Edinburgh and the region, Phase 4 provides a supply of **low-carbon heat at scale**, aiding the city's decarbonisation without having to build all generation within the city. This symbiotic relationship is the essence of a **"heat highway" approach** – moving heat from where it's abundant to where it's needed, much like the national electricity grid moves power.

In a broader sense, Phase 4 positions the region as a **leader in innovative climate solutions**. It showcases a working model of circular energy economy: capturing industrial waste in a rural area to warm urban homes, instead of wasting that energy and simultaneously burning fuel in the city for heat. If achieved, it will influence and reframe national policy, leading to replication elsewhere (other regions with dispersed industry and nearby cities could adopt the template).

Timeline: Phase 4 is the longest-term aspect of the project. Realistically, it may not be fully implemented until the early-to-mid 2030s, after Phases 1–3 have established the core network. However, preparatory steps are imminent. The request for Council to engage now with the Heat Network Support Unit and the National Wealth Fund is partly to prepare for this phase – these bodies can help structure the outline business case with a regional perspective in mind.

5. Conclusion

The East Lothian Heat Network feasibility study presents a compelling case for a transformational regional energy infrastructure. The evidence shows this project can deliver affordable, low-carbon, and secure heat to tens of thousands of homes and businesses — while generating strong local economic, environmental, and societal value. Yet to move from feasibility to delivery, a supportive policy and regulatory environment is essential.

It is also worth noting that as a community approach, the Heat Network will not reach every community, so we are actively supporting smaller scale approaches that can enable a just transition, particularly for our rural communities who are off gas grid. It has been however out of scope for this study, but it is very much part of our ambitions to support all in our county.

To unlock this potential, we set out the following key asks of **government, regulators,** and **regional partners**:

Policy Enablers – From Principle to Implementation

The Scottish Government and the UK Government has already outlined strong principles for heat decarbonisation. We welcome these, but urge timely and coordinated implementation to ensure heat network readiness aligns with policy goals and gives confidence to investors and consumers alike. Specifically:

- **Ensure reform of the electricity market** supports the use of renewable generation across the whole energy system including using it as a source of heat. This is critical to ensuring that Scottish wind generation is used effectively.
- **Mandate public sector connections:** All publicly owned buildings should be required to connect to a heat network where one exists and it is viable. This creates critical early anchor loads, reduces project risk, and exemplifies public leadership.
- **Firm up the Heat in Buildings Bill:** The Bill should include binding timelines that align with planned heat network rollouts. Consumers need certainty on future heating options, especially in zones where district heating is likely to be the most cost-effective path to Net Zero.
- **Support flexible zoning:** Heat network zones must be place-based and pragmatic. They should accommodate large, cross-boundary systems like the East Lothian–Edinburgh corridor, which has strategic potential for grid balancing and low-cost heat production through diverse sources.
- **Enable utility parity:** Permitting schemes and statutory undertaker rights must be introduced to treat heat networks as essential infrastructure. This would streamline delivery, reduce costs, and accelerate connection. Heat networks must be allowed to operate on equal terms with other regulated utilities.
- **Include heat in national and regional energy planning:** Strategic planners like SPEN and the future NESO should embed heat infrastructure into regional energy system models. This integration will help unlock synergies between electricity, heat, and storage, and ensure least-cost decarbonisation pathways.
- **Build future sources of waste heat** (such as hydrogen, data centres and CCUS) in places **where the substantial waste heat can be used.** Make it a planning condition and connect these policy areas with the opportunities for decarbonising heat.

A Call for Regional Collaboration

We call on **East Lothian, Midlothian**, and **Edinburgh City Council** to commit to progressing this vision, jointly. Only through coordinated local authority leadership can this integrated network be realised. The following actions are proposed:

- Initiate a joint governance and funding framework for early-stage project development.
- Identify lead officers or champions within each council to drive alignment.
- Embed heat network planning in Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) across the region.
- Begin joint exploration of suitable procurement and delivery models — including local authority-owned, community-led, or public-private approaches.

This project has the potential to be the largest and most impactful heat network in the UK, serving over 100,000 consumers with clean, affordable energy. We are actively seeking conversations with partners who can help us bring this to life. Please email the team at eastlothianheat@gmail.com

With shared ambition and aligned action, we can make this future a reality — and ensure that **no home is cold, and no heat is wasted.**

Known as The Bridge To Nowhere, bridge over Biel Water where it flows into Belhaven Bay and the North Sea at Dunbar. East Lothian, Scotland



10 October 2025

SUBJECT: Proposed working partnership between East Lothian Council and Lothian Heat CIC

Dear Laurence

As per our conversation earlier today, this letter summarises the key points of what we would anticipate forming the basis of a non-legally binding **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** signed between **Lothian Heat CIC (LH)** and **East Lothian Council (ELC)** to collaborate on finding heat solutions to support the people, council and businesses of East Lothian. The aim is to establish a working partnership to combine expertise and resources for the effective planning and development of initiatives that align with ELC's LHEES, Fuel Poverty, economic development and public sector decarbonisation objectives.

Lothian Heat CIC

We are a newly formed Community Interest Company, that has built up from over 2 years of deep feasibility work supported by East Lothian Community Benefits¹ that culminated in [East Lothian Heat's Feasibility Study Report](#). It has been set up to provide a development vehicle to serve the interests of those living and working in East Lothian, Midlothian and Edinburgh the following charitable objectives:

1. To explore solutions for minimising waste heat and delivering clean, affordable heat to homes across the Lothians and Edinburgh.
2. To maximise community ownership of and benefit from future heat solutions.

We have a number of projects that we wish to explore that are relevant for East Lothian communities, including:

- Large and small-scale district **heat networks** which we believe can support the Council's public sector decarbonisation challenge.
- Communal approaches to shared group loop, micro-scale heat network and individual heat pump or other suitable solutions, particularly for **rural communities** and those currently off the gas grid, including East Lammermuir, Tynninghame and Pencaitland.
- Supporting **regional retrofit** endeavours such as East Lothian Climate Action Network and Sustaining Dunbar's Community Heat Teams and East Lammermuir Council's priorities for the disbursement of community benefit funding.
- Regional collaboration with a laser focus on delivering the **cheapest possible heat price** for customers.
- Work with SPEN and NESO to explore the impact of a heat network and thermal storage as a **flexibility solution for the regional grid**, aiming to prevent curtailment and reduce energy bills.
- Working on **local supply chain development, skills and training** for business opportunities related to heat network and retrofit projects.

¹ ECLB's East Lothian Heat Project and East Lothian Climate Hub's Community Heat Teams are two of three shortlisted projects for [BE-ST's Accelerate to Zero](#) Community Champion Awards in November.

We have working groups looking at each of these, and if we have support of East Lothian Council we are confident we can unlock identified external funding streams to employ staff and funding to progress these projects.

It is our belief that the Council, whom we recognise has budgetary and resource challenges, will be served by working with us to leverage what limited resource it has for the benefit of all the residents and businesses of East Lothian, as well as regional players and partners.

Framework for collaboration

Our suggestion is that the following may be areas that we could define clear joint working.

East Lothian Council (ELC)	Lothian Heat CIC (LH)
Agree to promptly progressing an MOU with LH which sets out joint areas of interest.	Progress MOU's with the other regional Councils, specifically Edinburgh and Mid Lothian.
Consider providing some staff resource (secondment part or full time or joint working to progress projects of joint interest that sit within the LHEES plans)	Unlock external funding to fund and appoint a staff team to work on project development and leverage LHEES officer time from each council to progress projects of shared interest with ELC, ECC, MLC.
Appoint a liaison representative and appropriate governance arrangements that satisfy ELC procedures.	Finalise Governance arrangements with an experienced board with energy sector, heat network and financial expertise.
Facilitate relationships with external stakeholders (e.g., Viridor, Tarmac, landowners, Data Centre Operator).	Develop MOU's with key stakeholders and develop relationships that can unlock further detailed studies and action as required.
Explore how ELC assets and projects might support network development including, but not limited to:	Work with regional energy masterplanning to identify routes to efficient and effective

1. Mussleburgh Phase 1 project to c2,500 homes and Queen Margaret University - an application for feasibility development to HNSU. 2. Utilising the opportunity of the Data Centre proposals at Cockenzie for the public good to be served by utilising the significant waste heat. 3. East Lammermuir project development - planning and consenting. 4. Assessing the impact a heat network could have on ELC public sector decarbonisation targets.	whole system integration for the benefit of Edinburgh and the Lothians.
Support external funding applications for research, feasibility study and business case development work.	Recognise ELC's financial and resource constraints and that they have no appetite or capacity to invest and to make that clear in any project development, business and financial modelling work.

Joint Responsibilities include overall planning, facilitating data sharing, securing necessary approvals, exploring opportunities for **local supply chain development** (with Scottish Enterprise), and proactively communicating any challenges.

Governance and Funding

- A regional public sector **Steering Group (SG)**, including representatives from LH, ELC, Edinburgh City Council and Midlothian Council will be established. This group will meet regularly to review progress and make strategic decisions.
- Both parties will cooperate to **identify, secure, and manage funding**. A Lead Applicant will manage the formal claims process, with both parties assisting with necessary financial information and reporting to ensure transparency.

In summary, we are seeking your agreement to a formal commitment by Lothian Heat CIC and East Lothian Council to collaborate on working to find solutions for East Lothian residents and businesses and to progress regional collaboration and resource.

If you have any further questions about the specifics, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours faithfully,

Ralph Averbuch, Dr. Gemma Bone Dodds, Chris Bruce

Cabinet Secretary for Housing
Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Taigheadas
Màiri McAllan MSP
Màiri NicAilein BPA



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Cllr Norman Hampshire
grandison@eastlothian.gov.uk

Our Reference: 202500476911
Your Reference: 20230722/HeatNetworks_SG

18 August 2025

Dear Cllr Hampshire,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July 2025 inviting Gillian Martin MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, to meet with you and the Chair of the East Lothian Community Benefits organisation to discuss the potential for scaling up heat networks across East Lothian and the wider Southeast Scotland region. This has been passed to Màiri McAllan MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Housing, as this falls under her portfolio interests.

Unfortunately, due to significant diary pressures, the Cabinet Secretary is unable to accommodate a meeting at this time. She has asked me to pass on her gratitude for the kind invitation and has requested that you continue to liaise with her officials to explore opportunities for advancing heat networks development across East Lothian and the wider region. We would be grateful if you continued to direct any enquires to HeatNetworkSupport@gov.scot for further consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Courtney Gibson
Private Secretary

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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SGN

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SGN is working with a range of stakeholders to support the transition to a Net Zero gas network powered by hydrogen

SGN is dedicated to supporting the UK Net Zero target and assisting organisations in Scotland to decarbonise their operations



Scotland Gas Networks (SGN) is a **leading independent gas distribution network**, delivering gas to over 5.9 million homes and businesses **across Scotland and the south of England**. We are committed to providing a **safe, reliable and affordable gas supply**, while also playing a key role in the UK's transition to a **Net Zero future by investing in renewable gas and hydrogen technologies**

LTS Futures

A £30 million project testing the compatibility of repurposing a decommissioned 30 km pipeline in Scotland for hydrogen transport.

H100 Fife

Our pioneering plan for a world-first hydrogen heating network, supplying 300 local homes with clean gas, powered by offshore wind.

H2 Connect

A project exploring a future hydrogen ecosystem of demand, production, storage and imports in the south of England.

H2 Caledonia - The focus for this discussion

H2 Caledonia is our flagship project aiming to connect blue and green hydrogen production with industrial and commercial customers across Scotland resulting in the creation of a Scottish hydrogen ecosystem.

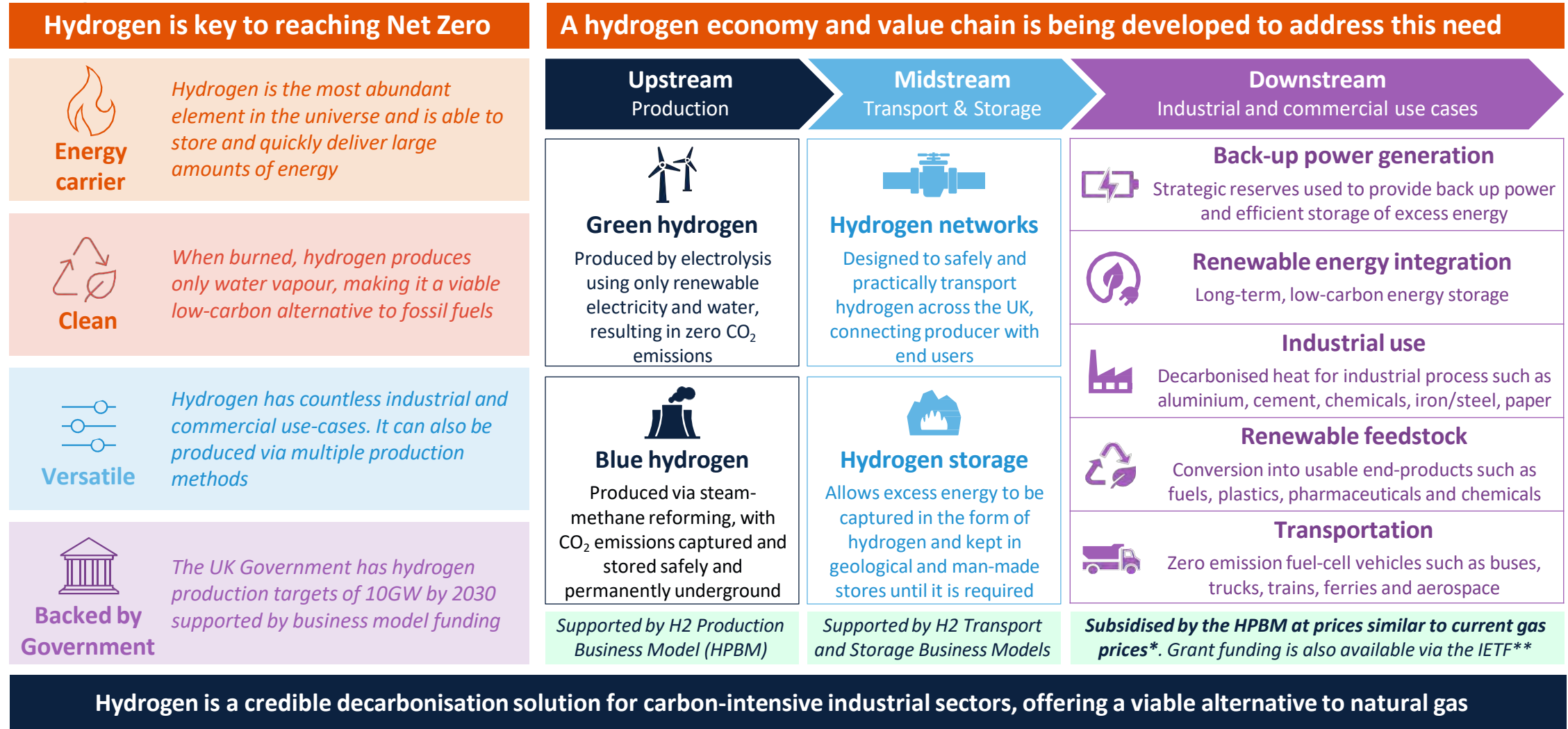
H2 Caledonia will demonstrate the safety and practicality of transporting hydrogen as a means to decarbonise in an affordable and secure way

H100 Update

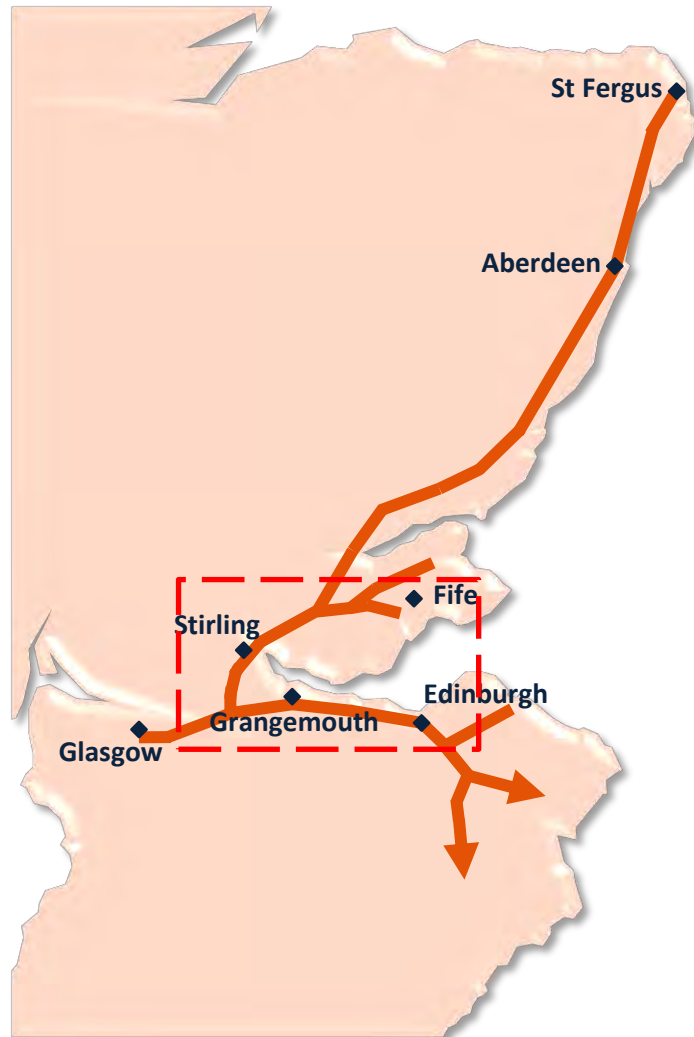
H100 Fife - in the final stage of commissioning



Hydrogen will play an essential role in the UK's transition to Net Zero, helping to decarbonise the energy system and hard-to-abate industries



H2 Caledonia is leading the way in enabling a hydrogen ecosystem in Scotland and will be the cornerstone project for the country



H2 Caledonia is being developed to achieve four key objectives and will be fundamental in delivery of the transition to Net Zero in Scotland:



To enable development of a **Scottish hydrogen economy** by connecting hydrogen production with industrial and commercial consumers through new-build and repurposed transport infrastructure



To safeguard the **Scottish industrial manufacturing sector and associated jobs in Scotland** by providing a technically proven and commercially viable option for decarbonisation



To support delivery of **Scotland's Net Zero ambitions** by creating a credible route to decarbonisation for hard-to-abate sectors

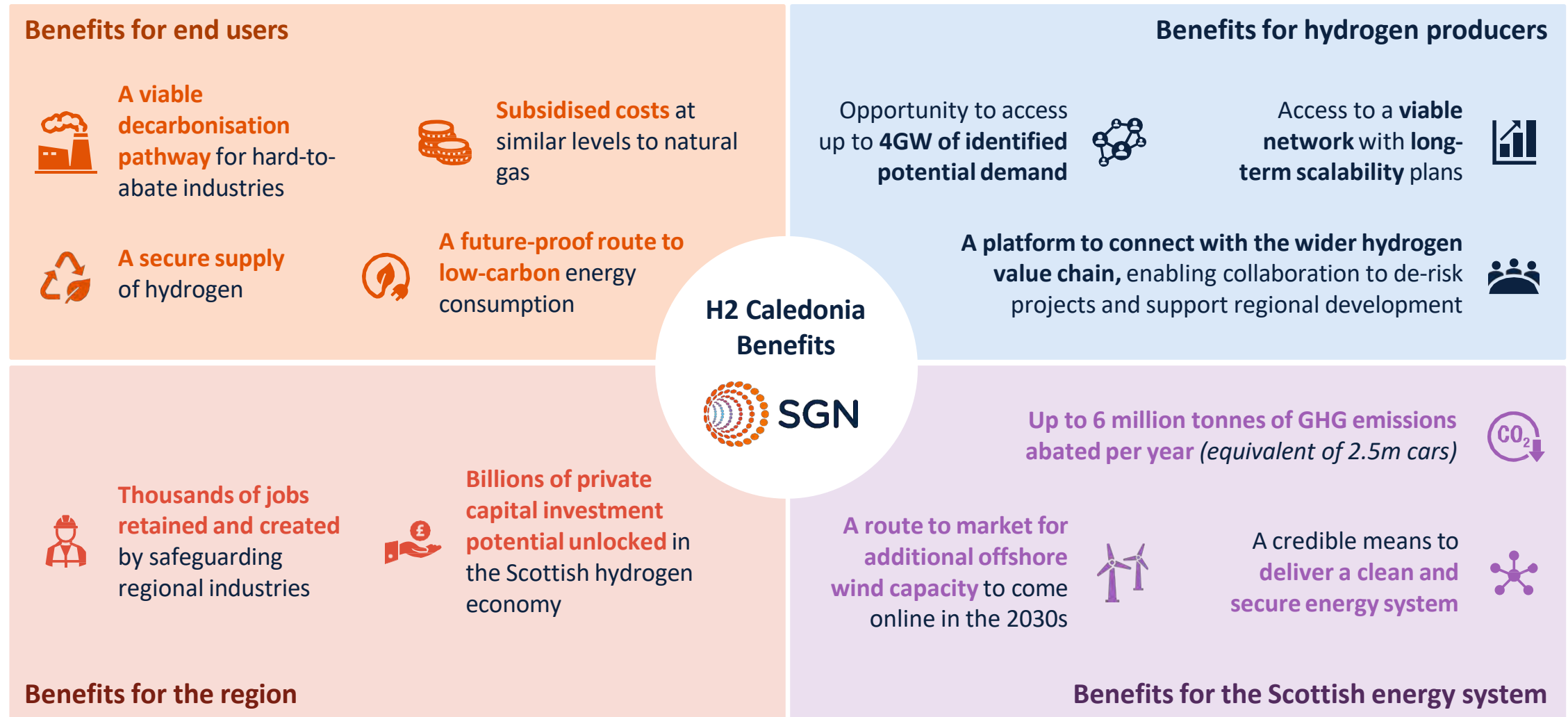


To futureproof and provide resilience to the **Scottish energy system** and enabling a route to market for substantial amounts of offshore wind generation in the coast of Scotland

Extensive technical work has been carried out to date by delivery partner Wood Group plc, strategically balancing costs and environmental impacts of the network route to confirm the technical feasibility of H2 Caledonia



H2 Caledonia has the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits for end-users, producers, the regional economy the Scottish energy system



A consortium is being developed to enable cooperation and ensure H2 Caledonia can deliver on the needs of regional stakeholders

The four guiding principles of the H2 Caledonia Consortium

- **1 Combine ambition**
Set a **clearly defined vision, purpose and objectives** that are well understood and agreed by members
- **2 Drive collaboration**
Enable collaboration and connection between members, including strategic cooperation in order to maximise the opportunity provided by H2 Caledonia
- **3 Demonstrate commitment**
Drive holistic progress by **providing the confidence to members**, enabling them to push on with their own hydrogen and decarbonisation plans
- **4 Champion sustainability**
Collectively progress towards regional decarbonisation and sustainability goals through enduring collaboration, momentum and commitment over time



We invite you to join the consortium group and collaborate with us in driving the vision forward

H2 Caledonia plans to bring together a diverse and extensive group of over 60 regional stakeholders across Scotland

Based on regional engagement to date, we have developed an initial view of the potential scale of H2 Caledonia. We are now accelerating regional engagement with the aim of building a broad consortium of support

The H2 Caledonia consortium of support could potentially include:



Note: This is a prospective view of the consortium and will be confirmed following further stakeholder engagement

The H2 Caledonia consortium will initially be focused on fostering collaboration and purpose, and to lay the foundations for the future

What you can expect from us

Engagement opportunities such as roundtables and townhalls, including key regional stakeholders to help shape the vision and build support



Opportunities to connect with others across the value chain, such as end-users or producers



Receive exclusive updates on the project status such as grid timings, route location and development timings to inform your Net Zero plans



What we will be asking of you



Provide a **letter of support for H2 Caledonia and/or permission to include your company logo** in our materials



Support regional hydrogen development by attending consortium meetings and helping shape the future energy system



Provide project data to support H2 Caledonia routing and design options and techno-economic analysis of the potential benefits

Outputs of this phase of work



H2 Caledonia Commercial Needs Case Study

Publish: Expected 2025

Key outcome: Public facing report which communicates the socio-economic benefits and needs case for building a hydrogen ecosystem in Scotland



H2 Caledonia Launch Event

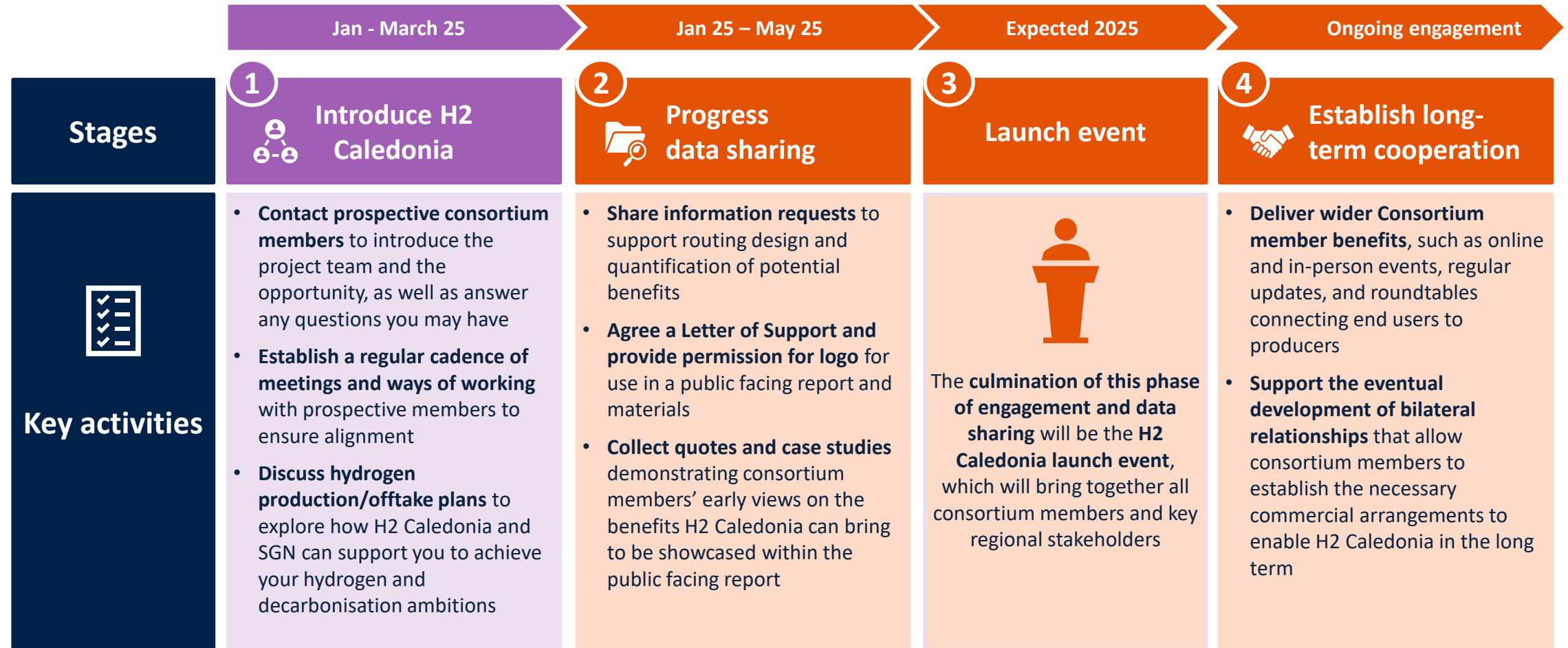
Date: Expected 2025

Location: To be confirmed

Key outcome: Ministerial event for the official launch of H2 Caledonia, convening all prospective consortium members and regional stakeholders including MPs and MSPs

H2 Caledonia represents an opportunity to connect with like-minded organisations to drive change in Scotland

The H2 Caledonia team is excited to be commencing engagement and looks forward to collaborating with you on this opportunity



SGN would welcome the opportunity to work with you to develop the vision of H2 Caledonia over the coming months

COMMITTEE: East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE: 28 October 2025
BY: Executive Director for Place
REPORT TITLE: Edinburgh Innovation Hub Update
REPORT STATUS: Public

6

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Edinburgh Innovation Hub.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the update on the Edinburgh Innovation Hub.

3 BACKGROUND

Edinburgh Innovation Hub overview

3.1 Background/Context

- The Edinburgh Innovation Hub is a £40m flagship development by East Lothian Council (ELC) and Queen Margaret University (QMU). Completion of the Hub in October 2025 signals the project partners' ambition to create a nationally significant facility to capture, support and grow innovation-led enterprise in East Lothian and the Edinburgh region. Located next to Queen Margaret University on land owned by East Lothian Council, the Hub will be a catalyst for the development of the wider Edinburgh Innovation Park (EIP).
- The Hub is a best-in-class innovation facility developed as the first phase of the Edinburgh Innovation Park, a new and unique development for innovation-led enterprise. The Hub shall significantly enhance the already successful offering of the

Edinburgh region for innovation and tech-based enterprise by providing serviced and fitted commercial laboratory and office space for high growth tech and innovation-based businesses.

- The Hub will facilitate a vibrant innovation cluster where high growth SMEs and innovation-led businesses co-locate with research and business networks under one roof to deliver a specialist service offering for commercial innovation. The Hub will provide a nucleus where people will congregate to network within high quality meeting space that can be configured for conferences, seminars, meetings, training and social events.
- The Hub will be a regional and national resource that will enable cross-sector collaborations and interactions at all levels. Businesses will benefit from a network of business support, and people and businesses will be brought together to share knowledge and skills at the 'crossing point' between R&D and commercialisation.

3.2 Construction period

- Construction started in January 2024 by the principal contractor, Heron Bros, after a complex and competitive procurement process. The construction phase of the development is nearing completion with building handover scheduled for October 2025. While 10 weeks later than original contracted, mitigations achieved in key client fit out works mean that this date is only 4 weeks beyond that planned within the overall development programme.
- The projected cost of the overall development remains within the approved budget of £36m, which includes £1.5m of Client Fit Out work and £0.5m of funding towards Hub operational working capital.
- The Hub consists of a mix of specialist laboratories and offices of various sizes offering a flexible but bespoke accommodation to accommodate the requirements of a range of tenants.

3.3 Operational activities

- Activities to ensure the operational readiness of the Hub and the Operating Company are ongoing. Client familiarisation and fitout works will be ongoing after the Hub will be available for occupation. Marian McNeil, the CEO of the Edinburgh Innovation Hub was appointed early in 2025 and will be responsible for overseeing operational requirements.
- Target markets for the Hub will be companies and enterprises that are innovation-led and compliant with the Gateway policy (which ensures control over the types of tenants to occupy the Hub and the EIP). In particular, the Hub will target companies in important growth sectors with specialist needs, including Life Sciences, Food & Drink, Technology, Startups, Spins outs and Enterprise initiatives. The Hub

has already attracted higher than expected interest from prospective tenants prior to officially opening with very positive feedback from potential tenants who have visited the Hub in recent weeks. The operational team are building on this interest and are to implement targeted marketing strategies to further attract tenants from the sectors.

3.4 Community Wealth Building impact

- Community Wealth Building is embedded in the hub project and has already realised benefits during the construction phase (see Appendix 1).
- The Hub is part of a Community Wealth Building ecosystem in East Lothian and the wider region, with QMU and ELC as anchors. Over time, the Hub will help accelerate Community Wealth Building work in East Lothian and unlock the potential for the wider Edinburgh Innovation Park.
- Working in partnership with the ESES City Region Deal team, Heron Bros have exceeded their Community Benefit obligations by 287%, supporting the Deal's Community Wealth Building commitments through the delivery of the following:

Local spend: Heron Bros local spend within a 40-mile radius has accumulated to over £400,000 over the course of the project. Charitable donations has topped £22,000 with over 50 hours of Heron Bros staff volunteering over the period.

Local employment: Local employment figures on the Hub accumulating to over 400 staff during the construction period, with 66% of labour from within the region. Two local East Lothian residents were supported into newly created entrant positions and have sustained their roles for the duration of the construction phase.

Student engagement and placements: Engagement with various local schools and education partners offering numerous site visits and work placements over a 4- week period. The site team and sub contractors engaged in daily taster sessions with the placement attendees giving them real world experience of the daily task of painters, electricians, plumbers, joiners, engineers and site managers.

3.5 Economic Benefits

The Hub and Edinburgh Innovation Park has and will generate job opportunities (from construction, operational requirements of Hub, occupying tenants). It will also generate inward investment to support innovation led research and development in the region, offer support skills pathways in innovation for students and young people and be a

critical participant and contributor to the existing innovation ecosystem in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.

3.6 Edinburgh Innovation Park

The JV partners continue to monitor the opportunities and timescales associated with the wider park development and are engaged in discussions around prospects within City Deal 2.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: East Lothian Council's £10M contribution is reflected in the approved capital plan.

5.2 Human Resources: There is no Human resource implication relating to the Edinburgh Innovation Hub

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): There is no other implication relating to the Edinburgh Innovation Hub.

5.4 Risk: There is no Risk relating to the Edinburgh Innovation Hub

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 ***Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.***

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

X

or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Community Wealth building Report

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Council Report (Private) - Commercial Heads of Terms between ELC and QMU for the Delivery of the Food and Drink Innovation Hub and Park – 27 October 2020.
- 8.2 Council Report (Private) - Commercial Heads of Terms between East Lothian Council and Queen Margaret University for the Delivery of the Food and Drink Innovation Hub and Park – 15 December 2020.
- 8.3 Council Report (Private) ELC/QMU Commercial Heads of Terms. – 27 April 2021.
- 8.4 Council Report (Private) East Lothian Council / Queen Margaret University Legal Update – 16 November 2021
- 8.5 Council Report (Private) East Lothian Council / Queen Margaret University Joint Venture – February 2022.

- 8.6 Council Report (Private) East Lothian Council / Queen Margaret University Joint Venture – March 2022.
- 8.7 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update– June 2022
- 8.8 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update – February 23
- 8.9 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update – November 23
- 8.10 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update – February 24
- 8.11 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update October 24
- 8.12 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update February 25
- 8.13 Members Library Report Edinburgh Innovation Hub update June 25

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Catherine Molloy
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Date	9 October 2025

Head of Service Approval

Name	Keith Dingwall
Designation	Head of Development
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	13th October 2025

Community Benefits & Community Impact Report

October 2025

Community Benefits: Points Targets

- ***Points target set at start of contract** **15,000 points**
- **Heron Bros committed to overachieve;
projected points to be achieved** **22,950 points**
- **Actual points achieved to date** **50,210 points**
** 14,400 of these points have been achieved through the awards to local SME contractors*
- **% to target** **334%**

**Points target was calculated using East Lothian Councils CBiP points matrix against project value*

Community Benefits: Categories

Category 1 - Training and work experience

Category 2 - Employability and skills

Category 3 - Education and outreach

Category 4 - Local economy and social enterprise

Category 5 - Community engagement

Category 6 - Protecting and improving our environment

Key - **CRD** references the benefit has been received/offered across the ESES CRD area
- **ELC** references the benefit has been received/offered to ELC beneficiaries only

Category 1 - Training and work experience

- Work experience for **12-14** East Lothian Works school aged pupils (14+) 'Pathways to Construction' Launched 17th February, focus on bricklaying, joinery, painting
ELC
- Work experience for **6** x 16+year old residents of the CRD area (ringfenced places for EL residents) Launched 10th February, funded via CITB, enabled by ESES
CRD **ELC CRD**
- Work experience offered to **3** university / college students. Launching March 25 - tying to mock interview opportunity **CRD**

Category 2 - Employability & Skills

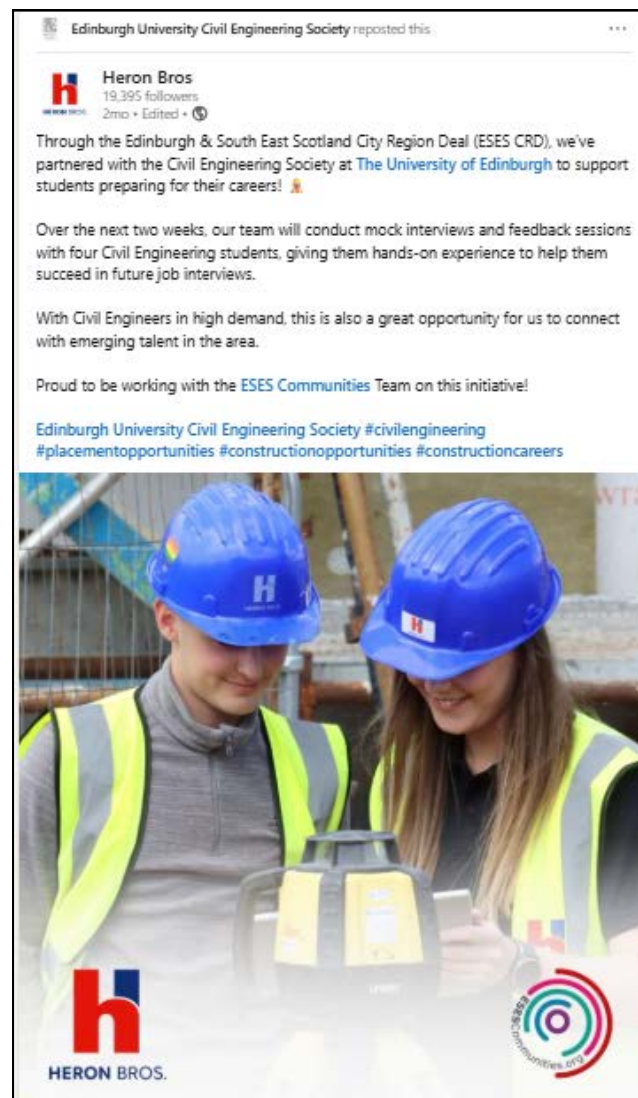
- 2 x Graduate apprenticeships created & employed on site **CRD**
- 3 x new full time employment opportunities created (sustained for over 12 months)
 - **Senior Engineer ELC**
 - **Gatesperson ELC**
 - **Fork Lift Driver ELC**
- 3 x accredited training opportunities for apprentice engineers **CRD**

Category 3 - Education & Outreach

Employability workshops, careers advice, site visits;

- **16** x Developing Young Workforce 'Introduction to Construction' students completed site visits and industry insight session. Complete January 2025. **ELC**
- **13** x Developing Young Workforce 'Level 5 Construction Pathways' students completed site visits and industry insight session w/c 17/02 **ELC**
- **15** x Developing Young Workforce students site visits and industry insights session. Complete 24th January 2025. **CRD**
- **15** x East Lothian Works Fabrication and Welding students offered to take part in offsite Fabrication/Manufacturing site visit to offer specialised learning, coordinated by Heron to supply chain partner TClark **ELC**
- **3** x Interview preparation and skills sessions for HE/FE students Complete March 2025 **CRD**

Category 3 - Education & Outreach Case Study



Heron Bros partnered with The University of Edinburgh's Civil Engineering Society to deliver unique sector experience. Over two weeks, their team conducted mock interviews and feedback sessions with four Civil Engineering students. This initiative provides invaluable hands-on experience, directly enhancing the students' readiness for future job interviews and careers in a high-demand field.

[!\[\]\(14c713e5cbf2175aaba001aeb3375d44_img.jpg\) **Case study**](#)

Category 4 - Local economy & social enterprise

- Deliver a 'Meet the Buyer' event for SMEs to understand supply chain opportunities - held May 2024, 54 attendees at event **CRD**
- Employ local businesses as part of the supply chain, non extensive list below; **ELC CRD**
 - ~Contract awarded to Lagwell Insulation **ELC**
 - ~Gladsmuir based Concrete supplier **ELC**
 - ~Sawmill Timber, Tynninghame **ELC**
 - ~Foodtruck full time on site, new micro-business linked through Business Gateway **ELC**
 - ~Howdens Musselburgh awarded on site kitchen fitout contract **ELC**
- Support for Social Enterprises (SEs); opportunities for SEs through the main contract; East Lothian Roots and Fruits, The Bike Station, Low Impact Living (Climate Action Network) The Destiny Project, Archaeology Scotland **ELC CRD**

Category 5 - Community Engagement

- **Archaeology Scotland Refurbishment Project.** Heron renovated a learning space for young people resulting in 9 Musselburgh Grammar School pupils being awarded Heritage Hero Awards **CRD ELC**
- **East Lothian Roots and Fruits** - Heron staff donated high value gifts to the charity which supported 8 families over Christmas **ELC**
- **LIL Families Event** - Heron sponsored Bike Safety Checks and information sessions at the event using the Bike Station to assist families to get back to cycling. **ELC**



HERON BROS.

Category 5 - Case Studies



➡ **LIL Families Event** - Heron Bros sponsored free bike safety checks at the Haddington event, promoting sustainable living and active travel. This initiative supported the local community near the EIH, fostering well-being and a greener future in East Lothian.

➡ **East Lothian Roots and Fruits**



➡ **Archaeology Scotland Project** - This project transformed a shipping container into an outdoor learning facility for Archaeology Scotland, and now provides training and heritage skills to individuals, especially those in deprived areas, creating a positive destination for learning

Category 5 - Community Engagement

- **The Destiny Project** - Upskilling of community leaders and charity members/users on the importance of biodiversity within rural areas including the development of guides and training programmes for communities
- ***The Destiny Project*** - *Heron offered donation of materials and installing paving pathways to allow for Prestonpans Train station community garden to become fully accessible to all - not complete due to Network Rail permissions delay, alternative training (above) delivered*
- **Community Garden Donations** -Heron have sourced materials for local community gardens who offer opportunities for members to learn about gardening, bolster social inclusion and practice the 'seed to plate' ethos. **Planned June 2025 ELC**
- **Supporting In-Tandem** - Heron are providing Hi-Vis vests and engaging with a local organisation who offer cycling opportunities for visually impaired and members who have long term health barriers. **Planned June 2025 ELC**

Category 6 - Protecting & improving our environment

- **Bird house / bat house joinery project** with The Destiny Project, providing materials, workshop delivery and creation of boxes. Completed August 2025 **ELC (See Case Study)**
- **Bike workshop**, promoting sustainable travel and offering mechanics time to service East Lothian residents bikes. Coordinated through Low Impact Living (Climate Action Network). Completed April 2025 **ELC**
- **QMU Outdoor learning hub** - Heron have donated materials including stone, blockwork, wood, rock and pipes for outdoor space and estate landscaping **ELC**
- **Materials for community gardens** - Heron and their supply chain are looking to provide 4 East Lothian community gardens with pallets which will be repurposed for planters and other projects to encourage skill sharing and additional planting. **ELC (See Case Study)**

Category 6 - Case Studies



➡ East Lothian Community Gardens Supported: Waste Reduction and Biodiversity Enhancement

Heron Bros diverting materials from landfill and donating them to four local community gardens across East Lothian.

The donation provided a substantial benefit to the local community groups by significantly reducing their material costs, allowing them to allocate limited funds to other priorities.

Furthermore, the repurposed pallets were used by the organisations for projects focused on growing local food and creating new habitats.

This resulted in a positive environmental impact by diverting waste from landfill and actively increasing biodiversity across East Lothian.

Category 6 - Case Studies

➡ Community, STEM and Habitat Creation



Heron Bros prepared and delivered a hands-on workshop focused on practical construction and environmental science. They provided 10 flat-pack bird box kits and instructed participants from The Destiny Project and the Heugh Community Garden on how to build them.

The workshop held at the Heugh Community Garden, demonstrated how to install the completed units to create local wildlife habitats, with participants taking home their units and the knowledge on how to install in their own communities.

A template of the kit and instructions were also provided to the Destiny Project to enable them to replicate for future groups, which will provide many young people the opportunity to learn basic construction skills.



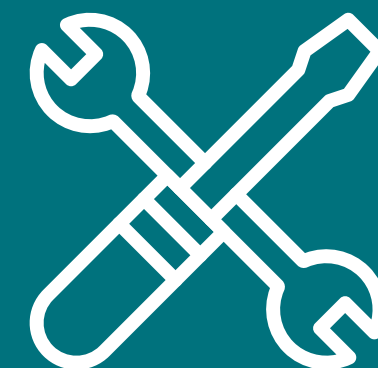
Local Workforce
144 employees onsite
reside within East Lothian



66% of the local labour
onsite are from within
a 40mile radius



TBC% of construction
spend was within
local area or with SMEs
(40 miles)



Toolbox Talks
149 hours dedicated to
employees engaged with
the project

COMMITTEE:	East Lothian Council
MEETING DATE:	28 October 2025
BY:	Executive Director for Place
REPORT TITLE:	Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal: Annual Report 24/25 and Update
REPORT STATUS:	Public

7

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To summarise the key findings on the appended City Region Deal Annual Report (Appendix 1) (approved by the City Region Deal Joint Committee on 5 September 2025).
- 1.2 To provide an update on the date for the Annual Conversation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 To note the summary findings of the seventh Annual Report.
- 2.2 To note the date for the next Annual Conversation.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal was signed by the First Minister, Prime Minister, and City Region Leaders on 7 August 2018.
- 3.2 Each year the City Region Deal partners are required to produce an Annual Report to assess how well the City Region Deal is aligning towards the overall vision and inclusive growth outcomes for the city region. The first Annual Report was approved by the City Region Deal Joint Committee on 3 September 2019. The seventh and the most recent Annual Report was approved on 5 September 2025.

Annual Report – Overview

3.3 The Annual Report for 2024/25 is an overall progress report for the City Region Deal Programme between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025. The Annual Report contains the following:

- a City Region Deal overview (Page 11 of the Annual Report);
- a Financial Statement, covering the financial year 2024/2025 (Page 16 of the Annual Report);
- a short summary of progress on each project and programme and expected milestones to be achieved in the next year. Included in the report are seven case study videos (Page 19 of the Annual Report); and
- an update on Benefits Realisation (Page 68 of the Annual Report); and
- an update on the Regional Prosperity Framework Delivery (Page 73 of the Annual Report);
- the Year Ahead (Page 80 of the Annual Report).

3.4 The Annual Report demonstrates significant progress across all City Region Deal projects and programmes. While cost inflation has impacted some project budgets during delivery, all projects remain within acceptable time parameters and all but one (not the Edinburgh Innovation Hub) are within acceptable budget parameters.

£41.9 million of Government money was drawn down in 2024/25, with £37.9 million on Capital projects and £3.9 million on the Revenue programme.

3.5 Some key achievements in the last 12 months:

- The launch of the Strategic Sites Programme Prospectus in October 2024;
- The shortlisting of the Regional Prosperity Framework at the Scottish Public Service Awards in December 2024;
- The topping out ceremony at the Edinburgh Innovation Hub in December 2024;
- The publication of the second edition of the Social Business Directory in March 2025;
- The official opening of the Edinburgh Futures Institute in April 2025;
- The official opening of the Usher Institute in June 2025;
- The approval of the Blindwells Strategic Outline Business case in June 2025; and
- The launch of the South East Regional Delivery Alliance Knowledge Hub in June 2025.

3.6 In addition, the report highlights key achievements through the Deal, which include:

- £3 billion added to Scottish and UK economy (Gross Value Added)
- 22,000 job opportunities created or supported
- 900 micro, small and medium enterprises supported
- 550+ apprentices and internships supported

- £11 million of additional funding leveraged through our Integrated Regional Employability and Skills programme; and
 - £100,000+ donated to regional good causes.
- 3.7 As well as delivering on the projects in the Deal, the Annual Report demonstrates that the governance structure, established to manage City Region Deal activity, has also enabled effective and strong regional partnership working on important cross-regional activities. Future activities associated with this, and other project delivery dates are noted at Page 80 of the report.

East Lothian Council Engagement

- 3.8 East Lothian Council is represented through the City Deal governance, both through Elected Member representation and senior officer engagement on respective Boards. During 2024/25 some specific achievements aligned to East Lothian include:
- Completion of Edinburgh Innovation Hub in October 2025 which is subject to a separate report on the Council agenda, and is part of a flagship ambition to create a nationally significant facility to support innovation-led enterprise in East Lothian and the wider Lothian region.
 - Following the submission of the Blindwells Strategic Outline Business Case in summer 2025, a positive acknowledgment by both governments, with a notification from Scottish Government to work with East Lothian Council to explore further the potential for wider Blindwells.
 - Ongoing engagement through the City Region Deal to unlock the full potential of upgrading the A720 Sheriffhall Roundabout, and wider strategic transport opportunities.

Annual Conversation and Future Opportunities

- 3.9 The Annual Report is followed up in a conversation between the Scottish City Region Deal Delivery Board and the senior representatives of the deal, where progress and concerns are discussed. The Annual Conversation for this year will take place on 11 December 2025.
- 3.10 The report summaries key priorities for 2025/26; however, more wider discussions progress around the future of regional discussions and indeed the wider opportunities.
- 3.11 The City Region Deal has a comprehensive and well-established governance structure supported by officer boards and groups of which East Lothian is well represented. As part of this governance structure, the chair of these groups rotates on an annual basis with East Lothian taking on the chair of these groups during 2025/26.
- 3.12 Council will continue to be kept updated in relation to to the work programmes agreed through the City Region Deal to ensure work is progressing aligned to the strategic direction of the Council and to maximise future opportunities to work collaboratively across the region.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: There is no financial impact relating to the Annual Report and Annual Conversation for East Lothian Council.

5.2 Human Resources: There is no Human resource implication relating to the Annual Report and Annual Conversation for East Lothian Council.

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): There is no other implication relating to the Annual Report and Annual Conversation for East Lothian Council.

5.4 Risk: There is no Risk relating to the Annual Report and Annual Conversation for East Lothian Council.

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 ***Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.***

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

X

or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments

7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Annual Report 24/25.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCRD) – Annual Report, Annual Conversation and Regional Growth Framework Update – 29 October 2019.
- 8.2 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal – Annual Report, Benefits Realisation Plan, and Food and Drink Innovation – Update 27 October 2020.
- 8.3 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal – Annual Report and Queen Margaret University Update – 27 October 2021
- 8.4 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal – Annual Report and Innovation Hub – October 2022
- 8.5 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal – Annual Report and Innovation Hub – October 2023
- 8.6 Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal – Annual Report - October 2024:

<https://esescityregiondeal.org.uk/new-blog/2025/9/10/annual-report-202425-published>

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

Name	Catherine Molloy
Designation	Project Manager
Tel/Email	Cmolloy1@eastlothian.gov.uk
Date	8 th October 2025

Head of Service Approval

Name	Keith Dingwall
Designation	Head of Development
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	10th October 2025



**CITY
REGION
DEAL**

Edinburgh
& South East
Scotland

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 – 2025





Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Forewords	7
2. City Region Deal Overview	11
3. Financial Statement	16
4. The Deal – summary of progress	19
5. Benefits Realisation Update	68
6. Regional Prosperity Framework	73
7. The Year Ahead	80
8. Contacts and Further Information	81e



Executive Summary

Key Achievements



£3bn of Gross Value Added to the City Region, Scottish and UK economy.



Over **22,000** job opportunities created or supported by City Region Deal activities.



100% of our government funding was utilised for 24/25.



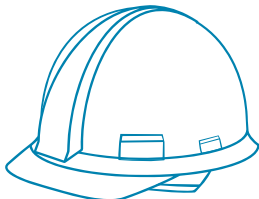
Over **124,000** students have completed data courses.



DDI Driven Innovation projects have secured over **£360m** in research funding.



More than **1000** local businesses supported by deal activities.



Over **550** apprenticeships and internships supported.



City Region Deal construction projects retain over **75%** of labour and of spend locally.



Over **£100,000** donated to regional good causes.



Our skills programme has leveraged an additional **£11m** of funding.



Executive Summary

Timeline



ESES City Region Strategic Sites Programme launched



Regional Prosperity Framework shortlisted at the Scottish Public Service Awards



Topping out ceremony at Edinburgh Innovation Hub



Next Generation Deal proposal shared with Governments



ESES Regional Innovation Action Plan launched



Second edition of the Social Business Directory published



Official opening of Edinburgh Futures Institute



Official opening of Usher Institute



Outline business case approval for Blindwells strategic site



Launch of Regional Delivery Alliance Knowledge Hub



Executive Summary

Video Highlights

A showcase of the diverse and innovative initiatives supported by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, featuring the people and organisations behind the projects, their delivery partners across the region, and those who are benefiting.

City of Dunfermline Strategic Growth

Through the Housing Infrastructure Fund, Dunfermline will see enhanced transportation infrastructure, reducing congestion, improving connectivity and making commuting more efficient and environmentally friendly. New schools, parks, and community amenities will enhance quality of life and support a vibrant, inclusive community. Dunfermline's strategic growth will benefit the local area and contribute to the broader regional and national economy.



SE-RDA: Affordable Housing

The South East Regional Delivery Alliance (SE-RDA) was established in 2024 to support the delivery of new build affordable housing through aggregating demand, promoting higher performing homes towards net zero carbon, enabling more efficient procurement and knowledge sharing.



Tweedbank Expansion

Expansion at Tweedbank is delivering premium business space through the Borders Innovation Park, while the adjacent Lowood Estate is one of the city region's seven strategic sites, delivering much-needed housing. This is attracting inward investment, strengthening local businesses, and tackling inequality by providing quality employment and affordable housing. The site is well-connected via the nearby Borders Railway terminus.



Supporting Individuals at Risk of Homelessness

Through close collaboration with NHS Lothian, the DataLoch team has improved the data underlying the Cyrenians InReach service that supports individuals at risk of homelessness. By allowing address data to be updated more accurately and reliably every month – which hadn't been possible previously – the latest information about emergency-accommodation locations allows Cyrenians to better prioritise where they focus their efforts.



Fife Industrial Innovation Investment

The Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (i3) Programme is a £58 million, ten-year programme delivered by Fife Council with funding support from the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region Deal. The investment delivers new business premises and immediately available serviced employment land. These are located within existing business clusters in mid and south Fife, adjacent to the M90 and A92 growth corridors.





Executive Summary

Granton Waterfront Regeneration

Over the next 10-15 years, the Granton Waterfront regeneration programme will create a new residential-led mixed-use community, home to around 8,000 people on Edinburgh’s waterfront. It will deliver around 3,500 net zero carbon homes, a low carbon heat network, a primary school, a health centre, commercial and cultural space and a new coastal park.



Data Skills Gateway Pathways and Progression

The partnership between Data Education in Colleges and the third sector is embedding clear progression pathways for learners. Access to Industry shares how this collaboration has enabled them to offer new SQA accredited data skills courses, creating opportunities that previously didn’t exist for their learners. We also hear from students themselves, as they reflect on their journeys into further and higher education and employment, demonstrating the transformative impact of these pathways in helping them reach their full potential.



CTTS Telecoms Academy Programme

The pilot CTTS Telecoms Academy was launched in the Scottish Borders, providing entry-level telecoms training to six local jobseekers. Previously only available in the South of England, this new centre aims to support Scotland’s telecoms workforce through upskilling while also creating opportunities for local jobseekers. Following the pilot’s success, CTTS has expanded training delivery across the region and beyond.





1. Forewords

Councillor Jane Meagher

Convener, Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal is delivering exceptional results. Now worth over £1.6 billion, it generates the greatest additional investment of any Scottish city region or growth deal. The programme is driving economic growth, enhancing critical infrastructure and creating sustainable communities, while ensuring benefits reach all parts of the region. To date, it has created over 22,000 job opportunities and delivered more than 5,500 homes and supported over £2.8 billion in Gross Value Added.

These achievements reflect the strength of our regional partnership, which brings together six local authorities, four universities, six colleges, and the Regional Enterprise Council in a coordinated approach to regional development.

The official openings of the Usher Institute and the Edinburgh Futures Institute were particular highlights last year. The Usher Institute brings together researchers, healthcare professionals to address population health and social care challenges and to position Edinburgh and South East Scotland as a global leader in data-driven health innovation. The Edinburgh Futures Institute is one of the largest interdisciplinary teaching institutes in the United Kingdom and, working with industry government and the third sector, seeks to develop new solutions to major global issues.

The Edinburgh Innovation Hub adjacent to Queen Margaret University will be operational in November. Fife's flagship Industrial Innovation Investment (i3)



Councillor Jane Meagher

programme has delivered new facilities and serviced sites in three locations. The new office building opposite Tweedbank Railway Station built in the first phase of the Borders Innovation Park is fully occupied. It hosted the Joint Committee meeting in June which approved Phase 2 of the programme.

The award-winning Integrated Regional Employability and Skills Programme continues to deliver transformational outcomes across the region, supporting over 8,300 individuals into employment and delivering over 127,000 skills improvements. This programme is essential in ensuring that everyone can benefit from the opportunities created by the Deal and is critical to the region's future prosperity and inclusive growth. Innovation is crucial to addressing our existing challenges, adapting to new ones and ensuring we can continue to grow the economy.



To address the rapid population growth in the region, we have developed a Strategic Sites Investment Prospectus. As well as being a fundamental human right, housing cannot be divorced from economic policy. Building sufficient homes will benefit workforce mobility, reduce inequalities, drive productivity growth and deliver a huge economic return.

The Regional Innovation Action Plan that partners developed jointly with Innovate UK and Scottish Enterprise can drive inclusive growth through its focus on skills, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Greater detail about each project in our deal can be found in Section 4 of this report, and seven new case-study videos have been produced to highlight the positive impact that projects are having on our residents' lives.

We are in active discussions with the Scottish and UK Governments on how best to build upon the success of the City Region Deal and to enable the region to address delivery challenges and accelerate growth. Our Regional Prosperity Framework Delivery Plan focuses on four delivery programmes: housing delivery; implementing the Regional Innovation Action Plan; skills; and transformational regional transport and net zero infrastructure.

I want to thank all our partners, stakeholders, and community members who have contributed to these achievements and to driving inclusive growth for everyone across the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.



1. Forewords

It has been a great pleasure to see the excellent progress made in Year 7 of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The **Regional Enterprise Council (REC)** was formed in November 2018 to advise the Deal's decision-making body, the Joint Committee, on the delivery of projects across the city region and to encourage further investment opportunities. We work directly with the Joint Committee and Elected Member Oversight Committee, representing businesses, social enterprises, and community groups to make sure the Deal delivers real benefits for everyone. REC members bring a broad range of experience, expertise and wide networks to best represent business, social enterprise and wider third sector across the city region.

Over the past year, REC members have visited the Edinburgh Futures Institute and Usher Institute, both of which formally opening during the period. We visited these alongside the National Robotarium and the Dunard Concert Hall construction site. These are all major projects that have only been possible through partnership working and joint funding, and they will bring significant benefits to people across the region. We encourage anyone interested in the Deal to watch the case study videos embedded in this annual report, which bring the projects to life.

The Data Driven Innovation Hubs continue to surpass expectations on all their targets for Talent, Research, Adoption, Data, and Entrepreneurship "TRADE" and the Regional Innovation Action Plan launched in March 2025 will help to coordinate future innovative activity across the region.

The City Region Deal is supporting the delivery of the Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (i3) programme. In the past year,

Garry Clark
Chair, Regional
Enterprise Council



Neil McLean
Vice Chair, Regional
Enterprise Council



new business units have opened in three locations, including **Levenmouth Business Park**, which is now occupied with a range of business tenants. The Deal investment and recently opened Levenmouth Rail link have created a particularly strong catalyst for the local area and region.

The REC also look forward to the completion of the Edinburgh Innovation Hub this November. Located next to Queen Margaret University, it will provide lab and office space for small and medium businesses in life sciences and food & drink sectors, creating opportunities for existing and new businesses.

Inclusive Growth is a key part of the Deal. In January, universities and colleges across the region signed the **Community Wealth Building pledge**, committing to:

- Support local SMEs through procurement
- Strengthen community-based ownership and resilience
- Promote fair employment practices and accessible career pathways

The REC previously helped develop the Regional Prosperity Framework vision as well as shape the related **Delivery Framework** in 2023. We are pleased to see the ongoing attention given to evaluation and review, with a refreshed plan under development.



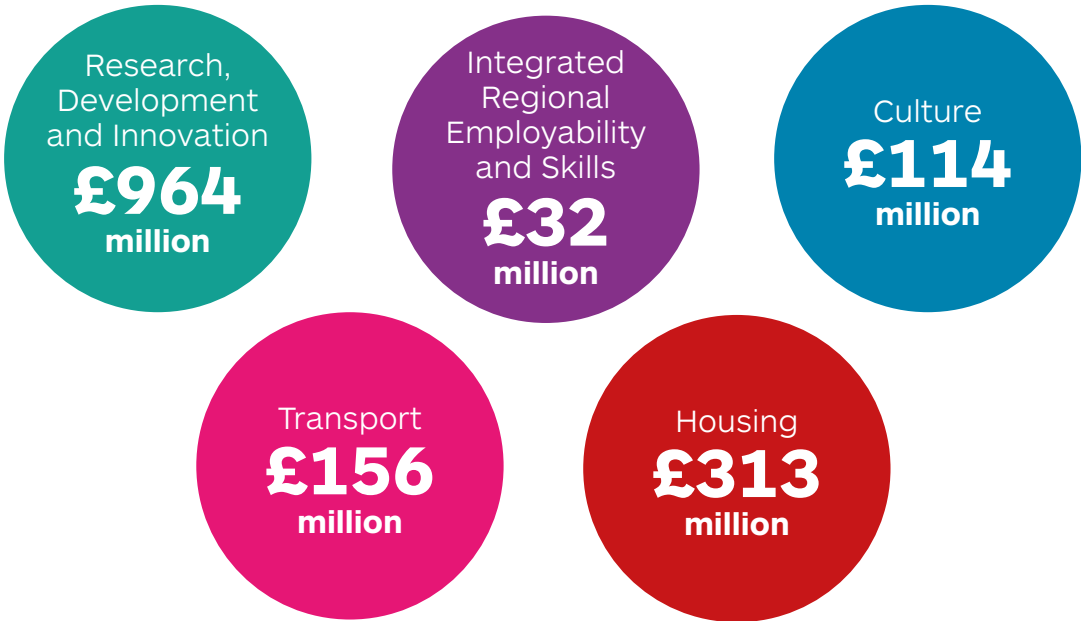
We have previously stated that the Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) programme represents the red blood cells in the City Region Deal, carrying oxygen to the rest of the programmes. IRES has already far exceeded its overall targets at the six-year point of the eight-year programme. The REC commend the work taking place producing propositions for the continuation of the IRES programme for the full 15 years of the Deal and intend to play our part in developing these and important work on a second generation ESES City Region Deal to build on the successes to date.



2. City Region Deal Overview

Status of Projects and Finances

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal is now a **£1.6 billion, 15-year programme** aimed at driving productivity and reducing inequalities through five key themes:



This map shows where the projects are located across the region

Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) activity spans across the whole City Region and is integrated into all projects.

-  Research, Development and Innovation
-  Transport
-  Culture
-  Strategic Housing Sites



2. City Region Deal Overview

The City Region Deal projects are listed in the Table below. More detail on the projects, including their current status in **Section 4**.

Table 1: Status of Programmes and Projects – July 2025

Theme/Programme/Project	Location	(Expected) Business Case Approval	Stage	On Time?	On Budget?
Research, Development and Innovation					
Edinburgh International Data Facility	Edinburgh/Midlothian	Dec 18	3. Deliver		
Bayes Centre	City of Edinburgh	Dec 18	3. Deliver		
National Robotarium	City of Edinburgh	Dec 18	3. Deliver		
Edinburgh Futures Institute	City of Edinburgh	Mar 19	3. Deliver		
Usher Institute	City of Edinburgh	Sep 19	3. Deliver		
Easter Bush (Road)	Midlothian	Mar 21	2. Implement		
Easter Bush	Midlothian	Mar 21	3. Deliver		
Edinburgh Innovation Park (Food and Drink Innovation Hub)	East Lothian	Jun 21	2. Implement		
Fife Industrial Innovation Investment	Fife	Mar 19	2. Implement		
Borders Innovation Park	Scottish Borders	Mar 19	2. Implement		
Integrated Regional Employability and Skills	Cross-Regional	Dec 18			
Integrated Knowledge Systems	Cross-Regional	Jun 19	3. Deliver		
Labour Market Analysis and Evaluation	Cross-Regional	Jun 19	3. Deliver		
Integrated Employer Engagement	Cross-Regional	Jun 19	3. Deliver		
Intensive Family Support	Cross-Regional	Mar 19	3. Deliver		
Data-Driven Innovation Skills Gateway	Cross-Regional	Mar 19	3. Deliver		
Housing and Construction Infrastructure Skills Gateway	Cross-Regional	Mar 19	3. Deliver		
Workforce Mobility	Cross-Regional	Jun 19	3. Deliver		

Table continues overleaf



2. City Region Deal Overview

The City Region Deal projects are listed in the Table below. More detail on the projects, including their current status in **Section 4**.

Table 1: Status of Programmes and Projects – July 2025

Theme/Programme/Project	Location	Business Case Approval	Stage	On Time?	On Budget?
Transport					
West Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	Jun 24	2. Implement		
A720 (Sheriffhall Roundabout)	Edinburgh/Midlothian	TBC	1. Define		
Culture					
Dunard Centre	City of Edinburgh	Mar 22	2. Implement		
Regional Housing Programme	Cross-Regional	Sep 19 (work prog report)			
Affordable Housing Programme	Cross-Regional	N/A	3. Deliver	N/A	N/A
Seven Strategic Sites	Cross-Regional	Winchburgh: Aug 18 Dunfermline: Jun 21 Others TBC	2. Implement		
Regional Delivery Alliance	Cross-Regional	N/A	2. Implement		N/A
Housing Company	Cross-Regional	N/A	3. Deliver		

Project Stages

Stage no.	Definition
1. Define	Business case being developed, and not yet approved by Thematic Board and Joint Committee.
2. Implement	Business case has been approved by Thematic Board and Joint Committee, and is being implemented. In a capital project, this may be construction; for skills projects this may be establishing a course or system.
3. Deliver	Project is in place and benefits realisation framework to assess if it is achieving its objectives.
4. Legacy	Project has resulted in mainstreaming or improvements to business as usual (impact) that is generated beyond the funded period.

T: Timeline B: Budget

RAG Status	Definition – Timeline	Definition – Budget	Mitigation
	Progressing in line with Implementation Plan or complete.	Project is in sound financial health. No significant financial concerns. Spending largely in line with profile.	No mitigation required
	Moderate Delay.	Project is financially stable. Some low to moderate financial concerns. Spending is for the most part in line with profile.	Project team must have actions in place for improvement. Project should be closely monitored by senior management and relevant boards.
	Delay is significant.	Project has some moderate to high financial concerns. Significant concerns with slippage.	Project team must have actions in place to establish a strategy to urgently address issues, with oversight from senior management and relevant boards.



2. City Region Deal Overview

Stages

As of August 2025:

1 Projects are in **Stage 1 Define**, which means that the project's business case is yet to be completed

8 Projects are in **Stage 2 Implement**, which means that the project's business case has been approved by Joint Committee and is in the process of being implemented

15 Projects are in **Stage 3 Deliver**, which means that the project has been implemented and is working towards delivering its objectives

Time and Budget

16 Projects are considered to be on **target** to be completed on time (green score) or have been completed on time

7 Projects are **delayed**, but considered to be within an acceptable range, with management action in place to address the issue (amber score)

16 Projects are considered to be in sound financial health, with spending largely in line with profile (green score)

4 Projects are considered to be financially stable, but with some low to moderate financial concerns (amber score)

1 Project considered to have some moderate to high financial concerns (red score)

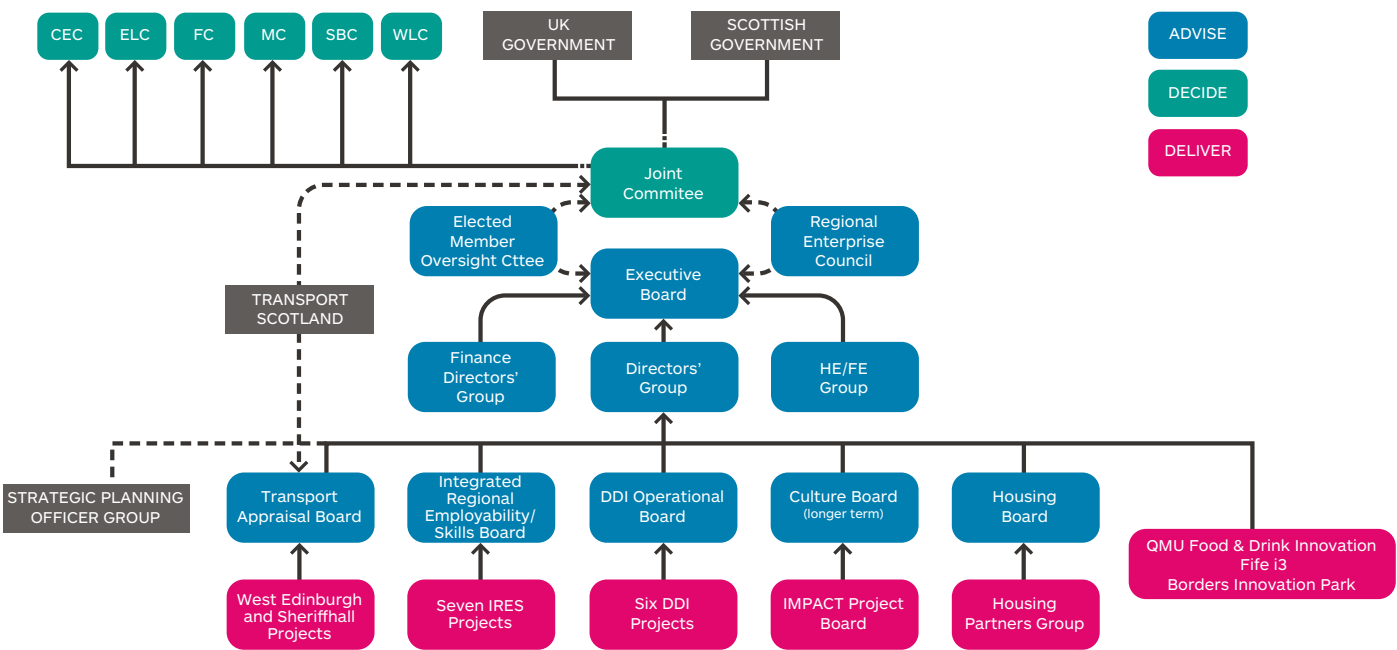


2. City Region Deal Overview

Governance

The City Region Deal has a comprehensive governance structure as shown below. This is summarised in the diagram below. There is more detail on the Boards and Groups in Section 3 of the **Deal Document**:

Functioning Governance





3. Financial Statement

This City Region Deal identifies new and more collaborative ways that partners will work with UK and Scottish Governments to deliver change to the city regional economy. The Governments will jointly invest £600 million over the next 15 years and regional partners committed to adding in excess of £700 million, overall representing a deal worth £1.3 billion. Since the Deal was signed, partner investment projections have increased by over £200m. As a result, the value of the Deal is now £1.6 billion. A summary of the City Region Deal total over a fifteen-year period is shown in the Table 2.



Table 2: Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal Financial Summary

Project	SG (£m)	UKG (£m)	Partner Capital (£m)	Partner Revenue (£m)	Total Funding (£m)
Bayes Centre	2.2	30.3	12	48.4	92.9
Borders Innovation Park	15.0	0.0	14.1	0.0	29.1
Easter Bush	1.3	16.1	27.3	19.2	63.8
Easter Bush Link Road	0.0	10.9	57.1	0.0	68.0
Edinburgh Futures Institute	2.2	55.7	145.7	130.0	333.6
Edinburgh Innovation Hub	1.4	28.6	27.6	0.0	57.6
Edinburgh International Data Facility	0.7	78.9	2.7	36.7	118.9
Fife i3 Programme	35.0	0.0	23.5	0.0	58.5
National Robotarium	1.4	21.0	0.0	0.0	22.5
Usher Institute	0.7	48.5	22.0	47.4	118.7
Total Research, Development & Innovation	60.0	290.0	332.0	281.7	963.6
Dunard Centre	10.0	10.0	94.0	0.0	114.0
Total Culture	10.0	10.0	94.0	0.0	114.0
Integrated Regional Employability & Skills Programme	25.0	0.0	0.0	11.2	36.2
Total Integrated Regional Employability & Skills	25.0	0.0	0.0	11.2	36.2

Table continues overleaf



3. Financial Statement

Project	SG (£m)	UKG (£m)	Partner Capital (£m)	Partner Revenue (£m)	Total Funding (£m)
A720 Sheriffhall Roundabout*	120.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	120.0
West Edinburgh Public Transport Improvement Programme	20.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	36.0
Total Transport	140.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	156.0
New Housing Partnership – Edinburgh Living**	15.0	0.0	248.0	0.0	263.0
Housing Infrastructure Fund**	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
Total Housing	65.0	0.0	248.0	0.0	313.0
Grand Total	300.0	300.0	690.0	292.9	1,582.8

*Includes £120m for Sheriffhall roundabout to be delivered by Transport Scotland.

** Funding issued by Scottish Government (Housing). Partner contribution of £248m relates to CEC on-lending.



3. Financial Statement

The City Region Deal Financial Summary for the period of April 2024 to March 2025 is set out in Table 3.



Table 3: Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal 2024/25

Project	2024/25	Cumulative (2018/19 - 2024/25)	
	CRD Expenditure (£m)	CRD Expenditure (£m)	CRD Expenditure as % of Funding
Bayes Centre	0.0	32.5	100%
Borders Innovation Park	0.2	3.0	20%
Easter Bush	0.0	17.4	100%
Easter Bush Link Road	0.5	2.0	18%
Edinburgh Innovation Hub	20.7	25.3	84%
Edinburgh Futures Institute	0.0	57.9	100%
Edinburgh International Data Facility	10.1	75.4	95%
Fife i3 Programme	5.7	25.5	73%
National Robotarium	0.3	22.5	100%
Usher Institute	0.0	49.2	100%
Total Research, Development & Innovation	37.6	310.7	89%
Dunard Centre	0.0	12.1	60%
Total Culture	0.0	12.1	60%
Integrated Regional Employability & Skills Programme	3.9	19.7	79%
Total Integrated Regional Employability & Skills	3.9	19.7	79%
A720 Sheriffhall Roundabout*	0.0	6.4	5%
West Edinburgh Public Transport Improvement Programme	0.3	0.7	3%
Total Transport	0.4	7.1	5%
New Housing Partnership – Edinburgh Living**	0.0	15.0	100%
Housing Infrastructure Fund**	0.0	0.0	0%
Total Housing	0.0	15.0	23%
Grand Total	41.9	364.6	61%

*Scottish Government funded. Transport Scotland taking forward scheme delivery.
 ** Funding issued by Scottish Government (Housing).

Across the Deal programme, £364.6 million of the £600 million government funding has been drawn down to March 25.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

This section summarises the themes, programmes and projects within the City Region Deal. It details the progress that has been made in line with the Implementation Plan.



Quarterly performance reports are shared between the Project Management Office (PMO) and Governments throughout the year and are published at each Joint Committee meeting.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Data-Driven innovation

The Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) initiative is a 15-year, £661 million investment and innovation programme launched in August 2018. It secured £270 million in capital funding from the UK and Scottish Governments as part of the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal.

The initiative developed a network of six hubs bringing together academic disciplines and external partners to solve some of the world's most pressing issues.

The hubs connect private, academic, and public organisations to foster innovation opportunities around technology and data. For researchers and innovators, this presents an opportunity to benefit from the scale and resources of large organisations through collaboration, while delivering economic and social benefits in the regions where they reside and work.

The hubs are based at the University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University and contribute 55,000 square metres of innovation space to the city region. Critically, they also provide a focus for increased collaboration across Higher Education Institutions in the region, as evidenced by the joint leadership of the National Robotarium, based at Heriot-Watt University, as well as partnership working with Further Education Colleges, aligned to the Data Skills Pathway.

Over the past year, DDI has concluded its investment phase, with two final Hub headquarters completed. The Edinburgh Futures Institute has been transformed from the Victorian Royal Infirmary building on Lauriston Place into a centre for modern-day contagion of ideas and dialogue around real-world challenges. It is home to a suite of interdisciplinary centres, external partners,



Bayes Centre



Edinburgh International Data Facility



Easter Bush Agritech Hub



Usher Building



4. The Deal – summary of progress

new companies, and students. The new Usher Building has also opened; based in Edinburgh's BioQuarter Health Innovation district, this Institute brings together specialists working at the intersection of data, health, artificial intelligence, social care and public health.

A key goal for this past year was ensuring the six hubs work together to maximise their impact as a single outward-facing DDI 'platform'. By leveraging this innovation platform, the University has enhanced the capacity of the institution and the city region to drive inclusive economic growth, share experience and knowledge, and avoid competition over external engagement.

DDI's key performance indicators are based on Talent, Research, Adoption, Data, and Entrepreneurship (TRADE). The most recent verified KPIs were signed off by University of Edinburgh Court in June 2025.

This marked a successful year for CPD (Continuing Professional Development) and MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) programmes under the Talent stream, representing 89% of DDI's total activity to date. The programme has now exceeded its end target by 130%.

£160 million in research activity was recorded with a 24% increase compared with 23/24. The initiative delivered £589million of activity in total, which represents 60% of DDI's total research target.

In the Adoption stream, £73.9 million income was generated, exceeding the end of programme target by 35%.



Edinburgh Futures Institute



National Robotarium

Finally, DDI supported 47 early-stage data-centric companies in the first half of 24/25, and has surpassed its end of programme target by 42%. The programme has also exceeded its follow-on funding targets by 311%.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

This year, the **Bayes Centre** has welcomed nine new companies to its community, including three international companies who have chosen it as their location for their UK base, taking the number of Members and Partners to 37. Several academic collaborations with companies based in Bayes have focused on local and societal impact. These include: using data science & AI to improve cycle routes in Edinburgh; track endangered Scottish seabirds; and monitoring biodiversity through birdsong. By the end of Q3, Bayes had led two and supported 13 strategically significant R&D and consultancy projects across the College of Science & Engineering, achieving an expected income of £9.2 million, far exceeding its target of £1.2 million.

Working with Schools from the College of Science and Engineering, Edinburgh Futures Institute and Edinburgh Law School, the Bayes Centre established a new programme of Space Bridges Courses, to bridge the gap in key short to medium space workforce skills in partnership with Fife College and on behalf of the UK Space Agency. This saw 145 enrolments onto the five university-led courses which focussed on helping people progress or transition into careers within the space sector and for professionals working alongside the sector.

Bayes continued to increase its support for entrepreneurial activity at the university and across the region supporting 90 founders, startups and scale ups across entrepreneurial programmes and events: the **Venture Builder Incubator**; **AI Accelerator**; and **EIE25**.



The AI Accelerator cohort 8

Photograph by Stewart Attwood



The Venture Builder Incubator cohort 5

Photograph by Neil Hanna



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

- The Bayes Centre hosted its largest ever Academic and Industry Meeting Day (**AIMDay**) with over 100 delegates participating in discussing 25 industry challenges. Five of these challenges went on to successfully secure up to £10,000 of EPSRC project funding each.
- **EIE** returned this year, bigger and better, showcasing emerging innovation and companies from Scottish Universities to a unique audience of 276 investors, founders and members of the Scottish tech ecosystem. By co-hosting the event with Tech Tour Growth Deeptech 25, EIE25

brought together 120 global investors with 42 deep tech startups and scaleups from across Europe.

- A new self-paced **online course** was launched for professional services staff at the University of Edinburgh on Generative AI. In the first two months, over a 1000 staff enrolled to upskill and became familiar with using GenAI to support their work.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Q2 25/26	Venture Builder Incubator (VBI) is partnering with Techscaler , funded by the Scottish Government, to grow VBI into the national tech incubator for Scottish Universities. The ambition is to support up to 20 additional researchers or postgraduate students, from any Scottish University, to start or grow their tech business. By Q2 25/26, the cohort will include researchers and postgraduate students from at least four other universities in Scotland.
Q4 25/26	Redesign, write and launch an updated version of the flagship online Data Science MSc with a development focused on a coherent curriculum that emphasises careers and practical applications of Data Science. The programme will begin recruiting students to start in September 2026.
Q4 25/26	Introduce opportunities for new industry and public sector organisations to hold their Away Day at Bayes, to curate bespoke away days at the university with specific input from an academic on a themed topic. Five away days will be held by Q4.
Q4 25/26	Bayes community to be grown to 45 co-located organisations and/or units, including Student Enterprise and other University units with a presence in the building, maximising their visibility and collaboration across University Schools.

Strategic added value

- Introduction of the Bayes Lounge, including **e-zone**, to the Bayes Centre building. The public access ground floor extends opportunities to external partners including founders, investors, companies, mentors and ecosystem builders to seamlessly engage with university teams working in entrepreneurship, enterprise and commercialisation alongside academics.
- **InnoConnect** funding of £50,000 enabled nine companies of various sizes, to access interdisciplinary expertise and specialist research facilities at the university to support the growth and innovation of their business.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

The **Easter Bush Agritech Hub**, continues to leverage world-class research and commercialisation facilities to establish itself as a global leader in Agritech excellence, fostering collaboration between researchers and companies.

Experts are utilising data to advance genetics and health innovations in agricultural science and business, as well as initiatives and novel systems designed to enhance production traits and other factors within food systems. Investment in Engineering Biology and Aquaculture capabilities has been secured, capitalising on strengths in data innovation. In the past year, a new DNA encoding method has been developed at the Hub, further aiding data-driven research and enhancing data insights and impact.

With the recent appointments of Maria Forlenza and Nick Wade to the aquaculture team, aquaculture offerings have been strengthened and expanded to include both genetic and immunological capabilities. This development has enabled the Hub to join industry alliances focused on tackling disease resistance within the sector and secure a prosperity partnership with a key local industry partner.

The DDI investment is transforming the scale and impact of agricultural technology, both in teaching and entrepreneurship. A new online data-driven breeding postgraduate programme has been approved, trained policymakers on the future of farming science, while Animal Health, Agritech, and Aquaculture (A3) companies continue to attract significant equity funding for their next stages of growth.

The Agritech Hub fosters an interactive community that brings together researchers and industry participants. This is exemplified



by the Industrial Doctoral Landscape Award application this year, where 23 companies formed a consortium to support 21 PhD studentships with the Roslin Institute, ensuring the delivery of essential skills for the bio-economy. Additionally, an A3 company is leading a large UK consortium initiative with DEFRA.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

1. Securing leverage strategic investment of over £5 million from the BBSRC, Roslin Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to strengthen the Engineering Biology for Animals and Food Systems via a new Engineering Biology Hub.
2. Strengthened and in the process of expanding the aquaculture offer with a wide range of industry alliances and partnerships: £8.5 million for Prosperity Partnership with Mowi; forming Industry Alliance to protect oyster production; contributing to Genome Map for Mussels; undertaking research vital for aqua industry; and helping industry to improve Mussel productivity.
3. New data methods and data-driven research that increase insight and impact:
 - Experts examine DNA changes that shaped life on Earth.
 - DNA encoding method aids data-driven genetics research.
 - Genetic insights inform manta ray conservation
4. Gene-edited technology developed by Roslin Scientists making pigs resistant to a virus has now been approved for use in food supply in USA – demonstrating the impact of the hub's research on food production.
5. Spinout **Rhizocore Technologies Ltd** won £1 million to lead a consortium focused on tackling agricultural pollution. Roslin Innovation Centre continues to support companies to secure funding to grow their business: **Cytomos**; **Dyneval**; **Betabugs** and **Raygonal**.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Ongoing	Continue to take a leadership role in the animal component of UK Engineering Biology initiatives through the newly established engineering biology hub for precision breeding in animals. Collaborate effectively with the engineering biology hub for health, also located at the University of Edinburgh, to strengthen partnerships with other UK institutions and industry partners. This collaboration will significantly enhance the precision breeding capabilities, ensuring that the region remains at the forefront of agricultural science and innovation.
Ongoing	Maintain the goodwill established within the Roslin Innovation Centre consortium, which includes 23 industry and public bodies supporting 21 studentships. This will help foster collaborative initiatives beyond the initial studentships. Additionally, aim to expand the consortium through industry-focused events.
Ongoing	Enhance the aquaculture capabilities on campus to support the growing activity in this area, which will include investing in specialised equipment for disease-resistant aquaculture.
Ongoing	Advance plans for a new veterinary first opinion practice to provide the next generation of veterinarians with a learning experience tailored for the future. This practice will ensure greater access to first opinion clinical practice materials for teaching students and, importantly, offer a dedicated programme focused on the financial and practical business skills necessary for graduates to thrive. This initiative will also expand access to first opinion facilities in the Midlothian area and facilitate increased outreach and research opportunities.

4. The Deal – summary of progress

Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) aims to ensure that the next generation of technologies are developed and used with social good and human flourishing at their core, baking in solutions rather than running to catch up with unintended consequences. This is done by connecting technical expertise with an understanding of human culture and society, forging partnerships beyond academia, offering a futures-focussed portfolio of training and education, and providing a space where new ideas are incubated, interrogated and translated into real-world impact.

Research at EFI is characterised by being radically interdisciplinary, impactful and in partnership. EFI supports innovation by bringing together diverse disciplines, communities, and data-driven approaches to co-create solutions for societal and global challenges. While working across all disciplines in the university, a strong concern with the human and the social is central to the work with technology.

Undergraduate and postgraduate students at the EFI work with practitioners on live projects focussed on the great global challenges. Open and bespoke executive education opportunities equip professionals at all stages of their careers with skills and understanding across technical capabilities, ethical considerations and practical applications.

Co-location and convening is central to the EFI's mission. With more than 300 people from over 50 organisations working in the building alongside students, researchers and academic colleagues, EFI convenes and catalyses cross-sector conversations and collaboration to enable newly integrated solutions. EFI engages the public in its work through its events programme, website and podcasts, ensuring an understanding of



Performers from In the Shadow of Tomorrow from EFI's Making Waves events season

Photo: Chris Scott



The Edinburgh Seven Tapestry at EFI

Photo: Chris Scott



Molly Danter from Scottish Dance Theatre and the CoSTAR Realtime Lab team work together to blend live performance with virtual production

Photo: Alan Richardson

what it does and how it contributes to the city, region and world.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

- Official opening of the building in April 2025 by the Chancellor of the University, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal. Attendees included Scottish, UK and local government representatives alongside those involved in building and working in the Edinburgh Futures Institute.
- Fourth Creative Tech Gathering brought together over 140 creative tech and data-driven innovation practitioners from across the creative industries to share, network, showcase their work and explore innovation within creative technology.
- Centre for Net-Zero High Density buildings based at EFI, with a £4.5 million funding boost from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), launched in May 2025. The Centre aims to transform the way urban buildings (tenements, flats, and commercial properties) are designed, retrofitted and maintained so that they are more energy-efficient, affordable to heat, and sustainable for future occupants.
- Compassion in Financial Services Hub launched to help develop a more inclusive, sustainable and compassionate financial system. Early work includes an innovative partnership with Young Scot to re-imagine and redesign financial products and services for young people that not only meet their needs but also have a positive impact on communities and the planet.
- Appointment of new Director for the Edinburgh Futures Institute and the creation of a refreshed vision which shows the ambition to support the economic development ambitions of the DDI network more broadly, through EFI's distinctive mandate around marrying development with social and human good.

Next milestones

The Futures Institute has developed a new vision for 2025-26 with the following key objectives:

Due Date	Milestone
Q2 25/26	Develop a plan for new incubator programme to support and accelerate DDI contribution to economic development.
Q3 25/26	Undertake a holistic review of education portfolio.
Q4 25/26	Develop the futures-focused professional education portfolio in human-centred and socially responsible technology.
Q4 25/26	Develop specific plans to scale research ambition in key flagship areas where EFI has early success.

Strategic Added Value

As part of the UKRI-funded **CoSTAR network** and in partnership with Abertay University, Code Base and Chroma Developments Limited, the **Realtime Lab at First Stage Studios, Edinburgh** is a collaborative space for industry leaders, creative visionaries, and researchers to explore virtual production. Looking at the integration of real-time and AI technologies, this lab is a hub for experimenting with dynamic interactive experiences. Connected through the Realtime Cloud Lab to the facilities at Abertay University, it will open doors for Scotland's creative professionals, providing them with next-generation production technologies to experiment and push the boundaries of their work. Resources are accessible through various open programmes, allowing companies and creatives to test, develop, and refine their ideas.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Edinburgh International Data Facility (EIDF)

Achieving the aims of the DDI initiative requires a powerful, high-capacity, and flexible data infrastructure capable of responsive and secure delivery of an ever-expanding range of complex and bespoke data and analytical services. These activities also demand a level of service (e.g., resilient to the loss of power, redundancy of equipment to mitigate the impact of sudden failures) that is not normally required for research computing applications and was not supported by previous facilities.

The **Edinburgh International Data Facility (EIDF)** City Region Deal investment was made up of four complementary components:

- **EIDF computer room:** a new high resiliency computer room (CR4) at the EPCC's Advanced Computing Facility in Midlothian, to complement the pre-existing three computer rooms, focused on supercomputing system provision for research users;
- **Data and software Infrastructure:** the underlying Data Science Cloud computing and data infrastructure to support the DDI initiative. As part of this component open source, and paid-for advanced data analytics, compute and other software infrastructure is being deployed;
- **Internet of Things (IoT) Service:** a regionally focused IoT network is being deployed across the City Region area, supporting both school-pupil engagement, as well as wider research and industry development;
- **Regional Data Haven:** the capacity for a regional data repository, with data provided by City Region Deal Partners, created to support a smart data generation infrastructure, aligned to work at a national level, such as Research Data Scotland, COG-UK, the Smart Data Foundry, and the Regional Health DataLoch Service.



Archer2



Advanced Computing Facility from the air



Nvidia H100 AI Processors



Apollo Server (housing GPU Processors)



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

EIDF's focus in 2024/25 was to upgrade existing services to meet the growing demand and to provision storage solutions that enable easy integration of these services. Upgrades included: a major software upgrade; 160 units added to the **EIDF GPU Service**; an upgrade to the latest **Cerebras** hardware (doubling its capacity); adding 144 GPUs to the **Safe Haven Services** to meet the rising demand for AI research and innovation on sensitive data held in Trusted Research Environments. This enabled the EIDF to act as a regional AI Factory.

EIDF received 11 (up 30% from last year) applications for access each month, which included a steady stream of regional companies, and some from wider afield, seeking access to EIDF expertise and resources.

The target of five out of six City Region Deal Local Authorities signing up to a full deployment of the IoT in Schools Service was also achieved.

The first year of the NERC-funded **Soprano** eco-acoustic EdgeAI research project was completed, which is using the Internet of Things Service network during development. This has already generated four further collaborative projects working with the Bat Conservation Trust, Forest Research and the Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment Programme, the James Hutton Institute and, locally, the Pentland Land Managers Association.

View all **EIDF services**.

Date Delivered	Milestone
Aug 24	Launched EIDF Edge to enable EIDF projects to host research web services from EIDF Virtual Desktops .
Aug 24	IoT in Schools Memorandum of Agreement with Fife Council in place.
Sep 24	Added 144 A100 NVIDIA GPUs to the Safe Haven Services . This was to meet the demand for AI research and innovation on sensitive data in Trusted Research Environments.
Oct 24	Launched EIDF Gitlab service to enable EIDF projects to collaborate on source code and project management globally.
Jan 25	IoT in Schools Memorandum of Agreement with Midlothian Council in place.
Feb 25	IoT in Schools Memorandum of Agreement with The City of Edinburgh Council in place.
Mar 25	Major upgrade to EIDF Cerebras Service from two CS-2 units to four CS-3 units. This was to enable research with even larger Large Language Models, reducing energy use.
Mar 25	Added SteatoSITE as the eighth Safe Haven to be hosted through EPCC Safe Haven Services . The focus of this Trusted Research Environment is on Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease in partnership with industry.
Mar 25	EIDF Engagement Manager started. They will increase use of EIDF and improve service offerings. Post is fully funded by HPE.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Date Delivered	Milestone
Apr 25	IoT in Schools Memorandum of Agreement with Scottish Borders Council in place.
Apr 25	Major upgrade to the GPU Service to incorporate features requested by users. Added 80 NVIDIA H200 and 80 H100 NVIDIA GPUs to bring the total GPUs in EIDF to 576. This was to meet the growing demand for GPUs for AI research and innovation.
May 25	Launched CephFS as the shared file system across EIDF GPU, Virtual Desktop and Notebook services.
Jun 25	EIDF received 30% more project applications between Jan - May 2025 than between Jan - May 2024. In 2025, 10 per cent of applications were from commercial organisations.
Jun 25	EPCC was reconfirmed as the host for the next UK Supercomputing Service. Working with DSIT and UKRI on the development of the revised Business Case for the Next National Supercomputing Service , with work on the procurement of the system and enabling works at the ACF to follow in early 2026.
Jun 25	Rollout of the IoT in Schools Service to all primary and secondary schools in Midlothian Council completed.

EIDF maintains its focus on **enhancing engagement and collaboration** with our DDI partners while expanding our services to ensure sustainability into the future.

In the coming year an **EIDF Container Registry Service** will be introduced – a digital storage space for users' software packages. Data science tutorials will also continue to be developed. To provide users, and EPCC, with a clear understanding of operational costings, an updated system of cost estimates based on expected usage, will be implemented.

EPCC will also be undertaking a **series of targeted EIDF events and activities** to foster community interaction and support the ongoing refinement of EIDF services to meet user needs. This approach has proven successful to date. EIDF will collaborate with DDI hubs, coordinating activities to enhance service offerings and attract further users and partners.

This **collaborative environment** will extend service capabilities to ensure they align with client requirements and evolving industry

demands. Such synergy is crucial to maintain EIDF's position as a key player in advancing regional Digital, AI, and Data expertise. The IoT Programme will **complete its rollout of the IoT in Schools service** to all schools within the City Region Deal local authorities that have signed up to the service. It will also commence engagement with local authorities in the region regarding the long-term continuation of the IoT in Schools service.

Finally, the activity in support of preparing the Advanced Computing Facility as the hosting location for the UK's **next National Supercomputing Service**, as announced in the Spending Review, has been re-started. In addition, EPCC was announced as the first UK National Supercomputing Centre in the Compute Roadmap in July. Work to support the delivery of this and to support the actions set out in the UK Government's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Opportunities Action Plan, particularly around access to **AI compute infrastructure**, are being undertaken.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

National Robotarium

The **National Robotarium** is the UK's centre for robotics and Artificial Intelligence. The state-of-the-art facility at Heriot-Watt University's Edinburgh campus is home to cutting-edge research and technology, which bridges the gap between science and industry, developing robotic solutions that address global challenges driven by sectoral and societal need.

With a core team of 30 full-time staff, the centre is also home to world-renowned researchers working with partners across Scotland, the UK and beyond to advance knowledge and drive innovation to ensure the ethical and responsible adoption of robotics and AI technologies. The centre is now home to over 140 people engaged in Robotics and AI.

Since its official opening in September 2022, the National Robotarium has solidified its position as a leader in the UK robotics sector, testing and developing new robotic applications to address real-world challenges. The centre has achieved significant success in growing its profile, particularly with policymakers from the UK and Scottish governments, including: hosting First Minister John Swinney for a national announcement around healthcare technology; continued discussions with Neil Gray around robotics for NHS Scotland; and the Deep Tech supercluster pilot launch with Scottish Enterprise. The UK Government's commitment of £40 million for regional robotics hubs demonstrates the centre's influence in shaping national robotics policy.

With a thriving portfolio of live projects, the National Robotarium advises industry—from SMEs to global conglomerates—on how they can catalyse their business through the adoption of robotics, engineering and



Ameca humanoid robot



Scotland's First Minister launches public services innovation plan at The National Robotarium



Industry event at National Robotarium

4. The Deal – summary of progress

automation to solve current and future challenges, and improve safety, efficiency and productivity.

Through its dedicated engineering and project management teams, experts in the facility work with organisations to explore, develop, design, implement and test robotic and AI solutions for deployment. In addition, the Business Development team offers expert advice and guidance on robotics strategy development, workforce training, investment case development, funding sources and infrastructure needs for effective robotic applications.

The centre also has a thriving outreach and engagement programme, which is committed to raising awareness of the benefits that robots, AI and automated systems can have on our everyday lives, building robotics skills and capabilities in the workforce, and inspiring the next generation of roboticists. This past year this outreach has expanded to have UK national reach with involvement in three national programs, one led by The National Robotarium. Total engagement numbers are now in excess of 27,000.

The facility also provides business acceleration and incubation support for entrepreneurial technology and robotics companies and is currently at capacity with a dozen start-ups and spinouts utilising the facility's labs, office spaces, equipment, and engineering expertise to develop their ideas, attract inward investment, and shape the future of robotics. In addition further support is given to 10 robotics companies not located in The National Robotarium but working closely with it. The early residents are now progressing to production and manufacturing, the main aim of the support given.



Robot petting zoo for Edinburgh Science Festival



Robotic arms project



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Launch of Blue Robotarium

The International Blue Economy Robotarium (**Blue Robotarium**) represents a groundbreaking expansion of the National Robotarium's capabilities, leveraging Orkney's unique marine environment and renowned technology expertise to advance the global blue economy. With a team of 400 service specialists, the Blue Robotarium harnesses the combined strengths of established Orkney-based companies alongside the National Robotarium to deliver innovative robotics, AI and autonomous systems solutions. Based in Orkney's distinctive archipelagic setting—with its strong focus on renewable energy, oil and gas, fisheries, aquaculture, and marine conservation—the facility provides an ideal testing ground for robotic and automated solutions across diverse marine sectors. The Blue Robotarium's mission centres on exploring, developing and applying robotics, AI and data management technologies to facilitate the safe and sustainable growth of the global blue economy, delivering benefits to island and coastal communities whilst advancing priority programmes including offshore wind automation, decommissioning robotics, and geographical digital twinning for critical marine infrastructure.

Headline Achievements in the past year

- **10** live industry projects.
- **20+** new partnerships formed.
- **140** people working in robotics and AI at the facility on a daily basis.
- **8,000 young people and 1,000 adults** engaged with the National Robotarium through school visits, competitions, outreach activities, bespoke work experience programmes for learners from across the UK, and science events/festivals, promoting the benefits of robotics and AI, and encouraging greater participation and diversity in computer science, data,

engineering and other STEM subjects across the UK. The total number of people engaged since the launch is now **over 27,000**.

- Pipeline of **100+** companies engaged in discussions to explore robotics solutions for their business
- **2** ongoing research collaborations.
- The successful expansion of **UKRAS-STEP**, a joint initiative with The University of Leeds to grow the UK's network of RAS (Robotics and Autonomous Systems) technicians and support their professional development, with multiple events hosted and increased visibility of RAS technical capabilities at the National Robotarium. The partnership has delivered two events—in London in June and Leeds in September last year—bringing together technicians from around the UK. The Centre have also offered placements to technicians which took place this year.
- **20+** companies, start-ups and entrepreneurs utilising business incubation support, with access to labs, equipment, engineering expertise and wider networks
- Implementation of the **Robotics Revolution policy plan**, which led to the UK Government's £40 million commitment for robotics adoption hubs, following the successful launch at Westminster and ongoing conversations with Department for Science, Innovation & Technology and Department for Business & Trade.
- **572** PR and media hits across national and international TV, radio, online and print.
- Sustained social media and digital engagement – **2422** new followers on LinkedIn (total **9098**) and **27,503** website visitors;
- The launch of The National Robotarium's **Instagram account**, accumulating 24,000 impressions since launching in October 2024.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Sep 25	First UK Robotics Expo launch.
Oct 25	Secure exhibition space in members area of Scottish Parliament to engage with MSPs ahead of 2026 Scottish Parliamentary Elections.
Dec 25	Lead the UK-level discussions for the establishment of a network of robotics adoption hubs across the UK.
Jan 26	Establish Robotics Scotland with the Scottish Government as a catalytic change programme for economic development and growth.
Mar 26	Establish engagement partners for enhanced regional and national outreach.
Apr 26	Funding to launch regional UK robotics adoption hubs begins.
Aug 26	Launch of robotics and AI capability maturity model programme for business-readiness.

Strategic Added Value

As a Global Research Institute at Heriot-Watt University, the National Robotarium leads world-class research that addresses global challenges and delivers benefits for industry, society and the environment. The centre delivers on its themed objectives, which are aligned to the overarching strategic aims of both Heriot-Watt University and the Data Driven Innovation initiative, led by The University of Edinburgh.

The National Robotarium actively identifies opportunities with colleagues across the DDI programme. The centre has funded a role within the Data Driven Innovation to support an Events Communications Lead, which helps work the hubs together through public engagement and strategic planning. The Data Driven Innovation communications forum has hosted monthly meetings in the different hubs, enabling a richer understanding of shared resources and capabilities.

These collaborative examples include:

- **With Bayes Centre and Edinburgh Innovations:** joint activities in Robotics and Autonomous systems across the

University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University, and both DDI hubs, including events, funding applications and cross-institutional support to start-ups and spinouts from Heriot-Watt University and University of Edinburgh, most notably via the **Venture Builder Incubator** and **Deep Tech Launchpad**, including co-hosting Tech Tours with Edinburgh Innovations.

- **With Edinburgh Futures Institute:** joint activities and events around developing trustworthy robotic and AI systems for greater accessibility and adoption, including co-hosting the sold-out EFI launch event in October 2024, featuring humanoid robot Ameca and Head of Robotics Dr Ingo Keller being interviewed by writer Jeanette Winterson.
- **With the Usher Institute:** exploring and developing opportunities for joint collaboration and enterprise opportunities.
- **With the Edinburgh International Data Facility:** encouraging collaboration and facilitating access to advanced computational technologies for academic and industrial partners, e.g. EIDF GPU Service for data processing and industrial AI.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Public engagement and outreach are integral parts of the National Robotarium's activities, providing a leading and socially conscious voice that encourages and inspires people of all ages to enhance their skills and knowledge to better understand the positive benefits robotics can bring to their lives and work.

Through the delivery of a sustained programme of engagement focused on robotics and artificial intelligence, the in-house engagement team puts audiences at the heart of its activities, increasing public understanding and critical appreciation of robotics and AI.

Through its own engagement strategy and its ongoing collaboration with the Heriot-Watt Engage team, the National Robotarium has been focused on the delivery of an ambitious Community Benefits plan, creating inclusive growth through youth and school engagement, work experience placements and job creation.

In the past 12 months, the centre has hosted and supported activities that are beneficial to the local community including robotics clubs, national robotics competitions for young people in school, further education and higher education (including UK-wide robotics competitions such as the **FIRST Tech Challenge**), events at Panmure House with Heriot-Watt's Computer Science and Robotics Engagement Lead, Dr Alistair McConnell.

Notable commercial achievements for tenant companies include **Frontier Robotics** making their first commercial sale to the **Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult**, and **Bioliberty** launching their first commercial product and branching out by establishing office space in the US where they are working to further advance the product with clinicians. These successes demonstrate the centre's effectiveness in supporting spinout companies from concept to market readiness.

Engineers at the facility have also been at the forefront of developing new innovations in soft robotics, harnessing expertise from both Heriot-Watt and The University of Edinburgh, to develop soft tentacle-like manipulators to improve sensing capacity and inspection of offshore units for a global energy company.

The National Robotarium also provides space for students in the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics, a collaboration between Heriot-Watt University and the University of Edinburgh, which delivers CDTs (Centres for Doctoral Training) for Robotics and Autonomous Systems (CDT-RAS) and Dependable and Deployable AI for Robotics (CDT-D2AIR), including hosting the first annual Robotics Summer School with Edinburgh Centre for Robotics.

The National Robotarium is fully engaged in informing policy on robotics and AI, advising government through a number of high-profile visits. The facility's success in driving Scotland and the UK's innovation and technology agenda includes developing a holistic policy plan that considers elements from ethics and regulation to economic growth and public perception.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Robotics Readiness

The National Robotarium's Robotics Readiness programme has successfully delivered six workshops since April, engaging organisations across various industry sectors in comprehensive assessments of their robotics capabilities and strategic adoption pathways. Four additional workshops are scheduled for the remainder of the year, alongside three bespoke workshops tailored to specific client requirements—one completed and two forthcoming. The programme continues to build strong awareness and understanding of robotics opportunities across industry, with participants gaining valuable insights into how robotics can enhance their operations. Enhanced follow-on support mechanisms are actively being developed to facilitate the transition from assessment to implementation, with encouraging early engagement from clients exploring proof-of-concept opportunities.

The National Robotarium continues to assess and develop robotics capabilities across industry, providing comprehensive support to organisations seeking to understand and implement robotic solutions. Through detailed capability assessments and readiness evaluations, the centre helps businesses identify opportunities for automation and develop strategic approaches to robotics adoption.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Usher Institute

The **Usher Institute** is transforming health in society by working with people, populations and data.

It has been a big year for the Usher Institute, working up to the official opening of the Usher Building on 26 June 2025. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organisation opened the Usher Building alongside the Rt. Hon. Ian Murray MP and Maree Todd MSP.

Ahead of the **official opening**, a number of key events and conferences have been held in the building, bringing together public, private and third sector colleagues to collaborate and enable data-driven improvements to the delivery of health and social care. Over 100 organisations have been welcomed into the building to engage in meetings and events exploring research priorities and real-world challenges.

The Usher Institute continues to champion the role that data and digital technologies have to improve outcomes for individuals and populations, and brings together expertise from across multiple disciplines as diverse as social scientists, engineers, machine learning/AI experts and clinicians and other health and care professionals. Professor Cathie Sudlow OBE took up the role of Director in May 2025, shortly after publishing her independent review of the UK's health data landscape.

DataLoch, based at Usher, is a partnership between the University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian. It brings together data collected as part of people's day-to-day use of health and social care services. After successful application, researchers from diverse organisations can securely access



The Usher building

Image: Craig Nicholl



Usher building interior social area

de-identified data extracts to investigate a wide range of issues and work on innovative solutions that ultimately improve care services and address health inequalities.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

- **Official opening ceremony** led by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organisation, alongside the Rt. Hon. Ian Murray MP and Maree Todd MSP in June 2025.
- Kathy Harrison, Programme Lead for DataLoch won **Digital Leader Award** at the 2025 Holyrood Connect Digital Health and Care Awards.
- **Research** led by Dr Ahmar Shar concluded NHS Scotland must boost treatment by a fifth to cut backlog exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Data scientists and clinical researchers are working with high street opticians for the first time to develop a digital tool that can predict a person's risk of dementia from a routine eye test.
- The Usher Building featured in **Doors Open Day** in September 2024, when members of the public were treated to a curated programme of science activities and engagement.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Autumn 2025	Build and grow stakeholder relationships coming out of events, conferences and activity in the Usher Building.
Autumn 2025	Complete onboarding of partners into office space in Usher Building in final available neighbourhoods.
Ongoing	Deliver public events in the Usher Connects programme , including annual lecture in McEwan Hall on 25 September 2025.
Ongoing	Continue to deliver education programme, including new short courses on the newly launched University short courses platform.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Edinburgh Innovation Hub

The **Edinburgh Innovation Hub** is a £40m flagship development by Queen Margaret University (QMU) and East Lothian Council (ELC). Development of the Hub signals the project partners' ambition to create a nationally significant facility to capture, support and grow innovation-led enterprise in East Lothian and the Edinburgh region. Located next to Queen Margaret University on land owned by East Lothian Council the Hub will be a catalyst for the development of the wider Edinburgh Innovation Park.

The Hub will be a best-in-class innovation facility developed as the first phase of Edinburgh Innovation Park, a new and unique development for innovation-led enterprise adjacent to QMU and minutes by train from Edinburgh City Centre. The Hub will significantly enhance the already successful offering of the Edinburgh region for innovation and tech-based enterprise by providing serviced and fitted commercial laboratory and office space for high growth tech and innovation-based businesses.

The Hub will become a vibrant innovation cluster where high growth SMEs and innovation-led businesses co-locate with research and business networks under one roof to deliver a specialist service offering for commercial innovation. The Hub will provide a nucleus where people will congregate to network. It will provide high quality meeting space that can be configured for conferences, seminars, meetings, training and social events.



Edinburgh Innovation Hub: Development Site



Edinburgh Innovation Hub: Development Site

The Hub will be a regional and national resource that will enable cross-sector collaborations and interactions at all levels. Businesses will benefit from a network of business support and people and businesses will be brought together to share knowledge and skills at the 'crossing point' between R&D and commercialisation.

Companies locating to the Hub will benefit from facilitated access to the University, its social and intellectual capital and to its business support services. Co-location will encourage mentoring and peer support. Close access to business development staff and business support intermediaries will enhance the support on offer, facilitating connections with investors and enabling business collaboration.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

The close linkages and proximity to the University Departments, their students and expertise is an important aspect of this initiative.

Target markets for the Hub will be companies and enterprises that are innovation-led. In particular, the Hub will target companies in important growth sectors with specialist needs, including Life Sciences, Food & Drink, Technology, Startups, Spins outs and Enterprise initiatives.

Strategic Added Value

- The Hub forms a key part of an ecosystem of Innovation themed projects promoted by the ESES City Region Deal.
- Collaboration across the Higher Education and Further Education network within the ESES City Region Deal has been ongoing. QMU has been, for example, through its existing collaborative partnership with Edinburgh Napier University assessing the opportunity for Edinburgh Napier University to contribute to the EIP development in terms of supporting Innovation support for SMES additional to or supplementary to the QMU service offering. Arising out of this, QMU has, with Edinburgh College, adopted the Bright Red Triangle model of entrepreneurial support first developed at Edinburgh Napier University. This means that more students, graduates and researchers in Scotland will have the opportunity to access an entrepreneurial education and to view entrepreneurship as a viable career path.
- QMU continues to liaise with other Scottish City Region Deals that have Innovation focussed activity to ensure alignment and collaboration in the national context.
- The Hub will generate job opportunities in the sector for highly skilled graduates both through the innovation led growth of the businesses located there, and through providing access to the space, facilities and services for graduate start-up companies.
- The wider project will contribute to job density improvement for the wider city region by making available infrastructure/ construction opportunities and employment opportunities within the Hub and the EIP.
- The Joint Venture structure created by the Hub partners enabled them to reclaim VAT on the Hub construction. These amounts were reinvested in the project budget to enable further positive impacts to the facility and the strategic business case.
- Linking in with the Capital City Partnership to capture through the procurement process a range of community benefits.

The Hub is phase 1 of the development of a wider Edinburgh Innovation Park (EIP).

Headline achievements in the past year

Date	Milestone
Jan 2024	Commencement of construction.
Dec 2024	Topping Out Ceremony.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Oct 2025	Handover of the construction of the Hub.
Nov 2025	Hub operational.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

The Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (i3) Programme is a £58 million, 10-year programme delivered by Fife Council.

The investment is delivering new business premises and immediately available serviced land. The new business accommodation is located within existing business clusters in mid and south Fife, adjacent to growth corridors (M90 and A92). It aims to facilitate more joint working between the region's universities and Fife businesses, to drive up productivity and to deliver higher value, skilled, permanent jobs from data driven innovation.

The new industrial and commercial stock will ensure that Fife's industrial estates provide flexible space for innovative manufacturing industries with cutting-edge digital and energy capabilities. Five sites have been developed in Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, Dalgety Bay, Lochgelly and Dunfermline during the first six years of the Programme. 6.59ha of employment land has been unlocked for private sector development and 6,209 m² of new business accommodation has been delivered. Demand remains high for new business units.

Headline achievements in the past year

- Tranche 2 and 3 of the Fife i3 Programme are in delivery.
- Construction completed for Levenmouth Task Force Units.
- Construction completed for Fife Interchange North, City of Dunfermline.
- Construction started at Levenmouth Phase 2.
- Construction started at John Smith Business Park, Kirkcaldy.
- Construction started at Flemington Road, Glenrothes – refurbishment//new build business units.
- Three sites totalling 5.1ha sold to private sector for investment.



Fife Industrial Investment Innovation



Easy Living Development Artist Impression, The Avenue, Lochgelly



Fife Interchange



Levenmouth Units



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Q2 25/26	Construction starts at Tranche 3 Levenmouth Site Servicing Project.
Q2 25/26	Construction starts at Tranche 3 John Smith Business Park, Kirkcaldy Site Servicing Project.
Q2 25/26	Flemington Road, Glenrothes Business Units – construction completes.
Q2 25/26	Plot 7a & 7b, The Avenue purchase concludes.
Q2 25/26	Levenmouth Business Units Phase 2 – construction completes.

Strategic Added Value

The Fife i3 Programme works closely with Scottish Borders Council to share Lessons Learned. It has engaged with the DDI Programme around innovation opportunities. These linkages will deepen through the implementation of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Innovation Action Plan.

Work continues to develop and refine the Programme's approach to sustainable construction and social value on a project-by-project basis.

Fife Council's inclusive growth priority is the Mid-Fife Area. However, all projects contribute to inclusive growth. The investment projects were selected on these criteria:

- Ability to support strategic business clusters;
- Location / connectivity to strategic growth corridors (M90, A92);
- Fit with existing predominant land use;
- Potential impact on sensitive or incompatible land uses; and
- Potential to deliver lower-cost business space.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Borders Innovation Park

The Borders Innovation Park, situated next to the Borders Railway terminus at Tweedbank, will deliver much-needed high quality business space to the Scottish Borders.

Costing £29 million and being constructed in three phases, the programme is intended to stimulate growth for local businesses and inward investors together with associated job creation.

As with many other rural economies, the Scottish Borders must overcome the problem of market failure caused by a combination of remote locations and poor infrastructure, a lack of supply of modern business premises and the increasing obsolescence of existing stock.

The first building to be completed in Phase 1 of the Borders Innovation Park opened in July 2022 having been delayed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The IT firm, CGI, has leased one floor in the building while Inspire Learning, a trading digital learning programme, occupies part of the other floor. The rest of the building is occupied by Mainetti, a manufacturing business.

The pandemic also impacted on the programme in that the aspirations to build out speculative office space in Phases 2 and 3 were exposed by changes in market conditions for this type of accommodation. This led to a review of the planned mix of developments in these phases. The development of road and service infrastructure to unlock the land for Phase 3 development has been undertaken.



Borders Innovation Park

Approval has now been given for Phase 2, which will extend the existing office facility from Phase 1 with the construction in 2025-26 of another 1,141 m² of office space designed for flexible division into four separate offices to accommodate future tenant needs.

In summary, the Borders Innovation Park will greatly enhance the inward investment offer in the Scottish Borders, particularly to high value sectors, as well as assisting existing businesses to improve their competitiveness. It will also help to address inequalities in the area through providing access to better quality, higher paid jobs.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

Date	Milestone
Nov 2024	Submission of Stage 1 Hub report for Phase 2.
May 2025	Submission of Stage 2 Hub report for Phase 2.
May 2025	Approval of Phase 2 Change Control by Scottish Borders Council.
Jun 2025	Approval of Phase 2 Change Control by City Region Deal Joint Committee.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Aug 2025	Start of construction of Phase 2 office building.
Jun 2026	Phase 3 FBC to Joint Committee.
Jun 2026	Completion of construction of Phase 2 office building.

Strategic Added Value

Scottish Borders Council is working with strategic partners including Fife Council, the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University and South of Scotland Enterprise to maximise the benefits of data-driven innovation and its potential to increase the number of innovation-active businesses, both regionally and locally. This work is taking place within the context of both the Borders Innovation Park programme and the relevant strands of the Regional Prosperity Framework.

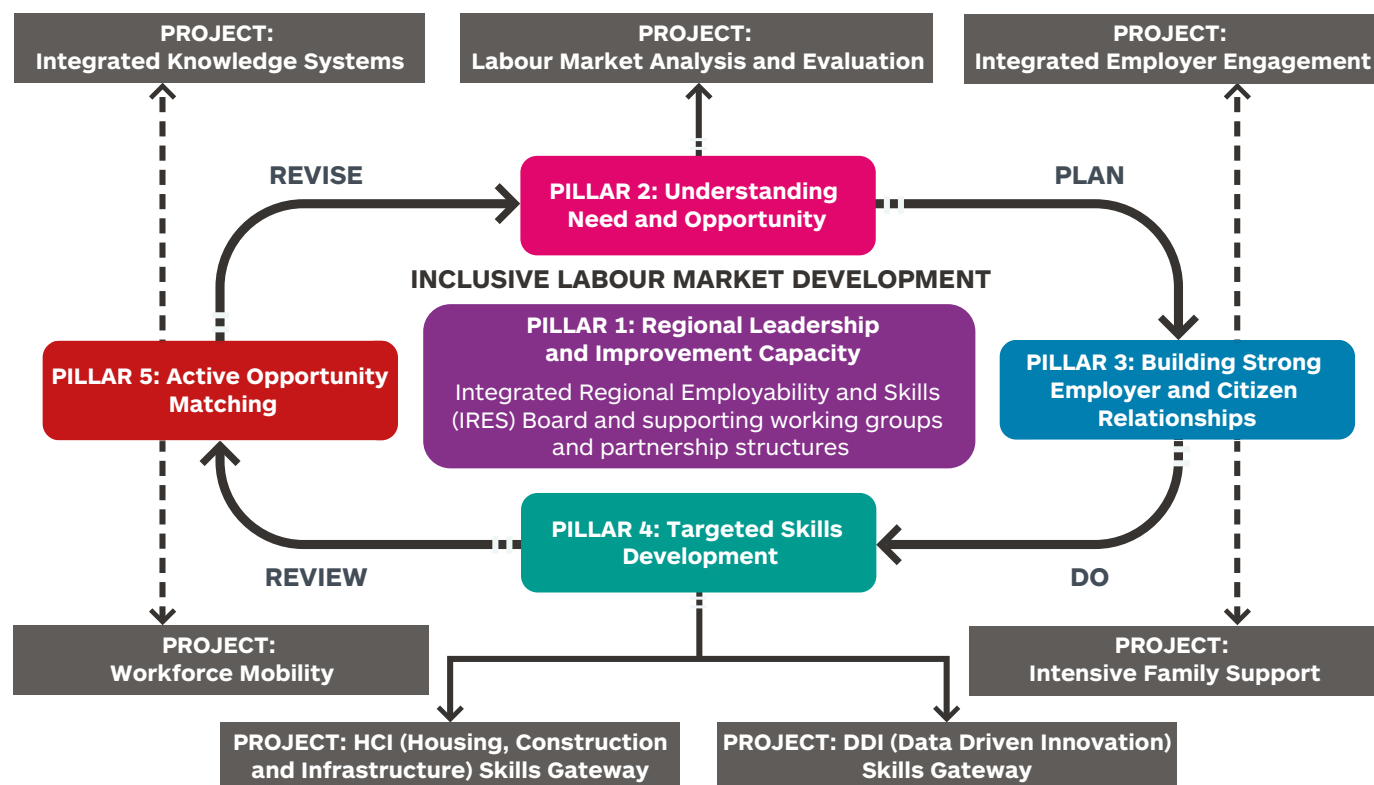
Scottish Borders Council is also working with South of Scotland Enterprise to maximise the business support and advice available to businesses as well as other aspects of the Borders Innovation Park programme. As a participant in the City Region Deal Housing, Construction and Infrastructure (HCI) Skills Gateway, the Council will look to develop new talent through utilising the construction opportunities during the build phases of the innovation park.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Integrated Regional Employability and Skills

The Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme and its cross-sector partnership seeks to evolve regional labour market policy and practice to help drive inclusive growth. The programme continues to focus on five improvement pillars targeting known areas of weakness or opportunity.



The IRES partnership is funded by £25 million investment (over eight years) and has a target of delivering an additional 14,700 skill improvements; 5,300 people into employment; and a further 500 career enhancements through its 7 themes:

1. Integrated knowledge management systems
2. Labour market analysis and evaluation
3. Integrated employer engagement
4. Intensive family support service
5. Housing construction and infrastructure (HCI) targeted skills gateway
6. Data-driven innovation (DDI) targeted skills gateway
7. Workforce mobility

The IRES programme has already delivered 127k skills improvements, achieved 8,300 job outcomes, supported 622 people to progress in their career and secured an additional £11.2m funding to enhance IRES activity.

The IRES programme continues to evolve, streamline, and integrate the region's employability and skills system to enhance our capacity and capability to drive inclusive growth and create added value for stakeholders.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

1 Integrated Knowledge Systems (IKS)

- Midlothian Council migrated to **Helix** bringing their employability data and their work under Community Learning and Development (CLD) into the system.
- All the work was completed to allow West Lothian Council to migrate at the very beginning of 25/26, with a test system, data mapping, training and extensive engagement.
- Helix functionality and usage was expanded to include Grant Applications - with pilot use for City of Edinburgh Council No One Left Behind commissioning, work to show a Provider Directory and new delivery across the different partners.



2 Labour Market Analysis & Evaluation (LMAE)

- Delivery of regional research into economic inactivity and the skills system's potential response.
- Delivery of research into supply and demand of skills in key sectors.



3 Integrated Employer Engagement (IEE)

- In 2024 IEE Employer Fund supported 49 businesses with their 'growth' phase across the region. Through engagement with Business Gateway, the eligibility criteria has been widened to businesses who have been trading for under 24 months from 18. The follow-up engagement has reported the creation of 25 jobs, 20 jobs retained, 22 people upskilled, 19 businesses were able to develop their net zero delivery, and 33 businesses have requested support with fair work.
- Through the Regional Energy Masterplan, IEE has led the 'Skills Supply' component which has resulted in analysing the qualification landscape within the region for curriculum options across heat decarbonisation and retrofit. The second phase saw a priority list of qualifications created with comprehensive specifications for each new proposed award, including costs and possible awarding bodies. Early testing is underway with one of the proposed qualifications; IBT (Insulation Building Treatments) through an experienced worker route and having engaged with SQA, supporting making the SVQ SQA route available in Scotland.
- IEE supported the launch of the **CTTS Academy** (Cable Telecoms Training Services) in the Scottish Borders, allowing local businesses to access accredited utility training previously only available in England. An IEE-funded pilot saw six employability clients complete training and move into local employment.





4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

The model has since been replicated in the Scottish Borders using UK Shared Prosperity Funding and expanded into East and Midlothian, with potential rollout in Edinburgh through **Capital City Partnership's Vocational Training Framework (VTF)**. CTTS, based in Lincoln, owns a UK-wide City and Guilds framework for cabling and utilities - also a route into offshore wind - and is in talks with Skills Development Scotland to adapt it into a Scottish apprenticeship model, with IRES involved in early discussions.

4 Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS)

- Building on the anti-Stigma Charter workshop co-designed with families across the region, the commitment has evolved into a regional campaign - Change the Story, developed throughout 2024–25. The campaign aims to challenge negative attitudes and discrimination towards people experiencing poverty. Organisations across the region are invited to sign the commitment and take meaningful action to end poverty-related stigma. A dedicated website, campaign materials, and a regional launch event are being planned to extend campaign's reach and lay the foundation for long-term impact.
- Discussions with The City of Edinburgh Council and Fife Council have helped shape local implementation of the campaign. In Edinburgh, a partnership approach has emerged, with council staff receiving training on poverty-related stigma awareness. The campaign has also supported the development of a series of animated videos to raise awareness and promote understanding across services.
- Following the successful funding of a joint research proposal with Strathclyde University, PhD researcher Rose Watson has begun a three-year study exploring the scope and impact of the Intensive Family Support Service. The research, which focuses on relational approaches within whole family support, is now underway, with fieldwork taking place across multiple local authority areas. Early findings will be shared through webinars and conferences, contributing to the wider evidence base on effective family support interventions.
- Scottish Borders Council has used Whole Family Wellbeing Funding to extend the Intensive Family Support Service model into the region, establishing a new team of eight dedicated staff. This represents a significant step forward, as no formal whole family support infrastructure previously existed in the area. The investment has enabled earlier, more coordinated intervention for families experiencing multiple and complex challenges, laying the groundwork for long-term, place-based support.





4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

5 Housing, Construction, and Infrastructure (HCI) Skills Gateway HCI Skills Gateway – YouTube



- A consortium including HCI Skills Gateway successfully bid for £4.5 million to establish the **Centre for Net Zero High Density Buildings** to support civic and industry partners in Edinburgh and Glasgow City Regions and in partnerships across the UK. The submission was selected under the UKRI (R&D) Call for Green Economy Centres. £750,000 will be utilised to progress skills-based net zero projects.
- Edinburgh Napier University, hosts of HCI Skills Gateway, secured a multi-million-dollar renewal of the **Trimble Inc Technology Lab** in Edinburgh. HCI's work with Trimble – including COP26, Timber TED, and the Global Infrastructure qualification – has been intrinsic to securing this investment.
- Four HCI Further Education Partners – Borders College, Edinburgh College, Fife College and West Lothian College – have achieved over 5,000 enrolments to HCI-funded net zero and sustainable construction short courses, including installation of EV-charging, insulation and building treatments, and waste management.
- Pioneering **Timber TED** delivery partners **NMITE** celebrated the announcement of a new £2 million Future of Work Skills Hub, together with a further £111,000 in UK Shared Prosperity Fund support specifically for HCI programme Timber TED.
- Thanks to HCI funding, over 20 secondary schools in Edinburgh and South East Scotland joined the Powering Futures SCQF Level 6 Metaskills challenge, with 1,500 S5 and S6 pupils solving real-life sustainability challenges set by business partners.

6 Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Skills Gateway



- As of June 2025, the **Data Education in Colleges** programme has achieved a significant milestone, reaching a total of **10,000 learner participations**.

Key participation demographics include:

- 1,893 learners self-identified as having a recorded disability.
- 256 learners were classified as women returners.
- 361 learners reported care-experienced backgrounds.
- 996 enrolments were from students identifying as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME).
- This continued growth reflects the programme's commitment to widening access and supporting underrepresented groups in data education.
- In 2025, the Data Education in Colleges team has made significant progress in learner achievement across the progression pathway of SQA Data Science qualifications at SCQF Levels 3 to 8. The following table outlines **achievement rates** by course and level:



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

Course	Level	Achievement (%)
NQ Data Skills	3	91%
NQ Data Skills	4	90%
NPA Data Science	4	90%
NPA Data Science	5	91%
NPA Data Science	6	73%
Python for Data Science	6	100%
NPA Data Science	7	75%
NPA Data Science	8	79%

7 Workforce Mobility (WFM)

- A new data analysis tool was delivered for Local Authorities across Scotland that enables them to fully analyse their bus services data quickly and in a way that provides more detailed information to allow quick and informed decision making. The data dashboards utilise graphs and charts as an effective communication tool for senior officers, Elected Members and the public.
- Through work with **SEStran** and **Scottish Futures Trust**, approval was gained across nine Local Authorities to investigate regional collaboration for EV charging expansion delivery and the creation of a common set of contract and procurement documents.
- The **'Bus Driver Careers' website** went live in May 2024 on **Helix.scot** and has received positive feedback from bus operators. A series of recruitment events took place across the region in collaboration with bus operators.
- The East Lothian Council **Journey Hub** and Active Travel Plan were delivered in May 2024, which is based on various data sets provided by Workforce Mobility Project and a comprehensive community consultation.





4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Dec 2025	IRES programme strategic development • Work is progressing to co-create a proposition for a regional skills programme post-March 2027 when the current IRES programme is scheduled to finish. Skills bootcamp pilot activity will take place in December to test the model in one of the key sectors ahead of implementing more widely during second generation phase. The proposal for the second-generation IRES programme will be submitted to ESES CRD Joint Committee for approval in December, after which liaison with Scottish and UK Government colleagues will be increased regarding possible funding for Second Generation IRES Programme, or component project elements.
Dec 2025 Ongoing Ongoing	Integrated Knowledge Systems (IKS) • Fife Council data transferred into Helix with site and data language mapping. • Expand use of Helix to include CLD for Scottish Borders and East Lothian Council. • Develop and roll out new functionality across Helix including Community Benefits tracking, grant applications and management.
Mar 2026	Labour Market Analysis & Evaluation (LMAE) • Complete new research to be agreed.
Jul 2025 Jul 2025 Aug 2025 Aug 2025	Integrated Employer Engagement (IEE) • Promote small grants programme through regional Business Gateway teams to support the development of innovative skills projects. • Conduct industry consultation to understand local employer needs for ongoing employer engagement enabling support through a future IRES, this consultation also identifies curriculum gaps. • Launch community benefit schedule of delivery for the Dunard Centre with the awarded contractor, Balfour Beatty. • Launch community benefit schedule of delivery for the Borders Innovation Park (Phase 2/3) with the awarded contractor; Morrison Construction.
Oct 2025 Oct 2025 Oct 2025	Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) • Deliver the official regional launch of Change the Story, including an event, public release of the campaign website, and coordinated communications activity across City Region partners to promote the commitment and drive organisational sign-up. • Publish initial findings from the Strathclyde University PhD research on relational approaches in whole family support, and research on families' perceptions of change, capturing how those directly supported by the service understand and experience progress in their lives, alongside The Improvement Service's Social Return on Investment (SROI) and impact evaluation reports for Intensive Family Support services, providing robust evidence to inform future policy and commissioning decisions. • Ongoing engagement with service delivery partners and families will remain a priority throughout 2025–26. This includes facilitating a regional reflective event for all IFSS partners to support peer learning and continuous improvement, providing regular reflective practice opportunities for frontline staff, and continuing to offer storytelling opportunities for families to share their lived experiences and influence future service development.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Dec 2025	Housing, Construction, and Infrastructure (HCI) Skills Gateway To develop strategic next steps for a regional approach to inclusive, net zero construction skills training, in partnership with the Centre for Net Zero High Density Buildings, Regional Prosperity Framework Net Zero Skills Accelerator, FE and HE partners, and ESES Strategic Sites Programme and Investment Prospectus.
Mar 2026	HCI 2025/26 small grantees programme (focusing on hard-to-reach groups) to conclude, engaging 200 trainees and 500 young people with eight key third-sector partners across Edinburgh and South East Scotland.
Jun 2026	HCI 2025/26 FE College programme (£65,000 to each of the four Colleges for piloting next stage net zero construction training) to conclude.
Aug 2025	Data Skills Gateway A joint Showcase of AI Resources for Scottish Teachers is to be run by the Data Education in Schools team, in conjunction with Scottish AI Alliance and the Children's Parliament.
Sep 2025	Professional Learning courses are to run with an AI literacy component for primary and secondary teachers.
Sep 2025	Further embedding of data and Ai content across courses at Edinburgh Napier and Queen Margaret universities.
Ongoing	Borders, Edinburgh, and Fife Colleges are collaborating to integrate Core, Artificial Intelligence, Data, and Meta Skills into programmes at SCQF Levels 4 and 5. Edinburgh College will pilot this integrated delivery model during the 2025/26 academic year, with plans for future scaling across all SCQF Level 4 courses. Although no longer directly funded by the Data Skills Gateway, this progress has been enabled by the investment provided through the initial phase of the programme.
Ongoing	A Data and AI community programme will be delivered as a professional learning initiative to over 20 staff members from Midlothian Community Learning. This initiative includes the pilot delivery of newly developed SQA Artificial Intelligence units at SCQF Levels 4, 5, and 6 through community-based courses. The programme aims to build staff capacity and extend access to AI education within community learning settings.
Ongoing	Data Skills for Work to lead on the editing, designing and publishing of White Paper to illustrate the gaps in data and AI skills. This will be complemented by the development of a workshop and skills tool to assess data and AI literacy levels and help organisations to upskill (number of organisations to be engaged with still to be agreed).
Ongoing	Work will commence on evaluating activity across the programme and on shaping a follow-on Data and AI skills proposition to run beyond the initial IRES funding. A range of funding sources will be targeted.
Mar 2026	Workforce Mobility (WFM) Continue the roll-out and development of PowerBi Templates to Local Authorities to better analyse the bus services data that they receive from Bus Operators to aide proactive identification of issues and opportunities.
Mar 2026	Develop a Business Case for the continuation of the Workforce Mobility Project and gain approval of the principles through City Deal governance, with a clear plan of how a sustainable funding solution can be delivered.
Mar 2026	Work with Planning teams across the region to utilise the Transport Assessment tools that have been developed by the project to inform the next versions of Local Development Plans and any Regional Spatial Strategies.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Strategic Added Value

Inclusive growth remains at the centre of the IRES Programme with the aim of supporting long term sustainable destinations for those who live and work within the ESES city region. By supporting local and regional ambition, the IRES project has contributed to national policy to help shape future investment for the region. IRES provides the key human aspect of the ESES City Region Deal, supporting citizens to upskill, reskill and progress in key industry sectors that are crucial to the growth of the region. To achieve these goals, IRES has focused on several key strategic activities:

- Bringing together a wider range of partners and stakeholders to develop new Skills Gateways and Bootcamps, as part of the co-design process shaping the IRES Programme beyond 2027.
- Establishing links to key regional economic drivers such as **Forth Green Freeport**, **Regional Innovation Action Plan**, **Seven Strategic Sites for Construction**, Net Zero and Retrofit Challenge.
- Key focus on tackling climate emergency through addressing established skills gaps in partnership with **Centre for Net Zero High Density Buildings**.
- Development of new Skills Bootcamp model to establish employer-led, integrated and inclusive pathways into key sectors.
- Driving cross cutting themes within regional networks such as **Community Wealth Building**.

4. The Deal – summary of progress

A720 (Sheriffhall Roundabout)

The Sheriffhall Roundabout is currently the only junction on the A720 Edinburgh City Bypass that is not grade separated, which means the City Bypass is at the same level as the A7 and A6106 local approach roads. This at-grade, six-way junction, often experiences significant queuing, especially during peak hours. The Scottish Government's commitment through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal includes £120 million to support improvements to the A720 Edinburgh City Bypass for the grade separation of Sheriffhall Roundabout. The project is being delivered by Transport Scotland and is subject to Transport Scotland's normal governance procedures.

The proposed new flyover arrangement at Sheriffhall will separate local traffic, including public transport, from strategic traffic on the bypass and will improve traffic flow on the bypass at this location, improving road safety and journey times for all users. In addition, the proposed new active travel facilities, consisting of nearly two miles of segregated shared surface and five dedicated grade separated subways under the new roundabout and A720 linking the A6106 and the A7 either side of the junction, will provide cyclists and pedestrians with their own safer dedicated alternative routes, removing the existing barrier and transforming the way they cross the A720 City Bypass.



Visualisation of the proposed Scheme looking from the South-West



Visualisation of Proposed Dedicated Active Travel Facilities



Visualisation of Proposed Dedicated Active Travel Facilities



Visualisation of Proposed Dedicated Active Travel Facilities



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Headline achievements in the past year

- Continued engagement with the City Region Deal partners on progress and scheme development.
- The Reporter's report, which sets out the Reporter's conclusions and recommendations following the Public Local Inquiry, is currently under active consideration prior to advice being provided to and a decision being made by Scottish Ministers on the scheme.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
TBC	Following detailed consideration of the Public Local Inquiry Reporter's Report and all objections received the Scottish Ministers will make a decision on whether the Orders for the scheme should be made. Subject to a positive Ministerial decision, the next stages in the development of the proposed scheme will be to compete the statutory authorisation process. Delivery of the proposed scheme can only commence if it is approved under the relevant statutory procedures and thereafter a timetable for progress can be set.

Strategic Added Value

The project will:

- Address the bottleneck on the strategic road network by improving operating conditions and connectivity at Sheriffhall and help to reduce the traffic impact of proposed developments on the area.
- Provide high quality active travel facilities to deliver a step change in accessibility for walking and cycling.
- Support future development in the region, including the South East Wedge development, inclusive growth and the removal of physical barriers to growth through delivery of programme of construction across the region.
- Contribute towards the requirement to provide Community Benefits in line with the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Support wider skills development in the construction sector.

4. The Deal – summary of progress

West Edinburgh Transport Improvement Programme (WETIP)

West Edinburgh is recognised as a key national economic asset and perhaps the most important gateway to Scotland. West Edinburgh will offer significant economic investment opportunities with potential to be internationally competitive. The vision for West Edinburgh and the unlocking of the proposed business and residential development cannot be delivered without significant investment in an integrated package of transport intervention measures. These include a core package of sustainable transport improvement measures along the A8/A89 corridor that provide long term resilience and support strong connectivity between neighbouring authorities and communities. The transport intervention measures are centred around sustainable transport enhancements between Broxburn and Maybury and are necessary to mitigate the impacts of new developments and meet current agreed modal share/shift targets. This proposal is in line with the City Region Deal vision and is supportive of local plans and policies which look to accelerate the rate of investment and economic performance by capitalising on our existing world class assets through inclusive and sustainable growth model.



Headline achievements in the past year

Date	Achievement
March 2025	Commencement of RIBA Stage 3 (developed design) including major site investigation works.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Autumn 2025	Conclusion of RIBA Stage 3 including commencement of Statutory Road Orders process.

Strategic Added Value

The purpose of the West Edinburgh Transport Improvement Programme is to progress the delivery of the public transport and active travel measures identified in the 2016 WETA Refresh study. Interventions will support a wide range of objectives including, but not limited to, the promotion of sustainable travel to a range of destinations; improving regional connectivity and accessibility for all to jobs, education, healthcare and leisure; and delivering an improved active travel and public transport mode share within West Edinburgh to support net zero carbon emission targets. The Programme has adopted a collaborative approach and brings together a range of key stakeholders and partners contributing to successful delivery. Key stakeholders and partners include the City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, Bus Operators, Transport Scotland, Active Travel Groups, Bus User Forums, SEStran, Sustrans, Network Rail, Edinburgh Airport, Major Developers and statutory consultees. In due course, this project will be procured as a construction project, and links with the Housing and Construction Infrastructure Skills Gateway will be established. The improvement of public transport provision in this area has the potential to unlock housing development opportunities and ease congestion in the corridor between West Lothian and Edinburgh.

4. The Deal – summary of progress

Dunard Centre

The Dunard Centre, supported by Royal Bank of Scotland, will be Edinburgh's first new purpose-built concert hall in over 100 years, opening up a new public realm in the heart of the city and delivering a world-class asset for Edinburgh, Scotland and the UK.

Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, it will be the first Nagata Acoustics hall in the UK, bringing together exceptional architecture, extraordinary acoustics and bold, ambitious programming to rival the best in the world in acoustic quality and audience experience.

Located in the heart of Edinburgh's New Town, the Dunard Centre will serve as the permanent home of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and a new venue for the Edinburgh International Festival, supporting the exceptional quality and diversity of its festival offerings year-round and cementing Edinburgh's international reputation as a cultural capital.

Beyond its role as a premier performance space, the Dunard Centre's vision is to provide a free-to-access, inclusive hub for artistic development, lifelong learning, skills development and community engagement. Its wide-reaching community engagement programme, delivered in partnership with a network of cultural and third sector organisations, will create meaningful pathways for lifelong learning, connecting artists, audiences and communities.



The Dunard Centre auditorium
Image: Andy Smith



The Dunard Centre café terrace
Image: David Chipperfield Architects



The Dunard Centre's Caledonia Hall auditorium
Image: David Chipperfield Architects



4. The Deal – summary of progress

The Dunard Centre benefits from the generous support of the Dunard Fund — a long-term funder of the arts and music in Scotland — and is the cultural centrepiece of the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal. A vital investment in the city's infrastructure, the venue will deliver wide-reaching benefits to the culture, tourism, hospitality and transport sectors as well as bolstering region-wide creative education provision, and increasing access to the arts through digital technology and regional partnerships.



The Dunard Centre's Caledonia Hall auditorium
Image: David Chipperfield Architects



The Dunard Centre's Caledonia Hall auditorium
Image: David Chipperfield Architects

Due Date	Achievements
Mar 2025	IMPACT Scotland welcomed four new trustees to the board: Yvette Hopkins, Shonaig Macpherson, Katherine Peskett, Roddy Hart.
Apr 2025	Jo Buckley, CEO, presented alongside First Minister, John Swinney on the importance of creativity to Scotland's identity at Carnegie Hall as part of Tartan Week 2025.
Jun 2025	Newly commissioned Dunard Centre Economic and Social Impact reports published.
Jun 2025	Carnegie Corporation of New York awarded Dunard Centre a grant of \$1 million.
Jun 2025	IMPACT Scotland received a tender offer from Balfour Beatty for the construction of the Dunard Centre.

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Aug 2025	IMPACT Scotland Stage 2 tender acceptance.
Autumn 2025	Main construction begins.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Strategic Added Value

The Dunard Centre's mission to create a 'Hall for All' is firmly centred around inclusion and access for everyone. Our vision is to deliver a bustling creative hub which will not only boost Scotland's economy and create jobs and career pathways, but increase access to the arts for people across all ages and stages, and create a welcoming, free-to-access public space in the heart of Edinburgh.

As an insight-driven organisation, our business strategy – from audience development and engagement, to programming and operations – is underpinned by a wealth of research. This has included market research undertaken by JRS Consortium in 2023, independent public polling by Whitestone Insight in 2025 and, most recently, an independent assessment of the Centre's economic and social impact.

The reports demonstrate that the Centre's operations are projected to generate £169.4 million in gross value added (GVA) over its first 20 years, supporting 289 FTE jobs. Based on an estimated 200,000 visitors annually, the hall is projected to increase spending in Edinburgh and the surrounding region by £8.6m a year. Our social engagement plan is absolutely central to our work. Our wide-ranging community engagement programme is expected to benefit around 17,000 people each year. This includes increased opportunities for skills development leading to improved workplace pathways, as well as lifelong-learning initiatives, digital programmes and affordable programming.

The Dunard Centre is also committed to becoming a beacon for sustainable working in the 21st century. Our ambition to become a zero-carbon building within a decade of opening is supported by an assessment and strategy from environmental design consultants Atelier 10. Plans to achieve our sustainability targets include the building design itself, a circular economy approach, and an assessment of carbon performance in line with the UK Green Building Council Net Zero Carbon Framework process.

4. The Deal – summary of progress

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region is experiencing a housing crisis. Five of the six local authorities have declared local housing emergencies, a situation compounded by the region's population growth rate – the fastest in Scotland.

In response to these challenges, regional partners have identified five priority areas for collective action to address the housing crisis and accelerate the delivery of affordable housing across all tenures:

- Affordable Housing Delivery;
- Retrofit;
- Strategic Sites Programme;
- Regional Delivery Alliance; and
- Innovative Funding Models and Infrastructure Delivery.

Affordable Housing Delivery

ESES continues to deliver a significant proportion of Scotland's new affordable homes. In 2024/25 the region collectively delivered over 1,290 affordable home approvals, over 1,700 site starts and nearly 2,200 completions, with a spend of nearly £126m. This exceeded all annual targets for spend, approvals, site starts and completions. A further £4.4m funding was utilised by City of Edinburgh Council and West Lothian Council to bring 615 void homes back into occupation. Compared to last year, there are 110 fewer homes approved, site starts are very similar and completions are down by 111 homes. The funding that has been available/spent is around £60m less in comparison to 2023/24.

Regional Affordable Housing Pipeline

Through local Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIPs), 15,360 homes have been identified that could be completed between 2025-2030. However, this target is currently unachievable due to insufficient funding.



Local authority partners have funding available or expect to secure funding for 4,619 homes, representing 30% of the affordable housing pipeline. With increased funding beyond current levels, regional partners estimate they could complete 9,268 homes, achieving 60% of the total pipeline.

Strategic Sites

Work continues to try to accelerate delivery of the seven strategic sites at Blindwells, Calderwood, Dunfermline, Edinburgh's Waterfront, Shawfair, Tweedbank and Winchburgh.

The **Strategic Sites Programme**, approved by Joint Committee in October 2024, highlights that the collective socio-economic impact of the seven strategic sites would:

- deliver 41,000 new homes (10,000 affordable);
- create 8,000 jobs; and
- contribute an additional £30 billion in Gross Value Added.

It would also unlock a strategic delivery pipeline and be a catalyst for at least £4.1 billion private and institutional investment and wider public benefits.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Significant progress has been made towards the delivery of the seven strategic sites this year, and especially in recent months. On 6 June 2025, the ESES City Region Deal Joint Committee considered three key reports and made the following key decisions:

- Endorsed the **Blindwells Strategic Outline Business Case**, for submission to UK and Scottish Government for consideration;
- Approved Fife Council progressing an application to access the **second phase of funding for Dunfermline** amounting to £6.1m (in line with the approved Full Business Case); and
- Approved a **progress report** outlining progress on the preparation of an Outline Business Case to support the case for the development of a new railway station at Winchburgh and proposed approach to Scottish Government to secure gap funding.

It is also anticipated that the full business cases for Granton Waterfront and Tweedbank Phase 1 will come forward in autumn 2025.

Across the seven strategic sites over 1,000 social rent and over 3,600 market homes have been started over the last year. A total of 400 social homes, 253 mid-market rent homes and 795 market homes have been completed. A full breakdown is provided in the tables here:

Table 1 – Strategic Site Delivery – Site Approvals

Delivery (starts)	Tenure Mix			
	Social Rent	MMR	BTR	Market
Blindwells	42	0	0	93
Calderwood	0	0	0	121
Dunfermline	1396	0	0	5584
Granton Waterfront	214	173	0	470
Shawfair	85	9	0	313
Tweedbank	0	0	0	0
Winchburgh	85	0	0	223
Total	1,822	182	0	6,804

Table 2 – Strategic Site Delivery – Site Starts

Delivery (starts)	Tenure Mix			
	Social Rent	MMR	BTR	Market
Blindwells	42	0	0	93
Calderwood	0	0	0	147
Dunfermline	637*	0	0	2544*
Granton Waterfront Silverlea	92	51	0	0
Shawfair	107	0	0	348
Tweedbank	0	0	0	0
Winchburgh	134	32	0	487
Total	1,012	83	3	3,619

*numbers relate to total units approved within the relevant planning permissions which have begun on site.

Table 3 – Strategic Site Delivery – Completions

Delivery (completions)	Tenure Mix			
	Social Rent	MMR	BTR	Market
Blindwells	23	0	0	111
Calderwood	42	33	0	182
Dunfermline	0	0	0	322
Granton Waterfront (Western Villages & D1)	243	220	0	0
Shawfair	18	0	0	41
Tweedbank	0	0	0	0
Winchburgh	74	0	0	139
Total	400	253	0	795



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Regional Delivery Alliance

The **South East Regional Delivery Alliance** builds on the Edinburgh Home Demonstrator Project which aimed to deliver a new model for delivering affordable Net Zero homes. The model is centred around collaborative procurement, whole life costing, development pipeline, and increased standardisation of housing types.

The **South East Regional Delivery Alliance's Knowledge Hub** was launched in June 2025. This online resource holds key documents that are intended to streamline the delivery of affordable housing projects, including:

- A five-year pipeline of affordable housing projects, created using SHIP data;
- 18 flat and house typologies and their associated Housing for Varying Need checklists; and
- A Design & Performance Standard, which is a written specification utilising Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and is net-zero ready.

Stronger collaboration has taken place with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) which led to the first RSL sites being included in a collaborative feasibility study.

A Regional Pipeline was created to provide a clearer view of housing projects, including those that are funded and deliverable.

The current return of investment for collaborative Bundle 1 has resulted in a cost saving of £765 per unit for the design team fees for the feasibility and pre-construction phases of Pilot 3.

Key achievements over the last year include:

- Increased quantity of homes – **24% increase in unit numbers** compared to target site density for Pilot 3.
- **Reduced design team costs** – A cost saving of £765 per unit for design team fees for the feasibility and pre-construction phases of Pilot 3.
- Performance – **35% reduction on space heating performance**, calculated through University of Edinburgh's Interim evaluation of Pilot 1

Innovative Funding Models and Infrastructure Delivery

With continued pressure on funding and financing for housing and enabling infrastructure, innovative funding models are playing a key role in unlocking development potential.

Partners and national agencies are actively sharing learnings and delivery models currently being utilised or under development across the region.

Three key approaches are being explored: risk-sharing models (successfully implemented at Winchburgh); outcome-based approaches (demonstrated at Granton Waterfront); and Growth Accelerator Models.

On Friday 28 March 2025, regional partners held a Strategic Sites Workshop examining infrastructure delivery mechanisms, innovative funding solutions, and examples of successful strategic site delivery from across the UK. Workshop participants included regional Chief Finance Officers, Strategic Site Lead Officers, leading academics, the National Wealth Fund, Scottish National Investment Bank, and the Scottish Futures Trust.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Retrofit

Regional partners have agreed to deepening collaboration with a focus on sharing data and learning on standards, costs, property condition, Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) and fuel poverty.

In May 2025, the University of Edinburgh completed a pilot archetype study to support retrofit and heat decarbonisation planning for LHEES, Work is ongoing to build upon and maintain momentum of the innovative archetype project.

Edinburgh Living

Since September 2024, Edinburgh Living has purchased a total of 141 new homes at three sites. This brings the total number of homes owned by Edinburgh Living to 715.

Headline achievements in the past year

Date	Achievement
Oct 2024	Special Joint Committee meeting to approve the ESES City Region Strategic Sites Programme . This included a socio-economic impact assessment demonstrating the collective benefits form the Strategic sites. The economic model was developed by the University of Edinburgh and the City Region Deal PMO and both Scottish and UK Government economists.
Jun 2025	Joint Committee Business case approval of Blindwells Outline Business Case and Dunfermline Phase 2 Delivery .
Jun 2025	Launch of the Regional Delivery Alliance digital Knowledge Hub resource.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Strategic Site Headline Achievements

Blindwells

- In October 2024, the strategic context for Blindwells was further progressed by approval of the Strategic Sites Programme by Regional Partners, which was developed with input from both Governments and provides a context to address the opportunities and challenges associated with the project via business case development, including capital and revenue support;
- In December 2024 East Lothian Council decided to progress a Strategic Outline Business Case for Blindwells, and during early 2025 the Council led close joint working with Scottish Futures Trust and the landowners and developers involved to enable formation of a Project Team and the SOBC to be drafted;
- In June 2025, Regional Partners and East Lothian Council approved the Blindwells Strategic Outline Business Case for submission to both Governments for their consideration, setting out the strategic benefits and impact that the new settlement can deliver at UK, national, regional and local levels.

Granton

- Working with Government officials throughout 2024, The City of Edinburgh Council secured a commitment from Scottish Government to support Granton Waterfront Phase 1 as announced by the Cabinet Secretary in her budget announcement in December 2024.
- Gas holder park was completed Dec 2024; this included restoration of the frame and the installation of a city park. The restoration of this structure permits development of the surrounding Phase 1 housing development sites.

- 75 net zero homes for social and mid-market rent alongside three commercial units were completed at Granton Station View in January 2025. Residents have now moved in.
- 388 net zero homes for social and mid-market rent are complete at Western Villages. Residents are now moving in.
- Commencement of 143 net zero homes for social and mid-market rent at Silverlea; completion is due in late 2025.

Shawfair

- 20 kilometres of pipework and energy centre for Shawfair DHN is now in place with the first heat customers in December 2024. More homes have been added to the network, with 86 homes expected to be added by the end of the year.
- Remediation of the site for Shawfair all-through Education Campus has begun.
- Continued installation of pipework for Shawfair District Heat Network to serve 3000 homes.
- Over 900 new homes either constructed, under construction, consented or being progressed for planning permission.



Blindwells



Granton



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Strategic Site Headline Achievements

Dunfermline

- The third of the 10 sites that comprise of the Dunfermline Strategic Site commenced on site in April 2025. This site will have 1400 units, bringing the total number of consented sites that are now active to 2544 units.
- Secured support of ESES Joint Committee to progress with submitting an application for accessing Dunfermline Phase 2 Delivery.
- The second strategic transport intervention was delivered.

Tweedbank

- Strategic site master plan for 15 years was approved by CBRE – a £250 million investment.
- Initial focus is on the next five years, which is to deliver 156 homes plus and retail. CBRE also updated their market analysis report for the five-year plan.
- Major planning application for Tweedbank Care Village was submitted in September 2024. The approval process is ongoing.

Calderwood

- Now over 1,700 occupations.
- A developer funded feeder bus service is now being provided to Kirknewton Railway Station pending agreement on an expansion of the Park & Ride Facility at the station.

Winchburgh

- Now over 1,300 occupation.
- Significant progress being made towards delivery of the railway station although a funding package remains to be agreed.
- A new non-denominational primary school at Hawkhill under construction to be ready for the new academic year 2025/26.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Next milestones

Due Date	Milestone
Summer 2025	- Regional Delivery Alliance: A webinar programme to aid engagement and communication with Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords and the private sector will take place in August. - Regional Delivery Alliance: A collaborative feasibility for Bundle 3 will be arranged to gain efficiencies in scale of affordable housing projects. - Edinburgh Living: A further 99 homes are expected to be purchased prior to the end of September 2025.
Autumn 2025	- Granton: Completion of 444 net zero homes for sale and rent at Western Villages. - Granton: Seeking Council Committee approval in September for the Full Business Case and to enter into development agreement for phase 1 of Granton Waterfront Regeneration, 847 homes and 14 commercial units alongside mobility hub and active travel. - Granton: Seeking Council Committee approval in September to enter into concession agreement for the Granton Waterfront Low Carbon Heat Network. - Shawfair: Feasibility Study is currently being concluded and District Heating Network routing selection finalised to connect Royal Infirmary to the MEL Heat Network that works for NHS Lothian. - Tweedbank: Strategic Site Full Business Case – Phase 1 submission. - Regional Delivery Alliance: The collation, procurement and feasibility of Bundle 3, from September 2025. - Regional Delivery Alliance: A whole life carbon exercise will be completed on seven of the 18 typologies.
Winter 2025/26	- Granton: Site start for Phase 1 and the district heat network. - Granton - Completion of 143 Social Rent and mid-market rent net zero homes at Silverlea. - Shawfair: Millerhill Recycling and Energy Recovery Centre (RERC), operated by FCC Environment, will capture waste heat and pipe it to 59 homes in Shawfair by the end of 2025. First heat customers expected before the end of the summer 2025. - Edinburgh Living: Seeking Council Committee approval to progress next phase of 145 acquisitions. - Regional Delivery Alliance: Progression of Bundle 2 into preconstruction. - Seek to establish a Strategic Sites Working Group with Scottish, UK Government and national agencies with a tri-partite approach to progress delivery of the Strategic Sites Programme. - Establish shared governance arrangements around the Blindwells project through the Strategic Sites Working Group - Blindwells - The Project Team anticipates a Government decision on the Strategic Outline Business Case winter 2025/26. If progression to Outline Business Case is approved by Governments, the next anticipated key milestones are included below.



4. The Deal – summary of progress

Due Date	Milestone
Winter 2025/26	• Blindwells - on-going joint working with both Governments, Scottish Futures Trust, National Wealth Fund, Scottish National Investment Bank and the landowners and developers involved to focus on identifying 'in principle' strategic solutions for infrastructure and services, financial innovation and delivery vehicles that can feature in the development of the Outline Business Case and Blindwells Area Design Framework (non-statutory planning guidance in support of the Outline Business Case); • Blindwells - develop a draft Outline Business Case and draft Blindwells Area Design Framework targeting Winter 2025/26
Spring 2026	• Regional Delivery Alliance: A successful business case to extension of the programme beyond its current date of March 2026. • Shawfair: The remediation of the town centre site by Shawfair LLP is getting underway currently and construction on the campus is targeted to start once this is complete in 2026.
Summer 2026	• Edinburgh Living: Acquisition of homes currently onsite (145) subject to viability criteria being met. • Blindwells – submit an Outline Business Case targeting summer 2026, which has been co-produced with both Governments and the Project Team and other as relevant.

Strategic Added Value

The Regional Housing Programme and delivery of the strategic sites can help address inequality, child poverty, improve health and wellbeing and create sustainable mixed communities and successful places that enable effective transformation and a just transition to net zero while responding to the climate and nature emergencies. This will also allow regional partners to retain, create and attract the high-quality workforce needed in South East Scotland to deliver our shared economic ambitions, which can enhance prosperity and contribute to productivity of the wider national and UK economy.

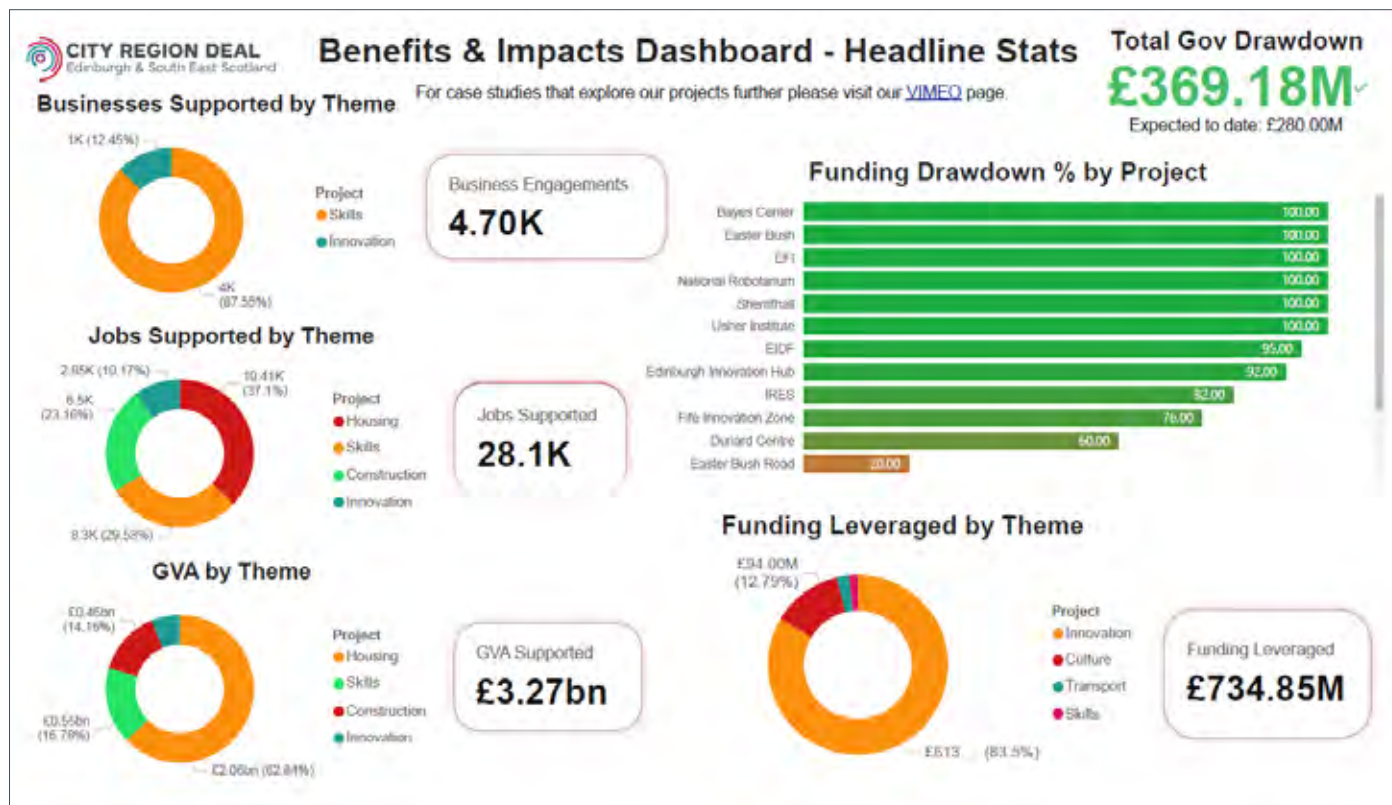
The Strategic Sites are a key part of the Regional Prosperity Framework (RPF). The RPF Delivery Plan has an ambition and vision to protect the environment and make best use of our extraordinary built and natural assets. This will ensure that our Region delivers a just transition to a net zero economy. There are three main goals of the RPF Delivery Plan: to reduce economic exclusion; sustained and increased competitiveness; and accelerate a fair transition to Net Zero.

The Strategic Site Programme and economic modelling demonstrates the collective impact of the seven Strategic Sites. They can deliver over 41,000 homes, over £30bn Gross Value Added, and support over 8,000 jobs. Together they can deliver transformational change in terms of housing supply and economic growth. For every £1 of public cost, £2.4 of GVA will be generated both in the region and elsewhere.



5. Benefits Realisation Update

In 2023/24 great progress has been made in benefit realisation monitoring and reporting.



Theme-specific benefits realisation progress:

Culture

The projected benefits to be realised over 15 years for the Dunard Centre Project have been refreshed in line with newer data, this has highlighted a higher estimation of benefits than originally estimated. Currently, the project is estimated to generate £107.5m in Gross Value Added (GVA) over its first 20 years of delivery, this is an increase of £30m in GVA from the original estimates from 2021. We continue working with our colleagues at IMPACT Scotland to improve and sophisticate our measurement of all the impacts and benefits that will be delivered by the construction and delivery of the Dunard Centre initiative.



5. Our Approach to Benefits Realisation

Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES)

The IRES project has been hugely successful when examining the original KPI's for the project.

The IRES project, now in its seventh year of an eight-year programme, is exceeding its business case targets and how now achieved these ahead of schedule:



Skills improvements

127,287

Goal: 14700 (+765.9%)



Job outcomes

8,300

Goal: 5300 (+56.6%)



Career progression

622

Goal: 500 (+24.4%)

Central to the success of the IRES programme is its extensive network of partners. This collaboration has fostered a culture of cross-sector regional collaboration, driving innovative approaches to address skills demands and opportunities. As a result, an additional £11.22m in funding has been secured, representing a 45% increase on government funding drawn down by the IRES programme so far.

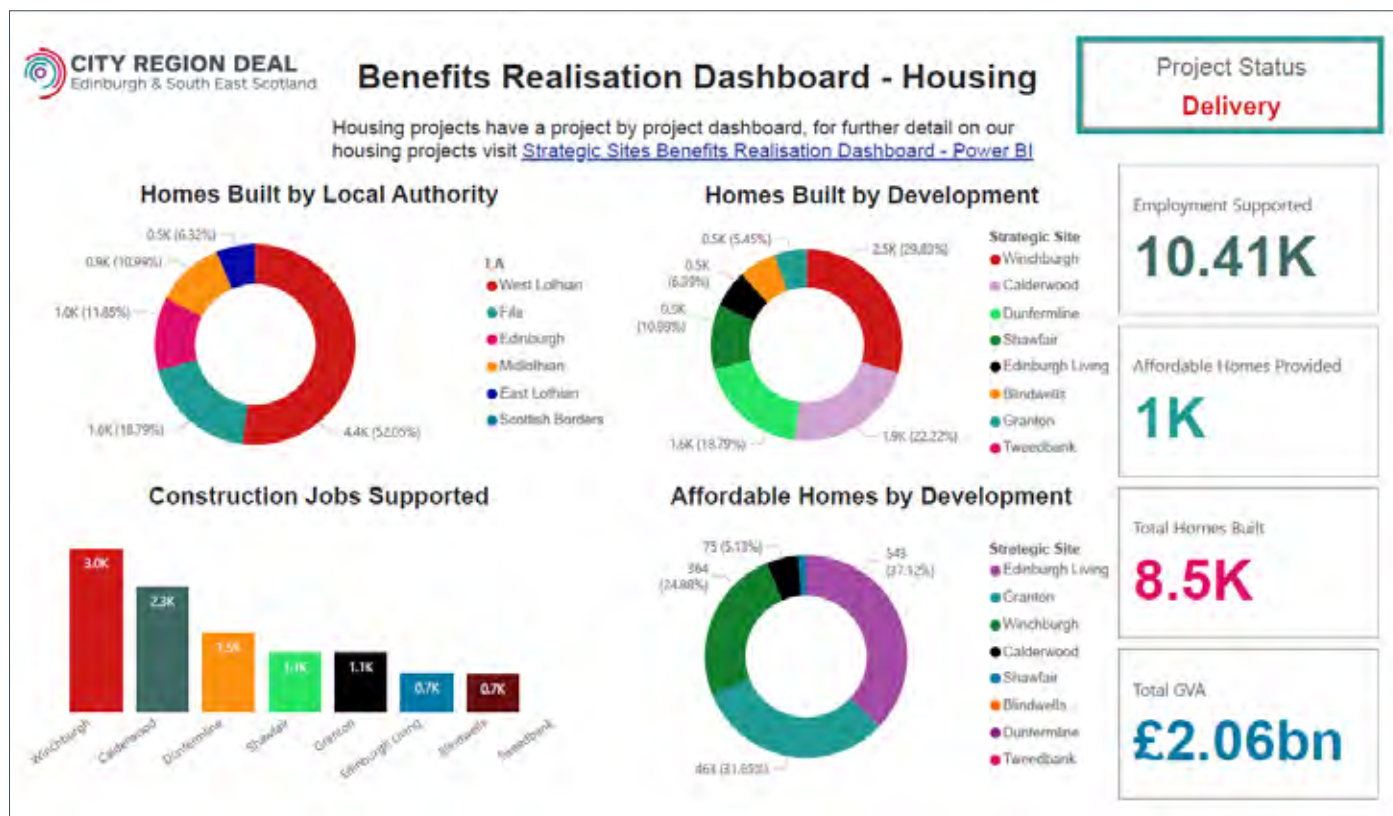
Click here to view the live **IRES Impact Data Dashboard** for more in-depth data on the projects within the IRES programme.



5. Our Approach to Benefits Realisation

Housing

A great deal of work has been done to improve the sophistication of benefits reporting in housing, having worked with colleagues in the University of Edinburgh, the UK Government and Scottish Government we have developed a model for assessing the impacts of the strategic housing development, with the key benefits outlined in this dashboard:





5. Our Approach to Benefits Realisation

Innovation

Data-Driven Innovation Hubs

The DDI Hubs have continued effectively delivering above expectation against the key performance indicators outlined in the business cases for them, with a summary of these below (please note the KPI for data is still being configured and will be reported as soon as possible):

Status of Programme	Status	Commentary
Talent – Courses		Both UoE and HWU are ahead of projected targets to date, and are on track to exceed the end of programme target of 84,000 students
Talent – CPD & MOOCs		The programme is over its end-of-programme target by 130%, and generated between £6-10m of economic impact between 22/23 – 23/24
Research		The programme is currently £1m ahead of its end-of-programme target
Adoption		The programme has exceeded its actual income target for the end of the programme by 35%
Entrepreneurship – Companies		The programme has officially exceeded its end-of-programme target for the number of companies engaged by 42%
Entrepreneurship – Follow-on Funding		The programme is over its end-of-programme target for follow-on-funding received by DDI companies by 311%

Fife Innovation Zone

Great progress has been made in Fife Innovation Zone where there are now 26 innovation action companies in the industrial units. These companies have created or safeguarded 151 jobs in Fife, and are utilising innovative new approaches to energy to create more sustainable and affordable energy solutions for tenants.

Borders Innovation Park

Borders Innovation Park situated next to Tweedbank Station and in the current Lowood Estate. The initiative is predicted to ultimately create around 350 jobs and an estimated Gross Added Value for the Borders economy of over £200m. Currently, 3 businesses are operating in Borders Innovation Park, with more benefits expected to be realised as the park continues to grow and develop.

Transport

Currently Transport projects have not begun delivery. However, work has begun to research how benefits monitoring, and evaluation can capture benefits such as reduced travel times, reduced carbon emissions and improved connectivity within the region.



5. Our Approach to Benefits Realisation

Construction

City Region Deal construction sites have supported a great deal of economic activity and are engaged in inclusive, community wealth building practices. Key benefits are highlighted below:



Going Forward

Currently there is an internal audit taking place on benefits realisation, following this the recommendations will be implemented to continue improving our approach to benefits realisation. A consultation with project leads has been undertaken to revise the benefits realisation plan, the revision of this will be published this year. An evaluation of the IRES project is underway which will have a published report in September, and the Benefits Realisation Officer continues working with other deals across the UK to share learning and promote a coordinated approach to benefits realisation, monitoring and evaluation.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Regional Prosperity Framework

The Regional Prosperity Framework (RPF) outlines a 20-year economic vision for Edinburgh and South East Scotland and captures the regions current economic priorities to deliver inclusive growth, increased competitiveness and a just transition to net zero. The Framework is the articulation of the next phase of the development of the regional economy, building upon the successes of the City Region Deal both in terms of the programmes and in terms of regional collaboration.

The **Regional Prosperity Framework Delivery Plan** was published in April 2023, focusing on priority projects identified for implementation within the subsequent two-year period.

Over the past year, regional partners have advanced projects identified in the RPF Delivery Plan, progressing them into delivery as funding becomes available. A notable example is the collaborative approach taken with UK Government Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF), where the six Local Authorities pooled just over £1m of their individual allocations to deliver priority RPF projects. This funding has supported essential development work including feasibility studies, economic impact assessments, and design activities that lay the groundwork for future implementation.





6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
Climate Ready SE Scotland	UKSPF (Local Authority pooled) & Scottish Government	Climate risk and opportunity assessment produced for the region. New economic analysis and coastal change modelling. Collated local knowledge and lived experience.	Developing business cases and detailed proposals for priority regional actions identified in the risk assessment and develop options for a sustainable partnership model.
Regional Energy Masterplan	UKSPF (Local Authority pooled)	Four key projects completed in 24/25 1. Development of regional data sharing agreement(s). 2. Climate Action Map – creation of online GIS map tool to support regional net zero planning and stakeholder engagement. 3. Pilot archetype study to support retrofit and heat decarbonisation planning for Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES). 4. Skills & training study for retrofit and heat decarbonisation including identification of skills gap, workforce capability evaluation, training needs assessment, policy alignment and recommendations.	Identifying groups of potential collaborative energy investment opportunities; and building upon and maintain momentum of the innovative archetype project.
Net Zero Accelerator Hub	UKSPF (Local Authority pooled)	Feasibility Study has been completed which evaluates the potential for a Net Zero Accelerator Hub addressing net zero demands and future delivery needs for the six Local Authorities encompassing net zero housing new build, retrofit housing, retrofit non-domestic buildings and low carbon transport infrastructure.	The next phase of the project is to enable the NZAH to deliver on its full potential will require capital investment of circa £20-25m to create physical space 'barns' in each College in the region and provide capacity required to deliver net zero training requirements.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
Visitor Economy and Culture	UKSPF (Local Authority pooled)	Regional Visitor Economy Partnership established. 4 projects completed in 24/25:	Target short term low budget actions to be delivered immediately; Business case development for larger scale longer term recommendations; Summer 2025 workshop to take recommendations forward and allocate lead organisation.
		1. Cycling – aim of becoming a leading cycling holiday destination. Developed a Cycling Tourism Strategic Vision Framework; Conducted a Regional Cycling Tourism Feasibility Study; and Created a Destination Development Plan with prioritisation matrix.	
		2. Culture – aiming to provide an enhanced cultural offer across the city region could be achieved by a new Regional Creative Content and Touring Framework. Capitalise on Edinburgh's reputation as a world-class festival city. Understand current audiences for performing arts offers within the region, identifying levels of latent demand – 89% adults in the market for some form of performing arts. Business modelling undertaken and a feasible business model for a regional creative content and touring framework following phase one market intelligence reports.	
		3. The Forth – Developed a comprehensive strategic plan for cruise tourism in region. To maximise economic, environmental, cultural, and community benefits while managing visitor capacity responsibly.	– Project Group targeting short term low budget actions to be delivered immediately. – Summer workshop to take recommendations forward and allocate lead organisation. – Business case development for larger scale longer term recommendations.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
		4. Data – Using multiple datasets to optimise the regional planning and managing of large-scale events, overlaying transport, accommodation, and event data. The work demonstrated how data integration can pinpoint transport and bed-space pinch-points, quantify worst-case overloads and generate actionable insights for planners, operators and businesses.	Work to secure data across short term lets, hotel occupancy, festival data, mobile network data, and more to plug gaps. Conduct scoping study into Tourism Data Commons Trust and Explore use of digital twin technology with UoE to test long-range tourism and festival scenarios across the city region.
Strategic Sites Programme	Existing Resources	Strategic Sites Programme developed underpinned by economic modelling undertaken by University of Edinburgh and Programme Management Office. Seven sites can collectively deliver 41,000 new homes, of which around 10,000 will be affordable, create 8,000 jobs, £30bn GVA and be a catalyst for at least £4.1 billion private and institutional investment and wider public benefits.	Work to est. a Strategic Sites with UK and Scottish Government, National Wealth Fund and Scottish National Investment Bank and others to accelerate delivery, streamline and co-produce business case solutions and ensure strategic alignment and collective action to unlock strategic sites and joint outcomes.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
SE Regional Delivery Alliance	Existing Resources	Project is based on pipeline coordination, regional typologies and design and performance standards, as well as collaborative procurement, the delivery model aims to facilitate the development of affordable housing projects with Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords for greater use of modern methods of construction to transform the performance of housing across the region and enable the move towards affordable homes built to net zero carbon standards. Benefits realised so far include: • Increased quantity of homes: 24% increase in unit numbers compared to target site density for Pilot 3. • Reduced design team costs: A cost saving of £765 per unit for design team fees for the feasibility and pre-construction phases of Pilot 3. • Performance: 35% reduction on space heating performance, calculated through University of Edinburgh's Interim evaluation of Pilot 1. • Knowledge Hub Launch – https://www.se-rda.org.uk/ was launched in June 2025. This online resource holds key documents that are intended to streamline the delivery of affordable housing projects.	Procurement is ongoing for the feasibility of Bundle 2, comprising of 5 sites with 4 Clients and an estimated 218 units. Progression of Bundle 2 into preconstruction is anticipated in early 2026 with the collation, procurement and feasibility of Bundle 3, underway in September 2025. The project team is developing a business case seeking extension of the programme beyond its current end date of March 2026.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
Forth Green Freeport	Existing and External	Became operational on 12 June 2024 and is set to attract new businesses and new jobs into Burntisland, Grangemouth, Leith and Rosyth. The Full Business Case is currently being reviewed by both the UK and Scottish Governments.	If Full Business Case is approved, it will unlock £25m of seed funding capital to address the key underdeveloped sites within the Freeport and attract inward investment.
Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan	Funding required	A Regional Transport Masterplan, of non-Transport Scotland infrastructure, does not currently exist for the Region, and therefore we have a gap in regional knowledge and justification for projects. A list of prioritised regional projects (transport services, infrastructure and innovation) has been identified with regional partners, SEStran and the lead officers from the other RPF priority projects.	Need funding to secure consultancy support to develop the priority projects through the appropriate design process to enable them to be ready for delivery and future funding.



6. Regional Prosperity Framework

Project Name	Funding Source	Output	Next Steps
Regional Intelligence Hub	Funding required	In December 2022, the Regional Economic Policy Advisory Group established by Scottish Government, published its review of regional economic policy delivery and made recommendations for how regional economic policy can be improved and delivered successfully in Scotland. A key recommendation by the Advisory Group, was for the Scottish Government to work with regional partners to explore establishing Regional Intelligence Hubs with areas prioritised to pilot Hubs. The University of Edinburgh, Smart Data Foundry and regional partners have developed a proposition and undertaken detailed scoping work involving a network of regional stakeholders and developed a demonstration dashboard for near-time regional data.	Continue to seek funding and support to set up and resource a Hub.

A workshop was held at the end of February 2025, to provide the opportunity for RPF projects to showcase and highlight key outputs ahead of funding coming to an end for UKSPF projects in the 24/25 financial year. A RPF Impacts Document is currently under development and captures these key deliverables achieved so far.

The RPF Delivery Plan is a live document, and a review and refresh of the projects has been taking place throughout the summer 2025 to ensure projects are still relevant and deliverable. This work has been developed with the City Region Deal Directors and elected member input. Further information on future priorities can be found in the RPF Update and Two-Year Refresh report which will also be considered at the 5 September 2025 Joint Committee meeting.



7. The Year Ahead

Date	Milestone
Aug 25	Start of construction of Phase 2 office building, Borders Innovation Park.
Aug 25	Launch community benefit schedule of delivery for Borders Innovation Park and Dunard Centre construction.
Sep 25	First UK Robotics Expo launch.
Sep 25	Joint Committee meeting where the following items will be considered: • City Region Deal Annual Report. • City Region Deal Benefits Realisation: Six-monthly Update. • Dunard Centre – Stage 2 Procurement update. • Internal Audit Annual Update. • Regional Housing Programme Annual Update. • Regional Innovation Action Plan – Update on Delivery Plan and Governance. • Regional Prosperity Framework Annual Update.
Autumn 25	Start of construction of Dunard Centre.
Autumn 25	Completion of 444 net zero homes for sale and rent at Western Villages, Granton.
Nov 25	Edinburgh Innovation Hub operational.
Dec 25	Complete onboarding of partners into office space in Usher Building in final available neighbourhoods.
Dec 25	Joint Committee meeting where the following items will be considered: • Tweedbank Strategic Site – Full Business Case. • A720 Sheriffhall six-monthly update from Transport Scotland. • Granton Waterfront Strategic Site: Full Business Case for Phase 1 and FBC for Heat Network. • Integrated Regional Employability and Skills Annual Update and Proposal for next stage.
Winter 25/26	Site start for Phase 1 and the district heat network in Granton, and and Completion of 143 Social Rent and mid-market rent net zero homes at Silverlea.
Jan 26	Establish Robotics Scotland with the Scottish Government as a catalytic change programme for economic development and growth.
Mar 26	Joint Committee meeting where the following items will be considered: • City Region Deal Benefits Realisation: Six-monthly Update. • Data-Driven Innovation Programme and Internet of Things Annual Update.
Mar 26	Construction complete at two business units in Fife: Flemington Road, Glenrothes and Levenmouth (Phase 2).
Jun 26	Joint Committee meeting where the following items will be considered: • A720 Sheriffhall six-monthly update from Transport Scotland. • Transport Programme Annual Update.
Jun 26	Completion of construction of Phase 2 office building, Borders Innovation Park.



8. Contacts and Further Information

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Further Information

- Keep up to date with the latest news and join the mailing list at www.esescityregiondeal.org.uk
- **Data-Driven Innovation website**
- Download all Joint Committee reports including approved business cases at **The City of Edinburgh Council Committee library** website.
- Visit the **webcast library** to view recordings of each Joint Committee meeting





MOTION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
Tuesday 28 October 2025

8

Ban on Smartphones and Similar Devices in East Lothian Schools

That East Lothian Council:

Notes the growing body of evidence showing the detrimental impact of smartphones on children and young people, including:

- Significant negative effects on learning outcomes, attention spans, and behaviour in schools;
- Widespread exposure to harmful online content, including bullying, sexual harassment, and explicit material;
- Increasing concerns from teachers, parents, and international organisations regarding the safeguarding, health, and wellbeing of young people in the context of smartphone use.

Further notes that international comparators such as France, the Netherlands, South Australia, and Denmark, alongside UK local authorities such as Barnet Council, Moray Council, and Edinburgh City Council, have already moved to implement comprehensive bans on smartphones in schools.

Additionally notes that evidence from the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA) behaviour survey shows that 71% of members reported mobile phones were negatively affecting behaviour and learning, while 92% reported lessons are interrupted by mobile phones.

Believes that East Lothian Council has a duty under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 3, 19, and 31) to act in the best interests of children and to take steps to safeguard them from harms.

Council is asked to:

1. Consult on how to introduce a full ban on smartphones, smartwatches, and similar devices on all primary school estates in East Lothian.
2. Consult on the introduction of a ban on smartphones, smartwatches, and similar devices for students in S1 to S6 during the school day (“bell to bell”), including break and lunchtimes, enforced through the use of lockable pouches or a similar system to ensure devices are securely and safely stored away from students.
3. Consult on permitting, at the discretion of individual Headteachers, the creation of pre-designated areas where S6 students may access smartphones outside of class time.
4. Consult on the establishment clear exemptions for students with medical needs (e.g. medication reminders) or Additional Support Needs where smartphone use is required.
5. Instruct officers to bring forward an implementation plan for the above, following consultation with headteachers, parents, carers, pupils, and trade unions, to ensure smooth and consistent delivery across all schools in East Lothian.
6. Agree that the outcomes of the consultation, an integrated impact assessment, and the financial implications of the ban be reported back to full Council before the end of the current school year, in order to allow a final decision and implementation for the 2026/27 academic year.

Proposed by Councillor Lachlan Bruce

Date: 13/10/2025

Seconded by Councillor Jeremy Findlay

Date: 13/10/2025

Received by Lel Gillingwater, Team Manager – Democratic & Licensing

Date of receipt: 13/10/2025



MOTION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
Tuesday 28 October 2025

9

Strengthening Planning Enforcement Powers

East Lothian is the fastest-growing county in Scotland. With this growth has come a significant increase in housing developments across the county. However, too often, developers appear to act with disregard for the planning conditions they have agreed to, leaving residents and Council officers to deal with the consequences.

There have been repeated instances where developers have failed to comply with planning conditions, have operated in breach of those conditions, or have sought retrospective permission after unauthorised works have already taken place. Such actions can cause major disruption to local communities, pose safety risks, and place considerable strain on Council departments including Planning and Roads.

One recent example includes construction traffic using residential streets rather than agreed access routes, creating risks and disturbance for residents. When such breaches occur, Council officers face the difficult task of enforcing compliance, often under the shadow of potential legal action and significant financial costs to the authority.

While local authorities in Scotland have access to a range of statutory planning enforcement powers – including Enforcement Notices, Breach of Condition Notices, Stop Notices, and Fixed Penalty Notices, these powers are often limited in practice by cost, complexity, and the potential for appeals. Scottish Government planning statistics show that in 2023–24 there were 5,991 enforcement cases across Scotland, resulting in just 634 notices served, six reports to the Procurator Fiscal, and only one prosecution.

There have been no significant changes to planning enforcement powers in recent years, nor are there current proposals to strengthen these powers at a national level.

Council is asked to:

1. Instruct the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Scottish Government urging them to review and strengthen the planning enforcement powers available to local authorities;
2. Request that this review consider providing councils with greater ability to ensure compliance with planning conditions and deal effectively with breaches, without the constant fear of costly legal action from developers;
3. Instruct officers to review East Lothian Council's current approach to planning enforcement, including resources, response times, and communication with residents, and report back to Council with recommendations;
4. Request that the Council's Planning Enforcement Charter be reviewed and actively promoted to ensure residents understand how to report potential breaches and what actions the Council can take;
5. Request that an annual summary of enforcement activity be presented to the Planning Committee to improve transparency and oversight; and
6. Agree that East Lothian Council should work with COSLA and other local authorities to continue sharing best practice and support a coordinated call for stronger and more effective enforcement powers across Scotland.

Proposed by Councillor Donna Collins

Date: 14 October 2025

Seconded by Councillor George McGuire

Date: 14 October 2025

Received by Lel Gillingwater, Team Manager – Democratic & Licensing

Date of receipt: 14 October 2025