

# Making Life Better



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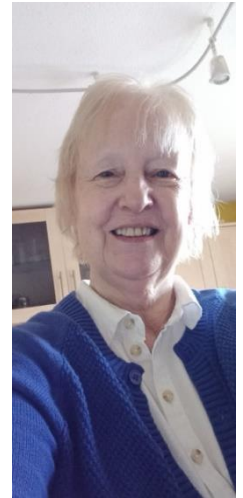
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# Introduction

## Welcome to Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership's Area Plan.

The Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership Area Plan 2025 - 2030 has been developed to meet the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This Act gives greater powers to communities to get involved in local decision making and to have greater control of buildings, land and service provision that will bring benefits to their communities.

During the preparation of the Local Place Plans in 2024, residents were invited to share their concerns, and the matters not related to buildings and land are recorded in this Area Plan. There are two sections in this plan. The first section deals with those matters over which the Area Partnership has some influence but no control and includes the way that the Area Partnership may be able to influence the actual decision makers. The second section (pages 11-12) details the matters over which the Area Partnership does have some control and shows how the Area Partnership plans to make the Dunbar & East Linton Area, including the villages contained therein, a better place to live in over the next five years.



**The main priority for each Area Partnership is to reduce inequalities and poverties across and within its communities.** The needs of the DELAP area are very real, and this plan contains data that outline the depth of the challenge facing the Area Partnership.

However, the scope of the work of the Area Partnership is much wider than this, and, even if the financial resources are principally focussed on bridging the inequality gap, the objectives of the Area Partnership also include meeting the needs of the young and the old, supporting our local economy, caring for our heritage and our environment, and acting to find ways to mitigate the effects of climate change. Much of this is achieved through supporting our third sector organisations and the volunteers in the area.

Work by the East Lothian Partnership is underway on the next version of an East Lothian Plan. The production of a DELAP Area Plan, before the East Lothian Plan has been written or finalised, is designed to inform the East Lothian Partnership of the matters that the local communities want to be taken into consideration when the ELP draws up the East Lothian Plan.

The Area Partnership brings together the elected East Lothian Councillors for the ward, representative Community Councillors, Tenants & Residents Association representatives and members from School Parent Councils who work with representatives from active community groups. They work together to determine how, together with public services and the third sector organisations, they can deliver the planned outcomes. Our Area Partnership was first established in 2014 and is made up of a broad range of community representatives, all of whom give of their time on a voluntary basis.

Since 2014 we have successfully supported and delivered projects aimed at improving our communities and making lives better for everyone who live and work here.

These projects included delivery of the ourdunbar website, the very popular Dunbar Summer School activity project for children and young people in our Area, supporting the improvements to West Barns Village Hall, the installation of superfast broadband in Stenton, the inter-generational group, supported places on the Battlefields project, improvement works to East Linton High Street and Preston Road. We have delivered projects that help people to live active, safe and healthy lives and are also working to reduce the attainment gap and increase the achievement potential for our young people. Our aim is to continue, and improve, this work by delivering the priorities identified in this plan.

Our priorities, detailed in the plan, help identify ways in which we can make Dunbar, East Linton and the surrounding villages even better places for everyone who lives there. The plan has also been shaped by a wide range of consultation and engagement activity over the last five years, including the recent feedback into the Local Place Plans. It has been developed by looking at available data, analysing this evidence, and sharing the conclusions as widely as possible.

It is an evolutionary plan, and the Area Partnership is always ready to hear of new ideas as to how we can make improvements to the lives of those living and working in the Area.

**Allison Cosgrove**

Chair – Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership

May 2025

## The concerns of the community in the DELAP area

As part of the Local Place Plan process, people were consulted across the four community council areas in the ward, and were asked to say what was concerning them, not just about matters to do with place, but also on matters such as health, transport, education, and the environment we live in.

These concerns are shown on the following pages 6 to 8, representing the views of over 800 people in Dunbar and West Barns alone with equally proportionate participation from Dunpender and the outlying villages.

### What role can the Area Partnership play to address these concerns?

The Partnership is made up of a very small number of volunteers, so its priority is to consider what are the matters within its control, capability and capacity to action itself, **making life better** for everyone living and working in the area. These actions are described in the second section of the Area Plan

There are many matters listed in this section which are not within the Area Partnership's area of control. At best, the Area Partnership may have some influence over some of them, but the reality is that many of these subjects need to be delivered by government agencies with resources far greater than the Area Partnership can offer.

### So, what is the purpose of this list of concerns?

The list represents the view of the people at a particular snapshot in time. These concerns will evolve and change with time. Most of the subjects are well-known to our politicians and decision-makers, but if anyone needs to know what the people want, this list leaves them in no doubt. If action is to be taken in any of these areas, and the decision-makers want the community to get involved in co-producing a solution, they will know that the Area Partnership is ready and willing to pull together the resources to help.

The Area Partnership may from time-to-time choose to write to or meet with decision-makers to ensure that these concerns are understood. The volunteers in the Area Partnership hold many different political views, so the Area Partnership itself will always remain apolitical.

The Area Partnership has a keen interest in the services that East Lothian Council delivers. It will use its influence wherever possible to provide positive guidance to the Council and to suggest ways in which services can be improved or delivered more efficiently.



## What the DELAP community has asked for

The Place Plan projects of 2024 offered up wide range of ways by which our lives might be made better. The most common suggestions made were as follows.

### Housing – you asked for

- No new housing estates
- Any new housing should be primarily low-cost, social housing. These houses should be smaller units suitable for down sizers and first-time buyers, and those working in our retail, care sector, tourism or hospitality businesses.
- Infrastructure resources should be in place before any development proceeds.
- Location of new housing should be subject to community approval.
- Plots for self-build homes should be made available on land allocated for housing.
- There should be no new housing on Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land.
- Owners of empty and abandoned buildings should be encouraged to renovate them for habitation.
- Collective retrofitting for house insulation across neighbouring houses should be co-ordinated to reduce costs.
- More residential care for the elderly and supported accommodation for young people is required.
- Single level living is needed for older people.
- Accommodation is required for incoming energy workers.



### Local economy and urban regeneration

– you asked for

- More retail outlets, cafes and restaurants in town centre high streets. In East Linton High Street, discourage further offices.
- Town Centre Infrastructure should be replaced to enhance the town centre.
- The start-up of new businesses, particularly where they fill a gap in the retail offering in the area.
- Support for the existing, and encouragement for the new, local tour operators and East Lothian Countryside Rangers to offer unique environmental experiences such as foraging courses, bird watching, geology and history tours.



### Health and wellbeing

– you asked for

- Facilities for young people to be improved to provide positive and creative outlets for their energy.
- Better use of ‘social spaces’, e.g. village halls, Bleachingfield, Hallhill, Dunbar Town House, The Legion, Dunbar.
- Community events that bring people together and reduce social isolation should receive funding support.
- Effective promotion of the existing health services.
- The Belhaven Hospital site to be secured as a facility for the community. As a minimum, a community buy-out to retain the Community Garden should be supported.
- Mental health services to be enhanced with better signposting of existing support.
- Leisure facilities and blue & green spaces must be accessible to all.



- Retail outlets to supply basic food stuffs in dispersed settlements and larger housing developments distant from high streets.
- The creation of new business units across the area, meeting the demand for small and medium sized units.
- Improved digital connectivity and cable access in rural areas.

## Transport and active travel – *you asked for*

- An enhanced and promoted active travel network, e.g. through better signs and maps, and an improved cycle path between East Linton and Dunbar.
- Improved safety and more safe crossing points across A1.
- Adequate cycle racks/hooks across the area.
- John Muir pathway at the Glebe, Dunbar to be re-instated
- Improved bus and rail services to provide connectivity between East Lothian’s towns and villages, particularly to the Community Hospital.
- A Dunbar Journey Hub.
- Reduced speed limits in residential areas and on quiet rural roads.
- Installation of passing places on narrow roads in the Lammermuirs.
- Installation of more electric car charging points, especially in remote settlements.



## Education and Training

– *you asked for*



- More local training opportunities, especially apprenticeships, are needed, especially for those who do not go directly into further education or other career paths.
- Training opportunities to meet the needs of local employers.
- Access to improved adult education and training
- Greatly extended pre-school childcare facilities and hours of provision.
- More early learning intervention
- More Life and social skills training

## Energy – *you asked for*



- Community-owned renewable energy generation.
- Community heating schemes.
- Relaxed regulations on solar panels and double glazing.
- Requirement for all renewable energy companies involved in major infrastructure projects to commit to the ‘Charter on Principles of Engagement’ developed by East Lammermuir CC.

## **Environment** – *you asked for*

- Improved nature networks across the DELAP area and connectivity with other habitats
- Encouragement for residents to facilitate movement of wildlife between gardens.
- An end of glyphosate use, except on giant hogweed or similarly invasive species.
- Protection of our existing green spaces within our towns and villages, e.g. through Field in Trust status.
- More allotments for residents
- Development of the currently operational Tarmac lake into a wildlife reserve and community space when it is safe to do so.
- Installation of more electric car charging points, especially in remote settlements.



## **Tourism** – *you asked for*

- Tourism to be developed in a slow/sustainable way to attract visitors without over-developing the area.
- A presumption not to allow developments that involve extra motorised traffic.
- The promotion of the area as a destination for day trippers, e.g. from Edinburgh, via train to Dunbar and East Linton or bus trips.
- Improved cycle provision on trains and buses, and cycle hire near stations, would facilitate active travel tourism.
- No further conversion of houses to holiday lets with the establishment of the DELAP area as a Short Term Let Control Area.
- Creation of an infrastructure that allows over-night visits without competing for housing: e.g. traditional B&Bs within people's houses; camp sites near public transport; camper van pitches; low-cost backpackers' hostels. Contractors, as well as tourists, will need accommodation during the next decade of development.



# The facts that lie behind these concerns

## HEALTH DATA

- Male Life Expectancy in Dunbar is lower than in East Lothian & Scotland.
- Higher rates of Coronary Heart Disease, Chronic Kidney Disease, Diabetes, Hypertension, and Dementia than Scotland overall.
- Higher rate of Alcohol and Drug Related Hospital Admissions for children and young people (aged 11-25) than in Scotland overall.
- Prevalence of cancer, diabetes & hypertension is generally higher than in Scotland.
- More East Lothians are overweight or obese, on average, compared to Scotland.
- Depression is more prevalent amongst patients at East Linton Surgery & Whitesands Medical Practice than in East Lothian and Scotland.
- Non-specified mental health issues are slightly more prevalent among GP patients in Dunbar & East Linton
- More people die by suicide in Eastern East Lothian than in the West.
- The forecast is that the number of elderly in the area will increase significantly over the life of the plan

(Source – NHS)

## POVERTY DATA

- The number of people seeking debt advice has trebled over the last five years.
- The amount of debt handled has risen by 225% over the last five years
- 36% of households in East Lothian accessed the Foodbank in 2022-23. That number is increasing.

(Source – Dunbar Debt advisory Team)

## COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT DATA

- Youth Anti-social Behaviour has been raised as a priority in 34 out of the last 36 Community & Police meetings.
- 94.5% of our Young People in the area reach a positive destination, the second lowest level in East Lothian.
- Connected Communities Dunbar provided 492 Capacity Building Opportunities in 2023/2024.
- Area Partnership members have undertaken 313 volunteer hours in 2023/24 on DELAP matters only, a small percentage of the total volunteer hours that this group gives to the community.

(Source – East Lothian Council)

## **HOUSING DATA**

- The number of houses in Dunbar and West Barns has risen by over 1000 in recent years, placing increasing stress on the town's infrastructure. With the increase in the number of houses has come an increase in anti-social behaviour.
- Hallhill (520 houses); Newtonlees (250); Newton manor(113); Belhaven Cala (98); Golf Club Cala (78) have been the major developments.
- The number of houses in East Linton has also risen over the same period with the development at Nobel Gardens (56 houses).
- Over the last five years 995 affordable homes have been built in the whole of East Lothian, but insufficient in the Dunbar & East Linton Area to meet demand, and no affordable homes in the Golf Club development.
- The level of unoccupied Council Houses remains much higher than in the private rented sector.

(Source – East Lothian Housing publications)

## **ENERGY PROJECTS DATA**

- Off-shore windfarms come ashore in the area.
- Battery farms will spring up in the area
- On-shore windfarms proliferate in the area
- Consequential damage to the lives of those living in the area and the environment is inevitable.

(Source – Published development plans)

# The Action Plan for DELAP

These are matters that are currently being addressed by the Area Partnership, or which are matters considered to be within the competency and capacity of members to address over the life of the plan.

Community based groups provide most of the resource and energy required to implement these plans. **The Area Partnership will provide support, and, where asked for, guidance to these groups, to ensure that the community projects achieve the desired outcomes.**

## Housing

*Our community believes that everybody should be able to access a home that is best suited to their circumstances. We will therefore support community-led projects that:*



- Work with the Council to see where accommodation can be built for the young and lower paid who currently cannot afford to live in the area.
- Work with the Council to see where accommodation can be built for those with special needs, including those of advancing years.
- Upgrade the parts of our housing estates that are falling into disrepair.
- DELAP will promote views that are expressed by the community on housing matters to ELC and the Scottish Government.
- Support the establishment of Residents' Associations

## Local economy and urban regeneration



*Our community believes that a vibrant local economy is essential. Regeneration of land and buildings and the creation of new job opportunities are key to this. We will therefore support community-led projects that work towards:*

- Dunbar High Street promoted and enhanced
- East Linton High Street promoted and enhanced
- Business Park Development
- Remote working opportunities and hot desking

## Health and wellbeing

*Our community would like everybody to have a better chance to live a healthy, active life. We will therefore support community-led projects that work towards:*

- Healthy eating
- Support for families and babies
- Support for Village Halls as centres for social cohesion
- Projects that promote exercise
- Way of reducing addiction to drugs and alcohol
- Access for all.
- Communication of where help is available.
- Mental Health improvements.



- Intergenerational activities
- External activities, over and above sporting activities.
- Resilience planning
- Dental care capacity
- Social Care initiatives
- Dementia Care initiatives
- Fighting loneliness and removing social isolation.
- Debt advice
- East Lothian Council's Poverty Plan.
- Promotion of views to the NHS, ELC and the Scottish Government on potential Health improvements for the community.

## Transport and active travel

*Our community needs to make travelling between towns and villages and in the built environment, safer and more convenient. We will therefore support community-led projects that will deliver:*

- Transport connections to the villages
- Safe routes to school and other key paths and cycle tracks.
- Look after the John Muir Way.
- Road safety
- Opportunities to walk or cycle



## Education and Training

*Our community considers that locally accessible opportunities for education and training for all ages is key local priority. We will therefore support community-led projects that will deliver:*

- Skills development for the young
- Life and social skills training
- Adult education
- Job application advice



## Environment

*Our community recognises the climate crisis and the urgent need to act now. We will therefore support community-led projects that will deliver:*

- Encouragement of sustainable living
- Encouragement of biodiversity
- Sea Defences to protect and preserve our towns and beaches
- Green networks, outdoor play, local food growing and community activities where people are connected to the outdoors, and where nature can thrive.
- Raising awareness of the value of our natural landscape, nature and soil.



## Energy

*Our community wants to address the impacts of ever increasing fuel bills and the impacts of a move from fossil fuels to renewables. We will therefore support projects that seek to deliver:*

- Energy efficiency advice schemes
- Community owned renewable energy schemes.
- Encourage personal renewable energy schemes – heat pumps, solar panels.
- District heating



## Tourism

*Our community recognises the hugely important part that tourism plays in the support of our local economy. We will therefore support community-led projects that will deliver:*

- Promotion of our area, including the special character of our villages as places to visit.
- Encourage day trips to our area.
- Develop more town centre events to attract visitors.
- Publish an Annual magazine.
- Finding the right balance between enough accommodation for visitors and not enough accommodation for residents.
- East Beach regeneration
- Access for all in the town and to our beaches.



## **Member organisations**

### **Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership Member Organisations:**

#### Councillors

- [Cllr Norman Hampshire](#)
- [Cllr Lyn Jardine](#)
- [Cllr Donna Collins](#)

#### Community Councils

- Dunbar Community Council
- Dunpender Community Council
- East Lammermuir Community Council
- West Barns Community Council

#### Pupil and Parent Councils

- Dunbar Grammar School Parent Council
- Small Primary School Parent Council Representative

#### Community Groups

- Bleachingfield Management Committee
- Climate Action East Linton
- Dunbar Trades Association
- Home Start East Lothian
- Innerwick Parish Welfare Association
- Sustaining Dunbar
- The Ridge
- Volunteer Centre East Lothian

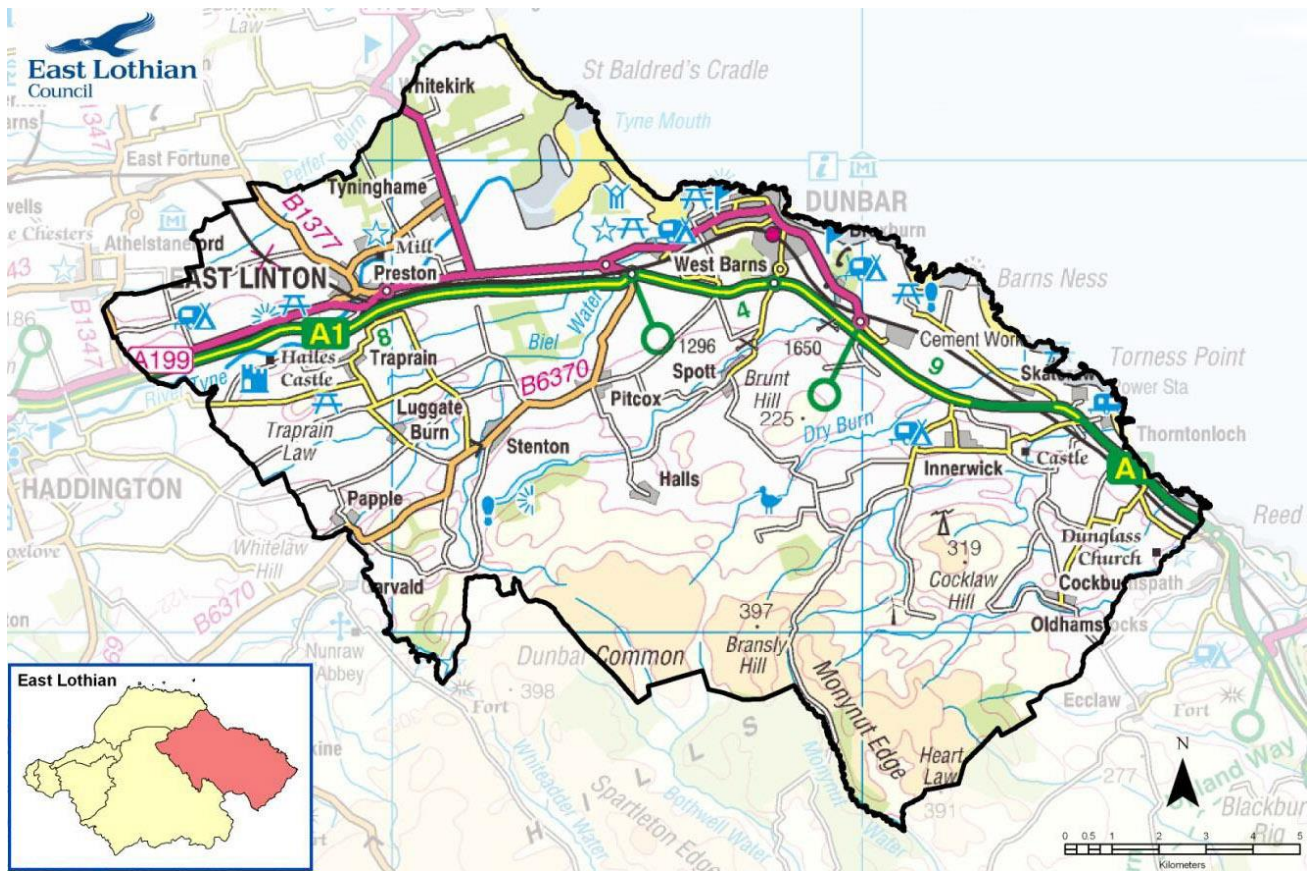
#### Tenants and Residents Associations

- Dunbar Shore & Harbour Neighbourhood Group
- Monkmuir TRA

#### East Lothian Council

- Stevie McKinlay, Connected Communities Manager - Dunbar

# Dunbar and East Linton Area Map



## Version Control document

Version	
1.0	February 2025 draft
2.0	April 2025 Draft
2.1	April 2025 Draft
2.2	April 2025 marked up with members' contributions
2.3	April 2025 after Review Meeting amendments
2.4	April 2025 to include explanatory headings
2.5	May 25 to change H&WB heading and insert support for the economy on page 3
2.6	May 25 following DELAP Business Meeting
3.0	Version submitted to the East Lothian Partnership May 2025
3.1	Edited with Accessibility Improvements