

Midlothian Council Local Housing Strategy 2017-22 Consultation

Tell us what you think

Midlothian Council is currently drafting the next Local Housing Strategy. We are keen to consult with a wide range of individuals and organisations on the priorities and targets for the future.

Why not read the discussion paper at the end of the Survey document which will give you more information? Then, tell us what you think of these proposed outcomes and give us your feedback in the following ways:

1. By filling out the Survey Form that accompanies this paper.
2. Or completing this online at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/midlothianLHS.
3. You can also get in touch with us at:

Housing Strategy
Midlothian Council
Buccleuch House
1 White Hart Street
Dalkeith
EH22 1AE

Tel: 0131 271 6698

Email: housingstrategy@midlothian.gov.uk

Please read the accompanying paper before you answer the questions below and tell us what you think of the proposed LHS outcomes by 30th September 2016. **No personal information will be published.**

Any person who wishes to make comments should return completed response forms to: HousingStrategy@midlothian.gov.uk or by post to:

Housing Planning and Performance
Midlothian Council
Buccleuch House
1 White Hart Street
Dalkeith
EH22 1AE

Alternatively you can complete an online questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/midlothianLHS

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Q 1. I am responding as: an individual from an organisation

Q 2. Your Name / or Organisation's Name and Address (as applicable)

LHS Outcomes Consultation Questions

It is proposed to implement 5 key outcomes to be delivered by 2022. These outcomes are based on Government LHS priorities and reflect the priorities we propose to take forward. Below are our proposed outcomes for the next LHS:

Outcome 1- Access to Housing and the supply of new housing has increased across all tenures in Midlothian.

Outcome 2- Homelessness is being prevented and homeless households, and those at risk of homelessness, are supported and provided with relevant housing options.

Outcome 3- The quality of homes and places have improved.

Outcome 4- People are able to access housing options and specialist provision of housing to meet their specific needs to enable independent living.

Outcome 5- Housing in Midlothian is more energy efficient and fuel poverty has reduced.

Please answer the questions that follow to the best of your knowledge:

Question 3: Are these the right outcomes? And do they reflect the right priorities
Please tick one box.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know

Please tell us what you think about these outcomes?

And/or if you think there are other outcomes we should consider, please specify below:

Question 4: In your view (or the view of your organisation), what issues should the next Local Housing Strategy prioritise? Please tick the box you agree with.

Potential Actions	Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	High Priority	Very High Priority
	1	2	3	4	5
Building new Council and Housing Association affordable rented housing					
Increasing access to other forms of affordable housing (e.g. Low Cost Home Ownership, Mid Market Rent, Help to Buy homes, Self Building)					
Increasing the supply of owner occupied housing					
Reducing the number of empty homes					
Increasing the supply of private rented housing					
Improving access and choice of social rented housing					
Regeneration activity in areas of poor condition or low demand					

Potential Actions	Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	High Priority	Very High Priority
	1	2	3	4	5
Prevention of homelessness					
Reducing the number of homeless households staying in bed and breakfast accommodation					
Reducing the time that homeless households spend in temporary accommodation					
Educating young people about their housing options					
Providing housing options for applicants from the Armed Forces					
Building Specialist Provision housing and providing support for older people and disabled people					
Providing good quality accommodation options for Gypsy/Travellers or Travelling Showpeople					
Poverty reduction and ensuring sustainable communities					
Housing support for people with disabilities and ensure independent living					
Housing advice and information for private sector housing					
Improve housing conditions across all tenures					
Improving the energy efficiency of all housing					
Reducing the number of households living in fuel poverty					

Question 5: Are there other issues which are important to you or your organisation?

Thank you for completing this Survey. We will use your comments to help us shape the next Local Housing Strategy for Midlothian.

Discussion Paper: What is a Local Housing Strategy and why is it important?

All Councils in Scotland are required to develop a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the development of this should involve a wide range of organisations and local residents. This paper explains in more detail on what the LHS is and the key issues it needs to address. We encourage you to participate by completing the Survey or providing your feedback to us.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on local authorities in Scotland to produce a LHS which sets out the key issues and priorities for ensuring the delivery of housing and related services in the local area. The Scottish Government expects the LHS to deliver the following objectives in a local authority area:

- Increase the number of homes across all tenures in the local area.
- Set out the local authority's view of the type and level of housing to be delivered.
- Set out agreed strategic vision and priorities for the future of housing and all housing related services in Midlothian.
- Set out how the Council will respond to national housing priorities.
- Contribute to the effective integration of health and social care.

The success of the LHS is reliant on working in partnership with a range of organisations and the community. Partner organisations include: Registered Social Landlords, the Scottish Government, Community Planning Partners, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership, private developers, landlords and land owners, Energy Efficiency Agencies including Changeworks and Home Energy Scotland, Support services such as Places for People, the Salvation Army and Shelter; and Community Groups, including Tenants and Residents Groups

What are the key issues that LHS should address?

The Scottish Government provides guidance to Councils about what the Council needs to consider when developing the LHS. This includes:

Increasing housing supply

What are some of the key issues?

- The population of Midlothian is increasing and to meet the level of need, 9,080 homes would have to be built in the next 20 years. A total of 6,045 of these homes would need to be "affordable" to buy or rent.
- There are currently 4,869 households on the Council's Housing Waiting List and applicants will face many years of waiting to be offered a house.
- There has been an increase in the number of applicants who require smaller sized properties.

- Many local people cannot afford to buy their own home. The average house price in Midlothian 2015 was £179,130 which is higher than the Scottish average. Also average earnings in Midlothian were lower than for Scotland as a whole.

Preventing and addressing homelessness

What are some of the key issues?

- In 2016 there are 1,114 households in Midlothian who have been assessed as homeless. The Council has a legal duty to provide permanent housing to these households.
- The Council provides housing options advice and support to help households avoid becoming homeless. The Council provided this service to 918 households in 2015.
- Every night an average of 83 homeless households in Midlothian have to stay in Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation, which is the fifth highest use of this accommodation by a local authority in Scotland.

Housing Quality

What are some of the key issues?

- The majority of housing in Midlothian meets the tolerable standard but many properties have elements of disrepair that need attention.
- Private owners cannot access grant funding to support the maintenance of their own homes but can access advice and assistance from the Council.
- Empty homes in Midlothian are a wasted resource as there is a shortage of housing in the county. There are 441 long term empty homes in Midlothian.

Specialist provision and supporting independent living

What are some of the key issues?

- In Midlothian, 16,565 people are aged 65 or over. By 2030 this is projected to increase to 22,392. The increasing number of older people living longer will result in greater need for care and support services and for specialist housing, such as adapted properties and extra care housing.
- 30% of the population in Midlothian have a long-term health condition. In addition, 8.8 adults per 1,000 of the population have a learning disability which is higher than the national average of 6. These households may require specialist housing provision and support to live independently.
- Specific households may require specific types of accommodation. For instance, Gypsy/Travellers will generally require a good quality pitch and amenities.

Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

What are some of the key issues?

- A total of 30% of households can be described as living in fuel poverty. This is when a household has to pay a significant amount of their income on heating costs for their home. This can lead to negative consequences such as debt, or health problems..
- A total of 12% of carbon dioxide emissions can be attributed to the housing stock in Scotland. It will be important to continue to reduce the level of emissions from housing in order that climate change is being addressed.

Local Housing Strategy 2013 – 2017 Achievements

Some significant achievements of the Council's LHS 2013 – 2017 include:

- Increased supply of new housing in Midlothian. Against an annual housing supply target of 565 the target was exceeded in 2012/13 (722), 2013/14 (585), 2014/15 (640).
- A significant increase in affordable housing in Midlothian, with an estimated 1,750 new units completed by 2017/18 since 2006.
- A new affordable housing tenure has been developed called Mid Market Rented housing with 65 units built and more being developed.
- Providing permanent accommodation for all unintentionally homeless households.
- Help to Buy Scotland has enabled 480 households in Midlothian to buy their own home - one of the highest numbers of households supported in Scotland.
- Homes are becoming more energy efficient due to insulation programmes in social and private housing in Midlothian.
- Implementation of a new housing allocation policy taking account of new legal requirements and the views of tenants and applicants.
- Implementation of the Homeswapper service to facilitate the process of home exchange among social housing tenants
- Tenants and applicants voted to increase rents to fund a third phase of council housing.
- Reduction in the number of homeless applications in Midlothian in 2014 and 2015.
- Housing condition across all tenures significantly improved through advice/information, aids and adaptations, energy efficiency installations.
- The needs of households with particular needs are being met including Gypsy/Travellers and the development of Extra Care Housing for Elderly People.