

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



**ECONOMY, COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND WEALTH BUILDING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

THIRD SECTOR AND WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

**REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
REGENERATION**

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the joint Annual Report produced with the Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian. The report gives an overview of the partnership working between West Lothian Council and the Third Sector in West Lothian including funding, partnership activity and support provided during the financial year 2024/25.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that panel:

- Consider and notes the contents of the report; and
- Notes the activity undertaken by the Third Sector and West Lothian Council in partnership.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Open, honest and accountable; and collaborate, inclusive and adaptive.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Appropriate assessments of projects will be carried out as required.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Supporting the Voluntary/ Third Sector and the activity delivered by the sector is aligned to the four key pillars of the CPP's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP).
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Various Council budgets detailed within appendix one.

VII Consideration at PDSP

Regular reports on the voluntary organisations budget and updates from the Voluntary Sector Gateway are provided to PDSP.

VIII Other consultations

Third Sector Working Group

D. TERMS OF THE REPORT**D.1 Background**

The annual report aims to bring together an overview of the partnership work and activity between the Council and Third Sector with a focus on the overall financial value of the various methods of support from the partnership. This includes the Council's ongoing investment in the sector, as well as how this work has met the priorities and needs of West Lothian Communities.

The report aims to provide and present the collective work and investment of the Third Sector and Council in one report rather than being viewed through the work of thematic areas of funding or service delivery in isolation. This is the fifth joint annual report.

Three areas have been highlighted in the report:

- Participation in decision making and planning;
- Investment and funding support for the Third Sector; and
- Case studies demonstrating the operational work of the sector.

D.2 Annual Report – 2024/25

The 2024/25 Annual Report is attached as Appendix one, it presents a wide overview of West Lothian Council's and partners engagement highlighted some of the funding supporting the Third Sector during 2024/25. It is designed to give an overview but to provide detail on all the funding. The report features case studies from Third Sector organisations which demonstrate the impact of activities on West Lothian communities and residents.

The format is similar to previous versions, with the inclusion of additional information on the impact of the partnership activity through forums and networks and the positive results this has had.

There continues to be strong partnership working between the Sector, West Lothian Council and Community Planning Partners. Areas highlighted within the report include:

- The continued joint working and joint scoring panels to allocate funding to the Sector for example the mental health and well being funding, local employability funding and Third Sector community support funding
- The Sector being represented and actively involved in the Policy Development Scrutiny Panels
- Continued representation and involvement of the Sector in key strategic and operational forums, for examples the Community Planning Partnership and Local Employability Partnership.

In 2024/25 the West Lothian 4 Communities, a funding website that supports the Voluntary and Third Sector to search for funding, had 203 registrations users who searched the site 18,251 times.

The website is accessible for West Lothian based organisations to easily search for funding opportunities across the UK. The site will pull together a list of possible funding sources based on the type of organisation and what activities are being delivered or what will be achieved from the provision. The functionality of the website significantly reduces the amount of time spent searching for funding and increases access to funding that organisations are aware of to apply too.

The panel is asked to note the content of the annual report.

E CONCLUSION

West Lothian Council recognises that the third sector plays a hugely important role in complimenting and adding values to the work of West Lothian Council in delivering support within communities. It is vital that our partnership working continues.

The annual report pulls together 12 months of activity, and provides a good opportunity to reflect on the work being done collectively and plan for future activity.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Voluntary Organisations PDSP, 24 September 2020

<https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=46334>

Voluntary Organisations PDSP, 4 November 2021

[West Lothian Council Committee Information - Submission Documents](#)

Economy, Community Empowerment and Wealth Building PDSP, 8 November 2022

[West Lothian Council Committee Information - View Committee Document](#)

Economy, Community Empowerment and Wealth Building PDSP, 6 June 2023

[West Lothian Council Committee Information - View Committee Document](#)

Economy, Community Empowerment and Wealth Building PDSP, 6 June 2024

[West Lothian Council Committee Information - View Committee Document](#)

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1: Annual Report 2024/25

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11 June 2025



THIRD SECTOR ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



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Introduction

This is the fifth annual report produced by West Lothian Council and Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian (VSGWL) covering 2024/25. The aim is to provide an overview of how the sector, West Lothian Council and other Community Planning Partners worked together to deliver vital support to communities.

In 2024/25 activity contained within this report has been developed and delivered against the backdrop of further reduction in public finances and organisations are feeling the impact of rising costs, inflation, and other financial pressures. It is therefore, even more important that partners work together at a local level to address the issues that communities are facing.

West Lothian Council, Community Planning Partners, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian (VSGWL) and the wider Third Sector continued to work together positively to provide a coordinated response to help and support vulnerable individuals and communities across the local area.

As in previous reports the changing landscape continues to see innovative ways of working to ensure services are delivered in a way that meets our community's needs. This continues to be the way of working that underpins the activity within this report and is highlighted by some of the case studies.

Contained within the report is information on the size and scale of the Third Sector, both in terms of the Scottish context and West Lothian. The information highlights the number of organisations, the number of staff employed and the spend in the local economy. It aims to show the scale and impact of the sector and highlights that the sector within West Lothian is a predominantly locally grown sector.



The report pulls together a wider overview of the overall investment, support and partnership working that takes place across a number of Council Services and other Community Planning partners. It is not meant to be an in-depth analysis, as the detail of the activity is reported and scrutinised within the lead area for delivery. It is however, an attempt to show the range of partnership work that goes on and a wider understanding of the funding that helps support the work in our communities. It is not a complete picture as links, networks and partnership working take place all the time and is not always captured easily. Similarly, with funding, there is much more investment that supports the Third Sector and Council to deliver than the investment

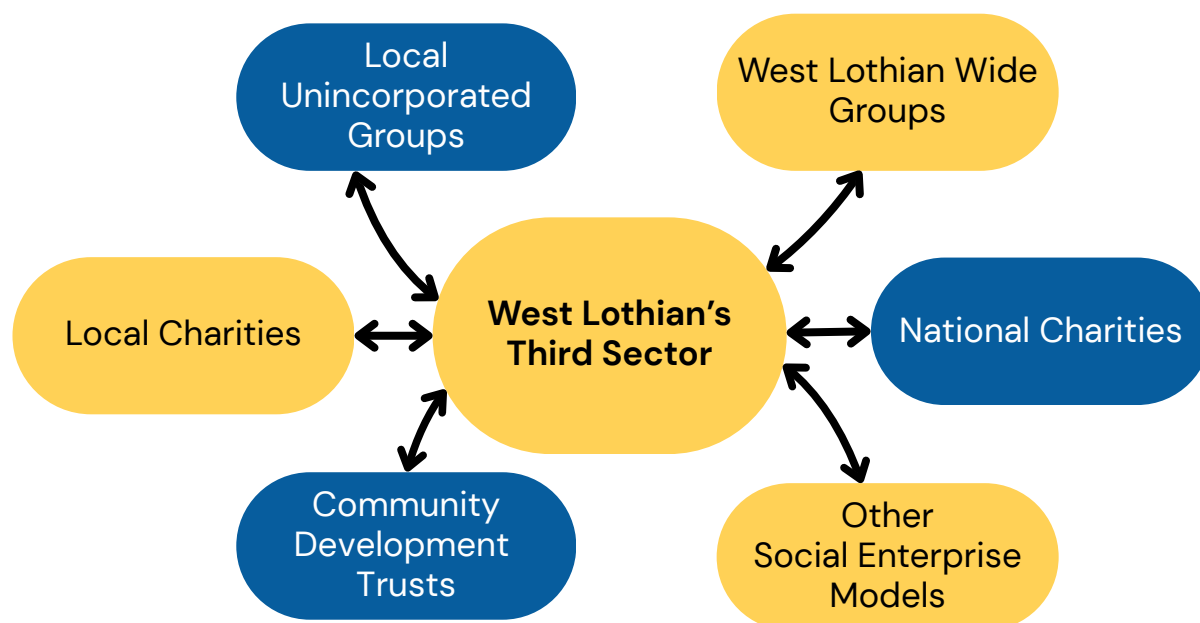
that goes into the Third Sector through Council and partners. The key importance of how the Third Sector is able to draw down funding from external funders is recognised and how that ability helps to deliver key support to our local communities whether geographically or thematically.

The report highlights over **£44.9** million of funding going into the Third Sector from West Lothian Council, Health partners, the VSGWL and some external funding managed by West Lothian Council in 2024/25. The figure shows the level of investment but it is not a full list as Partners and organisations are aware of more investment not captured within the report summary. The figures used in this report are rounded up or down for ease of reference.

West Lothian Council and the Third Sector continue to work closely strengthened by existing processes and relationships. Areas of partnership activity and alignment are captured within the report under partnership working and are meant to highlight the breadth of activity partners are engaged in.

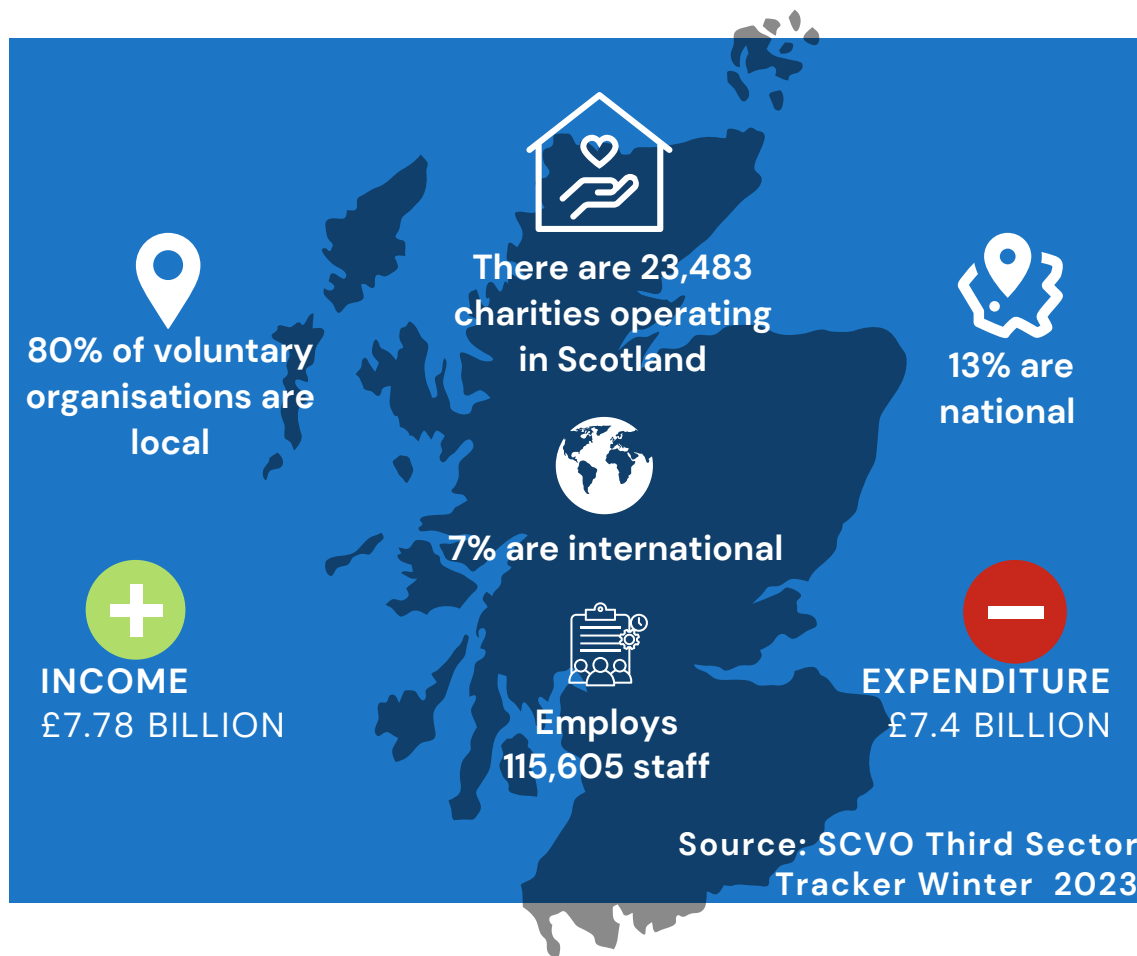
**£44.9
MIL**

In terms of defining the Third Sector, for the purposes of the report this includes local community-based organisations, groups (mainly charities but some unincorporated), West Lothian wide groups, national charities operating within West Lothian, Community Development Trusts and other social enterprise models.

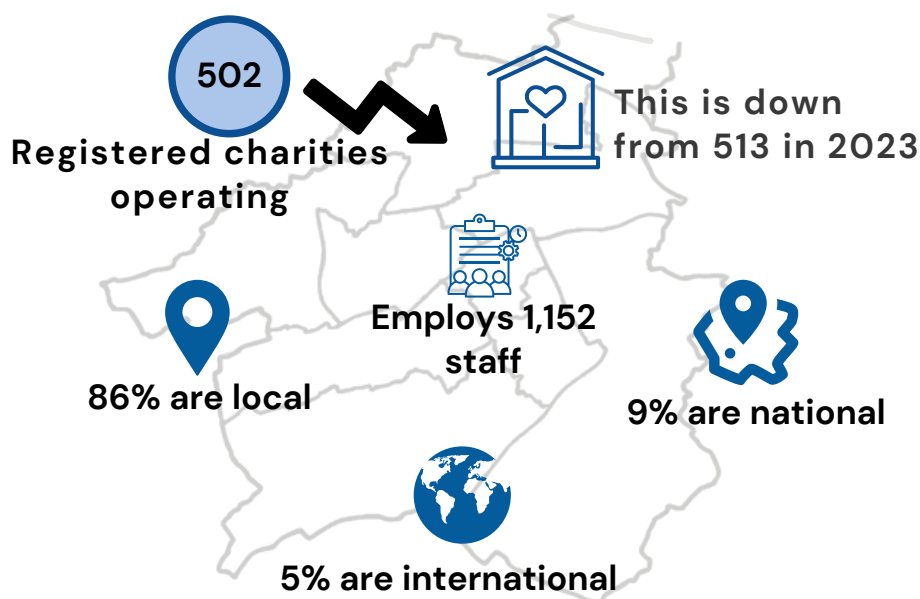


Size and Scale of the Sector

Across Scotland



Across West Lothian

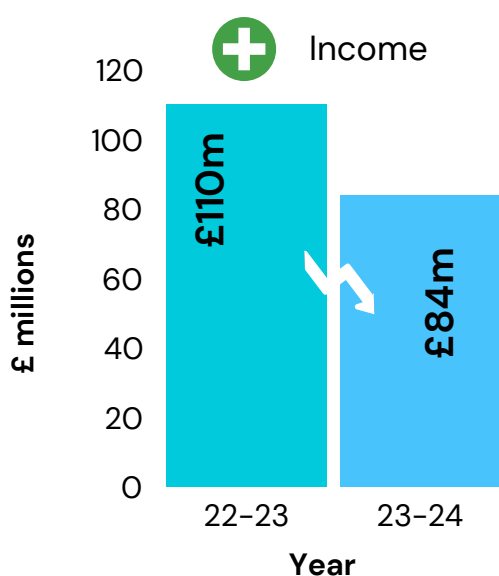


Source: SCVO Third Sector Tracker Winter 2023

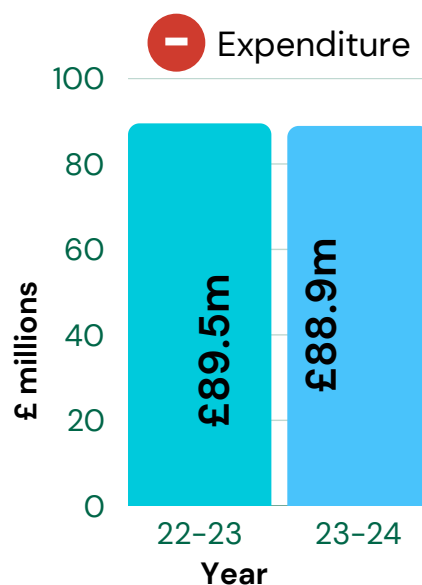
Number of Organisations by Activity in West Lothian



Income and Expenditure



The income for the Third Sector in West Lothian has fallen by **19.1%**.



The expenditure of the Third Sector in West Lothian fell by only **0.67%**.



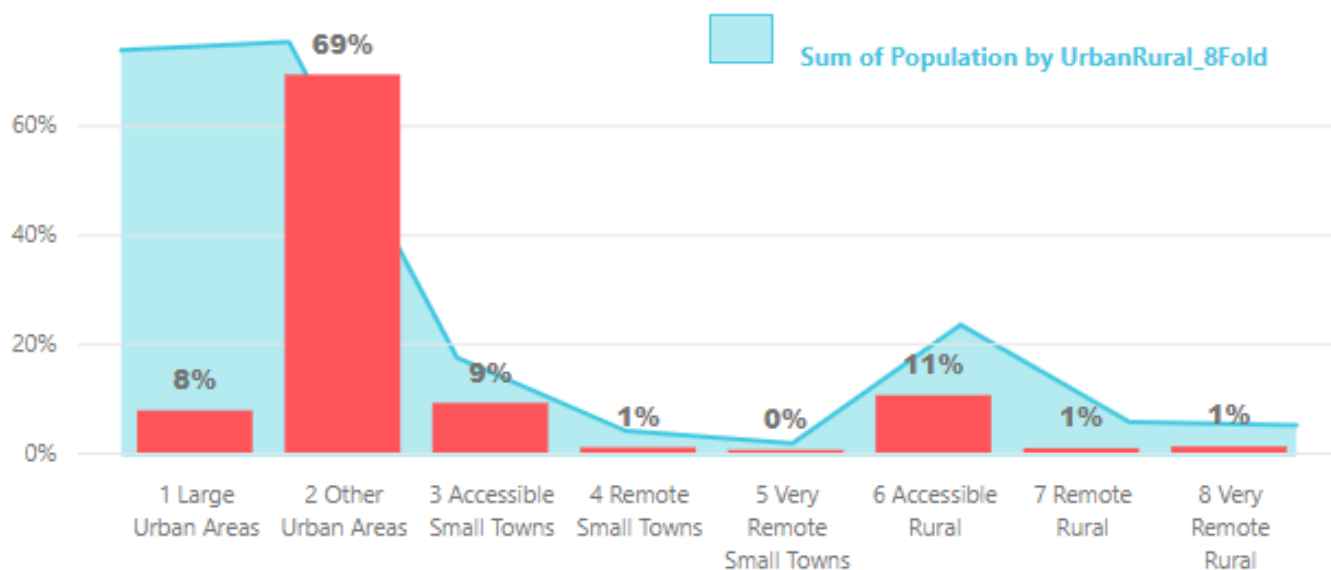
2023 Income Split*

This graphic illustrates the income sources for the third sector in West Lothian.

*data from OSCR Register

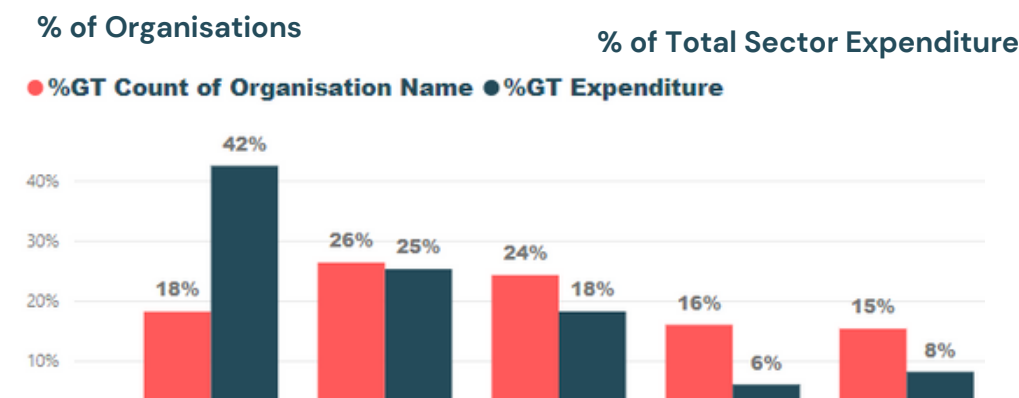
- Donations and legacies income ■ Charitable activities income
- Other trading activities income ■ Investments income
- Other income

Urban Rural Split



The graph illustrates the distribution of voluntary organisations across urban and rural areas in West Lothian. The majority, 69% of organisations, are situated in 'Other Urban Areas.' Which are areas that have populations of between 10,000 and 124,999 people.

SIMD Quintiles



Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's standard approach to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. It can help improve understanding about the outcomes and circumstances of people living in the most deprived areas in Scotland. SIMD looks at the extent to which an area is deprived across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing.

Working Together – Partnership & Strategic Working

Investment, partnership working and sharing of expertise is vital to both shaping strategy and delivering for communities. The Third Sector Working Group continues to be an important link between the Council and the Third Sector and has been pivotal in shaping policy and funding developments in 2024/25.

Below are a number of key examples of other partnership working and strategic working between the Third Sector, West Lothian Council and key Community Planning Partners.

Children and Families Forum

Policy Development Scrutiny Panels x7

West Lothian Volunteer Network

Older People Provider Forum

Third Sector Strategy Group

West Lothian Third Sector Employability Forum

Third Sector Cost of Living Forum

West Lothian Food Network



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Community Planning Partnership

Carer Strategy Implementation Group

Community Learning and Development Board

Local Employability Forum

Integration Joint Board

Improving Cancer Journey Programme Board

Health Improvement Inequalities in Partnerships Delivery Group

Adult Mental Wellbeing Prevention / Early Intervention Group

Anti Poverty Task Force

Trauma Board

Ukraine Support

Multiple subgroups, forums and committees

Policy Development Scrutiny Panels

The Third Sector and Council have continued to work together to support the Third Sector to represent the sector at all of the Council's Policy Development Scrutiny Panels. The Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian (VSGWL), has a seat at all Panels to support local policy scrutiny. To ensure wider sector representation and voice in shaping policy, it was agreed in 2023 that representatives, with a knowledge of the focus of the panel, would be supported to attend meetings. This has provided the Third Sector with the ability to input in to the Council's governance process. The representatives have set up mechanisms to communicate with organisations within the sector who are interested in the agenda items being discussed and enable contributions from the Third Sector. This year a second representative for each panel was identified from the Sector to support with representation.



The Policy Development Scrutiny Panels are; Corporate Policy and Resources, Education, Housing, Public and Community Safety, Social Work and Health, Environment and Sustainability and Economy, Community Empowerment and Wealth Building.

During the year the Third Sector working group has continued to support the identification of representatives and reviewed working arrangements to ensure they are supported to participate.

Themed Forums

The VSGWL coordinates a number of themed forums for the sector comprising of Third Sector groups with an interest in the theme of the Forum. It also provides the opportunity for partners to engage with all organisations with an interest and expertise in the theme of the Forum.

The Forums are; (Children and Families, Third Sector Cost of Living, Third Sector Strategy Group, Older People Providers, Third Sector Employability Forum and West Lothian Volunteer Network). Minutes from all the Forum meetings are available via the VSG's website. Work was undertaken during the year to look at the establishment of a Social Enterprise Forum.

The Forums aim to improve the effectiveness and maximise the contribution of West Lothian's Third Sector to the planning and delivery of services and activities around the themes. They also provide an opportunity for Community Planning Partners to engage with the sector around thematic areas.

Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG)

The role of TSSG is to advise and guide VSGWL about the needs of the sector at national and local policy development level and the delivery of the work plan. TSSG influence policy and planning nationally across the sector. TSSG also facilitates:

- sector reps at forums representing the sector and not just narrow organisational interests.
- the setting up of appropriate systems for the constituencies of organisations in each thematic/geographic group e.g. children and families, local regeneration planning etc
- communications both up and down between forums and the sector and within and across the sector

The TSSG also provides a forum for engagement with the sector in a strategic manor and to enable the delivery of any training and information sharing.



Third Sector Cost of Living Forum

In response to the challenges of the cost of living crisis, the Third Sector Strategy Group agreed to the establishment of a dedicated Third Sector Cost of Living Forum. The forum has considered how the sector can work together to identify ideas, opportunities, and potential solutions to the challenges the Cost of Living Crisis has had on organisations, volunteers, communities and individuals.

The Forum provides input to the Anti-Poverty Board and working group on the challenges being faces by the sector to be inputted into the partnership response to the challenges.



Third Sector Employability Forum

The Forum allows employability providers in the area to come together to develop better relationships between the sector and partners, to network, influence local or national decision-making and policy as well as share good practice.

In 2024/25 the consortium of Third Sector employability providers continue to deliver Partnership for Parents as a collective. This brought £480,000 into the sector to support delivery over the two year period and has resulted in further collaboration opportunities between partners.



The Forum feeds directly into the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) which has representatives from all the Community Planning Partners employability teams to help shape local employability and volunteering opportunities.

In 2024/25 the VSGWL became the co-chair of the LEP along side West Lothian Council.

During 2024/25 the Forum was awarded funding from the LEP to increase the capacity of the Forum with a dedicated member of staff. Delivery of this will commence in Spring 2025.

Children and Families Forum

The Forum aims to improve the effectiveness and maximise the contribution of West Lothian's Third Sector to the planning and delivery of services and activities for children, young people and families.

The Children and Families Forum represents the Third Sector's views on a range of key strategic groups and partnerships across West Lothian, and aims to ensure that the Third Sector is represented effectively on key partnership bodies, such as the Council's Children & Families Strategic Planning group. Members of the Forum take on representation roles to take part in these groups and ensure the wide-ranging views and areas of work of the Third Sector are well represented when looking at the provision of services for children, young people and families.



Older People Providers Forum

The Older People Providers Forum continues to play a vital role in facilitating connections between organisations across West Lothian that deliver services for older people. The forum acts as a platform for collaboration and information sharing, contributing directly to the quarterly production of the What's On Where guide, which is compiled by Home Instead.



A highly successful Older People Providers and Memory Support Fayre was held in March. This event was organised in partnership between Home Instead and the Carers of West Lothian's MIST project. It was promoted through existing networks within the Older People Providers Forum, with many attendees participating as a result of relationships and engagement developed through this collaborative group.

West Lothian Volunteer Network (WLVN)

The WLVN provides Volunteer Managers and Coordinators with a platform for support, information exchange, share best practice and build partnerships.

The WLVN meets on a monthly basis. There are 47 members of the Network. At each meeting everyone present has the opportunity to share service updates including volunteer stories and successes. Events can be shared on WLVN Facebook page. There is often a guest speaker or themed discussion on issues relevant to the network for example PVG changes.



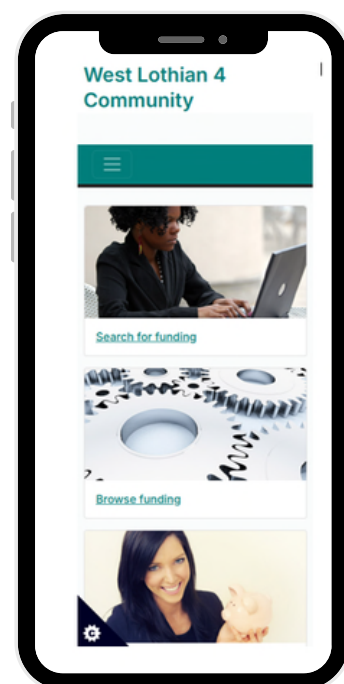
The Network successfully held a volunteer fair in Bathgate in January 2025 and are exploring other opportunities.



Open 4 Communities

In January 2024 West Lothian Council invested in West Lothian 4 Communities, a funding website that supports the Voluntary and Third Sector to search for funding. The website provides organisations, and Officers supporting organisations, with access to information on a range of grant funding sources throughout the UK. The site enables users to search by for example, type of funder, nature of funding required and the type of organisation applying. Once a search is complete the site provides a summary of the grant funders that support what they require and information on how to apply. Users are also able to set up alerts for funding. This significantly reduces the amount of time spent looking for funding, increases the range of funders organisations are applying to and provides information on how to apply directly and what is required for an application. A number of sessions have been run in 2024 with the Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian, to support organisation to use the site. Sessions have been recorded and are available on their website for those unable to attend. Feedback has been positive from users with the ease of use and access to information on funders that organisations never knew existed being the main areas of positive feedback.

In the first year of access 203 users have registered with the site from 160 local organisations with 18,251 visits to the site during the period being registered. Follow up engagement is currently taking place to identify the value of the additional funding that has been secured as a result of applications made through funder identified through the site.





West Lothian

COMMUNITIES MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING FUND



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

West Lothian
Health & Social Care Partnership
www.westlothianhscp.org.uk

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Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

In 2024/25 the Voluntary Sector Gateway supported the distribution of the West Lothian Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund of £466,000 to the local Third Sector. This was the third year of funding provided by the Scottish Government.

Organisations applied to the Voluntary Sector Gateway for a maximum award of up to £50,000 for projects aimed at supporting community-based projects and initiatives helping address local mental health and wellbeing needs for people aged over 16 years old across West Lothian.

Charities, social enterprises, community and voluntary groups, parent councils, and other third sector organisations operating in the West Lothian area were eligible to apply for activity covering 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

The fund received 68 applications seeking over £1.4m of funding from £466,000 available. A total of 37 organisation were successful and provided with grants to support their initiatives –

- Bathgate Belles Scottish Women's Institute
- 1st Step Development Ventures
- Answer Project LTD
- Bathgate Fabb Club
- Bathgate stroke support group
- Bathgate Thistle Community Football Club
- Bipolar Scotland
- Bridge Community Project
- Canine Concern Scotland Trust
- Carers of West Lothian
- EnvironMentalHealth CIC
- Equal Futures
- Families Outside
- Flosverse Techsphere CIC
- Home-Start West Lothian
- Kidz-Eco CIC
- Ladywell Neighbourhood Network SCIO
- Linlithgow Community Development Trust
- Livingston Community Shed
- Livingston United Parish Church
- Young At Heart
- Murieston Development Trust
- Neil's Hugs Foundation
- No limits
- Open Door Scotland
- Polbeth Community Hub
- Reusing IT
- Rock Trust
- Smile Providing Activities For The Elderly CIC
- Sporting Memories Foundation Scotland
- Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group
- The Brock Garden Centre SCIO
- West Calder and Harburn Community Development Trust
- West Lothian 50+ Network SCIO
- West Lothian African Women's Network
- West Lothian Diabetes Scotland Group
- West Lothian Women's Aid

Asset Transfer

In 2024/25, West Lothian Council provided support to two organisations: Spark and Bathgate Mosque. Spark received assistance with the former Almondbank Library while Bathgate Mosque received support for St David House. Both organisations have successfully navigated through the asset transfer process, with St David House marking the council's largest transfer to date.

Spark, is a local charity based in Craigshill which provides support to the local community. The organisation has been operating out of the Library building for over a decade, but now wants to own the property. The community asset transfer application was approved in March 2025. Spark plans to offer accommodation to various third sector organisations while also providing a range of community services in Craigshill themselves.

Ownership of St David House has been transferred to the Mosque and the project, which includes a community centre, a café and retail unit, is on track to transform a council office into a vibrant, multi-layered community hub.

During 2024/25 three Asset Transfer information sessions were held in Livingston, Bathgate and Linlithgow to provide information and advise on asset transfer and how groups engage with the process.



West Lothian Food Network

The West Lothian Food Network was set up in partnership with West Lothian Council in response to the pandemic and is now addressing the fallout from the negative impact of the cost-of-living crisis within deprived and isolated communities. The West Lothian Food Network is made up of 21 members all operating community shops/pantries. To date, a much-appreciated total budget provision of £1.8 Million from April 2021 to March 2025 has been supplied or committed to the West Lothian Food Network from West Lothian Council.

Network members provide early intervention identifying beneficiaries from areas of hidden poverty in affluent areas with high levels of debt and offer crisis support to avert food poverty providing choice, dignity, and access to quality and nutritious food.

Member organisations offer a wide range of support including educational cooking classes, community shops, cafes, larders, drop in pantries, distribute cooked meals, community fridges, debt & welfare advice, Anti-Poverty referrals and food vouchers/parcels within the local communities, providing place-based support.

Through the numerous services our members provide, people and families also receive help from the following supports:

- Benefit Maximation Advice
- Cooking Classes
- Fuel Banks
- Low Priced Produce
- Anti-poverty Advice
- Referrals to Relevant Services
- Emotional Support
- Reduced Isolation
- Women's Aid Supports
- Mental Health Support,
- Relevant Ethnic Minorities Food Support
- Food Vouchers
- Practical and Relationship Support
- Fresh Nutritious Food with Choice and Dignity



During 2024/25, the West Lothian Food Network has supplied around 57,000 meals to support people and families in West Lothian

The West Lothian Food Network has a dedicated [Web Page](#) which details the food support available across West Lothian. The site also includes an updated Food Charter.

VSGWL has continued to support the Food Network members by providing independent governance support to the network. VSGWL receive and pay out funds on behalf of the Food The Network has secured SCIO status has its own bank account. A Board of Trustees has also been established to oversee activity and develop plans for the long term sustainability of the network.

How Key Services and Partners Have Worked with the Third Sector in 2024/25

Below are some examples of how Services, Partners and the Third Sector have worked together. The information below is not designed to show all the information but to provide an insight into some of the activity in 2024/25.

The Voluntary Sector Gateway (VSGWL) represents the Third Sector on the Community Planning Partnership Board and Community Planning Partnership Steering groups. In March 2025 the Voluntary Sector Gateway and two organisations presented to the Community Planning Partnership Board on the role and contribution of the Third Sector in Community Planning.

THE GATEWAY
Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

Third Sector organisations play a vital role in the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) and Economic Partnership Forum (EPF). In 2024/25 the VSGWL became co-chair of the LEP alongside West Lothian Council. As a result the development of the local investment plan and allocation of funding was carried out with the Sector having an active role.



A number of key funding streams have been jointly assessed and funding awarded as a partnership between the Voluntary Sector Gateway, a range of Council Services and the NHS. This has included the Voluntary Sector Mental Health and Well being funding and the Third Sector Community Support fund.

The Third Sector has a key role in supporting the delivery of activity identified through the West Lothian Community Learning Development Plan and Developing the Young Workforce. The sector is represented on both Boards and actively contributes as partners to the strategic delivery.



Within the Integrated Joint Board activity there are strong strategic partnerships around child protection, community safety, alcohol and drug and community justice. This is supported by strategic working groups which have representation from the Third Sector and officers from the partnership. These include:

- Integration Joint Board and IJB Strategic Planning Group
- Integration Joint Board Care and Governance Group
- Carer Strategic Implementation Group
- Self-Directed Support Board
- Alcohol and Drug Partnership Exec Board
- Mental Health Oversight Group
- Children and Families Strategic Planning Group
- Anti Poverty Task Force
- Community Planning Partnership – Net Zero Sub Group
- Improving Cancer journey programme Board
- Local Employability Partnership

The Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian are also a key partner on behalf of the Third Sector on a number of groups including the Armed Forces Community Covenant Steering Group, Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Community Engagement and Empowerment Group.



Below are some examples of how key services and partners have worked with the Third Sector, around key areas of funding. The information below is not designed to show all the information but to provide an insight into some of the activity in 2024/25.

Community Wealth Building

In 2024/25 the Community Wealth Building Team administered a range of Council and external grants provided to the Council. This totalled £1,793,670 of funding to 146 projects. This is broken down below:

1. Voluntary Organisations budget – £1 million to support the Third Sector in West Lothian, awarded to 28 groups, through various methods including; Service Level Agreements, commissioning, Third Sector Community Support funding and Twinning associations.
2. Gala grants – £40,000 to 28 organisations
3. Pensioners Christmas Grants – £29,000 to 72 organisations
4. The West Lothian Development Trust windfarm funding allocated – £415,670 was awarded to 20 different organisations through 27 grants.
5. Heartlands Developer funding of £ 15,000 allocated to environmental improvements in Fauldhouse.

In 2024/25 the Scottish Government provided £294,000 Place-Based Investment Funding to West Lothian Council for a previously funded project West Calder and Harburn Development Trust's Co-Op Discovery centre.



Economic Development

Access2employment, through their Parental Employment Support programmes, paid out £418,253.30 to 13 Third Sector organisations.

- Epilepsy West Lothian – £3,276
- Flexibility Works – £2,100
- Homeaid West Lothian – £9,418.50
- Impact Arts – £75,000
- Kidzeco – £2,620.80
- Open Door Outreach Services – £2,340
- Routes to Work – £75,000
- Scottish Childminding Association – £19,550
- Smile Counselling – £4,320
- The Larder – £150,000
- Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian – £15,000
- West Lothian African Women's Network – £6,233
- West Lothian College – £53,395



Through the No One Left Behind Grant eight organisations received £44,247.05.

- Boghall Drop In Centre – £3,276
- Kidzeco – £14,086.80
- Lanthorn Community Association – £3,776
- Linlithgow Young Peoples Project – £7,715.80
- Low Port Centre – £2,620.80
- Stoneyburn and Bents O.F. Treat – £3,120.80
- The Larder – £1,771.25
- West Calder and Harburn CDT – £7,879.60



Through the Shared Prosperity Fund four organisations received £58,560:

- Change, Grow, Live received £49,000 to deliver employability support,
- Spark received £2,808 for an ERI,
- Simply Play received £5,202 and
- Murieston Tennis Club received £1,550 for Low Carbon Grants.

The Scottish Governments Rural funding also saw £136,000 allocated to 11 local community organisations.

- Beechbrae – £7,841.68
- Firefly Arts – £3,679
- Harburn Village Hall – £8,120
- Loganlea Miners Charitable Welfare Society – £10,094.79
- School Bank West Lothian – £9,000
- The Bridge – £5,000
- The Larder – 2 projects – £8,261.40 & £680
- West Calder and Harburn Community Development Trust – Polbeth Garden – £12,344.05
- West Calder High School Cares – £2,1080
- West Calder Hub – £57,846.67
- Winchburgh Community Development Trust – £11,198.40



Business Gateway Third Sector Support

Business Gateway continue to deliver business advice and support to existing and new start social enterprises in 2024/25. Support is tailored around the needs of individual organisations including business planning, social enterprise legal structures, finance raising, grant and loan applications, property, community benefit leases, asset transfers, income generation, governance and sustainability.



In 2024/25 support was provided to 52 social enterprises. During this time, 15 organisations received specialist business support and advice on Community Asset Transfer. In total 11 organisations were supported with a Business Development Review as part of organisational restructuring.

Operational Services inc. NETs, Land and Countryside Services

Open Space has worked with community groups to delivery local projects throughout 2024/25. These include:

- Managed project to supply and install new basket swing in Seafeld Park for Seafeld Community Council with their funding – £7,278; and



- Supported the delivery of Heartlands Funding, £15,000, on behalf of various Fauldhouse community groups though procuring and managing the installation of seating and handrails following community choices exercise by Community Wealth Building Team.

- The Transportation Team awarded HcL £125,000 to support their local public transport services. A further £182,119 was provided via the Community Wealth Building Team, reported above, to provide community transport.



Cleaner Communities continue to work with West Lothian Litter Pickers in cleaning up the environment during 2024/25. The service provided over 24,000 bags 'a new dedicated clean-up bag in Yellow was launched in July 2024' as well as supplying loan kit/equipment to supplement larger group picks.

The service also continued to support with the disposal of the litter and waste collected with a new online reporting form that has been well-received and used by groups. West Lothian Litter Pickers are now supported by more than 4,800 volunteers with around 200-400 active volunteers every week. Working in partnership saw over 6,000 volunteers take part in the Keeping Scotland Beautiful (KSB) Spring Clean, over double the number in 2023/2024.

Social Policy

In 2024/25, Social Policy paid a total of £38.7 million to third sector bodies for grants and commissioned services, which is an increase from £33.5 million paid in 2023/24.

In Adults and Older People Services, the total amount was £28 million. Of this, £24.7 million was paid to providers of direct care and support, to adults with disabilities and older people. There was a further £3.3 million paid for other indirect support such as advocacy and other services.



In Children and Justice Services, the total amount was £10.7 million. Of this, £6.5 million was for provision of external placements and supported accommodation, and £1.7 million for direct care for children with disabilities. The remaining £2.5 million was other support for families, mental health services, and other low level provision.

Housing

In 2024/25 £40,892 in total went to the Third Sector to support the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan work:

- Rock Trust – pilot of Upstream project – £26,667
- Action for Children – Young Persons Emergency Prevention Service – £14,225

This is commissioned work funded by grant funding from the Scottish Government.

The service works closely with the sector through the Homeless Strategy Government Board, which replaced the Rapid Rehousing Transition Board. This is attended by partners from Registered Social Landlords and the Third Sector. The Rock Trust attend this on behalf of other charities providing support to young people.

The sector attends the Homeless Strategy Board and associated workstreams.



Education

Sports

The Active Schools and Community Sport service supports a wide range of community sports clubs to deliver impactful positive outcomes for local communities.

In total 49 clubs currently hold Active Assured Accreditation, these clubs access a range of benefits such as bespoke club development support, opportunities to attend club network and professional learning events coordinated by Community Sport staff themed around the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda. As well as Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities with specialist deliverers to enhance the skillset of their volunteer workforce.



Funding support was provided during 2024/25 to 15 accredited clubs via the Sporting Grants scheme with £27,718 awarded for projects related to the development of volunteers and young leaders and targeting inequalities with a particular focus on women and girls and people with a disability and mental well-being.

A further £6,000 was awarded to two clubs to support care experienced children and young people as part of the 'Active4Me' programme across the two mainstream primary schools in Craigshill.

£5,000 funding was provided to S.M.I.L.E. Counselling to run a pilot project with the West Lothian Young Persons Sports Panel which involved bespoke training for the young people so that their views are heard and valued.

The service works in partnership with Clubsport West Lothian, the voluntary voice of sports clubs, organisations and individuals within West Lothian. Clubsport is a consultative partner, they received £5,000 to disburse to their member network of over 600. The organisation now supports 35 clubs.



The service supported 11 community sports clubs in accessing the council's Summer Programme Fund in 2024 and assisted with the identification of targeted children and young people from low income families to support their access to the provision, as well as supporting a number of clubs with applications to The Robertson's Trust, DCMS – SFA Grassroots Funds and Sportscotland's Facilities Fund.

Nursery and Early Years Provision

In 2024/25, £10,500 was awarded to seven playgroups, with each receiving £1,500.



Primary and Secondary Schools

Within schools some of the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), provided directly to each school, was awarded to the Third Sector to deliver specific interventions. This totalled £101,042 in 2024/25, the following organisation received funding:

- Enable – £24,000
- The Larder – £24,225
- West Lothian Youth Action – £16,614
- Smile Counselling – £31,620
- RUTS – £600
- Outward Bound Trust – £783
- Beechbrae – £3,200



Through other school funding £270,000 supported work provided by organisations such as Smile, The Larder, Well Being and WLYAP.

Summer Programme

West Lothian Summer Programme 2024 was co-designed by children, young people and families. West Lothian Council services, third sector and community partner providers offered a successful varied and diverse range of opportunities for children and young people throughout the six-week school summer holiday period. Participants enjoyed fun, engaging and educational activities including sports, arts, team games, outdoor learning, cooking skills, environmental projects and trips away. In total 6,302 children and young people benefited from the summer programme, a significant part of this was through services provided by 44 Third Sector partners who were supported through grants totalling £225,250.



Youth Work

A total of £6,528 was allocated for the delivery of youth work provision in Linlithgow and Bridgend areas where CLD Youth Services does not currently operate.

West Lothian Leisure

West Lothian Council provided provided funding to West Lothian Leisure of £2.048 Million towards providing vital sporting and leisure services for local residents.

west lothian leisure
XCITE

Anti-Poverty Service

The Anti-Poverty Service provided £150,000 in 2024/25 from Shared Prosperity Fund to the West Lothian Food Network to support food insecurity on a local level and use this money to help the network become more sustainable. Over and above this they received an additional £10,000 from the multiply funding pot, food network members were asked to apply for up to £1,000 for the delivery of a food insecurity community event bringing together partners who could support with advice, education and/or training. Advice Shop, A2E and Adult Learning were the key partners invited to these events.



To develop a more robust data collection system the food network accessed the FORT system at no cost allowing the network members to use the same platform for recording the information which has not only helped the council understand the profile of those accessing food support but has helped the network when applying for other funding.



FORT has also helped with the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Project group (including KidzEco and VSGWL) to build a service directory and active referral network.'

The Service delivers the Kidstart project in partnership with Kidzeco, with referrals from the Advice Shop, Citizens Advice and NHS Lothian to provide baby essentials packs to families in financial difficulty.

A rolling programme of 21 training sessions have been delivered with the Third Sector playing a vital role, including input from Carers of West Lothian, Gambling Harms, Home Energy Scotland and Armed Service Advice.

Finance and Property Services

In 2024/25, West Lothian Council provided support to organisations wanting to progress an asset transfer. Two organisations: Spark and Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited both successfully navigated through the asset transfer process, with St David House marking the council's largest transfer to date.

Support was also provided to a number of organisations who were looking at community benefit leases throughout the year.

NHS Lothian Partnership and Place Team

In July 2023 the NHS Partnership and Place team allocated Health Improvement Funding to two separate projects. The funding was to deliver a programme of work which helps to achieve the outcome of shaping healthy, safe and vibrant places and communities in West Lothian. The projects that received funding were:



- £100,000 to a Child Poverty Project which is a collaboration between Kidzeco, Citizens Advice Bureau and West Lothian Council. The Projects is designed to help parents cope with their perinatal journey, prevent crisis situations, and foster positive physical and mental health for themselves and their children. It will also address finance, housing and employability issues if required. This project has a service level agreement in place from October 2023–September 2026.
- £100,000 to Carers of West Lothian for their early intervention project to support those waiting on or newly received dementia diagnosis. The project focuses on developing coping mechanisms, helping the person with dementia and their carer/family to get the best support and put plans in place for the required support. This project has a service level agreement in place from October 2023–September 2026



These were reported in the 2023/24 Annual Report and repeated here to show the financial commitments running through 2024/25 which equates to roughly £33,000 per year over the course of the three years covered by the funding.

Environmental and West Lothian Climate Actions Network

The service works strategically through the Community Planning Partnership Net-zero Sub-group and involve input from the Joint Forum of Community Council's and West Lothian Climate Action Network (WLCAN), with both representing their network members. The work with WLCAN also involves support at an operational level, along with the Community Wealth Building Team. WLCAN also delivered content for the story mapping element of the city-region wide Climate Risks and Opportunities Assessment.

The service offered support and advice on climates related matters as required, for example to Murieston Village Hall's Management Committee to support them in reducing their energy consumption and associated costs. This consisted of a number of site visits and the provision of energy data.



West Lothian Climate Action Network

In 2024/25 the West Lothian Climate Action Network (WLCAN) had a focus on four key seasonal themed activities focusing on Food, Water, Energy and Transport. As well as the delivery of a number of workshops, conversations and engagement activities in the community. This included attending or supporting 95 events throughout the year aimed at community conversations on climate change and awareness raising.

The project donated 210 orchard trees to community groups. Pruning workshops for the trees were fully booked as members joined the Hub team along with a trainer from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh at the Woodland Trust Scotland's Bellsquarry reserve on the edge of Livingston.

The ECO Fund aimed to help grassroots groups to develop projects spanning food growing, energy efficiency measures, environmental training and conservation. WLCAN members were able to bid for the two levels of grants; a small grant of up to £2,000 and large grant of up to £5,000. In total 24 projects were awarded funding in 2024/25 with a total of £23,000.



Conclusion

As evidenced by this report, the partnership work between West Lothian Council, Community Planning Partners and the Third Sector is well established. It will be vital to continue to consolidate and build on this partnership going forward in 2025/26.

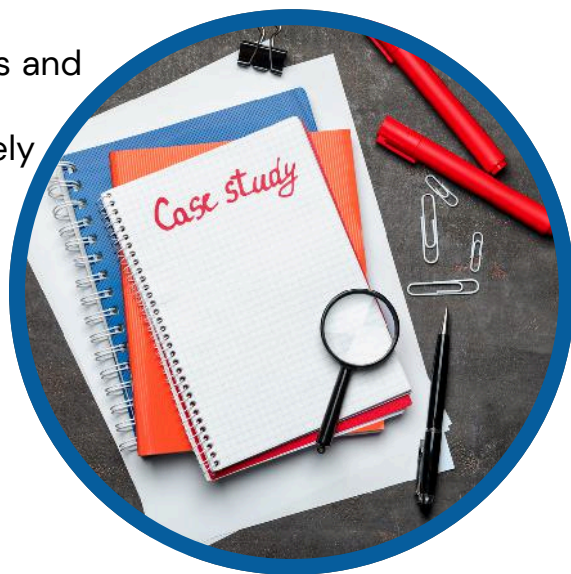
The importance of Community Planning Partners, including West Lothian Council and the Third Sector, working as strategically as possible to deliver for West Lothian communities remains key. This will help make best use of constrained resources in future. For example, encourage more consortium or collaborative funding applications that clearly address strategic priorities.



Case Studies

The report has provided a range of high level facts and figures about the sector nationally, locally, funding and partnership working. However, what is ultimately important is what this actually looks like in practice.

Below are a number of case studies that highlight some of the activity that has been delivered by key areas of funding highlighted in the report.



● Whitburn Community Development Trust	Page 30
● Fauldhouse Community Youth Target	Page 32
● Play Works at The Dale Hub	Page 35
● The Larder	Page 37
● Youth Action Project	Page 40
● Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian	Page 42
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● Sporting Memories	Page 49

WHITBURN Community Development Trust

'At the heart of the community'

Whitburn Community Development Trust is a local charity run by volunteers, the vision of the Trust is to relieve poverty, promote well-being and build a healthy, prosperous, and sustainable future for our town and its people. The Trust strives to achieve this through the provision of our Community Support Hub, Community Fridge and Community Garden. Through these activities the Trust provides services and support to tackle and alleviate the significant economic challenges and pressures facing our community.

Whitburn Community Garden

Who We Are

The garden, was created in 2021 and is a testament to hard work and community spirit in Whitburn. It began with the idea of giving back to the community, but since opening the garden has grown from just an open patch of lawn located behind the Whitburn Community Education Centre.

The garden now has over 30 raised beds; has recently installed an additional polytunnel, allowing further growth of tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers in a protected environment; has planted a variety of pear, apple, and plum trees; and established a wildflower patch to promote biodiversity and invite pollinators to the garden.

In 2024 just under 500kg of fruit and veg was harvested and distributed through the Community Fridge, as well as to participants at open day events held in the garden.



What We Do

Started and lead by a hardworking team of volunteers, the garden serves as an open space where people can share and gain new knowledge, such as how to grow fresh tasty food, how to support wildlife, how to improve the local environment, and more. It is also a space where open day events can take place to encourage members of the community to take part for fun and entertainment.

Our Community Garden:

- Offers a socially cohesive space for members of all generations to come together and share experiences and learn new skills.
- Allows the community to be involved in growing fresh fruit and veg to see the process of farm to fork.
- Produces locally grown fruit and veg which is made available to members of our Community Fridge
- Provides the opportunity for the community to enjoy open green space which is proven to increase people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Provides volunteering opportunities.



After losing their jobs and feeling lonely two of our volunteers joined the garden separately to give them something to do now Alex and Stephen have built up a friendship and have found another passion in common which is litter picking and have arranged times to meet up out with the Garden to litter pick around the community.





In January 2023 Fauldhouse Community Youth Target (FCYT) was created by volunteers and local young people within Fauldhouse in response to a number of instances of fires raising and increased Antisocial behaviour in Fauldhouse. The group has a remit to deliver youth work, signposting and support to the young people of Fauldhouse. Working collaboratively with young people to ensure all services provided are relevant, successful, effective, inclusive, transformative and sustainable.

Since its inception the group has gone from strength to strength and in 2024/25 through support from West Lothian Development Trust received funding to establish a Friday evening Drop-In and Street Sport programme aimed at young people primarily in Primary 7 to Second year at high school.

The Street Sports Outreach and Engagement project is designed to directly address the issues of antisocial behaviour and youth offending by engaging young people on the street in regular, organised sports sessions in both Fauldhouse and Longridge. The project delivers a positive, constructive alternative to the negative influences many young people encounter daily and are engaged in.



The Key Components of the weekly project are:

- Conducting Street Sports Sessions which provide engagement through sports such as football, basketball, and bat and ball games concentrating on the areas within the villages where risk taking behaviour and antisocial behaviour takes place. The sessions also provide a forum to engage with young people and also make them aware of the Drop-In at Fauldhouse Partnership Centre.

- Drop-In at Fauldhouse Partnership Centre on a Friday night to create consistent opportunities for young people to participate in structured, healthy activities such as cooking for life skills, pool league, darts league, activity-based sessions, Xbox online sports gaming.



The ultimate aim is to work and engaging with young people in Fauldhouse and Longridge regularly to build positive relationships so they can be signposted and encouraged to engage with other services as required.

Means of Engagement

Staff and volunteers engage the young people in the streets and at the Drop-In as a way to build trust and establish positive relationships with young people. This connection is crucial for encouraging regular participation and fostering a sense of belonging in the communities of Fauldhouse and Longridge.

This engagement is key in provision to as young people get to shape the activities they can participate in.

Providing a Gateway to Further Support

The street sports sessions and drop-in serve as a gateway to a broader range of support services within West Lothian with identification of individuals who may benefit from more targeted interventions. This includes CashBack Communities Connected, educational support, SMILE Counselling and other mental health services and Early and Effective Intervention.

Partnership Working

FCYT has established strong links with partners including West Lothian Youth Action Project, The Larder, CashBack Communities Connected, West Lothian Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Forestry and Land Scotland and, AidnAbet.

Outcomes achieved

- Since January 2025, the project has had 392 individual attendances at the Drop-in sessions, averaging 28 young people each session and 232 individual interactions with young people on the street sessions averaging 21 young people per session.
- Reduction in Anti-social behaviour reports in relation to young people within the village from Police and Fire
- Young People building positive relationships with peer groups with some Friday night sessions seeing 50 participants between the Street Sports Element and Drop-In. The initial target was to engage 100 young people from target areas across the year and this has been exceeded.
- Young People building positive relationships with staff in all the community facilities in the area. The Friday night drop-in takes place at Fauldhouse Partnership Centre and some young people that have previously been banned from the centre are now participating and engaging positively with staff.



- Young People building positive relationships with wider community. Participants in FYCT programmes have also been central to developing the garden space at Eastfield Centre and contributing to Fauldhouse in Bloom with FYCT leading the organising of volunteers from both their own and other youth groups.
- There have also been numerous donations from community members to the project of time and items to support delivery of services such as Air Fryers and food and drinks for the young people highlighting a shift in relationships and perceptions within the community.



Play Works at The Dale Hub: Empowering Families through Play 2024/2025

The Dale Hub, located in Armadale, serves as a vital community resource, catering to the diverse needs of local residents through relationship-based family support and play. The Dale Hub, serves as a cornerstone for community support, offering a diverse range of services aimed at nurturing the well-being of families and children.

Located in one of the top SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) areas in Scotland, the Hub plays a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by families in this area. Its initiatives are designed to reduce the impact of child poverty by providing opportunities, supporting attainment, enhancing overall well-being, ensuring access to services, and adopting a trauma-informed approach.

Weekly Impact

Each week, approximately 103 families access The Dale Hub's services, equating to an estimated 145 children and 76 parents benefiting from support every quarter.

This consistent engagement underscores the Hub's pivotal role in the community, providing a trusted space for families to seek assistance, build relationships, and enhance their well-being. There is no set criteria to attend the Dale Hub's services therefore it supports a wide variety of challenges.



Term-Time Offerings

The Dale Hub's term-time schedule includes a variety of programs designed to support families:

- **Baby Massage:** Promotes physical and emotional well-being for parents and carers of pre-mobile babies, supporting critical developmental areas such as attachment, sleep, digestion, and circulation while encouraging early communication.
- **Stay & Play:** Open-access sessions for parents and carers of preschool children, providing opportunities to explore innovative play styles, discover children's individual preferences, and encourage social and emotional growth.
- **Cooking Groups:** Including budget-friendly meals, air fryer recipes, family cooking, and specialist courses like the 4-week Christmas dinner series, these groups foster healthy eating habits, life skills, and food education, while creating a social space for building relationships.

- **Gardening Group:** Offers a peaceful opportunity to enjoy the outdoors while engaging in gardening activities, cultivating a sense of community and personal achievement.
- **Little Adventurers Buddy Sessions:** Designed to nurture a child's natural curiosity and love of adventure, these off-site sessions encourage exploration and resilience while building vital peer relationships.
- **Children's After School Clubs:** Provide a safe, welcoming space for children and young people to engage in exciting play opportunities, developing social skills, confidence, and promoting outdoor active lifestyles.
- **Cold Water Therapy:** Combines group breathing exercises with cold water immersion, promoting positive mental well-being and fostering a sense of community among participants.
- **Mindful Colouring:** Provides a supportive space for parents to practice mindfulness, enhancing emotional well-being and strengthening their ability to support each other while the children promote their independence and have access to a high-quality play session.

Collaborative Partnerships

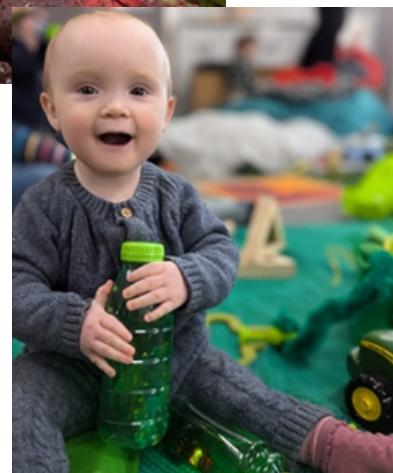
The Dale Hub plays a proactive role in community development by hosting the Armadale Regeneration Meetings. Through these meetings, the Hub contributes to strategic planning and initiatives aimed at improving local services and opportunities.

Play Works partners with the Roots Project to provide mental health support for children and young people, adopting a whole-family, play-based approach to foster emotional well-being.

Play Works also collaborates with various universal services to promote family well-being, ensuring that families have access to a comprehensive support network that addresses their diverse needs within the community.

Conclusion

Through its flexible range of services and programs, The Dale Hub continues to be a vital resource for families in Armadale. By fostering a supportive environment grounded in play and community engagement, the Hub empowers families to build resilience, strengthen relationships, and create lasting positive change in their lives. Its work is instrumental in mitigating the effects of child poverty and promoting a brighter future for all.



THE LARDER

Blackburn Café A Lifeline for Carers in Blackburn

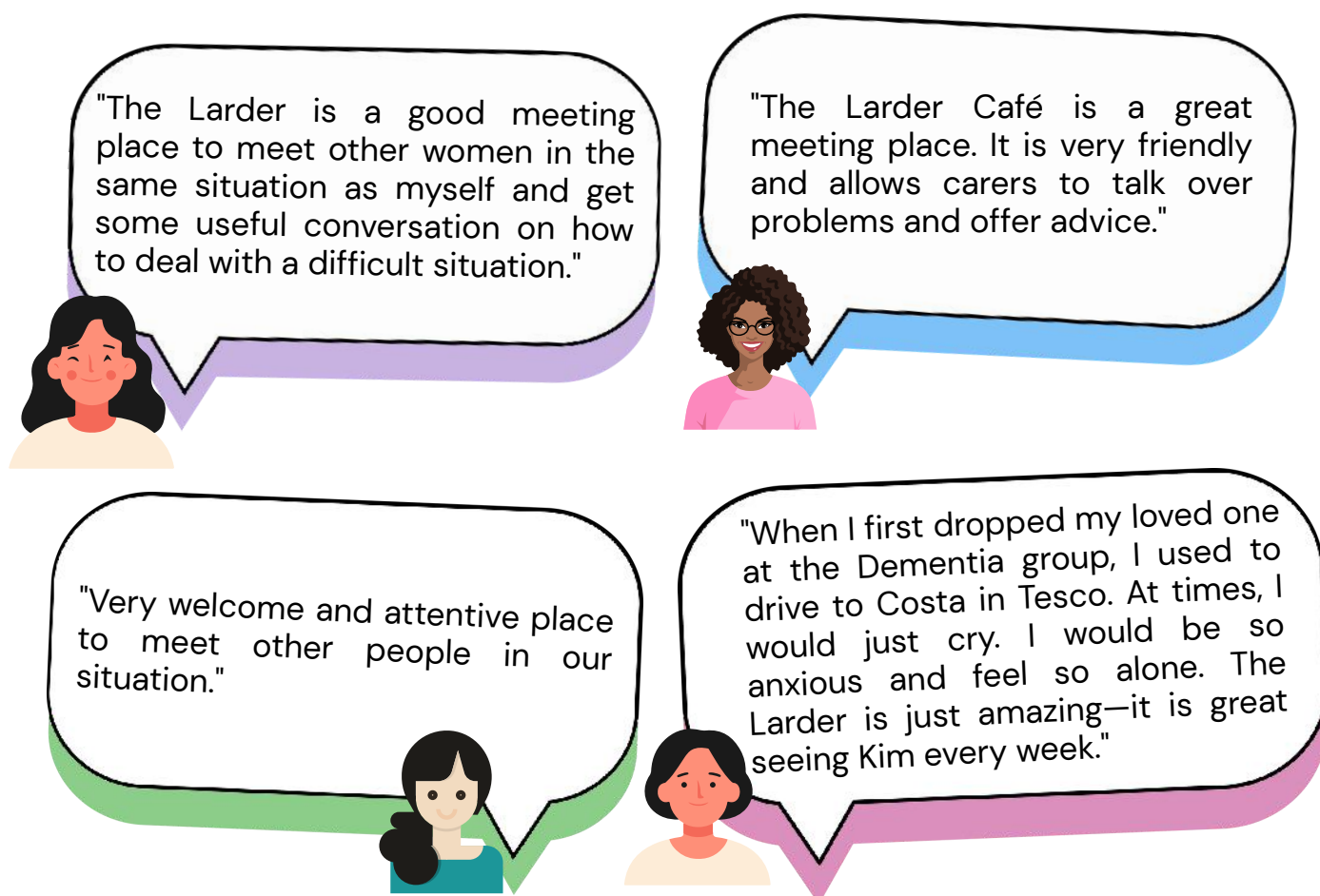
The Larder café in Blackburn is more than just a café, it offers a community space and sometimes a sanctuary for individuals navigating some of life's most challenging circumstances. Among the initiatives that have taken root here is an informal peer support group for women who care for loved ones with dementia. What began as an offer of a simple cup of tea while their husbands attended a Sporting Memories group has blossomed into a lifeline for these carers.

Caring for someone with dementia is a journey filled with profound emotional, mental, and physical demands. For many of these women, the role of "carer" is intertwined with their identities as wives, sisters, or daughters, often leaving them isolated and unsupported. The Larder offers them a safe and welcoming space to share their experiences, exchange strategies, and find comfort in the understanding of others who truly grasp their struggles.

Through the compassion and care facilitated by The Larder team, particularly Kim, these women have found a sense of connection and validation that transcends traditional social or family circles. Weekly gatherings provide not only a break from their caregiving responsibilities but also an opportunity to form deep, meaningful relationships.



Here's what some of the women have shared about their experience at The Larder:



This group exemplifies the heart of The Larder's mission: to provide dignity, community, and opportunity to everyone who walks through its doors. By creating a space where carers can support one another, The Larder has given these women more than just a meeting place—it's given them hope, strength, and a renewed quality of life.

The Impact of social interaction through attending Community Meals.

Diamond Home Assist is a dedicated care provider based in West Lothian, offering bespoke support services to adults with disabilities and complex needs. One of their key services visits has been visiting our Café in Blackburn to bring clients together at our community meals. This weekly visit by 12–15 adults, supported by their carer, plays a crucial role in enhancing the well-being each adult, particularly through social interaction and enjoying freshly cooked food together in the community.

Many of the Diamond Home Assist clients have mobility issues and learning difficulties and have been receiving support from Diamond Home Assist for a number of years. Before joining the community meals program, feedback from carers was that clients often felt lonely and isolated, with limited opportunities for social interaction. Our community meals and Café now provide a safe space where everyone can meet and interact over a meal.

Diamond Home Assist introduced their clients to our community meals program back in Spring 2024, where clients have been enjoying healthy, home-cooked meals in a social setting. The meals are prepared by The Larder's trained staff who ensured that all dietary needs were met. The service of the meals is supported by our Community Worker, volunteer and Café Supervisor. The community meals are accessible for the individuals and many have support to use public transport to and from the meal, making it accessible for all.



Impact of Social Interaction

- **Reduced Loneliness:** The community meals provides clients with regular opportunities to interact with others, significantly reducing feelings of loneliness. Clients now look forward to these gatherings as a highlight of their week.
- **New Friendships:** Through the community meals, many clients have formed new friendships with others that are supported and with staff who attend. These relationships extended beyond the meal times, with clients meeting for coffee and other social activities.
- **Enhanced Mental Health:** Regular social interaction had a positive impact on the clients' mental health. Many have become more engaged and showed signs of improved cognitive function. One individual in particular is now looking to actively volunteer with The Larder to gain work experience and learn new skills within our community shop. The sense of belonging and community support helped alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- **Increased Confidence:** Participating in community meals has boosted their confidence. Clients now feel more comfortable engaging in conversations and participating in group activities, which in turn improved their overall self-esteem.
- **Support Network:** The community meals also served as a platform for clients to connect with other support services offered by The Larder and Diamond Home Assist that further enhances their quality of life.

This case study highlights the importance of community-based initiatives in supporting vulnerable adults and fostering a sense of belonging and community.



West Lothian Youth Action Project (WLYAP), operates a streetwork service for the whole of West Lothian. The project has provided this service for over 30 years. In October 2024 there was a significant increase in the delivery of this service. Through a tendering process the organisation was successful in being awarded the contract to deliver street work services, with a focus on support activity in 4 geographical areas of West Lothian each week. West Lothian divided the region into 4 areas, with the aim to have street work in all four areas weekly during times when antisocial behavior is likely to the highest. The four areas are:

1. Bathgate, Armadale & Blackridge
2. Fauldhouse, Whitburn, Blackburn and the Breich Valley
3. Livingston, Mid and East Calder
4. Uphall, Broxburn, Winchburgh and Linlithgow

What is streetwork?

The principle is based on detached youth work, providing advice, information, support and intervention with young people in the communities of West Lothian, in places where young people gather such as parks, shopping precincts, Livingston Town Centre, skateparks and at times more hidden areas such as woodlands and around derelict buildings; basically, the work can happen anywhere that young people choose to gather.



The Project has a close working relationship with West Lothian Community Safety Partnership, who assist the project in targeting areas where there have been reports of youth anti-social behaviour.

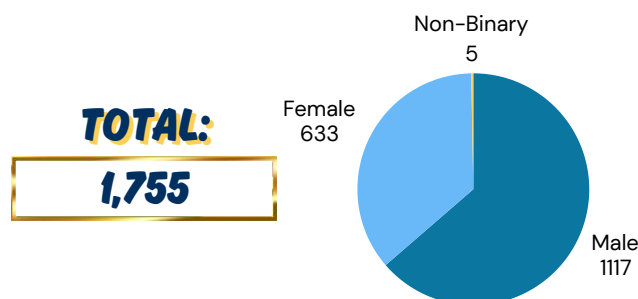
A Tasking and Coordination group meet weekly, involving Police, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), Youth Justice, Housing, the Safer Neighbourhood team and Community Regeneration Team. Relevant information from this group is forwarded to the Youth Action Project to enable targeting of street work on a weekly basis.

The Projects Youth work teams are then briefed on the issues concerning communities and young people that have been highlighted. The intervention, delivered by trained youth workers, often dissipates the problems with young people, the less confrontational approach rather than the authoritative appearance of the Police or security staff can alleviate youth issues quickly. That said it is vitally important that we all work together.

WLYAP staff listen to the views of young people and if necessary, can act as advocates to improve situations in the community.

The street work predominantly happens on the evenings of Thursday, Friday and Saturday and Friday and Saturday afternoons. There is some flexibility to this if youth issues are identified regularly at another time.

No. of Engagements with young people (Direct work with young people) October 2024 – March 2025.



In addition to the Community Safety aspect of the work of the project, WLYAP workers provide 1-1 support, groupwork and training, provide diversionary activities and interventions if young people have issues with alcohol or illegal substances or if they are experiencing problems with relationships, poor mental health, difficulties with education or employment. The work of the project is very diverse therefore it is essential that excellent partnerships are in place with statutory, third sector organisations, businesses and the local community groups.

Achievements in 2024/25 – A sample of the differences made by the Streetwork team

- WLYAP have been noted in reports to the Public and Community Safety PDSP by both the Police and SFRS as important partners in prevention and intervention initiatives. Due to the close linkage with the work of this PDSP, the Project Director of the organisation was nominated through the Third Sector Strategic Group and the Gateway to attend these PDSP's on behalf of the third sector.
- Assistance in the Bonfire night working group – which resulted in only 1 reported incident involving youth disorder on 5th November 2024.
- Development of a Whitburn diversionary group – 7 young people no longer engaged in criminal activity/ fire raising, a reduction in substance use and positive destinations for 6 out of 7 members of the group.
- The new residential home by Livingston Skate Park – no longer experiencing youth anti-social behaviour.
- A reduction in youth anti-social behaviour (ASB) at Bathgate Partnership Centre
- Excellent relationships with businesses and security staff throughout West Lothian addressing youth ASB together.





Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian

The West Lothian NHS HIF (Health Improvement Fund) Project is delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureau in collaboration with the West Lothian Council Advice Shop and Kidzeco. It provides advice and support to families with children from pre-birth to 15 years.

The project was set up in October 2023 to build capacity of existing work and to increase services that are delivered to tackle poverty, inequality and child poverty. The project aims are to work with families to reduce poverty and health inequalities by providing access to advice and other support services. It will improve life chances and opportunities for people, and they will live happy healthier lives as a result of engaging in the support offered. The partnership formed is unique to ensure that people and families receive a holistic “person centred” approach that will help them address multiple and complex challenges.



Families have access to enhanced holistic support throughout the community; in schools and community venues to ensure the service is accessible and limit barriers by also offering a service which is child friendly. Referrals are received from partner organisations and via FORT from community midwives and health visitors. As well as advice and information to enhance knowledge and maximise income, other services include kids’ classes and workshops delivered by Kidzeco.

Partnership working and having a good understanding of the work and support available from other agencies is a key focus. Areas highlighted in the Poverty Index were targeted specifically to raise awareness, and ensure clients had the opportunity to engage. The organisations regularly engage with local strategies and plans such as the Child Poverty Action Plan and No One Left Behind, and have also created a steering group for organisations working with families to share information.

Outcomes to date:

- Over 300 families have had access to support with over 100 referrals received from NHS community staff.
- The project has assisted clients at over 1000 appointments throughout the community.

- The client financial gain to date is in excess of £500,000.
- Weaning workshops and food packs provided to families has seen an increase in nutritional knowledge and families reporting to be cooking together.
- The Health Walks programme delivered by Kidzeco has enhanced physical activity and mental well – being. Over 50 buggy walks have been arranged with feedback reported to have improved mood and reduced social isolation.
- Increased provision in classes at kidzeco where childcare is available has increased participation for families who normally can't engage.
- Home visits are offered and have been provided by all partners where further barriers have been identified.

Feedback

'I don't know what I would have done without the help provided. I was totally lost, I don't understand how benefits work and so was happy when my midwife referred me. It's such a relief to have it all sorted – thank you'

"I was worried about getting things wrong as it can affect my visa. I know I cannot access public funds so was very worried about getting what I need for my baby and this made me very sad. When you delivered so many things for my baby it gave me joy and I am so thankful for all your help"





WEST LOTHIAN CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK CASE STUDY 2024/25

West Lothian Eco Gathering 21st February 2025

West Lothian Climate Action Hub celebrated its first 'operational' year at a network gathering for its members on 21 February 2025. This event coincided with the third round of Eco Development Funding to WLCAN's members for their climate action projects.

Membership has grown from 24 to 80 since the Hub's official launch last year.

The network has good coverage thematically and geographically, and our team will continue to focus on: trying to ensure that any gaps are filled including more marginalised groups and communities; and member activities that have **real, positive** climate impacts on the ground.

The staff and volunteer board have been working to develop the Hub's profile in West Lothian through building relationships, partnership working with local, regional and national public, private & third sector organisations, events, training, workshops, social media, website and other forms of media and communication. Attendance at events has been key with the following engagements being delivered in 2024/25:

- Total Events Delivered or Participated In: 95
- Total Number of People in Attendance: 2049
- Total Number of People Engaged Directly With: 1274

The Annual Gathering was a chance to highlight the groups who received awards in the latest Eco Fund. Projects include planting for pollinators, a peat-free compost community collaboration, and work to prolong the life of school clothing items.

Broxburn and Uphall Development Group received an Eco Fund award for a project on electro-culture at the 'BUGS' community garden. Lead grower, Helen Triplet, described the living experiment that will take place in four trial beds over 2025.

It will explore the use of structures with copper wire or other conductive materials. These are inserted into the soil around plants so that atmospheric electricity is captured as "free" energy that enhances plant growth. The aim is to show how this cutting-edge horticulture can enhance sustainable plant growth in the garden, which is well established in local food growing and its work with school children and community members.



Capturing the essence of the project and WLCAN's willingness to help, Helen added:

“What makes this project special is its spirit: a blend of community, ecology and innovation. It's not just about growing food – it's about growing understanding, engaging minds and nurturing a deeper relationship with the soil beneath our feet. We're incredibly grateful for the support that makes this work possible.”

The relationship between WLCAN and its members has been forged through:

- small community events, annual gathering & network meetings
- larger themed gatherings such as our Gather & Grow and Water Confluence events
- training such as the internationally-established Climate Fresk workshops
- face-to-face climate education with schools in order to support our ambition for a Youth Climate Action Network
- green spaces activities, including pruning workshops

Our four 2024/25 key seasonal themes on Food, Water, Energy & Transport have focused the Hub's work for its first year and provided appealing ways to engage the public.

As well as this, more than £23,000 has directly funded over 20 groups on climate action in West Lothian as broken down below:

Fund 2

- Artlink Edinburgh & The Lothians
- Bathgate Baths Community Garden
- Broxburn & Uphall Development Group
- Livingston Community Shed
- Loganlea Miners Welfare Charitable Society
- Murieston Community Garden
- Pumpherston Community Council
- Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group
- West Lothian College
- Whitburn & District Community Development Trust

Fund 3

- Almond Valley Nature Action
- Bathgate Community Development Trust – Bathgate in Bloom
- Beechbae
- Broxburn & Uphall Development Group
- Carers of West Lothian
- Cedarbank School
- Craigsfarm Community Development Project
- Livingston Community Shed
- Pumpherston Community Council
- River Almond Action Group
- Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group
- St Michael's RC Church
- The School Bank West Lothian
- West Lothian Youth Action Project – Growing Together

Alongside this were donations of 210 orchard trees to community groups. Pruning workshops for the trees were fully booked as members joined the Hub team along with a trainer from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh at the Woodland Trust Scotland's Bellsquarry reserve on the edge of Livingston.



Events like these confirmed the desire for education and empowering community groups to share skills along with a growing public appetite for action on food growing, environmental improvements and climate change.

We are also collaborating and communicating with a range of regional and national partners such as:

Regional (mainly West Lothian): Chamber of Commerce, Business Gateway, River Almond Action Group, Developing the Young Workforce, Linlithgow Loch Group, The Verdancy Group, Bike Library, Community Race Forum, Central Scotland Wildlife Group, Growers Forum, Voluntary Sector Gateway, Youth Action Project, WL College, political representatives MPs/MSPs and elected members, Community Council Forum, and various WL Council Officers and groups, including Net Zero, Regeneration, Biodiversity, Climate and other functions.

National: Home/Local/Business Energy Scotland, Changeworks, Community Energy Scotland, Woodlands Trust Scotland, Powering Futures, Scottish Rural College, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, Capital City Partnership and simply too many stakeholders to mention.

We are also sharing knowledge and experience with fellow hubs nationally, and with the Scottish Government's Community Climate Action Team's support. Furthermore, we have formed a close collaboration with the 5 other SE Hubs (Fife, City of Edinburgh, Mid & East Lothian & Scottish Borders) within the City of Edinburgh Region Deal Zone, working closely together on community energy developments and long-term fundraising.

Our team are currently refining our detailed **Events & Engagement Plan** for the year ahead in 2025/26. This is across a number of key climate themes, and to ensure we have events in all 9 wards of our region. We will strive to reach out to those local communities with socio-economic and environmental challenges and barriers to addressing the climate emergency.



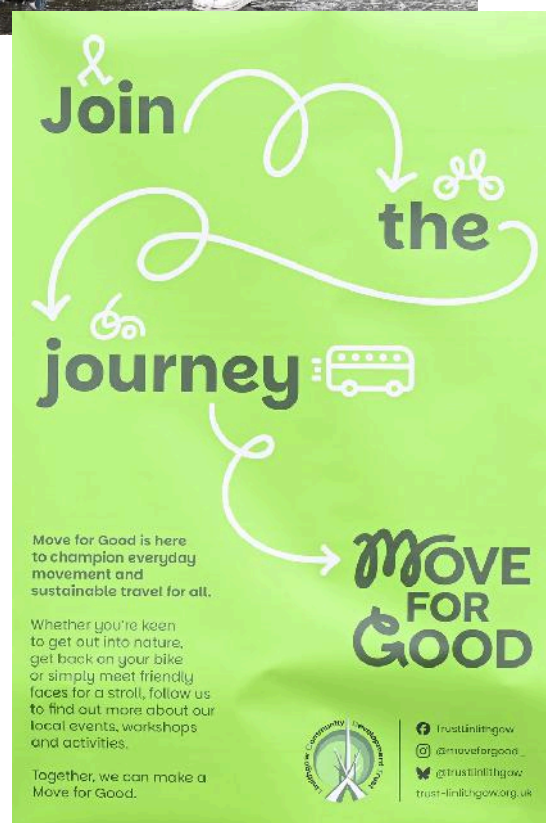
Linlithgow Community Development Trust

Linlithgow CDT has delivered significant accomplishments in the first year of their Active Travel programme with support from Paths for All and is now well positioned to move into the next phase of developing their active travel behaviour change programme with support from South-East Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTran). The first year has been about designing and testing their programmes and building connections with our communities. Year two will be focused on consolidation.



Key achievements have seen expanded partnerships and activities aimed at a more holistic and strategic approach to delivering behaviour change. These have included:

- cycle training and confidence building at the West Lothian Cycle Circuit;
- regular weekly health walks and DIY cycle maintenance sessions to build consistent touch-points with our community;
- developing communications and marketing to increase and broaden understanding of what the active travel project offers through their new programme brand 'Move For Good'; and
- launching Scotland's first Festival of Movement as part of a community engagement and partnership development strategy.



Linlithgow CDT has made significant contributions to nurturing and supporting active travel activities with local clubs and including:

- Women's Hour,
- No Limits Sports Club,
- Buggy and Sling Walks,
- Cycle Kitchen,
- WLCC junior cycling and holiday sessions,
- YOUTHSPACE,
- Bridgend Primary School, and
- Children 1st.



Feedback from the sessions has been positive:

Women's Hour feedback:



"Get cycle confident is the perfect name for the group as that's exactly what it delivers."

"Returning after the break there were several ladies that had just got back on their bikes, we have learnt so much about cycling together. I know which gears to use to get me round the track quicker and easier, but also how to balance, control my bike on tight turns, cycle slowly and each week I have fun learning new skills."



Holiday Programme feedback:

"The instructors did an excellent job adapting the session to meet the needs of all the children, even taking the time to perform minor bike repairs. This personalised approach was greatly appreciated and ensured that every child could participate fully."



"I was particularly impressed with how the event helped my son develop his confidence, balance, and manoeuvring abilities. He came away from the session with improved skills and a greater love for cycling."

Festival of Movement feedback:

"It feels inclusive. There's a nice range of things to try, all different sports together."



"Was great to see, hear about and try adaptive bikes. Children who tried inline skating really enjoyed themselves."

"Seeing that there are lots of groups and people in the local area who are thinking about this stuff locally, not just on the global scale."

"Attendees were very interested that there be tangible change in Linlithgow to support better movement."

"There seems to be more of an activist community in this part of Scotland than I was aware of. People are so passionate about getting people moving, for health and the environment. It's good to see."



SPORTING MEMORIES
COMMUNITY CLUB MEMBER

CASE STUDY

Providing a weekly lifeline to
older adults



Broxburn Sporting Memories Club

There is a reason why our model is to run weekly clubs, it provides routine and regular social contact to those who are lonely and/or isolated in their communities.

Broxburn Sporting Memories club is just one example that shines a light and brings home what we do.

Member, Tom (age 85)

After discovering Sporting Memories from his hospital bed, Tom joined the club with his friend who encouraged him to come along. Tom's wife had passed away some years ago and he found himself living alone with few social connections left.

This is what Sporting Memories means to Tom.

The club has become such a huge part of my life and it's so important for elderly people to have groups like this."

"For a person of my age it's a really good thing and it's important that people know the club is here.

I live on my own after my wife passed away 10 years ago and loneliness is such a horrible thing."

"Some people can go out and mix easily but I don't so coming to the club and making it part of my weekly routine has been brilliant.

The social aspect of it is vital and the guys who run the club are tremendous."

Broxburn Sporting Memories meets every Wednesday 10.30am to 12pm at Albyn Park, Broxburn.
If you want to find your local club visit sportingmemories.uk/clubs

Annual Report

£44.9 million

across all sectors covered in this report



Voluntary Sector Gateway

£466,000

£466,000

Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund – 37 projects



Social Policy

£38.7 million

Adults & Older People Services



● **£24.7 million** paid to providers of direct care & support.

● **£3.3 million** indirect support– advocacy & other services.

Children & Justice Services

● **£6.5 million** for provision of external placements & supported accommodation

● **£1.7 million** on direct care for children with disabilities

● **£2.5 million** paid for other support including families and mental health



Community Wealth Building

£1.8 million

Voluntary Organisation Budget



£1 million (28 groups)

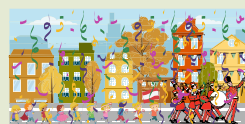
Place Based Investment Fund

£294,000

(1 group)



Gala & Similar Annual Events Fund



(26 groups)

£40,000

West Lothian Development Trust



(27 grants)

£416,000



Pensioners Xmas Fund



towards a meal or event
(69 groups) **£29,000**

Developer Contribution Community Fund



1 grant in Fauldhouse

£15,000

Public Health

£200,000

● **£100,000** paid to Carers of West Lothian – Early intervention Alzheimers project



● **£100,000** awarded to a Child Poverty Project– collaborating with:
– Kidz-Eco CIC
– Citizens Advice Bureau



West Lothian Climate Action Network

£23,000



funding **24** groups on climate action in West Lothian

Operational Services / NETS

£304,000

Operational Services

£125,000 Paid to Handicabs for public transports services



West Lothian Litter Pickers

Supported West Lothian Litter Pickers **4,800** volunteers with equipment, uplift and disposal.



200-400 volunteers active weekly.

Anti-Poverty Service

£160,000

- to support The Food Network & residents to access food in a dignified way

£150,000

- Food Insecurity Community Event

£10,000



Housing and Homelessness

£41,000

- £14,000** paid to: Action for Children – Young Person Emergency Prevention Service



- £27,000** paid to: Rock Trust – Upstream prevention of homelessness in schools



Economic Development

£657,000

West Lothian Rural Community Led Local Development Fund

£136,000 (11 groups)



Shared Prosperity Fund grants provided to **4** groups
£59,000



Employability

- No One Left Behind funding:
£44,000 (8 groups)
- Parental Support Programme
£418,000 (13 groups)



Education

£2.6 million

Nursery & Early Years Provision

- Support to 7 local Playgroups
£11,000



Primary & Secondary Schools



- Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) (7 groups)
£101,000

- Other school funding
£270,000



Summer Programme



- 2024 Summer Programme:
44 groups funded supporting **6,302** children
£225,000

Youth Work

- Detached youth work
£6,000



West Lothian Leisure



- 2024/25 West Lothian Leisure management fee:
£2 million

Active Schools & Community Sports

- 15** Sports Grants awarded to accredited clubs
£28,000



- £6,000** awarded to **2** clubs for the Active4Me programme

- £5,000** awarded to Clubsport West Lothian benefiting over **600** individuals and **35** clubs



- £5,000** awarded to S.M.I.L.E. Counselling for pilot bespoke training