



Midlothian Community Learning and Development Strategy 2024 – 2027

- Youth Work • Adult Learning
- Community Development • Employability

Our Community Learning and Development Strategy for Midlothian at a Glance 2024 to 2027

Our main work is to build skills for learning life and work through youth work, adult learning, community development and employability in Midlothian.

Our Shared CLD Partnership Endeavor will:

- Sustain and expand the range of people engaged in CLD activity.
- Reduce poverty through CLD activities and projects.
- Increase social interaction, health and wellbeing through CLD activity.
- Further develop pathways for learning, personal development & employment, including self-employment.
- Enhance living well in our communities including digital resilience.
- Expand our climate change actions and outdoor spaces CLD offer.
- Enhance our CLD workforce and volunteer's skills.



Clear guidance is provided to all Local Authorities and Partners on the national policy context for Community Learning and Development CLD which we must meet in order to comply with the requirements. [These are contained in the Community Learning and Development Guidance for 2024 to 2027.](#)

Index

Introduction	page 4
Document Aide	page 5
Community Planning Structure	page 7
The Midlothian Compact	page 8
National and Regional Drivers	page 9
CLD consists of adult learning, family learning, youth work and community	page 10
development CLD Inclusive Practices and Removal of Barriers to Participation	page 14
Skilled CLD Workforce	page 15
What we know about Midlothian	page 16
Our CLD achievements over the last 3 years 2021 to 2024	page 17
What people and stakeholders said they wanted – CLD consultation results	page 19
Unmet Needs, opportunities and challenges	page 21
Midlothian CLD Collective Evaluations and Improvement Planning	page 23
Measuring Success	page 24
CLD Shared Endeavour Action Plan	page 25
Appendix – A Guide to CLD Terminology	page 43

Introduction by Councillor Kelly Parry, Chair, Community Planning Board and Dr Lesley Kelly, Chair, Community Planning Working Group

We are delighted to introduce the second Midlothian Community Learning and Development Partnership Strategy and Action Plan for 2024-2027. It sets out the priorities for community learning and development in Midlothian, reflecting the Single Midlothian Plan and the Community Planning Partnership.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) enables people to identify their individual and collective goals, engage in learning, and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities. This plan includes various activities and reflects partners' work who deliver youth work, adult learning and community development covering both public and third sector settings.

Over the last three years, there has been outstanding progress made in implementing the actions and targets from the CLD Plan 2021 to 2024. Twenty-three action areas were completed, with ten being pursued further in 2024. There were no areas marked as red or incomplete. There were some fantastic achievements through dedicated projects like Soup to Go, Shaping Places in Central Dalkeith and Woodburn, Trusted Partners Cash First, Volunteer Midlothian Conversation Café, employer fairs, Foundation



Dr Lesley Kelly Chief Officer Third Sector Interface/Chair Community Planning Working Group

Apprenticeships, National Progress Awards including digital, reducing poverty work and through a variety of mental health and wellbeing courses. The outdoors featured strongly with the family learning Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society Grow and Learn Awards (GLIN), Croft Street Garden and outdoor learning focused volunteering. We are particularly delighted with our progress on CLLE-supported Duke of Edinburgh achievements and the support given by CLLE to young people with additional support needs to achieve their Gold Award and attend the formal presentations at Holyrood in June 2024.

Considering the national CLD review, it is vital to recognise in this plan the need for equity of funding for CLD activity and further strengthening of CLD's identity locally and nationally. It is also essential to recognise that, as the national review states, CLD impacts are life-changing and sometimes lifesaving.

The plan emphasises how we will respond to the current challenges and build on the developments over the last few years in learning, volunteering, and community development. Through the work of local CLD practitioners, we will support our communities to thrive and our young and old learners to develop the skills they need to navigate our changing world.

We thank all the partners who contributed to the development of this plan. We hope you will enjoy reading it.



Cllr Kelly Parry Chair, Community Planning Board/Leader of Midlothian Council

Document Aide

Several acronyms, abbreviations, and terms unique to the field of community learning and development are used in this document. Some key agencies and partnerships link to this area of work, which can be challenging to understand. Below is a quick guide to assist you with this:

- The Single Midlothian Plan or Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) is the statutory plan that the Council and its partners must produce due to statutory legislation. It governs our work.
- Community Planning, sometimes called the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, is a group of local agencies and community representatives who work together to benefit their communities. This is a statutory requirement of the Community Empowerment Act 2015. They have themes within the plan and sub-groups to implement the agreed improvement actions. CPWG is the short title for the operational group in Community Planning and stands for the Community Planning Working Group. Dr Lesley Kelly is the chair of this group. The strategic community planning group is the Community Planning Board, which scrutinises the work and performance of the partnership, Cllr Kelly Parry chairs this group.
- Community Learning and Development (CLD) is a term that can be used in several ways. It can describe a professional group of qualified staff with a degree in CLD or those working to a set of values and principles that guide it.
- TSI stands for Third Sector Interface, a partnership between Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), Volunteer Midlothian (VM), and the Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian (SEAM).

- Economic Development in Midlothian Council lead on Community Wealth Building which includes supporting social enterprises and community interest companies (CIC's).
- CLLE is the Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Service, part of Midlothian Council. It delivers youth work, adult and family learning, community capacity building and employability.
- Public Health in Midlothian is part of the Health and Social Care Partnership and works to address health inequalities and support health within communities.
- Third Sector is a collective term that describes community groups, social enterprises, and voluntary groups that deliver services. Some have paid staff, but most have a Board of Directors or Management Committee.
- Community capacity building or community development is when community groups are supported to develop, secure resources and take collective action on issues or improve their community.
- Positive Destinations is a term used to describe young people who secure work, training or employment.

This strategy and action plan sets out how we will:

- Support the development of staff and volunteers through excellent training and personal development opportunities.
- Support services and community groups to become more able to meet the changing needs of Midlothian's growing population.
- Gather more views to influence the CLD partnership offer for future

years.

- Increase the number of people who can take part by removing barriers to participation.
- Increase digital participation.
- Promote a strong focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities.
- Improve opportunities for good health and well-being through joint work, grant funding, and the use of outdoor spaces.
- Provide a mixed learning offer - online, blended and face-to-face.
- Support young people, adults and families in improving their life chances by developing skills for learning, life, and work.
- Enhance our shared partnership endeavour by embedding the Compact Track values in our work.
- Assist communities in meeting local needs and developing their capacity, including the effective use of volunteers.
- Increase the voice of learners and citizens to influence improvement in learning and development in our community.
- Make innovative use of outdoor spaces.
- Support communities in recovering from Covid-19, with a focus on health and wellbeing.
- Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in community learning, address barriers, and support sustainable community development.
- Produce a communication plan to support implementation, provide community feedback, and celebrate success.
- The work of this plan is reported to Midlothian Council and the

Community Planning Partnership through the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) Plus group which reports to the thematic subgroup Midlothian will Support Residents to Improve Employability and Outcomes for Communities (MIEOC), although there is relevance to the other community planning themes.

By undertaking these actions together, we will continue to make:

Midlothian
A Great Green Place to Grow

Midlothian Community Planning Partnership Structure

Community Learning and Development reports to the Midlothian will support residents to improve employability and outcomes in our community (MIEOC) thematic group of Community Planning in Midlothian.

How we work together:



Midlothian Compact and Midlothian Council Volunteer Policy

Midlothian Council and the Third Sector Interface (TSI) have a Compact agreement which embraces a shared set of values, summarised as 'TRACK':



Togetherness: The sectors will work together to design and deliver services for the people of Midlothian. Public sector decisions affecting the operation and resourcing of third-sector organisations will only be made with engagement with the sector. Similarly, funding bids by third-sector partners that affect the operation/ resourcing of public services will only be made with engagement with the relevant public-sector partners.

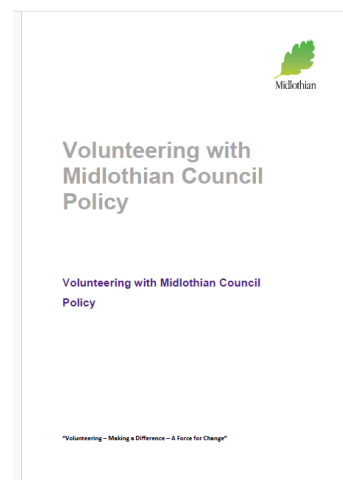
Respect: We will offer each other mutual respect and parity of esteem, valuing the knowledge, skills, and constraints

within both sectors at all levels.

Accountability: we will collaborate with each other openly and with mutual accountability.

Creativity: we will seek creative approaches to opportunities and challenges.

Kindness: we are committed to putting kind, socially inclusive interactions at the heart of all our work, trusting our partners to make meaningful connections, creating space for partners to come together, and addressing people's needs holistically.



[Midlothian Council has a Volunteering Policy](#) which is endorsed by the Midlothian Third Sector Interface (TSI). This too has directly informed the CLD Plan.

National and Regional Policy Drivers

Within the Midlothian CLD Plan we need to ensure we are considering how we reflect and link at a local level on national policy. These include:

- [Learning for All CLD National Review](#)
- [Raising Attainment](#)
- [New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy](#)
- [ESOL \(English for Speakers of Other Languages\)](#)
- [Curriculum for Excellence](#)
- [Community Empowerment](#)
- [Family Learning](#)
- [Employability and Skills](#)
- [Mental Health Support](#)
- [Developing the Young Workforce](#)
- [UNCRC](#)
- [Youth Participation](#)
- [Tackling Child Poverty](#)
- [Getting it Right for Every Child](#)
- [Keeping the Promise](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [Learning for sustainability](#)
- [South East of Scotland City Deal](#)



Community Learning and Development consists of adult and family learning, youth work and community development.

Adult Learning

Adult learning is based on three core principles. That it should be:

- lifelong - beginning in the early years and covering the whole age span of post-compulsory education;
- life-wide - covering all aspects of life, personal, work, family and community; and
- learner-centred - the educational process builds around the interests and motives of the learner.

It focuses on those most excluded and experiencing disadvantage, ensuring accessible opportunities to learn throughout life. It is often the first step back into education and employment and responds to learners' goals and aspirations, recognising that adults bring skills, experiences and assets to build on. Community-based adult learning is unique as it is voluntary and delivered with and for adults in their communities, usually free of charge.

Adult learning is vital to support people to upskill for employability, learn new skills and develop existing ones, keep people active and engaged in learning and their communities, reduce social isolation, and improve mental health.

In Midlothian, Communities, Lifelong Learning and

Employability (CLLE) deliver a paid programme of adult learning as well as a free community-based programme which includes support for literacy and numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Other providers include Development Trusts, third-sector organisations, colleges and universities. In addition, partners in economic development offer online webinar seminars for residents and those setting up businesses.

As a Partnership, we recognise that community-based adult learning improves much more than educational outcomes for those participating. Learning that starts in the community contributes to a range of positive outcomes for the learner, their family and their wider community.



***“Offer more
Highers and
National 5
qualifications
in the
community.”***

Family Learning

Family Learning sits alongside other approaches that concern parents and children's learning. These definitions differ slightly from family learning and include parental engagement, parental involvement, and learning at home.

The key features of family learning are:

- Family members learn together as and within a family, focusing on intergenerational learning.
- It involves two or more people related by kinship or similar roles. This includes stepparents, carers and extended families.
- Learning can be formal, non-formal or informal.
- Learning may be intentional, where the activity is primarily about learning, or it may be a by-product of other activities, and not even be recognised as learning.

Family learning approaches and programmes provide opportunities for cross-cutting support in themes such as literacy, numeracy, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), closing the poverty and attainment gap, parental engagement, and health and well-being. Family learning recognises the importance of parents and carers being fully engaged and equal partners in their child's learning.

Partnerships with parents and carers are essential in planning family learning opportunities. This partnership will take different forms across early years, primary, secondary, and community-based learning programmes but is

consistently vital to effective family learning.

Midlothian's Family Learning Strategy and related plan recognises the current challenges families face and articulates our vision of how family learning will support Midlothian's aspiration to be 'A Great Green Place to Grow.'



Youth Work

Youth work promotes values of inclusion, mutual respect, equality and the involvement of young people in decision-making. It is an informal education practice that supports young people's social, emotional and educational development. It aims to build skills for learning, life and work whilst creating a sense of belonging and the power to influence improved outcomes in communities. This allows young people to develop their voice, influence their place in society, and reach their full potential.

There are three fundamental principles:

- Young people choose to participate.
- Youth work must be built from where young people are.
- Youth work recognises the young person as partners in a learning process.

In Midlothian, youth work occurs in various settings including youth clubs and centres, voluntary and uniformed organisations, drug/alcohol and sexual health settings, outdoor education, outreach programmes, and detached street work.

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) aims to involve young people in decisions on public services that affect them, committing organisations to work together for better, safer communities. Midlothian Youth Platform (MYP) is a youth-led charity for young people aged 12 -25 to connect the processes of policymaking and development with young people. MYP aims to be an independent and youth-led organisation free from influence, where young people can give their views to

policymakers without hindrance, fear, or barriers.

Young people in Midlothian also have an opportunity to stand for election to the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP). This is a national democratically elected body representing the views of young people who feed into Scottish Government policy and decision making and conduct campaigns for things that matter to young people. Elections follow the same process as Scottish Government with young people being voted in as representatives for a period of two years to represent the views of young people in Midlothian.



"Youth work should be open access, free and held in venues accessible to young people."

Community Development

“Community development supports communities of place and identity to use their assets to improve the quality of community life and helps communities and public agencies work together to improve services and decisions.” (SCDC)

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 supports this by aiming to:

- Change the balance of power between communities and the public sector.
- Introduce more rights for community bodies.
- Strengthen community voices in the decisions that matter to them.
- Encourage partnership between service providers and communities with a focus on achieving outcomes and tackling inequalities.
- Enable communities to make requests not just to local authorities but to a wide-ranging list of public bodies for any land or buildings they feel they could use in a better way to deliver services and benefits.

In Midlothian, the CPP collaborates with local communities to build solid and cohesive places where people feel a sense of pride and belonging and can create networks to support each other. The CPP wants individuals of all ages in communities of geography and interest to shape the future direction of all services in Midlothian by giving them a voice and influence to ensure that services meet their needs and aspirations. Much of this support is provided by the TSI and CLLE to the third sector, community groups and Community Councils.

In addition, local development planning guidance highlights local place plans as a tool to enable this. A local place plan (LPP) is a proposal by a community body about the development and use of land. They aim to improve people's engagement and involvement in the planning system and help

communities to change their local area by influencing development planning. Local communities can contribute to improving their “place,” agree on priorities, and act (often working with others) to make change happen.

LPPs have been designed by a number of communities in Midlothian.

In addition, social enterprise is a vehicle to deliver gaps in services by empowering communities to take ownership, thus developing individual and collective skills.



“More recognition of the impact community development has and celebrate this together!”

CLD Inclusive Practices and Removal of Barriers to Participation:

Inclusive Learning Environments: Promoting equality and diversity is a shared responsibility that ensures all community members have access to learning opportunities regardless of their background. This inclusivity, fostered by community leaders, policymakers, and educators, creates a more supportive and welcoming environment, encouraging broader participation and engagement in community learning programmes.

Addressing Barriers to Participation: Community learning strategies can identify and address barriers that prevent marginalised groups from accessing educational resources by prioritising equality and diversity. This leads to more equitable outcomes and empowers all individuals to reach their full potential.

Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Competency: Emphasising diversity in community learning initiatives helps participants develop cultural awareness and competency. This enriches the learning experience and fosters mutual respect and understanding within the community, strengthening social cohesion.

Promoting Social Justice: Integrating equality and diversity into community learning and development strategies ensures that programmes are aligned with broader social justice goals. This focus helps to reduce disparities and promotes fairness, and by participating in community learning programmes, individuals are actively contributing to a more just and equitable society.

Sustainable Community Development: A commitment to equality and diversity supports sustainable community development by ensuring that all voices are heard and valued in decision-making. This inclusive approach makes more resilient communities equipped to meet their members' diverse needs.

Interested in using your strength to influence equalities work? Yes, then please contact our CLLE Equalities Engagement Officer by emailing. CLL@midlothian.gov.uk

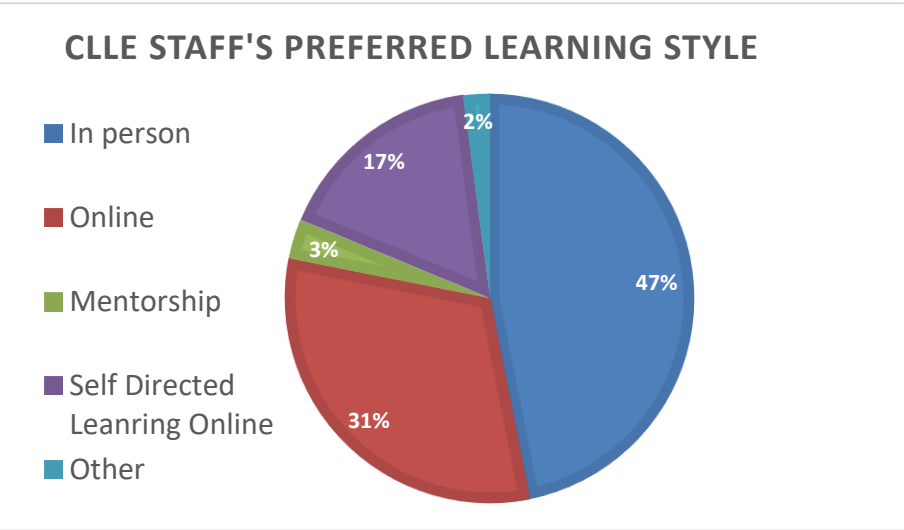
***"Equality and Diversity training for the
community groups and community
councils we work with."***

Skilled CLD Workforce including Volunteers.

Learning and development providers must demonstrate continuing professional development of volunteers, sessional, part-time or full-time paid staff. Midlothian Council's Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE) service and the Third Sector Interface (TSI) offer a co-ordinated annual training programme for staff and volunteers. The Southeast & Central Consortium (SE&CC) also provides Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities. In addition, the further education sector has supported workforce skill development through various means, including co-delivery of HNC Working with Communities and launching new skill-boosting courses like health and social care and childcare.

A recent survey of the CLD workforce highlighted key areas for staff, volunteer and organisational development support as highlighted below.

Format for delivery of CLLE Staff Training

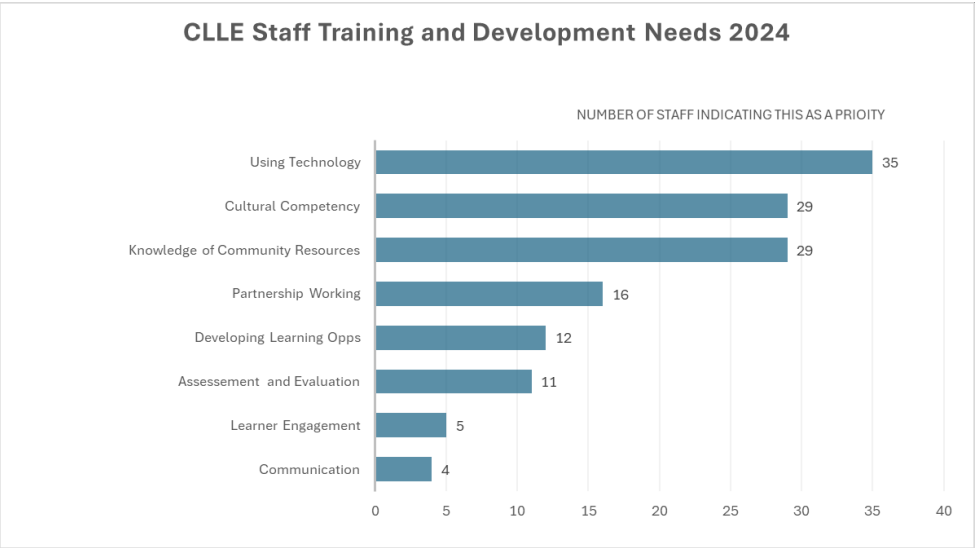


Third Sector Training Needs

The recent survey asked respondents about their training needs. The graph below outlines the numbers who said they were likely or very likely to attend training on different subjects:

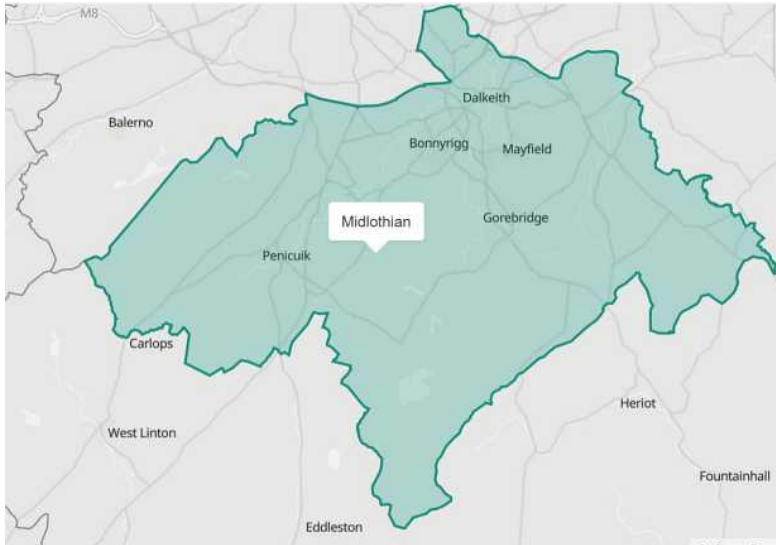


CLLE Midlothian Council Staff Training Needs:



What do we know about Midlothian?

([Midlothian Profile](#), [NOMIS](#) and [ONS](#).)



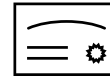
EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

In 2023, Midlothian had an employment rate of 85.3%, higher than Great Britain's (GB) average of 76.8%. Midlothian has an unemployment rate of 2.1% compared to 3.4% at a UK-wide level. 36.3% of Midlothian residents are on long-term sickness benefits in Midlothian, which is higher than the Scottish average of 32.7% and the UK average of 27.3%.

Earnings - If you live in Midlothian, you earn a similar amount to the Scottish average. If you work in Midlothian, you are paid less per hour. On average, men earn £16.26 per hour (Midlothian) compared to £18.24 (Scotland), and women earn £14.14 per hour (Midlothian) compared to £17.93 (Scotland).



Businesses There are 2,700 active businesses in Midlothian.



Qualifications: 5.5% of the Midlothian population has no qualifications, less than the UK average of 6.6%. 60.4% of the Midlothian population has Level 3 or higher qualifications, 7.8% lower than the UK average.



Apprenticeships: in 2023/24, 578 apprenticeships started in Midlothian, and 465 were completed. In Scotland, an average of 682 apprenticeships started, and 567 were achieved (per 100,000). 94.0% of 16- to 19-year-olds participated in work, education or training in 2024.



MIDLOTHIAN'S HEALTH.

Midlothian's average 'healthy life expectancy' is 63.7 years (females) and 58.6 years (males). The UK rates are 62.6 years and 61.9 years, respectively. (Healthy life expectancy is the average number of years that a person can expect to live in full health by considering years lived in less than full health due to disease or injury).

11.9% state they currently smoke cigarettes in Midlothian, which is lower than the UK average of 12.4%. There is no data for vaping.

Self-reported 'well-being' figures (out of 10) show 'Anxiety' scores are lower than the UK average at 2.7% (Midlothian) compared to 3.3% (UK). 'Feeling Worthwhile' is 7.8%, in line with the UK average of 7.9%. 'Happiness' is the same at 7.4%, and 'Life Satisfaction' is also identical at 7.5%.



DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY (2024)

In Midlothian, 79.0% of premises have Gigabit-capable broadband, 7.8% below the UK figures. 4G coverage is 97.5% compared to 100% in the UK. 5G coverage is 72.9% compared to the UK's 84.6%.

Community Learning and Development Partnership Achievements over the last three years



A total of **15,769 learners** have engaged with Midlothian Council, Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Service (CLLE).



A total of **6,049 qualifications** have been secured by learners engaging with Midlothian Council, CLLE Service.



898 new young people have undertaken **CLLE Duke of Edinburgh Groups**, with 490 qualifications being achieved in this period.



Midlothian Council CLLE has offered a total of **495 day and evening courses, 80 of which are accredited**. In addition, **1,263 adults** have attended CLLE paid-for adult learning classes over the last three years.



A total of **4,172 adults and families** have attended

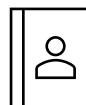
CLLE free community projects for families.



A total of **15,125** young people have participated in our youth work positive destination projects through CLLE, **245** of whom were supported with their learning and qualifications through **Croft Street Hub** and **1,056** at our **Loanhead Vocational Learning Centre**.



Volunteer Midlothian delivered over **500 Transform supported and supervised** volunteering sessions for 15 to 25 year olds, with 119 young people regularly volunteering with this project. 35 young people secured an SQA in Volunteering.



Over the last three years, **2,436 people** have received one-to-one support from CLLE staff to build their skills for learning, life, and work.



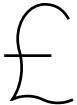
A total of **583 people** benefited from English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision delivered through CLLE.



CLLE has supported a total of **214 community groups**, with **696 activities recorded**.



As a partnership, we exceeded our target for the number of people from Midlothian of all ages accessing college. **For Edinburgh College this was 3,773 in 21/22 and 4,566 in 22/23. 73 Midlothian residents enrolled at Newbattle Abbey College 22/23.**



External funding and partnership work have **secured over £6.5 million of funding**. This is likely be more, however recording all the funding brought into Midlothian is difficult.



Connect Online, operated by Volunteer Midlothian, worked with over **242 learners and 30 volunteers**. CLLE ran four digital skills courses per year, and the Midlothian Digital steering group has produced an improvement action plan to reduce digital exclusion.



As a CLD partnership, we have delivered **over 38 staff and volunteer training opportunities** over the last three years through the TSI and Midlothian Council. We have a legislative duty to ensure a skilled and confident workforce, including volunteers. This also includes **over 50 people completing either the PDA in Youth Work, Introduction to Youth Work, NHC working with communities** or, for some, the CLD Degree or postgraduate qualifications.



Over the last 3 years more than **700 young volunteers** from Midlothian registered for **Saltire Awards with well over 600 Saltire Awards** achieved, totalling more than 26,000 hours of volunteering. 24 Saltire Summit nominations have been made.

Summary of what people have told us our youth work, adult learning, community development and employability should focus on over the next three years.



All aspects of CLD work should be about providing learning and community opportunities to reduce poverty and build skills for learning, life and work.



CLD providers should provide opportunities to learn about and gain qualifications in green issues, jobs and climate change. Specifically, carbon footprint, forestry courses, mend, lend, reuse, share, borrow schemes and community clear ups.



CLD providers should enhance pathways for learning, personal development and employment opportunities for all ages. They should offer things like CV support, job searching, interview preparation, mental health support, core skills, driving courses and specific occupational qualifications. They should also think about job sector specific courses, lab skills, social care, retail, finance and digital.



CLD providers should provide learning based in the community to increase digital skills and improve community resilience. On topics like cyber security, spot fraudsters, digital safety, impact of social media, accessing digital services like

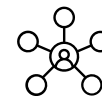
banks, home appliances repairs, smart phone use, paid items like word and safety package deals and promote podcasts and blogs.



CLD should provide courses and projects focusing on social interactions, health and wellbeing which encourage social interaction, intergenerational skill sharing, decrease anxiety, build resilience and have creches. Create projects like tournaments, healthy living and target key groups older people, people new to Midlothian, new parents and those with additional support needs but keep opportunities universal. Don't target everything, remember those just coping.



Young people want activity-based youth work, then a focus on building skills and knowledge through a curriculum they set. It should also include the option to gain qualifications. Should be held on Friday afternoons, early evenings generally 5pm to 8.30pm and lunch breaks.



CLD providers could support apprenticeships and build financial, computer and digital, cooking, health and volunteering skills. Offer shorter opportunities, it's hard to commit to 8 to 10-week courses, offer 4 weeks and other options, mix it up more. Don't put all courses in hubs, spread the offer out to smaller communities as it's too hard to travel.



CLD should provide opportunities for all ages to learn about STEM, Children's Rights, outdoor learning, land-based learning, food growing, farming, citizenship and anti-racism practices.



CLD providers should promote all activities through social media, word of mouth, community notice boards, online web pages, leaflets, community groups and through newspapers. We should also advertise where there is free wifi.



Stakeholders told us we should consider offering courses on get the best out of your money, making food go further, financial literacy, best deals, know your rights, fuel insecurities, practical cooking, low-cost activities sessions and courses to help people complete online forms.



14% of stakeholders wished to contribute to the CLD Plan by

having a specific action and 48% would offer a case study as indicated in the stakeholder's survey.



Stakeholders also told us they would like training on what different parts of the council do, supporting volunteers, dealing with difficult people and situations, understanding addiction, videos for volunteers on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), health and safety, helping young people reduce their anxiety, looking after yourself to prevent burn out and on neurodiversity.



Stakeholders told us to create welcoming places for people to meet appealing to different age groups, abilities and backgrounds; offer more qualifications in courses like music; create intergenerational opportunities, healthy living and climate action groups.

"Encourage climate change to be considered as part of the planning of all activities!"

Unmet Needs, Opportunities and Challenges Going Forward

In Midlothian, resources for CLD have been reducing whilst the population has been increasing significantly. Many of these challenges will continue over the next three years with CLD resources likely to decrease further despite the recommendations made in the Independent Review of Community Learning and Development (Learning: For All. For Life 2024). One of the recommendations of the national report is to ask Scottish Government to identify and re-allocate funding to CLD to ensure equity across learning sectors.

Local people and partners have identified the following areas where needs may not be met over the course of this Plan:

- **Financial grants and staffing have reduced within the CLD sector over the last 3 years.** Strategic and operational planning for CLD will be difficult as further reductions are expected due to the current funding crisis at all levels. The reliance on short term funding and being asked to return funding mid-term is contributing to this challenge.
- **Third sector grants** from Midlothian Council are under review and any further reductions pose a significant risk to service delivery.
- **CLLE resources have reduced over the last 3 years,** resulting in less core staff and a focus on targeted work with less universal learning opportunities for both young people and adults. Further reductions will have a significant impact on delivery.
- **A small number of professionals** are available to support **community development** with communities and groups, leading to staff having to prioritise work and not cover all identified needs and demands.
- **A lack of suitably qualified adult learning tutors** who can teach qualifications up to Higher level continues to impact on the number and range of accredited courses delivered locally. This includes adult literacy and numeracy and ESOL.
- **The population of Midlothian is increasing rapidly with no increasing resources to match the growth.** With a growing and changing demographic, we need to reach out to new and emerging communities such as new housing developments and New Scots to ensure services are accessible to all.
- The **Locality Improvement Plan** pilot for Central Dalkeith and Woodburn needs to be rolled out to 5 other areas **with no additional resources to support this.**
- Free, accessible, local opportunities with pathways for learners to build skills and gain qualifications is challenging with **reduced staffing, lack of available delivery spaces and financial pressures. The lack of free childcare (creches)** to support parents/carers to participate is reducing accessibility.
- **Isolation and mental health needs are critical challenges for all age groups.** Our services need to be adapted to meet these needs and be trauma informed.
- **Sustaining social peer support groups run by volunteers** and community activists is challenging due to the age of existing volunteers. New volunteers need to be recruited and retained.

- **Demand for volunteering opportunities for young people and work experience placements** have increased but there are challenges in securing appropriate opportunities.
- There is an increasing awareness of the needs of learners and staff with **neurodiversity**. We need to increase training and learning opportunities which meet these needs.
- An increasing number of young people with additional support needs require **support to transition** from one service to another and into a positive destination.
- There is **increasing demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** courses, including specific focused groups on employability, single sex and specific age groups.
- Some households still do not have access, or can't afford to operate, **digital devices and internet connectivity**. National funding to provide these is reducing or has stopped and this has an impact on our most marginalised and excluded residents.



Midlothian CLD Collective Evaluation and Improvement Planning

In March 2024, Education Scotland inspected Midlothian's Community Learning and Development provision. The findings of their visit were incredibly positive. However, one area where they identified room for improvement was around collective evaluation:

'There is not yet shared ownership of all CLD priorities or a consistent understanding of how all key stakeholders contribute fully to the CLD Plan. Whilst the close alignment between the CLD Plan and the Single Midlothian Plan is a strength, a few key stakeholders do not fully recognise how they contribute to progressing CLD Plan priorities. Joint self-evaluation is not yet systematic across collaborative work with all relevant partners, such as the health service. Senior leaders should review current self-evaluation arrangements to ensure that all key partners' collective impacts and information help inform and influence strategic decision-making more fully.'

It was agreed that the Midlothian Council CLLE team would work with the TSI to examine how we could improve in this area.

We commissioned an Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) support session to start the process. ESS works with third-sector organisations and funders to help them measure and explain their impact—the session aimed to unpick the idea of 'CLD collective evaluation' by developing a logic model. The session was beneficial and identified the following issues: The meaning of 'collective evaluation' was discussed.

Characteristics mentioned included:

- Having shared outcomes across a range of CLD activities and services
- Having shared processes for evaluating those outcomes

It was recognised, however, that there are several challenges associated with collective evaluation:

- There is a diverse range of outcomes associated with CLD activities. How can this be coherently evaluated on a collective basis?
- Community partners are similarly diverse with differences in capacity, experience levels, and challenges, to name just a few!
- Community partners are busy, time is limited, and resources are stretched. Will 'collective evaluation' be seen as an additional task or complication?

After some discussion, the following approach was suggested:

- It was decided that focusing on a specific CLD activity area would help test collective evaluation.
- After some consideration, the group chose volunteering as a suitable activity for this exercise.

A logic model and evaluation plan for the collective evaluation of volunteering will be developed.

Our strong foundations to measuring success together and improving quality – “A CLD Shared Endeavour!”

1. We will ensure that we have a numerical target against almost all the outcomes and actions in the action plan below.
2. We will ensure that Education Scotland (HMle) improvement actions from the CLD Partnership Progress Visit are incorporated into this plan.
3. We will pilot a shared area for self-evaluation each year.
4. We will pilot new ways of gathering statistics and successes from different agencies and sectors to improve shared reporting rather than single agency reporting where possible.
5. We will produce an annual CLD report using a statistics and impact stories approach.
6. The annual CLD Report will be scrutinised by the Local Employability Partnership Plus, the new CLD Partnership Plus Thematic Group, and the Community Planning Working Group, and a copy will be provided to the Community Planning Board and to Midlothian Council.
7. The new CLD Partnership Plus thematic group will review and assess six monthly progress on the CLD plan, grading progress as red, amber, or green.
8. As a partnership, we will communicate our successes and challenges clearly to stakeholders and communities.



Community Learning and Development (CLD) A Shared Endeavour Action Plan

Sustaining and expanding the number and range of local people engaging in CLD activities by creating a stronger identity for CLD. (Based on the CLD National Review Recommendation 2024)

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Lead and Key Partners	Timescale
Midlothian will support residents to improve employability and outcomes in Communities. (MIEOC)	Create a clear identity for CLD work including employability	Rename the MIEOC thematic CPP group to Midlothian will provide CLD activities through partnership working (CLD Partnership Plus) All related aspects are rebranded to CLD partnership plus	A communication plan for the CLD partnership activity produced and implemented targeting key groups including protected characteristic groups, geographic priority areas and armed forces including serving, reservists and veterans and their families.	Community Planning Working Group/CPP Board	2024 to 2025 2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	CLLE will sustain and expand levels of engagement with local people	CLLE will actively work in partnership to promote activities and reach new learners and community groups	Engagements 6,000 Home Visits 550 Opportunities offered 500 Learners from 20% SIMD 380 Learners from 40% SIMD 2,000 Qualifications achieved 2,500 Satisfaction Levels 98% Key Skills Secured 90% One to One Support 700 Community Groups engaged with 55 Participants in paid for adult learning 500+	CLLE	2024 to 2025

MIEOC/CLD partnership plus	Reflect better the breadth, quality, volume and impact of CLD work taking place in Midlothian	<p>Pilot joint tracking and contributions to the national CLD key performance indicators</p> <p>Review individual learning plans</p> <p>Create partnership self-evaluation</p>	<p>12 national key performance indicators have partnership contributions secured</p> <p>Individual learning plan template reviewed and co-produced</p> <p>One joint self-evaluation piloted per year</p>	CLD Partnership Plus	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD partnership plus and LEP Plus	Young People are involved, supported and build skills for learning, life and work	<p>Guaranteed youth work universal offer each week in each school cluster consisting of transitional youth club, open youth club, CLLE D of E and street work</p> <p>One bespoke youth work offer in each cluster to prioritised young people e.g. boys to men, glitter group, dungeons and dragons, art/cooking groups, care experienced and young carers.</p>	CLLE will engage with 3,300 (24/25 and sustain for three years) young people through youth work and employability	CLLE Officer Youth/LEP Plus	2024 to 2027

		Ensure a flexible NOLB offer to young people to secure positive destinations	Participation measure baseline 94.0% (progressive target (94.5% (24 & 25), (95% (26 & 27)	CLLE Officer Youth/LEP Plus	2024 to 2027
		Youth participation is supported by CLLE through the youth platform and MYP/SYP.	12/15 young people supported per year One youth influence event supported per year for example Community Planning Hackathon Annual youth work survey to influence the development of the youth work offer	CLLE Staff	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD partnership Plus and LEP Plus	Young People are involved, supported and build skills for learning, life and work.	Youth Volunteering is supported through the Transform Project	32 young people will engage in Transform, supported & supervised volunteering activities per year. 75 Transform sessions will be delivered per year	TSI (Volunteer Midlothian) (funding dependent)	2024 to 2027

CLD and Partners' Contribution to Reducing Poverty (Based on the CLD National review recommendation for the potential for CLD activity to reduce poverty)

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus and Reducing Poverty thematic groups	Reduce child poverty through partnership working	Midlothian Council, CLLE and Public Health NHS Lothian produce the child poverty action plan annually and report impact.	No of actions on target from the child poverty plan.	Education/CLLE & Public Health NHS Lothian	2024 to 2027
		Pilot a shared approach to food and pantries in Midlothian with central storage.	Number of project Milestones achieved.	COLTF, CLLE and local pantries	2024 to 2025
	Sustain an accessible cash first support for local people	Work with the Cost-of-Living Task Force (COLTF) to secure funding and support trusted partners to operate cash first in local communities.	16 partners supported and tracking of quantitative supports.	COLTF/CLLE/16 trusted partners	2024 to 2027
	Volunteers have opportunities to volunteer in projects to reduce poverty	Volunteer Midlothian promotes anti-poverty volunteering opportunities	No. of organisations with anti-poverty volunteering opportunities	Volunteer Midlothian	2024 to 2027

			registered with VM		
	Young People have access to free food	Explore with Food Facts Friends evening access for young people to the food pantry and associated youth work activities, with the right supports available.	Young People have access one evening per week	CLLE/Food Fact Friends	2024 to 2027.
	Poverty approaches are better informed and influenced by lived experience	Surestart, Midlothian Council and other CPP Partners deliver the Child Poverty Peer Research Project and set milestones	100 families included in the project	Surestart, Midlothian Council and CPP partners	2024 to 2027

CLD and Partners' Contribution to Improving Social Interaction, Health and Wellbeing (Based on the CLD National review recommendation for the potential for CLD activity to provide life changing and sometime lifesaving impacts)

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Adults participating in CLD have improved health and wellbeing	CLLE will deliver 5 courses for adults per year relating to health and wellbeing	5	CLLE	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Families participating in CLD have improved health and wellbeing	CLLE will sustain the number of family learning participants taking part in health and wellbeing opportunities	514 participants	CLLE	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	ESOL Learners participating in CLD have improved health, wellbeing and feel better connected to their community	Sustain and develop opportunities for ESOL speakers to connect, improve skills and participate in their local community	3 projects per year	TSI and CLLE	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Volunteering supports social connections, health and wellbeing	Volunteer Midlothian will promote volunteering to have a positive impact on wellbeing .	Minimum of 2 promotional stalls & 4 talks/presentation to promote volunteering. Record numbers of people registering with Volunteer Midlothian to volunteer to improve their health &	Volunteer Midlothian	2024 to 2027

			wellbeing		
Community Plan Working Group Partnership	Deliver 'Better Me' (whole systems approach to diabetes) in Mayfield and Easthouses	Access to healthier foods, access to money, increase opportunities for physical activity	Contribution analysis for whole system approach	Housing Team MELDAP Substance Misuse Team CLD Team Lived Experience Members	2024 to 2025

CLD and Partners' Contribution – Improving Pathways for Learning, Personal Development and Employment (CLD building skills for learning, life and work)

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	A family learning aligned offer across Midlothian	Create a Midlothian joint family learning pathway/offer	Pathway in place	Children Services, Education and CLLE	2024 to 2027
	An expanded SQA Qualifications offer by the CLD Sector	Review pathways for key thematic learning including distance learning	5 pathways reviewed over 3 years.	CLD Partnership (MEIOC/Lep Plus)	2024 to 2027
		Explore music, climate change/ green job qualifications being available in the community	Number of new qualifications offered 1 per year	CLLE Expanded Quality Assurance Group	

	Volunteering opportunities sustained or range expanded	Co-work with the Storehouse Penicuik to support vulnerable adults seeking volunteer or work experience relating to retail, food, hospitality, stock control, social media marketing	Baseline year 1 – establish the number of volunteers supported	Penicuik Storehouse	2024 to 2027
		Co-work with Food Fact Friends to support volunteer placements	Baseline year 1 - establish the number of volunteers supported	Food Fact Friends Penicuik	2024 to 2027
	Local people of all ages are supported to secure employment or secure their next steps	NOLB funded programmes deliver effective support through key worker support, qualifications and job and training outcomes	Annual targets agreed with Scottish Government are met for those participating in the programme Number of people registering to volunteer directly with VM who are looking for volunteering to help them into employment or	Midlothian LEP Plus	2024 to 2027

	Improve employability outcomes for Midlothian residents	Collaborate with Midlothian Council Sport & Leisure to grow work placement opportunities and pathways to employment	advance within employment Opportunities and pathway defined Number of people supported into work placement opportunity Number of people gaining employment	CLLE, Sport & Leisure and other LEP stakeholders	2024 – 2027
		Collaborate with Midlothian Council Sport & Leisure to create S&L Modern Apprenticeships	Establishment of S&L Modern Apprenticeship(s) No of people accessing S&L MA – initial baseline.	CLLE, Sport & Leisure	2024 – 2027
		Identify opportunities to establish collaboration with NHS Lothian/Health and Social Care (HSC) which results in more pathways for local people to enter Health and Social Care	1 opportunity identified years 2 to 3	HSCP, Public Health and LEP	2025 to 2027

MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Increase access to qualifications and support pathways to lifelong learning.	Train two local community partners to deliver Adult Achievement Awards, expanding qualification delivery in local settings.	Two partners trained to deliver Adult Achievement Awards. At least 20 learners enrol for awards through new partners within the first year	Newbattle Abbey College (Lead), Local Community Learning & Development (CLD) partners	2024 to 2025
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CLD and Partners' Contribution –Living Well in Communities, including digital resilience

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Digital opportunities offered to meet local needs	<p>Partners will be responsible for the delivery of group learning and 1:1 support across Midlothian. This will range from basic digital skills through to a range of digital qualifications</p> <p>Digital learning opportunities will include topics such as avoiding scams, staying safe online, good passwords, cloud storage, using smart home technology, engaging with services and businesses online</p>	<p>The Midlothian Digital Partnership Group Action Plan will be implemented tracking the number of actions on target and a minimum of 2 meetings per year</p> <p>1 review completed annually of the digital offer</p>	CLLE, TSI, Midlothian Libraries and the Digital Partnership Group	2024 to 2027

		Library Services will provide knowledge, space and technology to support users in the community	Number of people supported Number of sessions provided		
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Effective partnership working is sustained	Review Compact between the third sector and Midlothian Council	New Compact approved	TSI/Midlothian Council	2024 to 2026
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Priority local communities are supported to improve community outcomes through locality planning – Living Well Plans	Support the implementation of the Central Dalkeith and Woodburn Living Well Locality Plan and support 5 communities to progress Living Well Plans.	Number of plans produced 6	CLD Partnership Plus	2024 to 2027
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Communities and third sector organisations remain active and involved in Midlothian	Capacity building support provided by CLLE and TSI CLLE to Support Federation of Community Councils and subgroups.	Number of groups CLLE (55) supported. Number of Interactions	CLLE/TSI CLLE	2024 to 2027 2024 to 2027
Midlothian is Safer Operation Juke –	Reduction in ASB calls to Police	Officers are targeting Youth ASB within Midlothian (including on buses), Police are	Reduction in ASB calls to Police	Police Scotland Partners (CLLE, CAP, SW, LRT and Housing	Ongoing – Operation Juke is utilised when ASB calls increase within

Reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the local area		working in partnership with CLLE, CAP, SW, LRT and Housing Associations to divert youths from ASB within the area. Officers are conducting high visibility and plain clothes patrols in the area and patrolling on foot, pedal cycle, quad bikes and vehicles		Associations)	Midlothian.
Midlothian is Safer Operation Jewel – Reducing off road bike ASB	Safer Roads and Public areas. Reduction in ASB off-road bike calls	Officers are targeting off-road bike ASB within Midlothian. Officers are conducting high visibility and plain clothe patrols in the area utilising Selecta DNA to assist in identifying offenders	Safer roads / public areas/ Reduction in ASB off-road bike calls	Police Scotland	Ongoing – Operation Jewel is used when ASB calls increase within Midlothian

CLD and Partners' Contribution to Climate change, sustainable learning and outdoor spaces

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
Midlothian is Greener	CLD activities have embedded climate change and sustainable learning built into them	Build capacity of staff and partners to embed climate change into CLD learning and projects	3 CLD activities can demonstrate embedding of climate change and sustainable learning across the CLD partnership	CLD Partnership Plus (MEIOC/Lep Plus)	2024 to 2027
	Capacity will be improved to act on local climate change through the inputs of Midlothian Climate Change Hub	Midlothian Climate Hub will continue to undertake capacity building work with local communities	3 interventions annually (funding dependent)	Midlothian Climate Change Hub and Partners	2024 to 2027
	Delivery of Forest Schools courses to adults, families and young people	One CLD member of staff trained and starting delivery February 2024	3 courses delivered per year	CLLE and Newbattle Abbey College	2024- 2027

	More people are aware of and engaged in Green Prescribing Project	Roll out Green Prescribing project across Midlothian and establish a monitoring and evaluation framework	Evaluation plan produced and data collected	HSCP, Public Health and Third Sector	2024 to 2025
Midlothian is Greener	Provide hands-on learning and volunteering opportunities focused on conservation and climate awareness	Expand volunteer opportunities at Newbattle Abbey College grounds, focusing on conservation and outdoor learning projects.	<p>Increase in the number of conservation-focused volunteers by 25% by year-end.</p> <p>Completion of at least 2 volunteer-led conservation projects annually</p>	Newbattle Abbey College (Lead), Local environmental and conservation groups	2024 to 2027

CLD and Partners' - Enhancing Our Workforce and Volunteer Skills

Priority Area/Link to SMP	Outcome	Action/Task	Performance Indicator	Key partners	Timescale
MIEOC/CLD Partnership Plus	Staff capacity and confidence increased around working with mental health and wellbeing, creating CLD informed approach	All staff holistically trained & supported around working with mental health and wellbeing in CLD context, creation of CLD staff pathway for support, reflection and action	Staff report positive awareness & inclusive working culture regarding CLD engagement with mental health and wellbeing 98%	All CLD teams, Health in Mind, Equalities staff and partners	2025
	Raised awareness of neurodiversity including support for parents within our services	Working group re training suite and creation of CLD staff pathway for support, reflection and action Working group re mental health & wellbeing includes equalities	Group established with diverse representation; staff communication/ accessible information Staff participation in training 90%	All CLD Teams, Equalities Rep, Autism Scotland/Scottish ADHD, Coalition/local partners, Education Psychologists	2025 to 2027

		<p>Raise awareness of neurodiversity needs of users and staff: staff training and feedback</p> <p>Plan programmes to address needs of neurodiverse adults/parents</p>	<p>Local Learning opportunities planned 2 per year</p> <p>1 local opportunity per year</p>	<p>All CLD Teams, Equalities Rep, Autism Scotland/Scottish ADHD, Coalition/local partners, Education Psychologists</p>	2025 to 2027
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Appendix One – A Guide to CLD Terminology

Several acronyms, abbreviations, and terms unique to the field of community learning and development are used in this document. Some key agencies and partnerships link to this area of work, which can be challenging to understand. Below is a quick guide to assist you with this:

- [The Single Midlothian Plan or Local Outcome Improvement Plan \(LOIP\)](#) is the statutory plan that the Council and its partners must produce due to statutory legislation. It governs our work.
- [Community Planning](#), sometimes called the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, is a group of local agencies and community representatives who work together to benefit their communities. This is a statutory requirement of the Community Empowerment Act 2015. They have themes within the plan and sub-groups to implement the agreed improvement actions. CPWG is the short title for the operational group in Community Planning and stands for the Community Planning Working Group. The strategic community planning group is the Community Planning Board, which scrutinises the work and performance of the partnership.
- Community Learning and Development (CLD) is a term that can be used in several ways. It can describe a professional group of qualified staff with a degree in CLD or working with a set of values and principles that guide it.
- [TSI stands for Third Sector Interface, a partnership between Midlothian Voluntary Action \(MVA\), Volunteer Midlothian \(VM\), and the Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian \(SEAM\).](#)
- [CLLE is the Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Service](#), part of the Midlothian Council. It delivers youth work, adult and family learning, community capacity building, and employability.
- Public Health in Midlothian is part of [Health and Social Care](#) and works to address health inequalities and support health within communities and also there is [Public Health NHS Lothian](#) as well.
- Third Sector is a collective term that describes community groups, social enterprises, and voluntary groups that deliver services. Some have paid staff, but most have a Board of Directors or Management Committee.
- Community Capacity Building or Community Development is when community groups are supported to develop, secure resources and take collective action on issues or improve their community.
- Positive Destinations is a term used to describe where young people go after leaving school. These destinations include volunteering, college, training, a job, etc.
- [The Midlothian Compact](#) is an agreement based on guidance from the Scottish Government between the Council and the third sector.
- [The Midlothian Federation of Community Councils](#) comprises representatives from the 15 community councils. They look at Midlothian-wide and shared issues. MTRaP (Midlothian Transport, Road and Paths).