

Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose. The Place service ambition is to deliver joined-up, collaborative, and participative approaches to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

Place Services encompasses Building Services; Housing Services; Neighbourhood Services; Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment; Property & Facilities Management; Protective Services and Sport & Leisure.

## Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

We are committed to building on the learning and new ways of working that were adopted during the pandemic and renew our focus on delivering our key priorities at the most local level possible. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, the vision of our new 5-year strategy focuses on reducing inequalities at the same time as looking after the health of our planet. Specifically, we have three main aims:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes.
- No child or household live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Reprioritisation and redesign is crucial to balancing the Council's financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges and changes that we will face.

The strategic plan sets out our biggest challenges that need to be addressed over the next five years. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of the fastest growing local authority in Scotland, and delivering our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

## Transformation Blueprint Objectives

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap of outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
2. Follow the Money to ensure that the services we commission, contracts we manage and digital solutions we use deliver value for money.
3. Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible, ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively, supported by digital technologies that fit for a 21st century workforce.
4. Design a workplace for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way.
5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in joined-up service delivery which improve outcomes.

# Environmental

## Key achievements Q2 24/25

Midlothian Council was one of the first local authorities to sign Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, publicly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change brings with a commitment to make the Council's activities net zero carbon by 2030. Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change Strategy and focus continues within Place services to achieve future emissions targets. The ambitious strategy sets out how we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, encourage, and work with others in our community to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate. A new Climate Change officer was appointed last quarter. As part of that role, a refresh of our Climate Change Strategy and underlying action plan is in development to support the Council and wider local authority partners in their collective journey to net zero across Midlothian.

Economic Development continues to promote the Midlothian Business Green Pledge on social media and in direct conversations with clients to increase education and awareness of climate change and suggest adaptations. A total of 147 businesses have now committed to the



Pledge with 21 of those signing up during quarter 2. The team continue to work with pledgers to identify the best platform for group sharing. Through the LinkedIn group, pledgers share their experiences and the team continue to share a mix of green information from partners on learning opportunities, support and funding.

### Road Services

Up to this quarter, under the combined Capital Works Programme and Residential Streets Programme, a total of 7.70km of carriageway and 1.16km of footway was resurfaced. Representing 1% and 0.16% of the carriageway and footway network respectively. Carriageway resurfacing is on target for the quarter. Although footway surfacing is slightly behind target, good progress was made this quarter compared to last and it is expected to meet the annual target.



901.76 tonnes of material was used in quarter 2 to fill potholes. 199.48 tonnes of material was used for temporary repairs and 702.28 tonnes for pothole pro permanent patching. This is an increase of 127% compared to this period last year where 396.4 tonnes were used. The Pothole Pro project equated to 6,031m<sup>2</sup> of permanent patching, repairing 967 potholes this quarter which is a 198% increase in square metres patched and a 12% increase on the number of pothole repaired compared to the same period last year.

As part of the street lighting capital programme a target of 500 new lighting column replacements are planned for this year. Lighting column programme commenced towards the end of quarter 2 with 22 columns replaced. The vast majority of replacements will take place during quarter 3 and as such the annual target is expected to be made by the end of the year. In addition, a further 472 street light replacements are programmed for this year which include LED upgrades. 23 upgrades were completed during the first week of the programme.

In this quarter 4 additional digital 'school zone' signs were installed utilizing Transport Scotland funds and the upgrade of CCTV installation

at Shawfair park and ride started. Planning and resourcing for our Winter Service was complete this quarter with 2 new gritters due for delivery and over 3,000 tons of salt in stock.

### **Waste and Recycling**

As part of a wider Neighbourhood Services review, a new management structure for the Recycling Team was implemented in quarter 1. This has resulted in streamlined management of the service which has already seen an increase in productivity and time management of front line teams.

To further support the new management structure within the Recycling Team, the contract for the “digital depot” was awarded this quarter. The contract will provide digital in cab technology to all of the roadside collection vehicles within waste services. This will transform the way the front line service is delivered and will result in efficiencies and improved customer service.

The team have continued to improve the way the service engages with residents in relation to enquiries and complaints. A new way of working has seen a significant improvement to customer service, resulting in a more responsive and timely service to residents who contact the team.

In quarter 2 the food waste collection service was expanded to include a further 2,500 properties in the rural area. Initial figures show that this has been a great success with 2 tonnes of food waste collected in the first week alone. This is potentially 100 tonnes of food waste recycled rather than going into the residual bin. The expansion of the food waste collection service is the latest phase of the plan to transform the waste collection service as part of the move to twin stream recycling in 2025.



### **Neighbourhood Environment Team**

Quarter 2 has seen the new Neighbourhood Environment Team become further established within the Recycling and Greenspace Service. The new team combines elements of the former street cleaning service with specialist elements of the greenspace team to create a new service that aims to improve the quality of the local environment for our residents. Across Midlothian, the Neighbourhood Environment Team has been carrying out the following works in our local communities:

- Ensuring our streets remain clear of litter
- Cleaning our bus stops so that they provide safe, clean shelter for residents
- Emptying street litter bins
- Spraying and removing weeds from footpaths and roads
- Mechanical sweeping of roads and pavements
- Ensuring pathways are clear of overhanging trees and shrubs
- Keeping Midlothian clear of fly tipping
- Edging back grass verges to reclaim overgrown footpaths
- Power washing of high streets and public areas



The team are currently prioritising leaf clearance to ensure that our footpaths and roads are clear of leaves to keep our public realm safe. We will then focus on a winter work programme which will see a deep clean of key routes throughout Midlothian.

### **Play area improvements**

The team are continuing to deliver the play area improvements programme funded by the Scottish Government grant, with further projects planned for 2024 in play areas across Midlothian. Further updates will be provided as projects are developed throughout the year. 10 improvements across our play areas, parks and green spaces were completed up to and including this quarter. The team are currently installing a play trail at Ironmills Park.

### **Village improvements**

During quarter 2 the Greenspace Team have been finalising plans to carry out clean up works in village areas to build on the success of the work in 2023 which saw improvements to 16 areas including; Pathhead, Leadburn, Fala, Howgate, Lasswade, Ford, Edgehead, Auchendinny, Newton village and Silverburn to date with works planned for Cousland, Carrington, Millerhill, Temple, Whitehill and Middleton. The works will commence in quarter 3 and further details will be provided once the plans have been confirmed.

### **Working with the community**

The Greenspace Team have continued during quarter 2 to work with our brilliant volunteers across Midlothian. The work we carry out jointly has a huge impact on the quality of the local environment and we are determined to strengthen these partnerships over the rest of 2024. Our volunteer groups provide added value to the work that we do with litter picking, gardening and fund raising to brighten our local areas. Up to and including this quarter, 3,342 volunteer hours (557 days) were spent in countryside sites. Volunteer numbers continue to remain high.



## Protective Services

Our Business Regulations Food and Safety team continue to prioritise proactive interventions at food businesses registered with Midlothian Council with the highest risk for food safety and standards. These include retailers and caterers with significant or sustained non-compliances in food law. 18 out of 22 planned priority inspections were completed for this quarter and as such the official control verification visits to our approved premises planned for this year are on track.

This quarter Food Standards Scotland issued a Food Alert for Action due to counterfeit alcohol being found in a retail premises in another local authority area in Central Scotland. Over 3 days officers from our Business Regulation Team carried out checks on over 40 small independent retailers in Midlothian. Counterfeit Glens vodka was found in 1 retail premises in Midlothian with 12 bottles being voluntarily surrendered by the premises manager. The test report provided by Edinburgh Scientific Services on a sample taken showed the product contained propan-2-ol (iso-propanol) from an industrial source. Propan-2-ol is harmful when consumed with symptoms including nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain, intoxication, respiratory depression and coma. Ingestion of any amount can lead to toxicity meaning the product was unsafe. Investigations are currently ongoing.

A Remedial Action Notice was served on a Midlothian food manufacturer due to extensive mouse activity in the food preparation areas. The business was closed for 4 days to clean and disinfect the premises and implement control measures to control the mice. A further unannounced inspection has been carried out at the premises and found to be satisfactory, maintaining their control measures.

During a programmed food inspection, a mobile street trader was found to be operating with no running water, relying on bottled water to wash hands and clean equipment and surfaces. The issue was resolved within 1 day and the unit now has a supply of running hot and cold water.

A restaurant/takeaway in Gorebridge that was recently closed twice due to rat activity within the food premises was showing signs of improvement due to the intensive interventions of the Environmental Health Officers involved. However, a Health and Safety Improvement Notice had to be served on the duty holder to ensure the fixed electrical installation was safe due to evidence of damage to the wiring by rats. The notice was complied with after a short extension, however the electricians report showed remedial works are required and follow up is necessary.



The Canadian Food Safety Institute visited the UK to carry out an audit on UK food manufacturers who export to Canada, and Local Food Authority official controls in place at these premises. An officer from Midlothian Council's Food and Safety Team joined the Institute on their visit to one of Midlothian's largest manufacturers of meat products. Feedback was provided at the end of the visit to the business with a few minor points raised. They acknowledged the resourcing challenges Midlothian Council's Food and Safety Team have and were satisfied with the official controls in place.

The Food and Safety Team have recently appointed a trainee Authorised Officer. The officer took up post in September and has 6 months of training to complete requirements set by the Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland (REHIS). This is a very positive addition to the team and allows the officer to progress over time from a Food Safety Officer to an Authorised Officer with health and safety duties which then has the potential to gain qualifications to be an Environmental Health Officer.

Our Trading Standards team received 48 consumer complaints this quarter, a decrease from 56 during the same period last year and 82 in Q1 of 22/23. 96% of consumer complaints were responded to within 5 working days and 84% completed within 14 days. Completion is not fully within service control and is dependent on traders and complainants responding to investigations. This year to date at least £22,065 has been returned to Midlothian consumers following Trading Standards involvement.

Trading Standards prosecution cases continue this quarter with guilty pleas obtained in two cases and a further case submitted:

- a sole trader pled guilty to operating a fraudulent scheme relating to retaining deposits for 9 bathrooms he did not provide, a total of £10,875.75. Trading Standards reported the case in 2022 with 15 complainers, 3 of whom were from Midlothian, under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
- a Mayfield shop owner pled guilty to intending to supply oversized vapes in June last year and was fined £500.
- a report was submitted by Trading Standards to the Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) for offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994. In December 2023 Police Scotland assisted Trading Standards in enforcing a warrant at a home in Gorebridge where a private Facebook group was being ran selling counterfeit goods, mainly brand clothing but also handbags and perfume. The private group may have had over 3,000 members and counterfeit goods were recovered from several buyers in Midlothian.

As reported last quarter, 3 other cases are proceeding in court with a December trial date set after Trading Standards involvement.

39 Trading Standards primary inspections took place this quarter of a targeted 145 for the year, although off target, most inspections take place over quarters 3 and 4 so our overall annual target is expected to be met. Due to extensive inspections to farms and small holdings over the last year, only 8 small holdings/farms are required for inspection this year.

This quarter 36 intelligence logs were recorded on IDB, the national Trading Standards Intelligence database (IDB) by our Trading Standards team. In comparison to other Scottish Councils, Midlothian continue to sit in the top quartile for logs created.

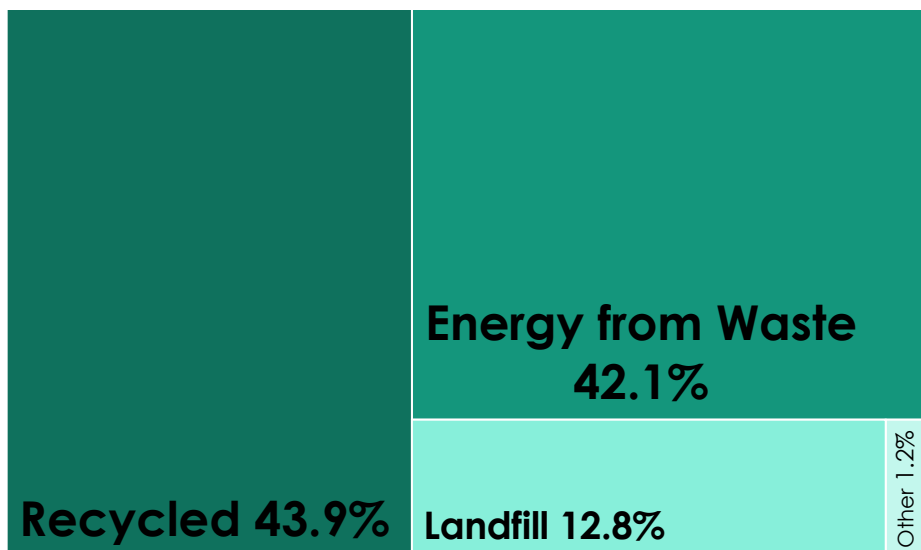
Our Public Health Environmental Protection team successfully applied and were awarded college fee funding from Skills Development Scotland for two Regulatory Services Apprentice posts. Recruitment took place this quarter and apprentices will be in post during quarter 3. This new pilot apprenticeship scheme is aimed at partially addressing the national shortage of regulatory services officers and is hoped to assist future staffing requirements by providing a new route into the field of Environmental Health.

The team received 290 public health service requests this quarter from Midlothian residents and businesses. A further 62 service requests were received from internal sources. Key activities for the Public Health Environmental Protection team this quarter included:

- The issuing of 93 Short Term Let Licences under the new scheme
- Progression to court of an animal welfare case reported to the Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) earlier in 2024. A further case is currently being prepared and will be submitted in Q3 to the COPFS regarding alleged offences under the Antisocial Behaviour Scotland Act 2004 Part 8 Housing: registration of certain landlords
- Planned out of hours assessments commenced this quarter to assess noise and others Environmental Health matters in Midlothian. These assessments include licensed premises.
- A number of statutory notices were served this quarter regarding a various issues including fly-tipping and vermin. All notices served in quarter 2 have been complied with.
- Investigations this quarter led to the identification of 2 unlicensed HMO's both of which are now going through the licensing process.

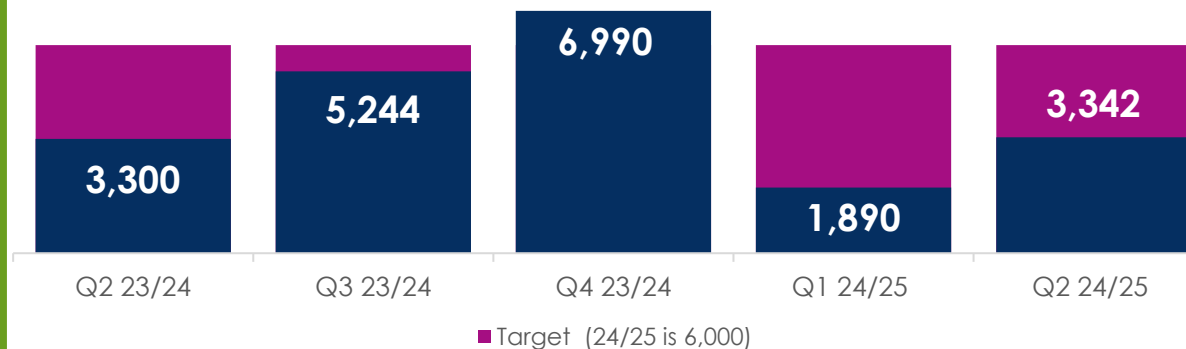
# Neighbourhood Services – performance

## % OF ALL DISPOSED WASTE\*



\*data shows figures for Q4 23/24. Q1 and Q2 24/25 not available until Q3.

## Number of vounteer hours in countryside sites (cumulative)



**10** park and greenspace improvements/new facilities complete up to this quarter out of 50 planned

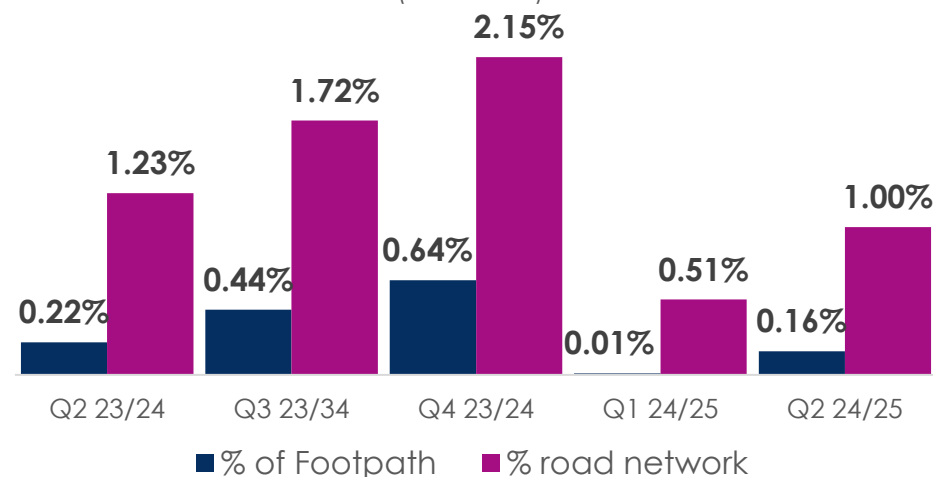
**901.76** tonnes of material used to fill temporary and permanent potholes this quarter.

**6,031** m<sup>2</sup> of permanent patching achieved this quarter.

**967** potholes were permanently repaired this quarter.

**217** tonnes of carbon emissions saved from street lighting this quarter.

## % of Roads and footpath resurfaced (cumulative)



# Protective Services – performance

## Food Standards

**86%** of food related service requests from mid residents and Businesses responded to with target of 10 working days.

**82%** of Priority 1 and 2 premises receiving completed food law intervention in line with the service plan.

**42** food law service requests received this quarter

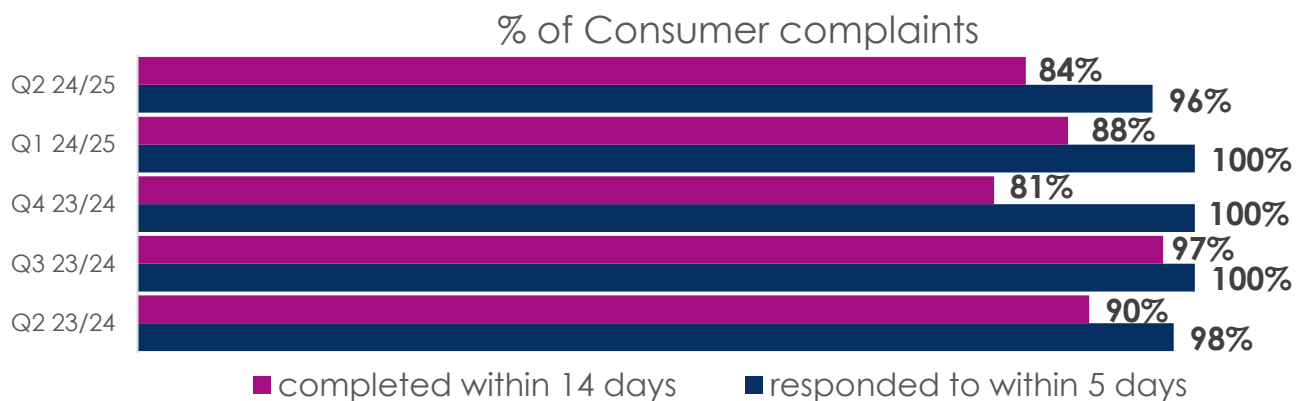
## Public Health

**290** Public Health service requests received from residents and businesses this quarter. (360 in Q1).

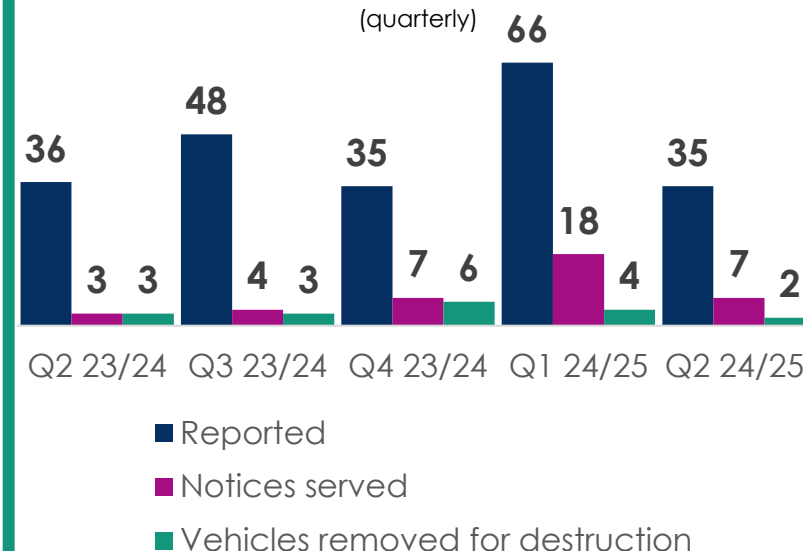
**96%** of public health complaints receiving first response within timescale this quarter.

## Trading Standards

**48** consumer complaints received this quarter (decrease from 56 in Q2 23/24)



Number of abandoned vehicles (quarterly)



**106** liquor licence applications received in Q2 with **95%** determined

**158** Civic Government license applications received in Q2 with **67%** determined

# Housing

## Key achievements Q2 24/25



### Meeting housing need

The Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024/25 to 2028/29 was submitted to the Scottish Government during 23/24. The SHIP identifies the Council's priorities for investment in new affordable housing in Midlothian over a 5 year period. The delivery of more affordable housing remains a high priority for Midlothian, as reflected by our ongoing and ambitious housing development programme.

From March 2024 to date we have received the completed handover for 96 new build homes in Conifer Road, Mayfield, St Cuthberts in Bonnyrigg High Street and Buccleuch Wynd. This quarter 8 golden share applicants for low cost home ownership were reviewed and accepted.

There were 6,564 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this quarter, a 25% increase compared to the same period last year. 144 lets were made this quarter, 6 houses were let through our Housing First model. 56 lets were made to new build and open market purchases.

This quarter the team successfully made changes to our Capita ONE reporting system, through weeks of testing we now have the ability to record 'rough sleepers' in Midlothian, where our older system didn't capture this level of detail.

An initial review of our supported accommodation commenced this quarter to look at better ways we can support, protect and house women within our supported accommodation sites. More information on the review will be shared in the next few quarters.

## Homelessness



There continues to be a significant demand placed on homeless and temporary accommodation services, alongside the increase in energy, food and fuel costs, requiring a comprehensive preventative approach. Homelessness is not inevitable and can often be prevented. The Homeless Persons (Suspension of Referrals between Local Authorities) (Scotland) Order 2022 gives people in housing crisis the freedom to settle where they choose with access to the support they need and aims to help them integrate more fully into the local community and to reduce repeat homelessness. The removal of the necessity to have a local connection to an area under this legislation has seen a shift in persons now presenting to Midlothian and as result the total number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of quarter 2 was 406, an increase of 23% compared to the same period last year. Although we did not experience immediate negative effects of this the changes to legislation, the impact is now changing and we continue to monitor

the long terms effects.

Despite a 34% increase in single male parents and added pressures of placing 44 households in unsuitable temporary accommodation, this quarter we successfully avoided breaching the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO) due to the dedication and hard work of our Housing Team, moving people urgently and exchanging properties where tasks had been completed to be able to accommodate.

Our aim is to reduce the length of time that an applicant is in Temporary Accommodation and through our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan we see households moving through the homeless system more quickly. Officers take a proactive approach when allocating properties to place applicants in their area of choice where possible, increasing the opportunity to accept the property being flipped to permanency and allows for a more sustainable community.

Latest figures from quarter 1 show the length of time homeless applicants waited until receiving a permanent housing outcome was 51 weeks, showing a continued downward trend from 106 weeks at quarter 1 of 22/23 and 58 weeks for quarter 1 last year. It should be noted figures for quarter 2 are not currently available however we expect current figures to remain within target. Similarly, figures for the length of time homeless applicants spent in temporary accommodation is currently not available the most recent available data for Q4 23/24 shows that an average of 40.3 weeks was spent in temporary accommodation compared to an average of 62 weeks over the same period in 22/23.

It is expected that figures will continue to remain within our 60 week target.

The number of temporary accommodation households that have been flipped to permanent accommodation was 74 this quarter, reducing the need for multiple moves before being permanently housed, allowing for links established within the local community to be maintained.

Homelessness prevention assists around 20 households with advice and assistance about homelessness prevention per week. This is rental assistance advice, financial awareness advice and mediation. The number of homeless cases provided with advice and assistance this quarter was 222. We continue to promote this service to ensure early successful intervention when possible.

Tenants sustaining permanent accommodation continues to be high this quarter with 97% of homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy after 1 year.

## Building Maintenance

The total number of jobs completed internally by our Building Maintenance Service this quarter was 7,925. A total of 15,977 jobs have been completed so far this year. Jobs include all reactive, planned works, voids and inspections.

This year the Building Maintenance Service (BMS) Capital upgrade programme has been set at just over 3000 upgrades across our estate, continuing from achievements last year. These upgrades include the continuation of our new windows, doors, bathrooms and kitchen programmes helping Midlothian Council maintain its Scottish Housing Quality Standards. The service also aims to complete the remaining fire door installs to all our flats to ensure that we are also compliant with the latest fire regulations.



This quarter we have increased the percentage of Council Housing stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards criteria to 76.55%. Although this is still off target there has been a significant increase from 34.3% meeting standards at Q2 of last year. Due to changes in the Energy Efficiency regulations affecting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) criteria, 431 houses were identified as failing the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). We have reduced these failures to meet 2025 targets. However, with the Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR's) now part of the SHQS we found that 4733 were failing assessment. We have reduced this figure to 1,708 during quarter 2, resulting in 76.55% now meeting standard. Work is progressing to bring this indicator back on target. 100% of smoke alarms comply with current legislation.

In line with our Damp and Mould policy the service continues to roll out the environmental sensors throughout our portfolio. This year BMS are aiming to install around 2,000 monitors across 1,000 homes. This continued roll out will provide us with valuable information from within our homes, allowing us to achieve our targets set out in our Damp and Mould policy. The information collated by the monitors is sent through to a portal using a gateway system that also monitors our smoke alarms.

# Housing – performance

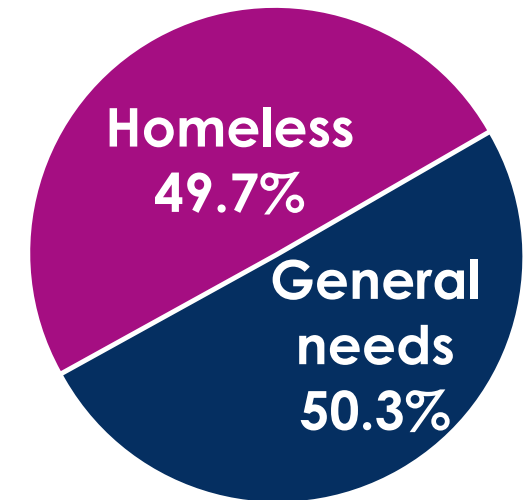
**6,564** applicants on housing waiting list this quarter (General needs and Homeless) (increase from 5,251 in Q2 23/24).

**56** Lets to new build and open market purchases this quarter.

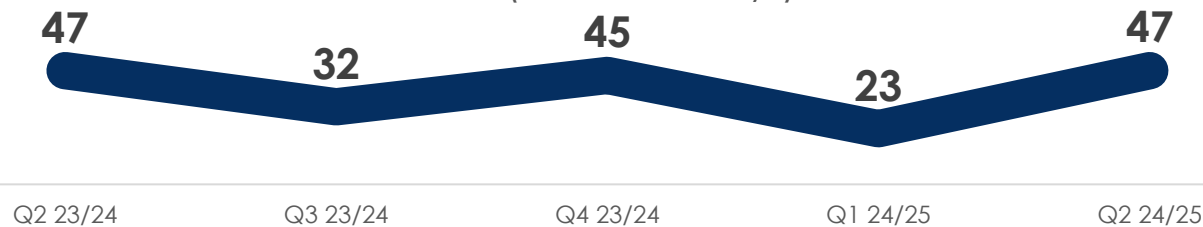
**6** Lets to Housing First applicants this quarter.

**141** housing lets this quarter.

% of lets made to applicants

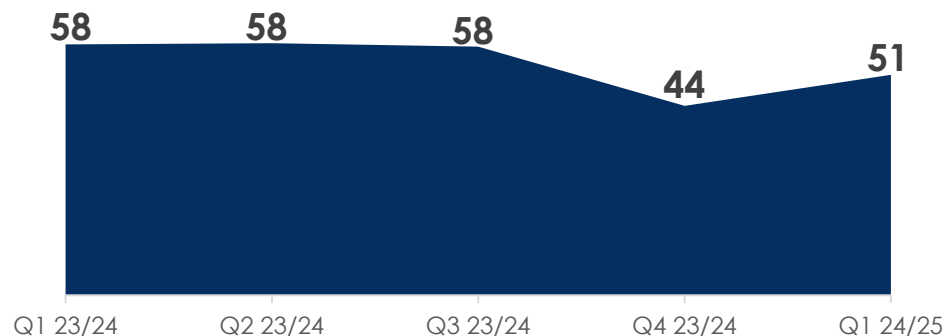


Time taken to re-let permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)

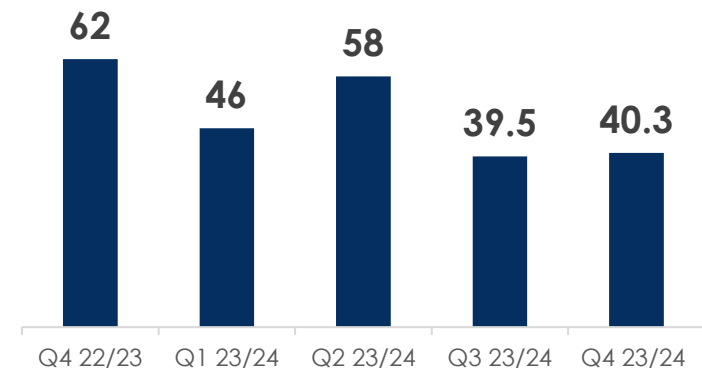


**97%** of Homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy after 1 year.

Length of time (weeks) homeless applicants wait until receiving a permanent housing outcome



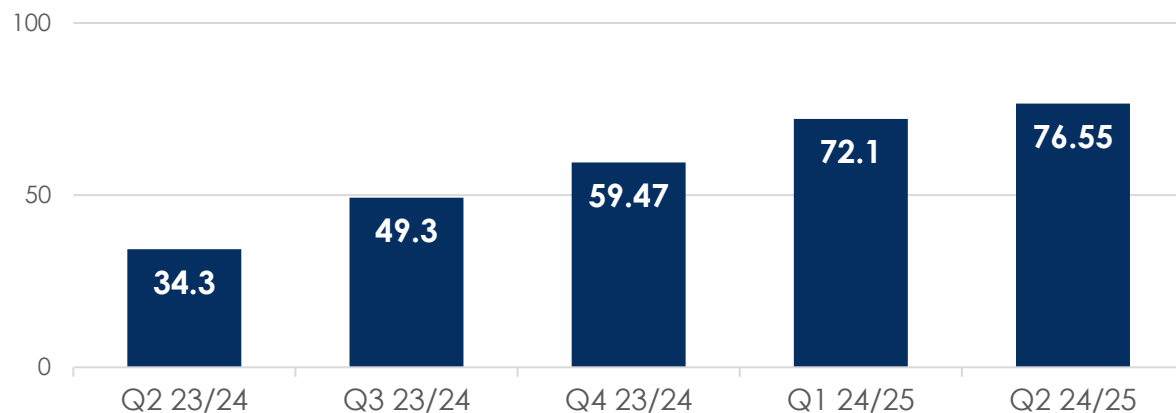
Length of time (weeks) homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation



Due to reporting issues, recent data for quarters 1 and 2 will not be available until quarter 3.

# Building Services – performance

% of Council housing meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) (cumulative)



## 15 hours

Average time taken to complete emergency repairs for Q2.

## 7,925

jobs completed this quarter by our Building Maintenance Service

Percentage of housing repairs completed on time this quarter:

## 95.72%

of  
emergency  
repairs  
completed on time

## 89.15%

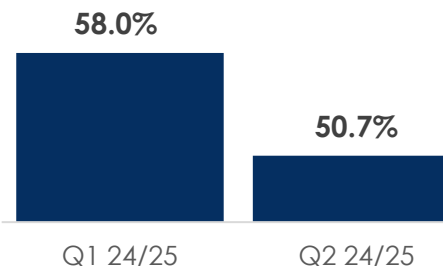
of  
priority 2  
repairs  
completed on time

## 87.14%

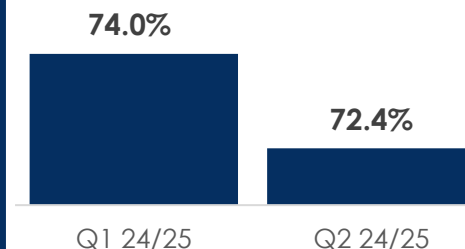
of  
priority 3  
repairs  
completed on time

## Building Standards

% of first reports for building warrant applications issued within 20 working days



% of building warrants issued within 10 working days, following receipt of satisfactory information



Building Standards customer satisfaction rate:

## 7.7

out of 10

# Economy & Regeneration

## Key achievements Q2 24/25

Midlothian Council's Economic Renewal Strategy sets out our ambitious approach to managing the transition from pandemic lockdown and planning for the longer term challenges the local economy will face. The strategy aims to mitigate the adverse economic impact on the local economy from COVID-19. Key aims are to protect jobs and aid business recovery using a place-based partnership approach that maximises the opportunities developing from the pandemic. Taking this partnership approach, the strategy will foster entrepreneurship, upskilling and training, addressing gaps in the market and changing the way business is done to better align this to customer behaviour. Alongside support for agriculture, tourism and the leisure and hospitality sectors, the council will also promote local jobs and self-employment opportunities, particularly for young people, to give them the necessary skills and support they need to benefit from economic recovery. Work is ongoing to refresh the Economic Strategy and will be presented for approval to Council later in the year.



### Business gateway Service

The Business Gateway Service has seen a similar level of demand this quarter compared to the same quarter last year.

52 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received in Q2. Enquiries are received from individuals that are considering setting up a business but need support to achieve this, these clients tend to have numerous sessions with their advisor covering areas such as business planning, access to finance, regularity compliance, routes to market and can take from 3 months to a year to reach the trading stage.

The total number of new Business start-ups this quarter was 20, creating a total of 23 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1,020,000 to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading. This is a

decrease compared to 32 starts over the same period last year however the 52 'Planning to Start' enquires this quarter means the pipeline is still healthy leading to more starts up over the next few quarters. of 13 new business starts.

### **Business Gateway Expert Help Programme**

Work continues with our Net Zero Nation Programme which is supporting 13 diverse local businesses to accelerate their Net Zero Journey. The businesses will take part in 12-month Net Zero Business Accelerators with funding support from Midlothian Council/Business Gateway Midlothian. In return, they must sign an agreement where they commit to approach their Net Zero strategy and credible carbon reduction plan with vigour, speak at physical and online events to encourage other business leaders to start their own transition to Net Zero. The companies will receive a 12-month carbon accounting software license, an expert partner providing 1:1 support over 12 months to help them produce their audited carbon accounts, their carbon reduction plan produced, an auditor to verify and certify their carbon accounts and carbon reduction plan. After completion in December 2024, the team will commence case studies on the outcomes for businesses.

Our first Learn e-Commerce Expert Help programme commenced last quarter in April. 18 businesses enrolled for the digital course, with 6 going on to receive 121 expert help guidance from the trainers. The feedback from clients has been extremely positive with tangible improvement to their businesses immediately felt. A second round of this programme has received a good level of interest with 13 businesses applying and now approved for programme with an estimated launch date during October.

The team continue to provide expert help consultancy in financial management and Human Resources to support the Fair Work Policy to Business Gateway clients on an as needed basis. 30 businesses have been supported since the programme began, with budget left for another 20 interventions.

## **Business Gateway Midlothian Summer Events**

A Business Gateway coffee morning was held on Friday 6th September 2024 at The Craigie Hotel in Penicuik. James Palmer, Development Director of Penicuik Estates, presented an in-depth picture of the plans for the estate, their green approach and the opportunities for partnering with the local business community. Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh College and the team from the Workforce Mobility Project attended and had stands to introduce themselves to the business. 44 businesses attended the event with the majority based in Penicuik and the surrounding areas.

The next scheduled [BG Coffee Morning](#) is on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November at the newly opened conference suite at Energy Training Academy in Dalkeith, Midlothian Energy LTD and the CR Deal Workforce Mobility Project will present.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> July the Business Gateway team presented to the members of the Rosemains Steading Business Association on the forthcoming UKSPF grant. Focusing particularly on the exporting fund, 12 businesses attended the event.

The team also presented at the Moredun Scientific Tenants Meeting within the Midlothian Science Zone on the 21<sup>st</sup> August, outlining the support Business Gateway offers and the UKSPF grant process. 17 businesses attended the event.



## **Business Associations**

There are 3 active Business Associations in Midlothian covering Dalkeith, Penicuik and Pathhead within Midlothian. An event has been arranged for the 24<sup>th</sup> Of October to bring together Midlothian food and drink businesses to develop a business association. This will include producers and retailer.

## **UKSPF Local Business Support**

The Green Skills programme to upskill local plumbers, heating engineers and electricians in the installation of Heat Pumps and Solar Panels/Battery Storage was launched this quarter. This programme will upskill in the region of 8 local tradespeople with a further 4 places available to unemployed people to access the Managed Learning Programme which takes an individual with no experience of the trade to become fully qualified gas and heat pump installers.

### **Social Enterprise**

The Business Gateway service continue to promote the Social Enterprise model to clients where their plans, objectives and values align to the model. Contributing to Community Wealth Building objectives, the team support projects from the Social Enterprise Conversation sessions as they develop. The service supported 12 Social Enterprise organisations in quarter 2. Support provided included:

- 3 Community Interest Companies provided with support to access grant funding, expert help and Community Asset Transfer.
- An existing charity in a precarious financial situation was supported to develop revenue streams and explore avenues for becoming financially sustainable. Business Gateway Learn Ecommerce expert help in progress.
- 1 Third Sector Organisation has been provided with support to collaborate with a private sector business that had outgrown their current facility, this will provide a new audience for the business as well as utilise catering facilities that are not viable for the Charity to realise revenue generation.
- 1 pre-start development Trust has been provided with support with planning and developing its organisational structure.
- 1 pre-start social enterprise has been provided with support to develop their idea and been given advice on support available with the current social enterprise landscape.

### **Land and Property**

Property enquiries are specific premises enquiries and sign ups to the property mailing list. We had a total of 9 enquiries from local businesses in Q2 of which 3 were from businesses outside of Midlothian, these could be considered Inward Investment enquiries however they are all smaller businesses looking to relocate from Edinburgh or surrounding areas.

## Property Assets

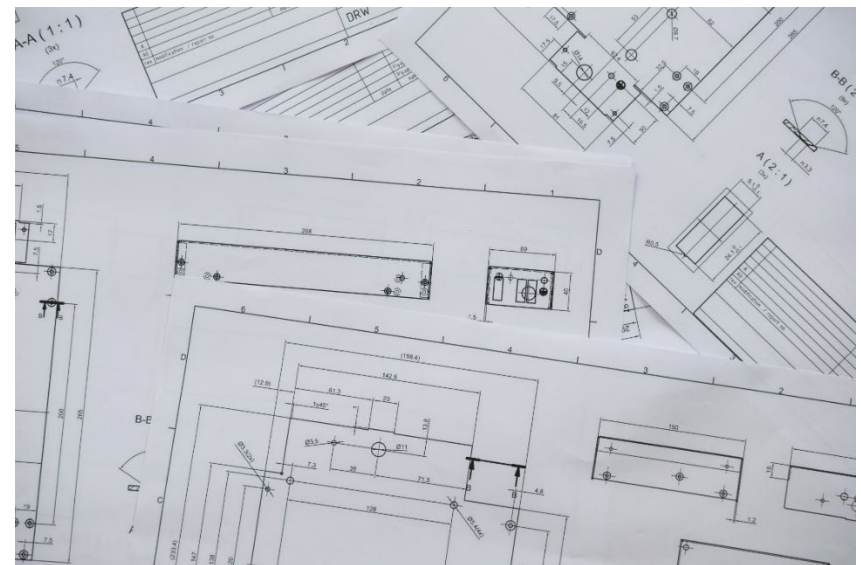
This quarter our Estates team concluded the sale of the Leadburn dwelling and the sale of the former Loanhead Police Station (subject to planning consent). In addition, the conclusion of the acquisition of 3 houses under the Ukrainian Resettlement Programme. In conjunction with Midlothian Energy Limited (MEL) the team concluded options into future heating alternatives for the Bonnyrigg Heating Scheme

## Planning

Following the adoption of the National Planning Framework No.4, the Planning Service formally commenced its review of the Council's adopted spatial strategy, the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2 (MLDP2). The first phase consisted of engagement with community groups, key agencies, the development industry, local residents and elected members. This engagement was ongoing throughout 2023/24 and continues into 2024/25. At its meeting in June 2024 Council approved the MLDP2 Evidence Report, including setting a Local Housing Land Requirement at 8,851, for submission to the Scottish Government for 'Gate Check'. This is the first major milestone in the MLDP2 process. The Evidence Report has now cleared the 'Gate Check' process, the second Council in Scotland to clear this process.

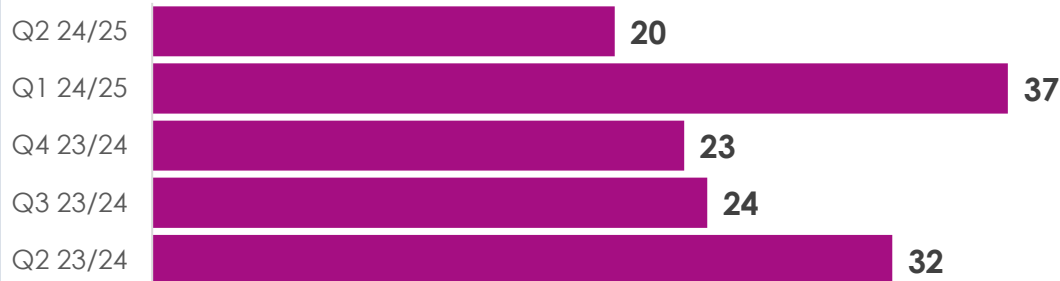
## Building Standards

Although performance targets in relation to building warrant applications issued are off target this quarter, our Building Standards service continues to provide a high level of customer satisfaction against an increasing service demand. The Building Standards service review has been agreed and the first phase now implemented. The new service structure will now seek additional resource to manage the increase in workload and meet the nationally agreed service level performance targets.



# Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment–performance

Number of new Business start ups (quarterly)



**2** 'Strengthen your business' enquiries this quarter

**5** Instances of Local Growth Advisor support (LGAS) this quarter

**21** Businesses signed up to the **Midlothian Business Green Pledge** this quarter (increase from 15 in Q2 23/24)

**12** Social enterprises supported this quarter (12 in Q2 23/24)

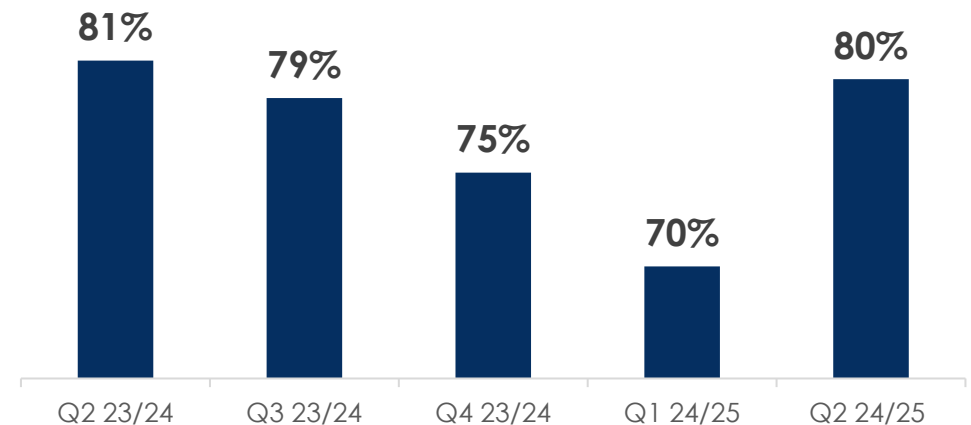
**52** 'Planning to Start' enquires/submissions this quarter (decrease from 56 in Q2 23/24)

## Social media

**1,736** Locate in Midlothian followers.

**2,436** Business Gateway followers

% of planning applications completed within target of 80%



**66 weeks**

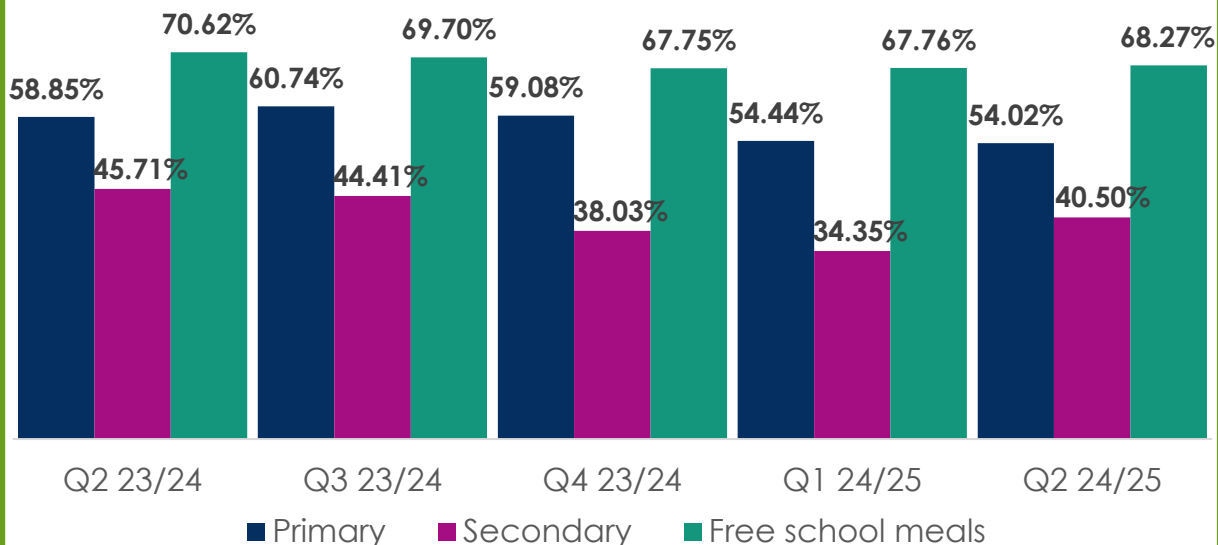
Average time to determine planning applications for **major** developments.

**10 weeks**

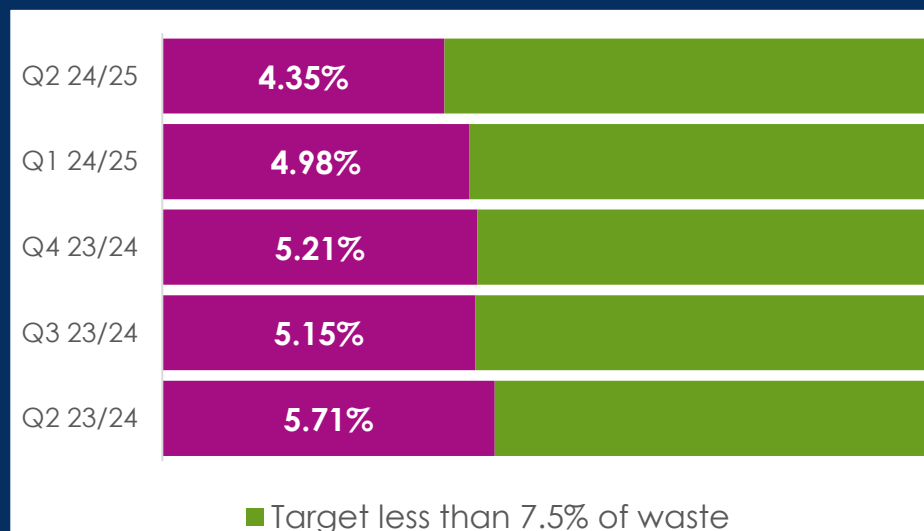
Average time to determine planning applications for **local** developments.

# Property and Facilities – performance

% of school meal uptake



Percentage of school meal food waste

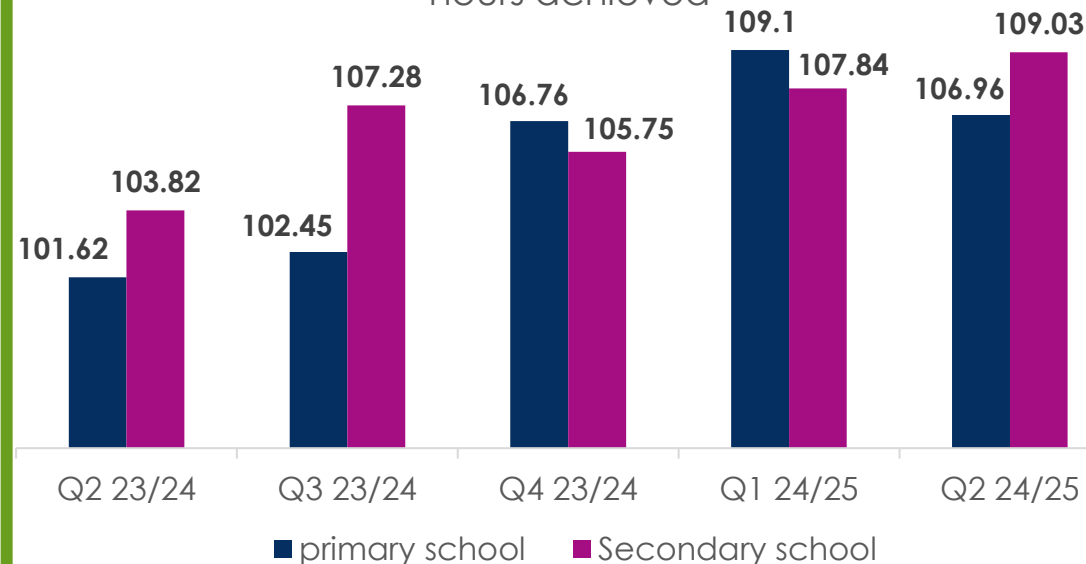


**6.7** nursery and primary school meals prepared per hour this quarter (7.27 compared to last year Q2 23/24)

**TARGET:** APSE national average 8.84 meals prepared per hour

**9.05** secondary school meals prepared per hour this quarter (8.46 compared to last year Q2 23/24)

Percentage of cleaning hours against budgeted hours achieved



# Health and Wellbeing

## Key achievements Q2 24/25

### Catering Services

The percentage of Secondary school meal uptake this quarter has increased to 40.5% and continues to sit above the APSE average of 36.23%. This is due to changes made to the menu offered to secondary schools to attract pupils back into the dining room. The percentage of Primary school meal uptake for quarter 2 was 54.02% and again remains steady compared to previous quarters. Primary school meal uptake continues to sit well above the APSE average of 41.24%. The percentage of school meal food waste has decreased to 4.35% from 5.74% compared to the same period last year. In addition, our Catering Service were awarded the Bronze Food for Life Award and the Pro-veg School Plates Bronze award.



**Across Sport and Leisure services**, our Tonezone memberships continues to grow through improved marketing and promotion with a total of 4,527 memberships up to the end of quarter 2. An increase of 8% compared to quarter 2 of last year.

Towards the end of quarter 1, a new Sport and Leisure mobile app was launched. The new app makes it easier for customer to access and manage their account, book classes, get live pool updates, news and Active Schools information. The app had 500 downloads within the first week of launch. By the end of quarter 2 the app now has over 8,000 users. Our app can be found on the Apple and Google store.

1,765 primary 4 pupils attended free swimming lessons this quarter (within a 5 week block) after an effective system was put in place from our programme development officer.

Our **Alpine coaster at Midlothian Snowsports Centre** opened successfully on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September. The overall length of the coaster is 980 meters (315 metres uphill and 667 metres downhill) with a vertical drop of approximately 170 metres. After a successful communications campaign the coaster was fully booked since its opening weekend to the 13<sup>th</sup> of October with 11,479 tickets being sold.

### **Our Active Schools Midlothian**

Sharing good practice, our Midlothian Active Schools Young Ambassador programme was delivered by our Active Schools team as an opening presentation at the East Regional Young Ambassador conference this quarter. All Midlothian secondary schools were engaged to deliver the programme.

Using a similar model to Edinburgh Leisure and Active Schools, we have extended our partnership with Edinburgh college into our health and fitness courses with opportunities for placements within our centres.

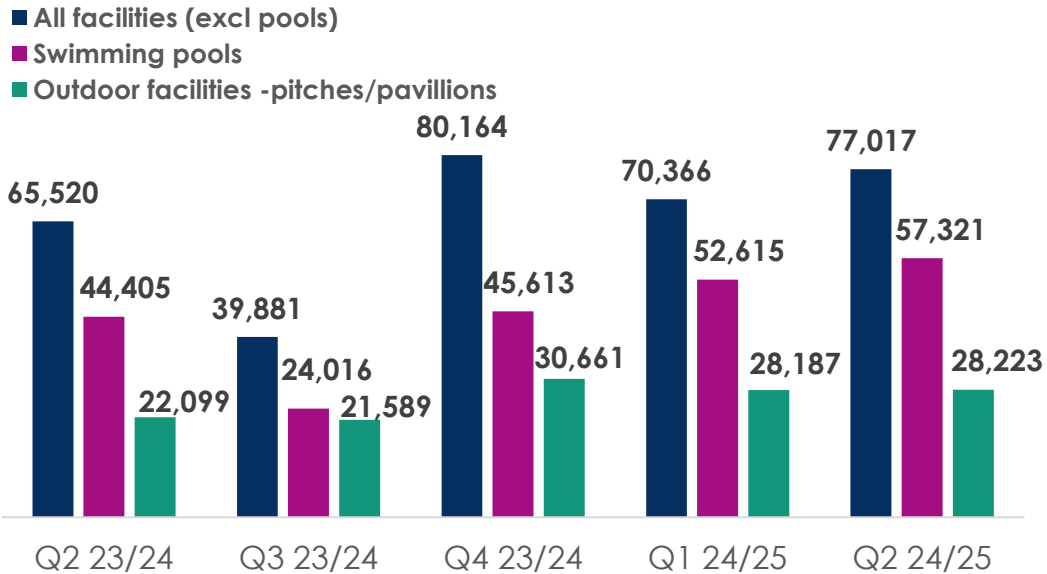
Our summer holiday programme was well attended generating income and resulted in a good base to build on for future years.



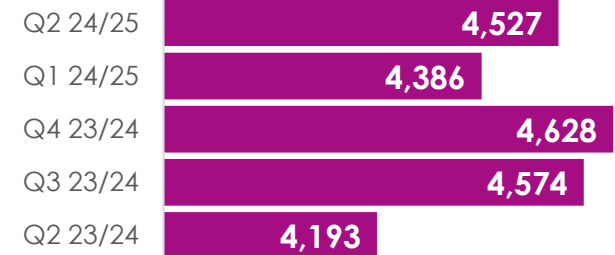
**Midlothian Active Choices (MAC)** is a sport and leisure physical activity referral programme, aimed at adults who are inactive and experience various health conditions. The programme offers a range of supported activities across Midlothian to help manage these health conditions. This quarter saw 1,653 Midlothian Active Choices attendees, an increase of 8% compared to the same period last year. 444 new referrals were received after completion of MAC sessions showing an increase of 20% compared to the same period last year.

# Sport and Leisure - performance

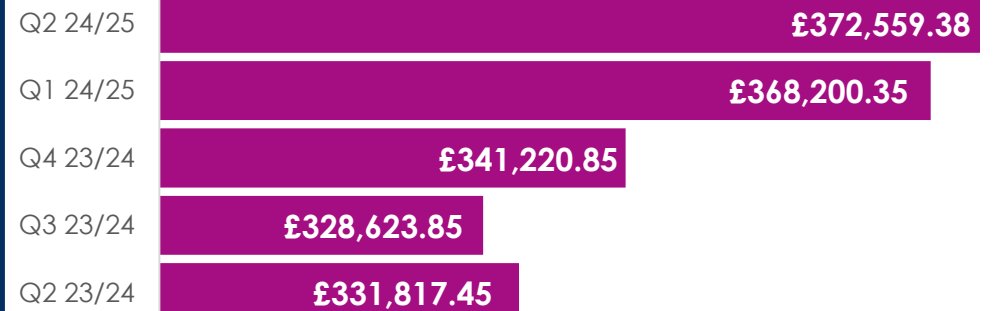
## Number of attendances at Sport and Leisure facilities (quarterly)



## Number of Tonezone memberships (cumulative)

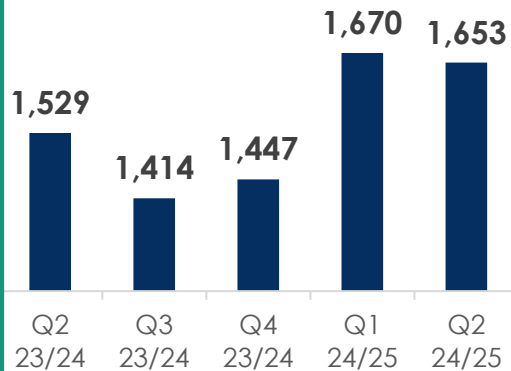


## Total income generated from Tonezone memberships

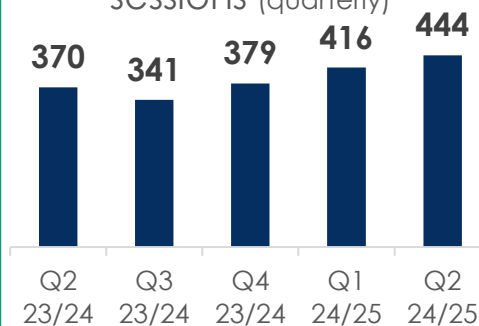


## Midlothian Active Choices (MAC)

### Number of MAC attendees (quarterly)

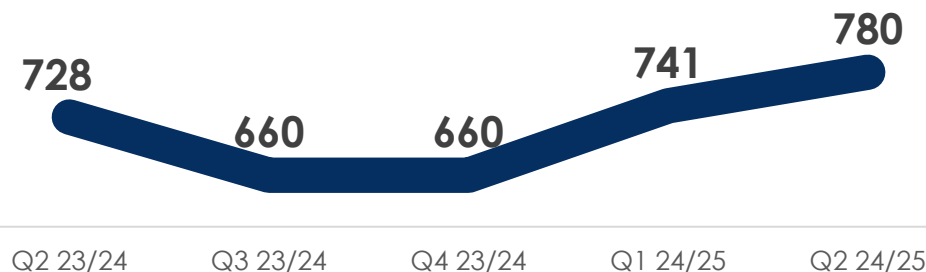


### Number of new referrals after completion of MAC sessions (quarterly)



## Ageing Well

### Number of activities offered by Ageing Well to 50+ age groups (quarterly)



## Capital Investment Programme

As Scotland's fastest growing local authority area, it is critical to delivery that investment in community infrastructure, such as housing, the learning estate, economic investment and green infrastructure, is in the right place at the right time. This will help our communities to live well, live locally and prosper. How we invest in community infrastructure must also respond to changes in our working and living patterns brought about by the pandemic. Communities need to be able to readily access the services they require. Capital investment is also an opportunity to support our local economy through job creation and skills enhancement, particularly in relation to supporting a transition to a green economy as we invest in sustainable, highly energy efficient buildings.

As a growing Council, we have the opportunity to transform parts of Midlothian in a way that reflects how we live now. We will invest in community infrastructure with a focus on place-making, reducing inequalities, improving economic opportunities and improving education and health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Capital Investment Strategy brings together many strands of the Council's activities to build upon our past successes and drive forward innovation in a co-ordinated and achievable manner for the benefit of Midlothian and its citizens.

The Capital Investment Strategy sits centrally within the Council's future planning activities and in doing so has to reflect the demands of Council services to ensure positive outcomes are achieved in the right place, at the right time for the maximum benefit to Midlothian. The extensive capital programme delivers new schools, a record investment in council housing, improved community infrastructure, investment in the local transport network and innovative developments such as the new low carbon heat network in Shawfair.

To ensure Midlothian is 'building back better', this investment is also creating new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, opportunities for businesses and communities and families hard-hit by the impact of the pandemic. These new opportunities help lead the way out of the pandemic and towards a better future for Midlothian.

The Education Learning Estate Strategy programme has been developed and is subject to regular review meetings with Education and stakeholders to ensure effective monitoring, reporting and delivery of improvement and expansion of the Education estate including Early Years provision. This currently covers approximately 30 projects at various stages of development.

Midlothian Council is overseeing a significant housing programme. Phase 1 provided 864 additional houses within Midlothian. The total number of new homes from phase 2, 3 and 4 is currently estimated at 1134, comprising of 489 from phase 2 budget and 645 from phase 3 and 4 budgets. Progress continues with 645 homes currently being constructed on site either through commencement of enabling works or main contract works as of November 2022. An additional 327 homes are funded for delivery in phase 5. This included the largest Passivhaus programme in Scotland, with 191 homes to be built to the exacting Passivhaus standard, in line with Midlothian Council's Net Zero Housing Design Guide. This ensures exceptionally high levels of energy efficiency and low utility bills for our residents. At present any further Passivhaus developments are paused for a cost benefit analysis exercise.

## Challenges and risk

Over recent years, innovative ways of working have been introduced and services adapted at pace to respond to the needs of our citizens, in particular those experiencing the greatest levels of poverty and inequality. Our services are continuing to build on this learning moving forward, harnessing the energy, flexibility and creativity demonstrated by our workforce, to embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation across Place.

## Growing Council

In addition to the financial sustainability challenges, other challenges for Midlothian continue in the cost of living crisis, the growing and ageing population and the increasing demand for services that this brings.

The recent Census results 2022 highlights that Midlothian remains the fastest growing local authority in Scotland with an increase of 16.1%. The 2011 census data lists Midlothian as having a population of 83,187 which has risen to 96,600 in the 2022 census data. The level of growth is 2.3% higher than our previous calculation and is now 13.4% higher than the Scottish average of 2.7%. In terms of households, Midlothian saw the highest percentage increase at 17.2% since the 2011 census. Population density in Midlothian is 273.1 residents per square kilometre compared to the Scottish average of 69.8.

This growth creates the opportunity to meet the housing need with 25% of new homes being built in the affordable housing bracket, in addition to the expansion in Council house building. This construction will directly support employment and will see a steady increase in the value of Council Tax income received over time.

The approved Capital Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet those demographic pressures and includes the financial contributions Midlothian will make to the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Encompassing five main themes the City Region Deal will bring significant investment across the regions with total investment of circa £1.3 billion across:

- Data Driven Innovation: £751 million
- Integrated Regional Employability and Skills: £25 million
- Transport: £156 million
- Culture: £45 million
- Housing: £313 million

Through the Data Driven Innovation strand the Deal will leverage existing world-class research institutes and commercialisation facilities in order that Easter Bush becomes a global location of Agritech excellence. The Easter Bush project includes significant investment in transport infrastructure along the A701/2 transport corridor. In addition, by improving on-site infrastructure at Easter Bush and transport infrastructure, The University of Edinburgh expects commercial partners will be able to co-locate at scale to commercialise Agritech breakthroughs.

## **Risk**

The Council's Strategic Risk Profile is presented retrospectively to Audit Committee quarterly. The most critical risks to the Council are Financial Sustainability, Climate Change and the Change Programme. Corporate Solutions is key to the delivery of mitigating actions to these risks; through strategic planning and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and driving forward the Council's transformation programme to drive change and redesign services.

# Pentana Performance Dashboard – Q2 24/25

A full review of quarterly performance data is available via Pentana (Browser login link - <https://midlothian.pentanarpm.uk/login>)

34

Quarterly Reporting Place Pls  
- On Target

20

Quarterly Reporting Place Pls  
- Off Target

73

Quarterly Reporting Place Pls  
- Data only

5

Quarterly Reporting Place Pls  
- No data available

7

Quarterly Place High Service  
Risks

99

Quarterly Place All Service  
Risks

## Quarterly Reporting Place Pls - Off Target

...	Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Last Update	History
●	PLACE.P.5.2a Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Free from seri...		98.9%	100%	Q2 2024/25	
●	BS.PLACE.P.5.2b Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern fa...		98.4%	100%	Q2 2024/25	
●	HSN3 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the S...		76.55%	100%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.P.5.2c Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe ...		76.55%	100%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.P.14.2f Percentage of the footpath network resurfaced (cumulative)		0.16%	0.3%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.BUILDS.02 Be on site with first modular housing development within 12 mon...		No	Yes	Q2 2024/25	
⚙	PLACE.BUILDS.04 95% of first reports for building warrant applications issued withi...		50.7%	95%	Q2 2024/25	
⚙	PLACE.BUILDS.05 90% of Building warrants issued within 10 working days, followin...		72.44%	90%	Q2 2024/25	
●	BS.PLACE.HSN.01 Re-let time permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)		47 days	35 days	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.MPI.05 % of Service Pls that are on target/ have reached their target. (does ...		81.74%	90%	Q2 2024/25	
⚙	HSN4b Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF)		32 days	7 days	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.PFM.18 Number of nursery and primary meals prepared per hour (APSE)		6.7	8.84	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.PFM.21 Percentage of free school meal uptake (P1-P5)		68.27%	77.57%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.PLAN.02 Average timescale (weeks) to determine planning applications for ...		66	50	Q2 2024/25	
●	PROSERVICES.19 Percentage of consumer complaints responded to within 5 worki...		96%	100%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PROSERVICES.25 Number of Trading Standards Primary inspections (quarterly)		39	70	Q2 2024/25	
●	PROSERVICES.30 Percentage of businesses registered for tobacco/vapes in Midlot...		0%	5%	Q2 2024/25	
⚙	RHM.a.04.4mi Percentage of lets made to homeless list applicants		49.7%	60%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working d...		86.24%	95%	Q2 2024/25	
●	PLACE.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 wor...		92.31%	95%	Q2 2024/25	

← 1 of 1 →