# Notice of Meeting and Agenda

## Cabinet

**Venue:** **Council Chambers/Hybrid,**
**Midlothian House, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN**

**Date:** **Tuesday, 04 March 2025**

**Time:** **11:00**

**Executive Director : Place**

**Contact:**
Clerk Name: Democratic Services
Clerk Telephone:
Clerk Email: democratic.services@midlothian.gov.uk

**Further Information:**

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

**1       Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

**2       Order of Business**

Including notice of new business submitted as urgent for consideration at the end of the meeting.

**3       Declaration of Interest**

Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

**4       Minute of Previous Meeting**

**5       Public Reports**

**6**      **Private Reports**

**7**      **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 20 May 2025 at 11.00am.

# Minute of Meeting

# Cabinet

| Date | Time | Venue |
|---|---|---|
| Tuesday, 5 November 2024 | 11:00 am | Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith and MS Teams |

**Present:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Councillor Parry (Chair) | Councillor Alexander (Virtual) |
| Councillor Cassidy | Councillor McKenzie |
| Councillor Scott | |

**In attendance:**

| |
|---|
| Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive |
| Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place |
| Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships |
| Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer |
| Rebecca Hooton, Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities. Deputy Chief Social Work Officer |
| Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions |
| Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place<br>Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer |
| Laura Gunning, Principal Officer Public Health |
| Fiona Kennedy, Service Manager - Health and Social Care |
| Hannah Forbes, Democratic Services Officer |
| Janet Ritchie, Democratic Services Officer |

## 1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of Cabinet. Apologies were submitted by Anne-Theresa Lawrie and Councillor McManus. The Chair wished Councillor Russell a happy birthday on behalf of the Cabinet.

## 2 Order of Business

The order of business was as detailed within the agenda. The Chair highlighted that the additional Education Appointment Committee minute would be noted under item 4.3.

## 3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

## 4 Minutes of Previous Meetings

4.1 The Minute of the Meeting of Cabinet held on the 17 September 2024 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4.2 The Action Log was noted.

4.3 The Private Minute Volume was submitted for approval and approved as correct record.

## 5. Reports

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | Strathesk Primary School and Nursery Class Inspection Report | Education Chief Operating Officer |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Education Chief Operating Officer presented the report which outlines the inspection of Strathesk Primary School and Nursery Class. In June 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Strathesk Primary School and Nursery Class. The report was published on 1 September 2024 and is available on the Education Scotland website.

Cabinet is recommended to
  (i) Note the content of the summary of the inspection report.
  (ii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with this report.
  (iii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for noting purposes.

The Chair thanked the Education Chief Operating Officer for the report and opened for questions.

Congratulations were passed to all the pupils and staff for another rewarding inspection. Cabinet felt confident that any areas marked for improvement will be improved.

| Decision |
|---|
| Cabinet noted the contents of the report. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|---|---|
| 5.2 | Anti-Bullying Policy | Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships presented the report. They advised that the review of the Midlothian Anti-Bullying Policy comes ten years after the adoption of the current policy and the report reflects new guidance from the Scottish Government, including recent research into the reasons for bullying and the ongoing impact. It has been created by a working group made up of representatives from schools, and Officers responsible for Children's Rights, Additional Support Needs, Care Experienced Young People, and parents and pupil voices. The report is designed as a model policy for schools to adopt, with aspects which can be adapted according to individual school contexts. The policy includes clear definitions, roles and responsibilities in an attempt to clarify best practice when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour. A suite of support and guidance materials, aligned with a professional learning programme will support the implementation of the policy over the coming year, based on information from schools as they review their existing practice and procedures. The policy sits within the Relational Approaches Framework which has been introduced to schools, and will, in further iterations, reflect key messages from the Inclusion Framework which is under development.

Cabinet was asked to approve the adoption of the Anti-Bullying Policy, and the proposal to continue with consultation activity around the policy and development of guidance materials as schools embed practice within their settings.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships for the report and opened it up for questions.

Cabinet advised that they are happy to approve the report. A question was raised in relation to SEEMiS, and the length of time records are kept. It was highlighted as a possible concern that these records may not always be appropriate to keep for the full duration of a child's time in education. It was also asked what work will be undertaken to ensure that SEEMiS is going to be user friendly for pupils to access this information.

The Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships explained that the records on a child's profile on SEEMiS will be on there for the duration of their time in education and that all activity will be monitored.

| Decision |
|---|

| Cabinet approved the recommendations as detailed in the report. |
| --- |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.3 | Education Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/2025 | Education Chief Operating Officer |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Education Chief Operating Officer presented the report, highlighting the salient points of the report, noting progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes, the challenges and risks. The Education Chief Operating Officer thanked the staff for the continued hard work to make this improvement possible. The report was for noting.

The Chair thanked the Education Chief Operating Officer for the report and opened for questions.

Cabinet noted the amazing work improving attendance from the Midlothian Aligned Officer who had only started in August 2024. The Learners Conference was described as a great experience and thanks was passed to the Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Team for their hard work over this weekend.

The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities advised that there was an article detailing bonfire activities published which can be shared with Cabinet after this meeting.

| **Decision** |
| --- |
| The report was noted by Cabinet. |

| **Action** |
| --- |
| The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities to share the published article relating to bonfire activities with Cabinet. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.4 | Children Services, Partnerships and Communities Performance Report Quarter Three 2024/2025 | Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities presented the report highlighting the salient points of the report and the typing error in the title that should be Quarter Three, and noted progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes, the challenges and risks. It was noted by the Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities that the highest risk has been changed to parental mental health.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities for the report and opened for questions.

The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities was asked about the main reasoning for the change from domestic violence to mental health as the highest risk and if this has any relation to the cost of living crisis. The waiting list for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) was also raised as a concern with the current waiting list being at 1408 people. Cabinet asked if the waiting list correlates to adult mental health issues and highlighted the importance of having facilities for young people.

The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities explained that the data needs to be examined in relation to mental health, with specific emphasis on people who have been diagnosed with mental health or have poverty related concerns. This could be a combination of both, and the workforce needs to investigate this further. It was also explained that adult mental health may be trigged by children with neurodiversity diagnosis challenges, however the Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities advised that they do not have an answer for if this correlates into adult mental health.

The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities highlighted that the number of 1408 on the waiting list is people waiting for an assessment, but this does not mean that they will be diagnosed. There has been a cultural change in the understanding of neurodiversity which has caused an increase in the numbers on the waiting list.

Cabinet asked if people who are on the waiting list are still able to seek financial support without a diagnosis. The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities advised that the Department for Work and Pensions will now allow some change to support depending on the evidence that is provided to them.

| Decision |
| --- |
| Cabinet noted the report. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.5 | Adult Social Care Services Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/2025 | Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer |

| Outline of report and summary of discussion |
| --- |
| The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer presented the report and highlighted a change in formatting to make this clearer. The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer advised Cabinet that for the next meeting, figures will be brought back in relation to adult ADHD assessments. The progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes, the challenges and risks were highlighted. The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer advised Cabinet of the increase in challenges in adult mental health and ongoing changes in the drug world. The report was for noting. <br><br>The Chair thanked the Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer for the report and opened it up for questions. |

Cabinet discussed the contents of the report, including the Community Payback Order (CPO), and asked if it is likely that more resources will be needed around that and what the financial implications are. Cabinet also discussed alcohol related illnesses and the importance of their dangers being communicated to the public. Cabinet asked if the volume of alcohol sales in Midlothian is known.

The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer advised that the Section 27 grant from the Scottish Government received each year is currently being reviewed. The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer highlighted ongoing drug problems, including the cost of drugs and the inexpensiveness of synthetic drugs which has a strong link to criminality.  It was advised that the ongoing work around alcohol use has not had the same focus as drugs and there can be more work done around on this.

The Chief Officer Place explained that the volume of sales relating to alcohol is not something Council keeps a record off. They highlighted that the Scottish Government has increased the per unit price to try discourage spend on alcohol as much as possible

The Chair asked if legal highs still exist, and if they have the potential of cropping up in the future. Cabinet also discussed alcohol deaths and asked for clarity regarding how records on this are kept and if they are recorded different to West Lothian.

The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer advised the Chair that legal highs have almost disappeared in Midlothian, and the main issue is synthetic drugs. Alcohol deaths are recorded nationally. West Lothian has had a significant increase, and the Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer advised they can check why that would be.

| Decision |
| --- |
| Cabinet noted the report. |

| Action |
| --- |
| The Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer to bring back figured in relation to adult ADHD assessments. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.6 | Place Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/2025 | Chief Officer Place |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |

The Chief Officer Place presented the report, highlighting the important points of the report including progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and the challenges and risks.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer Place for the report and opened for questions.

Cabinet noted the great progress with school meals and how children are engaging with the changed menu, and asked if there would be any benefit for the school meals to be accessible through a digital platform with a pre-order function with more information relating to the nutrition of the meals.

The Chief Officer Place stated that there is a Food Nutritionist who can detail those important factors in the school meals. The pre-order function is something that can be investigated in the future.

Cabinet highlighted the sport and leisure innovation regarding the offers in place and asked about the conversion rate of people taking out memberships with the offer and if that membership is sustained afterwords. Cabinet noted concerns that housing issues with homelessness does not seem to be getting any better. The Chief Officer Place was asked to explain what the process is for the closure of restaurants by Environmental Health.

The Chief Officer Place explained that there is a growth in memberships relating to the offers. They further explained that the impact on the housing stock, with ensuring the voids turn around, is completed at the same time. The Voids Team are working very hard to ensure their turn around is complete. The Chief Officer Place advised that in relation to the closure of restaurants by Environmental Health, a further survey takes place and once that issue has been resolved the restaurant is able to open again.

| Decision |
| --- |
| The report was noted by Cabinet. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.7 | Corporate Solutions Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/2025 | Chief Officer Corporate Solutions |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |

The Chief Officer Corporate Solutions presented the report, highlighting the salient points from the report, noting the library visits, delivery of the outcomes against the Council's strategic objectives, the Transformation Blueprint and the sign up for direct debit for garden waste. The roll out of Microsoft 365 and the new intranet development phase will be launched in January 2025.

The Chief Officer Corporate Solutions thanked all the staff in Corporate Solutions for what has been achieved under really challenging circumstances and recognised the other services who have supported Corporate Solutions in delivering its priorities. The report was for noting.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer Corporate Solutions for the report and opened it for any questions.

Cabinet highlighted feedback received regarding the way the public are contacting Midlothian Council.

The Chief Officer Corporate Solutions advised that the best communication method is through digital platforms such as social media and the library. It was noted that more work needs to be done regarding communications, and feedback is always welcome. The Chief Officer Corporate Solutions also explained that the service platform and system upgrades are costing more, however this will result in a saving in the future.

| Decision |
| --- |
| Cabinet noted the report. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.8 | Midlothian Council Report Quarter Two 2024/2025 and Balanced Scorecard | Chief Executive |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Chief Executive presented the report together with the Balanced Scorecard which provides a summary of actions in line with the Single Midlothian Plan, further complementing the reports presented from each of the services
during the meeting. The report was for noting.

The Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships, Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities and Councillor Alexander left the meeting at 12:45.

No questions were asked and the report was noted.

| Decision |
| --- |
| The report was noted by Cabinet. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.9 | Midlothian Council Statutory Report to Scottish Ministers on Public Bodies Climate Change Duties 2023/2024 | Chief Officer Place |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Chief Officer Place advised that the purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the Council's statement of compliance with its statutory climate change reporting duties for 2023/2024, a copy of which is available in the CMIS Members' Library. The report recommends its submission to Scottish Government by the due date of 30 November 2024.

It is recommended that Cabinet:

| | |
|---|---|
| (a) | approves the Council's Report on Compliance with the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties for 2023/24; and |
| (b) | agrees to the submission of the report to Scottish Ministers by 30th November 2024. |

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer Place and noted that this was a very interesting report. There were no questions presented to the Chief Officer Place and the report was approved.

| **Decision** |
|---|
| Cabinet approved the recommendations as detailed in the report. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|---|---|
| 5.10 | Private Water Supplies – Grant Funding Report | Chief Officer Place |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Chief Officer Place spoke to the purpose of the report which is to provide information on a proposal for additional grant criteria in order for Midlothian Council to be able to support private water supply users in securing improvements to their supplies to protect public health.

Cabinet is recommended to:

i. Note that Midlothian has 67 private drinking water supplies, 40 of which are 'regulated' (incorporating commercial activity) and 27 which are 'type B' (owner occupied domestic only).

ii. Note the provisions of the Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006, in particular Regulation No. 8, permitting Midlothian Council to approve grant assistance in respect of works likely to improve the nature or quality of a private water supply. The maximum grant is currently up to £800.00 per property.

iii. Note that this level of current grant assistance has not increased since 2006 and increased costs of living over this time risks a decline in the supply maintenance, which may pose a public health risk to supply users.

iv. Note that Regulation 8(2) of the Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 permits Midlothian Council to pay grant in excess of £800 where an eligible person could not, without undue hardship, finance the expense of improvement works.

v. Approve the proposed criteria for approval of additional grant (appendix C) and the maximum amount of grant payable to a property eligible for additional assistance as £3,400.00 (initial £800 plus up to £2,600.00 additional discretionary grant).

vi. Acknowledge that grant funds are reclaimable in full (plus any Midlothian Council administration costs) from the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR), a public body responsible for nationally monitoring Scotland's private water supplies and advising Scottish Ministers. The approval of

additional grant will be subject to the continuation of funding availability from DWQR.

The Chief Officer was thanked for the report and the Chair opened for any questions.

Cabinet discussed the different types of water supplies that owners may have for their properties. The Chief Officer Place explained that there is a duty of care for any private water supply to be investigated to ensure any improvements can be made. It was highlighted there is a reclaimable grant up to £800.00 per property and Cabinet are being asked to agree to expand on the current policy position.

The Principal Officer Public Health stated that a risk assessment will be undertaken to assess if the works are eligible to improve the quality of the water supply.

| Decision |
| --- |
| The report was approved by Cabinet. |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.11 | Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg – Disposal of Land Report | Chief Officer Place |
| **Outline of report and summary of discussion** | | |

The Chief Officer Place advised that this report details that double yellow lines were approved by Cabinet in October 2023 to be extended along the length of Lothian Street to mitigate pedestrian and road safety concerns and challenges for movement of buses and other large vehicles. Consequently, there has been vehicle displacement into neighbouring residential streets from both residents and visitors to Lothian Street. A business owner on Lothian Street submitted a planning application to form a car park on land adjacent to 103 Lothian Street at the junction with Waverley Crescent. The application was initially refused under delegated authority but subsequently granted planning permission by the Council's Local Review Body (LRB) at its meeting in October 2024. With the Council being landowner, it is in a position to offer the land for lease on the open market.

It is recommended that Cabinet:

(i)    Note the challenges for Lothian Street resident and visitor parking since the introduction of extended double yellow lines on the grounds of pedestrian road safety and traffic flow improvement

(ii)   Note the Local Review Body Decision (24/00062/DPP) to permit the formation of car parking and associated works on land adjacent to 103 Lothian Street, at the junction with Waverley Crescent, Bonnyrigg

(iii)  Approve to lease on the open market the area of land adjacent to 103 Lothian Street, at the junction with Waverley Crescent

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer Place for the report. No question were raised and the report was approved by Cabinet.

| Decision |
|---|
| The report was approved by Cabinet. |

## 6      Private Reports

None discussed.

## 7      Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as Tuesday 20 January at 11:00.

The meeting terminated at 12:58.

# Cabinet Action Log

| No | Date of Meeting | Item No and Title | Action | Action Owner | Expected Completion Date | Comments |
|----|-----------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1 | 05/03/2024 | **5.2 Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities Performance Report Quarter Three 2023/24** | Write to Scottish Government to highlight the issues around at home education. | Education Chief Operating Officer | Complete | **Recommended for closure.**<br><br>Completed. Letter drafted by Education Convener being advised by Legal. |
| 2 | 05/03/2024 | **5.5 Place Performance Report Quarter Three 2023/24** | Write to Scottish Power to express frustrations and concerns around timescales on responding to issues within Midlothian. | Chief Officer Place | 10 May 2024 | **Recommended for closure.**<br><br>Completed. Letter issued to SPEN in May 2024. |

| No | Date of Meeting | Item No and Title | Action | Action Owner | Expected Completion Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 17/09/2024 | **5.6 Education Q1 2024/25 Performance** | Form a 1-page briefing to come back regarding SCQF and provided to Councillors. | Education Chief Operating Officer | Complete | **Recommended for closure.**<br><br>Attainment meetings have been arranged with ward members and schools to discuss performance at which further information on the qualification system will be shared and discussed. |
| 4 | 05/11/2024 | **5.3 Education Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/25** | Share the published article relating to Bonfire activities with Cabinet. | Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities and Deputy Chief Social Worker | 20/11/2024 | **Recommended for closure.**<br><br>Completed. The article link was circulated on 20/11/2024. |
| 5 | 05/11/2024 | **5.5 Adult Social Care Services Performance Report Quarter Two 2024/25** | Bring figures back to Cabinet in relation to Adult ADHD assessments. | Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer | 28/02/2025 | Detail will be provided in Q3 Performance Report. |

**Inspection of Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery**

**Report by Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer**

**Report for Information**

## 1        Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

(i)        Note the content of the 21st January 2025 inspection report.
(ii)        Congratulate the headteacher pupils, parents and staff connected with Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery on the key strengths highlighted in the report.

## 2        Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

The report outlines the outcome of the Education Scotland inspection of Newtongrange Primary School and nursery class.

**24 January 2025**

**Report Contact:**
Colin McLean, Quality Improvement Manager Professional Learning and Digital Inclusion & Learning
Colin.McLean@midlothian.gov.uk

## 3 Background/Main Body of Report

**3.1** In September 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery. The report was published on 21st January 2025 and is now available on Education Scotland's website. This is also attached as Appendix B.

**3.2** Education Scotland is responsible for inspecting education settings throughout Scotland. They do so using core quality indicators;
QI 1.3 **Leadership of Change**
QI 2.3 **Learning, teaching and assessment**
QI 3.1 **Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**
QI 3.2 **Raising attainment and achievement**

### 3.3 Strengths

The strengths identified in the Education Scotland report of 21/01/25 are:

- The headteacher and the staff team have created a positive culture of learning in Newtongrange. Children respond positively to the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers and support staff. They demonstrate a clear sense of community and belonging. Children in the school and nursery engage enthusiastically in a wide range of experiences which provides them with rich opportunities to learn and achieve in different contexts.
- Staff work well together to plan learning which is relevant, enjoyable and has a clear focus on children's rights.
- Children make strong progress in literacy and numeracy. Children who require additional support make good progress towards achieving their personal targets.

### 3.4 Areas for Improvement

The main areas for improvement are:

- Senior leaders and staff should continue to work collaboratively to refine approaches to learning and teaching in both the school and nursery to further meet the needs of all the children.
- Staff should continue to develop approaches which promote children's understanding of the key skills and knowledge that they are developing. This will support them better to apply these in different situations.

### 3.5 Conclusion

The inspectors concluded "We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Midlothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools."

## 4     Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

### 4.1     Resource

There are no resource implications.

### 4.2     Digital

There are no Digital implications.

### 4.3     Risk

Education Scotland's team of Inspectors visit a sample of education settings every year to find out how they are performing. A report is published which informs parents about the key strengths of the setting and its capacity for further improvement.

Following the publication of the report further visits may be made to the setting, by the Education Authority to assist improvement and monitor progress.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by central officers in the Education Team is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of settings to demonstrate their capacity to improve.

### 4.4     Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

The School Improvement Plan will be screened for equalities implications.

### 4.5     Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A


**Appendices**

**Appendix A – Additional Report Implications**
**Appendix B – Background information/Links**

**APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

**A.1    Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian

**A.2    Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

☐ Holistic Working
☐ Hub and Spoke
☐ Modern
☐ Sustainable
☒ Transformational
☒ Preventative
☐ Asset-based
☒ Continuous Improvement
☐ One size fits one
☐ None of the above

**A.3    Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

☐ One Council Working with you, for you
☒ Preventative and Sustainable
☐ Efficient and Modern
☒ Innovative and Ambitious
☐ None of the above

**A.4    Delivering Best Value**

Noted within.

**A.5    Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

A link to the published report has been made available to Elected Members, parents of children currently attending Newbattle High School and other interested parties.

**A.6    Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The setting will continue to improve its work in line with the school improvement plan and central officers in the Education Team will continue to challenge and support the setting in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

**A.7    Adopting a Preventative Approach**

The Education (Scotland) Bill aims to take preventative action in order to close the attainment versus deprivation gap by implementing key policies and programmes which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities. Midlothian is highly committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

**A.8    Supporting Sustainable Development**

The School Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

**APPENDIX B**

[Newtongrange Primary School inspection report 21/01/25](#)

21 January 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher and the staff team have created a positive culture of learning in Newtongrange. Children respond positively to the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers and support staff. They demonstrate a clear sense of community and belonging. Children in the school and nursery engage enthusiastically in a wide range of experiences which provides them with rich opportunities to learn and achieve in different contexts.

- Staff work well together to plan learning which is relevant, enjoyable and has a clear focus on children's rights.

- Children make strong progress in literacy and numeracy. Children who require additional support make good progress towards achieving their personal targets.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Midlothian Council.

- Senior leaders and staff should continue to work collaboratively to refine approaches to learning and teaching in both the school and nursery to further meet the needs of all the children.

- Staff should continue to develop approaches which promote children's understanding of the key skills and knowledge that they are developing. This will support them better to apply these in different situations.

1 | Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery Class, Midlothian Council, 5544629

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from How good is our school? (4th edition) and How good is our early learning and childcare?. Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Newtongrange Primary School and Nursery Class

| Quality indicators for the primary school | Evaluation |
|---|---|
| **Learning, teaching and assessment** | **good** |
| **Raising attainment and achievement** | **very good** |
| Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale | |

| Quality indicators for the nursery class | Evaluation |
|---|---|
| **Learning, teaching and assessment** | **good** |
| **Securing children's progress** | **good** |
| Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale | |

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:
Newtongrange Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Midlothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Teri McIntosh
HM Inspector

**Attainment Report for Broad General Education (P1,P4,P7,S3)**

**Report by Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer**

**Report for Information**

## 1 Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to note:

- the strengths and areas for improvements of our children and young people's attainment in P1, P4,P7 and S3 as outlined in this Report, and acknowledge the strategies adopted to address areas for continuous improvement outlined in this Report.

## 2 Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the annual update on attainment for Midlothian's dataset Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) within the Broad General Education (BGE). This update provides important indications of the achievement for our children and young people, at various stages from P1 to S3. This report highlights the successes and challenges at various points, along with plans for the future to address these and ultimately improve the outcomes for all of our children and young people.

**20 February 2025**

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## 3    Background

3.1    The purpose of this report is to present the current position, trend outlook and comparison to national and comparator performance for our BGE attainment in Midlothian. The data comes from the Scottish Government's Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) update for 2023/24, as well as our own analysis of Midlothian data. It should be noted that we identified some minor errors in the published data for Midlothian and these will be corrected in the next update which will be published in December 2024. We present the corrected figures in this report. The report presents our current performance versus the national and comparator levels and considers trends over time. The summary provides information on the proportion of school pupils who have achieved the expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels in literacy and numeracy relevant to their stage. This presents the data based on teachers' professional judgements for the percentage of pupils who have achieved the expected CfE levels in reading; writing; listening and talking; and numeracy in all Primary 1 (P1 - Early Level), Primary 4 (P4 - First Level), Primary 7 (P7 - Second Level) and Secondary 3 (S3 - Third Level) pupils in mainstream schools. Further information on the Broad General Education and Curriculum for Excellence can be found at **Education Scotland, Curriculum for Excellence**

## 4    Attainment Summary

4.1    Appendix B presents a more detailed summary of the attainment from the ACEL update. It presents the performance of attainment in Midlothian versus the national and comparator authorities. This highlights the following key messages:

a.  The improvements in primary combined Literacy and Numeracy which were evident in session 2022/23 have been broadly consolidated in session 2022/24, with very little change in the overall figures, remaining above pre-pandemic levels. However, the figures for 2023/24 are below both the National and comparator figures for 2023/24.

b.  In S3, attainment was higher in Numeracy than it had been in 2022/23, as well as being above National and comparator figures. In Literacy, attainment decreased and was below National and comparator levels (but still above pre-pandemic levels).

c.  Analysis by stage shows improvements in Literacy levels for P4 and P7; and in Numeracy levels for P4, P7 and S3, compared to the 2022/23 levels. The S3 Numeracy level was also above National and comparator figures. In contrast, the figures for Literacy and Numeracy in P1 were lower than in 2022/23, and lower than the National and comparator figures. There is a noticeable gap between the P7 Literacy and Numeracy levels for 2023/24 and the National and comparator levels.

d.  In terms of the individual components of Literacy, there were improvements in P4 Reading, and P7 Writing compared to the figures for the previous session. The figures for all Reading and Writing in P1 and S3 were lower than for 2022/23, although the S3 Literacy figures were all above pre-pandemic levels. The figures for P7 Reading and Writing were noticeably lower than the National and comparator levels.

e.  The attainment gap was analysed by looking at pupils in receipt of free school meals, versus those not in receipt of free school meals. This provides a much better reflection of poverty in Midlothian, compared to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

f. The figures for combined primary show that the attainment gap in Literacy and Numeracy widened in 2023/24 from the previous year. In S3 the attainment gap also narrowed for Literacy but widened for Numeracy.

4.2 In summary, for most year groups, there has been some improvement in at least one area of attainment for 2023/24, in comparison to last year and pre-pandemic levels. There are some positive outcomes in areas for Midlothian in comparison to national and comparator authorities' figures, however there are still areas for improvement. The most notable improvements are in P4 Literacy and S3 Numeracy. There are however challenges where improvement will be focused, which includes Literacy and Numeracy in P7 and Literacy in S3.

4.3 In order to address improvements to attainment across our schools and ELC settings we now have a single improvement outcome, to intensify focus. The Service plan for session 24/25 details the measurable actions that we will take to raise attainment and achievement, to ensure that all children and young people in Midlothian achieve outcomes which lead to positive and sustained destinations. Our Service Improvement Plan this session has four main workstreams: learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum (LTAC); attendance& engagement (A&E); relationships, wellbeing & care (RWC); and inclusion, equity & targeted support (IETS). Further details of the support underway are as follows:

4.3.1 Raising Attainment Strategy (RAS)

This Strategy underpins our drive for improved attainment. Almost all schools have engaged with this over the last session, supporting connections to school level improvement priorities. A Data Review Timeline for attainment analysis, leading to intensive support and challenge for schools identified as 'Priority' on the Risk and Capacity Register (RCR), is detailed within the RAS. Officers report weekly on the progress of Priority schools to the Education Chief Operating Officer at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Meetings and termly to the Excellence and Equity Board. All quantitative attainment measures are detailed in the Education Service Improvement Plan.

4.3.2 Data Development and Tracking & Monitoring

The Data and Performance Group consists of council officers and representatives from our schools and ELC centres. The group meets in alignment with the RAS Data Review Timeline, which tracks key data uploads and key tracking periods. Agile analysis of data measures ensures that both local and national data is analysed and shared timeously to monitor progress and identify areas requiring support. Regular review of measures ensures that resource can be allocated to support and challenge priority schools.

A robust and consistent approach to tracking and monitoring is in now place in primary schools and aligned tracking periods are embedded in school and Local Authority calendars, allowing for effective data dialogue between and within primary schools. Almost all primary Head Teachers are accessing their dashboards following data uplifts. 75% of school leaders attended additional data dashboard training. The quality and volume of information contained in the dashboards will allow for in-depth analysis of pupil progress, including interventions for characteristic groups, leading to improved outcomes for learners.

A common aligned tracking, monitoring and reporting system is being developed for use by secondary schools, as a priority. Analysis of secondary attainment, via the Scottish Government's Insight analytical tool and secondary Head Teacher attainment trios, and through the newly introduced Secondary Attainment Meetings, have been purposeful in the sharing of data between settings, with the opportunity for challenge and reflection.

4.3.3    Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The Midlothian Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Framework is in place and evidence suggests that it is beginning to support increasingly robust school self-evaluation and professional learning. The Framework outlines the key features of highly effective learning, teaching and assessment, and is aligned to the Raising Attainment Strategy.

Increased levels of Quality Assurance (QA) activity and the introduction of an improved professional learning offer will enable us to secure ongoing improvements to the quality of our learners' experience, reducing variation across our system and improving attainment for our children and young people. Feedback from teachers involved in professional learning has been positive. All schools are aware of the requirement to align school level guidance with our agreed Midlothian LTA Framework. The development of the LTA framework will also be closely monitored by the Excellence & Equity Board.

A Midlothian Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Curriculum Strategy has been developed with senior leaders, to provide focussed guidance and support on learning, teaching, assessment and curricular (LTAC) impact priorities.  The strategy supports a focus on an agreed purpose and set of principles, to help secure consistently high-quality practices.

Additional supports for teachers and practitioners lie within the LTA Framework materials and appendices as a single point of access for support in improving approaches and practice.

4.3.4    Development of curriculum progression frameworks

The Midlothian Numeracy and Literacy Progression Frameworks are now in place in our schools; all school staff have received appropriate training and support in their use. All Midlothian schools and settings are now using consistently utilising agreed approaches to planning for Literacy and Numeracy within the Broad General Education. All other curriculum progression frameworks are also now in place and being used by schools to ensure coherence across our schools. These frameworks improve confidence, across all schools, in moderated assessment to Fourth Level Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) benchmarks.

4.3.5    Support for moderation of teacher professional judgement

Every Midlothian primary school is being supported to effectively moderate teacher professional judgements across Literacy and Numeracy. LA sessions are planned for this session with a writing focus at P4 and P7 stages. This activity is focused on ensuring increasing confidence in learners' achievement of the CfE levels of attainment that are submitted annually to Scottish Government. This support is being provided by Local Authority officers and Education Scotland colleagues, building capacity through upskilling key staff in each school.

A refreshed QAMSO Plan (Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers Plan) is in place to support our schools with moderation activity in response to our attainment data and areas of greatest need. For session 2024/25, our priority focus continues to be on improving writing, throughout the Broad General Education.

4.3.6    Support from the Raising Attainment Team

The raising Attainment Team are supporting eight priority schools identified by data and using a variety of approaches, including Lesson Study to reflect on practice, modelled lessons, planning support, whole school transformation in reading approaches and ongoing professional learning. The work of the Team has been positively recognised in Summarised Inspection Findings in schools which have been visited by HMIE and during the recent thematic review of the Local Authority by Education Scotland officers. Professional learning opportunities have also been provided for Newly Qualified Teachers and Support staff, with positive feedback of over 90%. The newly launched Core Numeracy programme for practitioners was oversubscribed by 50% and is running a second cohort to meet demand.

4.3.7    Attendance developments to support Raising Attainment

Self-evaluation toolkits have been developed as part of the Attendance Workstream to support schools in identifying areas for intervention. These have been used effectively at school and at ASG level.  School leaders are supportive of a move towards partnership network meetings taking place in localities to facilitate a closer look at attendance data and access local resource and partners to support. All ASGs have refreshed approaches to attendance, including plans to issue communications to families that show the link between attendance, days in school and the benefits to attainment.

4.3.8 Digital Support

Midlothian's Digital Inclusion and Learning Team support the effective use of technologies to enhance and extend learning, teaching and assessment. Learning Technologists continue to work with class teachers to plan and co-deliver digital learning sessions for young people, based on a consistent core offer. 199 sessions have been completed since August 2024. 124 teachers have submitted feedback, with 98% agreeing their knowledge had increased/improved and 91% reporting that the learning will help pupils. Work to establish an operating model for the Midlothian Digital Campus has drawn from connections with two LAs and one Regional Improvement Collaborative. Meetings with curricular DHTs and secondary HTs to develop understanding of the offer has shaped the operating model further. A small, proof of concept course offer for online delivery has now been shared with schools.

**5**      **Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)**

**5.1**      **Resource**

There are no resource implications for this report.

**5.2**      **Digital**

Further to the improvements made last year on data development, the digital data dashboards available for all primary schools and support give learner details to inform deeper analysis and support an improved consistent approach to tracking and monitoring. This support is being extended to secondary schools.

**5.3**      **Risk**

N/A

**5.4**      **Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)**

N/A

**5.5**      **Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)**

See Appendix A

**Appendices**

**Appendix A – Additional Report Implications**
**Appendix B – Attainment Summary**

**APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

**A.1    Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

This will work towards the key priority of; Reducing the gap in learning outcomes.

**A.2    Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

☐ Holistic Working
☐ Hub and Spoke
☒ Modern
☐ Sustainable
☒ Transformational
☐ Preventative
☐ Asset-based
☒ Continuous Improvement
☐ One size fits one
☐ None of the above

**A.3    Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

One Council Working with you, for you
Preventative and Sustainable
Efficient and Modern
Innovative and Ambitious
None of the above

**A.4    Delivering Best Value**

The delivery of this plan with assist the council in meeting its best value duties. Most notably in the following Best Value themes: Governance and Accountability; Effective use of resources and; Partnerships and collaborative working.

**A.5    Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

N/A

**A.6    Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The content in this report and the continuous improvement to support improvement in attainment for all young people will assist in improving performance and outcomes for the council.

**A.7    Adopting a Preventative Approach**

N/A

**A.8    Supporting Sustainable Development**

N/A

## APPENDIX B

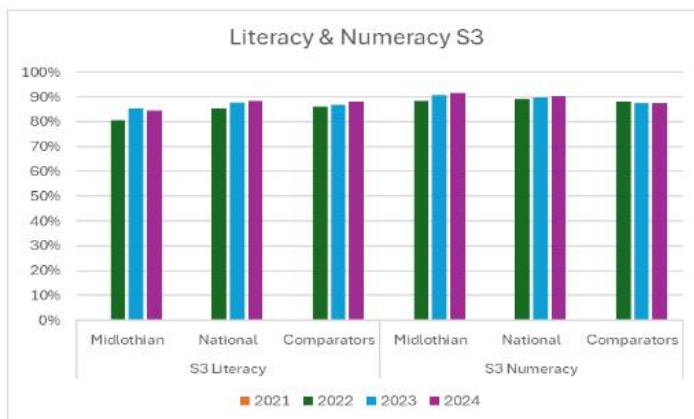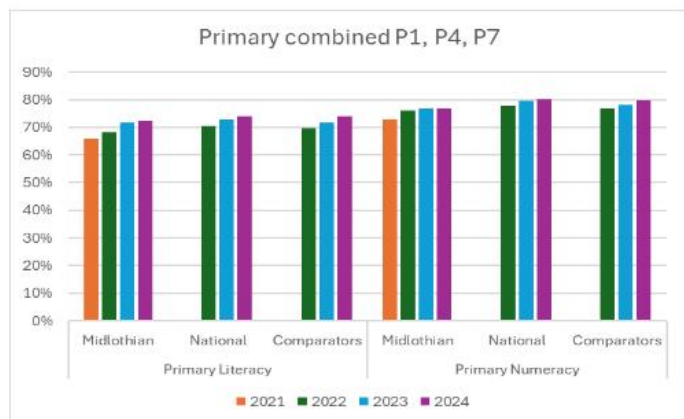## Attainment Summary

### 1. ACEL - Literacy & Numeracy





**Table 1 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Literacy and Numeracy, 2017-2024**

| Literacy & Numeracy | | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Literacy[b] | Primary Literacy | Midlothian | 69.90% | 65.75% | 68.20% | 71.64% | 72.34% | 0.70% | -1.65% | -1.57% | 2.44% |
| | | National | 70.98% | - | 70.54% | 72.74% | 73.99% | 1.25% | - | - | - |
| | | Comparators | 71.35% | - | 69.72% | 71.74% | 73.91% | 2.17% | - | - | - |
| | S3 Literacy | Midlothian | 81.26% | - | 80.70% | 85.40% | 84.43% | -0.97% | -3.88% | -3.79% | 3.17% |
| | | National | 87.46% | - | 85.54% | 87.76% | 88.31% | 0.55% | - | - | - |
| | | Comparators | 89.30% | - | 86.08% | 86.73% | 88.22% | 1.49% | - | - | - |
| Numeracy | Primary Numeracy | Midlothian | 76.18% | 72.80% | 76.05% | 76.84% | 76.82% | -0.02% | -3.47% | -3.10% | 0.64% |
| | | National | 77.95% | - | 77.95% | 79.60% | 80.29% | 0.69% | - | - | - |
| | | Comparators | 76.62% | - | 76.93% | 78.11% | 79.92% | 1.81% | - | - | - |
| | S3 Numeracy | Midlothian | 88.68% | - | 88.50% | 90.53% | 91.59% | 1.06% | 1.27% | 4.21% | 2.91% |
| | | National | 89.15% | - | 89.07% | 89.56% | 90.32% | 0.76% | - | - | - |
| | | Comparators | 90.26% | - | 88.19% | 87.46% | 87.38% | -0.08% | - | - | - |

[a] Average figures for Midlothian, National and Comparators are calculated pre-Covid (2017-19). This is to enable comparison in primary and secondary and to highlight improvement that is needed in recovery from the pandemic.
[b] Literacy is a combined measure of all literacy components. Pupils must have attained their expected levels in Reading, Writing and Listening & Talking.
[c] Data in S3 was not collated in 2021
[d] The comparators used for analysis are taken from our LGBF family group of councils, which are based upon the type of population and the type of area. For this report it includes Highland, Scottish Borders and Stirling. Further detail on this can be found here.

### Trend performance
- The figure for the combined measure for primary Literacy is slightly above that from session 2022/23 (by 0.70%), whereas the figure for combined Numeracy is in line with 2022/23 (decrease of 0.02%).
- In S3 Numeracy, there is an increase of 1.06% compared to 2022/23, whereas for Literacy there has been a fall of 0.97%; these levels again remain above pre-pandemic levels. There is a clear trend of improvement for S3 Numeracy over the past four years.

**Comparator performance**
- Primary combined Literacy is below the National and comparator figures for 2023/24, by 1.65% and 1.57% respectively. Primary combined Numeracy is also below the National and comparator figures for 2023/24, by 3.47% and 3.10% respectively.
- In S3, attainment in Literacy is lower than the National and comparator figures in 2023/24 by 3.88% and 3.79% respectively, whereas Numeracy attainment is higher than the National and comparator figures by 1.27% and 4.21% respectively.

## 2. ACEL - Primary Literacy & Numeracy by stage

**Table 2 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Literacy by Stage, 2017-2024**

| Literacy by stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 75.45% | 71.93% | 70.35% | 76.68% | 76.32% | -0.36% | -0.55% | -1.03% | 0.87% |
| | National | 74.25% | 70.76% | 74.02% | 75.70% | 76.87% | 1.17% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 75.02% | 71.40% | 74.32% | 75.85% | 77.35% | 1.50% | - | - | - |
| P4 | Midlothian | 68.71% | 61.07% | 65.93% | 69.69% | 70.93% | 1.24% | -0.45% | 0.35% | 2.22% |
| | National | 68.95% | 63.78% | 67.19% | 69.74% | 71.38% | 1.64% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 68.70% | 63.60% | 66.28% | 68.54% | 70.58% | 2.04% | - | - | - |
| P7 | Midlothian | 64.80% | 64.06% | 68.27% | 68.50% | 70.19% | 1.69% | -3.79% | -4.00% | 5.39% |
| | National | 68.94% | 66.35% | 70.55% | 72.97% | 73.98% | 1.01% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 70.36% | 67.22% | 68.79% | 71.14% | 74.19% | 3.05% | - | - | - |
| S3 | Midlothian | 81.26% | - | 80.72% | 85.40% | 84.43% | -0.97% | -3.88% | -3.79% | 3.17% |
| | National | 87.10% | - | 85.53% | 87.76% | 88.31% | 0.55% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 89.30% | - | 86.08% | 86.73% | 88.22% | 1.49% | - | - | - |

**Table 3 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Numeracy by Stage, 2017-2024**

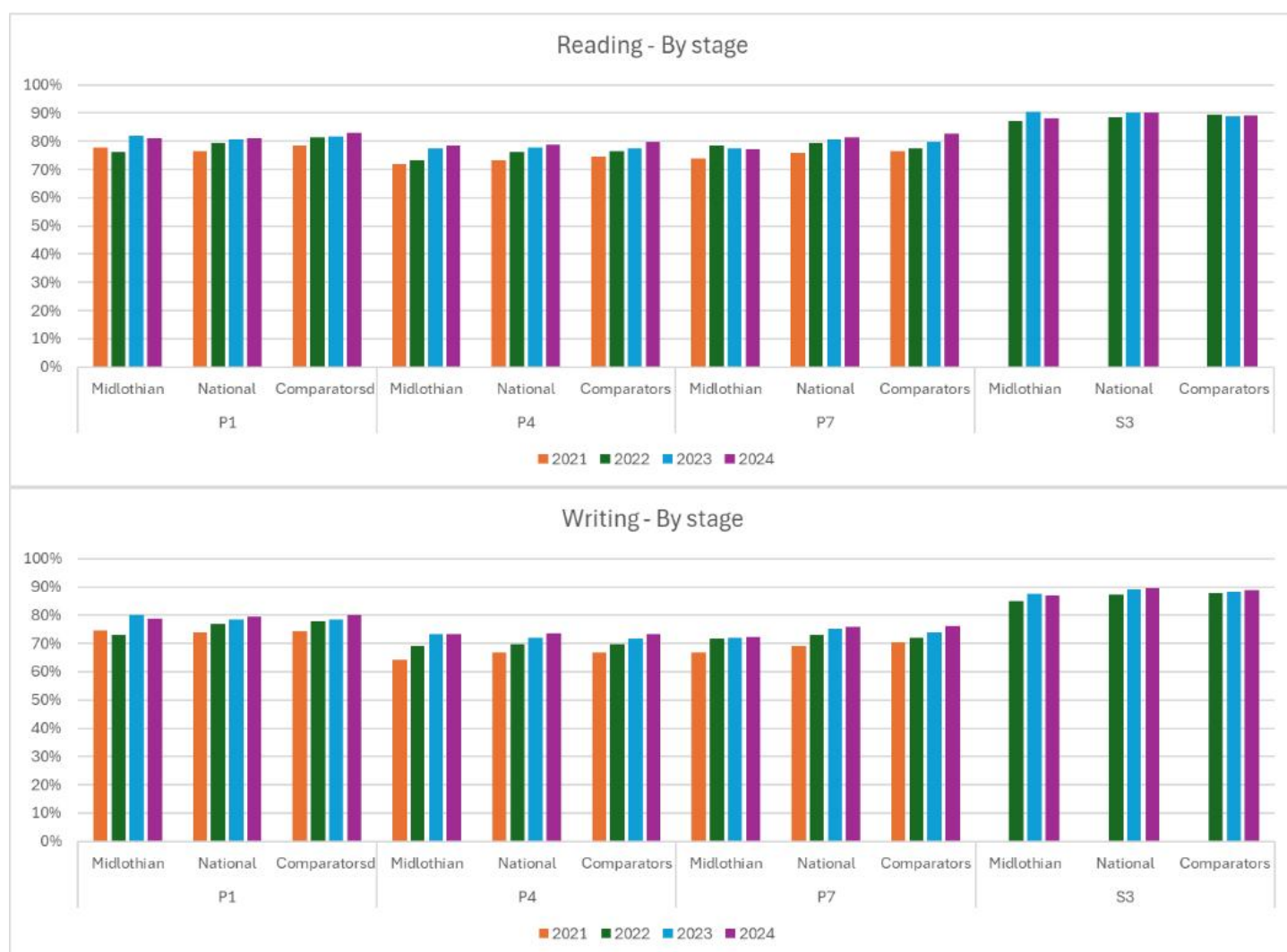| Numeracy by stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 82.03% | 81.74% | 81.23% | 84.62% | **83.21%** | **-1.41%** | **-1.67%** | **-2.63%** | **1.18%** |
| | National | 84.26% | 81.07% | 83.59% | 84.71% | **84.88%** | **0.17%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| | Comparators[d] | 82.21% | 80.60% | 83.79% | 84.20% | **85.84%** | **1.64%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| P4 | Midlothian | 75.94% | 71.32% | 72.62% | 74.36% | **75.60%** | **1.24%** | **-2.45%** | **-0.82%** | **-0.34%** |
| | National | 75.82% | 71.59% | 74.93% | 76.86% | **78.05%** | **1.19%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| | Comparators | 74.47% | 70.41% | 73.95% | 75.18% | **76.42%** | **1.24%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| P7 | Midlothian | 69.77% | 64.53% | 73.97% | 71.39% | **72.31%** | **0.92%** | **-6.18%** | **-5.99%** | **2.54%** |
| | National | 73.74% | 71.90% | 75.69% | 77.69% | **78.49%** | **0.80%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| | Comparators | 73.25% | 71.07% | 73.52% | 75.50% | **78.30%** | **2.80%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| S3 | Midlothian | 88.69% | - | 88.52% | 90.53% | **91.59%** | **1.06%** | **1.27%** | **4.21%** | **2.90%** |
| | National | 89.15% | - | 89.07% | 89.55% | **90.32%** | **0.77%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| | Comparators | 90.26% | - | 88.19% | 87.46% | **87.38%** | **-0.08%** | **-** | **-** | **-** |

**Trend performance**
- For P1 pupils, the percentage of pupils achieving Early Level in Literacy fell slightly (by 0.36%) compared to last year but is still above the figures for 2020/21 and 2021/22. Attainment in Numeracy was lower than 2022/23 by 1.41%; again, this is still above the figures for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

- For P4 pupils, attainment in both Literacy and Numeracy at First Level was higher than 2022/23 (both by 1.24%). There is a clear improving trend for both measures over the past four sessions.
- For P7 pupils, attainment in Literacy at Second Level was higher than the previous year by 1.69%. The figure for Numeracy was higher than the previous year by 0.92%. Both figures are above pre-pandemic averages.

**Comparator performance**
- For P1, P4 and P7, performance in Literacy and Numeracy was lower than recorded nationally and by our comparator authorities for 2022/23. The biggest differences are in P7 Numeracy, which was lower than National and comparators by around 6%; and in P7 Literacy, which was lower by around 4%.

3.        **ACEL - Literacy Components by stage**

Listening and Talking - By stage

## Table 4 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Reading by Stage, 2017-2024

| Reading by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 81.79% | 77.90% | 76.25% | 82.01% | 80.94% | -1.07% | -0.24% | -1.98% | -0.85% |
| | National | 81.01% | 76.61% | 79.37% | 80.60% | 81.18% | 0.58% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 81.95% | 78.37% | 81.30% | 81.60% | 82.92% | 1.32% | - | - | - |
| P4 | Midlothian | 77.75% | 72.01% | 73.33% | 77.42% | 78.38% | 0.96% | -0.57% | -1.35% | 0.63% |
| | National | 77.46% | 73.32% | 76.04% | 77.90% | 78.95% | 1.05% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 77.94% | 74.48% | 76.47% | 77.65% | 79.73% | 2.08% | - | - | - |
| P7 | Midlothian | 76.85% | 73.96% | 78.35% | 77.52% | 77.05% | -0.47% | -4.29% | -5.54% | 0.20% |
| | National | 78.21% | 75.74% | 79.33% | 80.82% | 81.34% | 0.52% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 79.07% | 76.67% | 77.63% | 79.83% | 82.59% | 2.76% | - | - | - |
| S3 | Midlothian | 85.32% | - | 87.28% | 90.62% | 88.14% | -2.48% | -2.09% | -1.19% | 2.82% |
| | National | 90.17% | - | 88.39% | 90.13% | 90.23% | 0.10% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 91.85% | - | 89.44% | 88.97% | 89.33% | 0.36% | - | - | - |

## Table 5 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Writing by Stage, 2017-2024

| Writing by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 78.66% | 74.49% | 73.01% | 79.97% | 78.76% | -1.21% | -0.68% | -1.35% | 0.10% |
| | National | 78.14% | 74.05% | 76.86% | 78.39% | 79.44% | 1.05% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators[d] | 77.65% | 74.35% | 77.81% | 78.47% | 80.11% | 1.64% | - | - | - |
| P4 | Midlothian | 71.86% | 64.08% | 68.98% | 73.17% | 73.35% | 0.18% | -0.15% | 0.14% | 1.49% |
| | National | 71.88% | 66.67% | 69.68% | 72.01% | 73.50% | 1.49% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 71.87% | 66.76% | 69.64% | 71.69% | 73.21% | 1.52% | - | - | - |
| P7 | Midlothian | 67.98% | 66.80% | 71.60% | 71.86% | 72.31% | 0.45% | -3.54% | -4.04% | 4.33% |
| | National | 71.72% | 69.01% | 72.92% | 75.21% | 75.85% | 0.64% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 72.99% | 70.50% | 71.96% | 74.00% | 76.35% | 2.35% | - | - | - |
| S3 | Midlothian | 82.63% | - | 85.13% | 87.49% | 87.06% | -0.43% | -2.53% | -1.82% | 4.43% |
| | National | 89.16% | - | 87.35% | 89.24% | 89.59% | 0.35% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 90.87% | - | 87.90% | 88.13% | 88.88% | 0.75% | - | - | - |

**Table 6 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels in Listening & Talking by Stage, 2017-2024**

| Listening and Talking by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Diff to 23 | Diff to Nat 24 | Diff to Comp 24 | Diff to Pre-Pandemic ave.[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 88.61% | 87.71% | 85.38% | 89.17% | 89.49% | 0.32% | 2.18% | 1.20% | 0.88% |
| | National | 86.38% | 83.96% | 86.14% | 86.90% | 87.31% | 0.41% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators[d] | 86.91% | 85.61% | 87.37% | 87.13% | 88.29% | 1.16% | - | - | - |
| P4 | Midlothian | 83.84% | 82.86% | 84.79% | 88.79% | 87.88% | -0.91% | 0.93% | 2.25% | 4.04% |
| | National | 84.32% | 82.04% | 84.54% | 86.56% | 86.95% | 0.39% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 84.30% | 82.47% | 84.44% | 86.64% | 85.63% | -1.01% | - | - | - |
| P7 | Midlothian | 80.29% | 81.89% | 86.06% | 86.12% | 86.00% | -0.12% | -1.74% | -2.21% | 5.71% |
| | National | 83.65% | 82.32% | 85.70% | 87.00% | 87.74% | 0.74% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 84.94% | 84.03% | 85.33% | 86.00% | 88.21% | 2.21% | - | - | - |
| S3 | Midlothian | 86.58% | - | 85.78% | 89.29% | 89.24% | -0.05% | -1.54% | -1.22% | 2.66% |
| | National | 91.16% | - | 89.29% | 90.54% | 90.78% | 0.24% | - | - | - |
| | Comparators | 93.06% | - | 90.43% | 89.13% | 90.46% | 1.33% | - | - | - |

**Trend performance**
- For Reading, attainment in P4 improved by 0.96% from last year; there is a clear improving trend over four years and the figure is above the pre-pandemic average. In P1 and P7 attainment decreased by 1.07% and 0.47% respectively; the P1 figure is below the pre-pandemic average by 0.85% but is above the figures for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The P7 figure has fallen for two consecutive sessions. In S3, the figure was 2.48% lower than last year, but remains above the figure for 2021/22 and the pre-pandemic average.
- For Writing, attainment in P4 and P7 improved from last year (0.18% and 0.45% respectively); there is an improving trend over four years and the figure is above the pre-pandemic average. In P1 attainment decreased by 1.21%. Both the P1 and P4 figures are above those for 2020/21 and 2021/22. In S3, the figure was 0.43% lower than last year, but remains above 2021/22 and the pre-pandemic average.
- For Listening and Talking, the figures for P1 were slightly higher than the previous year (by 0.32%). The figures for P4 and P7 were slightly lower than last year, with the bigger difference being in P4 (0.91% lower). In all cases the 2023/24 figures are above the pre-pandemic averages.

**Comparator performance**
- For Reading, the percentage of pupils achieving their expected levels in P1, P4, P7 and S3 were lower than the national and comparator figures for 2023/24. The biggest differences were in P7, which was 4.29% lower than the National figure and 5.54% lower than the comparator figure.
- For Writing, the percentage of pupils achieving their expected levels in P1, P7 and S3 were lower than the national and comparator figures for 2023/24. The biggest differences were in P7, which was 3.54% lower than the National figure and 4.04% lower than the comparator figure; and in S3, which was 2.53% below National and 1.82% below comparator.
- For Listening and Talking, the Midlothian figures for 2024 were above the National and comparator figures in P1 and P4. The figures for P7 and S3 were lower than the National and comparator ones. In all cases these differences were within 2.5%.
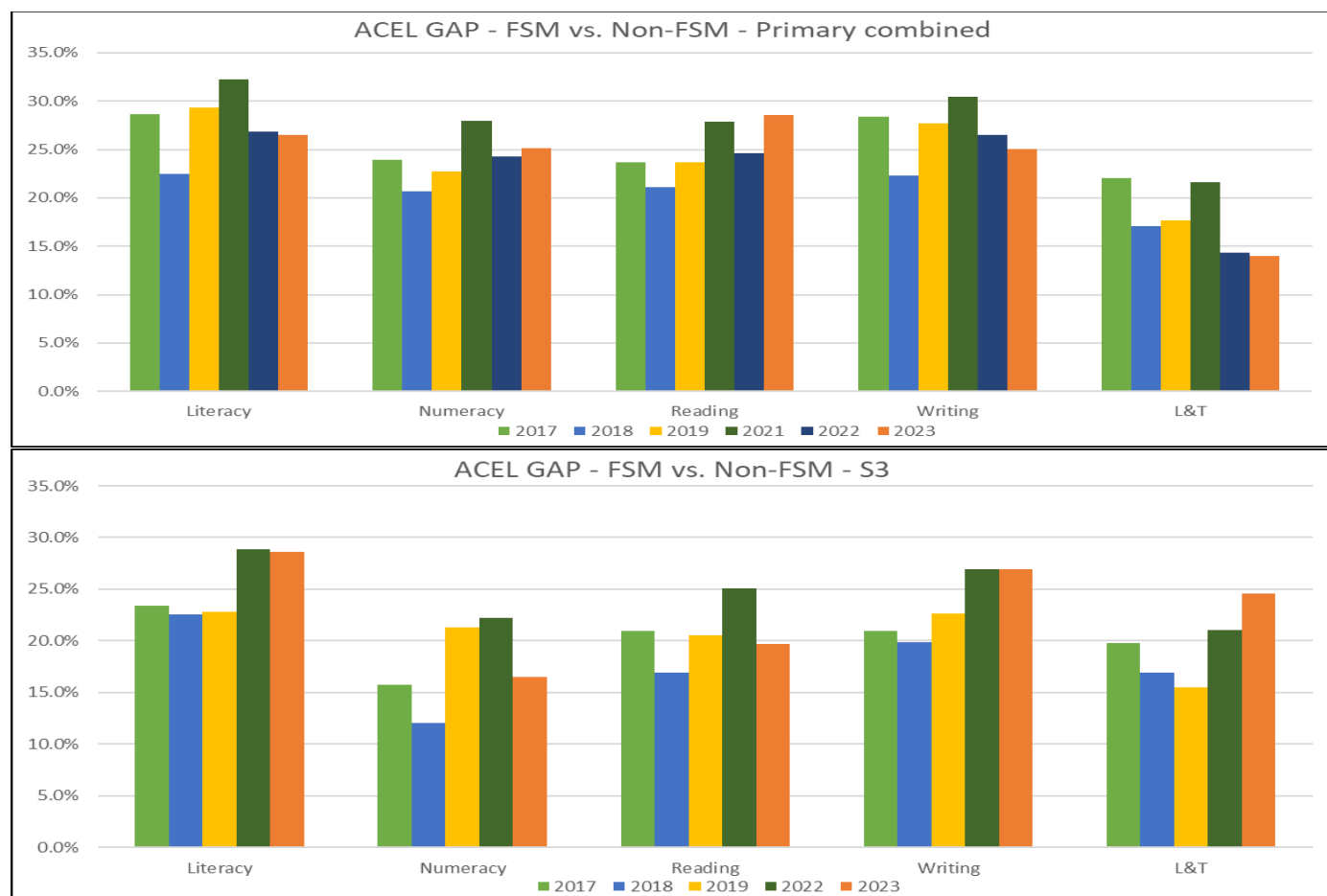
## 4. ACEL – Attainment Gap



ACEL GAP - FSM vs. Non-FSM - Primary combined



ACEL GAP - FSM vs. Non-FSM - S3

**Table 8 – ACEL Attainment Gap[a] of percentage of pupils achieving expected CfE levels, FSM[b] vs. Non FSM[c], 2017-2023**

|  |  | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Diff to 22 | Diff to Ave. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary Combined[d] | Literacy | 26.82% | -32.24% | -26.83% | -26.53% | -0.30% | -0.29% |
|  | Numeracy | 22.44% | -27.98% | -24.29% | -25.11% | 0.82% | 2.67% |
|  | Reading | 22.81% | -27.91% | -24.64% | -28.57% | 3.93% | 5.76% |
|  | Writing | 26.12% | -30.42% | -26.48% | -25.01% | -1.47% | -1.11% |
|  | L&T | 18.93% | -21.62% | -14.35% | -13.98% | -0.37% | -4.95% |
| S3[e] | Literacy | 22.94% |  | -28.88% | -28.57% | -0.31% | 5.63% |
|  | Numeracy | 16.35% |  | -22.19% | -16.51% | -5.68% | 0.16% |
|  | Reading | 19.49% |  | -25.12% | -19.67% | -5.45% | 0.18% |
|  | Writing | 21.14% |  | -26.94% | -26.97% | 0.03% | 5.83% |
|  | L&T | 17.42% |  | -21.03% | -24.57% | 3.54% | 7.15% |

[a] The attainment gap is shown here as a differential of the percentage of pupils attaining their expected level in receipt of free school meals versus those not in receipt of free school meals (i.e. 45.80% of FSM cohort attaining expected levels in literacy – 72.64% of non-FSM cohort attaining expected levels in literacy = -26.83% attainment gap). Note that FSM is used as the measure of deprivation to give a more representative spread across Midlothian and the fact that SIMD is not an effective measure in all areas of the authority.
[b] FSM = pupils registered for free school meals
[c] Non-FSM = pupils not registered for free school meals
[d] Primary combined is all pupils in P1, P4 and P7 stages
[e] Note no data collected in 2021 for S3 pupils
* Note there is no comparable data currently available nationally and for other authorities to allow us to look at how Midlothian compares.

### Trend performance
- In primary combined there has a widening of the gap compared to 2022/23 for Literacy (3.41%) and Numeracy (4.78%). The 2023/24 gaps are wider than the pre-pandemic averages. In the individual components of Literacy, the gap decreased very slightly (0.80%) for Reading but increased for Writing (4.88%) and Listening & Talking (5.67%).

- In S3, there was a narrowing of the gap from last year for Literacy (5.42%) but a widening of the gap for Numeracy (3.46%). In the individual components of Literacy, the gap decreased for Writing (7.00%) but increased very slightly for Reading (0.97%) and also for Listening & Talking (6.19%). The overall Literacy figure is broadly in line with the pre-pandemic average gap, but the gap has widened for Numeracy (3.62%).

# Q3 Education Performance Report 24/25

**Improving Outcomes for Learners through an Empowered System**

**Education Services encompasses Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), Primary Schooling, Secondary Schooling, Special Schooling, Additional Support Needs, Digital Learning, Education Psychology and Community, Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE).**

## Vision and context

**All children, young people, adults and communities in Midlothian are supported to be the best they can be. This will be achieved through a nurturing, respectful and collaborative approach that promotes wellbeing, equity, inclusion and lifelong learning.**

The Education Service Plan is informed by and links to the outcomes determined by the Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child Board.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, as amended 2016, placed new duties on education authorities, and the Education Service Plan includes identified areas for improvement specific to Education to fulfil these duties. As a result, the Education Service Improvement Plan not only reflects the key priorities in the Midlothian Single Plan but also aligns closely with the key priorities in Education –

**We will raise attainment and achievement to ensure that all children and young people in Midlothian achieve outcomes which lead to positive and sustained destinations. Our Service Improvement Plan has four main workstreams:**

- Learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum
- Attendance& engagement
- Relationships, wellbeing & care and
- Inclusion, equity & targeted support

We have the following outcome measures and targets:

| | Last Published Data | June 2024 Results | June 2025 | June 2026 | June 2027 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACEL P1, P4, P7 Combined Literacy | 71.80% | 71.80% | 73.00% | 75.00% | 77.50% |
| ACEL P1, P4, P7 Combined Numeracy | 76.82% | 76.82% | 79.00% | 81.00% | 82.00% |

1

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S3<br>Literacy 3rd level or better | 85.45% | 83.45% | 88.00% | 90.00% | 91.00% |
| S3<br>Numeracy 3rd level or better | 91.59% | 91.59% | 93.00% | 94.00% | 95.00% |
| % Initial Destination in<br>Higher Education | 31.90% | 38.00% | 40.00% | 42.00% | 45.00% |
| Attendance Rate<br>Primary | 92.47% | 93.24% | 93.50% | 94.00% | 95.50% |
| Attendance Rate<br>Secondary | 87.05% | 87.10% | 89.00% | 90.50% | 92.00% |
| Participation Measure 3 years post initial destination rate % | 94.0% | 94.0% | 94.5% | 95% | 95% |
| Exclusion Rate per 1,000<br>Primary | 4.24 | 3.00 | 2.00 | 1.50 | 1.00 |
| Exclusion Rate per 1,000<br>Secondary | 28.98 | 25.00 | 22.50 | 17.50 | 15.00 |
| % of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 1.1 | 77% | 77% | 84% | 88% | 90% |
| % of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 1.3 | 77% | 77% | 84% | 88% | 90% |
| % of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 2.3 | 63% | 67% | 77% | 84% | 90% |
| % of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 3.1 | 67% | 65% | 79% | 85% | 90% |
| % of schools & ELCs with validated Good or better QI 3.2 | 49% | 51% | 69% | 79% | 90% |

## ACEL Literacy and Numeracy

*The following information has been provided by the Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) dataset that was published in December 2024. A full Attainment report including Senior phase insight data and "Reducing the Gap" information will be published in Q4*

- There has been improvement in the P1, P4 and P7 literacy whilst attainment in numeracy has remained at a similar level, all be it with a minute decrease. Both sit below the national and comparator averages.
- There has been positive improvement in S3 numeracy from 2023 to 2024 and Midlothian continues to be above the national and comparator figures.
- There has been a decrease in S3 Literacy which is mirrored by the comparator figures
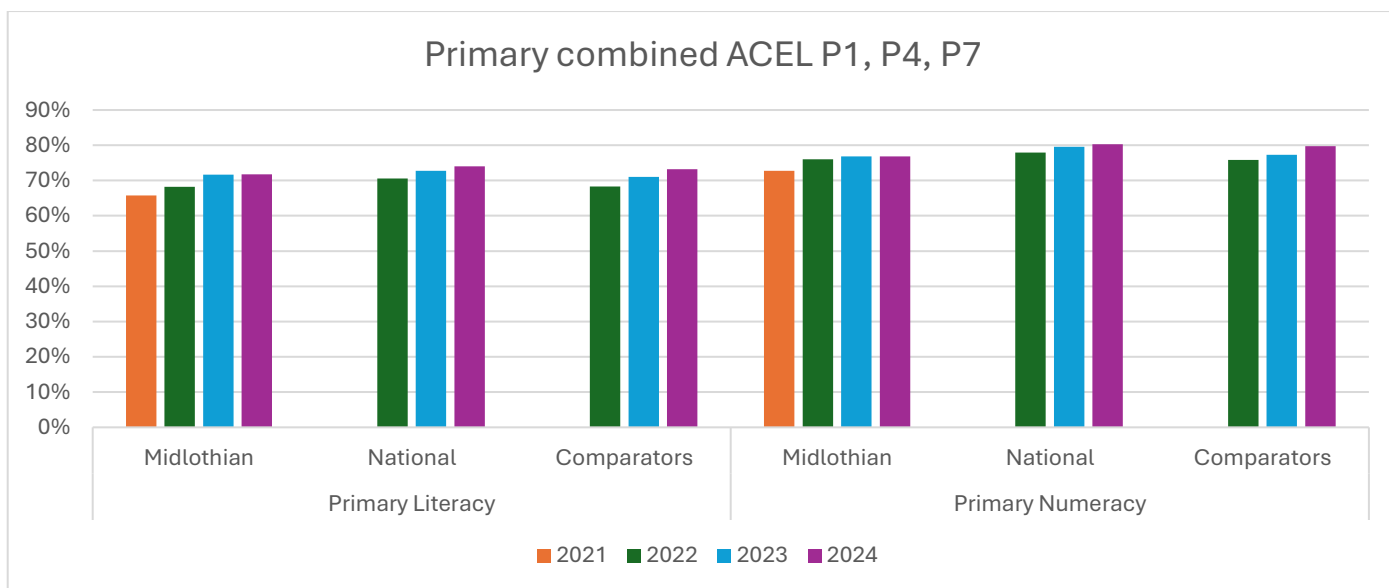
2

Chart 1. Combined literacy and numeracy for primary, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.
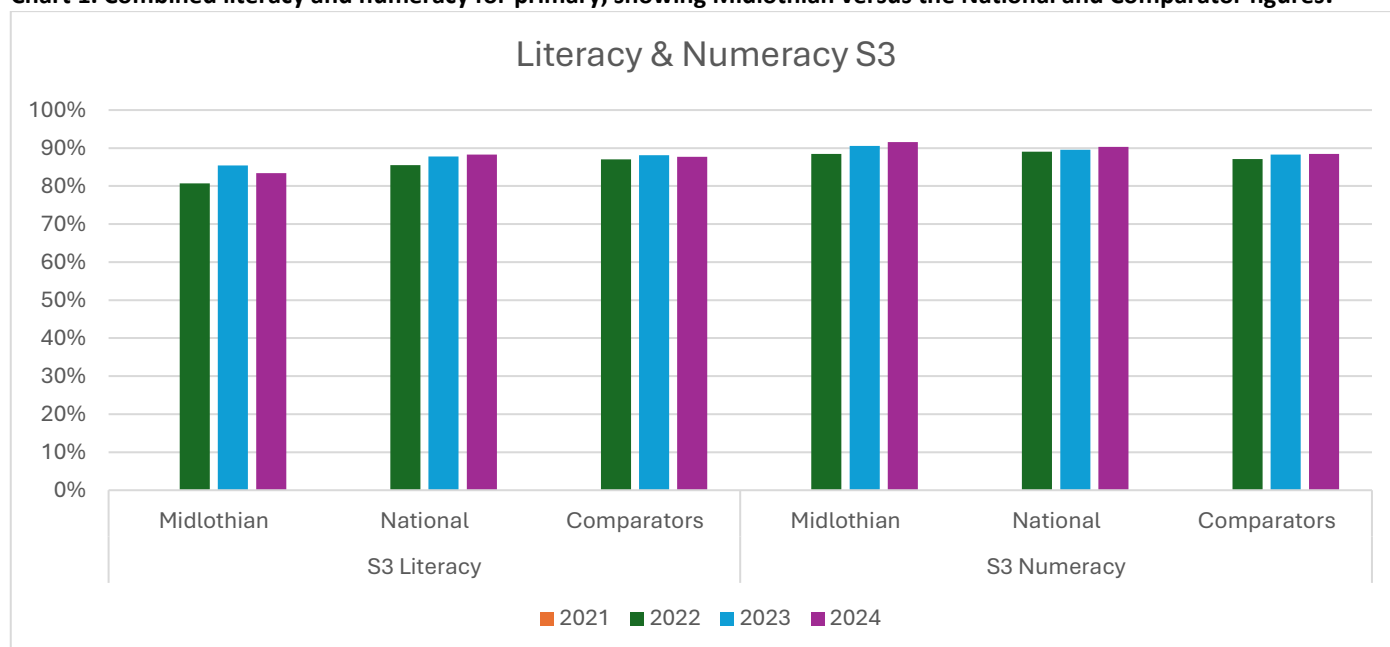


Chart 2. Combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Literacy & Numeracy | | | Pre-pandemic Ave.[a] | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Literacy[b] | Primary Literacy | Midlothian | 69.90% | 65.75% | 68.20% | 71.64% | 71.80% |
| | | National | 70.98% | - | 70.54% | 72.74% | 73.99% |
| | | Comparators[d] | 69.38% | - | 68.27% | 71.05% | 73.20% |
| | S3 Literacy | Midlothian | 81.26% | - | 80.70% | 85.40% | 83.45% |
| | | National | 87.46% | - | 85.54% | 87.76% | 88.31% |
| | | Comparators | 90.03% | - | 87.01% | 88.11% | 87.68% |
| Numeracy | Primary Numeracy | Midlothian | 76.18% | 72.80% | 76.05% | 76.84% | 76.82% |
| | | National | 77.95% | - | 77.95% | 79.60% | 80.29% |

3

| | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Comparators | 75.74% | - | 75.81% | 77.28% | 79.78% |
| S3 Numeracy [c] | Midlothian | 88.68% | - | 88.50% | 90.53% | 91.59% |
| | National | 89.15% | - | 89.07% | 89.56% | 90.32% |
| | Comparators | 89.56% | - | 87.13% | 88.28% | 88.43% |

**Table 1. Literacy and numeracy figures for Primary and S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

[a] Average figures for Midlothian, National and Comparators are calculated pre-Covid (2017-19). This is to enable comparison in primary and secondary and to highlight improvement that is needed in recovery from the pandemic.
[b] Literacy is a combined measure of all literacy components. Pupils must have attained their expected levels in Reading, Writing and Listening & Talking.
[c] Data in S3 was not collated in 2021.
[d] The comparators used for analysis are taken from our LGBF family group of councils, which are based upon the type of population and the type of area. For this report it includes Highland, Scottish Borders and Stirling. Further detail on this can be found here.

## ACEL Literacy by Stage

- Data from the National release shows increased Literacy levels in P4 and P7, whilst decreasing in P1 and S3.
- Literacy is a combined score of Reading, Writing and Listening & Talking.
- Midlothian continues to be below the National and Comparator literacy levels at all stages, however the averages at all stages are increasing.
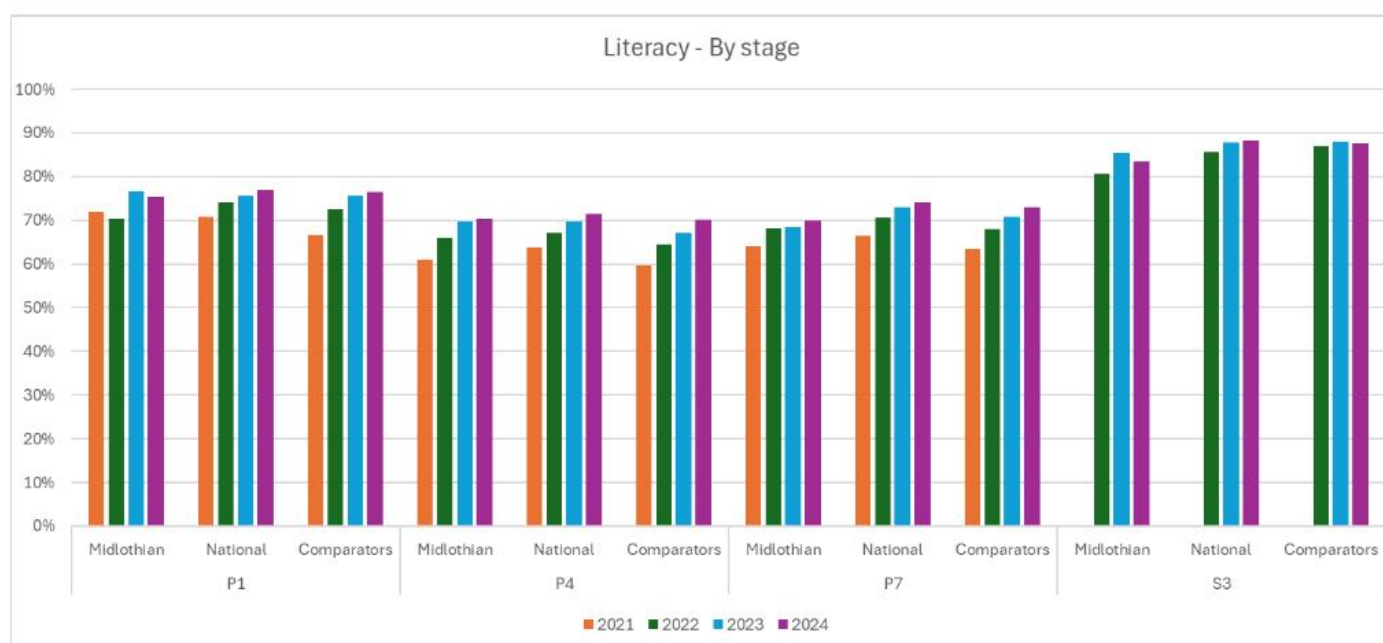


Chart 3. Chart of the combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Literacy by stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 75.45% | 71.93% | 70.35% | 76.68% | 75.40% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | National | 74.25% | 70.76% | 74.02% | 75.70% | 76.87% |
|  | Comparators | 72.83% | 66.63% | 72.58% | 75.54% | 76.56% |
| P4 | Midlothian | 68.71% | 61.07% | 65.93% | 69.69% | 70.46% |
|  | National | 68.95% | 63.78% | 67.19% | 69.74% | 71.38% |
|  | Comparators | 67.45% | 59.62% | 64.59% | 67.10% | 70.24% |
| P7 | Midlothian | 64.80% | 64.06% | 68.27% | 68.50% | 69.90% |
|  | National | 68.94% | 66.35% | 70.55% | 72.97% | 73.98% |
|  | Comparators | 68.04% | 63.50% | 67.92% | 70.85% | 73.04% |
| S3 | Midlothian | 81.26% | - | 80.72% | 85.40% | 83.45% |
|  | National | 87.10% | - | 85.53% | 87.76% | 88.31% |
|  | Comparators | 90.03% | - | 87.01% | 88.11% | 87.68% |

**Table 2. Literacy figures by stage, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

**ACEL Numeracy by Stage**

**ACEL Numeracy by Stage**

- Figures show increased Numeracy levels across P4, P7 and S3. S3 continues to track above the National and comparator levels.
- P1 and P4 figures are in line with National and comparator levels, P7 is slightly below the National level and S3 is slightly above.
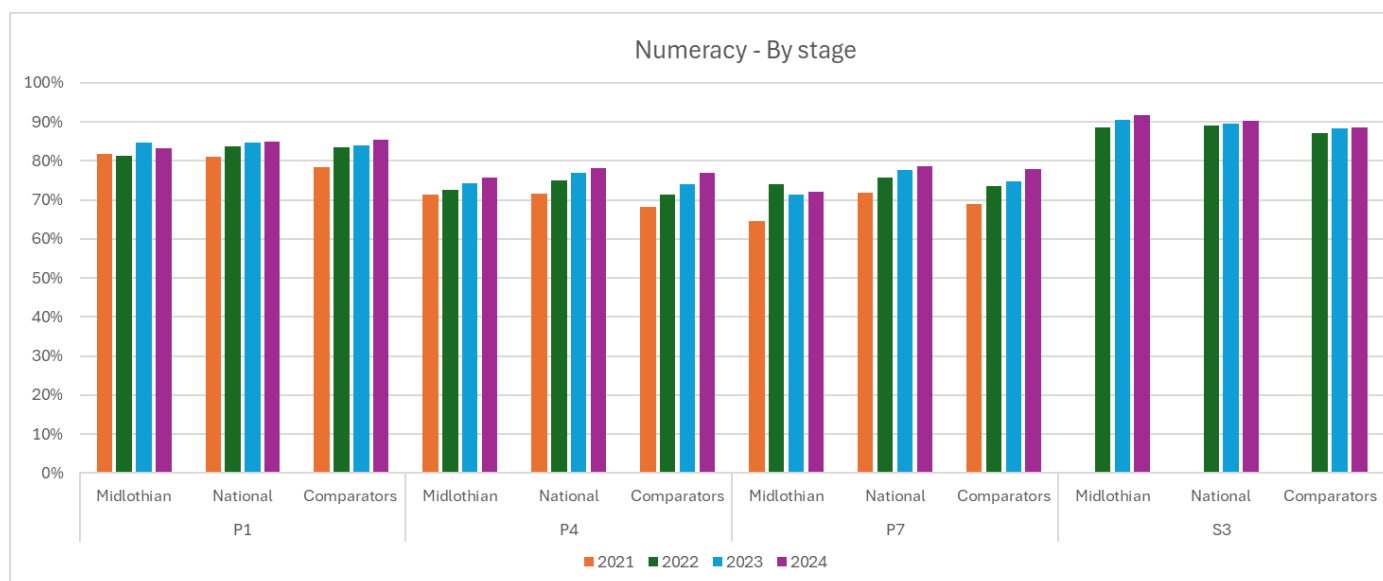


Chart 4. Chart of the combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Numeracy by stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 82.03% | 81.74% | 81.23% | 84.62% | 83.29% |
|  | National | 84.26% | 81.07% | 83.59% | 84.71% | 84.88% |

5

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Comparators | 81.48% | 78.39% | 83.34% | 83.86% | 85.39% |
| P4 | Midlothian | 75.94% | 71.32% | 72.62% | 74.36% | 75.60% |
| | National | 75.82% | 71.59% | 74.93% | 76.86% | 78.05% |
| | Comparators | 74.69% | 68.11% | 71.43% | 73.96% | 76.98% |
| P7 | Midlothian | 69.77% | 64.53% | 73.97% | 71.39% | 72.18% |
| | National | 73.74% | 71.90% | 75.69% | 77.69% | 78.49% |
| | Comparators | 71.45% | 68.98% | 73.45% | 74.77% | 77.81% |
| S3 | Midlothian | 88.69% | - | 88.52% | 90.53% | 91.59% |
| | National | 89.15% | - | 89.07% | 89.55% | 90.32% |
| | Comparators | 89.56% | - | 87.13% | 88.28% | 88.43% |

**Table 3. Numeracy figures by stage, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

## ACEL Reading by Stage

- Reading levels at P1, P7 and S3 have decreased on the previous year.
- Whilst P1, P4 and S3 are in line with the National and comparator levels, P7 continues to be slightly below those levels. Only S3 is above the pre-pandemic level.
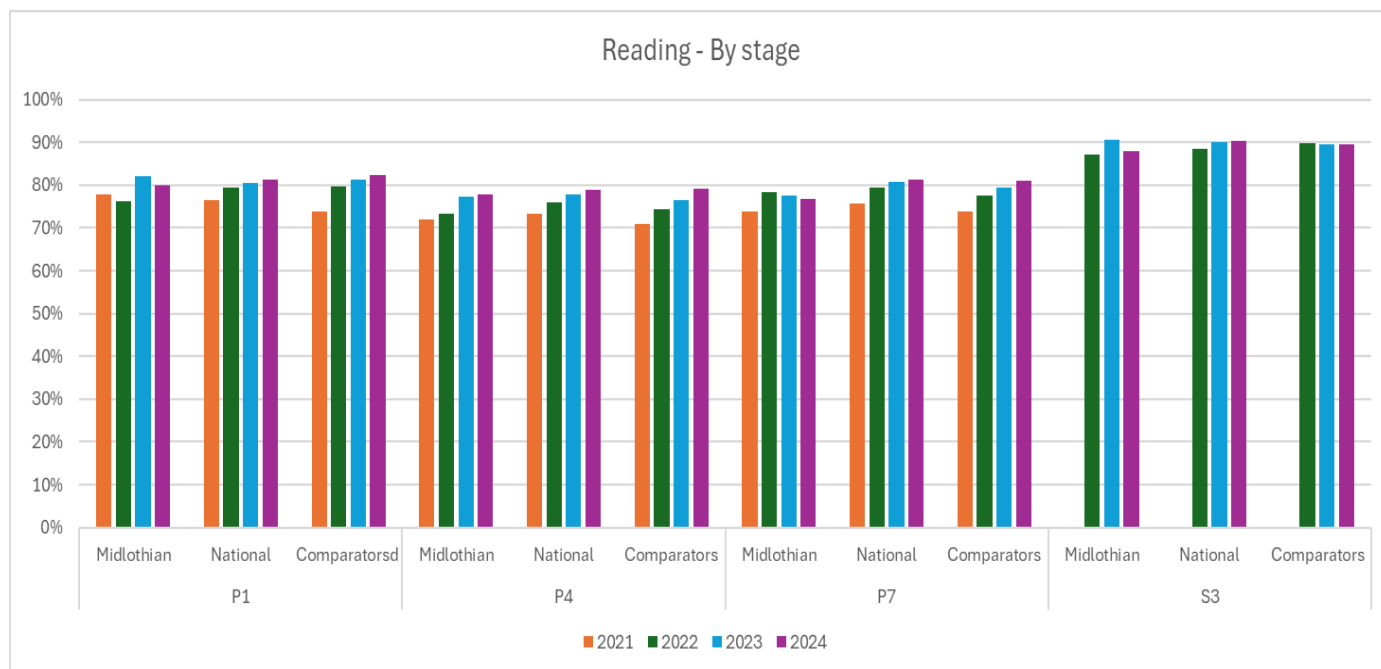


Chart 5. Chart of the combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Reading by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 81.79% | 77.90% | 76.25% | 82.01% | 80.04% |

6

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | National | 81.01% | 76.61% | 79.37% | 80.60% | 81.18% |
| | Comparators | 79.97% | 73.73% | 79.73% | 81.34% | 82.27% |
| P4 | Midlothian | 77.75% | 72.01% | 73.33% | 77.42% | 77.93% |
| | National | 77.46% | 73.32% | 76.04% | 77.90% | 78.95% |
| | Comparators | 76.64% | 70.81% | 74.49% | 76.56% | 79.05% |
| P7 | Midlothian | 76.85% | 73.96% | 78.35% | 77.52% | 76.73% |
| | National | 78.21% | 75.74% | 79.33% | 80.82% | 81.34% |
| | Comparators | 77.80% | 73.74% | 77.51% | 79.44% | 81.09% |
| S3 | Midlothian | 85.32% | - | 87.28% | 90.62% | 87.88% |
| | National | 90.17% | - | 88.39% | 90.13% | 90.23% |
| | Comparators | 92.49% | - | 89.69% | 89.56% | 89.42% |

**Table 3. Reading figures by stage, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

## ACEL Writing by Stage

- Writing levels at all stages have decreased on the previous year.
- Levels at P1, P4 and P7 continue to show positive trends over time. Compared to the pre-pandemic average P4, P7 and S3 are all showing improvement.
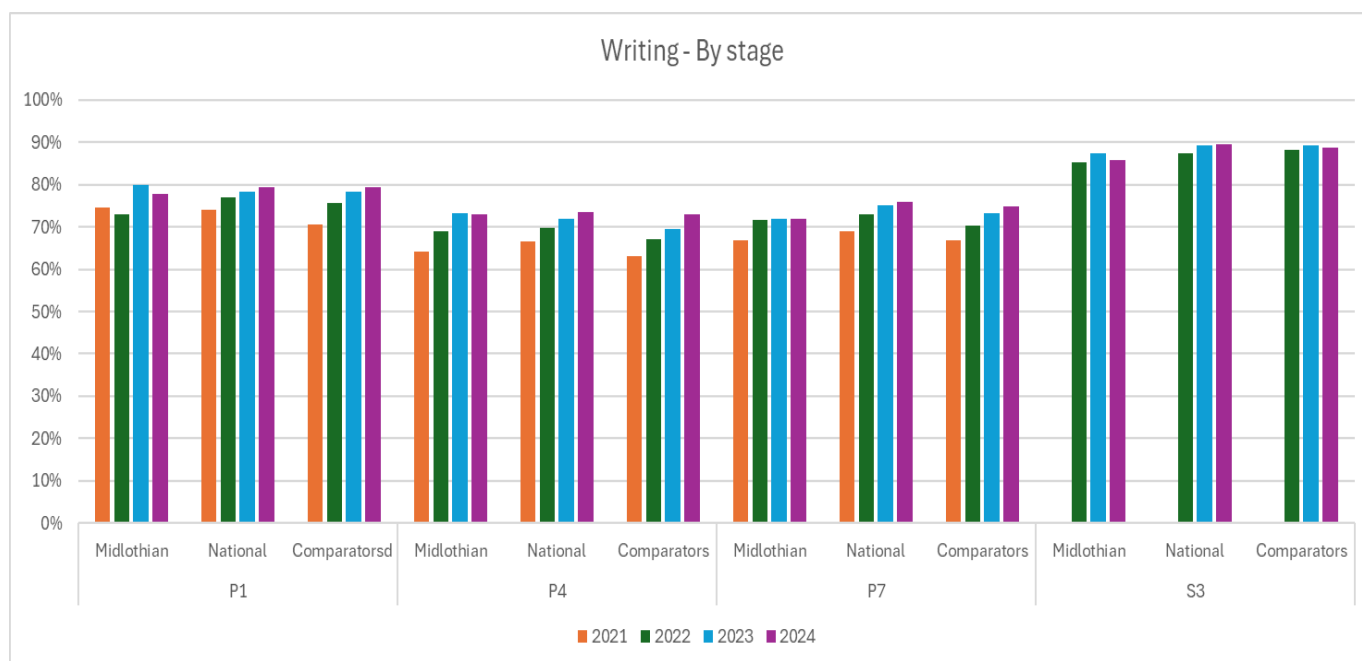


Chart 6. Chart of the combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Writing by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 78.66% | 74.49% | 73.01% | 79.97% | 77.81% |

| | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | National | 78.14% | 74.05% | 76.86% | 78.39% | 79.44% |
| | Comparators | 76.78% | 70.59% | 75.71% | 78.25% | 79.48% |
| P4 | Midlothian | 71.86% | 64.08% | 68.98% | 73.17% | 72.86% |
| | National | 71.88% | 66.67% | 69.68% | 72.01% | 73.50% |
| | Comparators | 71.53% | 63.06% | 67.07% | 69.61% | 73.00% |
| P7 | Midlothian | 67.98% | 66.80% | 71.60% | 71.86% | 72.01% |
| | National | 71.72% | 69.01% | 72.92% | 75.21% | 75.85% |
| | Comparators | 71.45% | 66.80% | 70.30% | 73.13% | 74.80% |
| S3 | Midlothian | 82.63% | - | 85.13% | 87.49% | 85.80% |
| | National | 89.16% | - | 87.35% | 89.24% | 89.59% |
| | Comparators | 91.52% | - | 88.14% | 89.14% | 88.62% |

**Table 4. Writing figures by stage, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

**ACEL Listening and Talking by Stage**

**ACEL Listening and Talking by Stage**

- Listening and Talking levels at P1 and P4 continue to track above both National and comparator levels.
- Levels at P7 and S3 are in line with the National and comparator rates. All stages are showing positive 3 and 5 yearly rates.
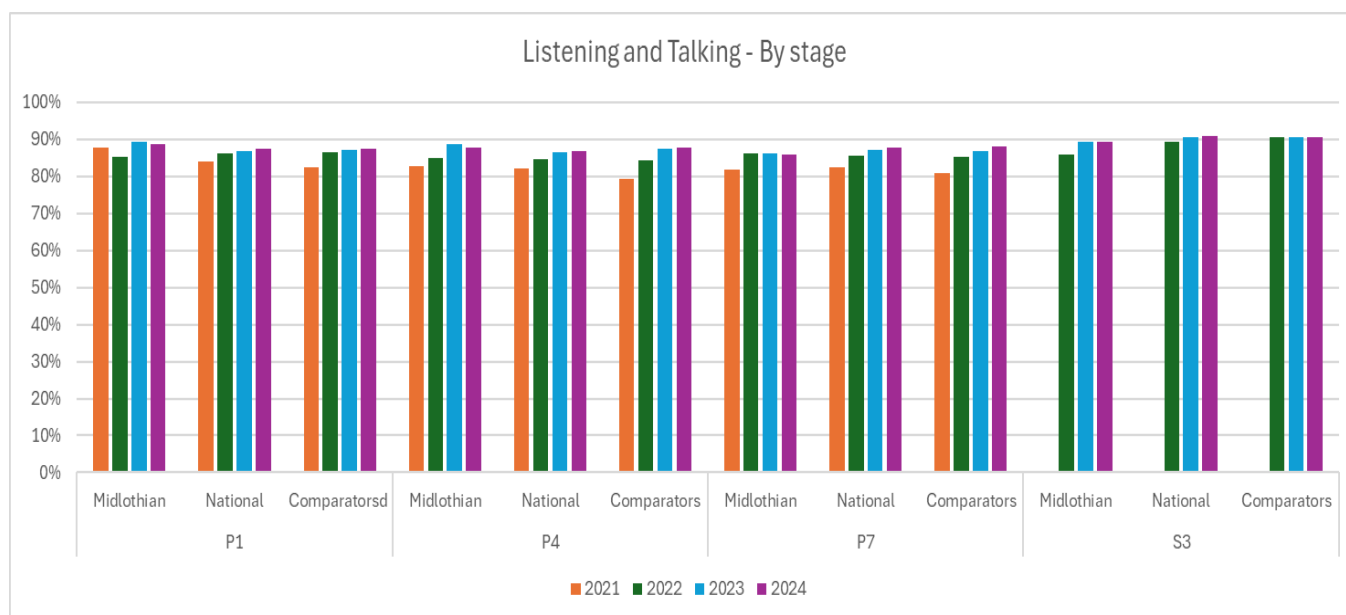


Chart . Chart of the combined literacy and numeracy for S3, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.

| Listening and Talking by Stage | | Pre-pandemic Ave. | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Midlothian | 88.61% | 87.71% | 85.38% | 89.17% | 88.58% |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | National | 86.38% | 83.96% | 86.14% | 86.90% | 87.31% |
| | Comparators[d] | 85.18% | 82.38% | 86.38% | 87.08% | 87.56% |
| P4 | Midlothian | 83.84% | 82.86% | 84.79% | 88.79% | 87.88% |
| | National | 84.32% | 82.04% | 84.54% | 86.56% | 86.95% |
| | Comparators | 84.27% | 79.21% | 84.16% | 87.31% | 87.61% |
| P7 | Midlothian | 80.29% | 81.89% | 86.06% | 86.12% | 86.00% |
| | National | 83.65% | 82.32% | 85.70% | 87.00% | 87.74% |
| | Comparators | 83.85% | 80.74% | 85.31% | 86.93% | 88.14% |
| S3 | Midlothian | 86.58% | - | 85.78% | 89.29% | 89.24% |
| | National | 91.16% | - | 89.29% | 90.54% | 90.78% |
| | Comparators | 93.54% | - | 90.61% | 90.58% | 90.62% |

**Table 5. Listening and Talking figures by stage, showing Midlothian versus the National and Comparator figures.**

## Workstream 1: Learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum

**Aligned to the Service Plan, priorities for 2024/25, key actions are:**

- Midlothian schools and ELC settings offer a relevant, progressive and motivating strengths-based 3-18 curriculum, that enables all learners, including those with ASN, to move on to highly skilled, sustained positive destinations.
- Quality improvement processes evidence improvement in QI 2.3 LTA.
- Robust data sets track and monitor educational outcomes for all children and young people.

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Midlothian schools and ELC settings offer a relevant, progressive and motivating strengths-based 3-18 curriculum, that enables all learners, including those with ASN, to move on to highly skilled, sustained positive destinations.**

**Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Curriculum**
- Successful launch of Let's Talk About PL Offer to support implementation of LTA Framework with attendance from majority of schools across Midlothian.
- LTA overarching guidance developed to support LTA Framework
- LTA and Curriculum papers combined to form draft LTAC strategy paper
- Over 100 learners from primary schools and over 30 learners from secondary schools participated in the Learners Conferences in September, sharing insights into what helps them to learn and achieve. This information will further inform the LTAC Framework.
- QAMSO plan and supports for moderation in place and shared with head teachers
- ASG level action plans support ongoing planning for 2025/26 and beyond in relation to curriculum and pathways
- MACO offer extended for Session 25-26 in collaboration with HTs and DHTs
- QI 2.2 Curriculum is currently being evaluated as part of most QI visits to schools. Evaluation data will be included in performance reports once this is completed.

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- A course offer for digital delivery has been identified, despite professional association challenge. Elements of online delivery have been identified in FA offer to provide further scope for a proof of concept offer in 25/26.

**Quality improvement processes evidence improvement in QI 2.3 LTA.**

- QI visit activity over term 1 focused on improvement and enhanced schools and detailed reports have been written for all schools to support improvement. Half of secondary school visits have taken place. Trio attainment meetings have been held with all secondary HTs/SLT and summary of next steps shared. Follow up attainment meetings later this term after Insight update.
- Risk and capacity register updated and analysis of targeted support being undertaken.

**Robust data sets track and monitor educational outcomes for all children and young people.**

- A comprehensive set of outcome measures is included in our Service Improvement Plan and these are monitored quarterly and annually.
- Six weekly Data and Performance group monitoring progress
- 3-18 Data dashboards and tracking periods are in place.
- QI score for use of data is improving and this reflects better use of data for improvement in schools.

**Raising Attainment Team**

- The raising attainment team continues to be prioritised to work in primary schools with the lowest attainment and/or are in the improvement QI category. The team works alongside teachers and school leaders to plan, teach and engage in Numeracy and Literacy CLPL. The focus is on attainment raising strategies through high quality professional learning to improve practice and learner experience. A "Core Numeracy" programme has been established which is a universal offer open to all teachers in Midlothian which is centred around Midlothian core Numeracy principles. This was oversubscribed by 50% and a second cohort will be running from March.

**Professional learning offer**

- Our professional learning offer focuses on key aspects of effective learning, teaching and assessment and runs throughout school year 2024-25.

**Digital Inclusion and Learning Team**

- Learning Technologists continue to work with class teachers to plan and co-deliver digital learning sessions for young people, based on a consistent core offer. 199 sessions have been completed since August 2024. 124 teachers have submitted feedback, with 98.4% agreeing their knowledge had increased/improved and 91.4% reporting the learning will help pupils. Work to establish an operating model for the Midlothian Digital Campus has drawn from connections with two LAs and one RIC. Meetings with curricular DHTs and secondary HTs to develop understanding of the offer has shaped the operating model further.

## Workstream 2: Attendance and engagement

**Aligned to the Service Plan, priorities areas of improvement for 2024/25:**

- Tracking, monitoring and reporting processes are in place for attendance and engagement in education leading to more targeted interventions.
- Pupil voice informs all decisions pertaining to attendance and engagement at individual and strategic levels.
- Parents, schools and partners are clear on their roles and responsibilities and feel confident and skilled in promoting attendance

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Tracking, monitoring and reporting processes are in place for attendance and engagement in education leading to more targeted interventions.**

- The attendance dashboard has been further developed, providing schools with data on monthly basis on a monthly basis including tracking of numbers at different attendance bands to inform intervention.
- The new codes from Scottish Government have been rolled out with new guidance and coding workshops designed to run in February for school leaders.
- Tracking and monitoring guidance is currently being drafted to ensure all schools are effectively tracking attendance as well as the impact of interventions over time.
- New tracking systems have ensured accurate tracking and monitoring of attendance for children supported by CLLE and Pathways.

**Pupil voice informs all decisions pertaining to attendance and engagement at individual and strategic levels.**

- All ASGs have participating in the Attendance Partnership Network with partners from Educational Psychology, Family Wellbeing Service, Home School Practitioners and 3rd Sector focusing on sharing effective practice and strengthening locality planning for children and young people at different levels of attendance.
- 100% of the members of the Attendance Partnership Network have reported increased in confidence in meaningfully including children in making sense of issues and planning for improvements in attendance and engagement in education.
- Findings from the learner conference on safety and belonging in school, the young people co-researcher project findings, as well as stories from parents and young people have led to quality multi-agency discussions at the Attendance Partnership Network leading to improved collaboration around attendance concerns. Guidance is being drafted to support the young people's toolkit to promote Engagement in Education.

**Parents, schools and partners are clear on their roles and responsibilities and feel confident and skilled in promoting attendance**

- The self-evaluation tool has been positively received by school leaders and is being used to gather insight into current strengths and identify areas for improvement across the schools for young people at different levels of attendance. Findings will be collated to inform workstream priorities and actions.
- The initial review of policy implementation has identified need for further streamlining of processes to reduce administrative tasks.
- There is improved clarity of role and partnership with Family Wellbeing Service to support attendance.

## Workstream 3: Relationship, wellbeing and care

**Aligned to the Service Plan, priorities areas of improvement for 2024/25:**

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- Effective tracking and monitoring processes lead to more targeted support and improved outcomes for all children and a narrowing of the gap for those with ASN and protected characteristics.
- All staff demonstrate confidence in their use of relational approaches through effective professional learning, staff support and supervision
- All schools and settings are able to demonstrate effective practice and pathways to promoting wellbeing and reducing risk of harm.

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Effective tracking and monitoring processes lead to more targeted support and improved outcomes for all children and a narrowing of the gap for those with ASN and protected characteristics.**

- The SHINE survey has been rolled out to all secondary schools with findings to be received in March. This will inform strategic planning in relation to wellbeing and mental health support as well as self-help tools for young people.
- The DPIA for rolling out the Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile has been agreed in principle and there is a work plan to meet the final conditions.
- Once data is available, analysis will take place to identify gaps in relation to poverty, ASN, CEYP and young carers.

**All staff demonstrate confidence in their use of relational approaches through effective professional learning, staff support and supervision**

*Professional learning and implementation*

- 1000+ teachers, LAs and Early Years Practitioners from across all 6 ASGs have participated in Safe, Connected and Ready to Learn professional learning programme (equivalent to trauma level 2). The evaluation data to date shows significant increases in knowledge, skills and confidence.

Percentage of staff that agree or strongly agree with statement

| Statement | Light | Dark |
|---|---|---|
| I have a strong working knowledge of trauma-informed relational practice | 30.8 | 82.1 |
| I feel confident in taking a trauma-informed approach in my role. | 39.5 | 79 |
| I have insight into possible effects of trauma and adversity within my school community. | 68.6 | 91.7 |
| I understand the power of relationships in buffering the effects of stress and promoting growth, healing and wellbeing. | 82.7 | 94.9 |
| I have knowledge of a range of ways of looking after my own wellbeing and that of my colleagues. | 70.2 | 87.2 |
| I am aware of triggers that can impact on my wellbeing and capacity to provide trauma-informed support. | 68.8 | 91 |
| I feel confident in development my practice in ways that resist re-traumatisation of children and young people. | 50.8 | 79 |
| I feel confident in supporting children and young people through recovery following heightened stress. | 47.2 | 79.5 |

*Staff wellbeing*

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- An action plan has been drafted following the Appreciative Enquiry into staff wellbeing based on the 4 key areas:
  - Time and space to fulfil your role
  - Right support at right time to meet learners needs
  - Feeling valued and part of a shared purpose
  - Time, space and systems for reflection and care

- All ASGs are participating in the Nurture Leads Community of Practice which provides a forum of support for the implementation of principles and practice from Safe, Connected and Ready to Learn.
- Group supervision formats have been set up within the Nurture Leads Community of Practice and very positively received.
- We secured engagement with the Wee Breathers to set up Supervision in Education – this has been postponed due to staff absence within their organization.

*Policy development*

A new policy has been drafted to set out Midlothian's approach to promoting positive relationships and behaviour with guidance on physical intervention and seclusion, informed by Included, Engaged and Involved part 3. A series of engagement and co-production activities have been undertaken to develop this policy and guidance with further planned this term (listed below). The new policy draft will be shared by end of March with a view to going through council and launching in August.

- Nurture Leads working group have drafted initial themes and plan for policy development.
- Over 100 learners from primary schools and over 30 learners from secondary schools participated in the Learners Conferences in September, sharing insights into what helps them feel safe, connected and ready to learn in school.
- A series of meetings with Union representatives
- Planned sessions with parent and pupil councils and staff from ASN provisions

**All schools and settings are able to demonstrate effective practice and pathways to promoting wellbeing and reducing risk of harm.**

- A professional learning framework is being developed with the Professional learning team to establish core induction PL and progression routes in areas of trauma-informed practice, mental health and wellbeing.
- A review of the Wellbeing Concern process is underway with regards to robustness and consistency of process across settings and pathways to intervention.
- Progress continues in the development of the Single Point of Access through strengthening the Team Around the Child process to ensure robust systems of resource allocation.

## Workstream 4: Inclusion, equity and targeted support

**Aligned to the Service Plan, priorities for 2024/25, key work streams:**

- Policies, systems and processes are in place to advise and assist schools and settings around inclusive practice and the allocation of additional resource.
- Develop a robust data set 0-18 to inform future learning estate planning to ensure that buildings and resources are available well in advance of need.
- Through workforce reform we build a diverse and relevant workforce that is skilled and confident in meeting learners needs.

## Key achievements this quarter:

As a result of the ASN review, from August 2024, the central ASN Team was redesigned to support schools and settings within a locality model:

- 5 x Early Years Inclusion & wellbeing officers to support and provide advice to ELC settings
- 6 x Education Support Officers ASN (including one who line manages the EY Inclusion & wellbeing officers and one who has responsibility for care experienced learners). Their role includes:
- Promote inclusive practice and procedures to improve outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs.
- Provide, deliver and signpost professional learning around inclusive practice, where relevant, to teachers and support staff.
- Support schools and settings with ASN provisions in relation to curriculum, learning environments, learning, teaching and assessment.
- 2 x Quality Improvement Officers ASN – link officers for identified localities to support quality assurance and inclusive practice in all settings, including ASN provisions.
- Outreach Teams – Wellbeing, Neurodiversity, Communication & Access and inclusion

### Outcomes this academic year

- Individual school data on attainment and achievement reflects positive impact of interventions. Attainment and achievement data demonstrates improved positive outcomes for all learners with ASN.
- Improved attendance data in all schools and settings.
- Reduction in exclusions.
- Reduction in violent incidents.
- Design an Inclusion Framework which is aligned to the Midlothian's Raising Attainment Strategy. This will provide guidance to schools around inclusive practice and how to support learners with additional support needs.
- Ensure that all ASN provisions have robust Tracking and Monitoring systems in place to evidence attainment and achievement.
- Monitor and reduce part-time timetables across the Midlothian
- Midlothian Learner's Plans and Personal Support Plans are in place for all learners who require one. Learner planning is informed by robust assessment of needs for learners with neurodivergence.
- Websites for information around inclusion and ASN in Midlothian for staff and parents will be live and accessible.
- Transition Planning for post school destinations is in place for 14+ learners with additional support needs.
- A comprehensive CLPL programme ensures staff confidence and skills in creating inclusive learning environments for learners with ASN.
- Systems and processes with robust terms of reference are in place for the allocation of additional resource.
- School staff will be confident in knowing where to access additional support and resource in order to meet learners' needs at the earliest opportunity.
- An agreed, revised formula for allocating devolved learning assistant hours to ensure equity and transparency across schools and localities will be confirmed for session 2025-26.
- SEEMiS data recording for ASN is up to date and accurate.
- A workforce review is progressed to develop a diverse and relevant workforce that is skilled and confident in meeting all learners' needs.
- A robust data set from 0-18 will be created to inform future Learning Estate Planning to ensure that buildings and resources are available for allocation well in advance of need.

**Progress**

- Acquisition and implementation of "B-Squared" digital tracking & monitoring system to track and evidence learning and progression across ASN provisions – ongoing (funding confirmed, awaiting confirmation of DPIA). This should be completed by end of March and rolled out to schools in August 2025.

**Improving central systems & processes (including development of guidance and policies) to support staff to meet needs at appropriate levels of intervention.**

- The following key polices and guidelines to support schools have been developed/completed, in consultation with relevant stakeholders:

    1. Midlothian Learners' Planning Guidance – completed and sent out to schools August 2024
    2. Education Resource Group – completed. Revised Terms of Reference and Guidance sent out to schools August 2024.
    3. Staff website – completed September 2024
    4. ASN SEEMiS data – completed and sent out to schools November 2024
    5. Build-Up Timetables Guidance - completed and issued to schools in January
    6. Medical Procedures Handbook in final stages – due to be sent out to schools February
    7. Managing Exclusions policy – to be ratified by Cabinet in March
    8. Anti-Bullying Policy – to be ratified by Cabinet in March
    9. Home Education & Flexi-Schooling Guidelines – currently with legal services to oversee. To be ratified by Cabinet in March
    10. Inclusion Framework  - in development
    11. Learner toolkit – in development
    12. Parent Website – in development
    13. Transition guidance – in development
    14. ASN Transport Policy – out for consultation (as part of new Integrated Transport Policy)

- ASN Outreach Service – This service has been redesigned with effect from August 2024 and now consists of five teams – Neurodiversity, Wellbeing, Access and Inclusion, Deaf Education and Communication. The outreach teams support a range of learners across Midlothian who have a range of diagnosed need, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Dysregulated behaviour, Hearing Impairment, English as an Additional Language and Early Years ASN.

- Each team currently supports the following number of learners across Midlothian at Staged Intervention Level 2 (Universal plus support).

- This can include:

    - Working with teachers in their classroom to support neurodivergent learners
    - Offering advice and consultation for groups or individual learners
    - Carrying out observations of learners and recommend further support
    - Working with school teams, wider communities and other agencies to plan coherent and progressive programmes of support for Neurodivergent learners

- The total number of learners in Midlothian supported by our Outreach teams in mainstream settings amounts to **961** and meets the Council's duty to support learners, where possible, in a mainstream school.

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- Evidence shows, via ERG data, that most schools who refer and receive support from the Outreach team are making fewer referrals to the ERG than those schools who are not currently accessing this resource.

- Education Resource Group (ERG) - Numbers of children and young people presented to the ERG for a provision placement with effect from August 2025:

- We have ensured the threshold for learners to access our Complex ASN provisions is robust. All learners who have met the threshold are non-speaking, ASD, have some form of global or intellectual delay and most learners need intimate care. The learners who meet the threshold for Saltersgate have the same needs as above plus medical needs.

| Session 2024/25 | Total referrals to ERG Panel | Learners who met the threshold | Total capacity Available | Spaces required |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary | 37 | 37 | 17 | 20 |
| Secondary | 47 | 24 | 16 | 8 |

- The number of children and young people who require specialist provision from August 2025 is greater than the spaces we currently have available. The lack of available places in certain locations requires us to add additional capacity to our estate for August 2025. A report has been prepared for cabinet in February detailing this need and possible solutions.

- ASN Network – On average, 25 Principal Teachers from ASN Provisions across the authority have continued to meet regularly, facilitated by senior ASN Officers. They have engaged with sessions on Moderation for SQA (in Numeracy, Literacy and other curricular areas) and feedback sessions from HMIE. Evaluation surveys have indicated this has increased confidence in learning & teaching practice and assessment activities.

- Both Primary Support for Learning Teachers and Secondary Pupil Support teachers (on average 32) have also continued to meet regularly, facilitated by Senior ASN Officers.  These groups have received valuable input from CAMHS, engaged with updates around supporting Dyslexia and managing behaviour. Evaluation surveys have indicated this has increased confidence in understanding children's needs and class management.

**Developing a sustainable ASN workforce development strategy to meet the growing demands of Midlothian Council through**:

1. Identifying need across all localities
2. Identifying the impact of current resource
3. Highlighting any gaps in service
4. Recommending the type of workforce required to meet needs
5. Recommending a cost effective, equitable and sustainable way of devolving resource in localities

- In development – a paper has been completed with recommendations. Further discussions and planning will be taking place with Saltersgate school and CLLE.

**Developing sustainable, alternative and bespoke curriculum packages for children and young people unable to sustain fulltime mainstream education through:**

1. Mapping out current alternative and bespoke curriculum offers available to schools
2. Identifying the impact and total cost of the current resource
3. Highlighting any gaps in provision
4. Recommending cost effective, sustainable ways of providing alternative pathways

- In development – a paper has been completed with recommendations. Further discussions and planning will be taking place with the education Senior Leadership Team and CLLE.

## Community, Lifelong Learning and Employability

**CLD builds skills for learning, life and work.**

- In the last three quarters 4,697 people have engaged with CLLE services across 426 opportunities. 281 home visits were carried out. 353 people accessing our services live in SIMD 20% and 1,777 in SIMD 40%.  In addition, 40 community groups have received support and advice from CLLE.

- **The new CLD Partnership Plan 2024 to 2027** was approved and endorsed by the Community Planning Partnership Board and approved by Midlothian Council on 17th December 2024.

**Employability Highlights**

1. The Childcare Review stage 4 draft and report is almost complete.
2. The No One Left Behind (NOLB) allocation of funding to Midlothian (CLLE) has been provisionally provided by Scottish Government.

**NOLB All Age Employability Service for those who are not parents, including young people**

**Impact quote from user:**

> *"The support CLLE gives me makes me happy. I feel less stressed and worried about things. With their help I feel supported, and it makes me more motivated."*

> *"I feel comfortable with my keyworker and with her help now have the confidence to attend college and have a part time job"*

- In Q3 the NOLB All Age Employability team have continued to provide support to **198** people, with **59** new starts this quarter. From this:

  - **23** have moved onto employment, self-employment or a modern apprenticeship
  - **2** have moved onto further/higher education
  - **17** have achieved a work related/accredited qualification
  - **2** have started work experience

**Key activities for All Age NOLB Employability from Oct to December 2024 have been:**

- As well as continuing 1:1 keyworker support within CLLE, our NOLB partners have offered a variety of new opportunities for our participants, working from stage 1 to 3 working with various professionals such as the Police, MYPAS Drug and Alcohol Awareness through to colleges and employers. These interventions are removing the barriers to moving onto employment.

- Working closely with our construction companies with community benefits, we have been able to provide a successful route for our clients to come from our workshops to gain industry related qualifications such as CSCS card and First Aid at Work through to on-site work experience and gaining an industry reference for jobs.

**Parental Employability Support funded through NOLB Scottish Government**

- The team has continued to support **244** existing parents on our caseloads from the year 24-25 and a further **67** new parents started in quarter 3. From this:

  - **23** parents have entered employment, self-employment or progressed in employment.
  - **25** parents have achieved a total of **72** work related/ accredited qualifications ranging from REHIS, First Aid,
    Preparation to Care, CSCS, LGV, IT, Food Allergy and Intolerance Training, Animal Handling, Wellbeing, Paediatric
    First Aid and SIA door supervisor.
  - **7** parents have moved onto further/higher education

- The new NHS paid work experience pilot across the Lothians has 4 people from Midlothian participating which was our maximum number of funded places available. A variety of new opportunities have been offered through our NOLB funded partners, these include Prepare to Care training, ICT and problem-solving qualification, security officer training, preparation and next steps course, family learning sessions in the CLLE community garden, ESOL community meals, driving theory classes, and 1:1 intensive support for people complex disabilities and health conditions.

**Parental Employability Support Impact Statements:**

*"I am very happy with all the services and support you provided, especially with writing my CV, meeting new people through the Conversation Café, and improving my conversation skills. I have now gained the necessary qualifications with the support of the Parental and Employability team and have found a good job. Now, I can earn my own money and live happily with my family. Thanks, PES team!*

*"Thank you for the training, a wee update, I had couple of security shifts over Christmas and New Year and they have more work to offer me. This will support me and my family by increasing my household income. Thanks again".*

<u>**Youth Work**</u>

- Universal and targeted youth is progressing well in all clusters from P5 up to 18 year olds.  The targeted swimming is successful in supporting those on low incomes by offering free opportunities with some progressing onto qualifications including NPLQ and Rookie Lifeguard.  There was a very successful multiagency approach to supporting young people over Halloween and Bonfire night.

- 12 young people from the Young Carers CLLE group have successfully completed the Ocean Youth Trust 7 day voyage, which is an amazing achievement by these young people.  Street work is actively taking place on

Friday evenings and this is in targeted in areas based on Police intelligence.  In the last few months, the team have been in a variety of places including Straiton, Penicuik, Gorebridge and Dalkeith.

[Midlothian Council - CLLE (Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability) (padlet.com)](padlet.com)  We ensure our partners and staff are able to see through our padlet the offer across Midlothian for youth work and adult learning to help cross referrals etc.

## Adult and Family Learning

- 255 local people have enrolled in the paid for adult learning programme which is offering a variety of courses such as Spanish, French, Painting, Dress Making and national qualifications including Nat 5 Maths. The programme is advertised locally and through social media and places are booked through Eventbrite. The adult learning programme fees pay for the tutors who deliver these courses.  There are also a variety of community-based adult learning and family learning activities on offer including:  Wreath Making, Mindfulness for Wellbeing, National 4 Numeracy, Digital Skills for Beginners, Emergency First Aid at Work, Family Cooking, Oral History Town Hall Tales and Family Film and Arts.

## Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Support

- We have successfully enrolled new learners to our mainstream ESOL classes which began again in September, while we continued to provide extra ESOL support to Afghan and Syrian refugees and delivered more informal Conversation Groups. Lipreading sessions continue in Penicuik and local advertising has improved, leading to the enrolment of some new learners for the group. We are now providing more opportunities for Adult Literacy at Eskdaill Court, with a group focussing on Basic Literacy meeting on Monday mornings and another group for Level 3 and 4 meeting on Wednesdays – as well as providing several 1:1 sessions for learners who require extra confidence and support.

## Community Capacity Building/Community Development and Reducing Poverty

- CLLE have worked to support a diverse range of partners including Community Councils, Development Trusts and other community groups, as well as providing support for the cost-of-living task force and child poverty action group.

- On 6 December 2024, the Council completed the transfer in ownership of the Poltonhall Sports Complex, including the astro pitches, grass pitches, pavilion, caretaker flat and car park to Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club (BRCFC) in implementation of the decision of the Community Asset Transfer Committee at their meeting on 30 January 2024 under the Community Empowerment Act. Community Development staff have supported BRCFC throughout this process.

- Community Development staff supported the renaming and opening of Woodburn Community Hub (formerly the MARC building, 10 Woodburn Road) on the 21st October 2024. This marks a significant step in giving the building an identity and encouraging wider use. We have secured external funding to allow improvements to the small kitchen area and storage room to make the building work more efficiently for all users. We are continuing to work with the architects and Place Directorate colleagues on the second stage of the feasibility study to look at the design of a new building in more detail, including supporting consultations with local residents and users.

- Community Development staff continue to support the Child Poverty Accelerator Fund (CPAF) community research lived experience project, providing training and support to the researchers and helping with their event on the 9th October as part of Challenge Poverty Week. The event provided an opportunity to let members of the public interact with displays highlighting the struggles experienced by families living in poverty.

- The review of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian has reached its final consultation stage and the completed report will be presented to Midlothian Council in April.  Other community councils have received bespoke support for example, the Newtongrange Park Access Project, training for new officer bearers at Bonnyrigg and District Community Council and use of the complaints policy.  Equalities training was delivered to the Federation of Community Councils to help them understand their legal duties.

**External Funding Update**

- NOLB allocations have been provisionally confirmed by Scottish Government for 25/26.
- Skills Development Scotland have not yet confirmed funding levels for Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships for 25/26.
- Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) 2022 – 2025 programme will end on 31st March 2025.  UK Government has advised that 25/26 will be a transition year of funding with details of a new programme post March 2026 to be announced in the UK Government's Spring statement.  The funding for 25/26 is a 40% reduction in funding for the 24/25 period.  The Midlothian allocation is a total of £1,166,951 with a split of capital £330,884 and revenue £836,067.  There is a minimum requirement for 28.3% of the total allocation to be used for capital which is an increase of just over 10% compared to 24/25.  The UKSPF Board has agreed, in principle, recommendations for the continuation of most projects with a reduced amount of funding.  Governance is required by Council to implement these recommendations and deliver the 25/26 UKSPF transition programme.  The interventions from the original UKSPF programme can still be used for the transition year but they will be mapped over to the UK Government's 5 new missions, priorities, themes and sub themes for reporting.

**Challenges:**

- The funding landscape, changes and uncertainties pose risks to the services delivered by CLLE and partners.
- Access to buildings to deliver youth work which have no cost and are suitable remains a challenge, in one area we are now being charged £30 an hour, up to £150 per night for specific facilities.
- Securing adult learning tutors to deliver qualifications at National 5 and Highers is very challenging, but essential to be able to offer adults evening access to upskilling their access qualifications for higher paid jobs and entry into FE/HE, whilst having daytime commitments.  We are exploring other options for delivery including commissioning to see if this can generate more service delivery in this area.
- Accessibility issues with council buildings where CLLE are based (Aim High, Penicuik Town Hall and Eskdaill Court) remain.

# Pentana Performance Dashboard – Q3 24/25

## Quarter 3 - Education

| 5 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 19 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicators that are On Target | Quarterly Education Service Indicators Off Target | Education service Indicators Data only | Indicators that have No Data Available | Quarterly Education Service All Risks | Quarterly Education Service High Risks |

### Education INDICATORS Off Target

| ... | | Code & Title | Gauge | Value | Target | Next Update Due | Last Update | History |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 🔄 | 🔴 | ED.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 working ... | | 33.33% | 95% | 01 Apr 2024 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| | 🔴 | ED.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days | | 40% | 95% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔄 | 🔴 | CSPC.P.11.2j Participants in the paid for adult learning program | | 255 | 375 | 01 May 2017 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔄 | 🔴 | CSPC.P.11.2h The number of Community groups engaged with CLLE | | 40 | 41 | 01 Oct 2017 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔄 | 🔴 | BS.E.P.1.1e Improve Secondary School Attendance | | 89.48% | 91.5% | 01 Jan 2025 | Q2 2024/25 | |
| | 🔴 | ED.SPSO.04.3 Average time in working days for a full response for escalated compl... | | 20.333 | 20 | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔄 | 🔴 | BS.E.P.1.1d Improve Primary School attendance | | 94.96% | 95% | 01 Jan 2025 | Q2 2024/25 | |

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# Children's Services, Partnership and Communities Performance Report Q3 24/25

*"All children, young people, adults and families in Midlothian are supported to be the best they can be. This is achieved through a nurturing, respectful and collaborative approach that promotes wellbeing, equity and inclusion."*

## Community Priorities

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) draw together public, voluntary and private sector bodies, and local communities to deliver a shared plan to improve the lives of local people based on evidence. In Midlothian, the plan is called the Single Midlothian Plan (SMP). This is a shared partnership plan of how we will meet the needs of our local communities and brings together all the priorities for Midlothian into one place.

Our outcomes for the next five years are:
• Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes,
• No child or household need live in poverty
• Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2045.

In Midlothian the Getting It Right for Every Child Board (GIRFEC) is one of the subgroups of the SMP, and one of the main drivers for the effective delivery of services to children. The GIRFEC Plan also known as the Integrated Children's Service Plan 2023-2026, is a statutory three-year plan devised by the local authority and health. The plan develops key outcomes and priority actions which are designed to improve the lives of children, young people, and families.

The plan has 12 shared priority themes, outcomes and actions which sit within 4 subgroups:

1. Children & Young People's Rights
2. Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing
3. Whole Family Wellbeing
4. Information Sharing and Commissioning

We are fully committed to realising a children's rights approach to all of our work and ensuring that we embed the principles of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) alongside our Promise commitments.

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**The Promise**

Midlothian continues to progress towards the key foundations of The Promise Scotland Plan 2024-2030. We are committed to listening and acting on the feedback from the voices of our care experienced children and families. In Q2 we secured a three year contact with Who Cares? Scotland and are working together to develop our participation strategy and refreshing our Champion's Boards to ensure wider engagement with our care experienced children and young people. This work continues to be shared with wider partners to raise awareness of The Promise and Corporate Parenting duties.

**Referrals:**

**Number of referrals by Quarter**

| 22/23 | | | | 23/24 | | | | 24/25 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |
| 2,155 | 2,212 | 2,023 | 2,626 | 2,353 | 2,067 | 1,436 | 1,324 | 1,170 | 932 | 970 |

In Q3, we have seen a slight increase in referrals compared to Q2, this slight increase is considered nominal and still indicative of a sustained reduction in referrals. This is a result of continuing efforts to ensure that referrals coming into social work are appropriate and referrals for early support are redirected to TATC and the Family Wellbeing Service. Referrals coming into the service typically remain complex, child protection and require workers with experience to undertake assessments and manage risk. Recruitment and retention of experienced staff remains an issue across the service. This impacts on the movement of case work through the service due to a lack of experienced workers who are unable to lead on child protection work. To manage this, Team Leaders are providing additional support to newly qualified staff to support and develop their skills and our recruitment efforts are focused on attracting experienced workers.

**Family Wellbeing Service**

The Family Wellbeing Service is now well established and continues to work alongside families, schools, health and third sector partners to support children and their families to improve low school attendance, and other wellbeing concerns. A new Team Leader took over managing the Family Wellbeing Service at the end of November 2024. Positively the team have not experienced any gap in Team Leader cover during this transition period.

The team recruited to the post of Family Learning Coordinator in August 2024 and work is underway to collate information about all the available learning in place for families, the data about staff skills and examine the gaps in skills and service provision.

The following excerpts are from feedback the Family Wellbeing Service has received from children, families and other professionals:

*"...Thanks for everything you've brought me to do and where you've brought me now."*
**14 year old girl who had been unable to attend school and who has been supported to reengage in relationships and learning.**

*"We've only known you (Family Wellbeing Worker) a short while but in this time, you've done so much and made such a positive impact. I'm so glad I answered your text that time."*
**Mum of 3 Primary-school-aged children where the family required support with school attendance, finances and behaviour management for a child with additional support needs.**

*"[Family Wellbeing Practitioner] has been tremendous in supporting [8-year-old boy}. The worker was able to engage him in a way that no other professional at the time could. The worker's consistent, kind and*

*dependable approach allowed the child to develop trust and gently re-engage with his education and improve his engagement with therapy. The child has come on so far and is on track to reach a positive destination. I do not think we would have achieved this had it not been for the Family Wellbeing Practitioner!*
*Thank you for your service. For cases like this one it demonstrates that your service is invaluable in supporting vulnerable young people in Midlothian."*

**Team Around the Child (High School)** has been tested and introduced to support more consistent and robust planning for high school aged children. This replicates the model that has been long established and successful for early years and primary schools. Team Around the Child (TATC) allows multi agency discussion about a child and their family's needs, to create a plan about which service within the council or third sector are best placed to provide support in a timely manner. It avoids families or professionals having to send multiple referrals and provides access to the Family Wellbeing Service and other supports funded by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

Feedback from Education service colleagues about the TATC High School process has been positive, with people sharing that the structure and process of TATC HS is clear and supportive. Suggestions of improvement such as developing a digital consent option are now in development.

**Foster Carers Christmas Celebrations**
In December the Family Centred Care team arranged a Christmas celebration for children, young people and their carer at 'Jump In'. A fun time was had by all. Foster carers were also offered tickets to take children and young people to the Pantomime.
We are now planning a carers appreciation brunch in February 2025 to say thank you to all our carers for their ongoing commitment. We celebrate a range of carers who have provided care and support for over 5, 10 and 15 years and reflect on the number of children who have been supported to return home to families or move on to permanent homes.

**Income Maximisation**
As part of our effort to reduce child poverty Children's Services fund three income maximisation projects. These projects support families engaged with our services including Hawthorn Family Learning centre, the Family Wellbeing Service and those involved in child protection processes. The three projects continue to support families to access their entitled benefits, grants and reduce debts. Over Q3 the projects collectively *generated £132,570 income for 49 families*. This is an increase in families reached by the projects and financial gains for individual families continue to be significant. Going forward we have agreed to further improve ease and speed of access to the projects by having 1 referral route instead of 3.

**Child Protection and Looked After away from home population**
The data evidences that our looked after population is fairly static. Overall, across the past year the data has had no significant change, generally fluctuating from 140 – 152 children. The introduction of Family Group decision making, supports families to devise a plan which promotes families staying together with support from extended family.  Further capacity for early support also contributes to keeping children out of care.
For children who have needed permanent care it is really positive that there has been significant progress with permanence planning for a number of children within this period.

The number of children's names on the child protection register has also remained fairly consistent across the past year however once again a cautionary approach when looking at this data as two families can mean a significant increase in the numbers. The main reason for registering a child's name on the register is the risk posed by *parental mental health*, this is a change from previous years where domestic abuse was the most common risk factor. Emotional abuse and domestic abuse remain very prevalent in registrations.

In Q4 we are seeking to strengthen our data to explore the connection between poverty and those on the children on the child protection register or who are looked after.

3

**Rate per 1,000 of Midlothian Looked After and Accommodated Children**

| 22/23 | | | | 23/24 | | | | 24/25 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |
| 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 6.5 | 6.6 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 8.6 | 6.8 | 8.6 |

**\*Scotland Average for 22/23 is 9.7**

**Disability Service and Self-Directed Support**

A discrete disability team is now in place for children's services. Work continues to recruit experienced and skilled staff to the new team. Our focus upon improving practice and consistency continues, to ensure families are receiving a fair and equitable response to assessed needs. In addition, we are working to identify gaps in service provision – engaging with families to ensure there views shape any new contracts or commissioned services.

The development of this team supports the Business Transformation Project focused on improving transitions across Education, Children's Services and Adult Services. The introduction of the team will support better tracking of our young people who will need support as they move into adulthood.

**Midlothian House Project**
The fifth cohort of young people to be supported by the project started in Q3. There are currently forty-six young people involved with the project. Only two young people have disengaged from this support since the team began and we continue to have no tenancy breakdowns or evictions for young people supported by the team. This work has been well supported by positive working relationships with partners, most notably colleagues within housing.

**Care leavers National Movement Conference**
In November the Care leavers National Movement Conference was held.  Young people and colleagues from the Midlothian House Project participated in the organisation of the conference, holding a stall showcasing the Midlothian House Project. One of our young people spoke at the conference, sharing his experience of leaving care and being supported by the team – this  was a huge achievement for him and the team.

## Challenges and risks

**Workforce:**
As noted in previous quarterly reports, there is a national shortage of experienced and skilled staff across the sector. This has resulted in us having to rely on locum workers who are both expensive but also do not offer continuity to service users.  We are testing ways to make permanent roles more attractive to experienced staff and have had successful recruitment in Q2. In addition, we are considering ways to ensure we support and retain our existing workforce.

**Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children**
We continue to work with our Home Office colleagues to discuss the distribution of UASC who arrive mainly in Kent on small boats.  Most local authorities in Scotland are at capacity with no more foster or residential capacity to accommodate these young people.  We are trying to develop more creative solutions and further capacity to meet this ongoing demand, which can only be expected to further increase in coming months as the weather starts to improve. In Q3 we have supported two young people into our care, one of whom was a spontaneous arrival. We are also waiting a further 2 referrals. They are well supported by our local team of workers and offered the same opportunities as our local Care Experienced young people.

**Increased numbers of children impacted by the delay in neurodevelopmental waiting times:**

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There remains a significant delay in families waiting for an appointment with CAMHS regarding neurodevelopmental (ND) concerns. NHS is in the process of developing a new pathway to support ND assessment and support. This work is in its early stages but seeks to ensure families have reduced waiting times for assessment and those that do not need clinical input are supported via other means. Midlothian is an active part of the consultation and planning and the Framework has been shared with the GIRFEC board for feedback and sign off.

Partners are seeking solutions to support children, families and schools with the delay in assessment and support from NHS. We are currently working with the Innovation Unit to develop a bid for Lottery funding to support coproduced community initiatives to improve support and inclusion for those families impacted by neurodivergence.

**Financial Pressures**

Finance is an ongoing challenge across the council. Budget consultation and proposals have a significant impact on how we support children and their families. We must ensure that we have sufficient capacity within our workforce and resources to meet the increasing demand faced by the service as the population continues to grow. Within Children services we continue to review how we meet our statutory requirements and provide early and enhanced support which reduces the burden on statutory services. This will remain an ongoing challenge as we plan for the new financial year.

**Priority 1: Ensure the Midlothian Wellbeing Service is aligned with other family supports across Midlothian**

**Key achievements this quarter:**

- The TATC process is now consistent across all ages. This ensures that FWS is considered in line with all other supports available.
- Feedback from Education service colleagues about the TATC High School process has been positive, with people sharing that the structure and process of TATC High School is clear and supportive. Suggestions of improvement such as developing a digital consent option have been taken on board and are in development.
- Feedback from children, families and professionals about the Family Wellbeing Service remains highly positive, with a recurring theme of strength in building relationships with hard to reach children and families identified.
- Remaining WFWF funding has been used for targeted commissioning informed by data regarding gaps in service being collected via TATC.
- Data collection and performance indicators for the team have been defined and are in place. Data is now being drawn and reviewed for performance reporting and service developments. Work ongoing to create data dashboards and management information.
- The Family Learning review underway. This will collate information about all the available learning opportunities in place for families, the data about staff skills and examine the gaps in skills and service provision to support future planning.

**Priority 2: Develop a transitions strategy and pathway across Children's Services, Education and Adult Health & Social Care**

**Key achievements this quarter:**

- The Service Manager (Disability) has now commenced in role and is making key connections across the partnership. Both this manager and a Service Manager for Adult Services are leading the

5

GIRFEC work plan for Transitions. This includes policies and procedures that direct transitions from Education and Children's Services to Adult Services – including those impacted by complex needs, learning and physical disability, mental health and other acute vulnerabilities.

- The Children's Services Disability team is now in place with social workers and practitioners. Recruitment for a permanent team leader is in process.
- Data collection and tracking is being established to allow long term planning for those with complex needs and consideration of support packages as they move though the system.

**Priority 3: Maintain supports offered by Family Group Decision Making and Kinship staff to ensure children remain with birth/ kin families.**

**Key achievements this quarter:**

- 31 family referrals were made to FGDM during this quarter.
- 17 family meetings held in Q3.
- We have increased the service capacity with the recruitment of a new part time worker.
- Additional capacity has been created to complete Kinship Assessments with a new worker aligned to this work. 2 workers will increase capacity but also support to ensure assessments are robust.
- We remain on target to increase the numbers of kinship assessments completed year on year.
- The Kinship workers are now aligned with Family Centred Care which will in time increase the support offered to Kinship Carers to be more in line with the offer for Foster Carers.
- Kinship policy is now out for consultation with stakeholders, colleagues and management.

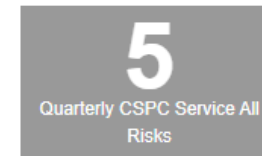**Priority 4: Strengthen the number of staff who understand the importance of trauma informed practice**
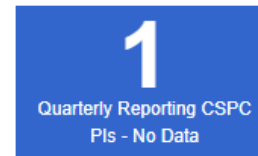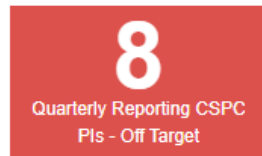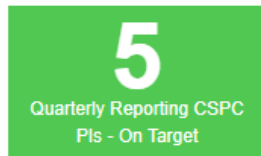**Key achievements this quarter:**

- 42 CSYP staff were trained in Trauma informed practice in Q3, 36 at Level 1 and 6 at Level 2 bringing the total for the 24/25 year to 97.
- Further training sessions in Level 1 and 2 Trauma informed practice are being rolled out throughout 24/25.
- Children's Services and Learning and Development have agreed 17 Children's Services staff will be supported to complete University level qualifications – all of these course support rights based and trauma informed practice.
- Psychological consultations have been introduced of staff support and wellbeing. Much of this is focused on ensuring staff are supported with the challenging nature of the work and they have opportunities to reflect on the impact of our work. This was a pilot until December 24 and will be reviewed as part of the Children's Services staff survey.

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# Pentana Performance Dashboard – Q3 24/25

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

## Quarter 3 - Children's Services Partnership and Communities

| **5** Quarterly Reporting CSPC PIs - On Target | **8** Quarterly Reporting CSPC PIs - Off Target | **29** Quarterly Reporting CSPC PIs - Data only | **1** Quarterly Reporting CSPC PIs - No Data | **5** Quarterly CSPC Service All Risks | **0** Quarterly CSPC Service High Risks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

### Quarterly Reporting PIs - Off Target

| ... | Code & Title | Gauge | Value | Target | Next Update Due | Last Update | History |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 🔴 | BS.CSPC.LPI.04 Child Protection: % of Core Group meetings held within a 8 week p... | | 85% | 100% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | BS.CSPC.LPI.05 Child Protection: % of Core Group meetings held within 15 days fo... | | 87% | 100% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CSPC.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumul... | | 9.52 | 9.00 | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CSPC.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative) | | 94% | 95% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CSPC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete t... | | 85.71% | 95% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CS.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1 | | 8 | 5 | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CS.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days | | 0% | 100% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CS.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working days | | 0% | 100% | 01 Apr 2025 | Q3 2024/25 | |

← 1 of 1 →

# Adult Social Care Services Q3 24/25 Performance Report

*Adult Services protect and improve the wellbeing of the people and communities of Midlothian. We help people get the right support, in the right place, at the right time.*

**Adult Social Care Services**

We work in partnership with people to contribute to sustaining thriving communities. We provide information, education, and support to help people take positive action to prevent ill or worsening health and wellbeing. When people need our support, our intervention should help people achieve the things that matter to them. We have 'Good Conversations' with people, provide personalised care, promote self-management, and ensure well-coordinated services across health, social care and the Third and Independent sectors.

Social work services in Midlothian are delivered jointly by Midlothian Council and Midlothian Integration Joint Board. Adult social work and social care services, including justice social work, are delegated to Midlothian IJB. This means we are part of integrated health and social care and overseen by Midlothian HSCP and IJB. Adult Social Care contributes to the Midlothian IJB Strategic Commissioning Plan, the strategic aims of both NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council, and contributes to the work of the Community Planning Partnership through the Single Midlothian Plan.

To meet the needs of people and communities we need to deliver on the strategic priorities of all our partners. We have identified a number of similar themes and priorities that we must work together to achieve. We need to:

- Provide more preventative care
- Understand how peoples' and communities' needs have changed and build the right offers of support
- Ensure effective and efficient services while also maintaining quality
- Improve socio-economic, health, wellbeing, and personal outcomes

Social Work staff **work with service users** who are referred or self-refer to services. The work undertaken aims to support the individual to **achieve positive health and wellbeing** and will do this by supporting them to achieve positive **change, access resources** and to become **integrated** in their communities.

## Supporting people with a Learning Disability
**Learning Disability Team**

They provide social work assessment and care management services to around 400 people with a Learning Disability. The amount of support provided can vary, some people may require just a few hours of support each week whereas others may require significant amounts of support with all aspects of their life. Midlothian Council hold guardianship and / or corporate appointeeship for many people with a learning disability which results involvement in day-to-day support needs and decision making.

There is a budget of £21.5 m for the provision of care for people with Learning Disabilities with the majority of this expenditure being on locally based care providers. Care managers work collaboratively with providers to ensure high quality care is provided, and coordinate input from the NHS Community Learning Disability Team when required. There are no concerns in relation to the care provided by the majority of the care providers with joint work ongoing with one care provider to support quality improvements with their service provision.

There is an ongoing focus on positive behavioural support in relation to individuals exhibiting challenging behaviour. This can be a time-consuming care management activity, but the outcomes of this work include an improved quality of life for people we support and a reduction in support costs.

The St. Cuthberts supported living project is nearing completion. This core and cluster service consists of 8 one-bedroom flats with 24/7 on site support. The first tenants have moved in, and the remaining flats will be the occupied over the next two months. Four flats have been allocated to individuals who are able to live relatively independently but will require ongoing access to 24/7 support. The other 4 flats will be allocated to individuals who in the longer term will be able to live independently in their own tenancy, but in the short term will require access to 24/7 support while they develop their independence skills. This service will assist these individuals, typically young adults with a Learning Disability leaving home, acquire the necessary skills and transition to a regular tenancy.

## Supporting Older People over 65
### Older People's Social Work Team

They provide social work assessment, care management and review of services for people over 65 years old and their carers. There is a separate team for those who have a diagnosis of dementia. Services provided include packages of care to support individuals with personal care and housing support. Carers needs assessments are also undertaken and respite in the form of Self Directed Support budgets, commissioned services or council care home resources.

The team works closely with voluntary and third sector organisations to arrange support, information and assistance to access community resources to enable Midlothian older people to live well as they age. Midlothian Council also hold Guardianship on behalf of the Chief Social Work Officer and depending on the powers granted ensure that the welfare needs of individuals are managed including use of powers to manage care needs and services. The team also carry out duties relating to review of private guardianship orders and review of all care home placements to ensure that safeguarding measures, care planning and service provision continues to meet the needs of individuals, and that resource allocation is effectively managed in line with the eligibility criteria.

There is a budget of £19.4 million providing funding for services in line with Self Directed Support Legislation. A panel of Service Managers meets weekly to consider funding request when assessed need is identified and the eligibility criteria have been applied. Resources commissioned include Packages of Care to support personal care, meal provision, support with medication, 24 hours care in care home placement. The overall aim is to support older people to remain in their home for as long as possible, to reduce risk of harm and to avoid or reduce the risk of hospital admission where possible.

In November there was an event for older people arranged by the Older People's Assembly, attended by older people representative of the diversity in our community, including some invited service users. Voluntary, third sector and statutory services from both health and social care provided stalls and information to the attendees. There was an opportunity to discuss supports and community resources that provided social, educational, recreational and health improvement supports. Feedback was positive and allowed for networking and information sharing.

The annual Older People's newsletter was completed and distributed throughout Midlothian from GP surgeries, libraries, health centres, care homes. It contained information on services, community groups and services and aimed to support older people to reduce isolation and access support and assistance to live well as they age.

## Supporting people during hospital discharge
**Hospital In Reach Social Work Team**

They assess the needs of people who need support relating to hospital discharge. They operate over all acute hospital sites, rehabilitation and psychiatric wards at Midlothian Community Hospital and Highbank Intermediate Care facility, providing assessment and discharge planning for individuals. Assessment of need is completed as quickly as possible to enable a rapid response to discharge planning in line with Home First and delayed discharge policy and Council eligibility criteria. The aim is to reduce the time that an individual is delayed in hospital when they are clinically well enough for discharge, reducing risk of infection, delirium or other negative impact of hospital admission as well as freeing the much-needed hospital bed for others with clinical need. The Hospital In Reach Team are currently working on an improvement plan to ensure that connections between home care, rehabilitation services and community services are robust, rapidly accessible with timescales for action, evaluated and managed at the daily meeting were all people experiencing delayed discharge are discussed. This assists with monitoring and planning all Midlothian inpatients discharge in an efficient and comprehensive way.

## Supporting people living in Newbyres Care Home
**Newbyres Village care home**

The team provide 24 hours care and support for 48 residents. (12 beds/one street is currently vacant). Staffing and leadership issues led to a pause in admissions during 2023/4 after a care home inspection returned requirements and improvements along with disappointing grades. There were 33 residents when we reopened to admissions in 2024, and the care home is now reaching capacity. An improvement plan is in place and a permanent, experienced care home manager has been engaged.

3 full time nurses provide 12 hours x7 days a week clinical support for the residents. The district nursing service provides support and out of hours service. The care home support team, learning and development team, hospital at home service and quality assurance officer work in partnership with Newbyres staff to promote a service offering quality 24 hours care and support to residents and to identify and plan ongoing improvement.

Their activities team receive significant support and praise from residents, carers and staff. They excelled at Christmas with a fantastic, very well attended, Christmas Fair, raising significant funds for the activities fund. A well-attended and supportive activities programme runs year round and there is always a Cream Tea to be had on a Friday afternoon, encouraging community wellbeing and engagement and a chance for further support to be provided to carers and families.

# Justice and Protection Services

This service area includes Justice, Community Justice, Duty Social Work, Adult Support and Protection, and Public Health.

## Supporting people in contact with the Justice system
### Justice Service

They support people involved in the Parole and Pre-release process including the preparation of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports and pre-release reports. The team **supervises people aged 18 and over** who are subject to Community Payback Orders, Parole, Life and Non-Parole Licences, Extended Sentences and Supervised Released Orders.

Their work is underpinned by the ideals of **reparation**, **rehabilitation** and **reintegration** and aims to provide a clear pathway to support those who have been convicted of offences to achieve a positive destination.  Through the work undertaken by those subject to unpaid work we also aim to provide meaningful benefit to our local communities.

The team are co-located with the community-based Substance Use and Mental Health services (NHS and local authority) alongside relevant voluntary sector organisations for people in recovery (Health in Mind, MELD and Penumbra).  This provides a one stop shop for those experiencing issues related to trauma, mental health and/or offending behaviour to easily access services and reduce barriers to engagement.  Sharing of practice, knowledge and skills across the services in No 11 has enabled staff to more effectively support clients to achieve outcomes.

## Supporting people at risk of harm
**Adult Support and Protection Team**

They provide **support and protection for people aged 16** and over who may be at risk of harm who meets all of the following criteria:
- unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property rights or other interests
- are at risk of harm, and
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness, or physical and mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed then those not so affected.

The team undertake **identify, minimise and manage risk** and ensure that all suspicions, disclosures or actual harm are acted upon.   Measures to protect adults need to be considered in the context of wider range of support services and an ASP investigation may highlight gaps in support.  In these instances, an assessment of need should be undertaken to identify and develop an outcomes focused care plan.   They work with the Public Protection Unit to develop how to collect feedback from people managed under Adult Support and Protection.

Between January and April 2024 there was a joint inspection of Adult Support and Protection, which included scrutiny of records over the preceding two year period, analysis of supporting evidence, staff survey and staff focus groups.  The joint inspection focused on :
- How good were the partnership's key processes for adult support and protection?
- How good was the partnership's strategic leadership for adult support and protection?

It was concluded that the partnership's key processes for adult support and protection were effective with areas for improvement. There were clear strengths supporting positive experiences and outcomes for adults at risk of harm, which collectively outweighed the areas for improvement.

Social Workers in the **Duty Team** provide all statutory and associated functions identified in S.12 of Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.  Staff **support** people aged 16 and over **with crisis interventions**, urgent and planned assessments, development of adult care support plans, reviews, and short-term interventions.

# Justice and Protection Services– Performance Measures

The work undertaken by the Justice Service supports work ongoing to achieve progress in:

- Single Midlothian Plan Priorities: Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life and work.

- Single Midlothian Plan Themes: Midlothian Will be Safer

- National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes: Living in the Community, Positive Experiences and Dignity, Quality of life, Health inequalities, Safe from harm

Individuals become formally involved with Justice Social Work at the point of conviction when a Court makes a request for a Justice Social Work Report; requests for assessment and risk management planning are received from the Scottish Prison Service and the Parole Board.  Table 1 shows the number of reports requested over each of the 3 months.  The main type of report is **the Justice Social Work Report** (JSWR) and these are requested by a Sheriff or Judge **to inform sentencing**.  The Justice Service also compete reports for Scottish prison Service and the Parole Board for those who are progressing through their custodial sentence.

**Chart: Reports requested during Q3**
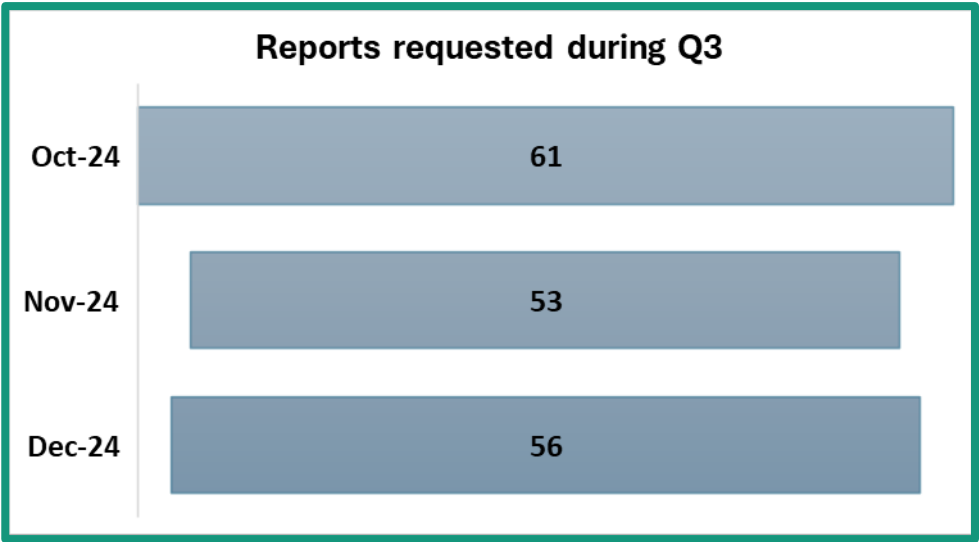


Reports requested during Q3

| | |
|---|---|
| Oct-24 | 61 |
| Nov-24 | 53 |
| Dec-24 | 56 |

Staff in the Justice Service work with men and women subject to Community Payback Orders who present with a wide range of presenting risk and needs.   This includes individuals with **mental health, substance use, adverse childhood experiences, trauma and negative experiences** of education and or employment. Staff working within Justice Services require the appropriate level of support and training to enable them to effectively engage with people in order to progress **interventions towards positive changes** in behaviour.   An important part of ensuring that men and women in the justice system have ease of access to services and resources is the provision of robust community-based alternatives to custodial sentences as it enables individuals to remain in their community, **maintain relationships** and ensures continuity of care.

The main community-based sentence is a Community Payback Order (CPO), which can have several requirements attached to it.  The most frequently imposed requirements are Supervision and Unpaid Work.   During **Q3** the **Courts imposed 42 Community Payback Orders**, the chart below shows how many of these included the main two requirements.

**Chart: Community Payback Orders imposed during Q3**
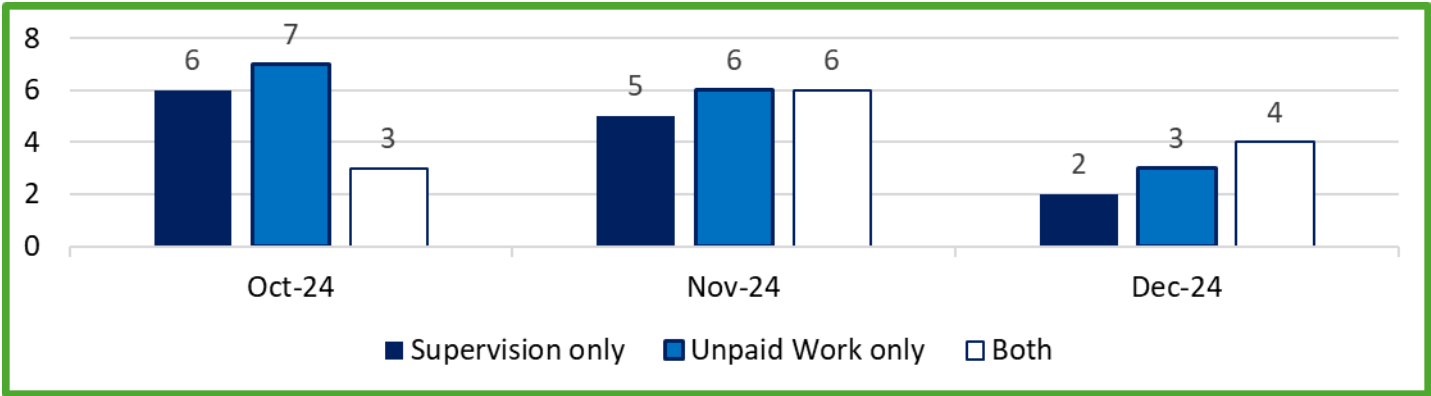


Alongside managing individuals on Community Payback Orders the Justice Service provides a **throughcare service** to people who are in **prison** and to their families/named support, from the point of sentence, during the period in custody and following release. It comprises of two elements that are fundamentally connected, **services provided during the custodial sentence** and services provided **on release back into the community**.  Justice Social Work have a statutory duty to provide a service to persons who will be subject to statutory supervision on release.  This includes a life sentence, Order for Lifelong Restriction (OLR), long-term determinate sentence (4 years and over), short term sex offender sentence, extended sentence or a Supervised Release Order (SRO).

It is essential to establishing and maintaining **confidence in community-based sentences** that there is assurance that robust action is taken on non-compliance.  To be able to comply with the requirements of the order the individual has understand the expectations and **consequences** of non-compliance it is important that staff are skilled in being able to engage with people effectively.   Justice Social Work staff use a **trauma informed and person-centred**

approach to develop effective working relationships with clients.   In the interests of justice, and to maintain the public confidence in community sentences, all missed appointments, or failure to comply, are responded to robustly using disciplinary procedures which can result in the order being returned to court in breach.   During the breach process we continue to seek to engage individuals to re-engage with interventions to **reduce and manage the risk** of re-offending.

The table below illustrates the percentage of individuals who have been breached and those with whom we have been able to maintain effective engagement with during the breach process.

The number of open orders is greater than the number of individuals supervised as a person can be subject to more than one CPO at any given time.

**Chart: Effectively Participating in Community Payback Order**
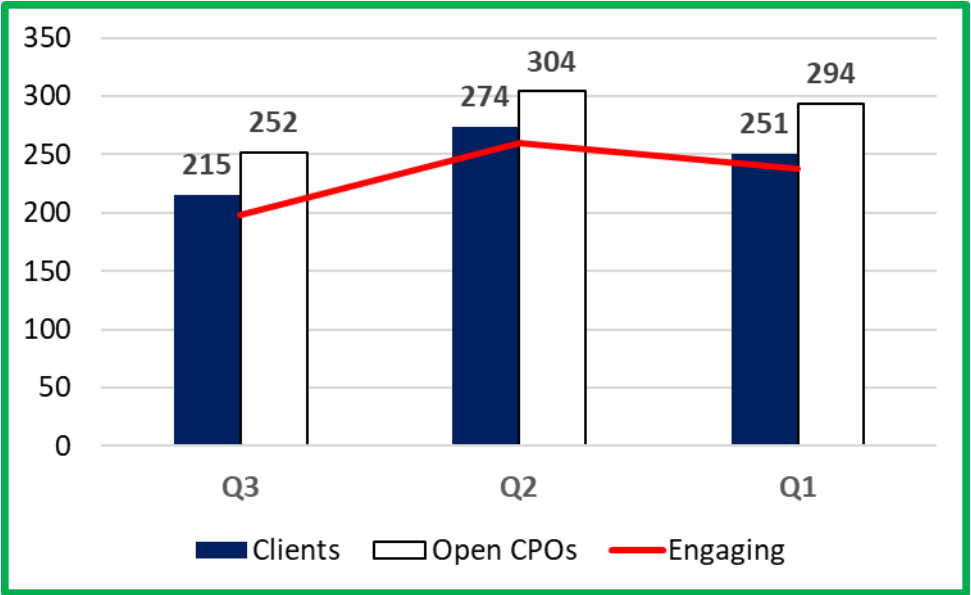
Q3 Feedback from people on CPO's and those in the wider community who have benefited:

From individuals on orders:
*"…..you've been nice to me. I like you. Who says they go on supervision to enjoy it but I have. Any other punishment for me wouldn't have been right, it's good talking to someone you dinnae know, it's been a Godsend that I got this"*

*"I've made changes to my dinking, only drinking socially, I enjoyed unpaid work but glad to have been able to complete it"*

From beneficiaries:

*"We Just want to say that your team continuing support to help facilitate hospital discharge. We feel that we can get client home faster, properties cleared, and Clients' furniture moved.  You all do an amazing job, and we could not do our job without your support."*

*"Thank you so much again for all your hard work – it really does benefit so many vulnerable members of the community and supports so many other services.  Your help has been much appreciated with this one!  ☺  Keep up the amazing work team and please read this email out to the clients that were involved in this job."*

*"I wanted to email you about support I got from your team today. I had a client who MARC were doing the removals for they however left a good bit of stuff in the client's old house.  My client called me in a panic as she is in a wheelchair and has no support.  I visited and filled my car but there was still a good amount left.  I called (staff member), and he along with your clients attended within 5 minutes, loaded their van with the remainder of the clients' items and delivered them to her new property.  I am aware they only had a small gap in what I can imagine is a busy schedule.  I cannot stress enough how grateful and appreciative I am of your team stepping in today and supporting me with what was a very stressful situation for my client.  They really did save the day!"*

# Public Health

The Public Health Practitioners work **to support services to improve wellbeing** and reduce health inequalities for the people of Midlothian. We support staff to **design and deliver** services that support early intervention and prevention. We make connections and **share good practice** about how to avoid inequalities, and we monitor and evaluate long term, population level outcomes. The Health Inclusion team works directly with **vulnerable people** in the community to understand what matters to them and live the lives they choose.

## Supporting people at risk of suicide
**Suicide Critical Response workshop**

The purpose of the workshop was to stress test Midlothian's response to a suicide. The workshop was facilitated by Public Health Scotland and used a fictional scenario to work through varies aspects including data sharing, support for those affected and communications. 16 people attended the workshop from a variety of sectors including HSCP, 3rd Sector, Education, Children's services, Public Health, and Housing. As part of the evaluation of the event people fed back that they enjoyed the interactive nature of the session and found the discussion useful, describing the value of the interactive format, the informal discussions, and the networking conversations.

The attendees reported that they learned and gained a better understanding of the gaps in our response and the processes we currently have in place when a suicide happens in Midlothian, and recognised the importance of people, perspectives and information. We also asked what people would do differently as a result of attending. The main response was addressing actions to ensure our response is effective. This workshop has helped to establish a baseline for our response to suicide in Midlothian and will help develop the 3-year strategy going forward.

As part of a multidisciplinary working group, Midlothian HSCP Public Health Practitioners worked in collaboration with the Public Health Scotland Local Intelligence Support Team (LIST), NHS Lothian Public Health, Midlothian HSCP Planning, Performance and Improvement Team and Midlothian Council to complete the Q3 update to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). All members of this group have considerable expertise in their specialist fields, with senior sponsorship provided an NHS Lothian Consultant in Public Health. The data provided within the JSNA are of the highest quality, having already undergone comprehensive cleansing, assurance and validation processes in advance of publication. Data sources are always clearly referenced. This work has received recognition as a national exemplar by Public Health Scotland and the model has since been adopted by other IJBs.

The working group met most recently on 20th November 2024 and reviewed the sections set out below. The update was presented to Midlothian IJB's Strategic Planning Group on Thursday 16th January 2025, including a brief summary of each of the areas. The full data sets, comparisons and references / sources were provided as appendices. The update was very well received and included:

- Demographics – Mortality
- Prevention and Early Intervention - Education & Qualifications
- Health Behaviours - Sexual health and Blood Borne Viruses
- Health Behaviours - Loneliness & Social Isolation
- Health behaviours - Physical activity
- Health behaviours – Drugs
- Population groups - People involved with Community Justice
- Health conditions - Coronary heart disease
- Access to care - Unpaid Carers
- Access to care - Primary Care (GPs)
- Access to care - Hospitals - Unscheduled care

Midlothian data are very often consistent with the national picture across Scotland. However, it is important to note that health inequalities are still having a significant impact at a local level and driving variation across geographic data zones. The predicted shift in economic profile of the Midlothian population, driven by the scale and location of current housebuilding, may have the effect of disguising the level of economic deprivation in some areas of Midlothian. In the longer term, this may have an effect on funding models and has the potential to reinforce the inverse care law and widen health inequalities further.

# Substance Use

Midlothian SUS treatment service Q3 performance predicted 100%, for all individuals referred to the service both for Substance misuse and Alcohol dependency were seen and assessed/treatment started within 21 days. (Due to reporting schedule final report not confirmed)

The service continues to progress with implementation of the MAT standards and are on target for the Scottish Government target expectations for March 2025, evidence of sustained Mat 1-5 and provisional Green 6-10. Midlothian has submitted recent progress report for Q3 and is on target for expected deliverables. The service con confirm MAT progress report has been submitted and accepted by Scottish Government for Q3.

The service received 44 new referrals over Q3, off which 23 referrals were for alcohol and 21 for Drugs. As reported all individuals for both alcohol and drugs have been seen within the 21 days.
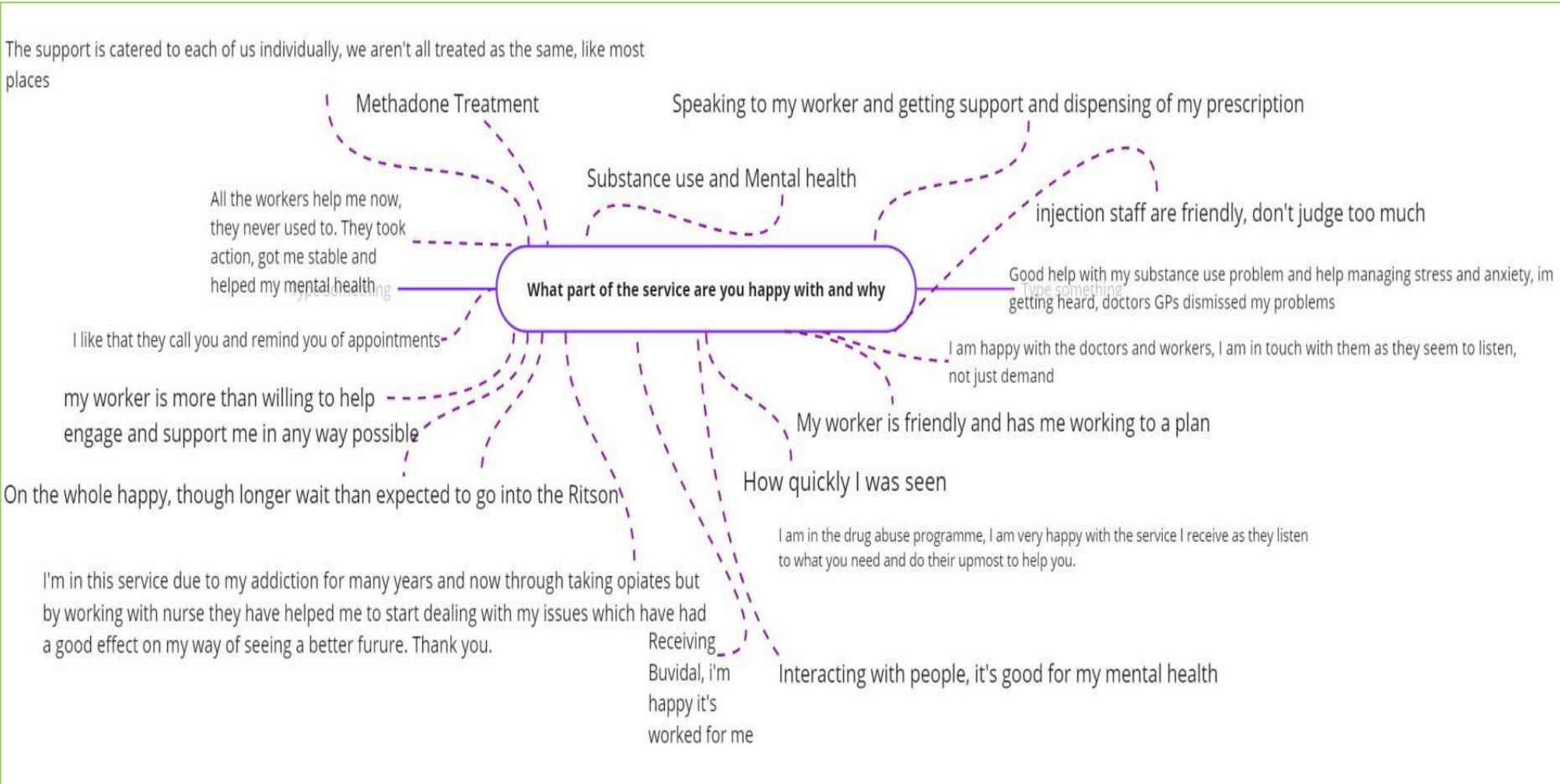
| Midlothian Substance Use Treatment Service | Q3 |
|---|---|
| A11 – all individuals seen within 21 days of referral. | Predicted 100% |
| Caseload | 334 |
| New Referrals (excludes re titration) | 44 |
| NFO assertive outreach (treatment service required only) | 18 |

Midlothian SUS service recognises the importance of Patient/Client feedback, it enables the service to improve the quality of services and ensures that care meets the needs of patients and clients, which in turn provides better outcomes for Patients/Clients. Feedback is important in identifying areas for improvement, evidencing the strengths and gaps of a service, through the voice of those with lived experience.

The service continues to strive to obtain feedback both through 1:1 but also for the group actives held. Throughout Quarter 3 the service's focus has been on the following 4 questions:

- 'What part of the service are you happy with and why'?
- 'Is there anything about the service you feel needs improving'?
- 'Are there services that are not available that you feel we should provide'?
- 'Do you have any other comments on the service we provide'?

Below is a 'Mindmap' of the feedback received from Patients/Clients highlighting what parts of the service they are happy with and why.



The support is catered to each of us individually, we aren't all treated as the same, like most places

Methadone Treatment

Speaking to my worker and getting support and dispensing of my prescription

Substance use and Mental health

All the workers help me now, they never used to. They took action, got me stable and helped my mental health

injection staff are friendly, don't judge too much

What part of the service are you happy with and why

Good help with my substance use problem and help managing stress and anxiety, im getting heard, doctors GPs dismissed my problems

I like that they call you and remind you of appointments

I am happy with the doctors and workers, I am in touch with them as they seem to listen, not just demand

my worker is more than willing to help engage and support me in any way possible

My worker is friendly and has me working to a plan

On the whole happy, though longer wait than expected to go into the Ritson

How quickly I was seen

I am in the drug abuse programme, I am very happy with the service I receive as they listen to what you need and do their upmost to help you.

I'm in this service due to my addiction for many years and now through taking opiates but by working with nurse they have helped me to start dealing with my issues which have had a good effect on my way of seeing a better furure. Thank you.

Receiving Buvidal, i'm happy it's worked for me

Interacting with people, it's good for my mental health

Throughout the feedback Patients/Clients highlighted an area for improvement, individuals reported not fully knowing what was available to them. On receiving this feedback, the services came together and developed a resource board, which is situated within main reception area outlining all that's available to support individuals with their personal recovery.

Further, services all agreed to demonstrate that they were positively making changes based on the feedback from Patients/Clients. The service developed 'You Said, We Did' section, this has been a positive and welcomed addition to NO 11. Our priority is engaging with Patients/Clients to ensure they feel engaged in-service design as well as demonstrating that services are listening and hearing the voice of a person with lived experience.

# Adult Mental Health

Adult Mental Health Service: Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) and Intensive Home Treatment Team (IHTT)

Psychiatry
All adults referred to the CMHT are seen based on their needs and urgency within 1-4 weeks. Providing a range of assessment, diagnostics, treatment, and interventions for both individuals who are subject to statutory Mental Health Care and Treatment Orders and those who have significant mental disorder and require specialist intervention. Midlothian strive to continue to meet the waiting time directive of 100% of all individuals referred to adult mental health are seen within 18 weeks.

Neurodiversity
Neurodiversity presents as a national challenge for waiting time performance, both ASD and ADHD. Midlothian's waiting time performance for both conditions continue to be the shortest across Lothian, where individuals from point of referral acceptance for ADHD longest wait is 65 weeks and ASC 61 weeks. There is ongoing development work Pan Lothian to look at how we can robustly address the current and increasing demand.

| Midlothian Adult Mental Health (Medical, Nursing and AHP) | Q3 |
|---|---|
| Waiting times | (CMHT) 2-3 weeks dependent on urgency. Waiting time target 100% of individuals seen within 18 weeks<br><br>ADHD – 293 individuals on waiting list- longest wait 65 weeks<br><br>ASC- 61 individuals on waiting list- longest wait 61 weeks. Reduction of 40 individuals waiting since last quarter. |
| New Referrals | 371 |

**Bed performance**

The bed performance for Midlothian has fluctuated over Q3 and predominantly not remined on target. Midlothian continues to have a higher percentage of individuals admitted to hospital who are subject to the Mental health care and treatment act. IHTT continue to provide daily in reach to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, assertively working with the wards and the consultants to identify opportunities to provide early discharge/supportive community transfer.  We recognise there has been pressure on bed allocation, the medium for Q3 over all is 12 per month.

On further review and exploration of Midlothian bed usage this quarter, Midlothian currently has a reduction in its allocated bed numbers (7) for new acute presentations requiring hospital admission due to having 3 residents who require more complex mental health housing options which are currently not available in Midlothian or wider Lothian. This must be considered when reviewing the bed median.

As a service we further explored the unusual change in our atypical performance in allocated bed usage and identified that several individuals were of new presentations to the service as well as several existing Patients who had not required hospital intervention for a number of years but regrettable over the last few months due to changes in their circumstances even with extensive input from the community teams has resulted in requiring hospital admission for a period of stability.

IHTT and the CMHT continue to work closely with the inpatient wards to identify individuals quickly for early discharge and supporting individuals to be at home.

| Q3 | |
|---|---|
| Median Bed performance | 12 |

**Mental Health 18+ and Substance Use**

Workforce challenges in Mental Health and SUS can be changeable, this can be due to the on-going pressures in the reduction of wider work force availability which impacts on recruitment. This reduction can impact across Health and Social Work/Care, which can lead to posts remining vacant for substantial periods. Midlothian has been in a positive position due to staff remining and choosing to work in Midlothian.

Our internal challenges consist of both long-term and short-term absences, service and team leads work closely with individuals through promoting attendance at work, to support individuals to return in a supportive manner.

Although we currently have a small number of vacancies (5) there has been positive response to these vacancies through recruitment. Long-term and short-term absence across Mental Health and SUS, can have a significant impact, and during these times services come together to mitigate any risks to service delivery. I'm pleased to say that it is not currently impacting on service delivery, the pressure we currently face in long term is within the Team Lead cohort, however we have mitigated this through acting up posts and between the service manager and other team leads supporting the relevant teams to ensure appropriate management and leadership.

# Pentana Performance Dashboard

**A full review of quarterly performance data is available via Pentana (Browser login link – https://midlothian.pentanarpm.uk/login**

## Quarter 3 - Adult Health and Social Care-

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **18** Indicators that are On Target | **9** Indicators that are Off Target | **11** Indicators that are Data Only | **1** Indicators that have No Data Available |
| **15** Actions that are On Target | **2** Actions that are Off Target | **12** Quarterly ASC Service All Risks | **0** Quarterly ASC Service High Risks |

### Adult Health and Social Care INDICATORS Off Target

| ... | Code & Title | Gauge | Value | Target | Last Update | History |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 🔴 | 24/25.AHSC5.2a Midlothian Adult Mental health bed occupancy rate (8 beds - 7 acut... | | No | Yes | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | AHSC.MPI.06 % of high risks that have been reviewed in the last quarter | | 0% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | ASC.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days | | 22.22% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | AHSC.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumul... | | 13.33 | 10.53 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | 24/25.AHSC4.2a Percentage of key projects rated with a RAG status of green. | | 75% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | AHSC.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does n... | | 83.33% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | ASC.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1 | | 7.444 | 5 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | AHSC.MPI.03 % of service priority actions on target / completed, of the total number | | 88.24% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | AHSC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete ... | | 88.89% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |

← 1 of 1 →

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.

Midlothian

**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 Q3 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 in line with the Scottish Government targets. Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change Strategy which 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. Focus continues within Place services to achieve future emissions targets. This quarter Council were asked to consider the findings of the Climate Action Support Report (CASR) prepared by Aether consultants relating to climate emission reduction trajectories for the Council's estate.

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.

This quarter saw the official opening of Midlothian Energy Limited (MEL) Centre which will capture low carbon heat from the Millerhill Recycling and Energy Recovery Centre and use this heat to supply 1,000s of homes, education and retail properties at Shawfair. Council endorsed a 5 year business plan for Midlothian Energy Limited that includes future plans to supply low carbon heat to new homes in Midlothian through the MEL heat network and expansion into existing buildings and other areas of Midlothian. The first home is now connected to the heat network at Craighall Village (CALA) and Plot Connection Agreement is also in place with Robertsons in Shawfair.

Our new Active Travel Strategy **'On the Move Midlothian: Our Active Travel Strategy for Everyone 2024-2034**' was approved this quarter at December Council. The strategy will allow Midlothian Council to continue to seek further funding from 2025/26 onwards for active travel projects throughout Midlothian, with funding bids and proposals already being prepared for the delivery of more safe, and properly lit routes to schools and towns, town centre cycle parking, improved active travel connections between Lasswade and Loanhead, and between Roslin and Penicuik, as well as the creation of a rural off-road connection between Penicuik and the Scottish Borders. The new strategy will lead the way in providing safe, convenient, well connected and well maintained active travel networks to encourage the use of active and public forms of transport, aiming to reduce our carbon emissions and car kilometres.

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. Businesses signing up to the Pledge continues to rise each quarter with a total of 169 businesses now committed, 22 of those signing up during quarter 3. 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 21.1km of carriageway and 2.22km of footway was resurfaced. Representing 3% and 0.32% of the carriageway and footway network respectively. Carriageway resurfacing has exceeded our target set out for the year with 13.4km of carriageway resurfaced during quarter 3. Although footway surfacing is slightly behind target, good progress has been made over quarters 2 and 3 and it is expected to meet the annual target.

3
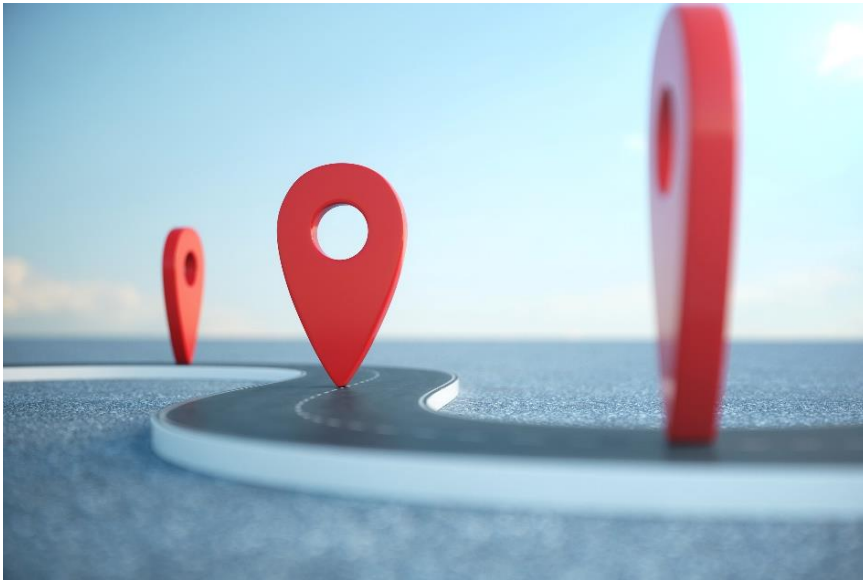
676.76 tonnes of material was used in quarter 3 to fill potholes. 424.98 tonnes of material was used for temporary repairs and 251.78 tonnes for pothole pro permanent patching. The Pothole Pro project equated to 2,078m$^2$ of permanent patching, repairing 611 potholes this quarter. There has been reduction in the number of pothole repairs compared to the same period last year, this is due to more periods of adverse weather throughout quarter 3.

As part of the street lighting capital programme a target of 500 new lighting column replacements are planned for this year. The lighting column programme commenced towards the end of quarter 2 with 180 columns replaced up to the end of quarter 3. The remaining replacements will take place during quarter 4 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. 203 upgrades were completed up to the end of quarter 3.

This quarter the upgrade of CCTV installation at Shawfair park and ride was completed and successful recruitment of a new Lighting Team Leader which will manage our Road Construction Consents and lighting projects.

**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 the 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 last quarter and the implementation of the digital in cab system began this quarter. This will provide digital in cab technology to all our roadside collection vehicles within waste services and transform the way the front line service is delivered, resulting 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.

During quarter 3, the service launched the recycling app (LitterLotto) which encourages residents to recycle at home for the chance to be entered into a free prize draw for £100 each month as well as a £1,000 UK wide free prize draw.  The app features benefits such as earning 'coins' for every piece of recycling binned correctly that can be used to claim discounts and rewards.  The app also uses advanced AI technology to recognise waste types, providing information on whether the Council can recycle items and which bin to use as well as offering tips on recycling items more effectively.  This has been widely promoted on our social media platforms and it is hoped to see an increase in recycling which will provide environmental and financial benefits.

5

**Neighbourhood Environment Team**

This quarter, the new Neighbourhood Environment Team became fully 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



This has resulted in improvements to the quality of the local environment across Midlothian through increased litter picking, weed removal, deep cleaning and mechanical sweeping.  The team are currently prioritising the removal of detritus which helps to prevent excessive weed growth throughout Midlothian during the growing season.

6

**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 the remainder 2024/25 in play areas across Midlothian.  23 improvements across our play areas, parks and green spaces were completed up to and including this quarter.

**Village improvements**

During quarter 3 the team carried out clean-ups in village areas including Cousland, Edgehead, Temple and Howgate. This programme will continue in quarter 4 ahead of the grass cutting season starting in March.

**Working with the community**

The Greenspace Team have continued to work with our brilliant volunteers across Midlothian, supporting 6 volunteer groups who help manage our countryside sites. 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 the year. 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, 5,107 volunteer hours (851 days) were spent in countryside sites. This quarter the Park Ranger Service hosted a Christmas 'thank you' celebration for our volunteers and our ageing well volunteer leaders.

During quarter 3 the Ranger service delivered the Midlothian Outdoor Festival attracting over 1,500 participants to a wide range of outdoor activities including cycling shows, walks, talks and running events.

**Greenspace improvement projects**

In quarter 3 the Greenspace team have secured funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to invest in the following projects;

- **Vogrie Country Park entrance barrier** - this investment will improve the parking experience for visitors to the site as well as increase income which is re-invested into the service.
- **Litter bin investment** - this funding will be used for the installation of 250 litter bins which will renew a quarter of the entire litter bin stock in parks and on our streets. The funding will be used to target damaged bins that detract from the aesthetics of the local environment.

## Protective Services

**Business Regulations and Trading Standards**

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.

A Remedial Action Notice was served at a Dalkeith restaurant to stop the use of a vacuum packer to package both raw meats and ready to eat foods. This practice is at high risk of food cross contamination due to the complexity of the equipment that cannot be effectively cleaned and disinfected between these uses to ensure food safety.

A restaurant/takeaway in Gorebridge that has seen ongoing interventions from officers since May 2024 was served with an additional Remedial Action Notice during quarter 3 to stop food being stored within a shipping container on the site. Due to significant ongoing rat activity in the area and the poor structure of the shipping container, the Food Business Operator was unable to prevent the rats gaining access to the food storage area. A report has previously been sent to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service regarding previous serious non-compliances. In the meantime, officers continue to inspect the premises on a monthly basis and are working with the Food Business Operator to improve his understanding of food hygiene and get adequate procedures in place.

This quarter our Environmental Health Officers investigated two serious health and safety incidents that happened within Midlothian businesses.  Investigations of this nature are resource intensive requiring two officers.  At this time, one has concluded, and the other is ongoing.

Two Health and Safety Prohibition Notices were served on different businesses after defect reports were received from lift engineers highlighting serious deficiencies.  Controls to prevent and remove the risk were put in place quickly and the notices were lifted.

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 initial visit to the business with a few minor points raised. A final visit to the premises during quarter 3 confirmed all works were completed to their satisfaction and the audit was closed.

Given the ongoing nationwide crisis regarding the lack of qualified Environmental Health Officers and Food safety Officers, our Food and Safety team have adopted a "grow our own" approach by recruiting a second trainee Food Safety Officer who will complete practical training and required reports before undertaking the Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland (REHIS) professional exams in September 2025. Two Environmental Health Officers have been contracted to assist with training of officers and tackling a backlog of inspections to bring our programmed food law inspections back on track; including working on some of our low-risk inspections from our 2024/2025 service plan.

Our Trading Standards team received 28 consumer complaints this quarter, a decrease from 44 during the same period last year. All consumer complaints were responded to within 5 working days and 96% fully 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 £48,395 has been returned to nine Midlothian consumers following Trading Standards involvement. These figures do not include refunds obtained by reporting cases to the Procurator Fiscal. In addition, an ATM cash machine in Bonnyrigg was restored to free use after Trading Standards contacted the provider who was charging £1.25 whilst still advertising free cash withdrawals.

Trading Standards prosecution cases continue this quarter with one case reaching a conclusion regarding a discount bathrooms company who was ordered to repay £10,875.75 to nine customers. The trader pleaded guilty to an offence under the Consumer Protection from the Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 of operating a fraudulent scheme. Another case, involving a trader from Penicuik, may be resolved after they

provided a full refund to a Penicuik customer of £4,350 which had been charged for landscaping works that were not carried out. There are currently three other cases in various stages of legal proceedings:

- A trial is now to take place in May 2025 regarding alleged offences concerning 8,400 cigarettes and tobacco last year.
- A couple from Gorebridge and Bonnyrigg who allegedly sold fake goods on a Facebook private group boasting of over 3,000 members is pending.
- A Wishaw man, a repeated fraud offender, who did not return £3,000 to a Dalkeith woman after it was confirmed permission was required to replace roof tiles, faces charges brought by other authorities and a warrant has been issued for his arrest.

**Illegal tobacco**

This quarter Trading Standards were joined by Police Scotland and a tobacco detector dog as part of Operation CeCe Scotland (funded by HMRC), an operation which has been working to seize illicit tobacco since 2021. During November, 9,100 cigarettes and 9 tobacco packs were seized and in December, 480 cigarettes and 10 tobacco pouches were seized from the same shop in Dalkeith. The cigarettes and tobacco were not legal for the UK market and some brands are very likely to be counterfeit, possibly contain unsafe filler material. Packs were sold for £5 minimum. Trading Standards issued Sanction Notices at each visit which could result in HMRC imposing fines totalling £12,500.  The property owner was also contacted by Trading Standards and an eviction is in process. This is the first local example of a national problem of a shop being a front for the sale of illicit tobacco.  Two other shops were visited and on both occasions no illegal tobacco was found.

51 Trading Standards primary inspections took place this quarter, 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 37 intelligence logs were recorded on the national Trading Standards Intelligence database (IDB) by our Trading Standards team. Intelligence logging remains high from quarter to quarter this year and in comparison to other Scottish Councils, Midlothian continue to sit in the top quartile for logs created.

Our Public Health Environmental Protection team successfully recruited a Regulatory Services apprentice this quarter after being awarded college fee funding from Skills Development Scotland for two Regulatory Services Apprentice posts. 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 313 public health service requests this quarter from Midlothian residents and businesses. A further 83 service requests were received from internal sources. Key activities for the Public Health Environmental Protection team this quarter included:

- A new Environmental Warden has taken up a part time post, principal duties include dog control, flytipping, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling. This post fills a vacancy created under the flexible working scheme.
- A number of statutory notices regarding a variety of matters including fly-tipping and vermin were served in quarter 3 and have been complied with.
- A renewed process for prescribed information checking under landlord registration commenced during quarter 3. 23 cases were raised during the remainder of the quarter, 17 of which have now demonstrated compliance and 6 remain ongoing.
- Updated licence conditions for commercial animal boarding establishments were approved by Council in December 2024. The approved licence conditions will provide authorised inspecting officers with improved scope for ensuring compliant premises operation and sufficient standards of animal welfare.
- By the end of quarter 3, the Public Health and Environmental Protection team had issued 98 Short Term Let Licences under the new scheme.
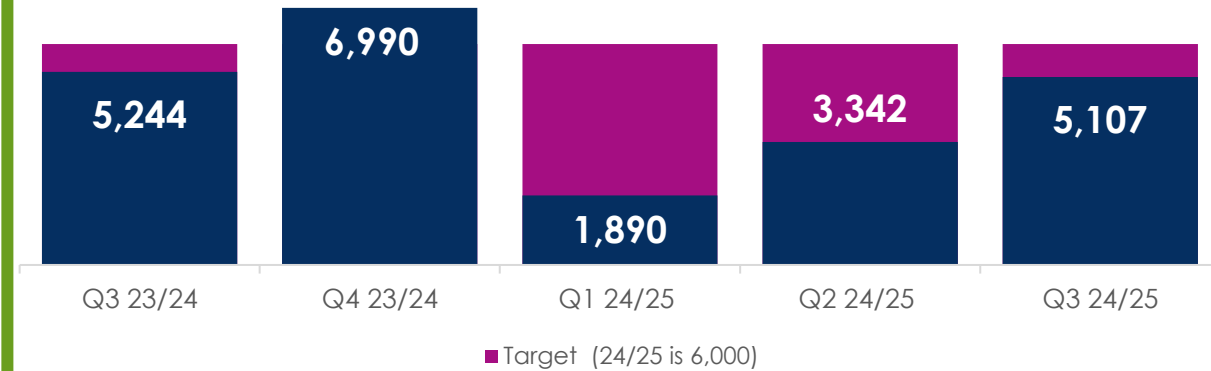
# Neighbourhood Services – performance

## % OF ALL DISPOSED WASTE*

Recycled 49.4%

Energy from Waste 34.8%

Landfill 14.7%

Other 1.2%
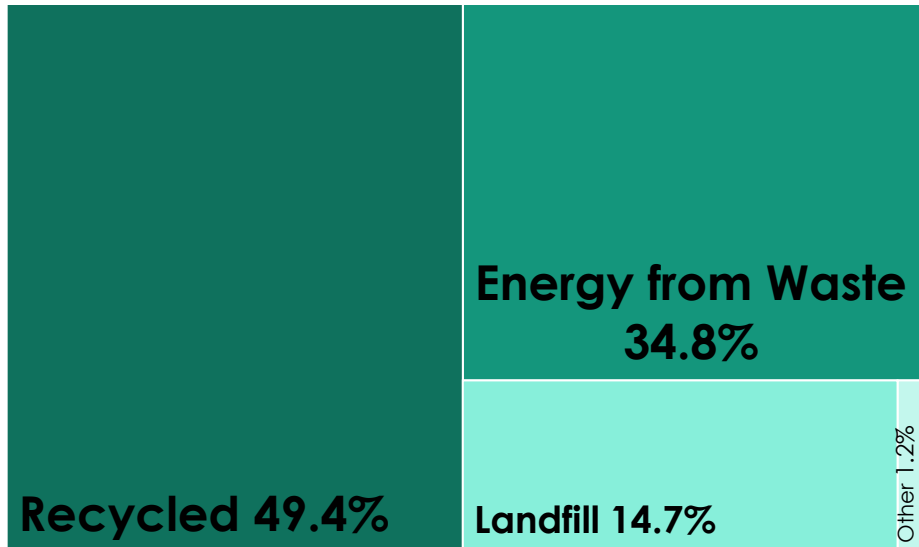
*Data shows figures for Q2 24/25. Q3 24/25 not available until Q4.*

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

| Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5,244 | 6,990 | 1,890 | 3,342 | 5,107 |

■ Target  (24/25 is 6,000)

**23** play area, parks and greenspace improvements completed this year to date.

---

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

**2,078** m² of permanent patching achieved this quarter.

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

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

## % of Roads and footpath resurfaced
### (cumulative)

| | Q3 23/34 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % of Footpath | 0.44% | 0.64% | 0.01% | 0.16% | 0.32% |
| % road network | 1.72% | 2.15% | 0.51% | 1.00% | 3.01% |

■ % of Footpath   ■ % road network
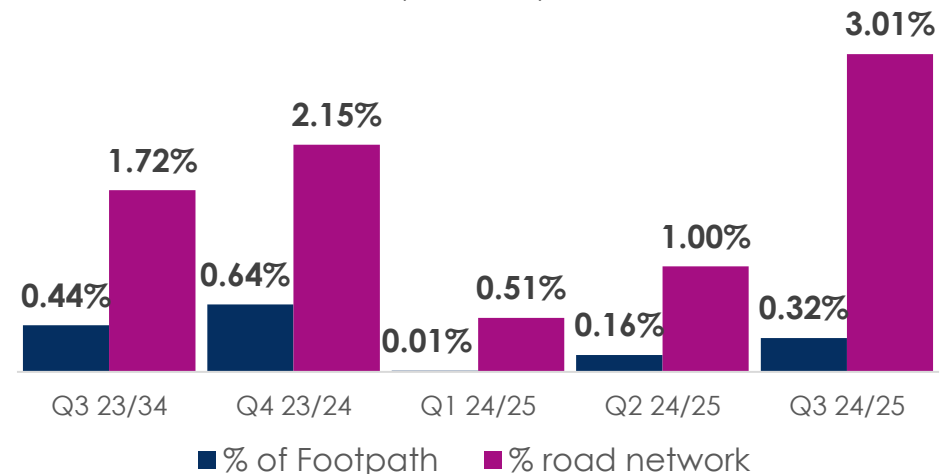
# Protective Services – performance

## Food Standards

**94%** of food related service requests from mid residents and Businesses responded to with target of 10 working days.

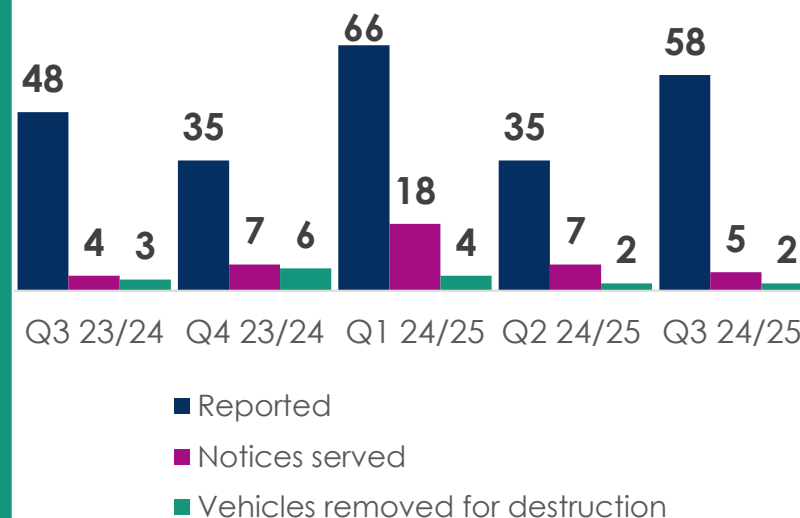**63** food law interventions carried out (Hygiene/Food Standards)

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

## Public Health

**313** Public Health service requests received from residents and businesses this quarter. (290 in Q2).

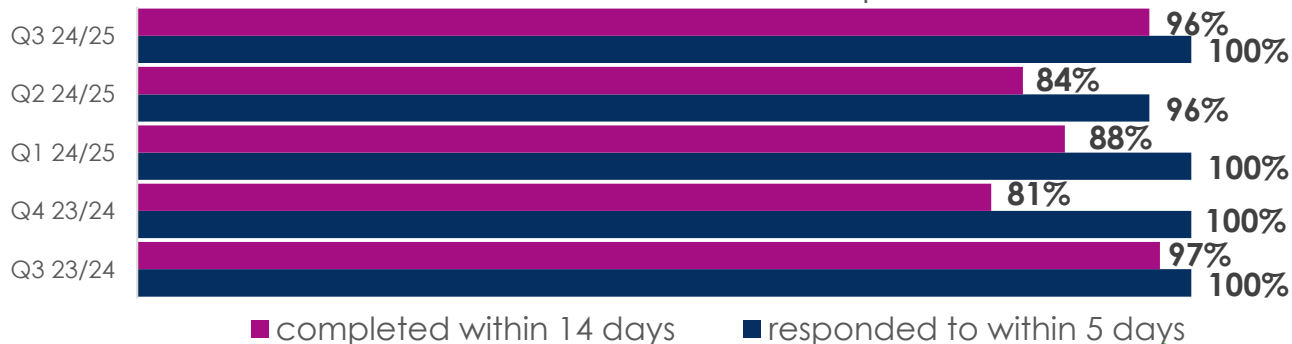**98%** of public health complaints receiving first response within timescale this quarter.

## Trading Standards

**28** consumer complaints received this quarter (decrease from 44 in Q3 23/24)

### Number of abandoned vehicles
(quarterly)

| | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reported | 48 | 35 | 66 | 35 | 58 |
| Notices served | 4 | 7 | 18 | 7 | 5 |
| Vehicles removed for destruction | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 |

- Reported
- Notices served
- Vehicles removed for destruction

### % of Consumer complaints

| | completed within 14 days | responded to within 5 days |
|---|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | 96% | 100% |
| Q2 24/25 | 84% | 96% |
| Q1 24/25 | 88% | 100% |
| Q4 23/24 | 81% | 100% |
| Q3 23/24 | 97% | 100% |

completed within 14 days    responded to within 5 days

**109** liquor licence applications received in Q3 with **100%** determined

**90** Civic Government license applications received in Q3 with **78%** determined

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# Housing

## Key achievements Q3 24/25

**Meeting housing need**

The Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2025/26 to 2029/30 was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 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 119 new build homes (23 this quarter) in Conifer Road, Mayfield, St Cuthberts in Bonnyrigg High Street, Buccleuch Wynd, Pathhead and Danderhall.

There were 5,971 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this quarter, a 9% increase compared to the same period last year. 152 lets were made this quarter (averaging 50 lets per month), 4 houses were let through our Housing First model. 40 lets were made to new build and open market purchases.

This quarter the Scottish Housing Regulator conducted an assurance visit to evaluate our Temporary Accommodation service. Feedback received was positive and they were satisfied with the processes and improvements implemented so far highlighting our commitment to meeting regulatory standards and providing effective support to those in need.

**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 3 was 378, an increase of 5% 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.

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 available from quarter 2 show the length of time homeless applicants waited until receiving a permanent housing outcome was 39 weeks, showing a continued downward trend from 106 weeks at quarter 1 of 2022/23 and 57.5 weeks for quarter 3 last year. It should be noted figures for quarter 3 are not currently available however we expect current figures to remain within target. Similarly, quarter 3 figures for the length of time homeless applicants spent in temporary accommodation is currently not available. The most recent available data for quarter 2 in 2024/25 shows that an average of 33.9 weeks was spent in temporary accommodation compared to an average of 89 weeks over the same period in 2022/23 and 39.5 weeks quarter 3 of last year. It is expected that figures will continue to remain within target.

The number of temporary accommodation households that have been flipped to permanent accommodation was 53 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 196.  We continue to promote this service to ensure early successful intervention when possible.

Tenants sustaining permanent accommodation continues to be high this quarter with 91.8% 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 9,031. A total of 25,008 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 80.29%. Although this is still off target there has been a significant increase from 49.3% meeting standards at quarter 3 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 (EESSH). 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 4,733 were failing assessment. We have reduced this figure to 1,708 during quarter 2 and 1,436 this quarter resulting in 80.29% 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.

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**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. Outlined in the review is the proposal to increase the workforce to manage the increase in workload, as well as successfully managing the future of the service as it navigates through the expected changes due to succession planning.

Building Standards met with the Scottish Government in October 2024 and was given a positive review and welcomed the outcome of the Rational Report and the Council's commitment to the service re-structure.

# Housing – performance

**5,971** applicants on housing waiting list this quarter (General needs and Homeless) (increase from 5,481 in Q3 23/24).

**152** housing lets this quarter.

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

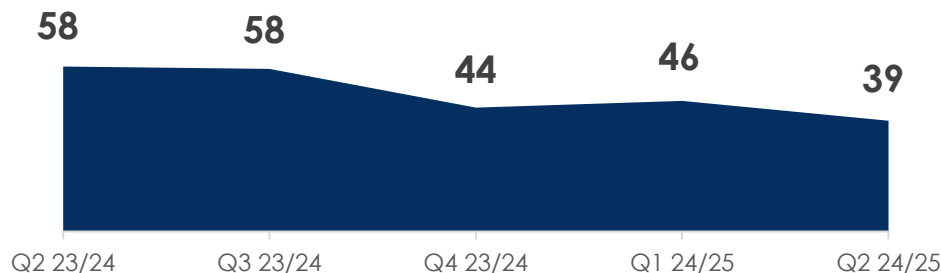**4** Lets to Housing First applicants this quarter.

**% of lets made to applicants**

Homeless **72%**

General needs **28%**
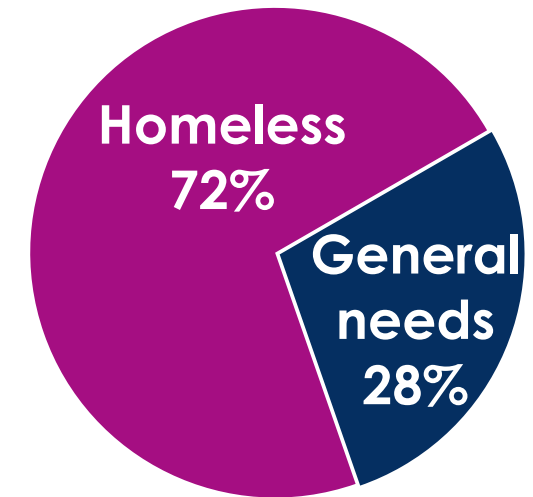
Time taken to re-let permanent accommodation properties (calendar days)

| Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | 45 | 23 | 47 | 28 |
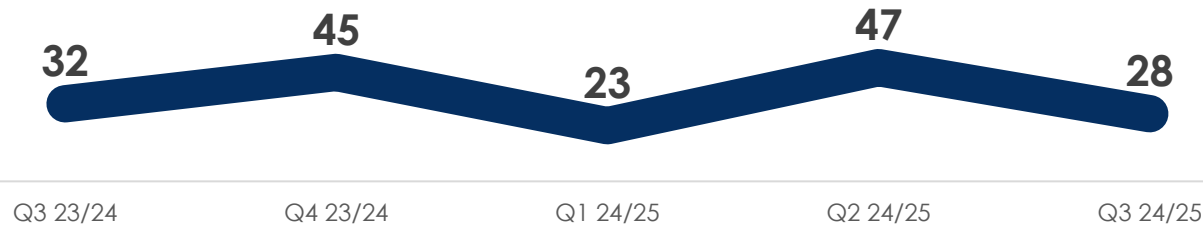
**91.8%** of Homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy after 1 year.

Length of time (weeks) homeless applicants wait until recieving a permanant housing outcome

| Q2 23/24 | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 58 | 58 | 44 | 46 | 39 |

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

| Q2 23/24 | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 58 | 39.5 | 40.3 | 42 | 33.9 |

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*Due to reporting issues, recent data for quarter 3 will not be available until quarter 4.*
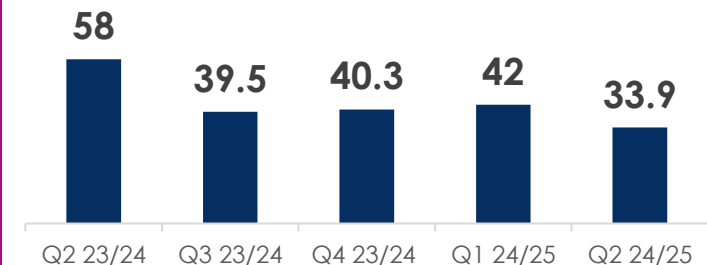
# Building Services – performance

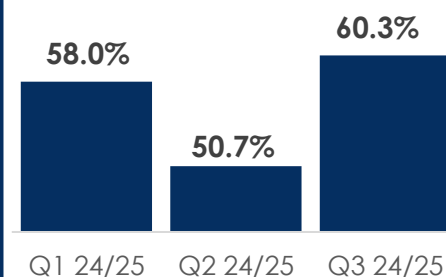## % of Council housing meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) (cumulative)

| Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 49.3 | 59.47 | 72.1 | 76.55 | 80.29 |
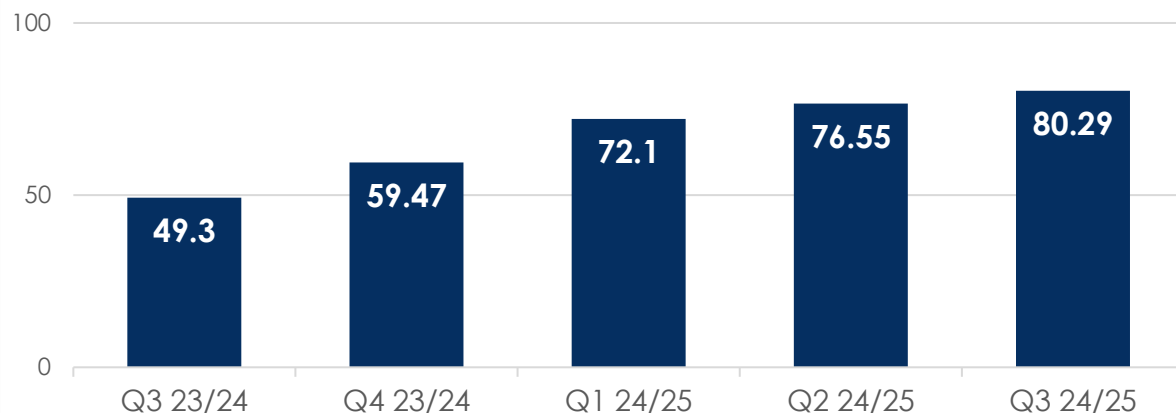
**9,031** jobs completed this quarter by our Building Maintenance Service

**25,008** jobs completed year to date

## Percentage of housing repairs completed on time this quarter:

**93.67%** of **emergency repairs** completed on time

**82.05%** of **priority 2 repairs** completed on time

**83.01%** of **priority 3 repairs** completed on time

## Building Standards

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

| Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 58.0% | 50.7% | 60.3% |

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

| Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 74.0% | 72.4% | 75.0% |

**Building Standards customer satisfaction rate:**

**7.7** out of 10

# Economy & Regeneration

## Key achievements Q3 24/25

This quarter Council approved the Economic Strategy for Inclusive Economic Growth 2025-2030. The new strategy aligns with the Scottish Government National Strategy for Economic Transformation and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Prosperity Framework. Midlothian's vision is that:

*"Midlothian's wellbeing economy will support our communities, businesses and town centres to thrive, ensuring inclusivity and fair work for all. It will continue to be recognised as home to world leading clusters of science and innovation and be known as an area in which everyone can live, work and do business sustainably to generate wealth and wellbeing for its citizens"*

This will be achieved in accordance with four pillars, principles that underpin the strategy's vision: **empowerment, partnership and collaboration, ambition** and **innovation** and sets out the following priorities to achieve our vision:

- Develop Midlothian's proposition within the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.
- Enhance skills and employability opportunities in Midlothian, to meet the challenges and opportunities of inclusive Green Growth with entrepreneurship recognised as valuable career pathway.
- Maximise the potential of Midlothian's key sectors to support a Just Transition.
- Capitalise on the strengths of Midlothian's strategic partners to embed community wealth across all services to realise a wellbeing economy.
- Re-imagine our town centres, ensuring they meet Midlothian's economic, social, cultural and environmental needs.
- Deliver infrastructure enhancements that will support Midlothian's transition to a Wellbeing Economy.

**Business gateway Service**

The Business Gateway Midlothian Service continues to offer consistent levels of activity across various support services, from pre-start, to start-up and existing business growth support.

44 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received in quarter 3. Although 16 fewer enquires compared to this quarter last year, 152 enquires have been received this year to date which is similar to the year to date stats of 23/24.  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 17, creating a total of 23 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1,230,000 to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading. This is a decrease compared to 24 starts over the same period last year however the 'Planning to Start' enquires over this quarter and last means the pipeline is still healthy. Business Gateway, as part of the 'Gateway to the Future' service redesign, are looking to engage with more existing and growing businesses. Pre-start micro-businesses and sole traders are still key to the service. The perception of how Business Gateway can support has to expand into growth and high growth client profiles in order to maximise the Economic Development potential, this is what has driven the launch and promotion of the 'Strengthen Your Business' enquiry tool which received 8 enquires this quarter.

Further to the above, and also part of the Business Gateway Service redesign, quarter 3 saw the launch of a new CRM tools; 'customer categories' and the 'progress tracker':

- **Customer categories**: the existing categories pre-start/new business/business base have been complemented by pre-start plus, new-business plus and local priority categories. Business Gateway local offices can now differentiate incoming planning to start businesses with more economic development potential across set metrics (premises, growth potential, exporting, minimum revenue, employee

numbers) by setting as 'pre-start plus'. If potential is realised and business starts, they will be 'new business plus'. One year after being 'claimed' as a start, if potential is still there, they can be categorised as a 'local priority'.

- **Progress Tracker**: where clients (due to potential economic development impact and scope) are requiring multiple interactions, across multiple themes, the progress tracker is a useful tool to retain all interactions in one place.

The set applicable themes include Human Resources, Carbon Reduction, Intellectual Property, Community Wealth Building, Innovation, Fair Work, Digital Maturity and Finance. This can be useful to see which outcomes have been achieved and is helpful where more than one person is providing support for a client. It also provides continuity where there is absence or staff turnover.

**Business Gateway Expert Help Programme**

Our second cohort of the Learn Ecommerce Expert Help programme went live in December with 14 local businesses enrolled. The programme will continue through January with one to one and group sessions with the Learn Ecommerce Expert Help provider.

The Net Zero Nation 12 month Programme which supported 13 diverse local businesses to accelerate their Net Zero Journey finished in December 2024. An in-person meeting with the full cohort of businesses and the delivery team is scheduled in quarter 4, where the Business Gateway team will receive feedback from the businesses involved and start to develop case studies on the outcomes achieved.

The popularity of our HR Expert Help programme has meant the budget was fully allocated in November 2024. 21 local businesses took advantage of the support since launch in March 2023.

16 local businesses have benefitted from the Finance Expert Help Programme since its launch in February 2023, with budget remaining for up to 4 clients.

**Business Gateway Midlothian Events**

A Business Gateway Midlothian Coffee Morning was held on the 8th of November 2024 at the Energy Training Academy with a focus on sustainability. Presenters at the event were Midlothian Energy Limited and CRD The Workforce Mobility Project outlining sustainable developments in Midlothian and how businesses in the area can get involved. 23 businesses attended the event. The outcomes were:

- Business based in Loanhead Industrial Estate working with Vattenfall to explore an estate wide transition to Green Energy.
- Businesses keen to be involved in the workforce mobility project, a video will be created to highlight the benefits to businesses of involvement to encourage wider participation in the data capture.

The next Coffee Morning is scheduled for Friday 24th of January at the [Midlothian Innovation Centre](#).
The speaker is Mark Blair form Effective Now, a Midlothian based consultancy. He will focus on how small businesses can best manage young people in the workplace.

**UKSPF Local Business Support**

A total of £374,813.36 of grant funding was allocated to 3 themes, Community Wealth Building, Tourism Culture & Heritage and Exporting with the final tranche of funds allocated this quarter. Over the course of the programme we have distributed 31 grants:

- Community Wealth Building - 14 applications
- Exporting – 8 applications
- Tourism Culture & Heritage – 9 applications

The Tourism Culture and Heritage funding included £25,000 to Economic Development to create 5 marketing videos and the procurement process awarded this work to local business Fifth House Design.

The Green Skills programme (fund value £100,000) continues to recruit and upskill local plumbers, heating engineers and electricians in the installation of Heat Pumps and Solar Panels/Battery Storage, this programme includes the Managed Learning Programme (MLP) which takes an individual with no experience of the trade to fully qualified gas and heat pump installers. In quarter 3 four unemployed individuals commenced on the MLP programme, each will participate in a work placement with a local installation company for the duration of the programme. The Solar Panel and battery storage programme has been popular we have so far approved 21 electricians for places within quarter 3 and they will progress to complete the course with Energy Training Academy. The Air Source Heat Pump element of the Green skills programme has been less popular but we have allocated 10 places so far and continue to work with local businesses to access the training.

The Economic Development team and our delivery partner The Energy Training Academy has been actively promoting the Green Skills programme via various online channels such as Locate in Midlothian, Facebook and LinkedIn, we have also reached out to non-Business Gateway registered businesses and converted them to clients in addition to supporting them to access the training.

**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 13 Social Enterprise organisations in quarter 3. Support provided included:

- 3 pre-start social enterprises have been provided with support to develop their idea and been given advice on support available and the current social enterprise landscape.
- 2 pre-start business associations have been provided with support and advice to set up structure and begin trading.
- 1 pre-start development Trust has been provided with support with planning and developing its organisational structure.
- 2 Social Enterprises have been provided with support to successfully secure grant funding.

**Land and Property**

Property enquiries are specific premises enquiries and sign ups to the property mailing list. We had a total of 31 enquiries from local businesses in quarter 3 of which 6 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. 2 inward investment enquiries were received in quarter 3, 1 from Heckmondwike in England with the potential to bring 60 jobs and one from Musselburgh in East Lothian with potential to bring 20 jobs to the area.

**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 this year, 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. The outcome of this process was reported to Planning Committee at its meeting in October 2024.
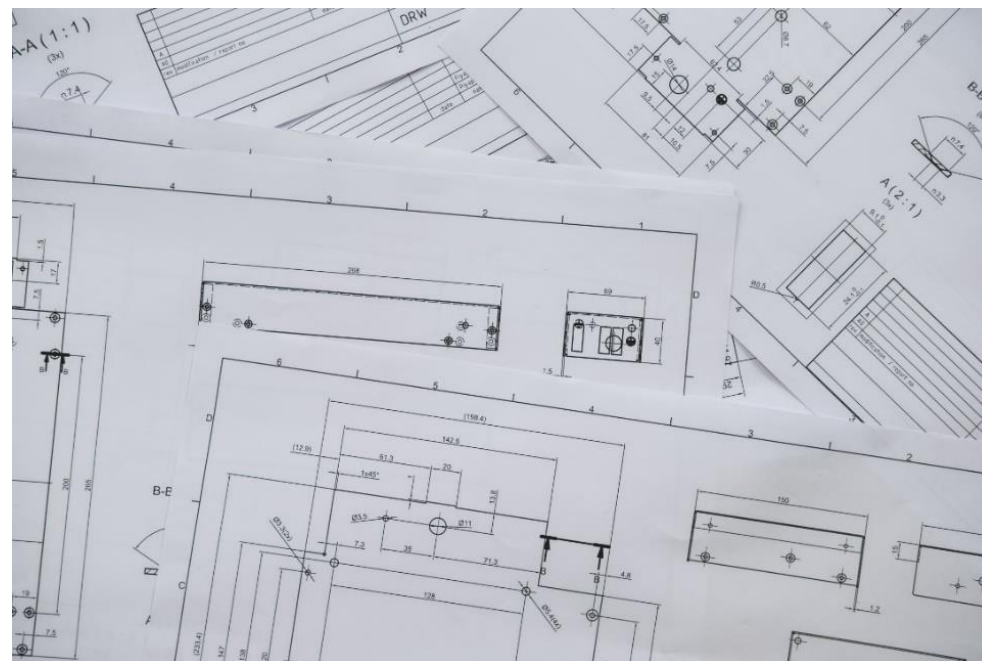
# Planning, Sustainable Growth & Investment–performance

## Number of new Business start ups (quarterly)

| Quarter | Value |
|---------|-------|
| Q3 24/25 | 17 |
| Q2 24/25 | 20 |
| Q1 24/25 | 37 |
| Q4 23/24 | 23 |
| Q3 23/24 | 24 |

## Social media

**1,749** Locate in Midlothian followers.

**2,502** Business Gateway followers
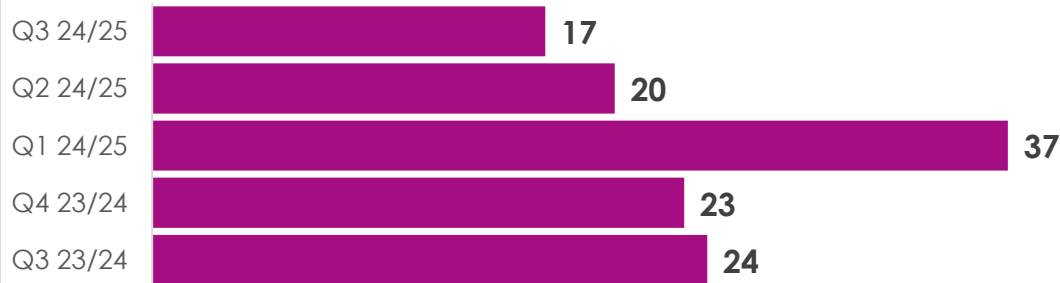
**8** 'Strengthen your business' enquiries this quarter

**22** Businesses signed up to the **Midlothian Business Green Pledge** this quarter (increase from 16 in Q3 23/24)

**13** **Social enterprises supported** this quarter (17 in Q3 23/24)

**44** **'Planning to Start' enquires/submissions** this quarter (decrease from 60 in Q3 23/24)

## % of planning applications completed within target of 80%

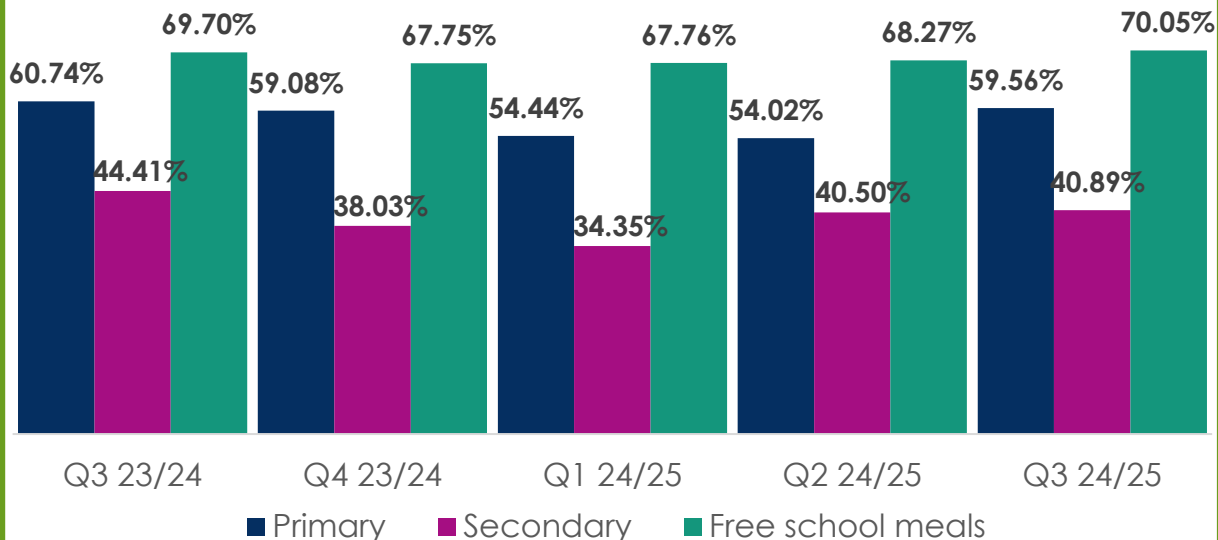| Quarter | Value |
|---------|-------|
| Q3 23/24 | 79% |
| Q4 23/24 | 75% |
| Q1 24/25 | 70% |
| Q2 24/25 | 80% |
| Q3 24/25 | 81% |
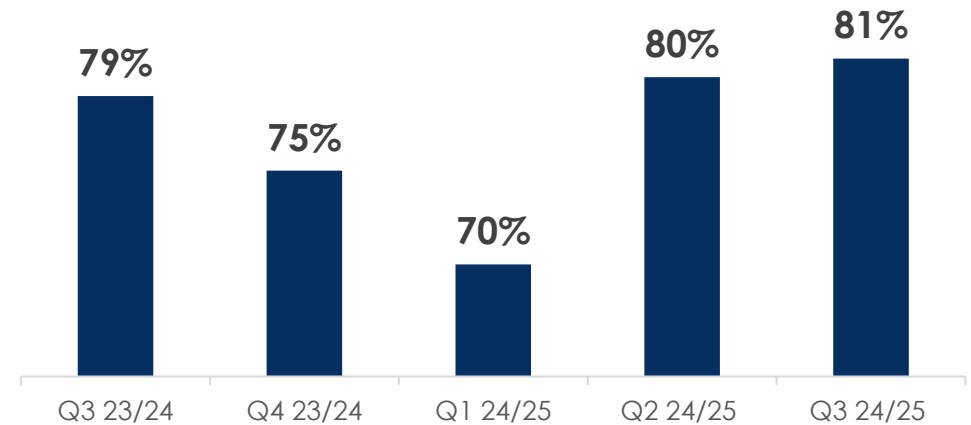
**67 weeks** Average time to determine planning applications for **major** developments.

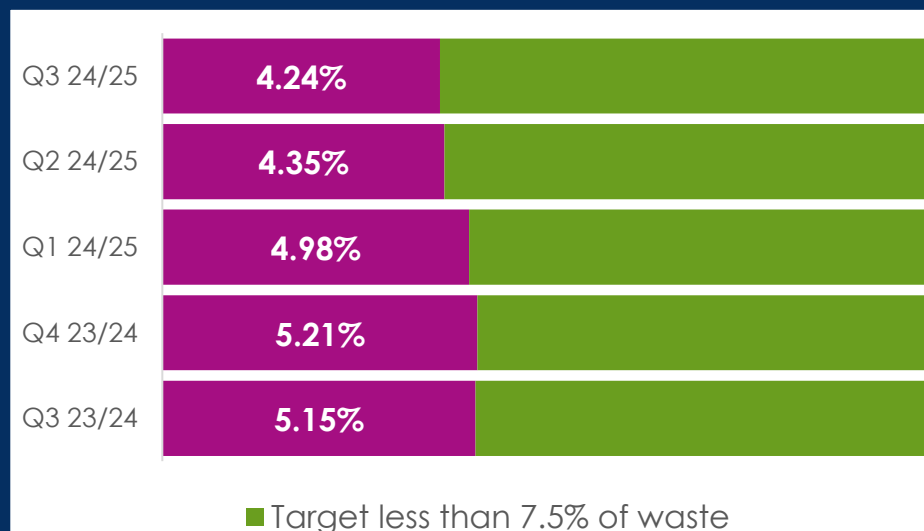**12 weeks** Average time to determine planning applications for **local** developments.

# Property and Facilities – performance
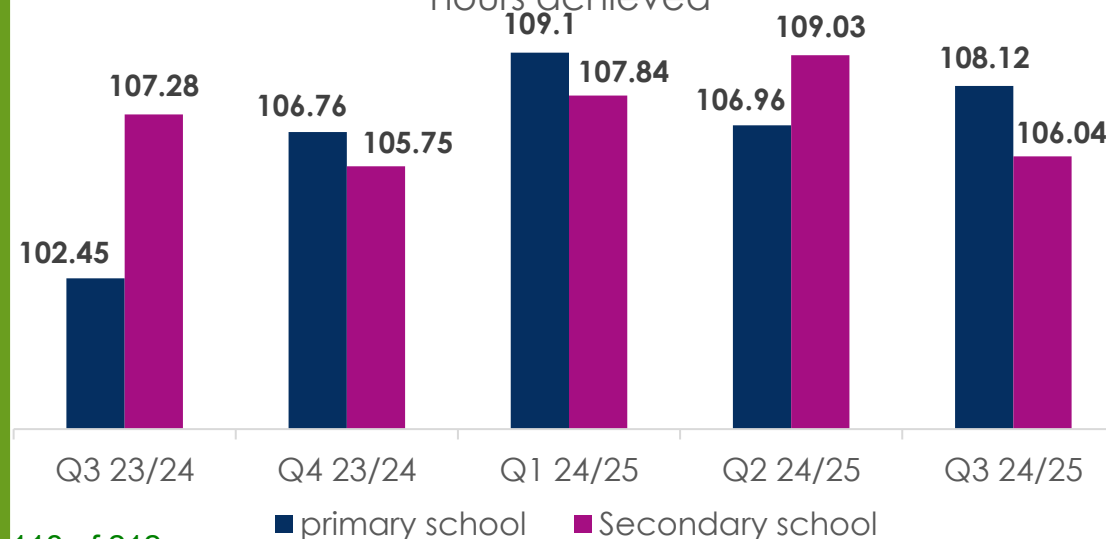
## % of school meal uptake

| Quarter | Primary | Secondary | Free school meals |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 60.74% | 44.41% | 69.70% |
| Q4 23/24 | 59.08% | 38.03% | 67.75% |
| Q1 24/25 | 54.44% | 34.35% | 67.76% |
| Q2 24/25 | 54.02% | 40.50% | 68.27% |
| Q3 24/25 | 59.56% | 40.89% | 70.05% |

Legend: Primary — Secondary — Free school meals

## Percentage of school meal food waste

| Quarter | Waste % |
|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | 4.24% |
| Q2 24/25 | 4.35% |
| Q1 24/25 | 4.98% |
| Q4 23/24 | 5.21% |
| Q3 23/24 | 5.15% |

Target less than 7.5% of waste

**6.85** nursery and primary school meals prepared per hour this quarter (7.48 compared to last year Q3 23/24)

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

**9.27** secondary school meals prepared per hour this quarter (8.23 compared to last year Q3 23/24)

## Percentage of cleaning hours against budgeted hours achieved

| Quarter | primary school | Secondary school |
|---|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 102.45 | 107.28 |
| Q4 23/24 | 106.76 | 105.75 |
| Q1 24/25 | 109.1 | 107.84 |
| Q2 24/25 | 106.96 | 109.03 |
| Q3 24/25 | 108.12 | 106.04 |

# Health and Wellbeing

**Key achievements Q3 24/25**

**Facility Services**
The percentage of Secondary school meal uptake this quarter was 40.89% 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 3 increased to 59.56% and again remains steady compared to previous quarters. Primary school meal uptake continues to sit well above the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) average of 41.24%. The percentage of school meal food waste has decreased to 4.24% from 5.15% compared to the same period last year.

Across our cleaning and janitorial functions, the percentage of cleaning hours against our budgeted hours achieved in both Primary and Secondary schools remain on target with productivity levels above APSE averages, based on the APSE national average of cleaning 192m per hour. This quarter Facility Services contributed to the smooth transition of Mayfield Primary to Easthouses Primary, completed the October holiday works programme across our schools and ensure the smooth opening of the new Woodburn Primary School extension.

**Across Sport and Leisure services,** our Tonezone memberships continues to grow through improved marketing and promotion with a total of 4,872 memberships up to the end of quarter 3. An increase of 7.6% compared from last quarter.

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 3 the app now has over 8,000 users. Our app can be found on the Apple and Google store.

Primary 4 free swimming lessons continue this quarter after an effective system was put in place from our programme development officer. Two swimming blocks were delivered during the quarter delivering 18 classes per week, totalling 4,633 attendances over both the 7 and 4 week block.

Our **Alpine coaster at Midlothian Snowsports Centre** opened successfully on the 14th of September. After a successful communications campaign the coaster was fully booked since its opening weekend to the 13th of October with 11,479 tickets being sold. This quarter a further 18,779 tickets were sold.

**Our Active Schools Midlothian** team continue to work in partnership with sportsscotland, providing opportunities for our children to adopt healthy and active lifestyles throughout their school years and into adulthood by supporting and sustaining a network of volunteers, coaches, leaders and teachers who, in turn, deliver extra curricular physical activity and sport before, during and after school and in the wider community. 225 activities were delivered this quarter, an increase from 197 delivered during quarter 3 last year. 3,013 participants attended Active Schools free extra curricular club which is an increase of 7.5% compared to the same period last year. The number of volunteer hours delivered in the Active Schools Programme has also increased from this time last year with 2,128 volunteers compared to 1,972 during quarter 3 of 23/24.
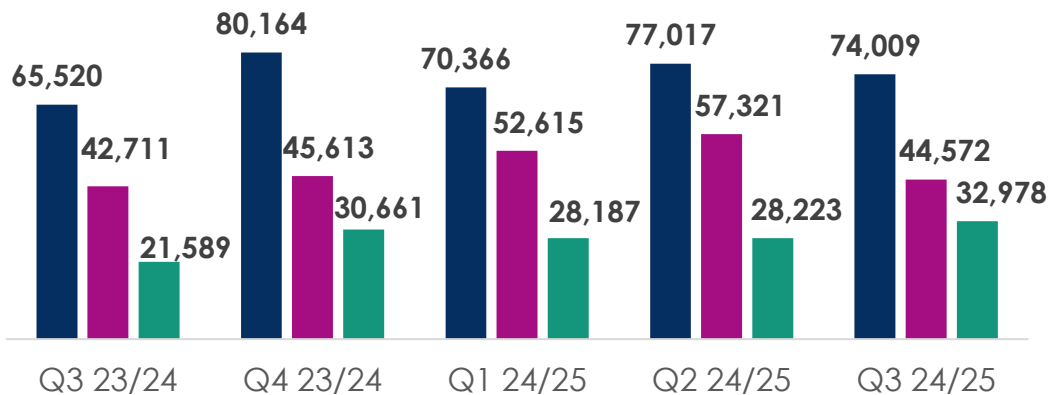
Our October and December holiday programme was well attended generating income and resulted in a good base to build on for future years. In addition, this quarter Newbattle High school won the School Sport Award at the Scottish Sports Awards 2024.

**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 1,307 Midlothian Active Choices attendees with 364 new referrals received after completion of MAC sessions showing an increase of 7% compared to the same period last year.
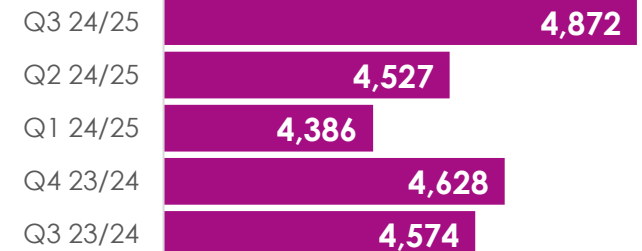
# Sport and Leisure - performance

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

- ■ All facilities (excl pools)
- ■ Swimming pools
- ■ Outdoor facilities -pitches/pavillions

| | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All facilities (excl pools) | 65,520 | 80,164 | 70,366 | 77,017 | 74,009 |
| Swimming pools | 42,711 | 45,613 | 52,615 | 57,321 | 44,572 |
| Outdoor facilities -pitches/pavillions | 21,589 | 30,661 | 28,187 | 28,223 | 32,978 |

## Number of Tonezone memberships (cumulative)

| Quarter | Memberships |
|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | 4,872 |
| Q2 24/25 | 4,527 |
| Q1 24/25 | 4,386 |
| Q4 23/24 | 4,628 |
| Q3 23/24 | 4,574 |

## Total income generated from Tonezone memberships

| Quarter | Income |
|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | £397,740.65 |
| Q2 24/25 | £372,559.38 |
| Q1 24/25 | £368,200.35 |
| Q4 23/24 | £341,220.85 |
| Q3 23/24 | £328,623.85 |

## Midlothian Active Choices (MAC)

### Number of MAC attendees (quarterly)

| Quarter | Attendees |
|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 1,414 |
| Q4 23/24 | 1,447 |
| Q1 24/25 | 1,670 |
| Q2 24/25 | 1,653 |
| Q3 24/25 | 1,307 |
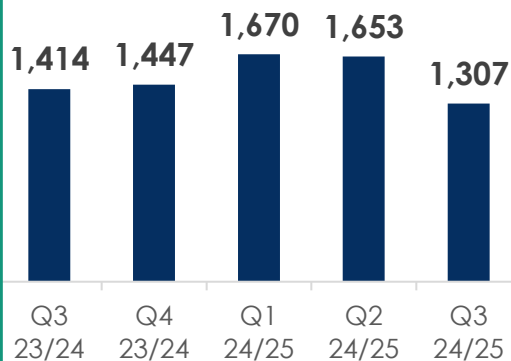
### Number of new referrals after completion of MAC sessions (quarterly)

| Quarter | Referrals |
|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 341 |
| Q4 23/24 | 379 |
| Q1 24/25 | 416 |
| Q2 24/25 | 444 |
| Q3 24/25 | 364 |
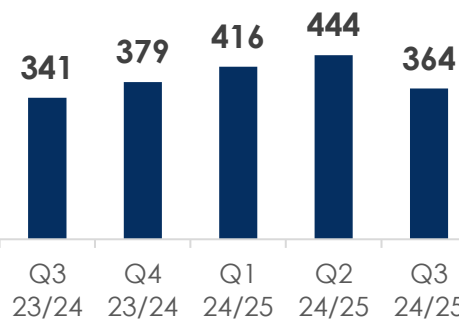
## Ageing Well

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

| Quarter | Activities |
|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 660 |
| Q4 23/24 | 660 |
| Q1 24/25 | 741 |
| Q2 24/25 | 780 |
| Q3 24/25 | 744 |
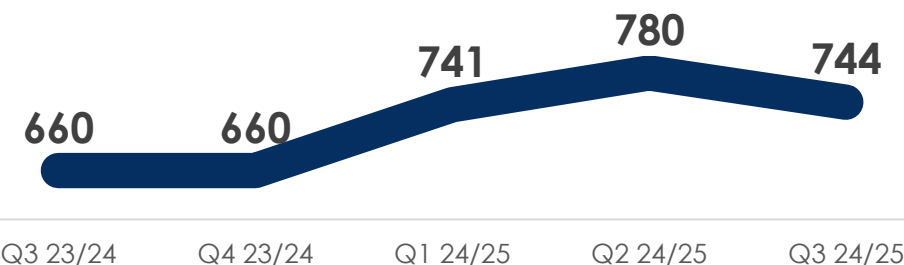
# Capital Investment Programme

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. These new opportunities help lead the way towards a better future for Midlothian.

The Education Learning Estate Strategy programme continues 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 covers a number of projects at various stages of development.

The delivery of more affordable housing remains a priority for Midlothian Council. As part of our 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 297 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.

**Construction and Development**

**Key achievements Q3 24/25**



- Nomination for 2 Scottish Property Awards (Regeneration and Education) for Buccleuch St passivhaus housing and Easthouses Primary School.

- Completion of Contract 1 and 2 at Midlothian Snowsports Centre (Hillend) with parking and service infrastructure now in place and Alpine Coaster fully operational since September 2025.

- Woodburn Primary School 9 class, STEM and gym extension was delivered to budget and 2 weeks early in November 2024. The new expanded kitchen also completed.

- Entered into a contract for 20 homes on site of former leisure centre in Danderhall, at Newton Church Road. On site as of January 2025 with homes being built to Passivhaus standard.

- Passivhaus development progressing well on site at former Newbattle High School, part of Scotland's largest Passivhaus housing programme. The first handovers are programmed for summer/autumn this year.

- Replacement Highbank Intermediate Care on site with extra care housing progressing well on site with Ogilvie in Bonnyrigg, which is currently 40% complete.

- Newbyres Gorebridge replacement housing site is progressing well and on programme with the construction of 79 new homes.

## 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 – Q3 24/25

| 28 | 26 | 73 | 5 | 7 | 99 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quarterly Reporting Place PIs – On Target | Quarterly Reporting Place PIs – Off Target | Quarterly Reporting Place PIs – Data only | Quarterly Reporting Place PIs – No data available | Quarterly Place High Service Risks | Quarterly Place All Service Risks |

## Quarterly Reporting Place PIs - 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% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | BS.PLACE.P.5.2b Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Modern fa... | | 98.4% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | HSN3 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the S... | | 80.29% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.P.5.2c Percentage of the Council's housing stock meeting the 'Healthy, safe ... | | 80.29% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.P.14.2f Percentage of the footpath network resurfaced (cumulative) | | 0.32% | 0.45% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.BUILDS.02 Be on site with first modular housing development within 12 mon... | | No | Yes | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔒 ● | PLACE.BUILDS.04 95% of first reports for building warrant applications issued withi... | | 60.27% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔒 ● | PLACE.BUILDS.05 90% of Building warrants issued within 10 working days, followin... | | 75% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔒 ● | PLACE.BUILDS.07 Respond to general Building Standards emails and corresponde... | | 93% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔒 ● | PLACE.BUILDS.08 Issue Building Warrants for people with disabilities within 10 days | | 66.6% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative) | | 88% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does ... | | 82.61% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complet... | | 53.95% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 ● | HSN4b Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (LGBF) | | 8 days | 7 days | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.PFM.18 Number of nursery and primary meals prepared per hour (APSE) | | 6.85 | 8.84 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.PFM.21 Percentage of free school meal uptake (P1-P5) | | 70.05% | 77.57% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.PLAN.02 Average timescale (weeks) to determine planning applications for ... | | 67 | 50 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.PLAN.03 Average timescale (weeks) to determine planning applications for l... | | 12 | 10 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PROSERVICES.04 Percentage of priority 1 and 2 premises receiving completed foo... | | 0% | 50% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PROSERVICES.25 Number of Trading Standards Primary inspections (quarterly) | | 51 | 137 | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PROSERVICES.30 Percentage of businesses registered for tobacco/vapes in Midlot... | | 0% | 5% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 ● | RHM.a.04.4oi Percentage of lets made to general needs list applicants | | 28% | 40% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 ● | RHM.h.05.5aiii Percentage of Homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy ... | | 91.8% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working d... | | 90.91% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ... | | 66.67% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| ● | PLACE.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 wor... | | 92.86% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |

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# Corporate Solutions Q3 24/25 Performance Report

*Corporate Solutions delivers forward looking services fit for a modern 21st Century organisation, with the citizen at the centre of service redesign.*

Corporate Solutions encompasses Human Resources, Digital, Customer Engagement, Legal & Governance, Corporate Resources, Transformation PMO and Continuous Improvement.

Corporate Solutions supports the whole Council, delivers services to internal and external stakeholders, plays a key role in the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and ensures organisational compliance, develops the workforce, and advances transformation.

## Transformation and opportunities

### Transformation Blueprint (2023-2028)

Reprioritisation and redesign are crucial to balancing the Council's financial position, as well as preparing for further challenges, continued growth, and unknown changes that we will face. The Council's three strategic aims, as set out in the Single Midlothian Plan are:

- 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.

The Transformation Blueprint was approved by Council in 2023 and sets out key areas of concern that need to be addressed over the next five years.

**Transformation Blueprint Objectives**

1. Support the Council to address the 5-year funding gap outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
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.

The Council's Transformation Blueprint provides the framework for opportunities to change the way services are improved and delivered to be more efficient. Corporate Solutions has a particular focus on delivering digital first approaches, embedding automation to improve customer access to services and hybrid working. We will continue to work to address the inequalities that our communities face, respond to the demands of being the fastest growing local authority in Scotland, and deliver our vision of being a great, green place to grow.

# Customer Engagement

**Aligned to the Transformation Blueprint, Customer Engagement priorities are set out below:**

- Continued rollout and implementation of Customer Service Platform
- Reviewing service delivery across all Contact Centre teams
- Increased use of e-Resources in libraries
- Community and school library redesign

- Active promotion of library space, for Council and partner services, and enable out of hours access for communities
- Rollout of the Hub and Spoke delivery model with libraries providing and facilitating increased local service provision

- Refreshed Customer Engagement Strategy including revised communications and engagement plan
- Launch of the new mobile One Stop Shop in partnership with the Third Sector
- Increase income within Registrars through alternative ceremony offer

**Communications and Marketing:**

- Promoting the council's vision, strategy and plans such as a Great Green Place to Grow, Transformation Blueprint, Wellbeing Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and carbon charter to internal and external audiences.
- Raising awareness of the ways that people can take part to influence how public services operate e.g. public consultations such as Midlothian Local Development Plan, town centre regeneration projects, and school catchment area consultations.
- Supporting service redesign and the delivery of change, e.g. supporting the shift to the new customer service platform which will enable citizens to do much more online.
- Promotion of behavioural change, for example by encouraging residents of Midlothian to recycle more or travel more actively or improve their health and wellbeing.

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## Key achievements this quarter:

### Library services

Our library services continue to transform and thrive in responding to the needs of our communities. This quarter overall figures for library visits remain high with an 11% increase in total visits compared to quarter 2 and an 8% increase compared to the same period last year.

155,290 physical library visits were made this quarter, an increase of 13% from the previous quarter and 7% compared to the same period last year, indicating both a strong recovery from the quieter summer holiday period and continuing long term trend of increased visits in person as our libraries become local community hubs.

40,885 virtual library visits were made this quarter, an 7% increase compared to this period last year. Similar to the previous quarter, the increase is mainly a result of more customer visits to our online catalogue which has increased in popularity since the library management system was upgraded in 2024. Library membership continues to increase with a 9% rise in members compared to the same period last year and a 2% compared to last quarter.

2,151 library events were held during quarter 3 which is an increase of 45% from the same period last year.  This covers regular events and activities for both adults and children as well as standalone events.

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**Book Week Scotland** was held from 18th to the 24th of November, and libraries marked it by holding a range of free events to celebrate books and reading within our communities. Gorebridge Library hosted local author Alex Mullarky with children from the local primary school attending the sessions. With the help of some local poets, our Bibliotherapist ran two sessions in Loanhead Library, looking at writing skills, self-publishing and focusing on tools to help aspiring authors promote their stories. All libraries hosted quizzes, class visits, Bookbug Sessions, story sessions, craft sessions and book gifting throughout the week. Midlothian Primary 1 pupils were gifted with Bookbug Explorer bags and Primary 2 and 3's received their Read Write Count bags. Overall, 79 events were held with 586 adults and 2,159 children attending which is a 20% increase from last year.

Working with our School Librarians, we asked secondary school students in Midlothian to unleash their inner author. Students were asked to go 'wild with words' and show their talent by submitting short stories with a theme of **'Hope'.** The judges were impressed by the diversity of young people's hopes, from dreams of finding a friend who is always there for you, to wishing for a better future for the planet. Entries included stories of survival, dystopian dramas and modern takes on traditional tales. 26 entries were received from 5 of our Midlothian secondary schools.

Our winner of the S1-S3 category was Lucie Sloan of Beeslack Community High School for her story 'Hope The Pencil', an original tale of life from a creative pencil's point of view. Lucie used this clever concept to convey the ideas of belonging, purpose and friendship. The S4-S6 category was won by Oran Ritson of Penicuik High School for the story 'Slain and Capture', an epic tale of princely revenge. The winners were announced at the Midlothian Young People Awards and presented with their prizes.

All primary pupils were invited to join in the celebrations by designing a bookmark exploring the theme of 'Reading Gives You Super Powers'. The standard of entry was amazing and there were over 1,200 entries this year. The winners received a £15 book token and the runners-up a £10 book token. All four of the winning entries have been printed for distribution to customers in Midlothian Libraries.

**Library Natter Project**

After a successful application to the Public Libraries Improvement Fund run by the Scottish Library and Information Council, the new Library Natter Project officially launched on the 12th of December 2024. Focusing on the Dalkeith community, our aim is to create a safe space for people to sit, relax and chat and meet other library users while learning about and engaging with wider Council services and community organisations that would benefit them. Three taster sessions were delivered in partnership with the Edinburgh Craft Club to highlight the types of events and activities available in the space and over 30 attendees engaged with the service. Feedback from library users, staff and partners has been extremely positive and going forward we are planning a variety of events in the space and aiming to work with more partners within the local community. The photos above show the launch event and one of the craft events, a candle decorating class.

**Relaunch of Warm and Well hubs**

To coincide with Challenge Poverty Week, we relaunched our four Warm and Well Hubs in Danderhall, Lasswade, Loanhead and Newbattle Libraries this quarter. The coat collection point was relaunched at Dalkeith Library and a new one launched at Loanhead Library offering coats and warm clothing to those who need them. We have worked in partnership with a number of other services including Community Lifelong Learning & Employabilty, Citizens Advice Bureau, Ageing Well and Changeworks, to host workshops and drop-in sessions providing advice on benefits, home energy efficiency, household budgeting and Cost of Living support and advice. Danderhall Library now has a pop-up pantry, working with the Cyrenians and Penicuik Library is now a collection point for food parcels from the Midlothian Food Bank instead of residents travelling to Gorebridge.

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**Focus on digital support within our libraries**

Libraries play a crucial role in supporting communities with digital access, learning and support and in preventing digital exclusion. 709 customers were supported with digital queries this quarter including general IT help, assisting customers to access services online such as job searches, benefits, universal credit and assist in making payments online. There is an 18% increase in support given this quarter compared to the same period last year. Figures this year remain consistent over quarter 1 to quarter 3.

There are a number of key ways in which libraries contribute to the digital life of our communities:

- **Providing Free Access**: All our libraries offer free access to computers, the internet, Wi-Fi and other digital devices. They also provide a quiet and safe space to work, study or just browse the internet. This is especially important for those who cannot afford their own technology, those who have poor Wi-Fi coverage and those who lack a quiet space at home.

- **Support and Guidance:** Library staff are on hand to provide assistance with any digital query and can help people to navigate unfamiliar tech or software. This support can be invaluable to those who are less confident in their own skills. Library staff are discreet and knowledgeable and are trusted by both the public and other areas of the Council to be able to provide this support.

- **Community Hubs:** Libraries are community hubs where people can access a wide range of online services including access to other Council services such as the Garden Waste service, job seeking and benefits, online education and learning and also to just browse the internet, doing online shopping and using social networking sites. This helps bridge the digital divide by ensuring everyone has access to essential online services.

- **Partnerships:** We also work in partnership with different services and organisations such as Community Lifelong Learning & Employability and Midlothian Voluntary Action to extend our reach and impact. These partnerships can help bring digital resources, training and support to our communities.

In addition to these general areas, there are some specific examples of where libraries support the digital wellbeing of our communities. Quarter 3 saw the launch of the new Direct Debit process for the Garden Waste sign up and libraries were signposted as the place for help with this service for those who are not online or don't have the technology or confidence to sign up online themselves. For the Garden Waste Service, from its launch, over 3,600 residents have been helped to sign up.

The **Near Me programme**, funded by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and the Scottish Government Technology-Enabled Care programme have supported the launch of 2 hubs in Midlothian (in Dalkeith and Gorebridge Libraries) enabling people who lack digital access, digital skills or a confidential space at home to have a remote consultation with Health and Social Care staff. This saves time and travel costs and increases equitable uptake of health services. Library staff are on hand to provide assistance if needed.

**Digital Learning Stations project**
During quarter 3 library services were successful in an application for funding for a new library project. The Digital Learning Stations project, with funding provided by the Public Library Improvement Fund via the Scottish Library and Information Council, aims to bridge the digital skills gap by equipping Midlothian Libraries with user-friendly learning stations featuring tablets, notebooks, and laptops pre-loaded with interactive tutorials on essential computer skills, internet safety and other vital digital skills. Designed to cater to learners of all abilities, the initiative allows individuals to progress at their own pace, both in-library and at home, with the help of take-home kits containing step-by-step guides and resources. By empowering residents with the confidence and skills to navigate the digital world, the project seeks to combat digital exclusion, foster connections, and open up new opportunities in an increasingly online society.

**Channel shift**

Channel shift work continues with the rollout of customer services through our Customer Service Platform. This quarter focused on the launch of garden waste direct debit sign ups, general enquiries online form and online bulky uplifts processes.

Several other service requests continue in test phase and due to go live in 24/25:

- online application forms for school clothing grants and free school meals
- direct debit online sign up for Council Tax, rent and other payments
- access protection markings requests
- Subject Access Requests
- Vogrie parking passes

This quarter contact centre call numbers have reduced and are at the lowest level compared to any other quarter for several years. There has been a 11% reduction compared to the same period last year and a 14% compared to last quarter. In general quarter 3 is usually a quieter period for call volumes due to the festive period. However, after collaboration with our main service areas Waste, Greenspaces and Road services last quarter, changes to the way in which customer contact is handled in those services is having a positive effect on dealing with repeated customer contact and resolving ongoing customer queries more efficiently.

Due to a reduction in call volumes this quarter compared to last, the percentage of calls answered within 120 seconds has improved from 48% during quarter 1 to 67% in quarter 2 and 77% this quarter. Call abandonment rates remain steady at 8% this quarter but shows an improvement from 17% in quarter 1. This abandonment rate calculates the total number of calls that come into the call queue and then leave the queue. There is no ability to analyse why calls are abandoned, callers may choose to hang up because they would rather not wait, or they have called at an inopportune time. Front-end messages are updated on contact centre lines to provide information to the customer waiting, for example, if a whole street of bins had been missed, this would be reflected in the front end message. Lines also have messages directing people online to carry out transactional activity. With work ongoing via our Customer Services Platform and the Revenues Improvement Programme, to implement e-billing and self-service through 2024/25 and 2025/26, we expect call volumes to reduce over time as more people move to self-service, resulting in a higher percentage of calls answered within our customer target response times.

Quarter 3 shows an increase in the percentage of online customer contact against telephone contact with channel shift figures showing 14% compared to 11% in quarter 1.

Email contact has decreased by 16% from the same period last year with 10,623 emails handled by the contact centre during quarter 3. This can be attributed to changes made to customer forms which now go directly to the service which means quicker responses direct to customers and also as outlined above changes to the way in which customer contact is being handled by our services, leading to fewer contacts stating dissatisfaction.  The number of webforms received via the contact centre has significantly decreased this quarter after the launch of the "missed bin" form via our Customer Services Platform.  A reduction of 43% compared to last quarter and 71% from the same period last year. The number of webforms handled by Contact Centre staff will continue to reduce as more services are automated and rolled out through the Customer Services Platform.

Stage 1 complaint responses across Corporate Solutions are off target this quarter with 85.71% of stage 1 complaints responded to within 5 days. As part of the implementation of the new online complaints portal, there has been an increase in stage 1 complaints received through this self-service option. However, some of these are service requests and not complaints, and work is ongoing to better signpost customers to service request options that are more appropriate. As a result, complaint volumes for Corporate Solutions have decreased by 29% over quarters 1 to 3 of this year compared from the same period last year.

## Communications and promotion

Our communication and marketing team continue to support services across the Council by promoting key initiatives on our social media platforms, news releases, website and community radio channel. Key successes this quarter include:

**Introduction of direct debit scheme for garden waste service.** Our web content and public facing direct debit sign up form was built by our web team in collaboration with Digital Services and Business Applications who developed the back end processing with input from the Waste and Recycling team. Promotion was carried out by email communications to 17,402 customers via the Mailchimp syndication platform. Five social media posts were run across November on Facebook and Twitter/X. The total reach of Facebook posts was 20,138. The average engagement was strong at 8%, with the initial announcement post earning an excellent 16% engagement rate. Our garden waste direct debit pages were viewed 3,716 time during the quarter.

**Savings proposals consultation was launched between the 9$^{th}$ to 20$^{th}$ of November** to gather views from our communities on savings proposals to bridge the Council's budget gap. Promotion was carried out through media releases and an image issued for launch, covered in local press (Midlothian View, Midlothian Advertiser, Evening News and Black Diamond). Paper copies were supplied to our libraries, easy read versions of the consultation were supplied by our Equalities Team who held a separate event. The consultation was also promoted via our social media channels with 12 Facebook and 12 Twitter reminders using the social media graphics over 6 weeks. The best performing post was the launch on Facebook which was viewed 55,827 times and 601 engagements.

The consultation received 1,694 responses, 1,542 online, 105 comments and letters via the HaveYourSay inbox and 47 paper submissions. Results were analysed and a summary of the findings shared by our communications team via Citizens Space, our website and social media platforms.

**Continued Cost of Living campaign.** The main activity this quarter in terms of promoting our ongoing Cost of Living campaign was around the relaunch of our Warm and Well Hubs with a new home page map, produced by our Web Team, to make it easier for people to find all cost of living supports in their areas. The re-launch of the hubs was promoted via 35 Facebook and 35 Twitter posts. The best performing post was on Facebook which was viewed 37,532 times with 35 engagements. The friendly URL of www.midlothian.gov.uk/midlothiancares was changed to point to a new maps page rather than previous landing page. The website page was used 816 times compared with 416 in the same quarter of 2023/24.

**Midlothian's Outdoor Festival.** Activities to promote and maximise the uptake of customers to over 30 events led by our Countryside Ranger service included promotion via our social media platform with 12 Facebook and Twitter reminders, highlighting different events. The best performing Facebook post received 23,499 views. Our graphic designer produced posters and leaflets. Webpages were created to point viewers across to Eventbrite to sign up for events, pages receiving 875 views. Media releases with group images featured in local press including Edinburgh Evening News and Midlothian Advertiser. The event was publicised on council's news slot on Black Diamond radio and an article was ran in our staff magazine, Connect. A record 1,559 people attended events.

**Bonfire Night Waste Amnesty** campaign was launched in October to encourage the uptake of a free collection of potentially flammable waste from communities most affected by nuisance fire-raising in the run up to Bonfire Night. Various promotional activities were carried out including a news release and news story published on the Council's website, a series of social media posts publishing the initiative and providing ongoing updates on slot availability for uplifts were posted across Facebook (14 posts) and Twitter (13 posts). The best performing Facebook post had a reach of 21,401 with a high rate of engagement at 12% and reached 4,944 impressions on Twitter. The story was also picked for publication by Midlothian View and Edinburgh Evening News. After a slow start to the campaign, the Contact Centre received around 130 calls, a figure comparable with 2023/24, with all slots filled.

**Midlothian Young People Awards 2024.** This annual awards scheme allows the Council to acknowledge the achievements of young people living and working in Midlothian and their contribution to their local communities with the awards ceremony held on Tuesday 26 November at Rosslyn Chapel. Promotional activity was carried out to maximise the number of nominations received in all categories as well as generate publicity for the winners following the awards ceremony. Activities included promotional posters for Community Lifelong Learning & Employability to reach out to schools, employers and volunteer organisations, news stories on our website, news releases to the local press, regular slots on our community radio stations Black Diamond FM to promote the scheme, encourage nominations and later interview winners. Media coverage of the winners included a half page feature with photos in the Advertiser, Edinburgh Evening News (both online and in print issue), Edinburgh Life Magazine and Midlothian View. Promotion and group winners were also shared across our usual social media sites including Instagram.

**Launch of LitterLotto app on 1st of December** to encourage residents to download the app and ultimately increase awareness in recycling at home leading to increase in recycling rates. Promotional activity included posters throughout our Council buildings, launch of a media release, news website page created with links to download the app, advertisement via Black Diamond FM and internal staff promotions. 12 Facebook and 12 Twitter posts delivered different key messages and images to engage the viewer. The best performing post was viewed 16,453 times with 95 engagements. The total number of views on Facebook was more than 100,000 with 248 engagements.

**Winter and Festive promotions:**

**Gritter naming competition launched between the 4th to the 15th of December.** A two week public relations push was delivered to name our new gritter, promote goodwill, promote our winter service and help people understand what the Council does during severe weather. Activities to promote the competition included a media release and an image of the new gritter with Gorebridge Primary pupils and roads crews featured in Evening News, Midlothian Advertiser and Midlothian View and 6 Facebook and 6 Twitter posts. The best performing posts were on Facebook with the launch post receiving 71,821 views and 98 engagements and the winner announcement post was viewed 48,342 times with 386 engagements. The competition received 300 entries.

**Santa Alpine Coaster promotion.** Video clips were created to promote Christmas ticket offers and extra slots at our Alpine Coaster in December. Footage was filmed at Hillend featuring Santa enjoying the Alpine Coaster. The imagery from filming was also used to create the graphic used in this year's official email Christmas card. The video was promoted via 5 Facebook posts reaching a total of 21,369 impressions with and average engagement of 7%. The best performing post was the initial post, which reached 8,213 users and had an engagement rate of 11%. The corresponding 5 posts on Twitter achieved a more modest 2,823 impressions, with an engagement rate of 3% which is better than expected for the platform. After promotion, the December booking slots became fully booked.

**Grinch Waste and Recycling.** A video was produced for social media to share changes to our festive bin collection dates. The footage was filmed, edited and issued a humorous short clip, leveraging royalty free content such as stock music and special effects plug-ins to create a professional result with existing equipment and software and no additional outlay. The main version was published to YouTube and shared in Christmas and New Year versions on social media. The video received 875 views on YouTube, making it Midlothian's third best watched video of the year behind two viral clips of the Alpine Coaster. The 9 Facebook posts published across December generated 35,072 impressions and had an excellent engagement rate of 8%, including 16% engagement rate on the first post. 10 Twitter posts generated 8,250 impressions, with a solid 5% engagement rate.

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# Customer Engagement – performance measures

## Customer contact

### Number of Contact Centre calls (quarterly)

35,833  42,358  45,296  37,084  31,816
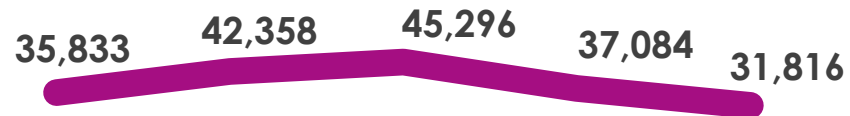
| Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |

**77%** of calls this quarter answered **within 120 seconds**

### Social Media

25.1k Midlothian Council Facebook followers

17.8k @midgov twitter followers

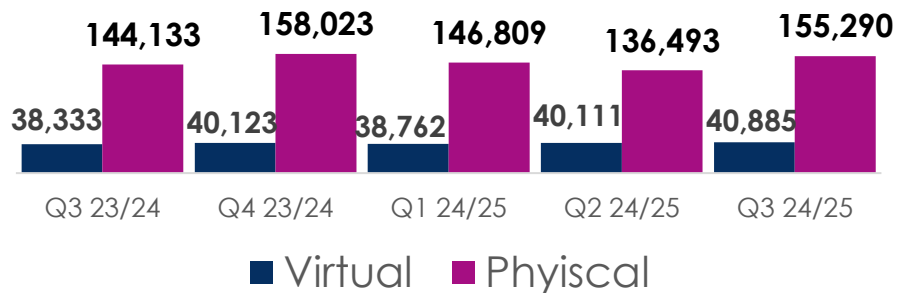**14%** Customer contact received **digitally (webform versus telephone)** this quarter.

**10,623** **Email contact** handled this quarter (decrease from 12,634 in Q3 23/24)

**685** Contact Centre **Webforms** received this quarter (decrease from 2,396 in Q3 23/24)

### Number of Library memberships

| Quarter | Child memberships - new | Total |
|---------|-------------------------|-------|
| Q3 24/25 | 328 | 37,102 |
| Q2 24/25 | 539 | 36,428 |
| Q1 24/25 | 321 | 35,375 |
| Q4 23/24 | 369 | 34,312 |
| Q3 23/24 | 416 | 33,837 |

■ Child memberships - new   ■ Total

## Library services

### Number of Library visits (quarterly)

| | Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Virtual | 38,333 | 40,123 | 38,762 | 40,111 | 40,885 |
| Physical | 144,133 | 158,023 | 146,809 | 136,493 | 155,290 |

■ Virtual   ■ Phyiscal

**2,151** **Library events** held this quarter.

**1,490** **Children's library initiatives** taken place in Q3.

**709** Library customers supported with **digital queries** in Q3.

# Human Resources

To achieve the Council's strategic priorities, we recognise that people are our most important asset. Workforce is a key priority in the Council's Transformation Blueprint. The Council aims to attract the best talent, grow our own talent ensuring there are clear progression pathways, ensure our workforce feel engaged, valued and motivated and importantly, empower our staff to enable them to reach their full potential.

Our workforce vision is to work as **One Council** using our knowledge, experiences and sense of shared endeavour to collaborate and think creatively and innovatively so that our people can deliver life-changing impacts for our communities. Our ways of working mark a clear desire for cultural change and a shift towards a more agile and modern operating model.

**In order to ensure a thriving workforce, key areas of focus for 2024/25 are:**

- Investment in Organisational Development through focused programmes of work e.g. launch of Managers Forum, refresh of Leadership Forum
- Development and delivery of the new Workforce Strategy 2024-2029
- Completion of workforce plans in all services, with a particular focus in high risk areas, aligned to the new Workforce Strategy
- Continued rollout of the Wellbeing Strategy with measures to demonstrate impact and visible contribution to reducing absence levels
- Development and delivery of the Recruitment Strategy aligned to the Workforce Strategy

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Wellness@Midlothian**

The rolling programme of Wellness@Midlothian initiatives continues to support the positive health and wellbeing of our staff. This quarter 24 wellbeing events were held covering financial support, carer support, physical wellbeing and information sessions. A total of 324 staff attended various events which is a 95% increase from attendees last quarter. Events included:

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**Financial support for our employees:**

- Onsite visits from Lothian Pension Fund.
- Through Affinity Connect, a pension tax session.
- 3 promotional activities to support Talk Money Week running from 4th to 8th of November which included Capital Credit Union products and services and advice on energy costs from Changeworks and Home Energy Scotland.

**Events to support employees with carer responsibilities:**

- 2 Vocal Carer sessions held for Sport and Leisure and Highbank staff as well as activity to promote Vocal Carer resources.

**Health and wellbeing events:**

- 2 health walks organised by the Active Travel Team held in December.
- 4 female swim sessions at Newbattle.
- Scottish Mental Health First Aider 2 day course.
- Suicide prevention 2 day training course.
- 2 wellbeing meetings held for Children Services staff aimed at Social work and Occupational Health field work.
- 1 Listen and Learn exercise carried out at our Contact Centre.
- Promotional activities were delivered for menopause awareness, employee assistance programme and bereavement resources.

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**Absence and case management**

The HR team continue to proactively work with managers and their teams to support them in their absence management, helping to tackle and reduce sickness absence, complimenting the range of health and wellbeing support provided by the Council to all employees. The HR team provides training for managers in absence management processes and provides management information to enable managers to measure and manage the long and short term absence in their areas. This work is resulting in progression of absence cases, capability hearings and return to work as well as the more efficient management of employee relations cases to bring these to a conclusion. This quarter the number of long term absence cases supported by HR was 127 which is reduction of 23% compared to the same period last year. A number of cases were brought to a conclusion this quarter.

HR commission services including an Employment Assistance Programme, Physiotherapy services, Occupational Health and work in partnership with local and national agencies to offer counselling, health and lifestyle advice, health plans and treatment guidance for the workforce. Employees can self-refer to the Employment Assistance Programme from MCL medics which provides lifestyle support regarding relationship issues; work/life balance, stress, nutrition, sleep and can be accessed 24/7. 8 sessions of counselling can be offered free of charge, where the employee requires this level of support. Physiotherapy services of up to 4 free sessions can be accessed by the employee to receive treatment and advice for musculoskeletal injuries and various health conditions to improve movement and mobility.

Our Human Resources continue to support various employee relations cases.  All business partners attended a half day settlement agreement HR academy sessions at Brodies, solicitors, this year. In addition, mediation training was provided to a small selection of interested staff. The result of this training will give managers the tools to carry out mediation to reach a quicker resolution between our employees and reduce cases escalating.

**Investing in our workforce**

This quarter saw the formal launch of our **Workforce Strategy 2024-34** after approval was received from Council in December. The Workforce Strategy is a core part of the council's Transformation Blueprint, will support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (2023-2028). The Workforce Strategy is accompanied by a 3-year short term action plan which will be reviewed annually. The strategic aims of the plan are to:

- **Plan**: deliver an evidence and outcome-based workforce planning framework that is an integral part of the council's approach to strategic planning.
- **Attract**: ensure the council becomes the employer of choice for the population of Midlothian, by deploying best practice in attracting the best staff.
- **Train**: enable the council to become a "Learning Organisation", providing staff with business-focussed training and development to equip them with the skills and knowledge required to deliver their best.
- **Employ**: ensure Fair Work principles continue to be at the heart of management practice, ensuring staff are, and feel, valued and rewarded.
- **Nurture**: create a workforce and leadership culture focusing on the health and wellbeing of a demographically balanced workforce that reflects the community it serves.

As part of the Workforce Strategy the Employee Survey launched last quarter to gather as much feedback from our employees as possible. The results of the survey were analysed this quarter, the output of which will feed into our Workforce action plan. Survey results will be shared with staff during quarter 4.

The new Managers Forum continued this quarter with online sessions providing managers guidance on supporting staff going through bereavement, stress, depression and anxiety. Sessions were also held on pension options and good leadership models. The forums provide a safe space for leaders and managers to share experiences.

1,465 staff accessed our mandatory e-learning courses this quarter compared to 803 staff accessing courses across the same period last year. This year to date has seen a significant increase in e-learning courses undertaken by our staff. Courses include training on Bribery Act 2010, Information Security and GDPR, procurement fraud, cyber security, records management and threat of terrorism.

Work commenced this quarter on the redesign of the Human Resources intranet site which will see a new digital platform for employee resources, policies, employee and managers guidance and templates.

**Workforce measures**

We track our employee turnover rates on a half yearly basis by expressing it as a percentage of employees overall when taking account of all leavers. Consideration of the levels of turnover across services, locations and particular groups of employees helps to inform workforce planning and resourcing. Compared to last quarter, staff turnover rates have reduced this quarter to 2.2% from quarter 2 however have increased slightly compared to the same period last year of 1.8%

The gender pay gap measures the average female pay (£20.68) versus average male pay (£21.17) within the organisation. The figures show that the Council has more male staff at higher rates of pay by 2.3% this quarter which shows a reduced pay gap compared to the same period last year at 2.74%.

The percentage of female employees in the top 5% of earnings continues to gradually increase compared to the same period last year with 127 female employees in the top 5% of earnings compared to 119 during quarter 3 of last year.

Sickness absence rates for all employees has remained similar compared to the same period last year with average sickness days at 8.45 for this quarter compared to 8.33 during quarter 3 of 2023/24. Data shows similar results for Corporate Solutions where the average number of working days lost due to sickness absence this quarter is 6.91 compared to 6.61 for quarter 3 of 2023/24. Of the FTE days lost, 72% was due to long term sickness, 16% self-certified, 12% short term absence. Work continues with each service area to review attendance levels and support those absent to return to work.

# Human Resources – performance measures

## Workforce demographics
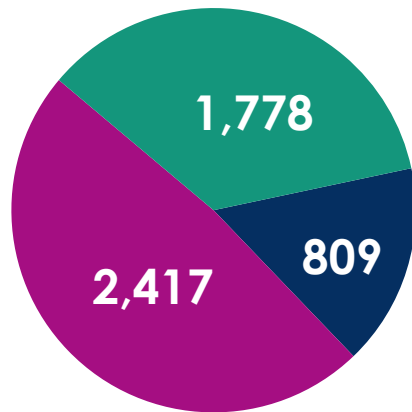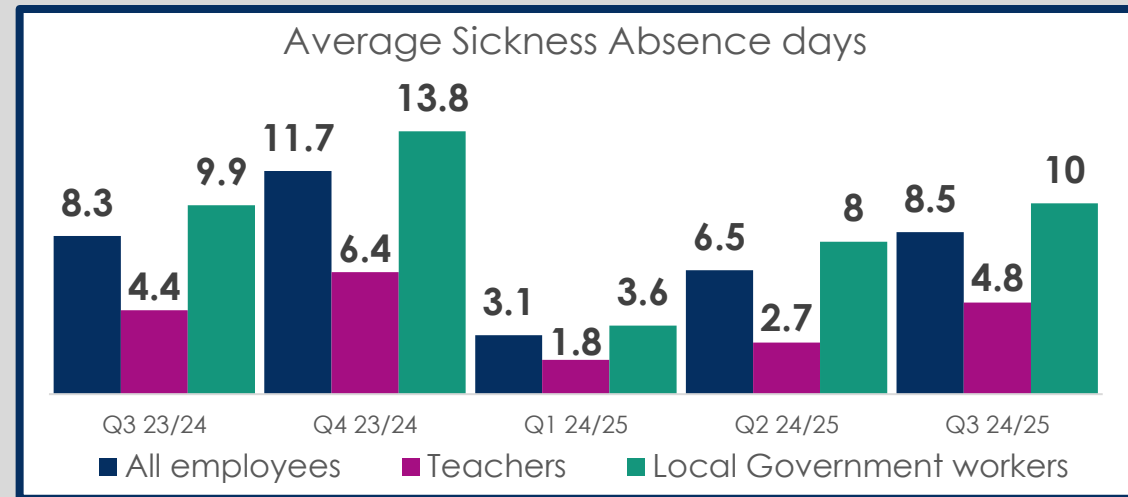


**No. of staff by age group**

- 16-30: 809
- 31-50: 2,417
- over 50: 1,778

**65.2%** of employees are Midlothian Residents
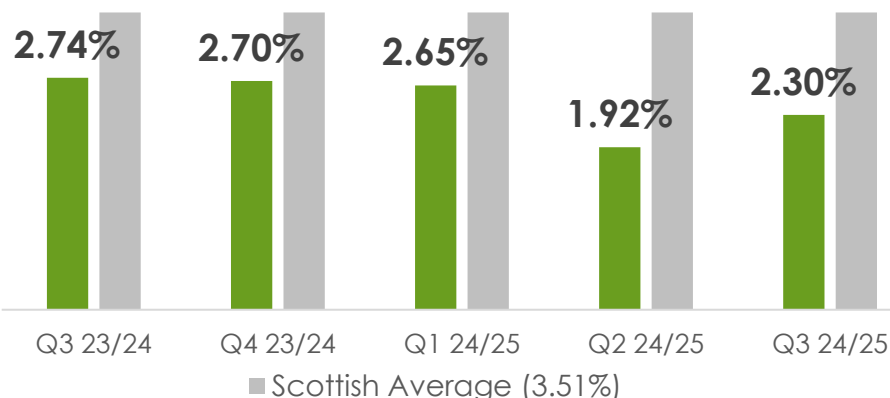
**1,221 (24%)** Employees with over 15 years of service

**269** Leavers at end of Q3 (cumulative figure)

**127 female employees in top 5%** this quarter.

### Gender pay gap between average hourly rate of pay for male and female (all employees)



| Quarter | Value |
|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 2.74% |
| Q4 23/24 | 2.70% |
| Q1 24/25 | 2.65% |
| Q2 24/25 | 1.92% |
| Q3 24/25 | 2.30% |

Scottish Average (3.51%)

## Employee Health and Wellbeing

### Average Sickness Absence days



| | All employees | Teachers | Local Government workers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 8.3 | 4.4 | 9.9 |
| Q4 23/24 | 11.7 | 6.4 | 13.8 |
| Q1 24/25 | 3.1 | 1.8 | 3.6 |
| Q2 24/25 | 6.5 | 2.7 | 8 |
| Q3 24/25 | 8.5 | 4.8 | 10 |

**127** Long term **absence** cases ongoing this quarter

**173** Occupational Health referrals via OHIO this quarter

**19** HR cases in progress this quarter

**346** Physiotherapy referrals made this quarter

- **24** wellbeing events held this quarter with 324 attendees
- **1,465** employees accessing **mandatory eLearning courses**
- **815** employees accessing **non-mandatory eLearning courses**

### % of staff turnover (quarterly)



| Quarter | Value |
|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | 2.2% |
| Q2 24/25 | 2.6% |
| Q1 24/25 | 1.9% |
| Q4 23/24 | 2.26% |
| Q3 23/24 | 1.8% |

# Digital

**Digital solutions underpin the Transformation Blueprint. Key work streams include:**

- Review and refresh of the Council's Digital Strategy, including reprioritisation of projects to enable change and transformation
- Development of a data analysis capability and pilot projects such as multi-source analysis of cost of living data and streamlining of performance and other standard reporting
- Expanding digital automation efforts via Power Automate, to improve efficiencies and process quality
- Continued rollout of compliance and cyber security protective measures, including attainment of PSN and Cyber Essentials certification, staff training and engagement and establishing a Security Operations Centre
- Deepening the adoption of Microsoft O365 capabilities and applications to enable organisational efficiencies, collaboration and lay the foundation for future AI initiatives
- Delivering service improvements in frontline teams through projects such as the digital transformation of Neighbourhood Services
- Continue the roll-out of the Customer Services Platform solutions to promote channel shift
- Equipped for Learning: support the EfL project to provide best in class, secure digital ecosystem for optimal learning outcomes
- Developing Council telephony digital strategy and implementing upgrades to education estate
- Upgrading all Windows devices to the latest operating system standard (Windows 11)
- Ensure all digital aspects of Council operations are well supported and operational

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Digital Strategy**

This quarter we launched our new **Digital Transformation Strategy 2024-2029** after approval was received from Council in November. Key to delivering change as part of the Council's Transformation blueprint, is fully utilising digital tools, digitising and automating processes, introducing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and ensuring that decisions can be made through comprehensive data and management information.

Our Digital Transformation Strategy outlines key priority areas that the Council will focus on over the next 5 years, harnessing digital tools, technology and data. The key areas are:

- **Automate**: For an Efficient, Modern Council
- **Reimagine:** Transform Service Delivery
- **Data:** Deeper Insights and Preventative Operations
- **Secure and Sustain:** Protect and Preserve

**Education and Equipped for Learning**

As part of the equipped for learning project, Wi-Fi School upgrades were rolled out across the vast majority of our schools this quarter. Digital Services collaborated with Edinburgh University to install Internet of Things (IoT) gateways in all High Schools, enabling environmental monitoring of classrooms. In addition, Digital Services successfully contributed to the transfer of students and staff from Mayfield Primary to Easthouses Primary. Recently the Council was named a SMART Exemplary Council. This award was presented in recognition of the approach Midlothian has taken to replacing SMART panels (boards) in schools and Early Learning Centres as part of the Equipped for Learning project with 541 panels across 34 sites replaced so far.

**Digital Systems and Infrastructure**

A range of improvements have been completed this quarter to facilitate a more efficient organisation and improve how we work:

- The next phase of the Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) migration continues. SWAN is one of the most significant single public sector Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives ever undertaken in Scotland. The programme establishes a single shared network and common ICT infrastructure across Scotland's public sector. This quarter the majority of our 52 SWAN internet circuits across the region have been migrated to SWAN2.
- Our Xerox printer replacement procurement process was completed this quarter.
- As part of the Windows 11 upgrade, 85% of our Corporate and Education PCs and laptops have now been migrated to Windows 11.

**Cyber Security**

Work continues this quarter to maintain and strengthen our cyber security. Key successes this quarter include:

- Hosting of a cybersecurity incident exercise with support from our incident response provider.
- Addressing and resolving several cybersecurity incidents.
- Implementation of numerous security upgrades and patches following National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidelines.
- Providing security oversight for the onboarding of new applications and technical service.

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**Roll out of Microsoft 365** across the whole corporate estate was completed last year, enabling widescale collaboration and co-production with work efficiencies now being realised in many ways across various service areas.

Phase 2 started in December 2023, focusing on user adoption, service-level workflow re- design, SharePoint deployment, software rationalisation and data reporting and visualisation.

Progressing with the roll out of SharePoint and OneDrive for corporate users by engaging with Infotechtion (a leading M365 delivery organisation), who are providing advice and guidance for key parts of the project.

Various activities have taken place this quarter to support staff with M365 across the organisation including:

- Continued the rollout of Teams and SharePoint for external sharing with partner organisations
- Enabled external sharing capabilities for Microsoft 365 Forms.
- Launched the Tribe365 engagement and training programme to enhance digital skills among identified champions and build upon internal knowledge and capacity.
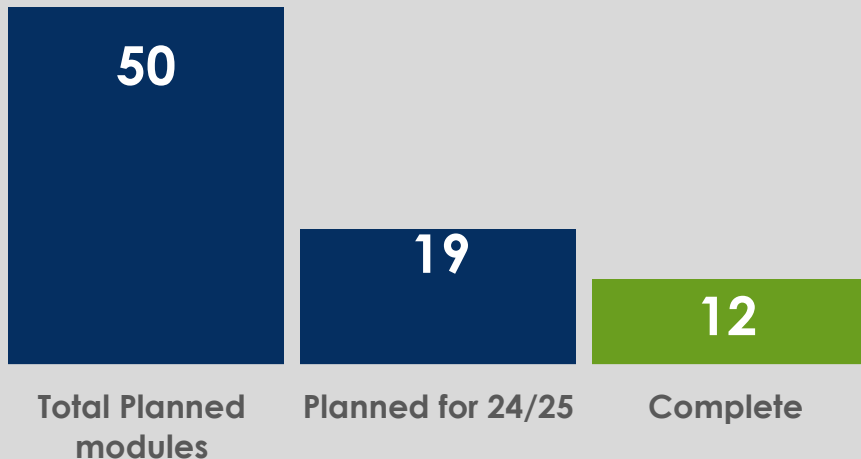- Initiated the build of a new M365 based intranet site to replace the existing vulnerable site.

# Digital – performance measures

## Key Digital projects

**50%**
of Neighbourhood Services digital project complete

## Progress of total number of Customer Service Platform modules (cumulative)

| Total Planned modules | Planned for 24/25 | Complete |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 50 | 19 | 12 |

## Customer satisfaction and helpdesk

% of IT helpdesk incidents complete within 48 hours (quarterly)

| Q3 23/24 | Q4 23/24 | Q1 24/25 | Q2 24/25 | Q3 24/25 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 53% | 58% | 58% | 61% | 62% |
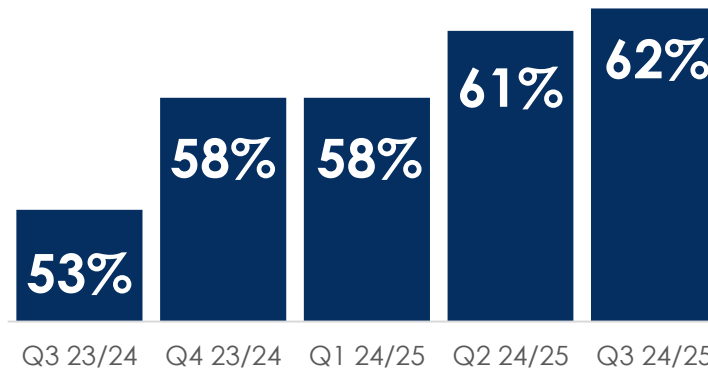
Digital Services Customer satisfaction rate:

**94%**

## Website

**401,819**
Midlothian Council **Website visits** this quarter (346,508 website visits in Q2 24/25)

## Cyber security performance

**52%** of **cyber security training** complete

**100%**
of **Cyber Essentials and PSN implemented**

# Corporate Resources

**Key priorities for the service in 2024/25**

- Redesign of business processes to achieve efficiencies across all of Corporate Resources
- Making more use of current applications to enable self-service e.g. viewing Council Tax and rent accounts online
- Continued upgrade of applications supporting the Council's transformation agenda e.g. increasing automated and online payments

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Invoicing**

Work continues in the rollout of invoice approval processes. Moving away from paper-based invoicing to invoice approval system management allows for a greater level of audit, performance management and data, leading to more up to date financial monitoring and real time reporting. The Business Applications Team continue to work with Scottish Government's e-commerce team on next steps for the e-invoicing programme and onboarding of suppliers to this service. The invoice approval process expansion continues across Property Maintenance and Fleet Services. Green slip transactions have reduced from 12.1% in quarter 2 (23/24) to 8.3% this quarter.

The rate of invoices paid on time across the Council this quarter was 91.9% (target is 95%). A total of 74,993 transactions were processed up to quarter 3, of which 63,422 are included in the Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI) invoice calculation with an average of 11.5 days to pay an invoice.

The team made 9,055 direct payments to bank accounts to cover free school meals during the holiday periods, Ukrainian Host payments and Economic Development Business Grants. 2,516 internally generated payments were processed including grants, corporate appointees, salary deductions and treasury activities.

Business application upgrades were completed this quarter for DRS (dynamic scheduling tool for Property Maintenance), Civica Automation to version 8.1.8 and Granicus to version 556a and a major upgrade to Content Server to version 23.4 was completed.

Two business cases for the Parent Portal project and Mosaic Access Community Gateway Project were presented to Business Transformation Steering Group and recommendations accepted to commence these transformation projects which will result in improved customer experience.

Other activities this quarter included the completion of a health check review of the Itrent system and associated processes and completion of the 2024 Scottish Exchange of Data (ScotXed) annual return which was submitted to the Scottish Government this quarter. The submission covers data such as the levels of achievement for Curriculum for Excellence in numeracy and literacy, school attendance statistics, absences, exclusions and pupil numbers.

**Employment and Reward**

This quarter seen the successful implementation of the pay award and associated back pay for both Local Government Workers and Teachers which included system testing to support the process. Working with our Health and Safety team a new eyecare contract was procured and introduced for all Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users.

**Business Services**

The rollout of incoming mail scanning and electronic mail distribution continues this quarter with implementation of more efficient processes for Finance and Sport and Leisure. As part of our M365 applications, MS stream was introduced this quarter to video record and create training material and guidance procedures across our mail scanning service.  In terms of records management, our records management policy, business classification scheme, retention schedule and associated user guides were refreshed, and our records champions re-established with training delivered.

**Supporting the Cost-of-Living Crisis**

Requests for crisis funding continue to remain consistently high compared to last year with a 3% increase in applications received.

100% of our total Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) budget up to and including quarter as been allocated. The Scottish Government granted Midlothian a further £260,000 in December. 5,109 applications were received for Crisis Grants and 931 received for Community Care Grants up to and including this quarter. This demonstrates the continued significant financial challenges faced by our communities.

The successful recruitment of the Scottish Welfare Fund Assessors allows the team to respond and address the current backlog of processing activities and analyse the reasons for the high number of applications and refusals to identify preventative activity to mitigate people reaching this crisis point. This is identified as a key action in the Child Poverty Action Plan. In addition, 2,692 customers received help and support via housing benefits this quarter.
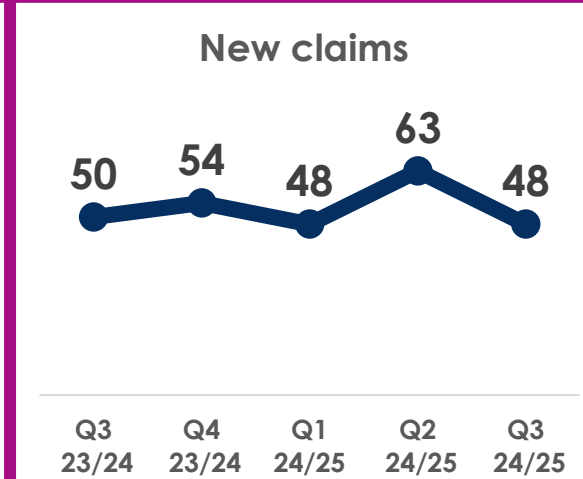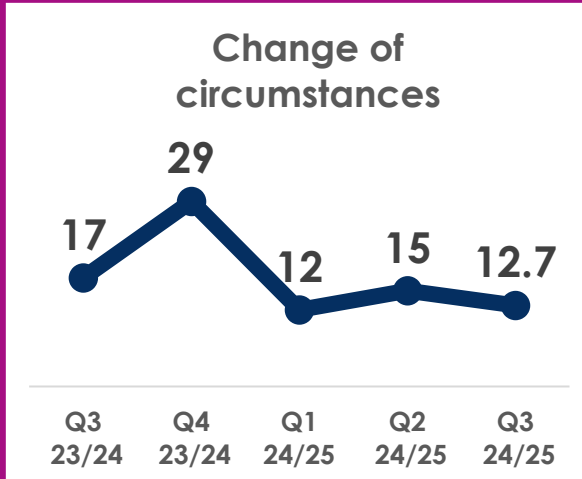
The percentage of current housing rent arrears sits at 15.47% for Q3, an increase from last year of 13.61%. In year Council Tax collected year to date is 77.5% showing a similar rate of collection this time last year of 77.1%. It is anticipated that the Cost of Living Crisis is affecting households and their ability to meet all their household bills.
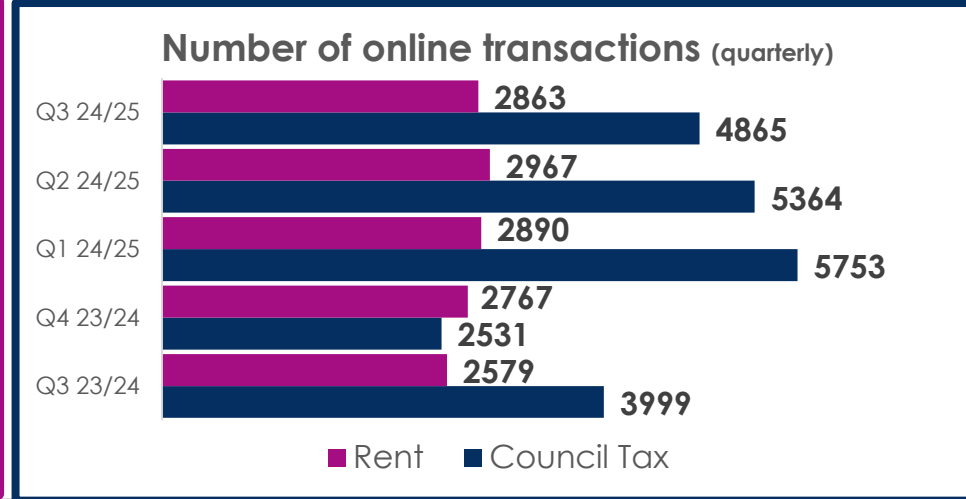
# Corporate Resources – performance measures

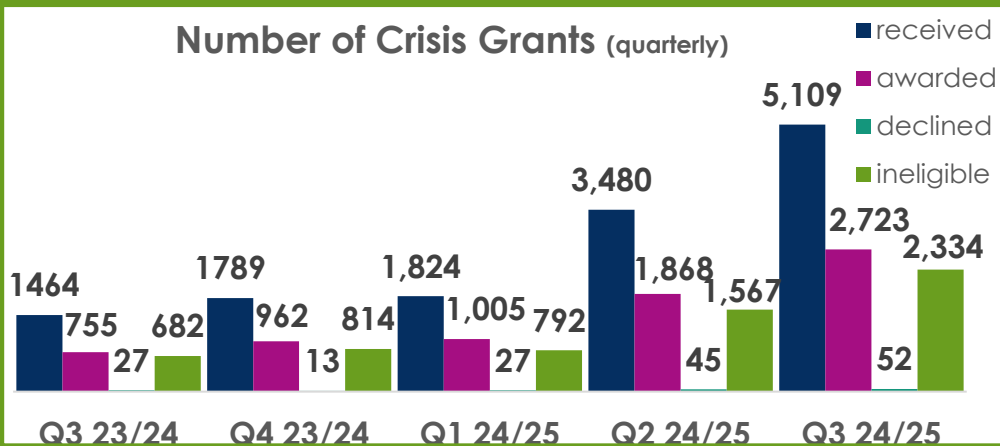## Revenues and Benefits

### Average processing times (days)

**Change of circumstances**

17 — Q3 23/24
29 — Q4 23/24
12 — Q1 24/25
15 — Q2 24/25
12.7 — Q3 24/25

**New claims**

50 — Q3 23/24
54 — Q4 23/24
48 — Q1 24/25
63 — Q2 24/25
48 — Q3 24/25

**77.5%** of in year **Council Tax collected** year to date.

### Number of online transactions (quarterly)

| Quarter | Rent | Council Tax |
|---|---|---|
| Q3 24/25 | 2863 | 4865 |
| Q2 24/25 | 2967 | 5364 |
| Q1 24/25 | 2890 | 5753 |
| Q4 23/24 | 2767 | 2531 |
| Q3 23/24 | 2579 | 3999 |

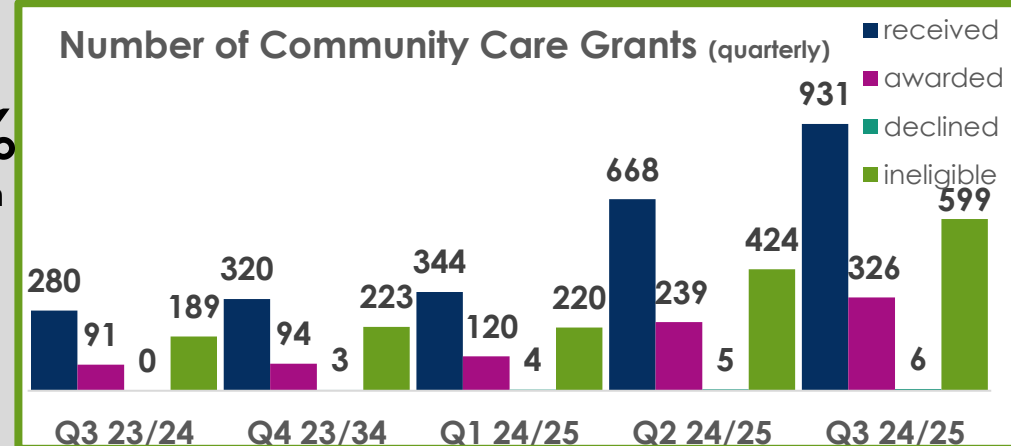Legend: Rent, Council Tax

## Scottish Welfare Fund

**£320,370** granted from Scottish Welfare fund for **crisis grants**

**£478,221** granted for **community care grants** in Q3.

### Number of Crisis Grants (quarterly)

Legend: received, awarded, declined, ineligible

| Quarter | received | awarded | declined | ineligible |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 1464 | 755 | 27 | 682 |
| Q4 23/24 | 1789 | 962 | 13 | 814 |
| Q1 24/25 | 1,824 | 1,005 | 27 | 792 |
| Q2 24/25 | 3,480 | 1,868 | 45 | 1,567 |
| Q3 24/25 | 5,109 | 2,723 | 52 | 2,334 |

**100%** of Scottish Welfare Fund original budget spent this quarter.

### Number of Community Care Grants (quarterly)

Legend: received, awarded, declined, ineligible

| Quarter | received | awarded | declined | ineligible |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q3 23/24 | 280 | 91 | 0 | 189 |
| Q4 23/34 | 320 | 94 | 3 | 223 |
| Q1 24/25 | 344 | 120 | 4 | 220 |
| Q2 24/25 | 668 | 239 | 5 | 424 |
| Q3 24/25 | 931 | 326 | 6 | 599 |

Grant applications deemed as ineligible are in general those that have exceeded the maximum amount of 3 applications in a year or customers who do not meet the set criteria for the award.

# Legal and Governance

**Key priorities for the service in 2024/25**

- Review of the Council's governance framework with revised Standing Orders and Associated Scheme(s)
- Implementation of the new Subject Access Request portal
- Development of the new Procurement Strategy, with a focus on social value, the introduction of a Council wide approach to Community Benefits, and an increased focus on local procurement
- Aligned to the Transformation Blueprint, undertake a review of Contract and Grant Management.

## Key achievements this quarter:

**Legal Services**

Various commercial transactions took place by our in-house legal team this quarter including:

- Completion of transfer in ownership of Poltonhall Playing Fields and Pavillion to Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- Completion of Section 69 Agreement relative to a development of offices, storage and library facilities at Gilmerton Road with contributions totalling £42k secured.
- Completion of Section 75 Agreement relative to 28 units at former Newbattle Community High School with contributions of £332k secured.
- Completion of Section 75 agreement for Inveravon House, Loanhead to secure £11,065 in developer contributions.
- Missives concluded to purchase 4 properties on the open market for social housing.
- Completion of 2 'Golden Share' transactions as part of the Council's affordable housing strategy.
- 7 notices of payment of scheme of assistance grants registered to facilitate home improvements for eligible applicants.
- Grant of Deed of Restriction from Overage Security in favour of Shawfair LLP to facilitate land sale at Shawfair.
-  4 Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO's) completed.
- Completion of 3 settlement agreements and settlement of a complex Employment Tribunal.
- Dismissal judgements received from the employment tribunal for 32 holiday pay claims.
- Draft guidance on use of electronic signatures prepared for internal consultation and discussion, as appropriate.

In addition, one staff member completed their legal traineeship with the Council and is now a fully qualified solicitor promoted into the post of Assistant Solicitor within our Legal Commercial team.

The legal court team continue to protect the Council's interests and deliver suitable outcomes for children and vulnerable adults through attendance at court this quarter. Various activities were undertaken by our Court team this quarter including:

- Response to 92 individual legal queries.
- Raised 11 applications for guardianship and/or Intervention Orders under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- Raised 1 application for permanence orders/permanence orders with authority to adopt under the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.
- Raised 8 actions for recovery of possession under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- Prepared for, and took witness statements for a permanence proof and provided substantial ongoing representation and advice in 2 ongoing permanence matters.
- Represented Children and Families in two actions for Child Protection Orders under the Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011.
- Advised on four cases at the Education Additional Support Needs Tribunal.
- Attended and/or provided advice for 13 Adults with Incapacity/Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences.
- Provided advice at 2 Adoption and Permanence Panels, for two individual children.
- Provided advice to education on statutory duties.
- Advised Adult Services Social Work on an ongoing cross-border court case.
- Advised on implementation and readiness for UNCRC.
- Advised Social Work on duties to adults and children with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- Liaised with Sheriff Court in relation to amendments to work processes.
- Provided policy advice to the Data Protection Team and Education Authority relating to responses under Subject Access Requests and Pupils Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003.

**Procurement**

Work undertaken this quarter includes:

- 13 tenders from the previous quarter have been managed but not yet completed on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) (at either final evaluation or recommendation stage).
- 4 new tenders have been issued (all on PCS) either at evaluation or recommendation stage and 2 tenders awarded.
- 4 new quick quotes were awarded.
- 8 mini competitions have been issued on PCS.
- 4 Direct Awards have been issued on PCS.
- 22 new Midlothian based suppliers have been registered.

In addition, the Annual Procurement Report for 23/24 was presented to Council this quarter outlining the authority's regulated procurement activities against our procurement strategy.
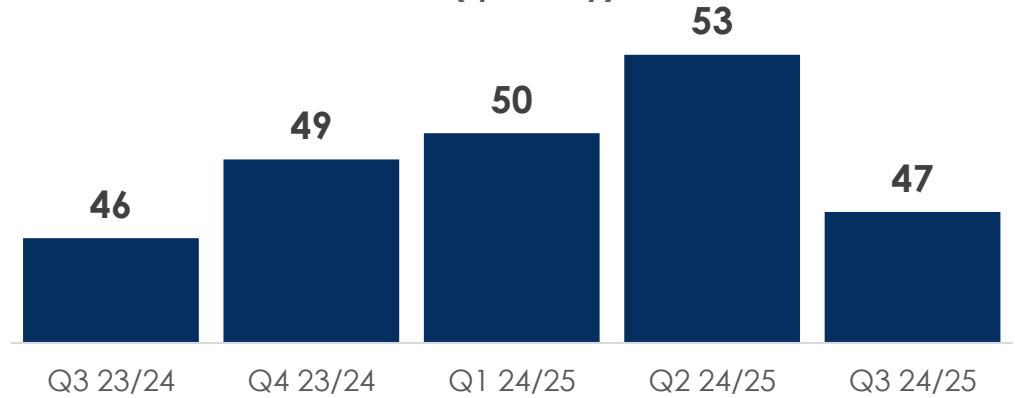
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# Legal and Governance – performance measures
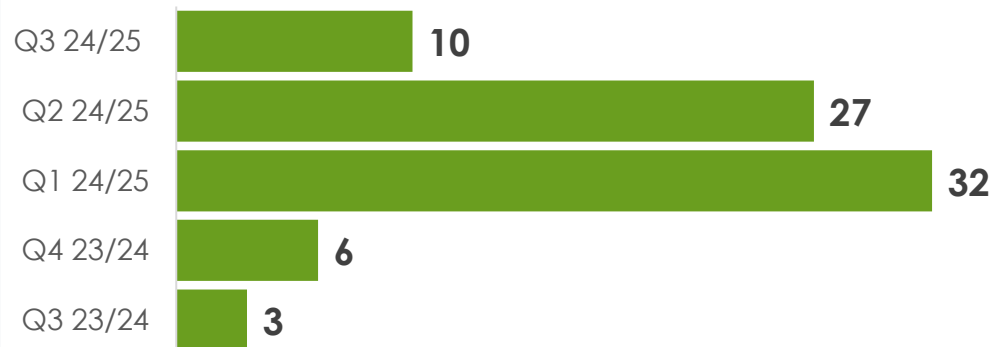
## Access to information

### Number of Freedom of Information requests recieved (quarterly)

| Quarter | Value |
|---------|-------|
| Q3 23/24 | 319 |
| Q4 23/24 | 397 |
| Q1 24/25 | 304 |
| Q2 24/25 | 266 |
| Q3 24/25 | 359 |
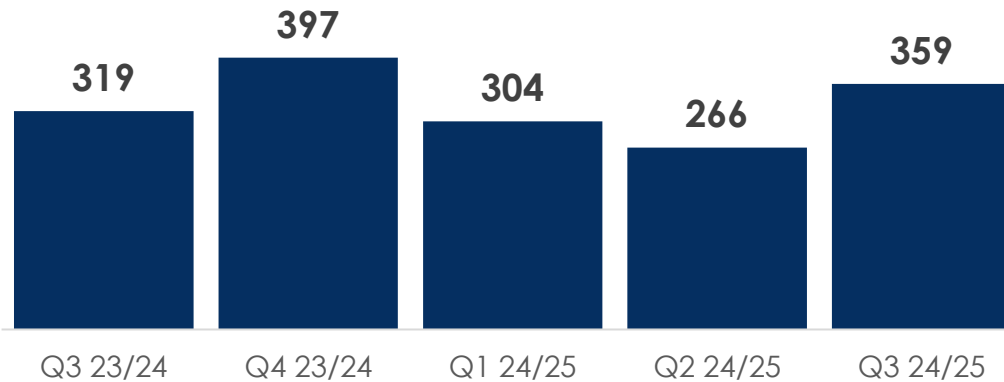
### Number of Subject Access Requests recieved (quarterly)

| Quarter | Value |
|---------|-------|
| Q3 23/24 | 46 |
| Q4 23/24 | 49 |
| Q1 24/25 | 50 |
| Q2 24/25 | 53 |
| Q3 24/25 | 47 |

### Number of regulated procurement excerises undertaken

| Quarter | Value |
|---------|-------|
| Q3 24/25 | 10 |
| Q2 24/25 | 27 |
| Q1 24/25 | 32 |
| Q4 23/24 | 6 |
| Q3 23/24 | 3 |

**15** Legal commercial transactions carried out this quarter

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The Continuous Improvement team supports the required step-change to ensure that as an organisation we learn from feedback and complaints received and improve service delivery as a result of driving forward a culture of continuous improvement.

**Key priorities for the service in 2024/25:**

Working with services to focus on performance measures and supporting approaches which deliver improved outcomes, including:

- The introduction of a revised Planning and Performance Management Framework (PPMF) and a newly developed Best Value Framework (BVF).
- Revising the Midlothian Excellence Framework (MEF), our corporate self-evaluation tool, to reflect changes to the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF).
- External data submission, monitoring and reporting of Local Government Benchmarking (LGBF), including maintenance of the LGBF dashboard on Pentana for elected members.
- Key contact for corporate level external scrutiny activities such as the Best Value Thematic exercises undertaken by our external auditor.
- Facilitating a review and update of all policies and procedures in place to deliver the Council's strategic outcomes and ensure alignment with overarching strategies.
- Review and refresh of the Equalities work programme including increased awareness of equality and diversity and the redesign of the staff equalities group to facilitate greater diversity and inclusion in the Council's decision making processes, policy development and a more diverse workforce reflective of the communities the Council services.

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## Key achievements this quarter:

**Equalities**

- Worked with the Lothian Regional Equalities Partnership to develop joint equality outcomes for public consultation.
- Launched the Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 survey to gather the views of local people and equality organisations to inform the development of the final Midlothian Equality Plan 2025-2029.
- Liaised with Council services and partners to ascertain the progress achieved on the current Midlothian Equality Plan 2021-2025.

- **Contact Us:**
- Plans for developing processes for the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) coordination and reporting underway.
- Early-stage planning of process for 'support requirement levels/types of support' for services to better enhance/monitor service provision.
- Finalising Annual Complaint Handling Report for 2023/24 with the data since live with the new Complaints Management System.
- Continuing with Child Friendly Complaints considerations.
- Contact Us training session planned and to be delivered in Q4.

## Challenges and risks

**Financial position**

Council approved the 2024/25 budget at its meeting on 27 February 2024. Whilst the 2024/25 budget is agreed, the challenge remains to reach ongoing financial sustainability. Cost and income projections for future years are embedded in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is supported by the Transformation Blueprint containing a range of transformation themes to drive towards a position of financial sustainability. Officers continue to work closely with the Business Transformation Steering Group to respond to the challenges.

The Council continue to work to ensure the Council has robust financial management arrangements in place with a full suite of financial monitoring reports for quarter 2 of 2024/25 presented to Council this quarter.

The team continues to provide in-depth financial input to revenue and capital projects embedded into the Medium Term Financial Strategy with regular updates being presented at Council.

**Growing Council**

The recent 2022 Census results have now been published. Between 2011 to 2022 data shows that Midlothian had an increase in population 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 kilometer compared to the Scottish average of 69.8.

**Economic pressures**

Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is experiencing unprecedented adverse market conditions, leading to significant rises in tender prices for a wide range of materials. There is evidence that inflation of between 10% and 15% beyond BCIS predictions is affecting projects. The pandemic has also accelerated financial challenges, and the growth from being the fastest growing local authority in Scotland places significant pressure on Midlothian to be able to deliver high quality services to its citizens.

**Capital Investment Strategy**

Midlothian's approved Capital Investment Strategy sets out the infrastructure required to meet these 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

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 aims to deliver new schools, 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.

In response to all these pressures, a range of reprioritisation activity is taking place, with a revised Capital Investment Strategy being considered by the cross-party Business Transformation Steering Group, and options to review what and how services are delivered as part of the savings measures to reduce the funding gap recommended to Council.

**Cost of Living Crisis**

Midlothian's citizens are facing significant financial challenges. The impact on households continues to be noted across the UK with 49% of adults reporting an increase in their cost of living in December 2023 (Office for National Statistics; Francis-Devine et al, 2022). The UK is currently facing an unprecedented wave of increasing prices, bills and tax challenges. The 41 year high inflation rate of 11.1% in October 2022 has been the main driver of the cost of living crisis which has outstripped wage and benefit increases. After this peak in inflation, rates have continued to decline, dropping to 2.0% in May 2024. Over the three years between May 2021 to May 2024 food prices rose by 30.6%. The price rises continue to impact low-income households hardest as a larger proportion of their costs are on energy and food. The Resolution Foundation forecasted that absolute poverty will increase by 300,000, from 11.7 million in 2023/24 to 12 million in 2024/25.

As our citizens feel the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, they will seek additional support from public services, in particular local authorities. To respond to this emerging crisis, the Council established a Cost of Living Task Force in 2022, which is chaired by the Council Leader and meets regularly to coordinate mitigating activities.

**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 driving forward transformation.

# Pentana Performance Dashboard – Q3 24/25

| 12 | 11 | 67 | 1 | 26 | 0 |
|----|----|----|---|----|---|
| Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - On Target | Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Off Target | Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Data only | Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Data not available | Quarterly Corporate Solutions All Service Risks | Quarterly Corporate Solutions High Service Risks |

## Quarterly Reporting Corporate Solutions PIs - Off Target

| ... | Code & Title | Gauge | Value | Target | Last Update | History |
|-----|--------------|-------|-------|--------|-------------|---------|
| 🕐 🔴 | CR.CC.4 % of contact centre calls abandoned (quarterly) | | 8% | 5% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORP.DIGITAL.12 % completion rate of cyber security training (cumulative) | | 52.27% | 57% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORP.LEG.02 % of Freedom of Information requests complete within Statutory time... | | 96% | 100% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORPS.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (Corporate Soluti... | | 93.1% | 95.0% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORPS.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complet... | | 73.81% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 🔴 | CSE.LPI.03 Average processing time for new claims (internally calculated) (quarterly) | | 48 days | 25 days | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 🔴 | CSE.LPI.04 Average processing time for change of circumstances (internally calculat... | | 12.7 days | 8 days | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORPS.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. | | 86.49% | 90% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 🔴 | RHM.r.01.1 % of in-year Council Tax collected ytd (cumulative) | | 77.5% | 95.2% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🕐 🔴 | RHM.r.02.1 % of current Housing Rent arrears (total) | | 15.47% | 7.5% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORPS.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working ... | | 85.71% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |

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# Midlothian Council Report Quarter 3 2024/25

## Progress Against Strategic Outcomes

The new Single Midlothian Plan focuses on three main priorities:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life and work.
- No child or household need live in poverty.
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

In recent Census results, Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size of all mainland council areas in Scotland with an increase of 16%. In addition, Midlothian has 10 zones which fall into the most deprived areas living a local share of 8.7% living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

To accommodate growth within the resources available we will need to think differently about the services we deliver and how we deliver them. Rooted in the creation of a wellbeing economy, in June 2023 Council approved the new Transformation Blueprint 2023-2028. Some services will be transformed to meet our growing population within the financial envelope available, others may be delivered in a different way and some will need to stop. Fostering a collaborative culture where everyone is focused on the same end goal – creating effective and efficient services which will benefit our citizens – will be crucial to future success.

The Transformation Blueprint will focus on the nature of the work we will do, developing a 21st century workforce supported by a workplace fit for the future where joined up services are delivered in a holistic and integrated way.

The 5 key objectives of the Transformation Blueprint are:

1. Support the Council to address the 5 year funding gap of £29.121 million 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 fit for the future delivering services in a holistic and integrated way as well as utilising our assets to maximise their potential.
5. Drive forward multi-agency transformation to deliver systems-level change resulting in integrated service delivery which improve community outcomes.

Following approval from Council, this quarter saw the formal launch of our **Workforce Strategy 2024-34** and **Digital Transformation Strategy 2024-29.** The strategies are a core elements of the council's Transformation Blueprint and will support the council's medium-term financial strategy (2023-2028).

**Workforce Strategy 2024-34** is accompanied by a 3-year short-term action plan and the strategic aim are:

- *Plan:* deliver an evidence and outcome-based workforce planning framework that is an integral part of the council's approach to strategic planning.
- *Attract:* ensure the council becomes the employer of choice for the population of Midlothian, by deploying best practice in attracting the best staff.
- *Train:* enable the council to become a "Learning Organisation", providing staff with business-focused training and development to equip them with the skills and knowledge required to deliver their best.
- *Employ:* ensure Fair Work principles continue to be at the heart of management practice, ensuring staff are, and feel, valued and rewarded.
- *Nurture:* create a workforce and leadership culture focusing on the health and wellbeing of a demographically balanced workforce that reflects the community it serves.

**Digital Transformation Strategy 2024-29** outlines the key priority areas the Council will focus on over the next 5 years, harnessing digital tools, technology and data. The key areas are:

- **Automate:** For an Efficient, Modern Council
- **Reimagine:** Transform Service Delivery
- **Data:** Deeper Insights and Preventative Operations
- **Secure and Sustain:** Protect and Preserve

Whilst a full update for the performance for each of the Council's Service areas is published separately, this report reflects a summary of the key service updates, against the thematic areas of the Single Midlothian Plan.

# Single Midlothian Plan Themes in 2023/27

## Midlothian will be Healthier – Achievements

The Midlothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) plan and direct delegated health and social care services for the people of Midlothian. Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) oversees the delivery of all the services delegated to Midlothian IJB. The aim of integrated health and social care is for the people to experience more joined up treatment and care.

Achievements from Public Health include:

- **Learning Disability Team** – the St Cuthberts supporting living project is nearing completion with the first tenants having moved in.  The core and cluster service consists of 8 flats with 24/7 on site support.

- **Older People's Social Work Team** – an event arranged by the Older People's Assembly in November provided the opportunity to discuss supports and community resources and resulted in positive feedback and allowed for networking and information sharing.  The annual Older People's newsletter containing information on services and community groups was distributed throughout Midlothian.

- **Hospital In Reach Social Work Team** – currently working on an improvement plan to ensure connections between home care, rehabilitation service and community services are robust, rapidly accessible with timescales for action, evaluated and managed at the delay meeting were all people experiencing delayed discharge are discussed.

- **Newbyres Village Care Home** – successful Christmas Fair raised significant funds for the activities.

- Public Health Scotland facilitated a **Suicide Critical Response workshop** which has helped establish a baseline for our response to suicide in Midlothian and will help develop the 3-year strategy going forward.

- **Midlothian SUS treatment service** Q3 performance predicted 100%, for all individuals referred to the service both for Substance misuse and Alcohol dependency were seen and assessed/treatment started within 21 days.  The service received 44 new referrals over Q3, off which 23 referrals were for alcohol and 21 for Drugs.

- Reviewed and updated quarter 3 data for the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** working alongside data colleagues in NHS Lothian Intelligence team and published on the Health and Social Care Partnership website. The data provided within the JSNA are of the highest quality and this work has received recognition as a national exemplar by Public Health Scotland and the model has since been adopted by other IJBs. The update was presented to Midlothian IJB's Strategic Planning Group on Thursday 16th January 2025.

The **Near Me** programme, funded by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and the Scottish Government Technology-Enabled Care programme have supported the launch of 2 hubs in Midlothian (in Dalkeith and Gorebridge Libraries) enabling people who lack digital access, digital skills or a confidential space at home to have a remote consultation with health and social care staff. This saves time and travel costs and increases equitable uptake of health services. Library staff are on hand to provide assistance if needed.

**Tonezone** memberships continues to grow through improved marketing and promotion with a total of 4,872 memberships up to the end of quarter 3. An increase of 7.6% compared from last quarter. The Sport and Leisure mobile app makes it easier for customer to access and manage their account, book classes, get live pool updates, news and Active Schools information. By the end of quarter 3 the app has over 8,000 users.

**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 1,307 Midlothian Active Choices attendees with 364 new referrals received after completion of MAC sessions showing an increase of 7% compared to the same period last year.

The rolling programme of **Wellness@Midlothian** initiatives continues to support the positive health and wellbeing of our staff. This quarter 24 wellbeing events were held covering financial support, carer support, physical wellbeing and information sessions. A total of 324 staff attended various events which is a 95% increase from attendees last quarter.

## Midlothian will be Safer – Achievements

This theme aims to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour, working with a range of individuals and organisations within community justice. The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 supported a redesign of the community justice system, transferring the responsibilities for reducing offending and reoffending to local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). A National Strategy for Community Justice (2022) and National Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework (2023) were published by the Scottish Government to outline the new model.

Individuals become formally involved with Justice Social Work at the point of conviction when a Court makes a request for a Justice Social Work Report; requests for assessment and risk management planning are received from the Scottish Prison Service and the Parole Board. Between 1 October and 31 December 2024, the team **received 170 requests** for reports, **a reduction of 3.4%** on last quarter.

Staff in the Justice Service work with men and women subject to Community Payback Orders who present with a wide range of presenting risk and needs. This includes individuals with **mental health, substance use, adverse childhood experiences, trauma and negative experiences** of education and or employment. Staff working within Justice Services require the appropriate level of support and training to enable them to effectively engage with people to progress **interventions towards positive changes** in behaviour. An important part of ensuing that men and women in the justice system have ease of access to services and resources is the provision of robust community-based alternatives to custodial sentences as it enables individuals to remain in their community, **maintain relationships** and ensures continuity of care.

The main community-based sentence is a Community Payback Order (CPO), which can have several requirements attached to it. The most frequently imposed requirements are Supervision and Unpaid Work. During **Q3** the **Courts imposed 42 Community Payback Orders**.

The work undertaken by our Unpaid Work Team is underpinned by the ideals of **reparation, rehabilitation and reintegration** to support those who have been convicted of offences to achieve a positive destination and provide meaningful benefit to our local communities. Those

undertaking unpaid work have the opportunity to gain a range of **skills**, experiences and opportunities to promote their rehabilitation and ability to **desist from offending**.

## Midlothian will Get it Right for Every Child – Achievements

In Midlothian the Getting It Right for Every Child Board (GIRFEC) is one of the subgroups of the SMP, and one of the main drivers for the effective delivery of services to children. The GIRFEC Plan also known as the Integrated Children's Service Plan 2023-2026, is a statutory three-year plan devised by the local authority and health. The plan develops key outcomes and priority actions which are designed to improve the lives of children, young people, and families.

The plan has 12 shared priority themes, outcomes and actions which sit within 4 subgroups:

1. Children & Young People's Rights
2. Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing
3. Whole Family Wellbeing
4. Information Sharing and Commissioning

We are fully committed to realising a children's rights approach to all of our work and ensuring that we embed the principles of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) alongside our Promise commitments.

**The Promise** – Midlothian continues to progress towards the key foundations of The Promise Scotland Plan 2024- 2030. Committed to listening and acting on the feedback from the voices of our care experienced children and families, in Q2 we secured a 3 year contact with Who Cares? Scotland to support delivery of a participation strategy and to re-fresh our current 'champion's boards'. This work is currently being shared across the entirety of Midlothian and wider partnerships to raise awareness of The Promise and Corporate Parenting duties.

**Family Wellbeing Service** – A new Team Leader was appointed in November and the service continues to work alongside families, schools, health and third sector partners to support children and their families to improve low school attendance, and other wellbeing concerns.

**Team Around the Child (High School)** – Team Around the Child (TATC) allows multi agency discussion about a child and their family's needs, to create a plan about which service within the council or third sector are best placed to provide support in a timely manner. Feedback from Education service colleagues about the TATC High School process has been positive, with people sharing that the structure and process of TATC HS is clear and supportive.

**Foster Carers** – The Family Centred Care team arranged a Christmas celebration for children, young people and their carer as 'Jump In' and foster carers were also offered tickets for the Pantomime.

**Disability** – Development of a discrete disability team supports the Business Transformation Project focused on improving transitions across Education, Children's Services and Adult Services.  The introduction of the team will support better tracking of our young people who will need support as they move into adulthood.

The **Education Service Plan** is informed by and links to the outcomes determined by the Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child Board. Key priorities are to raise attainment and achievement to ensure that all children and young people in Midlothian achieve outcomes which lead to positive and sustained destinations. The Service Improvement Plan has four main workstreams:

- Learning, teaching, assessment & curriculum
- Attendance& engagement
- Relationships, wellbeing & care and
- Inclusion, equity & targeted supports

The raising attainment team continues to be prioritised to work in primary schools with the lowest attainment and/or are in the improvement QI category. The team works alongside teachers and school leaders to plan, teach and engage in Numeracy and Literacy CLPL.

Learning Technologists continue to work with class teachers to plan and co-deliver digital learning sessions for young people, based on a consistent core offer. 199 sessions have been completed since August 2024.

Attendance dashboard has been further developed, providing schools with data monthly and including tracking of numbers at different attendance bands to inform intervention. New tracking systems have ensured accurate tracking and monitoring of attendance for children supported by CLLE and Pathways.

Outcomes this academic year include:
- Individual school data on attainment and achievement reflects positive impact of interventions.
- Attainment and achievement data demonstrates improved positive outcomes for all learners with ASN.
- Improved attendance data in all schools and settings.
- Reduction in exclusions.
- Reduction in violent incidents.
- Midlothian Learner's Plans and Personal Support Plans are in place for all learners who require one.
- Transition Planning for post school destinations is in place for 14+ learners with additional support needs.
- Systems and processes with robust terms of reference are in place for the allocation of additional resource.
- SEEMiS data recording for ASN is up to date and accurate.

**Active Schools Midlothian** team continue to work in partnership with sportsscotland, providing opportunities for our children to adopt healthy and active lifestyles throughout their school years and into adulthood by supporting and sustaining a network of volunteers, coaches, leaders and teachers who, in turn, deliver extra-curricular physical activity and sport before, during and after school and in the wider community. 225 activities were delivered this quarter, an increase from 197 delivered during quarter 3 last year. 3,013 participants attended Active Schools free extra-curricular club which is an increase of 7.5% compared to the same period last year. The number of volunteer hours delivered in the Active Schools Programme has also increased from this time last year with 2,128 volunteers compared to 1,972 during quarter 3 of 23/24.

| Midlothian will Support Residents to Improve Employability and Outcomes in our Communities - Achievements |
|---|

The vision for this is to reduce the gaps in learning, economic circumstances and poverty.

The new **CLD Partnership Plan 2024 to 2027** was approved and endorsed by the Community Planning Partnership Board and approved by Midlothian Council on 17th December 2024.

In the last three quarters 4,697 people have engaged with CLLE services across 426 opportunities. 281 home visits were carried out. 353 people accessing our services live in SIMD 20% and 1,777 in SIMD 40%. In addition, 40 community groups have received support and advice from CLLE.

In Q3 the **No One Left Behind (NOLB)** All Age Employability team have continued to provide support to 198 people, with 59 new starts this quarter. The team has continued to support 244 existing parents on our caseloads from the year 24-25 and a further 67 new parents started in quarter 3.

**Youth Work** - Universal and targeted youth work is progressing well in all clusters from P5 up to 18-year-olds. 12 young people from the Young Carers CLLE group have successfully completed the Ocean Youth Trust 7-day voyage, which is an amazing achievement by these young people. Street work is actively taking place on Friday evenings, and this is in targeted in areas based on Police intelligence.

255 local people have enrolled in the paid for **adult learning programme** which is offering a variety of courses such as Spanish, French, Painting, Dress Making and national qualifications including Nat 5 Maths. There are also a variety of community-based adult learning and family learning activities on offer.

As part of our effort to reduce **Child Poverty** Children's Services fund three income maximisation projects. These projects support families subject to Child Protection processes or those engaged with Hawthorn Family Learning centre and the Family Wellbeing Service. The three projects continue to support families to access their entitled benefits, grants and reduce debts. Over Q3 the projects collectively generated **£132,570 income for 49 families.**

**Library services** continue to transform and thrive in responding to the needs of our communities. This quarter figures show:
- library visits remain high with an 11% increase in total visits compared to quarter 2 and an 8% increase compared to the same period last year.
- 155,290 physical library visits were made this quarter, an increase of 13% from the previous quarter and 7% compared to the same period last year.
- 40,885 virtual library visits were made this quarter, an 7% increase compared to this period last year.
- membership continues to increase with a 9% rise in members compared to the same period last year and a 2% compared to last quarter.
- 2,151 library events were held during quarter 3 which is an increase of 45% from the same period last year.
- Book Week Scotland in November saw 79 events held with 586 adults and 2,159 children attending which is a 20% increase from last year.

Libraries play a crucial role in supporting communities with **digital access**, learning and support and in preventing digital exclusion. 709 customers were supported with digital queries this quarter including general IT help, assisting customers to access services online such as job searches, benefits, universal credit and assist in making payments online. There has been an 18% increase in support given this quarter compared to the same period last year.

The new **Library Natter Project** was launched on the 12 December with a focus on Dalkeith community and creating a safe place for people to sit, relax and chat and meet other library users while learning about and engaging with wider Council services and community organisations.

Completed the transfer in ownership of the Poltonhall Sports Complex in December, to Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club (BRCFC) in implementation of the decision of the **Community Asset Transfer** Committee.

## Midlothian will be Greener- Achievements

The Climate Emergency Group's and Community Planning Partnership vision is *significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030*. Our values are to get to net zero equitably, taking into account different people and communities' capacities and abilities to get there. The Group consists of individuals and representatives of Midlothian Community Councils, Community Groups, national government agencies, Third Sector organisations, Midlothian Council, local chamber of commerce, landowners and Midlothian Energy Ltd.

The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) forms part of the local development plan for Midlothian and will also be the strategic basis that future plans and applications will need to take into account.

The biggest sources of carbon emissions in Midlothian are still domestic uses (30.5%) and transport (27.5%). Therefore, this theme will concentrate on reducing carbon emissions in the areas of domestic heating/power and transport to get to Net Zero.

Thematic actions are designed to increase awareness, promote reflection and action on the key Climate Emergency issues of energy, food and travel. They will lead to a better understanding of carbon emissions and greater investment in greener travel, renewable heat, energy sources and heating efficiency in Midlothian. The actions will help inform and give people the opportunity to get involved to make a difference. Midlothian's future will be different through having more people aware and engaged in Climate Emergency issues, both consciously and subconsciously. This will make Midlothian more resilient to the effects of Climate Change and in addition help contribute more widely to Climate Change resilience.

Outcome 1: Learning for Sustainability is increased
Outcome 2: Sustainable Living is increased
Outcome 3: Low Carbon/Renewable Energy Development and Home Energy Saving is Increased
Outcome 4: Carbon Storage is increased

Work continues to implement the Council's Climate Change Strategy which 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. Focus continues within Place services to achieve future emissions targets. This quarter Council were asked to consider the findings of the Climate Action Support Report (CASR) prepared by Aether consultants relating to climate emission reduction trajectories for the Council's estate. 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.

This quarter saw the official opening of **Midlothian Energy Limited (MEL) Centre** which will capture low carbon heat from the Millerhill Recycling and Energy Recovery Centre and use this heat to supply 1,000s of homes, education and retail properties at Shawfair. Council endorsed a 5-year business plan for Midlothian Energy Limited that includes future plans to supply low carbon heat to new homes in Midlothian through the MEL heat network and expansion into

existing buildings and other areas of Midlothian. The first home is now connected to the heat network at Craighall Village (CALA) and Plot Connection Agreement is also in place with Robertsons in Shawfair.

Our new **Active Travel Strategy 'On the Move Midlothian: Our Active Travel Strategy for Everyone 2024-2034'** was approved this quarter at December Council.  The strategy will allow Midlothian Council to continue to seek further funding from 2025/26 onwards for active travel projects throughout Midlothian.  The new strategy will lead the way in providing safe, convenient, well connected and well maintained active travel networks.

Economic Development continues to promote the **Midlothian Business Green Pledge** with businesses signing up to the Pledge continuing to rise each quarter with a total of 169 businesses now committed, 22 of those signing up during quarter 3.

During quarter 3, the waste services launched the recycling app (**LitterLotto**) which encourages residents to recycle at home for the chance to be entered into a free prize draw for £100 each month as well as a £1,000 UK wide free prize draw.

The new **Neighbourhood Environment Team** became fully established within the Recycling and Greenspace Service this quarter. 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.

The **Greenspace Team** have continued to work with our brilliant volunteers across Midlothian, supporting 6 volunteer groups who help manage our countryside sites. 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, 5,107 volunteer hours (851 days) were spent in countryside sites. This quarter the Park Ranger Service hosted a Christmas 'thank you' celebration for our volunteers and our ageing well volunteer leaders. During the quarter the Ranger service also delivered the Midlothian Outdoor Festival attracting over 1,500 participants to a wide range of outdoor activities

| Midlothian will have a Wellbeing Economy and be Better Connected – Achievements |
|---|

A wellbeing economy aims to deliver increased economic opportunities for all, providing meaningful and fair work, better outcomes for young people, sustainable places, improved health outcomes, reduced poverty and environmental sustainability.

The **Midlothian Strategy for Inclusive Economic Growth 2025-2030**, a comprehensive plan aimed at fostering a wellbeing economy that supports local residents, communities and businesses was approved by Council in November.  The strategy aims to create an economy that benefits all residents, ensuring opportunity and fair work for everyone through collaboration, inclusivity, innovation, and ambition. The strategy aligns with Local and National Plans, including the Single Midlothian Plan 2023-2027, and focuses on the following strategic priorities:

- Develop Midlothian's proposition within the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region
- Enhance skills and employability opportunities in Midlothian, to meet the challenges and opportunities of inclusive Green Growth with entrepreneurship recognised as valuable career pathway
- Maximise the potential of Midlothian's key sectors to support a Just Transition
- Capitalise on the strengths of Midlothian's strategic partners to embed community wealth

across all services to realise a wellbeing economy
- Re-imagine our town centres, ensuring they meet Midlothian's economic, social, cultural and environmental needs
- Deliver infrastructure enhancements that will support Midlothian's transition to a Wellbeing Economy

The **Business Gateway Midlothian Service** continues to offer consistent levels of activity across various support services, from pre-start to start-up and existing business growth support. 44 'Planning to Start' enquiries were received in quarter 3. The total number of new Business start-ups this quarter was 17, creating a total of 23 jobs and an estimated contribution of £1,230,000 to the Midlothian economy in their first year of trading. As part of the Business Gateway Service redesign, quarter 3 saw the launch of new CRM tools; 'customer categories' and the 'progress tracker'.

The second cohort of the Learn Ecommerce Expert Help programme went live in December with 14 local businesses enrolled. The programme will continue through January with one to one and group sessions with the Learn Ecommerce Expert Help provider. The Net Zero Nation 12 month Programme which supported 13 diverse local businesses to accelerate their Net Zero Journey finished in December 2024. The popularity of our HR Expert Help programme has meant the budget was fully allocated in November 2024. 21 local businesses took advantage of the support since launch in March 2023.

A Business Gateway Midlothian Coffee Morning held on the 8th of November 2024 at the Energy Training Academy with a focus on sustainability, saw 23 businesses attend.

A total of £374,813.36 of grant funding was allocated to 3 themes, Community Wealth Building, Tourism Culture & Heritage and Exporting with the final tranche of funds allocated this quarter. Over the course of the programme we have distributed 31 grants.

The **Alpine coaster** at Midlothian Snowsports Centre opened successfully on the 14th of September. After a successful communications campaign the coaster was fully booked since its opening weekend to the 13th of October with 11,479 tickets being sold. This quarter a further 18,779 tickets were sold.

Nominated for 2 **Scottish Property Awards** (Regeneration and Education) for Buccleuch Street Passivhaus housing and Easthouses Primary School.

### Midlothian will Work Towards Reducing Poverty – Achievements

This theme focuses on reducing all aspects of poverty using a data informed approach whilst learning from those with direct experience of poverty. 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 as set out in the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Homelessness is not inevitable and can often be prevented.

The Council's **Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2025/26 to 2029/30** was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 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 119 new build homes (23 this quarter) in Conifer Road, Mayfield, St Cuthberts in Bonnyrigg High Street, Buccleuch Wynd, Pathhead and Danderhall. The number of temporary accommodation households that have been flipped to permanent accommodation was 53 this quarter, reducing the need for multiple moves before being permanently housed, allowing for links established within the local community to be maintained.

There were 5,971 active housing applicants placed on the Common Housing Register at the end of this quarter, a 9% increase compared to the same period last year. 152 lets were made this quarter (averaging 50 lets per month), 4 houses were let through our Housing First model. 40 lets were made to new build and open market purchases. Tenants sustaining permanent accommodation continues to be high this quarter with 91.8% of homeless applicants sustaining a permanent tenancy after 1 year.

**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 196. We continue to promote this service to ensure early successful intervention when possible.

**Midlothian House Project** – The fifth cohort of young people to be supported by the project started in Q3. There are currently forty-six young people involved with the project.  Young people and colleagues held a stall at the Care leavers National Movement Conference in November showcasing the Midlothian House Project and one of our young people spoke at the conference sharing their experience of leaving care and being supported by the team.

This quarter we have increased the percentage of Council Housing stock meeting the **Scottish Housing Quality Standards** criteria to 80.29%. Although this is still off target there has been a significant increase from 49.3% meeting standards at quarter 3 of last year. Work is progressing to bring this indicator back on target.

The percentage of Secondary **School meal uptake** this quarter has increased to 40.89% 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 3 was 59.56% 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 4.24% from 5.15% compared to the same period last year.

To coincide with **Challenge Poverty Week** our four **Warm and Well Hubs** in Danderhall, Lasswade. Loanhead and Newbattle Libraries were relaunched. The coat collection point was relaunched at Dalkeith Library and a new one was launched at Loanhead Library. We have worked in partnership with a number of other services including Community Lifelong Learning & Employabilty, Citizens Advice Bureau, Ageing Well and Changeworks, to host workshops and drop-in sessions providing advice on benefits, home energy efficiency, household budgeting and Cost of Living support and advice. Danderhall Library now has a pop-up pantry, working with the Cyrenians and Penicuik Library is now a collection point for food parcels from the Midlothian Food Bank rather than people having to travel to Gorebridge.

## Challenges and Risks

**Financial position**: Council approved the 2024/25 budget at its meeting on 27 February 2024. Whilst the 2024/25 budget is agreed, the challenge remains to reach ongoing financial sustainability. Cost and income projections for future years are embedded in the Council's Transformation Blueprint which contains a range of transformation themes to drive towards a position of financial sustainability. Officers continue to work closely with the Business Transformation Steering Group to respond to the challenges. Financial Services continues to work to ensure the Council has robust financial management arrangements in place with a full suite of financial monitoring reports regularly presented to Council.

**Economic pressures:** Inflation, as well as rising energy costs, are affecting the construction industry in Scotland. The UK is experiencing unprecedented adverse market conditions, leading to significant rises in tender prices for a wide range of materials. There is evidence that inflation of between 10% and 15% beyond BCIS predictions is affecting projects. The pandemic has also accelerated financial challenges, and the growth from being the fastest growing local authority in Scotland places significant pressure on Midlothian to be able to deliver high quality services to its citizens.

**Growing Council:** The recent 2022 Census results have now been published. Between 2011 to 2022 data shows that Midlothian had an increase in population 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. In addition, Midlothian has 10 data zones which fall into the most deprived areas.

**Cost of Living Crisis:** Midlothian's citizens are facing significant financial challenges, as they feel the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, they will seek additional support from public services, in particular local authorities. Requests for crisis funding continue to remain consistently high compared to last year with a 3% increase in applications received. 100% of our total Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) budget up to and including the quarter has been allocated. However, the Scottish Government granted Midlothian a further £260,000 in December with a further £37,000 for administration. 5,109 applications were received for Crisis Grants and 931 received for Community Care Grants up to and including this quarter. This demonstrates the continued significant financial challenges faced by our communities.

**Workforce Challenges:** There are workforce challenges across a range of services including health and social care, social work and regulatory services due to on-going pressures in the wider workforce availability which impacts on recruitment.

# Pentana Performance Dashboard – Q3 24/25

## Midlothian Council - How we are Performing▾

| 5 | 3 | 10 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Midlothian Council Off Target | Midlothian Council On Target | Midlothian Council Data Only | Midlothian Council No Data |

### PI Off Target ⓘ

| ... | Code & Title | Gauge | Value | Target | Last Update | History |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 🔴 | BS.MC.MPI.17 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target. | | 69.88% | 85% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | CORP8 Corporate Indicator - Percentage of invoices sampled and paid within 30 day... | | 91.9% | 95.0% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | BS.MC.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working d... | | 76.74% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | BS.MC.SPSO.05.2 Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working ... | | 90% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |
| 🔴 | BS.MC.SPSO.05.3 Percentage of complaints escalated and complete within 20 work... | | 86.96% | 95% | Q3 2024/25 | |

← 1 of 1 →

**Care at Home Inspection by Care Inspectorate**

**Report by: Nick Clater, Head of Service, Health and Social Care**

**Report for Noting**

**1        Recommendations**

Cabinet is requested to

1.  To note the outcome of the inspection for Care at Home (Registered name Domiciliary Care)

**2        Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

This report advises of

1.  The outcome of the focussed inspection
2.  The recommendations that will be included within the improvement plan.

**Date:           14/01/25**
**Report Contact:        Nick Clater**

**3        Background**

**3.1        Inspection**

Midlothian Council Domiciliary Care service is registered as a Care at Home Service. It provides care to adults from 16 years and older people living in their own homes within Midlothian. The care at home service also includes The Midlothian Enhanced Rapid Response and Intervention Team (MERRIT) which are based at Bonnyrigg Health Centre. This was an unannounced inspection of the service which took place between 19 November 2024 and 26 November 2024. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. The inspectors reviewed a range of information about this service prior to the actual inspection. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. During the inspection the inspectors' sourced feedback from various aspects of the service. This included talking with 15 people who were using the service and their families/friends. An electronic questionnaire was also sent out to those who use the service and their families/friends and there were 30 responses. Additionally, the inspectors talked to the management team in the service, observed direct practice of carers with clients and reviewed a range of documents relating to the service provision.

**3.2 Grades**

The grades of the service are based on the findings of the inspection and are related to "*The National health and Social Care standards My Support My Life"*

The objectives of the Standards are to drive improvement, promote flexibility and encourage innovation in how people are cared for and supported. All services and support organisations, whether registered or not, should use the Standards as a guideline for how to achieve high quality care.

The following grades were awarded to the service:-

- How well do we support people's wellbeing?    **5 - Very Good**
- How good is our leadership?    **5 - Very Good**
- How good is our staff team?    **5 - Very Good**
- How well is our care and support planned?    **4 - Good**

The key messages which were predominantly all positive from the Inspectors highlighted in the report were:-
People experienced warmth, kindness and dignity in how they were supported and cared for.
Support records contained detailed information to guide staff and plans were personalised and set out the care and support that people required to keep them safe.
Management had a clear overview of the service.
Staffing arrangements were working well.

**3.2        Areas for Improvement**

There were no requirements.
There were 4 areas for improvement from the previous inspection. 3 of the areas of improvement have been met and one nearly met with some further improvement work to

be completed. This relates to *ensuring people that staff know how to care and support them should they become unwell, anticipatory care plans should be developed for each person.*

The area for improvement is for the manager to continue to build upon the work already commenced around future care planning (previously known as anticipatory care plans). There is a new template in place and a number of clients have had their care plans reviewed with the new future care planning template however the remaining clients all require the new template imbedded. This will be completed by May 2025.

## 4      Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

### 4.1     Resource

There are no direct resource requirements arising from the inspection.

### 4.2     Digital

There are no digital implications related to this paper.

### 4.3     Risk

There is a reputation risk to Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership should identified improvements not be progressed.

### 4.4     Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

All relevant IIAs sit within service.

### 4.4     Additional Report Implications

There are no additional report implications at present.

**Appendices**

**Appendix A – Additional Report Implications**
**Appendix B – Background information/Links**

**APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

**A.1    Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

**A.2    Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

☐ Holistic Working
☐ Hub and Spoke
☐ Modern
☒ Sustainable
☐ Transformational
☐ Preventative
☐ Asset-based
☒ Continuous Improvement
☐ One size fits one
☐ None of the above

**A.3    Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

☐ One Council Working with you, for you
☐ Preventative and Sustainable
☐ Efficient and Modern
☐ Innovative and Ambitious
☒ None of the above

**A.4    Delivering Best Value**

The report does not directly impact on Delivering Best Value

**A.5    Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

The Care Inspectorate and the home care service fully involve communities and their stakeholders when undertaking inspections. Feedback from stakeholders, service users, their families and friends are all incorporated into the inspection outcome.

Any improvements that require relevant consultation with service users, family members and carers will be undertaken by the relevant service.

**A.6    Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The attached inspection report highlights  significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people.

**A.7    Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Not applicable

**A.8    Supporting Sustainable Development**

Not applicable

**APPENDIX B**

**Inspection Report**



InspectionReport-32
1666.pdf

# Midlothian Council - Domiciliary Care - Care at Home
# Support Service

35-37 High Street
Bonnyrigg
EH19 2DA

Telephone: 01312 715688

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
2 December 2024

**Service provided by:**
Midlothian Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003002602

**Service no:**
CS2004062598

## About the service

Midlothian Council Domiciliary Care is registered as a Care at Home Service. It provides care to adults and older people living in their own homes within Midlothian. The care at home service, including The Midlothian Enhanced Rapid Response and Intervention Team (MERRIT) which are based at Bonnyrigg Health Centre.

The MERRIT care team is part of a multi-disciplinary team. The team deals with emergency and crisis situations on a short-term basis. Carers offer personal care and some domestic assistance. They provide 24-hour response for people with personal alarms, and they are heavily involved with responding to and the prevention of falls.

At the time of inspection 236 people were using the service.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection of the service which took place between 19 November 2024 and 26 November 2024. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 15 people using the service and their families/friends. We also gave the opportunity for family/friends, health professionals and staff to complete an electronic questionnaire of which we received 30 responses.
- we talked with staff and the management teams
- observed staff practice and daily life
- reviewed a range of documents

## Key messages

- People experienced warmth, kindness and dignity in how they were supported and cared for.
- Support records contained detailed information to guide staff and plans were personalised and set out the care and support that people required to keep them safe.
- Management had a clear overview of the service.
- Staffing arrangements were working well.
- The manager should continue to build upon the work already commenced around future care planning.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

| | |
|---|---|
| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 5 – Very Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 5 – Very Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 5 – Very Good |
| How well is our care and support planned? | 4 – Good |

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How well do we support people's wellbeing?     5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People experienced warmth, kindness and dignity in how they were supported and cared for. People's choices were respected and promoted. Staff members knew people well and this ensured good health and wellbeing outcomes. One person told us 'We work well with service and care is directed by us not the other way round'.

Managers strived to ensure consistency of staff as much as possible, a visit scheduling system was in place to monitor this. Improvements had been made to limit the number of different carers people had visiting them. Where this had been achieved, people welcomed the consistency. One person told us "As we have regular care staff, they have built a great relationship with my husband, which makes it all easier".

People told us that they looked forward to staff visiting and for some the company of staff was a significant positive outcome for them. Some people benefitted from support to access their local community helping them to feel connected and reduced isolation.

Support records we sampled contained detailed information to guide staff, daily notes were descriptive and linked to identified outcomes. People had access to their individual support plans which promoted their rights in relation to information held about them.

There were referrals made to health professionals where people's health changed or deteriorated. Staff recognised changing health quickly and this benefitted supported people by referrals being made promptly. One relative told us 'The office staff are very approachable and when I've needed to be in contact with them, I have felt listened to with my concerns acknowledged and acted upon swiftly'.

An extensive training programme was in place to ensure staff were knowledgeable and competent to effectively support people. This included dementia awareness, mental health and first aid. Staff routinely attended adult protection training which enabled them to keep people safe and protected.

Management monitored and audited medication records to ensure any medication errors had been acted upon. All medication was administered by staff who received regular training to ensure safe practice which benefitted people's health, this was followed up by observations of practice to ensure that staff were competent and skilled. Care plans detailed clear information in relation to support required with the application of topical medication. The management team had completed body maps to support staff in the application of transdermal patches and we discussed how these could be included to support all topical medication needs. We made a previous area for improvement in relation to medication, this area for improvement has now been met.

## How good is our leadership?　　5 – Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Management had a good overview of the service. Staff told us the manager and management team had an open-door policy, where any aspect of care, support or development could be discussed and was listened to.

The manager knew the care and support needs of people and was able to direct care in a supportive and professional manner. An established staff team supported each other through clear channels of communication. This ensured any changes to care were consistently achieved. Regular team meetings offered an opportunity for staff to share and contribute to the development of the service.

There were a range of audit tools used to inform the manager and senior management about how well the service was performing. An overall improvement plan was in place which was supported by action plans to drive continuous improvement. We observed that identified actions resulting from quality audits could be easily tracked through to completion showcasing improvements made and improved outcomes for people using the service.

Audits linked to healthcare were regularly completed. This enabled overview of any actions that needed to be put in place to improve individual health. This led to positive outcomes for people using the service.

All accidents, incidents and concerns had been appropriately recorded and actioned. This included notifications to the Care inspectorate. Managers ensured where needed, that any identified risk led to changes in planned care.

We had made a previous area for improvement in relation to quality assurance, this area for improvement has now been met.

## How good is our staff team?　　5 – Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People could be confident safe recruitment guidance was followed by the service. An induction programme for new employees helped ensure staff were prepared for their role. This included shadow opportunities to facilitate introductions with people who experience support.

Staffing arrangements were working well. Visit arrival times were planned within a timescale which provided some flexibility. People we visited were not identifying arrival time to be a problem. During our visits staff were not rushing and took the necessary time which also allowed for a chat with the person. Missed visits were rare and where they occurred learning was sought to reduce reoccurrence.

Staff completed a range of online and face to face training courses relevant to people's needs. There were systems in place to evaluate staff's understanding or ability to transfer learning into practice. The provider

ensured staff training and support provided the skills, knowledge and understanding required to meet people's needs.

We saw that supervision records were completed for all staff on a regular basis; staff told us they could speak with a manager at any time and attended regular team meetings. We sampled records of supervision meetings and observations of staff practice and found evidence of discussions held, feedback on practice, reflection on any training undertaken and aspects of care they did well or found more challenging. This aided staff development. We discussed with the manager linking observations of practice to staff supervision sessions so that clear feedback could be provided.

Morale across the service was high, staff we spoke to said they were happy at their work. Staff felt well supported by management and confident in raising concerns. This supported people to have a positive experience of their care as the staff team were enthusiastic and happy.

## How well is our care and support planned?     4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service had worked hard to improve the quality of care and support plans since our last inspection. We found that plans were personalised and set out the care and support that people required to keep them safe. We made a previous area for improvement in relation to care plans, this area for improvement has now been met.

Key processes such as the monitoring of people's falls and risk assessments were in place and were regularly reviewed. People and their relatives also benefitted from six monthly reviews of their care and support. However, this was not consistent for all, the manager acknowledged that reviews of care had fallen behind in some areas and was working with staff to ensure these were completed in a timely manner.

It is important people, and their legal representatives have opportunities to discuss and agree how they would like to be supported at the end of their lives. The management team had commenced development of future care plans since the last inspection, these included do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation (DNACPR) certificates where appropriate. Plans helped to direct the care and support for people at the end of their life however, work was still in the early stages. We had made a previous area for improvement in relation to future care planning, this area for improvement will be carried forward to ensure completion of the work already undertaken and sustained improvement moving forward (**See area for improvement one**).

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure people that staff know how to care and support them should they become unwell, anticipatory care plans should be developed for each person.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability and frailty'. (HSCS 3.18)

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

## Areas for improvement

### Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure people experience high quality care, the manager should ensure that records are fully maintained, along with relevant guidance (including body maps) when supporting people with their medication.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:
'If I need help with medication, I am able to have as much control as possible.' (HSCS 2.23)

**This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.**

### Action taken since then
Please refer to information detailed under key question one.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that people are confident that the care they receive is well led and managed, the manager should ensure any actions identified from audits completed are carried through to completion and this is clearly evidenced and tracked.

This is to ensure the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:
'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having comprehensive and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19)

**This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.**

### Action taken since then
Please refer to information detailed under key question two.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure people that staff know how to care and support them should they become unwell, anticipatory care plans should be developed for each person.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:
'I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability and frailty'. (HSCS 3.18)

**This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.**

### Action taken since then

Please refer to information detailed under key question five.

This area for improvement has not been met.

### Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure that people are confident that the care they receive is person centred and well led, the manager should ensure personal plans record all risk, health, welfare and safety needs in a coherent manner which identifies how needs are met. This should also incorporate risk enablement where appropriate and agreed.

This is also to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard which state:
'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.' (HSCS 1.1)

**This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.**

### Action taken since then

Please refer to information detailed under key question five.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

## Detailed evaluations

| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 5 - Very Good |
|---|---|
| 1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support | 5 - Very Good |

| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very Good |
|---|---|
| 2.4 Staff are led well | 5 - Very Good |

| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
|---|---|
| 3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together | 5 - Very Good |

| How well is our care and support planned? | 4 - Good |
|---|---|
| 5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes | 4 - Good |

# Inspection report

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یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

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本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.

**Title: Newbyres Care Home Inspection by Care Inspectorate**

**Report by: Nick Clater, Head of Service, Health and Social Care**

**Report for Noting**

# 1        Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to

1.  To note the outcome of the inspection for Newbyres Village Care Home Service

# 2        Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

This report advises of

1.  The outcome of the focussed inspection (Unannounced)
2.  The recommendations that will be included within the improvement plan.

**Date:**            **15th January 2025**
**Report Contact:**        **Nick Clater**

## 3　　Background

### 3.1　　Inspection

Newbyres Village Care home is registered as a Care Home Service. It provides care and accommodation for up to 61 older people. The provider is Midlothian Council. The care home is in Gorebridge, Midlothian and is close to shops and local amenities. Accommodation is within five units named 'streets', each with lounge and dining areas and access to enclosed gardens. There is a separate area that houses the kitchen and laundry facilities as well as staff room and staff changing rooms.

Forty-four people were using the service at the time of inspection.

This was an unannounced inspection of the service which took place on 7th and 8th of January. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection information was reviewed about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making their evaluations of the service, the inspectors spoke with people using the service as well as feedback from relatives. They also spoke with management and staff, observed practice and daily life as well as reviewing a wide range of documents.

### 3.2 Grades

The grades of the service are based on the findings of the inspection and are related to "*The National health and Social Care standards-My Support My Life*"

The objectives of the Standards are to drive improvement, promote flexibility and encourage innovation in how people are cared for and supported. All services and support organisations, whether registered or not, should use the Standards as a guideline for how to achieve high quality care.

The following grades were awarded to the service: -

- How well do we support people's wellbeing?　**4 - Good**
- How good is our leadership?　**3 - Adequate**
- How good is our staff team?　**3- Adequate**
- How good is our setting?　**4- Good**
- How well is our care and support planned?　**4 - Good**

The key messages which were predominantly all positive from the Inspectors highlighted in the report were: -
- Staff were knowledgeable about peoples care needs and showed genuine caring and respectful attitudes when supporting people.
- People living in the care home and their families were happy with their care.
- Quality assurance and management oversight required improvement to ensure people experienced positive outcomes and that staff felt supported in their roles.
- People's health was effectively monitored and escalated to other health professionals when needed.
- Recruitment of staff must be in line with the 'safer recruitment through better recruitment guidance'
- Evidence needs to be demonstrated better regarding adequate documentation and interventions for skin care.

**3.2**        **Areas for Improvement**

.
There was one <u>requirement</u> from the previous inspection report (March 2024). This related to *ensuring that people who experience stress and distress receive the right support that is person centred and improves their quality of life.*
This was completed by 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and was met within the required timescales.

There was one <u>area of improvement</u> from the previous inspection report (March 2024). This related to *supporting people's health and wellbeing and meeting people's nutritional needs, the provider should improve how they provide sufficient choice in line with people's likes and preferences and dietary needs'* '
This area for improvement has been met.

From the **current** inspection there were three areas for improvement identified by care inspectors-

1. To further minimise the risk of any development of pressure ulcers the provider should ensure the system in place must be able to demonstrate that the skin care needs of the service users are regularly assessed and adequately met.

   Plan- *improvement planning in place including a review of all Waterlow Scores, care plans, health care support plans and risk assessments relating to skin care, training needs of staff relating to skin care to be identified and addressed through supervision and training matrix has been updated, regular audit of recording and record keeping being completed.*

2. To support people's health and wellbeing the manger must have a good overview of all documentation and an effective overview of the daily running and delivery of care to those residing in the care home. This includes having visible presence within the service and to fully engage with staff, relatives and those supported to ensure the service is well led and managed effectively.

   Plan- *effective leadership to be implemented, new, experienced manager has been recruited, training needs of inexperienced managers to be identified and addressed, leadership modelling to be embedded in the improvement plan, supervision of managers to be robustly implemented in a consistent, supportive and purposeful manner. Actions to be embedded, actioned and evaluated through improvement plan.*

3. To ensure people experience care where staff recruitment practices is within the service to the standard detailed in the Scottish Social Services Council and Care Inspectorate Guidance.

   Plan-*documentation relating to recruitment to be reviewed, training needs of those managers likely to be involved in recruitment to be identified, suitable and adequate records to be kept, embedded in the improvement plan*

**4**    **Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)**

**4.1**  **Resource**

There are no direct resource requirements arising from the inspection.

**4.2**  **Digital**

There are no digital implications related to this paper.

**4.3**  **Risk**

There is a reputation risk to Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership should identified improvements not be progressed.

**4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)**

All relevant IIAs sit within service.

**4.4 Additional Report Implications**

There are no additional report implications at present.

**Appendices**

**Appendix A – Additional Report Implications**
**Appendix B – Background information/Links**

**APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

**A.1    Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

**A.2    Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

☐ Holistic Working
☐ Hub and Spoke
☐ Modern
☒ Sustainable
☐ Transformational
☐ Preventative
☐ Asset-based
☒ Continuous Improvement
☐ One size fits one
☐ None of the above

**A.3    Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

☐ One Council Working with you, for you
☐ Preventative and Sustainable
☐ Efficient and Modern
☐ Innovative and Ambitious
☒ None of the above

**A.4    Delivering Best Value**

The report does not directly impact on Delivering Best Value

**A.5    Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

The Care Inspectorate and the Newbyres Care Home Service fully involve communities and their stakeholders when undertaking inspections. Feedback from stakeholders, service users, their families and friends are all incorporated into the inspection outcome.

Any improvements that require relevant consultation with service users, family members and carers will be undertaken by the relevant service.

**A.6    Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The attached inspection report highlights significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people.

**A.7    Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Not applicable

**A.8    Supporting Sustainable Development**

Not applicable

**APPENDIX B**

**Inspection Report**

PDF

InspectionReport
NBV 012025.pdf

# Newbyres Village
# Care Home Service

20 Gore Avenue
Gorebridge
EH23 4TZ

Telephone: 01312 705 656

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
27 February 2024

**Service provided by:**
Midlothian Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003002602

**Service no:**
CS2007167115

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## About the service

Newbyres Village care home is situated in Gorebridge, Midlothian and is close to shops and local amenities.

The home is run and managed by Midlothian Council. The home is made up of five wings named "streets", each with lounge and dining areas. There is also a wing that houses the kitchen and laundry facilities. Each wing has a shared garden.

Newbyres Village care home provides long-term care and is registered to support 61 people.

## About the inspection

This requirement was made following a visit to the service in relation to a complaint investigation which took place on 23 October 2023. The provider submitted an action plan which detailed how the requirement would be met to ensure positive outcomes for people experiencing care.

## Key messages

By the 19 January 2024 the provider must ensure that people experiencing care in the service are supported to maintain good personal and continence care. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that :

a) Each person experiencing care or their representative is involved in an assessment of their support with personal and continence care.
b) Each person receiving the service has a personal plan that details the support that they require to maintain their personal and continence care needs.
c)Staff consistently document on the daily care record when personal and continence care support has been provided.
d) Reviews of the effectiveness of this support are recorded at regular intervals or in response to any problems or changes noted. These reviews must include seeking guidance from other professionals as appropriate.

To be completed by: 19 January 2024

By the 19 January 2024, the provider must ensure that people who experience stress and distress receive the right support that is person centred and improves their quality of life. To do this the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

a) ensure staff can demonstrate in their practice the effective support to people experiencing stress and distress;
b) risk assessments should be recorded in a way that facilitates choice and risk enablement and is monitored appropriately;
c) any recommended stress and distress interventions are implemented, monitored and reviewed frequently;
d) personal plans contain information that reflects people's experience of stress and distress and takes into account all aspects of the person's care and support needs, including their choices and wishes;

To be completed by: 19 January 2024

By the 19 January 2024, the provider must ensure medication is given as prescribed to support people's health and wellbeing. To do this the provider must as a minimum:

a) Ensure people administering medication do so in accordance with agreed protocols and best practice guidance. This includes demonstrating their responsibility to ensure that that medication administered is taken by people or if declined discarded of safely with appropriate records kept.
b) Ensure detailed medication protocols are in place for as required medications. This must have sufficient detail of the right time and the correct way for these to be given. Records will include if they have achieved the desired effect.
c) have an effective system of audit that monitors medication administration.

To be completed by: 19 January 2024

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By the 19 January 2024 the provider must ensure that people experiencing care in the service are supported to maintain good personal and continence care. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that :

a) Each person experiencing care or their representative is involved in an assessment of their support with personal and continence care.
b) Each person receiving the service has a personal plan that details the support that they require to maintain their personal and continence care needs.
c)Staff consistently document on the daily care record when personal and continence care support has been provided.
d) Reviews of the effectiveness of this support are recorded at regular intervals or in response to any problems or changes noted. These reviews must include seeking guidance from other professionals as appropriate.

**This requirement was made on 23 October 2023.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement
This requirement was made following a visit to the service in relation to a complaint investigation which took place on 23 October 2023. The provider submitted an action plan to detail how the requirement would be met to ensure positive outcomes for people experiencing care.

There was evidence that people experiencing care had been assessed and reviewed regularly with their personal and continence care. This was included in people's personal plans with details of the support they require, including if personal or continence care is refused.

Continence care records and risk assessments show support delivered to people once personal and continence care has been delivered. Bowel charts and continence records are up to date with evidence of service seeking external support from district nurses with regards to catheter care.

#### Met - within timescales

#### Requirement 2

By the 19 January 2024, the provider must ensure that people who experience stress and distress receive the right support that is person centred and improves their quality of life. To do this the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

a) ensure staff can demonstrate in their practice the effective support to people experiencing stress and

distress;
b) risk assessments should be recorded in a way that facilitates choice and risk enablement and is monitored appropriately;
c) any recommended stress and distress interventions are implemented, monitored and reviewed frequently;
d) personal plans contain information that reflects people's experience of stress and distress and takes into account all aspects of the person's care and support needs, including their choices and wishes;

To be completed by: 19 January 2024

**This requirement was made on 23 October 2023.**

**Action taken on previous requirement**
Staff across the service had received training on stress and distress interventions and altered behaviours. The training has increased their understanding of people's needs. Key information is communication which is implemented and monitored by all staff.

Personal plans show staff recognising early signs via ABC chart, observations ,responses and escalations if required to help deliver appropriate support to people experiencing stress and distress.

**Not met**

**Requirement 3**

By the 19 of January 2024, the provider must ensure medication is given as prescribed to support people's health and wellbeing. To do this the provider must as a minimum:

a) Ensure people administering medication do so in accordance with agreed protocols and best practice guidance. This includes demonstrating their responsibility to ensure that that medication administered is taken by people or if declined discarded of safely with appropriate records kept.
b) Ensure detailed medication protocols are in place for as required medications. This must have sufficient detail of the right time and the correct way for these to be given. Records will include if they have achieved the desired effect.
c) have an effective system of audit that monitors medication administration.

**This requirement was made on 23 October 2023.**

**Action taken on previous requirement**
The service has an up to date medication and policy and protocol.

Medication audits undertaken by the manager ensure safe medication practices are being adhered to in accordance with good practice guidance and policy with regard to medication status, supplies and as required medication.

We observed Medication Administration Records (MAR). The systems in place provide quality assurance processes to ensure people are supported safely with medication in line with their care plan guidance.

**Met – within timescales**

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

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