

# Housing Contribution Statement

2024 - 2029



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Achievements 2019-2023 .....	4
1. Governance.....	5
2. Shared Evidence and Key Challenges .....	6
Poverty and Inequality .....	8
Homelessness.....	10
Accessible and Adaptable Homes .....	13
Gypsy/Travellers .....	21
Violence Against Women and Girls .....	22
3. Shared Outcomes .....	24
4. Resources.....	28



# Introduction

Housing is a key social factor which determines health and wellbeing. House condition, security of tenure, suitability to a person's needs and overcrowding can directly determine physical and mental health. Wider housing aspects, including affordability, access to communities, social isolation, location and choice all have indirect impacts on health and wellbeing. As a result, affordable, high-quality homes are now considered a public health tool and essential in reducing health inequalities<sup>1</sup>.

In recognition of the critical role housing has on health, the Scottish Government introduced Housing Contribution Statements (HCS) as a statutory requirement in 2013. The purpose of the HCS is to provide the bridge between the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the Integration Joint Board's (IJB) strategic plan, with a focus on shared outcomes and investment decisions.

This is the third HCS in East Lothian and will sit as a supporting paper to East Lothian's [Integration Joint Board \(IJB\) Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#) and any further plans until 2029. This HCS is timed for the adoption of East Lothian Council's (ELC) Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-2029, allowing for strong strategic links to be formed.

East Lothian has faced significant challenges in recent years, including the Covid-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, and an increasing and ageing population. These challenges have compounded to place critical pressure on the demand for and the delivery of services across Health and Social Care and Housing. Whilst the need for services has increased, disproportionately so for those already vulnerable, East Lothian's IJB and Council have faced unprecedented financial challenges.

Partnership working, through shared priorities and actions is, therefore, more vital than ever to ensure that residents can access essential services to support health and wellbeing. This HCS outlines how the IJB and East Lothian Council will address challenges through shared priorities and actions.

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<sup>1</sup> [Healthy housing for Scotland \(publichealthscotland.scot\)](https://www.healthscotland.scot.nhs.uk/healthy-housing-for-scotland/)

# Achievements 2019-2023

It is important to look at key achievements from the past several years. These successes highlight the opportunities available in improving health through a housing contribution.

*Figure 0.1 Housing Contribution to Health and social care 2019-2023*

995 affordable homes added to the supply. This includes 643 new social rent homes and 229 mid-market homes

Development of core and cluster flats for individuals with mental health conditions.

Over 40 units of housing provision delivered in partnership with Health and Social Care for Social Care Users with care and support needs.

Introduced Wellwynd Hub. The award-winning service allows people to try out TEC (Technology Enabled Care).

Invested over £3m in adaptations allowing people to remain in their own home across tenures.

181 private homes benefitted from cavity wall insulation.  
344 roof insulations and 1,939 efficient heating system have been installed in ELC properties.



# 1. Governance

East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) and Housing services work closely together.

As directed by the [Public Bodies \(Joint Working\) \(Scotland\) \(Act\) 2014](#), the IJB's Strategic Plan outlines its proposal for integrated functions. East Lothian IJB issues directions to ELC and NHS Lothian in relation to the delivery of delegated functions. Specific to housing, the IJB has delegated responsibility for aids, equipment, and adaptations and currently hold housing support contracts.

Whilst Housing is not represented on the IJB, the service can inform and advise the IJB on strategic housing matters through membership of the Strategic Planning Group (SPG). The role of the SPG includes developing the Strategic Plan and advising the IJB on strategic matters relating to the delivery of services across East Lothian.

Housing is represented in certain action focused 'Change Boards' which develop strategies and policies and plan service change to best reflect the needs of populations across East Lothian. At the time of writing, Change Boards were under review, and as such no diagrams or further detail could be provided.

A Housing Partners Board was formed in May 2024 to oversee and help direct actions within the LHS. East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) are represented alongside other key stakeholders on the Housing Board.

## 2. Shared Evidence and Key Challenges

There are a wide range of challenges which may create barriers to achieving the ambitious outcomes in the Strategic Plan and the LHS. These challenges are well documented across Housing and the ELHSCP through several key reports. The most relevant examples include:

- [Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3](#) (HNDA 3), which estimates housing need and demand across South East Scotland.
- Engagement and consultation, including work delivered jointly by ELHSCP and Housing service, representing the voices of residents and stakeholders<sup>2</sup>.
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessments<sup>3</sup> including on wheelchair accessible housing, social care clients, older people and children and young people.

The key challenges which interact with the housing system and impact health and wellbeing outcomes are summarised below.

- East Lothian has a complex geography and most areas are categorised as ‘accessible rural’. Rurality can pose distinctive challenges for delivering services.
- It is difficult to deliver health and social care packages, such as access to care at home, to a dispersed client group across rural parts of the county and access to other community support services.
- East Lothian has the second fastest growing population in Scotland. This pressurises services to the point of, or beyond, capacity and can impact wait-time to the detriment of both staff and residents.
- Capital funding of services has not increased to match population growth, placing further pressure on meeting service demand.
- East Lothian has an ageing population, with the over 75 age-group expected to have the largest population increase by 2028, at 32%<sup>4</sup>. This is creating a high demand for specialist services, including aids and adaptations.

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<sup>2</sup> [IJB Strategic Plan 2022-2025 Engagement Feedback Report](#)

<sup>3</sup> [ELHSCP Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Sub-National Population Projections | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

- The working age population is not growing at the same pace as the older population, leaving a gap in the workforce needed to deliver essential care packages to support the ageing population.
- Single person households are expected to have the largest percentage increase of all household types by 2028<sup>5</sup>. With this increase comes a greater risk of loneliness amongst more of the population. Studies have shown that loneliness and social isolation is critically detrimental to health and longevity. For those of older age, social isolation and loneliness can increase the risk of strokes, diabetes, and cognitive decline<sup>67</sup>.
- Housing costs have increased with inflation. Housing costs determine choice over where people live and the quality of homes, as well as the amount of income left to spend on activities and services which support health and wellbeing. Financial pressures also have a detrimental impact on mental health, including increases in anxiety and stress.
- Fuel poverty affects 25% of the population<sup>8</sup> (likely to be an underestimation as this is based on 2019 data). Fuel poverty increases risk of respiratory conditions through damp as well as increased levels of stress and anxiety.
- Further work is required around future housing needs of bariatric patients.

The intersection between age, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender, and physical and mental health can make people more vulnerable to poor health and housing outcomes<sup>9</sup>.

The following section highlights challenges faced by certain groups and how, through joint working between Housing and ELHSCP, progress can be taken to reduce inequalities. This document will focus on groups listed in [guidance](#), further information on the housing challenges faced by certain groups can be found within the LHS 2024-2029.

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<sup>5</sup> [Household Projections | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Social Isolation and Loneliness \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors: The Power of Social Connection in Prevention - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Supporting documents - Scottish house condition survey: 2019 key findings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Using intersectionality to understand structural inequality in Scotland: Evidence synthesis \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

## Poverty and Inequality

The housing system is a key driving force of poverty and inequality, affecting people across their lifetime<sup>10</sup>. Those living in poverty are more likely to live in poor quality and insecure housing.

Poor-quality housing, such as damp and mould, unsafe electrics and overcrowding can increase risk of acute injury, developing respiratory conditions, poor mental health and hospitalisation. Housing issues relating to condition can influence health separately, whilst experiencing multiple housing issues can worsen health impacts and increase harm.

Particularly in the private sector, vulnerable groups such as young people, older people and minoritized populations are more likely to live in poor quality housing. These groups often have fewer housing options available and face a range of barriers to accessing health services, placing them at further risk.

Those with a high housing cost and lower income can be made to make decisions over food and heating. This can lead to malnutrition, respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, and poor mental health<sup>11</sup>.

It is estimated that 21% of children live in relative poverty across East Lothian. It is widely cited that child poverty is the biggest predictor of homelessness in later life. National reports have found, that experiencing homelessness and temporary accommodation during pregnancy can increase risks of premature births, low birth rate and delays in development. Health impacts associated with poor housing can be lifelong, including chronic illness and disabilities, and can affect life chances and expectancy<sup>12</sup>.

Access to high quality, affordable and secure housing is, therefore, seen as the key to tackling poverty and inequality. East Lothian Council is committed to addressing poverty and inequality within the county, as outlined with in the Council's [Poverty Plan 2021-2023](#).

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<sup>10</sup> [Using intersectionality to understand structural inequality in Scotland: Evidence synthesis \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> [\\*fph-poverty-housing-and-health-briefing-pdf.pdf](#)

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.feantsaresearch.org/public/user/Observatory/2021/EJH\\_15-3/EJH\\_15-3\\_A8\\_v01.pdf](https://www.feantsaresearch.org/public/user/Observatory/2021/EJH_15-3/EJH_15-3_A8_v01.pdf)



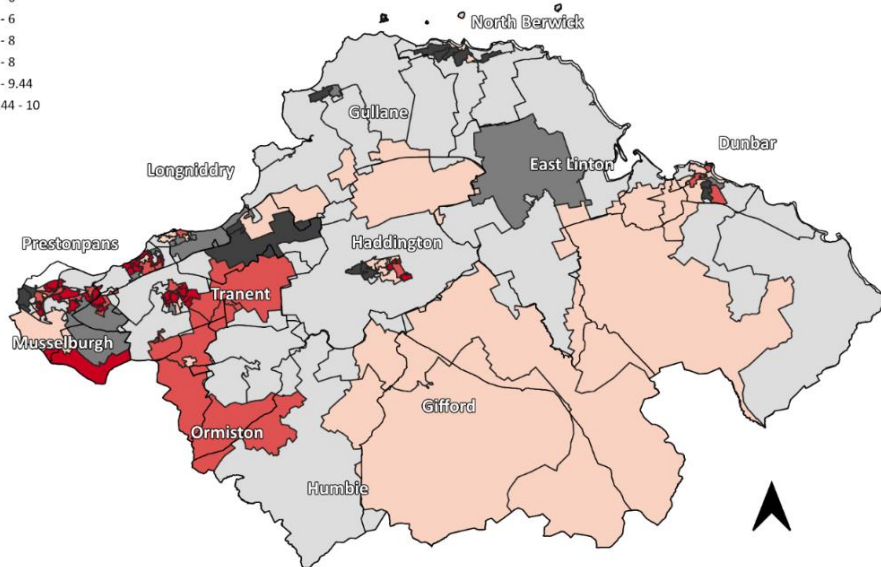
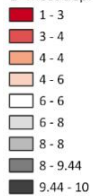
## Socio-economic context

The [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (SIMD) is a standard tool used to rank levels of deprivation across data zones within the country. It looks beyond low income to highlight multiple deprivation using 7 factors which can determine opportunities and resources, including health, housing, and access to services.

There are 8 areas in East Lothian which fall into the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. There are an additional 2 areas which are within the 10% most deprived. All of these areas of high deprivation are within the west of the county (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation map East Lothian

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020  
1- most deprived; 10- least deprived



Source: East Lothian Council, 2023.

SIMD focuses on concentration of deprivation. Those living in small pockets of poverty or in poverty within areas with strong access to transport and high education attainment, for example, can be effectively hidden within these figures. This underestimates the spread of deprivation across East Lothian. Inequalities which impact health and wellbeing should be viewed on a scale, effecting people at various levels. Whilst those in the most extreme deprivation will see the most severe outcomes, health risks associated with inequalities start effecting people at lower ends of the scale.

## Homelessness

The number of homeless applications in East Lothian has increased in recent years, reflecting national trends. The number of applications made to East Lothian Council has risen from 695 in 2022/2023 to 795 in 2023/2024<sup>13</sup>.

Those experiencing homelessness are much more likely:

- To have multiple physical health conditions, including developing chronic joint pain or bone and muscle problems - often associated with rough sleeping.
- Have a pre-existing mental health condition which is worsened by the trauma of homelessness and risks developing additional mental health conditions.
- To use drugs and/or alcohol as a coping mechanism.
- To have a poor diet and/or skip meals<sup>14</sup>.
- To have a shorter life expectancy<sup>15</sup>.

A study into homelessness in Scotland found that leading up to homelessness, people increase visits to health services, such as hospitals. The number of visits peaks just before a homelessness application is first made<sup>16</sup>. This highlights how health issues can compound and worsen as the risk of homelessness becomes reality.

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<sup>13</sup> [Supporting documents - Homelessness in Scotland: 2022-23 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Homeless Health Needs Audit Report.pdf \(kxcdn.com\)](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Health and Homelessness in Scotland \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Health and Homelessness in Scotland \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Early prevention of homelessness can, therefore, be used as a health intervention tool and can ultimately reduce spend for primary health services. To recognise this relationship between health and homelessness, and in line with the national agenda that ending homelessness is a shared responsibility across all public bodies, the Scottish Government is to introduce new prevention duties through the [Housing \(Scotland\) Bill 2024](#).

Once enacted the Bill will give public bodies, including health boards and the IJB, the duty to 'Ask and Act'. This will require professionals to ask about a person's housing situation, and if it is believed they are threatened with or experiencing homelessness to respond with action, where appropriate.

Relevant professionals will also be required to use their existing role and capacities to effectively prevent homelessness if it is a threat. For health bodies, this may include ensuring access to specialist services which target health issues which are often linked to homelessness, including mental health and substance use.

The Housing Bill is in the early parliamentary stages and is subjected to consultation. It is not known when the new duties will come into force. East Lothian Council's Housing Service will support the IJB as 'Ask and Act' is embedded. Partnership working will ensure consistency, knowledge sharing of East Lothian's housing system and that clear referral pathways, where appropriate, are developed.

### ***Temporary Accommodation***

East Lothian Council currently faces critical pressures within its Homeless (known as Housing Options) Service. As homeless applications increase, typically the demand for temporary accommodation rises accordingly. Increased demand, low turnover of social housing stock and a lack of alternative affordable housing options has led to lengthy stays in temporary accommodation for homeless households, in excess of the national average.

A lack of cooking and food storage facilities in emergency accommodation, namely B&Bs, can affect diet, impacting on nutrition, energy levels and mood. As homes are temporary, people can often feel unsettled and socially isolated. Isolation can be detrimental to mental and physical health, increasing risk of heart-related conditions, suicide and cognitive decline<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> [Loneliness among Homeless Individuals during the First Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

As committed to through East Lothian Council's [Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan](#) (RRTP) and LHS 2024-2029, East Lothian Council will reduce time spent in emergency and temporary accommodation. This will be targeted through innovative use of housing stock, including shared tenancies, changing temporary tenancies to permanent, where appropriate, and through the ambitious affordable housing target.

Mainstream temporary accommodation may not be manageable or appropriate for vulnerable individuals with complex mental health and/or substance misuse health needs. In East Lothian, 24/7 supported accommodation is available for vulnerable individuals; resettlement support is provided, where necessary and appropriate, for those moving into a tenancy; and a Housing First approach is taken to our most complex households.

### Housing Contribution 2024-2029

- Implement a rolling programme to redesignate temporary accommodation as permanent tenancies.
- Review the current provision of supported accommodation, in close working with the HSCP.
- Ask and Act.

**Actions aim to:** reduce time spent in temporary accommodation, improve flow through housing system, ensure complex needs are identified and met and encourage homelessness prevention across services.



### Long-term Health Benefits

- Reduction in prolonged stress and anxiety associated with waiting for permanent accommodation.
- Effectively preventing homelessness can:
  - Reduce health care crisis intervention need and hospitalisation rates.
  - Reduce cases of chronic illnesses and heart conditions.
  - Reduce morality rates - including drug-related deaths.
  - Improve mental health and wellbeing.



## Accessible and Adaptable Homes

Individuals with disabilities which require the use of aids or wheelchairs to move around the home, are more likely to require accessible housing. Aids and adaptations can also provide essential support to carers to administer care safely, reducing risk to their own health and wellbeing.

### *Older People*

East Lothian has an ageing population. Generally, health declines as we age, with an increased risk of developing chronic conditions such as dementia, diabetes and arthritis<sup>18</sup>.

Life expectancy within the county is above the national average for both women (82.9 years compared to 80.7) and men (79.3 years compared to 76.5)<sup>19</sup>. Healthy life expectancy, the average number of years living in good health free from chronic illness and disability, for women in East Lothian is 65.3 years and 63.7 years for men<sup>20</sup>.

The difference between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy highlights the quality-of-life people will experience as they age. In East Lothian, on average, women spend 17.6 years in poor health and men 15.7 years. During these years of ill health, it is likely that people will require increased access to and support from health services and their own informal support networks to manage conditions.

Frailty increases as we age making us more vulnerable to multimorbidity (having more than one health condition). Having multiple conditions can reduce quality of life and increase disability<sup>21</sup>. Health services in East Lothian, therefore, are not only likely to have increased demand through an ageing population but to see more complex health conditions.

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<sup>18</sup> [Chapter 1: life expectancy and healthy life expectancy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

<sup>19</sup> [Life Expectancy in Scotland 2020-2022 Provisional Figures, Report \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://nrscotland.gov.uk)

<sup>20</sup> [Healthy Life Expectancy 2019-2021 \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://nrscotland.gov.uk)

<sup>21</sup> [Frailty in Older People - PMC \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)

Age-related health conditions can affect how well a person can access communities and move in and around their home. Research conducted by ELHSCP; the '[Planning for an Ageing Population Feedback Report](#)' highlighted that the majority of participants wanted to live independently in their home as long as possible. Homes, therefore, need to suitably adapt to the health needs of the older population.

The majority of older people in East Lothian live in general needs homes. Of those aged over 65; 67% live in owner occupied housing, 26% live in the social rented sector and 4% live in the private rented sector<sup>22</sup>. This highlights the need for accessible homes across all tenures.

To live independently in homes, older people may need:

- Ground level properties, or at least access to a bedroom and bathroom on the ground floor.
- Adaptations to homes, including fitting handrails, and wet rooms.
- Access to Care at Home packages.
- Access to Technology Enabled Care (TEC).
- Greater support from community groups to reduce isolation and loneliness.

The current pressures on adaptations services and the impact this can have will be discussed later in this document.

There has also been an increase in homeless applicants for those aged 60+ over recent years. In 2022/2023 there were 50 homeless applications made by those within this age category. For those of older age the associated health risks of homelessness may be even more damaging due to frailty. Those experiencing homelessness at an older age are also more likely to have complex housing and care needs. This can add challenges to finding an appropriate property near/close to support networks.

ELHSCP is working collectively with key stakeholders, including extensive community engagement, to ensure that services best reflect the needs of East Lothian's aging population. East Lothian Council's Housing Services will also continue to support ELHSCP in the development of the Planning for Older People's Services. This includes involvement within options appraisals and representation within the 'Planning for Older Persons Independent Community Panel'<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Census, 2011

<sup>23</sup> [Planning older people's services | East Lothian Council](#)

### Housing Contribution 2024-2029

To address the above challenges ELC Housing Service will:

- Develop 200 units across different housing tenures for older people.
- Redevelop the former Herdmanflat Hospital Site for older people.



**Actions aim to:** increase affordable housing options for older people within communities, increase access to affordable high quality homes, reduce duration of homelessness through increased supply.

### Long-term Health Benefits

- The Herdmanflat development prioritises community links and access to green space. This will:
  - Reduce social isolation.
  - Improve mental health and wellbeing.
  - Reduce rate of cognitive decline.
  - Improve physical health and the risk of frailty.
- Access to affordable housing options which meets needs can reduce the risk of multimorbidity, falls and improve mental health.



## ***Dementia***



The number of those living with dementia is set to increase by 65% by 2040<sup>24</sup>. Those with dementia face a range of challenges within housing including:

- Sensory impairments including visual perception which may make it difficult to manage stairs.
- Touch sensitivities may impact wellbeing and create risks.
- Decline in mobility may lead to difficulties using kitchen and bathroom appliances.

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<sup>24</sup> [ELHSCP \(2023\) East Lothian Dementia Strategy 2023-2028, Technical Report.](#)

East Lothian HSCP [Dementia Strategy 2023-2028](#) highlighted that two thirds of people living with dementia stay in owner-occupied housing with the majority of homes lacking basic accessibility features.

Housing Contribution 2024-2029	Long-term Health Benefits
 <p>To address the above challenges ELC Housing Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work alongside the HSCP to ensure the development and implementation of the Dementia Strategy has strong strategic links to housing/housing services.</li><li>• Support the development of the post diagnostic support for Dementia Route map.</li></ul> <p><b>Actions aim to:</b> Support those living with dementia and their carers to live in their homes for as long as wanted/appropriate through strategic planning.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduction in social isolation and the associated health risks.</li><li>• Reduction in stress and anxiety levels for those living with dementia and carers, improving overall mental health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Use of appropriate equipment reduces risk of physical injury to those living with dementia and carers. Reduction in physical injury can also lower risk of developing chronic pain.</li><li>• Reduced need for emergent intervention and support from health care services.</li></ul>

### ***Delayed Discharge***

Delayed discharge is used to describe patients in hospital who are assessed as being clinically fit and ready to be discharged but cannot leave because the necessary care, support or suitable housing is not readily accessible and/or funding is not available<sup>25</sup>. Delayed discharge can result in poorer outcomes for individuals as well as putting pressure on hospital inpatient services.

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<sup>25</sup> [Impact and experiences of delayed discharge: A mixed-studies systematic review - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)



Increased access to suitable housing for these individuals, including homes of various housing models and levels of on-site support, and efficient adaptations programmes can help prevent delayed discharges. Including carers in discharge planning, as required by the [Carers \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#), can also support understanding housing issues which may prevent a person from returning home.

### ***Health and Social Care Workforce***

East Lothian follows national trends in staffing shortages across health and social care services. Whilst this is due to several reasons, housing affordability within the county contributes to this. High demand for affordable housing, including social homes, and a relatively small and expensive private rented sector creates a barrier to those on low to medium incomes, especially in the east of the county.

East Lothian has set an affordable housing supply target (HST) of 891 units to be delivered within the lifespan of the LHS 2024-2029. This may help address the housing needs of healthcare staff, in turn improving access to care at home packages for those in need. Improved access to care at home packages will also help reduce delayed discharges.

However, after setting the HST, the Scottish Government reduced the amount of funding available to local authorities for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. It is unlikely that East Lothian Council will be able to meet the HST, without additional funds. To counter this, innovative solutions will be explored, and resources targeted.

### ***Adaptations***

Adaptations <sup>26</sup> play a critical role in the housing system, allowing people to live at home for longer when they wish to do so.

The funding process in East Lothian is complex and varies depending on tenure and type of adaptation. Funding of adaptations in East Lothian has come under increasing pressure, with rising material and labour costs and demand outstripping the amount of available funding.

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<sup>26</sup> As defined in the Scottish Government '[Guidance on the Provisions of equipment and adaptations](#)', adaptations are used to modify an environment to "restore or enable independent living, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families". Adaptations are wide ranging and are defined by purpose, but may include the installation of a wet floor showers and grabrails, and widening door frames.

Whilst this is the case across all tenures of housing, funding of adaptations in private sector homes has become increasingly pressurised. Barriers to adapting private homes, in turn, places further pressure on demand for social homes. East Lothian Council are currently undertaking a review of adaptations to explore new ways of delivering services more efficiently to help maximise opportunities to meet the growing demand.

Delay in delivering adaptations may result in unnecessary hospital admission, delayed discharges and can increase risk of falls, reduced mobility, and impact mental health. This also impacts those who provide unpaid care, including those living within the household such as a spouse. Providing support without essential equipment can increase risk of physical injury, stress and burnout.

Living without necessary adaptations also increases the likelihood of a person being bound to their own home and/or certain rooms in their home. Being homebound is damaging to health and can result in a higher prevalence of cognitive impairment, limitations in function, depression, increased anxiety, and decreased mobility<sup>27</sup>

#### Housing Contribution 2024-2029

To address the above challenges ELC Housing Service will:

- Review of adaptations service for all tenures.
- Explore alternative options of funding major adaptations in the private sector to ensure shared statutory obligations are met.



**Actions aim to:** ensure that the delivery of aids and adaptations in East Lothian can meet the needs of the ageing population.

#### Long-term Health Benefits

- Reduce the number of falls- decreasing the risk of injury and need for medical intervention.
- Aid and adaptations can ensure access in and out of the home, decreasing risk of social isolation.
- Access to the outdoors is essential to maintaining mental and physical health and to improving:
  - Cognitive function.
  - Mobility.
  - Levels of stress and anxiety.
  - Risk of multimorbidity and developing chronic illness.



<sup>27</sup> [The Impact of Homebound Status in Older Persons - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

## ***Wheelchair accessible housing***

Wheelchair accessible housing is essential for reducing inequality and removing barriers which may prevent people from living independently and accessing communities and support.

As identified in HNDA3, the current unmet need for wheelchair users is 430 households in East Lothian - across all tenures of housing. This indicates a significant proportion of people who may be living in a home which cannot support their health needs.

While proposed changes to Building Standards through the '[Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability, and usability of Scotland's home consultation](#)' will ensure a new minimum standard in private homes, it will not go far enough to ensuring private sector homes are wheelchair accessible.

To meet the current unmet need and existing demand for social rented wheelchair accessible housing, East Lothian Council has set wheelchair accessible housing targets, as required by the Scottish Government. ELC commits to 10% of the total supply of new affordable housing being wheelchair accessible, with a minimum of at least 100 units to be delivered over five years.

East Lothian Council has not yet developed a mechanism to promote the development of wheelchair accessible homes in the private housing sector. By only developing wheelchair accessible housing in the affordable housing sector, an additional burden is being placed on already stretched provision.

### **Housing Contribution 2024-2029**

To address the above challenges ELC Housing Service will ensure:



- 10% of the total supply of new affordable housing is wheelchair accessible.

**Actions aim to:** address the unmet need for wheelchair accessible housing in East Lothian across all tenures and improve equality within the private sector for wheelchair users.

### **Long-term Health Benefits**

- Improved mental health and wellbeing through increased independence and empowerment.
- Reduced risk of health impacts associated with social isolation including:
  - Cognitive decline.
  - Mental health illness.
  - Morbidity and suicide.



## ***Social Care Users***

In 2018, East Lothian HSCP published a Strategic Needs Assessment which calculated the predicted social care requirements of particular needs groups. While these relate to social care users, they are indicative of a growing population of adults with complex care needs. The report found the following:

- Growth in the population of social care users with a learning disability will not match the general population rate, however, will increase from 402 in 2019 to 729 in 2041.
- 24.8% of all people with a learning disability in East Lothian have 3+ health conditions, compared to 2.3% of the Scottish population.
- The population of physical disability social care users is expected to grow in line with the population growth, increasing from 224 in 2019 to 271 in 2041.
- The population of mental health social care users is expected to grow in line with the population growth, from 231 in 2019 to 248 in 2041.

There is a trend of increasing complexity and more intensive support arrangements being required amongst social care users. This sometimes requires the provision of core and cluster housing. Throughout the last 5 years, over 40 units of core and cluster have been developed in partnership with ELHSCP. This has mostly focused on delivering core and cluster provision for those with a learning disability who require 20+ hours of specialist care and/or support.

East Lothian will continue to deliver core and cluster housing in partnership with ELHSCP. Throughout the lifetime of the LHS, ELC will develop up to 12 units of core and cluster housing per annum, dependant on funding<sup>28</sup>. This will help ensure the needs of those with complex health and support needs can access a housing model which best supports them.

In 2022, new Mental Health Recovery Service for individuals with mental health conditions were opened to replace previous bedsit provision. This new housing provision encompasses 8 individual flats alongside a staff base for 24/7 care and support provided by a specialist provider.

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<sup>28</sup> The target number for core and cluster housing, to be delivered within the LHS 2024-2029, was outlined within the Wheelchair and Specialist Housing Strategic Needs Assessment 2022. Estimates used local data to assess the current and predicted future need for specialist houses for those with complex health needs.

Properties include a mix of one and two bed flats. Despite this increased provision, individuals continue to be discharged from psychiatric care with no fixed abode. Albeit small in numbers, this remains a significant problem.

One key challenge for the Mental Health Recovery Service is the availability of affordable homes. To move on from the service, when it is most suitable to the person, some require a permanent home. Due to the lack of affordable housing options, there is a risk that residents have to stay within the service for longer than is needed whilst they wait for a suitable home to be available.

## Gypsy/Travellers

National research has shown that Gypsy/Travellers<sup>29</sup> have the worst outcomes in terms of poverty, health, housing, and employment. Gypsy/Travellers have equal rights to funds and services, such as home adaptations and carer support. However, they are less likely to access and receive those services, with barriers including stigma and culture.

The Gypsy/Traveller Steering Group Action plan 2018-21: revised August 2020, set out key priority areas in the Lothians:

- Increase representations of Gypsy/Travellers in service provision.
- Give staff in public and voluntary sector training and information on Gypsy/Travellers.
- Promote and provide information on health services on unauthorised encampments.
- Improve education and employment access for Gypsy/Travellers.

Up until 2020, East Lothian and Midlothian Council shared a Gypsy/Travellers site on the border between East Lothian and Midlothian. There are also two private sites in East Lothian. A reduction in the number of tenants on site to zero, followed by extreme vandalism including fire raising, resulted in the site being closed.

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<sup>29</sup> This document uses the [Scottish Government](#) definition of Gypsy/Travellers: “The term ‘Gypsy/Travellers’ refers to distinct groups – such as Roma, Romany Gypsies, Scottish and Irish Travellers – who consider the travelling lifestyle part of their ethnic identity.”

## Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

VAWG refers to all individuals who identify as women and girls, and includes: domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation and so called 'honour based' violence, such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

VAWG widens gender inequalities and has an extensive list of health impacts. Whilst health impacts are influenced by the type, pattern, and frequency of violence, VAWG is associated with:

- Psychological and physical trauma.
- Brain injuries - which can impact memory, information processing and decision making.
- Mental Health conditions - such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD.
- Increased risk of self-harm and suicide.
- Using alcohol and drugs as a coping mechanism<sup>30</sup>.

As well as being extremely damaging to health, domestic abuse is costly. A 2016/17 study in England and Wales estimated that the social and economic cost of domestic abuse was approximately £66 billion. The biggest contributing factor of this cost was physical and emotional harm, including costs of hospital visit, specialist services and prescriptions<sup>31</sup>.

Domestic abuse is the most common reason for women to make a homeless application in East Lothian. Housing and housing costs can be a barrier to women escaping forms of violence, including harm and coercive control. Safe, secure and affordable housing can, therefore, be used as a protective and preventative tool for women experiencing VAWG<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> [The role of healthcare services in addressing domestic abuse \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/resources/research-briefings/role-of-healthcare-services-in-addressing-domestic-abuse)

<sup>31</sup> [The economic and social costs of domestic abuse \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614842/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-domestic-abuse.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> [Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2016/04/Equally-Safe-Scotland-Strategy-for-Preventing-and-Eradicating-Violence-Against-Women-and-Girls.pdf)

Women's Aid East and Mid Lothian (WAEML) are commissioned by East Lothian Council to provide refuge accommodation within the county. Refuge provides temporary housing, alongside support, to women and children fleeing domestic abuse. There is high demand for refuge, on average there are 5 women waiting for a space in refuge at any one time. Outreach support is also provided by WAEML and available to women across the county.

ELC's Housing Service will develop an Equally Safe Housing Policy, in line with the Council's wider policy strategy, which recognises all VAWG in line with national policies. This will help develop best practice across the Housing service to address challenges faced by women subjected to/fleeing domestic abuse. In time, effective practice in housing will bring improvements to the health of women across East Lothian.



### 3. Shared Outcomes and joint approaches

The IJB Strategic Plan and LHS 2024-2029 are underpinned by priority outcomes. Priority outcomes reflect the focus of the IJB and ELC Housing Service in challenging the key issues which exist in East Lothian to create a barrier in improving equality and eradicating poverty.

The LHS 2024-2029 has 5 priority outcomes, as shown below. Essential to achieving each outcome are a number of corresponding actions taken across ELC. As the priority outcomes of the LHS are closely aligned with those of the IJB Strategic Plan, carrying out these actions will progress priority outcomes of the Plan. This highlights the housing contribution to be made to East Lothian’s health and social care services - outlined in table 1.

Figure 2.1 LHS 2024-2029 Priority Outcomes





Table 1: Aligning Strategic Plan and LHS Outcomes with the Housing Contribution for 2024-2029		
IJB Strategic Plan Outcome	Supporting LHS Priority Outcome*	Housing Contribution 2024-2029
Develop Services that are sustainable and proportionate to need.		ELC Housing Service will assess housing need and demand through developing the Local Investment Framework (LIF). Evidence from the LIF can be used to direct housing investment where most needed, improving equity across the county. In turn this will improve health inequality, particularly that embedded through poverty.
Deliver new models of community provision, working collaboratively with communities.		<p>ELC Housing service will support East Lothian’s HSCP as they embed strategies including the ‘See/Hear Action Plan for Sensory Impairment’ and ‘Dementia Strategy’ to ensure housing meets the needs of client groups.</p> <p>Housing will also contribute to providing specialist support to those with certain conditions and/or disability within the community through the development of core and cluster housing. This will ensure that the needs of those within East Lothian are met in the county, reducing out of area placements - aligning with national and local strategies.</p>
Focus on prevention and early intervention.		<p>Poor health outcomes can be prevented through the provision of affordable high-quality and suitable homes. ELC has an ambitious housing supply target of 891 homes over the next 5 years. Making best use of housing stock will be supported through reviewing ELC allocations policy and developing an empty homes strategy and voids management strategy.</p> <p>Focus on homelessness prevention, including developing prevention pathways and embedding new prevention duties - in line with the Housing Bill, is critical to this outcome.</p> <p>Ensuring people can access accessible and suitable homes will prevent the risk of developing physical and mental health conditions associated with living in unsuitable homes. ELC has set a target for developing wheelchair accessible homes within the social sector.</p>

		Reducing fuel poverty through ELC Housing’s targeted energy efficiency programmes will, in turn, prevent development of associated health conditions.
Enable people to have more choice and control and provide care closer to home.		<p>ELC Housing Service will increase choice through developing core and cluster housing and increasing the supply of wheelchair housing.</p> <p>ELC Housing will also help support the choice of independent living through exploring alternative funding streams for adaptations.</p>
Further develop/enable integrated approaches and devices.		ELC Housing service will continue to support Technology Enable Care (TEC). The provision of Wellwynd helps people to explore what TEC is available and what may best suit them. We will jointly explore further opportunities to encourage use of TEC.
Keep people safe from harm.		<p>VAWG is a high threat to harm for women and girls within the county. Housing is a critical tool in ensuring the safety of women. ELC’s housing service will develop an Equally Safe Housing Policy which recognises all VAWG.</p> <p>ELC’s Housing service will also reduce harm caused by homelessness through embedding <a href="#">Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone</a> (SHORE) standards, focusing on prevention and</p>

		reducing length of time in temporary accommodation through innovative methods, such as flipping temporary tenancies.
Address health inequalities.	<div data-bbox="591 450 815 580" style="background-color: #4F81BD; height: 82px;"></div> <div data-bbox="591 580 815 711" style="background-color: #E67E22; height: 82px;"></div> <div data-bbox="591 711 815 845" style="background-color: #F1C40F; height: 84px;"></div>	<p>ELC Housing service will contribute to reducing inequalities created through poverty through the supply of affordable housing.</p> <p>Health inequalities of homelessness experiences will be addressed through prevention pathways and duties and by improving the flow through temporary housing.</p> <p>Inequalities faced by those with physical disabilities will be addressed through increasing the supply of wheelchair accessible housing.</p>
* LHS priority outcomes are represented by corresponding colour as shown in figure 2.1		



## 4. Resources

The delivery of priority actions within the IJB Strategic Plan and LHS require a commitment of resources across both bodies, recognising that the ambitious outcomes of both plans cannot be achieved in isolation of each other. Improvements in the health and wellbeing of East Lothian's population and a reduction in health inequalities require continued investment in improving current housing stock and increasing the affordable housing supply.

However, as previously mentioned, current pressures placed on the public sector budgets have never been so critical. ELC and the IJB have seen the cost of delivering essential service increase beyond funding. This risks the delivery of services and achieving the key outcomes, highlighting the need for continued partnership working and finding innovative funding and cost reduction methods.

The table below outlines current and future allocated resources for services essential to deliver the shared outcomes within the IJB Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and LHS 2024-2029. Although some of the functions have been delegated to the IJB, the budgets may still lie with Housing and vice versa.

For the purposes of this document, table 2 is inclusive to top headline figures in relation to the budget identified as making a direct contribution to health and social care through delegated and non-delegated functions.

**Table 2: Housing Services which contribute to health and wellbeing of East Lothian- Current and Future Resources and Investment (£)**

	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>*2024-2025</b>	<b>*2025-2026</b>	<b>*2026-2027</b>	<b>*2027-2028</b>	<b>*2028-2029</b>
<b>Housing Services Delegated services</b>							
Commissioned Housing Support	£770k	£770k	£770k	-	-	-	
Council Housing Adaptations	£1m	£1m	£1m	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Adaptations	£364k	£364k	£364k	-	-	-	-
<b>Housing Services Non-Delegated Services</b>							
Energy Advice Service	£63k	£79.5k	£60k	-	-	-	-
Investment in private sector stock	£1.1m	£1.1m	-	-	-	-	-
New Affordable Housing	£26.86m	£28.49	£16.7m	£29.4m	£17.3m	£23m	£30.6m
Improvements to ELC stock	14.4	13.2	£13.1	£13m	£13m	£13.8m	£11.8m

\*As approved in the 2024 HRA budget. Source: East Lothian Council, 2024

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[www.eastlothian.gov.uk/elhscp](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/elhscp)