

Community Planning and Regeneration Annual Report 2007 - 2008

Working with others to regenerate West Lothian by enabling individuals, families, communities and businesses to achieve their potential

New Council Service

The new Community Planning and Regeneration service was created on 1 August 2007 to support the locality planning process and the development of an Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government.

Led by former head of economic development, Alistair Shaw, the new service brings together economic development with the communities team, voluntary sector support, community planning service and employability services branded access2employment.

Outcome agreements and performance targets are increasingly being seen as a strategy for improving public services. The Outcome Agreement will form the basis of the new Community Plan and set the future priorities for West Lothian. Delivery of the Outcome Agreement will be through the Locality Planning model. It will link performance and funding more closely, moving away from the "initiatives" culture.

"The Outcome Agreement will bring together the priorities of the Government, Council and Community Planning partners in important areas as diverse as raised educational attainment, economic participation, health improvement, homelessness and antisocial behaviour," said new Head of Service, Alistair Shaw.

"Key to delivery of the Outcome Agreement and the Community Plan will be the Council's locality planning approach based on the new multi-member ward boundaries."



Achievements in 2007 - 2008

- ☺ Single Outcome Agreement submitted to Government by deadline of 31 March '08.
- ☺ The new Locality Planning and Local Area Committee process has begun with most steering groups having met and decided on priorities that will align to the Single Outcome Agreement.
- ☺ Successful strategic EU funding bids under the Leader rural development programme and the new Lowlands and Uplands Scotland ERDF and ESF programmes 2007-2013
- ☺ Extension of New Deal contract offered by Jobcentre Plus to West Lothian Council.
- ☺ Working For Families project completed on 31st March. Performance exceeded targets. Further funding through the Fairer Scotland Fund received to continue with support to this group of current and potential customers.
- ☺ The Business Gateway 5 year contract for Lothian was awarded to a Consortium led by West Lothian Council in August 2007.
- ☺ Bathgate became the first Business Improvement District in Scotland in March 2007, when 92.6% of businesses voted in favour of the BID.

Cost of Service

The cost per West Lothian household of delivering Community Planning and Regeneration services is 71.4p per year – less than the price of a small loaf of bread.

Our Aims

- ▶ Support and promote West Lothian's economy and maximise the contribution of business and enterprise.
- ▶ Regenerate the most disadvantaged communities.
- ▶ Improve the life chances of individuals and groups experiencing poverty and disadvantage.
- ▶ Improve employability - particularly for young people and other disadvantaged groups.



West Lothian Council delivers

www.westlothian.com



Outcome Focused Working

The service gets down to business in Bathgate to deliver the Council's Single Outcome Agreement through the Locality Planning model.

One Outcome is to see "all people in West Lothian living in balanced, well-designed sustainable communities where they can access the high quality amenities and services they need."

"Team Bathgate" pictured here brings together colleagues from the Communities Team; Business Gateway/ Enterprise In Partnership; Town Centre Management; the Business Improvement District team; Voluntary Sector Support; and access2employment.

"Our mission is to work with others to regenerate West Lothian by enabling individuals, families, communities and businesses to achieve their potential," said Head of Service, Alistair Shaw.

"Similar models of joint working are being rolled out across West Lothian in the new locality planning approach based on multi-member wards."



Community Planning and Engagement

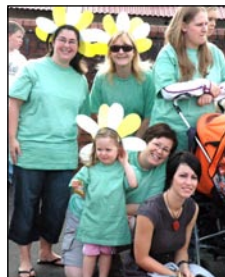
The team's high-level priorities are to regenerate the most disadvantaged communities and to improve the life chances of individuals and groups experiencing poverty and disadvantage.

Through the locality planning process the team continues to support the development of projects that address these priorities.

These include Mayfield House in Armadale, Daisy Drop In in Craigshill and the Craigshill Youth Project, Knightsridge Adventure Playground, youth and food initiatives in Addiewell, Whitburn Older People's Project, Boghall Community Resources and public health initiatives.

"Daisy helped me a lot when I had my little boy. They came to the hospital and visited and I listened to other mums on how they coped and they gave me advice on so many things."

- ▶ Locality Planning
- ▶ Community engagement
- ▶ Strategic link to and monitoring of the Voluntary Sector
- ▶ Youth Participation
- ▶ Parent Action
- ▶ Public health work in relation to locality planning



Partnership Working

The teams across the service engage with a range of partners across the statutory, voluntary and business sectors. We have lead responsibility for the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership Board and West Lothian Economic Partnership Forum. These forums provide the strategic context for a range of other partnership groupings, including for example the West Lothian Tourism Forum, Workforce Plus and More Choices, More Chances Action Plan groups and a plethora of other project specific working groups.

Partnership delivery is the name of the game in Locality Planning and key projects like Business Gateway and New Deal. We also represent West Lothian on a number of key regional, national and European groupings and partnerships – promoting West Lothian's interests and identifying new ideas and opportunities.

Results and Targets - Delivering our Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	Results 2007-08	Target 2008-09
Number of new business start-ups	301	280
Number of SMEs assisted	523	530
Number of Job Candidates Supported	1614	1620
Number of Job Candidates into Work	727	770
Families engaged in positive activity through projects addressing strategic priorities	*	100
Young people participating in youth activity	*	200
People accessing health screening services	*	100
Young people accessing c card services	*	400
Voluntary Organisations compliant with Following the Public Pound Directive	*	100%
Sickness Absence	3.4%	3.4%
Customer Satisfaction Business Services	89%	90%
Customer Satisfaction Employment & Skills	97%	90%

*Not previously monitored



Youth Health Forum Established

In November 2007 a conference was organised to bring together young people from across West Lothian.

The conference had two key purposes: to identify young people's issues in relation to health and to recruit a small group of young people to take these issues forward. Over 100 young people attended the conference with 25 young people going on to attend the first meeting of the new youth health forum. Supporting these young people is a staff partnership from agencies including St John's Hospital, Social Work, Social Policy, School Nursing, CHCP, COZ, Capability Scotland, CLD, & the Communities Team.

The young people have agreed to meet on a six-week cycle and have identified three priority issues to work on. These issues are drugs and alcohol, mental health and access to health services. The young people have also nominated six of their number to represent the views of West Lothian young people on the pan-Lothian consultation group, looking at the re-provision of the Royal Sick Children's hospital.

Services for Business



In August 2007 the Lothian Consortium led by the Council's Business Gateway service won Scottish Enterprise's 5-year contract to deliver Business Gateway services across Lothian.

In early 2008, following the Scottish Government's restructuring of Scottish Enterprise, the council, with other local authorities, gained increased flexibility in the delivery of that contract.

The formation of the Community Planning & Regeneration service enhanced the

opportunity for the business team to add value to the Locality Planning process by providing targeted and flexible services relevant to the demands of each locality. EU funding streams, which have provided enhanced Business Gateway services, especially e-commerce, Enterprise in Partnership, Business4Growth and the Business Learning Network, came to an end in March 2008, setting new challenges for the service in 2008-09. Through Enterprise in Partnership and the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust there is a particular opportunity to support young people through More Choices More Chances initiatives.

Preparatory work for the launch of new business growth funds got under way in 2007-08 which will increase the service's engagement with growth businesses. However the Young Person's start up grant of £1,000 came to an end in March 2008. Increased partnership working with West Lothian Chamber and the College was identified as an area for growth, as was increased intermediary working with banks, lawyers accountants and property agents.

The Business Services team delivered two important improvements to the business portal, enhancing the search facilities on both the online business directory and the online events calendar.

"Just a quick note to say I got the grant. Thank you so much for your help. I am leaving work with a big grin and high hopes for the future."

- ▶ Support for entrepreneurship and growing businesses through the Business Gateway brand.
- ▶ Growing the base of internationally competitive businesses
- ▶ E-commerce solutions
- ▶ Environmental management
- ▶ Business information services and website
- ▶ Economic promotion

"I took the advice of Business Gateway West Lothian to speak to staff in Scottish Enterprise. My first thoughts were that we probably wouldn't qualify for support, not being a biotech or hi-tech sector firm. But through a bit of networking, we were put in touch with a very experienced independent consultant."

Employability Services

West Lothian families most in need of support were the main beneficiaries of local employment activity delivered under the two-year Working for Families funding package.

This was demonstrated by recent analysis of the outputs achieved through the £900,000 provided by the Scottish Government to improve employment outcomes for parents in disadvantaged communities.

The work started in West Lothian, delivered under the access2employment brand, will now continue thanks to support from the Fairer Scotland Fund.

Some interesting findings have emerged from the results achieved between 2006 – 2008, which provide useful pointers for employability work in the future: West Lothian was one of five local authorities where less than 20% of clients were in employment when registering for Working for Families services. In West Lothian, a high proportion of clients (82%) were making transitions into employment.

West Lothian's registrations saw the highest percentage of families on low incomes. West Lothian worked with the highest percentage of families with low or no skills. The outputs give clear direction for targeting resources in the future to address issues such as skills development which will help our clients to access better quality jobs.

- ▶ Co-ordinate employability services
- ▶ Design & commission employability programmes
- ▶ Employer engagement
- ▶ Redundancy response
- ▶ Employability work with young people
- ▶ Provide funding to remove barriers to employment



New Deal

Through New Deal the service continued to support a wide range of employability activity.

One successful project was the partnership with West Lothian College and Miller Construction to help participants to secure employment in the construction sector.

Business outcomes 2007-2008

	Outcome	Target
New businesses started	301	230
Businesses started by women	137	84
Businesses started by people under 30	134	48
Jobs created by new businesses	600	460
Survival rates of new firms	88%	75%
SMEs assisted by Growth advisers	523	500
E-business seminars	14	12
Companies receiving environmental support	42	35
Women in Business events	8	8
Business information enquiries	511	500
Business website registrations	1661	600



Economic Strategy and Policy

The publication of the 2008 **Economic Review** comes one year on from the re-launch of West Lothian's **Economic Strategy**. It provides an update on progress towards the area's long-term goals set out in the March 2007 strategy. Launched at the recent **West Lothian Economic Conference**, the review reports on five key targets surrounding jobs, pay levels, educational attainment, school leavers progressing to higher education and economic activity. West Lothian's economic partners continue to vigorously pursue the core challenge of growing and strengthening the West Lothian economy.

In 2007-08 the Policy Team successfully led two major **EU funding applications**. One will support targeted employability and regeneration work via key Community Planning Partners; the other - **Leader** - supports rural development in West Lothian.

The restoration of **Blackburn House** as a centre for creative industries came to fruition in 2007-08, the service's role being to ensure the effective deployment of EU funds in the project.

Work was completed on the new **cycle trail at Fauldhouse** in December '07. The trail is the first stage of a wider regeneration project for the Fauldhouse community, including the provision of café, crèche and car parking facilities. Community Planning and Regeneration, The Forestry Commission, ERDF, The Coalfield Regeneration Trust, The Levenseat Trust, Scottish National Heritage and West Lothian on the Move provided funding for the trail.

A number of **transnational links** were strengthened during the year, including those with Grapevine, USA and Estonia.

In February 2008 a new action plan was approved for West Lothian's five **traditional town centres**. £250,000 was spent in 2007-08 on improvements at Armadale, Bathgate, Broxburn/Uphall, Linlithgow and Whitburn, with additional funding of around £400,000 provided annually in a new 10-year framework programme.

Regular **farmers' markets** were established in both Linlithgow and Bathgate during the year, with the introduction of a Continental market in both towns.



In April 2007 West Lothian was promoted for the first time at **VisitScotland's Expo '07**.

An action plan to boost tourism was given the green light when a series of recommendations from independent consultants was approved, including the establishment of a new public/private sector partnership company to develop a **tourism strategy** for West Lothian.

In July, the **James Doohan Memorial Exhibition** highlighting the birthplace of cult Star Trek character Scotty opened in Linlithgow.

In March 2008 a new **Visitor Information Centre** opened at County Buildings in Linlithgow, replacing the TIC previously located in the Burgh Halls.

"My first attendance at the conference - found it most informative and interesting"

"Need this inspiration more often"

Staff Survey

A staff survey was carried out in January 2008, with an **83%** return rate. Overall, the results were positive, with the majority of answers being rated as "good".

Highlights include:

95% of staff rating our services to external customers as excellent or good; **88%** of staff feeling they are part of their own team; **81%** feeling they are encouraged to develop new ideas.

Service Improvements

The **staff survey** and the recent **staff away days** resulted in a number of suggestions to improve the service.

Other improvements are being addressed by an internal **quality team** as initiatives through the council's WLAM and Chartermark quality processes.

Partner consultation and **customer feedback** have resulted in a number of improvements to improve the services we offer our customers. These include:

- ▶ A new newsletter was launched to promote employability services to customers and partners. Two issues were published, in summer and winter 2007.
- ▶ A multi-agency "door knocking" campaign was run in Knightsridge to contact hard-to-reach clients and to provide a single point of contact to council and partner services.
- ▶ Access2employment extended its reach into local communities by working with new partners, including homeless units in Blackburn and Dedridge, and family centres in Livingston and Bathgate.
- ▶ Employment advisers began learning some basic Polish phrases to improve communication with West Lothian's increasing migrant worker population.
- ▶ The delivery of basic IT skills training was introduced at Family Centres to enable parents to benefit whilst their children were cared for.
- ▶ A new programme delivering practical employability skills - Teen Options - was developed and delivered in Inverlmond High School and Bathgate Academy for pupils at risk of falling into the More Choices More Chances category.
- ▶ Enterprise in Partnership services were extended into Fauldhouse, Blackburn, Armadale and Boghall.
- ▶ New industrial estate maps were developed to extend the range made available on the business portal.



Contact Us

Head of Service: Alistair Shaw, 01506-777251

Alistair.shaw@westlothian.gov.uk

Enterprise Centre: 01506-777400

Enterprise@westlothian.gov.uk

Access2employment: 0800 0329768

Access2employment@westlothian.gov.uk

Communities Team: 01506 775835

www.westlothian.com