

Engagement and Consultation Plan

Introduction

East Lothian Council is committed to ensuring that key stakeholders and the local community have a role in developing the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2024-2029. Only through genuine engagement can a strategy be developed which reflects local needs and aspirations.

There is a unique opportunity to engage with key stakeholders and the local community in true partnership working, with the Local Development Plan and Health & Social Care Partnership strategic plans also due. Every effort will be taken to ensure a joined-up approach.

This report supports the development of the LHS, and aims to summarise the partnership working, consultation and engagement which will take place during 2022 and 2023, prior to publication. This is a live document which will be updated as the consultation and engagement process progresses.

Background

The Housing (Scotland) 2001 Act requires that local authorities consult on their LHS, and the statutory Equality Duty on public bodies requires the involvement, consultation and engagement of as wide a range of local residents and tenants and communities of interest as possible.

The Scottish Government's Local Housing Strategy Guidance (2019) states that engagement must be underpinned by a Human Rights Based Approach which is aligned with the Community Empowerment Act (2015) and locality planning.

When preparing the Consultation and Engagement Plan, LHS Guidance (2019) guidance states that we must be mindful that:

- Engagement and consultation is undertaken early on in the LHS development process;
- A range of media and advertising is used to ensure as wide an audience as possible within local communities and from relevant representative groups including people with or who shared protected characteristics;
- In an effort to end inequality, that the make-up of the local population is accurately reflected;
- Less traditional forms of engagement methods are undertaken to ensure all those willing or able to engage have the opportunity to do so.

National Standards for Community Engagement

The *National Standards for Community Engagement* are good practise principles designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement. Originally launched in 2005, the National Standards were reviewed and updated in 2015/16, they set out the definitions of community engagement:

Community engagement is supported by the key principles of fairness and equality, and a commitment to learning and continuous improvement. High quality engagement is:

- Effective – in meeting the needs and expectations of the people involved;
- Efficient – by being well informed and properly planned; and
- Fair – by giving people who may face additional barriers to getting involved an equal opportunity to participate.

Community engagement is a process which provides the foundation for:

- Shared decision making – where communities influence the options and decisions that are taken;
- Shared action – where communities contribute to any action taken as a result of the engagement process; and
- Support for community-led action- where communities are best placed to deal with the issues they experience and are supported to take the lead in providing a response.

East Lothian Engagement Plan

Surveys

From 7th February 2022, the Housing Strategy (HS) Team will publish a themed survey every second month, with the exception of an additional survey during May 2022 on Health, Housing and Place in partnership with H&SCP and Planning. These will be advertised via the Consultation HUB and advertised through social media channels. Each survey will be supported by an amination which explains the content of the survey.

Table x: Surveys Published		
Month	Theme	Response
February	Initial Engagement	215
April	Health, Housing and Place	80
May	Rural Housing	228
July	Older People	94
August	Young People	80

Equalities Workshops

During April and June, Housing Strategy, Planning Policy and ELH&SCP teams will hold joint workshops for ELC, H&SCP and third sector staff. The theme of each workshop are set out below and centre on equalities groups.

The workshops will be advertised to named contacts within each organisation as well as via Volunteer Centre East Lothian.

Table x: Equalities Workshops		
Date	Theme	Number of Participants
06.04.22	Children & Young People	8
08.04.22	Ethnic Minorities (including Gypsy/Travellers), asylum seekers & refugees	3
11.04.22	Learning Disabilities & Autism	6

19.04.22	Older People	6
20.04.22	Dementia	5
21.04.22	Homelessness	7
25.04.22	Substance Misuse	3
27.04.22	Mental Health	5
30.05.22	Gender Based Violence	11
09.06.22	Veterans	11
14.08.22	People involved in the Justice System	15

Service Providers Workshops

Table x: Service Provider Workshops		
Service	Description	Number of Staff Participants
Action for Children	Supported temporary accommodation for young people aged 16-25.	10
Blue Triangle	Supported temporary accommodation for young people aged 16-25 and adults.	4
Sight Scotland	Sight Scotland is a charity that supports & cares for blind people of all ages.	1
Stepping Out	Stepping out is a mental health project and small charity based in East Lothian.	2
Starfish Cafe	Starfish Café is run one day a week at Hope Church in Musselburgh by volunteers in recovery from drugs and alcohol	2
Carers of East Lothian	Carers of East Lothian support carers by providing a range of advice and support to aid the individual in their caring role, enhance their own wellbeing and strengthen their collective voice to improve services.	8
East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership	OT & Acute Hospital Team	22

Lived Experience

During March and April 2022, the HSO Team will engage individually with third sector organisations to establish the best way to consult with individuals they support and/or provide a service to. The impact of Covid-19 presents us with unique challenges when consulting and engaging. While all engagement with ELC/H&SCP staff will take place virtually, to ensure we are taking an equalities focused approach, we will be adaptable to the needs of the different client groups while taking the necessary precautions. This might mean small focus groups held in third sector buildings, or 1:1 interviews on the phone or in person, or more innovative ideas such as walking consultations. Where possible, we will work alongside our colleagues in H&SCP to jointly consult with lived experience groups.

Table x: Lived Experience Workshops		
Date	Event & short description	Number of Participants
10.05.22	New Horizons – current tenants	4
11.05.22	WAEAML- Women’s Aid East and Mid Lothian	6
17.05.22	New Horizons – ex-tenants	3
24.05.22	Stepping Out – Musselburgh	7
22.06.22	Stepping Out – North Berwick	13
7.04.22	Veterans Breakfast	24
15.06.22	Blue Triangle – young people	4
27.05.22	ESOL- English for speakers of other language	4
13.07.22	ESOL- English for speakers of other language	6
2.08.22-9.09-22	4 x sessions Sheltered Housing Complexes	42

Public Engagement

Alongside Comms we will investigate how we can use the website, YouTube videos with voice overs and animations to share information about the LHS. This could then be followed up with ‘doors open’ online events for members of the public.

We will work with colleagues in H&SCP to produce DIY Engagement Packs to be sent out to Community Councils, Local Area Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing sub-groups, patient participation groups, third sector partners and H&SCP providers. This includes a video explaining the purpose of the three strategic plans, a recording sheet to record participants, and facilitator notes to provide guidance on questions and how to facilitate a workshop. This format has been tested by H&SCP with positive results.

Community Housing & Homelessness

In April, we’ll hold a workshop with Community Housing Service Development Team on LHS development and priority outcomes.

During May the HSO team will attend the team briefs of each Community Housing Team to present on ‘What is the LHS? Why is it important and how can we feed into it?’ This will then be followed up by two 2 hour workshops later that month (combining 2 teams for each), for Community Housing Officers to identify priorities and share their ideas.

An initial engagement presentation was delivered to the ELTRP Exec Panel in April 2022 and discussions are currently taking place as to further engagement, with the possibility of an ELTRP conference in June with the theme of the LHS.

Table x: Community Housing & Homelessness Engagement Sessions	
Date	Team and Engagement Type
21.04.22	Service Development Team
4.05.22	Prestonpans Team - Briefing
5.05.22	Sheltered Housing Team - Briefing
11.05.22	Musselburgh Team -Briefing

12.05.22	Sheltered Housing Team - Workshop
18.05.22	Prestonpans & Musselburgh - Workshop
18.05.22	Haddington Team - Briefing
25.05.22	Tranent Team - Briefing
1.06.22	Haddington & Tranent Team - Workshops
22.06.22	Housing Options Team (Response) Workshop
27.06.22	Tenancy Support Workshop
20.07.22	Housing Options Team (Accommodation) Workshop
28.07.22	Housing Options Team (Prevention) Workshop

Area Partnership Engagement

To ensure consultation and engagement is specific to each area in East Lothian, each member of the Housing Strategy Team will be taking responsibility for engaging with specific area partnerships. The aim is that these relationships will continue after the LHS has been developed and ensure close working relationships with the Connected Communities Team.

Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership Engagement		
Date	Event	Number of Participants
05/09/2022	Meeting with Area Partnership	2

Fa'side Area Partnership Engagement		
Date	Event	Number of Participants
October 2022	LHS Engagement with Area Partnership	Cancelled due to lack of participants

Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership Engagement		
Date	Event & short description of input	Number of Participants
13.06.22	Gifford Community Council	10
16.06.22	Haddington Area Partnership	10
23.06.22	S1-6 Youth Club	9
24.06.22	P4-7 After School Club	12

Musselburgh Area Partnership Engagement		
Date	Event	Number of Participants
24/06/22	Dementia Friendly Musselburgh	22

North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership Engagement		
Date	Event	Number of Participants
31/08/2022	Area Partnership Meeting	20
06/09/22	North Berwick Children and Young People Network	6

Preston Seton Gosford

Date	Event	Number of Participants
02.06.22	S1-4 Youth Club Prestonpan	Shadowing, no participation. Youth workers did give some backgrounds on the young people but the YP did not want to chat
08.06.22	PSG Area Partnership meeting	18
14.06.22	Longniddry Social Drop in	4
14.07.22	Lunch with the Bunch by Pennypit at the Legions	10
04.07.22	Walking Football Port Seton	5

TO BE UPDATED ONCE CONSULTATION IS COMPLETE.