

planning

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2021 | 22



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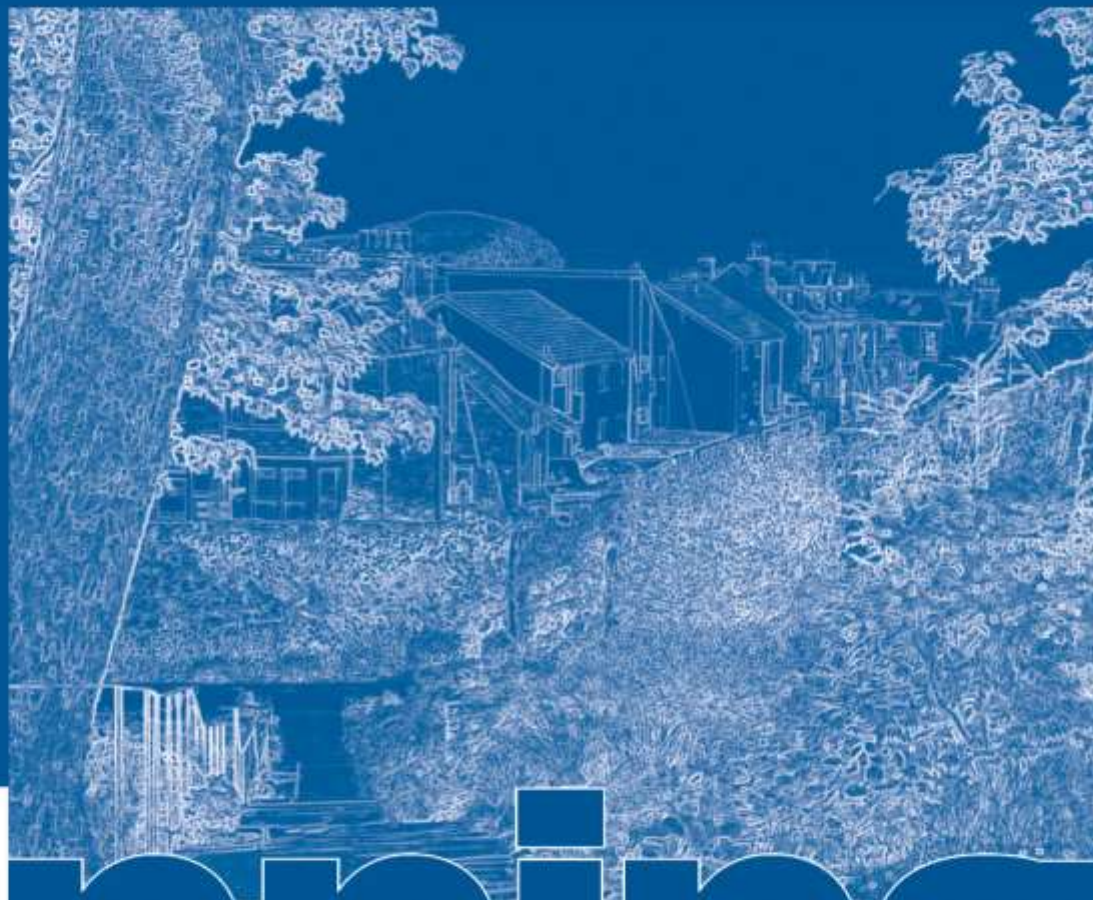
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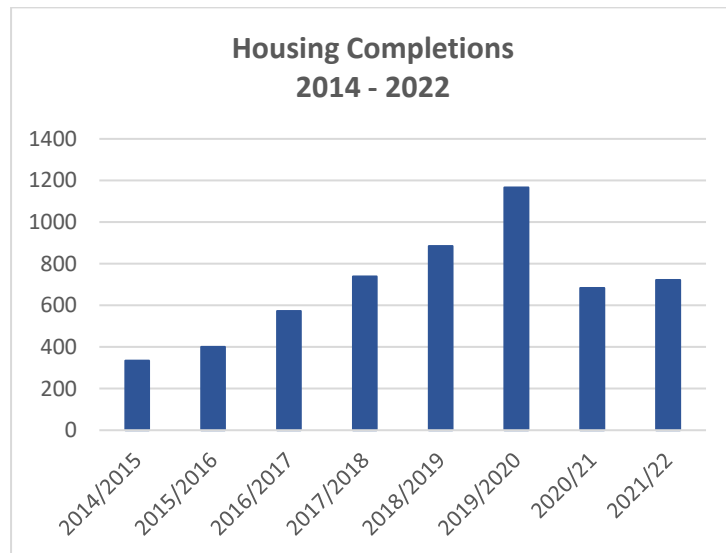
**SERVICE
PRIORITIES**

Introduction

Our Priorities as a Planning Service

East Lothian Council is pleased to present its Planning Performance Framework report for 2021 to 2022. This PPF sets out how East Lothian Council as a planning authority is achieving a high-quality planning service.

Between 1998 and 2020, the population of East Lothian has increased by 22.1%. This is the highest percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland's population rose by 7.7% (source [NRS](#)).



We remain one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland and this is reflected in the provision of record numbers of homes in East Lothian. Indeed, according to new figures from National Records of Scotland, East Lothian, along with Midlothian, had the highest population change of council areas in Scotland from mid-2020 to mid-2021:

[City populations fall in latest estimates | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

Over the last five years we achieved a sustained and significant rise in housing completions. Alongside that there has been increased provision of infrastructure that is required to achieve balanced and sustainable communities.

By mid-2028, East Lothian's population is forecast to grow by 7.2 percent - the second fastest growth in Scotland. This population growth is driven by net migration of 9,130 people projected to move in to the Council area.

East Lothian has a varied and attractive landscape character and is rich in cultural heritage with a significant number of listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled and unscheduled archaeology, designed landscapes and historic battlefields. The Council seeks to protect these key heritage assets whilst balancing the need to meet the demand for new homes, business and infrastructure.

The Planning Service reported on our last PPF and on the associated Scottish Government's feedback to our Policy & Performance Review Committee and obtained its approval ([Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)).

As recommended by the Scottish Government this PPF has undergone a peer review process with East Ayrshire Council, our partner authority. East Lothian Council wishes to thank East Ayrshire Council for their help in this process.

It is the normal practice of East Lothian Council to compare our decision making timescales against the national average. Normally the Scottish Government publish those national figures in mid-July, allowing the Council to complete our PPF by the deadline of the end of July. However this year the Scottish Government have confirmed that there has been a delay at Scottish Government statistics, and that the national figures will not be published until mid-August. The Scottish Government have also confirmed that they are happy for reports to be submitted without the inclusion of the Scottish Average figures, as they can get the information from the Annual Statistics when they are published.



Whilst the delay cannot be helped, the Council does believe that it is important to benchmark our figures against the national average. For this reason, in this PPF we have used the national planning performance statistics from the first two quarters of 2021-2022:

[Planning performance statistics 2021/2022: Quarterly \(April 2021 to September 2021\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-performance-statistics-2021-2022/pages/quarterly-april-2021-to-september-2021.aspx)

EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
Performance against Key Markers

Marker		13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21
1	Decision making timescales								
2	Processing agreements								
3	Early collaboration								
4	Legal agreements								
5	Enforcement charter								
6	Continuous improvement								
7	Local development plan								
8	Development plan scheme								
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR)			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	Regular and proportionate advice to support applications								
12	Corporate working across services								
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge								
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases								
15	Developer contributions								

Overall Markings (total numbers for red, amber and green)

	Red	Amber	Green
2013-14	7	7	1
2014-15	4	5	6
2015-16	1	6	6
2016-17	1	5	7
2017-18	3	4	6
2018-19	1	1	11
2019-20	1	0	12
2020-21	0	1	12

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

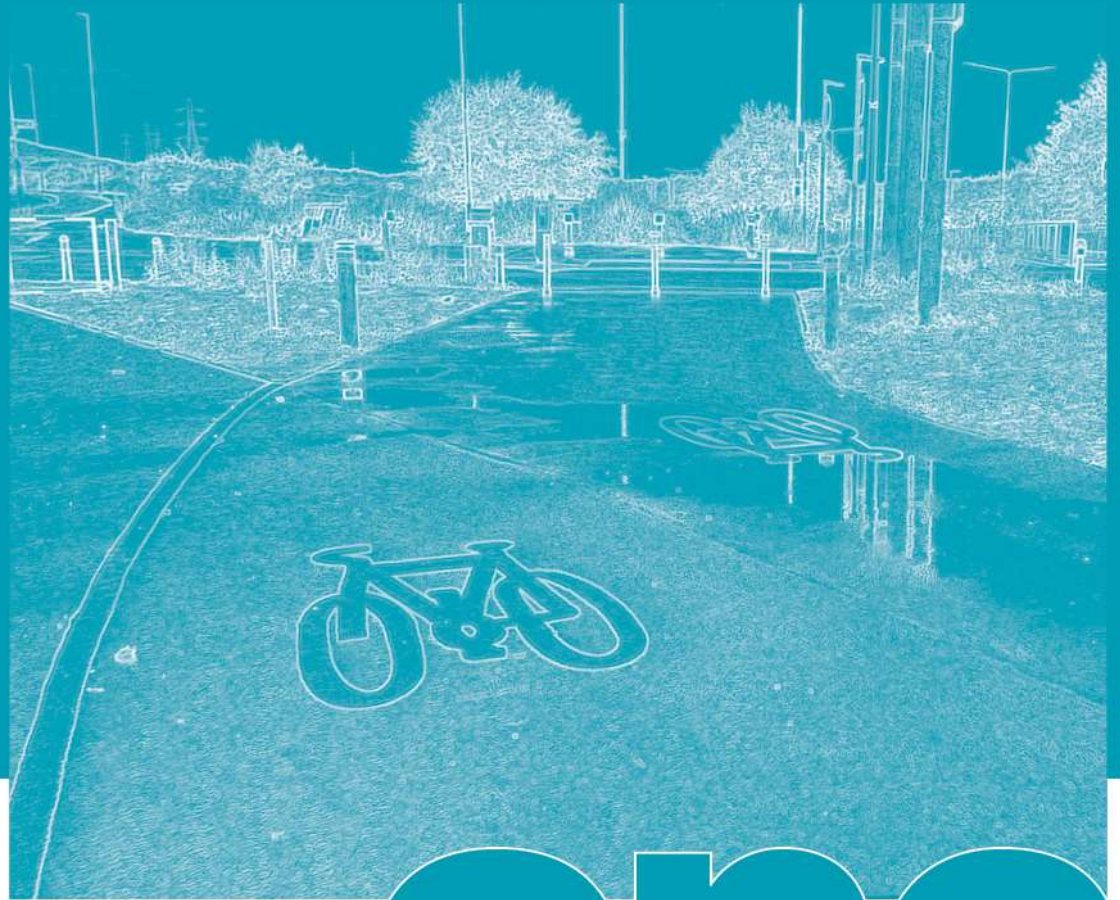
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	2020-21 Scottish Average
Major Development	43.5	31.5	38.3	32.6	60.9	47.1	13.8	17.0	41.3
Local (Non-Householder) Development	22.8	13.9	11.4	15.3	14.2	10.5	10.3	10.8	12.4
Householder Development	7.7	7.5	7.8	8.4	8.0	7.6	7.2	7.0	8.1

Scottish Government Feedback

East Lothian Council's tenth Planning Performance Framework Report, covering the period April 2020 to March 2021, was submitted to Scottish Ministers in July 2021. In November 2021, the Scottish Government provided feedback on the report based around the 15 performance markers agreed by the High-Level Group on Planning Performance. Red, Amber or Green ratings were awarded based on the evidence provided, giving an indication of performance and the priority areas for improvement action.

The table *Performance against Key Markers* illustrates that, for 2020-2021, the Scottish Government rated us green against 12 Performance Markers out of 13 that were applicable during the monitoring year.

Compared to the previous monitoring period the Planning Service was rated amber rather than green for its decision making timescales, but moved from red to green due to its better performance in dealing with legacy cases. This represents an improvement over the previous year, and the best rating of our 10 PPF's that have been assessed.



one

**QUALITATIVE NARRATIVE
& CASE STUDIES**

1: Qualitative Narrative & Case Studies

The case studies included in Part 1 of our Planning Performance Framework seek to document the qualitative story of the past year's performance and demonstrate how the Local Development Plan and its supplementary guidance have been implemented to deliver high quality development and place making.

The case studies throughout this PPF cover a number of aspects of the planning function and help to validate many of the key markers. Similarly, to the previous PPF, given the continued impact COVID-19 has had on working practice, we have prepared case studies to show how the Planning Service has continued to implement its response to the Covid 19 crisis and also changes we have made to digital practices.

Case study 1 looks at the Council's approach to electric vehicle policy and actions taken to enable the accelerated uptake and adoption of electric vehicles and associated infrastructure.

Case study 2 shows how the Planning Service has continued to implement our working practice due to changes brought on by COVID-19.

Case study 3 looks at pre-application discussions and planning application for the formation of distillery visitors' centre and associated works at Glenkinchie Distillery.

Case study 4 highlights a partnership project between East Lothian Council Planning Service and Scotland's Gardens and Landscape Heritage (SGLH) and the engagement of around 30 volunteers in survey work of historic gardens and designed landscape sites.

Case study 5 looks at our working practices and the opportunities new technology presents and how it can be used as part of a more effective and efficient Planning Service.

CASE STUDIES

QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

CASE STUDY 1 – Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure

Location and Dates: East Lothian 2018-2021

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Governance

Key Markers:

- 11. Production of relevant and up to date policy advice
- 12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)

Key Areas of Work:

- Climate change
- Transport

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning and other staff
- Local Developers



Overview:

In 2018 an East Lothian Council cross-disciplinary working group was set up to consider the Council's approach to electric vehicle policy, particularly in regard to new developments. The working group was led by Road Services and consisted of a wide range of officers, including from the Planning, and Housing Services and the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer.

A significant proportion of East Lothian residents are dependent on their car, and there are large numbers of residents without a driveway or other safe place to park and charge. The improvement in the provision of vehicle charging infrastructure has been critical in helping to mitigate some of the negative environmental impacts associated with using private vehicles.



The current LDP sets out the Council's planning strategy and policies to help stimulate, guide and manage future development within East Lothian. In terms of transport and its environmental impacts, the Plan, through its Policy T31, supports the principle of the provision of

East Lothian Council Planning Performance Framework 2021/22 vehicle charging points where necessary and appropriate in design terms. In 2020, the Planning Service completed the Design Standards for New Housing Developments SPG. This document provides further guidance on exemplar vehicle charging point provision.

In August 2019, a declaration of a Climate Emergency was unanimously supported by East Lothian Council elected members. The Climate Emergency declaration recognises that the impacts of climate change are having a serious effect on our communities and this requires urgent action to make all Council Services net Zero Carbon as soon as reasonably practicable or in any case by 2045. The work of the group is an example of the Council taking action to fulfil our commitment of making East Lothian a carbon neutral county.

Goal:

The working group's goal was to identify actions required to enable the accelerated uptake and adoption of electric vehicles and associated infrastructure. It was recognised that while the initial network of publicly available vehicle charging infrastructure should be provided in prominent town centres locations, in public car parks and at health & leisure community facilities, there would be a growing demand for people to charge their vehicles affordably near home i.e. on residential streets, parking courtyards or driveways formed for this purpose.

To this end, the group discussed how the Local Development Plan and the Planning Service could support the provision of charging infrastructure in new developments so as to reduce the need for retrofitting.

Outcomes:

The group's focus on the promotion of charging infrastructure sits firmly within other Council strategies and plans such as the Climate Change Strategy and the commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency at a local level.

Over the last three years, East Lothian has seen significant progress in the roll-out of charging points across the county. There is now at least one journey charging hub in each town. In addition, there are an increasing number of on-street and off-street destination chargers for residential use, taking the total numbers from three working units in 2017 to around 170 in summer 2022.

Members of the group participated in the preparation of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design Standards for New Housing Areas. The SPG was adopted in May 2020 and contains key design principles and priorities in respect of vehicle charging. The SPG requires that developers fully consider the provision of vehicle charging points. In any case, the Climate Change Condition is placed on all suitable planning applications requiring applicants to prepare a report demonstrating that they have fully considered all options for sustainable building including chargepoints. This report provides a useful tool to structure discussions on charging infrastructure.

However, these discussions are most constructive if they take place at the pre-application stages of the planning process, as the full provision of charging infrastructure may require changes to road/parking layouts.

Salters Road, Wallyford Park & Ride



Source: [PlugShare - Find Electric Vehicle Charging Locations Near You](https://www.plugshare.com/)

For sensitive locations in Conservation Areas, the Council sought a discreet design for on-street vehicle chargers. This resulted in a variety of bollard-style chargers being installed in a number of locations in East Lothian. These chargers have been designed to blend more discreetly into the street scene.

Connected Kerb chargers in North Berwick and Inveresk Conservation Areas (the Glebe town centre car park, North Berwick and a residential area at Wedderburn Court, Inveresk)



Quote

“The Planning Service and Roads Services play an important role in enabling more equal access to electric vehicle charging across the region which is a key part of East Lothian Council’s to mitigate the impact of climate change and to become a carbon neutral county”

Cllr John McMillan, the Cabinet Spokesperson for Environment, Economic Development and Tourism

Name of key officers:

For the Planning Service of East Lothian Council: Paul Zochowski, Leigh Taylor, Marek Mackowiak and Ciaran Kiely

For Road Services of East Lothian Council: Morag Haddow and Ryan Robertson

GOVERNANCE

CASE STUDY 2 - Adaptations the planning authority has made to working practice due to changes brought on by COVID-19

Location and Dates: From April 2021 to present

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of service and engagement – positive actions to support sustainable economic growth and initiatives to work consistently with stakeholders and deliver a positive customer experience;
- Governance – how structures and processes are proportionate, effective and fit for purpose

Key Performance Markers:

- 12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit;
- 13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities

Key Areas of Work:

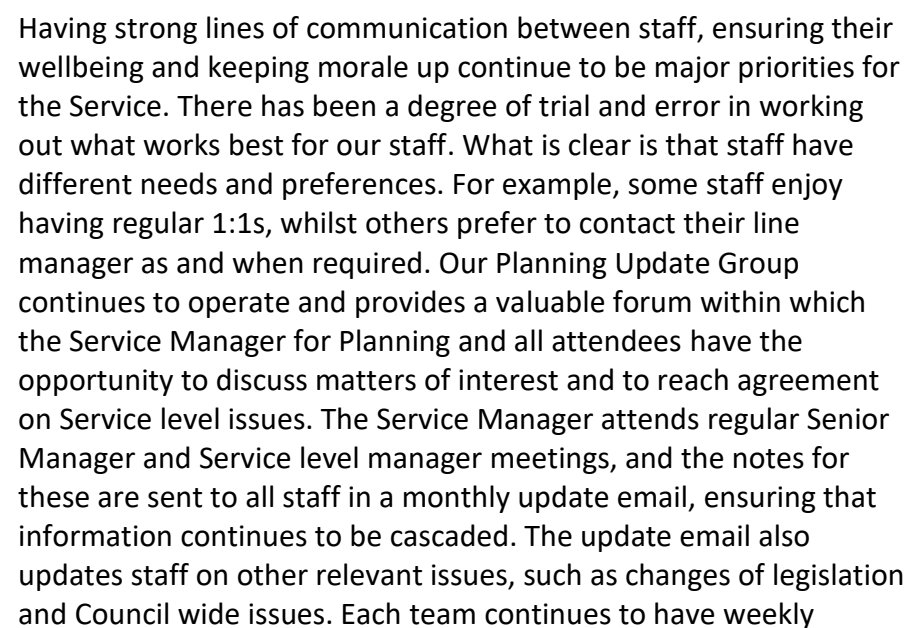
- Process improvement
- Development Management Processes

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning and Other Staff
- Planning Committee



The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be at the forefront of everyday life and remains the biggest challenge for the Planning Service in East Lothian. As restrictions ease and we enter the recovery phase, the planning system has a vital role to play in the future recovery of our communities and society.



meetings, and some teams also make use of other social media, such as WhatsApp to stay in touch.

Planning Committee is still held virtually, and has continued as scheduled on a monthly basis. Our online platform allows members of the public to view proceedings on a live stream, as well as providing applicants, objectors and community councils the opportunity to present their cases. Meetings of the Local Review Body also continue to be held on an online platform, thus again allowing members of the public to view proceedings on a live stream.

In line with the Chief Planner's guidance, the Planning Service continue to take a positive and pragmatic approach through choosing not to take enforcement action, in a range of circumstances that have helped businesses and services to diversify and continue to operate within our communities during the pandemic. Examples of this have included beer gardens, pavement cafes, and allowing holiday parks to operate year round in breach of a planning condition. Whilst this has undoubtedly had a positive impact on our economic recovery, the Planning Service are beginning to consider how these temporary uses should be regularised once the Chief Planner decides that it is time to withdraw these temporary arrangements.

As the national response to COVID-19 continued to evolve, we have continued to work closely with NHS health colleagues and senior management in advising them how proposed testing and vaccination centres could be operated as permitted development and therefore without the need for planning permission.

Goals:

During this year we have sought to build on and improve our working practices to ensure that our planning system continues to operate effectively and efficiently and to play its part in the economic and social wellbeing of our communities. The dedication of all staff and the innovative and adaptable approaches we have taken has helped to ensure that business has continued as near to normal as possible.

Our staff are our greatest asset, and therefore a key objective was to ensure they remained safe, connected and motivated, and had everything they need in order to be able to do their work whilst working from home. Whilst a number of staff have unfortunately caught COVID, based on the precautionary approach the Council has chosen to adopt, we have managed to ensure that this has not spread to other staff. Our workforce has been relatively stable during the past year. We have however had 2 planning officers leave and we have found it difficult to recruit suitable replacements. A goal in the coming year will be ensuring that we remain an attractive Planning Service to work in.

Continuing from the previous year, a key goal of the Planning Service has been to relax planning control, through choosing not to take enforcement action, in a range of circumstances that could help businesses and services to diversify and continue to operate within our communities during the pandemic. This has not been without challenge, with local residents sometimes challenging this approach where they did not support the temporary developments. Another objective that continued this year was to ensure that we had speedy and effective engagement with health colleagues to

ensure that temporary public health facilities could be delivered as efficiently as possible.

Outcomes:

Planning performance in the determination of planning applications continues to be strong, with speed of determination continuing to exceed the Council's targets. Planning enforcement has also continued to deal with enforcement complaints in accordance with the standards set out in our Planning Enforcement Charter. Planning policy have been able to continue their work with minimal delay, ensuring that a response was made to draft NPF4 whilst ensuring that we remain on target with our timescales for background work in respect of LDP2. Feedback has been generally positive, with various stakeholders appreciating the procedures we have taken to ensure that critical activities continue to be undertaken. There has been some concerns raised from customers who have found it more difficult to contact planning officers and get responses to their queries. This is something that we will seek to address during the coming year.

Name of key officer:

For the Planning Service of East Lothian Council: Keith Dingwall

Quotes

"The pandemic has made trading very difficult for many of our local businesses. We are therefore delighted that the Planning Service of East Lothian Council has continued to take a positive and supportive approach through choosing not to take enforcement action, in a range of circumstances that have helped businesses and services to diversify and continue to operate within our communities during this difficult period".

Kate Darrah, Dunbar Trades' Association

"I'm delighted with how our Planning Service, despite the various challenges thrown up by the pandemic, have continued to undertake all of our critical activities and with performance above the national average. They have been proactive in ensuring a safe return to the office. They have also sought to help meet the Council's targets in respect of reducing carbon emissions, whilst at the same time taking a positive approach towards aiding societal and economic recovery."

Councillor Norman Hampshire, Leader of the Council and Convenor of East Lothian Council Planning Committee

QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

CASE STUDY 3 - Glenkinchie Distillery – pre-application discussions and planning application for the formation of distillery visitors' centre and associated works

Location and Dates: 2018-2022

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes – pre-application work, planning policies and guidance are delivering high quality development on the ground with positive social outcomes;
- Quality of service and engagement – early pre-application discussions and good working relationships with applicant and their architects;
- Governance – strong collaboration between local authority services and national agencies.

Key Performance Markers:

- 2. Project Management
- 3. Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees on Planning Applications

Key Areas of Work:

- Conservation
- Design

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning and Other Staff
- The applicants and their architect



Overview:

In 2018 Diageo approached East Lothian Council through its appointed planning agent Graeme Laing of North Planning and Development with the intention of submitting a planning application for significant alterations to the Glenkinchie whisky distillery to improve the visitor experience. Early collaborative and positive discussions took place which helped influenced the form and layout of the proposed development. The planning application was submitted in late 2018 and approved within the agreed timescale. The approved scheme has been successfully implemented and in 2021 received [the Scottish Design Awards in 'The Building Re-use' category](#). The scheme was also shortlisted in [the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland \(RIAS\) Awards in 2022](#).

Goals:

The Glenkinchie Distillery is a collection of Victorian Category 'B' listed buildings and a well-considered and sensitive response to the site's historic heritage was required. Initial design considerations were proposed by Michael Laird Architects and these were discussed on site with the client team. Subsequently the Planning Service provided detailed comments on the proposals which initially included demolition of an old bowling green and its pavilion which itself was an extension to the former gatehouse building which also housed a boardroom meeting area, and a garage building attached

to the main warehouses. All of these were situated prominently at the front of the complex.

Glenkinchie Distillery – entrance October 2018.



Source: Glenkinchie Distillery, Diageo, Design & Access Statement (MLA, October 2018)

Initial proposals from the applicant had been to replace these buildings with a large new car park as well as altering the first main warehouse building to provide high level balconies on two elevations. Both these proposals received negative feedback from Planning as the distillery buildings effectively comprise the Glenkinchie Conservation Area and it was considered that a soft

landscape approach was suggested using the local burn and the backdrop of existing trees as a basis for the new approach to the distillery and retaining the existing car park on the opposite side of the village road. The demolitions could then be justified as they were later buildings and would make way for the new approach to the distillery. The balcony proposals were removed in favour of clean lines emphasising the height and storage capacity of the warehouses and a new entrance way inserted appropriately on the ground floor.

Glenkinchie Distillery – entrance June 2022



Source: ELC

Outcomes:

In design terms the new proposals developed in this collaborative process were considered successful by both the company and the Planning Authority. The application itself was one of the first in East Lothian to be the subject of a Processing Agreement which was adhered to and the decision issued timeously. The Planning Service worked closely with all stakeholders to ensure determination timescales were met without compromising the quality of the project. It is considered that this process shows the value of the pre-application advice stage.

The completed project succeeded in achieving an improved sense of arrival for visitors by creating a beautiful garden between the car park and the new visitors centre. Whilst the bowling green pavilion and some other small structures in front to the historic warehouse had to be demolished, this enabled the applicant to create a new and attractive open space. Also, to further preserve and enhance the character of the listed building, the owners reused materials from buildings of historic relevance which were removed as part of the overall proposal. The proposal's design and its careful implementation was recognised by the jury panel of [the Scottish Design Awards in 2021](#).

Glenkinchie Distillery – new garden



Source: ELC

Quote

“East Lothian Council has a tremendous pre-application service for major applications. At the initial stages of this project, the Planning Service was able to provide comprehensive pre-application advice and comments on the emerging designs, including the co-ordination of responses from key consultees. This valuable feedback and engagement helped to inform the submitted proposals, reducing the time required to deal with the final application.”

Graeme Laing, North Planning and Development

Key officer for the Planning Service of East Lothian Council:

Paul Zochowski

Caoilfhionn McMonagle

QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

CASE STUDY 4 - The Glorious Gardens East Lothian

Location and Dates: 2021-2022

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes – project management
- Governance – strong collaboration between local authority services and national agencies.

Key Performance Markers:

- 11. Production of relevant and up to date policy advice

Key Areas of Work:

- Conservation
- Design

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff
- Volunteers
- Scotland's Gardens and Landscape Heritage



Overview:

The Glorious Gardens East Lothian (GGEL) project is a partnership project between East Lothian Council Planning Service and Scotland's Gardens and Landscape Heritage (SGLH). It was set up to address the need for the Council, as Planning Authority, to understand the importance of the many gardens and designed landscapes within East Lothian that are most likely to be of local or regional importance. East Lothian has 23 designated Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes sites of national importance but more than 100 candidate gardens and designed landscapes of more local importance.

These are protected by East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 policy CH6 that states, in line with national policy, that development that would significantly harm the elements justifying designation of sites of national importance listed in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes or sites of local or regional importance included in historic gardens and designed landscape records will not be permitted.

The Planning Service has identified the candidate sites and drawn preliminary boundaries around these based on first edition OS mapping.

Goals:

However survey work is needed on site along with research into understanding the history and development over time of the individual sites. Using SGLH volunteers working to a toolkit for the

job prepared by SGLH trustees, the aim is to undertake detailed surveys of around 60 of the 100 candidate sites that have been ranked internally within the service as the first priority sites. If sufficient volunteers come forward or those that have capacity to do more we would hope to achieve a full survey.

It was recognised early on that resourcing is an issue, whether it is identifying sufficient financial resource within the East Lothian Council budget at a time of significantly reducing budgets or whether it is the capacity of SGLH, who can no longer afford to employ a full time professional officer.

Amisfield Park - Category A Listed Walled Garden



Outcomes:

The need for professional assessment of the significance of the sites and to oversee the work of the volunteers before they could be confirmed was identified and a resource found from within the Council to do this capped at £7,000 p.a. over three years. SGLH work within this to pay a professional landscape historian to examine the volunteers surveys and assess the significance of each site and in this way it is hoped to achieve the project by the end of the 2023 financial year. In turn SGLH have identified a resource to fund the secondment of an officer from Archaeology Scotland to coordinate the volunteers with the Council providing free training room space as and when needed to ensure the volunteers are well supported and trained in their work. A very creditable turnout of around 30 volunteers appeared at the first training session in March and expressed themselves enthusiastic and ready to get started.

As assessments of significance are completed and landscapes defined as being of local or regional importance, or perhaps worthy of forwarding to Historic Environment Scotland for consideration as new Inventory sites, these will be added to the Council Historic Environment Record and to Canmore. In due course the Council Planning Service will therefore be able to more fully implement policy CH6 into the determination of planning applications in those gardens and designed landscapes that are of local significance in East Lothian.

Amisfield Park Walled Garden



Quote

"As a former town planner, I became aware of the 'Glorious Gardens East Lothian' Project though looking for volunteering opportunities, as I have just retired, and came across it amongst several projects the National Library of Scotland were promoting that involved research and historical mapping analysis.

I thought this was a good way to find out more about the heritage of East Lothian, as I'm unfamiliar with the area, but also combine document research with field work and meeting similar volunteers with an interest in built heritage issues.

The Scottish Historic Gardens & Landscape (SHG&L) Assessment Toolkit is most helpful and it was interesting to see the quality of assessment reports produced in similar Lottery funded projects for South Lanarkshire and Falkirk Councils.

The training sessions involving SHG&L, Archaeology Scotland and East Lothian Council Planning Services, initially at the John Grey Centre and on site at Amisfield, Haddington, were also helpful and allowed meeting-up with fellow volunteers and to talk through similar queries.

It is encouraging that the council will vet the various site assessments of numerous East Lothian historic gardens and designed landscapes and consider from the research arising from the 'Glorious Gardens' project whether some of these sites warrant new built heritage protection."

Chris Alcorn – GGEL Volunteer

QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

CASE STUDY 5 – Digital Planning

Location and Dates: From April 2021 to present

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of service and engagement –initiatives to work consistently with stakeholders and deliver a positive customer experience;
- Governance – how structures and processes are proportionate, effective and fit for purpose; and
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Performance Markers:

- 6. Continuous Improvement;
- 12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit;
- 13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities

Key Areas of Work:

- Digital Practice

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff



Overview:

The pandemic has given Planning Authorities the opportunity to review our working practices and the opportunities new technology presents and how it can be used as part of a more effective and efficient Planning Service.

As our planning staff largely continue to work from home, a key priority was to ensure that staff could communicate and collaborate efficiently in real time with each other and with other stakeholders within the service. In the last year, Microsoft teams has been rolled out to all Council staff, and in time, this will replace skype for business as our main communication platform. It was essential that all staff received adequate training in order to use this platform effectively. Four of our Planning Service staff became 'Teams Champions', being formally trained to increase their depth and breadth of knowledge. They then delivered Teams training to everyone in the Service, thereby helping drive awareness and adoption of the platform and in turn helping improve efficiency in our working practices.



MS Teams has been used extensively in the last year, with the Planning Service adopting a digital by default approach to meetings. This has reduced the risk of staff getting COVID, whilst also saving time and reducing costs. At the same time, we recognise that on occasion there remains an essential need for in-person meetings and site visits. On this matter, staff continue to undertake site visits for every planning application.

Planning Committee is still held virtually, and has continued as scheduled on a monthly basis. Our online platform, Connect Remote, allows members of the public to view proceedings either on

a live stream or on demand. This online platform also allows applicants, objectors and community councils the opportunity to present their cases. Meetings of the Local Review Body have also moved onto an online platform, thus again allowing members of the public either to view proceedings on a live stream or on demand.

Planning is a varied and challenging profession with a fast pace of change. The Planning Service therefore supports its staff in continuing to learn and develop their skills and to keep up to date on current issues on an ongoing basis. An important part of that is continuing professional development (CPD). In the last year, the Service has encouraged all staff to attend virtual CPD events. This has cut down risks to them, whilst at the same time reducing costs and emissions, saving time, and allowing officers to attend events that they would not otherwise have been able to get to.

Digital technology has been used to revolutionise our East Lothian Archaeology & Heritage Fortnight, an annual programme of events organised by our Archaeology Service.



Previously all events were held in person. However, we now have a combination of both in-person events and online content. Online content included presentations, videos and exhibitions, hosted on the John Gray Centre website. Most of the online presentations, films and articles are still available:

[Archaeology Fortnight 2021 - Events - John Gray Centre](#)

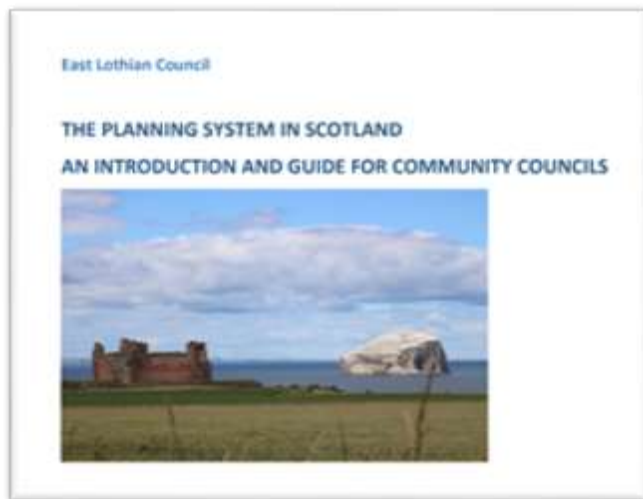
This online content has significantly increased the average number of people attending each event (compared to the 2019 Archaeology Fortnight), and has allowed people who could not attend in person to still be involved in the celebration of East Lothian's heritage.

Switching to having a digital programme online instead of a printed programme has allowed us to save costs, as well as enabling us to keep things flexible. This may prove useful if Covid restrictions come back in place before September requiring us to move more events online.

The Archaeology Service have also transformed their Historic Environment Record (HER) system using digital technology. Before COVID, this system was held locally on our computers with the supporting files on the Council's network. When we moved to working from home the system no longer worked properly, and caused many issues with our day to day work. In 2021 we moved to a cloud based system. This has proved to be a huge success, with much improvement in performance when either working from home or in the office. It also means that support for the system can be done by the external system that provides the system entirely remotely, meaning their response time for issues is much quicker,

and can be done without the involvement of the Council's IT Service, saving their time.

The Planning Service have also utilised digital technology to enhance our training for community councils. Given the number of new community councillors, a priority for the Service this year was to provide training for them to increase their knowledge of the planning system and their role within it. It was felt that the combination of a guide together with a training session was the best way to deliver this. However it was considered that existing planning guidance for community councils (Planning Advice Note 47) was somewhat outdated. The Planning Service therefore decided to create our own guide to the planning system for community councils. It was further considered crucial that this should be an electronic guide, thereby reducing costs and emissions and ensuring that it is easily available for community councillors. Our guide can be found [here](#).



A copy of the new guide has been forwarded onto the Improvement Service, who are considering whether to roll it out across Scotland.

The training session was held on a virtual platform, again allowing ease of attendance for community councillors whilst at the same time reducing costs and emissions.

Goals:

In line with the Council's Digital Strategy, the Planning Service Services has been using technology wherever possible to both improve the customer experience and deliver reduced costs by rationalising and streamlining processes. Access to a digital infrastructure that is fit for purpose and allows all users of the Planning Service to thrive in East Lothian is essential.

The new technology we've adopted has greatly improved the customer experience whilst bringing about significant reductions in cost. A good example of this is our adoption of Microsoft Teams, which has allowed staff to meet our performance objectives whilst working from home. Our adoption of teams champions together with the rolling out of Teams training for all staff has built up confidence in the new system and helped officers to operate more effectively.

Our adaption of new technology has also met our objective of improving the experience and accessibility of the service to our customers. Our online platform for Planning Committee and Local Review body ensures full transparency and openness whilst making it easier for applicants, objectors and community councils to participate in the decision making process. The use of digital

technology to deliver online events as part of our Archaeology and Heritage Fortnight has increased participation numbers and feedback to it has been positive.

Our goal is to embed a culture of digital innovation. Whilst this remains a work in progress, the introduction of new digital practices such as the introduction of a cloud based system for our Historic Environment Records, shows that we are embracing the opportunities new digital technology presents.

Outcomes:

Feedback from both staff and customers has been generally positive, with various stakeholders recognising that through harnessing and realising the potential opportunities digital brings, we can radically improve how our service operates.

This project is still underway, and we will continue to review our processes to see how new digital practices can improve the ways we operate. In continuing to adopt new technology, we can reduce costs whilst improving performance and the customer journey.

Name of key officer:

For the Planning Service of East Lothian Council: Keith Dingwall

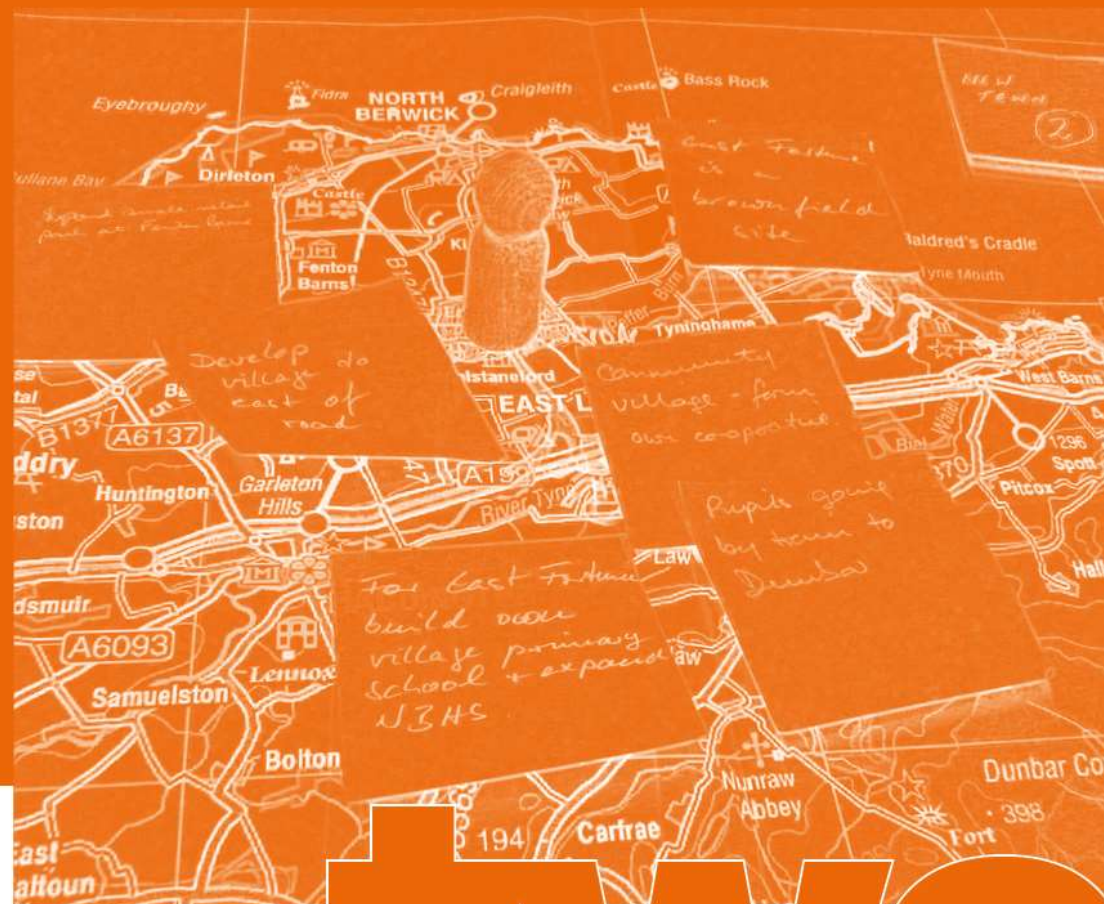
Quotes:

“Turley are the planning agents for the new mixed use settlement at Blindwells, one of the largest allocated sites in East Lothian, where 1,600 new homes are to be constructed together with the infrastructure, employment, town centre and educational amenities required for modern living. We have been impressed by how the Council’s Planning Service have adapted their working practices whilst ensuring that business can continue as usual. Their move to virtual communication platforms at the start of the pandemic allowed us to have regular meetings, which in turn allowed us to deal with any issues and improve the development proposal. Their virtual platform for meetings of the Planning Committee meeting allowed us to participate in the decision making process and helped us to secure the necessary major permissions in order to pave the ways for the next steps in the creation of the new settlement.”

Alison Maguire, Associate Director, Turley

“I’m pleased that East Lothian Council’s Planning Service has been using technology wherever possible to both improve the customer experience and deliver reduced costs by rationalising and streamlining processes. This innovative use of data and technology can provide significant benefits to the system, and is wholly consistent with the aims and objectives of the Scottish Government.”

Paul McLennan MSP, East Lothian Constituency



two

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

2: Supporting Evidence

- [Housing Land Audit 2021](#)
- [Development Plan information](#)
- [East Lothian Council Web Site: Planning Pages](#)
- [Planning Enforcement Charter 2022](#)
- [Council Policy and Performance Committee](#)
- [ELC Planning Committee meetings](#)
- [ELC Full Council meetings](#)
- [Development Plan Scheme 13](#)
- [East Lothian Council Plan](#)
- [Update and Progress Report on the 2017-2027 East Lothian Plan](#)
- [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#)
- [East Lothian Customer Service Charter 2021-22](#)
- [East Lothian Feedback Team](#)
- [LTS Active Travel Improvement Plan 2018-24](#)
- [Electric East Lothian](#)
- [Community Councils training session - Planning](#)

Reference list of topics covered in the case studies presented in Part 1.

Case Study Elements	Issue Covered	Case Study Elements	Issue Covered
Design	Case study 1, 3	Interdisciplinary Working	Case study 1, 3, 4
Conservation	Case study 1, 3, 4	Collaborative Working	Case study 1, 3, 4
Regeneration	3	Community Engagement	4
Environment	Case study 1, 3	Placemaking	Case study 1, 3
Greenspace	Case study 3, 4	Charrettes	
Town Centres	Case study 1	Place Standard	
Masterplanning		Performance Monitoring	
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	Case study 1, 4	Process Improvement	Case study 2, 5
Housing Supply		Project Management	Case study 2, 3
Affordable Housing		Skills Sharing	Case study 4, 5
Economic Development	Case study 3	Staff Training	Case study 5
Enforcement		Online Systems	Case study 2, 5
Development Management Processes	Case study 1, 2, 3	Transport	Case study 1
Planning Applications	Case study 1, 2, 3	Active Travel	
		Other: please note	



three

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Part 3: Service Improvements

In the coming year we will:

- continue discussions with communities and elected members on next stages in LDP2 process within the context of the planning review including NPF4
- continue to seek the views of stakeholders on what they see are the issues in their area in order to prepare the Evidence Report. This engagement and information gathering will have a particular focus on the usually harder to reach groups such as the elderly, disabled people, young people and gypsy travellers
- research the matter of short-term lets, with a view to report the matter to Council to get a decision whether or not there should be a short-term let control area(s)
- continue to engage with developers and planning agents through individual meetings and a planning newsletter to update on planning policy and development management matters
- review how we deal with pre-application enquires and decide whether or not introduce discretionary charges
- review our application validation processes and decide whether or not to adopt the HOPS national validation standards
- attend the Association of East Lothian Community Councils to provide to discuss relevant planning matters
- continue to reduce the number of legacy planning applications
- continue to review working practices adopted during Covid pandemic to increase the Planning Service resilience, improve efficiency and effectiveness

Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2020/21:

Committed and outstanding improvements and actions	Complete?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>continue discussions with communities and elected members on next stages in LDP2 process within the context of the planning review including NPF4</i> 	<p><i>Yes – The Planning Service continues to discuss the review of the current LDP with elected members and communities eg Community Councils meetings</i></p> <p><i>ELC response to the Scottish Government’s NPF4 consultation was approved by elected members on the 29th of March of 2022 . The council’s response (available at Agendas, reports and minutes East Lothian Council) has broadly welcomed the draft NPF4, which provides guidance in relation to future new homes, puts an emphasis on an ‘infrastructure first’ approach to development and sets an aspiration for improvements to connectivity including the potential to improve the East Coast Main Line. A short article about the draft NPF4 and our response to the consultation can be accessed here.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to the above we also responded to the Scottish Government’s consultative documents on the following matters - Draft Local Development Plan Regulations, Draft Local Development Plan Guidance, Draft Consultation on Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>continue to seek the views of stakeholders on what they see are the issues in their area in order to prepare the Evidence Report. This engagement and information gathering will have a particular focus on the usually harder to reach groups such as the elderly, disabled people, young people and gypsy travellers</i> 	<p><i>Yes - The East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 review process is ongoing and currently involves a policy review and evidence gathering, particularly focussing on gathering the views on land-use related matters. Further details of this engagement will be set out in the 2022 Development Plan Scheme. At this early stage of the plan preparation the Policy and Projects team is working closely with other services within the Council in order to ensure their early input and contribution into the Evidence Report. In early 2022, together with the Sport, Countryside and Leisure Services we started a project of reviewing the council’s Open Space Strategy and the preparation of the Play Sufficiency Assessment. The preparation of these</i></p>

	<p><i>documents will involve an extensive engagement with a wide range of groups, including children and disabled people.</i></p> <p><i>Also, as part of this early LDP2 engagement work the Policy and Projects team contributed to a series of workshops led by the colleagues from the Housing Services that initiated a work on the Council's Local Housing Strategy. A range of stakeholders took part in these workshops, including health and social care practitioners as well as elderly people.</i></p> <p><i>The Council's Development Plan Scheme was updated in 2021.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will provide updates on the Local Development Plan review on its Planning & Building Standards pages here.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>organise a training session for Community Councillors to cover issues relevant to the planning applications' process</i> 	<p><i>Yes – a training session on the planning system for Community Councillors was held. This covered planning policy, development management and planning enforcement. A guide to the planning system was also sent to all community councils following the recent elections.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>continue to engage with developers and planning agents through individual meetings and a planning newsletter to update on planning policy and development management matters</i> 	<p><i>Yes – Planning Service staff meet regularly with developers and planning agents and update them on planning policy and development management matters. The Service Manager and other senior officers also meet developers and planning agents regularly in respect of the major development sites. An example of this was the three-weekly meetings to discuss the new settlement at Blindwells.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>investigate the way of becoming an early adopter of the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy for Planning</i> 	<p><i>Yes – staff from the Planning Service met with the Scottish Government's Digital Planning team to discuss the project and the potential of us becoming an early adopter.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>attend the Association of East Lothian Community Councils to provide to discuss relevant planning matters</i> 	<p><i>Yes – in July 2021, the Service Manager for Planning attended the Association meeting and discussed relevant planning matters with attendees.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>continue to reduce the number of legacy planning applications</i> 	Partly - over the last monitoring period we achieved a significant reduction in the number of legacy planning applications (209 cases cleared and 198 cases remaining)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>review and publish our Planning Enforcement Charter</i> 	Yes – the reviewed Planning Enforcement Charter was published in March 2022 – available here
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>continue to review working practices adopted during Covid pandemic to increase the Planning Service resilience, improve efficiency and effectiveness</i> 	Yes - In 2021 a Planning Update Group was formed, which is chaired by the Service Manager and consists of a representative from each team. This group reviews working practices <i>and when necessary makes changes to increase the Planning Service resilience, improve efficiency and effectiveness. One example of this has been how to manage a gradual return to the office whilst ensuring the safety and wellbeing of staff.</i>

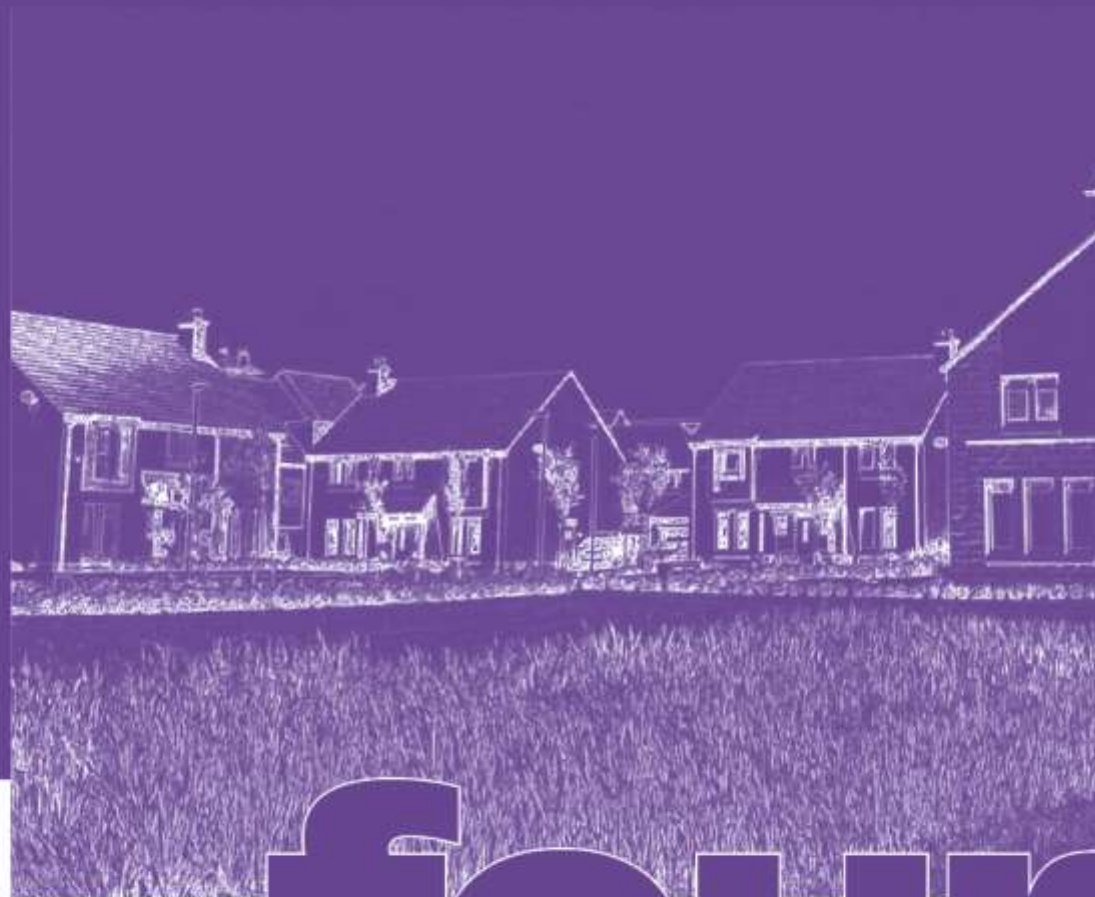
No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	The statistics are set out in Part 5 of the PPF. These statistics demonstrate a reduction in average timescales for both major and local non-householder developments and overall strong average timescales, which are all significantly better than the Scottish average.
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications <u>and</u> availability publicised on planning authority website	Processing agreements are consistently offered for major and complex applications through both the Council's website (Planning Processing Agreements Planning Processing Agreements East Lothian Council) and pre-application discussions, however, there remains a limited uptake of this opportunity, with developers being content to work with the Council in terms of application project management and, where required, agreed extensions of time. Project management approaches help to monitor progress and to ensure that major planning applications are determined within agreed timescales including simple project planning, keeping a spreadsheet for consultation responses, and, where necessary, meeting on a regular basis with applicants and agents.

3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and • clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	<p>We provide a pre-application advice service which is promoted through staff engaging with prospective applicants. Before the Covid pandemic our Service operated a duty officer system twice a week. Whilst we have stopped this service, we still provide free advice by responding to telephone and written enquires. Any information we seek is clear and proportionate to their needs. The Planning Service has established an on-going collaborative working arrangements with internal consultees and key agencies.</p>
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)	<p>The Planning Authority had no live applications with more than 6 months after resolution to grant. This overall good performance is partially due to our pre-application discussions that address developer contributions and the role of the Planning Obligations Officer who is a key contact for developers in understanding the implications of their development in the context of the Developer Contributions Framework. This helps to minimise the number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant.</p>
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	<p>Our updated Enforcement Charter was approved in March 2022.</p>

6	Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	The service improvements we identified in our previous PPF have largely been achieved. Of the seven identified, we have completed six and whilst it has not been possible to hold an annual developers forum, we have kept communications with them going in the form of individual meetings and through a planning newsletter.
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Yes, LDP adopted in September 2018
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	<p>Our DPS 13 sets out a broad timescale for the LDP2. It is projected that LDP2 will be adopted by 2025 which is not within 5 years of current plan adoption. The Scottish Government intends to submit the post consultation draft NPF4 to Parliament in Autumn 2022. When approved, the strategy and policies of NPF4 will be used to inform the development of the next LDP. The planning policy team has started preliminary work on producing the Evidence Report for LDP2, which will contain the baseline information and issues on which LDP2 will be based. The legislation allowing us to do so is programmed to be enacted by the Scottish Parliament by the end of 2022. This would allow the Evidence Report to be published in the autumn of 2023 following which it will be subject to an independent Examination, called a Gatecheck.</p> <p>Project plan for LDP2 work is in place.</p>
9	Stakeholders including Elected Members, industry, agencies, the public and Scottish Government are engaged appropriately through all key stages of development plan preparation	<p>MIR stage is not applicable. However, Elected Members have already been engaged early in the preparation of the LDP2. This engagement has consisted of a briefing on the LDP2 timescales and outline of the new planning system.</p> <p>MIR stage is not applicable. However, stakeholders have already been engaged early in the preparation of the LDP2. This engagement consisted of meeting with Key Stakeholders - the planning policy team leader attended a Youth Parliament and the Association of East Lothian Community Councils meeting to raise an awareness of the LDP2 and of the recent planning reform. Also, a planning newsletter was issued in 2020 to everyone who is on the planning mailing list, including developers and planning agents. This amongst other things outlined our initial work on the LDP2 and explained the plan preparation process under the new planning regime.</p>
10	No longer applicable – gap kept for data continuity	

11	Production of relevant and up to date policy advice	All SGs and SPGs listed in the current LDP have now been finalised and adopted.
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	<p>Both pre-application enquiries and applications are appraised in weekly team meetings to highlight potential issues, assess opportunities for design improvements and give greater consistency on outcomes. Internal consultees including Roads, Education, Environmental Health, Landscape, Countryside and Legal services are available for fortnightly pre-application slots with developers. The team of Transport Planners who are consulted on proposals are also responsible for the Roads Construction Consents for the same proposals so as to ensure that RCCs and planning applications are subject to consistent processes and are twin tracked.</p> <p>Within the last monitoring period a new Climate Change and Sustainability Officer has been appointed and her post has been moved to within the Planning Service, in order to strengthen the contribution our service makes to reduce carbon emissions and respond to the climate emergency.</p>
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	<p>We continue our regular engagement through HOPS (including Development Planning and Development Management sub-committees), COSLA, Conservation Officers Group, SESPlan Working Group and with relevant stakeholders including Key Agencies to improve service delivery and share good practice, skills and knowledge (eg our participation in KAG LDP (Environmental Evidence)).</p> <p>Additionally, officers have attended a wide range of CPD events over the year and staff are encouraged to disseminate that knowledge to their colleagues.</p>
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Out of 294 legacy cases identified in during the current PPF monitoring period we have cleared 207 cases.

15	<p>Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	<p>Our LDP, supported by the Developer Contributions Framework SG sets out expectations for developer contributions.</p> <p>Pre-application discussions address developer contributions and are part of a protocol for application processing. The role of the Planning Obligations Officer is critical in that respect. It helps to reduce negotiation periods and agree/register Section 75 agreements within shorter timescales.</p>
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four

NATIONAL HEADLINE INDICATORS

4: National Headline Indicators (NHI)

A: NHI Key outcomes - Development Planning:

Development Planning	2021-22	2020-21
Local and Strategic Development Planning:		
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	LDP – 3 years and 10 months	LDP – 2 years and 10 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? SDP to be resolved following Ministerial rejection and legislative change to strategic planning and through NPF4	LDP – no SDP - no	LDP – yes SDP - no
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Y	Y
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	Y	Y
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs	Draft HLA 2022	Agreed HLA 2021
Established housing land supply	9,526	10,164
5-year effective housing land supply programming	6,005	6,042
5-year effective land supply total capacity	9,270	9,914
5-year housing supply target	4,275	4,519
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	5.7 years	6.4 years
Housing approvals	1,403	962
Housing completions over the last 5 years	4,196	4,047
Marketable employment land supply	81.1 ha of which 3.6 ha are immediately available	81.1 ha of which 10.3 ha are immediately available
Employment land take-up during reporting year	6.7ha	0 ha

Context and Commentary – Development Planning

After a period of consultation and engagement with HfS the 2021 Housing Land Audit was published in April 2022. The draft 2022 Housing Land Audit will be consulted with HfS later in 2022. The previous reporting year saw a significant number of housing completions of 722, with the total housing completions over the last 5 years being 4,196 demonstrating the level of delivery enabled by the housing land supply set out in the LDP. Our latest HLA figures demonstrate that we have 5.7 years of effective housing land supply.

ELC response to the Scottish Government's NPF4 consultation was approved by elected members on the 29th of March of 2022. The council's response (available at [Agendas, reports and minutes | East Lothian Council](#)) has broadly welcomed the draft NPF4, which provides guidance in relation to future new homes, puts an emphasis on an 'infrastructure first' approach to development and sets an aspiration for improvements to connectivity including the potential to improve the East Coast Main Line. A short article about the draft NPF4 and our response to the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

In addition to the above we also responded to the Scottish Government's consultative documents on the following matters - Draft Local Development Plan Regulations, Draft Local Development Plan Guidance, Draft Consultation on Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations.

[The Development Plan Scheme no13](#) sets out the next stages for the LDP and its associated guidance. The DPS was updated in 2021 and any future update will be done in the context of the draft National Planning Framework timescales.

The East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 review process is ongoing and currently involves a policy review and evidence gathering, particularly focussing on gathering the views on land-use related matters. Further details of this engagement will be set out in the 2022 Development Plan Scheme. At this early stage of the plan preparation the Policy and Projects team is working closely with other services within the Council in order to ensure their early input and contribution into the Evidence Report. In early 2022, together with the Sport, Countryside and Leisure Services we started a project of reviewing the council's Open Space Strategy and the preparation of the Play Sufficiency Assessment. The preparation of these documents will involve an extensive engagement with a wide range of groups, including children and disabled people.

A planning newsletter was issued in November 2021 to everyone who is on the planning mailing list, including developers and planning agents.

B: NHI Key outcomes – Development Management

Development Management:	2021-22	2020-21
Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	33% (375)	36% (415)
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	0	25% (3)
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	98.2%	96%
Delegation rate	98%	97.7%
Validation	20.31%	29.62%
Decision-making Timescales		
Major Developments	10.4 weeks	17 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	9.4 weeks	10.8 weeks
Householder developments	7.6 weeks	7 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	209	207
Number remaining	198	87

Context and Commentary – Development Management

Whilst the percentage of applications subject to pre-application discussions has reduced this can be at least partly attributed to the pandemic, as we were unable to operate our duty officer system and many customers are less willing to engage. At present, the Council continues to offer a free pre-application service. This part of our process is currently being reviewed, and it may be in time that, like the majority of other Planning Authorities, the Council introduces a discretionary fee for some pre-application discussions.

We are pleased that we still have such a high rate of delegated decision making, again showing the confidence of our Members in the planning decisions we take.

Whilst the figures are generally positive, we have seen the further worsening of validation rates and this is a cause for concern. It is for this reason that East Lothian will be adopting the HOPS National Validation Standards as a central part of our application validation process, once the updated Standards have been published. It is also hoped that, in time, the [Scottish Government Smart Applications service](#) for Planning and Building Standards will further reduce the number of invalid planning applications.

There has been a significant improvement in our average decision making times for major developments (10.4 weeks compared to 17 weeks in 2020-21) and a slight improvement in our average decision making times for local non-householder developments (9.4 weeks compared to 10.8 weeks in 2020-21). We are pleased that these figures are significantly better than the national average for 2021-22 (10.4 weeks compared to a national average of 55.0 weeks for major developments and 9.4 weeks compared to a national average of 12.8 weeks for local non-householder developments). Our performance in the determination of householder developments has again been strong, with our average decision making time of 7.6 weeks, whilst being slightly slower than last year (7 weeks), is still faster than the national average (8.3 weeks).

In the last year we have cleared 209 legacy applications, compared to 207 during the previous year. It is encouraging to see such a large number of legacy applications being removed from our system. However, there remains a considerable number of legacy applications still to be dealt with, and this could have a negative impact on our performance figures.

C: Enforcement activity

	2021-22	2020-21
Time since <u>enforcement charter</u> published / reviewed	Published in 31 March 2022	Published in 31 March 2020
Complaints lodged and investigated	358	401
Breaches identified – no further action taken	272	300
Cases closed	346	269
Notices served	25	76
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Context and Commentary – Enforcement Within this PPF’s monitoring period there was a slight decrease in the number of complaints lodged and investigated as well as identified breaches that required no further action. This year, there was a noticeable increase in the number of cases closed to the previous year (346 against 269). Whilst this encouraging, the on-going high levels of construction activity across East Lothian continues to place a considerable pressure on our enforcement service and this will be monitored carefully to establish if further resource is required.



five

OFFICIAL STATISTICS

PART 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics

A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Timescales	2021-22	2020-21
Overall		
Major developments	8 (10.4 weeks)	12 (17 weeks)
Local developments (non-householder)	301 (9.4 weeks)	306 (10.8 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months Local: more than 2 months 	224 (74.4%) 77 (25.6%)	232 (75.8 %) 74 (24.2%)
Householder developments	605 (7.6 weeks)	585 (7 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months Local: more than 2 months 	534 (88.3%) 71 (11.7%)	546 (93.3%) 39 (6.7%)
Housing Developments		
Major	8 (10.4weeks)	6 (7 weeks)
Local housing developments		64 (14.2 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months Local: more than 2 months 	36 (73.5%) 13 (26.5%)	39 (60.9%) 25 (39.1%)
Business and Industry		
Major	0	0
Local business and industry developments	9.3 weeks	11 (12 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months Local: more than 2 months 	11 (64.7%) 6 (35.3%)	10 (90.9%) 1 (9.1%)
EIA Developments	1 (16 weeks)	0
Other Consents		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>As listed in the guidance(right)</i> 	218 (7.6 weeks)	243 (7.8 weeks)
Planning/legal agreements	5.8 weeks	3 (35.4 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major: average time Local: average time 	10.2weeks	5 (6.7 weeks)

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

		Original decision upheld			
	Total number of decisions	2020-21		2021-22	
Type	No.	No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	14 (2021-22) 13 (2020-21)	6	46.2%	4	28.6%
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	10 (2021-22) 5 (2020-21)	3	60.0%	8	80%



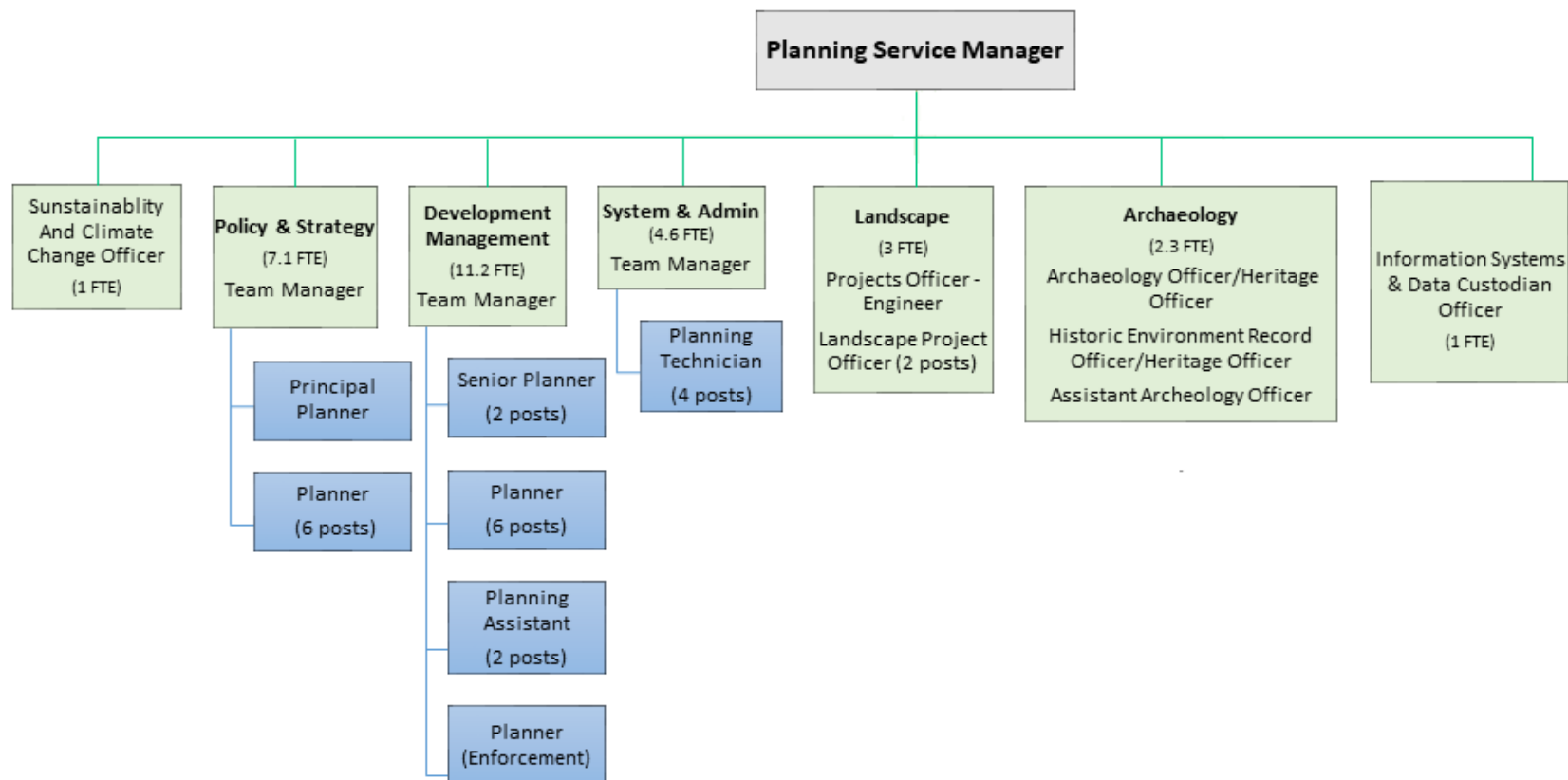


six

**WORKFORCE
INFORMATION**

6: Workforce Information

Workforce information should be a snapshot of the authorities planning staff in position on the 31st of March 2021. The information requested in this section is an integral part of providing the context for the information in parts 1-5. The template below allows the information to be recorded in a consistent format, additional guidance on what to include is within the template itself.



	Tier 1 <i>Chief Executive</i>	Tier 2 <i>Director</i>	Tier 3 <i>Head of Service</i>	Tier 4 <i>Manager</i>
Planning Service Manager				1

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	12	11.2
Development Planning	8	7.1
Enforcement	1	1
Specialists	0	0
Other (including staff not RTPI eligible) (Includes planning technicians, information systems, landscape and archaeology staff)	12	9.6

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	4
30-39	8
40-49	11
50 and over	10

In addition to planning responsibilities (Development Management - Planning Delivery, Development Planning -Strategy and Policy), the Service delivers the Council's statutory responsibilities for Landscape and Tree Protection, Corporate Address Gazetteer and Archaeology/Heritage Management under the Service Manager, Planning role. There are two Team Managers with responsibility for the two major business streams of the service, Planning Delivery and Strategy and Policy, delegating responsibility from the Service Manager to allow a clear line of responsibility and reporting for those workstreams. Landscape Officers, the Corporate Address Gazetteer, Archaeology Officers and the Management Systems and Administration Officer all report directly to the Service Manager.



Within the last monitoring period a new Climate Change and Sustainability Officer has been appointed and her post has been moved to within the Planning Service, in order to strengthen the contribution our service makes to reduce carbon emissions and respond to the climate emergency.

Overall, our workforce has been relatively stable during the past year. We have however had two planning officers leave and we have found it difficult to recruit suitable replacements. We are aware that many other planning authorities in Scotland have had difficulties with recruitment. With our positive attitude towards flexible working and by ensuring staff are able to maintain suitable work-life balance, we hope that East Lothian Planning Service remains an attractive place to work.



seven

PLANNING COMMITTEE INFORMATION

7: Planning Committee Information

Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	9 (LDP, SG/SPG and SESplan decisions, ratification of report on called in application)
Planning committees	8
Area committees	n/a
Committee site visits	23
Local Review Body	8
LRB site visits	15
Audit & Governance Committee	-
Policy & Performance Review Committee	-



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EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2020-2021