



West Lothian Council

Your Views - Better Off West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy

Better Off West Lothian

Your Views



Better off West Lothian

Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy is West Lothian's current approach to tackling poverty locally. The strategy was developed in 2012 and set out a plan to address poverty over a five year period between 2012 and 2017. We know that addressing poverty is important to West Lothian residents. In the recent 'Transforming Your Council' consultation, minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality placed third highest of the eight priorities set by the council to improve the quality of life in West Lothian.

As the current strategy reaches an end, it will be reviewed and refreshed to take account of the changing nature of poverty and the issues of most importance in West Lothian in the near future.

We are now seeking views from people living in West Lothian to help shape a new, refreshed anti-poverty strategy. We want to know what you think about poverty related issues, particularly if you have experienced challenges in your life relating to financial difficulties. We are also interested in hearing your ideas about what we can do at a local level to help people experiencing poverty or money worries.

Your views are important and will be used to help develop an action plan to address poverty and deprivation in West Lothian.

Section 1

In the following section we will ask some questions about your own situation and experiences. All information gathered is anonymous and individuals cannot be identified from the information provided. The details you provide in this section will be used to gather overall evidence about different economic situations and the potential impact on people in West Lothian.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or community group you can skip this section by clicking 'next' at the bottom of the page.

Please tell us about the people who live in your household. Select any statement that applies to you:

- I am single
- I live with my partner
- I have 1 dependent child
- I have 2 dependent children
- I have 3 or more dependent children
- I have non-dependent adults who live with me
- Other

Please tell us about your work status. Select any statements that apply to you:

- I work full time
- I work part time but would like more hours
- I work part time and do not wish to increase my hours
- I work varying hours with no guaranteed work (eg zero hour contract, agency work etc)
- I am self employed
- I am unemployed and looking for work
- Other
- I am not able to work due to ill health or disability
- I am a carer for a person with an illness or disability
- I am a stay at home parent
- I am a student
- I am retired

Please tell us about your sources of income. Select any that apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earnings from employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other benefits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earnings from self-employment | <input type="checkbox"/> State retirement pension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Out of work benefits (Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Employment & Support Allowance or Universal Credit) | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational or private pension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credits | <input type="checkbox"/> Student loan or bursary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability benefits | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/> | |

Which of the following best describes your current financial situation?

- 'SKINT' - very low or no income, cannot afford basic essentials such as food or clothing
- 'STRUGGLING' - cannot afford to keep up with regular payments such as rent, council tax or gas/electricity. May need to borrow money or rely on family or friends to make ends meet
- 'SURVIVING' - just keeping afloat financially. Enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but unexpected costs or changes such as repairs, illness/injury or a relationship breakdown would be likely to cause real financial difficulty
- 'SECURE' - Able to afford all outgoings with enough to cushion for unexpected costs. May also be able to save regularly or afford extra costs such as holidays and leisure activities

What would you say is the most difficult thing about living with money worries?

Section 2

In the following section we will ask you some questions about poverty related issues and how we can address these in West Lothian.

There are different approaches we can take to address poverty locally. Please rate the following approaches from most to least preferred.

(1 = most preferred approach)

- ▲ ▼ The strategy should aim to protect people already experiencing poverty from the worst impact of living with poverty
- ▲ ▼ The strategy should aim to work with those not experiencing poverty to create opportunities for those who are to live a poverty free life (for example, working with employers to promote the Living Wage)
- ▲ ▼ The strategy should aim to reduce the number of people experiencing poverty
- ▲ ▼ The strategy should aim to prevent people who are just above the poverty threshold from falling into poverty
- ▲ ▼ The strategy should aim to enable people experiencing poverty to increase their chances of living a poverty free life

There are many issues that are likely to affect people in West Lothian in the near future. As part of the anti-poverty strategy, we will develop an action plan each year to set out what we will do locally to help those affected.

Please tell us which issues you think should be addressed in order of priority.

(1 = highest priority)

- ▲ ▼ Welfare reforms such as the introduction of Universal Credit and the new Scottish Social Security Service
- ▲ ▼ Increasing levels of child poverty
- ▲ ▼ Difficulty finding suitable work. For example, low pay, not enough hours or lack of flexible working options.
- ▲ ▼ The 'poverty premium' (paying more for goods and services when you are on a low income because you can't access the best rates or deals)
- ▲ ▼ Money worries at key life stages. For example, having a baby, losing your job, getting a house or after a death.
- ▲ ▼ Housing issues. for example, homelessness, affordable housing options and keeping up with rent and other housing costs
- ▲ ▼ Tackling stigma and myths about poverty
- ▲ ▼ Other (please tell us what)

Other issues:

Can you think of one thing that could be done at a local level to help tackle poverty and/or deprivation?

Section 3

We are looking to recruit a panel of volunteers to work with us and have an ongoing input as we move forward with the new, refreshed anti-poverty strategy.

If you have experience, either now or in the past, of living on a low income or struggling to make ends meet we are interested in hearing from you. If you would be interested in becoming a volunteer 'Expert by Experience', please provide your contact details below and we will contact you to discuss the role.

Contact details

First and last name

Phone number

Email address

If you would prefer we contact you in another way, please let us know how

Section 4

In the following section we will ask some questions relating to equality monitoring information.

We ask questions to collect overall statistical information, not to pinpoint individuals. You do not have to answer these questions but if you choose to do so, this information will help us to ensure that the new strategy is fully inclusive and meets the needs of everyone in West Lothian.

How would you describe your gender identity?

- Female
- Male
- In another way
- Prefer not to say

If you would like to, please tell us what other words you would use to describe your gender identity

Have you ever identified as a transgender person or a transperson?

For the purposes of this question, "transgender" or "trans" is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider that you have a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a substantial, long-term physical or mental impairment (lasting 12 months or more), which affects your ability to carry out normal, day-to-day activities.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If you have answered yes to the above question, please state the type of disability which applies to you. If none of the categories apply, please select 'other' and specify the type of disability

Blindness/ sight loss

Deafness / hearing loss

Learning disability

Longstanding condition

Mental health condition

Physical disability

Prefer not to say

Other

What is your ethnic group? Please select the option which best describes your ethnic group or background

White

White - other British

White - Irish

White - Eastern European

White - Gypsy/Traveller

White - Other ethnic group

African

Arab

Asian - Bangladeshi

Scottish Asian - Chinese

Asian - Indian

Asian - Pakistani

Asian - Other

Black

Caribbean

Mixed/ multiple ethnic group

Other ethnic group

Prefer not to say

What is your religion or belief?

- Buddhist
- Church of Scotland
- Hindu
- Humanist
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Other religion or belief
- Other Christian
- Sikh
- Pagan
- Roman Catholic
- None
- Prefer not to say

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Gay/Lesbian
- Heterosexual/ straight
- In another way
- Prefer not to say

If you would like to, please tell us about other words that you would use to describe your sexual orientation

What age are you?

- Prefer not to say
- Date of birth

You have completed the survey. Thank you very much for your participation.

You can now close the window.