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GAIN OF £1.35m ...and a series of new benefits are on the way for West Lothian's pensioners this summer.

Thousands of pensioners are set to benefit from a series of new initiatives that are being launched in West Lothian this summer.

**Major developments will see:**

The Pensioner Income Maximisation Service (PIMS) being made permanent after a hugely successful trial period,

The creation of a Senior People's Challenge Fund, and The development of a West Lothian Food Train Service (see page four for more details).

Council Leader Peter Johnston explains: " When we launched a review last September, what was clear was that 'no change' was not an option.

" Statistics show that between 2010 and 2030 those aged 65-74 will increase by 54% with those aged 75-84 increasing by 90%, and those over the age of 85 increasing by 193%.

" The challenge this creates for the council has two dimensions. First being the Quality of Life agenda and how to support older people to live long, healthier lives in their own communities.

The second being the need to develop a range of options to support individuals who will require care services.

“ The review highlighted that the most productive approach encourages older people to live healthy, active lives in the community and provides care services to vulnerable older people, maximising the use of smart technology promoting independent living wherever possible.

“ A key challenge is how to best provide for the needs of our most impoverished older people and the creation of the PIMS has met that challenge head on.

“ The Pensioner Income Maximisation Service has been a complete success securing extra, much needed cash for West Lothian residents. In six months the service helped elderly people gain an extra £1.35 million, with some older people gaining from £40 to over £100 per week. In the coming year I fully expect this scheme to deliver an additional £2 million of income to our neediest pensioners making a huge and significant impact on their quality of life.”

If you are over 60 and you would like to make sure that your income is correct, contact the team. You can contact the West Lothian Pensioner Income Maximisation Team, which is based at the Advice Shop in Bathgate, on 01506 776441.

### Deadline for feedback in sight

West Lothian residents have until Wednesday 30 June to respond in writing to the council's proposals to make £45 million of budget savings between 2011/14.

The consultation kicked off in February following a report on the officer-led Contingency Strategy being reported to a meeting of the Council Executive.

Readers will also recall a four-page summary of the report which was featured in a pullout in the March issue of *Bulletin* (this is available on the council's website).

Since then work has progressed with a public meeting for community representatives at Howden Park Centre in April. This was followed up by detailed proposals being sent to

community representatives and groups week starting 17 May.

Council Leader Peter Johnston said: "We believe that West Lothian is leading the way on detailing officer proposals to secure the necessary savings, over the next three years.

"However, before any decisions are made, I believe it is vital for the council to listen to the views of our community.

"You can put forward your ideas and opinions, as we strive to consult with communities about the types of decisions that must be made.

"Over the summer the feedback we receive from members of the public and community groups will be gathered and reports written for the council's Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panels (PDSPs).

"This is the biggest challenge this council has ever had to face up to. It is essential for our council and our community to pull together to tackle the tough times ahead."

Turn to pages six and 11 for more information on how to shape the decision-making process.

### Funding changes approved

Changes to the funding of extensions at three schools: St Margaret's Academy, Linlithgow Academy and St Mary's RC primary have been approved.

The council remains committed to extensions at St Margaret's Academy costing some £10.5 million. The extensions will be undertaken over four phases and in line with expected housing development.

The first phase of the extension has been completed and the second phase will commence shortly. The later two phases are currently planned for 2016 and 2018 although the actual date of these extensions will also be determined by plans for a new denominational secondary school at Winchburgh.

Deadline for 2010 Gardens Competition – You'd be 'daff' to miss it!

West Lothian Council's 2010 gardens competition has been set for Friday, 9 July. Judging will start during the week beginning Monday, 2 August and the awards ceremony will be held on Friday, 5 November.

The competition will be judged on an area basis and all householders living in West Lothian are eligible to take part. Entry is free and there are around 40 prizes to be won.

There are also special prizes for best vegetable garden, gardening for wildlife and floral containers, this category includes hanging baskets, tubs and window boxes.

Organiser Colin Bell said: "Gardening is a healthy leisure activity, which can enhance and enrich our communities. Not everyone likes going to the gym – and gardening offers a handy and cheaper alternative.

"It's a great way to relax, escape and just chill out from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.  
"Being in the garden can lift people's spirits and create a sense of community pride.

To enter, or find out more about this year's competition, simply phone the Customer Service Centre on 01506 775000 or email [customerservice@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:customerservice@westlothian.gov.uk)

Howden Park Centre named Building of the Year

West Lothian's premier arts venue, Howden Park Centre, has received a top architectural accolade from the Edinburgh Architectural Association (EAA) - the stunning arts centre has been awarded the title 'Building of the Year'.

The prestigious award was presented to architects Nicoll Russell Studios at a ceremony in April.

West Lothian Council funded the £6 million redevelopment of Howden Park Centre with a grant of £1.29 million from the Scottish Arts Council.

The annual award attracted more than 40 entries that were narrowed down to a short list of 12 ranging from house conversions, a new church, new hotels to apartment and office blocks.

Robert Black, President of the Edinburgh Architectural Association, said: "It is gratifying and encouraging that the profession continues to achieve such a high standard of architecture across a wide variety of building type."

Councillor Jim Walker, Executive Councillor for Culture and Leisure added: "Given the quality of the competition we are delighted that Howden Park Centre has been named Building of the Year. "

## Working for young people in West Lothian

Local young people have been given a helping hand to get into the world of work.

Chief Executive Alex Linkston presented achievement awards recently to the first group of young people to have completed the council's Get Ready for Work (GRFW) programme.

GRFW provides up to 26 weeks of work experience within a council service. The trainee, normally aged 16 or 17, has a staff member as workplace mentor to help support them in the

workplace, so they gain the vocational skills required to be a competent and valuable employee.

Alex Linkston said: "As the largest employer in West Lothian, we were delighted to add GRFW to our existing training programmes for young people.

"Given the current economic downturn, training and employment opportunities for young people are less available than they have been previously.

"Of the 12 young people who have completed the training programme so far, three have secured employment with the council and two have returned to education.

"This is a unique opportunity for the council to become part of the solution for these young people and help them in a very practical way to get on track to compete for jobs or move into training or learning."

For more information or to get involved in the GRFW programme, contact Miriam Georgeson 01506 777946 or email [miriam.georgeson@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:miriam.georgeson@westlothian.gov.uk)

West Lothian looks to become a Fairtrade Zone

**A Steering Group set up to help West Lothian achieve Fairtrade Zone status met for the first time recently.**

The group aims to ensure the council moves towards its goal of achieving the prestigious Fairtrade Zone status.

Councillors joined representatives from the existing Fairtrade town and village groups, and members of the two newly established groups in Bathgate and Breich Valley.

Council Leader Peter Johnston said: " West Lothian Council is committed to supporting Fairtrade and has helped establish the four Fairtrade towns in Linlithgow, Livingston, Uphall and Whitburn over the last eight years.

" The Steering Group will help to make further progress to gain countywide recognition.

“ Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world.

**How can I help?**

Look for products with the Fairtrade logo next time you are shopping;

Get involved in your local town, church or school group;

Encourage your work colleagues to buy Fairtrade and become a Fairtrade workplace;

Encourage your School or College to become a

Fairtrade School or College.

**For more information on Fairtrade and how you can get involved:**Contact Douglas Grierson:

**[douglas.grierson@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:douglas.grierson@westlothian.gov.uk)**

Douglas can also put residents in touch with the existing Linlithgow, Livingston, Whitburn, and Uphall groups.

Two new groups in Bathgate and Brieche Valley are just starting up and looking for volunteers.

Contact: Gillian Reid (mrs\_g@btinternet.com) for Bathgate; or Anne Walsh (fairsfayre@btinternet.com) for Breich Valley.

Useful websites :

Fairtrade Foundation:  
[www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

Scottish Fair Trade Forum:  
[www.scottishfairtradeforum.org.uk](http://www.scottishfairtradeforum.org.uk)

Do More, Drink Less is the message from young people

The villages of Stoneyburn, Addiewell and Loganlea are spearheading a new initiative to encourage people to drink less.

The exciting community-led campaign has been organised by West Lothian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Partnership, supported by West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) and delivered by the council's Community Regeneration team.

The campaign aims to reduce average alcohol consumed by everyone in our communities, promote actions that will reduce harm from alcohol misuse, improve community safety, highlight positive activities, and motivate groups to be proactive.

The extensive community consultation included: schools, community and youth groups, and traders. Look out for activities in Armadale and Knighstridge in Livingston with everyone agreeing: "We need to drink less alcohol."

Executive Councillor for Social Policy Isabel Hutton commented: "This is an exciting project aiming to create safer, healthier, happier and more prosperous communities. With input from communities the message is about making the use of the facilities and activities that we have on our doorstep to add enjoyment to our lives, reducing the alcohol we drink and finding more success in our communities. Replacing apathy with fun and confidence."

If you live in Armadale, Knightsridge, Stoneyburn, Addiewell or Loganlea look out for the campaign in your area, support it any way you can. The promise is that each event will feature lots of laughter and fun.

If you want to help in the campaign phone 01506 281080. If you have a drink problem call 0800 7314314.

Tackling financial concerns of those affected by cancer

West Lothian families affected by cancer have benefited from an increase in income thanks to the work of an invaluable service.

The West Lothian Macmillan Advice Team is a partnership between West Lothian Council's Advice Shop and the Macmillan Cancer Support charity. The team has raised over £4.1million (£1.6million from 2008 and £2.5 million in 2009) since they started in April 2008.

In two years, the team has helped 903 local residents with their finances, and assisted in securing £66,000 of Macmillan grants to help people in financial hardship as a result of their cancer diagnosis.

Executive councillor for Social Policy, Isabel Hutton, said: "When the service was launched, we hoped that it would have an impact on

tackling the often unexpected side-effects of cancer – and it clearly has.

“Scotland has the lowest benefit claim rate in the UK and cancer patients with a terminal illness lost out on £8 million in unclaimed benefits.

Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Linda Adlard, said: “We provide information on a variety of topics including how to get the right benefits, travel costs and filling in benefit forms.

The team can be contacted at the Advice Shop, Unit 17, Waverley Industrial Estate, Bathgate. Or call 01506 776227 or email [macmillan@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:macmillan@westlothian.gov.uk)

New approach reaps benefits for housing tenants

West Lothian Council’s Housing and Building Service has been named the Best Scottish Housing and Building Services Team at the APSE Scottish Accolades Awards 2010.

The team was awarded the accolade following the introduction of a new appointment system that has drastically cut the length of time that council tenants wait for home repairs.

Executive councillor for Services for the Community, Frank Anderson, explains: " The existing repairs service appointment system, which had been in operation since 1996, was in need of modernisation. The system was outdated and needed a more customer-oriented approach in offering appointments for our repairs service."

Some of the achievements secured to date for customers:

Customer satisfaction levels have increased from 88% to over 99%

Average time taken to complete a routine repair is drastically reduced.

80% of day to day repair jobs now being offered an appointment service

Reduced the number of wasted calls to nearly nil as customers are kept fully informed of appointments through a text messaging service.

Councillor Anderson added: "The team deserves a great amount of credit for creating a more efficient, and effective repairs service for our tenants."

## Meldrum Primary

£3.4 million redevelopment

It is expected that work will start in autumn 2010 and be completed by summer 2011.

The extension includes the construction of a new four classroom extension with improved toilet and cloakroom facilities. Demolition of the lower level classroom block and refurbishment of the remaining upper level means that the school will all be on the same level. The demolition of the lower block allows the existing assembly hall to be extended southwards. The unusual 'L' shaped classrooms in the refurbished area will be reconfigured to more regular class spaces of a suitable size to meet the needs of a modern curriculum.

**Work on the new extended and refurbished school includes:**

Eight classrooms

Two general purpose areas  
Extended hall with new changing facilities  
Learning support accommodation  
Admin accommodation plus improved entrance area  
Improved pedestrian links to the school  
**All hands to the pump!**

The council has recently taken delivery of two new towable pumps.

The pumps will help improve the support that the council can give to those customers affected by flooding, will help reduce the time that public roads are closed due to flooding and will enable the council to respond more quickly to pollution incidents.

Joe Bainbridge, from the council's Flood Risk Management team, said: "The pumps are high-volume units ideal for displacing water with sediments, oil and diesel, and screened sewage."

All smiles @ **BALBARDIE**

Inspectors have heaped praise on Balbardie Primary School in Bathgate after a recent inspection.

Education chiefs praised the leadership, ethos and progress at the school after visiting as part of a national survey of primary education. Inspectors highlighted a number of key strengths including:

The leadership of the Head Teacher in creating a culture of continuous improvement.

A strong culture of inclusion.

The school's progress in taking forward Curriculum for Excellence that has resulted in a significant impact on children's learning.

The leadership at all levels provided by staff and children.

Children who are very responsible, confident, safe and happy in school.

The very effective arrangements for children to develop their literacy skills in a range of contexts.

Head Teacher Audrey Ford said: "The success of our school is due to the strong partnership we have with our parents, carers and local community. I am fortunate to have wonderful teachers and support staff. Our pupils are pretty amazing too!"

Executive councillor for Education, Andrew Miller, added: "I believe that the vast majority of parents whose children go to Balbardie recognise what an excellent school it is and all the good work that takes place to ensure the pupils get the best possible start to their schooling.

" However, it is always pleasing to see that external inspectors also recognise the school's achievements."

## Delivery service could be on the right tracks

West Lothian's Senior People's Forum is giving consideration to the development of a Food Train which enables a network of local volunteers to provide a shopping and delivery service for older people.

The Food Train, a registered charity has been operating in Dumfries and Galloway for the last 15 years.

The Food Train, which provides a personal shopping service and other services, is made available to older people who, for whatever reason, are unable to shop for themselves. Working in conjunction with local supermarkets a greater range of affordable healthy food produce can be made available regardless of where individuals live.

Executive councillor for social policy, Isabel Hutton, said: "Along with a new shopping service for older people it brings many benefits for people who can't get to the supermarket themselves. Regular contact with the local volunteer can bring with it additional social benefits knowing that a friendly face can be relied upon to call on a regular basis.

" Volunteering in itself is also recognised as bringing about health benefits for those who participate.

“ We would like to acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government in contributing to the initial cost of this new service.”

Chair of West Lothian CHCP, Theresa Douglas supports the new service: “The potential a Food Train offers is known to be substantial as where it already operates it has evolved to include Food Train Extra, offering additional practical support to older people to sustain their independence.”

Look out for updates on the development of this service, the Senior People’s Forum and volunteering opportunities online:  
[www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

It is anticipated the Food Train will be launched in West Lothian during the summer months

Gala season in West Lothian

Residents of Armadale and surrounding areas are looking forward to Armadale’s Centenary Gala Day 2010 on Saturday 19 June.

### *Did you know?*

During the late 1800s, there were annual summer parades of the local friendly societies in Armadale.

In 1900 Armadale Children's Gala Day was established to celebrate the donation of Wood Public Park to the town by James Wood, Coalmaster of Bathville.

In 1911 a pageant featuring a Queen was introduced.

From 1925, the pageant with its Queen became a regular feature of Armadale's annual celebrations.

### *What is on?*

**Friday 18 June:** Proclamation and Street Fayre (North Street from 6pm - 8pm). There will be live music, street entertainment and fun for kids, with eight stalls. Stalls are available free to local community and voluntary organisations. There is no need to register but stallholders need to provide their own equipment.

***Saturday 19 June:*** The 100th Armadale Children's Gala Day: parade leaves Armadale Academy 11 am > parade arrives at Watson Park (approx) 12 noon

> coronation pageant will follow immediately on arrival at Watson Park > park entertainment

***The parade route is:*** Armadale Academy > West Main Street > The Cross > South Street > Wotherspoon Crescent > Mayfield Drive > Calder Crescent > Lower Bathville > Bathville Cross > South Street > The Cross > North Street > Watson Park

***Other Gala Days:***

***Saturday 12 June:*** East Calder and Wilkieston Children's Gala Day, Fauldhouse Children's Gala Day, Grand Harburn Festival, Harrysmuir Fun Day, Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Children's Gala Day, Torphichen Children's Gala Day, Uphall Children's Gala Day and Uphall Station Children's Gala Day. ***Sunday 13 June:*** Loganlea and District Children's Gala Day. ***Tuesday 15 June:*** Linlithgow Marches. ***Saturday 19 June:*** Armadale Children's Gala Day, Broxburn Children's Gala Day, Deans Children's Gala Day, Kirknewton Gala Day, Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Children's Gala Day, Stoneyburn and Bents Children's Gala Day. ***Saturday 26 June:*** Ecclesmachan and

Threemiletown Children's Gala Day, Polbeth Children's Gala Day, Whitburn Children's Gala Day, Winchburgh Children's Gala Day. *Sunday 27 June:* Blackridge, Westrigg and Westcraigs Children's Gala Day. *Saturday 3 July:* Seafield and District Children's Gala and Civic Week. *Saturday 7 August:* Bridgend Children's Gala Day. *Sunday 15 August:* Linlithgow Union Canal Society Fun Day. *Saturday 21 August:* Craigshill Festival Association.

## Facility centres on family first

The new Strathbrock Family Support Centre in Broxburn is proving a big success six months after opening its doors.

The £1.6 million centre developed in partnership between Housing and Building Services and the Community Health and Care Partnership is an important resource that provides quality accommodation for families. All the families are referred to the centre via the council's homelessness services, children and families' services or the domestic abuse service. Executive councillor for Health and Care, Ellen Glass said:

“The aim of the support centre is to provide a safe environment from which positive parenting is supported and developed. The centre assists families, develops parenting and household management skills, supports families to sustain independent living in the community and re-establishes positive patterns of family life.

“ We consulted with local people before the centre opened as it was vitally important to everyone that this facility become a part of the community. “

Councillor Frank Anderson, added: “ Our highly trained staff are experienced and are able to call on other more specialised services as and when necessary. Specialist staff include social care staff, education support staff, health staff and other welfare services.”

## **HOUSING BOOST for those on waiting lists**

**West Lothian Council has announced plans to extend the number of new build council houses that are under construction.**

The boost means that an extra 100 council houses will be built over a four year period – bringing the total to 800.

Executive councillor for Services for the Community, Frank Anderson said: "We are able to do this by combining the prudential borrowing, funded by our rental income, with additional funding made available from the Scottish Government's Incentivising New Council House Building Fund.

"This means that we will have built 800 new council homes in West Lothian by 2012 – the first council homes to be built in over 25 years.

"Council homes are in short supply across the country and there are currently almost 9,000 people on the waiting list for council homes in West Lothian. The first phase of construction is well underway and 150 houses have been completed.

"The first phase will see 248 houses built across several areas including, Boghall (68 homes), Whitburn (49 homes), Bathgate (87 homes) and Livingston (44 homes)."

## Second phase announced

West Lothian Council is hopeful that building work on the second phase of new council homes will be underway by the end of August.

Eight sites have been identified and are currently subject to the council identifying building tenders and obtaining of planning permission.

Councillor Anderson said: " The plan is for site starts between August and early next year with completion around the end of 2012.

" The plans are for 545 homes to be built which will benefit residents all over West Lothian."

The houses will be built at Dixon Terrace, Whitburn (116 homes), Eliburn, Livingston (90 homes), Inveralmond CHS playing field, Livingston (92 homes), Little Boghead, Bathgate (150 homes), Alderstone Road, Livingston (45 homes), Ferrier Crescent/Marches Drive, Armadale (19 homes), Uphall Station Infants School, Uphall (23 homes) and Ladeside Avenue, Blackburn (10 homes).

Burning calories, not carbon

Executive councillor for the Environment, Robert De Bold, joined Rona Gold, the council's Climate Change Policy officer, to inspect the council's fleet of energy efficient, Crafter vans and promote the council's folding bike.

The council owns 11 of the vans, which exceed the tight emission controls, set by the Europe Union.

Councillor De Bold explained: "The council is always looking at ways it can improve the fuel use of our vehicles and our replacement vehicles are always to the highest environmental standard.

"The vans we have purchased exceed this standard and are classed as EEV (Enhanced Environmentally Friendly Vehicle). These vehicles benefit from reduced road-tax, reduced emissions and reduced fuel consumption."

Rona added: "My main role is to investigate the council's carbon footprint and identify projects where savings in carbon can be made.

" One project is the green travel plan, which the council has been working on for a number of

years. The plan promotes environmentally friendly travel options to staff.

“ Staff based in County Buildings, Linlithgow have certainly taken the plan on board and are making use of the council’s folding bike.”

Rona added: “We are encouraging staff to think of their health and, as part of this, we have a folding bike that can be used by staff to travel to work appointments. The folding bike can be carried on those parts of the journeys that require travel by bus or train.”

**West Lothian Council has signed up to two projects aimed at tackling climate change.**

The council is joining other cities and councils to take part in the European Union’s Covenant of Mayors carbon reduction campaign and the UK-wide 10:10 project.

Rona Gold, the council’s Climate Change Policy Officer, explained: “ Local authorities in Scotland have to reduce their CO2 emissions by more than 20% by 2020. “ By signing up to these programmes, the council is providing a commitment that we will continue to strive

towards reaching our carbon reduction targets and continually publish evidence of our progress.

## Home improvements

Whilst every effort is made at the development and planning application stage to ensure that new housing is of a high quality, there are always lessons that can be learned once building is completed.

In a recent survey, West Lothian Council asked homeowners about the quality of their new homes and their surroundings. The survey sought to find out aspects of a new development that work well and areas that don't.

Feedback from the survey, which is to be repeated every two years, will be passed onto the house builders to allow them to reflect on their products. It will also help to identify where the planning guidance issued by the council to developers needs to be amended or improved. The latest survey asked residents living in five different locations including major new housing sites at Wester Inch, Bathgate and Lower Bathville, Armadale, to rate particular aspects of

the development they lived in. The results suggested that;

There was a high degree of satisfaction about the appearance and layout of new developments;

The majority of residents were satisfied with the developments they lived in; and in Most residents considered their residential estates to be safe.

There were also a number of common areas of concern, including:

Car parking, and the maintenance and factoring arrangements for open space.

A series of action points have been drawn up and will be pursued by the relevant service providers.

The survey results will also be used by Development Planning to help inform a new Residential Development Guide, which it intends publishing later this year.

For further information relating to the survey, just go online and enter the following link into your web browser:

<http://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=6241>

Vandalism drops after joined-up approach hits the mark

West Lothian Council, Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, and Lothian and Borders Police joined forces during a recent campaign aimed at tackling local issues such as alcohol-related disorder, fire raising, and fly tipping.

During the campaign in April, there was a 60 per cent reduction in vandalism calls compared to the same period last year. In addition, there was almost a 10 per cent decrease in youth calls throughout the area, and the number of fire-raising calls fell by a third.

Inspector Stephen Elliot of Lothian and Borders Police, Safer Communities Department, said: "By sharing intelligence and best practice with our partners, we have really made an impact in local communities across West Lothian.

“We have enjoyed so much success over the past few weeks that we will continue to tackle anti-social behaviour together in the long term.”

## What took place?

The council’s Neighbourhood Environment Teams removed large bricks, debris and rubbish from areas of Polbeth;

Police and the council’s Environmental Wardens also carried out high-visibility patrols in Polbeth;

Representatives from the police, fire and rescue service, and the council carried out a huge community clear up in the Knightsridge area of Livingston. Providing reassurance and advice to residents on a variety of issues such as fire safety and anti-social behaviour.

You can contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131, or Crimestoppers in confidence and complete anonymity on 0800 555 111.

Forget CSI Miami ...CSU West Lothian is the newest show in town

Council chiefs have given the green light for the development of a new and innovative group that will focus on community safety in West Lothian.

The West Lothian Community Safety Unit (CSU) will be made up of partner agencies, West Lothian Council, and Lothian and Borders Police. The unit will involve the council and the police putting their resources into one specialised division, which aims to provide positive outcomes for residents in West Lothian.

The unit are based in the Civic Centre where both the police and council share their headquarters in West Lothian.

Acting Chief Superintendent Jeanette McDiarmid, Divisional Commander, said: "Whilst the culture of partnership working is not new to us in West Lothian, the facility of partner agencies working within the same environment is relatively new and is regarded as good practice.

"The Community Safety Unit will help eradicate duplication and ensure everyone is pulling together to achieve our joint objectives.

Council Leader Peter Johnston added: " Issues such as anti-social behaviour cannot be reduced by one single agency, it requires a team approach and that is essentially what the Community Safety Unit is all about. The new Community Safety Unit will take our successes to date and will build upon them."

Look out for more information on the CSU in the next edition of *Bulletin*.

## BEST BAR NONE AWARDS

Forty-one licensed premises in West Lothian were honoured for their high standards of safety at the recent Best Bar None awards.

The winning venues received their awards from Chair of the West Lothian Licensing Board, Councillor John Cochrane.

The national Best Bar None Awards scheme encourages licensed venues to improve standards of operation to a commonly agreed national benchmark. It is the only recognised award scheme which encourages and rewards higher standards of operation in the licensed trade.

Part of the scheme involves the licensed trade working in partnership with Lothian and Borders Police, Lothian Fire and Rescue Service and West Lothian Council to make their premises safer, and to reduce alcohol related crime and irresponsible drinking.

Councillor Cochrane said:

“All the participants have proved they care about their customers’ safety and security on a night out and have shown a strong commitment to making West Lothian a safer place.”

## LONGRIDGE

£1.4 million  
investment starts

An ambitious investment programme of almost £1.4 million has started at Longridge Primary School. The project will radically improve the facilities at the school for pupils, staff and provide exciting new community facilities for local people.

Improvements include: a new community hall, a teaching base, a general purpose room,

changing and improved toilet provision. The extra teaching spaces are part of the council's commitment to class size reduction. Work is due to be completed in August 2010.

Executive councillor for Culture and Leisure Jim Walker commented: "Having the building joined up with the school will make such a difference. We are really looking forward to closer links with the community.

Karen Gardner, Secretary of Longridge Community Education Centre Association, added: "We can now see the beginning of this new facility that will provide modern community and education facilities that are much needed."

*news in brief*

## YOUTH WORK AWARD

Youth Link Scotland hands out various annual awards for those involved in work with young people. Marjory Gillies has been a Youth Worker in Fauldhouse for over 25 years and in recognition of her outstanding service and dedication she was nominated in the category of

'Part Time Youth Worker of the Year' and was awarded the Bronze prize. Well done Marjory!

## **YOUNG QUALITY SCOT AWARDS**

The council's Community Learning and Development team recently took part in the Young Quality Scot Awards. Ten young people successfully gained their award by taking part in regular meetings and an overnight residential aimed at developing communication, team building and presentation skills. The Young Quality Scot Awards are national citizenship awards, which recognise young people who are involved in voluntary work in their local community.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

The council's Customer Service Centre offers a high-quality service to everyone who calls. Since the Contact Centre was established in June 2000 the council has continually looked to improve the services that are delivered to customers. Staff deal with a wide variety of enquiries regarding all council services, and record comments and complaints about services delivered by West Lothian Council. Last year, the

team received an amazing 274,000 calls from residents. The team recently conducted a review of their services and carried out a survey, which will be used to improve the services on offer. Residents can view the results by visiting [westlothian.gov.uk](http://westlothian.gov.uk) Residents can contact the team by calling 01506 775000 or emailing: [customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk)

## **ARMADALE YOUTH SPACE**

The Armadale Youth issues group secured funding to support the establishment of a space for young people. The unique youth space has now been completely refurbished with the full involvement of young people and will be used by the whole area, including Blackridge and Westfield.

The space will provide a youth friendly and attractive facility, which will be responsive to the needs of young people.

## **EVERYONE'S A WINNER WITH A CREDIT UNION!**

Over 300 West Lothian residents joined a credit union in the first two months of 2010, providing them with access to financial services run by and for local people.

Credit union offices are based in the centres of Livingston, Bathgate and Blackburn, and are open every day for people to open savings accounts, apply for affordable loans and the other services available. For more information about how a credit union could help you, contact West Lothian Credit Union Forum on 01506 633222, email [info@wlcuf.org.uk](mailto:info@wlcuf.org.uk) or visit [www.wlcuf.org.uk](http://www.wlcuf.org.uk).

Anniversary expansion for specialist ink firm

A West Lothian specialist ink firm is celebrating its 25th year in business by building a brand new £3.5 million manufacturing centre.

Broxburn-based Paragon Inks are moving to a new, larger 23,000 square foot, purpose-built, facility in Starlaw Park, near Bathgate, which will allow them to triple their present production. Their new premises are expected to be open in November 2010.

Paragon develop, manufacture and sell specialist ultra-violet inks and UV colourants for

the graphic printing industry who then use them on cartons, labels and tags.

Martyn Day, Executive councillor for Transport and Development, said: "I'm delighted to see a successful local firm like Paragon Inks expanding despite the current challenging economic conditions. The move to larger premises will allow the firm to continue to grow and prosper in the future."

Breaking new ground for Bathgate civic building Work has started on a brand new civic building for Bathgate that will bring council and community services together under one roof.

A special ceremony took place in May to mark the construction of a new building to replace the former Lindsay House on South Bridge Street. Councillor Walker said: "I'm delighted that work has started on this new centre, which will meet the growing needs of the community in Bathgate and West Lothian.

"The new building will be modern, attractive, spacious, practical and flexible, and the spaces will be used to their maximum potential.

“The new council building will include a community hall, library, accommodation for the Advice Shop and Council Information Services (CIS) centre, a community café, office accommodation, and meeting spaces for community groups, as well as a landscaped garden complete with an orchard.”

Phil McEwan, managing director of Ogilvie Construction, said: " This new centre will breathe new life into the heart of Bathgate, and provide a stunning building for local people to use."

**Le Magnifique! Bathgate gets signed up**  
**A delegation from the French town of Cran**  
**Gevrier travelled to Bathgate recently to sign up**  
**to an official twinning link between the towns.**

The visitors, which included the Mayor of Cran Gevrier and a jazz band, took part in the Procession Weekend festivities.

During their two-day trip, the delegation visited Boghall Primary School, St Kentigern's Academy, the new swimming pool at Balbardie and the Low Port Centre in Linlithgow.

Executive councillor for Culture and Leisure, Jim Walker, added: "I was absolutely delighted to welcome the visitors to Bathgate.

"Education is key to the twinning link and the partnership will bring about many opportunities for young musicians, school children and local groups to visit Cran Gevrier in the future."

### Improvements in your town centre

Communities in West Lothian are beginning to see the benefits of the recent investment from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF).

Projects that are completed or are in progress as part of the TCRF works.

#### **Armadale (£353,374)Completed**

Refurbishment of Goth Clock and reinstatement of bell.

Shop Front Scheme launched.

#### **In progress**

Civic Space at The Cross. Start date expected late June.

Deep clean of town centre including chewing gum removal.

Signage/Gateway Strategy.  
Furniture Strategy.

### **Whitburn (£376,114)**

#### **Completed**

Purchase of derelict site at The Cross.  
Shop Front Scheme launched.

#### **In progress**

Civic Space at The Cross, start date expected late June.

Deep clean of town centre including chewing gum removal schedules for late July .

Signage/Gateway Strategy progressing.

Furniture Strategy progressing.

### **Bathgate (£860,000)**

#### **Completed**

Premises Improvement Scheme launched through Enterprising Bathgate Ltd.

## **In progress**

Feasibility study underway into Town Centre WiFi Zone.

Deep clean of town centre including chewing gum removal scheduled for later this year.

Signage Strategy progressing.

St David's Square/Steelyard Civic Spaces to start mid June.

## **Broxburn/Uphall (£467,264)**

### **In progress**

Streetscape improvements have begun in Broxburn.

Streetscape improvements in Uphall to begin late June.

Shop Front Scheme launched.

Deep clean of town centre including chewing gum removal scheduled for later this year.

Signage Strategy/Gateways progressing.

Linlithgow (£857,770)

In progress

Streetscape improvements have begun.

Signage Strategy progressing.

Furniture Strategy progressing.

Reinstatement of Civic Rose

Garden at Burgh Halls.

Planting of semi mature trees near the Vennel.

### **Makeover for shop fronts**

Shop owners have 750 reasons to find out more about West Lothian Council's Shopfront Improvement Scheme.

Local businesses in Armadale, Whitburn, Broxburn and Uphall are being given the opportunity to apply for grants up to £750 to improve their shop fronts.

Shop owners have until 1 Dec 2010 to submit their applications for grants.

*If you have any queries regarding the scheme contact Suzanne McCardle, BIDs Manager, on*

*01506 777926 or email*

*suzanne.mccardle@westlothian.gov.uk*

Master Composter volunteers needed in West Lothian

Interested in learning more about composting and prepared to give some of your time to promote home composting?

The Changeworks Master Composter Project is looking for volunteers in the Lothians area. Master Composters will be trained in how to home compost before going back into their own communities to spread the composting message.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer and would like further information should contact: Stephen Gilfillan, Waste Services, on 01506 775000 or

email: [stephen.gilfillan@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.gilfillan@westlothian.gov.uk)

Interested in a reduced-cost composting bin?

Then please contact WRAP quoting reference AD-ZWS-01 while stocks last: 0845 076 0223  
[www.wasteawarescotland.org.uk](http://www.wasteawarescotland.org.uk)

Got your three FREE bags of compost yet?

Compost is still available to householders – voucher available on your brown bin calendar. Compost is still available to West Lothian householders at Blackburn, Oakbank and

Whitburn Community Recycling Centres. A maximum of three bags of free compost (subject to availability) will be offered using the voucher contained within the brown bin calendar.

## **Council get new policies for taxi and PHCs moving**

The Taxi and Private Hire-car trades in West Lothian are set for a makeover after new policies were given the go ahead.

The new changes are a result of a recent review and consultation exercise into the overall hire-car provision in West Lothian. The aim of the review is to ensure that West Lothian has a hire-car fleet which best meets the needs of all the community, including disabled people.

Executive councillor for the Environment, Robert De Bold, said: " The council has agreed to make a number of improvements including a requirement for all taxis to meet an 'accessibility standard' by January 2015.

" The council has received feedback from a few disabled persons expressing concern about the

introduction of side-loading taxis to replace saloon-type taxis.

“ However, we would like to assure all taxi users that the new ‘accessibility standard’ means that, in future, all taxi vehicles will be required to be wheelchair accessible, have retractable exterior steps, interior grab rails, hi-visibility seats and a loop system to assist those with hearing impairment.

“ A similar standard has existed in Edinburgh since 1995 and has proved a success.”

As part of the changes, a new style of licensing plate has been designed to ensure that members of the public can easily distinguish between Private Hire-cars (PHCs) and taxis. The current plates are pale blue for taxis and pale green for PHCs, which can be difficult to distinguish between. The new PHC plates will have a band of the West Lothian Council tartan across the top of the plate, and the taxi plates will remain pale blue.

Work will start on the new Pumpherston and Uphall Station Community Primary School in September 2010.

The project - an investment of £7.6 million - will be completed by December 2011. The Scottish Government has confirmed £2.6 million support from the Scottish Futures Trust.

Executive councillor for Education, Andrew Miller, added: The communities of Pumpherston and Uphall Station desperately need this facility and I know that they will be delighted to have a confirmed start for this long awaited project. "In addition to the primary school and nursery, the project includes a new community library which I'm sure will also be well received by local people. The school has been designed in a way which will allow it to be extended in the future to meet local needs."

The school will be built as a full single-stream facility for up to 231 primary school children and will include:

Eight classrooms

Assembly hall and dining area

A nursery with 30 morning and 30 afternoon places

General Purpose room  
Community library  
Admin accommodation  
Changing facilities

The existing pitch will be upgraded. In addition there will be a new MUGA [multi use games area], playground space and safe pick up/drop off facilities.

### *Sports bulletin*

#### **Making waves – welcome to Bathgate’s new sports complex**

Bathgate’s £9.7 million state-of-the-art swimming complex has opened its doors.

The new swimming complex at Bathgate Sports Centre in Balbardie Park, includes a six-lane, 25-metre swimming pool, a 10-metre teaching pool, new sports changing accommodation, sauna, steam room, pitch improvements and new office accommodation.

West Lothian Council is providing the majority of the £9.7 million for the overall project, with West

Lothian Leisure providing £1,600,000 and sportscotland contributing £800,000 towards the total cost.

Jim Walker is a Director on West Lothian Leisure's board and Executive councillor for Culture and Leisure.

He said: " The old pool served the community extremely well over the years but it was time for a change and the latest offering will be warmly welcomed by the community.

" The complex is just the latest investment in Bathgate, which highlights our continuing commitment to provide quality leisure facilities for all age groups in West Lothian.

" We aim to create a centre of sporting excellence in Balbardie Park for the enjoyment of the whole community."

Robin Strang, General Manager of West Lothian Leisure, added: "It will provide a wider leisure experience for the entire family, with not only the new swimming complex but the existing gym, fitness classes, racquet sports arena, football courts (indoor and outdoor), nine-hole

golf course, indoor bowling, soft play area, and kids' activities.

"The main pool is of competition standard and will be ideal for gala and local swimming clubs to help enhance kids' development and the potential of Scottish Swimming. The facilities will be fully accessible by all whether your aim is fun, health and fitness or excellence. Under 5's and over 60's who are resident in West Lothian can swim for free, and free swimming sessions are available for children during school holidays."

**Play parks revamped for local children**  
Children across West Lothian are enjoying upgraded play parks representing an investment of £1.1 million during the year 2009/10.

In total, 20 play parks have been refurbished and upgraded during 2009/10. Work was recently completed at Moncrieff Way (Livingston); Stonebank (Livingston); Langton View (East Calder); Burghmuir (Bathgate); Parklands (Broxburn); Langside Gardens (Polbeth). While work on Wateryett play area (Linlithgow) and Almond Park (Livingston) will be completed soon. Executive councillor for the Environment,

Robert De Bold, commented: "The completion of Wateryett and Almond Park play parks will herald the completion of an investment of more than £1 million in local play parks. With the school holidays approaching, I'm sure that children across West Lothian will warmly welcome their new play facilities."

Dancing queens are Dehli bound

Three talented West Lothian dancers are heading to India, after being chosen to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games.

Nicole Horsburgh, currently attending Broxburn Academy, Vicki Rees, a former Inveralmond CHS pupil and Jade Smith, from Livingston have all been chosen to perform at the Delhi 2010 handover ceremony this autumn.

The Handover Ceremony marks the Flag Handover from Delhi to Glasgow, and includes an eight-minute creative performance to showcase Glasgow and Scotland to the rest of the world. The performance, which will involve a mass choreographed dance routine, will take place in the spectacular Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and

will host a capacity crowd of 60,000 for the Closing Ceremony. It will be beamed live across the Commonwealth to an estimated audience of 1 billion people.

The games take place between 3 - 14 October, with the closing ceremony taking place on the last day.

West Lothian Council held auditions at Broxburn Academy in April to find three dancers to perform at the ceremony.

Jim Walker, Executive councillor for Culture and Leisure, said: Over a dozen dance hopefuls turned out to go through a tough audition process that involved a two-minute solo dance performance and an interview.

"The competition was extremely fierce and I'd like to offer my congratulations to Nicole, Vicki and Jade on winning a place.

"This is certainly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and will showcase the breadth of sporting talent that exists in West Lothian to a worldwide audience."