

Priority sites identified in Linlithgow for new council homes

Linlithgow is a priority for new council led housing projects for the next five years.

But funding restrictions will mean the ever-growing demand will never be fully met either in the town or elsewhere in the county- even with the partnership of Registered Social Landlords (RSL) such as housing associations.

Along with Livingston the county town remains a high demand area for new social housing as the council prepares its latest Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

Councillors on the Housing Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel heard details of the plan from housing officer Gillian Edwards.

She told the meeting: "It is an opportunity for us to set out key investment priorities for affordable housing and it demonstrates how these will be delivered. It's something Scottish Government requires from us annually and it sets the resources which help deliver thies priorities and those of our partners. It is delivered annually and looks forward for the next five years.

"Currently our priorities are to look at our council projects in high demand areas such as Livingston and Linlithgow, and we are hoping to progress more development in the Core Development Areas where we have had a lot of s success

delivering affordable housing already mostly in Winchburgh and Calderwood in East Calder.”

“We want to develop those projects already committed.”

West Lothian Council has prioritised four developments to be developed for council housing in priority areas Livingston and Linlithgow which will increase the council housing stock by at least 128 units. The bulk of these new homes will be in Livingston.

Planned to start next year in Linlithgow is work on 15 new council homes on Deanburn in Linlithgow.

Current sites under construction in the north-east of the county include 100 homes for Wheatley Homes East and Home Group, two of the partner RSLs in Winchburgh.

Sites for more than 2,173 homes have been identified but funding commitments for only 161 to be built. Other provision will come from open market acquisition – the buy back for former council homes.

A further 270 homes for special housing have also been identified.

There has been an 11 % cut in funding for new builds in the next year and no financial commitment from the Scottish Government beyond 2025/26 which makes it difficult for housing officers to draw up detailed proposals.

By Stuart Sommerville Local Democracy Reporter