

# **West Lothian Council “remains committed” to new homes in Livingston**

**West Lothian Council “remains committed” to plans for new homes in the centre of Livingston after the collapse of one of the key contractors involved in the project.**

The new supported housing for young people at a site beside West Lothian College was being built off site by the Ayrshire firm Connect Modular which went into administration at the start of the year.

The use of a modular building system promised the new homes would be ready inside a year from the start of the project last July.

The SNP’s Willie Boyle raised the question at this month’s meeting of the council’s Executive: “Given the news about the collapse what will the impact be on the Livingston project?”.

Head of Housing Julie Whitelaw told the meeting: “It is too early at this stage to be clear about the delivery of the project, but we are working closely with our delivery partner Hub South East.”

Hub South East is the development partner of the council for major construction projects

Connect Modular Ltd, which is part of the Wee House Group, based in Cumnock, collapsed early in the New Year with 48 members of staff made redundant across the company.

The firm builds modular homes provided to housing associations, local authorities, and community trusts across the UK as part of the wider firm.

Construction in Livingston started in July last year, with the homes set to be completed and ready to let by September this year.

The land was a vacant site off Almondvale Crescent behind the Tony Macaroni restaurant and adjacent to West Lothian College's campus.

The supported housing consists of 28 one-bedroom flats, with 16 flats designed with potential for future use as mainstream housing.

Flexible office space will be provided for a maximum of ten staff along with staff overnight accommodation to provide dedicated space and privacy, whilst still being on hand to assist and support the young people.

The affordable housing will provide 20 homes with a mix of two and three-bedroom houses, along with two three-bedroom flats.

A West Lothian Council spokesperson told the Local Democracy Reporting Service after the meeting: "The council has been made aware of the situation regarding Connect Modular. The council is not in a direct contract with Connect Modular. Hub South East, a key delivery partner for the council, appointed Connect Modular for the construction phase of the project.

"The council remains committed to the delivery of new affordable housing in West Lothian and we are working closely with our delivery partner Hub South East to seek clarity on the developing situation and a way forward for the project."

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter