



Midlothian Tenants' Newsletter

Planning to vote in the General Election?

Don't forget: if you want to vote in person on Thursday 4 July, you will need photo ID.

Our council election pages include everything you need to know about the election, including which forms of ID are accepted and deadlines for applying for postal and proxy votes. Find out more at www.midlothian.gov.uk/election



What's on in Midlothian?

Garden competition

If you are proud of your garden; take part in our annual tenant's garden competition.

The closing date is 8 August and prizes will be awarded on 22 August. Nominate yourself, or someone you know by sending a photo with contact details to:

tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk

Please title your email 'Garden Competition'. A housing staff member can visit to take a photo if you are unable to. To request this please call **07502918630** or email: tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk

Categories

- Best Overall Garden
- Tallest Sunflower (Under 15s)

Prizes

- 1st: £25
- 2nd: £15
- Under 15s: £10



rock trust
ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS



The Rock Trust is Scotland's youth homelessness charity – supporting young people for more than thirty years.

Originally launched in Edinburgh, it now helps young people in Glasgow, Perth, Fife, West Lothian, and most recently Midlothian. As more regions in Scotland declare housing emergencies, and more young people find themselves at risk of homelessness, demand for services like these increase.

The charity aims to ensure that every young person in Scotland has access to expert youth specific services to avoid, survive, and move on from homelessness. They advise, educate, and support young people to build the personal skills and resources required to make a positive and healthy transition to adulthood.

This year, Rock Trust has launched a new prevention and housing support service in partnership with Midlothian Council. This will provide better support for young people with housing issues, helping them access and maintain a home. It will also give them the best chance to enter employment, training or further education and therefore live healthier and happier lives.

Sophie found herself homeless and resorted to couch-surfing for a month following a family dispute. Recognising her situation, the Midlothian Council offered housing assistance to her and made a referral to Rock Trust for one-to-one support.

Sophie faces challenges stemming from anxiety and a physical disability, making her more vulnerable. Rock Trust has been instrumental in assisting her in establishing her new tenancy and facilitating access to available funding. As a result, she has been able to secure funding for a new carpet, enhancing her comfort and sense of belonging in her new home.

The Rock Trust project worker is dedicated to arranging Sophie's energy provider, a process that has been long and complex. Efforts are also underway to secure alternative funding for her to acquire essential appliances for her flat.

Sophie (not her real name) says having Rock Trust support is "a weight lifting off her shoulders every time she meets with her project worker".

Commenting on the launch of the partnership project with Midlothian Council, Rock Trust CEO Kate Polson, said: "With youth homelessness cases in Midlothian and across Scotland rising in the past year, it is more important than ever that we reach young people early, before homelessness occurs.

Where this isn't possible, young people need youth-specific support with safe and age-appropriate pathways into housing. We're proud to be expanding our services into the area and are grateful to Midlothian Council for their commitment to the young people in their communities. It is through this kind of cross-collaboration and investment in support that we will turn the tide on Scotland's youth homelessness crisis."

With Rock Trust's support young people will be better able to sustain their tenancies, with focus on: budgeting, finances, health & wellbeing, and community connections. The organisation will also work with young people at risk of homelessness, helping them to stay in their family home and maintain their living situation.

For more information visit www.rocktrust.org/youth-housing-hub or email hello@rocktrust.org Call **0345 222 1425**

Cost of Living Information

Prices for energy, food and bills are rising and many of us are worried about finances. You may find yourself in a position you have never been in before. There are services and advice that can help. Eligibility for these services may depend on your circumstances.



Rent

For help and assistance with rent concerns call Midlothian Council Arrears Department **0131 271 3499** or email arrears@midlothian.gov.uk

We can help:

- Review your current rent balance and help you to set up an affordable repayment plan to stop you getting into more debt.
- Give you advice on eligibility for housing benefit, Universal Credit, and other types of financial assistance.
- Give info. on sources of help and debt management advice.

Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

- You may be able to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) if you have a shortfall between your rent and your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Costs. In some circumstances you can apply for additional help if you can show financial hardship or are under occupying your home.
- Speak to our team to discuss and request an application form.

Universal Credit

If you are of working age, you may be entitled to Universal Credit. To apply for this please visit www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit or contact the DWP on **0800 328 5644**.

As part of Universal Credit, you can ask for your housing costs to be paid directly to the council. You can also ask for your payment to be paid twice per month rather than every month.

Help with budgeting and financial advice

Seek help with benefits by emailing Welfare Rights team WelfareRights@midlothian.gov.uk or call **0131 270 8922**.

Citizens Advice Bureau: 0800 032 7077

Penicuik Citizens Advice Bureau:
bureau@penicuikcab.org.uk or call **01968 675 259**

Dalkeith Citizens Advice Bureau:
bureau@dalkeithcab.org.uk or call **0131 660 1636**

Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund offers two types of grants:

Crisis Grants may help if you are in crisis because of a disaster, like a fire or flood, or an emergency such as losing all your money or having to visit a sick child in hospital.

Community Care may help if you are about to leave care to live on your own in the community, or to help if you are struggling to provide a safe and secure home for your family.

Council Tax

You may be eligible for help with paying Council Tax. Council Tax Reduction (CTR) is a government scheme to help those on low incomes. To claim this, download an application form from: www.midlothian.gov.uk, phone / email Revenues on: **0131 271 3201** or revenues.enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk

You can also contact the Revenues Department to discuss potential entitlements to Council Tax discount, exemption or to discuss charges etc.

Applications can be made online www.midlothian.gov.uk or by phone. For online support or to apply please call **0131 270 5600** (Further eligibility criteria and info. can be found on our website).

Home Energy Scotland

Home Energy Scotland is a free, impartial energy advice service from the Scottish Government. Their advisors can help if you're worried about energy bills or struggling to stay warm at home. The team have the latest information from energy suppliers. They can give practical advice and energy-saving tips to ease pressure on finances.

Contact a friendly advisor free on **0808 808 2282** (Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm)

More information on the cost of living and various supports and payments can be found online at: www.midlothian.gov.uk



Parental Employability Support (PES)

Are you a Midlothian parent who would like to earn more?



PES is a project that was created to support families in Midlothian. We believe that having access to the right skills and training is essential for people who want to increase their in-work development or gain employment. We offer:

- 1:1 support with a Key Worker who can help with: identifying career goals, job searching, interview skills and developing new skills to improve your future career opportunities.
- Support in gaining skills or qualifications to increase your working hours and improve your chances of a pay increase.
- Support in using your skills in a new career, to upskill within your current role or to change direction.

For more information email: CLL@midlothian.gov.uk or call **0131 270 8900**

Roads & Parking Contacts



Disabled parking bays:
disabled.parking@midlothian.gov.uk

Parking enquiries:
parking@midlothian.gov.uk

Road safety concerns:
gillian.bathgate@midlothian.gov.uk