Scottish Housing Regulator
5th Floor
220 High Street
Glasgow
G4 OQW

Date: 27 October 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

East Lothian Council – Annual Assurance Statement

Subject to the highlighted areas detailed below, we can confirm that the Council complies with the regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework. This includes that we:

- Achieve all of the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services.
- Comply with our legal obligations relating to housing and homelessness, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.

The following areas are highlighted as exceptions:

Lead Pipe Water Programme

The Council's Lead Pipe Water Programme involves testing the water supply in Council-owned homes for lead content and replacing supply pipes where necessary. While this programme has been in place for a number of years, it was recently identified that a number of Open Market Acquisition (OMA) properties had not been captured within the original programme scope. A targeted catch-up programme was subsequently initiated to address this gap. Good progress has been made, however, there are currently 10 properties where the process remains incomplete due to repeated unsuccessful attempts to gain access. To ensure the remaining properties are tested and the programme can be brought to a successful conclusion, a programme of compulsory access visits, including forced entry where necessary, will now be progressed.

The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2020

The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2020 came into effect on 01 October 2021. From this date onwards, the Council has been unable to meet its statutory obligations in respect of suitable temporary accommodation provision and remains in breach of the Order. In addition, the Homeless Persons (Suspension of Referrals between Local Authorities) (Scotland) Order 2022 changed the rules on local connection in November 2022 meaning local authorities no longer had the power to refer an applicant to another local authority on the basis of their local connection status. It is in regard to both of these legislative changes that East Lothian Council continues to face challenges regarding the provision of suitable temporary accommodation. The SHR's Engagement Plan in place for East Lothian Council focuses on the provision of temporary accommodation to homeless households and compliance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. The Council continues to work hard to mitigate these breaches through new supply; high numbers of allocations to homeless households; revisions to the Council's Allocations Policy; and conversion of temporary accommodation to permanent housing etc. There has been significant progress during the past year, and there are currently 17 live breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (down from 66 at this time last year), with ongoing efforts and a strategic plan in place to further reduce this figure going forward.

Areas of Specific Assurance

In respect of the areas of specific assurance, as requested in the Scottish Housing Regulator letter of 19 March 2026, the following points are highlighted:

- Data on homes – the Council can provide assurance that it holds comprehensive, good quality and regularly updated information on the construction, components and condition of its housing stock.
- Compliance with the Scottish Government's minimum site standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites – the Council does not currently have any active sites.

General

We confirm that we have seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the level of assurance.

We approved our Annual Assurance Statement at our Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 29 September 2026.

I sign this statement on behalf of East Lothian Council's Audit and Governance Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Allan
Service Manager (Temporary) – Internal Audit