

Midlothian Council

Why we are engaging with Midlothian Council (Midlothian)

We are engaging with Midlothian about its **service quality, services for people who are homeless** and its **site for Gypsy/Travellers**.

To assess the risk to social landlord services we have reviewed and compared the 2017/18 performance of all social landlords to identify the weakest performing landlords. Midlothian is in the bottom quartile for all social landlords in relation to:

- the percentage of tenants who feel the landlord is good at keeping them informed about services and decisions;
- complaints management;
- days to complete non-emergency repairs;
- satisfaction with the repairs service;
- anti-social behaviour cases resolved within local targets;
- average days to re-let properties; and
- percentage of rent collected of rent due.

To assess the risks to people who are homeless we have reviewed and compared the data for all councils from the Scottish Government's 2017/18 national homelessness statistics, the Annual Returns on the Charter and information from our previous engagement with Midlothian. From this we identified areas where we require further information and assurance from Midlothian:

- how people access the service: in Housing Options cases, the low percentage of people Midlothian recorded as presenting for homelessness reasons for whom the council completed a homelessness application.
- Midlothian's assessment of homelessness applications: the percentage where contact was lost before assessment is above the Scottish average.
- temporary accommodation:
 - Midlothian did not make offers of temporary or emergency accommodation on around 44 occasions where it had a duty to make an offer;
 - Midlothian breached the unsuitable accommodation order on around 5 occasions; and
 - the average length of time people spend in temporary accommodation provided by Midlothian is above the Scottish average.
- outcomes for people who are homeless:
 - the number of people waiting for more than one year for an outcome is above the Scottish average;
 - the time it took to discharge its duties to people who are unintentionally homeless from application is above the Scottish average; and
 - the percentage of unintentionally homeless people with whom Midlothian lost contact is above the Scottish average.

Midlothian expects to comply with the Scottish Government's minimum standards for its Gypsy/Traveller site by 31 March 2019. The deadline for compliance was June 2018.

What Midlothian must do

Midlothian must:

- provide us with the information we require in relation to its homelessness service;
- demonstrate to us that it complies with its duty to offer temporary or emergency accommodation and the unsuitable accommodation order; and
- provide us with information about its progress in meeting the minimum standards for its Gypsy/Traveller site.

What we will do

We will:

- review Midlothian's Annual Return on the Charter in June 2019 and the information we require about its homelessness service and meet with Midlothian quarterly to discuss its services;
- monitor Midlothian's compliance with its statutory duties in relation to offers of temporary or emergency accommodation and the unsuitable accommodation order;
- review our engagement with Midlothian when it has finalised its Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan; and
- monitor Midlothian's delivery of the minimum standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites.

Regulatory returns

Midlothian must provide us with the following annual regulatory returns:

- Annual Assurance Statement;
- Annual Return on the Charter; and
- the return on the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

It should also notify us of any material changes to its Annual Assurance Statement, and any tenant and resident safety matter which has been reported to or is being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.



[Read more about Midlothian Council >](#)

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