



Business Bulletin

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 20 January 2022

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Convener Councillor Kate Campbell</p>  <p>Vice Convener Councillor Mandy Watt</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Jim Campbell • Cllr Cammy Day • Cllr David Key • Cllr Kevin Lang • Cllr John McLellan • Cllr Susan Rae • Cllr Alex Staniforth • Cllr Susan Webber • Cllr Norman Work 	<p>Jamie Macrae Committee Officer Tel: 0131 553 8242</p> <p>Sarah Stirling Assistant Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 3009</p>

Recent News

Homeless Applicants and Gold Priority

As part of the EdIndex and homeless assessment processes households with potential mobility needs are referred through to the Home Accessibility Referral Team (HART) who can award gold priority if the household has a need for accessible or ground floor accommodation to meet their needs. There are around 45-50 households per year assessed as homeless who are awarded a gold priority due to their mobility needs.

Most referrals to the HART happen around the time of the homeless assessment however there are cases where individuals may have had a silver priority for some time before their change in circumstances. Silver homeless waiting time of up to six months is now being carried forward automatically onto any gold priority awarded. Cases with waiting time over this amount will be considered individually as part of the referral process to HART to ensure these are managed fairly against other gold property cases with similar needs that may have been waiting some time for suitable housing.

Housing Options - Overcrowding

Households lacking two or more bedrooms to meet their household needs or living in single bedroom homes with children under the age of 16 are awarded a silver priority for bidding under the choice based letting system. To ensure the legal reasonable preference requirements are maintained for certain groups in housing need the additional waiting time for overcrowding is capped at 12 months. There are currently around 1,000 households with this priority on the EdIndex housing register with around half of them actively looking to move.

Even with this priority it is recognised that it can be challenging for overcrowded households to get a suitable move. Contact is therefore being made with overcrowded applicants to make sure they are aware of the range of potential housing options that may be

Background

Contact:

jennifer.hunter@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 7532

Contact:

jennifer.hunter@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 7532

Recent News

suitable for them. The housing options information for applicants will include:

- Information on the online [mutual exchange](#) register that is free for existing tenants of the EdIndex landlords;
- Directing applicants to the [supply and demand](#) information on the EdIndex website; and
- Information on mid-market rent and the private rented sector.

Edinburgh Living Annual Update

Officers provide an annual report on Edinburgh Living each year to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee. Due to the timing of the annual audited accounts, Edinburgh Living's first annual report was submitted for noting in January 2021 and covered the financial year 2019, resulting in a 13 month gap between the end of the year and the report. To make sure that reporting to Committee is more up to date and better aligned with Edinburgh Living's own governance, annual reports will now be delivered each March and report on performance in the previous year. This business bulletin provides highlights for 2020. Further detail will be provided in the 2021 Annual Report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee in March 2022 and referred to Government, Risk and Best Value Committee in line with existing governance arrangements.

By the end of December 2020, Edinburgh Living had an additional 112 homes under management, bringing the total to 243. The annual Financial Statements were audited by Azets and set out an underlying profit of £125,000 for the year. Delivery of homes slowed during the year due to the global pandemic and lettings ceased across the industry in line with national restrictions. This protected both staff and members of the public. Twelve homes that remained empty at the beginning of the pandemic were made available for use by the Council's Temporary Accommodation service which avoided homes remaining empty and supported the city-wide

Background

Contact:

hazel.ferguson@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 7968

Recent News	Background
<p>initiative to reduce the number of people in shared accommodation at the height of the pandemic.</p> <p>At the start of the year, the key goals for 2021 included a focus on delivering another 100 homes in to the LLP and provision of services to our tenants as as restrictions changed.</p>	
<p><u>Meadowbank Masterplan Award Wins</u></p> <p>The Meadowbank masterplan has been awarded two industry accolades for the masterplan that sets out the vision for the future mixed use development of the site surrounding the new Sports Centre.</p> <p>The project was awarded the Masterplanning Award by the Edinburgh Architectural Association awards at a ceremony on the 28 October 2021. This was followed by the success in the AJ Architectural Journal awards as the winner of the Masterplan category, an achievement for showing the vision of the development.</p> <p>A procurement process is now well underway to appoint a development partner to work with the Council to deliver on the vision that has been set out.</p>	<p><u>Contact:</u></p> <p>tricia.hill@edinburgh.gov.uk</p> <p>0131 529 3954</p>
<p><u>Update on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Acquisitions and Disposals Strategy</u></p> <p>The HRA Acquisitions and Disposals (A&D) strategy was originally approved at Health, Social Care and Housing Committee on 26 January 2016. The overarching objective of the strategy is to increase supply and reduce ongoing management and maintenance costs by consolidating HRA assets. Homes are purchased where full block consolidation could be achieved and homes are sold to divest from blocks where the Council is the minority owner.</p> <p>The programme is self-funding, with the proceeds of homes sold being used to purchase homes. Scottish Government grant funding is also levered in to support the purchase of homes for social rent. Since its implementation, 152 homes have been purchased and</p>	<p><u>Contact:</u></p> <p>lisa.mallon@edinburgh.gov.uk</p> <p>0131 529 6291</p>

Recent News

94 homes have been sold (as of October 2021). This is a net increase of 58 social rented homes. This has led to 71 blocks where the Council has divested its interest and 46 blocks where the Council has further consolidated its ownership.

In June 2018, Housing and Economy Committee approved the Mixed Tenure Improvement Strategy (MTIS) which set out steps to tackle mixed tenure repairs in previously Council-owned estates including proposals for a revised Scheme of Assistance to provide more flexible support to owners to meet the costs of repairs and improvements to their homes and a dedicated Mixed Tenure Delivery Team to engage with residents, liaise with owners and to support delivery of mixed tenure projects. The mixed tenure improvement pilot is being taken forward in the Murrayburn/Hailesland and Dumbryden areas, to assist this. 39 homes have been purchased in the MTIS pilot area with a potential 31 sales currently in the pipeline (as of October 2021).

In October 2021, Finance and Resource Committee approved the expansion of the A&D purchase criteria to include homes in blocks where the Council owns 50% or more. The expansion will support the purchase of 270 homes over the next three years to be used as temporary accommodation and get people out of unsuitable accommodation.

Young Person's Guarantee Small Grants update

Following approval of Young Person's Guarantee small grants funding at committee on 4 November 2021, officers are delighted to report that all projects have begun to promote their activities and accept referrals from young people.

Following agreement that the fund could be re-opened to organisations to deliver activities between January and March 2022, eight further applications were received. These were scored by a panel of Local Employability Partnership (LEP) members including officers from the Council, Skills Development Scotland, NHS Lothian and Capital City Partnership, with two being recommended for award and subsequently

Background

Contact:

Elin.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 469 2801

Recent News

approved by the Executive Director of Place under delegated authority as agreed by committee.

These were: **Volunteer Edinburgh** to support four young people, who are currently being supported through Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), for further barrier removal and support to progress into volunteering opportunities, and to **Into Work** to support young people with complex barriers, including disability, to progress into training or employment.

All of the projects will be evaluated prior to the end of the financial year with recommendations made as to whether provision should be continued, dependent on future funding awards from Scottish Government.

Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (2022/23)

On 3 June 2021, the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee directed that the Council put 10 projects forward to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF). Of these 10 projects, three were withdrawn by the respective project managers prior to submission, with officers ultimately putting seven projects forward. Of these seven projects, two were invited to make a stage two bid to the RCGF. In December 2021, the Council was notified that both stage bids had been successful. The successful projects are:

- Macmillan Hub (awarded £2,000,000): the development of a new multi-use centre at Macmillan Square in Muirhouse/Pennywell entailing the partial replacement of an existing two-storey community arts centre and library with a new four-storey community hub incorporating a nursery, library and skills hub, community arts centre, and six affordable homes, in partnership with the charity North Edinburgh Arts.
- West Shore Studios: (awarded £1,730,000): the refurbishment of a 1970s industrial unit at 20 West Shore Road in the Granton Waterfront into a creative

Background

Contact:

david.cooper@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 6233

enterprise and third sector hub, in partnership with the charity Edinburgh Palette.

Scottish Government's Draft Rented Sector Strategy Consultation

On 20 December 2021 the Scottish Government published a Draft Rented Sector Strategy Consultation – 'A New Deal for Tenants'. The consultation runs until 15 April 2022, and seeks views on how to improve accessibility, affordability choices and standards across the whole rented sector. [A New Deal for Tenants - Draft Strategy Consultation Paper - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/12/A-New-Deal-for-Tenants-Draft-Strategy-Consultation-Paper-gov.scot). It is anticipated that the Final Strategy will be published for consultation by the end of 2022 and new legislation will be brought forward in 2023.

Scottish Government states that the Draft Strategy is an important first step in a phased approach to introduce reform during the course of this Parliament. Key actions identified to deliver improvements include:

- Delivering a new deal for private rented tenants to put them on a more equal footing with social rented tenants, through the introduction of a new Housing Bill in the second year of this Parliament;
- Establishing a regulator for the private rented sector that will enforce defined standards and considering the role of the existing Regulator covering social rented housing – through legislation by the end of this Parliament;
- Implementing a national system of rent controls for the private rented sector, whilst exploring what further action we can take to ensure rents in the social rented sector are affordable by 2025;
- Creating a new Housing Standard covering all homes; and
- Regulating to set minimum standards for energy efficiency and zero emissions heating.

Contact:

lisa.mallon@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 6291

The Story Never Ends Campaign

Forever Edinburgh's [The Story Never Ends](#) campaign promotes Edinburgh to domestic overnight visitors, targeting families and pre-nesters in Scotland and older independents in England and specifically targets Food Loving Culturists and Engaged Sightseers.

Since the last update in July 2021, the Council and partners have successfully secured a further £90,000 from VisitScotland's Market Readiness Fund to extend the campaign over winter (October 2021 – March 2022). The winter campaign capitalises on Edinburgh's fascinating history by curating and sharing inspiring facts and stories that are distinct to the city.

Campaign content is organised into three winter themes with a series of fresh seasonal blog content being created and published, all featuring bookable visitor products. The winter themes are:

1. **Dark Edinburgh**, focussing on Edinburgh's haunted past by featuring spooky attractions, visitor experiences and haunted venues to differentiate the capital from competitor destinations;
2. **Entertaining Edinburgh (winter Sparkles)**, which positions Edinburgh as the UK's top festive city break destination by raising awareness of the city's winter programme and festive offer (Edinburgh's Christmas, seasonal food and drink menus, 'made in Edinburgh' shopping, winter deals and events, as well as the city's festive cultural programme); and
3. **The Next Chapter**, that highlights new reasons to choose Edinburgh by raising awareness of, and inspiring bookings to, new businesses opening in Edinburgh in 2022.

As part of the winter campaign, we also launched [Resident Rewards Edinburgh](#), a new initiative offering high value monthly 'Rewards', exclusive to residents. Each month, a new Resident Reward will be made available to residents so they can enjoy their city for less. Rewards secured so far include 50% off tickets to attractions, tours and experiences as well as discounted

Contact:

Elin.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 469 2801

Recent News

Background

meals in local restaurants and there is an ambition to continue to offer this beyond the life of the campaign. New [Resident Reward promotional film](#).

As well as engaging residents in the city's cultural offer, Resident Rewards hopes to build advocacy among citizens, increase resident generated content, build civic pride and demonstrate to citizens that the city appreciates their loyalty and custom.

So far, activity has secured coverage in gold-tier media titles with total readership in the billions. Activity outputs include a new [Dog-Friendly Edinburgh](#) video and a competition prize offering a private tour of Edinburgh with multi award-winning author, Ian Rankin OBE.

So far, the The Story Never Ends campaign has delivered the following:

April-December

- 180k pageviews to www.edinburgh.org/storyneverends microsite and over 2k referrals to bookable products;
- 17k Resident Reward pageviews in its first month;
- 33k video views at 100%;
- 13.2m impressions across Social, YouTube, Search and Display;
- +180 pieces of press coverage;
- Nine new destination promotional videos of varying lengths ([The Story Never Ends video playlist](#));
- 1.4bn online readership reach in quality titles (national and international); and
- +200 high-res images of Edinburgh for city and partner promotional activity.