

Livingston

West Lothian

'Mark Two' New Town – Designated 16 April 1962

With the redevelopment of Glasgow predicted to be so advanced by 1965 as to require 1,000 houses per year more than could be accommodated in the existing three Scottish New Towns and 'overspill areas', Livingston was designated in 1962 to provide a new focus for industrial activity in Scotland's central belt and to link the industrial west with centres of expansion in the Forth basin, while revitalising a coal- and shale-mining area through modern industry. Having survived successive national and local economic downturns, Livingston has emerged as a major commercial, social and cultural focus within an area that has benefited greatly from substantial inward economic investment. It now forms the administrative centre of West Lothian and is the primary retail centre for the area and a key location for employment.



Key facts:

- **Location:** 25 kilometres west of Edinburgh, 50 kilometres east of Glasgow, served by two railway stations to the north and south of the town.
- **2011 Census population:** 50,296, in 22,537 households.¹
- **Local authority:** West Lothian Council.
- **Local Plan status:** West Lothian Local Plan (adopted 2009). A new Local Development Plan is in progress – *West Lothian Local Development Plan: Main Issues Report* was published in August 2014.

New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 16 April 1962.
- **Designated area:** 2,708 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 70,000 (population at designation: 2,000).
- **Development Corporation:** Designated to accommodate planned 'overspill' from Glasgow and regenerate its surrounding sub-region by attracting new, rising industries. The masterplan had six principles: create a place of distinctive character; conserve and create good landscape; build to high standards of residential and industrial layout; secure a diverse and balanced population; develop without a requirement for self-containment (the first New Town to have a plan for 80 square miles around its boundary); and control the motor vehicle to allow pedestrian insulation. Development Corporation wound up 31 December 1996.

Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Livingston that are owner-occupied (61.8%) is 2% below the UK average and 3% higher than the UK New Towns average. 26.4% of households in Livingston are in social rent – 5% and 8% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively.
- The West Lothian local authority area ranks 11 out of 32 in the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (1 = most deprived).

- The 2011 Census reported that the 'general health' of Livingston residents is above the UK New Towns and UK averages. 61.4% stated they enjoyed 'very good' health – 14% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages. Other categories are broadly in line with the UK New Towns and UK averages.

Employment/economic profile:

- Livingston forms the administrative centre of West Lothian, is the primary retail centre for the area, and is a key location for employment. The Centre (Livingston's retailing centre at Almondvale Boulevard) serves as a sub-regional retail centre for Edinburgh and the Lothians.
- Significant opportunities for economic growth at Livingston have been identified.

Development Corporation legacy:

- With its comprehensive network of traffic-free paths as part of a network of greenways and along some main road corridors, Livingston is the exception to a general shortage of safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian routes between and within towns in West Lothian.
- The Deans South housing estate, one of the first built in Livingston, is now in need of significant redevelopment.

Key issues for the future:

- Continued growth – Livingston has been subject to significant housebuilding in the last ten years, but there is still a need for affordable housing and for some smaller sites to be brought forward.
- Estate renewal – comprehensive redevelopment of early housing at the Deans South estate.
- Promoting and maintaining the employment base.
- Tackling areas of social deprivation.
- Maintaining the town's status as a sub-regional shopping centre.

¹ Locality 2010 area for Livingston used (2012 General Register Office for Scotland estimate is 54,431)

Did you know?

Livingston is at the heart of Scotland's 'Silicon Glen', and high-tech industry flourished and helped the growth of the town until the 1990s.