

# ELTRP UPDATE



Over the last few months ELTRP has been working with East Lothian Council to look at this year's rent consultation process. Through this partnership, working ELTRP representatives on the Housing Revenue subgroup wanted to ensure that all tenants got the opportunity to give their views in a variety of ways and that tenants would get the best outcome possible. East Lothian Council decided to consult their tenants on a 2% rent increase.

Through their involvement, ELTRP influenced the consultation process in the following ways:

- ♦ agreed the consultation letter, questionnaire, and approach to consultation through participation in a joint rent consultation working group with East Lothian Council
- ♦ encouraged local groups and Registered Tenants Organisations (RTO) to consider the potential increase and formulate a response to the Council
- ♦ promoted the consultation through ELTRP social media, website and local radio
- ♦ held a consultation event to which all their members were invited. An invitation to the event was also included in the ELC mailout to all their tenants.



## ELTRP Rent Consultation Event

The Rent Consultation event was held as part of their Burns Supper on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 via zoom. The event consisted of an input from ELC Service Manager James Coutts, an opportunity for discussion in small groups and a poll to gather attendees' views on the rent consultation. Some of the general feedback at the meeting included the following comments:

- ♦ 2% is good, thought it would have been a 5% increase, also good that ELC have taken on board the impacts of coronavirus with some people losing their jobs and being furloughed.
- ♦ 3% less is available to the council so would be interested to hear what impact this will have on services
- ♦ 2% is better than 5% and it takes into account that some people have suffered because of the virus and perhaps lost their jobs or had their income reduced
- ♦ As a tenant – I got an email and have already completed the survey, thought it was a quick way of doing it
- ♦ Good for people of all ages as some can do online but those who cannot still have the option to fill in a paper survey
- ♦ What effect will a lower % increase have on the services we receive
- ♦ Good that the council are consulting
- ♦ Maybe should have a rent freeze

### Views from attendees

The general comments suggest that people think that 2% is fair. However, some of the attendees did think it was the wrong time for an increase and a rent freeze should take place this year.

## ELTRP then ran a poll and the result were as follow:

- ♦ 87.5% were happy with the level of consultation
- ♦ 81% thought the rent they pay is good value
- ♦ 69% thought a 2% rise was fair
- ♦ 94% agreed with the modernisation and new build programme
- ♦ 25% said their situation been made worse by COVID



## East Lothian Council have decided to freeze rent increase for the coming year

*ELTRP are delighted with the council's decision to adopt a rent freeze for this year. It will provide a welcome boost for many tenants and their families in these difficult times.*

ELTRP staff and EC members continue to work from home and meet online, if you need to speak to a member of the ELTRP team we can be contacted as follows:



Patsy – pking@tis.org.uk or 07584 474934  
Alex – tenantspanel@hotmail.com or 07396 696890  
Jim - jimherron1@aol.com  
Sue - scairns@eastlothian.gov.uk or 07946 449362

Website - [www.eltrp.co.uk](http://www.eltrp.co.uk)

Twitter - @EastLothianTRP

Facebook - @EastLothianTRP

# Local Group Information

 **Haddington East Tenants' and Residents' Association**  
Promoting the Community's Right to Get Involved



Haddington East Tenants and Residents Association is happy to announce that they have been awarded a total amount of £2500 to support their new and innovative 'Buddying Project'. Both Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership and Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership have awarded their 'Buddying Project' £1250 each to enable this project to support people experiencing mental health issues across these areas.

In recent times the group have been struggling to meet due to the lockdown, but have been getting and giving support to each other by telephone one by one. They are all keen to be able to meet again when allowed and are delighted that the new head Steven Johnson - Deputy Head Teacher at Knox Academy Meadow Park School has agreed they can continue to use the annex of his school when the rules allow. They are so pleased they will get back to their original venue which they much valued. Anyone wishing to find out more please contact [haddpeerproject@gmail.com](mailto:haddpeerproject@gmail.com) or Alan Dunton 01630822533.



## 'Buddying' Project



The Mental Health Peer Support Project is a unique resource for mental health support and due to the constant changes in Guidance, they have developed a 'buddying' programme for people to meet in 'pairs' on a rotational basis in order to continue to keep people engaged, reduce isolation and loneliness, encourage going outside of their home in order to help keep their mental health as 'good' as possible. The group always adhere to the Government Guidance around Covid-19 and adapt accordingly. The group promote 'acceptance' and being non judgemental of each other and others'; and how all of the community can be supportive of each other whether they have a mental health issue/illness or not.

Here are some of the comments by participants:

"It is a reason to get up in the morning", "it is a safe space to go and just be", "I have learned how to cook", "it definitely improves my own mental health", "made new friends", "stops me from being depressed".

Covid-19 has had a very disruptive effect on the group and they have worked very hard to overcome the impact it has had on the functioning of the group and the mental health of individual members. The 'buddying project' is a programme that has been developed that allows the group to meet as peers to support and be supported by one another, addressing issues of isolation and loneliness, with the capacity to adapt quickly to changing Covid-19 threat levels and mixing and distancing advice. We have run trials of different aspects of the programme and these have been popular and successful in achieving our objectives.

This is really exciting for HEIRA and the Mental Health Peer Support Group to take forward in 2021 and beyond.

## Upcoming meetings

### Beach Lane Tenants & Residents Association



**Open meeting**  
**Thursday, 4th March 2021**  
**7pm Zoom**

The group will review goals they have achieved in 2020 and discuss their priorities moving forward.

For more information and joining instructions, please contact the group at [beachlanetra@gmail.com](mailto:beachlanetra@gmail.com)



### East Lothian TRA wide meeting

East Lothian TRA wide meeting will take place on Thursday, 11th March 2021 at 6.30pm via zoom.

Please stay safe and be assured of our very best wishes at this time from all at



east lothian tenants and residents panel