

About You	
1.	<b>Your Name</b> Catherine Duns
2.	<b>Your Employer / Organisation</b> Midlothian Council
3.	<b>Your Position</b> Senior Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Worker
4.	<b>Your E-Mail at Work</b> catherine.duns@midlothian.gov.uk
5.	<b>Your Role in the Project</b> Catherine had various responsibilities within the project. Her roles included acting as a key contact for all parties involved, monitoring the project, evaluating how it is being administered, and signposting within the project.
An Introduction to the Project	
6.	<b>Which partner organisations are involved in delivering the project (local authorities, organisations, community groups, etc.)?</b> Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce, Midlothian Council's partner organisations, a Mayfield-based private laundrette, Ladywood Leisure Centre.
7.	<b>Does the project have specific aims and/or objectives? <i>If so, please add to the box below.</i></b> The Midlothian Wash and Dry Laundry Service aimed to mitigate the effects of the cost-of-living crisis by providing free laundry services to those in need.
8.	<b>Does the project have a title? <i>If so, please add to the box below.</i></b> Midlothian Wash and Dry Laundry Service
9.	<b>When did it start?</b> The outdoor laundry service started in 31/12/2022. The private laundry service started in 04/2023.
10.	<b>Has it finished? Is it on-going? Does it have an end date? <i>Please add dates to the box below.</i></b> No longer active. The outdoor laundry service initially occurred from 31/12/2022–31/03/2023. Both services continued through Winter 2023/24, until 31/03/2024.
11.	<b>Which groups of people, if any, are targeted by the service provided?</b> Any individual or family in Midlothian who struggled to afford to wash and dry laundry due to the cost-of-living crisis.
12.	<b>How many people have been served by the project?</b> Approximately 732 loads of laundry were completed by the private laundry provider. For the outdoor laundry facility, 351 tokens have been distributed to 47 residents to date.

13.	<b>Where is it delivered?</b>	
	Midlothian	
<b>The Initial Idea</b>		
14.	<b>Who had the initial idea?</b>	
	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce	
15.	<b>How did the idea for the project come about?</b>	
	The initial idea came about as a response to the cost-of-living and energy crises. Many Midlothian households struggled to afford to use their washing machine or heat their home to dry laundry.	
16.	<b>Did you draw on any published reports / papers / research evidence or practice you had seen elsewhere to inform your plans?</b> <i>If so, please add details to the box below.</i>	
	Midlothian Council primarily listened to the needs of local communities and households to inform their initial plans rather than solely external evidence. Residents struggled to afford to run a wash or put their heating on to dry clothes. Recent research endorsed by Midlothian's Cost of Living Taskforce supported the extension of the project. For instance, 17,000–21,000 Midlothian residents cannot afford to heat their homes and 28,000–34,000 adults are worried about energy bills.	
17.	<b>Who was involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce	
18.	<b>Were those with lived experience of poverty involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
	Yes, Midlothian Council responded to the needs and testimonials of those with lived experience. This inspired the initial idea for the project.	
19.	<b>What funding was used, if any, to support the development of the initial idea of the project?</b>	
	Local Authority COVID Economic Recovery (LACER) funding was used to support the development of the initial idea.	
20.	<b>What in-kind resources were needed when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
	<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection and delivery of laundry from a private provider.</li> <li>• Tokens for outdoor wash and dry facilities that can be used at any time.</li> </ul>
	<b>Equipment</b>	N/A
	<b>Local Knowledge</b>	N/A
	<b>Food and Drink</b>	N/A
21.	<b>What, if any, barriers did you have to overcome when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	

	The primary barrier that was overcome when developing the project involved negotiating coverage expansion, particularly to the Dalkeith and Woodburn areas. No barriers have arisen with the outdoor Wash and Dry Laundry Service in West Midlothian.	
22.	<b>What, if anything, was helpful when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
	Lived experience testimonials from locals and the support of the Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce were helpful when developing the initial idea of the project. They highlighted the need for a laundry service as energy bills have skyrocketed due to the cost-of-living crisis.	
23.	<b>Did you conduct a feasibility study? (if yes, please describe what you did and what you concluded)</b>	
	No.	
24.	<b>What was the timeline between the initial idea and the start of the project?</b>	
	The initial idea coincided with the start of the cost of living and energy crises, and the project began in December 2022. There was a bit of a lag because of the procurement process, so it took slightly longer to get the project running than was hoped.	
25.	<b>Who made the decision to introduce the project?</b>	
	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce	
<b>Pilot Project</b>		
26.	<b>Did you run a pilot project?</b>	
	No.	
<b>The On-going Development of the Project</b>		
27.	<b>Has the project changed through time?</b>	
	Yes.	
28.	<b>In what ways has it changed?</b>	
	<b>Scale</b>	-
	<b>Location</b>	The private laundry delivery service has expanded to cover Dalkeith and Woodburn.
	<b>Population</b>	-
	<b>The Offer</b>	-
29.	<b>What were the reason for these changes?</b>	
	The reason for these changes was to increase support for Midlothian residents in the winter months and to support Midlothian's priority areas in particular. The outdoor laundry service has not changed.	
<b>Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users</b>		
30.	<b>Is there a referral process? If yes, how does the referral process work (self-referral, referred by other agencies, identified from an existing database)</b>	

	Rather than formal referrals, contact details for the private laundry service were provided by Midlothian Council's partner organisations. Service users reached out to the delivery service themselves to reduce the sharing of personal data between organisations. The Council's partner organisations distributed tokens for the outdoor laundry service to their service users.
31.	<b>How are potential clients made aware of the project?</b>
	Midlothian-based local organisations and professionals made potential clients aware of the project.
32.	<b>How do you keep in touch with service users? Do your service users have a preferred method of contact?</b>
	Communication was generally informal between service users and professionals. The preferred method of contact was word-of-mouth. Midlothian Council did not proactively contact previous service users.
<b>Working With People with Lived Experience of Poverty</b>	
33.	<b>Are those with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>delivering</u> the project? <i>If so, please describe below.</i></b>
	No.
34.	<b>Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>managing</u> the project, <u>supervision</u> within the project, or project <u>governance</u>? <i>If so, please describe below.</i></b>
	No.
35.	<b>Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>any other aspect</u> of the project? <i>If so, please describe below.</i></b>
	Those with lived experience provided feedback to Midlothian Council. Some of the volunteers who distributed the tokens for the outdoor service have lived experience of poverty.
<b>Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working</b>	
36.	<b>Who has overall responsibility for the project?</b>
	Midlothian Council, Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce
37.	<b>Is this the only responsibility of the person managing the project? <i>If not please describe the manager's wider roles and responsibilities.</i></b>
	No. Midlothian Council has various other responsibilities regarding the welfare of its residents. Midlothian's Cost of Living Taskforce was set up as a response to the cost-of-living crisis, with the Wash and Dry Laundry Service being just one aspect of their work to tackle poverty in Midlothian. The Taskforce distributed LACER funds to several related projects and makes recommendations to the Council. Overall, mitigating the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Midlothian households.
38.	<b>Is there a Project Steering or Advisory Group or Organising Committee? <i>If yes, who is involved in this and how does it work.</i></b>
	Midlothian's Cost of Living Taskforce have a committee with elected members who supported the Wash and Dry Laundry Service. Midlothian Council monitor and collect data and report back to them. The Council monitor instances of support, how much funding is left, and geographical gaps, for instance.

39.	<b>If there is no Steering Group, what governance arrangements are in place to review strategy and performance?</b>
	N/A
<b>Staffing</b>	
40.	<b>Are there any paid staff? <i>Please describe their role and their contribution.</i></b>
	Yes, the private laundry delivery service was comprised solely of paid staff. They pick up, wash and dry, and deliver the laundry. The partner organisations distributing the tokens for the outdoor service were also comprised of paid staff.
41.	<b>Are volunteers involved in delivering the project? <i>Please describe their role and their contribution.</i></b>
	Some of Midlothian Council's partner organisations have volunteers who help distribute the tokens, but managers monitor this.
<b>Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements</b>	
42.	<b>Is the project part of a wider anti-poverty strategy? <i>If so, please give details.</i></b>
	Yes. The project is part of the Midlothian Council's broader anti-poverty strategy. It is included in the Cost-of-Living Taskforce's budget and is one of several practical support measures organised to alleviate poverty in the area.
43.	<b>Is the project part of any other strategy? <i>If so, please give details.</i></b>
	No.
44.	<b>Is the project delivering a service that is a statutory commitment. <i>If so, please give details.</i></b>
	No.
<b>Funding</b>	
45.	<b>Who funds the project? <i>Please give details.</i></b>
	LACER funding was used.
46.	<b>How is the project funded?</b>
	The Midlothian Cost of Living Taskforce allocated LACER funds to the Wash and Dry Laundry Service.
47.	<b>What is the budget for the project / how much does it cost to deliver?</b>
	The budget was £33,000. No additional funding was required for the extension of the project. £3,500 worth of tokens were purchased in March 2023 for the outdoor laundry service, with 351 tokens being distributed to date. For the private laundry service, 732 washes were completed which cost £7,500.
48.	<b>Is future funding based on pre-agreed outcomes or outputs being delivered? <i>If so, please give details</i></b>
	Yes, although they had enough funding left to continue with the Winter 2023/24 roll-out.
<b>Resources</b>	
	<b>What in-kind resources do you need to deliver your project?</b>

49.	<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor laundry machines in West Midlothian.</li> <li>Private laundry facilities based in East Midlothian.</li> </ul>
	<b>Equipment</b>	N/A
	<b>Local Knowledge</b>	N/A
	<b>Food and Drink</b>	N/A
50.	<b>For each of the in-kind resources listed above, who provides it?</b>	
	<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ladywood Leisure Centre provide the outdoor service.</li> <li>A private, local laundrette based in East Midlothian.</li> </ul>
	<b>Equipment</b>	N/A
	<b>Local Knowledge</b>	N/A
	<b>Food and Drink</b>	N/A
51.	<b>Did you have to buy or develop new IT systems, software (databases, apps) or technology to deliver your project? <i>Please describe below.</i></b>	
	No.	
52.	<b>Was additional staff training required to deliver your project? <i>If so, please describe.</i></b>	
	Yes, additional training on data protection and impact assessments was provided by Midlothian Council. Adult and child protection briefings were also given in case of any vulnerable clients.	
<b>Formal Monitoring and Evaluation</b>		
53.	<b>What information, if any, do you collect about your project?</b>	
	<b>Number of users</b>	Number of users and washes were recorded.
	<b>Profile of users</b>	Target groups, geographical areas, and the demographic of households were recorded to monitor trends.
	<b>Experience of users</b>	Feedback was recorded.
	<b>Anything else</b>	N/A
54.	<b>How often is data collected? Who collects the data?</b>	
	Data was continually collected by Midlothian Council.	
55.	<b>Do you have baseline data on what things were like before the start of the project or before users started the project? <i>Please describe the type of baseline data that you have.</i></b>	
	Midlothian Council experienced little demand for services like the Wash and Dry Laundry Service before the cost-of-living crisis. As a council, however, data is collected and reported annually to inform practical support measures such as the Service. Examples of this are reports such as the Profile of Midlothian 2022 and Single Midlothian Plan 2023–27.	
56.	<b>Do you produce an annual report? <i>Please provide details of what this includes.</i></b>	
	No.	
57.	<b>In what ways, if at all, do you use the data that you collect to adapt the service that you provide?</b>	

	Midlothian Council identified a gap in coverage (Dalkeith and Woodburn) and expanded the service geographically.
58.	<b>Have you employed an external organisation to formally evaluate your project? <i>If yes, please provide details.</i></b>
	No.
59.	<b>If yes, in what ways, if at all, have you used the External Project evaluation to adapt the service that you provide.</b>
	N/A
60.	<b>Do you intend to employ an external organisation to evaluate the service that you provide in the future? <i>If yes, please provide details.</i></b>
	No.
<b>Impact</b>	
61.	<b>What difference has the project made?</b>
	The Midlothian Wash and Dry Laundry Service positively impacted the well-being of service users by reducing laundry-related expenses for households in need of support. It reduced stress for those worried about high energy bills or households with children needing clean school uniforms. It was also helpful for those experiencing a short-term crisis; for instance, the private laundry delivery service has benefited those coming out of the hospital. In general, the project reduced anxiety and removed the everyday strain from many Midlothian households. For example, recipients report relief after not waiting several days for clothing to dry during colder months.
62.	<b>How do you know this? What evidence demonstrates impact (metrics, interviews, feedback)?</b>
	Lived experience feedback demonstrates this. Letters and leaflets were issued to service users to inform them that the service was ending and to ask for feedback. Included were Money Matters leaflets.
63.	<b>To what extent have the aims of the project been achieved?</b>
	According to the feedback provided by service users, the project's aim to mitigate the effects of the cost-of-living crisis by providing free laundry services was achieved. It also had a positive effect on service users' well-being and mental health.
64.	<b>How, if at all, has the demand for the service provided by XXX changed since it started?</b>
	Demand for the service was seasonal. There was less demand over the summer months as energy bills tend to be lower and it is easier to dry clothes when it is warmer.
65.	<b>If yes, has the project had the capacity to meet these changing conditions and demand? <i>Please describe and explain below.</i></b>
	Yes. Midlothian Council closely monitored the project over the 2022/23 winter months. This resulted in the project's extension to 2023/24. The Council therefore had the capacity to meet these changing conditions again.
66.	<b>Has the project had any unexpected or unintended outcomes? <i>If so, whether positive or negative, please describe.</i></b>

	Yes. One unexpected outcome is the positive impact the project had on service users' mental health and well-being. Midlothian's Wash and Dry Laundry Service reduced anxiety and stress for those experiencing fuel poverty.	
67.	<b>In your opinion, is the project having an impact on tackling poverty? If so, please describe in what ways.</b>	
	Yes. The project alleviated fuel poverty for those in need, even if it was sometimes just short-term relief. This had a knock-on effect in that it reduced money-related stress and anxiety in service users.	
<b>Learning from Experience</b>		
68.	<b>What is working well?</b>	
	Midlothian's Wash and Dry Laundry Service ran smoothly and helped those in need. Those who received tokens for the outdoor laundry facilities were able to use the service anytime they wanted to. The private laundry delivery service succeeded because their staff collected and delivered the laundry to each household. The Service was strengthened further after expanding geographically.	
69.	<b>What, if anything, is working less well?</b>	
	The project's only potential drawback was that households had to transport their laundry to and from the outdoor laundry themselves, which potentially added additional expenses and hurdles despite suiting some service users. The Council's partner organisations provided additional support to overcome these barriers.	
70.	<b>What are the key learning points that you'd like to share with other practitioners? For example, is there anything that you would do differently?</b>	
	One key learning point is understanding how to balance demand with what can be feasibly delivered. How to make those in need aware of a project like this without publicly advertising to manage demand is tricky. Making services as accessible as possible for households in need is also essential.	
71.	<b>What plans do you have to develop or expand the project in the future?</b>	
	Because both services worked well and ran smoothly in 2022/23, the project stayed the same (with the exception of an increase in scale) during the 2023/24 roll-out.	
72.	<b>How easily do you think your project could be replicated in another setting?</b>	
	The Midlothian Wash and Dry Laundry Service could easily be replicated in another setting if adequate support exists. The private laundry service is quite a clear model that can be replicated with other businesses in other areas.	
<b>Social Media</b>		
73.	<b>Please enter social media contact details and weblinks to supporting documents or resources below:</b>	
	<b>Web Pages</b>	N/A
	<b>Facebook</b>	N/A
	<b>Instagram</b>	N/A
	<b>Twitter</b>	N/A
	<b>Tik-Tok</b>	N/A
<b>GDPR Consent (Add yes or no in the box)</b>		



<b>I give my permission to be named in the tackling poverty locally directory and associated public outputs.</b>	Yes
<b>I give permission for our organisation to be named in the tackling poverty locally directory and associated public outputs.</b>	Yes
<b>I give permission for me to be contacted by directory users.</b>	Yes
<b>I am willing to be contacted if more details are required</b>	Yes