

Influencing Statutory Agencies

Midlothian Voluntary Action has a long history of working in partnership with Midlothian Council. This leaflet looks at how community groups and voluntary organisations in Midlothian have made their views known over the past four decades.

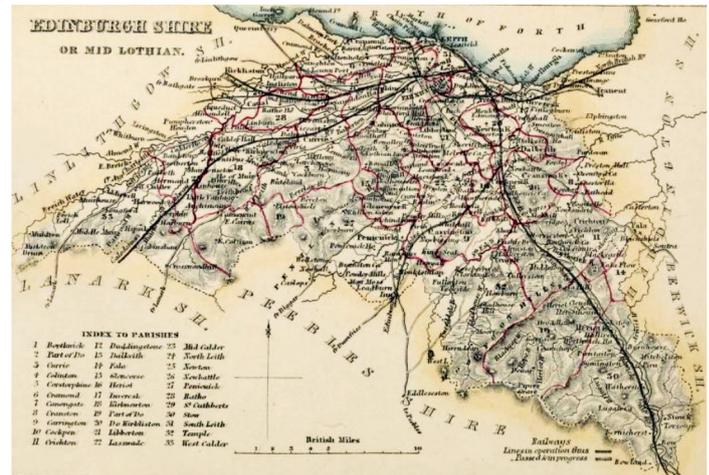
Prior to 1974

Edinburghshire was a county constituency at Westminster from 1708 to 1801 and from 1801 to 1918. After the Representation of the People Act 1918, the area of the Edinburghshire constituency was mostly divided between the Midlothian and Peebles Northern and Peebles and Southern Midlothian constituencies. By this date, the county of Edinburgh had been renamed as the county of Midlothian.

Modern Government in Midlothian

The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 abolished the counties and burghs as local government units, replacing them with regions and districts.

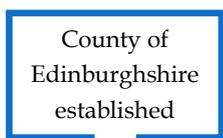
Lothian Regional Council formally took over responsibility in May 1975. It was split into four districts: East, Mid and West Lothian, and the



City of Edinburgh. Towns such as Currie which had formerly been burghs of Midlothian, were now administered as part of Edinburgh.

The council was responsible for education, social work, water, sewerage, transport (including local buses within Edinburgh).

The two-tier system of local government was ended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, resulting in the abolition of Lothian Regional Council, and its replacement by a unitary system of local government. The former districts of the Lothian region became the basis for the new unitary councils, that is, the Midlothian Council we know today.



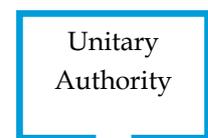
1708



1918



1973



1995

Working with the Statutory Sector

Community Planning

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 formally introduced the concept of ‘Community Planning’, which many people currently active in their communities will recognise. Community planning is defined by the Scottish Government as ‘a process which helps public agencies to work together with the community to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives.’

Today’s community activists work within the well-defined structures of community planning... but what happened in the decades before?

Voluntary Sector Structures

The history of engagement with the statutory sector often reflected the statutory funding available. Midlothian was a recipient of the Scottish Office’s Urban Programme, and European funding such as RECHAR, aimed at coalfield areas.

However, it was an unsuccessful funding application that kick-started formal engagement with the statutory sector. In 1998 the Urban Programme was replaced by the Social Inclusion Partnership Fund, which involved the establishment of a Social Inclusion

Partnership Board. Midlothian Council submitted a bid to the Fund, but was unsuccessful. It was decided that the voluntary sector would hold a Social Inclusion Forum, which proved invaluable at helping to coordinate activity.

Voluntary Sector Forum: The VSF offers a chance for voluntary organisations to receive feedback from the Community Planning Partnership etc. and to discuss issues of relevance to the sector. The VSF was established in 1996, merging with the SIP, and continues to meet today.

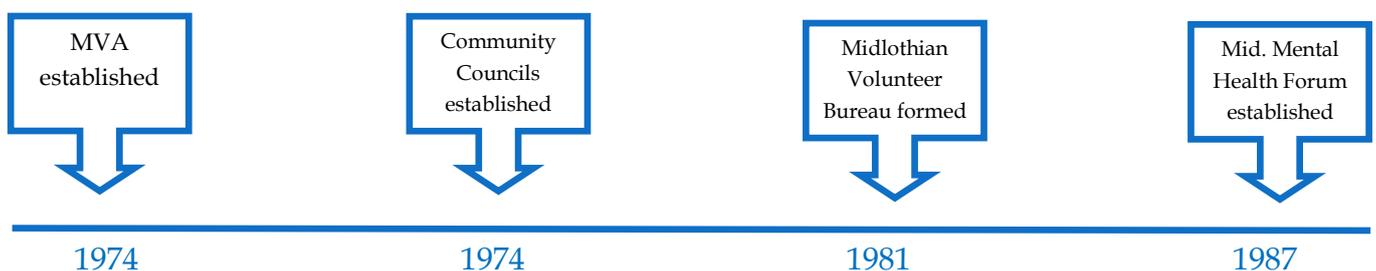
Protests

In addition to working in partnership, local



Photo © Indymedia

activists have reserved their right to protest...



20 Years of the National Lottery in Midlothian

MVA is not the only organisation with an important anniversary this year!

Since 1994, National Lottery players have raised £32 billion for projects all over the UK and over 450,000 grants have been awarded.

Over the past twenty years this has been a valuable source of income for Midlothian, where we have seen 716 grants awarded with a total value of £36,562,370.

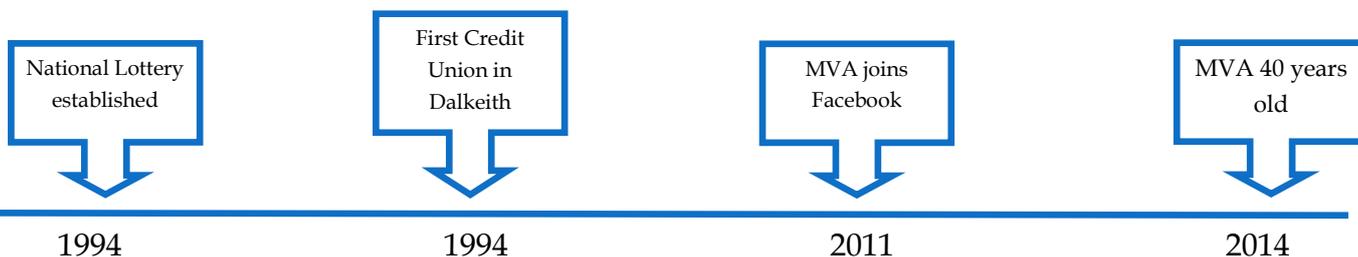
Some of the larger grants received by the voluntary sector include:

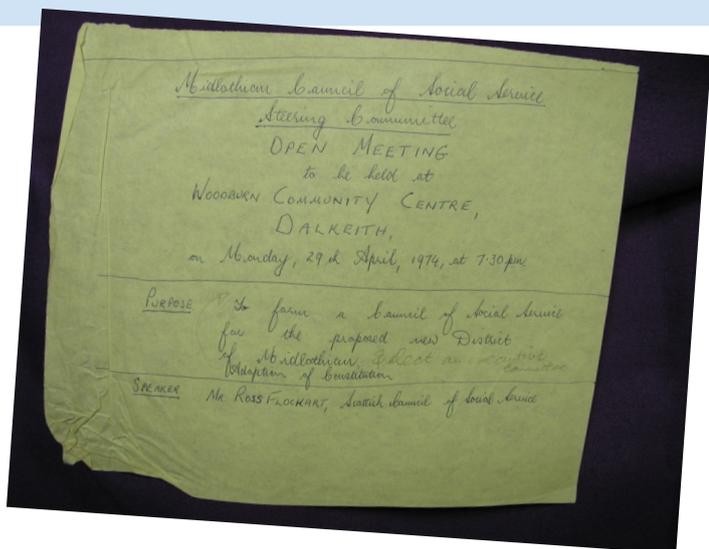
- 1997 Scottish Mining Museum: Funding for the Lady Victoria Colliery £3,574,000;
- 1999 Mayfield & Easthouses Youth 2000 Project: To provide and establish a community based youth facility;
- 2000 Midlothian Young People's Advice Service: To provide a drop in centre, outreach services and information services for young people incorporating counselling, health education £354,071;
- 2003 Penicuik Citizens Advice Bureau: To allow the organisation to widen access to disability benefits and welfare rights information £130,000;
- 2007 McSence: To establish the Midlothian Social Enterprise Centre £800,000;
- 2009 Loanhead Community Learning Association: To build a new community managed facility and outdoor space £646,533;
- 2010 Gorebridge Community Development Trust: To build a new community hub in Gorebridge, in Midlothian. £835,000;
- 2012 Midlothian Sure Start: To develop a multi-agency early intervention programme that empowers families in Midlothian with multiple risk factors to take control of their lives. £899,081.

Funding for this project was provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is proposed that when the project is complete, all the materials are donated to the new Dalkeith Museum located in the Corn Exchange.



This leaflet is continuing to be developed.





Representing the Voluntary Sector

Midlothian Voluntary Action is part of the Midlothian Third Sector Interface, providing support to local Third Sector organisations, and helping them to have their voices heard in the local community planning structures.

1974: MVA started life in 1974 as the Midlothian Council of Social Services; its initial aims are detailed right;

1981: MVA helped to set up Dalkeith Unemployed Workers' Centre, now MARC;

1981: Midlothian Volunteer Bureau established (later established as a separate organisation, now known as Volunteer Midlothian);

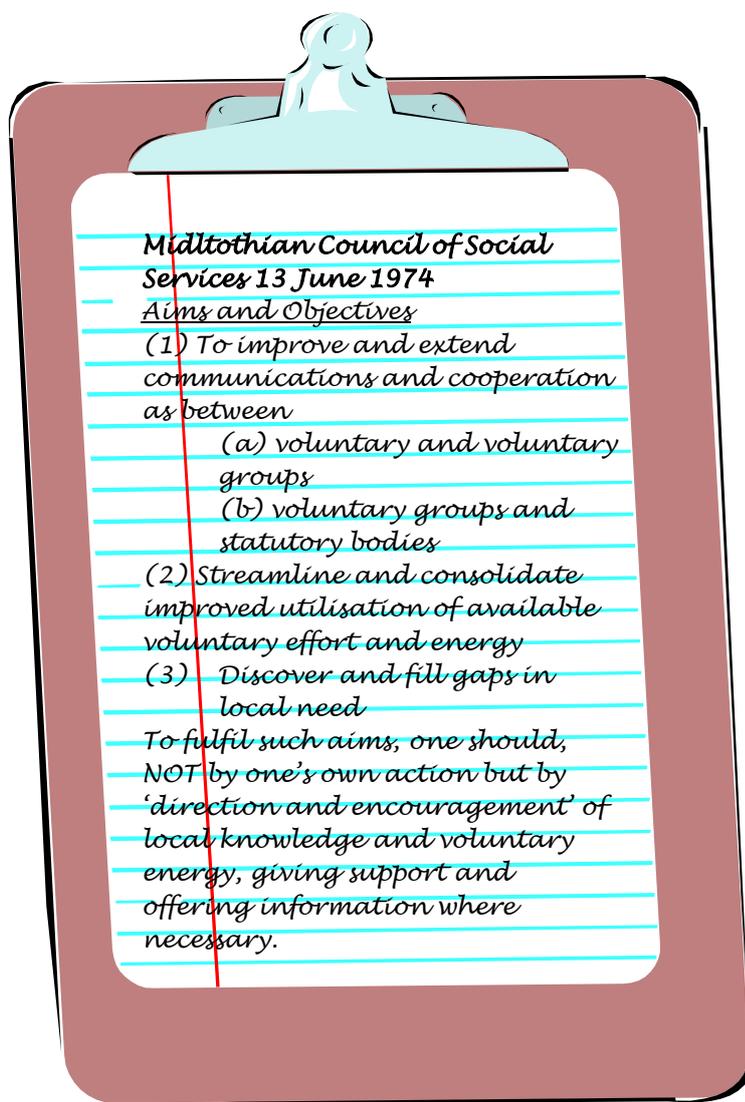
1984-88: Midlothian Energy Campaign – joint project with Manpower Services Commission. 28 staff employed to draught-proof 1400 homes;

1987: MVA becomes the local distributor for BBC Children in Need funding;

1999: MVA received £154,472 funding from the Big Lottery Fund to convert shop premises in Dalkeith, leased from Midlothian Council, into accessible offices and meeting room for use by local voluntary organisations and community groups;

2002: MVA gains funding to run a Healthy Living Centre;

2013: MVA provided training for 208 individuals from 92 organisations, 440 individuals received our briefings and 51 organisations received funding support.



2014 onward: Who knows what challenges and opportunities the future will bring... please join us on our journey!