



Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

Progress Update - March 2018



Borderlands Partnership

The Borderlands Partnership brings together the five cross-border local authorities of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council. The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is focusing on ways to make the area more attractive to investors, visitors and those who may wish to relocate.

This update provides background on progress.

The Story so Far

The Borderlands Partnership was established in 2014 and since then has worked on a collective ambition to unlock the potential for sustainable and inclusive economic growth across the South of Scotland and North of England.

In September 2017, a Proposition submission (The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Proposition) was sent to the UK and Scottish Governments. This set out the partners' vision for a Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Reference to a Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal was included in the UK Government's autumn budget statement (November 2017) and the Borderlands Partnership is in ongoing discussions with the UK and Scottish Governments.

Borderlands Themes

The Borderlands Partnership is working together to deliver transformative change across the region to maximise the benefits of growth. This includes two key economic challenges - the need for population growth and improved productivity.

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is focusing on the factors which make places attractive to investors, visitors and those who may wish to relocate. The shared ambition is to play our full part in the Scottish and wider UK economy.

The following themes make up Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:





Energy

The Borderlands is a significant generator of clean energy through renewable sources and planned new nuclear power. This cluster of energy assets in the region presents a significant opportunity to use energy as a lever to drive economic and social growth. At present much of the clean energy produced in the Borderlands is utilised elsewhere and the region does not achieve full advantage from the assets it holds.

On a wider plane, the Borderlands suffer from a dispersed geography with poor transport links and these present a significant cost barrier to businesses seeking investment locations. The ability to supply clean cheap energy, especially when coupled with 21st Century digital infrastructure, offers an opportunity to attract new business investment to the region and support the creation of high value jobs.

Contained within the overall ambition to be the first zero carbon gigabit region, the energy proposition is a critical component of the transformative investment required to achieve a step change in the performance of the Borderlands economy.



Digital

The investment in transformational digital infrastructure is highlighted as critical to tackling the barriers to longer term sustainable growth. The most effective way of boosting productivity and for achieving inclusive growth across the Borderlands region is by improving our digital connectivity.

Improved digital connectivity is needed to:

- ❖ better position our towns, and our city, as active and agile places where innovation can flourish, thereby making many of our places significantly more attractive in which to invest;
- ❖ enable virtual learning across our educational facilities to help release the potential of the region's human capital; and
- ❖ transform our industrial and business parks and to make them attractive to investors and businesses. This transformation requires the supporting digital technology to establish the next generation of industrial and business parks.



Transport Connectivity

The Borderlands region is a strategically important area, integral to the development of the wider economy and ideally located at the intersections of the UK's rail and road networks, with improving airport and sea port capabilities, including the increasingly important link to Northern Ireland and through it to EU markets beyond Brexit. As such, transport connectivity within, across and through the Borderlands is critical to the future prosperity of the area.

Three flagship transport projects are integral to these plans. These are:

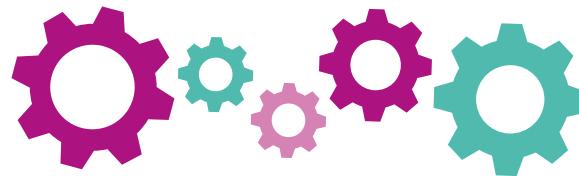
- ❖ **The Borders Railway:** Proposed extension of the Borders Railway line from Tweedbank to Carlisle.
- ❖ **The Borderlands Regional Airport:** The airport will open to commercial flights in June and has potential to have a transformational impact on the visitor economy across the Borderlands region.
- ❖ **Carlisle Station Gateway:** Carlisle Station is the busiest transport interchange in the Borderlands area serving the wider Borderlands region.



Rural Productivity

There is an opportunity to significantly increase the work done to inspire innovative working practices in rural land management across the area. The Borderlands unique selling point is its expansive rural area.

It therefore highlights the scope to establish a new future for our Uplands whereby the interdependencies between its economic, social and environmental assets are properly harnessed and mutually reinforcing each other as well as maximise the economic benefits from our forestry sector.



Business

We have many diverse rural businesses that are the life-blood of our rural economy. The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal aims to support businesses to grow, attract investment and encourage more innovation active businesses. Our region needs to create the conditions to give the private sector confidence to invest.

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal highlights the need within the region to assist companies in the transition to growth businesses and to make investments that will help increase business productivity. There is also a parallel need to support our existing businesses in their adoption of new technologies and to be competitive in a post-Brexit world.



Destination Borderlands

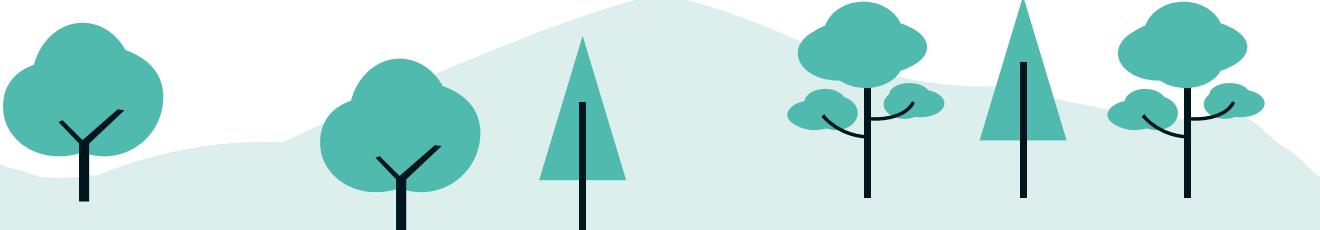
The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal recognises the potential of the Borderlands to become the UK's premier outdoor recreation area in walking, cycling, horse riding and other outdoor sports and to attract more visitors.

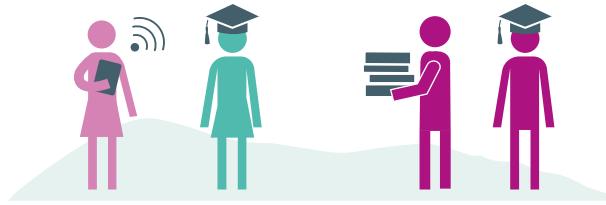
The Borderlands has a common cultural as well as natural heritage from the Roman Frontier to the medieval Reiver period and literacy, music, art and architectural links.

By looking at these assets and natural linkages in a pan-Borderlands way, a number of significant opportunities can be identified that would deepen the reach and appeal of the area as a place that visitors want to stay for longer throughout the year, as a great place to invest and as a great place to live.

Lengthening stay is one approach where the Borderlands can play a key role, extending international stays by showcasing why international visitors should add days to their UK or European trip.

Whilst the Borderlands has many assets of international appeal, there is a need for continued investment in attractions and facilities to achieve a step change in the visitor experience.





Quality of Place

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal recognises that our primary challenge is population growth and specifically the need to attract more working age people to the area to improve our productivity and to grow our economy. Our diverse geography and extensive land mass present particular challenges of driving growth highlighting the urgent need for better, fit for purpose digital and transport connectivity.

Tackling this will require a wide variety of approaches, with diverse developments across the Borderlands designed to attract greater numbers, and greater diversity, of working age people. However, common to all approaches will be the attractiveness of great places, driven by digital technology in a low carbon environment.

Throughout the Borderlands, the availability of clean, low carbon energy and the connectivity of leading edge digital technology will best position our towns, and our city, as active and agile places where innovation can flourish, thereby making many of our places significantly more attractive in which to invest.

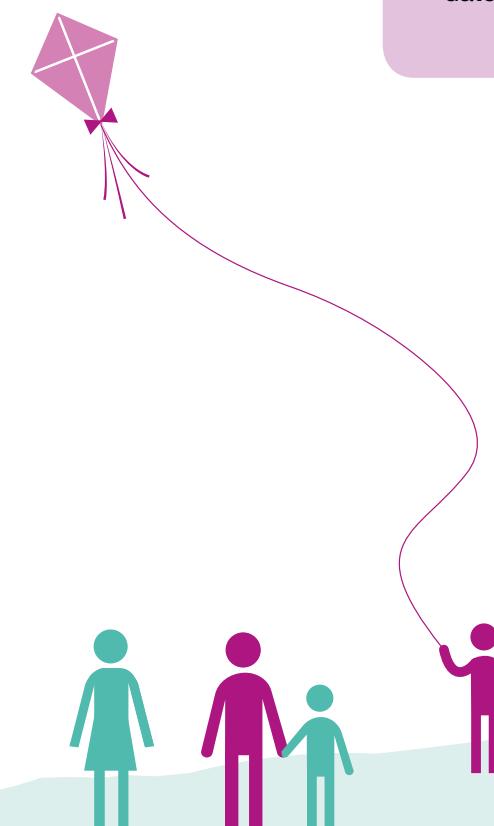
The Borderlands is made special by the places within it. There is significant opportunity to put the Borderlands at the forefront of rural development through the delivery of bespoke and sustainable interventions that genuinely reflect the area's particular strengths and opportunities.

Skills

Further Education and Higher Education providers will be collaborating to develop proposals for supporting skills development across the Borderlands area to help attract and retain people, but also to ensure provision of skills to meet employer needs.

Next Steps

The Borderlands Partnership continues to meet key stakeholders on a regular basis. A Borderlands website - **www.BorderlandsGrowth.com** - will go live soon. This will provide information on the Borderlands Partnership's work to date and will update on any progress.



The Borderlands Partnership is made up of:

