

Public Document Pack

COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2015

Please find attached copy of the Reducing Inequalities Draft Strategic Plan in respect Item 7 on the agenda for the above meeting

7.	Reducing Inequalities (Pages 1 - 82) Presentation by SBC Depute Chief Executive (People) on the Draft Strategic Plan for Reducing Inequalities in the Scottish Borders 2015 – 2020.	20 mins
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reducing inequalities

IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS 2015-2020

CONSULTATIVE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN



Reducing Inequalities in the Scottish Borders 2015-20

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FOREWORD

As the fragile economic climate and era of austerity continues, we are reminded of the important social and economic role we play in the Scottish Borders. This Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan sets out how Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) will fulfil our responsibilities, refreshing our commitment to tackling inequalities and strengthening the contributions made by all key partners and stakeholders.

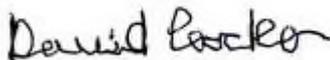


We want all residents in the Borders to live longer, healthier, more prosperous lives, regardless of where they live or how much money they have and we want the lives of the most disadvantaged to improve the fastest so that the inequality that exists between the richest and poorest in our communities is reduced.

Issues around inequality are challenging enough, but we are also operating at a time of major changes in the financial and economic worlds. The recession of the last six years and the ongoing banking pressures, as well as the changing political landscapes at Holyrood and Westminster bring additional constraints and challenges.

Scottish Borders Council is committed to delivering services that will support this plan but success will depend on all our partners' ongoing commitment, collective ownership and support so that we can all work together to make a real difference. This strategy should ensure our efforts and resources make an impact, tackling the challenges people face and improving outcomes for our residents.

It is intended that this document places inequalities on the agenda of every stakeholder in the Borders and provides a focus for consultation to enable the Council and its partners to engage with individuals, organisations and the wider community. I am pleased to be able to present this Draft Strategic Plan for Reducing Inequalities in the Borders to you, and to underline our commitment as a Council to working with our partners, and with the people of the Scottish Borders to tackle inequalities across our region.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Parker". The script is cursive and somewhat informal.

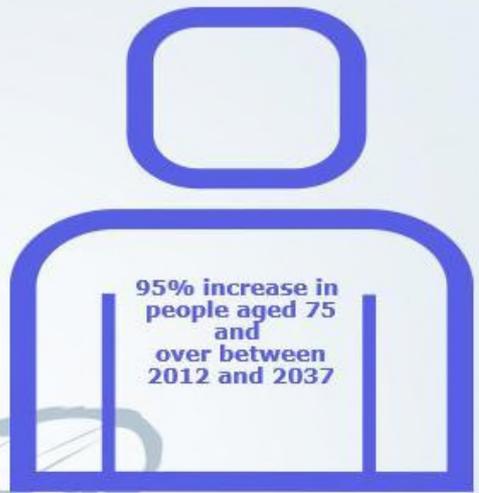
Councillor David Parker

Leader of the Council and Chair of the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership





The average house price in the Scottish Borders is £140,000 compared to Scotland £135,000. Making the Borders unaffordable for many residents



95% increase in people aged 75 and over between 2012 and 2037



Wages in the Scottish Borders are 12.2% below the national wage level for Scotland

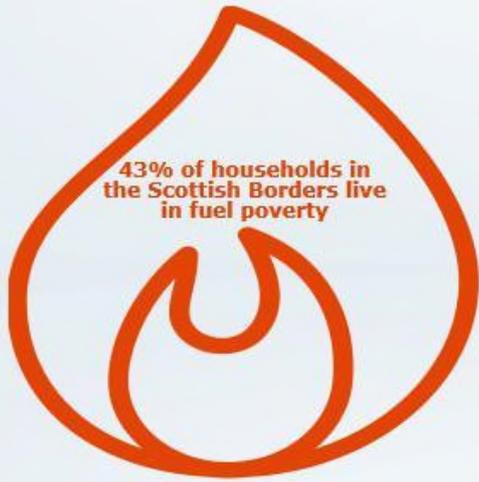
Reducing Inequalities



47% of people live in rural areas



There are 8 areas in the Scottish Borders where 60% or more of the population aged 16 and over have no or low qualifications



43% of households in the Scottish Borders live in fuel poverty



7 areas in the Scottish Borders have higher rates of crime compared to Scotland

Executive Summary

This strategic plan for reducing inequalities in the Borders builds on the significant amount of research, analysis and consultation that has been completed previously by the Council, various partnerships, community organisations and other agencies. The Community Planning Partnership has undergone a robust consultation and analysis process to arrive at the priorities and outcomes outlined in this strategy.

Given the collective time and resources expended nationally, as well as by all local partner organisations, we already have a good understanding of the issues that impact on inequalities in the area. This strategy is underpinned by research as well as local and national policies to provide an improved understanding of the nature and changing dynamics of inequalities across the Scottish Borders.

Five key strands of inequalities in the Scottish Borders have been identified as:

Health and Wellbeing	Attainment , Achievement and Inclusion	Employment and Income
Housing and Neighbourhood		Keeping People Safe

The Scottish Borders covers a large, predominantly rural area resulting in greater potential inequalities in terms of residential location by income level. The research demonstrates clear differences in the nature of inequality across the five themes and across the Borders. These differences are significant both in term of the potential implications for delivering effective public services to areas of need, and also for the potential impact on a range of health, wellbeing, social and economic outcomes.

The themes within this strategy are all inextricably linked and it can be challenging to consider the individual themes in isolation, however one of the key priorities of this strategy is to bring all these areas together, reinforcing the contributions and commitments being made from all partners and to identify where more resource is required. This will require a focused, targeted approach to inequalities and strong partnerships to deliver the identified outcomes.

Reducing inequalities is critical for the future development of the Borders for a number of reasons:

- I. Eliminating disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity is about creating a 'fair' society. Most people want to live in a Borders where everyone has an opportunity to participate and thrive – where factors such as gender, where you live and how much money you have are not the major determinants of people's life chances and outcomes;



- II. Reducing inequalities supports economic growth and improves the productivity of all our residents. Reducing disadvantage and widening access to opportunities will allow more residents of the Borders to participate and make a greater contribution to the local economy.

- III. Poor educational achievement, poor health and unemployment are all barriers to economic participation. Our future economic success requires the skills and well-being of everyone living in the Borders. Critically, the ageing of our population means that if we want to meet our aspirations for a more prosperous and ambitious region we must improve economic and social outcomes in our most deprived communities and all individuals affected by inequality.

- IV. Disadvantage and inequality of opportunity also results in increased pressure on our public services and services offered by our partner organisations. Investment to reduce inequalities will lower future costs in the public sector, as well as alleviate social problems. For example, if we can reduce the number of young people leaving school with few qualifications, it is likely we will be spending less on other benefits in the future such as housing benefit, as well as there being a reduction in pressure on some services.

Inequalities are often deeply rooted and significant coordination and collaboration across a huge number of areas and services will be required if we are to make a meaningful impact. This Strategy identifies many of the effects of inequality in our society and given what we know about these effects we must commit to ambitious, but realistic targets to reduce these and ensure equitable progress across the different social groups and areas identified in the Borders.

Future national policy direction will be one of the key drivers in tackling inequalities in the long term, and there will only be so much we can achieve at a local level to reduce the gap and the effects. We must also acknowledge that major change may even take a generation, however this strategy outlines our commitment to prioritising a reduction in inequalities, ensuring all local plans and policies are truly inclusive and will drive progress over the next five years and beyond.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is unacceptable in this day and age that the people of the Scottish Borders have very different experiences of life opportunities, good health and wellbeing depending on which part of the region they live or on their individual characteristics. In our most disadvantaged areas it is clear that people suffer significantly more from income deprivation and health problems, whilst those living in the most affluent areas can live significantly longer. This is due to a wide range of complex inequalities.

Significant efforts have been made from a range of agencies and communities to close the gap in inequalities over recent years, yet the gaps remain unacceptable. The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is committed to trying to break the cycle and so have set out to develop this Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan for the Borders to help enable the work of all stakeholders to focus on a number of key priority areas that will make a difference to people's lives.

It is well documented that those who have the least access to income, employment and good housing experience higher levels of ill health; often have less physical and psychological resilience to meet challenges; and less power and influence to effect change. Poverty and inequality that is created by prejudice, discrimination or by structural bias diminishes opportunity and life experience. Reducing inequalities and promoting equality of opportunity and improved positive outcomes, therefore, remain the Community Planning Partnership's major challenge. Although outcomes are generally improving for most people in Borders the CPP believe that there is still a lot to be done to support and enable the poorest and most disadvantaged households.

Figure 1: Five Main Inequalities Themes

The Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership Inequalities Theme Group set out to develop this high level strategic plan to tackle and reduce five key strands of inequalities in the Scottish Borders.



This Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan closely aligns with the Scottish National Outcome 7 *“we have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society”* and also contributes to the other 15 national outcomes as demonstrated in Table 1 and Figure 2 below.

Table 1: Inequalities Themes Alignment with National and Community Planning Priorities

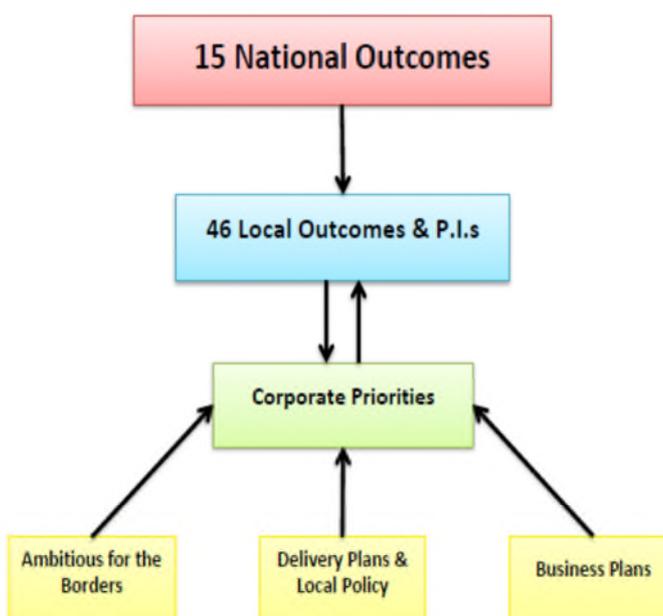
Reducing Inequalities Themes	National Strategic Objectives	Community Planning Priorities	National Outcomes
Attainment, Achievement and Inclusion	Smarter	Reduce inequalities	3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation 4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens 5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed 8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
Employment and Income	Wealthier and Fairer	Grow our Economy and maximise the impact from the low carbon agenda	1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe 2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people 13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity 15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs
Health and Wellbeing	Healthier	Reduce inequalities	6. We live longer, healthier lives 5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed 7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society 8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk 16. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need 15. Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older, and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
Housing and Neighbourhood	Greener	Grow our Economy and maximise the impact from the low carbon agenda	12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. 14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
Keeping People Safe	Safer and Stronger	Reduce inequalities	9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger. 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need 11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others

1.1 Background to the Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan

Reducing Inequalities is one of three priorities identified by Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership as part of its Single Outcome Agreement and it should be acknowledged from the outset there is already considerable work taking place from both a single agency and partnership approach to reduce inequalities in the Scottish Borders.

At its April 2013 meeting, the Community Planning Strategic Board considered the Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment 2013 which drew some strategic conclusions about the priorities for the Borders and helped the Board to coalesce around a focused vision:

Figure 2: SOA Alignment



“By 2023, quality of life will have improved for those who are currently living within our most deprived communities, through a stronger economy and through targeted partnership action”.

The Board was clear that in order to achieve this ambitious vision, the CPP needs to focus on 3 strategic priorities that clearly contribute to a range of National Outcomes, as shown below and in 2015 are:

1. Grow our economy
2. Maximise the impact from the low carbon agenda
3. Reduce inequalities
4. Future services reform

Table 2 below illustrates that priorities 1 & 3 are the most relevant in terms of inequalities; **Grow our Economy** and **Reduce Inequalities**.

Table 2: Relevance of Priorities 1 & 3 and National Outcomes

Scottish Borders Priorities	National Outcomes
Grow our economy	1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place to do business in Europe 2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people 13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity 16. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs
Reduce inequalities	3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation 4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens 5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed 6. We live longer, healthier lives 7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society 8. We have improved the life chances for young people and families at risk 9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger. 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need 11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others 15. Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older, and are able to access appropriate support when they need it



This strategic plan will build on this work by developing a strategic framework to co-ordinate and focus partnership priorities across all sectors including voluntary, private, public and third sectors.

The Scottish Government's Child Poverty Strategy describes some of the fundamental principles, of how we need to break 'cycles of poverty, deprivation, unemployment, health inequalities and poor educational attainment which are embedded in particular in our disadvantaged societies'. Our aspiration is therefore to break these cycles by taking strategic and operational action in collaboration with communities across the Scottish Borders.

This strategy and framework for action have been formulated on detailed strategic analysis of the population and geography of the Scottish Borders, supported by qualitative research, policy review and recent Scottish Government publications. The aim is to reduce the gradient of inequality across socio-economic groups as the evidence provides that more equal societies are healthier and happier.

1.2 The Reducing Inequalities Vision and Outcomes to be Achieved

The Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan has been informed by a number of current plans and strategies including a range of national policies and it is underpinned by:

- The Single Outcome Agreement for the Scottish Borders
- The Strategic Assessment
- Public Health Inequalities Action Plan (currently in development)
- The Tackling Poverty and Achieving Social Justice Strategy 2013
- Early Years Framework
- The Local Housing Strategy 2012-17
- Economic Strategy Action Plan
- Welfare Reform Programme for the Borders
- Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (Scottish Government 2014)

The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) sets out the joint commitments between the Council, Community Planning Partners and the Scottish Government to deliver an agreed set of outcomes. The SOA is based around and builds upon the existing community plan, the Council's corporate plan and other plans and strategies existing within and between partner organisations. It therefore reflects extensive consultation with stakeholders around these existing plans and strategies.

Vision

Reducing Inequalities in the Scottish Borders Vision is that:

‘By 2025, the gap between the most deprived and the least deprived in the Scottish Borders will have been reduced’

To achieve this strategic vision and to better understand the inequalities in the Scottish Borders this strategic plan focuses on five key themes:

Health and Wellbeing	Attainment , Achievement and Inclusion	Employment and Income
Housing and Neighbourhood		Keeping People Safe

The over-arching principles of Reducing Inequalities in the Scottish Borders are:

- 1. Early intervention and prevention to break the cycle of poor outcomes**
- 2. Working with our communities, building on the assets of individuals and communities**
- 3. Ensuring that children and families’ needs are at the centre of service design and delivery**

These founding principles will be at the heart of everything we strive to achieve as we build on our strategic framework and action plan in the months and years ahead.

Focusing on the three over-arching principles will allow us to:

- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure healthy standards of living for all
- Use every opportunity to prevent ill health where possible and promote health and wellbeing
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities

It is well documented that housing; poverty and health are inextricably linked. There is wide body of research that shows better housing and improved income can lead to some improvements in self-



reported physical and mental health and reductions in some symptoms. For example, heating and energy efficiency measures can improve the indoor environment and also alleviate fuel poverty which can improve occupant's health and wellbeing. There is a significant amount of existing activity contributing to a reduction in inequalities and many local policies and action plans are doing some commendable work, across a number of complex and challenging areas which this strategic plan aims to capture.

The following sections of this strategic plan set out:

- Our analysis of the key issues in relation to inequalities across the Scottish Borders
- Identified outcomes and how those outcomes are to be achieved across each of the five key themes. Each section sets out:
 - what the key issues are
 - what we want to achieve (outcomes)
 - what the planned activities are – what we are already doing or planning to do
 - what else needs to be done during the life of this strategic plan and beyond
- Framework for Action: Priorities and Commitments
- Resourcing the Strategy
- Consultation – how people can make a contribution to development of the strategy

1.3 Equalities Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Scottish Borders Council embraces the commitments required under the Equality Act 2010 (in force from April 2011) which brings the general duty to 9 equality strands of age, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. A full equalities impact assessment has been undertaken on Reducing Inequalities Strategy in line with Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders Equality Policy and Impact Assessment. This shows that the strategy has many positive impacts on all of the equality impact groups. A full copy of the impact assessment is attached as Appendix 6.

In addition the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act have underpinned this strategy, supporting framework and action plan. These characteristics are important to recognise and address when tackling inequalities and include:

Age	Disability	Gender
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race / Ethnicity
Religion and Belief	Sexual Orientation	Gender Reassignment

When developing plans, policies and strategies, authorities are required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). A SEA screening exercise has been carried out and Scottish Borders Council determined there is no requirement for a full SEA. The SEA Screening Report can be viewed in Appendix 6.

1.4 Rural Proofing

A rural proofing exercise has also been carried out to ensure that the needs of rural areas are fully taken into account in the development of the Reducing Inequalities Strategy and will not be adversely affected by the strategy (Appendix 5).

Rural proofing applies to all areas of Scottish Borders classified by Scottish Government as 'remote rural' or 'accessible rural'. This is relevant for the whole administrative area of the Scottish Borders out with the towns of Hawick, Galashiels, Peebles, Selkirk, Eyemouth, Jedburgh and Kelso.

The rural proofing exercise was carried 26th August 2015 as part of the preparation of the final draft. It was determined that the implementation of the plan will not have any adverse impact on the rural area and that the needs of rural areas have been properly taken into account.



2. UNDERSTANDING INEQUALITIES IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

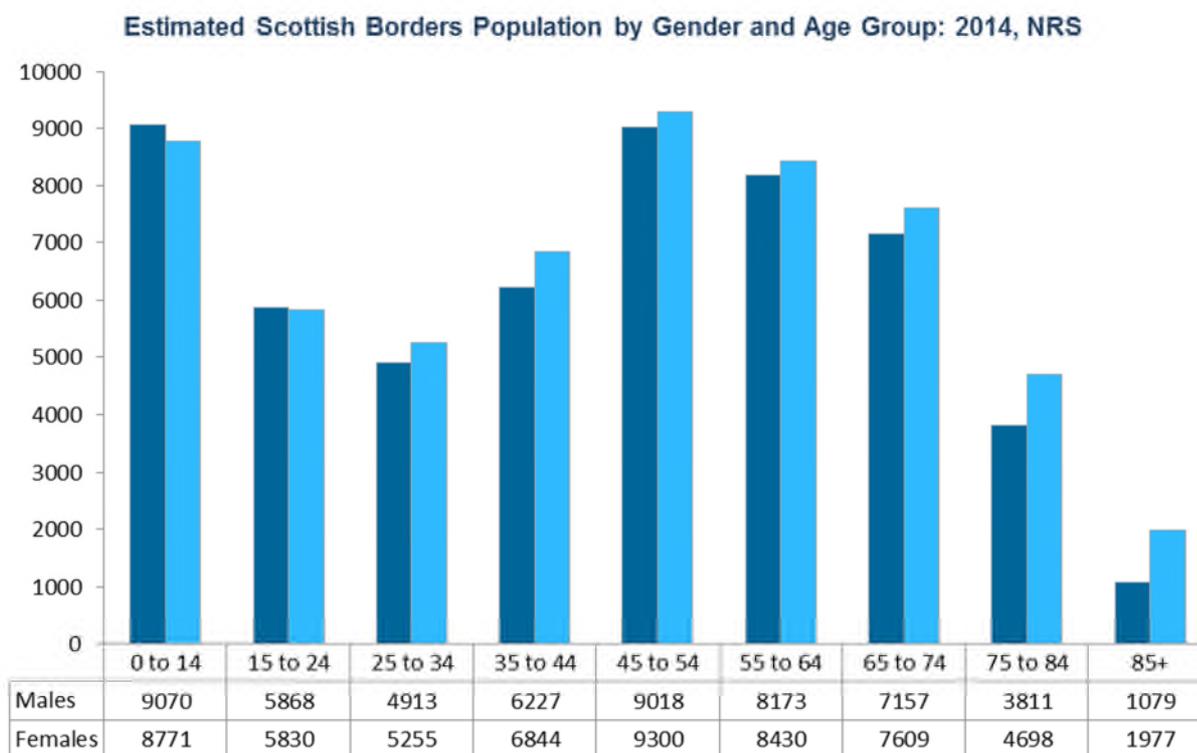
2.0 The Scottish Borders Context

- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies 5 datazones in the Scottish Borders as being in the 15% most deprived in Scotland. However, SIMD is less accurate when applied in rural areas so there could be areas of hidden poverty.
- The Scottish Borders has a lower proportion of people that are considered income deprived compared to Scotland (10.1% vs 13.2%). Within the Borders Langlee and Burnfoot are the two areas where 20% of the population is considered income deprived areas.
- Child Poverty ranges from 0% to 26% between settlements (13% overall).
- The poorest in our society die earlier and have higher rates of disease, including mental illness.
- In 2013, 10% of the Scottish Borders working age population were claiming out of work benefits compared to 13% for Scotland however, the Langlee and Burnfoot areas both have a much higher %, 24.1% and 20.2% respectively.
- 43% of households in the Borders are in Fuel Poverty (12% are in extreme fuel poverty).
- Compared to Scotland, the Scottish Borders has a better life expectancy for both men and women (78 vs 77 and 82 vs 81). However, there are areas in the Scottish Borders where both male and female life expectancy is below the level for Scotland; Galashiels West, Galashiels North and Langlee.
- Areas of deprivation have higher rates of people claiming health related benefits.
- In 2012, the Scottish Borders ranked 29 out of 32 for lowest average weekly wage and is significantly lower than the Scottish average (17% below the level for Scotland, equating to over £70).
- 5.8% of people over 60 are claiming pension credit in the Scottish Borders lower than the level for Scotland. Eyemouth and Hawick have a greater proportion claiming pension credit compared to Scotland.
- 97% of all victims of gender based violence in Scottish Borders are female
- Areas with more low weight singleton births between 2011/12 and 2013/14 compared with Scotland include Peebles North, Langlee, Burnfoot and area, Cheviot East, Hawick Central, Jedburgh and Hawick West End.
- Between 1997 and 2014 the workplace based gross median weekly pay in the Scottish Borders has been 17% below the level for Scotland, equating to over £70.
- Those experiencing poverty in rural and urban areas face the same problems, but due to the rurality of the Scottish Borders these problems can be more acute.

The Scottish Borders is a rural local authority with 5 towns with a population of between 5,000 and 15,000 (Hawick, Galashiels, Peebles, Kelso and Selkirk) and a further 5 towns with a population of 2,000 to 5,000 (Jedburgh, Eyemouth, Innerleithen, Duns and Melrose). According to the Scottish Government's 6-fold urban-rural classification, 47% of the population of the Scottish Borders live in rural areas compared to 18% for all of Scotland. The rural nature of the Scottish Borders can lead to additional challenges for those experiencing inequalities.

In 2014 it is estimated that there are 114,030 people living in the Scottish Borders; the age-group and gender breakdown can be seen in Figure 3 below. Compared to Scotland the Scottish Borders has a similar proportion of children (16%), less people of working age (61% vs. 66%), but more people aged 65 and older (23% vs. 18%).

Figure 3: Population by Gender and Age Group

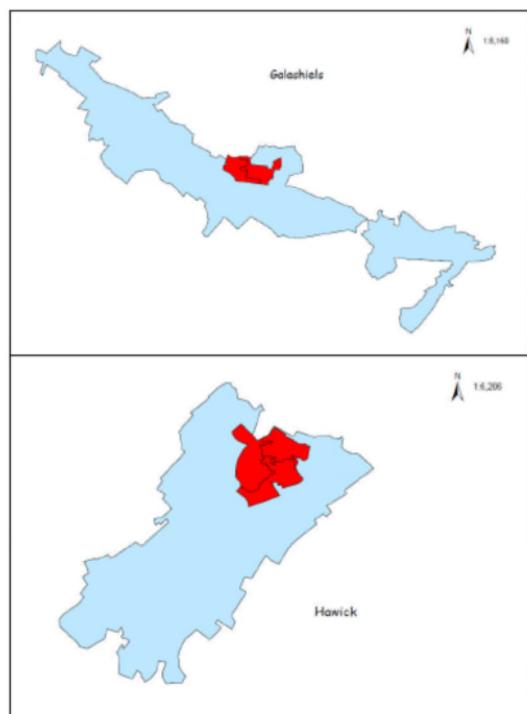


The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying those places in Scotland suffering from deprivation. There are seven domains in SIMD, used to measure the multiple aspects of deprivation, which are: employment, income, health and education, geographic access to services, crime and housing. Of the 130 datazones¹ in the Scottish Borders, 5 are found in 15% of the most deprived datazones in Scotland, compared to 5 in 2009, 3 in 2006 and 2 in 2004. These deprived datazones are in Galashiels and Hawick and account for 3.5% of the population of the Scottish Borders.

¹ The SIMD ranks small areas (called datazones) from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,505). People using the SIMD will often focus on the datazones below a certain rank, for example, the 5%, 10%, 15% or 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.



Figure 4: SIMD 15% Most Deprived Areas in the Scottish Borders (2012)²



In the Scottish Borders, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation does not provide a true and accurate picture of deprivation. Although 5 datazones in the Borders were identified as being in the top 15% most deprived in Scotland, it could be argued that this does not take into account small pockets of deprivation in more rural areas. It is important that all residents who are living in poverty or deprivation benefit from this strategic intervention, particularly following a period of severe economic downturn and benefit changes from the UK Governments welfare reform programme, which has left more people facing financial insecurity. As such, geographical location, although significant, has had a relatively minor influence on strategy development.

An analysis of inequalities in the Scottish Borders (Appendix 1 and 7) was carried out using the ScotPHO “Health and Wellbeing Profiles 2015”³ as a base coupled with additional data sets. The ranking matrix shows the rank (1 to 29) for each of the small area geographies and each of the 46 inequality indicators.

There are 9 Intermediate⁴ Geographies (small areas) in the Scottish Borders with 20% (9 of the 46) of indicators ranked between 1 and 5. These are:

Table 3: Intermediate Geographies Inequalities Ranks

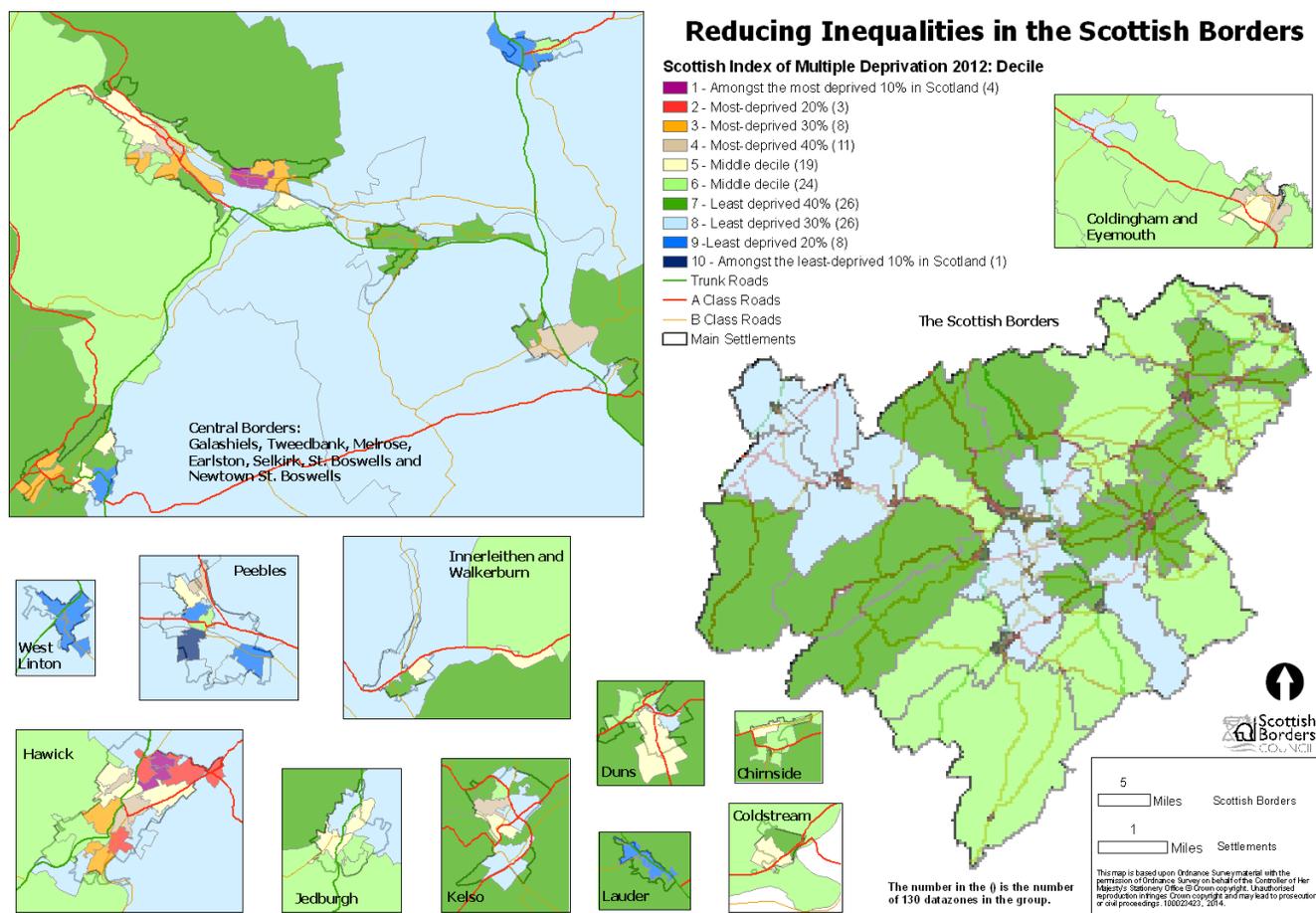
Area Name / Indicator	Number of Indicators Ranking 1 to 5 of 29	% of Indicators Ranked 1 to 5 out of 29
Langlee	31	67%
Burnfoot and area	28	61%
Eyemouth	22	48%
Galashiels West	22	48%
Hawick Central	15	33%
Galashiels North	14	30%
Hawick North	11	24%
Coldstream and area	10	22%
Hawick West End	10	22%

² The low numbers of deprived datazones in the Scottish Borders is typical of rural local authorities and reflects the inherent anti-rural bias in deprivation area data; the SIMD is more suited to measuring poverty in an urban environment and less accurate when applied to a rural context such as the Scottish Borders. As a result this may underestimate the extent of rural deprivation.

³ ScotPHO (the Scottish Public Health Observatory) create profiles of related to public health which can be found at: <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/comparative-health/profiles/online-profiles-tool>

⁴ The intermediate zones are aggregations of data zones within local authorities and contain between 2,500 and 6,000 people.

Figure 5: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012 - Deciles



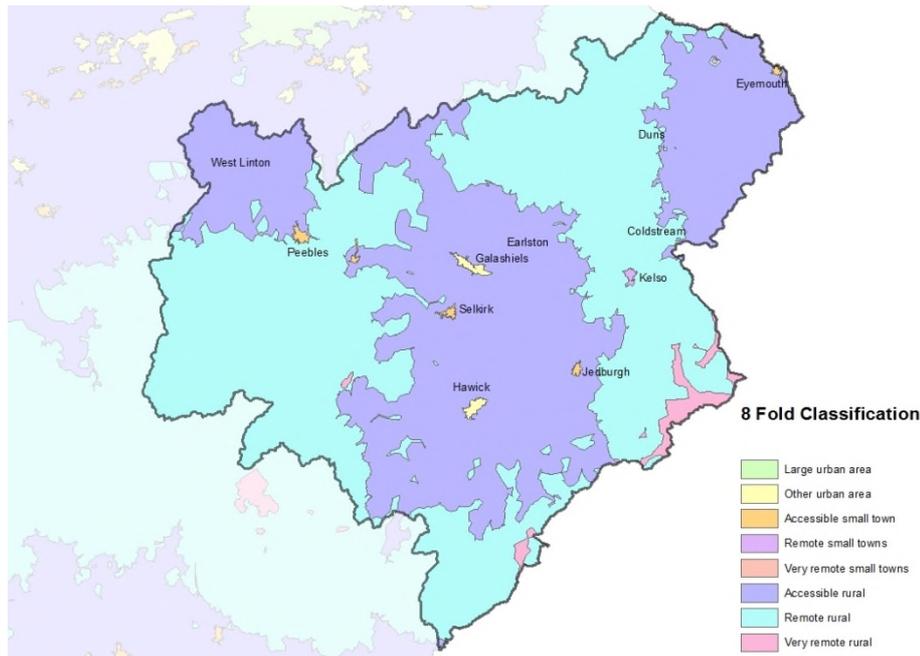
2.1 Rurality and Accessibility

The rural nature of the Scottish Borders and the challenges this brings is a cross cutting theme and should always be considered when examining the five core themes of this strategic plan. There are no cities in the Scottish Borders, only a few towns and scattered villages and there are only two settlements with a population over 10,000; Galashiels and Hawick. The remainder of the population is in smaller towns and settlements, with as much as a third of the population living in settlements of less than 1,500 people.

The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification provides a standard definition of rural areas in Scotland. Figure 6 (page 20) clearly shows that Scottish Borders is predominately classed as accessible rural and remote rural, there are no large urban areas only two other urban areas (Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people), Galashiels and Hawick.



Figure 6: Rural/Urban Classification 2013/14



'Our Rural Numbers are Not Enough' (March 2011) support the arguments made in this report highlighting that there are particularities to rural living which may exacerbate the problems around inequalities in rural Scotland. Some of the key findings of the report include⁵:

- Higher cost of living: Food and transport fuel, in particular, cost more in rural areas.
- Higher levels of consumption: More money is required to heat homes adequately in rural areas and the greater distances to employment and services mean more money must be spent on transport.
- Fewer opportunities to earn an adequate income: Although employment rates compare favourably with urban areas, low pay, seasonal employment and the historical low take-up of welfare benefits in rural areas each depress household income.
- Dispersed 'invisible' deprivation: Many rural communities appear affluent and thriving, yet deprivation exists beneath this veneer. Deprivation in rural areas is not clustered but can be spread over considerable distances and can be found adjacent to affluence.
- Independence and self-sufficiency are more highly valued in rural areas making it more likely that unmet need is unknown need to policy makers and service providers.
- Research shows that part-time work is favoured by some women in order to balance other commitments. In rural areas, part-time work tends to be low paid and below workers' skill levels and qualifications, further exacerbating the gender pay gap.

⁵ JH McKendrick &co (2011) 'Our Rural Numbers Are not Enough'
20

- Access is *the* underpinning issue in rural areas, affecting all aspects of life - access to services, information, transport links, support, employment opportunities, learning and training – the list is endless. Access difficulties also add complexity where the identification of need is concerned: they will not only have most impact on the least mobile groups, e.g. elderly people, people with long term illness, people who are reliant on public transport, for whom access to services is most vital – but also such issues are harder to identify in rural populations with their complex socio-economic profiles. Thus even though access issues compound and exacerbate individuals' need, in rural areas that need is harder to spot (to factor into service planning) and to address (through increased service delivery costs).
- Fuel Poverty: Households in rural areas are more likely to be at risk of being classed as being in fuel poverty or extreme fuel poverty than in more urban areas and is examined in more detail under the Housing and Neighbourhood theme.
- Housing affordability patterns for rural Scotland reflect what we already know of the challenges that a lack of affordable housing can bring to a rural area; younger generations having to move away from their home area, locals being priced out of the market, and targets for growing businesses and providing services more difficult to achieve without the necessary housing for the often lower-paid workforce in rural communities.

The Scottish Governments 'Taking Forward the Government Economic Strategy' states:

"In rural areas other factors may also contribute to poverty, such as lack of access to services and the fragility of remote communities. These can compound the effects of low income, educational achievement and poor health on life opportunities and capacity to seize them".

Accessible infrastructure and services are essential to modern life in rural Scotland. Initiatives over many years have targeted specific areas and communities; thus harnessing the lessons learnt continues to be essential. There is a need for strategic, innovative approaches that also build in user's priorities and experiences.

Around 30% of people in the Scottish Borders are considered to be access deprived based on travel time to public and private services

Within the Scottish Borders, the road network makes it easier to travel north-south compared to east-west. The Borders Railway (opening September 2015) will enhance access between Edinburgh and the central Borders. There is a strategic network of bus services that run between the majority of the main towns and villages in the Scottish Borders. The majority of these services are provided by private bus companies, although most routes operate with subsidies provided by Scottish Borders Council.



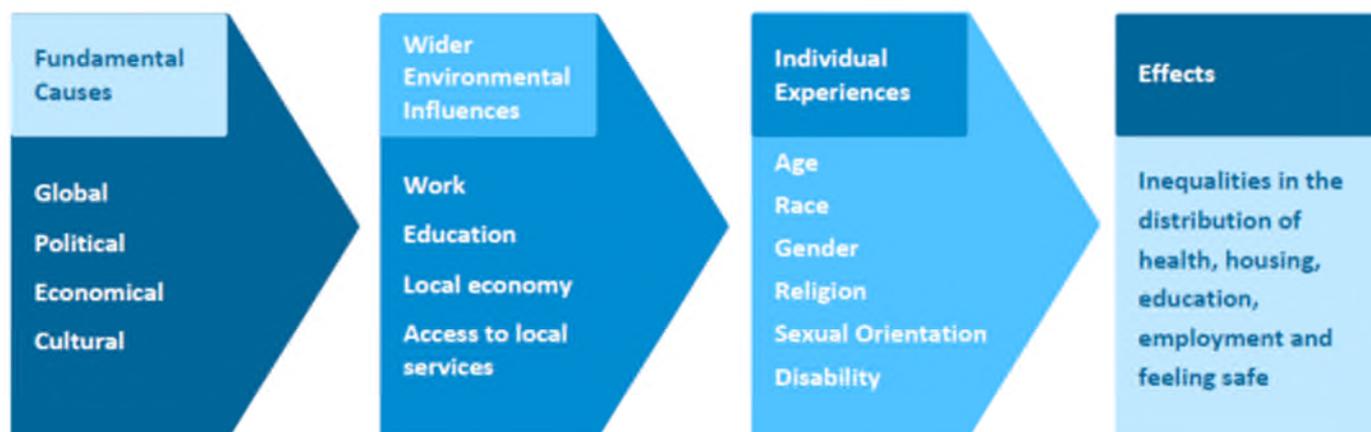
The roll out of Superfast Broadband is underway across the South of Scotland with a number of localities already upgraded to fibre broadband. The roll out continues and further areas will be upgraded to bring Superfast Broadband coverage in the South of Scotland to around 94% of premises by the end of 2017.

In terms of mobile phone coverage Ofcom has recently reported that outdoor 3G coverage in Scotland is at 96.6%, but there is major disparity between urban and rural areas. These high figures do not reflect the reality of user experience in rural areas such as the Scottish Borders. According to data from Ofcom Infrastructure Report 2014 coverage in the Scottish Borders for 2G is 40-60%; for the 3G it is 20-40% for EE and Three and 0-20% for O2 and Vodafone; and 0% for 4G. These proportions mask significant gaps in outdoor coverage, particularly in relation to 3G. Also the Scottish Borders is one of only eight local authorities in the UK which has more than 10% of its B roads in complete 'not spots'.

2.2 What do we mean by inequalities?

Inequalities can be defined as the gap between the most deprived and least deprived, (Health Scotland, 2014⁶) and can be expressed in terms of outcomes: e.g. life expectancy for people in different areas or in terms of other impacts such as income levels.

Figure 7: Causes and Influences around Inequalities



Inequality refers to **unfair** differences in a range of economic and social factors that influence well-being, including income, education, and health as well as disparities in earnings, derived from paid employment and in household incomes. It can also refer to inequalities in access to services e.g. health care or education.

Inequality and poverty are distinct but interrelated concepts. Changes to either poverty or inequality may occur independently of each other but generally higher rates of poverty or deprivation will be linked or related to inequalities. The nature of inequalities and the factors that generate them are complex,

⁶ Health Scotland, 2014, Health Inequalities Policy Review for the Scottish Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/23047-1.%20HealthInequalitiesPolicyReview.pdf>

dynamic and relational, and the diagram above tries to demonstrate the causes, influences and effects of inequalities. Tackling and reducing inequalities needs joined-up action to grasp these problems effectively.

2.3 National Policy

Reducing inequalities is about achieving social justice for everyone and the impact on health should not be under stated. There is significant focus of action on tackling health inequalities at a national and local level and this strategic plan for reducing inequalities in the Borders will align closely with that work.



Health inequalities are most often described in terms of socioeconomic status and linked to poverty and deprivation which is why there has been careful consideration of work being done to address health inequalities. At a national level the Scottish Government Action Plan '**Equally Well**' gives a direction on this, and recent reports from the Ministerial Task Force have highlighted research on what is effective and not effective, plus the recognition of the importance of addressing the fundamental causes of health related inequalities. The ambitious approach taken by the Scottish

Government has been to take the emerging understanding of the underlying causes of health inequalities and turn it into practical and linked action across all of national and local government's key responsibilities: for making Scotland Smarter, Wealthier and Fairer, Greener, Safer and Stronger and, ultimately, Healthier.

Scotland's Economic Strategy sets out an overarching framework for a more competitive and a fairer Scotland and identifies four broad priority areas where our actions will be targeted to make a difference. One of the key areas of the strategy is to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared more equally across society is just as important as boosting overall growth.



The Scottish Government Framework aimed at tackling poverty and income inequality in Scotland was launched in November 2008. **Achieving Our Potential** sets out the joint approach of the Scottish Government and outlines the key actions required; such as the strengthening of income maximisation work and supporting people who find it hardest to get into jobs or use public services.



In December 2008, **The Early Years Framework** was launched, signifying the Scottish Government and COSLA's commitment to the earliest years of life being crucial to a child's development. It is increasingly evident that inequalities in health, education and employment opportunities are passed from one generation to another. The framework signals local and national government's joint commitment to



break this cycle through prevention and early intervention and give every child in Scotland the best start in life.

The national **Child Poverty Strategy (2014-17)** sets out what the Scottish Government will do to reduce the levels of child poverty in Scotland, and to ensure that as few children as possible experience any kind of socio-economic disadvantage. There are two very distinctive aims within the strategy:

- To reduce the levels of child poverty by reducing income poverty and material deprivation.
- Improve children's wellbeing and life chance - with the ultimate aim being to break inter-generational cycles of poverty, inequality and deprivation.



Supporting families into work, improving living standards and raising educational attainment are the fundamental aims set out in the government's Child Poverty Strategy.



The National Parenting Strategy highlights the value and importance of parenting, recognising that parents are the biggest influence on the life chances of our children, the future generation of our society. The Strategy is for mums and dads, grandparents and the wider family, as well as foster, kinship and adoptive parents – in other words, anyone involved in bringing up children. And it covers parenting of children of all ages – from pre-conception and early childhood, through school years and adolescence to adulthood.

The Scottish Borders has integrated the national strategy into its current plan and developed (additional) Corporate Parenting Strategy to further support and ensure inclusion and for all children.



The Commission on Housing and Wellbeing: A blueprint for Scotland's future (June 2015) has undertaken a wide ranging assessment of links between housing and wellbeing in order to offer proposals for the future direction of housing policy in Scotland. The report sets out 47 recommendations with the aim of sustaining and improving the wellbeing of the Scottish population through policies and programmes which reinforce the importance of good housing in building strong local communities and helping people to live better lives.

Creating a Fairer Scotland: Employability Support: A Discussion Paper

Scotland's Economic Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's view that building a more competitive economy and a fairer society go hand in hand. Employability services are vital in improving economic opportunities for those out of work and from 1st April 2017, employment support services in Scotland will change. New powers to provide employment support for disabled people and those at risk of long term unemployment will be devolved to Scotland.



Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (2014)



The Scottish Government definition of gender based violence states that “gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of action that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affronts their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in the public or private life”. Gender based violence is considered to be a cause and consequence of gender inequality.

The aim of Equally Safe is to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, creating a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from such abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

2.4 Welfare Reform

Apart from the unprecedented economic and financial climate we have faced over the last decade, there are other key policy areas which impact on the levels of inequalities in the Borders such as the reform of the welfare system. An effective response to Welfare Reform requires a co-ordinated approach between Scottish Borders Council and Community Planning Partners, Registered Social Landlords, and the voluntary sector.



This approach focuses upon awareness and support for families to minimise debt and maintain tenancies, budgeting, financial inclusion and education, life skills such as cooking - which can both reduce household expenditure and improve health - and ongoing employability work which focuses both on getting people into work and on gaining the skills and opportunities to move into more secure, better paid employment.



Scottish Borders Council, in partnership with its community planning partners, has established a five-year Welfare Reform Programme to cover all likely implications of the changes to the welfare system. This includes impacts on the residents of the Borders and how to mitigate the worst effects, on the Council and its related functions, impact on the local economy and impacts on other organisations such as RSLs. The governance structure of this programme board is outlined in Figure 8 (below).

Figure 8: Welfare Reform Programme Governance Structure



The programme outlined above is extremely important as the current changes to welfare benefits are more far-reaching and profound than have been seen for 60 years, involving changes to entitlement, their value and how they are to be paid, as well as initially being introduced at a time of economic recession. These reforms are likely – at least in the short term – to widen the gap in inequalities particularly as the groups most likely to be impacted by the welfare benefit changes and economic recession will be the most vulnerable in our society. The Welfare Reform Programme identified above therefore underpins this strategic plan.

2.5 Conclusion and Implications for the Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan

Whilst many of the indicators SBC use to assess quality of life show that the Borders is generally a good place to live, we have seen little improvement in outcomes for people within our most deprived areas over the last 10 years, despite significant interventions and additional resources being deployed in these areas by public sector partners. Many of the Borders-wide indicators e.g. for breastfeeding, smoking

during pregnancy, attainment, are above the Scottish average but when examined at local level, large disparities exist between our most and our least deprived areas.

The evidence shows there are a number of key implications and challenges that the Scottish Borders face which this strategy must help tackle:

- The Community Planning Strategic Board wishes to see a targeted approach to partnership activity in the Burnfoot area of Hawick and the Langlee area of Galashiels so that outcomes are improved over the long term (see evidence in Section 2 of the SOA).
- Whilst rates of child poverty in the Scottish Borders are lower than Scotland as a whole (11% compared to 15% in Scotland), rates are as high as 28% in our more deprived areas.

This will not necessarily involve putting *more* money into these areas but will involve examining what is done with the resources we all deploy currently and examining why it is possibly only having a limited impact. There is also a desire to see that work done through the Early Years Collaborative has a particular benefit to those in our most deprived areas, ensuring that children in these areas do indeed get the best start in life and go on to benefit from opportunities within an improved Borders economy.

- Poverty and lack of income is central to all of the strategic themes identified. The tackling poverty and achieving social justice strategy was developed by the Council and its Partners and is one of the key local policy documents which will underpin this strategic plan for reducing inequalities in the Borders.
- There is a significant amount of statistical and qualitative evidence around inequalities and the pervasive impact that this has on all aspects of life. The challenge for the CPP is identifying effective policies and partnerships which can effectively try to redress the imbalance. Income inequalities mirror and reflect other inequalities, such as health inequalities and are compounded by a wide range of relevant issues around employment, education and housing to name a few.
- It will be important to focus activities which seek to reduce inequalities in the Borders on the groups who are identified at greatest risk of falling into the most disadvantaged circumstances and/or in those areas where there are the highest levels of deprivation such as:

- **Single households**
- **Children in Poverty**
- **Single Parents**
- **Elderly**
- **People with a disability or a long term health condition**
- **Homeless**
- **Women and Girls**



3. EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

3.1 What are the key issues?

The summary below sets out our understanding of the key issues in relation to Employment and Income

- SIMD identifies 5 datazones as being in the most deprived in Scotland. However, SIMD is less accurate when applied in rural areas so there could be areas of hidden poverty.
- There are areas within all the towns of the Scottish Borders that experience income or employment deprivation however, the highest levels occur in Langlee and Burnfoot.
- The highest percentage of key benefits claimants are in Galashiels, Hawick, and Eyemouth.
- The Scottish Borders has an unemployment rate of 5.9% compared with 7.9% in Scotland, however between 1997 and 2014 the workplace based gross median weekly pay in the Scottish Borders has been 17% below the level for Scotland, equating to over £70 (Scottish Borders ranked 29 out of 32 for lowest average weekly wage and is significantly lower than the Scottish average).
- Women earn less than men in the Scottish Borders; £426 compared to £468 for gross weekly pay in 2014 (workplace based).
- 18% (approx. 10,200 households) in the Scottish Borders live in poverty, compared with 19% in Scotland.
- The Scottish Borders has a higher proportion of over 65 year olds (23%) compared with Scotland (18%).
- Child Poverty in the Scottish Borders is 11% compared with Scotland 15%. The level of child poverty in the Scottish Borders ranges from 5% to 28%.
- 10% of working age population in the Scottish Borders is receiving out-of-work benefit, compared to Scotland (13%).
- According to the 2011 Census the working-age people aged 16-64 make up 62% of the Scottish Borders population, below the Scottish average of 66%.

Following a deep economic recession, employment is not easy to come by for many people. Being equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to sustain and secure employment is fundamental to improve life chances for individuals seeking work and their families.

Many people who are unemployed face greater barriers than others when it comes to getting into and moving forward in the world of work. The reasons for this are often

quite complex, but there are a number of barriers that typically have to be overcome before people enter or re-enter the workplace; low educational attainment, low self-confidence and esteem, gaps in their CV, bad experiences of work, lack of references, high anxiety, lack of recent work experience, low stamina, out of date or lack of employability skills, lack of awareness of employers expectations, and stigma around mental health problems. As a result, some people may need extra help and support to gain the benefits of work that many of us take for granted.

Some people may also belong to groups identified as priority groups for receiving assistance through employability programmes, including lone parents, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems, the long-term unemployed, young people leaving care and ex-offenders. It is important that the people facing barriers to entering employment are directed to the appropriate services at the right time, and that the staff providing support are able to refer people to these services. It is crucial that in the Borders we identify whether we do in fact have the appropriate services to assist our most vulnerable residents.

A stronger link may also be needed between **Employability, Economic Development and Employment Support Service** which would help better coordinate issues around the demand and supply-side actions in the labour market, helping people overcome barriers to employment and at the same time working with local employers to maximise the jobs available. The Inward Investment Approach being adopted by the Council will be crucial in helping to maximise the jobs available across the region.

Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of wealth in an economy, the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector. Table 4 (page 30) shows that the Scottish Borders can expect a modest increase in GVA per annum up to 2030, with a small increase in employment per annum and reduction in unemployment.

Employability is defined by Scottish Government as: “the combination of factors and processes which enable people to progress towards or get into employment, to stay in employment and to move on in the workplace.”



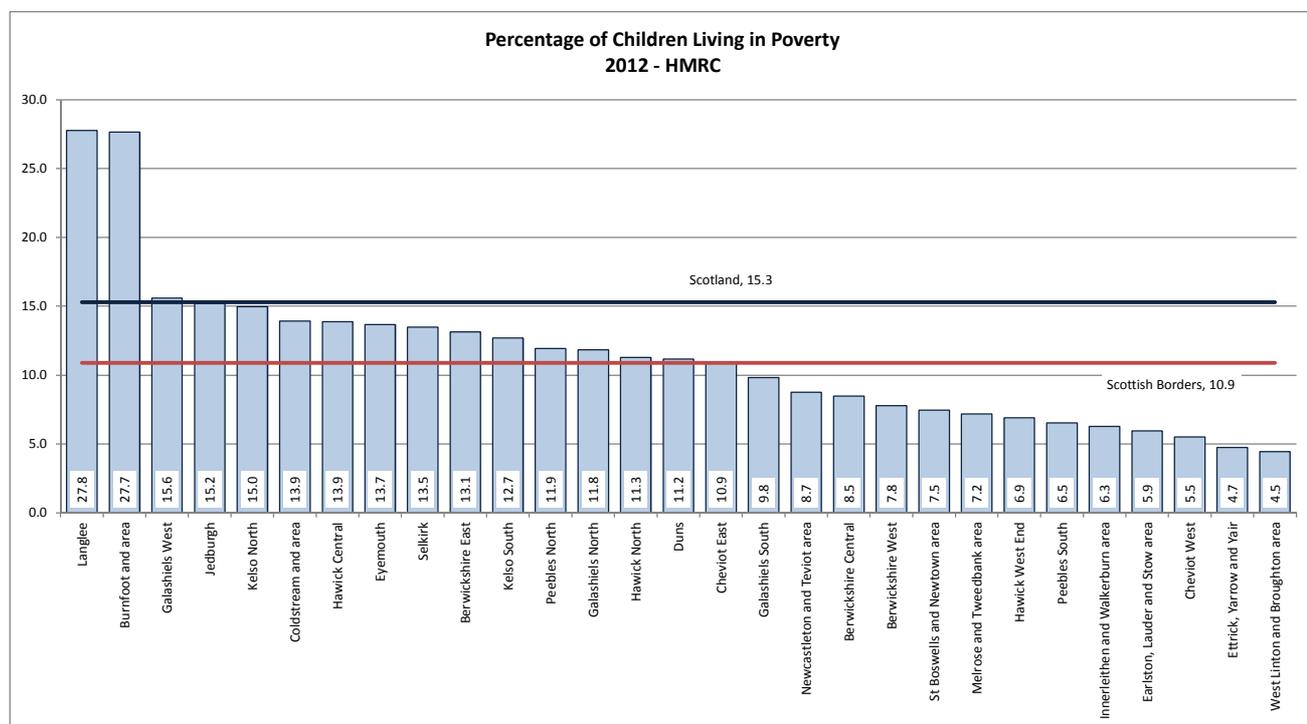
Table 4: GVA, Employment and Unemployment Forecast 2012 – 2030

	GVA % per annum	Employment % per annum	Unemployment % per annum
	2012-2030	2012-2030	2012-2030
Clackmannanshire	2.43	-0.01	-3.11
East Lothian	3.05	0.51	-0.68
Edinburgh	3.60	0.62	0.46
Falkirk	2.66	0.08	-1.28
Fife	2.48	0.05	-2.49
Midlothian	3.15	0.53	-2.34
Scottish Borders	2.95	0.20	-2.32
Stirling	3.11	0.38	-1.34
West Lothian	3.70	0.80	-2.62
Edinburgh City Region	3.26	0.43	-1.41

Source: Oxford Economics 2013

The key objective of participating in the in the **City Region Deal for the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland (ESES CR)** programme is a targeted increase in GVA. The increase in GVA being aimed for across the region is 5% over the 20 year period of the programme. A successful bid for a city region deal could therefore go a long way in contributing to reducing the employment and income inequality gap in the Borders, improving outcomes for our most deprived residents.

Figure 9: Percentage of Children Living in Poverty



Child poverty is defined by HMRC as dependent children under the age of 20 in families in receipt of Child Tax Credits (<60% median income) or Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance.

In 2012 HMRC calculated that 10.9% of children in the Scottish Borders were living in poverty, less than the 15.3% for Scotland. Within the Scottish Borders, HMRC calculated that over 27% of the children in Langlee and Burnfoot and area were living in poverty. (figure 9 on page 30) It also shows that all areas of the Scottish Borders have children living in poverty.

UK Government's **Welfare Reforms** are likely to have a significant impact on levels of child poverty, particularly the changes to eligibility for child tax credits and working tax credits, which could, on average, mean that households may become around £700 per year worse off.

Growing up in poverty means being cold, going hungry, not being able to join in activities with friends and contributes to widening the gap in the longer term. Children living in poverty are more likely to leave school with fewer qualifications which in the long term translates into lower earnings, and experience of health inequalities. We want to ensure that the Scottish Borders is a region where all children have fair chances in life, therefore early intervention is absolutely critical to the success of the overall aims of this strategic plan.

Investing in education and training opportunities and income maximisation services should improve income distribution but we need to continue to recognise the important role of developing our economy in the Borders and the important role that the labour market plays. This strategy understands that the structure of our economy shapes wages and income distribution in the Borders.

3.2 What do we want to achieve?

Strategic outcome 1

By 2020 inequalities in income and employment deprivation between the most and the least deprived people and communities across the Borders are reduced

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring a targeted and holistic approach to income maximisation and support to those impacted by welfare reform;
- Increasing employability, skills and confidence;
- Ensuring there is support for people (furthest away from the labour market) to take up employment opportunities in the Scottish Borders. (E.g. child care & affordable transport);
- Increasing employment opportunities and maximising job availability
- Focusing on early intervention and prevention, and supporting people to develop money management skills



- Improving access to education, training and employment for economically inactive young people and,
- Better access to childcare to enable women to take up employment

The following sections set out what we are currently doing to achieve this outcome, what is planned, and concludes with what else should be done over the period 2015-20.

3.3 Tackling Poverty and Achieving Social Justice Strategy 2013-18

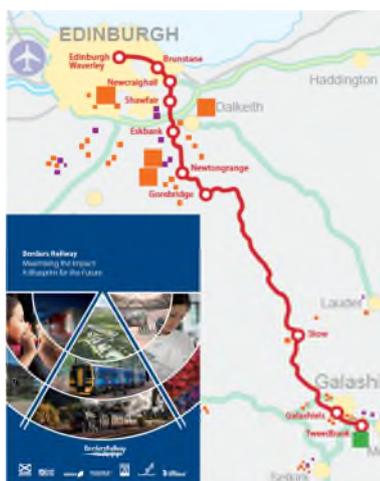
The Tackling Poverty and Achieving Social Justice Strategy is the Council's and partners plan of how we are tackling poverty in order to achieve improved social justice across the Scottish Borders over the next five years and beyond. There are two outcomes that come under the employability theme within the strategy:

- Borders residents have the ability to secure and sustain employment
- Young people increase their participation in employability programmes and are able to engage effectively in employment and training opportunities.



The Council's Welfare Benefits Service and Employment Support Service contribute significantly to the implementation of this particular plan by supporting clients to maximise their income and increasing opportunities for disadvantaged job seekers in the Borders.

3.4 Borders Railway



The Borders Railway will strengthen economic linkages between the Scottish Borders and Edinburgh. This will increase the potential for major inward investment; encourage more people to set up businesses in the Scottish Borders; and significantly increase visitors and tourists. It will also enable Borders residents to access more opportunities for employment, training and education whilst being able to stay in the area. The Borders Railway Blueprint and the Joint Committee plan to maximise the economic opportunities of the railway, incentivising business to grow and expand, creating a vibrant economy, attracting skilled people to live in the Borders and impacting significantly on tourism and the economy.

3.5 Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023

The Scottish Borders Economic Action plan identifies four key priorities which will contribute to reducing inequalities:

- Creating the conditions for business to compete
- Building on our assets
- Developing the workforce of the future
- Providing leadership



Key Vision of the Scottish Borders Economic Strategy

“By 2023 the Scottish Borders will be amongst the best performing and most productive rural economies in Scotland. By supporting existing businesses and encouraging higher value economic activity, our quality of life will increase. The Borders will become a location of choice for growing businesses and for people to live and work.

3.6 Scottish Borders Learning & Skills Partnership

The Partnership has links directly into the Community Planning Partnership and helps ensure a consistent and integrated approach to employment, training and education, providing support to both individuals and employers. These partners are committed to developing the workforce and working with both employers and educational institutions.

3.7 Developing the Young Workforce – Scottish Borders Programme

This programme sets out the strategy for implementing the recommendations from the Wood Commission (Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce). The programme has been set up with four core areas. Themes one and two are led by the Council’s Education Service and Borders College. Theme 3 covers Apprenticeships and is led by Skills Development Scotland and the fourth theme “targeting employers” is led by the Councils Economic Development Service.



3.8 Strategic Inward Investment Approach

The Approach involves working with Midlothian and the City of Edinburgh Councils to promote opportunities along the railway corridor, as well as across the whole of the Scottish Borders. The project aligns with objectives of the Borders Railway Blueprint but also supports the aspiration to create well-paid jobs as part of Scotland's Economic Strategy. The opening of the Railway and the improved linkages represent a major opportunity to attract inward investment to the Borders.

3.9 Strategic Partnership Against Poverty

The Strategic Partnership Against Poverty (SPAP) is a multi-agency partnership that works together to address issues related to poverty in the Scottish Borders. This includes understanding and implementing changes to the welfare system and co-ordinating activities related to employment and educational opportunities, money management / budget /debt advice, housing related issues and homelessness. The membership of SPAP includes: Housing and Welfare Services, Neighbourhood Services – Customer Services, The Borders Housing Network, Learning Disability Services, Public Health, Economic Development, Strategic Policy Unit, SBC Finance, Education / Community Learning and Development, CAB – Borders, DWP – Borders, Pensions Service.

3.10 Key Delivery Plans

Local

Corporate Transformation and Services Business Plan (2015/16 – 2017/18)
Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 & updated Action Plan (May 2015)
Employment Support Delivery Plan (2014)
Tackling Poverty and Achieving Social Justice Strategy 2013-2018
Welfare Reform Impacts Paper (December 2014)
Final Oxford Economics Report Update 2013
Borders Railway: Maximising the Impact: A blue Print for the Future (2014)

National

Creating a Fairer Scotland: Employability Support: A Discussion Paper (2015)
Developing the Young Workforce - Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (2014)
Disabled people, work, & Local Authorities in Scotland (2015)
Scottish Government Economic Strategy (2015)

3.11 Priorities for the Strategic Plan

The following summarises the key actions required to tackle inequalities in employment and income across the Borders:

- Ensure information and advice is widely available and easily accessible across all relevant agencies
- Implement Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 & Action Plan
- Developing the Young Workforce – Scottish Borders Programme: “Apprenticeships”
- Implement the new Inward Investment Approach
- Improve evaluative activity around current services to ensure they are the right services
- Maximising jobs in the Borders, in particular skilled and well paid jobs.
- City Region Deal for Edinburgh and the South East of Scotland (ESESCR) programme
- Implement the Tackling Poverty & Achieving Social Justice Strategy
- Continue the Welfare Reform Programme to manage and mitigate the effects
- Maximise the impact and opportunities from within the Borders Learning and Skills Partnership
- Continue to provide services which support income maximisation and employment support such as the Welfare Benefits and Employment Support Services.



4. HEALTH & WELLBEING

4.1 What are the key issues?

This summary sets out our understanding of the key issues in relation to inequalities of health and well-being:

- Between 2012 and 2037 the National Records of Scotland project that the number of people aged 75 and older will grow from 11,072 to 21,610 an increase of 95%.
- The Scottish Borders has a better life expectancy for both men (78) and women (82) than Scotland (77 and 81). Areas where life expectancy is lower in men and women compared to the Scottish average are Galashiels West, Langlee and Galashiels North.
- Although it is improving, smoking during pregnancy is higher in the Scottish Borders (25%) than the Scottish average (20%). This is particularly high in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas.
- There are higher rates of emergency admissions to hospital for people within more deprived areas of the Scottish Borders.
- Areas of deprivation within the Scottish Borders have higher rates of coronary heart disease, respiratory disease, disease of the digestive system, alcohol related hospital admissions but lower rates of cerebrovascular disease (stroke) and cancer.
- Between 2006 and 2012 the proportion of people claiming Incapacity Benefit / Severe Disablement Allowance for mental or behaviour reasons increased by 3.7% in the Scottish Borders compared to 1.4% for Scotland.
- 9.1% of the Scottish Borders population provided unpaid care according to the 2011 Census; there was a greater concentration of unpaid carers in rural Berwickshire.
- People in areas of higher deprivation have poorer mental health.
- Areas of deprivation have higher rates of people claiming health related benefits.
- Selkirk, Langlee, Jedburgh, Duns and Coldstream have a higher rate of 'early deaths' compared to Scotland.
- Low Birth Weight is an indicator of health inequality within the Scottish Borders several areas had higher rates of low birth weight compared to Scotland these were Peebles North, Langlee, Burnfoot and area, Cheviot East, Hawick Central, Jedburgh and Hawick West End.
- The Scottish Borders has a lower rate of child obesity (9.1%) compared with Scotland (10.1%). Areas where it is higher than the Scottish figure are Cheviot West, Eyemouth, Berwickshire East and Coldstream and Area.
- Areas of deprivation have higher drug related and alcohol related hospitalisations.
- 84.1% of people in the Scottish Borders consider their health to be 'very good' or 'good' compared with Scotland 82.2%. Areas where people rate their health below the Scottish average are; Hawick West End, Eyemouth, Coldstream and Area, Hawick Central, Burnfoot and Area, Kelso South and Langlee.

There are inequalities in the health of people in Scotland which are unfair and unjust, because they are based on social structures and factors such as how much money people have. These inequalities mean that some people are more likely to be ill or have low levels of wellbeing, to become ill earlier in life and to die younger than others. This includes people with learning disabilities and those who experience mental health problems.

The health and wellbeing of the people in the Scottish Borders is generally better than Scotland as a whole. However, the inequalities in health between the most and the least deprived people and communities are apparent in the Scottish Borders, as they are in other parts of Scotland.

Equally Well
 “Scotland’s health is improving rapidly but it is not improving fast enough for the poorest sections of our society. Health inequalities remain our major challenge.”

The Scottish Borders has seen a significant improvement in premature mortality from 2006-2013 currently has the lowest rate of any mainland NHS Board. In Scotland as a whole the premature mortality gap between most and least deprived areas is at its lowest ever for persons under 75 years. The Scottish Borders also has a better life expectancy for both men and women than Scotland. However, some of the more deprived areas in Scottish Borders have a lower life expectancy for men and women compared to the Scottish average.

Living in an area of greater deprivation is associated with a wide range of poorer health outcomes including: poor mental health, suicide and suicidal behaviour, and higher rates of lifestyle related diseases such as heart disease. Deprivation can mean people develop health conditions at an earlier age, have more complex and often multiple problems and have poorer outcomes. (This has an impact on their general wellbeing and can affect family and informal carers.)

Figure 10: Theories of Causation of Health Inequalities

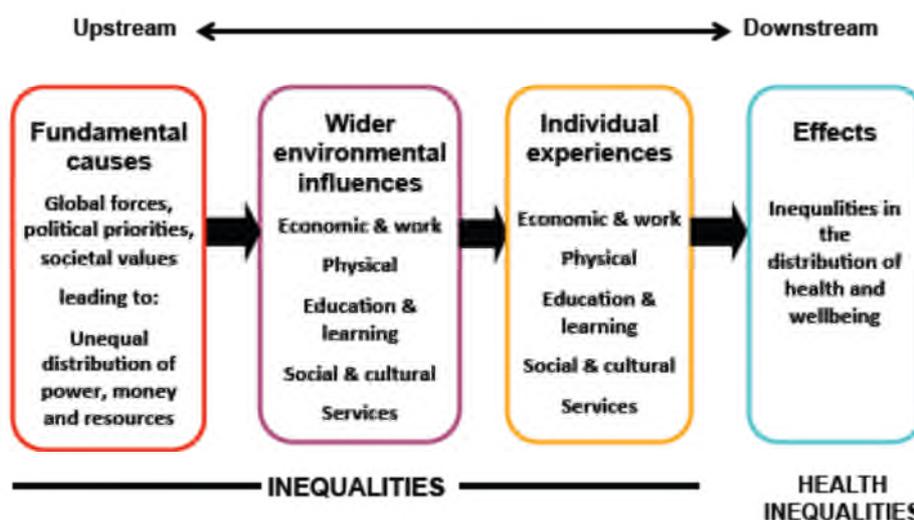


Figure 10 on page 37 illustrates the causation of health Inequalities which are caused by a fundamental inequality in the distribution of power, money and resources. These inequalities influence the distribution of wider environmental influences on health, for example the availability of good quality housing, work, education and learning opportunities. In turn, these factors shape individual experiences and health throughout life.

In order to address health inequalities in Scotland and more specifically the Scottish Borders requires action on three levels:

- Actions that **mitigate** the health and social consequences of social inequalities. People who are socially disadvantaged have higher health needs and the level and intensity of service provision should reflect that.
- Actions that **help** individuals and communities resist the effects of inequality on health and wellbeing. These include targeted health improvement activities, community development activities that increase social capital in deprived areas, improvements to the physical environment in deprived areas.
- Actions that **undo** the underlying structural inequalities in power and resources. They include provision of high quality universal services such as education, housing, employment and improved environments particularly in the most deprived areas

The cost of running NHS Scotland continues to rise which puts a lot of strain on the health sector and the wider society. Public health can be part of the solution to this challenge. The evidence shows that prevention can be cost-effective, provide value for money and give returns on investment in both the short and longer terms.

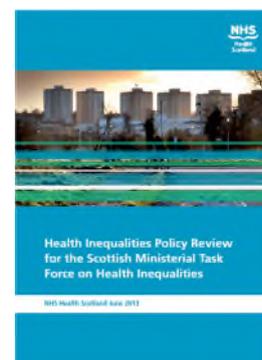
4.2 What do we want to achieve?

Strategic Outcome 2

The inequalities in health & wellbeing between the most and the least deprived people and communities across the Borders are reduced

This will be achieved by:

- People who are socially disadvantaged have higher health needs and the level and intensity of local service provision should reflect that.
- For all staff in statutory or non-statutory organisations to understand their public health role in reducing health inequalities.
- To enhance, develop and maintain partnership working across the Borders to address the many factors leading to health inequalities.
- Partnership working at a local and national level



- Through CPP and IJB established principles on reducing health inequalities from evidence-based work and apply these in a proportionate way across the Borders.

The following sections set out what we are currently doing to achieve these outcomes, what is planned, and concludes with what else has to be done over the strategic plan period, 2015-20.

4.3 Health & Social Care Partnership

NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council are working together to put in place formal joint working arrangements with the aim of providing better, more integrated adult health and social care services in the Borders. Planning of services for Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders will be brought together by a Joint Board but a much wider range of services will be involved in the partnership.

In order to achieve this vision, the partnership plans to:

Key Vision

“Working together for the best possible health and wellbeing of our communities”

- Improve outcomes for service users and carers
- Make services easily accessible with clear available information
- Deliver quality services in a person’s own home or community in a timely way
- Have open, transparent and understandable governance arrangements
- Make effective use of resources and delivery of agreed efficiencies across the partnership
- Develop a flexible skilled workforce
- Meet agreed performance targets

4.4 Public Health

Public Health focuses on promoting the health and well-being of people living in the Scottish Borders and protecting people from becoming ill.

- The Joint Health Improvement Team leads and supports work across the Scottish Borders to improve health and reduce health inequalities.
- The Health Protection Team focus on protecting the public from infectious diseases and environmental hazards. Regulatory Services carry out work under a wide-range of legislation relating to the health, safety and welfare of our Borders community.
- Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Support Team commission drug and alcohol services and interventions to reduce the impact of problem drug and alcohol in Borders.
- The Service Improvement Team assesses population needs and evidence to shape the design of local services.



Scottish Borders Public Health Inequalities Action Plan is currently in development which will underpin the Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan and identify the key priorities for the Scottish Borders and its partners.

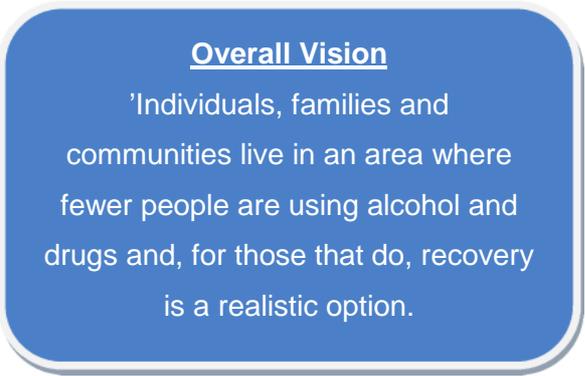
4.5 Health Promoting Organisations

The 'Small Changes, Big Difference' campaign from NHS Borders aims to engage our staff, the public and businesses across the Borders to make small changes in their life and work practice to make a big difference to their own and other's health and wellbeing.

The NHS Borders Health Promoting Health Service (HPHS) programme focuses on the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and visitors in hospital and community settings. It has an underpinning theme that "every healthcare contact is a health improvement opportunity."

4.6 Drugs and Alcohol Partnership

The Scottish Borders Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP) is tasked with delivering a reduction in the level of drug and alcohol problems amongst young people and adults in the Borders, and reducing the harmful impact on families and communities. ADP are committed to working with the Scottish Government, colleagues, people in recovery and local communities to tackle the problems arising from substance misuse.

A blue rounded rectangular box with a white border. Inside, the text reads:

Overall Vision
'Individuals, families and communities live in an area where fewer people are using alcohol and drugs and, for those that do, recovery is a realistic option.'

ADP members, including Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders, Lothian & Borders Police, the Community Justice Authority, and voluntary sector drug and alcohol services, adopt a joint strategic approach to reducing drug and alcohol problems amongst young people, adults and the harmful impact on communities.

The **Alcohol & Drug Partnership Strategy 2015-2020** sets out four key strategic aims:

1. Reducing prevalence of alcohol and drug use by 5% by 2020 through prevention and early intervention
2. Reducing alcohol and drugs related harm to children and young people
3. Improving recovery outcomes for service users and reduce number of deaths from accidental drug use to fewer than four per year by 2020
4. Strengthening partnerships and governance structures

The Alcohol and Drug Partnership not only has a role in the health and wellbeing inequality theme but also the keeping people safe theme.

4.7 Healthy Living Network

Borders Healthy Living Network (HLN) was established in 2003 and delivers a strong focus on health improvement. Individuals and communities in Borders are under pressure from a fluctuating labour market and uncertainty relating to public sector funding and jobs.

The Healthy Living Network operates in the most deprived areas in the Borders (Selkirk, Walkerburn, Eyemouth, Langlee and Burnfoot) and aims to reduce inequalities in health by empowering communities to identify and address health issues.

4.8 Third Sector Organisations

The Third Sector makes a direct impact on the wellbeing of its citizens and the improvement of its public services. The Third Sector organisations can be very effective in addressing the wider factors underlying health inequalities.

4.9 Key Delivery Plans

The following highlights the key delivery plans which the Council and partners are already working with to reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Local

Adult Services Business Plan (2015-16 – 2017/18)
Joint Health Improvement Business Plan (2015/16 – 2017/18)
Scottish Borders Health & Social Care Partnership Draft Strategic Plan (2015 – 2018)
Alcohol & Drug Partnership Strategy 2015-2020
Scottish Borders Alcohol Profile 2013/14
Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) Delivery Plan 2015-2018
Children and Young People's Health Strategy for the Scottish Borders 2013 – 2018
Scottish Borders Violence Against Women Strategy (2016-20)
Scottish Borders Violence Against Women Strategy Action Plan (2016-20)

National

Equally Well (2008)
Equally Safe (2014)
Consultation on the Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy (2015)
NHS - Health Inequalities Policy Review (2013)
NHS – Health Inequalities Briefing Paper (2015)
Audit Scotland health Inequalities in Scotland (2012)
World Health Organisation - The Case for Investing in Public Health (2014)

4.10 Priorities for the Strategic Plan

The following summarises the key actions required to reduce inequalities in health & wellbeing between the most and the least deprived people and communities across the Borders:

- Support the development of the Public Health Inequalities Action Plan (currently in development)
- Use CPP and IJB established principles on reducing health inequalities from evidence-based work and apply these in a proportionate way across the Borders.
- Support an active Healthy Living Network particularly in Langlee, Eyemouth and Burnfoot areas.
- Encourage organizations to undertake joint needs assessments, develop common objectives and agree joint plans.
- Explore joint staff training programmes to promote greater understanding and cooperation across organisations.
- Identifying common IT platforms and data sharing agreements could lead to a more efficient and seamless delivery of care.
- Encourage staff to understand what health inequalities exist and how these may be tackled.
- Health improvement initiatives should be targeted in areas of deprivation or at particular vulnerable groups e.g. those with mental illness.
- Additional primary and social care support should be provided in areas of deprivation to prevent emergency admissions

5. ATTAINMENT, ACHIEVEMENT AND INCLUSION

5.1 What are the key issues?

This summary sets out our understanding of the key issues in relation to inequalities in attainment and achievement:

- Although girls tend to out-perform boys at school, in line with the national trend, the attainment gap for girls in areas of high deprivation is stark where they are out-performed by boys in certain age groups.
- According to the 2011 Census the Scottish Borders has marginally more people aged 16 and older with no or low qualifications compared to Scotland; 50.6% and 49.9% respectively.
- Within the Scottish Borders there are 8 areas where 60% or more of the population aged 16 and over have no or low qualifications. These are Burnfoot and Area, Langlee, Eyemouth, Hawick North, Kelso North, Hawick West End, Jedburgh, and Hawick Central.
- Burnfoot area and Langlee has the lowest level of attendance for both Primary and Secondary School, although Borders has a better attendance rate when compared to the national average (95.9 vs 94.8).
- Scottish Borders has a similar average tariff score for all pupils enrolled in S4 compared to Scotland. Areas in the Scottish Borders with the lowest scores are Burnfoot Area, Jedburgh, Galashiels West, Galashiels North, and Langlee.
- Scottish Borders has more S4 pupils with 5 awards at SCQF level 5 and above compared to Scotland; 46.9% and 40.9% respectively. However, within the Scottish Borders the percentage ranges from 21.6% in Burnfoot and Area to 82.2% in Peebles South.
- Scottish Borders has a slightly higher proportion of S6 pupils with 5 awards at SCQF level 5 and above; 48.3% and 44.0% respectively. Within the Scottish Borders, the proportion ranges from 18.2% in Langlee to 78.2% in Earlston, Lauder and Stow Areas.
- The Scottish Borders has a greater proportion of school leavers at a positive destination at 6 months compared to Scotland; 92.1% and 90.0% respectively. However, within the Scottish Borders there were 6 areas where less than 85% of the school leavers were in a positive destination at 6 months. These were: Hawick Central., Innerleithen and Walkerburn Area, Eyemouth, Coldstream and Area, Galashiels North and Langlee



The educational attainment and qualifications of people in the Scottish Borders is generally above average when compared to the rest of Scotland. However, education attainment and qualification inequalities are more pronounced in areas of deprivation in the Scottish Borders.

The educational achievement gap between societies' richest and poorest is apparent from early years. Qualification levels are significantly lower among those living in poverty and school leavers living in the most deprived areas are less likely to move on to positive destinations. A good standard of education is essential to secure well paid employment, further learning or training opportunities and avoid falling into the poverty trap. Too many disadvantaged children grow up in the Borders without the skills needed to thrive in the long term. Whether in educational attainment between income groups or across geographic locations—inequality persists and lower levels of performance among the most disadvantaged create long-term problems

When considering the key information around attainment and achievement in education there also needs to be a focus on the impact of neighbourhoods, families, the economy and housing which all affect the educational outcomes. These areas have direct effects on what and how much children learn. Children growing up in the more deprived neighbourhoods, for example, are much more likely to experience stress from family disorder, live in fuel poverty or be prone to health issues which could all affect their educational development. This Reducing Inequalities Strategy acknowledges the universal nature of inequality and understands how these external environmental factors impact pupils, schools and adult learners. The disparities between the more affluent and more deprived neighbourhoods in the Borders exacerbate the gap in opportunities.

5.2 What do we want to achieve?

Strategic Outcome 3

By 2020 the inequalities in educational outcomes and attainment between the most and the least deprived children across the Borders are reduced.

We want to see improvements in early child development to enable children and young people to make good progress with educational achievements and attainments across all areas of the Borders and socio-economic groups. They should be equally equipped with the knowledge and skills to proceed to adult working life.

This will be achieved by:

- Implementation of the Children and Young People's Act 2014 including early learning and childcare redesign, supporting vulnerable children and young people including Looked After / Kinship Care.

- Implementing 'Raising Attainment for All', ensuring our children and young people are numerate, literate and have the skills and knowledge to achieve their aspiration and ambition in partnership with the local community including parents/carers.
- Ensuring that there are opportunities and targeted support to enable all young people to achieve their goals, and overcome challenges (e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, inequality, caring responsibilities or social/emotional concerns).
- Ensure there are opportunities to learn and develop skills and reduce isolation for the most vulnerable people and improve the capacity of the community.

The following sections set out what we are currently doing to achieve this outcome, what is planned, and concludes with what else should be done over the period 2015-20.

5.3 The Children & Young People's Leadership Group (CYPLG)

The Children & Young People's Leadership Group (previously Children & Young People's Planning Partnership) has a remit for early years, and have made significant strategic commitments to involve children and young people in the decisions which affect them.



Through the implementation of GIRFEC within the Scottish Borders the group is supporting children and young people as individuals, on matters affecting their care, learning, health and wellbeing: and as a group in the evaluation and development of the services available now and in the future.

With an expansive and varied membership the group continues to provide inclusion to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people in the Scottish Borders with a focus on reducing inequalities.

The Early Years Collaborative sets out the national stretch aims to reduce stillbirth and improve child development, recognises the importance of parenting and family learning environment, assists healthy child development and positive health and social outcomes.

5.4 Developing the Young Workforce: Scottish Borders Programme

This programme sets out the strategy for implementing the recommendations from the Wood Commission (Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce), and the importance of increasing and maintaining youth employment, which is one of the Scottish Governments strategic objectives. Addressing the youth employment agenda provides economic opportunities and reduces the risk of young people suffering from mental illness such as anxiety and depression. The programme has



been set up with four core areas. Themes one and two are led by the Council's Education Service and Borders College. Theme 3 covers Apprenticeships and is led by Skills Development Scotland and the fourth theme "targeting employers" is led by the Council's Employment Support Service.

5.5 Children and Young People's Act 2014

Scottish Government has tried to strengthen the rights of children and young people in Scotland by encouraging Scottish Ministers and Public Bodies to think about these rights and how they relate to their work. With the creation of new systems to support children and young people and support to identify any problems at an early stage, rather than waiting until a child or young person reaches crisis point.

Three key policies within this Act which have been implemented within the Scottish Borders:

- Early Learning & Childcare provision has been extended to eligible 2 year olds providing improved early support.
- Additional support for looked after children and young people in care giving them the right to stay in the same placement up to 21. Where necessary looked after young people will be provided with "advice, guidance and assistance" up to the age of 26 where this is something that would be helpful to them.
- Free school dinners for children in Primary 1-3 to support the development of our young people and tackle inequalities in our society, including child poverty.

5.6 Scottish Government Raising Attainment for All Programme (RAFA)

Supporting families into work, improving living standards and raising educational attainment are the fundamental aims set out in the government's child poverty strategy.

Within the Scottish Borders the RAFA projects have received national recognition and have transformed the attainment of some of our most vulnerable children.



The national online comparison tool – INSIGHT – allows us to analyse, compare and improve performance of pupils in the senior phase of secondary school.

The percentage of S4 pupils achieving literacy and numeracy at level four (National 4) was 82 per cent in 2014, up from 67 per cent in 2012.

At National 5 level, 39 per cent of S4 pupils also passed certain modules within English and Maths, also considerably up on the 2012 figure of 26 per cent.

5.7 Scottish Borders Integrated Children and Young People Plan

The Integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan provides the vision and values local partners have for children, young people and their families in the region. In addition, the plan details the key priority areas of work on which the Children & Young People's Leadership Group (CYPLG) will focus resources over the next three years.

Vision
All children and young people in the Scottish Borders will achieve their unique potential.

With a strong focus on early intervention, some key priority areas for the CYPLG include:

- Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Early Years
- Looked After and Accommodated Children and Young People
- Parental Involvement
- Improved attainment and achievement for all our children and young people
- Improved health and wellbeing for children and young people
- Transitions 16+

5.8 Community Learning and Development Plan

Community Learning and Development (CLD) provides free and accessible community based learning opportunities which result in:

- improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship
- stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities

CLD helps to develop the resilience and ambition needed to combat the effects of economic factors which cause deprivation and inequality. It does this by ensuring that barriers to better life chances are understood and overcome and by ensuring that communities are full partners in delivering solutions

5.9 Scottish Government Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for 3 to 18 year olds.



It aims to ensure that all children and young people of Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future.

The purpose of the curriculum is to help children and young people to develop the four capacities of education. This means we want our children and young people to become:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

The Scottish Borders has fully implemented the Curriculum for Excellence across the region. It continues to raise attainment by developing innovative and collaborative practice with all partners in raising the attainment of our most vulnerable individuals and groups of learners.

5.10 Scottish Borders Youth Voice

Scottish Borders Youth Voice is the name we give to activities for young people (aged 12-25 years) to get actively involved in decision-making and youth-led campaigns in the Scottish Borders.



Scottish Borders Youth Voice brings together Youth Voice Teams, Youth Chex, Child Right's Group and the Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament. It also supports other youth-led initiatives such as Youth Legacy Ambassadors for the Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Borders Saltire-Inspire Awards.

5.11 Early Years Strategy (Early Years Framework)

The Early Year Strategy's is derived from the aims to break the cycle of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders.

The establishment of four Early Years Centres in primary schools in areas of deprivation (Langlee, Philiphaugh, Burnfoot and Eyemouth) within the Scottish Borders provides children and parents with:

- Parenting support, activities and an informal drop in service for advice
- Support and help for children to grow and lead happier and healthier lives
- Access to different services and professionals to give the best start in life for Scottish Borders Children



- Opportunity to bring part of the community nearer to families

5.12 Borders Young Person's Guarantee

The objective of the **Borders Young Person's Guarantee** is that the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) partners will ensure that every young person leaving school in the Scottish Borders will have the offer of a job, training or further education opportunity. Given the progression of most school leavers to a 'positive destination', the Guarantee will focus on the estimated 8% who do not go onto further education, work or training. Initial work by the Council's Strategic Policy Unit suggests there are about 89⁷ school leavers who will be the target beneficiaries for this initiative.

Senior Phase Strategy
Our aim is ensure our young people reach their full potential and move on to a positive and sustained destination of their choice.

5.13 Scottish Borders Supported Child-minding Scheme

This service has seen child-minders provide early intervention to hundreds of families experiencing short term vulnerability caused by a variety of factors and including poor mental or physical health; bereavement; new baby; postnatal depression; isolation; teenage parents; kinship care or need to study. As a result of the service children can develop their communication skills and become more confident and able to cope in social situation outside the family: and parents are more able to cope with family life spending quality time with their children.

⁷At the time of writing the report the number of young people that left school without a positive destination was an estimated 89 in 2013-2014. The annual figures for school leavers not in a positive destination varies between 80-120



5.14 Key delivery plans

The following highlights the key delivery plans which the Council and partners are already working with to reduce inequalities in attainment and achievement.

Local

Scottish Borders Council Senior Phase Strategy (2015)

Scottish Borders Children and Young People's Plan (2015-2018, Draft)

Community Learning and Development Business Plan 2014/15 – 2016/17

Tackling Poverty and Achieving Social Justice Strategy 2013-2018

Involved: The Participation of Children & Young People in the Scottish Borders (2012-2015)

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy (2012- 2015)

Scottish Borders Young Carers Strategy

National

Scottish Government Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland (2014 Revision)

Early Years Framework (2009) and Early Years Collaborative

Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education (2014)

Scottish Government National Parenting Strategy (2012)

Curriculum for Excellence (2009)

Raising Attainment for All Programme (2014)

Getting it Right for Every child (GIRFEC)

Opportunities for All implementation (2012)

5.15 Priorities for the Strategic Plan

The following summarises the key actions & priorities to support a reduction in inequalities associated with educational Attainment, Achievement and Inclusion.

- Further implement the Early Years Framework building on the Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy and expand the Early Years Centres into further deprived areas
- Progress the CLD Strategic Plan across all the learning community partnerships
- Enhance early intervention policy, guidance, practice and provision for the most vulnerable children.
- Raise attainment of all school leavers with particular attention to those within the most deprived segment, closing the attainment gap.
- Attainment, achievement and inclusion remain lower for children living in area's of deprivation. Continue to focus the level and intensity of local service provision within those areas to reflect that requirement but also ensure appropriate services are available to all across the Borders.
- Continue to implement Raising Attainment for All Projects to transform the attainment of some of our most vulnerable children.
- Utilise available resources to measure and monitor improvements e.g. Insight is a major online benchmarking tool designed to help bring about improvements for pupils in the senior phase (S4 to S6).
- Implement the Borders Guarantee.
- Increase participation in early childhood education by groups where participation might be low.



6. HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOOD

6.1 What are the key issues?

This summary sets out our understanding of the key issues in relation to Housing and Neighbourhood inequalities across the Scottish Borders

- It is estimated that, as of August 2014, only about 25% of the buildings in the Scottish Borders received a good energy efficiency rating of A, B or C.
- Almost 10% of the people in the Scottish Borders claimed Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit in August 2012, increasing to almost 20% for those aged 65 and older. The areas with highest proportion of claimants were in Hawick and Galashiels.
- The average house selling price in Scottish Borders, is £140,000 compared to Scotland £135,000. The average income in the Borders is £25,700 compared to Scotland which is £27,000, making housing unaffordable for many people.
- 43% of households in the Scottish Borders live in fuel poverty compared with 36% for Scotland. The three main factors influence whether a household is in fuel poverty are household income, fuel costs and energy efficiency.
- There are fewer households in the Scottish Borders with gas central heating (60%) compared to Scotland (74%). The Scottish Borders is a rural area and there are areas not connected to the gas network.
- The Scottish Borders has one of the highest private rented sectors in Scotland and it continues to grow (17% compared with Scotland, 13%).
- In the most deprived areas, almost two-thirds of the households rent from a social landlord compared to only a fifth in the least deprived areas.
- The Scottish Borders has the lowest Local Housing Allowance rate in Scotland. £72 a week for a one bedroom property.
- Homelessness is more likely to affect particular groups including those with drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, people with a history of offending and domestic abuse victims.
- Between 1991/92 – 2014/15 there have been on average 82 affordable houses built each year. A shortage of housing in the social rented sector places pressure on the private rental sector and can create affordability issues for those on low incomes and benefits.
- 23% of all households in the Scottish Borders have someone in the household with a long-standing illness, health problem or disability. This increases to 47% in the social rented sector.
- 42% of dwellings in the Scottish Borders are need of urgent disrepair compared to 38% for Scotland.
- 92% of residents in the Scottish Borders are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. The biggest issues were with anti-social behaviour and issues around cleansing services.

Housing is not just a matter of bricks and mortar but is an integral part of the Borders' physical, economic and social character. Good housing can have a massive impact on someone's life as it can offer shelter, security and space. Good housing can provide a sense of belonging and connection to where we live and acts as a springboard to develop other aspects of our lives.

Housing and neighbourhood conditions are widely acknowledged to be important social determinants of health & wellbeing through three main pathways: (1) internal housing conditions, (2) area characteristics and (3) housing tenure.

Poor or inappropriate housing can contribute to a wide range of physical and mental health problems. Actions relating to housing have the potential to produce significant benefits in the health and well-being of individuals and the wider community, and generate savings in public and private expenditure on health, housing and social services.

Fuel Poverty is a serious issue in Scotland, particularly in the Scottish Borders, where the rural nature of the area, the type of housing and the high proportion of elderly households, contributes to higher levels of fuel poverty than the Scottish average. Three main factors influence whether a household is in fuel poverty: household income, fuel costs and energy efficiency. Of these, it is the third (energy efficiency) which SBC and its partners can influence the most. Measures such as low cost insulation and gas heating systems are among the most cost-effective means of increasing household energy efficiency and reducing fuel bills.

The 'neighbourhood' is the focus for many residents' concerns about issues such as anti-social behaviour and crime, visual amenity, traffic safety, community resources, shops etc. These aspects of life are particularly important to people. The ranking of the statistics for the local geographies demonstrate that geographical concentrations of disadvantaged people exist in the Borders, in particular when we look at data around income, benefits and child poverty.

Tackling homelessness is a key part of fighting poverty and inequality in Scotland. Those who are most vulnerable within society are also more likely to be affected by homelessness. This can include those with physical or mental health problems, people on benefits or low incomes and those with complex needs. Safe housing is a key tenet of a coordinated approach to tackling domestic abuse; currently there is one refuge in Scottish Borders that cannot meet demand for spaces. There is a need for a wider range of safe housing options for victims and their families.

Good housing is an essential part of a successful neighbourhood and local community. It is recognised that the architecture and urban design of our neighbourhood environment effects health and well-being both from a physical and mental perspective. Neighbourhoods and town environments in the Scottish



Borders are generally environmentally pleasing, however maintaining a broad range of shopping facilities and the upkeep of our town centres continues to be a challenge.

Tenure patterns are important in terms of the range of options available to households, in the Scottish Borders there has been an increase in private rented sector and a decrease in the number of social rented properties. With regard to the private rented sector and affordability, changes made to the calculation of rates in 2011 means that Local Housing Allowance (LHA) claimants may now only be able to afford the lower 30% of properties within the market area rather than the lower 50%. Access to the sector has also become more restricted for single person households aged 25-35 as a result of Welfare Reform, with households under age 35 being able to access benefit payments entitling them to shared accommodation (previously for those aged below 25).

6.2 What do we want to achieve?

Strategic Outcome 4

By 2020 more people in the Scottish Borders will be have access to a good quality, energy efficient affordable home where they feel safe and can live independently and be part of their community

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring the supply of housing meets the needs of Borders Communities
- Ensuring people have better access to good quality, energy efficient homes
- People are less likely to become homeless and those affected by homelessness have improved access to settled accommodation
- More people with particular needs and/or requiring support are able to live independently in their own homes.
- An increased emphasis on the role of spatial planning and consideration of the Strategic Development Plan, the role of the Local Development Plan and the Main Issues Report
- Conducting a Needs Analysis in relation to housing options for those fleeing domestic abuse

This section sets out current and planned activity to support the reduction of inequalities in relation to housing and neighbourhood.

6.3 Local Housing Strategy

The **Local Housing Strategy (LHS)** provides the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand and to inform the future investment in housing and related services across the Scottish Borders area.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to develop a Local Housing Strategy, supported by an assessment of housing need and demand for a five year period. It should bring together the Local Authority's responses to the whole housing system including: requirements for market and affordable housing; prevention and alleviation of homelessness; meeting housing support needs; addressing housing conditions across tenures including fuel poverty and linkages with the climate change.

To achieve this vision four strategic outcomes and associated action plans have been identified which Scottish Borders Council and its Community Planning partners are committed to delivering. These outcomes are:

- The supply of new housing meets the needs of the Scottish Borders communities
- People have better access to good quality, energy efficient homes
- People are less likely to become homeless and those affected by homelessness have improved access to settled accommodation
- More people with particular needs and/or requiring support are able to live independently in their own home

6.4 Preventing & Tackling Homelessness

Scottish Borders Council has statutory duties towards people affected by homelessness. This **Homelessness Services Delivery Plan** is one of a number of sub-strategies and documents that sit below the overarching Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2012-17.

Scottish Borders Council and its partners have developed effective homelessness prevention techniques through housing options approaches, mediation with family members (often to keep young people at home) and providing rent deposits guarantees. Prevention techniques are going beyond the issue of homelessness and are increasingly tackling the underlying

Vision

“Every person in the Scottish Borders has a home which is secure, affordable, in good condition, energy efficient, where they can live independently and be part of a vibrant community”

Vision

“People are less likely to become homeless and those affected by homelessness have improved access to settled accommodation”

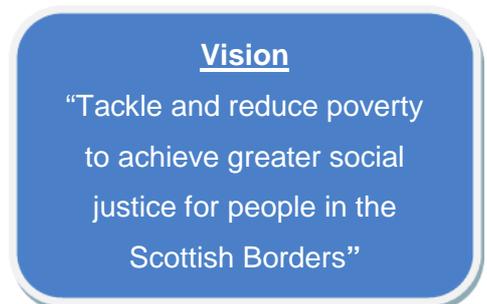


causes, with advice on benefits, employment and training, and appropriate signposting to other support services.

The key objectives are:

1. Preventing Homelessness by working in partnership with other agencies
2. Maximise access to a range of support and assistance to help people achieve or maintain independence
3. Focus provision of information and advice on local need
4. Increase the supply of, and improve access to, settled accommodation
5. Monitor quality and effectiveness of management and delivery systems

Housing Strategy & Services as well as Homelessness, also includes a Welfare Benefits Service whose role is to maximize the take-up of social security benefits and tax credits and an Employment Support Service which was tasked with improving performance and mainstreaming the delivery of supported employment activity both within and out with the council.



6.5 Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2013-2018

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) is a five year plan for targeting investment in affordable housing in the Scottish Borders.

The SHIP shows how affordable housing investment priorities set out in the Local Housing Strategy will be delivered in practice over the period 2013-18. Overall, the plan aims to:

- improve longer term planning
- form the basis for more detailed planning and identify funding
- develop actions identified in Local Housing Strategy.

6.6 Borders Housing Network

The **Borders Housing Network** is the group representing the registered social landlords (RSLs) in the Scottish Borders. The 4 main RSLs in the Scottish Borders are: Scottish Borders Housing Association, Waverley Housing, Eildon Housing and Berwickshire Housing Association. The RSLs provide quality affordable housing for those in housing need. Within the Scottish Borders the RSLs work in partnership to help deliver the Local Housing Strategy and develop policy, practice and projects that support the broader needs of current and future social housing tenants. This includes having a consistent approach or protocols related to things like: homelessness, rent arrears, young people who are tenants, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, single medical assessment or adaptations).

6.7 Fuel Poverty and Home Energy Efficiency

Fuel Poverty is a serious issue in the Scottish Borders and there is a lot of work being done within the Council and with partners to ensure this problem is addressed. **The Fuel Poverty Delivery Plan 2013-2016** was developed in 2013 and sets out what can be done over the next three years and beyond to help alleviate fuel poverty wherever possible. The progress made in addressing fuel poverty in the Scottish Borders will be monitored and evaluated through the Local Housing Strategy and reported on annually.

The four key aims are:

- Continue to monitor fuel poverty in the Scottish Borders to improve targets.
- Provide good quality information and advice on fuel poverty and energy efficiency.
- To facilitate fuel poverty programmes in private sector and housing association properties.
- Improve access to information and advice to help maximise incomes.

6.8 Third Sector Organisations

Scottish Borders Council is a stock transfer local authority, transferring all of its housing stock in 2003. Therefore the third sector plays a crucial role in shaping the housing sector in the Scottish Borders.

Close links through partnership working with Housing Associations and other key partners is key to delivering the Local Housing Strategy and meeting statutory obligations. The **Local Housing Strategy Partnership Group** agrees the overall aims, direction and development of the Local Housing Strategy in the Scottish Borders. One of the key objectives of the partnership is to share information and support on housing policy and practice.

6.9 SESPlan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is a technical document which provides a robust evidence base for housing and land use planning and sets out the total additional future housing estimate by tenure over a 20 year period, covering owner occupation; private rent; below market rent and social rent.

HNDAs provide a framework to enable an understanding of additional future housing estimates and help local authorities to consider the level of housing that can realistically be delivered. HNDAs also provide broader information on how well housing systems are working. This helps local authorities to set policies aiming to provide an appropriate mix of housing across an area including different types and sizes of affordable housing. HNDAs may also be used to inform other areas of housing policy i.e. the role of below market rent; allocation policies; demolitions and transfers.



6.10 Planning/ Town Centres

Well-designed, sustainable places, both urban and rural, support people's physical and mental wellbeing. They are places in which people want to live. They improve safety by increasing the number of people who use local facilities and generate a real sense of community. And they are sustainable places - environmentally, socially, physically and economically.

Well-designed, sustainable places also contribute to sustainable economic growth, improving transport and telecommunications connections will make the Scottish Borders more attractive to business and enhance its attractiveness as a place to live and work.

6.11 Key Delivery Plans

The following highlights the key delivery plans which the Council and partners are already working reduce inequalities in housing and across neighbourhoods

Local

Local Housing Strategy 2012-217
Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2015-2020
Fuel Poverty Delivery Plan 2013-2016
Capital Projects Business Plan (2015/16 – 2017/18)
Private Sector Strategy (in development)
Homeless Delivery Plan 21016-2016
SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment (2015)
Low Carbon Economic Strategy (2013)
Priority Client Group Delivery Plan `
Local Development Plan (2013)

National

Joint Housing Delivery Plan for Scotland May 2015
Housing Generation Rent: What are the Challenges for Housing Policy in Scotland? (June 2015)
Commission on Housing and Wellbeing: A blueprint for Scotland's future (June 2015)

6.12 Priorities for the Strategic Plan

The following summarises the key actions required to reduce inequalities in housing and across neighbourhoods

- Development of Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022
- Continue to monitor and develop the role of the Care & Repair Service
- RSLs to review allocation policies, and develop models of provision to meet changing need.
- Establishment of fuel poverty partnership based on Healthy Homes Highland model
- Prioritise affordability of supply – low wages impact on choice of housing for some/ limits choice
- Work with RSLs to ensure EESSH targets are met by 2020
- Implement the Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Work with Health and Social Care to ensure appropriate provision of specialist housing to meet the needs of our ageing population and priority client groups



7. KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

7.1 What are the key issues?

This summary sets out our understanding of the key issues in relation to inequalities of keeping people safe:

- The Scottish Borders is a relatively safe place to live and work with low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and a low number of fire occurrences.
- Gender based violence is an issue in Scottish Borders and costs in the region of £50 million per year to address.
- In 2014/15 there were over 890 incidents of domestic abuse reported to Police Scotland.
- In 2014/15 there were over 100 high risk cases of domestic abuse discussed at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and 19 high tariff domestic abuse perpetrators discussed at Police Scotland's Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating meeting.
- There were 129 rape and sexual violence offences committed in 2014/15
- Areas of high deprivation have higher rates of crime, antisocial behaviour, preventable injuries, and drug and alcohol misuse.
- Despite the relative safety of the Scottish Borders, the perceptions of the public regarding safety can be disproportionately negative. This can be even more prevalent in areas of disadvantage or by individuals who feel geographically or socially isolated.
- The Scottish Borders has more emergency hospital admissions as a result of an unintentional injury for children aged 15 and under compared to Scotland.
- Proportionally more accident admissions to hospital occur in the 15% most deprived areas in the Scottish Borders.
- 20% of antisocial behaviour incidents in the Scottish Borders have alcohol as a contributing factor.
- More people are killed or seriously injured as a result of a road traffic accident in the Scottish Borders compared to Scotland.
- Although the Scottish Borders has a low occurrence of accidental dwelling fires, proportionally more accidental dwelling fires occur in areas of high deprivation.

People living in poverty are less likely to be able to fully participate in their communities because many simply do not have the disposable income needed to take part in clubs, events or activities in their area. People living in the most deprived areas are also more likely to experience anti-social behaviour and to feel unsafe in their neighbourhood. Problems such as vandalism, litter, noise disruption and drug dealing are more common in deprived areas and, as a result, ill feeling towards such areas is reinforced. By building resilience and knowledge within local communities vulnerable people and families are better supported and able to access services and resources they need, and are enabled to help tackle the causes and effects of poverty and inequalities within their community.

Not all women and girls are at equal risk of gender based violence. Some factors can increase vulnerability to abuse and keep women trapped; factors such as age, financial dependence, poverty, disability, homelessness, insecure immigration status and ethnicity. It is therefore a key requirement in future work to address inequality that gender based violence is considered and targeted, appropriate preventative action taken.

There is a complex relationship between deprivation and gender based violence and it is not a simple “cause and effect” relationship. There is an interplay between poverty, gender, power (i.e. access to the resources) and the significant influence of societal attitudes/expectations of gender means that in the Scottish Borders, areas of deprivation see more reporting of gender based violence but this is not necessarily a demonstration of deprivation as a leading cause of gender based violence, e.g. domestic abuse. It is estimated that 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, and of that 10% will have experienced it in the previous 12 months – this will apply across all socio-economic classes.

Strategic Outcome 5

All areas across the Borders are safe places to live and work

7.2 What do we want to achieve?

This will be achieved by:

- Increasing residents’ pride in their local neighbourhood.
- Improving engagement opportunities for all including a better understanding of specific requirements of minority communities.
- Reducing the effect of alcohol related issues and associated interdependencies – health impact of drinking behaviour, substance misuse, antisocial behaviour, cost to public sector.
- Changing attitudes towards crimes and reported incidents relating to equality characteristics and domestic abuse.
- Ensuring people are safe in their homes with a focus on those that are vulnerable, including older people and children.



- Take a partnership approach to addressing gender based violence which includes the voices of survivors to shape policy and practice.
- Tackling the highest risk cases of domestic abuse – by supporting victims and challenging repeat offenders.
- Reducing the opportunities, threat and impact of serious and organised criminal activity in Scottish Borders.
- Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

The following sections set out what we are currently doing to achieve this outcome, what is planned, and concludes with what else has to be done over the strategic plan period, 2015-20.

7.3 Scottish Borders Safer Communities

The Scottish Borders Safer Communities Partnership vision is:

Partnership objectives are:

- To promote and co-ordinate an effective multi-agency response to gender based violence in line with efforts to protect, prevent and provide whilst supporting effective means of participation..
- Reduce the level and impact of antisocial behaviour.
- Encourage prevention activities that are delivered to maximise community wellbeing and reduce the negative impact of substance misuse.
- Implement a robust and effective response to injury prevention.
- Ensure a robust and effective response to Road Safety Issues.

Key Vision

“Make the Scottish Borders the Safest Place to Live, Work and Visit”.

7.4 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

The key priority areas in the Scottish Borders that are considered in the Local Assessment and those that action plans will be developed for are:

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties
- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Reduction in Road Traffic Collisions
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



7.5 Police Scotland

Police Scotland aim to deliver policing that is visible, accessible and responsive to the needs of the communities across the Scottish Borders. Priorities and Objectives:

- Priority 1 – Protecting People
- Priority 2 – Reducing Violence, Disorder and Antisocial Behaviour
- Priority 3 – Tackling Substance Misuse
- Priority 4 – Making our Roads Safer
- Priority 5 – Tackling Serious Organised Crime
- Priority 6 – Tackling Acquisitive Crime



7.6 The Scottish Borders Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP)

The Scottish Borders Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP) is tasked with delivering a reduction in the level of drug and alcohol problems amongst young people and adults in the Borders, and reducing the harmful impact on families and communities.

7.7 Scottish Borders Violence against Women (VAW) Partnership

The Scottish Borders Violence Against Women Partnership is responsible for adopting a partnership approach to tackling all forms of gender based violence. Using Equally Safe as a strategic framework, the new Scottish Borders Equally Safe Strategy will align partnership resources to addressing the four key components of Equally Safe (2014):

- Scottish Borders embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
- Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically
- Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and promoting women’s safety and wellbeing
- Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

7.8 Scottish Borders Licensing Board

Licensing Boards must seek to promote the five licensing objectives within their policy statements and consider these when making decisions on licence applications and licence reviews. Licensing Boards also have a legal duty to assess the extent to which they consider there is overprovision of licensed premises, or a particular type of licensed premises in their area. The licensing objectives are:

- Preventing crime and disorder



- Securing public safety
- Preventing public nuisance
- Protecting and improving public health
- Protecting children from harm

7.9 The Scottish Borders Local Licensing Forum

The Forum has produced local Alcohol Profiles which detail the impact of alcohol on crime, public sector services and individuals.

7.10 Third Sector Organisations

Third Sector Organisations that work toward reducing inequalities related to keeping people safe, particularly in respect of addiction services, neighbourhood watch schemes and other community safety actions (contact via Borders Third Sector Partnership and Third Sector Forum).

7.11 Antisocial Behaviour Team

Scottish Borders Council, along with our antisocial behaviour partners, are committed to combating antisocial behaviour and we will use all the powers available to us to deal with incidents, this includes but is not limited to:

- Providing confidential advice and assistance
- Encouraging and setting up mediation
- Acting as professional witnesses
- Issuing formal warnings
- Liaising and working with other agencies, RSL's, Private Landlords, Social Work, Homeless Services, Environmental agencies
- Applying to court for Antisocial Behaviour Orders
- Assisting landlords to take court action to re-possess tenancies
- People (especially vulnerable young people) will have increased skills, knowledge and confidence to make positive lifestyle choices for themselves.

7.12 Key delivery plans

The following highlights the key delivery plans which the Council and partners are already working to in relation to making the areas across the Borders safer and reducing inequalities:

Local

Safer Communities Draft Action Plan 2015/16 – 2017/18

Scottish Borders Violence Against Women Strategy & Action Plan 2016-2020

Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the Scottish Borders 2014-2017

Police Scotland Local Plan 2014

Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) Delivery Plan 2015-2018

Neighbourhood Services Business Plan (2015/16 – 2017/18)

National

The Strategy for Justice in Scotland

Equally Safe - Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls

A New Framework for Local Partnerships on Alcohol and Drugs

National Outcomes and Standards for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice System (2010)

Introduction to Safer Communities Programme - Guidance

Promoting Positive Outcomes: Working Together to Prevent Antisocial Behaviour in Scotland

Safer Lives: Changed Lives: A Shared Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women in Scotland

Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020

Scottish Community Safety Network Annual Report 2014



7.13 Priorities for the Strategic Plan

The following summarises the key actions required to reduce inequalities for Keeping People Safe:

- Burnfoot Hub and the wider support to the community to improve concerns of community safety and reducing the fear of Anti-Social Behaviour and fear of crime.
- Localities approach to delivering services in neighbourhoods – pilot Cheviot.
- Reduce the rate of repeat victimization of those reporting incidents of domestic abuse
- Maximise the opportunities to keep people safe in partnership with SB Cares.
- Borders Railway to improve safer methods of transport to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.
- Securing the resources to address gender based violence in relation to meeting demand and addressing identified unmet need in areas of deprivation.
- Actions to address perpetrator behaviour should be included in strategies to keeping people safe i.e. Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordinating Group (MATAC)
- Adopt a partnership approach to addressing gender inequality by ensuring Equally Safe becomes a partnership strategy - gender based violence is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality.
- Tackling the health inequalities associated with gender based violence by targeting areas of poor health outcomes.
- ASB risk assessment process.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The actions developed under the 'framework for Action' will focus on areas where the CPP can bring added value from a collaborative approach to reducing inequalities.

8.1 Framework for Action

Reducing inequalities is an ambitious policy encompassing both social and economic initiatives. This strategy aims to reduce disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity in order to achieve a similar distribution of outcomes between groups as well as between geographical areas in the Borders, resulting in a more equitable distribution of positive outcomes across the region. The Strategy sets out the principles for future work and is targeted towards all those in the Borders who experience disadvantage and unequal opportunities.

The strategic outcomes are all inextricably linked and it can be challenging to consider the individual themes in isolation, however one of the key priorities of this strategy is to bring all these areas together, reinforcing the contributions and commitments being made from all partners and recognising the synergies and positive impacts of targeted intervention in one area on another and to identify where more resource is required.

The **commitments outlined in the framework for action will address the challenge of how to embed the work to reduce inequalities through every service and work streams** of the council and some of our key partners across the Borders, while also ensuring there is ownership and commitment among partners.



FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

CPP will influence relevant stakeholders to include actions to address inequalities in their respective corporate plans and policies

Members of the CPP will agree to remove any barriers to collaboration and identify opportunities to enable the CPP to address the underlying causes of inequalities locally

The CPP will challenge all stakeholders in the Borders to work collaboratively to maximise impact from existing resources and will work with partners to help build their capacity and identify further opportunities to address inequalities

The CPP will encourage improved partnership working, more co-production of plans and policies and sharing of information among the Council and its partners

The CPP will play a lead role in informing and influencing others to support reducing inequalities

CPP will encourage innovative, local approaches and solutions to meet some of the challenges

Partners will improve delivery and effectiveness of services for at-risk groups by reviewing access to services and identifying any barriers to access or participation

CPP will prioritise investing in communities and supporting community empowerment and resilience

The CPP will support improvements in the quality and frequency of evaluative activity to enable us to fill gaps in information and to improve understanding of outcomes and what works

Partners will also commit to continuing their role as leaders and ambassadors in tackling inequalities by ensuring appropriate staff training across services, aspiring to paying the living wage, improving joined up working and committing to the principles in the framework for action.

This Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan will ensure reducing inequalities is a continued priority for all. The strategy shows that tackling the root causes of inequalities are inextricably linked to deprivation and poverty. Supporting the local population to become economically independent through lifelong education and learning, maximising jobs available, the provision of affordable housing and the provision of safe and prosperous communities across our region should remain a long-term priority for all partners and agencies in the Borders.

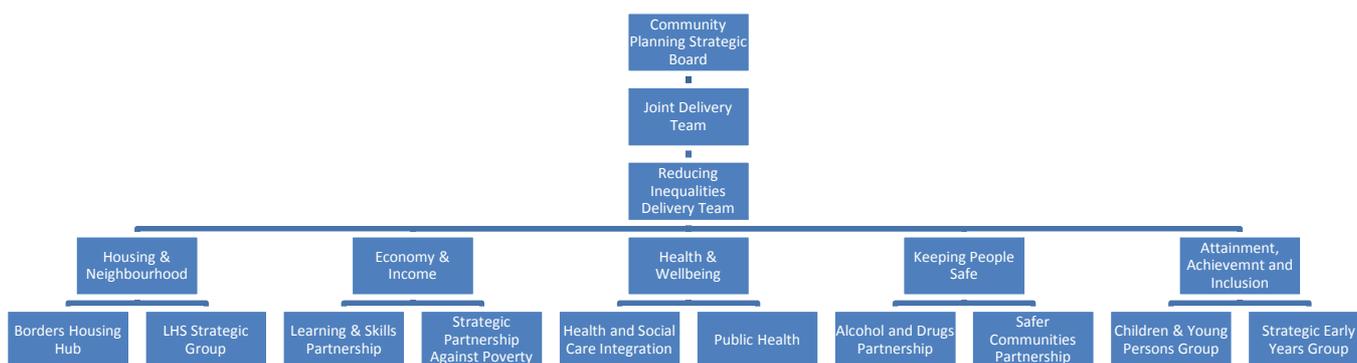
The key commitments and priority actions identified throughout all the sections of this strategy provide a valuable tool to inform the provisioning of effective and appropriate services that reduce unacceptable inequalities across the region and will improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.

8.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of Reducing Inequalities Strategic Plan

This reducing inequalities strategic plan is directed towards those in our society who experience disadvantage and unequal opportunities that result in poor outcomes, either through individual circumstances or as members of a group that confronts issues such as discrimination, or any other barriers to achievement.

Figure 11 below outlines some of the key partnership groups which can ensure the reducing inequalities commitments are being progressed and appropriately reported on.

Figure 11: Monitoring and reporting structure of this Strategic Plan



It is important the CPP review progress of this plan on an annual basis as a minimum and consider progress toward the 5 identified outcomes. This Strategy has agreed that tackling inequalities is a significant challenge, and there will always remain factors which our out with the remit of this strategy and local control, however progress must be regularly assessed.



The CPP will agree what key performance measures this plan will use which will give us an indication as to how well we are doing. A clear framework will be essential for guiding the monitoring process and ensuring the strategy is effective. The monitoring and evaluation will also keep under review internal and external changes which may require changes to the strategic plan or which may affect our ability to achieve the identified outcomes.

The best approach to implementing this strategic plan is to follow the CPP commitments outlined in the framework for action. This will ensure the outcomes and priorities of this strategy are incorporated into relevant strategies, policy action and departmental initiatives, as they are developed and reporting on these activities and outcomes could continue through the annual reports of relevant departments.

There should be a yearly report on the five outcomes within this strategic plan which should refer to the achievement of policy milestones covered in this document and report on the effectiveness of some of policies and their linkages with other services, partnerships and groups. Each section within this plan highlights some key priorities over the next five years and the annual reporting should also note progress on these key priority areas.

This approach and the commitments from the CPP should be effective in ensuring the outcomes and principles for reducing inequalities are factored into local policy development and service delivery. It avoids creating a separate action plan which risks overlapping existing departmental strategies and which may be less effective.

8.3 Performance Indicators

The table 5 on page 71 and 72 (also appendix 4) suggests some key performance indicators across each of the five strategic outcomes which would be useful to monitor changes in inequalities. The Inequalities Ranking Matrix in Appendix 7 is also a useful tool for monitoring key stats across the region.

Table 5: Reducing Inequalities Performance Framework

Strategic Outcomes	Key Indicators	Worst Intermediate Zone	Best Intermediate Zone	GAP*	Scottish Borders	Scotland	Targets	Source
The inequalities in health & wellbeing between the most and the least deprived people and communities across the Borders are reduced	Male life expectancy (years)	74.7	83.6	8.9	78.1	76.6		NRS 2009-2013
	Female life expectancy (years)	79.1	89.5	10.4	82.0	80.8		NRS 2009-2013
	All-cause mortality among the 15-44 year olds (rate per 100,000)	199	0	-199	91	105		NRS 2011-2013
	Mothers smoking during pregnancy (percent)	46.8%	4.7%	-42.1%	25.3%	20.0%		ISD 2011/12-2013/14
	Alcohol-related hospital stays (rate per 100,000)	1490	123	-1367	566	705		ISD 2013/14
	Drug-related hospital stays (rate per 100,000)	136	0	-136	88	117		ISD 2011-2015
By 2020 the inequalities in educational outcomes and attainment between the most and the least deprived children across the Borders are reduced.	Primary school attendance (percent)	93.8%	97.0%	3.2%	95.7%	94.9%		SG 2012/13
	Secondary school attendance (percent)	85.7%	94.3%	8.6%	92.5%	91.9%		SG 2012/13
	S4: % of pupils with English & Maths at SCQF level 3 or above	81.3%	100.0%	18.7%	96.1%	94.3%		SNS 2012/13
	S4: % of pupils with 5 awards at SCQF level 5 and above	21.6%	82.2%	60.6%	46.9%	40.9%		SNS 2012/13
	S6: % of pupils with 5 awards at SCQF level 6 and above	18.2%	7820.0%	60.0%	48.3%	44.0%		SNS 2012/13
	% of School Leavers at a Positive Destination at 6 Months	78.3%	100.0%	21.7%	92.1%	90.0%		SNS 2012/13
By 2020 inequalities in income and employment deprivation between the most and the least deprived people and communities across the Borders are reduced	Residence Based Full-Time Median Weekly Pay - Gross for Males (2014)	n/a	n/a	£-44.80	£512.40	£557.20		NOMIS
	Residence Based Full-Time Median Weekly Pay - Gross for Female (2014)	n/a	n/a	£11.70	£471.70	£460.00		NOMIS
	Workplace Based Full-Time Median Weekly Pay - Gross for Males (2014)	n/a	n/a	£-89.70	£468.70	£558.40		NOMIS
	Workplace Based Full-Time Median Weekly Pay - Gross for Female (2014)	n/a	n/a	£-34.40	£426.20	£460.60		NOMIS
	Population income deprived (percent)	23.4%	5.0%	-18.4%	10.1%	10.1%		SIMD 2012, SG
	Working age population employment deprived (percent)	21.2%	4.7%	-16.5%	9.3%	9.3%		SIMD 2012, SG
	Working age population claiming Out of Work benefits (percent)	21.4%	4.4%	-17.0%	10.0%	13.0%		SIMD 2012, SG
	Children Living in Poverty (percent)	27.8%	4.5%	-23.3%	10.9%	15.3%		HMRC 2012
	People claiming pension credits (aged 60+) (percent)	10.7%	2.2%	-8.5%	5.8%	7.7%		DWP 2013

Strategic Outcomes	Key Indicators	Worst Intermediate Zone	Best Intermediate Zone	GAP	Scottish Borders	Scotland	Targets	Source
By 2020 more people in the Scottish Borders will have access to a good quality, energy efficient affordable home where they feel safe and can live independently and be part of their community	Number of Affordable Unit Completions	n/a	n/a	n/a	Average 82 p.a.	n/a	100	HST, SBC
	% of Households in Fuel Poverty	n/a	n/a	7%	43%	36%		SHCS 2011-13
	% of Dwellings that fail the Scottish Housing Quality Standard overall - Owner Occupied	n/a	n/a	1%	55%	54%		SHCS 2011-13
	% of Dwellings that fail the Scottish Housing Quality Standard overall - Social Housing	n/a	n/a	-9%	40%	49%		SHCS 2011-13
	% of Dwellings that fail the Scottish Housing Quality Standard overall - Private Rented	n/a	n/a	13%	73%	60%		SHCS 2011-13
	Number of Homeless Assessments	n/a	n/a	n/a	532	29565		SG Homeless 2014-15
	Repeat homelessness assessments as a percentage of all assessments	n/a	n/a	-2.6%	4.5%	7.1%		SG Homeless 2014-15
All areas across the Borders are safe places to live and work	Patients with emergency hospitalisations (rate per 100,000)	11523	6317	-5206	8357	7500		ISD 2011-2013
	Road traffic accident casualties (rate per 100,000)	132	8	-124	70	63		ISD 2011-2013
	Crime rate (violence; drug offences; domestic house breaking; minor assault; and vandalism) per 1,000	71.3	5.0	-66.3	22.0	40.5		SG 2013
	Accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population: 2012-2013	224.5	17.7	-206.8	87.9	94.0		SNS 2011-2013
	Perceptions of safety when walking alone in the neighbourhood - Percent feel Very / Fairly Safe			8.0	93%	85%		SHS 2014

* GAP cells shaded are for the Gap between Scottish Borders and Scotland.

9. RESOURCING THE REDUCING INEQUALITIES STRATEGIC PLAN

The CPP and partners commit to examining the way in which resources have been invested over the years. Where gaps are identified, CPP partners are committed to act to fill those gaps as required. Where duplication is identified, partners will show leadership and engage in different approaches to planning and commissioning. Locality Planning, for example, in the context of the integration of health and social care in particular will provide further scope for more integrated delivery and service improvements. Localities and neighbourhoods are also usually where the greatest impact on outcomes can be achieved.

Given the huge amount of work across the Borders from the Council and a range of community planning partners and third sector organisations the RI strategic plan may not necessarily be looking at increasing resources – but may want more focus on commitments from partners and improved coordination of service delivery (as well as the taking consideration of some of the recommendations outlined above). The plan should however consider how to prioritise resources and identify areas where the plan really needs to focus.

Table 6: Resourcing the Strategy

Outcome	Resources
By 2020 Inequalities in income and employment deprivation between the most and the least deprived people and communities across Borders is reduced	SBC Core Funding, Scottish Enterprise Funding, Skills Development Scotland Funding, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, LEADER, City Deal (potentially) DWP.
The Inequalities in health & Wellbeing between the most and the least deprived people and communities across Borders are reduced	NHS Core Funding, SBC Core Funding, Scottish Government programme funding, external funding and partnership resources
By 2020 the inequalities in educational outcomes and attainment between the most and the least deprived children across Borders are reduced	SBC Core Funding, Developing the Young Workforce, DWP Funding, Attainment Scotland Fund
By 2020 more people in the Scottish Borders will be have access to a good quality, energy efficient affordable home where they feel safe and can live independently and be part of their community	SBC Core Funding, HEEPs, Scottish Government Affordable Housing Investment programme, RSLs private sector borrowing,
All areas across the Borders are safe places to live and work	Core funding from SBC, Police Scotland, Fire & Rescue, and NHS. Partnership funding from Scottish Government and external grant sources.

10. GLOSSARY

ADP – Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour

CAB – Citizens Advice Bureau

CLD – Community Learning and Development

COSLA – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

CPP – Community Planning Partnership

CYPLG – Children and Young People’s Leadership Group

CYPPP – Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership

DWP – Department for Work and Pensions

EESSEH – Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

ESESCR - City Region Deal for the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland

GES – Government Economic Strategy

GIRFEC – Getting It Right For Every Child

GVA – Gross Value Added

HEEPs – Home Energy Efficiency Programmes

HLN – Healthy Living Network

HNDA – Housing Need and Demand Assessment

HPHS – Health Promoting Health Service

IJB – Integrated Joint Board

LHA – Local Housing Allowance

LHS – Local Housing Strategy

MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

MATAC – Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordinating Group

NHS – National Health Service

PI – Performance Indicators

RAFA – Raising Attainment For All

RI – Reducing Inequalities

RSL – Registered Social Landlords

SBC – Scottish Borders Council

ScotPHO – Scottish Public Health Observatory

SCQF – Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment

SESPlan - South East Scotland Strategic Development Planning Authority

SHIP – Strategic Housing Investment Plan

SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SOA – Single Outcome Agreement

SPAP – Strategic Partnership Against Poverty

UC – Universal Credit

VAW – Violence Against Women

WG – Working Group



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