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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FRIDAY, 5 MARCH 2021

A MEETING of the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE will be held on FRIDAY, 5 MARCH 2021 at 10.00 am. The meeting will be conducted by Microsoft Teams Live Event. The meeting will be live streamed to the public and a link will be on the Council website.

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,

26 February 2021

BUSINESS		
1.	Apologies for absence	
2.	Order of Business	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minute (Pages 3 - 8) Consider Minute of Meeting held on 4 December 2021 (copy attached).	2 mins
5.	Dumfries & Galloway Council Carbon Neutral Route Map Presentation by Simon Fieldhouse and Sarah Farrell.	20 mins
6.	Stopping the Use of Plastic Bottles in Schools Presentation by Youth Ambassadors for Sustainability, Ruby Finn and Liberty Barber.	20 mins
7.	Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS) Programme Update (Pages 9 - 40) Consider report by Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy (copy attached).	10 mins
8.	Update on Climate Change Route Map Presentation by Chief Planning & Housing Officer and Corporate Policy Advisor.	20 mins
9.	Scottish Government Consultations Update by Corporate Policy Advisor.	10 mins
10.	Any Other Items Previously Circulated	

11.	Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent	
12.	Date of next meeting Friday 18 June 2021at 10 am	

NOTES

- 1. Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
- 2. Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

Membership of Committee:- Councillors S. Aitchison (Chairman), H. Anderson, K. Chapman, G. Edgar, J. Greenwell, S. Haslam, H. Laing, D. Paterson and S. Scott

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held in The meeting will be conducted remotely by Microsoft Teams on Friday, 4 December 2020 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors S. Aitchison (Chairman), H. Anderson, G Edgar, J. Greenwell, S. Scott.

Apologies Councillor S Haslam, D Paterson, Ms F Turpie-Laird.

In Attendance:- Chief Planning & Housing Officer (I Aikman), Corporate Policy Advisor (M Cook), Ecology Officer (A Tharme), Environmental Strategy Officer (L Cox), Chief Officer Roads (J. Hedley), Urban Designer (C Cooke), Clerk to the Council (J Wilkinson), Energy & Building Services Officer (J Caldwell), Young Ambassador, (L Barker), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of 4 September 2020.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **BIODIVERSITY**

2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Planning Officer proposing that the Council published the Biodiversity duty report and submit to Scottish Government by 1 January 2021. The report explained that the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 required public bodies in Scotland to provide a publicly available report, every three years, on the actions which they have taken to meet this biodiversity duty. The next report to be published by 1 January covered the period 2018-20. Previous Biodiversity duty reports submitted by the Council to Scottish Government by 1 January 2015 (Reporting period 2011-14) and 1 January 2018 (reporting period 2015-17 could be accessed at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/2211/biodiversity_duty_delivery_reports

2.2 Andy Tharme, Ecology Officer was in attendance to give a presentation on the Biodiversity Duty Report and Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Dr Tharme explained that the delivery of biodiversity was cross-cutting over a range of Council services, for example, in planning major projects, engineering and green space management. The establishment of the Sustainable Development Committee, together with the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency would play an important role in meeting its biodiversity duty going forward. Dr Tharme then discussed some biodiversity activity, such as guidance for planning applications to protect species such as bats, and the development of a Regional Strategic approach to maximise the benefits of new woodland creation. He referred to recent biodiversity offset activity, mainly in relation to windfarm schemes such as Langhope Rig. To compensate for the scheme the Council, working with Tweed Forum and Scottish Forestry, had delivered 77 ha of new native woodland which had benefited natural flood protection, controlled pollution and integrated forestry and farming. Another offsetting scheme was the Penmanshiel Compensatory Replanting Scheme. This was where a commercial plantation was felled and the Council took on responsibility, under planning policy, to compensate for the loss, by delivery of 110 ha new woodland. This had created a range of community benefits in terms of recreation as well as enhancing landscape biodiversity. Dr Tharme referred to other Council major infrastructure projects such as Dirt pot corner and Jedburgh Campus. The required surveys for both projects and construction methods employed had protected biodiversity

and species such as otters, bats, badgers and breeding birds. Dr Tharme then referred to Greenspace Management, delivered by Neighbourhood Services, highlighting the creation of wildflower areas and wet woodland to balance amenity requirements with nature. He went on to discuss the challenges ahead and the need to channel resources from other sources. Opportunities would arise from Regional Land Use Partnerships, Borderlands and Natural Capital investment in the green economy. Dr Tharme concluded this section of his presentation by referring to the loss of capacity in terms of outdoor education and the need to work with partners, such as the Tweed Forum and Borders Forest Trust, to facilitate delivery.

- 2.3 In response to questions Dr Tharme advised that with regard to the measurement of acidity in rivers, SEPA oversaw the River Basin Management Plan and analysed water courses to retain good ecological conditions. There was an online interactive tool <https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-environment-hub/> where further information was available. The Committee suggested that SEPA, and perhaps the Tweed Forum, be invited to a future meeting to discuss the River Basin Management Plan. Regarding grants available for tree planting, Dr Tharme advised that the Tweed Forum Borders Tree Planting grant scheme was available for smaller plots, larger plots could apply for a grant from Scottish Forestry. Regarding developer biodiversity contributions, Dr Tharme explained that biodiversity was a component of compensatory requirements. A Council working group was reviewing the developer contribution process. In Scotland NPF4 to be published next year, would determine how the Council could revise developer contributions. It was noted that the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) to be held in Glasgow next year, would be the important step for Scotland to make clear we were addressing climate change and biodiversity loss Mr Aikman confirmed that the Council would make representations for observers to attend COP26 and report back to the next meeting.
- 2.4 Dr Tharme then went on to discuss the Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2018 – 2028, the key policy drivers of which were the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, Scottish Government Purpose and Land Use Strategy. Climate change was the key driver with priority to action in and around settlements. Dr Tharme advised that consultation with stakeholders and local area partnerships had identified the key actions. He advised that the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy had six key themes: Ecosystem restoration; natural capital; conserving wild species; habitats and protected places; sustainable management of land and freshwater; greenspace for health and wellbeing, and, marine and coastal ecosystems. He explained the importance of ecosystem restoration to make space for natural processes, improving connectivity, habitat management and general water and river catchment, which would increase resilience to climate change and safeguard biodiversity. Dr Tharme then highlighted some of the key activities from the Action Plan including: restoring woodland ecosystems, encouraging biodiversity offsetting and enhancements as part of development planning, natural flood management; integrating woodland with other land users; enhancing habitat for pollinators; enhancing green space for health and wellbeing, conserving wildlife with initiatives such as supporting national species recovery, sustainable land management, ensuring appropriate tree planting, encouraging creative land and freshwater management projects. He then referred to the Marine and Coastal Ecosystem with the focus on the Berwickshire Marine Reserve with initiatives such as marine/coastal wildlife recording, beach litter surveys and beach cleans, reducing plastics in the marine environment. Dr Tharme concluded by quoting a Greek proverb “A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in”, suggesting this was an appropriate mind-set to adopt a long term approach to ensure future generations’ sustainability.
- 2.5 In response to questions, Mr Aikman advised there would be an opportunity to respond to the NPF4 Position Statement consultation on national planning policy. The closing date for which was 19 February 2021. Any changes to planning policy would need to flow from national government policy which would then be developed to relate to a borders context. He would forward as an action for the Development Contribution Working Group.

With regard to peatbog extractions, Dr Tharme advised that partners, such as Tweed Forum, were active in terms of peatland restoration. Habitat maps for the Borders, together with the national inventory of peatlands, informed planning policy and forestry planting. With regard to biodiversity and the development of local place plans. Mr Aikman advised that guidelines were still awaited and policy documents would give cognisance to existing development policies; conversations with communities would need to take place to develop individual community place plans. Regarding the Anti-poverty Working Group, there was a volunteer coordinator who was available to assist and support communities interested in the Food Growing Strategy. With regard to the beavers, Dr Tharme advised that they would spread naturally as long as the habitat was suitable, the proposed LBAP action was to future proof habitats so that they could accommodate beavers. With regard to mink, there was not a large scale eradication programme. The Chair thanked Mr Tharme for his attendance and interesting presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the submitted report and that it would be published on the Council's website and submitted to Scottish Government by 1 January 2021.

3. MANAGING OUR OPEN SPACE

3.1 The Chair welcomed Jason Hedley, Chief Officer Roads and Carol Cooke, Urban Designer, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the provision of operational ground maintenance services across the Council's public realms, parks, footpaths, play facilities, public toilets and litter bins. It was noted that the service also had a role in statutory duties such as the Food Growing Strategy, Greenspace Strategy, Open Space Strategy and Land Use Planning, and Biodiversity (LBPA). Mr Hedley showed slides demonstrating achievements by delaying grass cutting in cemeteries and war memorials, which had encouraged wildflowers to grow around headstones and wild poppies around memorials, both of which achieved a better outcome for the ecosystem. He also referred to delayed maintenance around the River Tweed which had encouraged pollinators, whilst still retaining access for recreational purposes. Mr Hedley highlighted that delayed maintenance benefits were not always financial but would improve biodiversity. Ms Cooke then discussed how the service could respond to the climate emergency. She explained the four areas were: Mitigation - reducing emissions and carbon footprint, including reduction in grass cutting, introduction of electric vehicles, and reviewing procurement and supply chains. Adaptation - managing climate change with tree and woodland planning, participatory budgeting, managing spaces for nature, removal of bedding plants and increasing pollinator friendly planting, surface water management. Biodiversity – increasing wildflower planting, roadside verges, Food Strategy and ensuring we have the skills and awareness within our workforce. Land use – stewardship of the green estate for health and wellbeing, tree planting, food security and community growing schemes. Ms Cooke explained that wider engagement would be important to make sure the Council had capacity to meet future challenges and manage open spaces for future generations.

3.2 In response to a questions Mr Hedley confirmed the grass cutting was approximately 28 days between cuts. Regarding the effect of home working on the Council's carbon footprint, Ms Cox advised that she would request feedback from the Council's Energy Manager and advise out with the meeting. With regard to community engagement the Council would facilitate discussions to move communities to more sustainable practices. All Members and communities would need to discuss a strong rationale in terms of the Council's operational aspects to promote sustainable outputs. An educational and cultural change was also required, with sufficient capacity and resources to ensure that all services had climate and sustainability knowledge. With regard to food waste emissions Mr Aikman advised that a presentation would be included in the plan for consideration at a future meeting. The Chair thanked Mr Hedley and Ms Cooke for their attendance and informative presentation. Following the presentation Ms Barber, Young Ambassador

commented that emphasis should be on directly cutting emissions at their source rather trying to adapt.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

4. ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Michael Cook, Corporate Policy Officer, referred to the recommendation from the Scottish Borders Council meeting on 25 September 'that the Sustainable Development Committee developed recommendations on a collaborative and inclusive regional dialogue on climate action...' The role of young people in the conversation was particularly important for the quality of life for future generations. Ms Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker, had developed a group of nine young people from across the region. Mr Cook suggested that the Committee build a relationship with this group and could consider each of the young people working with a specific Committee Member and their attendance at future Committee meetings. During discussion it was suggested that clarity was required on what we were asking Members and the young people to do. It was also suggested that young people could set questions for the Sustainable Development Committee to address. Mr Cook advised that he would take forward with Ms Rigby and come back with a proposal for the next Committee meeting in March. The Chair suggested that it might be appropriate to bring the March meeting forward to avoid school examinations.

DECISION

AGREED to develop a proposal for the next meeting on collaborative working and engagement with young people.

5. POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO COMMITTEE REPORT IMPLICATIONS SECTION

There had been circulated copies of a report by Executive Director Finance and Regulatory suggesting some change to the Implications section of committee reports to take account of UN Sustainable Development Goals and requesting feedback from the Committee. The report explained that at the Scottish Borders Council meeting on 25 September 2020, it was decided that the 'implications' section of Council reports would be reviewed and updated generally, with a specific objective of addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This review and updating to be overseen by the Sustainable Development Committee with recommendations for a finalised format and approach to the 'implications' section of reports to be brought to Council for decision by 31 January 2021 at the latest. The implications section of committee reports covered a number of specific areas: Financial, Risk and Mitigations, Integrated Impact Assessment, Acting Sustainably, Carbon Management, Rural Proofing, and changes to the Schemes of Administration and Delegation. The paragraphs which were being reviewed were the ones relating to Acting Sustainably and Carbon Management. To ensure officers took account of the UN Sustainable Development Goals when drafting report, it was proposed that a checklist was completed and details given in a new section "Sustainable Development Goals", on the specific UN goals which were being impacted. The draft checklist was attached as an Appendix to the report. Subject to Members' views the intention was that report writers completed the checklist and drew the most salient issues into a brief narrative in the 'a Development Goals' section of the report, explaining relevance and (where appropriate) how the recommendations in the report supported progress against Sustainable Development Goals. While 'taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts' was a UN SDG (SDG 13), it was recognised that, national legislation, the Scottish public policy context (e.g. the Programme for Government 2021-2022), and Scottish Borders Council's own commitments manifested in the Responding to the Climate Emergency Report of 25 September 2020 required specific reference to be made to the Council's efforts and progressed in this area. Accordingly, it was proposed that a paragraph in the implications section was retained under the title 'Climate Change', with report writers setting out details of the impact of the report in this area, and (where appropriate) how the recommendations in the report supported progress against Climate Change objectives. The Committee supported the proposed amendment and it was

confirmed that report writers would receive appropriate training in completing the Climate Change Implications section of reports.

DECISION

AGREED to support the proposed amendment to the implications section of committee reports, in relation to UN Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change, as set out in Section 4 of the report attached with the agenda.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, 12 March 2021 at 10.00 am.

DECISION

NOTED.

The meeting concluded at 12.55 pm

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ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES (EES:ABS) PROGRAMME UPDATE

Report by Executive Director Corporate Improvement and Economy

Sustainable Development Committee

5th March 2021

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide an overview and update on the local Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (also known as EES:ABS).**
- 1.2 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022 is the Council's key strategic document for planning and delivering initiatives to reduce fuel poverty and improve home energy efficiency. Priority 2 of the LHS is that "More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes".
- 1.3 The key delivery channel for addressing fuel poverty and improving domestic energy efficiency is the Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) This has been the cornerstone of both the Scottish Government's and Local Authority's energy efficiency improvements for private domestic properties since 2013.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Committee:-**
 - (a) Notes the progress made in delivering the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) in the Scottish Borders.**

3 ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEME BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2013 the Scottish Government launched the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS). The programme is now known as Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS). The programme supports private tenure households in fuel poverty to install energy efficiency measures. This helps tackle fuel poverty and the poor energy efficiency of private housing.

- 3.3 The programme replaced previous government schemes that had primarily focussed on low cost measures such as Cavity Wall Insulation (CWI) and Loft Insulation (LI). A grant funding allocation is made available annually for local authorities to develop and deliver these programmes in areas they identify as having high fuel poverty. The Scottish Government has indicated long term support for the Area Based Schemes in the Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map.
- 3.4 Programmes typically include the installation of external and internal wall insulation as well as cavity wall insulation however the scope of eligible measures is now widening. In the last year Scottish Borders Council has introduced decarbonisation and renewable technology in the form of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and Solar Photovoltaic and battery storage (PV Battery) to the programme.
- 3.5 Since 2013 the EES:ABS scheme has delivered energy efficiency measures to around 87,000 households across Scotland and during the period 2013 to 2019/20 allocations to local authorities totalled £374 million.

4 ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES (EES:ABS) IN THE BORDERS

- 4.1 EES: ABS programmes require innovative project design in order to identify areas in need of household insulation improvement and households in fuel poverty. This requires the Council to use strong and effective partnerships and available resources such as fuel poverty data, mapping, the Home Analytics tool and local knowledge.
- 4.2 EES:ABS in the Scottish Borders initially focused on External Wall Insulation (EWI) and Hard to Treat Cavities (HTTCs) as it was understood from available data that the majority of low cost measures (loft and cavity wall insulation) would already have been installed. For EWI projects in mixed tenure blocks/areas this resulted in a number of social landlord upgrades that would previously have been difficult or impossible to complete.
- 4.3 More recently the nature of the region's housing stock has resulted in an increased focus on Internal Wall Insulation (IWI), particularly as identified homes suitable for EWI and HTTC have been completed. Using available data Officers are able to identify which properties have received retrofit insulation and using data on Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) banding, SBC can identify potential properties for decarbonised heating installations, particularly for properties off gas.
- 4.4 Specific property archetypes of the Scottish Borders and the region's rurality present both challenges and opportunities. A large number of properties are off the gas grid and so may be particularly suitable for decarbonisation of their heating for example replacing an oil system with ASHP.
- 4.5 EES:ABS will continue with a fabric first approach, particularly Internal Wall Insulation (IWI) as this is appropriate for much of the housing stock within the Scottish Borders where we have large numbers of older solid walled

properties while looking to integrate this with innovative renewable technology in line with carbon net zero targets.

5 IMPACT OF ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES (EES:ABS) IN THE BORDERS

5.1 It is generally accepted that there are four contributory factors to fuel poverty:

- The energy efficiency and heating systems of the home;
- Fuel prices;
- Income of the household;
- Behavioural (how people live within their home/use their heating)

Energy efficiency schemes have worked directly to help address the first point. Increasing the energy efficiency of homes will have a positive impact on fuel bills given the reduced energy use to achieve the same heating regime.

Table 1: Fuel Poverty in the Scottish Borders (Scottish House Condition Survey)

	2010-12	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18
	Fuel Poor						
Scottish Borders	34%	43%	39%	38%	34%	31%	29%
Scotland	27%	36%	35%	34%	31%	27%	25%

5.3

5.2 SBC work closely with agencies such as Home Energy Scotland to ensure those accessing the programme are supported to address the other drivers of fuel poverty. Advice is offered on household behaviours relating to energy use in the home as well as sign posting for support on switching energy tariffs and income maximisation. SBC's [Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy](#) sets out the strategic and holistic approach to increasing affordable warmth and delivering energy efficiency improvements within the Scottish Borders.

5.2 A monitoring and evaluation programme has recently been introduced to the SBC EES:ABS programme to report on the outcomes and impact on households supported. The evaluations will be carried out using a range of technical monitoring data (temperature, humidity, and energy consumption) as well as social evaluation questionnaires looking at areas which cannot be explored with data alone such as the impact on managing energy bills and comfort within the home. The monitoring and evaluation report for the 2017/18 programme has not yet been published but can be made available on request.

5.2 The Energy Efficiency Scheme also has important wider impacts on households and local communities including:

- improvements in householder health and wellbeing;
- decreases in fuel bills
- decreases in energy consumption and carbon emissions;
- reduction in fuel poverty likelihood and prevalence;
- investment in the local community;
- reduction in local unemployment; and
- Improvement of local skill sets and experience.

5.3 One of the benefits of the EES:ABS is stimulation of the local economy through increased employment. This is often quite difficult to monitor and directly attribute to schemes but has resulted in trades being employed from the local community such as joiners, electricians, plumbers, and satellite TV engineers.

5.4 Community benefits are a feature of the tenders prepared to appoint EES:ABS contractors and during 2019-20 SBC have been engaging contractors on how this could be delivered by supporting Scottish Borders College and how training, materials and work experience could be provided to their students. Discussions and plans are still at an early stage and any successful outcome will be recorded in future reports.

5.3 Over the period April 2013 to December 2020 SBC has secured **£13.6m** in funding to deliver the programmes. £10.6 million has been Scottish Government EES:ABS grant funding allocation and £3m in Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.

Table 2: Summary of outputs April 2013-December 2020

SUMMARY	
Measures installed	4,353
Households supported	over 3,500
Annual Financial Savings	£521,540
Lifetime Financial Savings	£20,811,240
Annual CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	2,060
Lifetime CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	16,585

5.4 For the 2020/21 programme (expected to complete in December 2021) SBC have been allocated over £1.7m, a record allocation for the Borders. The anticipated measures, fuel bill and Co2 savings are detailed in table 3.

Table 3: Anticipated EES:ABS programme for 2020/21

Description	2020/21
EES:ABS Funding	£1,770,000
ECO Funding	TBC
Total Funding	£1,770,000
External Wall Insulation (Solid Wall)	30
Hard to treat CWI (CWI Solution)	88
Internal Wall Insulation (Solid Wall)	50
Air Source Heat Pump	39
PV & Battery	39
Total Measures	246
Annual Financial Savings (£)	£23,360
Lifetime Financial Savings (£)	£904,320
Annual CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	94
Lifetime CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	715

- 5.5 **Impact of Covid-19:** In the financial year 2019-20 SBC were awarded £1.34m in EES:ABS funding. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the programme's delivery due to the restrictions put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus. No installations were able to take place between March and July 2020 and following the nationwide lockdown restrictions remained on works taking place inside people's homes. It was still possible to install 100 of the planned 278 energy efficiency measures supporting over 75 households. £550,000 of the £1.34m grant allocation was drawn down over that period.
- 5.6 SBC and the appointed EES:ABS contractors will continue to follow Scottish Government guidelines and advice, adhering to construction sector best practice to ensure that employees and householders are always protected. Current restrictions in place have limited EES:ABS activity to external works only. As such only EWI and HTTC can progress and all other work has been paused.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

- (a) There is no direct financial implication contained in the report. However delivery of the programme is dependent on SBC's continuous provision of core services, financial resource allocations from Scottish Government and resources arising from partner agencies and private individuals.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) Delivery of the Energy Efficiency Programme's aims and objectives is largely dependent upon a number of variables, not least of which relate to resource and other political and organisational decision making processes beyond the control of the Local Authority.

5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

- (a) A full Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the current LHS (2017-2022). Equalities forms an integral part of the LHS process and form part of the LHS guidance. The Energy Efficiency Programme is monitored and reported on through the Local Housing Strategy reporting process.
- (b) A full Integrated Impact Assessment will be embedded in the development process of the new Local Housing Strategy and this will include consideration of the Energy Efficiency Programme.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

It is considered that there are no direct economic, social or environmental effects arising from the report recommendations.

5.5 Carbon Management

It is considered that there are no direct effects on the Council’s carbon emissions arising from the report recommendations. There are likely to be positive effects through fuel poverty and energy efficiency outcomes.

5.6 Rural Proofing

The LHS 2017-22 has been rural proofed and it is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from implementation of its objectives. There is likely to be a wide range of positive outcomes for rural communities, including improvements in health and fuel poverty levels. In addition many of the innovative new technologies being used such as ASHP and battery storage are likely to directly benefit rural areas.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation as a result of this report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 *The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications are being consulted and any comments received will be incorporated into the final report.*

Approved by

**Rob Dickson
Executive Director Corporate
Improvement and Economy**

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Donna Bogdanovic	Principal Officer, Housing Strategy, Policy & Development 01896 661 392

Background Papers: Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Schemes Overview
Paper February 2021

Previous Minute Reference:

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Donna Bogdanovic can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk or tel:01896 661392

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Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS)

Scottish Borders Council Overview Report

February 2021

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Everyone should have access to a warm home that they can afford to heat, unfortunately for many households living in the Scottish Borders this is difficult to achieve. Some of the reasons for this include poor insulation, inefficient heating, low incomes, the cost of fuel and a lack of understanding and awareness of inefficient behaviours in the home. Homes that are cold and energy inefficient are detrimental to health and result in many households living in fuel poverty.

The 2016-2018 based Scottish House Condition Survey data shows that in the Scottish Borders 29% of households were living in fuel poverty¹, with 15% living in extreme fuel poverty. This is in comparison with 25% of people in Scotland living in fuel poverty and 11% living in extreme fuel poverty. Fuel poverty is exacerbated by a number of specific factors affecting properties and households in the Scottish Borders, including: a larger proportion of dwellings built before 1945, the rurality of the Scottish Borders meaning more dwellings are off gas, a larger percentage of older households and a low wage local economy. Table 1 shows the percentage of people living in fuel poverty.

Table 1: Percentage of people living in Fuel Poverty

	2010-12	2011-13	2012-14	2013-15	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18
Scottish Borders	34%	43%	39%	38%	34%	31%	29%
Scotland	27%	36%	35%	34%	31%	27%	25%

The links between fuel poverty and wellbeing are well known, fuel poverty can have a severe impact on cold related ill-health and personal wellbeing, particularly amongst vulnerable households, and people on low incomes. We also know that a large number of households in the Scottish Borders fall into these categories and that many of them live in older, hard to treat properties, which are difficult to insulate.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to develop Local Housing Strategies that aim to ensure that, “so far as reasonably practicable, persons do not live in fuel poverty.” This obligation relates to housing in all tenures. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022 is the Council’s key strategic document for planning and delivering initiatives to reduce fuel poverty and improve home energy efficiency. Priority 2 of the LHS is that “More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes”.

The current LHS 2017-22 identified a need to develop a new Fuel Poverty and Home Energy Efficiency strategy to support the delivery of actions under LHS priority 2, in particular those which address the following policy issues:

¹ Please see Appendix A for a full definition of fuel poverty

- National fuel poverty target (2016) and links to energy efficiency
- Housing's contribution to climate change; and
- Meeting the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (ESSH).

The local strategy developed for delivering improvements is the Affordable Warmth Home and Energy Efficiency Strategy (AWHEES). This document was developed with partners in the Borders Home Energy Forum (BHEF) and approved by council members in August 2019 as SBC's strategy to increase affordable warmth and improve energy efficiency in housing.

The strategy supports delivery of the Scottish Government's "Energy Efficient Scotland" (EES) route map and new Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) which are scheduled to be in place by the end of 2023. LHEES aims to establish local authority plans for systematically improving the energy efficiency of buildings alongside the decarbonisation of heat as well as guiding building owner decision making about replacement heating systems.

The key delivery channel for delivering the AWHEES and addressing fuel poverty is the Home Energy Efficient Programme for Scotland: Area Based Scheme (HEEPS:ABS). This has been the core delivery of both the Scottish Government and Local Authority energy efficiency improvements for private domestic properties since 2013. This has recently been rebranded as Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) and for the purposes of this report is referred to by the new moniker.

Support given to Fuel Poor households through EES:ABS Schemes from April 2013 – December 2020:

- **Measures installed to date: 4,353**
- **Households supported: over 3,500**
- **Annual Financial Savings (£): £521,540**
- **Lifetime Financial Savings (£): £20,811,240**
- **Annual CO2 Savings (Tonnes): 2,060**
- **Lifetime CO2 Savings (Tonnes): 16,585**

Climate Emergency, Scottish Government Carbon Targets & Decarbonisation

At a meeting of Scottish Borders Council on September 25th 2020, councillors approved a motion declaring a **climate emergency** in the Scottish Borders. A series of recommendations were put forward including the reduction of greenhouse gases and in a report responding to the climate emergency by the Chief Executive of SBC² it was noted that

² [Climate Emergency Report](#)

“Decarbonising Scottish heating will be particularly challenging and will need transformation of our current housing stock, attitudes towards renewable technology and current heating supply. Specific challenges for Scottish Borders relate to off-gas grid. In addition, fuel poverty is very significant consideration”.

The **Energy Efficient Scotland routemap** was published in 2018 with the ambition that by 2040 “Our Homes And Buildings Are Warmer, Greener And More Efficient”.

Energy Efficient Scotland delivers across two key policy areas of Government: fuel poverty and climate change. As a result of this there are two primary objectives:

- Removing poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty; and
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through more energy efficient buildings and decarbonising our heat supply.

The current target in the Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map is that by 2040 all Scottish homes achieve an EPC Band C where technically and financially feasible. All homes with households in fuel poverty to reach EPC Band C by 2030 and EPC Band B by 2040. Social rented homes to achieve EPC Band B by 2032.

Table 2: Current compliance with Energy Efficient Scotland EPC band ratings, by locality and tenure type, presented as % of stock

Locality	Compliant with EPC C or higher (by 2040)			Compliant with EPC B (by 2032)
	Owner Occupied	Social Housing	Privately Rented	Social Housing
Berwickshire	21%	45%	12%	7%
Cheviot	29%	45%	21%	2%
Eildon	25%	36%	21%	2%
Teviot and Liddesdale	18%	36%	17%	3%
Tweeddale	27%	46%	22%	6%

The Council’s [Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy](#) (AWHEES) and the EES:ABS scheme support these national and local ambitions. In particular the introduction of renewables such as Air Source Heat Pumps to the EES:ABS programme will be vital in tackling climate change and fuel poverty, particularly in more rural areas.

Within the AWHEES there is a commitment to support renewable technology and to develop the local supply chain so that there are companies and the skill base to do this type of work within the Scottish Borders. Work to improve the supply chain has been undertaken and discussions in regard to this have been held at the Scottish Borders Home Energy Forum meetings.

Further fact finding work into the supply chain challenges and deliverables was continued across 2020 by the Southern Upland Partnership (SUP), with their project due to run up to March 2021. The SUP are now delegates of the Home Energy Forum.

INTRODUCTION TO ENERGY EFFICIENT SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES

In 2013 the Scottish Government launched Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS) to further support private tenure households to install energy efficiency measures. This was designed to tackle the poor energy efficiency of private housing in areas of fuel poverty. It replaced the previous government schemes that had primarily focussed on low cost measures such as Cavity Wall Insulation (CWI) and Loft Insulation (LI) shifting the focus to external wall insulation and hard-to-treat cavities.

Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) is an area-based scheme designed and delivered by councils with local delivery partners. They target fuel-poor areas and households to provide energy efficiency measures to a large number of homes while delivering emission savings and helping reduce fuel poverty.

Since 2013 the Scottish EES:ABS scheme has delivered energy efficiency measures to around 87,000 households across Scotland. Over the period 2013 to 2019/20 allocations to local authorities totalled £374 million. Since 2013 **£13.6 million** in funding has been secured for work in the Scottish Borders through £10.6 million of EES:ABS Scottish Government funding and £3 million of Energy Company Obligation (ECO).

Following the COSLA formula for Local Authority allocation the Scottish Borders Council allocation for 2020/21 is **£1.7 million**.

EES:ABS programmes require innovative project design in order to identify areas in need of household insulation improvement. This requires the Council to form strong partnerships and take advantage of available resources such as fuel poverty data, mapping, Home Analytics datasets and officers' local knowledge.

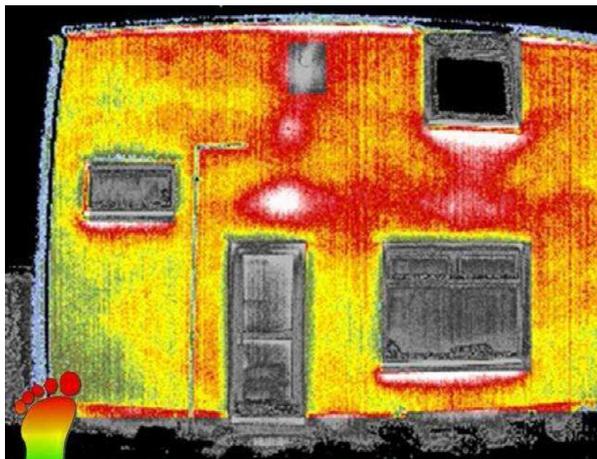
Delivery of EES:ABS involves local authority management and area selection but has a greater focus on more costly insulation measures such as external wall insulation (EWI), hard to treat cavities (HTTCs) and Internal Wall Insulation (IWI). In the last year Scottish Borders Council has introduced de-carbonisation and renewable technology in the form of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and Solar Photovoltaic and battery storage (PV Battery).

EES:ABS in the Borders initially focused on EWI and HTTCs as it was understood from available data that the majority of low cost measures (loft and CWI) would already have been installed. For EWI projects in mixed tenure blocks or areas this resulted in a number of social landlord upgrades that would previously have been difficult or impossible to complete. The nature of the region's housing stock also required an increased focus on IWI, particularly as identified homes suitable for EWI and HTTC had been completed.

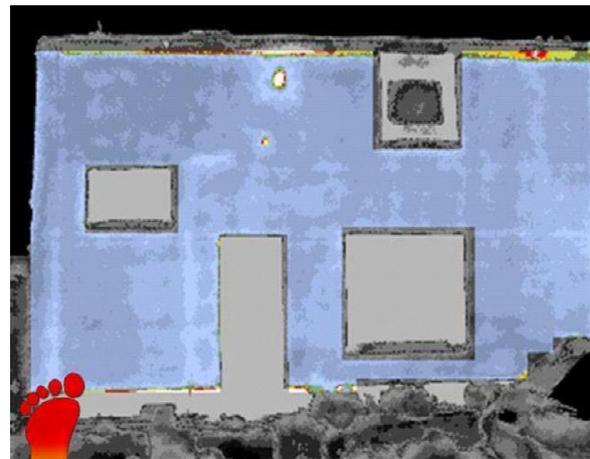
The images below are before and after photos of an external wall installation at Plora Terrace, Innerleithen.



External Wall Insulation can assist local residents in lowering their fuel bills. By reducing the amount of heat escaping through external walls, homes are quicker to heat and retain warmth for longer. In addition EWI can help to protect the fabric of a property and improve the cosmetic appearance of the building. The images below are use thermal imaging to show the difference in heat loss at a property before and after an EWI installation.



Thermal image pre External Wall Insulation



Thermal imaging post External Wall Insulation

Using available data Officers are able to identify which properties have received retrofit insulation. In addition the use of data on Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) bandings allows Officers at SBC to identify potential properties for decarbonised heating installations, particularly where properties are off the gas grid.

Specific property archetypes within the Scottish Borders and the rurality of the area present both challenges and opportunities. Given the nature of the housing stock within the Scottish Borders EES:ABS will generally continue with a fabric first approach, particularly Internal Wall Insulation (IWI), and will look to integrate this with innovative renewable technology in line with wider carbon net zero targets.

EES:ABS IMPACT ON FUEL POVERTY

It is generally accepted that there are four main contributory factors which cause fuel poverty:

1. The energy efficiency of a home and the heating system the property uses;
2. Fuel prices;
3. Household income;
4. Behavioural (how people live within their home and the amount they use their heating systems)

The energy efficiency schemes described have worked to address both the energy efficiency and heating systems of properties within the region. This has had a positive impact on fuel bills as a result of the reduced amount of energy used to achieve the same heating levels.

SBC work closely with agencies such as to ensure those accessing the programme are supported to address the other drivers of fuel poverty. Advice is offered on household behaviours relating to energy use in the home as well as sign posting for support on switching energy tariffs and income maximisation.

A monitoring and evaluation programme has recently been introduced to the SBC EES:ABS programme to report on outcomes and impact on households supported. The evaluations are carried out using a range of technical monitoring data (temperature, humidity, and energy consumption) as well as social evaluation questionnaires looking at areas which cannot be explored with data alone such as the impact on managing energy bills and comfort within the home.

All households who engage in the EES:ABS are referred to Home Energy Scotland and provided free impartial energy efficiency advice and advice on income maximisation. In addition advice and support is provided on the SBC website alongside contact information for Home Energy Scotland.



Table 3: Number of Home Energy Scotland interactions within the Scottish Borders

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Inbound calls	1,223	1,175	934	1,245	1,130
Outbound calls	815	592	705	977	558
Events	330	299	1,379	945	516
Other (e.g. emails, letters, home visits)	1,343	2,521	2,106	2,244	2,973
EES:ABS	238	0	0	0	0
Total advice interactions	3,949	4,587	5,124	5,411	5,117

As mentioned previously, SBC's [AWHEES](#) is the local strategy developed for delivering improvements, it represents the strategic and holistic approach to increasing affordable warmth and delivering energy efficiency improvements within the Scottish Borders. The overall AWHEES vision is that "More people live in energy efficient and affordably warm homes". The priorities working towards fulfilling the vision are:

- Priority one - to collectively work with our partners to improve affordable warmth and energy efficiency in homes
- Priority two - to explore wider measures to better manage energy and increase warmth in the home
- Priority three - to ensure that the Strategy provides opportunities for all in the Scottish Borders

SUMMARY OF FUNDING AND SUPPORT DELIVERED THROUGH EES:ABS

EES:ABS in the Borders has resulted in a significant number of installations since 2013 and has successfully maximised the use of the Scottish Government funding. Since 2013 a total of £13.6 million in funding³ has been secured through £10.6 million of EES:ABS Scottish Government funding and £3 million of Energy Company Obligation (ECO).

The UK government introduced ECO to fund energy efficiency measures throughout the United Kingdom. The Energy Company Obligation requires the big six energy suppliers to help householders save on their energy bills and carbon emissions. Local authorities are also expected to maximise use of Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding through EES:ABS which can work to provide additional funding and help the core EES:ABS funding to go further and support more households.

The bullet points below show the support that has been given to fuel poor households within the Scottish Borders through EES:ABS Schemes from April 2013 – December 2020 including expected savings both financial and environmental.

- **Households supported: over 3,500**
- **Measures installed to date: 4,353**
- **Annual Financial Savings (£): £521,540**
- **Lifetime Financial Savings (£): £20,811,240**
- **Annual CO2 Savings (Tonnes): 2,060**
- **Lifetime CO2 Savings (Tonnes): 16,585**

As an example Table 4 below shows the estimated fuel bill and CO2 savings for the 2019/20 programme based on the anticipated measures that could have been installed over the period. During the 2019/20 period the EES:ABS Air Source Heat Pump installation scheme was developed to support properties in off gas areas, however the impact of Covid on the supply chain has resulted in the ASHP installs being moved to the 2020/21 programme.

Table 4: Estimated fuel bills and CO2 savings for 2019/20 HEEPS:ABS based on anticipated measures

Measure	Tenure				CO ₂ Savings (tonnes)		Financial Savings (£)	
	Owner Occupied	Private rented	Social Landlord	Total	Annual	Lifetime	Annual	Lifetime
Internal Wall Insulation (solid wall)	56	0	0	56	43	321	10,080	362,880
External Wall Insulation (solid wall)	86	0	0	86	65	493	15,480	557,280
Hard to treat CWI (CWI solution)	126	0	0	126	57	434	12,600	529,200
Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)	10	0	0	10	25	500	6,950	139,000

³ See appendix B for a detailed breakdown

PARTNERSHIPS

The success of the energy efficiency schemes has been assisted by strong partnerships between the Council and local organisations. This has included community groups spreading the word about available funding; housing associations delivering and coordinating programmes; and local charities and organisations managing delivery.

Changeworks & Home Energy Scotland (HES)

EES:ABS programmes responsibility for management was (and continues to be) sub-contracted to Changeworks. This has included working with the Housing Strategy Team at SBC on area selection analysis, bid document construction, procurement as well as quality control and delivery. The relationship and communication between the Council and Changeworks has been successful and has supported Council energy efficiency objectives being met through these programmes.

The South East Home Energy Scotland (HES) advice centre (managed by Changeworks) continues to provide signposting and support for householders referrals and works in tandem with EES:ABS to strategically targets areas of fuel poverty.

Registered Social Landlords

Since the commencement of the EES:ABS programmes there have been strong and effective relationships in place with local RSLs, including Berwickshire, Waverley, Eildon and Scottish Borders Housing Association. These partnerships have enabled the following key outcomes:

1. Complementing RSL capital programmes with EES:ABS funding for private properties has enabled private tenure upgrades in shared blocks.
2. Work with RSLs has supported us to meet our fuel poverty objectives
3. The creation of a bi-monthly forum made up of key local stakeholders including SBC and the RSLs.
4. The creation and ongoing delivery of the AWHEES as referenced above.
5. Successful funding bid to implement the Warm & Well Borders Scheme created via Borders Home Energy Forum to mutually support sector activity. With CAB, RSLs, NHS, Borders College, HES and Changeworks amongst others. This resulted in £551,000 funding for two years to address fuel poverty and income maximisation as well as ongoing support to create a lasting legacy. Signposting and cross referral have also been used to maximise support across the agencies involved.

SOCIAL IMPACT & COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Energy efficiency schemes have an important impact on households and local communities including:

- improvements in householder health and wellbeing;
- decreases in fuel bills and energy consumption;
- reduction in fuel poverty likelihood and prevalence;
- investment in the local community;
- reduction in local unemployment; and
- improvements to skill sets and experience.

The Council has commissioned a number of research projects and developed procedures for monitoring the social impacts of energy efficiency schemes. A copy of the draft EES:ABS Monitoring and Evaluation Report for 2017/18 can be made available on request.

One of the benefits of energy efficiency schemes is stimulation of the local economy through increased employment. This is often quite difficult to monitor and directly attribute to schemes but has resulted in trades being employed from the local community such as joiners, electricians, plumbers, and satellite TV engineers. Examples of direct local employment also include 2 FTE posts created at Change Works in Peebles from 2017-2020.

Community benefits are a feature of the tenders prepared to appoint EES:ABS contractors and during 2019-20 SBC have been engaging contractors on how this could be delivered by supporting Scottish Borders College and exploring how training, materials and work experience could be provided to their Students. Discussions and plans are still at an early stage and any successful outcome will be recorded in future reports.

Community Councils play a key role in raising awareness of EES:ABS. It is important that local councillors are aware of the schemes and can signpost constituents towards advice with confidence that the support mechanisms are robust and thorough. Similarly, working with local communities and identifying a trusted voice within a scheme can generate local awareness and engagement.

It has been estimated that for every £100 million spent on energy efficiency improvements in 2018 approximately 1,200 full-time equivalent jobs were supported across the Scottish economy.

In order to attract some of these jobs to the region, efforts have been made to improve the local supply chain, something which has been an ongoing issue due to the rural nature of much of the region and the need to bring workers in from other parts of Scotland. Engagement with Borders College has continued and representatives from the college attend Scottish Borders Home Energy Forum meetings along with Officers and other key stakeholders in an effort to build ties and share knowledge.

Case studies

Case studies can show improvements to quality of life and properties that local initiatives have given to people within the region through some of the schemes we have referenced in this report.

Examples are shared below and a further, more detailed, example from the project in Tweedbank is available at Appendix C (attached).



Ms Harvey, IWI 18/19 Melrose

“My home was always cold, and heating was my biggest expense. Now I can sit in my sitting room and be completely unaware of how cold it is outside. I know it’s going to make a big difference in the winter. I would so recommend having the work done. The difference it makes is fantastic. The contractors couldn’t be nicer or more professional. My house is warmer, I’m going to save money, and of course it helps the planet too.”



Ms Mansfield, IWI 17/18 Peebles

“My flat now heats up quickly, and it keeps the heat in when I switch the heating off. I pay less money and have more warmth: it’s great.

I no longer have to wrap myself in throws to keep warm, which has made such a difference to how I feel about and within myself. I would recommend anyone to have the insulation installed: there is no downside.”



Mr and Mrs Greaves, EWI 17/18 Lower Langlee

“The real difference...is how it looks. It’s greatly improved, so much nicer to look at. It was a horrible dull colour before, but they’ve brightened it up, and the windowsills they’ve put on have hidden the red tiles and it all looks so much better. I’m really pleased with how the house looks now. I’d say definitely go for it. Especially if you get the offer we did. It’d be silly not to take it.”



Mr Williams, HTTC 16/17

“I couldn’t fault the service. Everyone was very mannerly and very good at their jobs. From the first lad who came to the door, to the final inspection, everyone involved gave a great service. Having the work done has made an immense difference: we’re not using the gas as much, and the house is much warmer. Upstairs used to be very very cold, because the windows are about 30 years old, but now it’s very warm. We used to have the heating on until 9.30-10 o’clock at night, but now we switch it off by 6.30pm.”

The images below are before and after photographs of an EWI install which took place at Telford Road, clearly showing the improvement the insulation has made to the fabric and aesthetic of the building.



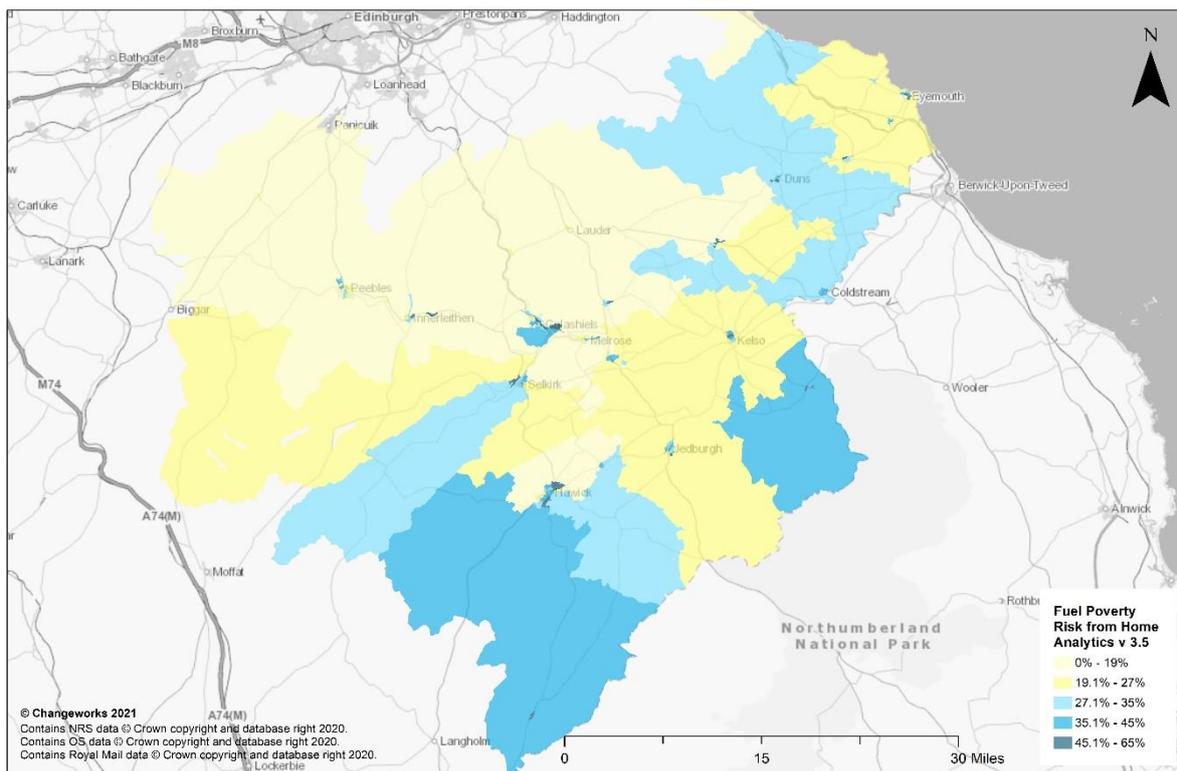
RESOURCES & DATA

Selection of EES:ABS areas is based on a number of Council, Changeworks and publically available datasets such as Home Analytics and the Scottish House Condition Survey.

In addition the use of GIS mapping provides Officers with an overview of fuel poor areas within the region. The Scottish Borders fuel poverty map shown below estimates fuel poverty density within the region. Fuel poverty levels are estimated based a number of indicators of fuel poverty including the following:

- Unemployed households;
- Single pensioner households;
- Permanently sick or disabled households;
- Properties with an energy performance certificate (EPC) rating E-G (poor energy efficiency);
- Properties with a central heating system other than gas or electricity (high fuel costs)
- Housing costs and the household composition

Fuel Poverty Risk(%) at Data Zone Level for Scottish Borders Council



Local knowledge and partnerships plays an important part in the future of EES:ABS. As household and area selection becomes more challenging due to the success of previous schemes, having in-depth knowledge of Scottish Borders housing stock will have greater importance. Therefore relationships with and knowledge sharing between RSLs, community groups and installers will be an important factor moving forwards. This is achieved through collaborative working such as the Borders Homer Energy Forum and working with the

appointed installers. SBC will continue to work with local RSLs and wider stakeholders to deliver commitments outlined in the AWHEES such as local community groups or trusted voices within communities who can provide local knowledge and support. In addition the use of GIS along with datasets such as those provided by Home Analytics allows detailed analysis of areas where schemes would be most beneficial.

An example of how this approach has led to successful delivery is the engagement with the Newcastleton & District Community Trust (NDCT). Previous attempts to promote schemes directly in the area had been met with limited uptake however including NDCT in the promotion resulted in a significant improvement. The approach included using NDCT logos on promotional materials, their members promoted the project on social media and distribution lists and supported the event. The trust of NDCT within the local community and the resultant trust in the project resulted in a response from 79 of the 349 households included. We usually expect around 2-4% response rates but received almost 23% in this instance with around 40 homes receiving insulation measures.

This approach is replicable and SBC, Changeworks, and Home Energy Scotland are currently engaging with a number of community based groups to develop similar approaches.

2020/21 AND BEYOND

For 2020/21 Scottish Borders Council were allocated a **£1.76 million** from the EES:ABS budget. Scottish Government are investing in the sector and it remains a vital part of the net zero carbon agenda. EES:ABS can be an integral part of the renewables and construction supply chain. Proof of market exists as there is significant Scottish Government commitment to Energy Efficient Scotland and similar schemes. In addition the activity across EES:ABS, W&W, AWHEES can act as an “anchor” for other activity and add to the collective step change in addressing both decarbonisation and sustainability.

These schemes have relied on a number of effective partnerships. During the delivery of EES: ABS, strong relationships with RSLs have been formed. This has been essential to the success of the schemes since EWI projects require coordination of private and social upgrades, particularly for mixed tenure blocks of flats.

Schemes have also resulted in a number of social and community benefits. Future EES: ABS programmes will require continued innovation during the planning stages in order to consistently reach fuel poor homes and maximise the use of EES:ABS funding. Resources such as the Changeworks fuel poverty map, Home Analytics and open source data sets will play an important role in meeting this requirement.

EES: ABS has significantly improved the energy efficiency of private housing stock in the Scottish Borders. EES:ABS programmes delivery will become more challenging as the easiest to treat properties and measures are installed and as such it is essential maximise the use of key partnerships and experience from previous schemes in identifying new areas.

The diminishing need for cavity and external wall insulation projects due to the success of programmes in recent years has resulted in a shift to greater numbers of internal wall insulation projects. Many households supported with insulation measures in previous years remain in fuel poverty with the cost of fuel bills remaining a driver. To address this challenge SBC and Changeworks developed a funding application under the EES:ABS 2020-21 ‘Special Project’s category which has now been approved by Scottish Government. The project will provide further support to these households by installing solar panels, battery storage and air source heat pumps.

COVID

In the financial year 2019-20 Scottish Borders Council were awarded £1.34m in EES:ABS funding. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the programme's delivery due to the restrictions put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus. No installations were able to take place between March and July 2020.

Following lockdown restrictions remained on works taking place inside people's homes, coupled with demand for tradesman soaring it was not possible to install as many measures as hoped. Despite the difficulties encountered, it was still possible to install 100 of the planned 278 energy efficiency measures supporting over 75 households within the region.

COVID safety precautions

SBC and the appointed EES:ABS contractors will continue to follow Scottish Government guidelines and advice and adhere to construction sector best practice to ensure that employees and householders are always protected and that their safety is paramount.

Currently in the latest lockdown, restrictions in place have limited EES:ABS activity to external works only. As such only EWI and HTTC can progress and all other work has been paused.

Glossary

Acronym

Full Name

CERT	Carbon emissions reduction target
CWI	Cavity wall insulation
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
ECO	Energy Company Obligation
EST	Energy Saving Trust
EWI	External wall insulation
HA	Housing association
HEEPS:ABS	Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes
HIS	Home Insulation Scheme
HTTCs	Hard to treat cavities
IWI	Internal wall insulation
RSL	Registered social landlord
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
UHS	Universal Home Insulation Scheme

Appendix A:

DEFINITION OF FUEL POVERTY

A household is in fuel poverty if:

(a) the fuel costs necessary for the home in which members of the household live to meet the conditions set out in subsection (2) are more than 10% of the household's adjusted net income, and

(b) after deducting such fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability (if any) and the household's childcare costs (if any), the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living for members of the household.

DEFINITION OF EXTREME FUEL POVERTY

A household is in extreme fuel poverty if:

(a) the fuel costs necessary for the home in which members of the household live to meet the conditions set out in section 3(2) are more than 20% of the household's adjusted net income, and

(b) after deducting such fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability (if any) and the household's childcare costs (if any), the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living for members of the household

Appendix B: EES:ABS funding, measure and savings

Description	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	201 9/20	2020/ 21	Total
EES:ABS Funding	£1,620,000	£1,130,000	£1,870,000	£1,100,000	£1,230,000	£1,340,000	£522,000	£1,770,000	£10,582,000
ECO Funding	£1,280,000	£342,000	£220,000	£614,000	£500,000	£75,000	£0.00	TBC	£3,031,000
Total Funding	£2,900,000	£1,472,000	£2,090,000	£1,714,000	£1,730,000	£1,415,000	£522,000	£1,770,000	£13,613,000
External Wall Insulation (Solid Wall)	315	275	238	86	37	88	-	30	1,069
Cavity wall insulation	141	50	-	104	-	46	5	-	346
Hard to treat CWI (CWI Solution)	32	-	73	856	655	177	40	88	1,921
Internal Wall Insulation (Solid Wall)	-	-	-	-	35	39	26	50	150
Loft Insulation (Virgin)	291	3	-	36	-	1	3	-	334
Lost insulation (Top-up)	336	-	-	148	-	40	8	-	532
Under Floor Insulation	80	-	-	26	-	9	18	-	133
Glazing	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
Air Source Heat Pump	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	39
PV & Battery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	39
Total Measures	1,231	328	311	1,256	727	400	100	246	4,599
Annual Financial Savings (£)	£120,950	£50,030	£46,840	£149,600	£90,120	£52,650	£11,350	£23,360	£544,900
Lifetime Financial Savings (£)	£4,777,500	£1,837,260	£1,738,800	£6,200,640	£3,715,920	£2,089,380	£451,740	£904,320	£21,715,560
Annual CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	512	205	190	554	361	194	44	94	2,155
Lifetime CO2 Savings (Tonnes)	4,102	1,533	1,435	4,740	2,760	1,655	360	715	17,300

APPENDIX C: Case Studies from Tweedbank external wall insulation project 2016/17

Scottish Borders Council ran an external wall insulation project in Tweedbank, funded by the Scottish Government and project managed jointly with Changeworks. Home Energy Scotland provided free impartial energy efficiency advice to householders. The project was part of the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS), part of the Scottish Government initiative to tackle fuel poverty (now known as EES:ABS).

The total investment in energy efficiency improvements for this project was £1.5m. External wall insulation was offered to 234 properties, 208 privately owned homes and 26 Housing Association owned homes. To date, 203 properties have been insulated with a further 10 in progress. Everwarm is the contractor selected to carry out the installation of the insulation. Gillian Allinson had external wall insulation installed on her end terrace home towards the end of 2016 as part of the external wall insulation project. It would usually cost in the region of £9000 to install external wall insulation on these types of properties but thanks to Scottish Government funding, householders could have the insulation installed for £1000. Gillian received a letter from Home Energy Scotland and Scottish Borders Council informing her that they were running a project in her area and that there was funding available to subsidise the work, she was delighted and decided to sign up.

“I really feel the cold, so I liked the thought of having a warmer house, and I thought having the external wall insulation would make the house look better too. But it’s really expensive to have it installed, so the deciding factor for me was that it was heavily subsidised. I couldn’t have had it done otherwise. In the end I paid £1000, which has been worth it already.”

The letter told her who to contact, and what would be involved. Once she’d signed up to the project, the contractors employed to undertake the work got in touch, and someone from the company came out to do a survey. They made sure that the property was suitable for external wall insulation, and explained what would happen and arranged an installation date.

Once the installation started, the contractor worked on three or four houses in the street at the same time. They put the scaffolding up and quickly got to work.



Gillian Allinson



Gillian's home after the insulation was installed

“It was really impressive how quickly it all happened. We'd drive away in the morning, and come back to a completely different looking house in the evening.”

Gillian had already had loft insulation fitted, but she's really noticed the difference in how warm her home is now that she's had the external wall insulation installed.

“Having the external wall insulation has made such a difference to our home. The heating's on a lot less, which is a miracle for me. I really feel the cold, and my family joke that I'll have two jumpers on while everyone else is in shorts and t-shirts! Well now the house warms up so much more quickly, and best of all, it stays warm, especially upstairs, even when the heating's off. Everyone thinks it's nice and cosy now. The house looks a lot better too. And because so many houses have had it done, it's really brightened up the neighbourhood.” Gillian is very happy with her decision to take advantage of the Scottish Borders Council's subsidy to install external wall insulation in her home.

“All in all I would completely recommend people to get it done. The subsidy meant I could afford to have it installed, and now my house is warmer, even though my heating's on less.” The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) completed prior to the installation of the external wall insulation rated the energy efficiency of Gillian's home as 49 (E) and the environmental impact (CO2) rating as 45 (E). The EPC completed following installation rated an improvement to the energy efficiency with a new rating of 67 (D) and environmental impact (CO2) rating of 66 (D).

Mike lives in a mid-terrace property in Tweedbank and decided to have the work done as he liked the idea of having a warmer home whilst spending less money to heat it. The project had initially started on one street in his estate but the project was extended. Mike spotted an advert in the local newspaper and he phoned the number for Home Energy Scotland to sign up to have the insulation installed.

The scaffolding was up around Mike's house for around six to eight weeks, the contractor would complete each stage of the process across all the houses in the immediate vicinity, before going back around to complete the next stage. Mike has also been impressed by the impact that the work has had on his house. As well as the visual benefits, his gas usage is down, and his house, which he previously described as cold, is now nice and warm.

"I'd say our gas usage is 10-15% below what it would normally be. Our daily charge is about 26p per day, which is very economical. Plus, our house used to be cold, but it's not anymore, which is great. Our primary reason for getting the work done was because of the visual impact and we've not been disappointed. The whole estate has been given a new lease of life, and the houses look as if they've just been built. And apart from anything else, having the work done has improved the resale value of our home above ones that haven't had the work done. It must make it more attractive to buy, both from a visual perspective and the heating benefits."

"I would encourage anyone thinking of installing insulation to do it. If they could see what I can see now they wouldn't hesitate. The house looks brand new, plus I've been able to turn my thermostat down by 2-3 degrees and my house is still lovely and warm."

I learned so much about how to save energy and cut costs just by going through the process. I encouraged my neighbour to have it done, and she's really pleased I did. I told her what I'd tell anyone in her position: you'll save money, your house will be warmer, and it'll look better. If you're still not sure, try and see somewhere that the work's been done, and if you know someone who's had it done ask them if their house looks better and feels warmer. I bet they'll tell you 'Yes'. We spent money to save money, and it's been really worthwhile."

The energy efficiency rating of Mike's home prior to the installation of the insulation was 62 (D) with an environmental impact (CO2 rating) of 56 (D), another EPC was completed following the installation and the energy efficiency rating improved to 70 (C) and CO2 rating of 67 (D).