

Discussion Output: Our Economy, Skills & Learning Theme (10th January 2018)

Summary/Area of Discussion:

Business Premises and Opportunities

Post-it Notes:

- Building on what we have – cycling, walking etc. to generate and attract bigger business to the area
- Designate more land for business use to make sure there is no a scarcity
- Allocation and retention of land/premises for economic and employment use - both large and small scale businesses
- Need wider range of business opportunities and locations to encourage young families to work in the area, not just live and commute, higher paid types of jobs too
- Encourage new business into the area and more home working
- Distinctiveness of Peebles is diminishing – High Street needs more nice shops
- Regeneration of High Street shops – more charity shops – concern High Street is declining – sunrise businesses
- Review planning reconciliations to widen possible industrial/non rural economic development in rural areas ie garages ... towns
- Identify and create economic development sites both in Peebles and rural areas
- To support economic start-ups and growth
- Lack of business premises
- We want space for business as well as houses – we want people to live and work here
- Business rates
- Promote self-growth business 'Enterprise Hub'

Key Areas for Tweeddale

- **Commercial and Industrial sites & premises**
- **Peebles High Street**
- **Attracting businesses (large and small)**
- **Support for start-ups and growth; 'Enterprise Hub'**

"How" Post-its:

- Approve more applications for business/industrial industries and designate more land
- Re-purpose existing disused buildings e.g. Mills
- Retention of industrial sites for employment and economic use
- Offer incentives to businesses and investors to come to the Borders eg reduces rent/rates
- Encourage smaller businesses to co-locate in multi-purpose centres
- Need to seek input from business forums
- Reach out to business forums to extoll the virtues and promote the location of Tweeddale to encourage new businesses
- Create a premises similar to the Bush and promote heavily
- South of Scotland Enterprise Agency – should seek to set its priorities AFTER it liaises with communities, not before

- LEADER - A more co-operative response to applications for funding.
- A new bridge built over the Tweed in Peebles will create a significant economic zone, not just more housing
- What businesses can grow around the elderly
- Identify sites for start-ups and growth sectors, allocate sites, service the land, let private sectors to build units
- Audit of premises and business needs/opportunities to draw potential growth businesses in. Carried out by a series of local seminars
- Make the Borders attractive to entrepreneurs, get them interested first then build the opportunities around them
- Businesses – private rents are expensive, can rentals be capped. Large national businesses affect local businesses
- One overall group to take forward developments for continuity

“Who”

- SBC; Borders College; NFUS; Scottish Enterprise; Business Gateway; DWP; Community Groups; High Schools; Business Leaders

Summary/Area of Discussion:

Improving Tourism

Post-it Notes:

- Cycle links need to be developed faster to link up communities
- Welcome + more infrastructure
- More cycle ways
- Bike shops – mountain biking spin off tourism should be captured
- Other tourism opportunities – mountain biking, walking, cycle path development
- Run a tourism marketing campaign linking up all our other tourism sites - don't just pass through – stop and enjoy
- Environmental sustainability – Tweeddale natural beautiful area - promote area - tourism, transport sustainable
- Promote local towns

Key Areas for Tweeddale

- **Marketing & Promotion**
- **Environmental Sustainability & Infrastructure**

“How” *Post-it Notes:*

- Need a strategic plan to improve Tourism in Tweeddale
- Ambassador role for the Borders and Tweeddale
- Marketing campaign, signage, support for events and budget
- Tweed Valley Sweatshirt and jacket promotion, Tweed Valley apps to download
- Bring together all tourism initiatives, put in money to build infrastructure – a community tourism project
- Build on tourism skills and apprenticeships

“Who”

Summary/Area of Discussion:

Connectivity (Transport & Digital)

Post-it Notes:

- Transport links – commuter belt – faster transport links – good quality electric transport for future
- Buses – infrastructure poor – ok north/south but not good east/west
- Need for hotels in and near train and Tweeddale area – peak times fully booked and more needed
- Transport/Broadband links
- 4 buses uplifting at Innerleithen but no public toilets
- Right infrastructure – roads and links for business – management of those links
- Continue to improve Broadband coverage/speed across the area. Along with 3G/4G mobile coverage that's reliable

Key Areas for Tweeddale

- **Transport infrastructure (incl. facilities) and connections into Tweeddale**
- **Broadband & Mobile coverage**

“How” Post-it Notes:

- Links into improves connectivity and transport links
- Better provision for bikes on trains
- Ask local buses to include trailers for bike transport

“Who”

Summary/Area of Discussion:

Education Opportunities

Post-it Notes:

- Don't have add on college education
- Closer link with colleges, schools and businesses
- Lack of higher education opportunities
- Would like a satellite of Borders College in Tweeddale to deliver further education the venue could change from town to town, venue to venue depending on availability
- Improve links and educational (Higher) opportunities to attract young people
- Retaining one workplace in the Borders
- Education don't do enough – skilled youths but how do we retain skills here and sustain
- Employer/volunteer system – accreditation students/benefits business (rate relief)
- Younger audience targeting
- Employability should not equate to qualifications
- Engage from primary schools use Fridays

<p><i>Key Areas for Tweeddale</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer ties/improving links between Borders College, Tweeddale schools and businesses • Retention of skills in the Tweeddale area • Opportunities for Friday afternoons (asymmetric week)
<p><i>“How” Post-it Notes:</i></p>
<p><i>“Who”</i></p>

<p>Summary/Area of Discussion: Skills Development</p>
<p><i>Post-it Notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling – creation of job skills could be expanded • YP – skills training – digital use of technology • Wider cognitive skill applying knowledge to other tasks • Working age group now, how do we sustain employability now • Focus on future and existing employees • Mentoring by drawing on community resources • More trades and practical skills training required
<p><i>Key Areas for Tweeddale</i> (highlighted in bullet points above)</p>
<p><i>“How” Post-it Notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a community led co-operative programme for primary and early secondary children to develop knowledge and skills. Create opportunities, consider a deal for employers and businesses and corporate sponsorship • Build skills trade
<p><i>“Who”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Learning Partnership; Parent Councils; Children & Young People Directorate (SBC); Business Community; Children & Young People; Community Learning Development; Third Sector; NVQ Assessors

<p>Summary/Area of Discussion: Research and Development</p>
<p><i>Post-it Notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peebles – commuter town – strategy to bring business here instead of going to Edinburgh • Research and development of new technologies re: elderly and others

- An audit of third sector and small businesses who can deliver **training and experience**
- How do we make Borders more appealing to work
- How do we get message to live, work and bring families up here
- **Inward investment strategy** – have we got business accommodation – not enough small starter businesses. Larger properties too extensive. Rail not had any impact
- Networking
- “Eliminating the borders between Borders”

Key Areas for Tweeddale
(highlighted in bullet points above)

“How” Post-it Notes:

“Who”

Summary/Area of Discussion:

Housing (will be covered in “Our Place” theme)

Post-it Notes:

- Affordable housing - low wages not attractive – need solved to attract and sustain people

Key Areas for Tweeddale

“How” Post-it Notes:

- All infrastructure more friendly for disabled

“Who”