

# Ambitious for the Borders 2015

## Partnership Agreement for the Programme of Local Government



- **We will ensure that sustainable economic development remains our top priority;**
- **We will work to make the Scottish Borders one of Britain's premier destinations for outdoor activities, both sporting and leisure;**
- **We will work to maintain and improve quality of life for all our residents.**

This document sets out the second partnership agreement for the programme of local government that has been agreed by the Independent, Scottish National Party and Liberal Democrat members of Scottish Borders Council's Administration.

The first "Ambitious for the Borders" agreement was published in 2012, and a review in June 2014 showed that just over 70% of the commitments made had either been achieved fully or significant progress has been made. This document now presents our commitments for the next 2 years, including commitments still in progress from our last document.

Key to our ambition is building on the Council's Corporate Plan commitment to 'maintaining and improving our high quality environment'. The environment of the Scottish Borders is a unique asset. Building on our

statutory Biodiversity duty, the Council will proof its policies against the requirement to protect the environment of the Scottish Borders, as assessed against the key measure of biodiversity. Where impacts are expected to be negative, offsetting will be appropriate.

All the partners to this document will put the best interests of Borderers before party-political allegiances, in a partnership founded on trust, fairness and mutual respect. The partners will continue to implement this ambitious programme for the Scottish Borders, with a commitment to sound financial management, delivering the highest quality services to the people of the Borders, and being accountable to local people.

# We will ensure that sustainable economic development remains our top priority by:

- Delivering the projects contained within the Borders Railway Blueprint, including the Borders Business Park and the Tapestry building at Tweedbank, as well as working to spread the benefits of the Borders Railway across the Scottish Borders
- Working with the Scottish Government, Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council and Dumfries and Galloway Council to prepare initial feasibility work on the potential to extend the Borders Railway to Hawick and Carlisle
- Supporting an enhanced rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick, which sees the delivery of new stations at Reston and East Linton
- Focusing additional resources on inward investment activity
- Investigating the opportunities for the Scottish Borders from a potential City Deal for the Edinburgh city-region
- Developing the Seafood Technology Park in Eyemouth
- Identifying new business space and additional employment land for economic growth across the Scottish Borders
- Working with communities to maximise the availability of broadband in rural areas
- Working with Mobile Network Operators, Ofcom, the Scottish and UK Governments to extend mobile phone coverage, including a rates moratorium if required in the most remote areas
- Liaising with local authorities involved in the 'Borderlands' Initiative to develop more effective border/gateway signage to promote the Borders' unique selling points, including feasibility work to seek external funding for large scale art/sculpture
- Building on the recent highly successful Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme/ Townscape Heritage Initiative (CARS/THI) schemes in Kelso and Selkirk, extend this initiative progressively to other settlements, starting with Jedburgh
- Working with our partners to build and develop more than 250 new affordable homes over the next two years

# **We will work to make the Scottish Borders one of Britain's premier destinations for outdoor activities, both sporting and leisure. With particular, reference to walking and cycling, we will:**

- Work with partners and AIMUp to secure an internationally recognised mountain biking attraction in the Scottish Borders
- Develop opportunities for mountain biking and road cycling across the Scottish Borders
- Progress and promote walking and cycling routes linked to the Borders Railway
- Promote our outstanding walking routes, including the “6 Great Trails” that are in the Borders (part of ‘Scotland’s Great Trails’)

## **We will work to maintain and improve quality of life for all our residents by:**

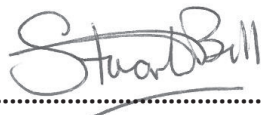
- Guaranteeing every young person leaving school in the Scottish Borders the choice of a job, training or a further education opportunity through the “Borders Guarantee”, developed with Community Planning partners
- Preparing and linking young people more effectively to the needs of the local economy, as recommended in the recently published “Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce” (Wood Commission)
- Continuing to ensure that deprivation funds allocated to schools are targeted at closing the attainment gap
- Undertaking a comprehensive Schools Estate Review, enhancing the learning experience and developing the virtual learning environment
- Reducing times for getting permanent places within families for children within the care system
- Working to increase care home standards across the Scottish Borders
- Introducing an Awards Scheme for care homes and their staff to recognise high quality and celebrate success
- Strengthening and enhancing services for individuals, carers and family members across health and social care services
- Producing a business case detailing the requirement and options for Extra Care Housing in the Berwickshire area
- Tackling fuel poverty with our partners, including delivery of the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland (HEEPS)
- Delivering better outcomes for communities by improved local co-ordination of the work of SBC, partners and communities.

# Ambitious for the Borders 2015


## Partnership Agreement for the Programme of Local Government



Councillor Sandy Aitchison  
LEADER OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBERS



Councillor Stuart Bell  
LEADER OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY GROUP



Councillor Catriona Bhatia  
LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

