

# Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy 2021

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## **FOREWORD**

Welcome to this Anti-Poverty Strategy produced by Scottish Borders Council to enhance and build upon previous work. There is a growing awareness of the issues of poverty across Scotland, and the Council is facing many challenges and constraints, compounded further by the impact of Covid-19.

The Scottish Borders face a number of unique challenges due to rurality - these include geography, ageing demographic, income deprivation, fuel deprivation, digital access, poor broadband, and food security.

We need to understand the causes and impacts of poverty and we are listening to residents, community planning partners and the third sector as we develop our Strategy further, therefore our Action Plan will contain specific actions to increase the life chances and experiences of all, alleviate financial pressures, and enable people to be part of their community.

The challenges that we are facing within the Scottish Borders are accelerating as the longer-term impacts of Covid-19 are being felt within our communities. We will therefore review this Strategy on a regular basis to ensure that it remains current and aligns to these challenges.

As well as providing support and opportunities, we also recognise the need to take a poverty informed approach to planning and delivery of services to begin to reduce the stigma of poverty, and to provide dignified and sustainable pathways out of poverty.

We believe that the combined knowledge, expertise and experience of Scottish Borders Council and our partners, as well as open and honest engagement with people experiencing poverty, will help us to tackle poverty and improve lives.

We recognise that a culture shift is required to reduce poverty and the stigma of poverty, and we are committed to playing our part to make that happen.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the development of the Strategy, in particular to people experiencing poverty who have given their time and shared their story, and we look forward to working towards reducing the impacts of poverty in the Scottish Borders.

**Councillor Robin Tatler**

**Chair of the Anti-Poverty Working Group**

## INTRODUCTION

*'The Scottish Government is committed to tackling poverty, but poverty has been rising and we are not on course to meet interim child poverty targets within three years. The relative child poverty target requires a fall of a quarter in the proportion of children in poverty compared to the latest data, which has increased compared to five years previously. The picture for other groups over the last five years is similarly disappointing, with no change in poverty for working-age adults and an increase for pensioners.'*

*'Work, social security and housing costs are vital to solving poverty in Scotland, as the coronavirus storm is sweeping many people into poverty and others deeper into poverty'*

*'Even before coronavirus, around a million people in Scotland were in poverty, living precarious and insecure lives.'*

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2020>

Setting out a clear vision and working with 6 themes and 11 outcomes, our Strategy highlights areas of activity that the Council and Partners aim to deliver to help reduce poverty in the Scottish Borders. We have identified key contributors to reducing poverty in the Scottish Borders already in existence and welcome these in support of this Strategy. It must also be recognised that Scottish and UK Governments have a part to play to improve the lives of people in the Scottish Borders and reduce poverty through nationally set policies and strategies. The Council will continue to lobby in support of these.

## OUR VISION

We want a Scottish Borders where no-one lives in poverty and where everyone is able to achieve their full potential.

We want the Scottish Borders to be a place where everyone can play their part in understanding that tackling poverty is everyone's responsibility.

We believe that if we act locally, and in partnership, we can make a real difference.

We want this Scottish Borders Anti-poverty Strategy to be pro-active, evidenced by real experience and directed by need.

Working with the people of the Scottish Borders, we aim to find solutions to poverty challenges which support them in a way that works best for them.

# POVERTY

## A DEFINITION

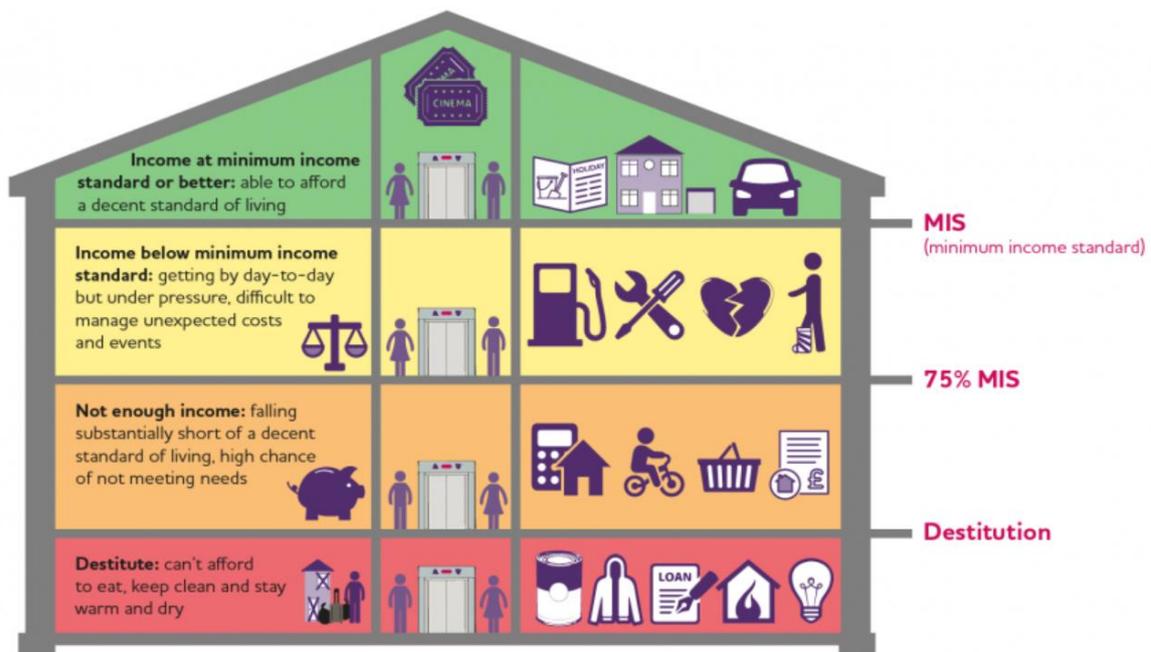
### What is poverty?

According to the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(JRF\)](#), Poverty is when your resources are well below your minimum needs.

### How does JRF define poverty in the UK?

Poverty affects millions of people in the UK. Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy the essentials for you or your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty, and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation – and even discrimination – because of your financial circumstances. The constant stress it causes can lead to problems that deprive people of the chance to play a full part in society.

### Levels of poverty JRF picture: - Focus on Minimum Income Standard (MIS)

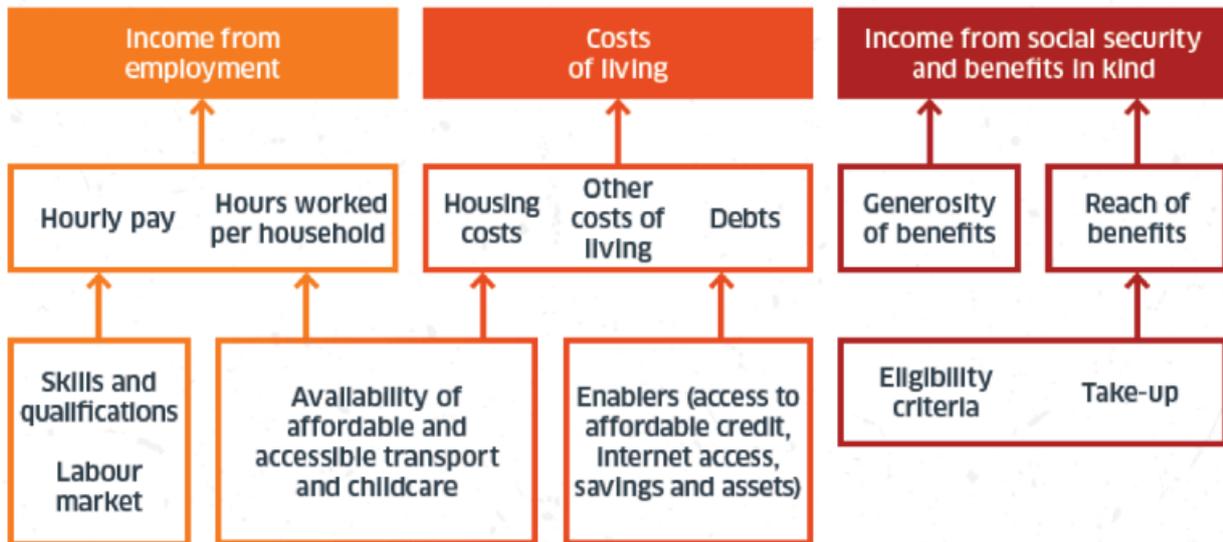


There are 3 levels of poverty

## FACTORS

There are several factors that can result in people experiencing poverty.

As identified by the Scottish Government's "[Every child, every chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022](#)" direct drivers of poverty fall in to three main categories – income from employment, costs of living and income from social security. The relationship of these drivers to wider thematic areas is summarised below.



Other factors that may contribute or compound people experiencing poverty, and are taken into account in the Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy include:

- Fuel poverty
- Housing poverty
- Food poverty
- Health and wellbeing
- Connections to family, friends, and community
- Digital poverty

It is recognised that multi-generational poverty exists but reasons why poverty persists are less clear-cut, and reveal multi-dimensional causes, as highlighted in the report: "[The persistence of poverty across generations](#)" by the JRF.

## CONTEXT

### NATIONAL

Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Scottish Government published “Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2016-2019”.<sup>1</sup> Key findings were:

- It is estimated that **19%** of Scotland’s **population** (1.02 million people each year) were living in relative poverty after housing costs in 2016-19. Before housing costs, 17% of the population (900,000 people) were living in poverty in 2016-19.
- According to DWP, for financial year ending 2020, 19% of children (aged 0 to 15) in Scotland live in a family with low income (before housing costs).
- In 2016-19, **60%** of working-age adults in relative poverty after housing costs as well as before housing costs were **living in working households**. This represents 380,000 working-age adults in poverty after housing costs, and 310,000 working-age adults before housing costs. **In-work poverty** for working-age adults has continuously increased since 2011-14.
- Relative poverty after housing costs for **pensioners** was **15%** in 2016-19 (150,000 pensioners each year). Before housing costs, 18% of pensioners (180,000 pensioners) were in relative poverty.

In October 2020, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published a briefing “Poverty in Scotland 2020”.<sup>2</sup> The report looks at what has happened to poverty in Scotland before and during the Coronavirus outbreak. Key findings of the report include:

- Even before coronavirus, around a million people in Scotland were in poverty, living precarious and insecure lives.
- By May 2020, there was a 65% increase in the number of households in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) compared to the start of the year.
- The coronavirus pandemic has had a detrimental effect on jobs and financial security, with workers on low wages or in poverty deeply affected.
- The proportion of workers in (Covid-19) at-risk industries vary across Scotland, with Scottish Borders being in the highest at-risk group of greater than 36%.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2016-19/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2020>



## LOCAL

There is poverty in the Scottish Borders. Evidence of this poverty is seen in “Scottish Borders Picture of Poverty” (Annex A). Key findings include:

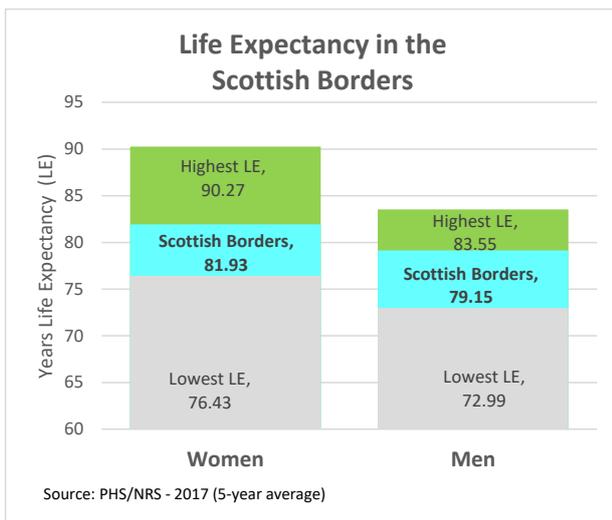
The **dependency ratio** is the relationship between the non-working age (0-15 years and 65+) population compared to those of working age.

A ratio of 70% (Scottish Borders for 2018) means that for every 1,000 people of working age there are 700 of non-working age.

### Dependency ratio 2018 and 2043

Dependency ratio for the <b>Scottish Borders</b>	
2018: <b>70%</b>	2043: <b>80%</b>
Dependency ratio for <b>Scotland</b>	
2018: <b>56%</b>	2043: <b>60%</b>

The dependency ratio for the Scottish Borders is higher than Scotland and is expected to increase.



**Life expectancy for women** in the Scottish Borders is **81.9 years**, ranging from 76.4 to 90.3. For **men, life expectancy is 79.2 years**, ranging from 73.0 to 83.6. Within the Scottish Borders, like other areas, there is a clear relationship between an area’s percentage of people that are income deprived and life expectancy; the higher the percentage income deprived the lower the life expectancy.

In 2020, the **median gross weekly pay** (workplace based) for full time workers in the Scottish Borders was **£481, £111 below** the £593 for Scotland or **81%**. (figure)

In 2020, the **median gross weekly pay** (residence based) for full time workers in the Scottish Borders was **£522, £73 below** the £595 for Scotland or **87%**.

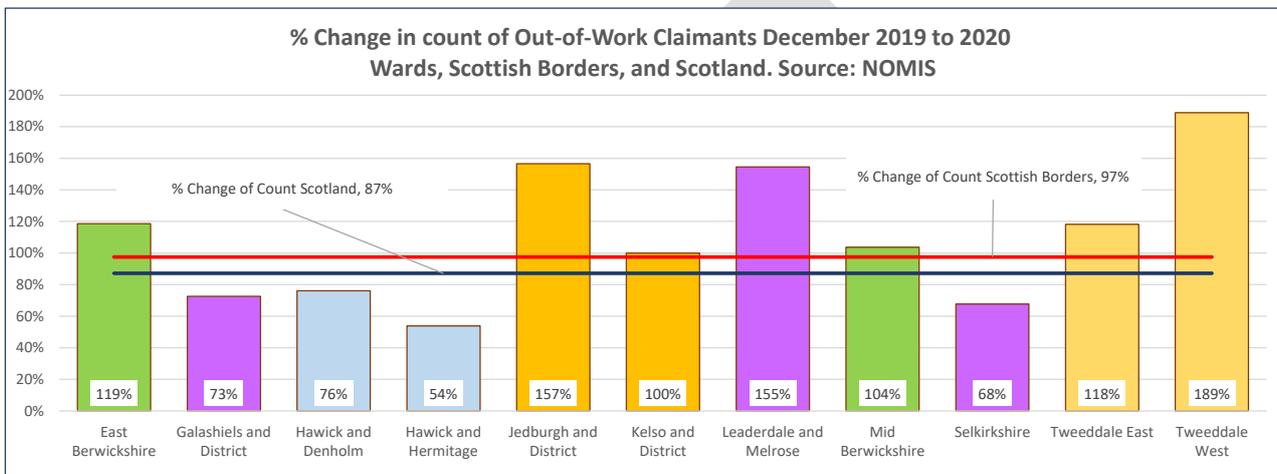


The median gross weekly pay (workplace based) for full time workers in the Scottish Borders has consistently been below the level for Scotland (83% between 2000 and 2020).



Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, **16.3%** of the **households** in the Scottish Borders were **workless**, slightly below the 17.7% for Scotland

Between December 2019 and December 2020, the number of people claiming **Out-of-Work benefits** aged 16 to 64 **increased by 97%** (1,730) from 1,775 (2.6%) to 3,505 (5.2%) respectively.

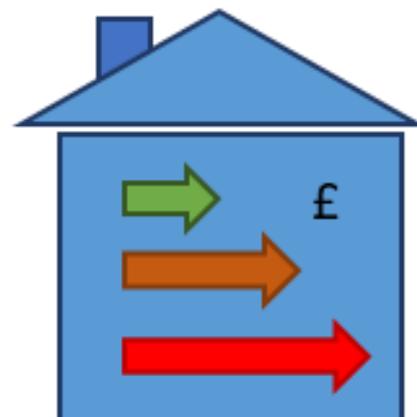


### Gross Value Added (GVA) for Scottish Borders is 73% of the GVA for Scotland.

GVA is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Around **29%** of all households in the Scottish Borders are fuel poor, equivalent to approximately **16,000 households**. There seems to be a higher level of fuel poverty in the Scottish Borders compared to Scotland (25%), although it is not statistically different.

Households with higher levels of fuel poverty in the Scottish Borders are those that are Older (38%) and those in Social Housing (51%).





**9.5%** of the Scottish Borders population is income deprived, although there are 12 Intermediate Zones with more than **10%**.



According to DWP, in February 2020 there were **2,840** people claiming Pension Credit in the Scottish Borders. This equates to about 101 pension credit claimants per 1,000 people aged 65 and older. Within the Scottish Borders, the rate of pension credit ranges from a low of 54 per 1,000 to a high of 216 per 1,000. (It is thought that there is an under-claiming of Pension Credit in the Scottish Borders.)



In the Scottish Borders, **18.4%** of children live in low-income families, the proportions range from 10.3% for Tweeddale East to 26.5% for Hawick and Denholm.



**8.7%** of the people of working age are employment deprived, although there are 12 Intermediate Zones with more than **10%**.

# 2,840

People aged 60+  
claiming Pension Credit

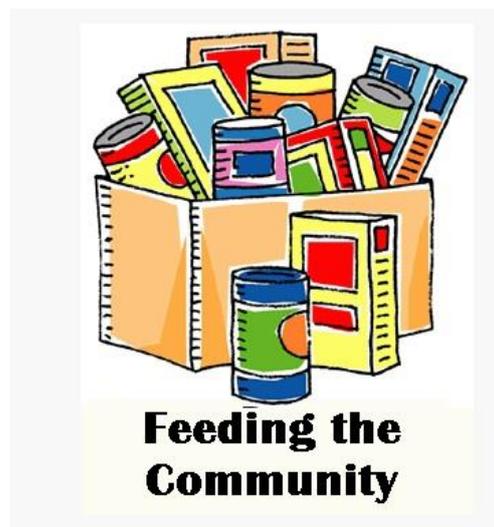
**81.3%** of households have home internet access in the Scottish Borders compared to 85% for Scotland.

**13%** of the Scottish Borders are unable to access decent broadband (USO) compared to 4% for Scotland, this varies across the Scottish Borders.

9% of adults in Scotland reported food insecurity (as defined by being worried during the past 12 months that they would run out of food due to lack of money or resources).

In January 2020 there were **17** Foodbanks / Fareshare Partners across the Scottish Borders. By July 2020 there were **40**.

All of these report increased demand.



### The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic so far in the Scottish Borders includes:

The number of **Universal Credit claimants** in the Scottish Borders increased by **80%** (3,700) from 4,600 in March 2020 to 8,300 in November 2020.



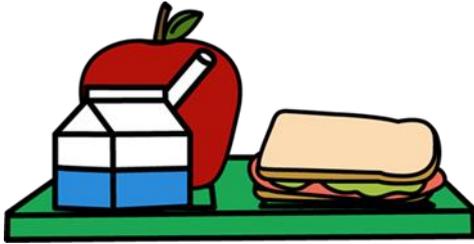
**80%**  
March to  
November 2020



**3,300 jobs furloughed** in the Scottish Borders (31 May 2021), accounting for 1.9% of Scotland's furloughed workforce.

The SDS's Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) aims to help minimise the impact for people and businesses facing redundancy. Between April and October 2020 **PACE** has engaged with **420** individuals and **15** employers.





There was a **20%** increase in free school meal awards from **1,659** in September 2019 to **2,075** in September 2020.

There has been a significant increase in the use of foodbanks, FareShare outlets and community kitchens.

In 2019-20 the Citizens Advice services in the Scottish Borders had **5,125** clients, gave advice 21,950 times, and gained over **£3.1** million for clients.



**5,125 Clients**

**Client Gain £3.1 m**

The Citizens Advice service in the Scottish Borders said to the Anti-Poverty Working Group:

“Various measures have been put in place by the Government through the DWP to combat the impact of COVID-19 i.e., temporary increase in Universal Credit payments, payment break in repaying benefit overpayments and delay in decisions on disability benefit applications and renewals. However, these are all temporary measures and will impact greatly on income going forward.

Similarly, furlough payments have saved job losses and redundancies, but the reduced income has caused financial difficulties and resulted in increased the use of credit for essential purchases.

Payment holidays on mortgages, loans and credit cards will also lead to increases in monthly repayments in due course. All of which will cause financial hardship.”

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We must take account of challenges and opportunities identified so far as set out below. We will use these to work and consult with people to understand the issues involved and to improve service design and delivery to make a positive change for individuals, families, and communities.

<b>Challenges – what we need to address</b>	
<p><b>Demographics - dependency ratio<sup>1</sup> and young adults moving out of the Scottish Borders</b> - The dependency ratio for the Scottish Borders is higher than Scotland and is expected to increase.</p>	<p><b>Impact of Covid-19 –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use of Universal Credit</li> <li>• 3,300 jobs furloughed</li> <li>• Increase use of food banks and community kitchens</li> <li>• Challenges to emotional wellbeing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Educational Attainment –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising attainment for all</li> <li>• Closing the poverty related attainment gap.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Low wages/low skill -</b></p> <p>The median gross weekly pay (workplace based) for full time workers in the Scottish Borders has consistently been below the level for Scotland (83% between 2000 and 2020).</p>
<p><b>Access to good broadband and mobile coverage –</b> The rurality of the Scottish Borders is an issue, as is affordability for some.</p>	<p><b>Fuel Poverty –</b> The proportion of households who are defined as ‘<b>fuel poor</b>’ in the Scottish Borders has consistently been higher than the Scottish Average.</p>
<p><b>Transport and Rurality of the Scottish Borders -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to affordable and timely transport.</li> <li>• Equitable access to all services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Sector Budget Constraints –</b></p> <p>The Council continues to face significant challenges as it aims to provide the best possible services within available resources.</p>
<p><b>Mental Health –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good mental health for all</li> <li>• Overcome and lift low aspiration</li> </ul>	<p><b>Impact of Brexit -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friction in the transport of goods between the UK and EU may result in limited supply and increased prices.</li> <li>• UK’s economy predicted to be smaller compounded by Covid-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunities – what is in place?</b>	
<p><b>South of Scotland Enterprise</b> - sustainable economic and social development of the area, including improving the amenity and environment.</p>	<p><b>Connecting Scotland</b> - over 700 devices issued that are supporting 300 individuals, 321 families, 63 care leavers and 25 vulnerable people including Digital Champions to support them.</p>
<p><b>Scottish Borders Council’s Procurement Strategy</b> – seeks to sustain local businesses and support the Borders Economy. Community benefits are delivered through direct jobs and spend within local contracts.</p>	<p><b>Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal</b> - £394.5M to narrow the productivity gap, increase the working age population and deliver inclusive growth.</p>
<p><b>Covid-19 Recovery</b> – A Strategic Recovery Board is in place which advises the Council on appropriate recovery actions. The Council will make use of a Covid-19 Vulnerability Index to assist in decision making around recovery.</p>	<p><b>Health and Social Care Partnership</b> – delivering health and social care services across the Borders.</p>
<p><b>Strong and resilient communities</b> - 59 Resilient Community Teams, 69 Community Councils and numerous third sector organisations and groups working together to support those in need within their communities.</p>	<p><b>Living Wage Group / Living Wage Area (Eildon)</b> SBC is an accredited Living Wage Employer and is encouraging more local employers to pay their staff the real Living Wage.</p>
<p><b>SBC’s Response to the Employability Challenge</b> - Sets out Scottish Borders Council’s approach to employability and training.</p>	<p><b>Regional Economic Partnership</b> – Strategy and Action Plan being developed. £2.7M invested in South of Scotland Destination Alliance.</p>
<p><b>5 Community Assistance Hubs</b> - SBC and CPP Partners providing person centred support and assistance to individuals across the Scottish Borders.</p>	<p><b>Money Worries App</b> - Launched in February 2021 to provide further support to those in financial hardship.</p>

## Opportunities – what is in place? (Continued)

<p><b>City Deal - accelerating growth</b> Investing funding in innovation, skills, and infrastructure, to accelerate economic growth while tackling inequality and deprivation including the Workforce Mobility Project.</p>	<p><b>Borders College</b> – 450 devices and data packages distributed to students. Young Person Guarantee – no-one left behind - ensuring those between 16 and 24 has the opportunity of work, education, or training.</p>
<p><b>Inspire Care</b> - digital devices for Scottish Borders Care Home Residents</p>	<p><b>Housing Associations supporting tenants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Access Programmes (supporting tenants to get online)</li> <li>• Debt advice</li> <li>• Signposting to other support services</li> <li>• Supporting tenancies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inspire Learning</b> - digital devices and online learning for Scottish Borders school children. 13,000 children (and their households) now have access to online connectivity with data packages where required.</p>	<p><b>Partnerships</b> – strong working relationships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local third sector organisations (over £2.5m dispersed in the Scottish Borders)</li> <li>• Voluntary sector and community groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Food Growing Strategy</b> – Community growing is for all. Community growing is about creating and sustaining places where people can grow together - where they can produce healthy food locally and experience the social, environmental and health benefits of growing. Anyone who wants to grow their own fruit and vegetables should be able to - growing should be accessible and affordable for everyone.</p>	<p><b>Wellbeing Service</b> – delivering health and wellbeing advice and support across the Borders.</p>
<p><b>The Promise</b> – Scottish Government have developed ‘The Promise Scotland’ as a means of driving change. It supports shifts in policy, practice and culture so Scotland can #KeepThePromise it made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults and their families – that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential.</p>	

## REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES

### From the Inform Consultation:

- *I rent from a private landlord with no interest in making improvements to the property, I have a homeless pass but will be waiting a long time for a home and don't qualify for benefits to help cover costs.*
- *Even though my husband has continuously worked through Covid, I have been furloughed twice and with the drop in wages along with no extra hours/holiday cover/ bonus our household income has dropped by around 20%. Yet groceries & essentials are increasing in price. We will manage but if we had a lower income would probably be in serious trouble*
- *Lost my second job due to the pandemic but I was lucky as I eventually picked up more hours in my other role*
- *Worried about the future, will my PIP be renewed, how I will manage when furlough and extra UC ends. Worrying about job loss, lack of jobs I can do etc. Future for my 19-year-old son.*
- *Fuel debt has been a real issue for me. I have storage heaters in my house which I did not fully understand in my first winter in my house. I'll never turn the storage heaters on ever again. An electric heater with a timer and thermostat would be a lot better.*
- *We have been accessing the community larder but it's not always a healthy choice.*

### Feedback from Workshops

- *Behaviours – the greatest challenge we face in supporting households is changing behaviours to break the cycle. Providing households with the skills and confidence to better manage is part of our service offer but it takes time to break this down and empower the Tenant to make informed decisions.*
- *Partnership working – SBHA, like all RSL's operate financial inclusion services which assists Tenants to maximise their income and better budget their household income. We have excellent links to CAB which allow us to support Tenants with wider debt issues (consolidation of debt for example) and through SBHA's Warm and Well project we are helping Tenants to heat their homes better and address fuel poverty and debt. We do however feel that where partnerships could be strengthened is the provision of clear pathways for more high-risk households. In many cases specialist intervention is required to bring about sustainable outcomes.*
- *Key for everything – better communication & information sharing - this makes it easier to raise awareness/support people in our communities, this will help people*
- *LIVE Borders – free sessions have really helped children & young people. Previously this was not accessible to everyone due to affordability – sessions have to be booked.*
- *Some parents struggle knowing what they can do with their children due to increased pressures of bills/cost of food /employment circumstances – everything is going up not all wages are going up*
- *If people are struggling to manage money - e.g. Scratch cards/ gambling/ smoking/ drinking - costly – meeting wider needs/problems and impacts on household finance – people can be vulnerable*

## **Gaining confidence and trust – SBHA**

*“Last year I couldn't get myself out of the financial hole I was in.... I buried my head deep in the sand, ignoring letters, phone calls, whilst my rent arrears were piling up until my home was at risk of being taken off me. "SBHA's Welfare Benefits Officer talked me through it all and then helped me apply online. Universal Credit has changed my life.... before I thought my only option was to declare myself bankrupt. I work 20 hours a week and was completely surprised at what I'm entitled to. "Don't give up hope - there is help out there! “Ms Y*

*“It's important, particularly for older people who might not be used to being online, to know that there's help like this available. And also, for people who have never claimed benefits before to know what's available. It's just great to know that there is help there. I feel better about things now” Mr X*

## **SBHA Team Feedback**

*“Having that local knowledge of my Tenants circumstances helped me to target support to those who I knew have health issues and would be worried about getting food and medicine. Having the support of the Hub and the resilience group was great.” SBHA Neighbourhood Housing Officer*

*“We are dealing with a lot of anxious people really worried about money.” SBHA Welfare Benefits Officer*

## **Quotes from Food Insecurity and Learning Loss Pilot Evaluation Report conducted for YouthLink Scotland**

*Forget the programme, the biggest key part here was the relationship that TD1 have got with families in the community... They have got a phenomenal relationship, they're well-known, and they go over and above for young people. So, there was trust there from the parents from the beginning. TD1 had full buy-in and the support, whether that be food, whether that be the activity packs, whether it be online sessions, there was trust there, and that was key. Teacher, Scottish Borders*

*A multi-agency approach was definitely key, it meant that no young people were missed out. Teacher, Scottish Borders*

## OUR 7 PRINCIPLES

Poverty in Scotland needs to be addressed. The Scottish Borders Council Anti-Poverty Strategy plans to improve the lives of individuals and families who are experiencing poverty and deprivation for whatever reason, including the recent impact of Covid-19. We will work together and involve all stakeholders in the process.

The following principles support our approach:

1. **Respect:** Treating everyone with dignity and valuing every contribution.
2. **Resilience:** Helping individuals and households to manage their own affairs and make informed choices and decisions about their lifestyle and prevent them falling into poverty; building resilience in people and communities.
3. **Person Focused:** Tailoring services and support to the different types and places of poverty and the different needs and characteristics of all our communities and identities, acknowledging that one solution does not suit all.
4. **Fairness:** Removing barriers that prevent some people from taking part in life, socially and economically. Promoting a society in which individuals and groups are treated fairly and receive a just share of the opportunities that our region has to offer.
5. **Sustainable:** Plan our actions for the long term, in an ongoing discussion with our residents. Designing and building services, infrastructure and organisations that are affordable and accessible.
6. **Shared:** Making sure there is a joint understanding of the issues around poverty in our region and working together in partnership.
7. **Communication:** Listening to and involving our residents, understanding their experiences, and using their advice.

## THEMES AND OUTCOMES

Our themes are structured around the ‘pockets, prospects, places’ measurement framework adopted by the Scottish Government Child Poverty Strategy with our own additions of ‘people,’ ‘partnerships,’ and ‘pathways.’

The actions contained in the Action Plan are designed to meet the outcomes shown in the following table.

Theme	Outcome
<b>Pockets</b>	<p><b>Outcome 1.1: Maximising Income</b> Maximise financial resources of households and reduce out-going costs. Households can access services and be socially, digitally, and financially included.</p>
<b>Prospects</b>	<p><b>Outcome 2.1: Education and Training</b> Attainment and achievement for all to enable them to reach their potential.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2.2: Employment Outcome</b> Households are sustaining employment and are re-skilling to enable them to seek alternative employment.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2.3: Health and Wellbeing</b> Reduce health inequalities and promote wellbeing.</p>
<b>Places</b>	<p><b>Outcome 3.1: Housing</b> Everyone lives in warm, affordable homes.</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.2: Transport Connectivity</b> Everyone is able to get to where they want to go in a way that is affordable.</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.3: Digital Connectivity</b> Everyone is able to connect digitally and in a way that is affordable.</p>
<b>People</b>	<p><b>Outcome 4.1: Community</b> Increase opportunities and empower people to fully participate in their communities and bring about change.</p> <p><b>Outcome 4.2: Poverty Awareness and Responsibility</b> Everyone plays their part in understanding that tackling poverty is everyone’s responsibility.</p>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<p><b>Outcome 5.1: Working Collaboratively</b> Improve partnership working and networks through use of technology and media channels and training opportunities and projects to reduce poverty in the Scottish Borders.</p>
<b>Pathways</b>	<p><b>Outcome 6.1: Signposting and Support</b> Develop and implement pathways to support people to move from dependence to independence.</p>

# KEY PLANS & STRATEGIES CONTRIBUTING TO REDUCING POVERTY IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

There are already many plans and strategies in existence which contribute to reducing poverty in the Scottish Borders and we have shown those that are considered key below.

<p><a href="#">South of Scotland Enterprise – Operating Plan 2020/21</a></p> <p>South of Scotland Enterprises vision:  <i>“We want to drive inclusive growth, increase competitiveness, and <b>tackle inequality</b> within the region. We want to establish the South of Scotland as a centre of opportunity, innovation and growth.”</i></p>	<p><a href="#">City Region Deal: Edinburgh &amp; South East Scotland</a></p> <p>City Region Deal is a mechanism for accelerating growth by pulling in significant government investment. By investing this funding in innovation, skills and infrastructure, performance will be significantly improved, and we will <b>tackle inequality</b> and deprivation.</p>	<p><a href="#">Scotland’s Public Health Priorities</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities</li> <li>• Flourish in our early years</li> <li>• Have good mental health</li> <li>• Reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs</li> <li>• Have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all</li> <li>• Eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active</li> </ul>
<p>South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP) – <a href="#">Regional Economic Strategy</a></p>	<p>Employability Challenge Response</p> <p>Currently in development</p>	
<p><a href="#">Community Planning Partnership – Key Priorities 2020/21</a></p> <p>An Action Plan developed by Scottish Border Community Planning Partnership in response to the ongoing pandemic. Themed around the following:          Structure (Community Assistance Hubs), Digital, Employment &amp; Economy, Education &amp; Skills, Built Estate, Early Intervention &amp; Prevention, Health &amp; Wellbeing and <b>Poverty</b>.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Plans and Strategies to Reduce Poverty in the Scottish Borders</b></p> <p><a href="#">Scottish Borders Community Food Growing Strategy</a></p> <p>Food growing should be accessible and affordable for everyone.</p>	<p><a href="#">Community Learning and Development</a></p> <p>Community learning and development (CLD) aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship</li> <li>• develop stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Affordable Warmth &amp; Home: Energy Efficiency Strategy 2019-2023</a></p> <p>Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy vision  <i>“More people live in energy efficient and affordably warm homes.”</i></p>		

## **DELIVERING THE STRATEGY**

The Strategy will be delivered through an Action Plan.

We see the Action Plan as a live document and new actions are included as a result of the consultation exercise carried out, and the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Action Plan is based on our key priorities and the actions are designed to achieve the outcomes set out for these as well as reflecting on the challenges and opportunities we have identified.

Key plans and strategies already contributing to reducing poverty have their own specific actions and these will be taken into account in our monitoring and evaluation methodology.

Many of the actions are already underway as part of service delivery carried out by SBC and Partners. Our Community Assistance Hubs, Resilient Community Teams, and our Third Sector Partners all make significant and valuable contributions towards the delivery of actions - many of them in partnership.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Monitoring and evaluating the Strategy will be carried out in several ways -

- Using the Covid-19 recovery matrix / index as a baseline.
- Updates will be provided by Partners as part of regular progress reporting of the Action Plan.
- Existing indicators in other plans will be reported where they relate to the Action Plan.
- Other measurement indicators will be developed as part of the Action Plan where they do not already exist.

In the longer term an assessment of the impact of the Strategy will be required. This will allow -

- A deeper understanding of poverty in the Scottish Borders
- Specific interventions and projects to be planned
- Recommendations to be made for future Strategy development

## **ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY MEMBERS REFERENCE GROUP**

The Reference Group will be made up of seven Members from Scottish Borders Council. The Reference Group will monitor the implementation of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that it benefits those most in need.

### **SUMMARY**

Scottish Borders Council and Partners are committed to making a difference to people's lives by reducing poverty in the Scottish Borders.

There are significant challenges ahead which must be addressed, and this Strategy will help us to do that.

We look forward to continuing to consult and engage with as many people as possible, particularly those with lived experience of poverty. This will help us to maintain an Action Plan which is truly reflective of the work that needs to be done to plan and deliver services with a poverty informed approach in mind.

As the longer-term impact of Covid-19 becomes clear, we plan to address this by keeping the Action Plan live and aligned to current challenges and opportunities as a result.

We are determined to play our part by using our combined resources to achieve the best outcomes to tackle poverty, remove the stigma attached, and create opportunities for positive change.