

Scottish Borders
Community Plan
September 2023

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Foreword

The Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership is delighted to introduce our new Community Plan, also known as the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, for 2023-2033.

Following work with the Improvement Service in 2021 we committed to reviewing our Community Plan in light of the changes that we have seen locally, nationally and globally over the last five years. At the same time as reviewing our Plan we have been looking at the structure of our community planning family and how we work together for the benefit of everyone that lives, works and studies in the Scottish Borders.

In our new Plan we have identified 12 outcomes that we, as a Partnership, aim to improve through joint working to support what is already taking place. The Community Planning Partnership can't support everything, nor does it need to. There is lots of effective work happening across the Borders to tackle and reduce inequality. In this Plan, the Community Planning Partnership has identified issues where, working together, we can add value – just because something isn't in the Community Plan doesn't mean that it is not important but rather that it is already being addressed.

Community is very much the key word in community planning, and indeed the Community Plan. It is coming together as the Borders community that we can make the Borders a fairer and more equitable place for all.

Cllr Caroline Cochrane
Chair, Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership

Introduction

Set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Community Planning is the process by which public organisations such as Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders work with local communities, businesses and community groups to plan and deliver better services, and improve the lives of people who live in the Scottish Borders. The purpose of the Community Plan is to set out inequalities that will be addressed and reduced through the delivery of targeted actions.

What do we mean by reducing inequality?

Reducing inequality is closing the gap between our least and most disadvantaged areas. Traditionally people living in our most disadvantaged areas were more likely to have low incomes and experience more health problems, whilst those living in the most affluent area tended to live longer healthier lives. The reasons for this are complex and a focus of the Partnership is to reduce these inequalities and reduce the gap. However, we know that the cost of living crisis is affecting people across the Borders; it is important that we are aware of the bigger picture in order to direct services and support effectively.

To ensure that we are achieving our aims we will monitor our progress and report on it annually. We will review our Plan at least twice over the next ten years to make sure that it still addresses key local priorities.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out the organisations who must be involved in Community Planning, they are:

NHS Borders	Historic Environment Scotland
Police Scotland	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Scottish Borders Council	NatureScot
South of Scotland Enterprise	Scottish Sports Council (represented locally by Live Borders)
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)
Borders College	Skills Development Scotland
Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board	VisitScotland

There are other organisations, that are crucial to effective community planning in the Borders, who are also part of our community planning family, they are:

Berwickshire Housing Association	Scottish Borders Housing Association
Eildon Housing	Third Sector (Borders Community Action)
Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network	Waverley Housing

Background to the Scottish Borders

The Scottish Borders is a sparsely populated, rural authority in Scotland, known for its breath-taking countryside, rich culture and heritage, and warm, friendly, welcoming community spirit.

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) recorded the mid 2020 population of Scottish Borders as 115,240.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Scottish Borders is projected to increase from 115,270 to 116,435. The largest percentage increase will be in those aged 75 and over. This is due to Scottish Borders having an ageing population by Scottish standards. The number of working age people, ages 18 to 64, is expected to decrease by almost 10% between 2020 and 2040, and account for 51% of the total population in 2040, compared to 56.5% in 2020.

<info graphic for the above data>

There are 5 localities in the Scottish Borders: Eildon, Tweeddale, Berwickshire, Cheviot, Teviot & Liddesdale and Tweeddale. Hawick and Galashiels are the most populated towns with 13,586 and 12,302 people respectively, followed by Peebles (8,581), Kelso (6,861) and Selkirk (5,458) (National Records of Scotland).

<infographic of the Scottish Borders with localities and key towns>

33,525 people (28.9% of the Scottish Borders population) live outside settlements of 500 or more people. Issues linked to living in a rural area can include poor access to services, lack of affordable housing and higher fuel costs. There may also be a dependency on car ownership to travel, leading to higher costs on those with less or increased difficulty in accessing services or amenities. More information is available on the [Council's website](#).

Community Planning in the Scottish Borders

Our Community Planning family is led by the Strategic Board which meets four times a year and gives direction to the work carried out to achieve the vision and outcomes set out in this Plan.

We know that there are inequalities across the Borders and we need targeted action in order to address them. To do this, and identify outcomes at a locality level, we have developed five Locality Plans. These cover each of the following areas:

- Berwickshire
- Cheviot
- Eildon
- Teviot & Liddesdale
- Tweeddale

Our Vision

Our Community Planning Vision is, “Working together with our communities and through targeted partnership action, will enable all people in the Scottish Borders to live their lives to the full.”

Supporting our vision are six underlying principles. These are set out later in this document, alongside our outcomes.

Our Outcomes for the Scottish Borders

To develop our new Community Plan we have listened to what you said at Scottish Borders Council's Community Conversations, identified key areas issues arising as part of the Borderlands discussions and taken the priorities you have raised through engagement developing other plans and strategies. We reviewed all of this information against publicly available data to identify where we are performing well and where we need to improve. From this we identified a range of draft priorities for the new Community Plan.



A list of the plans & strategies and data that we have used in the development of this plan are included in our appendices which can be viewed at www.scotborders.gov.uk/communityplanning

What is an outcome? An outcome is the result we want to achieve, for example fewer people experiencing domestic abuse.

There were 4 key issues identified through the needs assessment data, the engagement survey of June 2022 and further consultation in 2023. These form the focus of our plan:

1. The cost-of-living crisis is pushing more people into poverty
2. We have poor job density and a declining workforce
3. Some groups face greater challenges getting the health and care support they need
4. Many communities, particularly those in rural locations, have poor access to the services they need

These four issues form the basis of the 4 themes our community plan is centred around:

1. Poverty
2. Learning, Skills and Economy
3. Good Health and Wellbeing
4. Place, Community and Connectivity

Following discussions with you about the draft priorities we have 11 outcomes sitting under four themes.

The four themes are all linked not only through reducing inequality but by impacting on each other. We know that improving one outcome will have a knock-on effect, for example reducing the number of people living in poverty will have a positive impact on people's health.

In addition to the outcomes, we have identified the cross-cutting issue of A resilient and net zero Scottish Borders by 2045. Supporting this and the outcomes are four values that are central to our work. These and our ways of working are set out in the diagram on the next page.

Members of the Community Planning Partnership are committed to working together to achieve the outcomes set out in our Plan.

All of outcomes are focused on those facing the most challenges due to inequality. This will include, but is not limited to, older people, carer experienced people, people with disabilities, those living in poverty, refugees and asylum seekers.

OUR OUTCOMES				
THEME 1 – POVERTY				
Help mitigate against the financial challenges of day to day living for those who are most affected.	Children and young people from low-income households are supported to develop life skills to help them to succeed in life.			
THEME 2 – LEARNING, SKILLS AND ECONOMY				
More people have a clear route to progress into a greater variety of jobs, learning and training opportunities available within the Scottish Borders	Parents are supported to enter, remain, and progress in work.			
THEME 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING				
Improved access to effective services, particularly for those who face greater challenges accessing services	Reduced health inequalities for those experiencing the greatest negative impact.	Fewer people experiencing domestic abuse.		
THEME 4 – PLACE, COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIVITY				
More people have the skills to benefit from digital and mobile connectivity	More people have access to a home that meets their needs and is part of a sustainable community	Our communities are supported and empowered to be strong, active, resilient and sustainable.	People have access to better travel options across the Scottish Borders	
Cross cutting issue	A resilient and net zero Scottish Borders by 2045			
Our values	People focused	Inclusive	Innovative	Sustainable
How we will work	Community engagement and empowerment		Prevention and early intervention	

Each outcome will be delivered through a delivery plan which will set out a series of actions with measures and targets to show our progress.

Delivering our outcomes

We will put an action plan in place which will set out actions that will be delivered to achieve each of the outcomes. The action plan will be flexible to ensure that services can respond to needs in a changing environment and continue to understand who needs help and support.

Our Performance Management Framework forms the basis of how we will review our progress.

On an organisational level, Community Planning Partners are dedicated to working more cohesively and coherently with each other and with communities. Communities will be engaged throughout the journey, either through local place planning or wider locality groups such as the community integration groups and area partnerships.

Place Planning

Place planning refers to communities working together to identify priorities for their local area. This moves away from the traditional 'top down' approach to a community-led model which captures the ideas and aspirations of communities.

Community Planning Partners are supporting communities to develop Local Place Plans, and to bring direct investment and support into projects and initiatives identified by the people who know what's wanted and needed in their area.

Moving forward we will review the Community Plan against Place Plans as they are developed to make sure that it reflects local community-led place planning priorities.

Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building (CWB) is an approach to local development that aims to improve the wellbeing of communities by redirecting wealth back into the local economy, putting control and benefits into the hands of local people. For example, community ownership of land and buildings or investment locally rather than nationally.

We are committed as a partnership to CWB and will continue to develop it in the Borders throughout the life of this plan. We will update our Plan as we review it over the next 10 years.

National Outcomes

The National Outcomes set out the Scottish Government 's broad policy aims. Our Community Plan will contribute to all of these outcomes:

Community Plan outcomes	National Outcomes
Help mitigate against the financial challenges of day to day living for those who are most affected.	1, 5, 7, 11
Children and young people from low-income households are supported to develop life skills to enable them to succeed in life	1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11
Parents are supported to enter, remain, and progress in work.	5, 11
More people have a clear route to progress into a greater variety of jobs, learning and training opportunities available within the Scottish Borders	4, 5, 7
People have access to better travel options across the Scottish Borders	2, 10
More people are able to benefit from digital and mobile connectivity	2, 5
Improved access to effective services, particularly for those who face greater challenges accessing services	1, 8
Reduced health inequalities for those experiencing the greatest negative impact.	2, 8, 9
Fewer people are experiencing domestic abuse	1, 2, 8
More people have access to a home that meets their needs and is part of a sustainable community	2
Our communities are supported and empowered to be strong, active, resilient and sustainable.	2, 3

National outcomes	
1	We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
2	We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
3	We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
4	We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
5	We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
6	We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
7	We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
8	We are healthy and active
9	We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
10	We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally
11	We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

Our cross-cutting issue of a resilient and net-zero Scottish Borders by 2045 which is central to all our themes will contribute to national outcome six.

Supporting information

Information to support our Community Plan and the outcomes within it are available in a set of accompanying appendices available at www.scotborders.gov.uk/communityplanning

If you have any questions about this report for Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership please contact:

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To find out more about community planning please visit:

www.scotborders.gov.uk/communityplanning