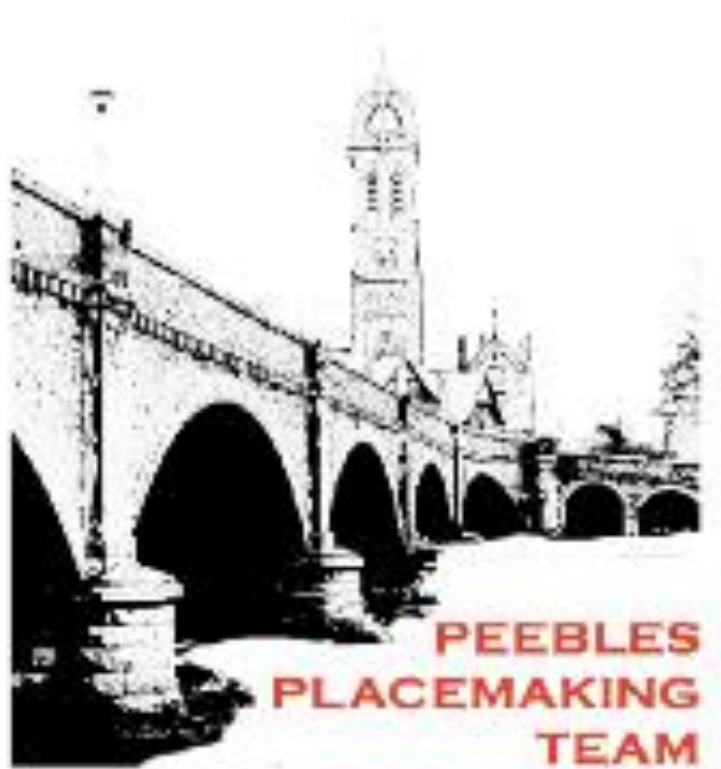


# The 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan





assistance has been provided by consultants

## New Practice

The 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan has been prepared by the Peebles Placemaking Team comprising volunteers drawn from the Peebles Community Trust, the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council, the Peebles Civic Society and other community groups.

It is based on wide consultation with the community over a number of years, and updates and extends the 2016-2021 Peebles Town Action Plan and the 2016 first stage Whole Town Master Plan (a diagnostic document establishing standards and thresholds for the future development of the town).

Assistance in finalisation and stress-testing of the plan was provided by consultants New Practice supported by funding from the Scottish Borders Placemaking Framework.

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- 1 Place Standard Tool Survey**
- 2 Profile of Peebles based on survey outputs**
- 3 Hard evidence**
- 4 Framework development**
- 5 Mapping of outputs and action categories**
- 6 Mapping Town Action Plan to wider strategies and plans**
- 7 Key initiatives in greater detail**
- 8 Priority actions ordered and classified**

## Overview

In the following pages we map a way forward for the community of Peebles and its surrounds and highlight a range of projects and initiatives intended to bring more job and work opportunities to the locality. These reflect and enact wide community views that seek to correct the recent development of Peebles and require measures to address growing inequality and ensure that the town's strengths and successes are shared by all. In particular, these actions focus on building and strengthening resilience and sustainability within the community – brought into increasingly sharp focus in the growing Climate Crisis.

In this same context the recent Covid emergency exposed weaknesses and the extent of inequalities in our community. At the same time, the positive and inventive responses of the community to that emergency demonstrated the nature and extent of the built-in resilience and cultural underpinning of the community – characteristics that can be all too easily brushed over as somehow quaint and old-fashioned but which in reality make up the “glue” that marks out a successful community.

At the time of writing the Peeblesshire Food Bank, operating from Peebles, is regularly providing support to more than one hundred families, and the Peebles and District Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has never been busier. We need action to achieve a change in direction.

## 1. Plan architecture

### 1.1 A Community Action Plan and Community led planning

*At heart community led planning aims to prepare a programme to build a resilient, sustainable and climate responsive settlement: to include objectives and outcomes; strategic and structural change; and outline tactics, actions and priorities to achieve those changes.*

It's ambitious. And amid political promises of **community empowerment**, **community led local development**, **bottom-up planning** and the benefits of a **circular economy** and **community wealth building**, communities can feel "frozen in the headlights", trying to work out how to respond and what to do. The first step is to disentangle the mixed messaging in such top-down encouragements for communities to engage with planning their futures and discover what they mean.

That amounts to something like

***identify what is wrong and right about your community, use this information to describe common aspirations, and, ideally with others, consider what might be possible and how it might be brought about***

***then shout it from the roof-tops preparatory to taking action.***

This is bottom-up Community Led Local Development (CLLD). Once armed with this information it becomes possible for communities to feed such information systematically and with foresight into all sorts of planning processes, plans and strategies, greatly increasing the likelihood of those ambitions becoming realities.

That approach enables a community to address short-term and longer-term issues; distinguish structural change from short-term interventions to strengthen "community"; and separate the strategic from the tactical.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> Peebles Town Action Plan is our attempt to tie these imperatives together.

## 1.2 Plan targeting

Peebles has core structural issues:

- rapid physical expansion of the settlement has not been matched with increased services;
- local employment opportunities have become fewer and most of us who live in the town have to commute to work some distance away;
- the town centre is on the northern bank of the river Tweed, but the most recent expansion has been south of the river, where conventional services are limited and the wider social infrastructure disjointed: one corner shop, no pubs, no cafés, no health services and no meeting places;
- some residents, including some long-established families, are marooned and disadvantaged, living in poorer housing, with fuel poverty, poor health, limited job prospects, low incomes, and high rates of dependency. This sector of the population is all but invisible.

These structural problems underpin a plan to re-think and re-balance the make-up and structure of Peebles:

- we find ourselves in the midst of a low wage gig economy, growing inequality and disparity in wealth and, in addition, a climate challenge that requires urgent action; and
- we have shifted from offering local employment – a mill town within an agricultural economy – to a situation where Peebles has become more of a dormitory town reliant on a commuter economy.

It does not serve the town well:

- the lack of local employment has greatly disadvantaged many less well-off households in the town, to the detriment of the town as a whole;
- meanwhile, physical and service infrastructures have not kept pace with recent rapid expansion

### 1.3 Plan focus

The **main focus** of the Town Action Plan is to **address the needs of those less well off**. We need to create local jobs and expand local services. Doing this also provides for the town as a whole.

So the key priorities are to:

- *directly address poverty and disadvantage;*
- *provide local work and housing for those less well off;*
- *support mental well-being;*
- *improve community capacity to direct and manage change.*

We have already begun. Extensive community engagement over many years has generated a large body of material which informs 150 priority actions – large and small, short-term and longer-term.

The key priorities set by the community, as listed above, are in alignment with stated outcomes listed in the 2023-2033 Scottish Borders Community Plan, and broadly link to the five themes that recur in regional, national and international goals, plans and strategies. These are shown in the graphic below – community originated priorities on the left, and themes from higher level plans and strategies on the right.

But while these four core strategic ambitions reflect the needed structural changes, most prioritised actions – in particular the smaller interventions that impact everyday life in the town and contribute “the glue” that holds the community together and contributes much to the unique identity of the town – are centred around “improve well-being” with a particular focus on accessibility, and these align most closely to the theme of “Quality of Life”.



## 2. Structuring the Plan

### 2.1 Action plan elements

The main elements of the action plan, based on these Five Core Strategic Ambitions are to:

- **slow the scale and rate of expansion** of the town until more local employment opportunities can be created and services improved for those who live here now
- **focus efforts on local economic development**, combining more conventional support services, including workshops and warehouses – as currently found on the Cavalry Park and South Park estates – with a “**Creative Industries Cluster**”, a building focussed principally on **product design and digital technologies** – *graphic and fashion design, publishing and marketing, film, TV and video production and support services, anchored with an emphasis on innovations in using natural materials such as timber, wood, wool, and so on, and creative arts* (supporting local artists, crafters and makers, and music, visual and performing arts). This cluster should be of sufficient scale to sustain further growth – through a combination of a significant new business and light industry estate; building the local enterprise incubator to mentor, train and grow businesses; attracting businesses to Peebles; and developing systems that meet the needs of home-based workers and small businesses
- **improve access to facilities, services and work opportunities for the less well off**, and for the infirm, disadvantaged or isolated of all ages. This includes access to health services, entertainment, social meeting places, cultural and heritage events and facilities, shops, childcare, sports and recreation, allotments, green spaces, and the great outdoors
- **improve availability of housing and accommodation for those less well off** – including affordable housing, housing for those entering the workforce, sheltered and managed care facilities, housing for the aged (including Alms Houses), and multi-generational housing
- **improve the energy efficiency** of older housing stock, **reducing domestic and business energy** demand, and actively working to **increase the use of renewable energy** perhaps including community owned generation?

Other measures in support of the above include:

- **improve paths and roads** infrastructure to favour and encourage more Active Travel;
- **upgrade the Hay Lodge Hospital** to a fully functioning Community Hospital;
- **create** social, medical, retail and recreational **infrastructure south of the river**;
- **a second river Tweed road bridge** to reduce traffic pressure on the present bridge, the High Street and Eastgate – to meet current needs;
- **strengthen community capacity to direct and manage change** – as in the Peebles Community Trust, the Community Council, the Civic Society, local Third Sector bodies, the Peebles Resilient Community and so on;
- **make Peebles a safer place** with more social infrastructure. Young people need more places to meet (outdoors as well as indoors); improve landscaping and visual signalling; promote civic pride; regularise on- and off-street parking (allowing the return of traffic wardens); increase the involvement of young people in planning and decision-making; facilitate and promote greater community participation in sports and clubs, and outdoor and indoor activities.

## 2.2 The challenges of delivering on such priorities

The full plan runs to 150 separate actions and initiatives, with differing priorities and sequencing, and differing calls on institutional, financial and community resources.

Taking forward the third of the five Core Strategic Ambitions – “improve access to services for all” – is likely to meet the least resistance from planners, developers, and residents, but presents the greatest challenge in terms of management. It is by far the most complex, multi-layered and demanding and will involve multiple activities to be taken forward by or in collaboration with many of the Planning Partners. Some of this will require funding in the millions but others are more modest in scale. Most depend on each other to deliver the planned outcomes of supporting “accessibility for all”.

The other ambitions may be more difficult. They will require significant shifts in thinking on the part of the Council officers and Planning Partners, although the Core Ambitions respond positively to and work in line with the many government policy initiatives supporting community empowerment, community led development, sustainable development and just transition to net zero.

For example, the planning regime continues to operate on a developer-led and market driven basis. Yet this is at odds with requirements identified in community engagement and in line with the concept of community-led development. How do we build more houses for the less well-off – as advocated by the people of Peebles – when RSLs (Registered Social Landlords) struggle to buy land in competition with developers? The current policy that 25% of housing development should be of affordable housing, yet “affordable” is a negotiable term; and even if this policy were fully implemented – and actually delivered truly affordable housing – it would fall well short of what is needed

Another example is economic land. Development of South Park Industrial Estate and Cavalry Park Business Park have been very successful, but it took over 20 years to achieve. Progress is heavily reliant on drip-by-drip development under market forces, with no supporting initiatives to encourage enterprise relocation or development at scale. The result is only modest increases in employment. As matters stand there is no economic, employment-led, development strategy for Peebles and any land that could be used to create jobs tends to be used for housing or, at most, for mixed development – which tends not to focus on creating jobs, but on doing the minimum to secure planning approval for housing.

As for creating more energy-efficient buildings, government policies are in favour, but there are few incentives. Modern Peebles is largely a product of the Victorian era, where most housing was built in the centre and north of the river. Much other housing was built before the 1980s and almost all of these buildings fall far short of achieving an EPC rating of C or better. A two-and-a-half year government-funded project “Change Works in Peebles” focused on assessing the scale of this issue and exploring how the different categories of housing could be upgraded. But, significantly, most less well-off people live in pre-1980s housing, which is where fuel poverty is worst. Despite considerable mapping and problem identification work completed under this project, there is as yet no clear route to upgrading Peebles housing stock to an energy efficient standard compatible with poverty-focused policies, the Climate Emergency, and a Just Transition to Net Zero.

And in the related field of renewable energy generation, communities find themselves on the periphery of infrastructure projects, courted to support large windfarm developments, yet largely excluded from profiting from such private sector developments. Instead, they are encouraged to go cap-in-hand for more modest community benefit handouts. Communities could participate more

directly in such developments, but 20 years on from the first community-owned renewable developments in Scotland, participation remains low, hampered by the reluctance of authorities to invest in building community capacities needed for such ventures. Instead, most communities are left to pursue community interests and developments through volunteers, many of them retired. Those that have been able to secure community benefit, mainly from windfarm developments, are more able to professionalise their community institutions by recruiting paid staff, becoming more able to contemplate participation in community-owned energy generation.

### 2.3 Moving forward

In section 3 we explore the context against which these priorities emerge and need to be implemented.

In section 4 we look at how these priorities have been brought forward from a long-list of needs and wants developed through a programme of community engagement, and the running of the Scottish Government's Place Standard Tool survey across the winter of 2021/22 which drew 290 responses from Peebles residents and neighbours. Significant additional detail is present in Annexes to the Plan, which are referenced in the main text where relevant.

In section 5 we revisit how these priorities have been drawn together within a Strategic Plan Framework, with a focus on practical delivery. And given that a number of already tabled major initiatives – second bridge, new economic zone, flood defence scheme, Active Travel infrastructure – have the potential to positively and/or adversely impact the future direction of development of Peebles significant initiatives and the quality of life experienced by residents, we also strongly advocate moving forward with clear foresight – informed by a comprehensive strategic assessment of the cumulative impact of such major initiatives.

Just how the Plan is to be driven forward and delivered is explored in section 6. It is not a simple matter, and is an issue that cuts to the core of how communities nurture, develop and strengthen community capacity.

In section 7 we present the programme of initiatives that has been designed to both generate the outputs and achieve the outcomes called for through the whole programme of community engagement and consultation, and provides the path forward in greater

### 3. Evolution of the size and economy of Peebles

#### 3.1 Population change

Peebles sits in a basin where the west-east Tweed Valley and the north-south Edderston Water Valley meet at the foot of the Manor Hills running west-east to the south of the town. It is located at a strategic intersection along the northern edge of the Southern Uplands, yet within a day's horseback journey south Edinburgh. For much of its existence Peebles has been a relatively small market town at the centre of a rural agricultural economy with a resident population ranging from between 1,000 and 3,000 individuals. The coming of the railways and tweed mills in the mid- to late-1800s spurred a rapid expansion of the town and an increase in its population from 3,000 to between 5,000 and 6,000 residents. This growth faltered in the 1960s when the railways were closed and a combination of competition from other parts of the world and technological change made the Borders woollen industry less competitive, and mills closed. This sequence is illustrated below, and the efforts to counter the loss of work through mill closures is described in [Annex 3](#).

#### 3.2 Rapid expansion

This blip in the growth of the Peebles economy led to a reduction in the population by about 500 as families left to find work elsewhere. Efforts to shore up the economy kicked in, but with relatively short-lived impacts, and with nothing like the scale needed to compensate for job losses in the mills. Further investment in town infrastructures did spur growth in the 1980s and 90s, but the underlying economy slipped from reliance on local jobs to one more and more dependent on jobs outside the town – and a reliance on commuting. Further investment in the town's infrastructures has been significantly less from 2000 to the present, but nonetheless the built footprint of Peebles (excluding green spaces) had increased by 37% to 2015, and has continued to grow – now over 45%, 2024. Almost all of this is down to new housing.

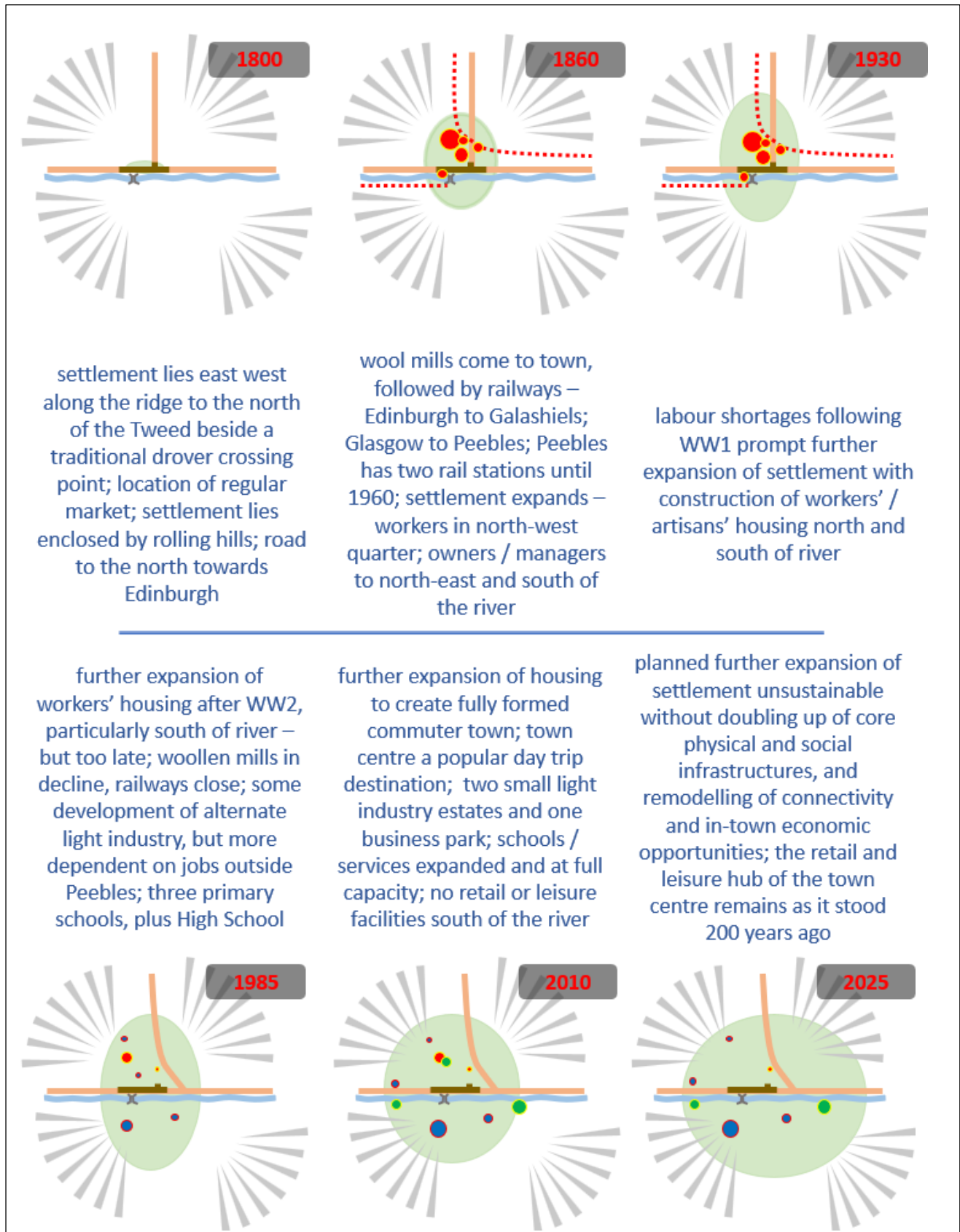
To re-cap, historically a Royal Burgh and county town Peebles was an administrative centre and market town serving a largely agricultural economy and for centuries experienced relatively little change in population, occupations and economic structure.

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century civic leaders, estate-owners and professional gentlemen invested in rail infrastructure, with the construction of rail lines between Peebles and both Edinburgh and Glasgow; which also helped the same local entrepreneurs to establish industrial scale woollen factories in the town. The railways and mills kick-started rapid growth in employment and housing with a growing economy. This flattened out in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with reduced market demand and consequent job losses. But both the population and economy of Peebles continued to grow, increasingly relying on rail and roads to get to and from work.

Changes in the economics of wool and textiles production impacted on the Borders' textile industries in general, and the Peebles mills in particular. By 1970 three out of the four main Peebles mills had closed, leading to a slump in employment opportunities, and a drop in the population of Peebles as families moved to secure work elsewhere.

Efforts by the District Council to encourage new business to Peebles succeeded to a degree, but did not fully replace the loss of local employment. Nonetheless, Peebles grew as more families sought to relocate from Edinburgh and the Central Belt and commute to their work. The underlying nature of the town shifted from rural mill town to a commuter dormitory settlement.

The layout and expansion of the settlement between 2000 and 2015 is illustrated on the next page



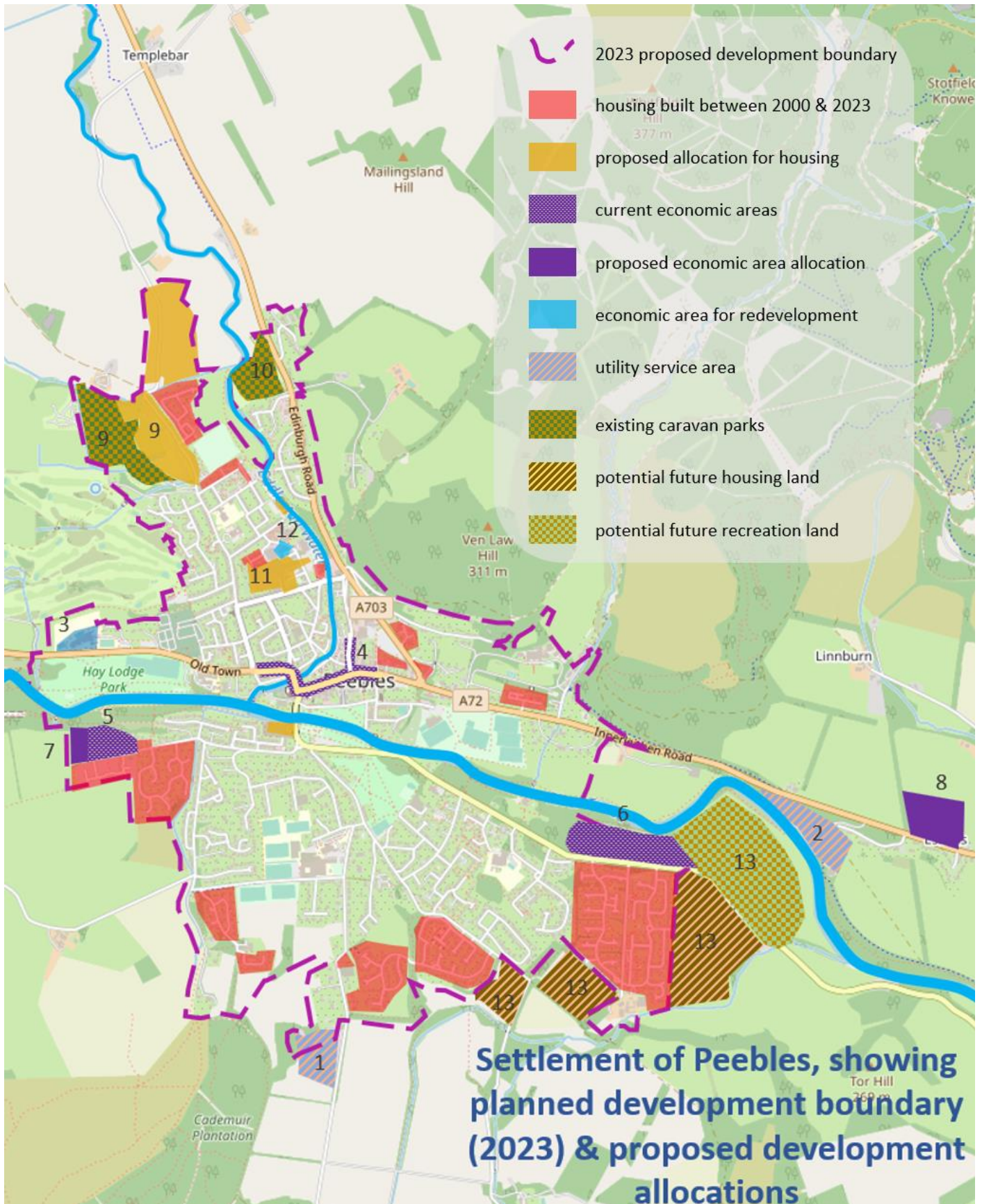
The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the closure of two larger businesses established following closure of three mills, and local employment opportunities have continued to fall ever since. Peebles has continued to present an attractive place to live and bring up families, and commuter families have continued to relocate to the town. But lack of higher-paid jobs locally has encouraged more of the local workforce to take up work outside Peebles, adding to the morning exodus of residents to work outside Peebles, returning each evening.

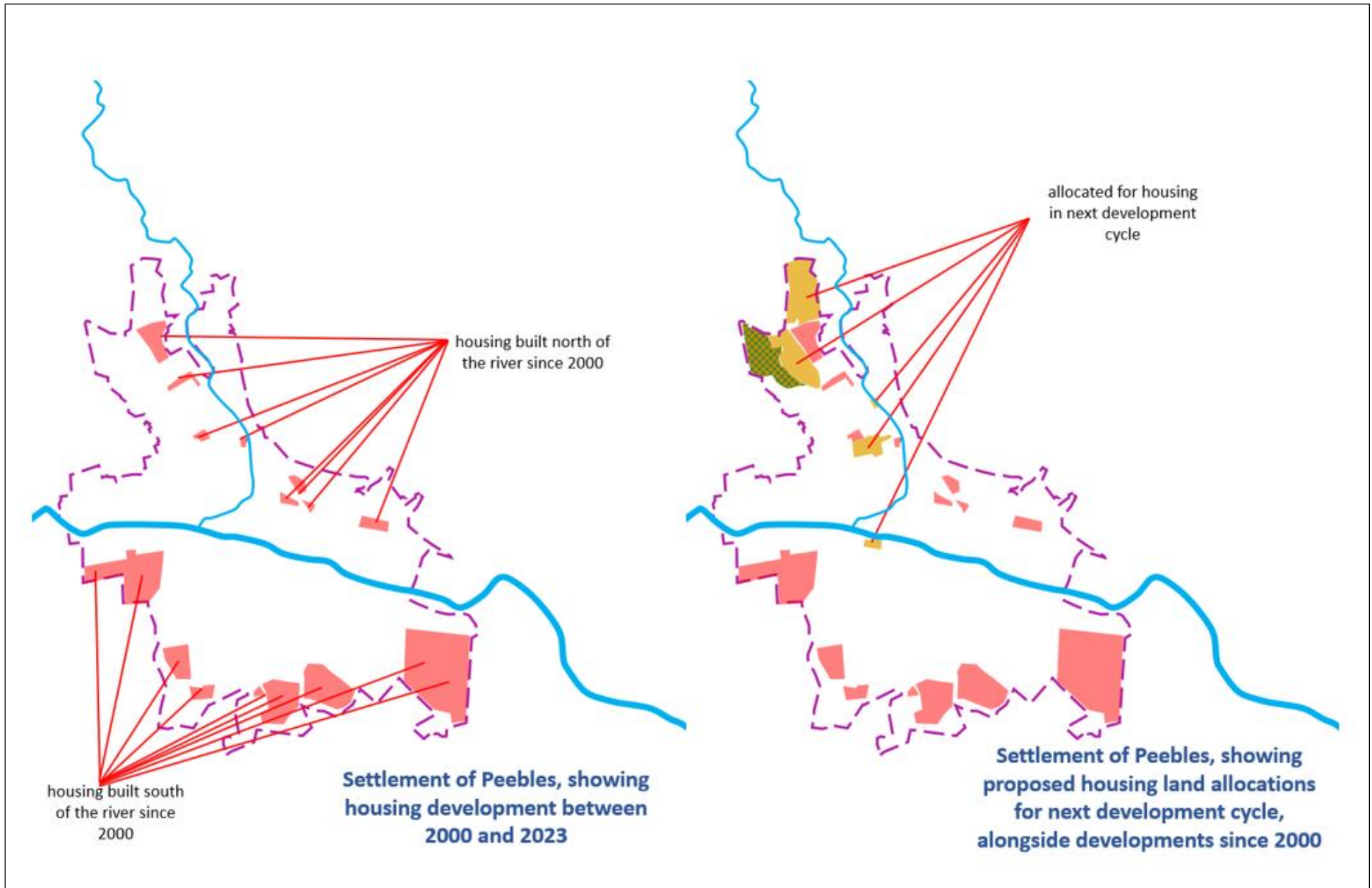
Public sector investment in key physical infrastructures in the 1990s and early 2000s – in schools, medical and sporting facilities, plus the establishment and expansion of light industry and business estates – has added to the attractiveness of Peebles, and somewhat improved local employment opportunities but not altered the increase in commuting or the predominance of local and low paid employment opportunities.

This has brought about shifts in home ownership. Despite a 45%+ increase in the built-up area of Peebles since 2000, population density has reduced as more people live in single or two-person properties. Lower income households are concentrated in pre-1960s and poorly insulated housing in areas of the town that traditionally housed mill workers. Most multi-residence buildings – flats and villas – are rented privately and are in the centre of town and its northern suburbs. Retail, hospitality and leisure facilities are in much the same array, location and scale as 100 years ago – in or near the town centre. There are only two retail premises outside the town centre – one corner shop north of the river, and one another south of the river.

## Legend

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 water treatment plant – recently substantially expanded | 8 proposed new Class 4 Use economic zone                            |
| 2 sewage treatment plant                                  | 9 Caravan Park designated mixed use development housing & lodges    |
| 3 new Kingsland Primary School (2010)                     | 10 Crossburn Caravan Park   |
| 4 town centre shops, cafés, restaurants & pubs            | 11 former March Street Mills site, designated for mixed development |
| 5 South Park Light Industry Estates                       | 12 Dovecot garage designated for redevelopment                      |
| 6 Cavalry Park business area                              | 13 allocations for possible future housing development              |
| 7 area designated for further economic use                |   |







**Settlement of Peebles, showing  
existing and planned economic sites**

## Legend

### Utility infrastructure

- upgraded water treatment at BonnyCraig (Bonnington Rd) (1) and sewage treatment & recycling centre at Eshiels (2)

### School

- new Kingsland primary school constructed at Neidpath Grazings (3)

### Economic use

- High Street retail & business area (4)
- South Park light industrial estate (5)
- Cavalry Park business estate (6)
- land beyond South Park light industrial estate designated for economic use (7)
- land at Eshiels designated for development as a new business / light industrial site (8)
- site at Rosetta House (9) designated for mixed use development, housing on lower part, and continuation of caravan park on upper part (square hatched); Crossburn (10) is the other caravan park in Peebles, lying between Eddlestone Water and Edinburgh Road
- former March Street Mills site (11) designated for mixed use development – housing and economic, including workers allotments
- Dovecot light industrial estate (formerly a part of the March Street Mills site) designated for redevelopment, along with nearby smaller site alongside Eddlestone Water (12)

### Potential future housing allocations

- three sites (13) to the south east of the settlement identified with potential for future housing development (and not allocated as such within this development cycle); half of the larger site (beyond Kittlegairy) is unsuitable for housing (shown square hatched)

## 4. Developing the Plan Framework

The 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan is not only an update of the 2016 Town Action Plan, but a substantially larger and more ambitious exercise covering a 10-year development period, and incorporating increased focus on Community Led Local Development, Locality Planning, Placemaking and Local Place Plans.

Its scope has been dictated by the outputs of community engagement and survey undertaken over a number of years, and incorporates the engagement methodology developed by the Scottish Government as the Place Standard Tool (see [www.ourplace.scot/tool](http://www.ourplace.scot/tool)). These exercises have provided the information used by the Peebles Placemaking Team to develop ideas of plan focus and priorities, and have generated numerous proposals and suggested actions to improve the sustainability and resilience of the community and settlement of Peebles.

### 4.1 Consultation and engagement

The Peebles Placemaking Team has gathered public opinion on life in Peebles through a programme of engagement summarised below. Greater detail is provided in **Annex 1**. Of particular interest has been the gathering of people's views on that which is good about Peebles, and that which is not so good – and how matters might be improved in the coming years.

#### Peebles Placemaking Team community engagement events

Sep	2020	Covid-emergency community response survey
Sep	2020	Active Travel community survey
Oct	2020	Active Travel High School survey
Oct	2020	School Brae Hub Arts & Crafts Skills Base survey
Jan-Apr	2021	Owning Our Future project - Ideas Map of Peebles
Mar	2021	Active Travel - community survey (76 responses)
Jun	2021	Active Travel - primary school hands-up survey (326 responses)
Jun & Sep	2021	Active Travel - Peebles High School survey (253 responses)
Jul/Aug	2021	Active Travel - suburbs survey (face to face plus 81 online)
Aug	2021	Active Travel - business survey, Town Centre and estates (39 responses)
Oct	2021	March Street Mills - revisiting community purchase
Oct	2021	streetside Place Standard Tool community engagement events
Oct-Dec	2021	Place Standard Tool survey (285 responses)
Nov	2021	Active Travel drop-in sessions
Nov	2021	Open Forum (about 100 attendees)
Feb	2022	Open Forum (about 100 attendees)
Oct	2022	Place Plan and Greater Peebles engagement
Mar/Apr	2023	x4 Place Plan drop-in sessions
Mar/Apr	2023	x6 Place Plan round table debates (6 x 8)
Apr	2023	Open Forum (about 40 attendees)

Evidence has also been drawn from a range of project focused studies headed by the Peebles Community Trust, which include:

- 2016 March St Mills community purchase survey
- 2017 March St Mills community potential development survey
- 2021 Owning Our Future project – Ideas Map of Peebles
- 2022 Field Sports - Recreational Opportunities
- 2023 Peebles Active Travel Study

## 4.2 The Place Standard Tool

Central to drawing the available information into a prioritised long-list of actions has been the running of the Place Standard Tool survey which was conducted over the winter months of 2021/22. This is a tool developed by the Scottish Government to assist communities in exploring Place and Placemaking (details at [www.ourplace.scot](http://www.ourplace.scot)). The survey encourages individuals to assess 14 town services and characteristics on a scale of 1 (a need for improvement) to 7 (near perfect – such as town amenities).

The 14 characteristics and core prompt questions are listed below.

Can I easily walk and cycle around using good-quality routes?	Moving around
Does public transport meet my needs?	Public transport
Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?	Traffic and parking
Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?	Streets and spaces
Can I regularly experience good-quality natural space?	Natural space
Can I access a range of space with opportunities for play and recreation?	Play and recreation
Do facilities and amenities meet my needs?	Facilities and amenities
Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access good-quality work?	Work and local economy
Do the homes in my area support the needs of the community?	Housing and community
Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?	Social contact
Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel I belong?	Identity and belonging
Do I feel safe here?	Feeling safe
Are buildings and spaces well cared for?	Care and maintenance
Do I feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better?	Influence and sense of control

Our survey drew 290 responses from Peebles residents and neighbours. It scored conditions and service provision against 14 characteristics of Place, and generated over 1,000 written comments. The survey and its outputs is described in [Annexes 1 & 2](#).

### 4.3 Likes & dislikes – comments from residents

Pleasant environment and good community.

Not enough activities for teenagers, lack of late-night buses for nights out.

Cycling here is amazing and the primary reason we moved. Everywhere is easy to walk to. Easy to commute to Edinburgh. Shops are brilliant. People are friendly.

Economy becoming very retail and tourist based. Few job opportunities outside of this. Transport connections unchanged and unimproved for many years.

Walks, nature, small community, green spaces, biking, friendly people, cafes, parks to walk dog.

No cycle lanes or bicycle parking, on-street parking EVERYWHERE, lots of gates preventing wheelchair and pram access to forest areas.

Perfect for raising a family, safe, great access to nature and open spaces, lots of activities for kids. For adults too lots of activities and if you like the outdoors perfect for recreation.

Parking is a nightmare.

Variety of independent shops. Strong community groups. Feeling safe being out at any time of the day or night. Great walks, lots to do.

Wheelie bins block the paths on collection day, which means less able folk have to step into the road. We need another bridge to get traffic away from roads that weren't built for lorries, tractors and all that.

Independent shops, lots going on, good broadband and decent bus service, lots of health and fitness classes, cinema/theatre, lovely walks, nice places for food and drink.

Lack of good employment opportunities; poor healthcare and education facilities; poor quality of roads; shockingly poor quality of new housing developments; lack of connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Community spirit. Rural access. Green space. Walkable distance to amenities. Its own theatre. Good cafes and restaurants. Good range of high street businesses. A town that is looked after and people can be proud of.

It is becoming a kind of affluent exclusive commuter town where rich professional commuters/retired affluent professionals move to cultivate/clone a trendy 'Country Life magazine' lifestyle.

Local schools and nurseries are good. Lots of good open spaces.

Beltane festival needs reforms. The Queen and court need to be reassessed in the 21st century, as does gender parity for the Cornet selection. The "idolising" of a prepubescent girl, placed on a par with a much older man, (the two main principals) is not appropriate.

Small enough to get around, but still offers many of the facilities of a larger place. Beautiful surroundings.

Lack of bike parking stands, worry about future building development, over-stretched medical services, lack of good local jobs.

The environment; city quite close by; many well qualified people; good community; nice shops, restaurants, hotels; helpful and skilled tradespeople; good schools and a pleasant and safe place to live. We are indeed lucky.

Lack of public toilets for my disabled son – have to go home.

The parks and walks available. New play park is fab.

Lack of jobs, terrible parking, local councillors not listening and being out of touch.

Small enough but big enough with open countryside on its doorstep.

Housing developments are outstripping local facilities and to an extent the local culture to the point where the very nature of the town is changing and what is good and attractive about it is under threat.

Perfect for raising a family, safe, great access to nature and open spaces, lots of activities for kids and adults.

The hidden/let's not talk about it issue of poverty and social deprivation in the town. Real people are struggling in our town.

A very positive community, the town is so much a part of the lovely local countryside. There are many things to do, the shops are varied, and so many great places to eat and drink.

Public not being listened to. The state of the public footpaths. There is no maintenance whether it be buildings or rivers.

Friendly, vibrant, plenty to do, easy access to countryside.

Doctors and dentists overloaded with work. Not enough social housing for young people with families. Parking needs to be sorted out.

Community spirit. Rural access. Green space. Walkable distance to amenities. Its own theatre. Good cafes/ Restaurants. The range of high street businesses. A town that is looked after and people can be proud of.

Eye-sore areas, particularly by Court-house, Tweedbridge Court area, and some of the Gytes allotments.

Peebles offers something for everyone. It's a town that still has a heart and is mindful of folk.

Lack of proper policing. Street parking is a disgrace with cars parked in illegal places. The town is now too big for our current Healthcare services.

It's beautiful and the local folk are friendly and caring.

It's very white and mono-cultural.

You meet lots of people from diverse backgrounds which makes Peebles one of the most cosmopolitan towns in the Borders.

A sort of old boy's network seems to control things. Lack of transparency for example with Common Good land.

Plenty clubs for older people if they want to join. The atmosphere the mountain bikers have brought to town.

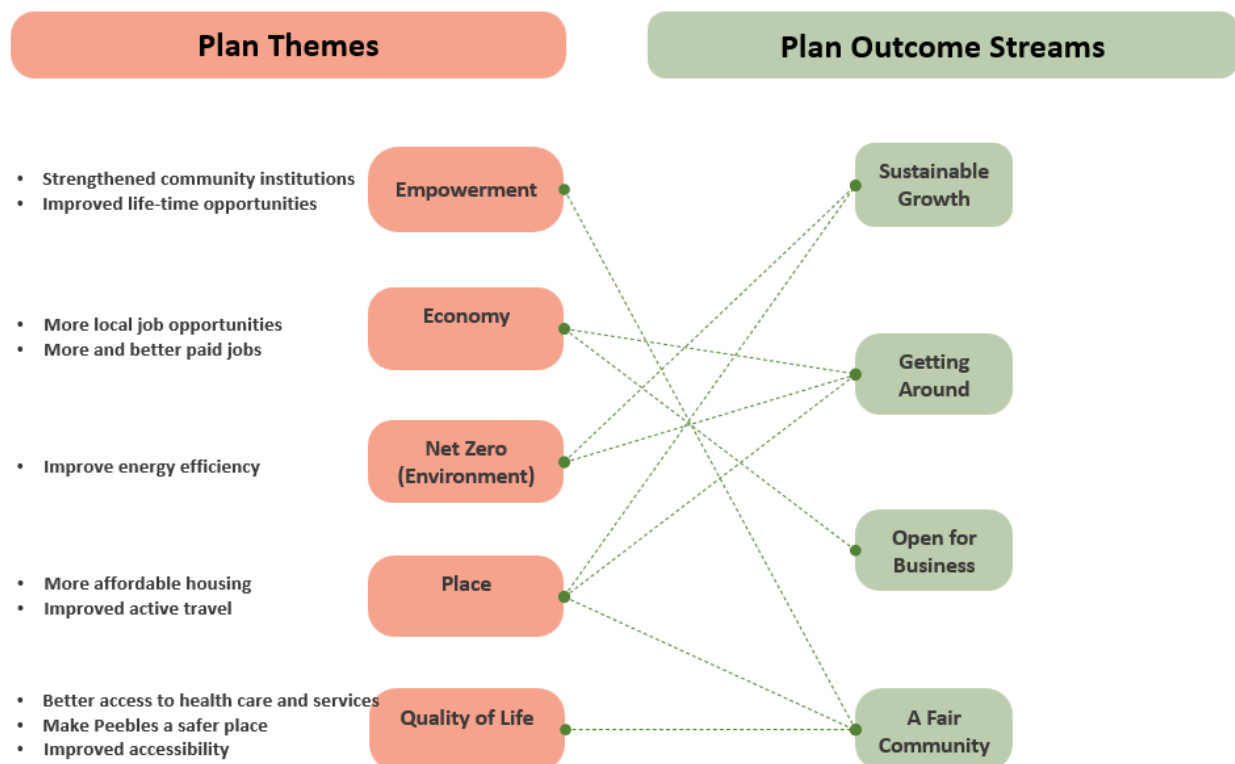
Peculiar arrangement of library, museum and gallery; no green burial site; too much heavy through traffic, too many cars permanently in High Street; too much house building, not enough social housing.

Good mix of town living and access to Edinburgh amenities in a rural setting.

Litter, bad parking, toilets not being open. Would like some other shops and more policing.

### 4.3 Developing the Plan Framework

From these the team has brought forward about 150 actions, large and small, prioritised for active promotion within a framework of some 20 core initiatives (detailed in [Annexes 5 & 8](#)). The 150 actions are not an exclusive listing, but do contribute towards achieving the outputs and outcomes of a coherent development narrative. The priority actions are grouped into categories, and align with the Plan Themes and Plan Outcome Streams – shown below.



## The Peebles Town Action Plan

### Enabling measures

- 1 Strengthening community capacity
- 2 20 year plan for settlement of Peebles

### Sustainable Growth

- A** Improved connectivity
  - A1 New road bridge*
  - A2 New pedestrian and cycle bridge*
- B** Housing for everyone
- C** Flood protection scheme
- D** Energy efficiency
- E** Expand Peebles economic footprint

### Open for Business

- H** Local business boost
- I** Creative industries cluster
- J** Tourism

### Horizontal measures

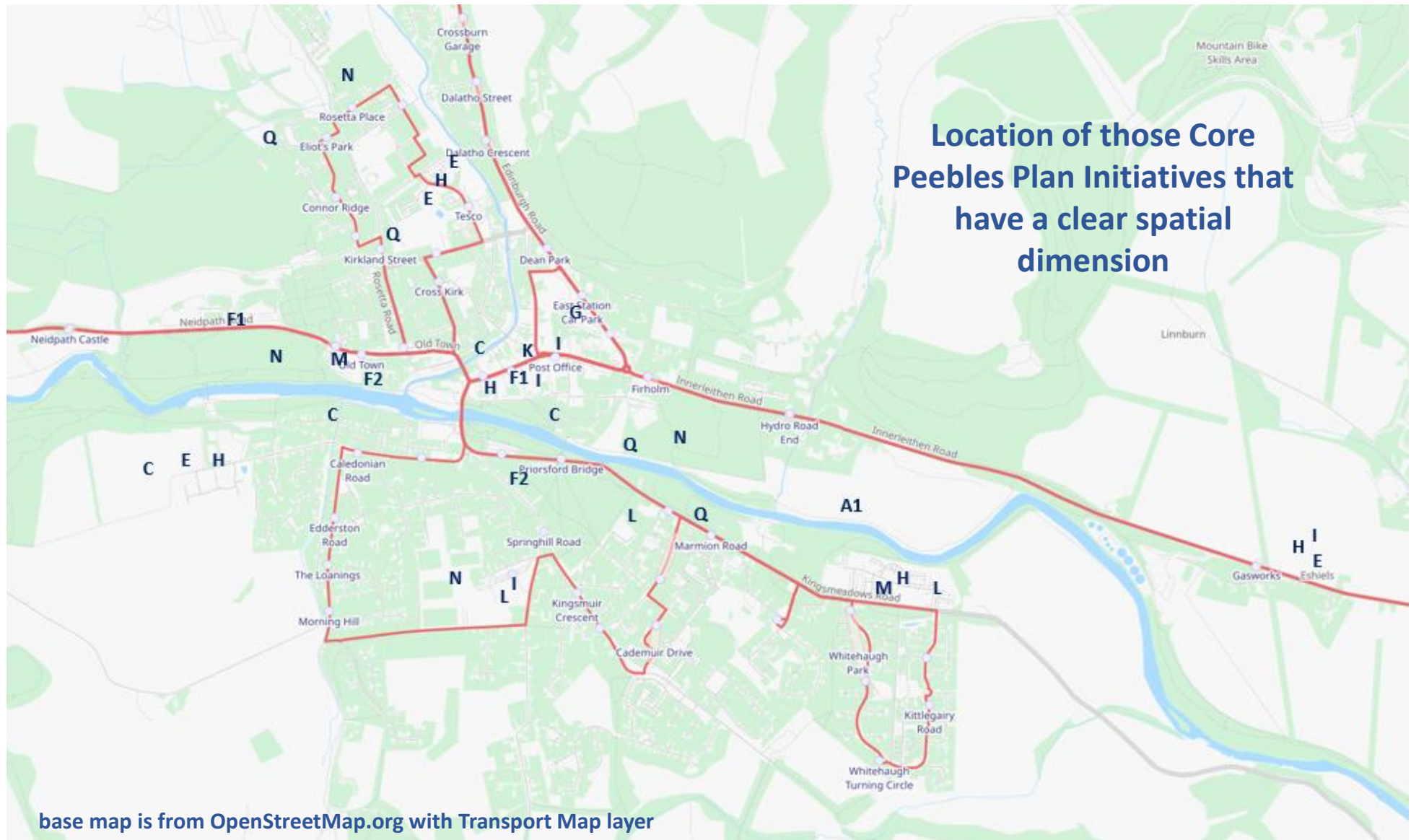
- 3 Creating a safer community
- 4 A focus on young people

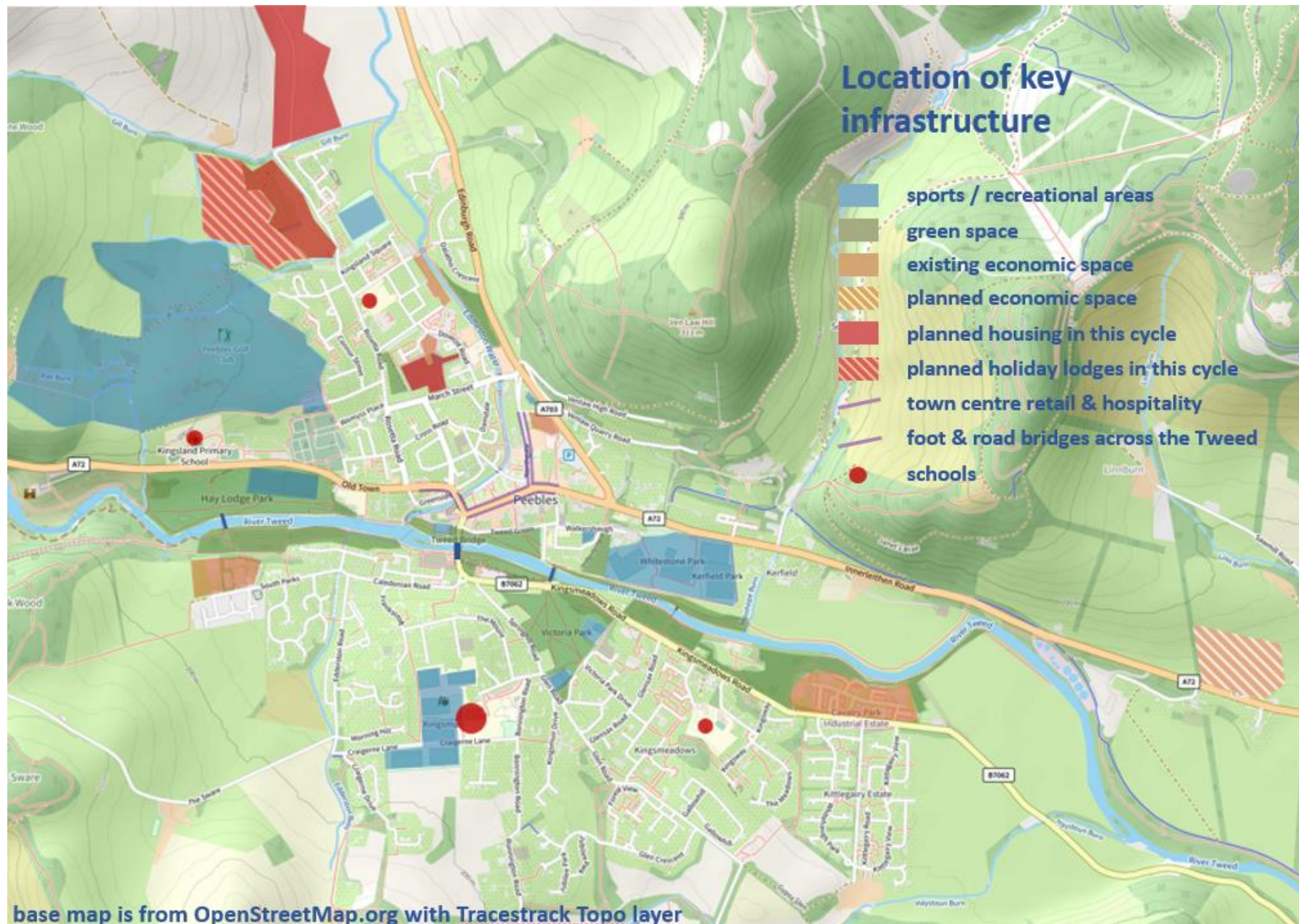
### Getting Around

- F** Active travel improvements
  - F1 Everyday journeys*
  - F2 Destination journeys*
- G** Transport infrastructure improvements
  - G1 Public transport*
  - G2 Parking*

### A Fair Community

- K** Town Centre regeneration
- L** Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure
- M** Health & medical infrastructures
- N** Field sports infrastructure upgrade
- O** Review of public and community indoor space
- P** Life-long learning, skills development and training
- Q** Green and food security





## 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan

1	Strengthening community capacity	
2	20 year plan for settlement of Peebles	
3	Creating a safer community	
4	A focus on young people	
<b>Sustainable Growth</b>		<i>The principle of sustainability is at the heart of the Plan for Peebles. The community is concerned about development and expansion of Peebles, particularly pressure on road network, congestion, services and infrastructure, and the creation of a sustainable and resilient future, and would welcome more opportunities to engage at an early stage and to be involved in decision-making processes.</i>
A	Improved connectivity	
A1	<b><i>New road bridge</i></b>	Build a second bridge to reduce current traffic pressure on the High Street to secure improved Connectivity between recent development to the southeast of the settlement and amenities in the town centre
A2	<b><i>New pedestrian and cycle bridge</i></b>	Build pedestrian bridge(s) to improve connection to key destinations in Peebles, encouraging walking, wheeling, and cycling, and reducing car usage.
B	<b>Housing for everyone</b>	To overcome the lack of affordable housing in Peebles, supporting the provision of a mix of housing and accommodation which are accessible to all, to rebalance community wellbeing and to build a sustainable and resilient future for the people of Peebles.
C	<b>Flood protection scheme</b>	Further develop the new flood defence scheme to reduce the intensity of flooding events in Peebles, safeguarding the town's future, mitigating the effects of the climate crisis while enhancing biodiversity.
D	<b>Energy efficiency</b>	Reduce energy use, shift demand to clean energy and advance energy savings. Make a just transition by reducing fuel poverty, securing community benefits and achieving community owned energy generation.

<b>E</b>	<b>Expand Peebles economic footprint</b>	Promote major investment in the economic infrastructure of Peebles, incorporating the newly proposed commercial business site in the Eshiels area, and ensuring this is well serviced by the appropriate road and transport infrastructure.
<b>Getting Around</b>		<i>Under the core strategic ambition of improving access to services for all, it is fundamental that connectivity and accessibility are at the heart of any future development of Peebles. To improve existing infrastructure, the Sustrans funded Peebles Active Travel Study provides evidenced proposals for making walking, wheeling, and cycling a more enjoyable and safer activity across the settlement. This originates from and extends the ambition to link the Tweed Valley Railway Path to the Eddleston Water Path.</i>
<b>F</b>	<b>Active travel improvements</b>	
<i>F1</i>	<i>Everyday journeys</i>	Continue to implement active travel infrastructure in Peebles, to make walking, wheeling and cycling a safer and more attractive experience for all.
<i>F2</i>	<i>Destination journeys</i>	Improve active travel links between the town centre and the green corridor along both sides of the Tweed, upgrading existing paths and providing new routes, to enhance connection to the river Tweed.
<b>G</b>	<b>Transport infrastructure improvements</b>	
<i>G1</i>	<i>Public transport</i>	Optimise the existing bus services to ensure it is most useful to local residents to achieve their journeys and improve access to services.
<i>G2</i>	<i>Parking</i>	Reassess Peebles car parking strategy, ensuring that regulations are enforced, to alleviate traffic congestion on the High Street and improve traffic flows.
<b>Open for Business</b>		<i>Provide support for economic development across Peebles, through the creation of new infrastructure to support local businesses and encourage others to the town, to support innovation and build on the town's strengths in natural resources, high educational achievement, and creative industries, and so create new opportunities for local people, and take some of the pressure off the need to commute out of town for work.</i>
<b>H</b>	<b>Local business boost</b>	Cater for small local independent businesses, the Working-From- Home community, and the small building trades businesses that are the backbone of Peebles' economy, and to provide supporting infrastructure and spaces to encourage the creation of start-ups and the relocation of small (<30 staff) businesses to Peebles.

I	<b>Creative industries cluster</b>	Develop a Creative Industries Cluster, to promote Peebles as a Creative Hub and to complement and expand on the existing cluster of people working in the creative arts.
J	<b>Tourism</b>	Continue to market Peebles as a key tourist destination, supporting sustainable and responsible tourism, ensuring that the local community can benefit from it and providing the appropriate supporting infrastructure.
<b>A Fair Community</b>		<i>Improve happiness and wellbeing in Peebles, both mental and physical, by promoting an equal, fair and resilient community, with a focus on enhancing access to a wide range of facilities, services, and opportunities for all residents, and improving use of existing assets to maximise local opportunities for socialising and becoming active citizens. This includes ensuring access to health services, entertainment, social meeting places, cultural and heritage events, and local shops. Additionally, the stream aims to preserve and improve green spaces and facilitate access to the great outdoors, ensuring that everyone in Peebles can enjoy a high quality of life and a strong sense of community.</i>
K	<b>Town Centre regeneration</b>	Re-imagining Peebles Town Centre for everyone, regenerating public spaces, refurbishing and maximising the use of surrounding cultural and public buildings, improving accessibility and facilitating navigation and connectivity.
L	<b>Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure</b>	To rebalance the expansion of Peebles, planning for improved access to services and for more provision of social and economic infrastructure south of the river, making it easier to get around and creating a social hub where all generations can meet and socialise.
M	<b>Health &amp; medical infrastructures</b>	Create a strengthened and better integrated health and care infrastructure in the town around an enlarged Community Hospital at Hay Lodge hosting a range of medical, health and care services for the community and its immediate hinterland as well as catering for an ageing and growing population.
N	<b>Field sports infrastructure upgrade</b>	To maximise the use of existing amenities in Peebles and upgrade sports facilities at Whitestone / Kerfield Park and Violet Bank, to enhance the experience for visitors and athletes, further increase community participation and add to the local economy.
O	<b>Review of public and community indoor space</b>	To develop a vision for the reuse and refurbishment of existing buildings, as well as new, so that valued sporting, cultural and third sector activities continue to thrive and develop. Foster collaboration, so that investment decisions are better informed and avoid duplication.

P	Life-long learning, skills development and training	To provide the community with opportunities to train and upskill in multiple disciplines which could lead to improved employability, and to provide local groups and individuals with learning opportunities to build capacity and improve mental health.
Q	Green and food security	Preserve and enhance existing green space in Peebles and surrounding natural habitat. Work closely with and support local community groups in maintaining in-town greenery and allotment spaces. Support community growing projects with a focus on tackling food poverty and biodiversity loss whilst supporting conservation efforts.

## 5. Town Action Plan core initiatives

### Enabling Measures

- En1 Strengthening community capacity
- En2 20 year plan for the settlement of Peebles

### Horizontal Measures

- Ho1 A safer community
- Ho2 A focus on young people
- Ho3 A just transition to Net Zero.

### Key Initiatives

#### Sustainable Growth

- A Improved connectivity
  - A1 New road bridge
  - A2 New pedestrian and cycle bridge
- B Housing for everyone
- C Flood protection scheme
- D Energy efficiency
- E Expand Peebles economic footprint

#### Getting Around

- F Active travel improvements
  - F1 Everyday journeys
  - F2 Destination journeys
- G Transport infrastructure improvements
  - G1 Public transport
  - G2 Parking

#### Open for Business

- H Local business boost
- I Creative industries cluster
- J Tourism

#### A Fair Community

- K Town Centre regeneration
- L Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure
- M Health & medical infrastructures
- N Field sports infrastructure upgrade
- O Review of public and community indoor space
- P Life-long learning, skills development and training
- Q Green and food security

## Legend

## 6. Pathways to Delivery

The table below summarises the initiatives which form the Plan for Peebles, with key information for their implementation.

Please refer to the [Peebles Town Action Plan](#) for more details and an up to date view of actions and potential paths for implementation.

### Policy context

Identifies policies related to the initiative as per the Local Development Plan 2

### Cost

Predicted cost for implementation

£ = Predicted to be a lower cost project


££ = Predicted to be a medium cost project


£££ = Predicted to be a higher cost project

### Timescale

Predicted time for implementation

### Status

 work required to get the initiative close to a deliverable stage

 Some parts of the initiative have started, but further work required to bring the initiative to a deliverable stage

 The initiative is close to a deliverable stage

Project		Policy Context	Cost	Timescale 1-3 = short [1 = <12months] 4-6 = medium [5 = 3-5 years] 7-10 = long [10 = 10+ years]	Status	Key Players / Potential Partners	Potential Funding	Further community engagement required [Yes / No]
Stream One - Sustainable Groth								
A	Improved connectivity					Scottish Borders Council	Capital investment project	Yes
A1	New Road Bridge	LDP2: HD3	£££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	Capital investment project	Yes
A2	New Pedestrian Bridge	LDP2: HD3	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	Capital investment project	Yes
B	Housing for everyone	LDP2: HD1, HD5, HD6, IS8	£££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Eildon Housing Association Scottish Borders Housing Association	Capital investment project	Yes
C	Flood protection scheme	LDP2: IS8, IS9	£££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	Capital investment project	No
D	Energy	LDP2: ED9	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	- SSE Renewables Sustainable Development Fund - Scottish Power Renewables Community Benefit Fund - Social Investment Scotland - Scottish Government's CARES Scheme - SSE Renewable Skills Fund	Yes
E	Expanded Peebles economic footprint	LDP2: ED1	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	- SOSE Grant funding - Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal - Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal	Yes
Stream Two - Getting Around								
F	Active Travel improvements	LDP2: EP4, EP6, EP12	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10				Yes
F1	Everyday Journeys		££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Sustrans Transport Scotland Regional Transport Partnerships Scottish Borders Council	- Active Travel Transformation Fund (granted) - Sustrans Places for Everyone - Sustrans Pocket Places	Yes

# 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan 2024-2033

Project		Policy Context	Cost	Timescale 1-3 = short [1 = <12months] 4-6 = medium [5 = 3-5 years] 7-10 = long [10 = 10+ years]	Status	Key Players / Potential Partners	Potential Funding	Further community engagement required [Yes / No]
F2	Destination Journeys		££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Destination Tweed	- Connecting Threads - Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal (granted) - Parks4Life Community Fund	On-going
G	Transport infrastructure improvements	LDP2: EP4						
G1	Public transport		£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Borders Buses	- Sustrans Places for Everyone - Sustrans Pocket Places	Yes
G2	Parking	LDP2: IS7	£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Local Councillors	- Sustrans Places for Everyone - Sustrans Pocket Places	Yes
Stream Three - Open for Business								
H	Local Businesses Boost	LDP2: ED3, ED4, ED5	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council	SOSE Grant funding	No
I	Creative Industries Cluster	LDP2: ED7	£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Creative Arts Business Network	- SOSE Grant funding - Creative Scotland - Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal – Research, Development and Innovation threads	No
J	Tourism	LDP2: ED7, EP4, EP8, EP12	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		South East Scotland Transport Partnership Go Tweed Valley	- SOSE Grant funding - HES	No
Stream Four - A Fair Community								
K	Town Centre Regeneration	LDP2: EP9	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Local Councillors Retailers Association Tweeddale Access Panel	- SBC - The Shared Prosperity Fund - Sustrans Places for Everyone - Sustrans Pocket Places - HES - SBC - Neighbourhood Support Fund - Parks4Life Community Fund	Yes
L	South Peebles	LDP2: ED5	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Peebles Community Trust	SBC - The Shared Prosperity Fund	Yes
M	Community Hospital	LDP2: PMD1, PMD2	£££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		NHS Borders SBC Health & Social Care Partnership	- NHS Borders - SBC – the Shared Prosperity Fund	No
N	Field Sports Infrastructure Upgrade	n/a	££	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Peebles Rugby Club Peebles Football Club Peebles Rovers Club Tweeddale Rovers Club Peebles County Cricket Club	- ClubSport - SportScotland	Yes
O	Review of public and community indoor space	n/a	£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Local Councillors		No
P	Life-long learning skills, development and training	n/a	£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		Scottish Borders Council Borders TSI Skills Development Scotland Borders College	- SBC - The Shared Prosperity Fund - SSE Renewable Skills Fund - SBC - Neighbourhood Support Fund	No
Q	Green and food security	LDP2: ED7, EP11, EP13, EP17	£	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		The Food Bank SOSE SBC (Growing Champion and Communities team) Greener Peebles Tweeddale Youth Action Peeblesshire Youth Trust	- SBC - The Shared Prosperity Fund - SBC - Neighbourhood Support Fund	No

## Annex 1 – Consultation, opinion gathering and data analysis

### 1.1 – Development and implementation of the Peebles Town Action Plan 2016-2021

Since its formation in 2010 the Peebles Community Trust has spearheaded a programme of community engagement – supported by the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council and the Peebles Civic Society – initially in scoping out the purpose and structure of the Peebles Community Trust, then development of a Vision for Peebles. In 2014 this formed the starting point for development of the 1<sup>st</sup> Peebles Town Action Plan (a programme of prioritised actions) and a first stage draft of a Peebles Whole Town Master Plan (a diagnostic document establishing standards and thresholds for the future development of the town). These were published in March and May 2016 respectively.

In working up these documents what we might now call the Peebles Placemaking Team (a group of volunteers drawn primarily from amongst the officers of the Community Trust, the Community Council and the Civic Society) established an engagement process that included a roughly annual Open Forum event held in the Burgh Hall (an exhibition of posters detailing ongoing changes in the town, accompanied by debates, round-table discussions, and opinion capture), supported by periodic street-side engagement (High Street and outside the two main supermarkets), and occasional paper and online surveys as required.

The Peebles Town Action Plan 2016-2021 comprised 18 key initiatives, seven of which were fully implemented during the plan period, substantial progress achieved in a further eight, and limited progress in the remaining three. Plan implementation was deemed to provide substantial benefits to the town, a significant uptick in funding for community projects, and proof of the value of such community-led planning.

During this period of Plan implementation the PCT headed up a number of project initiatives which themselves involved considerable community engagement and survey. These include:

- ❑ **Co-working and training centre:** In 2017, 18 & 19 the PCT headed up public engagement exercises in support of the potential purchase by the community of all or part of the 5.5acre site of the former March Street Mills. Information gathered was used to inform the application for registration of a Community Right to Buy (CRtB) under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act, predicated on development of part of the site as a community owned Co-working space and training centre, and retention on the site of the former mill workers allotments, alongside housing development and other economic use. The application was supported by 900 signatories. The decision by the Scottish Government to support the PCT application was successfully challenged in the courts by the site owner, and the application was controversially withdrawn from the register by the Government in mid-2022, and the site sold to a developer.
- ❑ **Community woodland:** The PCT commissioned community engagement supporting an application for purchase of the 17acre Eshiels Community Wood by the community as a biodiversity asset and education and training facility. Purchase from Forestry and Land Scotland, with the support of the Scottish Land Fund and Forestry and Land Scotland, was completed in 2019, and the wood has been run as a community asset ever since.
- ❑ **Community Hub:** In early 2019 the PCT headed up community engagement to purchase the former Ex-Servicemen's Club for re-purposing as a Community Hub.

The Ex-Servicemen's Club had entered into administration in August 2018 and, with the support of the members of the Club, the PCT with funding from the Scottish Land Fund completed this purchase in late 2019. At its AGM of that year the purchase was unanimously approved by the 110 PCT members attending. In subsequent years the PCT has undertaken a number of related further engagement exercises to inform plans for community use, refurbishment and development of the Hub.

- ❑ **Multi-use off-road path:** From 2019 the PCT headed up, with support from Sustrans, preparatory research and design work for the development of the 7km Eddleston Water Multi-use Path, contracting specialist consultants and undertaking community engagement and survey work associated with the project. Funding of £2.2m was secured, and the path constructed over 2022 and early 2023 by SBc Contracts, and opened in April 2023.
- ❑ **Active Travel Study:** In autumn 2020 the PCT headed up a study, funded by Sustrans, to pathfind a connection through Peebles between the Tweed Valley Railway Path and the Eddleston Water Path. During 2021 this project was expanded, responding to changed national policy priorities, to embrace a review of Active Travel opportunities across the whole settlement of Peebles. The PCT managed consultants and took responsibility for undertaking community engagement. The final study report was completed in November 2022. Engagement comprised a wide range of forms – online surveys, surveys of High School children, primary school children, parents of school children, Peebles businesses, exhibition and drop-in sessions, workshops, neighbourhood streetside surveys, and High Street and supermarket engagement events. Responses were collated from over 1,000 Peebles residents.
- ❑ **Imagining the future project:** In late 2020 and the first quarter of 2021 the PCT collaborated in an initiative of Community Land Scotland to locate creative practitioners in six communities across Scotland to explore different approaches to community engagement relating to community ownership and placemaking. Graphic designer Jess Parker worked with Peebles youth groups and families with children to envision better presentation and use of space across Peebles, resulting in innovative feedback, and the development of the Imagining the Future Map: Ideas for a Better Peebles – a mechanism for prompting debate amongst young people, and capturing their ideas. This formed part of the report “In Our Hands” produced by Community Land Scotland<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.2 – Development the Peebles Town Action Plan 2024-2034

Updating of the Peebles Town Action Plan 2016-2021 has been undertaken between January 2021 and July 2024. A range of engagement tools has been used to capture the views of Peebles residents, including online and paper surveys, undertaking streetside engagement, round table debates, and Open Forum events. The process continued throughout 2023. The scheduling of these events is summarised in the table below.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.communitylandscotland.org.uk/resources/in-our-hands-community-ownership-in-the-south-of-scotland/>

### Peebles Placemaking Team community engagement events

Sep	2020	Covid-emergency community response survey
Sep	2020	Active Travel community survey
Oct	2020	Active Travel High School survey
Oct	2020	School Brae Hub Arts & Crafts Skills Base survey
Jan-Apr	2021	Owning Our Future project - Ideas Map of Peebles
Mar	2021	Active Travel - community survey (76 responses)
Jun	2021	Active Travel - primary school hands-up survey (326 responses)
Jun & Sep	2021	Active Travel - Peebles High School survey (253 responses)
Jul/Aug	2021	Active Travel - suburbs survey (face to face plus 81 online)
Aug	2021	Active Travel - business survey, Town Centre and estates (39 responses)
Oct	2021	March Street Mills - revisiting community purchase
Oct	2021	streetside Place Standard Tool community engagement events
Oct-Dec	2021	Place Standard Tool survey (285 responses)
Nov	2021	Active Travel drop-in sessions
Nov	2021	Open Forum (about 100 attendees)
Feb	2022	Open Forum (about 100 attendees)
Oct	2022	Place Plan and Greater Peebles engagement
Mar/Apr	2023	x4 Place Plan drop-in sessions
Mar/Apr	2023	x6 Place Plan round table debates (6 x 8)
Apr	2023	Open Forum (about 40 attendees)

At the core of this engagement process has been the use of the Scottish Government's Place Standard Tool<sup>2</sup> as an online, paper and interview survey tool in a survey conducted over the winter of 2021 ([see below](#)).

A number of other project specific surveys and community engagement programmes have also been conducted to inform this process – Active Travel, Co-working, Skills Base, the Owning Our Future project, community ownership, etc.<sup>3</sup>.

Analysis of the outputs was used to generate revised needs and priorities for the town, mapped within a proposed strategic framework. This framework for further developed through a programme of roundtable debates, meetings with key community groups, and an Open Forum event to firm up the overall plan – summarised below.

- ❑ **Open Forum events:** Post the Covid-emergency the Peebles Placemaking Team continued its programme of Open Forums, with events held in November 2021, February 2022 and April 2023 at which poster presentations were made updating residents on changed policies, strategies and developments, wide-ranging

<sup>2</sup> [www.ourplace.scot](http://www.ourplace.scot)

<sup>3</sup> Supplementary project focused studies and surveys conducted or headed up by the PCT

2016 March St Mills community purchase survey  
 2017 March St Mills community potential development survey  
 2020 Summary of makeup of building stock of Peebles  
 2020 Summary of Peebles experience with flooding  
 2021 Owning Our Future project - Ideas Map of Peebles  
 2022 Field Sports - Recreational Opportunities  
 2023 Peebles Active Travel Study

discussions held on matters of current concern, and data collated on issues to be captured and addressed within the updated Town Action Plan. Attendance was 100, 100 and 40. Throughout this period the PCT, Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council and the Peebles Civic Society have regularly posted information articles in the monthly Peebles Life magazine (delivered to over 4,000 Peebles households) and other local print and social media.

- ❑ **Place Standard Tool survey<sup>4</sup>:** Running from December 2021 to February 2022 the Peebles Placemaking Team surveyed public opinion using the Place Standard Tool as an online, paper and interview survey tool, and undertaking associated streetside engagement, and round table debates. At the core of this the survey generated 290 survey responses (238 online responses, 36 paper questionnaire responses from predominantly older residents, and 18 streetside graphic responses from predominantly younger residents) from householders shown to be geographically representative of the community. Together with comments and responses received during the Open Forums and other engagement events these also generated over 1,000 written comments on likes, dislikes and change relating to Peebles and its future. Based on analysis of survey, together with research and interview data, the Peebles Placemaking Team was able to prioritise concerns, challenges and opportunities, bringing forward about 150 actions prioritised by the community.
- ❑ **Peebles Placemaking Team community engagement**
  - 285 responses to Place Standard Tool questionnaire survey
  - 240+ attendees at 3 Open Forum events
  - 1,000+ statements from residents on the town and its future development
  - 48+ attendees at round table debates.

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<sup>4</sup> The Place Standard Tool survey scores 14 reflections of town services and characteristics on a scale of 1 to 7, with a score of 7 indicating that things are near perfect (for example town amenities) and a score of 1 reflecting the need for huge improvement.















## 1.3 – Outputs of the Place Standard Tool Survey

### 1.3.1 The Place Standard Tool ([www.ourplace.scot](http://www.ourplace.scot))

The Place Standard Tool has been developed by the Scottish Government as a simple framework to structure conversations about place, based around 14 questions. Versions of it are used in many places around the globe. It allows people to think about the physical elements of a place (such as the buildings, spaces, and transport) as well as the social aspects (like whether people feel they have a say in decision making). The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing people to consider all the elements of a place in a methodical way. The tool pinpoints the assets of a place as well as areas where a place could improve.

It scores 14 characteristics of place, in five categories – movement, space, resources, civic and stewardship. A score of 7 indicates a characteristic is well provided for, and a score of 1 indicates much improvement is required.

#### The elements of the Place Standard Tool

Categories	Place Standard Themes	What the Design and Development Process could consider or enhance.
Movement	 <b>Moving Around</b>	Strategic cycle routes, local cycle routes, footpaths, pavements, active travel networks, connectivity, desire lines, destinations, permeability, surfaces, experience, accessibility, catering for different needs.
	 <b>Public Transport</b>	Local, regional, interconnection, commuting, infrastructure, sustainable travel, interchange between public transport & active travel, modal shifts in transport.
	 <b>Traffic and Parking</b>	Public realm experience, integrated, safe, controlled, vehicular speed & noise, perceptual barriers, pedestrian priority, technology, deliveries, uplift, loading, cycling, charging, types & organisation of parking.
Space	 <b>Streets and Spaces</b>	Quality of public realm, public space, legibility, orientation, wayfinding, street hierarchies and experience, character, vibrant, usability, inclusivity, multi-functionality, street frontage, thresholds, materials, boundaries.
	 <b>Natural Space</b>	Parks & open space, natural landscape, visual connection, existing features or landforms, access & connectivity, climate resilience, ecosystems, blue & green infrastructure, biodiversity, growing, productive spaces, educational benefits.
	 <b>Play and Recreation</b>	Variety & quality of play & recreation provision across age groups, care & maintenance, site features, indoor & outdoor sport, health & fitness, seating, social.
Resources	 <b>Facilities and Services</b>	Education, health facilities, social care, lifetime support, access & connectivity, mixed use, range & variety, associations, quality of services, sustainable provision, adaptation, healthy food, utilities, communications, repair, waste & recycling.
	 <b>Work and Economy</b>	Active local economy, quality of employment, training opportunities, work spaces, working from home, access to education, community enterprise, third sector, entrepreneurship, wider impact, local businesses.
	 <b>Housing and Community</b>	Relationship with local area, range of tenures, types & sizes, adaptability, social integration, shared resources, ongoing management, community assets, provision of communal facilities, energy & sustainability.
	 <b>Social Interactions</b>	Social spaces (indoor & outdoor), local groups & organisations, public spaces, informal social space, communal activities, welcoming spaces, tackling inequalities, cohesion.
Civic	 <b>Identity and Belonging</b>	Culture, heritage, topography, landscape, landmarks, gateways, design codes, local architectural styles / distinctiveness, perception, legibility, encouraging diversity, sharing networks.
	 <b>Feeling Safe</b>	Passive surveillance, reactivation of derelict spaces, weather, climate emergency, routes & access, boundaries, play, connections, trust, care.
Stewardship	 <b>Care and Maintenance</b>	Rights & responsibilities, public & private, housing management, climate emergency, weather events, long-term occupation, operational costs, procurement, longevity, fitness for purpose, communication, everyday care.
	 <b>Influence and Control</b>	Consultation, self-initiation, long-term management, community ownership, community capacity building, evaluation & ongoing improvement.

A short-hand version of the standard is shown below.

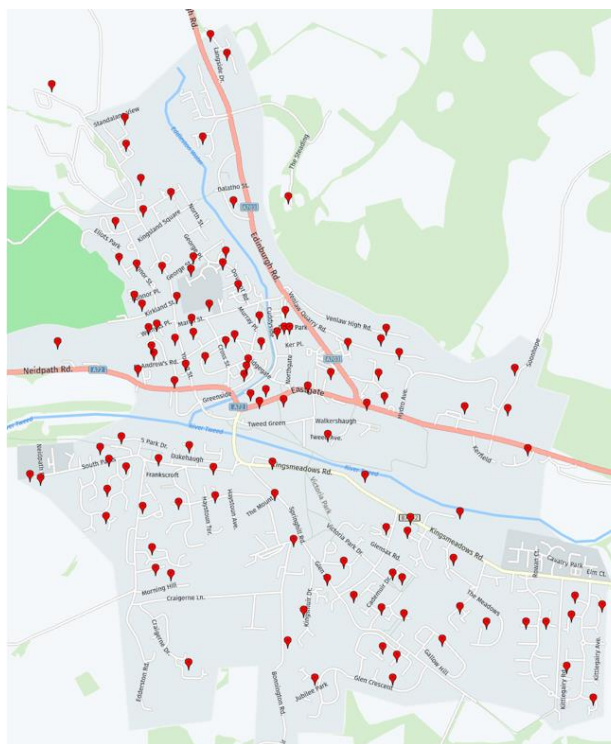
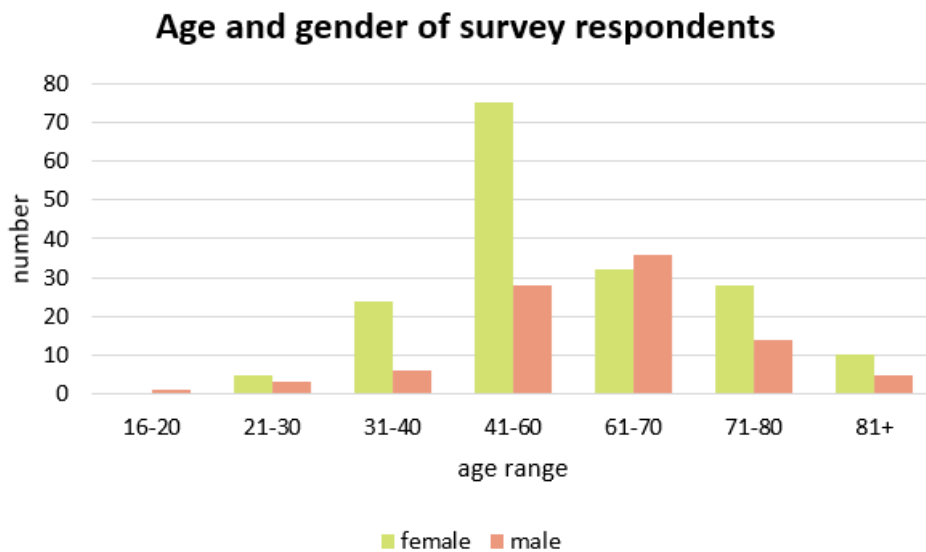
Can I easily walk and cycle around using good-quality routes?	Moving around
Does public transport meet my needs?	Public transport
Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?	Traffic and parking
Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?	Streets and spaces
Can I regularly experience good-quality natural space?	Natural space
Can I access a range of space with opportunities for play and recreation?	Play and recreation
Do facilities and amenities meet my needs?	Facilities and amenities
Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access good-quality work?	Work and local economy
Do the homes in my area support the needs of the community?	Housing and community
Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?	Social contact
Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel I belong?	Identity and belonging
Do I feel safe here?	Feeling safe
Are buildings and spaces well cared for?	Care and maintenance
Do I feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better?	Influence and sense of control

### 1.3.2 Survey performance

The survey, conducted over Dec 2021-Feb 2022, attracted 290 responses.

The age and gender distribution of respondents is shown below. Almost twice as many women responded as men, and disproportionately so in the age groups 31-40, 41-60, and over 70.

The distribution of respondents by postcode suggests that participation was broadly representative of the population distribution of Peebles.



plot of the postcodes  
from which 275  
responses were  
received

plus responses from fifteen  
other outlier postcodes  
within Tweeddale

### 1.3.3 Place Standard Tool Survey outputs

The numerical results of the survey have been plotted as histograms – shown in the figure below.

In these histograms of scores against each of the 14 place characteristics:

- ☐ where most scores are to the right of each distribution (5,6,7), provision can be taken as good to very good;
- ☐ where most scores are gathered towards the left of each distribution (1,2,3,4), the situation is not good and there is significant need for improvement;

- ❑ where scores are gathered towards the middle of each distribution, the overall message is that the situation is unsatisfactory, and improvements are expected;
- ❑ where scoring is widely spread across the distribution, it is indicative of widely differing experiences and opinions across the participants, which in itself is worrying, and a pointer to a need for more detailed explanation.

Survey results show:

- ❑ **High scores** – “nature space”, “feeling safe”, “identify & belonging”, “facilities & amenities”
- ❑ **Low scores** – “work & local economy”, “traffic & parking”, “housing & community”
- ❑ **Moderate scores** – “streets & spaces”, “social contact”, “care & maintenance”, “moving around”;
- ❑ **Worryingly wide range of scores** – “housing & community”, “influence & sense of control”, “public transport”.

Looking at these results in terms of the five categories:

- ❑ **Movement** – there is a wide spread of views shown here, with many people dissatisfied with current provision
- ❑ **Space** – provision under space is considered to be pretty good
- ❑ **Resources** – resource provision has to be reckoned as a mixed bag, with worrying situations in relation to “work & local economy”, and “housing & community”, but broadly positive responses under “social contact”, and “facilities & amenities”
- ❑ **Civic** – “feeling safe”, and “identity & belonging” rank particularly highly
- ❑ **Stewardship** – “care & maintenance” is ranked as good, but there is a particularly clumped distribution of scores around 3, 4, & 5 under “influence & sense of control” which is of particular concern.

The signals provided by these numerical results are given much greater definition by the 1,000 plus comments also collected through the survey and other sources. Together these have been used to develop a generalised descriptive profile of the town against the 14 Place Standard Tool elements – shown as [Annex 2](#).

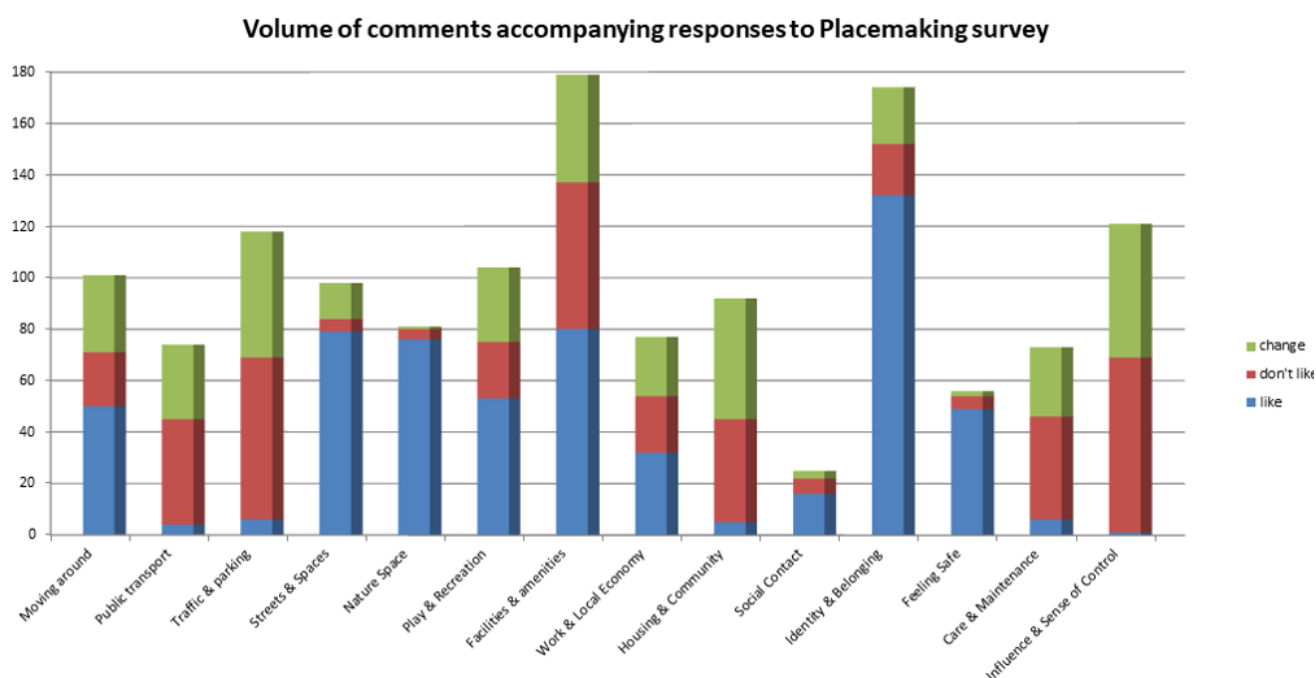
# Scoring from the Place Standard Tool survey



### 1.3.4 Comments received

The comments received are classified as representing a “like”, a “dislike”, and a signal for “change”. They are listed against the 14 elements of the Place Standard Tool, and some have a more general perspective. These likes, dislikes and change signals have been summed and plotted for each of the 14 elements of the Place Standard Tool and are shown below. They represent another, simple, representation of public opinion.

## Place Plan Survey 2022 – sense to which people are concerned



From this plot, some elements have attracted far more comments than others. For example, there have been many likes in relation to “identity & sense of belonging” – predominantly positive, with few comments calling for change. By contrast, there have also been many comments relating to “facilities and amenities”, but with almost as many dislikes as likes, and a significant number of comments calling for change. This element is something of a catch-all, and comments range from concerns about the lack of public toilet facilities, over centralisation of shops and facilities in the town centre, and limited facilities and services on the periphery of the settlement – particularly south of the river.

Other significant signals are an overwhelming negative view of “influence & sense of control”, with a significant number of comments calling for change. Likewise, for “traffic & parking”, where most comments reflect dissatisfaction and a call for change, with a particular focus on illegal parking (a call to bring back parking wardens), traffic congestion (notably along the High Street, but also over Tweed Bridge), and an imbalance between provision for pedestrians and motor vehicles throughout town, but particularly in residential areas.

Other elements with high numbers of comments showing dissatisfaction of the situation and calls for change include “housing & community” (an area of particularly vocal comment – lack of affordable housing, poor standard of much older housing, poor quality of much new housing, significant imbalance between new builds and provision of other social and

economic infrastructures), “public transport” (need for improvements in late night buses, connections to Borders General Hospital, and in-town bus services), and “care & maintenance” (potholes, general road maintenance, narrow and obstructed pavements). Relatively lesser comment on “work & local economy”, but dislikes and call for change outweigh likes. There are many positive comments about “moving about” but a nearly equal volume of comments expressing dislike and calls for change (a split between likes and dislikes of the focus on mountain biking and cycle related events, concern about lack of provision for safe cycling around town, aka Active Travel provision, positive response to the multi-use paths and the addition of the Eddleston Water path, and concerns that more and more of the town is falling outside the concept of a 20 minute neighbourhood).

### 1.3.5 Developing Action Plan priorities

All the above information has been used to draw up a long-list of possible actions to make Peebles a more resilient and sustainable place, and from this long-list a short-list of about 150 actions has been brought forward to populate the Action Plan.

These have been sorted into categories and this used to help develop the overall Plan Framework, also taking into consideration international, national and regional plans and strategies. This process is explained in **Annexes 4 & 6**.

The result of this process has been finalisation of a strategic plan framework, to which 20 core interventions and initiatives are linked. The 150 prioritised actions brought forward link to one or more of these core projects, but while the nub of each initiative is likely to be a core package of actions – often involving significant investment – most actions are of a significantly smaller scale, but nonetheless contribute to and consolidate the scale of community benefits expected to be derived from such initiatives. They form the “glue” that makes things happen. As such, many of these actions can be taken forward by community groups, social enterprises, and local businesses.

Considerable effort has been invested in developing the plan logic and its framework. The 150 actions brought forward is not an exclusive list. Thus any group seeking to promote an initiative or project should look to the underlying logic and structure behind the framework to identify where a particular project might fit in, and thus whether or not the sense of the project is supported by the Action Plan. Again, **Annexes 4, 5 & 8** provide more detail.

# Annex 2 – Generalised town profile based on community responses to the Peebles Place Standard Tool Survey

Can I easily walk and cycle around using good-quality routes?	Moving around
Does public transport meet my needs?	Public transport
Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?	Traffic and parking
Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?	Streets and spaces
Can I regularly experience good-quality natural space?	Natural space
Can I access a range of space with opportunities for play and recreation?	Play and recreation
Do facilities and amenities meet my needs?	Facilities and amenities
Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access good-quality work?	Work and local economy
Do the homes in my area support the needs of the community?	Housing and community
Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?	Social contact
Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel I belong?	Identity and belonging
Do I feel safe here?	Feeling safe
Are buildings and spaces well cared for?	Care and maintenance
Do I feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better?	Influence and sense of control

# Moving around

Walking and cycling are good for our health and the environment. Pleasant and safe routes can encourage walking and cycling.

- *Are there enough routes for walking and cycling?*
- *Are walking and cycling given priority over cars and other traffic as much as possible?*
- *Do routes provide obvious and direct links with the places that people want to go, such as schools, shops, parks and public transport?*
- *Are routes good quality, attractive and pleasant to use?*
- *Do routes meet the needs of everyone, whatever their age or mobility, and is there seating for those who need it?*
- *Do routes feel safe to use all year round and at different times of the day?*

## Can I easily walk and cycle around using good-quality routes?

4

- Walking, cycling and wheeling are not prioritised in the town. While it is possible to walk, cycle and wheel between key places, this is neither straightforward nor comfortable. Peebles is only moderately good for walking, relatively poor for cycling, and difficult for wheeling – there is much room for improvement
- That said, Peebles is 18 months into an holistic whole town review of active travel routes, standards and opportunities, which has highlighted problem areas, suggested a range of remedial measures (physical, routing, signage, nudges towards changed behaviour), and scoped out and costed infrastructure modifications, designs and extensions with indications of necessary investment. Consultation on design options continues.
- Peebles is located some two miles west of the internationally recognised mountain biking centre of Glentress, and has multi-use paths extending to both the east and north of Peebles which are a stimulus to active travel. The town also lies at the centre of a well-developed network of core paths incorporating drove roads, former railways lines, river paths, etc.
- Routes between town centre and residential areas can be attractive often involving burn-side paths along the Eddleston Water (the Cuddy) or the Tweed river and over stream bridges. The paths are adequately maintained and feel safe to use. There can be occasional and unavoidable issues with flooding. There could be increased provision of seats for those with age and mobility issues.

# Public transport

Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for all communities. Good public transport encourages people to get around in ways that are better for the environment.

- *Are public transport services frequent and reliable?*
- *Do they take people to where they want to go?*
- *Is public transport safe and easy to access, whatever their age or mobility?*
- *Are bus stops and train stations in convenient places and within walking distance of people's homes and is there seating for those who need it?*
- *Do bus and train stations have what is needed, for example, toilets, secure parking and cycle storage?*
- *Can everyone afford public transport services?*
- *Are facilities and vehicles of good quality and well maintained?*

## Does public transport meet my needs?

5

- Border Buses services to Galashiels and Edinburgh are every half hour, accessible and reliable. Local in-town services are considered to be OK, but serve a relatively narrow but important constituency.
- Public transport to the region's principal hospital (Borders General Hospital) is cumbersome and arguably poor.
- Two taxi services operate in town, and a community transport system is available for community groups.
- There is congestion at the Peebles bus stop at the Eastgate and out of service buses are parked up at three out of four of the town's main car parks. Given its rural status, many school pupils are bused to school and this puts additional pressure on public transport – with many vehicles only used for the school run and parked up for much of the day. The logistics of school bus runs not optimised, with congestion around the schools. There is an unreasonable expectation (by the Council) that pupils will be dropped to the school front door.
- Commuter traffic to Edinburgh often makes use of free-of-charge town car parks to leave their vehicles all day while they use shared or public transport to Edinburgh. This puts pressure on parking spaces especially on the weekly market day.
- There are currently no accessible toilet facilities in the town for those using public transport.
- Bus fares can be significant, especially for regular commuters – although some reduced fare options are available: there are pensioner bus passes and free travel for under-22s and those with Young Scots cards, including those in early years of work experience and attending college.

# Traffic and parking

Too much traffic can cause problems for people who live in, work in, or visit an area. Traffic and parking arrangements that allow people to move around safely can help people to get the most out of a place.

- *Do people take priority over cars and other traffic?*
- *What impact does traffic have on health and wellbeing in the place (you might want to think about access, noise and air quality)?*
- *Is parking in a safe and secure location?*
- *Are traffic-calming measure used effectively to benefit the community?*
- *Are there too many cars and too much traffic in the area?*

## Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?

3

- Priority is given to cars throughout the town - a situation we are trying to change.
- Whilst there are four main public car parks across the town, many local car owners use street side parking, and most drivers visiting the centre of town (the High St, Northgate, and Old Town) favour kerbside parking, frequently disregarding double and single line restrictions and disabled spaces. The High Street is something of a free-for-all. There are no traffic wardens and the police have insufficient resources to take on the role. The Council says traffic wardens are not cost-effective under current budgetary constraints.
- For such a small town (9,000+), there is a disproportionately large number of complaints about traffic jams on the High Street, mainly associated with combinations of school run and commuting.
- Parking is basically secure, but every few months there is evidence of anti-social behaviour, such as key-scratching cars and knocking off side mirrors, and thefts of mountain bikes from backs or tops of cars, and sometimes lockups.
- Traffic calming measures could be extended and are included in the active travel study proposals. The introduction of a pilot 20mph limit during Covid emergency was a significant success, despite some non-compliance, and has a positive impact on pedestrian comfort and safety.
- There is a major problem in facilitating the east-west movement of vehicular traffic across the town in both directions. Traffic generally needs to go along the High Street of the town both to and from the north.
- The footprint of the town was largely developed in a pre-motor car era. Some residential streets have become access roads to new housing estates and are now effectively one-way thoroughfares. A general lack of vehicular permeability presents ongoing problems.

# Streets and spaces

Buildings, landmarks, greenery, views and natural landscape can all help to create an attractive, distinctive place that people enjoy. These features can also help people to find their way around.

- *Do the buildings or public spaces make being in or passing through the area a pleasant experience?*
- *Are there positive features such as local landmarks, historic buildings, public squares or natural features that make the place look attractive?*
- *Do poor aspects such as derelict buildings, vacant land or excessive noise reduce the effect that these positive features have?*
- *Do features and routes help people find their way around?*
- *Is it much harder to enjoy the place at night, in different seasons, or during bad weather?*

## Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?

5

- The centre of town is an attractive historic Borders mixed landscape of largely Victorian properties and older heritage buildings, and includes extensive parkland. The town is located across the great River Tweed and its tributary the Eddleston Water (the Cuddy), in a secluded basin surrounded by rolling hills with farming on its lower slopes and heather moorland higher up.
- The town centre contrasts markedly with an ever-expanding footprint of post-war and modern estates. There has been a 37% increase in the built area of the settlement between 2000 and 2015.
- There are many local landmarks, historic buildings, public spaces and natural features in and surrounding the town that make the place look attractive, although there is limited evidence in the newer parts of the town.
- Signage to town features and car parks is not as good as it could be, with impacts on the visitor/tourism experience.
- The centre of town at night is pleasant and can be lively but feels generally safe. There are nine pubs and as many eating establishments in the town centre, plus a small theatre. But this contrasts with the almost complete absence of retail and hospitality establishments beyond the three main town centre streets: there is only one corner shop in the estates to the north and south of the town, plus the Hydro Hotel and the Golf Club on the outskirts.
- The town hosts cycling events quite frequently, and there are periodic funfair and other public events. While these occasionally invoke complaints – too many people, too much noise, High Street closed off – they form a vibrant element of the full calendar of events across the year.

# Natural space

Natural space includes parks and woodlands, fields, streams and rivers, green space alongside paths and roads, and tree-lined streets. These can be good for wildlife, improve air quality and benefit our health and wellbeing.

- *Is there a variety of natural spaces that are available to people?*
- *Are there opportunities for people to experience and have contact with nature?*
- *Is the natural space attractive and well maintained and is there seating for those who need it?*
- *Is the natural space affected by negative features such as excessive noise or poor air quality?*
- *Is a range of natural space accessible to everyone, whatever their age, mobility, disability, sex, ethnic group, religious belief or sexuality?*

## Can I regularly experience good-quality natural space?

6

- The town has evolved at the centre of a handsome landscape setting within an upland basin through which the River Tweed and its tributary the Eddleston Water flow. Open countryside is accessible on foot (within no more than 15 minutes from all parts of the town), by bicycle, by bus and by car. A wide range of natural spaces and habitats can be accessed in this way.
- Access is via a range of core, secondary and open country paths – the former managed and maintained, the latter less so. Whilst more seating/rest spots could be made available, general provision is in keeping with the nature of open countryside.
- The experience of the countryside is unaffected by negative features, noise or air pollution (other than periodic – e.g. every few years – tree felling/forestry maintenance).
- Accessibility for everyone is encouraged, with considerable provision, most notably in the town parks (though not all) and the multi-use paths running to the east and north of the town. A recently established Cycling for All Ages project operates in the town: two rickshaw cycles at this early stage in the project, where a registered "driver" can take one or two people with limited mobility through age or disability on tours of the town and surrounding countryside.

# Play and recreation

Good places encourage children to play and allow adults to enjoy leisure and sporting activities. Opportunities for play and recreation can improve the quality of our lives and our health.

- *What are the opportunities to take part in play and recreation? (You may want to think about specific groups such as teenagers, older people, children with disabilities and so on.)*
- *Are the spaces and facilities to support play and recreation of good quality, well maintained and used to their full potential?*
- *Are the spaces and facilities accessible and can everyone afford to use them?*
- *Are children able to challenge themselves and build their confidence while playing?*
- *Does the community welcome children playing outdoors?*
- *Is access to, or the feeling of safety within, spaces and facilities affected by the time of day or year?*

## Can I access a range of space with opportunities for play and recreation?

6

- The town has a good provision of organised sports and sports facilities (The Gytes, the High School, halls – tennis, football, rugby, cricket, swimming, badminton), plus the internationally recognised Glentress mountain biking just down the road, Go Ape (high wire/zip wire). There are also multi-use paths to the east and north of the town, and wide open spaces and right to roam on the outskirts.
- There are a number of playparks around the town, but the Council decided to focus investment on one big play park in the centre of the town, leaving perhaps half a dozen small neighbourhood playparks to fend for themselves, to atrophy, or to be dismantled – which has been frowned upon by much of the public.
- There are plenty of activities available for people of all ages and abilities, which are accessible, affordable and enjoyable. That said, if organised sports, climbing frames and group activities are not your thing, then places to hang out and other things to do, are arguably in shorter supply. Young people complain that there are not enough places where they can congregate, and not enough opportunity to use hang-out time productively / enjoyably – particularly in the evenings and on weekends.
- On balance there are high participation levels in play and recreation, but there is a significant proportion of the community, particularly of young people, that feel that their needs are not, or are only partially, supported.

Facilities and amenities are the things that we need to live and enjoy life. This can include shops, schools, nurseries, libraries, GP surgeries and places to eat, drink and meet friends. Access to facilities and amenities is important to support healthy, fulfilling lives.

- *Does a range of facilities and amenities meet a variety of different needs (for learning, health, shopping, relaxation, and so on?)*
- *Can everyone use the facilities and amenities, whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, disability, religious belief or sexuality?*
- *Are the facilities and amenities within a reasonable distance and easily accessible?*
- *Are they of good quality and well maintained?*
- *Are the facilities and amenities being used to their full potential to help to support a healthy lifestyle?*

- There is a wide range of facilities and amenities available to all in and around town – particularly in terms of sports and the outdoors, and places to eat, drink and meet friends. There is one theatre/cinema/arts centre.
- There are three primary schools and one large secondary school, a medical centre served by two GP practices of up to 14 GPs, plus a small medical facility (Hay Lodge Hospital), three dental practices, three nurseries and a library. There is a wide range of additional health and wellbeing services available – such as yoga, meditation, hypnotherapy, wellness, counselling, spa treatments – but all at a cost that is not within the budget of everybody, though these do contribute to a wide and mixed offer and experience.
- Shopping is limited to the centre of town, with a focus on providing for day visitors. There are two supermarkets, one food local store, and four "corner stores" (two outside the town centre). Overall this is pretty good provision, but is not sufficient for everyone. Shopping choice is limited, with the nearest wider retail opportunities are in Edinburgh 25 miles to the north, and Galashiels 20 miles to the east. Many households do their larger food shops in these out of town areas.
- Accessibility to facilities and amenities for those with disabilities is not as good as it could be, but in general accessibility to all is good.
- It is generally felt that more could be made of both the small medical facility and the services offered by the GP practices. It is not that they are under-performing, but greater integration could serve the community better. Care services, care in the community, and care homes, and provision for the elderly could be better integrated. The small medical facility at Hay Lodge is under-utilised, which is of particular concern given that the nearest A&E and general hospital is some 25 miles away. In addition, the limited local provision of managed care and old people's facilities means that many local households have old or infirm relatives who are in care many miles away from home – and often ill-served by public transport.

# Work and local economy

## Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access good-quality work?

2

Good-quality work offers important benefits through income, activity, social contact, sense of identity and job satisfaction. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively places where people want to spend time.

- *Is there an active local economy that helps to create different kinds of jobs?*
- *Are there opportunities for people to gain skills for work, such as education, training and volunteering?*
- *Can local people access job opportunities, whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, religious belief, sexuality or disability?*
- *Do local services such as jobcentres, recruitment agencies and affordable childcare help people to find and keep work?*
- *Are there opportunities and spaces for local businesses to start up and grow?*

- Peebles used to be the county town for Peeblesshire and a market town for an agricultural and rural economy, with its dominant in-town economy centred on the tweed textile industry. From the 1970s to the 2000s the town went from two thirds of its working population in work in Peebles to two thirds of its working population commuting ten or more kilometres to work (much of it in high earning professional, academic and managerial work in Edinburgh and surrounds).
- Today the local economy is dominated by low-paid retail and hospitality work, and many people who work in Peebles cannot afford to live here. A significant number of people operate one and two-man building trades businesses working from homes in the town, and a range of others run small home-based businesses producing and/or selling a range of consumer products, or offering (often natural resource) consultancy services to national and international public sector clients.
- There are limited local work opportunities, and still fewer that have clear career progression. Local training and skills development opportunities are limited, though such opportunities are on offer 20 to 30 miles distant – in the Central Belt and through establishments based in Galashiels, Hawick, etc.. The logistics of accessing these distant provisions are complex and expensive. Local volunteering opportunities are available through a range of community organisations, but could be better organised and coordinated.
- Local job opportunities are few, regardless of age, ethnicity, etc.. Some community based efforts assist the disadvantaged and others to gain work experience, but there is no real graduation route to long-term or independently sustainable employment.
- Local child care provision is varied and expensive.
- There are few opportunities or spaces for local business to start up and grow.

# Housing and community

## Do the homes in my area support the needs of the community?

3

The homes that are available locally will affect who lives in an area and how a place looks and feels. Good places have a mix of quality homes for families and people of different ages and incomes.

- *Is housing a positive feature of the area?*
- *Is there a range of good-quality housing available for different sizes of household?*
- *Is there a range of housing tenancies (rented, privately owned, and so on) to meet different needs of people, whatever their income?*
- *Do the different housing types work well with one another?*
- *Does a variety of housing allow people to stay in the area as their needs change, or they grow older?*

- Peebles is a rural settlement comprising some 4,300 buildings, most of which are residential. The core of this settlement is a network of Victorian era terraces and villas, with mill worker accommodation added between the two world wars and up to the 1960s. More recently, construction has been largely modern housing estates. Overall this provides a mixed range of housing types and qualities that accommodate families of different sizes.
- The town centre architecture is distinctive. The Victorian and earlier properties throughout the town are of heritage value and are generally well constructed and present a particular regional, heritage and vernacular character to the settlement that is valued by residents and by visitors. But they fall well short of the energy and efficiency standards of modern housing and policies that aim to manage a fair transition to net zero. Post Victorian era property is of more limited design and heritage value, and much less distinctive.
- The qualities and characteristics of the town's housing stock have been studied in some detail in the recently completed Change Works for Peebles project.
- There are pockets of social housing, old people's homes, and care facilities, and some provision of affordable housing, but all fail to meet local demand. As a result, many people who work in Peebles cannot afford to live here and local families have elderly relatives placed in care facilities many miles away from Peebles.
- There are many, particularly older, properties under single or double occupancy that is out of kilter with space and amenity needs – in part reflecting the lack of locally available property that would allow households to downsize.
- Planning policies require that a minimum 25% of new houses should be "affordable" homes. This is largely upheld by the local Council. But what is built is sold or rented at rates that are far beyond what most locals would consider affordable, and does not allow many families to both live and work in Peebles.

# Social contact

Feeling isolated can be damaging to our health and wellbeing. Good places provide a variety of spaces to meet and spend time with others.

- *Which spaces provide opportunities for people to meet?*
- *Is there a range of different spaces (indoor, outdoor, purpose-built and more informal) where people can meet?*
- *Can these spaces be used at different times of the day, throughout the year, and in different types of weather?*
- *Do people from across the whole community and from different backgrounds mix together and get to know each other?*

## Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?

4

- Peebles is a bustling small town, with plenty of community and church halls, open spaces and hospitality venues – which are generally well used by a wide range of community organisations and events. But a significant proportion of the population does not regularly make use of these amenities/facilities. Most of those who miss out are from younger and older age groups and those on low income or otherwise identified as disadvantaged within the metrics of the Scottish index of multiple deprivation (SIMD). These particular demographic groups are relatively poorly catered for in the town, and this effectively limits social contact, and can result in significant loneliness and isolation.
- Children of primary and secondary school age often complain of limited spaces (indoor and outdoor) where they can congregate and socialise, particularly in the evenings, when groups are regularly required to disperse for fear of or because of actual anti-social behaviour. Facilities for older age groups to congregate and socialise are also limited and have reduced in recent years (in part due to council budget cuts).
- School premises (three primary schools and one large secondary school) are rarely available for use outside weekday day-time schedules and during holidays. This is a much under-utilised resource.
- The community's response to the recent Covid emergency was quick and adaptive, and covered not only the town but rural populations out to a radius of 10 miles or more. The calls on community support revealed a significant number of households that were disadvantaged in one form or another – with vulnerable and/or isolated residents, where existing care and support infrastructures struggled to meet their needs. In addition, a variety of exercises directly or indirectly targeting fuel poverty identified a significant rump of households clearly suffering long-term fuel poverty.

# Identity and belonging

Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel I belong?

5

How a place looks, its history and what other people think of the place can affect how we feel. A strong local identity can help us feel pride in our place, our community and in ourselves as a result.

- *Do people view the place positively?*
- *Are the history, heritage and culture of the place known and celebrated?*
- *Do local groups and networks help people feel involved positively in their community?*
- *Can people feel connected to their neighbours and community, whatever their background?*
- *Does everyone feel like they belong, whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, religious beliefs, sexuality or disability?*

- Residents and visitors are very positive about the town. Residents, whether Gutterbluids (born in the town) or Stoorifoots (incomers), have a strong affinity with the town and its traditions. This rapport is enhanced by a calendar of traditional events such as the Peebles March Riding and Beltane Queen Festival, the Christmas Lights and Market, the Agricultural Show and Highland Games. The town's positive identity is re-enforced by institutions, including the Guildry Corporation, Community Council, Rugby Club, Callants, etc., and by its landmarks. These include the Mercat Cross, Veitch's Corner, the Chambers Institution, the Parish Church, Tweed Bridge, the River Tweed itself, Hay Lodge Park and Victoria Park, Venlaw and the Hydro, the Eastgate Theatre, and Neidpath Castle.
- Local groups and networks help people get involved with the town, and the schools play an important role. But the traditions and institutions of the town are not easily available or presented in a packaged and accessible form, and are not immediately accessible to newcomers, who sometimes struggle in the first months and years to pick things up.
- Good neighbourliness is generally present, but people can be stand-offish and don't encourage inquisitiveness. It is relatively unusual for neighbours to have more than a nodding acquaintance with their neighbours. The main route to knowing your neighbours is through children. Peebles Resilience Group explicitly seeks to encourage good neighbourliness and identify those who might need extra help in emergencies, most commonly flood and ice, but also during the Covid-19 pandemic and power outages.
- Peebles would assess itself as having no overt discrimination or prejudices, but anyone a bit different tends to stand out in this predominantly traditional, conservative, white Christian community, and they may not feel as comfortable within the community as we might assume or profess. The last decade or so has seen an influx of workers from eastern Europe, and residents of south Asian and Far Eastern heritage, some of whom run and staff a number of takeaways in town. Some individuals may not be as well integrated into town affairs as others.

# Feeling safe

## Do I feel safe here?

5

How safe a place feels can affect people's wellbeing and how they spend their time in the place. Well-designed places can help make places feel safer and reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.

- *Are routes safe and well used at different times of the day and throughout the year?*
- *Are spaces overlooked by buildings that are well used, adding to a feeling of safety?*
- *Is the area free of empty or derelict property, crime and antisocial behaviour?*
- *Do people feel safe both at home and when out and about?*
- *Is the area safe for everyone, whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, religious beliefs, sexuality or disability?*

- In general terms the town is very safe and people feel comfortable moving around the town at any time of the day or night.
- But youngsters in particular can feel insecure – in the town centre during the evening or night, and when traversing unfamiliar parts of the town some distance from where they live. These issues can relate to being unsure of things when in the vicinity of adults who have been drinking or taking or having taken drugs. They can also be associated with groups of youngsters picking on lone kids or other groups of young people.
- Similarly, some adults can be wary of areas during dusk or night-time where lighting is poor.
- Older adults can be intimidated by groups of young people congregating in the centre of town or in open spaces and parks – particularly where they are rowdy, drinking or boisterous – though there is little evidence that such wariness is warranted / results in conflict.
- There are periodic outbreaks of vandalism, such as tipping things over, scratching cars, breaking bottles and so on, usually associated with a particular group of kids getting together regularly for a matter of weeks or a few months and causing a nuisance. Older kids also congregate around play parks in the evenings and at night, when drinking and drug taking can get badly out of hand. But vandalism can also be associated with younger adults, particularly when pubs and late night parties empty out onto the streets.
- There are next to no derelict buildings in or around town, and few problems associated with such sites.

Places that are well cared for can make us feel positive, while those that are not looked after properly can have the opposite effect. Proper maintenance arrangements allow people to feel supported and more positive about where they live.

- *Are facilities such as parks, public spaces or public properties well maintained in general?*
- *Are there any specific problems in the area, such as litter, vandalism, or dog mess?*
- *Are there good facilities for recycling and refuse storage and is collection well organised?*
- *Do local authorities, housing associations, landlords and residents know their responsibilities and take action when necessary?*
- *Is there an effective local residents' association?*

- In general public spaces and properties are well cared for and look good.
- But there are problems with litter, vandalism and dog mess, although the culprits are a small minority of residents and visitors.
- Streets are regularly cleaned and garbage collection is well organised. A recycling centre is located just outside town, and is well-used and supported.
- Road surfaces are poorly maintained, with potholes evident along most roads and pavements. A local authority town team service is tasked with dealing quickly with problems, but repairs seem to be low on the Council's priorities (and the service is known to be effected by persistent budget cuts).
- The local authority, local housing associations, landlords and residents are vigilant and responsive to care and maintenance issues.
- In some developments there are local residents' associations, but it is not known how effective these are. In some parts of town where area maintenance contracts are held by third parties problems have arisen in the past.

# Influence and sense of control

People's views about their local area should be heard. Having a voice in decision making and feeling able to make changes can help to build stronger communities and better places. Having a sense of control can make people feel positive about their lives.

- *Are people able to contribute to decisions that affect them?*
- *Is everyone able to contribute, whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, religious belief, sexuality or disability?*
- *Do local community services or groups allow people to get involved?*
- *Do organisations such as local authorities, health services or housing associations actively work with the community to understand their needs?*
- *Do local people feel listened to? Do people know how to be listened to?*

## Do I feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better?

1

- There are few institutional obstacles to participation in the process of decision making, but residents rarely take part – for multiple reasons that include structural constraints.
- Scottish Borders Council consistently seeks local opinions through surveys and consultations but we suspect that only a small number of people take part, and it tends to be the same ones that do. Most people have little understanding of local government processes and limited interest. But they are quick to criticise decisions that they disagree with, whether or not they have made an effort to inform themselves. The workings of the Council are held in low esteem, as are the processes of local government generally, and these attitudes extend to council officers and elected councillors. Typically, people express the opinion that the Council never listens to the views of locals or simply dismisses them. Where people do contact Councillors on personal issues they are usually complimentary about the response.
- The creation of the Local Development Plan (LDP) is the most common point of interaction between people and local government, alongside planning applications, and access to medical and care facilities. Input to the LDP is largely considered a waste of time, since such views would almost be always dismissed. Few people are familiar with the planning system, but often criticise decisions and decision-making. Opinions of the social care system are also less than complimentary, although those with a closer interaction with care services tend to be more supportive. Overall, this points to a general distrust of the Council and its representatives, albeit based on limited knowledge and understanding of how the authority operates, and little interest in learning more.
- There are in Peebles significant exceptions to these generalisations. Local organisations such as the Community Council, the Civic Society, the Peebles Community Trust do actively contribute to decisions that affect the town. But while membership is open to all, active involvement is limited, as illustrated by lack of volunteers for seats on the decision-making boards. That said, the Community Council is one of the largest in the Borders, the Civic Society had a pre-pandemic membership of more than 200 and Peebles Community Trust has 900+ members. But there is little direct community engagement with these organisations, and most households have other priorities, including working and raising families. There remains little sense of community empowerment or confidence in the systems of local democracy, and a common view that the Council has become distanced from the locality through successive local government reorganisations.

# Priorities for action

What are the main issues and priorities for change that you have identified?

1. Increase the role of local opinion in Council decision-making. Support bottom-up planning, Community Led Local Development, building and strengthening community capacity to fulfil these roles, and a significant change in the attitude of the Council and council officers – a shift away from the public view that council officers operate on the basis that they know best: they may be the professionals, but they need to acknowledge that communities feel disempowered.
2. More emphasis needs to be placed in making adequate space and facilities available in Peebles for economic activity, whether through industrial or business estates, or working from home, or from offices / workshops scattered around the town and surrounds. Working patterns and approaches to work are changing and there needs to be support for this with programmes to encourage entrepreneurship, bring in inward investment, encourage businesses to relocate to Peebles, and enable more of the skilled and ambitious people living in Peebles to work in Peebles.
3. Take a more radical look at how to create and support a resilient and sustainable community. The emphasis should be on embedding more affordable housing within the fabric of the town – not just more lower cost flats and houses, but placing them better within the social, economic and physical fabric of the community, and providing rewarding job opportunities in and around the settlement with long-term career progression and prospects.
4. Increase the provision of managed care facilities and better service the social, welfare and mental health needs of the aged and infirm, and by the same token young people in the town. Integrate the provision of medical, health and wellbeing services.

# Priorities for action

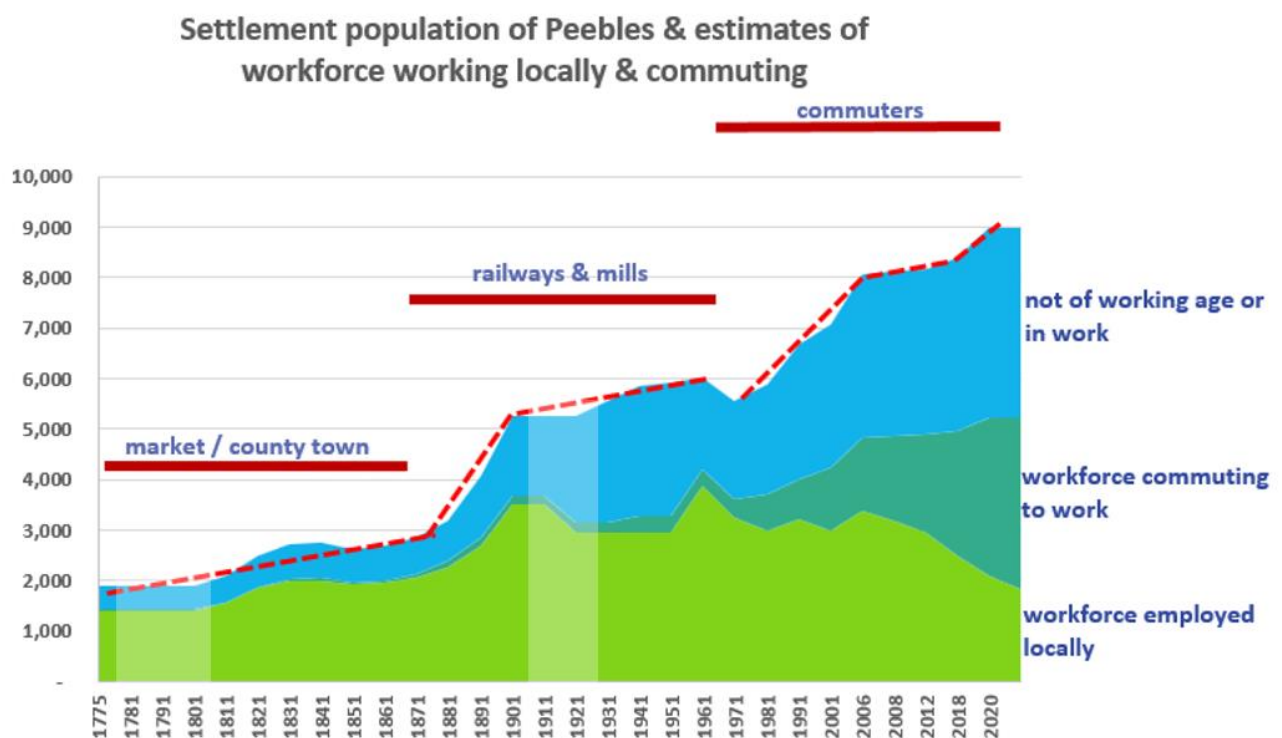
What actions could be taken to deal with these?

1. Ensure through tangible evidence that local democracy works, that the voice of the community does register and impact on decisions made in local government, care provision, health services and education.
2. Support for and investment in the local economy. Every bit of spare space seems to become new houses. Develop additional space and facilities in order to attract new companies to Peebles including higher salaried manufacturing and service businesses.
3. Re-balance the settlement. Two-thirds of workers commute to jobs outside Peebles; many jobs in Peebles are low paid and filled by workers who cannot afford to live here. Create a more resilient and sustainable community by enabling people to both live and work in Peebles.
4. Do more to care for the aged, infirm and disadvantaged, and increase support for young people outside school hours.

## Annex 3 – Hard evidence

### 3.1 Population change

In the graphic below we illustrate long-run change in the size and composition of the settlement of Peebles. The headline figures – represented by the red dotted line – are taken from census figures, conducted roughly every decade (excepting for those periods paled out in the graphic). The notes below the graphic describe how we have estimated the changes in settlement composition.



#### Notes:

The total Peebles population figures are taken from census records; allocations to working population and local and commuter employment are imputed as follows:

- in recent years 58% of the population are in work, slightly lower than the average of 60% in Scotland as a whole; and this is reducing slowly as the proportion of over -65s increases;
- in years past the average workforce was greater: in the 19<sup>th</sup> century most 14-year-olds were already at, in the latter part of 20<sup>th</sup> century the threshold was more like 16 years of age; life expectancy was lower, and a lower proportion of people living beyond retirement age;
- in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century most residents worked locally; the railways and mills brought more people to live and work in Peebles, but also allowed people to work outside the town. As the mills closed and other local work opportunities also reduced, more people sought work outside Peebles. Population growth from the mid-1990s was largely driven by families with young children whose parents commuted to work by road.

The blue part of the graph indicates that proportion of the population considered to be “not of working age or in work” (too old or too young); the green part of the graph shows an estimate of the in-work population, divided between those employed locally (shown in light green), and those commuting to work outside the settlement (shown in dark green).

The plot divides into three time periods.

In the late C18<sup>th</sup> early C19<sup>th</sup> Peebles was a rural market and county town at the heart of and serving a predominantly agrarian economy. Its population rose steadily across this period from about 2,000 inhabitants to 3,000.

Then the railways and mills arrived, heralding a significant upturn in both the resident population and workers being brought into the town daily on the trains. This saw a rapid rise in resident population from 3,000 to 5,000 over a matter of some 20 years to 1900, followed by steady increase to a high of 6,000 by 1960. The closure of the two railway lines in 1958 and 1962, coupled with a downturn in the industrial weaving industry (through competition from overseas and technological change), brought about a significant downturn on the Peebles economy, and nearly 500 people moved out of the town to find work elsewhere. Up until this time, very few Peebles residents worked outside Peebles.

The closure of the railways and cut back in the weaving industry saw a fallback in local employment from about 4,000 to 3,000 between 1960 and 1980, and this latter figure remained the norm through to the early 2000s. From a little after the year 2000 residents in local employment has declined to something like 2,000 residents working in or near Peebles today. But from the 1960s onwards, more and more residents have sought and found work outside Peebles – to the north in Edinburgh and the Pentland Science Cluster, and to the east in Galashiels and Newtown St Boswells (HQ of Scottish Borders Council). By the year 2000 commuter numbers amounted to some 1,000, but this is estimated to have since risen to between 1,500 and 2,000 today. In general, commuter work outside Peebles is in administration, management and the professions, or in technically skilled occupations. Such work pays significantly better than most work in Peebles.

### 3.2 Efforts to shore up job loss from mill closures

With the downturn in jobs within the tweed industry in the 1960s the Peebles Town Council, Peebles District Council and later the Scottish Borders Council, made efforts to attract other businesses to the town – with some short-term success. But by the late 1990s these businesses had closed or moved on, and few new jobs were being created in Peebles. Instead, more and more Peebles residents were commuting to work – in Edinburgh and its surrounds, and east to Galashiels and Scottish Borders Council at Newtown St Boswells.

It happened in the 1990s and early 2000s – when there was a downturn in local employment, which encouraged the authorities to invest in economic and social infrastructure, which in turn stimulated a period of growth. At present, infrastructure lags behind population and needs, and there are few local jobs – and still fewer offering career progression. It's time for a refresh.

To re-cap, at its peak the town supported four woollen mills employing two-thirds of the working population of Peebles and nearby settlements – Tweedside (burnt down 1965), Damcroft & Damdale (redeveloped in 1970s), March Street mills (bits sold off in the 1980s & 90s; closed 2015 and currently being redeveloped, mainly for housing). Holland & Sherry, still operating and now the town's largest employer, is a design, merchandising and dispatch hub.

There were efforts to attract workers to the town, including new workers' housing. These efforts attracted an influx of families, particularly from the far west of Scotland and Ayrshire. Further efforts followed both the First and Second World Wars, in part to compensate for battle casualties. And there was more housebuilding, both south and the north of the river.

The new businesses required a large mixed workforce of more than 1,000, embracing a wide variety of skills – maintaining and servicing complex machines, large building complexes and power plants, designing, producing and marketing various types and qualities of cloth, and servicing these enterprises through sales, orders, dispatch, accounts and finance. Subsequent closure of any business presented significant economic problems.

Although unable substantially to increase local employment, the Council laid the foundations for further growth. Across the 1970s, 80s and early 90s Peebles District Council attracted new business to replace at least some of the jobs lost from mill closures.

At the end of the 1960s a photographic finishing company, Litsters, was established on the old March Street Marshalling Yard (now the March Street Lane flats and Tesco); the railways closed in 1959 & 1963. In 1970 an American manufacturer of record styluses, Fidelitone, was encouraged to set up in Peebles on the same Marshalling Yard site, and traded until 1990). Together they employed 300 to 400 staff, and dampened the loss of so many mill jobs; but in time both succumbed to competition and technological change.

These two businesses predominantly employed female workers, and while every town has an array of builders, joiners, plumbers and electricians, the mill closures encouraged more men to set up and expand businesses in the building trades. Today the Peebles building trade is arguably the largest local employment sector, made up of predominantly of businesses employing one, two and three people working across the Borders and the Central Belt.

As well as the larger businesses of Litsters and Fidelitone, the new medical facility at the Hay Lodge Hospital and surgery, and the industrial estate at the former March Street Mill

marshalling yard, the former Peebles District Council established two developments south of the river: a light industrial estate at South Park, and a new school at Priorsford.

Reorganisation of local government in 1995 dissolved the District Council into a new regional authority: Scottish Borders Council. The town's infrastructure was expanded with additions to Priorsford Primary and Peebles High Schools, a new sports complex at the Gytes, and the Cavalry Park Business Park. The sale in the late 1990s of part of the March Street Mill complex led to the establishment of the Dovecot light industrial estate, which today accommodates more than over a dozen businesses.

These developments were accompanied by increased house-building, which led to a substantial influx of families with jobs in Edinburgh and nearby. This quickened the demographic change and loosened the social complexion of a town where most families, even in the mid-1990s, had at least one member, relative or neighbour who worked, or had worked in the mills.

In contrast, the core physical and economic layout of the town centre remains largely unchanged from Victorian times. Aside from the two supermarkets – in Northgate and on the former March Street marshalling yard – employment in retail and hospitality remains much the same. Growth in the industrial estates and business park has not matched or compensated for mill employment. The one exception is Holland & Sherry – the last remnant of the Peebles woollen industry – which is still expanding and is now the town's largest single employer with more than 120 staff.

### 3.3 Commuting, skills and jobs

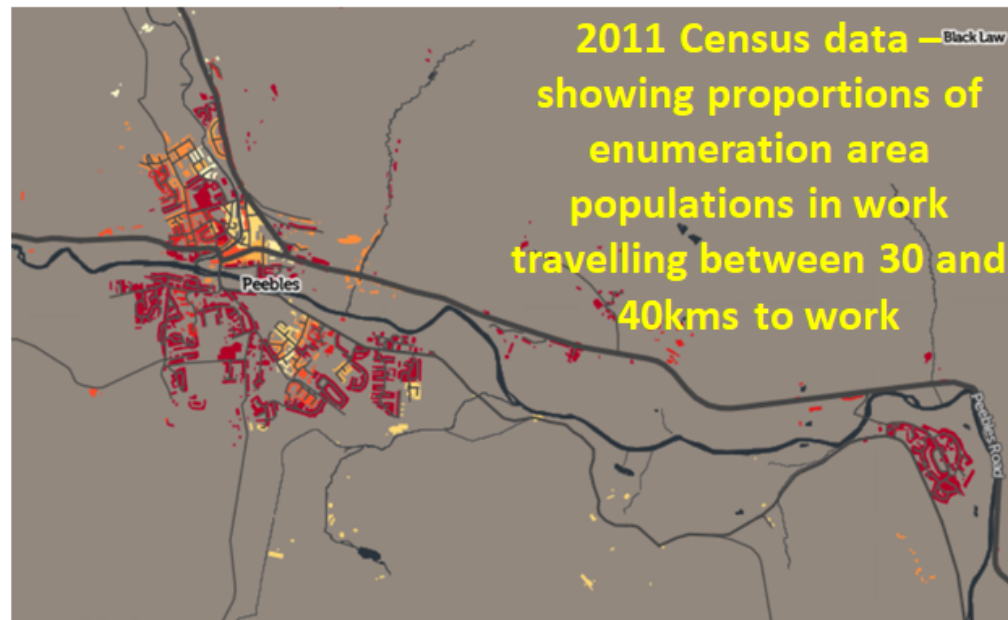
Census results are a great source of more detailed information, but they are only run every 10 years. Narrower based surveys are conducted between censuses, but data is not always easily accessible. DataShine Scotland ([www.scotland.datshine.org.uk](http://www.scotland.datshine.org.uk)) is a project run by UCL Consultants (an offshoot of University College London) funded by the National Records of Scotland, and focused on translating census data into a searchable mapping app, complete with the data behind the graphics. The currently available format is based on the 2011 Census; it is expected that a similar approach will be taken when 2022 Census data becomes widely available from 2025 onwards.

In the following two pages we explore the available data on how far residents of Peebles travel to work, as well as data on where they work, and a reflection of the type of work typical of the different Datazones (and the even smaller enumeration areas).

The first map shows a plot of how far residents travel to work, by enumeration area (a smaller area than Datazones) – based on 2011 Census data. The darkest maroon areas are where between 30 and 40% of residents per enumeration areas commute between 30 and 40 kms to work. These maroon areas are particularly prevalent south of the river, but not in the Victoria Park / Glensax Road area. Such areas are much less prevalent north of the river.

Below this graphic is a consolidated summary of the more specific data available on actually where residents of Peebles travel to to work (based on quite detailed data on which area of Edinburgh or the Borders they worked), as well as where people who travel into Peebles to work come from. These data showed that in 2011 about 3,550 of the Peebles population was in work, of which nearly 1,300 people (37%) travelled some distance outside of Peebles to work – commuters. Nearly 700 of these worked to the north of Peebles (notably in Edinburgh and the Pentlands), and about 300 each worked to the east (Galashiels / Newton St Boswells) and west of Peebles (a slightly less clear definition, but including Central Belt locations). About 550 people commuted into Peebles to work – mainly from east of Peebles (Innerleithen, Walkerburn, Galashiels), but also from West Tweeddale (rural areas, plus West Linton).

The second page of graphics illustrates the distribution of workers by occupation category. For this, people's occupations are recorded in one of 9 occupational groupings. The graphics show the distribution for two contrasting occupation groupings – Category 2: Professional & Category 5: Skilled trades occupations. These provide a fair representation of the differences in distribution by occupation across the town, and correlate strongly with local work versus commuting, academic and vocational skills, income and health levels.



**Commentary:** This is 2011 census data mapped, showing the proportion of those residents in work commuting between 30 and 40kms to work, mapped by enumeration area (smaller than datazones).

*Areas shown in darkest maroon are where between 30 and 40% of residents per enumeration area commute between 30 and 40kms to work; orange 10 to 15%, and lightest yellow <5%.*

2011 census data mapped as part of the DataShine Scotland project – [www.scotland.datashine.org.uk](http://www.scotland.datashine.org.uk)

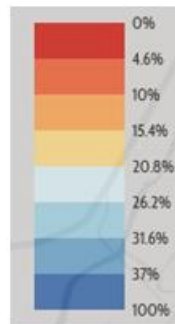
**Data:** From the 2011 Census, in response to a question on commuting to work – DataShine Scotland project – [www.scotland.datashine.org.uk](http://www.scotland.datashine.org.uk)

### **3,478 Peebles residents were in work (1,869 in N Peebles & 1,609 in S Peebles)**

- 1,256 lived and travelled to work in Peebles (36%)
- 483 Peebles residents mainly worked at or from home (14%)
- 423 Peebles residents had no fixed place of work (12%) – likely to include building trades
- 544 non-Peebles residents travelled to work in Peebles
  - 406 people travelled from east of Peebles to work in Peebles
  - 138 people travelled from elsewhere in West Tweeddale to work in Peebles
- 689 Peebles residents commuted to work to the north of Peebles - Edinburgh (20%)
- 308 Peebles residents worked outside Peebles in the West Tweeddale area (9%)
- 296 Peebles residents travelled to work to the east of Peebles (9%) – mainly Galashiels

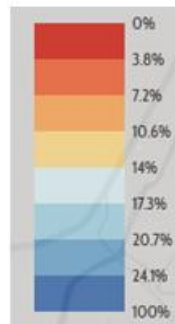
**Suggests up to 2,706 people working in Peebles in 2011**

**1,293 Peebles residents travelled to work outside Peebles (37%)**



## Contrasting employment distribution by occupation category

From 2011 Census – mapped as part of the DataShine Scotland project -  
[www.scotland.datashine.org.uk](http://www.scotland.datashine.org.uk)



Data captures all people in employment between the ages of 16 and 74, mapped by enumeration area (smaller than datazones)

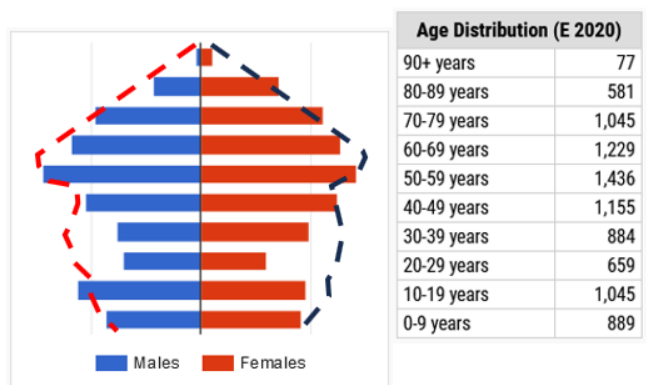
Displays show only two of the nine occupation groupings but present a fair reflection of the main spatial differences in distribution of employment / skills type by residence

### 3.4 Age distribution of the Peebles population

In engagement workshops concern was repeatedly raised that there was little to keep young people in Peebles once they had finished school, few local job opportunities, and that people moved to Peebles in their late 30s or later to bring up children or once children had left home, and in retirement at times of life when they might be more able to afford to purchase homes in Peebles. One would expect to see this represented in the population structure of Peebles, and this is indeed so as illustrated below.

The graphic shows the estimated population of Peebles for 2020, by age group and gender, shown in solid bar plots – taken from the National Records of Scotland. The dotted lines represent the population composition for the whole of Scotland for 2022, again from the National Records of Scotland.

**Peebles population by age and gender, 2020**



[https://citypopulation.de/en/uk/scotland/scottish\\_borders/S19002431\\_peebles/](https://citypopulation.de/en/uk/scotland/scottish_borders/S19002431_peebles/)

Year 2020 estimates, shown in solid bars

<https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/2022-results/scotland-s-census-2022-rounded-population-estimate/>  
2022 averages for Scotland shown as dotted lines

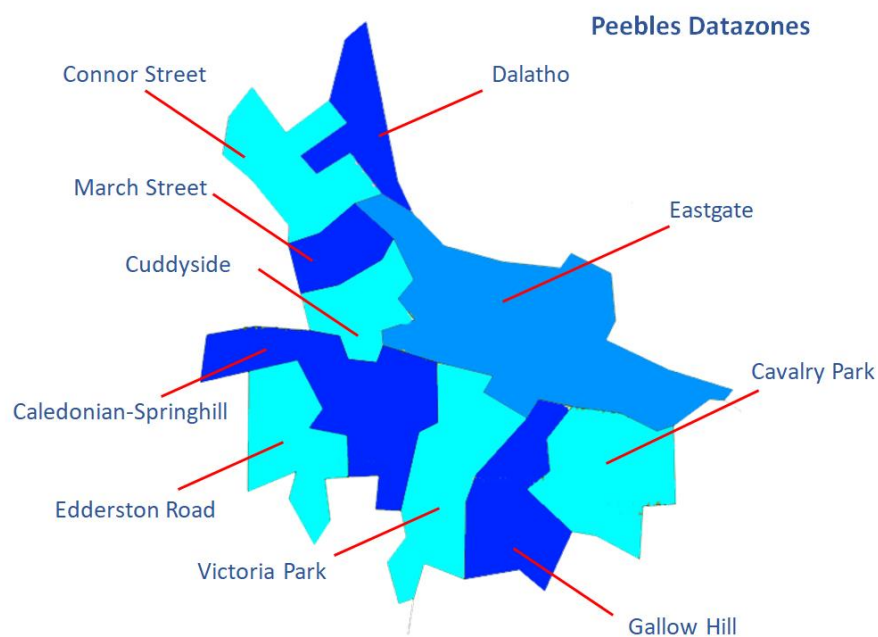
As can be seen, the proportion of the population in age groups 20-29 and 30-39 is well below the national average. It should be pointed out that in today's Britain this is not unusual for small rural settlements. But Peebles is hardly small, at a current population of a little over 9,000, it is the principal town and population centre of Tweeddale, and lies in a particularly attractive

part of the Borders and a little over 25 miles south of Edinburgh the Central Belt. It is of concern that the town cannot offer more to allow young people to both work and live here.

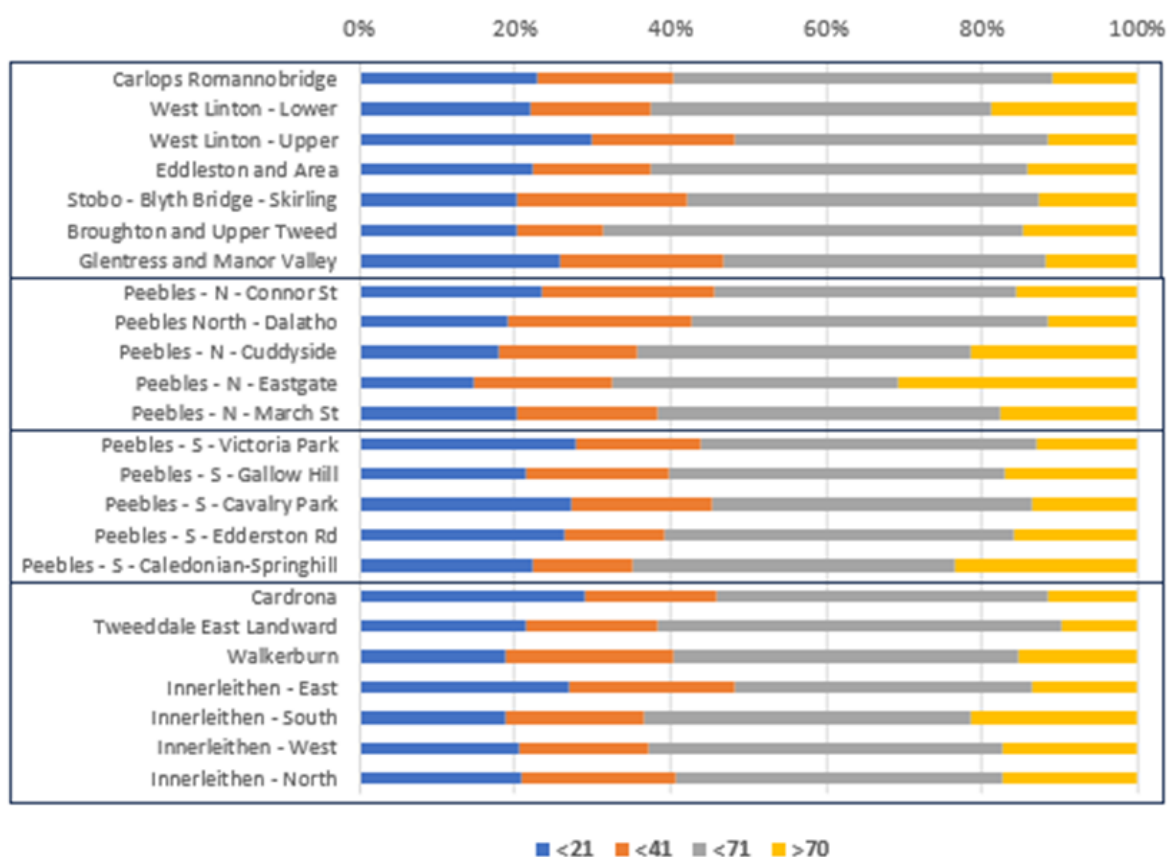
A wide range of demographic, social and economic statistics are regularly collected and analysed by central and local government. A common basis of analysis of small area statistics is by Datazone. Peebles is divided into ten Datazones each representing an area with a population of between 600 and 1,000 – five to the north of the river and five to the south (illustrated below).

Below this is additional data on the age composition of different parts of the Peebles and, for comparison, seven Datazones in West Tweeddale and seven Datazones in East Tweeddale.

Most of the variation between Peebles Datazones is in the proportions of under 21s and over 70s. Under 21s are noticeably lower in North Peebles, as well as in outlying areas of west Tweeddale. The proportion of 41-70 year olds is particularly raised in all areas outside Peebles, and in town in the Dalatho Crescent / Edinburgh Road area and the Edderston Road area of Peebles. Note that distribution of older cohorts is in line with that for Scotland overall – Peebles has an only slight raised proportion of older people.



**Age composition by dataszone, 2020**



**Source:** small area statistics, National Records of Scotland

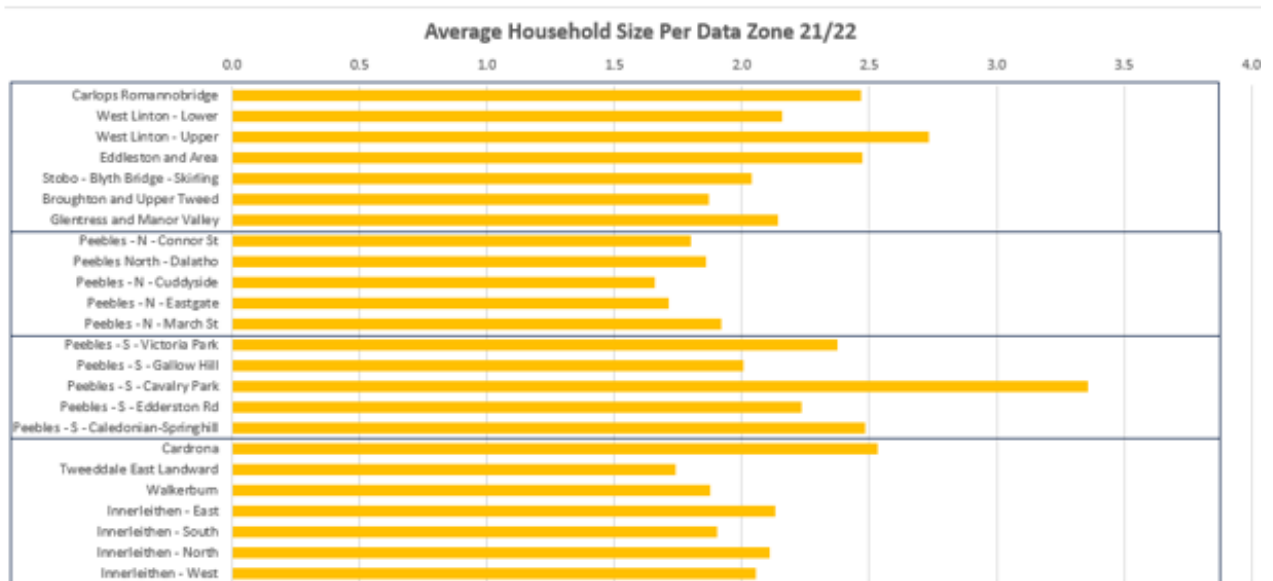
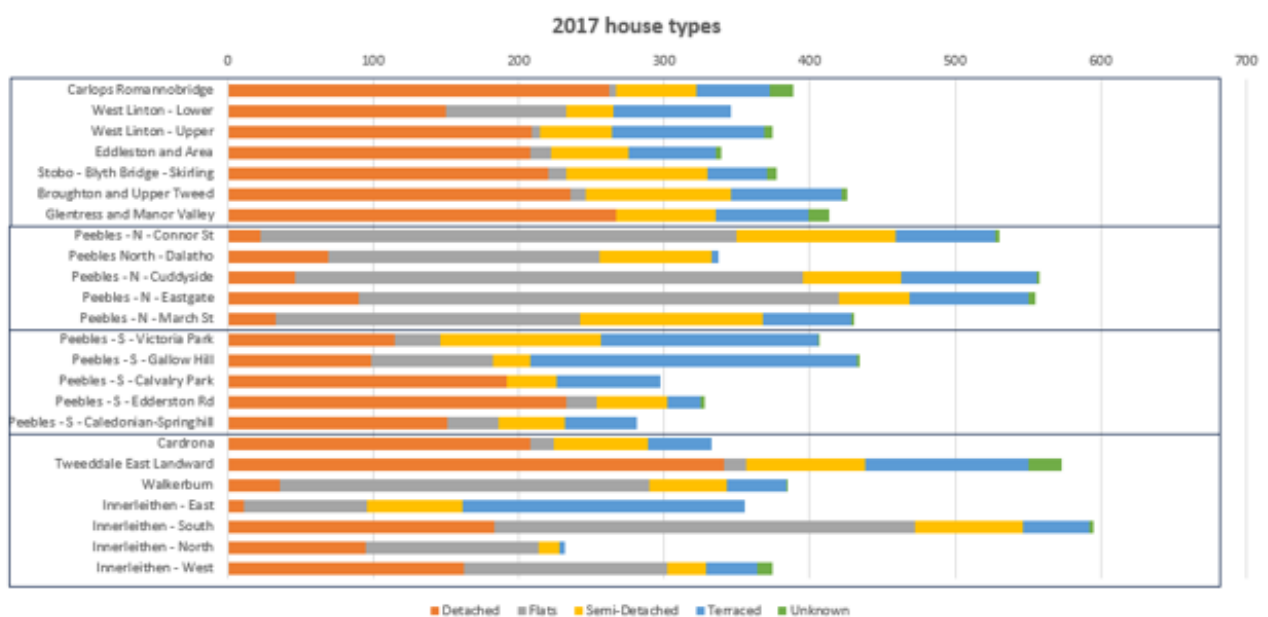
### 3.5 Housing

Small area statistics for 2017 show the composition of house types by Datazone.

North Peebles is distinguished by the high proportion of households living in flats and semi-detached and terraced housing. South Peebles is distinguished by the high proportion of households in detached homes.

Outside Peebles, to the north and west, the dominant house type is detached, to the east, flats in Innerleithen and Walkerburn, detached in Cardrona and in rural areas.

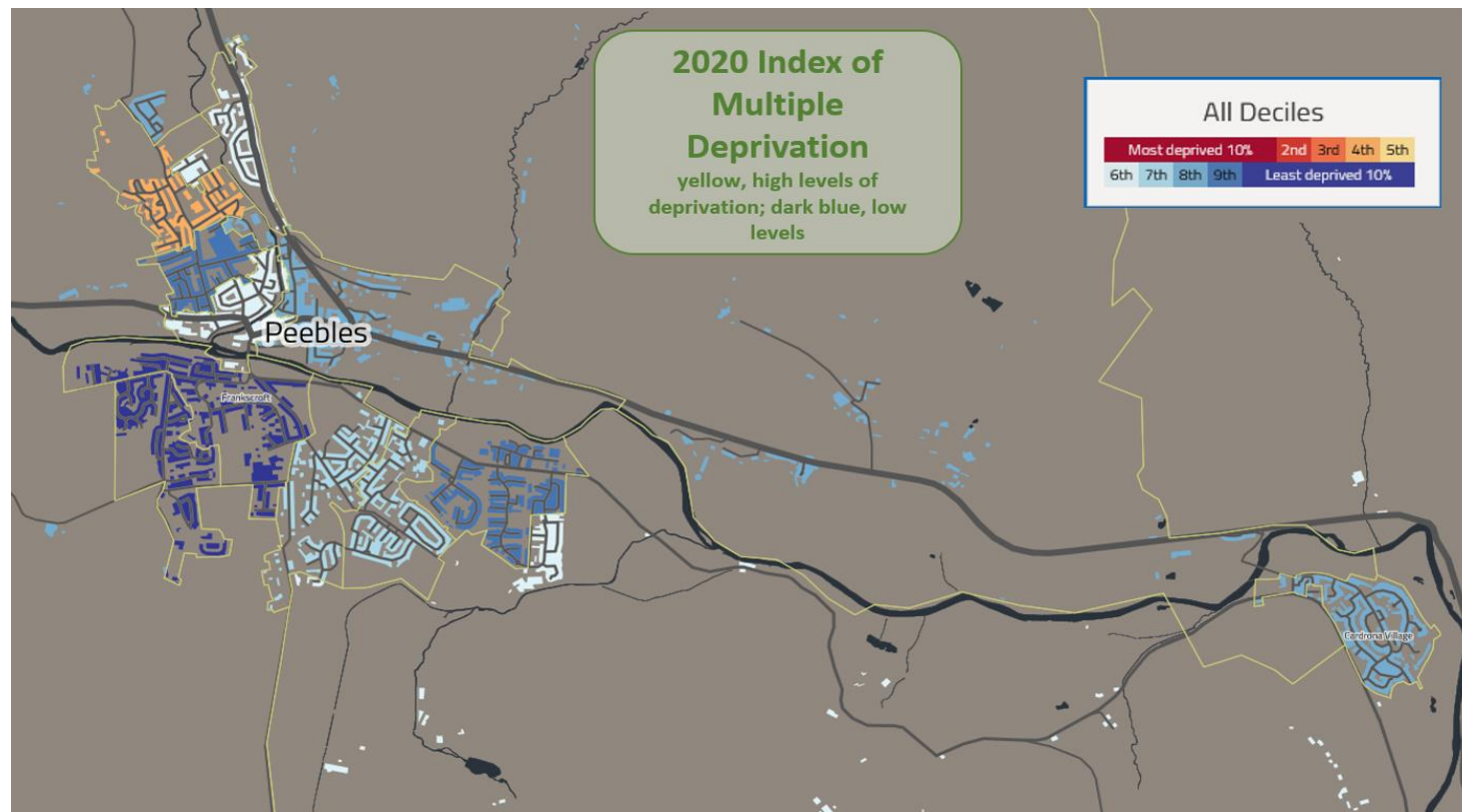
Household size is distinctly lower in North Peebles than South Peebles. Similarly household size outside Peebles in north and west Tweeddale is distinctly higher than that in east Tweeddale.



**Source:** small area statistics, National Records of Scotland

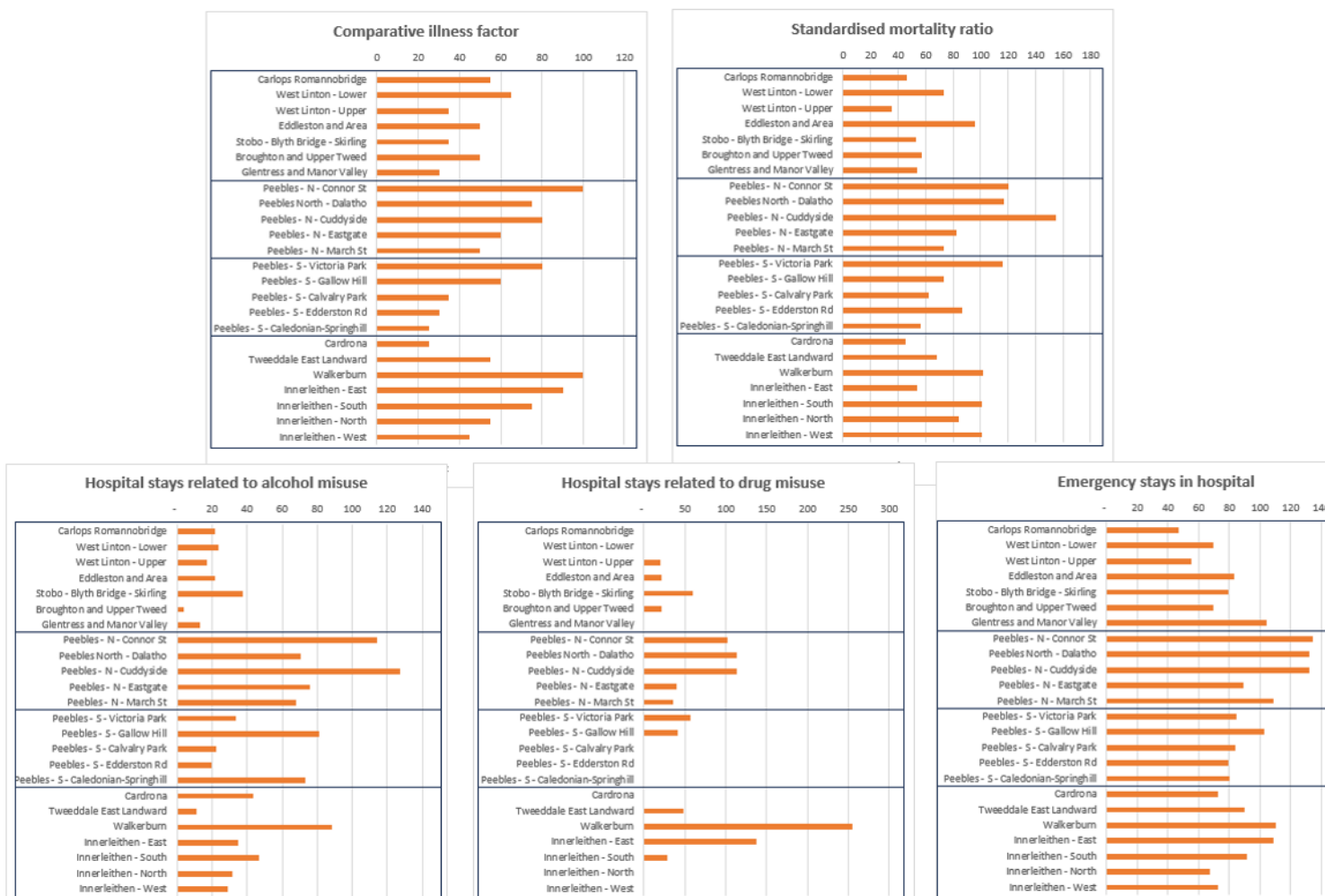
### 3.6 The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ([www.simd.scot](http://www.simd.scot)) looks at the extent to which an area is deprived across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. It is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (Datazones). If an area is identified as 'deprived', this can relate to people having a low income but it can also mean fewer resources or opportunities.



Below we show the overall SIMD 2020 scoring for Peebles and Cardrona – the redder the area the more deprived; the bluer the area the less deprived. The more deprived areas correlate strongly to house type, lower income levels, lower education, and poor health.

### 3.7 SIMD Health indices

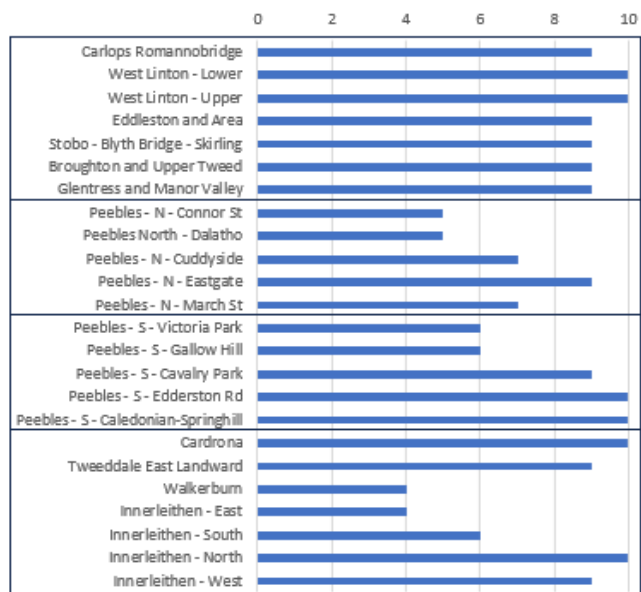


Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2017

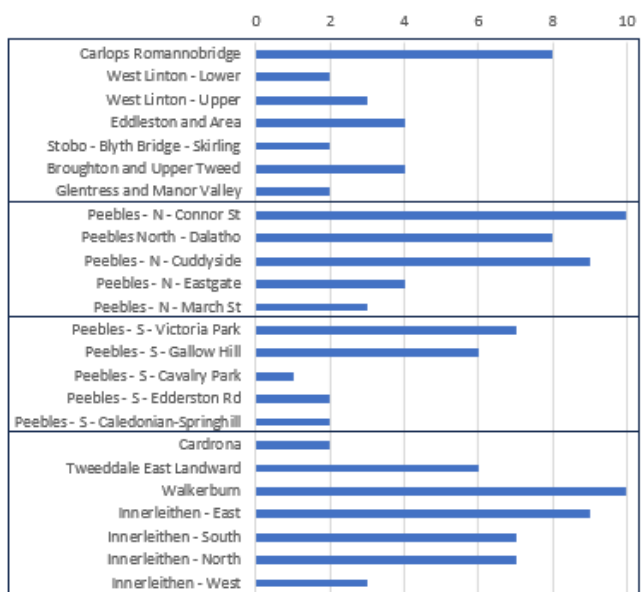
The health indices from 2017 are used in the formation of the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), and illustrate some of the disparities amongst those resident in North Peebles relative to South Peebles. These disparities are repeated throughout the SIMD dataset, and correlate with other characteristics such as housing type, housing quality, income level, education, fuel poverty, etc.. This is not just a North Peebles South Peebles issue. Presentation of data by Datazone masks marked disparities within individual Datazones – and under-represents both the extent of deprivation in Peebles, but also the nature of the disparities across the community.

### 3.8 SIMD Economic indices

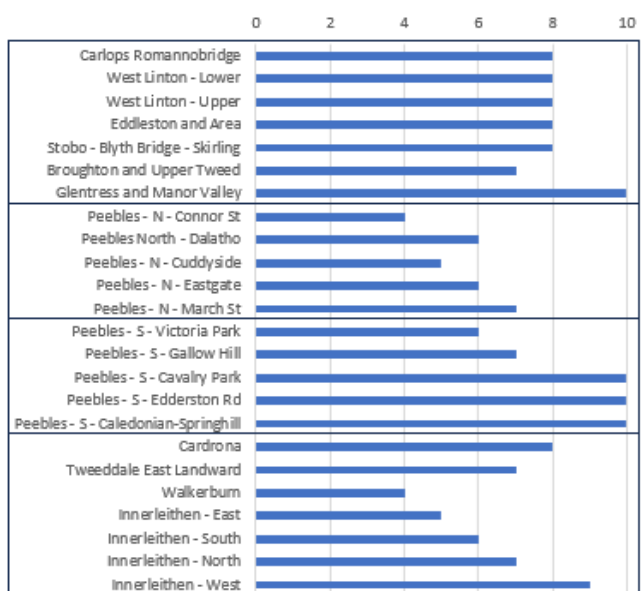
Education Skills and Training - decile (2020)



Employment deprived - decile (2017)



Income - decile (2020)



These economic indices, used in the formation of the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), further illustrate some of the disparities across the settlement, and within areas north and south.

Education skills and training levels and income levels are particularly low in areas of North Peebles, which also broadly aligns with lower income levels. Low scores are also apparent for Walkerburn and Innerleithen East.

These attributes contribute to formation of the category of “employment deprived”, which show still more marked disparities across the settlement.

These disparities are repeated throughout the SIMD dataset, and correlate with other characteristics such as housing type, housing quality, and fuel poverty, etc..

Presentation of data by Datazone masks marked disparities within individual Datazones – and under-represents both the extent of deprivation in Peebles, but also the nature of the disparities across the community.

These differences are presented more clearly when delineated by enumeration area, but this level of detail is not available under the SIMD datasets, though it is captured in the DataShine Scotland project (see [section 3.3](#)).

### 3.9 The 20-minute neighbourhood

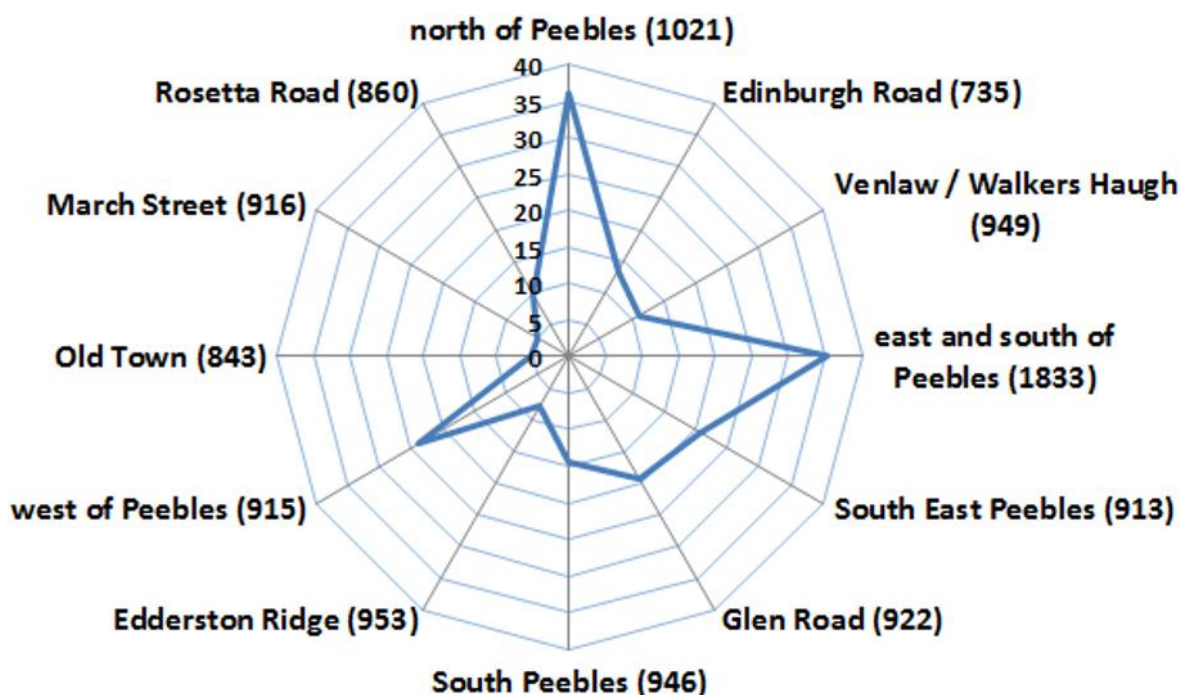
As the footprint of the Peebles settlement has increased in size, and particularly with its expansion of housing to the south east of the settlement, more areas of town on the periphery – notably to the north west, the south west and particularly the southeast – fall at some distance from the town centre and from many of the town’s highly centralised medical, social, cultural, recreational and economic facilities and services.

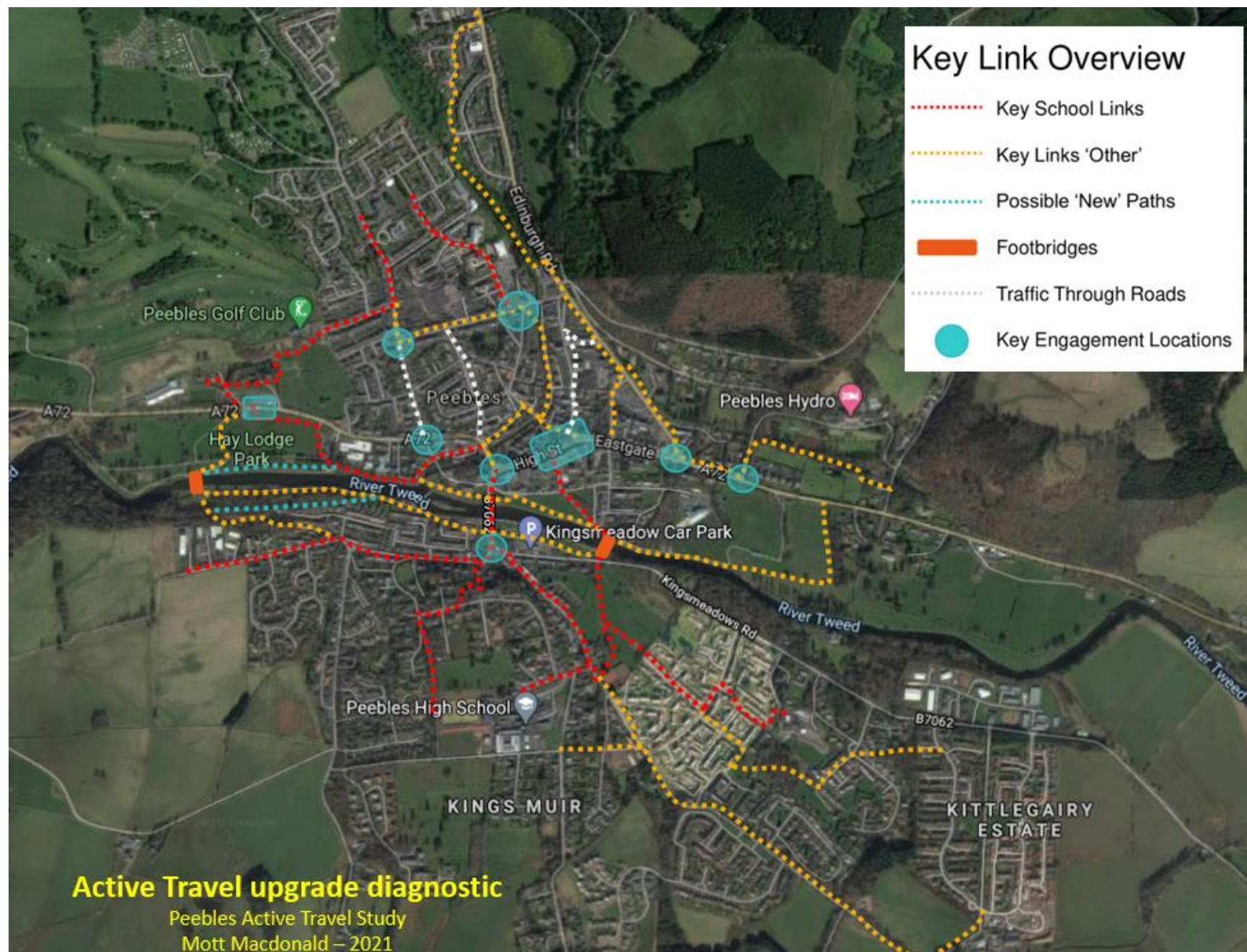
This is illustrated below in two outputs from the 2022 Peebles Active Travel Study headed by the Peebles Community Trust. The first graphic shows a radar plot of the time it takes to get to Hay Lodge Medical Centre using public transport. Figures in brackets are population per Datazone. It is one of several ways of demonstrating how the different parts of Peebles might be seen to meet (or not meet) the basic parameters of a 20-minute neighbourhood.

In general, areas in the far south east and north of the settlement fall well below the needs of a 20 minute neighbourhood. Alongside distance from the town centre and access to public transport, there are only two corner shops outside the Town Centre, one to the north and one to the south. There is no hospitality provision south of the river (pubs, restaurants, cafés), and only the Golf Club, Hydro Hotel and Rosetta Road Caravan Park facilities to the north and outside the Town Centre.

The second illustration shows the main pedestrian link routes across the settlement, including key inter-sections, all of which figure in the Active Travel upgrade proposals in the Peebles Active Travel Study.

#### public transport time (mins) to GP





## Annex 4 – Initiatives and priority actions

### 4.1 – Developing the plan framework

The 2024-2034 Peebles Town Action Plan is not only an update of the 2016 Town Action Plan, but a substantially larger and more ambitious exercise covering a 10-year development period, and incorporating increased focus on Community Led Local Development, Locality Planning, Placemaking and Local Place Plans.

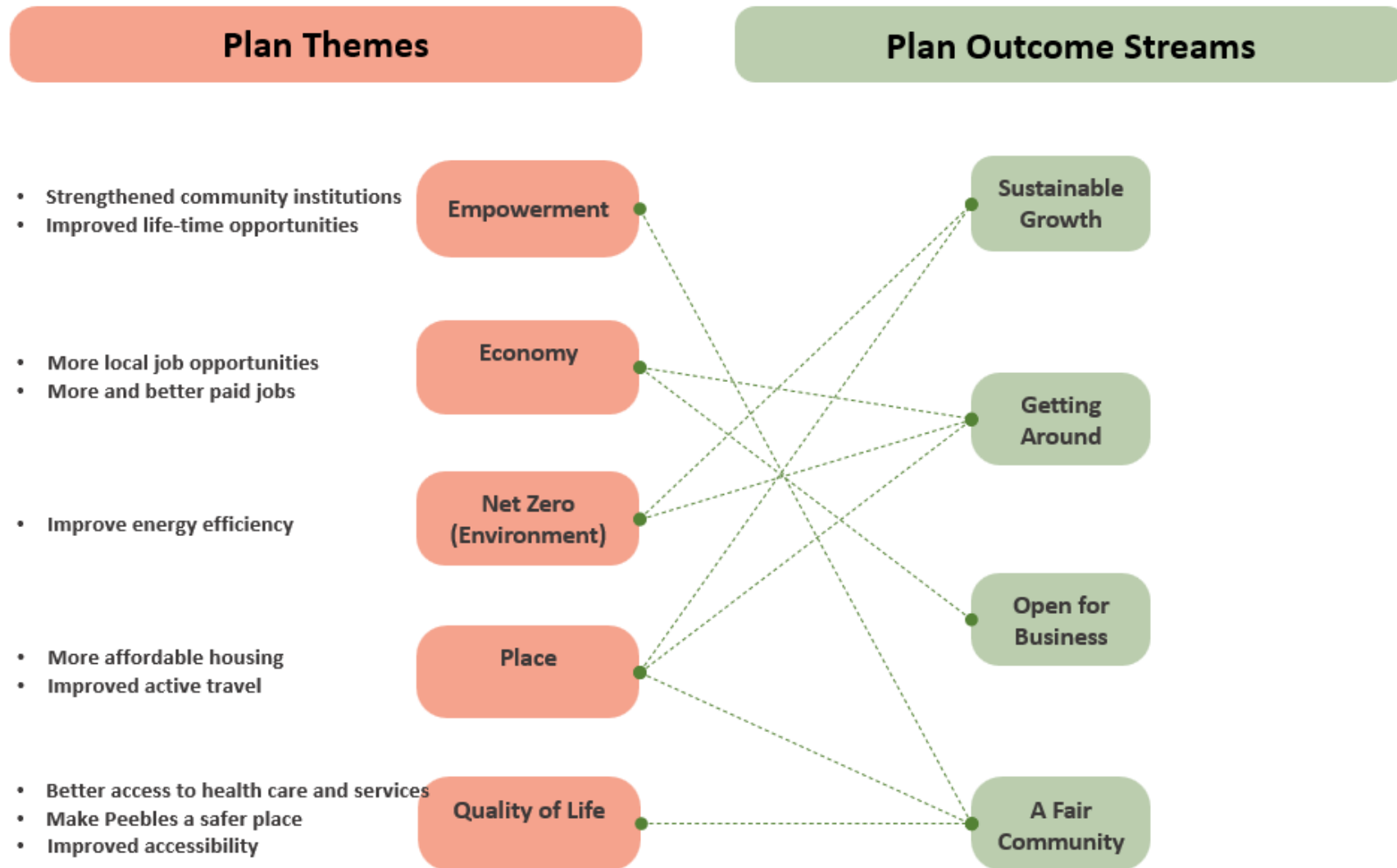
Its scope has been dictated by the outputs of community engagement and survey undertaken over a number of years, and incorporates the engagement methodology developed by the Scottish Government as the Place Standard Tool (see [www.ourplace.scot/tool](http://www.ourplace.scot/tool)). These exercises have provided the information used by the Peebles Placemaking Team to develop ideas of plan focus and priorities, and have generated numerous proposals and suggested actions to improve the sustainability and resilience of the community and settlement of Peebles.

From these the team has brought forward about 150 actions, large and small, prioritised for active promotion. The 150 actions (see **Annexes 5 & 9**) are not an exclusive listing, but do contribute towards achieving the outputs and outcomes of a coherent development narrative. That development narrative is expressed as Plan Strategic Ambitions shown on the left side of the graphic below.

These ambitions are in alignment with stated outcomes listed in the 2023-2033 Scottish Borders Community Plan, and broadly link to the five themes that recur in regional, national and international goals, plans and strategies shown on the right-hand side of the graphic below.



Out of this has been developed the plan streams, shown below.



The four streams are described as follows:

Plan Streams	
<b>Stream 1 – Sustainable Growth</b>	The principle of sustainability is at the heart of the Plan for Peebles. The community is concerned about development and expansion of Peebles, particularly pressure on road network, congestion, services and infrastructure, and the creation of a sustainable and resilient future, and would welcome more opportunities to engage at an early stage and to be involved in decision-making processes.
<b>Stream 2 - Getting About</b>	Under the core strategic ambition of improving access to services for all, it is fundamental that connectivity and accessibility are at the heart of any future development of Peebles. To improve existing infrastructure, the Sustrans funded Peebles Active Travel Study provides evidenced proposals for making walking, wheeling, and cycling a more enjoyable and safer activity across the settlement. This originates from and extends the ambition to link the Tweed Valley Railway Path to the Eddleston Water Path.
<b>Stream 3 – Open for Business</b>	Provide support for economic development across Peebles, through the creation of new infrastructure to support local businesses and encourage others to the town, to support innovation and build on the town's strengths in natural resources, high educational achievement, and creative industries, and so create new opportunities for local people, and take some of the pressure off the need to commute out of town for work.
<b>Stream 4 – A Fair Community</b>	Improve happiness and wellbeing in Peebles, both mental and physical, by promoting an equal, fair and resilient community, with a focus on enhancing access to a wide range of facilities, services, and opportunities for all residents, and improving use of existing assets to maximise local opportunities for socialising and becoming active citizens. This includes ensuring access to health services, entertainment, social meeting places, cultural and heritage events, and local shops. Additionally, the stream aims to preserve and improve green spaces and facilitate access to the great outdoors, ensuring that everyone in Peebles can enjoy a high quality of life and a strong sense of community.

### Accompanying measures

To aid implementation of the plan we have made more explicit two enabling measures and three horizontal measures that are implicit within the plan.

**En1 – Strengthening community capacity:** As highlighted throughout consultation and workshops, development and strengthening of community capacity to accommodate and effect change is viewed as an essential accompaniment to successful implementation of the Town Action Plan, and aligns with achieving a “strong, active, resilient and sustainable” community – a stated outcome of the Scottish Borders Community Plan. This is presented as an Enabling Measure within the Town Action Plan. A particular focus of this measure is the establishment of a Peebles Town Team, but it also extends to strengthening institutions such

as the Peebles Community Trust, Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council, the Peebles Civic Society, the Chambers Institution, the Eastgate Theatre, the Tweed Valley Tourism BID, the proposed Peebles Town Centre BID, and many more important organisations within the Peebles community. This is shown as **En1** in the graphic below.

**En2 – 20-year plan for settlement of Peebles:** In like manner, a number of planned large infrastructure projects – a second road bridge, a flood defence scheme, and a new business park, alongside further housing development – will have significant impact on the future development and functionality of the settlement. But the **cumulative** impacts of these developments also need to be examined, and management of synergies and mitigation of downsides proposed and acted upon. This is another delivery issue, and this too has been included in the Town Action Plan as a second Enabling Measure – **En2**.

**Ho1 – Creating a safer community:** Throughout the plan various actions and initiatives reference the building of a safer community – whether that is through improved active travel infrastructure helping make crossing the road safer, improved landscaping and lighting in public places to make people feel safer when out and about, or measures to reduce anti-social behaviour – illegal parking, substance abuse, petty vandalism. It is felt appropriate to emphasise that creating a safer community is one of the highlighted priorities emerging from the Place Standard Tool survey and community engagement, and this has been added as a Horizontal Measure – **Ho1**.

**Ho2 – A focus on young people:** A similar situation applies in respect of actions to support, encourage and provide for facilities, activities and initiatives for our young people. No one initiative within the plan focuses exclusively on addressing concerns raised by young people and by others concerning young people, but thirty or more of the prioritised actions have a young people dimension. To raise the visibility of these interventions and emphasise just how significant the scale of support in this area requested by the community, a specific Horizontal Measure has been brought forward as **Ho2**.

**Ho3 – A just transition to Net Zero:** Running throughout national, regional and local plans is a Horizontal Measure both emphasising and prioritising a **Just Transition to** achievement of **Net Zero**. To be more explicit still, there are three elements to this tag line. The first is recognition that the ambition is to actively cut carbon emissions to a small amount of residual emissions that can be absorbed and durably stored by nature and other carbon dioxide removal measures, leaving zero in the atmosphere. The second is that this is a process that takes time and that actions need to be taken now and ramped up over time to achieve a transition from the current high level of carbon emissions to net zero. The third is the often over-looked “just” transition – which focuses on bringing about fairer outcomes as the world transitions to net zero carbon emissions, maximising “the benefits of climate action” and minimising “the negative impacts for workers and their communities”. Accordingly, we have added a third Horizontal Measure as **Ho3** – a Just Transition to Net Zero. This should inform and serve as a watch-word for all initiatives, interventions and actions within the plan.

These, along with the initiatives A to Q are listed in the graphic below.

# The Peebles Town Action Plan

## Enabling measures

- En1** Strengthening community capacity
- En2** 20 year plan for settlement of Peebles

## Sustainable Growth

- A** Improved connectivity
  - A1 New road bridge*
  - A2 New pedestrian and cycle bridge*
- B** Housing for everyone
- C** Flood protection scheme
- D** Energy efficiency
- E** Expand Peebles economic footprint

## Open for Business

- H** Local business boost
- I** Creative industries cluster
- J** Tourism

## Horizontal measures

- Ho1** Creating a safer community
- Ho2** A focus on young people
- Ho3** A just transition to Net Zero

## Getting Around

- F** Active travel improvements
  - F1 Everyday journeys*
  - F2 Destination journeys*
- G** Transport infrastructure improvements
  - G1 Public transport*
  - G2 Parking*

## A Fair Community

- K** Town Centre regeneration
- L** Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure
- M** Health & medical infrastructures
- N** Field sports infrastructure upgrade
- O** Review of public and community indoor space
- P** Life-long learning, skills development and training
- Q** Green and food security

# Annex 5.1 – Action Categories mapped to Outputs and Pland Focus

## Plan Themes

- Strengthened community institutions
- Improved life-time opportunities

**Empowerment**

- More local job opportunities
- More and better paid jobs

**Economy**

- Improve energy efficiency

**Net Zero  
(Environment)**

- More affordable housing
- Improved active travel

**Place**

- Better access to health care and services
- Make Peebles a safer place
- Improved accessibility

**Quality of Life**

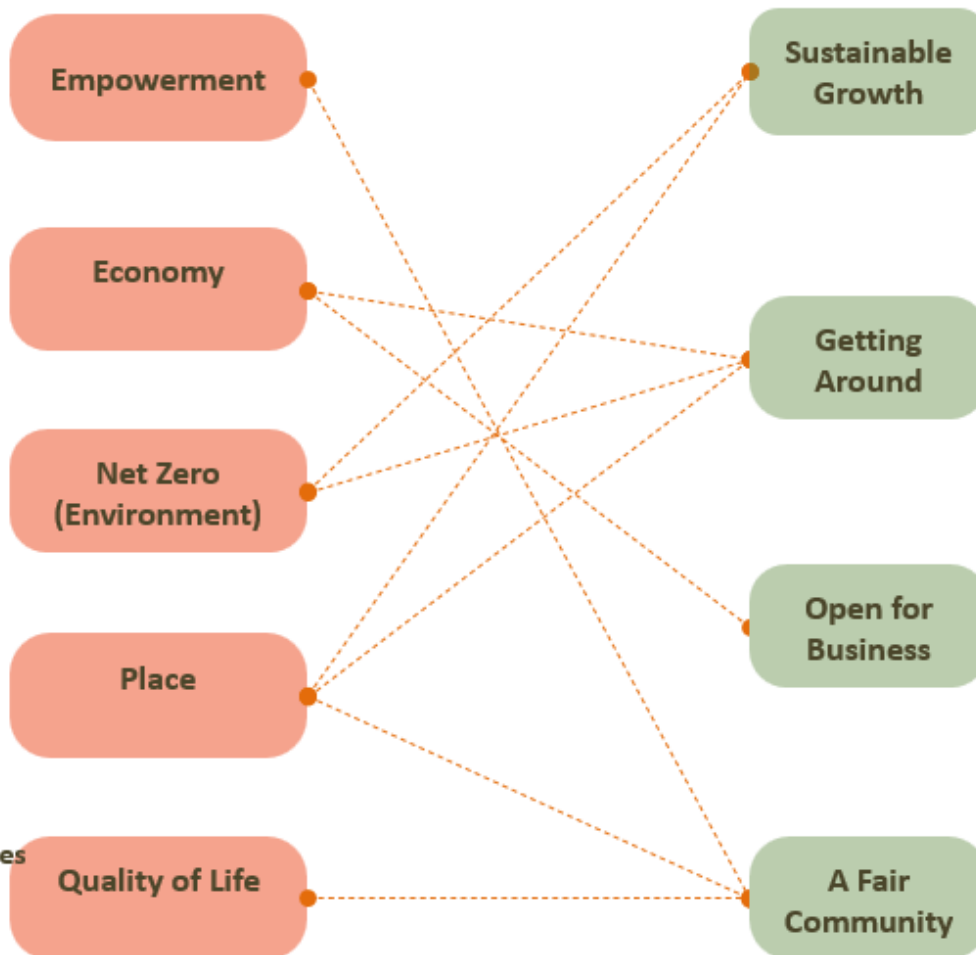
## Plan Outcome Streams

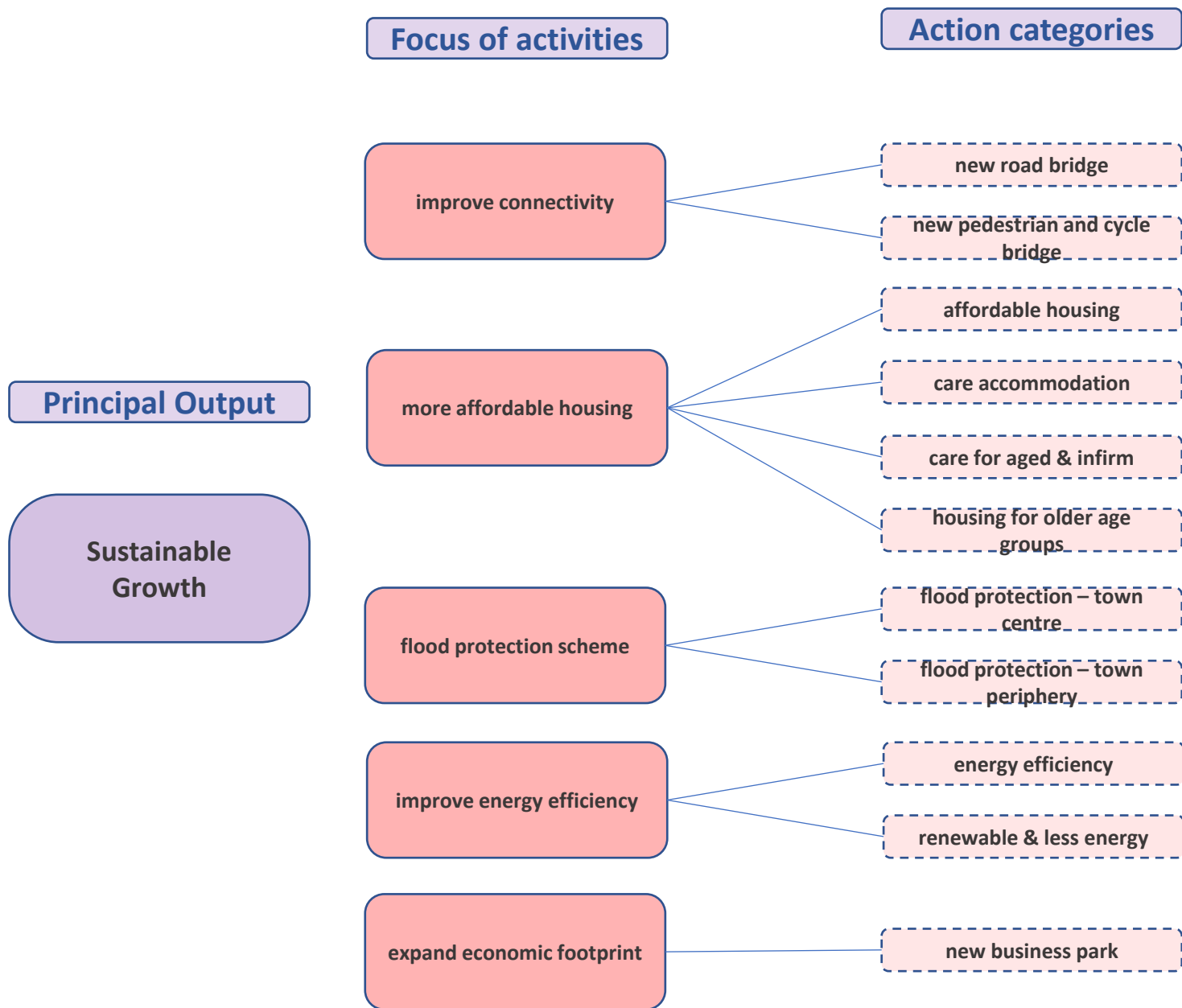
**Sustainable  
Growth**

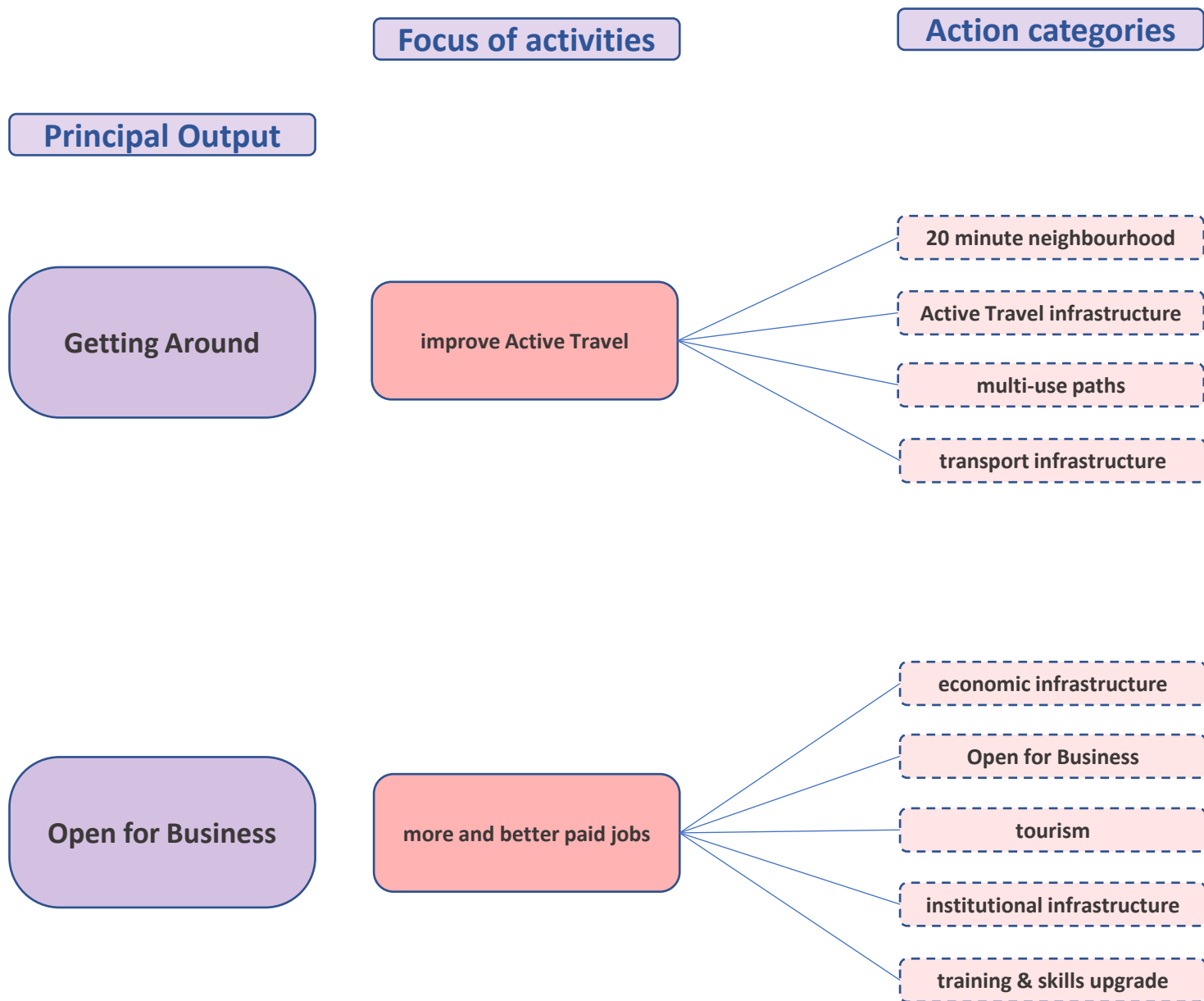
**Getting  
Around**

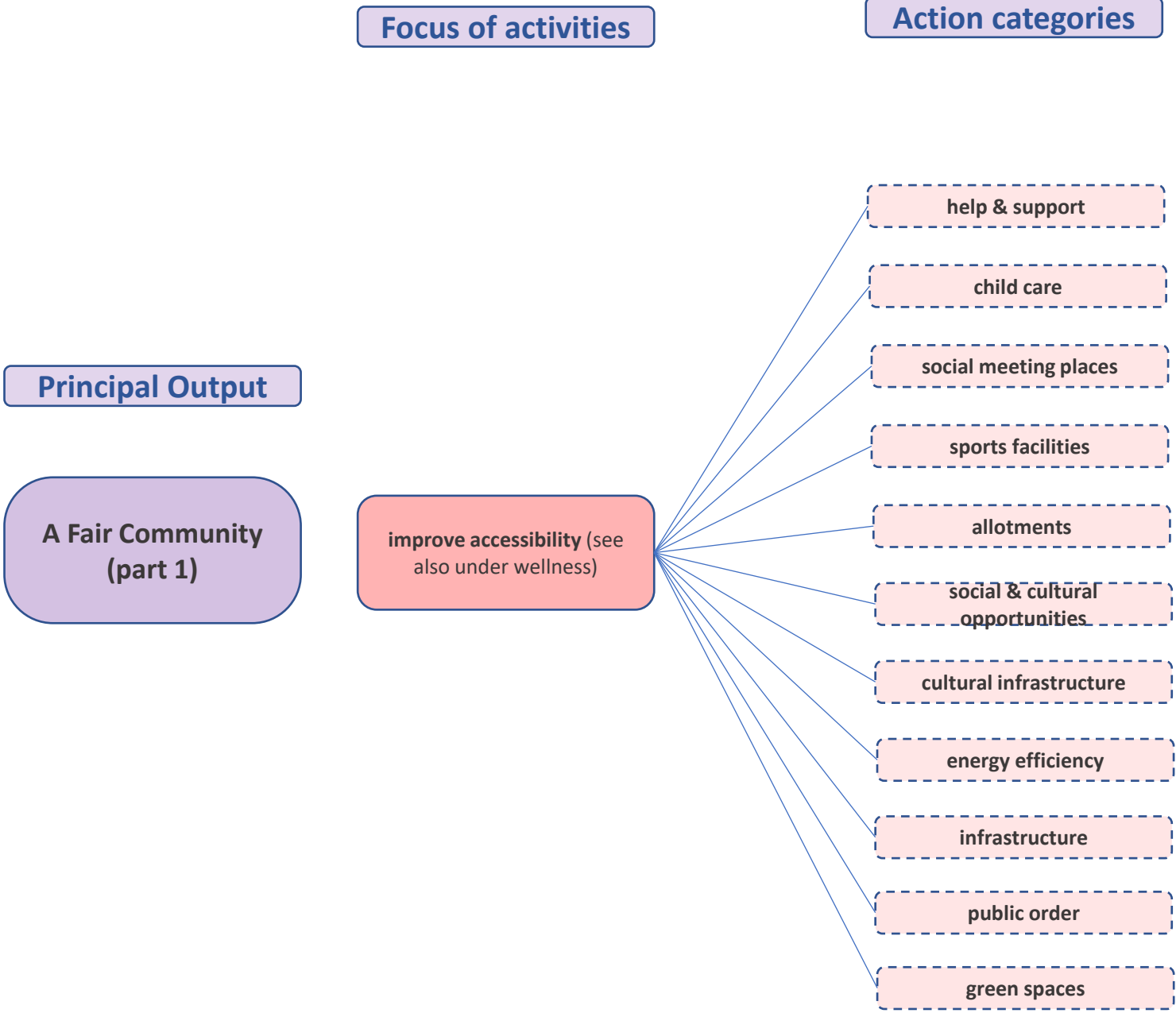
**Open for  
Business**

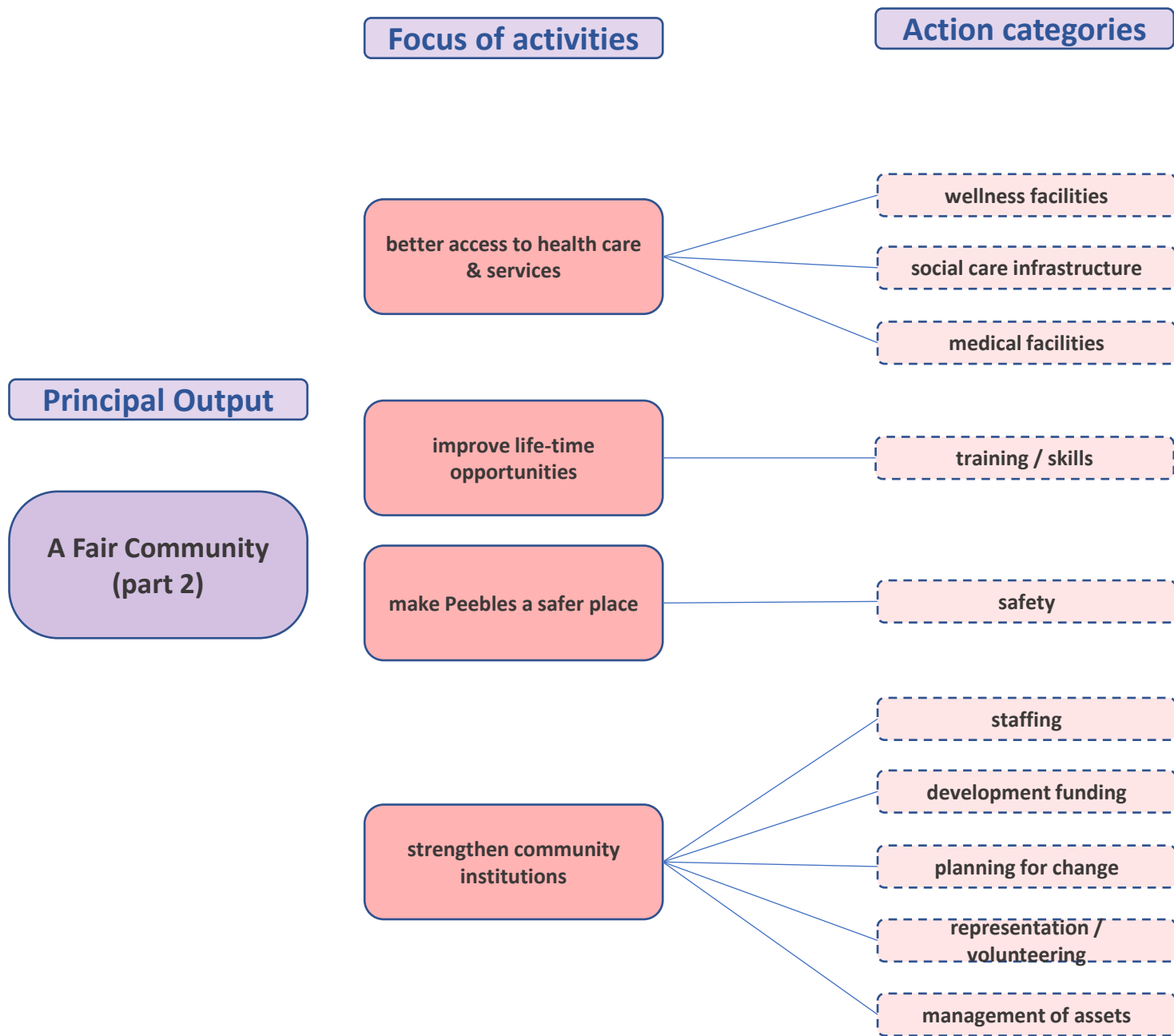
**A Fair  
Community**











# Annex 5.2 – Prioritised Actions Mapped to Focal Points and Action Categories

# Priority action categories

- 124 proposed actions arising from our consultations and engagement have been set against 8 focal points and 23 action categories broadly in line with the Principal Outputs and action categories listed above

Focus of activities	Action categories	Actions
improve social & cultural accessibility	social & cultural opportunities	8
	social & cultural infrastructure	8
	learning / training	4
	Improve security	2
	improve safety	2
20 min neighbourhood & active travel	active travel / 20 min neighbourhood	8
	public transport	3
	transport support infrastructure	5
Create more and better local jobs	economic infrastructure	8
	institutional infrastructure	5
	Open for Business	3
Sectoral economic development	tourism	8
	mountain biking	3
	Creative Industries	4
Health & care services	care services	5
	medical	3
	focus on poverty / disadvantage	5
Housing / accommodation	housing constraints	4
	housing	7
	energy efficiency	4
Transition to Net Zero	greening	10
Strengthen empowerment capacity	funding development	3
	planning for change	8
	staffing	4

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

1

Improve social & cultural accessibility

social & cultural opportunities

younger people meeting place

older people social cluster

bring back Day-Centre type facilities

rationalise booking systems for meeting places

strengthen sports provision

secure MMM allotments for community

secure additional allotments

review cultural inclusion / scheduling

secure future of the Eastgate Theatre & Arts Centre

social & cultural infrastructure

bring Hub into full operation

Chambers Institution upgrade

improve Victoria Day centre

community centre south of river

retail & hospitality provision south of river

improve Drill Hall

improve social infrastructure south of river

2

Improve social &  
cultural accessibility

learning / training

skills / vocational / business  
training for younger people

provide for life-long learning

promote environmental jobs  
for young people

public transport to college  
sites (Edinburgh / Borders)

improve security

improve policing /  
community officers' presence

address vandalism & public  
order issues

improve safety

plan for Flood Defences

build Flood Defences

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

3

Health & access –20  
min neighbourhood  
& active travel

active travel / 20 min  
neighbourhood

facilitate active travel –  
suburbs / schools

manage upgrade of Rosetta  
Road to The Crossings

facilitate active travel – High  
St & Tweed Green

facilitate active travel – Parks

extend multi-use path  
network – notably to north

rationalise on- and off-street  
parking & wardens

retail & hospitality provision  
south of the river

upgrade amenity value of  
green spaces

public transport

improve in-town public  
transport network

improve out-of-town public  
transport network

improve bus link to Glasgow

transport support  
infrastructure

establish more EV charging  
points

introduce car club & pool

make available e-bikes for  
hire

establish more bike lockups  
across town

cheaper electric vehicles

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

4

Create more and better local jobs

economic infrastructure

plan for Eshiels light industry / business estate

create home working & co-working infrastructure

expand Cavalry Park (if it is actually possible)

expansion South Park light industry park

create local employment at Glentress & Caerlee Mill

redevelop Dovecot economic area

repurpose Rosetta Rd Council buildings for jobs

plan for more economic provision south of the river

Institutional infrastructure

create support for home working & small businesses

step-up local support for growing more businesses

form, expand & promote local business chamber

upgrade & widen broadband infrastructure

increase support to 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector & local JSI

Open for Business

promote inward investment - Peebles Open for Business

implement plan to populate Eshiels business estate

build bridges between town & planning partners

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

5

**Sectoral economic development**

tourism

Mountain biking

Creative Industries

progress Connecting  
Threads

progress Borders Cycle Path

clear investment plan for  
Tweed Tourism

increase visitor  
accommodation

more tourism  
accommodation

boost Glentress multi-use  
offer

link to local cultural  
calendar – Beltane, Ridings

relocate main buses to  
Eastgate station car park

Mountain Bike Innovation  
Centre

expand Glentress &  
Innerleithen trails & offer

link to events calendar

create a Creative Industries<sup>#</sup>  
cluster at Eshiels estate

establish a Creative  
Industries incubator

establish co-working &  
shared workshop space(s)

link Creative Industries hub  
with inward investment

*<sup>#</sup>for our purposes the focus is on (not exclusively) – product design and digital technologies (graphic and fashion design, publishing and marketing, and film, TV and video production and support services – with a focus on innovations in, amongst others, using natural materials such as timber, wood, wool), and creative arts (supporting local artists, crafters and makers, and music, visual and performing arts)*

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

6

Health & care  
services

care services

more managed & assisted  
care facilities

more managed care  
facilities

improved care service  
provision

more dementia /  
Alzheimer's care facilities

improve Victoria Day Centre  
care provision

medical

establish Hay Lodge as  
Community Hospital

improved medical support

establishment of medical  
facilities south of river

focus on poverty /  
disadvantaged

secure future of Peebles  
Food Bank

food security – reduce food  
poverty & waste

boost & coordinate  
volunteering

upgrade Eshiels Re-Cycling  
Centre to RRR

community investment in  
renewable energy

Focus of activities

Action categories

Actions

7

Housing / accommodation

housing constraints

- no building on flood plains
- halt to house-building pending service upgrades
- no house building south of river until expansion plan
- no building south of river until second bridge

housing

- more affordable housing
- more social housing
- more sheltered housing
- more managed & assisted care facilities
- more new housing suitable for older people
- more single storey / bungalow accommodation
- more housing for young people entering work force

energy efficiency

- make public "Change Works in Peebles" diagnostics
- use of public diagnostic energy efficiency mapping
- home energy grants for all, not just those on benefits
- measurable progress in improving energy efficiency

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

8

Transition to Net  
Zero

greening

make more of amenity  
recreational spaces

in-town greening

broadening planted mix of  
public spaces

create network of  
community cons groups

plan for expansion of  
woodland / meadows

upgrade amenity value of  
public spaces

community ownership of  
Kingsmeadows woods

community ownership of  
out-of-town green space

build nature / educ. space  
at Kingsmeadows

expand nature / wildlife  
corridors around Peebles

## Focus of activities

## Action categories

## Actions

9

Strengthen  
empowerment  
capacity

funding development

develop community  
investment programme

achieve increased public  
investment

secure "community  
benefits" where possible

planning for change

update Town Action Plan

update Whole Town  
Masterplan

draft Place Plan

negotiate priority actions  
with planning partners

plan for expansion of town

plan for future schools  
capacity

monitor & evaluate  
progress re plans

strengthen information  
provision to community

staffing

secure staff funding of PCT

secure greater resources for  
local TSIs

strengthen community  
planning capacity

expand programme of  
works for TSIs

## Appendix 6 – Mapping of Peebles Town Action Plan elements to Council, Regional and National Plans

In the graphic on the following page we have mapped the main components of the various higher-level plans extant as of August 2024 – the 2024 Scottish Borders Community Plan, the 2023 National Planning Framework 4, and the South of Scotland Regional Economic Framework.

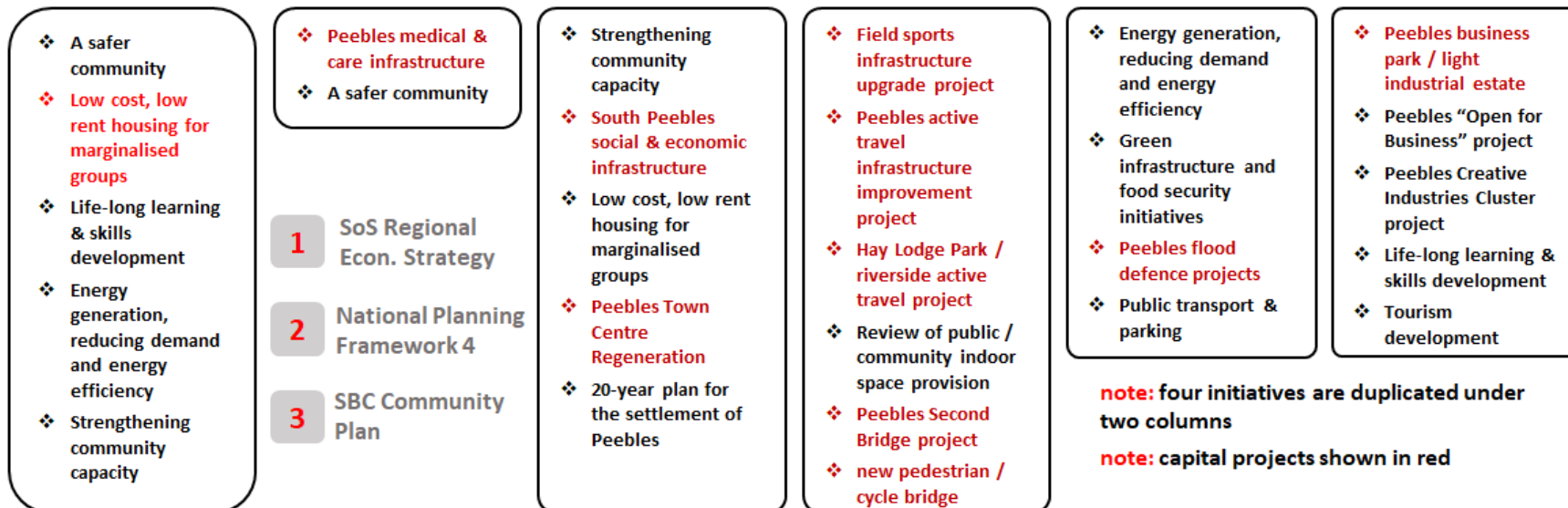
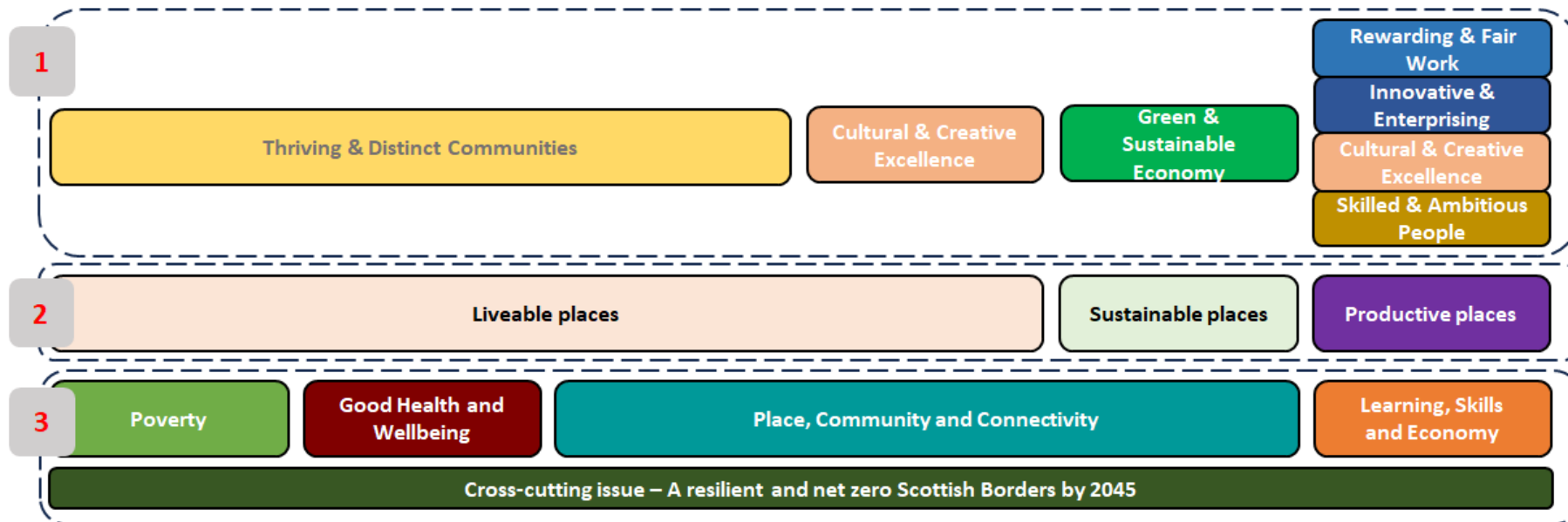
The Peebles Town Action Plan has been drafted from the perspective of capturing and communicating the needs and aspirations of the residents of Peebles – in line with bottom-up and Community Local Led Development (CLLD) advocated by regional and national government. But communities are not autonomous actors in this regard, and whilst there are some initiatives that can be taken forward by communities and community organisations themselves, in most cases action will require the support and collaboration of others – including alignment with the strategies, funding priorities and resource allocations of these organisations and bodies. To gain the attention of, and support from, those who hold the purse-strings it is helpful to demonstrate how the town's priorities align with those of the various organisations – though actually, in terms of practical reality, it is essential that such linkage is established.

In the following we describe in greater detail the logic governing these various plans, and how they are inter-related.

In the following we explore how the Town Action Plan links to:

- ☐ Scotland's National Performance Framework as expressed in the 2018 National Outcomes (not to be confused with the National Planning Framework, which informs Local Development Planning)
- ☐ Scotland's National priorities as expressed in the 2023 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)
- ☐ The 2018 SBC Community Plan Outcomes (currently under revision)
- ☐ The 2019 Tweeddale Locality Plan (which aligns with the ruling SBC Community Plan but capture local priorities).

# Mapping of Peebles Town Action Plan elements to Council, Regional & National Plans



## 6.1 Global context – the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

First it is appropriate to put such planning into a global context. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. Its origins hark back to the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992 when 178 countries adopted Agenda 21, a comprehensive plan of action to build a global partnership for sustainable development to improve human lives and protect the environment.

This was followed in 2000 by the elaboration of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to reduce extreme poverty by 2015, followed in 2015 by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at its core.

These 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global partnership. They cover focal areas such as water, energy, climate, oceans, urbanization, transport, science and technology. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.



## 6.2 SDGs and Scotland's National Performance Framework

The Scottish Government has used these goals (MDGs and later SDGs) as a framework for articulation of its own ambitions and policies. In 2012 it developed 16 National Outcomes that link to the MDGs.

1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe
2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment
3. Opportunities for our people. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation
4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
6. We live longer, healthier lives
7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society
8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
9. Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
10. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
11. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
12. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
13. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generation
14. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity
15. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production
16. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

These in part were used to inform development of Scottish Borders Council first Locality Plan, aka its Community Plan, which was produced in 2018. The Scottish Government undertook a review of its National Performance Framework in 2018<sup>1</sup> leading to a revision of its National Outcomes to 11, which link to the SDGs developed and adopted in 2015.

The framework sets out 'National Outcomes' that describe the kind of Scotland it aims to create. The outcomes reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland, are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and help to track progress in reducing inequality. These outcomes have been used to inform the development of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), and these will also be used to inform SBC's second Locality Plan, aka Community Plan, which is currently (2023) under development.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-sustainable-development-goals-national-review-drive-action/documents/>

## National Performance Framework

Our Purpose, Values and National Outcomes



These national outcomes are that people:

1. have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy (SDG 5 & 9)
2. are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally (SDG 17)
3. tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally (SDG 1, 2 & 8)
4. live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe (SDG 11)
5. grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential (SDG 3, 5 & 10)
6. are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society (SDG 4, 5 & 10)
7. have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone (SDG 8)
8. are healthy and active (SDG 1, 2, 3, 6 & 7)
9. value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment (SDG 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 & 15)
10. are creative and their vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely (SDG 11)
11. respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination (SDG 10 & 16)



### 6.3 National Performance Framework and the National Planning Framework 4

The introduction to the National Spatial Strategy for Scotland 2045, Part 1 of the National Planning Framework 4<sup>2</sup>, provides the following context.

*“The world is facing unprecedented challenges. The global climate emergency means that we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the future impacts of climate change. We will need to respond to a growing nature crisis, and to work together to enable development that addresses the social and economic legacy of the coronavirus pandemic, the cost crisis and longstanding inequality.*

*“Scotland’s rich heritage, culture and outstanding environment are national assets which support our economy, identity, health and wellbeing. Many communities benefit from great places with excellent quality of life and quality, affordable homes. Many people can easily access high quality local greenspaces and neighbourhood facilities, safe and welcoming streets and spaces and buildings that reflect diverse cultures and aspirations. Increasingly, communities have been finding new ways to live sustainably, including by taking control of their property or land.*

*“However, people living in Scotland have very different life chances, at least partly a result of the places where they live.*

*“Past industrial restructuring has had significant impacts in some places and communities. Disadvantage, child poverty and poor health outcomes are concentrated in parts of Scotland where life expectancy is significantly lower than in more advantaged areas. Access to the natural environment varies, and pollution and derelict land is concentrated in some places. Population change will bring further challenges in the future, particularly in rural parts of Scotland. Many people have limited access to opportunities because of the way our places have been designed in the past, and our city and town centres have experienced accelerating change in recent years.*

*“We have already taken significant steps towards decarbonising energy and land use, but choices need to be made about how we can make sustainable use of our natural assets in a way which benefits communities.*

*“Planning is a powerful tool for delivering change on the ground in a way which brings together competing interests so that decisions reflect the long-term public interest. Past, present and future challenges mean that we will need to make the right choices about where development should be located. We also need to be clear about the types of infrastructure we will need to build, and the assets that should be protected to ensure they continue to benefit future generations.”*

This is followed by statement of the Spatial Principles informing NPF4 policies:

National Planning Policy categories	Spatial Principles
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>sustainable places</b> , where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Just transition</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>liveable places</b> , where we can all live better, healthier lives; and	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conserving and recycling assets</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Local living</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Compact urban growth</b>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf>

❑ **productive places**, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy

❑ **Rebalancing development**

❑ **Rural revitalisation**

These map to the SDGs and National Outcomes as follows:

<b>NPF4</b>	<b>SDGs</b>	<b>National outcomes</b>
<b>Sustainable places</b>	7, 11, 12, 13	Environment, communities, economy
<b>Liveable places</b>	3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11	Communities, culture, human rights, children and young people, health
<b>Productive places</b>	1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 14	Fair work and business, economy, poverty, communities

NPF4 provides the top-level guidance for development of Local Development Plans by Councils. The Scottish Borders LDP2 is now in its final stages of development, and it is this that will link to the Peebles Place Plan which forms a specialist sub-component of the Town Action Plan (see **Annex F**).

## National Planning Framework 4

**Table 1 – National Planning Framework 4 Summary**

	Spatial principles	National Developments	Policies	Key policy links	Cross cutting policies
<b>Sustainable places</b> <b>SDGs: 7, 11, 12, 13</b> <b>National outcomes:</b> Environment, communities, economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Just transition</b></li> <li>• <b>Conserving and recycling assets</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Innovation Development on the islands.</li> <li>• Pumped Hydro Storage</li> <li>• Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure</li> <li>• Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities</li> <li>• Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Surface Water Management Solutions</li> <li>• Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling the climate and nature crises</li> <li>• Climate mitigation and adaptation</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Natural places</li> <li>• Soils</li> <li>• Forestry, woodland and trees</li> <li>• Historic assets and places</li> <li>• Green belts</li> <li>• Brownfield land, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings</li> <li>• Coastal development</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Zero waste</li> <li>• Sustainable transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Use – getting the best from our land: strategy 2021 – 2026</li> <li>• Making things last: a circular economy strategy for Scotland</li> <li>• Scotland’s Energy Strategy</li> <li>• Scotland’s Environment Strategy</li> <li>• Scotland’s Forestry Strategy</li> <li>• Scottish Biodiversity Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change Plan</li> <li>• Climate Change Adaptation Programme</li> <li>• Just Transition Plans</li> <li>• National Transport Strategy</li> <li>• Infrastructure Investment Plan</li> <li>• Strategic Transport Projects Review 2</li> <li>• National Islands Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Liveable places</b> <b>SDGs: 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11</b> <b>National outcomes:</b> Communities, culture, human rights,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Liveable places</b></li> <li>• <b>Compact urban growth</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Scotland Green Network</li> <li>• National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network</li> <li>• Edinburgh Waterfront</li> <li>• Dundee Waterfront</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, quality and place</li> <li>• Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods • Quality homes</li> <li>• Rural homes</li> <li>• Infrastructure first</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Connected Scotland</li> <li>• A Healthier Future: Scotland’s diet and healthy weight delivery plan</li> <li>• Cleaner Air for Scotland 2</li> <li>• Creating Places</li> </ul>	

children and young people, health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stranraer Gateway</li> <li>• A Digital Fibre Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heat and cooling</li> <li>• Blue and green infrastructure</li> <li>• Play, recreation and sport</li> <li>• Flood risk and water management</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Digital infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture Strategy</li> <li>• Heat in Buildings Strategy</li> <li>• Housing to 2040</li> <li>• Learning Estate Strategy/Learning Estate Investment Programme</li> <li>• Public Health Priorities for Scotland</li> <li>• Remote, Rural and Islands Housing Action Plan (pub. Spring 2023)</li> <li>• Scotland's Population Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Marine Plan</li> <li>• Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Productive places</b> <b>SDGs: 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 14</b> <b>National outcomes:</b> Fair work and business, economy, poverty, communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebalancing development</li> <li>• Rural revitalisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clyde Mission</li> <li>• Aberdeen Harbour</li> <li>• Industrial Green Transition Zones</li> <li>• Hunterston Strategic Asset</li> <li>• Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment</li> <li>• High Speed Rail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community wealth building</li> <li>• Business and industry</li> <li>• City, town, local and commercial centres</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Rural development</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Culture and creativity</li> <li>• Aquaculture</li> <li>• Minerals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Strategy for Economic Transformation</li> <li>• Retail Strategy for Scotland</li> <li>• Report of the City Centre Recovery Taskforce</li> <li>• Scottish land rights and responsibilities statement</li> <li>• Town Centre Action Plan 2</li> </ul>	

## 6.4 Scottish Borders Council 2024 Locality Plan, aka Community Plan

Community Planning now has a clear statutory purpose defined in Part 2 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. It is explicitly about how public bodies work together, and with the local community, to plan for, resource and provide services that improve local outcomes in the local authority area, all with a view to reducing inequalities.

These reforms aim to recognise that:

- It is unlikely that any public sector body can most effectively meet its own business requirements by working in isolation.
- Public bodies need to work closely in partnership with each other and their local communities in order to make the biggest difference in the outcomes for which they are responsible.
- How public sector bodies and communities do this should reflect often distinctive local conditions.

It is about how public bodies work together, and with local communities, to design and deliver better services that make a real difference to people's lives. It drives public service reform by bringing together local public services with the communities they serve, and provides a focus for partnership working that targets specific local circumstances. Partners work together to improve local services and to ensure that they meet the needs of local people, especially those who need the services most.

A Community Planning Partnership (or CPP) is the name given to all those services that come together to take part in community planning. There are 32 CPPs across Scotland, one for each council area. Each CPP focuses on where partners' collective efforts and resources can add the most value to their local communities, with particular emphasis on reducing inequality.

CPPs are responsible for producing two types of plan to describe their local priorities and planned improvements:

- **Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (referred to in Scottish Borders as the SBC Community Plan)**, which cover the whole council area
- **Locality Plans (for example the Tweeddale Locality Plan)**, which cover smaller areas within the CPP area, usually focusing on areas that will benefit most from improvement. Each CPP will produce at least one Locality Plan and some CPPs will produce many – there is no fixed number.

Planning Partners in the Scottish Borders include:

Statutory consultees

- Scottish Borders Council
- Borders College
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Integrated Health and Social Care
- NHS Borders
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- South of Scotland Enterprise
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Sports Council (represented by Live Borders)
- SEStran
- Skills Development Scotland
- VisitScotland

Non-statutory consultees

- Berwickshire Housing Association
- Eildon Housing
- Live Borders
- Scottish Borders Community Council Network
- Scottish Borders Housing Association
- Third Sector
- Waverley Housing

In addition to the Council's own Community Plan, some of the other Planning Partners have produced their own Locality Plans – as for example for Health and Care.

The first 2018 Borders Community Plan has been updated and replaced by the 2024 Community Plan. The four main themes have been re-cast as:

- ☐ **Poverty**
- ☐ **Learning , Skills and Economy**
- ☐ **Good Health and Wellbeing**
- ☐ **Place, Community and Connectivity**

With a fifth, cross-cutting theme of **A Just Transition to Net Zero.**

The main elements of the 2024 Community Plan are shown below.

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	

This maps to the National Outcomes as shown below.

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.

## 6.5 Tweeddale Locality Plan

Taking their lead from the Scottish Borders Community Plan, locality plans have been drawn up for each of the five sub-regions of the Borders – Berwickshire, Cheviot, Eildon, Teviot & Liddesdale and Tweeddale – but focusing on those needs, initiatives and projects prioritised for the particular region.

The Tweeddale Locality Plan, published in 2020, identifies the following priorities:

### Our Economy, Skills & Learning

- ❑ To improve and develop transport networks, connections and options – from, to and within Tweeddale Review the availability and suitability of business premises
  - *Develop commercial / industrial sites and premises to encourage new business to the area*
  - *To provide an “Enterprise and/or Community Hub” for start-ups and growth of businesses*
  - *Enhance marketing and promotion of the Tweeddale tourism offer*
  - *Improve broadband and mobile coverage*
  - *Develop stronger links with colleges, schools and businesses to create a joint approach to education and upskilling the workforce*
  - *Increase practical skills and knowledge for primary and early secondary school children & young people*
  - *Create a mentoring model within the community to build knowledge, skills and confidence*
  - *Increase training opportunities for local trades*

### Our Health, Care & Wellbeing

- ❑ To improve the availability, accessibility and connections to services for people living in rural areas and towns across the Tweeddale area to reduce loneliness and social isolation
  - *Increase the availability of locally based rehabilitation services*
  - *Increase the range of care and support options available (across the locality) to enable people to remain in their own homes and communities*
  - *Increase the range of housing options available across the locality and plan for future housing needs*
  - *Improve support for unpaid carers by providing a wider choice of support and assistance (including social events)*
  - *Develop intergenerational community hubs*

### Safer Communities

- ❑ Community connections need to be further developed to share information and activities across the Tweeddale Area
  - *Increase support to individuals to help them be active members of their community*
  - *Reduce anti-social behaviour*

- *Create stronger links to the SBC Community Action Team (with a focus on road safety, speeding and pedestrian access) by increasing awareness of the CAT and how communities can feed into the CAT work programme*

## Our Environment & Place

- ❑ Ensure that Tweeddale residents have access to appropriate housing, and the environment is clean and safe
  - *Improve the provision of suitable housing (sheltered, extra care, young people with disabilities) by developing a range of flexible accommodation for communities at every age and stage of life*
  - *Tackle fuel poverty*
  - *Identify opportunities where green space and access to green space can be improved and local access to growing projects can be developed*
  - *De-cluttering and environmental improvement campaigns are undertaken in key streets/areas within Tweeddale locality*
  - *Improve awareness and access to information, support and resources to increase energy efficiency.*
  - *Increase the range of affordable and accessible housing options available across the locality, and plan for future housing needs*

These were developed into the following regional Tweeddale Action Plan.

Priority	Planned Activity
<b>Economy, skills &amp; learning</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop commercial / industrial sites and premises to encourage new business to the area</li> </ul>	<i>The Council will identify sites in Peebles, Innerleithen and West Linton in the new Local Development plan which will support and facilitate business development and growth.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide an “Enterprise Hub” for start-ups and growth of businesses</li> </ul>	<i>SOSEP is undertaking a South of Scotland-wide study into the availability and suitability of business property. The study will consider the need for manufacturing and storage uses, as well as office space. It will also consider the needs of businesses at different stages in their growth cycle.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve marketing and promotion of the Tweeddale tourism offer</li> </ul>	<i>Work towards the establishment of a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) that will help support tourist marketing.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve broadband and mobile coverage</li> </ul>	<i>Deliver superfast broadband to all occupied premises by the end of 2021.</i>  <i>As 5G networks start to be delivered in some cities, the Council will continue to lobby for better mobile services across the Scottish Borders, so that rural areas are not ‘left behind’.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop stronger links with colleges, schools and businesses to create a joint approach to education and upskilling the workforce</li> <li>• Increase practical skills and knowledge for primary and early secondary school children &amp; young people</li> <li>• Create a mentoring model in schools</li> <li>• Increase training opportunities for local trades</li> </ul>	<p><i>Create a physical and digital hub to provide better access to training in health and social care, renewable energy, engineering and construction skills.</i></p> <p><i>Create a Regional Apple Training Centre at Kingsland Primary School for staff as part of the Inspire Learning Programme.</i></p> <p><i>Plan and implement work inspiration/experience programme with Developing Young Workforce Industry Group for young people with additional support needs</i></p> <p><i>Development of the secondary curriculum to meet the needs of the Regional Skills Investment Plan for the South of Scotland.</i></p> <p><i>Support the community to establish its own mentoring programme tapping into knowledge skill and experience within the community.</i></p> <p><i>The Chamber of Commerce are considering how to run an expanded programme in future. South of Scotland Enterprise may be able to support this mentoring approach once it becomes operation in April 2020.</i></p> <p><i>Create a network to provide better access to training in health and social care, renewable energy, engineering and construction.</i></p> <p><i>A project is being created to encourage local trade's people to develop skills in 'low carbon' and 'green energy' systems.</i></p>
<b>Health, Care &amp; Wellbeing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the availability, accessibility and connections to services for people living in rural areas and towns across the Tweeddale area to reduce loneliness and social isolation</li> <li>• Increase the availability of locally based rehabilitation services to reduce hospital stays</li> </ul>	<p><i>Continue to define the 'Locality Model', including the use of multi-disciplinary teams Monthly article in the Peeblesshire News showcasing different volunteering activities</i></p> <p><i>Develop ambassador role within Peebles and link this into the wider community.</i></p> <p><i>Develop local volunteering hub-micro site that can act as a one stop shop&amp; social media presence</i></p> <p><i>Increase the number of volunteers – showcasing the work of volunteers</i></p> <p><i>September 2019 IJB approved the expansion of Hospital to Home (H2H).</i></p> <p><i>A review of services in Tweeddale will be commenced by December 2019.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the range of care and support available to enable people to remain in their own homes and communities</li> <li>• Increase the range of affordable and accessible housing options available across the locality</li> <li>• Develop intergenerational community hubs</li> <li>• Improve support for unpaid carers</li> </ul>	<p><i>Older People Local area coordination has now been introduced across the whole of the Scottish Borders.</i></p> <p><i>6 new weekly sessions introduced in Tweeddale including health circuits, mobility, Guid Fettle, health conditions and gentle movement.</i></p> <p><i>September 2019 IJB approved the expansion of Hospital to Home (H2H).</i></p> <p><i>Older People Local area coordination has now been introduced across the whole of the Scottish Borders.</i></p> <p><i>A review of services in Tweeddale will be commenced by December 2019.</i></p> <p><i>6 new weekly sessions introduced in Tweeddale including health circuits, mobility, Guid Fettle, health conditions and gentle movement.</i></p> <p><i>New plans have been submitted by Eildon Housing to provide 22 homes providing mixture of flats and houses</i></p> <p><i>The Carers Advisory Board has become Carer's First, a forum to engage with carers across the Scottish Borders</i></p>
<b>Safer Communities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community connections need to be further developed to share information and activities across the Tweeddale Area</li> <li>• Increase support to individuals to help them be active members of their community</li> <li>• Reduce anti-social behaviour and improve street lighting and signage</li> <li>• Create stronger links to the SBC Community Action Team (with a particular focus on road safety) by increasing awareness of the CAT and how</li> </ul>	<p><i>Community Action Team to be recruited.</i></p> <p><i>Communities will be encouraged to use their Community Policing Teams as the first point of contact</i></p>

communities can feed into the CAT work programme	<p><i>The Safer Communities Team currently coordinate the activity of the Council funded Community Action Team (CAT).</i></p>
<b>Environment &amp; Place</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that Tweeddale residents have access to appropriate and affordable housing, and the environment is clean and safe</li> <li>• Tackle fuel poverty</li> <li>• Identify opportunities where green space and access to green space can be improved and local access to growing projects can be developed</li> <li>• De-cluttering and environmental improvement campaigns are undertaken in key streets/areas within Tweeddale locality</li> <li>• Improve awareness and access to information, support and resources to increase energy efficiency.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Develop a range of flexible accommodation for communities at every age and stage of life</i></p> <p><i>Incorporate the Wheelchair Housing Study into the next Strategic Housing Document</i></p> <p><i>Improve the provision of suitable local housing (sheltered, extra care, for those with disabilities, care homes etc) by developing a range of flexible accommodation for communities at every age and stage of life.</i></p>

## 6.6 Scottish Borders Council (SBC) Council Plan

It is worth remembering, however, that delivering Council services is not all about Community Empowerment, and that the Plan for the overall activities of the Council is captured in the Council Plan. The Council Plan for 2023/24, published in April 2023, has the themes as indicated in the graphic below.

### Scottish Borders Council (SBC) Council Plan 2023/24

	<b>Clean Green Future</b>	Incorporating biodiversity and nature restoration across 950 hectares of greenspace.	Collecting the waste of over 59,000 households, and managing over 70 recycling points and 7 community recycling centres, while achieving the top recycling rate for rural councils.
	<b>Fulfilling Our Potential</b>	Delivering high quality education to over 16,000 children across 59 primary school, 9 secondary schools and 29 funded providers.	Delivering over 1.5 million school meals per year to pupils across our primary and secondary schools.
	<b>Strong Inclusive Economy, Transport and Infrastructure</b>	Maintaining over 1,800 miles of public roads across the region, as well as some 490 miles of public footway, more than 1200 bridges and structures and 860 miles of walking and access routes.	Last year, bringing in £5.5 million of additional funding to spend on 24 Economic Development projects.
	<b>Empowered, Vibrant Communities</b>	Supporting over 80 community groups with £274,000 in grant funding through our Community Fund and £499,000 to 77 groups via our one-off 'Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund'.	Supporting our communities through the cost of living crisis by providing £1.2m of additional funding.
	<b>Good Health and Wellbeing</b>	Providing over 10,500 Care at Home Hours and over 14,500 Supported living hours per week to support people to live at home independently.	Maintaining 187 play parks.
Paying a living wage to the largest workforce in the Region, Scottish Borders Council, delivering excellent services daily			
 <b>Working Together Improving Lives</b>			

Based on this, priorities for the Tweeddale Area are illustrated in the graphic on the next page.

# Locality Actions

**TWEEDDALE:** This page presents priority work for Tweeddale for the coming year. Many of the projects are led by others working in our communities and we will take an enabling approach to provide advice and practical support to help others deliver.



## Clean Green Future

**Flood Protection:** Develop flood risk initiatives, including flood risk management strategies and plans for Peebles, Innerleithen, and Broughton.

**The Eddlestone Water Project:** Investigate the effectiveness of natural flood management (NFM) techniques and habitat restoration measures at a catchment scale

**Climate and Nature:** Support community-led initiatives that contribute to tackling climate change and nature loss.



## Fulfilling Our Potential

**Peebles High School:** Begin construction of the new high school in Peebles and engage with young people, their families and the community to support transition to new models of learning and service delivery

**Eddlestone:** Explore opportunities for outdoor learning spaces in Eddlestone



## Strong Inclusive Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

**Mountain Bike Innovation Centre:** Continue to work with SOSE and Napier University in the development of a Mountain Bike Innovation Centre at Cairlee Mill

**Cycling World Championships 2023:** Seize the opportunity provided by the CWC to promote cycling, and economic and business opportunities across the whole region



## Empowered, Vibrant Communities

**Tweeddale Place Making:** Support the Tweeddale Area Partnership's Place Making Working Group in working with interested communities to develop community-led place plans

**Tweeddale Area Partnership:** Strengthen the role of the Area Partnership through the completion of the Review of Area Partnerships and implementation of its recommendations and, in particular, strengthen its role in the oversight of place making, the associated development of a locality plan and the widening of engagement with Community Planning Partners in this process



## Good Health and Wellbeing

**Peebles Extra Care Housing development:** Develop a business case for Extra Care Housing in Peebles

**Integrated working:** Develop locality huddles and locality planning groups to deliver joined up services, focused on local needs. Re-ablement teams will work to help people regain confidence and daily living skills after illness

## Annex 7 – Peebles Town Action Plan key initiatives

### Enabling Measures

- En1 Strengthening community capacity
- En2 20 year plan for the settlement of Peebles

### Horizontal Measures

- Ho1 A safer community
- Ho2 A focus on young people
- Ho3 A just transition to Net Zero.

### Key Initiatives

#### Sustainable Growth

- A Improved connectivity
  - A1 New road bridge
  - A2 New pedestrian and cycle bridge
- B Housing for everyone
- C Flood protection scheme
- D Energy efficiency
- E Expand Peebles economic footprint

#### Getting Around

- F Active travel improvements
  - F1 Everyday journeys
  - F2 Destination journeys
- G Transport infrastructure improvements
  - G1 Public transport
  - G2 Parking

#### Open for Business

- H Local business boost
- I Creative industries cluster
- J Tourism

#### A Fair Community

- K Town Centre regeneration
- L Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure
- M Health & medical infrastructures
- N Field sports infrastructure upgrade
- O Review of public and community indoor space
- P Life-long learning, skills development and training
- Q Green and food security

<b>Sustainable Growth</b>		
	<b>A Improved connectivity</b>	
	<i>A1 New roadbridge</i>	Build a second bridge to reduce current traffic pressure on the High Street to secure improved connectivity between recent development to the southeast of the settlement and amenities in the town centre.
	<i>A2 New pedestrian and cycle bridge</i>	Build pedestrian bridge(s) to improve connection to key destinations in Peebles, encouraging walking, wheeling, and cycling, and reducing car usage.
	<b>B Housing for everyone</b>	To overcome the lack of affordable housing in Peebles, supporting the provision of a mix of housing and accommodation which are accessible to all, to rebalance community wellbeing and to build a sustainable and resilient future for the people of Peebles.
	<b>C Flood protection scheme</b>	Further develop the new flood defence scheme to reduce the intensity of flooding events in Peebles, safeguarding the town's future, mitigating the effects of the climate crisis while enhancing biodiversity.
	<b>D Energy efficiency</b>	Reduce energy use, shift demand to clean energy and advance energy savings. Make a just transition by reducing fuel poverty, securing community benefits and achieving community owned energy generation.
	<b>E Expand Peebles economic footprint</b>	Promote major investment in the economic infrastructure of Peebles, incorporating the newly proposed commercial business site in the Eshiels area, and ensuring this is well serviced by the appropriate road and transport infrastructure.
<b>Getting Around</b>		
	<b>F Active travel improvements</b>	
	<i>F1 Everyday journeys</i>	Continue to implement active travel infrastructure in Peebles, to make walking, wheeling and cycling a safer and more attractive experience for all.
	<i>F2 Destination journeys</i>	Improve active travel links between the town centre and the green corridor along both sides of the Tweed, upgrading existing paths and providing new routes, to enhance connection to the river Tweed.
	<b>G Transport infrastructure improvements</b>	
	<i>G1 Public transport</i>	Optimise the existing bus services to ensure it is most useful to local residents to achieve their journeys and improve access to services.
	<i>G2 Parking</i>	Reassess Peebles car parking strategy, ensuring that regulations are enforced, to alleviate traffic congestion on the High Street and improve traffic flows.
<b>Open for Business</b>		
	<b>H Local business boost</b>	Cater for small local independent businesses, the Working-From-Home community, and the small building trades businesses that are the backbone of Peebles' economy, and to provide supporting infrastructure and spaces to encourage the creation of start-ups and the relocation of small (<30 staff) businesses to Peebles.
	<b>I Creative industries cluster</b>	Develop a Creative Industries Cluster, to promote Peebles as a Creative Hub and to complement and expand on the existing cluster of people working in the creative arts.
	<b>J Tourism</b>	Continue to market Peebles as a key tourist destination, supporting sustainable and responsible tourism, ensuring that the local community can benefit from it and providing the appropriate supporting infrastructure.
<b>A Fair Community</b>		

<b>K Town Centre regeneration</b>	Re-imagining Peebles Town Centre for everyone, regenerating public spaces, refurbishing and maximising the use of surrounding cultural and public buildings, improving accessibility and facilitating navigation and connectivity.
<b>L Improvements to south Peebles infrastructure</b>	To rebalance the expansion of Peebles, planning for improved access to services and for more provision of social and economic infrastructure south of the river, making it easier to get around and creating a social hub where all generations can meet and socialise.
<b>M Health &amp; medical infrastructures</b>	Create a strengthened and better integrated health and care infrastructure in the town around an enlarged Community Hospital at Hay Lodge hosting a range of medical, health and care services for the community and its immediate hinterland as well as catering for an ageing and growing population.
<b>N Field sports infrastructure upgrade</b>	To maximise the use of existing amenities in Peebles and upgrade sports facilities at Whitestone / Kerfield Park and Violet Bank, to enhance the experience for visitors and athletes, further increase community participation and add to the local economy.
<b>O Review of public and community indoor space</b>	To develop a vision for the reuse and refurbishment of existing buildings, as well as new, so that valued sporting, cultural and third sector activities continue to thrive and develop. Foster collaboration, so that investment decisions are better informed and avoid duplication.
<b>P Life-long learning, skills development and training</b>	To provide the community with opportunities to train and upskill in multiple disciplines which could lead to improved employability, and to provide local groups and individuals with learning opportunities to build capacity and improve mental health.
<b>Q Green and food security</b>	Preserve and enhance existing green space in Peebles and surrounding natural habitat. Work closely with and support local community groups in maintaining in-town greenery and allotment spaces. Support community growing projects with a focus on tackling food poverty and biodiversity loss whilst supporting conservation efforts.

**Enabling Measure 1. Strengthening community capacity** (struggling to secure staff and operational funding for key institutional infrastructures such as Peebles Community Trust, local Borders Community Action, local Citizens Advice Bureau – false economy)

Increasingly the community is being encouraged to take a more hands-on role in informing and guiding the future development of the town and district, provide support and advice to its residents and businesses, and take greater responsibility for the upkeep of the town, including taking some assets under community ownership and management for the good of the town. Such actions require organisation and resources, and cannot be solely reliant on volunteers and/or retirees. Of particular relevance are the functioning of the local office of Borders Community Action, the work of the local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and the work of the Peebles Community Trust (PCT) – each of which can reasonably be described as under-resourced.

Of particular note, Borders Community Action, the Third Sector Interface body for the Scottish Borders, is a nominated lead development partner in delivery of over half of the 47 actions that make up the 2021 South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy<sup>1</sup>. It needs to be resourced and structured to be able to fulfil this function.

We would also, however, place special emphasis on strengthening and securing the professional (and salaried) functioning of the Peebles Community Trust, which plays such a central, leveraging and catalysing role in supporting achievement of a resilient and sustainable Peebles.

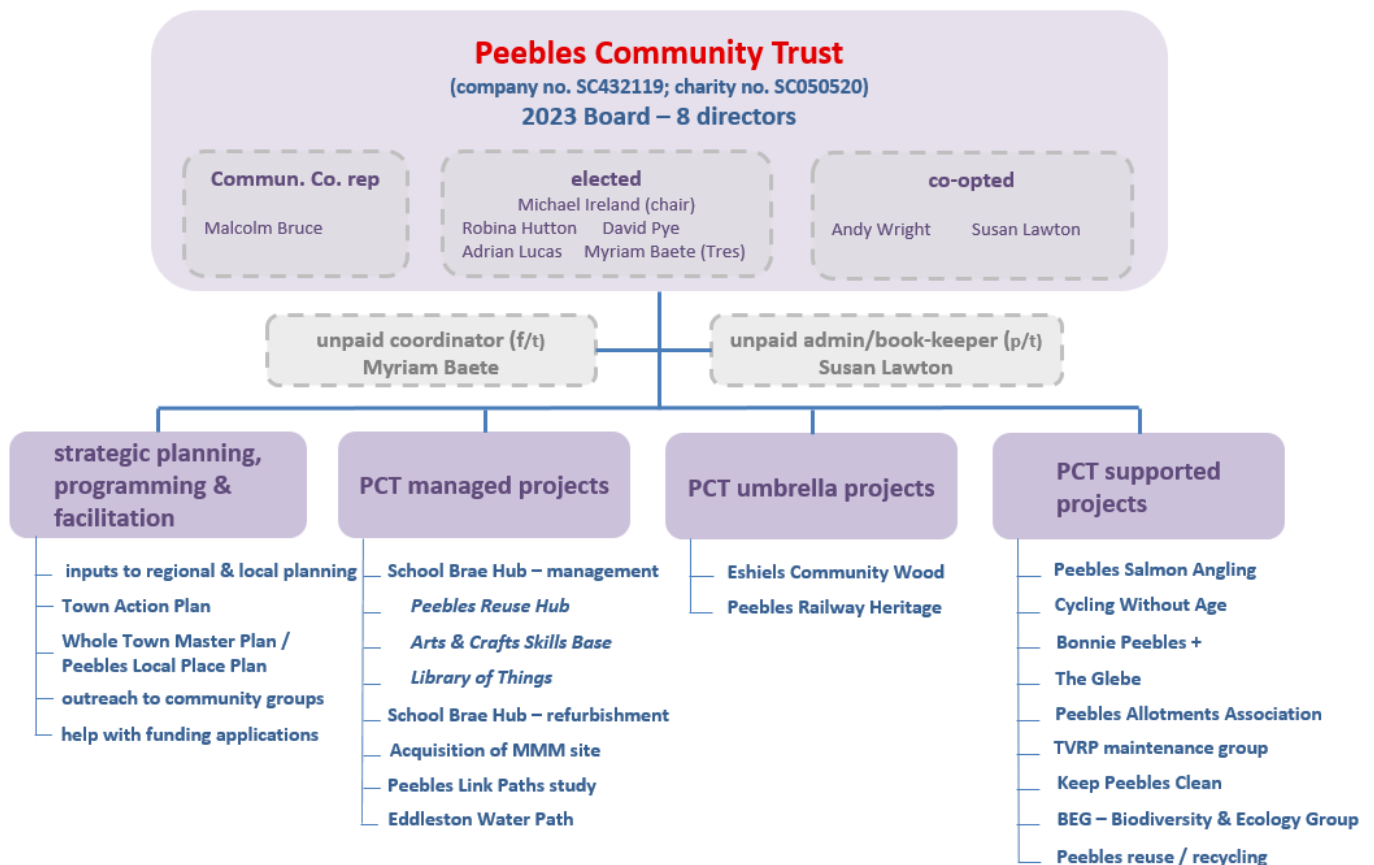
Historically Peebles has been the county seat of Peeblesshire as well as also having its own Town Council and later District Council. Government reform of 1975 saw the Peeblesshire administration subsumed within the Scottish Borders regional administration, and the 1995 reform saw the absorption of the District Council into the unitary authority of Scottish Borders Council, with local representation through six elected Tweeddale (the re-branded Peeblesshire) councillors. At the local level, community views are invited through the Royal Burgh of Peebles & District Community Council – which is the only civic organisation in Peebles that the Council and government are statutorily required to consult on issues of policy and planning. The Community Council has up to eighteen Community Councillors elected from residents within the Community Council boundary, and the six Tweeddale Councillors hold ex officio membership of the Community Council.

The work of the Community Council is complemented by the work of the Peebles Civic Society – particularly on planning matters. Recognising that the Community Council is not well structured to own or manage community assets, in 2010 then current and past members of the Community Council and the Civic Society joined together to establish the Peebles Community Trust (PCT), which was registered as a not-for-profit company in 2012 and recognised as a charity in 2020. The PCT operates a number of community projects – including taking ownership of Eshiels Community Wood and the School Brae Hub (the former Ex-Servicemen's Club) – and it supports a range of other community organisations in their endeavours.

The PCT, with a board now numbering eight, has proved a successful and pivotal organisation within the community, looked to by community organisations, Councillors and government agencies as the town's core anchor organisation and go-to body to take forward community ownership and other development initiatives as the town's principal development trust. From mid-2018 to mid-2022 the PCT benefited from grant funding towards employing a full-time development officer and a part-time administrator. This funding lapsed in March 2022, and despite concerted efforts to secure follow-on funding, and with substantial and scarce PCT generated match funding deployed to support building

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sosrep.dumgal.gov.uk/article/21953/Regional-Economic-Strategy>



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works, the PCT has operated with no funded positions for the last year. This is an unsustainable position.

In addition, the PCT is managing an expensive and complex fund raising and refurbishment programme to bring the School Brae Hub building up to modern standards and back into full operation. This is proving a challenge – not least to the stand-in volunteer administrative and management resources running day to day operations – but also arguably an avoidable distraction from the board and PCT management advancing and supporting the many other projects and organisations that should be its focus. At the core of this problem is the dearth of funding available to support core institutional capacity, and extreme reluctance on the part of funders of capital works to also fund project management positions and cover the costs of professional services (planning and programming inputs from building engineers, quantity surveyors, specialist services and the like). Given the proven success and track-record of the PCT in supporting a programme of community developments in Peebles, its inability to secure funding to support paid professional staffing is a serious threat to the future viability of the PCT.

**Enabling Measure 2. 20 year plan for the settlement of Peebles** (expansion of the settlement beyond areas marked within the settlement boundaries for Peebles and Eshiels in LDP2 requires a detailed master plan on how Peebles can expand further and remain a resilient and sustainable community)

As stipulated under Scottish planning legislation, Councils are required in their Local Development Plans to identify land for immediate and longer-term development (for housing, economic or other use). The 2016/17 LDP allocations within the settlement boundary included the lower part of the former Rosetta House estate (5.7ha) and the site of the former March Street Mills (2.3ha) which have been designated for housing / mixed use (planning approval on the former site has now lapsed, and planning for the latter has just been lodged). Outside the existing settlement boundary two sites are identified for longer-term housing development at South West of Whitehaugh (4.5ha) and North West of Hogbridge (2.9ha), and a further site for potential longer-term mixed-use development at Peebles East (South of the River) (32.3ha).

In the draft 2023 LDP (currently progressing through government examination) the settlement boundary has been extended northwards to accommodate a further housing site South of Chapelhill Farm (7.0ha), with retention of the Rosetta House estate site (5.7ha) and March Street mill site (2.3ha), and retention of the two forward planning sites and the one potential development site appearing in the 2017 LDP. In addition, however, a development and safeguarding proposal has been put forward for a business and industrial site at Eshiels (4.9ha) – located about 1km north east of the Kittlegairy development on the other side of the river (bearing in mind that there is an outstanding commitment to build a second bridge across the Tweed to the east of the town centre), and a lot closer should the proposed potential longer-term development ever take place at Peebles East (South of the River).

Further, in preparatory work for development of the 2023 LDP areas to the south west of Peebles at Southpark & Edderston Burn, and to the south of Peebles along Bonnington Road at Crookston Glen, have been examined as potential housing development sites – though not for the present. Likewise a number of sites at Eshiels, north of the A72, have been examined as potential housing development sites (to the north and west of the business and industrial site indicated in the previous paragraph), but not included in the current draft plan. These sites are likely to be subject to more detailed study in the future – within the next 5 to 15 years.

Even with the settlement layout as it is today the north eastern and south western and south eastern extremities of Peebles are now considerable distance from community facilities located almost exclusively in the centre of the town, and thus these areas arguably fall outside what might be considered a 20-minute neighbourhood. This would be stretched still further if the South of Chapelhill Farm site is included in the adopted 2023 LDP. But things get decidedly more complicated should developments to the south west, south and south east of the current settlement boundary come to pass, and still further should industrial and housing development take place at Eshiels. In amongst these potential developments is the current need for construction of a second bridge across the Tweed, and finalisation and implementation of a flood defence scheme.

We would argue most strongly that any developments beyond those adopted in the forthcoming 2023 LDP cannot go ahead without a Whole Town Development Framework Plan that details how and where further social, cultural and economic infrastructures north and south of the town are to be provided, how housing needs for those less well-off are to be met, how connectivity and active travel infrastructures are to be located and installed to link an increasingly dispersed settlement, and overall how residents can be facilitated in living, working and playing within the community they reside in.

**Horizontal Measure 1. A safer community** (general concerns about getting about – too much traffic, inadequate & inconsiderate parking, poor cycle & paths networks, poor crossing points, poor street lighting – not enough safe socialising places for old and young, plus growing problems arising from disparities in wealth and opportunity)

Peebles is a very safe, quiet and connected community, with few accidents, limited crime, good amenities, and a generally high standard of built environment located within high amenity countryside. But not everyone **feels** safe.

The settlement has grown rapidly over the last 25 years with commensurate increases in vehicular traffic, high and increasing levels of commuting, and areas of the settlement that are no longer within easy walking distance to the centre of town and its amenities – bearing in mind that almost all amenities are concentrated in or near the centre of town.

Coupled with increasing disparities in wealth (and the many social problems that accompany this), the largest schools' enrolment anywhere in the Borders, and an aging population, more and more people (young and old) are becoming isolated, lonely, and less confident, and suffering poor and worsening mental health and wellbeing – with an increase in concomitant issues – substance abuse, increased medication, violence, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, petit vandalism.

There is no silver bullet solution. Remedial measures are necessarily diverse, amongst which are:

- Improved insulation of housing stock
- Investment in active travel infrastructure
- Improved safe crossing points
- Increased social amenities, meeting places, and activities in the outer areas of the settlement, not just in the centre
- Greater social amenities for young people – places, facilities and events
- Provision of more local work opportunities
- Increased life-long learning, training and skills development
- Improved street and open space design and landscaping to encourage civic pride and discourage littering and petit vandalism
- Achieving wider recognition within the community that not looking after the poorest in our community lessens the quality of life of all of us.

**Horizontal Measure 2. A focus on young people** (need to emphasise the need to give particular focus to issues that affect young people and that so easily adversely impact on life opportunities for this age group; and recognise that this is an area that is all too easily under-recognised, under-resourced, and dismissed)

A wide range of issues have been raised by the community concerning young people – from Peebles being a great place to grow up in, and to raise a family, there are great opportunities for sports and outdoors activities, and great opportunities for education with a top ranking High School, to limited provision of space and facilities for young people to relax and meet up, very limited local job opportunities, limited provision for vocational training, growing evidence of problems associated with the mental health of young people, and stigmatisation of young people as anti-social and a problem. On top of this, the impacts of poverty, poor housing conditions, marginalisation, poor health, poor mental health, and disparities in wealth limit opportunities, have amplified adverse impact on the young.

Given the particular focus of the plan to:

- ***directly address poverty and disadvantage;***
- ***provide local work and housing for those less well off;***
- ***support mental well-being;***
- ***improve community capacity to direct and manage change;***

it is important to maintain a young people focus across all actions to implement the Plan. To further emphasise the point, over 50% of the prioritised actions brought forward in the plan have a young persons' dimension. This needs to be recognised.

We do not believe that a dedicated youth initiative does sufficient justice to the topic given that many of the issues addressed in the actions are not exclusive to young people, and also cover every part of the overall plan. Instead, we seek to give emphasis to the topic as a Horizontal Measure, and one that should be given specific recognition across the implementation of the Plan.

There are a significant number of community organisations in Peebles that are providing focused support, resources and facilitation to young people, such as Tweed Youth Action, Oor Space Youthy, Peeblesshire Youth Trust, Greener Peebles, Scouts and Guides, Army Cadets, and a wide range of youth focused activity clubs, from football and rugby, dance and theatre, to swimming and golf, and including the schools. But this is still not sufficient, and in particular does not suit or reach everyone – and may not be truly accessible to everyone. In particular, organisations that seek to reach the more disaffected or marginalised young people – such as Oor Space Youthy and Tweed Youth Action, and more recently Youth Voice Peebles – struggle to secure long-term funding and support. Recent surveys – by the Placemaking Team, by Youth Voice Peebles, by the High School, by the Active Travel Study – provide ample evidence of need and signal where support and assistance could and should be channelled.

The downside of the current situation is that Peebles has recent experience of the consequences of disaffection, disadvantage, alienation, and stigmatisation of young people – in instances of property damage, petty vandalism, under-age drinking and substance abuse, raised levels of poor mental health amongst young people, and numbers of young people who routinely feel unsafe and insecure within the community. This needs to be set against the many more instances of excellence in sport and education, in achievement in work experience, community initiatives, and good citizenship. The Plan focuses on accessibility for, and providing the best life opportunities for all. It is an ambition of the youth organisations of the town that Peebles should be able to promote itself as Open to Young People. It has some way to go on delivering on such an aspiration.

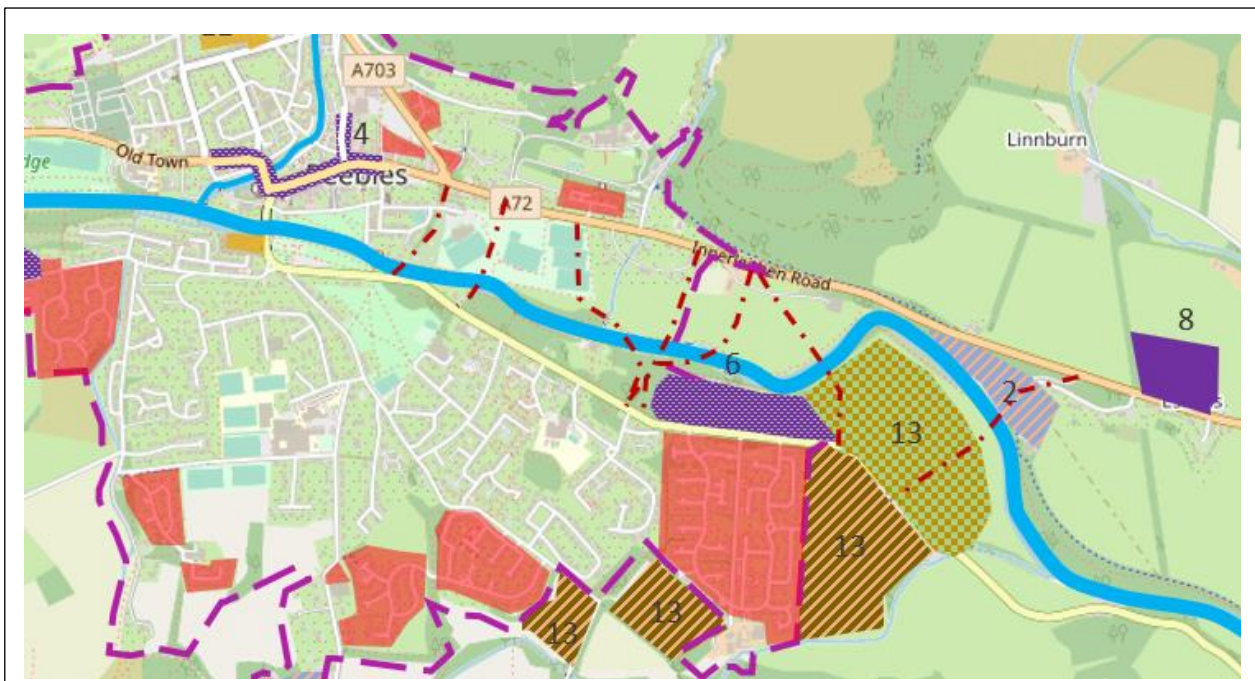
Horizontal Measure 3. A Just Transition to Net Zero

### A1. Peebles Second Bridge project (already over-due, but tricky balancing act)

The project is to build a second road bridge across the Tweed to reduce traffic pressure on the Tweed Bridge and on the High Street and Eastgate. The second bridge is urgently required to bring connectivity within the town into better alignment with recent expansion of the settlement to the south of the river (and particularly to the south-east), which has occurred without **commensurate** investment in physical and social infrastructures. The rationale for this is to meet the current needs of the town, and is not predicated on future expansion of the town. The immediate requirement is that planning work for the bridge should commence sooner rather than later, and be linked to work on other projects, including A2, B, D, F, H, K, L, O, P, Q & En1.

The town and the Council now find themselves in the position where vehicular traffic across the Tweed Bridge is at capacity (the only road bridge across the Tweed linking the northern and southern elements of the settlement). It is not an optional development, and serves two immediate requirements – the need to reduce traffic flows across the Tweed Bridge, and along the High Street; and the need to provide an alternate road connection between the southern part of the settlement and the town centre and trunk road system should the Tweed Bridge be out of action for a protracted period – whether due to accident, structural issues, or flood-related damage.

Construction of a second road bridge across the Tweed at Peebles has been in the pipeline for some decades but might now realistically be delivered within the next 10 to 20 years (budget for a detailed study is included in SBC funding plans, and capital allocations for construction are signalled in longer term budgeting). But how a bridge can be best configured to the long-term benefit of the town, and thus where the bridge should be located, is still to be determined.



Six potential locations were identified back in 2010, to which we now add a seventh, reflecting the likely development of a new economic site north of the A72 at Eshiels (shown above).

The bridge should, of course, be of a design and location that aligns with future growth – but this necessarily means that the longer-term plan for the expansion of the settlement of Peebles should already have been mapped out – which relates specifically to Enabling Measure 2.

**A2. New pedestrian and cycle bridge** (a new pedestrian bridge would encourage walking, wheeling, and cycling, reduce car usage, and provide a valuable adjunct to current and planned routings – to school, to work, to shops, to recreation)

There are currently two pedestrian bridges and one road bridge that cross the river linking the north and south of the town. These are at Fotheringham Bridge by Hay Lodge Park, Tweed Bridge off the western end of the High Street, and Priorsford Bridge at the eastern end of Tweed Green. The Priorsford Bridge is particularly narrow.

This initiative advocates for construction of a new pedestrian bridge across the Tweed to the east of the current bridges to provide a connection to Cavalry Park and nearby residential estates which are fall outside the definition of a 20-minute neighbourhood – they are more than 20-minutes by foot from daily amenities. In addition, it is argued that consideration should be given to widening the Priorsford bridge, which is currently the most heavily used pedestrian bridge, but which does not allow easy two-directional pedestrian traffic, let alone for wheelchair users, and cyclists.

This initiative aligns with a number of other initiatives – Active Travel (F), access for all, reduced reliance on the car for short journeys, and Business Boost (H) – and improves access to the existing multi-use paths (Tweed Railway Path and Eddleston Water Path), and the long-distance Tweed Valley Cycle Route linking the towns along the Tweed, which uses the Tweed Railway Path and extends it through town along the Tweed to link with the old railway tunnel just beyond the Fotheringham Bridge.

Recent expansion of the town has been concentrated to the southern edge of town and particularly to the south-east more distant part of the settlement, and with concentration of medical and social services, retail and hospitality facilities, most offices, and most sporting facilities north of the river, many parts of the southern part of Peebles fall outside the principle of a 20-minute neighbourhood.

Travel to work statistics (latest available are drawn from the 2011 Census data – see **Annex \***) show that significant numbers of residents travel from the south of the river to work within Peebles north of the river and similar numbers living north of the river work within Peebles south of the river. All residents south of the river access services on the north side of the river on a weekly basis, many on a daily basis. Most secondary school children living north of the river travel to the south of the river to access the High School.

In general the paths network is not currently suited to off-road cycle use, nor in many instances wheelchair or buggy use, and limited path widths beside main roads makes walking to and from town an unattractive mode for many households. Whilst there is an in-town bus service, it runs a limited five circuits a day and is only lightly used. Given the distances involved, most households south of the river, and particularly to the far south and south-east, travel to the north of town by private car or taxi.

Favoured routing for a new pedestrian bridge is between the Kingsmeadows House grounds and Cavalry Park, or east of Cavalry Park, joining on the northern side to an upgraded path running

alongside the Tweed linking to the Gytes and Tweed Green. It should be possible with such routings to avoid the need to fell trees, but also to enhance biodiversity through planned landscaping.

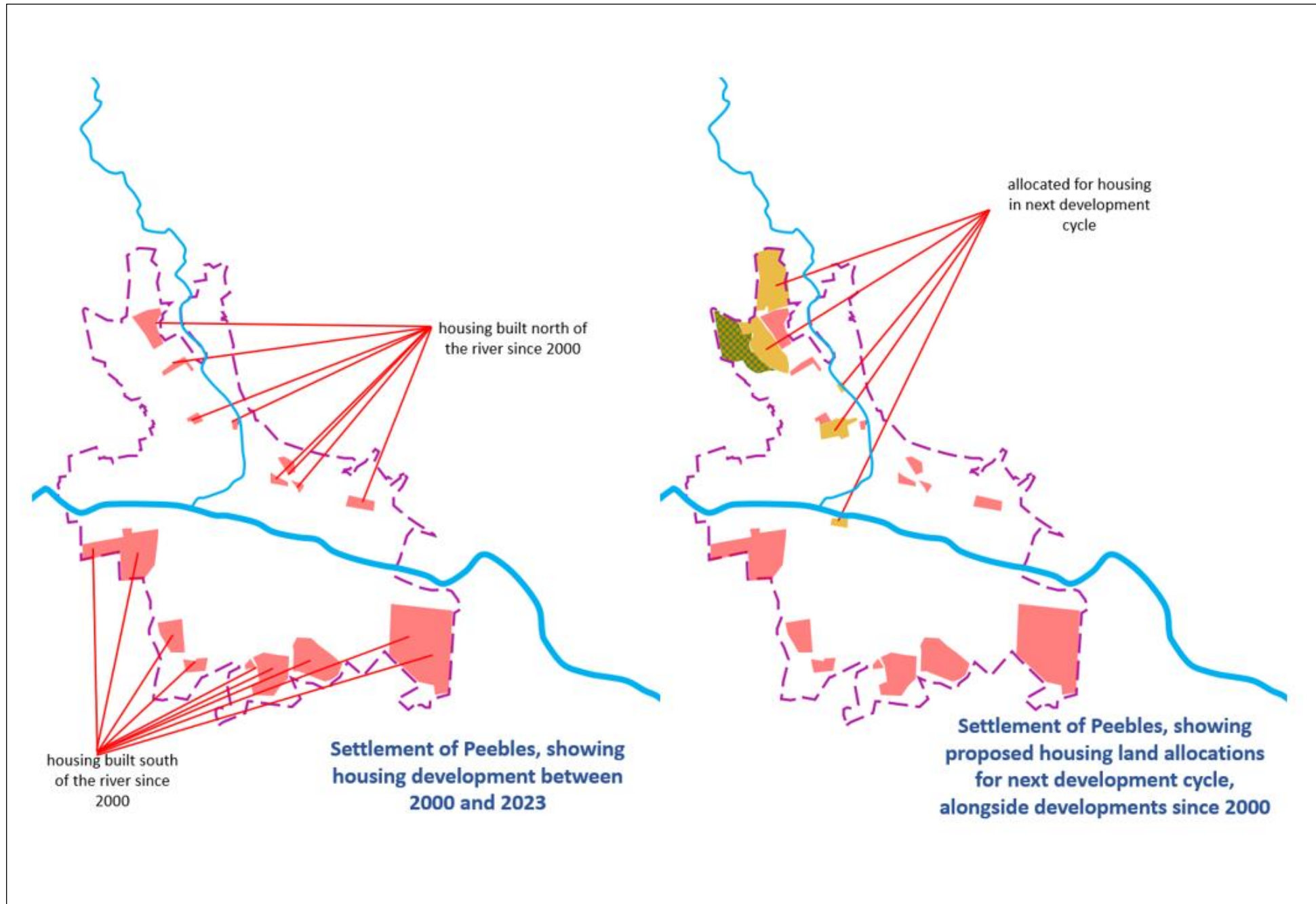
**B. Low cost, low rent housing for marginalised groups** (significant market failure, leading to worsening inequality and imbalance)

Peebles has witnessed an unprecedented increase in housing, with a more than a 40% increase in the built footprint of the settlement area since 2020. But whilst SBC policy is that 25% of all housing development should be of affordable housing, this has not resulted in the level of social, specialist or truly affordable housing that the town needs. There is strong evidence of market failure in this regard, and need for intervention to right worsening imbalance.

Peebles is a very attractive place to live, work and play, but with few local work opportunities (and those at low or minimum wages), few at the lower end of the income scale can afford to buy or rent newly built accommodation in Peebles – despite the town being particularly dependent on these people to service the town’s needs. This has resulted in an unbalanced community, with increasing inequality in wealth and opportunity. Further, the lowest cost housing in Peebles tends to have been built 50 or more years ago (much of it in Victorian times), to be owned or rented by those families that have resided in the town the longest, and to attract the highest running costs because of the poor energy characteristics of these buildings.

At the heart of this plan are three steps – (i) improve “accessibility” and provide “access for all” – to facilities, services, good health and wellbeing, and opportunities; (ii) promote development of more and better paid local job opportunities; and (iii) ensure that suitable housing and accommodation is available in the town so that all that reside here can also work and play here.

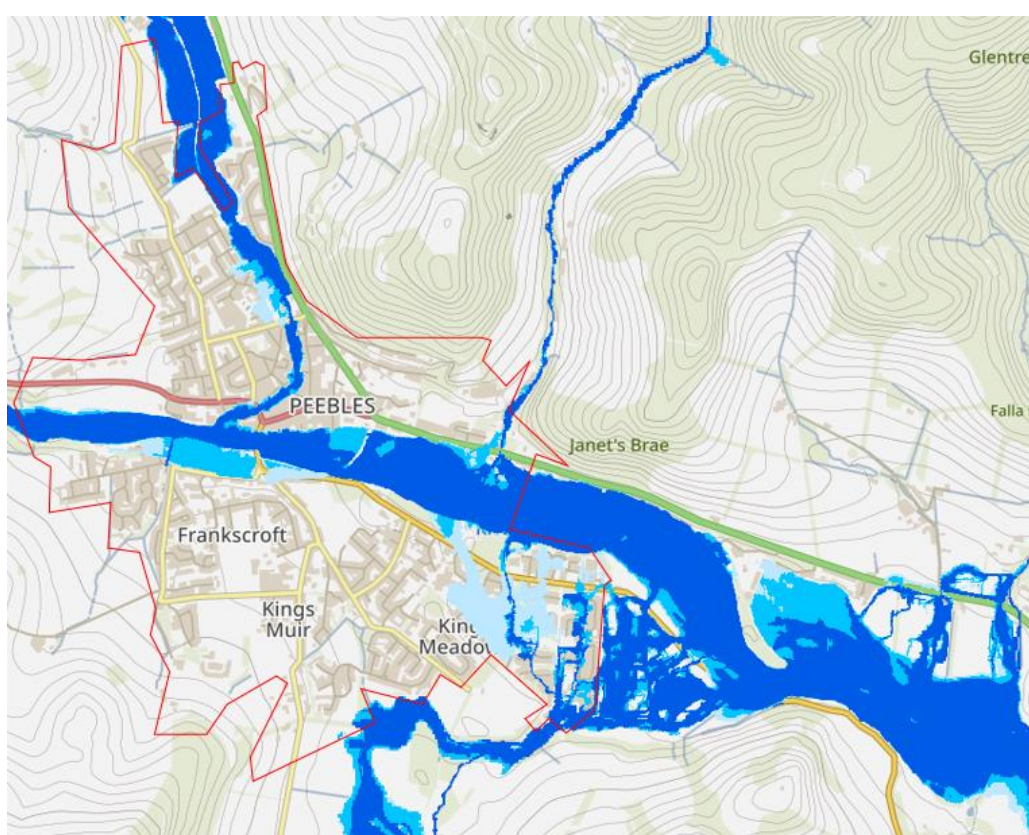
Under current circumstances we could go so far as to suggest that there should be a moratorium on all house-building unless it is purpose-built for those not currently provided for. To do otherwise is to in effect make Peebles into a gated community, with entrance dependent on wealth. What is needed is a range of housing for those least well-off (whether upgraded older housing, or new housing), housing for those entering the workforce for the first time; housing for the aged or with mobility issues; sheltered housing, and managed care facilities; and housing for those older people looking to downsize. Without directed intervention, such housing is not going to be provided. RSLs cannot compete for land against developers hell-bent to build high end full and near market housing. What is needed is a radical approach or approaches to house-building that supports a range of novel funding and ownership models – through RSLs, community ownership, coops, etc..



**C. Peebles flood defence projects** (preliminary planning and options analysis for this has been initiated; now need to resolve the trade-offs between flood management and protecting properties as the basis for moving forward)

Areas in the centre of Peebles along the Tweed and the Cuddy are prone to periodic flooding, with significant events taking place at least every five years, including damage to property putting families out of their houses for up to nine months at a time. There has also been recent flooding around the Haystoun Burn which has impacted housing on the recently completed Kittlegairy estate.

Up until now responses to flooding and protection against future flooding have been at the level of individual properties, with responsibility for action resting with individual property owners. Preliminary planning and options analysis for a wider Flood Defence Scheme has been undertaken in recent years, including public consultation, but until funding is available this cannot be finalised and taken forward.



The Eddleston Water catchment has been subject to long-term habitat and hydrology study, and a wide range of flow and flood management measures implemented combining natural flood management and engineered works to re-meander the river and introduce overflow storage areas to hold back water. It is expected that these measures will have significant beneficial impact in reducing the intensity of flooding events at Peebles where the Cuddy / Eddleston Water enters into the Tweed, but proof of this will only be evident after long-term monitoring.

The greatest flood risk to the settlement of Peebles is when there is heavy rain in the upper reaches of the Tweed catchment and in the Eddleston Water catchment. Since these catchments are at some distance from each other, and thus subject to differing weather conditions, care needs to be taken in ascribing benefits – most notably where the Tweed is in flood but there has been little rainfall in the Eddleston catchment – which is often the case.

That said:

- Proposals are for construction of hard flood defences associated with the lower reaches of the Eddleston Water where damage to property might be reduced, and in the area of Tweed Green and the housing cluster around Tweed Avenue.
- Other modifications are under consideration for the upland area to the south west of the town in the Edderston Ridge / Southpark area and associated with the Edderston Burn coming off the hill.
- Detailing and decisions on the extent of hard defences (cost-benefit analysis of how many properties are to be defended), and whether or not to specifically defend Tweed Green are still to be undertaken and plans finalised.
- Forward budgeting of costs by SBC and government is in hand, but timing is yet to be resolved.

From an Action Plan perspective, it is important that planning and design of any flood defence scheme is fully integrated with the wider placemaking and planning for the settlement. This is not straightforward – and should not be left to the last moment.

To the south east of Peebles the situation is arguably more precarious. The Whitehaugh and Kittlegairy housing estates are built on haugh land (low-lying often alluvial riverside meadow), an ancient designation indicative of annual or common flooding. Given that there has been at least one serious flooding event in recent years, affecting the southernmost housing on the Kittlegairy estate, the issue is serious – and brings into question the sense of giving planning approval for housebuilding in this area. Both the current adopted LDP and the draft 2023 LDP designate land to the immediate east of Kittlegairy as potential for longer-term mixed development. We strongly advocate against bringing the land forward on the basis that it is within the floodplain and has historically flooded, and development would fall contrary to adopted SBC Planning policies.

We recognise that the owners of this land are keen to have it brought forward for mixed development, but unless sureties (engineering and financial) can be provided by the site owners that building on this site can meet the highest protection against flood damage this should be strongly rejected.

**Da. Reducing energy demand & improving energy efficiency** (major issues with fuel poverty and Victorian housing stock, but need to build on outputs of the Change Works in Peebles project)

Given the poor energy efficiency standing of the town's built estate there is much still to do to encourage and bring about improvement. This project focuses first on improving the energy efficiency of households identified as in or at risk of fuel poverty.

In a linked but unrelated intervention, a second project is focused on establishing community ownership of part of one or more local windfarms (securing virtual ownership of generation capacity), as well as exploring other community owned renewable energy generation opportunities.

At the core of Peebles is a Victorian or older stone-built mix of terraced, semi-detached, upper and lower villas, and staired tenements mix of accommodation, mainly in the town centre and to the north of the river. South of the river, aside from older stone-built detached and larger properties, there is an array of smaller properties built between the wars and in the decades after the second world war. The greater proportion of these properties are embraced within the town's Conservation Area. The extensive areas of new builds, almost all in estates, are to the periphery of this older settlement. Almost all the older building stock in Peebles, and much of the mid-C20<sup>th</sup> housing, has poor insulation and draught proofing, and falls well below EPC C environmental efficiency rating – which is a minimum target for all housing to be achieved by 2040.

Between 2018 and 2020 a government funded energy efficiency project, "Change Works in Peebles", operated out of the Old Corn Exchange on the High Street, tasked with identifying how the overall energy use and energy demand for Peebles could be reduced. This included extensive diagnostic work – on categorisation of buildings, distribution of fuel poverty, and most energy inefficient and vulnerable households – and on exploration of how best homeowners could be encouraged to reduce energy demand through changes in behaviour and investment in energy saving upgrades. In follow-on work from this, the project sought to demonstrate energy saving fixes, and to upgrade a small range of properties to demonstrate the practicality and costs of appropriate interventions.

This has all been to the good, but aside from the project's direct interventions in upgrading properties, there has been very little residual benefit – as in further investment in improving the energy efficiency of properties or in seeking to develop and mobilise a more systematic approach to advancing energy saving through roll-out of the Scottish Government Energy Efficiency Roadmap. And little if any of the diagnostic work completed is available to the community and community organisations to inform strategies going forward.

**Db. Community owned energy generation, and community benefit (opportunities presenting through local windfarm developments)**

The community has an interest in securing community benefit from windfarm developments proximate to Peebles, but also an interest in taking virtual ownership of part of any windfarm development – which under the ruling regime is likely to generate significantly greater levels of ongoing revenue than community benefit.

We find ourselves in the situation of supporting renewables' generation (for over more than a decade the community has engaged with a number of windfarm developers looking to develop windfarms in our area) both from the perspective of commenting on planning applications and where a windfarm is approved looking to receive "community benefit". To date only one nearby windfarm has been built (Bowbeat, a 24 turbine development built in 2003), and a second approved for development (Cloich Wind Farm; original application now lapsed and a renewed application for fewer but larger turbines now in play). Two other proposed windfarms proximate to Peebles (Leithen Water and Scawd Law) are in the early stages of application for planning permission. The Peebles community receives no community benefit from the Bowbeat windfarm (its development took place well before the term "community benefit" entered into common usage in relation to communities, though the community of Innerleithen does, we understand receive some cash benefit), though it may be relevant that the owners of Bowbeat are currently seeking a significant extension to their operating license.

The community of Peebles is most certainly interested in applying for and securing community benefit from these developments, and has communicated such interest to these developers, but as yet none (with the possible exception of Bowbeat) has been available. Yet it is becoming very evident in the evaluation of community empowerment, community ownership and operation of Development Trusts across Scotland that those communities able to access community benefit have been, in general, more successful in advancing their ambitions towards development of more resilient and sustainable communities. Such success is a matter of the lottery of geographic location.

Accordingly, the community wishes to actively explore the possibility of taking virtual ownership of a turbine in each nearby development – as in how to raise the necessary finance to secure such interest, and how to negotiate one or more commercial agreements. It has been done elsewhere in Scotland, and there is no immediate reason why Peebles should not seek to do likewise.

### E. Peebles business park / light industrial estate (over 25yrs since major investment in economic infrastructure; without local jobs inequalities increase, and 20-minute neighbourhoods & transition to net zero out of reach)

In recent decades local employment opportunities have been on the wane and the economics of the town dominated by and reliant on income from work undertaken by residents more than 10kms outside town – commuters. This has created imbalance in the demography and functioning of the community, characterised by increasing inequality. This sits at odds with government policies and now challenges the future resilience and sustainability of the settlement.

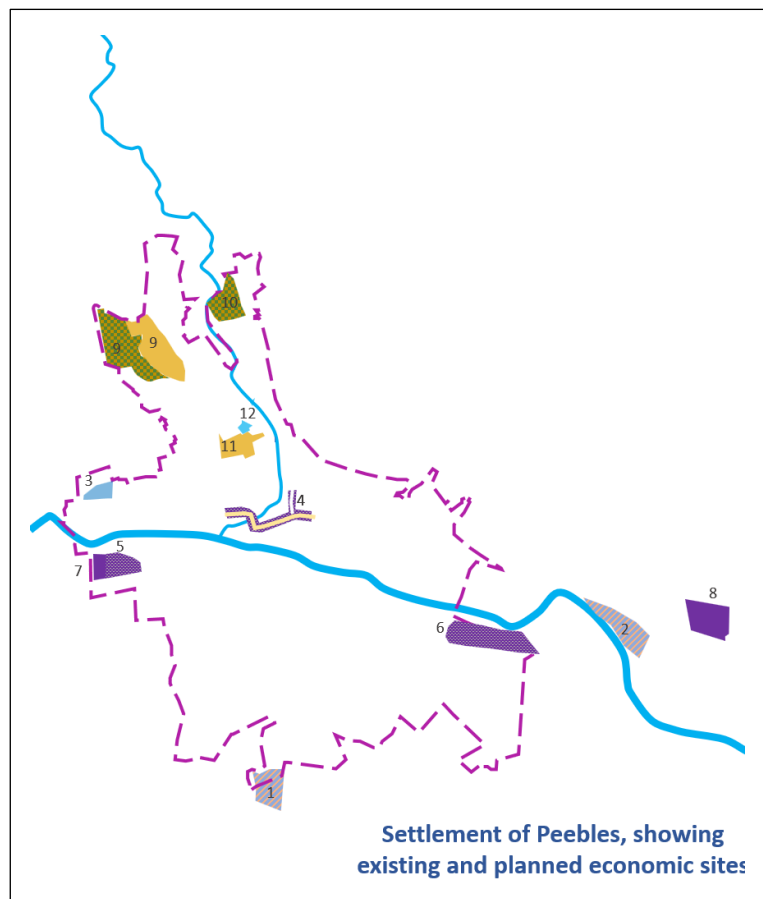
Despite some increase in size and occupancy of our industrial and business estates at South Parks and Cavalry Park (initiated in the 1980s and 90s, respectively), the closure of the last woollen mill at March Street in 2015 has been a significant blow to the local economy, which remains characterised by low wage work in retail and hospitality. Time for a concerted effort to encourage significantly greater employment opportunities within Peebles, including attracting businesses to locate to Peebles – which in turn requires the base infrastructure to be put in place: a new estate.

The proposed LDP2 includes nomination of a 14ha site at Eshiels, to the immediate east of the town settlement boundary and on the north side of the A72 just beyond (to the east of) the entrance to the Eshiels Recycling Centre. Assuming this proposal progresses to formal adoption of the LDP, development of the site presents a number of inter-dependent and complicated planning and development issues, notably:

- how to get on and off the site,
- how to strongly signal the intended longer-term layout and function of the site from the outset,
- who funds the laying out and servicing of the site,
- how to stimulate rapid settlement of the site (development of both the South Parks and Cavalry Park sites has been more of a trickle over a 25-30 year period), and
- how the site fits within and integrates with the longer-term development of the area around it (Eshiels Recycling Centre, existing housing, future housing, a second bridge across the Tweed).

At the very least we are of the view that public money should be used to lay out and service the site, and to design and construct a core commercial business structure on the site.

To make the most of this opportunity, this project links projects 9, 10 & 11, see below.

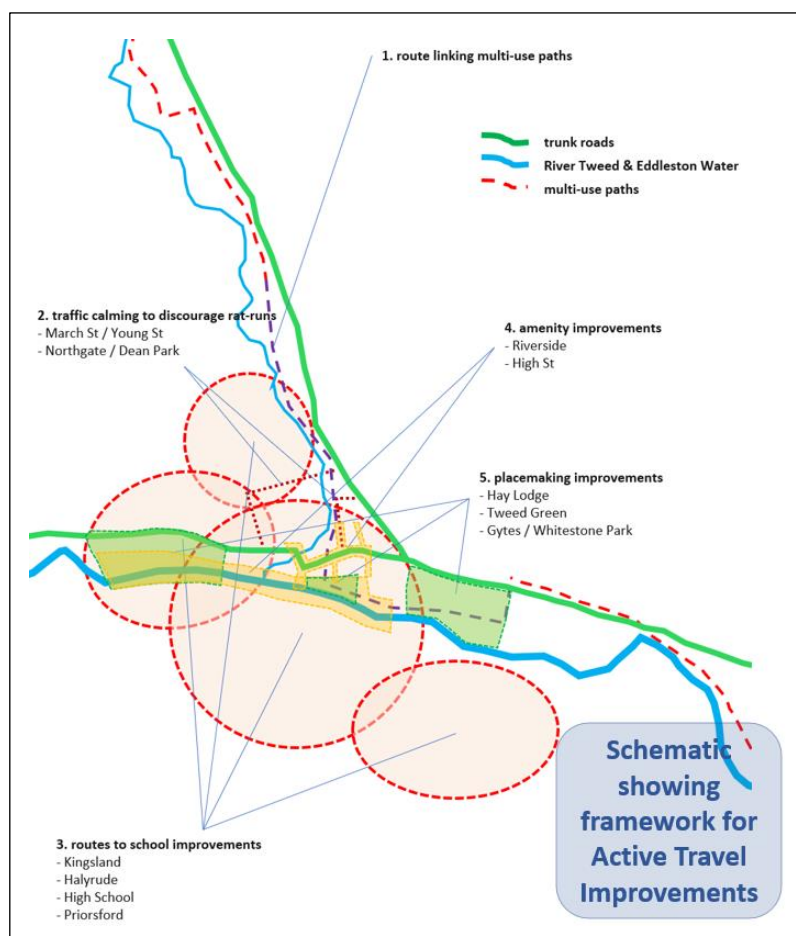


## F1. Peebles active travel infrastructure – everyday journeys (multi-£M; ready to go – can be tackled by intervention or by geographic area, and in stages)

The recently completed Sustrans funded Active Travel study, undertaken by Mott Macdonald (consulting engineers), Sterry Walters (Landscape Architects), and the Peebles Community Trust (community engagement), has mapped out a range of potential improvements to paths, pavements, and road crossings across the town. Whilst a key driver for the study was to pathfind a route or routes linking the Tweed Valley Railway Path and the Eddleston Water Path, the widened study focuses on making walking, wheeling and cycling a more attractive and safer experience for moving about the town.

Improvement packages can be broadly separated into measures addressing safe routes to each of the four Peebles schools (3 primary and one High School), measures supporting the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods, and measures guiding multi-path users into and across the town, including:

- Improve routes to school, particularly from South Parks to Kingsland School
- Improve south of river walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure facilitated by a new pedestrian and cycle bridge (see Initiative A2)
- Install more bike lock-ups in more locations around town
- Upgrade the High Street looking at streetscape, including exploring opportunities for seating, greenery, cycling infrastructure and wider and better surfaces.



These packages can be implemented by area, or by nature of intervention (raised tables, Dutch footpaths, path widening, landscaping, signage). Preliminary designs and drawing have been prepared and substantial community consultation completed.

Implementing a programme of improved active travel infrastructure forms a central part of achieving “access for all” – where barriers of cost, access for those with disabilities or mobility issues, and the provision a more inviting, enjoyable and safe environment encourages greater participation and supports improved wellbeing and health outcomes.

**F2. Peebles active travel infrastructure: destination journeys** (focus on paths and amenities along the green corridor either side of the river – with multiple benefits and links to other parts of plan – including leisure & recreation, safe travel to schools, tourism, and greening, and links to the long distance Tweed Valley Cycle Route championed by Destination Tweed)

This is another element of the active travel programme, but adds greater focus on leisure and recreation, visitor experience and tourism. Its core elements are installing / upgrading the paths either side of the river Tweed, from Tweed Bridge up to Fotheringham Bridge and a bit beyond, upgrading links and amenity between the town centre, Tweed Green and Victoria Park, and improving connectivity along and across the Tweed river east of Tweed Green linking to the Tweed Valley Railway Path at its start by the Hydro Hotel, upgrading the riverside link to the stairs further east by the former Wire Bridge linking to the entrance to the Eshiels tunnel on the Railway Path, and linking to a new pedestrian / cycle bridge by Kingsmeadows Estate / Cavalry Park (see A2).

A core part of this initiative is to better open the river corridor for recreational and leisure use. By Hay Lodge Park this starts with the levelling of “the hump” at the back of Hay Lodge House, where steps up and down to navigate around an overgrown beech hedge at the rear of the house (yes, the mature trees did originally form a modest hedge) prevent wheelchair access to the park from Greenside. Plans are in hand to achieve this under the Destination Tweed project (and its cultural programme Connecting Threads) funded from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.



Proposals are then to establish a paved path along the riverside from there to Fotheringham Bridge, and to upgrade and widen the path on the south side of the river from Fotheringham Bridge to Priorsford Bridge to accommodate pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists.

## **G1 Transport infrastructure improvements – public transport** (improved bus time-tabling, in-town and longer-distance)

In the responses to the Place Standard Tool survey public transport came in for more criticism than most – mainly, but not only, to do with timetabling. This initiative focuses on three main elements – improving passenger numbers and frequency of use of both in-town and longer distance public transport routes; review the logistics of public transport, footpaths and parking inter-connectivity, again in-town and along the longer distance routes, including revisiting the benefits of moving the main Peebles bus interchange from the Eastgate to the East Station Car Park; and exploring the viability of introducing a Pingo-type on-demand bus service to better serve nearby rural communities as well as Peebles residents.

The in-town bus service provides a vital link for the elderly, those with mobility issues, and households without a car, but for the majority it is not the transport of choice, and its limited frequency of service means many are forced to resort to use of taxi services. Alongside other initiatives to promote active travel, and to reduce use of private cars for short journeys, there is need to encourage more and more regular use of the in-town service – in collaboration with the main bus operator – as part of work to build improved connectivity across the settlement.

A similar situation arises with long-distance bus use, primarily the main X62 service between Galashiels and Edinburgh. Frequency of service is good across most of the day (every half hour), but comes in for criticism for the lack of late night time-tabling, but also early morning services. A focus should be on providing an enhanced service in the evening and at night, to connect Peebles with surrounding communities and towns, facilities and services. Passenger numbers have built up since the end of the Covid emergency, but again use of private cars far outweighs use of bus transport for journeys to and from work and leisure trips. The focus of this initiative is to encourage a change in behaviour to favour increased use of public transport – promoting its advantages alongside a review of timetabling and inter-connectivity. There is also a call to revisit the benefits of moving the main Peebles stop from the Eastgate to the East Station Car Park as part of moves to improve inter-connectivity within Peebles, and further reduce congestion in the centre of town.

The roll-out of a Pingo-type on-demand bus service in the Berwickshire area has proved of sufficient interest to encourage wider exploration of this type of service. Its introduction to Tweeddale should be actively experimented with.

**G2 Transport infrastructure improvements – parking** (measures to improve active travel experience in town whilst welcoming and accommodating high visitor numbers, and supporting commuters and inter-connection with public transport)

Concerns about traffic volumes, rat-runs, speed, illegal parking, pavement parking, congestion in side-streets, availability and use of town car parks figured particularly highly in comments arising from Open Forum events, survey and round-table discussions – with a very clear voice for return of parking wardens. These are not issues unique to Peebles, but it is evidently a material concern for older people, families with children, and people with mobility issues, and adversely affects the overall “feel” of Peebles.

This initiative brackets measures to address all of these concerns, with a focus on promoting active travel, improved connectivity and access to all, improvements in safety, reducing car usage for short-journeys, and improving inter-connection with public transport for longer journeys.

A priority is to reassess the Peebles car parking strategy, ensuring that regulations are enforced, with a view to alleviating traffic congestion on the High Street, improve traffic flows and making moving around the town a safer and more comfortable experience for pedestrians, wheelers, families with children, cyclists and those with mobility issues.

A second priority is to implement proposals to Decriminalise Parking Enforcement in the Borders to facilitate the Council enforcing its own parking policies with respect to motorists breaching parking controls in specified areas.

A particular focus should be on maintaining car parking for locals to ensure they have access to services, whilst also encouraging and facilitating reduced use of private cars for short journeys, including journeys to and from school. Alongside this is a call to ensure parking spaces for disabled users are provided at key locations.

There is also a call to explore the viability of outer town visitor parking site – to be complemented by local bus services – to promote more pedestrian use of the High Street by visitors, to minimise the impacts of tourist’ parking on local residents, and to accommodate the periodic raised visitor numbers associated with the year-round calendar of cultural and special interest events that form such an important part of the life of the town. This should also include investigation of how to accommodate additional spaces and improved facilities for camper vans and caravans.

#### H. Peebles “Open for Business” project (need to reverse declining local job opportunities)

It has long been an ambition to encourage more businesses to set up in Peebles and more business to locate to Peebles, but whilst there have been successes, the record is patchy. Fundamentally there have been limited facilities – offices, workshops, factories – and support structures to encourage business startups or relocations, and this remains largely the case today.

But:

- The internet, social media, the financial crash of 2009, and changing economic circumstances, followed by the Covid-emergency, have brought about significant changes in work patterns. This has encouraged / facilitated the establishment of many small businesses operated from home, and many salaried employees working from home one or two days a week, or more – but the town as a whole has shown few signs of embracing these changes, or even recognising such changes.
- And most businesses located to the South Parks and Cavalry Park estates are small with limited staff rosters, and there has been considerable churn – in some cases because the town has not been able to offer competitive expansion opportunities.

Peebles may be “Open for Business”, but it hardly has its arms wide open, nor does it offer a nurturing business environment. This needs to change. Undoubtedly some such change is conditional on there being suitable space for businesses to locate to, and thus is necessarily linked to infrastructure development projects (see in particular projects 8 & 11), but there also need to be the support structures in place – in actively marketing and promoting Peebles as a business destination, and in nurturing, mentoring and incubating our nascent small businesses to grow. The town has some great networking, entrepreneurial, technical and intellectual resources to draw on in these efforts, and growing four or five one- or two-man businesses to twenty or so employees would make a significant difference. Better still, encouraging an 80-person manufacturer to the town, or seeding a business cluster, would do much to shift the dial to Peebles re-balancing as a resilient and sustainable community.

## I. Peebles Creative Industries Cluster project (plays to local strengths, needs to be high-tech, needs to be at scale)

Peebles needs more and better paid jobs. Over two-thirds of the Peebles working population commutes to work based over 10kms away, mainly in Edinburgh and the Pentland Science Cluster, and mainly in academic, research and finance sectors, and in public administration. We need to create and locate more jobs in and near Peebles embracing a wide range of skilled and semi-skilled knowledge and expertise.

There is opportunity for promoting the development of an innovation hub at Peebles, in part located around the new business park, focused on creative industries, natural resources, sustainability and just transition to net zero. This aligns with local strategies and needs, including the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy. – with a focus on:

- *product design and digital technologies (graphic and fashion design, publishing and marketing, and film, TV and video production and support services – with a focus on innovations in, amongst others, using natural materials such as timber, wood, wool), and*
- *creative arts (supporting local artists, crafters and makers, and music, visual and performing arts).*

Strategic development and branding of Peebles as a significant Scottish Creative Industries Cluster, would ideally link to the programme of Data Innovation Hubs being developed across Edinburgh and its surrounds which forms a part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal through its Data Driven Innovation initiative. This initiative focuses on links to ten industrial sectors – including Tourism & Festivals, AgriTech and Creative Industries; sectors which have particular synergy with Peebles and the Upper Tweed Valley.

This sector is defined by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) as “*those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property*”. The creative industries in Scotland are defined according to 16 sub-sectors:

- |                     |                     |                  |                        |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| –advertising        | –design             | –performing arts | –software & electronic |
| –architecture       | –fashion & textiles | –photography     | publishing             |
| –computer games     | –film & video       | –radio & TV      | –writing & publishing  |
| –crafts             | –heritage           | –visual art      |                        |
| –cultural education | –music              |                  |                        |

Peebles is already heavily engaged in the Creative Arts – including a network of artists and makers, performing artists and musicians, with an array of art galleries, museums, a vibrant year-round cultural calendar, and an active theatre and arts centre. But such engagement is, in the main, at the artisan and cottage scale. In addition, however, many residents are skilled in the Creative Industries – in digital technologies, graphic and product design, publishing, web-design and the internet, coding, marketing, advertising, architecture, etc. – some running local businesses from home, and others in office accommodation on South Parks and Cavalry Park business estates (the largest, EBS Europe Ltd, trading as InforGen, with 20 staff), and in offices on the High Street and Northgate. Others are engaged regionally and internationally.

The proximity of Peebles to the Scottish economic and creative industries centres of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee (and their established involvement in fashion, animation, digital arts, and more recently the development of TV & film studios), combined with its attractiveness as a place to live, work and play [and its location in the countryside surrounded by high amenity environments, a wealth

of natural resources, and long histories in the wool, textile, forest and timber industries] makes it particularly well suited to further develop and scale up its engagement.

Seeding Peebles as a Creative Industries Cluster would be based on development of the proposed new Peebles / Eshiels industrial estate as a Creative Industries Hub, providing a central focus to a clustering of new and existing creative industries activities. This would focus on attracting businesses in product design and digital technologies, with applications in, for example, the use of wood products and textile industries, and in supporting Scotland's film and TV production studios. Its development would complement that at the Innerleithen Caerlee Mill Mountain Bike Innovation Centre (the skills sets are similar, but the application more varied).

## J. Tourism (opportunities with small changes to make more of the attractive tourism offer already available)

**Continue to market Peebles as a key tourist destination, supporting sustainable and responsible tourism, ensuring that the local community can benefit from it and providing the appropriate supporting infrastructure.**

The combination of Destination Tweed, The Tweed Valley Tourism Business Improvement District (BID) GoTweed ([www.GoTweed.org](http://www.GoTweed.org)), LiveBorders, and the Eastgate Theatre, amongst others, has done much to showcase the heritage, art, environment and culture of Peebles and Tweeddale for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. Likewise a year-round calendar of indoor and outdoor events, shows and activities, plus the internationally recognised Glentress and Innerleithen mountain biking facilities, the Beyond Borders and promenade Shakespeare staging at Traquair, and the setting and natural beauty of Peebles and the Southern Uplands, draws visitors from far and wide. But there is still more to be done to strengthen Peebles as a tourism destination, to enhance the tourist experience, and strengthen its contribution to the local economy. In many ways it is the smaller things the need attention.

Alongside upgrading of the Chambers Institution complex and other town centre assets, improvements to active travel infrastructure and connectivity, and upgrading of field sports infrastructure, and additions to the long-distance multi-use paths network, there are many opportunities to add value to the tourism offer.

System improvements include:

- Develop a whole-town approach to wayfinding and signage, to facilitate navigation but also to educate and bring awareness about the local environment, culture, and heritage. Wayfinding strategy to include improved signage to natural trails. Explore the viability of providing signage using common foreign languages to make the town more tourist-friendly
- Improve connections for both locals and tourists to key attractions

Promotional opportunities include:

- Develop a dedicated integrated events, ticketing and information website and apps to facilitate improved access to Peebles and its tourism offer
- Explore viability of providing supporting infrastructure for outdoor pursuits as part of a comprehensive visitor offer. For example, the growth of biking trails and links to leisure cycling: road, mountain and gravel; and, connections along the river to encourage initiatives like the Tweed Canoe Trail
- Support sustainable and responsible tourism, giving local visitors the opportunity to fully appreciate the local environment, culture and heritage
- Involve the local community in tourism planning and decision-making, to make sure that this is seen as an opportunity for the local economy
- Link local community members with training opportunities to learn about sustainable tourism and how they can get involved.
- Encourage visitors to support local businesses, to stimulate the local economy and benefit the local community

Improved facilities

- Modernise the Peebles Museum and expand the exhibition space to allow more of the stored items to be exhibited
- Encourage more art exhibitions in the Chambers Institution Galleries
- Improve usage of River Tweed and adjacent green spaces, providing more spaces for seating, playing, water-points
- Provide more and more accessible public toilet facilities within the town
- Improve car parking arrangements, and sign-posting to car parks.

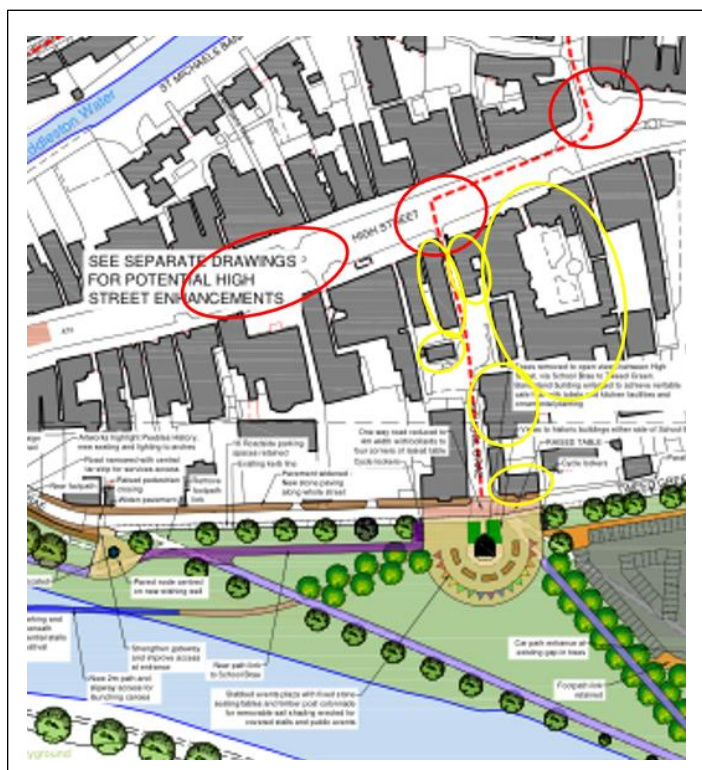
### K. Peebles Town Centre Regeneration (multi-£M; high visibility; builds on existing momentum; can be split into component projects)

An opportunity presents itself to take a fresh look at improving the built environment in the centre of town, including the possible integration of a number of building projects. The Chambers Institution, the Corn Exchange / former Fire Station, the School Brae Hub, the School Brae toilet block, the Burgh Hall allotments, and the Tweed Green Pavilion are all in some form of public / community ownership. It may be feasible to achieve substantial public realm improvements through integrated redesign of the area as a whole.

This is further encouraged when considering some of the town centre active travel proposals presented in the recently completed Sustrans funded Active Travel study, undertaken by Mott Macdonald (consulting engineers), Sterry Walters (Landscape Architects), and the Peebles Community Trust (community engagement). The study proposes traffic calming measures at the High Street end of Northgate, on the roadway between the Tontine and Crown Hotels, and relocation of the Veitch's Corner traffic lights to the front of School Brae. On Tweed Green the study identifies opportunities for substantially improving the amenity value and attractiveness of the area through some realignment of footpaths, landscaping (possibly in association with flood defence measures), improved car parking, and development of the Pavilion / Bandstand and its surrounds. This is also expected to provide a much more positive built environment encouraging improved civic pride and behaviour.

Plans for reconfiguring and upgrading the Chambers Institution complex are well advanced but need settlement on a final plan. Consideration of how installation of a mezzanine floor in the Burgh Hall could address heating, acoustics and amenity opportunities, increase usable space, facilitate extension of access to all first-floor areas within the Chambers Institution complex, and potentially open out to the back lower side of the Burgh Hall (as a decked / glazed area).

The School Brae Hub (formerly the Ex-Servicemen's Club, and now owned by the Peebles Community Trust), is the subject of a major, expensive and complex refurbishment project. There may be opportunity to achieve cost savings by linking structural works on this building with work on the adjacent Chambers Institution complex. But there may also be opportunity for greater integration between these two reconfiguration projects, bearing in mind their proximity and that they are joined by the area of allotments lying to the rear of both buildings.



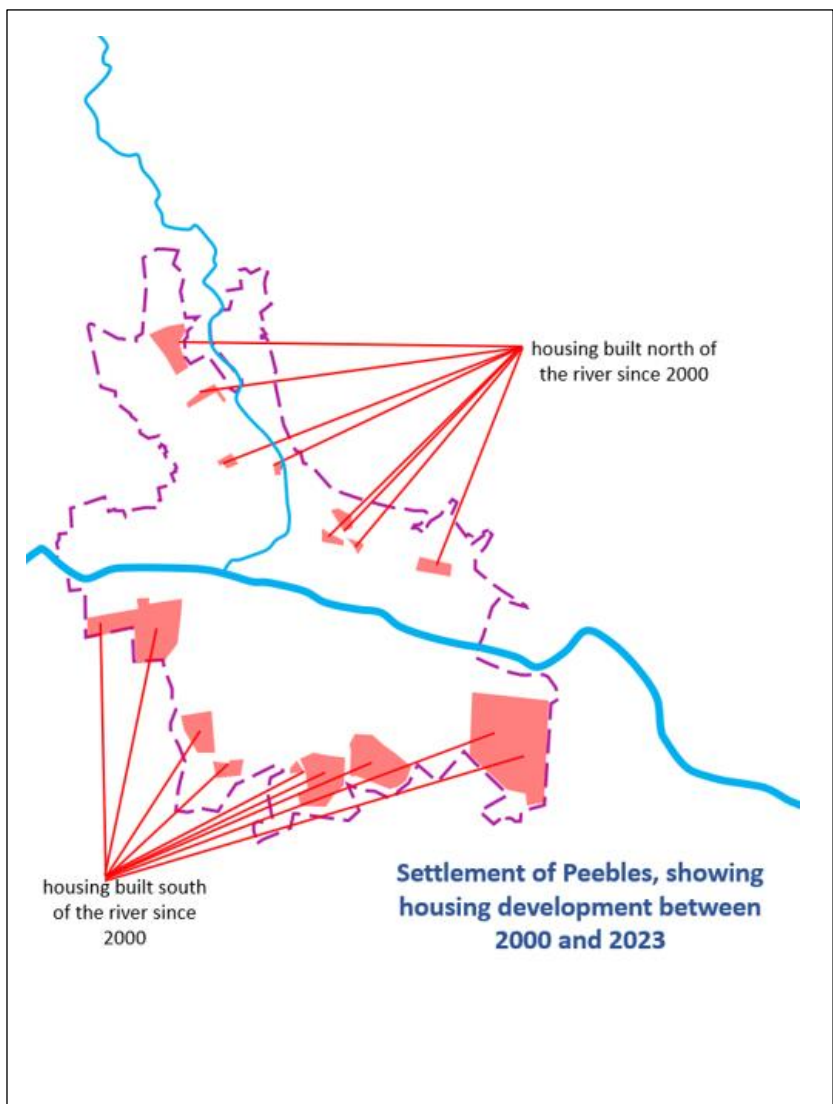
## L. South Peebles social & economic infrastructure (multiple benefits and links to other parts of plan – major “access to all” impact)

Whilst the longer-term issue is to plan for and encourage community infrastructure south of the river – and in particular medical and social care provision – in the shorter-term it is to provide a social hub south of the river, a meeting place for townspeople, young and old.

Peebles has expanded at an unprecedented rate over the last quarter century, with an increase of over 40% in the built footprint of the town, and addition of around 1500 to the town population. The original settlement of Peebles lies to the north of the river Tweed, around the High Street, Northgate and Old Town, with a small number of large houses and villas constructed in the C19<sup>th</sup> south of the river. The development of the town’s woollen mills led to construction of workers terraces and workers villas to the north and west of the town centre, and this remained the pattern up to around World War II. But thereafter most expansion has been to the south of the river – first on part of what was the Kingsmeadows Estate, and then up towards Gypsy Glen, along South Park, and latterly along Edderston Ridge and to the southeast of the town at Whitehaugh and Kittlegairy.

But there are few amenities south of the river. To this day there is but one corner shop, and no pubs, cafés or restaurants, and provision falls well short of what constitutes a 20-minute neighbourhood – to the disadvantage of this part of the community. In the 1980s a light industrial estate was commenced at South Park, and in the 1990s a business park, Cavalry Park, was opened. A care and community facility, the Victoria Park Day Centre, was built in the 1990s, and whilst it has latterly broadened its use it remains structurally under-utilised.

In the shorter term there are opportunities for development of social, care and health infrastructure at one or more of the Victoria Park Day Centre, Cavalry Park, and / or repurposing of some of the buildings on the Peebles High School site that do not form part of new school now under construction. In the longer-term further provision needs to be built into any further expansion of the town, and needs to be planned for.



**M. Health and medical infrastructures** (34kms to nearest hospitals; need to have modern integrated capacity for local population moving from 15,000 towards 20,000)

The core proposition is that Peebles and surrounds has now reached a size of population where its health and medical needs would be better served by an expanded and better integrated Community Hospital based around the existing Hay Lodge facility, but integrated with other healthcare provision within the town. The integrated service offer would include:

- improved minor injuries (out-patient department, including x-ray service),
- wider range of diagnostic services,
- expanded services for older people with mental health problems,
- dedicated physiotherapy and occupational therapy services,
- child health clinics, etc., and
- linkage to a local social services hub and care provision.

Peebles is currently served by the Hay Lodge Medical Centre and Hospital. This was developed in 1983 around the former Hay Lodge House located on the edge of the centre of Peebles, replacing the then ageing Peebles County Hospital on Rosetta Road and the Peebles War Memorial Hospital on Tweed Green. It forms a complex comprising two GP practices (upwards of 10 GPs, and supported by nursing staff), a 23-bed hospital unit focused on supporting acute medical care for the elderly (and also providing terminal care, convalescent care, respite care and rehabilitation), and a hospital administration / residential building. A wider range of NHS, SBC and private health services are available locally and regionally – as in dentistry, physiotherapy, pharmacy, podiatry, etc. – but Accident & Emergency (A&E) and full hospital services are only available at Borders General Hospital (34kms east of Peebles), and Edinburgh Royal Infirmary (33kms north of Peebles).

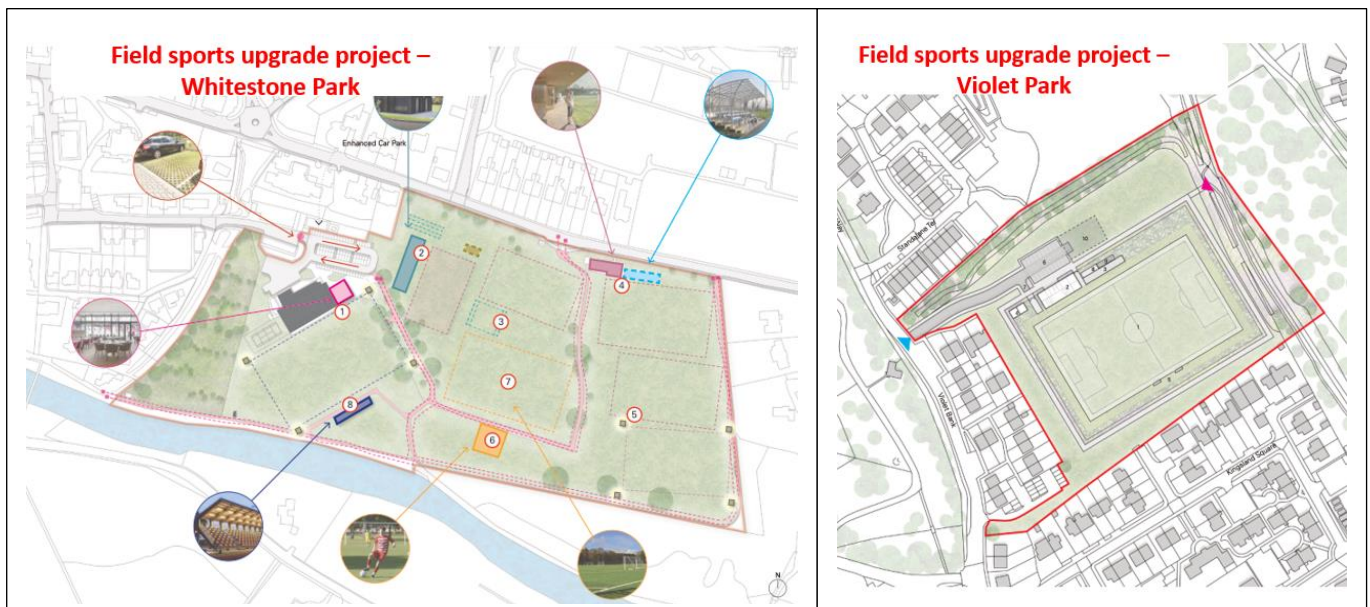
Tweeddale (formerly the county of Peeblesshire) has a population of around 22,000 and stretches from its central town of Peebles to embrace Broughton in the west, West Linton to the north and Caddonfoot to the east. Peebles has a settlement population of 9,000, and something in the order of another 6,000 people use Peebles as their main centre for services and amenities.

In collaboration with NHS Borders and the medical practices at Hay Lodge Medical Centre, we would like to explore possibilities, and instigate a more detailed assessment of the current situation and development opportunities.

**N. Field sports infrastructure upgrade project** (multi-£M; field sports has very high participation rates from all ages and parts / sectors of the community – supports “access for all” and ticks many direct and indirect boxes on improved health and wellbeing)

This project focuses on upgrading field sports facilities at Whitestone Park and Violet Bank – to substantially enhance both player and spectator experience, increase levels of participation from across the community, greatly improve the attractiveness and profile of Peebles as a field sports centre, and enhance the spectator, catering and entertainment offer. It brings pitches and facilities up to modern standards and specifications – some of which forms a pre-condition for ongoing participation in regional sports leagues. It is strongly supported by the town’s field sports clubs – the Peebles Rugby Club, Peebles Football Club, Peebles Rovers Club, Tweeddale Rovers Club and Peebles County Cricket Club – which together support a membership of in excess of 600 players, young and old, and attract spectators from across the town and the region.

Scoping, outline design and costing studies have been completed, and community consultation undertaken. All pitches will be retained as natural grass playing surfaces (7 football pitches, 1 rugby pitch, 1 cricket pitch), and most of the project is focused on upgrading supporting infrastructures – substantial expansion of changing facilities, spectator and hospitality offer at The Gytes (indoor seating for up 100 people) and on south side of rugby pitch, improved equipment storage facilities for Peebles Football Club, improved equipment storage and practice facilities for the Cricket Club, upgrading of existing Tweeddale Rovers Club Pavilion and adjacent team dugouts, and establishment of new fully fenced Peebles Rovers Club football pitch, changing facilities, viewing stand (relocated from Whitestone Park), clubhouse and car parking, at Violet Bank.



These facilities complement the sports offer in place and planned for Peebles High School (hockey, football, rugby, track athletics), rugby pitches and training facilities at Hay Lodge Park, crown bowling at Tweed Avenue, tennis at Victoria Park, and the Peebles Golf Club and course.

## **O. Review of public / community indoor space provision** (a strategic planning issues – making more of what we have)

Peebles is privileged to have an array of public / community owned indoor spaces available for hire for concerts, functions, meetings and social occasions. But almost all of these spaces – whether church halls, arts venues, sports facilities or civic halls – were designed and built in the distant past and for different times. As the council, community groups and management committees seek to upgrade and refurbish some of these facilities to bring them up to modern standards and requirements, and to meet market demand, it is self-evident that there is competition for access to limited public and charitable funding, but also pressure to make the most of what we have and to limit unnecessary duplication of offers. It would make sense to present the issue of indoor public spaces in a more coherent and strategic context so that investment decisions are better informed.

In the mix are:

### **Public / community buildings**

- The Chambers Institution complex (2 museums, exhibition space, library, Registrar's office, council chambers, Burgh Hall, council offices, CAB office, Go Tweed office)
- The Drill Hall / Community Hall (main hall plus 5+ meeting spaces)
- Schools related halls (High School, Priorsford, Kingsmeadows, Halyrude)
- The Gytes (large multi- sports facility)
- Sports Club at Peebles High School (sports complex shared between school & community)
- The School Brae Hub (formerly the Ex-Servicemen's Club – main hall + facilities on 3 floors)
- Victoria Park Day Centre (complex of spaces on one floor, plus gardens)
- Rosetta Road Council Buildings (former Council Chamber, multiple offices, police)
- Eastgate Theatre & Arts Centre

### **Club spaces**

- The Peebles Rugby Club (social space in centre of town)
- The Peebles Golf Club (social space by golf course)
- The Peebles Bowling Club (ground and clubhouse)

### **Church halls**

- MacFarlane Hall
- St Andrew's Leckie Church Hall & Bakehouse
- St Joseph's Church Hall

In the first instance it would be appropriate to collate information on what is exactly on offer, and an assessment of the market characteristics and demand for facilities and room / hall hire, preliminary to an assessment of future needs.

**P. Life-long learning, skills development & training** (disparities in opportunity and access start early, and continue throughout life; life-long learning is not just to do with work, but with well-being, inquisitiveness and enjoyment)

Peebles has been steadily shifting towards a split community as the better educated commute to well-paid jobs and the less educated (and generally less well-off) work locally in poorly paying jobs with limited career prospects.

Peebles desperately needs to be able to attract and create more local and better paying jobs. Alongside this it needs to ensure that all have access to and the opportunity to participate in rewarding lives – work and play. As matters stand, little is being done to remedy the current imbalance.

Peebles has three primary schools and the largest secondary school in the Borders – but use of school facilities and capacity outside school hours remains limited. Skills development in vocational and technical subjects is limited by an absence of local provision, great distance between Peebles and regional training hubs, and poor public transport links and schedules. On top of this the particular focus and structure of local building trades (a significant part of the local economy) and other businesses – which are predominantly small-scale in nature (most by design) – means that apprenticeship opportunities locally are few and far between.

The town supports a large number of clubs and social groups involved in a wide range of activities, encompassing a wide range of subjects and skills. But in practice the centralised physical and service infrastructures of the town mean that access to the benefits of these clubs is very often skewed – through physical access constraints, elements of socio-economic segregation, and social stigma (to do with isolation and self-confidence). Such effects are accentuated by reduced access and provision to public spaces – notably social areas for older people (such as Victoria Day Centre, Drill Hall, School Brae Hub, Firholm Day Centre). Also it can be argued that there is not enough provision for the marginalised and disadvantaged – whether through health, mobility, language or culture. This is accentuated still further for those living in nearby small villages and hamlets outside of Peebles.

In other priorities, development of a new industrial estate, attraction of more and larger businesses to Peebles, and focused development of a Creative Industries Cluster and improved provision for home workers, co-working, those working from home part of the time, are focused on rebalancing and growing the local economy. Going hand-in-hand with this is the need to ensure that local and nearby residents have or can acquire the skills needed to participate in these developments. One area of particular focus in the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy is delivery of a Just Transition to New Zero building on the wealth of natural resource assets and knowledge held within the South of Scotland. It is an aspiration that development of the Peebles economy will embrace these opportunities, including within the formation of a Creative Industries Cluster, but also that our young people will be provided with the skills needed to take up jobs linked to the natural environment and green technologies.

**Q. Package of green & food security initiatives** (on their own projects can be small, but impact on inequality, wellbeing & participation can be transformational)

There is broad recognition that Peebles is well endowed with access to the countryside, and has an abundance of green spaces within the town. But – access to and management of these spaces could be better, in ways that would not only make them “available to all” but meet the different needs of the varied components of our community. In addition, there is considered to be insufficient focus on biodiversity, protection, conservation and habitat coherence when addressing placemaking and planning.

In a distinct but related matter, there is recognised need for the provision of more allotment space, and better management of those allotments that we do have, and need of more support for the growing projects that are already in place (for example Greener Peebles), and support for expansion of the scale and number of these initiatives (for example further support for the grow your own efforts of the Food Foundation, and the unsuccessful taking of Jedderfield Farm under community management).

There are a range of projects and initiatives that have been identified for priority progression, but whilst they do fall within the catchall of green and food security initiatives, they do not present readily as a bundled package.

## Annex 9 - Priorities actions ordered and classified by core initiative

[illegible]

[illegible]

£	
££	£100k+
£££	£1M+
££££	£10M+