



# Community-led Planning Pilot



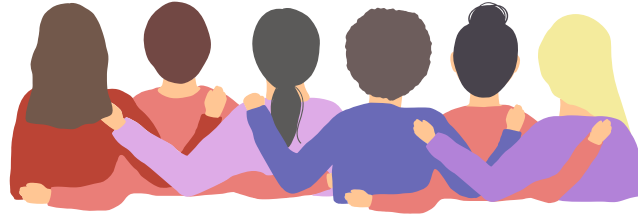
Project report  
August 2024

[www.borderstsi.org.uk/clp/](http://www.borderstsi.org.uk/clp/)

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# Introduction



This pilot provides support and resources to communities developing Local Place Plans in **Berwickshire and Cheviot**. It is all about building local capacity for the work of developing a community-led plan, with a focus on supporting community engagement.

**Project dates:** July 2023 – August 2024

## What does the project funding enable?

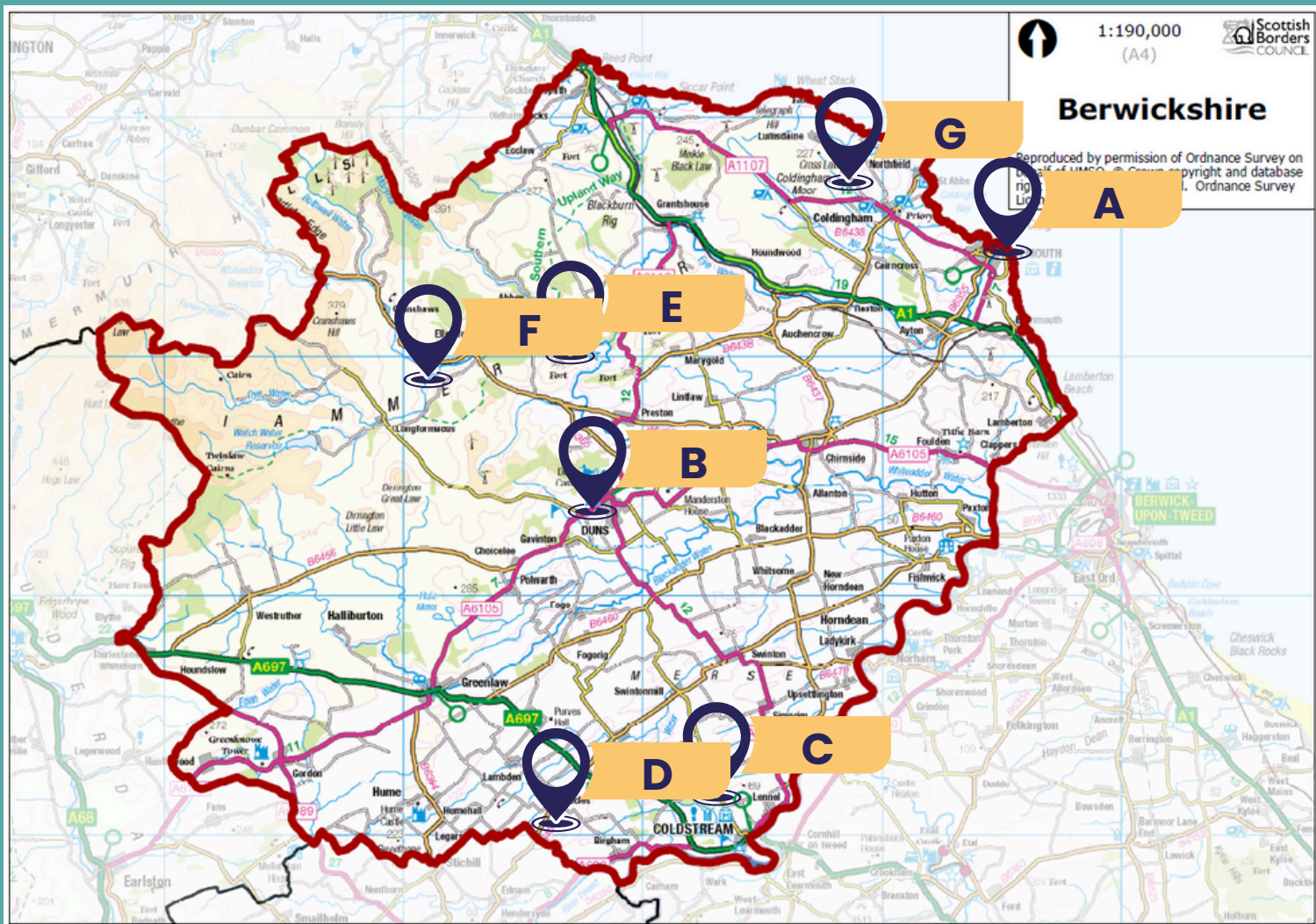
- ✔ Dedicated, full time Capacity Building Lead
- ✔ Funds to distribute to core teams to support community engagement
- ✔ Ad hoc facilitation e.g. Community Engagement Training

# Key project drivers

1. Support Community Development for Place Plans
2. Assess need and capabilities of local teams
3. To be led by and adaptive to community needs
4. Build awareness around Community Led Planning
5. Diversity at the heart of it all, priority to least heard voices
6. Offer opportunities for peer-learning/ collaboration and exchange
7. Provide immediate support/ signposting where necessary



# Pilot area – Berwickshire



**The project has supported the following communities in Berwickshire:**

A: Eyemouth

B: Duns

C: Coldstream

D: Leithholm, Eccles and Birgham

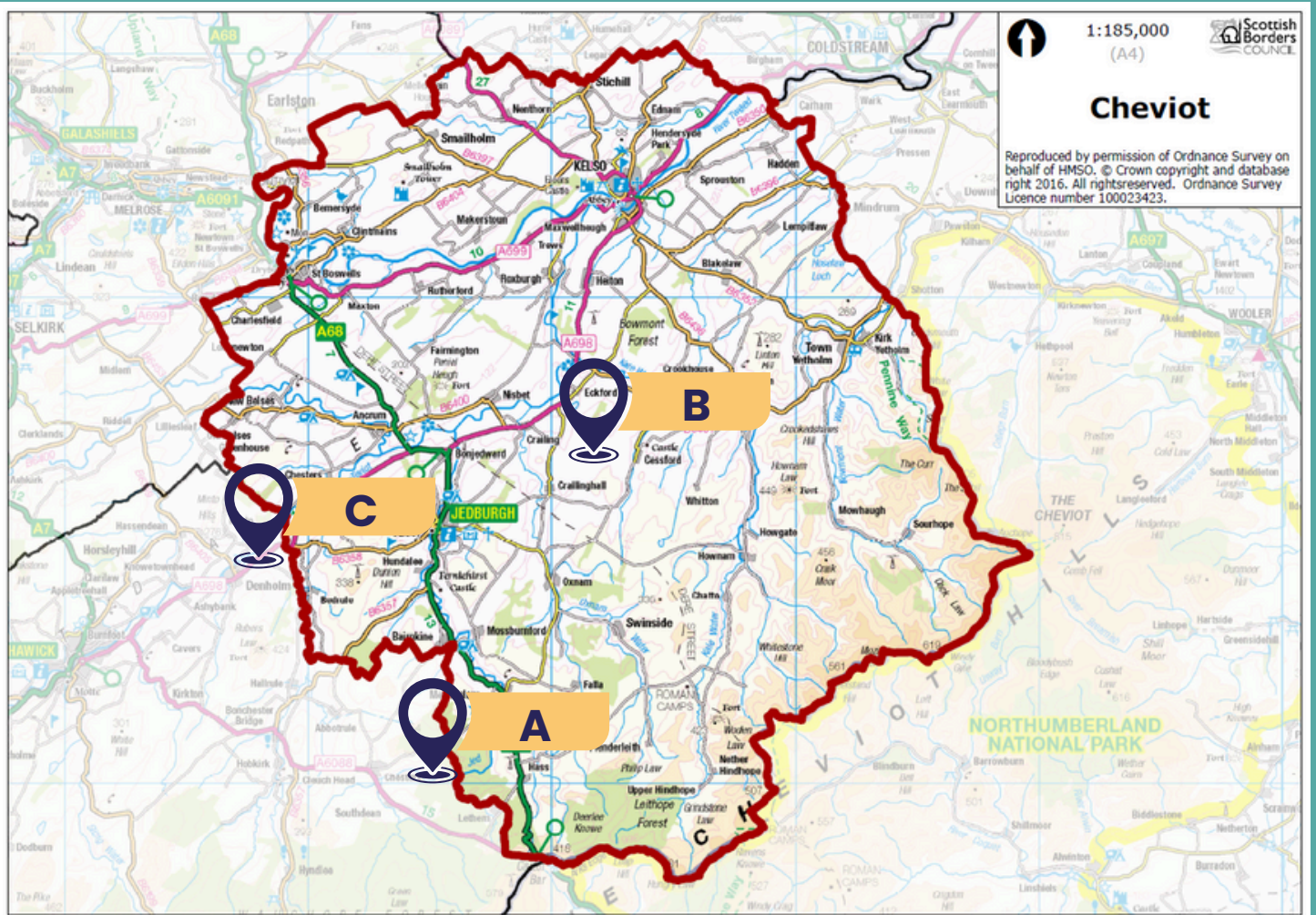
E: Abbey St. Bathans, Preston and Bonkyl

F: Cranshaws, Ellemford and Longformacus

G: Coldingham



# Pilot area – Cheviot



**The project has supported the following communities in Cheviot:**

- A: Jedburgh
- B: Kelso
- C: St. Boswells

# Delivery of support

## Funding

- Community engagement events
- Survey costs
- Core team running costs
- Communications e.g. community newsletter articles, websites, social social media support

## Support for core teams

- Establishing a core team
- Planning
- Presence at meetings
- Arrangements for local paid support e.g. admin, comms, engagement facilitation
- Troubleshooting
- Linking to key organisations
- Mediation support

## Knowledge sharing

- Webpage
- Newsletter updates
- Area Partnership presence
- Training
- Presentations
- Guide to process
- 95 people receive regular email updates
- Facilitation of peer learning

# Numbers supported



4 peer support sessions  
attended by 35 community  
volunteers  
across 16 communities



80 volunteers  
supported



10 communities  
given tailored support



# Mid-project review survey results

**2/3 were able to access support and resources adapted to their needs**

**“There is a lot for volunteers to take on board so timing has been a big issue”**

**Average rating for usefulness of project 4/5**

**Top 3 most useful elements:**



**Support to establish a core team.**



**Support and guidance**



**Communication of relevant information**

**2/3 would like more access to relevant information and funding**

**ALL would like to access Meaningful Community Engagement training**

# Survey findings on specialist support

**"We are a small community with limited skill sets available"**

## Preferred options:

**1 – local consultant**

**2 – consultancy framework**

## Types of specialist support required:



**Data analysis**



**Report writing**



**Electronic data filing and storage arrangements**

**"Any support welcome. We are a novice team and need all the help we can get"**

# Focus group findings

## Challenges and barriers

A focus group session was held in June 2024 to dig deeper into the challenges groups encounter and recommendations for future support.

The challenges and barriers which were highlighted in the session all centred around building a cohesive and well functioning team which has a sense of purpose and direction.



# Focus group findings

## What next?

Four top themes for the support of community-led planning came out of the focus group reflections. All are means for greater Community Empowerment.

1

Peer network – connecting common themes and community representatives

2

Voice at Community Planning Partnership via BCA

3

Revenue funding for local paid support roles to be administered via BCA

4

Continuation of support and guidance plus compartmentalised consultancy support

# Lessons learned through the pilot so far

A roadmap is needed  
before setting off



Clear communication  
of information is vital

Support must be  
adaptive





## A roadmap is needed before setting off

### **GUIDANCE**

Guidance to the whole planning process is needed to enable timescale planning, to ensure suitable data is collected from community engagements and to ensure alignment of planning with national policy.

### **LOCAL PLACE PLAN TEMPLATE**

Communities usually want to know what they are aiming for before they are willing to embark on the journey. They don't want to be re-inventing the wheel and they need to know what can be included.

### **REGISTRATION PROCESS**

A clear process for registering LPPs is wanted early on too. It needs to be made clear what the purpose of registration is.

### **DELIVERY AND FUNDING**

An understanding of how plans might be delivered is vital to avoid unrealistic expectations. Communities must be prepared to be involved in delivery and for this they need clear guidance on suitable funding.

A mechanism to inform statutory service provision and SBC capital project planning is also required.





## Clear communication of information is vital

### **RESEARCH**

Support organisations need to keep up to date on the community-led planning landscape and research best practice to be a reliable source of information and guidance for communities.

### **CLEAR PRESENTATION**

Support organisations must condense the plethora of information and present it clearly and concisely to communities, not simply signpost to it.

### **CONNECTED-UP**

Pieces of the knowledge jigsaw are often in the hands of different people, groups and support organisations: bringing people together fosters a joined-up approach, which is at the heart of community-led planning.

### **TRUST**

Good communication builds trust. Issues quickly arise when communication breaks down.

Support organisations also need to trust communities with all the information they require.



## Support must be adaptive

### **FLEXIBLE FUNDING**

Core teams need responsive and flexible access to funding to meet varied requirements.

Funding is often needed for project management, administration and communications due to the heavy demand on volunteer time, in addition to funds to support community engagement events and surveys.

### **COMMUNITY-LED PROCESS**

Each community will want to approach the process in their own way. Some want to do it all themselves, others prefer to bring in consultants.

Support organisations need to trust that local people know their places best and be prepared to fund and enable either approach.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS**

Communities have been developing Community Action Plans (CAPs) for long before LPPs were brought in.

There is some reticence about LPPs which have additional requirements to be compliant for registration. Support should also be available for developing CAPs and a mechanism available for SBC and other Community Planning Partners to recognise them.

### **PACE**

Community-led planning is a long-term process. The time needs to be right to embark and cannot be rushed.

Seeds often need to be sown a while before any signs of engagement are evident.



# Emerging community priorities

## Duns



Attribution: [Rosser1954](#)

- Public Park and toilets
- Facilities for Young People
- Public transport, active travel and parking
- Care Home
- Training and Education
- Access to local and affordable food
- Tourism facilities and promotion
- Town identity



Attribution: [Tom Parnell](#)

## Abbey st. Bathans, Preston and Bonkyl

- Connectivity – transport and broadband
- Path network
- Community resilience
- Community activities



# Emerging community priorities



Attribution: Jim Barton

## Coldstream

- Improved parking
- Youth activities and facilities
- More childcare provision
- Community Centre sustainability and resilience

## Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham



Attribution: Birgham Village Website

- Connectivity
- Inclusivity
- Sustainability
- Health and Wellbeing
- Pride of Place
- Rural Environment
- Tourism and Heritage



# Emerging community priorities

## Eyemouth



Attribution: [cathietinn](#)

- Play recreation and natural space
- Traffic, parking and public transport
- Education and healthcare provision
- Care and maintenance of the town
- Work and the local economy
- Housing and community.

## Jedburgh



Attribution: [Chris Allen](#)

- Environment
- Play and meeting spaces
- Transport
- Housing
- Participation
- Dynamic Town
- Quality of life
- Health and Wellbeing



# Emerging community priorities\* common themes



Youth facilities



Public and community transport



Meeting spaces and social activities



Care provision



Greenspace



Parking



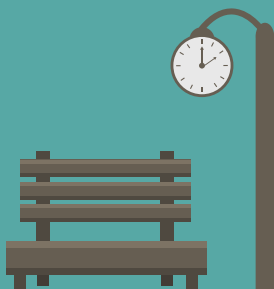
Active travel



Tourism



Resilience e.g. community venues



Care and maintenance



Identity and belonging

\*Pending further community engagement



# Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward for **BCA's involvement in the next stage of support** for community-led planning in the Scottish Borders.

They are based on combining the results from the survey and focus group session with lessons learned throughout the pilot project so far.

1. Continuation of the **Peer Support Network**, hosted by BCA with support from SBC.
2. Representation of the Peer Support Network on the **Community Planning Partnership** under theme 4 (Place, Community and Connectivity) which BCA is leading on.
3. **Internal training** of Community Development Team by the project's Capacity Building Lead to equip them to be better able to offer guidance and information on community-led planning to community groups.
4. Seek to secure further **revenue funding** for distribution to community-led planning teams to support the planning process. This funding could be applied for by CLP teams to cover local staff, compartmentalised consultancy support and community engagement expenses.
5. Continue to offer relevant **training** such as community engagement, data analysis and use of mapping tools.
6. Keep the community-led planning area of the **website** up to date and build on the resources it contains.
7. For ongoing in-person support at local CLP team meetings to be provided by SBC, with BCA Community Development Leads being brought in for **occasional support** (e.g. to assist with initial team formation).
8. For BCA to continue to be a **voice** for communities on all aspects of the community-led planning process.

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*In partnership with:*



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