

Borderlands Partnership Board Meeting

Wednesday 23rd September 2026
SRUC Barony Campus, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE

Chair: Cllr Glen Sanderson
Briefing Session 10:00-10:30
Partnership Board Meeting 10:30 – 11:30

AGENDA

Item	Agenda Item	Presenter	Paper
1.	Welcome & Apologies	Chair	
2.	Minutes from the last meeting & Written procedure approval	Chair	✓
3.	Declaration of Interest	Chair	
4.	Deal Performance Report	James Davies	✓
5.	Investment Panel Update	James Davies	✓
6.	Project Approvals a) Berwick Theatre	Emma Cox	✓
7.	Place Programme Update a) BTIP Part A approvals: Bedlington, Prudhoe, Whithorn	Chris Edwards	✓
8.	Programmes Update	Chris Edwards	✓
9.	AOB		

Next meeting: 9th December at 10:00 (Online)
Additional meeting may be required discuss the Citadels project

Borderlands Partnership Board Meeting

Wednesday 24th June 2026

Online (Microsoft Teams)

In person EDCOG and Borderlands team at The Sill.

Chair: Cllr Stephen Thompson

Briefing Session 10:00-10:20

Partnership Board Meeting 10:20 – 11:00

Attendees

Name	Initials	Organisation
Cllr Stephen Thompson	ST	Leader of Dumfries and Galloway Council
Cllr Glen Sanderson	GS	Leader of Northumberland County Council
Cllr Euan Jardine	EJ	Leader of Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Jonathan Brooke	JB	Leader of Westmoreland and Furness Council
Helen Paterson	HP	Chief Executive, Northumberland Council
Sarah McMillan	SM	Director of Northumberland Council
Jenni Craig	JC	Director of Scottish Borders Council
Michael Barry	MB	Lead Officer of Cumberland Council
Samantha Smith	SS	Lead Officer of Scottish Borders Council
Matt Williams	MW	Senior Service Manager – Economic Development and Regeneration
Rick O'Farrell	RO	Borderlands Director
James Davies	JD	Borderlands Programme Manager
Chris Edwards	CE	Borderlands Principal Programmes Officer
Joanne Burn	JBB	Borderlands Programmes and Assurance Officer
Angela McDougall	AM	Borderlands Senior Programme Officer
Emma Cox	EC	Borderlands Senior Programme Officer
Sarah Bruce	SB	Borderlands Senior Programme Officer
Charlotte Fleming	CF	Borderlands Administrator
Judith Nunn	JN	Economic Growth Manager, Northumberland County Council

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Cllr Mark Fryer	Leader of Cumberland Council
Andrew Seekings	Chief Executive of Cumberland Council
Dawn Roberts	Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council
David Roberston	Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council
Darren Crossley	Director of Cumberland Council
Stuart McMillan	Lead Officer of Dumfries and Galloway Council
Scott Hamilton	Executive member of Community and Business development

Item No. Agenda Item

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr Stephen Thompspon welcomed members of the Board.

Apologies were raised from James Davies from Andrew Seekings, Dawn Roberts, David Roberstion, Darren Crossley, Stuart McMillan, Scott Hamilton.

As the meeting was not quorate a written procedure confirmation of the decisions was agreed; however the Board considered the items.

2. Minutes from the last meeting and Written Procedure Approval.

James Davies (JD) noted that most of the actions from the last meeting will be covered at this Board.

JD highlighted that a key action was Stranraer Marina approval which was agreed to be done by written procedure due to delays in getting final approval from Scottish Government. This was covered under item 6 of the agenda.

No comments raised by the board.

3. Declaration of Interest

No declarations were raised before or during the Board meeting.

4. Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration Northumberland – Written approval request

Judith Nunn (JN) introduced the Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration Northumberland project and presented a supporting slideshow. JN outlined the request for £5.314 million of Borderlands funding, with delivery expected to commence in September 2026 and be completed before summer 2027.

Project Overview

JN explained that the proposal includes the development of a new cycleway along the northern side of the Military Road, improving east-west connectivity through quieter roads and existing tracks. The initial phase would connect Walltown, the Roman Army Museum and The Sill, while also linking to the newly commissioned River Trails route towards Kielder. Potential future links into the Tyne Valley, local communities and transport hubs are also being explored.

The project also includes the installation of 41 wayfinding markers at key gateways, heritage attractions and viewpoints, including locations such as Hexham, Haltwhistle and Corbridge.

Strategic Need and Benefits

JN highlighted several key barriers currently affecting the visitor experience, including poor connectivity, fragmented visitor journeys and limited transport links. The proposed investment aims to:

- Support sustainable tourism growth.
- Encourage active, low-carbon travel.
- Strengthen local communities and businesses.
- Improve the overall visitor experience along Hadrian's Wall.

Estimated benefits include:

- 18,488 additional visitors per year.
- £2.208 million increase in annual visitor spend.
- 27 jobs created.
- Strong value for money with a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.4.

Additional benefits include extending the tourism season and improving health and wellbeing opportunities.

Delivery and Governance

JN provided an overview of procurement arrangements, project costs and key delivery principles, including value for money, use of local supply chains and robust governance.

The project has strong stakeholder and regulatory support, with planning risk assessed as low.

Governance will be overseen by Northumberland County Council, supported by a dedicated project delivery team and Advance Northumberland, which will manage day-to-day delivery. Regular monitoring, reporting and technical oversight will ensure accountability and alignment with strategic objectives. JN concluded by noting that the project unlocks significant economic potential, demonstrates strong value for money, supports wider investment across Hadrian's Wall and contributes to inclusive growth objectives.

Questions and Comments

Sarah McMillan welcomed the project, noting that it maximises the benefits of Hadrian's Wall as a World Heritage Site. She highlighted the project's role in dispersing visitors, encouraging longer stays, increasing active leisure opportunities and supporting local businesses.

Cllr Stephen Thompson sought clarification on:

- The use of real-time data and digital signage.
- How success would be measured in relation to increasing visitor stays and leisure activity.
- Capacity and governance arrangements, particularly staffing resources supporting the programme board and project delivery.

JN advised that maintenance of the cycleway would be adopted by the Highways Team through an agreed arrangement. She explained that digital content would focus on connecting existing information streams, with AI technology being explored to reduce costs. However, she acknowledged there would still be an ongoing revenue requirement to maintain content through Visit Northumberland. Regarding capacity, JN confirmed that Advance Northumberland had been appointed to provide project management support and that a dedicated team was in place to deliver the project.

Cllr Euan Jardine expressed his support for the project and asked about opportunities to strengthen links with the Scottish Borders and wider Borderlands region.

JN responded that the project's aim is to create stronger connections without barriers. Drawing on discussions from the Destination Tweed project, she noted that opportunities to link routes across the wider Borderlands area had been considered. The proposed project represents the first step in addressing the current active travel challenges along the Military Road.

Jenni Craig suggested exploring opportunities to strengthen links between the project and routes extending into the Scottish Borders, particularly where existing River Trails connections already cross into the region.

Action: Officers to explore opportunities to develop future connections between the Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration project and routes within the Scottish Borders.

Recommendation

The Partnership Board is asked to:

Agree to a written procedure approval approach for the Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration project in advance of the Borderlands Partnership Board meeting on the 23rd of September 2026.

The Board agreed to the recommendations.

5. Deal Performance Report

James Davies (JD) presented an update on programme performance, highlighting significant progress in both project allocation and expenditure. JD reported that programme allocation had increased to almost 60% committed, with a target of reaching 70–75% commitment over the next 12 months. Actual expenditure had also increased and now represented approximately 18% of the total Deal value. He noted that concerns raised at the previous annual discussion regarding the balance of allocations across Scotland had reduced, with a more balanced position now emerging. These positive developments would be reflected in communications activity over the summer and at the Borderlands 5-Year Conference in October.

JD continued around the risks identified, such as the resourcing challenges continue to be an issue particularly in the place programme. The borderlands team have been aiming to ensure enough resourcing can be made for the places to develop their place plans to move into the next stage. These risks remain live and the team aim to review these on a regular basis. Some risks were noted to have decreased such as the elections in the Scottish parliament have passed. Inflation is one of the risks noted, this is being monitored regularly particularly for projects going through contracting.

Risks and Challenges

JD outlined the current programme risks, noting that resourcing challenges remain a key issue, particularly within the Place Programme. The Borderlands team continues to work with partners to ensure sufficient capacity is available to develop town investment plans and progress projects into delivery. These risks remain under regular review.

Some risks had decreased, including those associated with the Scottish Parliament elections. Inflation remains a live risk, particularly for projects moving through procurement and contracting stages, and is being monitored closely.

Questions and Comments

Cllr Jonathan Brooke thanked officers for the update and sought clarification regarding project expenditure within the Place Programme and the extent to which associated delivery challenges remained manageable.

JD advised that over £6 million had now been allocated through the Place Programme. Larger projects were beginning to move into delivery and expenditure phases, and the emerging town investment plans were providing greater clarity around milestones, timelines and delivery expectations.

Cllr Glen Sanderson queried the Quarter 4 expenditure figures presented for the Place Programme.

JD explained that there had been some inconsistency in the formatting of the expenditure slide, for which he apologised. He confirmed that £277,200 of Place Programme expenditure had been recorded in England, while expenditure on Place Programme projects in Scotland had not yet commenced but was expected to begin during the next quarter.

Cllr Sanderson commented on the ongoing scrutiny and public questions regarding the pace of delivery across the Deal.

Cllr Stephen Thompson acknowledged similar frustrations regarding timescales and suggested there may be opportunities to improve delivery processes.

Cllr Brooke commented on the role of community engagement within the Place Programme, noting that while engagement activity had contributed to delays, it remained an important part of the process. He added that delays had not yet become a significant issue with the wider public but echoed concerns regarding overall timelines.

Matt Williams agreed with the points raised regarding delivery challenges. He highlighted that, as a ten-year programme, some delays would be expected, although there remains a risk that certain projects could progress more slowly than anticipated. He noted that officers continue to work closely with project sponsors and maintain open communication across the Borderlands partnership.

Rail and Place Programme Discussion

Cllr Euan Jardine sought an update on the Borderlands Rail project and asked about engagement with Government to ensure momentum was maintained. Cllr Thompson noted that many of the Place Programme projects were now moving towards delivery and emphasised the importance of maintaining

engagement with both the UK and Scottish Governments. He suggested that this matter could be progressed further by officers.

Cllr Thompson also sought assurance regarding the programme target of achieving 75% commitment.

Rick O'Farrell (RO) confirmed that officers remained confident in achieving the commitment target, supported by a strong pipeline of projects expected to come forward for approval during the year. He noted, however, that a significant capital project failing to progress could affect overall programme commitments.

In relation to the Borderlands Rail project, RO advised that discussions would continue with the new administration in England and that officers would work with Jenni Craig to determine the most appropriate approach for engagement with Scottish partners.

Responding to comments regarding the Place Programme, RO acknowledged that progress had been slower than originally anticipated due to the community-led nature of the programme. In some locations, reaching agreement on local priorities had proven challenging. He invited Council Leaders to raise any concerns regarding specific towns with their Economic Development Directors so that officers could explore potential solutions to unblock progress.

Cllr Sanderson stressed the importance of maintaining a focus on delivery and requested that the Board continue to monitor the development of the Place Programme closely. He also highlighted concerns regarding inflation and the potential impact on future project costs.

RO confirmed that Place Programme progress would be discussed further with EDCOG following the Board meeting and that an update would be brought to the next Board meeting.

Cllr Jardine requested a further update on the Borderlands Rail project.

RO advised that discussions would continue following the Board meeting and that MPs were planning a briefing for MSPs to provide an update on the wider Borderlands programme, including the rail project. Jenni Craig added that officers would seek to agree a date for this session as part of the follow-up discussions.

Action: Borderlands PMO Team to provide a further update on the Place Programme, including progress on delivery, risks relating to inflation, and next steps, at the next Partnership Board meeting.

6. **Change Controls**

- a) Carlisle Station Gateway (approval)
- b) Business Infrastructure Scotland (approval)
- c) Natural Capital in Scotland (Grassland Project (notification)
- d) Destination Tweed (notification)

James Davies (JD) Updated the Board on change controls.

Carlisle Station Gateway

JD advised that the project is seeking a series of changes to its profile and timeline. The project has successfully secured an additional £13.5 million in funding to complete the interior works alongside the external works already planned. To ensure the works are delivered in a logical sequence, the Borderlands team is requesting an extension to the programme. The project continues to make good progress.

Business Infrastructure Scotland

JD outlined proposed changes to the project. Of the £7 million allocation for business infrastructure in the South of Scotland, several sites have encountered delivery challenges. As a result, the Borderlands team has been working with Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Borders Council to identify alternative sites that can achieve the same outcomes. While the revised proposals are expected to result in a slight reduction in job creation figures, the changes improve overall deliverability and continue to meet the project's original objectives.

Natural Capital in Scotland

JD advised that amendments have been made to some project headings within the Grassland Project to better reflect delivery activity on the ground. The revisions will enable certain elements of work to be undertaken by volunteers rather than requiring external contractors.

Destination Tweed

JD informed the Board of changes to eligible project costs, enabling certain legal fees to be treated as capital expenditure. These costs relate to securing agreements with landowners where no transfer of ownership is required. This has proven challenging and an additional contribution will be introduced to support project deliverability.

Questions and Comments

Cllr Glen Sanderson noted that significant discussion had previously taken place regarding the Grassland Project. He asked how progress would be

monitored and sought assurance regarding how project impacts would be measured.

JD responded that the Borderlands team receives monthly project updates detailing delivery progress. The team has been working closely with several farmers, with successful pilot activity already underway. Progress is also reported through quarterly monitoring returns, which capture measurable outputs as the project develops.

JD noted that a site visit had taken place during the previous summer and confirmed that the Borderlands team continues to monitor delivery closely. Current monitoring focuses on outputs such as the number of hectares involved and the number of farmers engaged. Longer-term evaluation will assess the economic impact of the interventions as further evidence becomes available.

Cllr Sanderson asked whether monitoring responsibility sat with Scottish Borders Council or the Borderlands team.

JD explained that the project is monitored at three levels: by the project team, by the Borderlands team, and in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, which leads the Natural Capital Programme in Scotland.

Cllr Sanderson asked when the first evidence of project success would be available.

JD advised that the project is expected to take several years to deliver its intended outcomes. The project is scheduled to run for five years, with a formal interim evaluation anticipated approximately two years after completion. In the meantime, the Borderlands team is focusing on ensuring that the appropriate delivery processes and monitoring arrangements are in place. Initial evidence may be available later in the year through the annual review process.

Action: Borderlands PMO Team to provide a future update on the monitoring arrangements and early outputs of the Grassland Project.

Recommendation

The Partnership Board is asked to:

Approve the change control request for Carlisle Station Gateway (appendix 5a)

Approve the change control request for Business Infrastructure Scotland (appendix 5b)

Note the approval of change control request for the Natural Capital Scotland (Grassland) pilot (appendix 5c)

Note the approval of change control request for the Destination Tweed project (appendix 5d)

Board members agreed to the recommendations.

7. Place Programme Update

- BTIP approvals: Gretna

Chris Edwards (CE) presented the Borderlands Town Investment Plan, which has been developed and includes three proposed projects:

- Star of Caledonia Extension – focusing on wayfinding and signage improvements associated with the project.
- Business Units Project – addressing the shortage of suitable business premises through the development of 10 new light industrial units for small businesses and traders.
- Housing Project – intended to support housing provision in the area. CE noted that there are currently concerns regarding the project's economic impact, which will require further exploration. However, the Borderlands team is keen for the project to remain within the plan to allow further development and assessment of its potential benefits.

CE advised that the Town Investment Plan had been considered and endorsed by the Place Programme Board and was therefore recommended to the Partnership Board for approval.

Recommendation

The Partnership Board is asked to:

- a) approve the Gretna BTIP Part A (Appendix A)**

Board agreed to the recommendations.

8. Project Approval: Stranraer Marina FBC (Confirmation)

Angela McDougall (AM) reminded the Board that the Stranraer Marina Project was approved in principle at the March Partnership Board meeting, subject to Scottish Government approval. She confirmed that Scottish Government approval, along with agreement of the associated conditions, was secured at the end of May.

AM advised that the report notes anticipated changes to the project's financial profile, which will be brought forward in due course following receipt of the Marine Licence and an updated delivery programme.

Cllr Glen Sanderson asked whether the Council was providing the additional funding from its own resources. He also expressed his enthusiasm for the project and welcomed progress towards delivery.

Cllr Stephen Thompson responded that Council decisions had been taken to identify ways of supporting the project through capital funding and that partners had successfully met the required funding target. He invited officers to provide further detail on how this had been achieved.

Lisa Hawkin advised that the majority of the funding would be provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council. Funding would comprise a combination of existing capital resources and prudential borrowing. While this may have future revenue implications, these were considered by the Council and approved as part of the Full Council decision in December.

Cllr Sanderson reiterated his support for the project and welcomed its progress.

Cllr Thompson echoed these comments and expressed his support for the project.

Recommendation

The Partnership Board is asked to:

Confirm approval of up to £20m of Borderlands funding for the Stranraer Marina Project FBC, subject to the special conditions listed at section 11.

Board members agreed to the recommendations subject to special conditions.

9. AOB

Cllr Stephen Thomspon thanked the Board members for attending and closed the meeting at 11:19.

Borderlands Partnership Board - Written Procedure

August 2026

Decision:	Approval of the award of £5.314m to Northumberland County Council for the Hadrian’s Wall Visitor Exploration Project.																								
Recommendation:	The Board is recommended to approve the award of £5.314m to Northumberland County Council for the Hadrian’s Wall Visitor Exploration Project with the following special conditions: From the PMO <table><tr><th>No.</th><th>Condition</th><th>Type</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Applicant to provide Scheduled Monument consent for the waymarkers and highway works</td><td>Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Applicant to provide confirmation of planning permission from NNPA</td><td>Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Applicant to provide confirmation of the maintenance arrangements for the wayfinding installations between NCC and the Partnership.</td><td>Prior to Grant Funding Agreement issue</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Provide evidence of compliant procurement process for all contracted works</td><td>Ongoing as and when processes are complete.</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Applicant to provide confirmation that all statutory approvals have been granted (building Regulations, health and safety, Highway orders etc.)</td><td>Ongoing monitoring</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>Applicant to provide a quantified risk register</td><td>Once all procurements have been undertaken</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>Applicant to provide evidence of the value for money appointment of NCC highways</td><td>Prior to Grant Funding</td></tr></table>	No.	Condition	Type	1	Applicant to provide Scheduled Monument consent for the waymarkers and highway works	Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue	2	Applicant to provide confirmation of planning permission from NNPA	Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue	3	Applicant to provide confirmation of the maintenance arrangements for the wayfinding installations between NCC and the Partnership.	Prior to Grant Funding Agreement issue	4	Provide evidence of compliant procurement process for all contracted works	Ongoing as and when processes are complete.	5	Applicant to provide confirmation that all statutory approvals have been granted (building Regulations, health and safety, Highway orders etc.)	Ongoing monitoring	6	Applicant to provide a quantified risk register	Once all procurements have been undertaken	7	Applicant to provide evidence of the value for money appointment of NCC highways	Prior to Grant Funding
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	and ANPL (Advance Northumberland Projects Ltd)	Agreement Issue
8	Applicant to provide evidence of the social value that will be delivered by the appointed contractors and how this will be monitored.	Prior to funding release.
From the Accountable Body		
Recommended Conditions		Condition Type
1.	There shall be no commercial exploitation of Project assets - no adverts on the way finders, or income derived through agreement with attractions / activities to be on the boards as an attraction / activity	Ongoing monitoring
2.	The Applicant shall provide a copy of the template agreement to be entered into with landowners to permit the installation of wayfinding signage on land that is not owned by Northumberland County Council (NCC). Completed agreements to be available to PMO /AB on request	With relevant Grant Claim
3.	A short summary of the relevant experience and responsibilities of key delivery personnel (include the 3 ANPL staff) should be provided	Prior to funding release.
4.	Project progress reports to be provided during delivery must include updates regarding cost overruns	Ongoing monitoring
5.	If the approved cycle route changes – then the Applicant must inform PMO/AB	Ongoing monitoring
6.	The Applicant shall ensure that the infrastructure will be publicly accessible, available to all users on equal terms, free of charge and without discrimination	Ongoing monitoring

Responsible Officer:	Emma Cox
Contact for further information:	Emma.cox@borderlandsgrowth.com
Date:	17.08.2026

Background The Borderlands Partnership Board agreed to approve this project in principle subject to a formal written procedure at the June 2026 Partnership Board meeting. This was following a presentation from the applicant to the Borad outlining the project description, costs, outputs and impacts as had been outlined in the Full Business Case. The project proposal has been assessed by the Borderlands PMO and by Northumberland County Council as the Accountable Body for Deal activity in England. As part of the new arrangements following confirmation of the Deal Reset, the Business case has also been reviewed by external appraisers to ensure compliance with the HM Treasury Green Book. The project is considered to meet the requirements for approval. It is the first project to come forward for approval for the Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme To manage areas where minor risks have been identified a number of special conditions have been proposed (see recommendations above). They are also included in the full project paper and form part of the appraisal process. These are proposed to be incorporated into the Grant Funding Agreement to ensure compliant delivery and are considered appropriate to manage the outstanding issues.
Reason for undertaking written procedure template A key element of this project is the construction of a new cycleway and active travel route. The applicant would like to commence this activity prior to the start of the Winter season to ensure delivery of the project within the identified timescales.
Supporting information Appendices attached • The Borderlands Partnership Board approval paper to take the decision by Written Procedure. • The Full Business Case for the project.

Approved on behalf of the Borderland Chief Executive's Group	
Name:	N/A approach agreed at Partnership Board
Designation:	N/A approach agreed at Partnership Board

Date:	N/A approach agreed at Partnership Board
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I confirm that I am content to (place a 'x' against the decision):	
Approve the Recommendations (any exceptions to be noted below).	
Reject the recommendation (please identify which recommendation(s) you are rejecting)	
Postpone the decision to the next Board meeting (please identify which recommendation(s) you are seeking to postpone)	
Name:	
Date:	

This item will be recorded at the Board meeting on the 23rd of September 2026

Deal Performance Update

August 2026

Introduction and Purpose

This Performance Update provides the latest position on the progress made with the Deal and is a consistent approach to the varied audiences for the Deal including the Economic Forum, Borderlands Partnership Board and officials from the UK and Scottish Government.

It covers:

- a summary of the latest financial position for projects in delivery
- a summary of the Forward Plan and tracker of project business cases development
- progress updates against projects and themes within the Deal
- highlighted risks
- communications activity

These summarise the full information as set out in the programme management tools used by the Partnership including the Programme and Project Tracker, Forward Plan and Risk Register which should be considered the source for progress and performance information and will be attached as appendices.

Key Messages

- The overall risk for the Deal remains raised as a number of key challenges remain evident:
 - There remains challenges in relation to capacity to deliver projects; the Partnership Board received a proposed approach to reduce this risk; however, this will remain a significant for some time. As more projects are reaching approval this risk is reducing in potential impact at a Deal level.
 - Inflationary impacts have become an increased risk due to the conflict in the Middle East and impact on costs.
 - Volume of activity for Place Programme and community capacity to bring this forward remains a challenge.
 - Risk to not achieving financial profiling 2026/27 due to delays with significant spending projects.
- Carlisle Citadels change control remains critical.
- Key approvals due for Berwick Maltings, and Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration in September.
- Overall performance has strengthened with over 55% of funding now committed and due to rise to approximately 70% by the end of 2026.
- Spend is increasing with 17.4% now defrayed but disappointing Q1 figures.
- Ahead of profile for match funding.

Risk register – key risks

Risk Ref	Description	RAG
1	There is a risk that insufficient resources, caused by competing priorities of project leads result in potential delayed in delivery of business cases	↔
2	There is a risk around the capacity of partners to deliver deal projects, caused by significant public sector challenges, resulting in pressures on Partners' cash flow and unknown Deal slippage	↔
6	There is a risk that wider economic impacts result in cost increases due to higher construction inflation than assumed in business cases.	↑
7	There is a risk that the changing political landscape will result in changing political priorities.	↔
10	There is a risk that the annual allocation isn't met caused by a lack of progress resulting in a potential reputational risk and reprofiling of drawdown.	↑
12	There is a risk of partnership funding not materializing as agreed caused by increasing restraints in public sector funding, resulting pressures on Partners' cash flow and/or project slippage.	↔
16	There is a risk that the increasing costs of materials, contractors and supply chain issues result in unmanageable cost increases or delays to delivering on profile	↔
21	There is a risk of fraudulent claims – Northumberland County Council policies followed.	↔

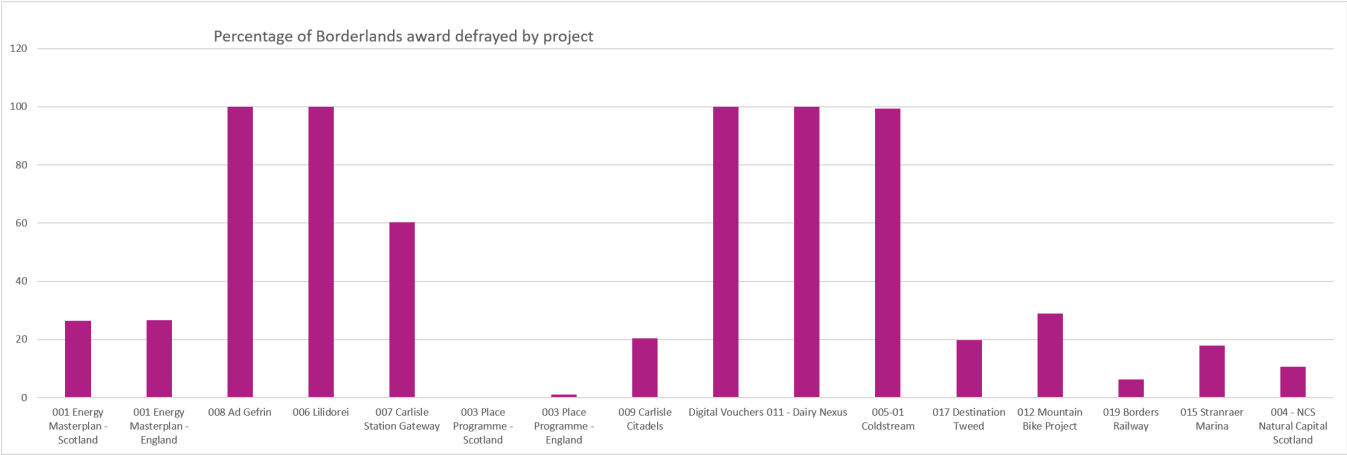
Deal Performance Update

Financial Progress & Projects in Delivery

Delivery Dashboard



A significant proportion of the Deal funding is currently committed at this stage of delivery at 55.2% Good progress has been made recently with 16% now defrayed.



Project spend has significantly increased in recent periods.

Financial Performance

Approved Projects – Spend Overview to Q1 2026/27

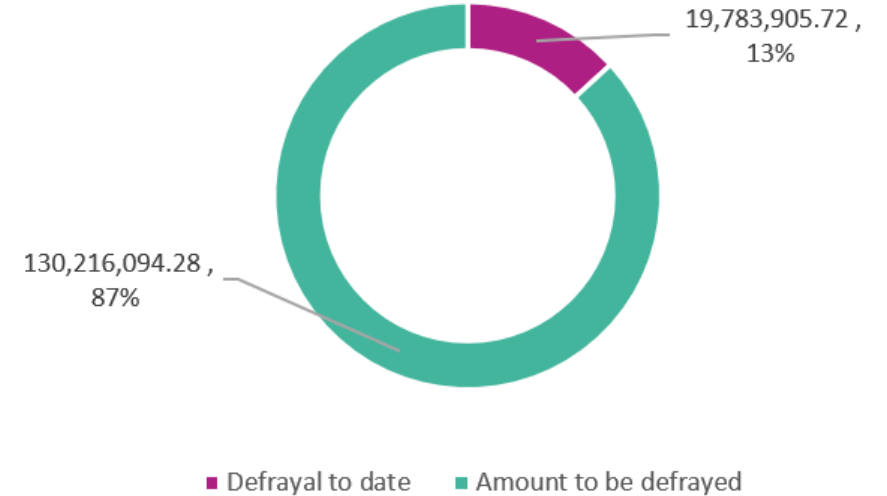
Project/Programme	Funding source	Project Value (£)		Defrayal to date (£)
		Original	Latest	Actual
001 Energy Masterplan	Borderlands Grant	1,100,000.00	1,100,000.00	283,867.00
	Match/Co-investment	-	-	-
008 Ad Gefrin	Borderlands Grant	3,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00
	Match/Co-investment	7,504,000.00	9,511,000.00	9,759,544.14
006 Lilidorei	Borderlands Grant	5,000,000.00	5,500,000.00	5,500,000.00
	Match/Co-investment	10,545,000.00	13,148,871.74	13,148,871.74
007 Carlisle Station Gateway	Borderlands Grant	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	12,038,721.00
	Match/Co-investment	3,851,000.00	3,851,000.00	6,724,589.00
003 Place Programme - Scotland	Borderlands Grant	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	-
	Match/Co-investment			-
003 Place Programme - England	Borderlands Grant	30,000,000.00	30,000,000.00	282,195.31
	Match/Co-investment			96,978.28
009 Carlisle Citadels	Borderlands Grant	50,000,000.00	50,000,000.00	10,224,613.10
	Match/Co-investment	27,498,136.00	27,498,136.00	1,676,156.74
005-01 Coldstream	Borderlands Grant	1,201,268.00	1,201,268.00	1,193,005.20
	Match/Co-investment	-	-	-
011 Dairy Nexus	Borderlands Grant	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00
	Match/Co-investment	1,878,071.00	1,878,071.00	1,635,613.73
004S Natural Capital Scotland	Borderlands Grant - Capital	1,942,337.00	1,942,337.00	156,677.94
	Borderlands Grant - Revenue	1,526,931.00	1,526,931.00	209,859.82
	Match/Co-investment	1,087,508.00	1,087,508.00	-
Digital Voucher Scheme	Borderlands Grant	4,000,000.00	3,313,599.00	3,313,599.00
	Match/Co-investment	4,830,000.00	7,133,749.00	7,133,749.00
017 Destination Tweed	Borderlands Grant	10,000,000.00	10,000,000.00	1,975,353.19
	Match/Co-investment	14,500,000.00	14,500,000.00	-
019 Borders Railway	Borderlands Grant	1,060,000.00	1,060,000.00	65,700.80
	Match/Co-investment	-	-	-
012 Mountain Bike Project	Borderlands Grant	15,500,000.00	15,500,000.00	4,479,378.25
	Match/Co-investment	1,850,000.00	1,850,000.00	-
015 Stranraer Marina	Borderlands Grant	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	3,587,238.52
	Match/Co-investment	24,570,000.00	24,570,000.00	-
Total (all funding)		228,524,251.00	298,172,470.74	95,485,711.76
Total (Borderlands Grant)		132,301,268.00	193,144,135.00	55,310,209.13
Total (Match/co-investment)		70,606,207.00	105,028,335.74	40,175,502.63

Scotland Summary - Total

Deal Funding Committed - Scotland (£)

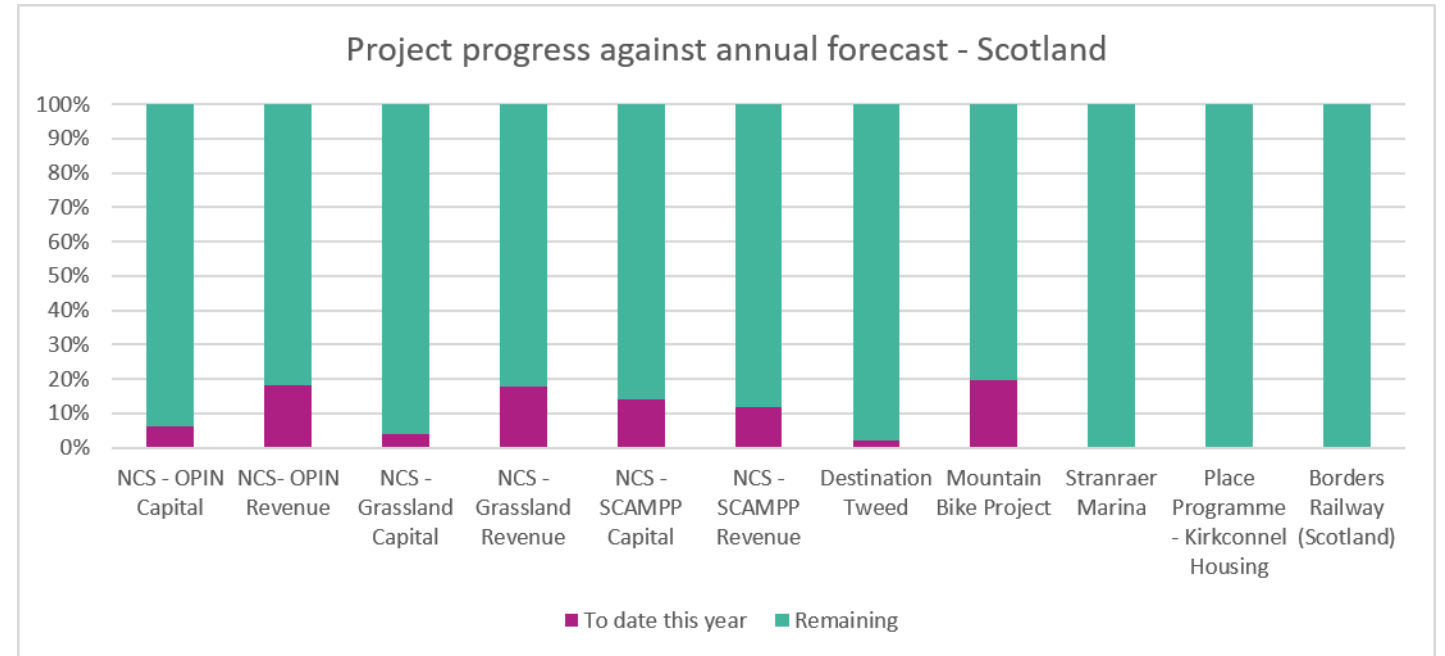


Deal Funding Defrayed - Scotland (£)



Scotland Summary – In year

Live projects	Performance previous financial year	Forecast this year	To date this year	Progress
NCS - OPIN Capital	100%+	38,856.00	2,461.39	6.3
NCS- OPIN Revenue	73.35%	72,952.00	13,288.31	18.2
NCS - Grassland Capital	100%+	107,291.00	4,126.48	3.8
NCS - Grassland Revenue	100%+	46,790.00	8,330.63	17.8
NCS - SCAMPP Capital	87.00%	102,491.00	14,367.61	14.0
NCS - SCAMPP Revenue	61.25%	199,214.00	23,331.18	11.7
Destination Tweed	100%+	4,040,578.00	89,875.81	2.2
Mountain Bike Project	100%	10,563,718.00	2,077,225.25	19.7
Stranraer Marina	93.07%	4,411,746.00	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - Kirkconnel Housing	N/A	400,000.00	0.00	0.0
Borders Railway (Scotland)	87.50%	35,000.00	0.00	0.0
Due to start this year				
Star of Caledonia	N/A	750,000.00		
Place Programme	N/A	313,800.00		
Natural Capital Scotland - BRICHT Capital	0%	45,990.00		
Natural Capital Scotland - BRICHT Revenue	0%	81,044.00		
Energy Programme	N/A	116,692.00		
TOTAL requiring approval		1,307,526.00		
TOTAL		21,326,162.00		
Scotland Forecast		21,326,162	Note: Energy Programme Claim £116,692 complete to be claimed in Q4	

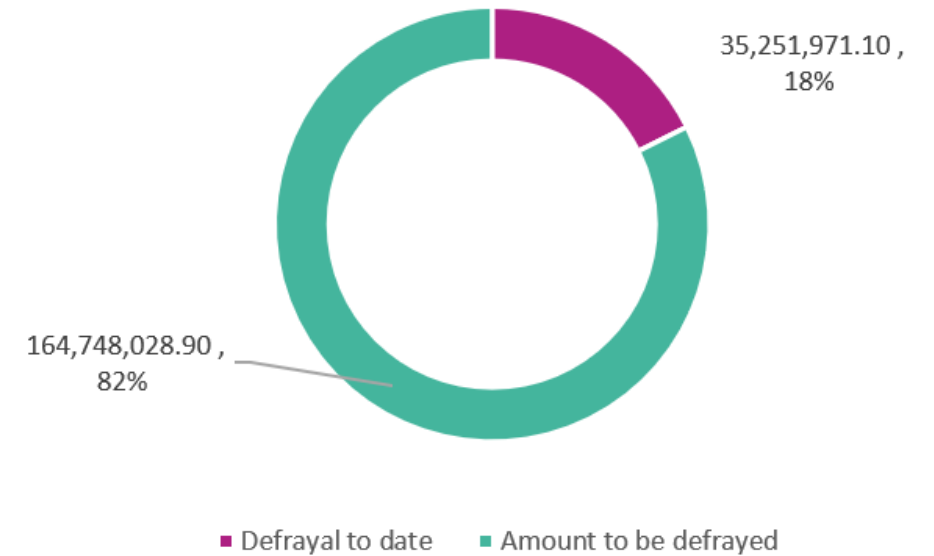


England Summary - Total

Deal Funding Committed - England (£)

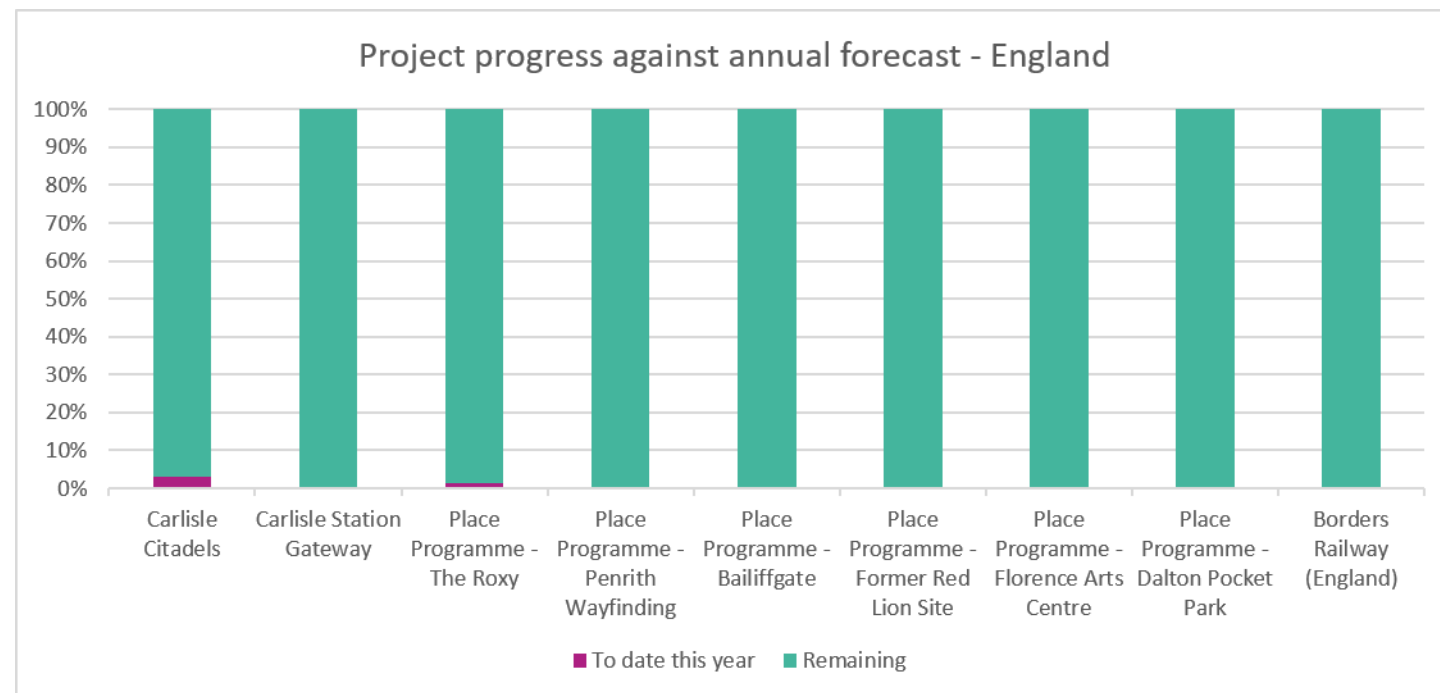


Deal Funding Defrayed - England (£)



England Summary – In year

Live Projects	Performance previous financial year	Forecast this year	To date this year	Progress
Carlisle Citadels	11.95%	12,000,000.00	365,536.88	3.0
Carlisle Station Gateway	N/A	481,552.00	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - The Roxy	72.76%	394,489.18	4,998.00	1.3
Place Programme - Penrith Wayfinding	57.59%	183,924.25	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - Bailiffgate	19.71%	1,144,128.00	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - Former Red Lion Site	N/A	236,223.00	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - Florence Arts Centre	N/A	237,500.00	0.00	0.0
Place Programme - Dalton Pocket Park	N/A	160,000.00	0.00	0.0
Borders Railway (England)	87.50%	35,000.00	0.00	0.0
Due to start this year				
Berwick Theatre	0%	7,870,619.00		
Hadrian's Wall - Visitor Exploration Northumberland	N/A	487,622.00		
Hadrian's Wall - Tullie	N/A	200,000.00		
Hadrian's Wall - Discover Hadrian's Wall West	N/A	63,750.00		
Place Programme	N/A	909,050.00		
TOTAL requiring approval		9,531,041.00		
TOTAL		24,403,857.43		
MHCLG forecast		27,100,000	Note: current underforecast due to conservative est. for Citadels prior to	



Deal Performance Update

Projects in Development

Projects in development – Forward Plan of decisions

Meeting / Month	August	September	October	November	December
Partnership Board	Type: Briefing Meeting Date: Wed 19 th Papers Issued: Wed 12 th Papers Approved: Fri 7 th (EDCOG) Decisions required:	Type: Board Meeting Date: Wed 23 rd Papers Issued: Wed 16 th Papers Approved: Fri 4 th (EDCOG) Decisions required: - BTIP Part A – Whithorn - BTIP Part A - Prudhoe - BTIP Part A – Bedlington - Maltings (FBC)	N/A	Type: Briefing Meeting Date: Wed 18 th Papers Issued: Wed 11 th Papers Approved: Fri 6 th (EDCOG) Decisions required: - BEST CAES (OBC) - PowerHub (OBC) - BOOST (OBC)	Type: Board Meeting Date: Wed 9 th Papers Issued: Wed 2 nd Papers Approved: Fri 4 th (EDCOG) Decisions required: - BTIP Part A – Newbiggin - BTIP Part A – Haltwhistle - BTIP Part A – Wigtown - BTIP Part A – Bellingham - BTIP Part A – Rothbury - BTIP Part A – Eyemouth - NCEL (OBC)

Projects in development – Forward Plan of decisions

Meeting / Month	August	September	October	November	December
Investment Panel	Meeting Date:	Meeting Date:	Meeting Date:	Meeting Date:	Meeting Date:
	Papers Issued:	Papers Issued:	Papers Issued:	Papers Issued:	Papers Issued:
	Decisions required:	Decisions required:	Decisions required:	Decisions required:	Decisions required:
	• Hadrian's Wall Visitor Exploration Northumberland • Discover Hadrian's Wall West • Maltings (FBC)	• Part B – Wigton Event Space • Part B – Longtown Community Centre • BRICHT (Natural Capital Scotland)	• BEST CAES (OBC) • PowerHub (OBC) • BOOST (OBC)	• Part B: Dalton High Street Grants • Part B: Jedburgh – Laidlaw Pool • Part B: Bedlington Station Heritage Café / Bistro • Part B: Galashiels – Hike & Bike • NCEL	• Part B: Jedburgh - Community Contact Hub • Part B: Penrith High Street Grants • Part B: Prudhoe East Centre • Part B: Hawick Signage • Part B: Kirkconnel Main Street • Part B: Stranraer – Dicks Hill



Enabling Infrastructure

The Enabling Infrastructure theme of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal comprises five activities worth up to £112.2m of Borderlands investment targeted at improving access to the region and connectivity within and outside of the area. This will contribute to the region's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit.

Project	Value	Council area	Sponsor	Status	Latest position	Next steps/issues
Carlisle Station Gateway	£20m	Cumberland	Cumberland Council	In delivery	Updated profile and reporting information submitted.	Progress being maintained. Additional funding approved from Network Rail.
Voucher Scheme	£4m	Cumberland, Northumberland & Westmoreland and Furness	DCMS/BDUK	Complete	Project has completed.	Complete
Carlisle Citadels	£58m	Cumberland	University of Cumbria	FBC approved	Change Request received and under review.	Change under consideration including funding requirements.
Digital Borderlands	£28.2m	Borderlands wide	Cumberland Council	Programme reset required	Strategic approach agreed	Development of programme business case in 2026
Borders Rail	£10m	Scottish Borders with Dumfries and Galloway & Cumberland	Scottish Borders Council	In delivery	Govt. approval enables the project to move forward.	Appointment complete. Recent celebrations of Phase 1 – 10 year anniversary



Improving Places

The Improving Places theme will investment up to £127.5m in supporting the places of the Borderlands to attract new people to visit and live in the area and revitalise our communities for existing resident.

Project	Value	Council area	Sponsor	Status	Latest position	Next steps/issues
Place Programme	£50m	Borderlands wide	Northumberland County Council/Scottish Borders Council	BTIP and Project development	All Place Plans approved. Gretna BTIP next to be approved.	Progress to BTIP phase for all places and further projects coming forward.
Lilidorei – The Alnwick Garden	£5m	Northumberland	The Alnwick Garden Trust	Complete	Project complete and launched 24/05/23. Strong media interest.	Into monitoring phase.
Berwick Theatre	£25.5m	Northumberland	Northumberland County Council	FBC in development	Interim FBC received and under review	Due for approval September 2026.
Destination Borderlands	£57.5m (total)	Various	Various	See next slide	See next slide	See next slide



Improving Places – Destination Borderlands

As part of the Improving Places theme 6 projects collectively make up the Destination Borderlands investment with specific projects to improve the overall offer of the Borderlands as a place to visit increasing visitor numbers, spend, length of the visit and the length of the season.

Project	Value	Council area	Sponsor	Status	Latest position	Next steps/issues
Hadrian's Wall and wider Roman Frontier	£13.14m	Cumberland and Northumberland	Project specific	Project cases in development	First approvals made – Northumberland Visitor Exploration and Discover Hadrian's Wall West.	Individual project proposals in development.
See More Lake District	£7m	Cumberland & Westmoreland and Furness	Westmorland and Furness Council	FBC development	FBC in development	FBC to be developed.
Destination Tweed	£11m	Scottish Borders	Tweed Forum	In delivery	FBC approved	Project underway.
Stranraer Marina	£20m	Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway Council	FBC in approval	FBC approved in principle by Partnership Board March 2026	Moving towards contracting..
7Stanes	£5m	Dumfries and Galloway & Scottish Borders	Forestry and Land Scotland	FBC in development	OBC approved	FBC under development.
Star of Caledonia	£1.5m	Dumfries and Galloway	Star of Caledonia Trust	FBC in approval	FBC responding to comments	FBC under review working to early 2027 approval.



Supporting business, innovation and skills

The business, innovation and skills theme of the Deal is intended to put the Borderlands in a strong place to be ready to take advantage of new ideas to enhance our prosperity and broaden opportunities. Up to £54m of investment will be made through this theme across five areas: Business Infrastructure, the Mountain Bike Project, Dairy Nexus, Forestry Innovation and the South of Scotland Learning Network.

Project	Value	Council area	Sponsor	Status	Latest position	Next steps/issues
Ad Gefrin	£3m	Northumberland	Ad Gefrin LLP	Complete	Project complete and open to the public.	Into monitoring phase.
Business Infrastructure (Scotland)	£8m	Dumfries and Galloway & Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders Council/Dumfries and Galloway Council	Business Case in development	Site proposals in development.	Coldstream project complete. Change Control for remaining sites approved.
Mountain Bike Project	£19.5m	Scottish Borders	South of Scotland Enterprise w. Napier Uni.	In delivery	FBC approved and contract awarded. Site demolition and preparation largely complete for construction.	Construction started.
Dairy Nexus	£8m	Dumfries and Galloway	SRUC	Complete	Project complete.	Into monitoring phase
South of Scotland Learning	£7m	Dumfries and Galloway & Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders/Dumfries and Galloway	OBCs	SOBCs endorsed at Partnership Board and SG approval received.	Progress to OBC.



Encouraging Green Growth

The Borderlands have particular opportunities in supporting low carbon growth and the transition to net zero carbon emissions. To support this up to £56.3m will be invested across four projects.

Project	Value	Council area	Sponsor	Status	Latest position	Next steps/issues
Energy Masterplan	£1.1m	Borderlands wide	Northumberland County Council/Dumfries and Galloway Council	Complete	Masterplan document complete.	Masterplan complete.
Energy Investment	£25.9m	Borderlands wide	Northumberland County Council/Dumfries and Galloway Council	Project development.	EOIs under review with additional queries raised. Board approved shortlisting in December 2025	Project OBCs underway.
Chapelcross	£17.3m*	Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway Council	OBC in development	Business case development on-going. Site developer appointed. Development plan underway.	OBC due to PMO.
Natural Capital (Scotland)	£5m	Dumfries and Galloway & Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders Council	In delivery	Programme OBC approved. 3 pilots in delivery, 1 pilot in assessment and 1 pilot in development. SCAMPP Part 2 approved by Partnership.	Woodland pilot delayed. Approval of BRICHT pilot.
Natural Capital (England)	£5m	Cumberland, Northumberland & Westmorland and Furness	Northumberland County Council	Proposition	Approach being developed with DEFRA and local partners. LINC aligned being taken forward.	Scope to be confirmed



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Borderlands Partnership Board

23 September 2026

Item 5 – Investment Panel Update

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to report the outcome of the Borderlands Investment Panel meeting(s) between Borderlands Partnership Board meetings in line with the approval to establish the Borderlands Investment Panel on the 19th July 2024.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Partnership Board is recommended to:
 - a) Note and endorse the outcome of the Borderlands Investment Panel meeting on the 11th September 2026.

3. Investment Panel meeting 11th September 2026

- 3.1. Three projects were reviewed and approved through the Investment Panel and one project (Berwick Maltings reviewed and is recommended to the Partnership Board under Item 6. Two change controls for Hadrian's Wall and Carlisle Citadels were endorsed.
- 3.2. The total amount of Borderlands funding awarded was £400,000 from the Hadrian's Wall Programme and £2,531,008 under the Place Programme.

4. Place Programme: Longtown Community Centre

Town:	Longtown
Project Ref:	P003-1
Project Name:	Longtown Community Centre
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	March 2028
Project Costs:	£1,290,502
Borderlands Funding:	£1,290,502

Project Description

- 4.1. The proposed improvements to the Community Centre comprise two elements:

- Improvements to the Community Centre building, including improvements to internal areas and entrance area, provision of changing rooms for out-of-hours use of the gym, new glazing, flexible co-working and educational space and improved kitchen facilities would allow a greater diversity of uses - including the potential for a commercial café that could be let out as a business opportunity, Options for the delivery of services are being explored e.g. tourist information, library and children's services. The potential for these services to be located within the community centre forms part of a wider service review within Cumberland Council and is expected to be completed within the next 6-12 months.
- Improvements to Centre Gardens, which is located to the side and rear of the building to provide improvements to landscaping & ecology works to improve the utility of the area for education and recreational uses.

Project Expenditure

Cost Heading	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	TOTAL £
Construction Costs		864,421		864,421
Design Costs		99,539		99,539
Project management		48,198		48,198
Risk		253,040		253,040
Inflation		25,304		25,304
TOTAL		1,290,502		1,290,502

Funding Profile

Funder	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	TOTAL £
Borderlands		1,290,502		1,290,502
TOTAL		1,290,502		1,290,502

Expected Deliverables

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Outputs	
Improved community facilities	299 sqm
Improved public realm / external areas	1673 sqm
Outcomes (From Business Plan, from Year 5)	
Annual Visits	48,000 (an increase of 28,000 - 33,000)
Number of Events	70
Volunteers	35
Gym and Wellbeing Participants	850
Wellbeing Sessions	420
Impacts (Present Value, post-Displacement)	

Value of Volunteering	£955,000
Value of Improved Physical Activity	£727,000
Value of Cultural Participation	£302,000
Offsite Spend	£320,000
Onsite Employment	£1,390,000

Special Conditions

No.	Condition	Source	Type
1	Provide evidence confirming the award of construction contract.	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
2	Provide evidence of a compliant procurement process for any contractors that are appointed to undertake the works.	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
3	Provide an updated BTIP once procurement is complete and a contractor appointed (May 2027), to incorporate final costs and demonstrate: • BCR remains positive • A compliant procurement process has been undertaken • Final costs per budget heading and drawdown profile • Delivery plan including key construction milestones • Updated risk register with risk owner allocated	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
4	Provide evidence of the baseline position for all the outputs/outcomes/impacts listed and a plan as to how these will be measured.	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
5	Confirm that Cumberland Council Executive have approved the acceptance of grant.	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued
6	Confirm the long-term maintenance plan of the assets created following completed designs.	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
7	Provide of a copy of the final business plan.	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued.
8	Provide confirmation of approval of Building Regulations following completion of RIBA 4 works.	PMO	Prior to Funding Release
9	Confirmation that a compliant subsidy control route can be agreed with the Accountable Body. This may require additional information from the applicant and could result in further special conditions being applied.	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued
10	Provide evidence of building / land ownership	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued
11	Provide a copy of the agreement between Cumberland Council and Longtown Community	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued

	Centre Board that outlines the ongoing maintenance responsibilities.		
12	Provide details of the systems in place to ensure that Longtown Community Centre Board collect and provide the required evidence to substantiate the proposed impacts.	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued

5. Place Programme: Wigton Flexible Events Space

Town:	Wigton
Project Ref:	P003-01
Project Name:	Wigton Flexible Events Space
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	March 2028
Project Costs:	£1,240,506
Borderlands Funding:	£1,240,506

Project Description

5.1. The proposed Wigton Flexible Events Space project will provide a new flexible events space within the existing Water Street Car Park that will enable the council, plus community and voluntary groups to run festivals, events and activities that will meet local demand and attract people into the town. The improvements will also provide a new gateway to the town for those visiting by car and deliver public realm improvements to improve the character of the area and support and encourage pedestrian movement through the town.

5.2. Overall, the project is expected to deliver economic and social benefits for Wigton by supporting local businesses through increased footfall and spend, as well as public realm benefits for residents and visitors, and the direct cultural and social value associated with attendance at the events hosted at the new events space.

Project Expenditure

Cost Heading	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	TOTAL £
Direct construction costs	-	540,742	-	540,742
Indirect construction costs	-	202,779	-	202,779
Design costs	111,528	-	-	111,528
Project management	33,458	33,459	-	66,917

Risk & contingency	-	276,590	-	276,590
Inflation	-	41,949	-	41,949
TOTAL	144,986	1,095,519	-	1,240,506

Funding Profile

Funder	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	TOTAL £
Borderlands	144,986	1,095,519	-	1,240,506
TOTAL	144,986	1,095,519	-	1,240,506

Expected Deliverables

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Outputs	
Sqm of new events space, public realm and landscaping	1007
Sqm of highway improvement	1631
New EV charging points	11
Improved wayfinding infrastructure and orientation	1
Outcomes	
Programme of new events (days)	4 large and 8 smaller events per annum
Attendance at cultural events	18,000 per annum
% of visitors currently staying for less than 40 minutes extending their stay	10% / 980 visitors
Programme of new events (days)	4 large and 8 smaller events per annum
Impacts	
Annual uplift in spending arising from cultural events	£794,000
Annual uplift in spending arising from increased dwell time	£258,000
GVA resulting from uplift in spending arising from cultural events (Present value over 15 years, post displacement)	£2,609,000
Increased Cultural Capital (present value over 15 years, post-displacement)	£1,096,000
GVA resulting from uplift in spending arising from increased dwell time (Present value over 15 years, post-displacement)	£905,000

Special Conditions

No.	Condition	Source	Type
1	Evidence that a compliant procurement process has been followed prior to the payment of any associated claim for funding.	PMO	Pre-Funding Release (linked to the procurement exercise)
2	The applicant must provide an annual events plan for (include date that outputs will be realised) to show that output targets will be met.	PMO	Prior to final claim being paid
3	Confirmation that the Executive have approved the acceptance of grant	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued.
4	Confirmation of Highways and Building regulation approval	PMO	Pre-Funding Release
5	Confirmation that a compliant subsidy control route can be agreed with the Accountable Body. This may require additional information from the applicant and could result in further special conditions being applied.	PMO	Prior to GFA being issued

6. Hadrian's Wall Programme : Discover Hadrian's Wall West

Town:	Cumberland
Project Ref:	014-03
Project Name:	Discover Hadrian's Wall West
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	November 2026
End Date:	January 2028
Project Costs:	£690,800
Borderlands Funding:	£400,000

Project Description

- 6.1. The Discover Hadrian's Wall West Project in Cumbria is an essential component of the Hadrian's Wall 10-year Investment Programme, helping to unlock the immense unrealised potential of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (WHS), and bring the destination to life for a growing and diverse audience of national and international visitors.
- 6.2. The vision is to:

"The Project Vision is to position Hadrian's Wall WHS as a coherent and integrated visitor destination – Discover Hadrian's Wall West dovetails with the Northumberland County Council Visitor Exploration Project and taken together forms one continuous Visitor Exploration project from Heddou-on-the-Wall to Ravenglass. In the Cumberland

area DHWW will highlight Roman Cumbria and the wealth of heritage assets along the west of the Wall and the Cumbrian Coast between Gilsland and Ravenglass to attract new audiences and encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more”.

- 6.3. Hadrian’s Wall has significant potential to become a major UK and global visitor destination. However, it is currently under-developed and its potential economic impact on local communities is not being fulfilled, in Cumbria particularly due to the Cumbria Coast largely consisting of invisible heritage.
- 6.4. The project will improve access to some of the most impressive cultural heritage and landscape in the UK by positively enhancing the infrastructure. The Project will improve the current disjointed and uncoordinated wayfinding signage that is detrimental to visitor orientation. The outcomes of the Project will positively impact on the potential of local rural economies along the Wall by attracting greater numbers of visitors that will use local facilities and services.
- 6.5. Borderlands investment will support Discover Hadrian’s Wall West project to bring to life the largely invisible heritage of the North-West. The project will expand the route as a destination, signposting visitors and local people to nearby attractions and amenities, complimenting signage for the Hadrian’s Wall Path and Coastal Trail, enhancing pre-existing infrastructure. The project will extend the tourism season with interactive digital experiences available all year, whilst promoting active travel and nature tourism along clearly defined cycling and walking routes. The cross linkage will contribute to Hadrian’s Wall’s destination cohesiveness and deliver on aims of the 10-year investment plan for Hadrian’s Wall.
- 6.6. Borderlands investment will support the creation of a wayfinding orientation trail with 68 strategically positioned information points with interpretation and alongside the physical infrastructure, the project will develop an associated app with birds eye digital wayfinding interactive map of the route, and digital virtual and augmented reality animation of the trail in 10 locations – bringing the invisible heritage to life.
- 6.7. Consistent signage, branding and information points will create a more coherent approach across the whole of the Hadrian’s Wall. This element of the project is being developed and procured in partnership with Northumberland County Council, to create a strong brand, and provide a distinctive visual identity along the route of Hadrian’s Wall in the western and central sections. Consistent signage, branding and information points will create a more coherent approach to this important WHS and visitor attraction, improving visitor awareness and understanding of the breadth of Roman heritage in the region, and highlighting key stopping points with stunning views of the local landscape, important links to Roman Heritage, and / or access to local services and facilities.
- 6.8. A total of 68 locations along Hadrian’s Wall have been identified as suitable for the installation of information points (digitally enabled). Each site will feature orientation and wayfinding details, along with information about the local area, including amenities, heritage, landscape features, and nearby attractions.

Project Expenditure

Cost Heading	Pre 26/27 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	TOTAL £m
Physical Wayfinding	-	95,000	190,000	285,000
Content Production	-	12,000	24,000	36,000
Digital Attractions	-	71,750	215,250	287,000
Digital Way finding	-	10,000	10,000	20,000
Risk/Contingency	-	-	62,800	62,800
TOTAL	-	188,750	502,050	690,800

Funding Profile

Funder	Pre 26/27 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	TOTAL £m
Borderlands	-	63,750	336,250	400,000
National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	125,000	125,000	250,000
Cumberland Council	-	-	40,800	40,800
TOTAL	-	188,750	502,050	690,800

Expected Deliverables

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
heritage themed interpretation points along the route with physical and digital and wayfinding	68
Digital virtual and augmented reality animation of the trail	10
A DHWW App on IOS and Android	1
Increase in visitor numbers	Additional 12,507 pa
Increase in visitor spending	£1.0 additional pa (gross)
Number of indirect jobs	47 local FTE/ 6UK national
Increase in walking and cycling journeys by the end of the assessment period of 10 years.	2%

Special Conditions

No.	Condition	Source	Type
1	Confirmation of approval of all match funding.	PMO	Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue
2	Provide confirmation Scheduled Monument consent where consent is required.	PMO	Prior to Grant Funding Agreement Issue
3	Provide confirmation of planning permission where consent is required.	PMO	If required

4	Provide confirmation of agreement with landowners for location of all information points identified as falling outside land owned or maintained by Cumberland Council.	PMO	If required
5	Provide evidence of compliant procurement process for all contracted works	PMO	Ongoing as and when processes are complete
6	Provide evidence of signed MoU between Northumberland County Council and Cumberland Council for delivery of the joint procurement of way markers.	PMO	Ongoing as and when processes are complete
7	Provide evidence of signed contract and final costs	PMO	Prior to funding release
8	Applicant to provide a quantified risk register	PMO	Once all procurements have been undertaken
9	Applicant to provide evidence of the social value that will be delivered by the appointed contractors and how this will be monitored	PMO	Prior to funding release
10	Applicant to provide Monitoring and Evaluation Framework during Q1 27/28	PMO	Q1 27/28
11	If the waymarker locations change – the Applicant must inform PMO/AB.	PMO	Ongoing monitoring
12	Maintenance plan of physical assets to be supplied	AB	Prior to funding release
13	Update regarding digital asset maintenance to be given in December 2031	AB	December 2031
14	The infrastructure remains publicly owned, publicly accessible and available for general use without any admission charge or fee to access the sites or facilities supported by the project	AB	Ongoing monitoring
15	Inclusion of attractions, activities and businesses within the wayfinding and digital tools is based on transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria	AB	Ongoing monitoring
16	No individual attractions, businesses or commercial operators shall receive exclusive promotion or preferential treatment.	AB	Ongoing monitoring
17	Project assets, including wayfinding boards and associated infrastructure, are not commercially exploited by third parties, including through advertising, sponsorship arrangements or other commercial agreements.	AB	Ongoing monitoring
18	No income is generated from attractions, activities or businesses in return for their inclusion on wayfinding boards, digital platforms or other project-funded promotional materials.	AB	Ongoing monitoring

Lead Officer(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
James Davies	PMO Manager	James.davies@borderlandsgrowth.com

Endorsed by

Designation	Date
Investment Panel	11/09/2026

Partnership Board

23rd of September 2026

Item 6a – Project Approval: Berwick Theatre

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Berwick Theatre Full Business Case.

2. Recommendations

The Partnership Board is asked to:

- 2.1. Approve the Berwick Theatre project subject to:
 - Northumberland County Council Full Council approval (meeting scheduled for November 2026)
 - The special conditions outlined in section 13.
 - A delegated final approval of the decision by the NCC Section 151 Officer and the Borderlands Director on the provision of a satisfactory subsidy control assessment and sign off by the external appraisers.

3. Project Details

Area:	Northumberland
Project Ref:	010
Project Name:	Berwick Theatre
Applicant:	Northumberland County Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	April 2029
Project Costs:	£33.4m
Borderlands Funding:	£28.5m

4. Project Description

- 4.1. The Berwick Theatre (Maltings) project is a flagship regeneration scheme that will transform the Maltings into an iconic, multi-purpose cultural and entertainment venue, bolstering Berwick-upon-Tweed's national and international reputation as an attractive, high quality cultural and tourism destination, increasing capacity for participation in arts, culture and creative activities, and acting as a driving force behind an enhanced programme of cultural activity.

- 4.2. Alongside Destination Tweed, this is a strategically important project for Berwick, the wider Borderlands and North East region; it will stimulate economic growth in the Culture, Creative and Tourism sector by attracting more visitors and spending to Berwick and the wider Borderlands economy throughout the year, extending the visitor season, offering repeat visit opportunities and supporting good quality, year-round jobs. The benefits of the programme transcend the English-Scottish border and are strongly aligned to the objectives of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Project Cost Changes and Proposed Solutions

- 4.3. The original project Outline Business Case (OBC) was submitted to UK Government and the Borderlands Growth Deal Partnership in January 2021, with an updated OBC approved in February 2023. Since then, the project has encountered a number of significant cost pressures as outlined below:
- **Construction Complexity** - Detailed design work and extensive building investigations undertaken as part of the RIBA 4 design stage, have provided a fuller understanding of the complexity of the project. These intrusive building surveys were only possible once the building was vacated by the Maltings in October 2025, as they involved physically opening parts of the building to examine hidden structural elements and materials. This process highlighted the complexity of the construction required to deliver the project resulting in a value engineering exercise and delays to the construction start date.
 - **Location and Market Appetite** - Whilst the construction contractor has tendered the work packages to multiple subcontractors, the market returns have in some instances been poor both in the number of subcontractors willing to bid and the costs that have been returned. This is understood to be a result of the project location and its complexity, making it less attractive to potential suppliers.
 - **Inflation** – The project has been affected by macro-economic events and government trade decisions which have significantly impacted construction industry inflation. These include conflict in the Middle East as well as new UK tariffs on steel imports. Whilst initial cost estimates allowed for inflation, this predated the Iran war and the impact of the additional inflation pressures this has created and has been a significant contributory factor to the cost increase.
- 4.4. Extensive efforts have been undertaken to limit cost increases by revising the construction strategy to reuse as much of the existing building structure as possible and also to value engineer costs. However, despite this the total capital project cost has risen to £33.4m. This is however a final stage cost, and the applicant and the main contractor are confident in the cost provided.
- 4.5. The total investment requested from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Partnership is now £28,500,000, a significant increase from the £15m originally requested. A

request will also be made to Northumberland County Council's Cabinet and Full Council to fund the remaining £4,859,492.

- 4.6. As part of this proposal, Northumberland County Council are requesting £3m from the **Northumberland allocation of the Borderlands Digital Programme** to offset the increased project costs. Whilst the project will support the objectives of the Borderlands Digital Programme through the adoption and integration of new digital equipment and content, this is not the primary purpose of the project and therefore the proposal is to transfer the funding between the programmes.
- 4.7. Since the inception of the Borderlands Digital Programme, Northumberland County Council has delivered a significant programme of investment in digital connectivity, supporting the roll out of Superfast and Gigabit broadband and delivering targeted interventions to tackle digital exclusion and isolation. As a result, Northumberland has increased its take-up of Superfast broadband to 73%, within the top 3 councils nationally, with current coverage at 97.89%. Total investment in digital connectivity, including the £1,587,971 from the Borderlands Top Up Voucher project currently stands at approximately £13.7m. The digital top up voucher scheme has supported residents and rural communities to offset high-installation costs and address market viability gaps.
- 4.8. Northumberland County Council has continued to support this initiative using local gainshare funding of £1,500,000 through Project Gigabit. A further £5m will be allocated from local gainshare to support digital connectivity as part of county-wide digital infrastructure and inclusion investment programme to deliver the objectives of the Borderlands Digital Programme, whilst off-setting the reallocation of funding from the programme to the Theatre project.

5. Project Expenditure

- 5.1. The overarching costs of the project can be found in the below table:

Cost Heading	Pre 26/27 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	TOTAL £m
Building works / Construction	1,516,891	2,051,242	10,283,568	16,234,331	457,701	30,543,733
Design and professional fees	1,827,047	233,536	353,675	397,442	4,060	2,815,759
TOTAL	3,343,938	2,284,778	10,637,243	16,631,773	461,761	33,359,492

6. Funding Profile

Funder	Pre 26/27 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £	TOTAL £m
Borderlands	2,165,370	2,284,778	9,381,769	14,668,083	-	28,500,000
Northumberland County Council	1,178,586	-	1,255,474	1,963,690	461,761	4,859,492
TOTAL	3,343,938	2,284,778	10,637,243	16,631,773	461,761	33,359,492

- 6.1. Northumberland County Council have spent £3,343,938 at their own risk on the project to date. The costs already incurred relate to RIBA 4 level design costs and are eligible to be capitalised. If this project is not approved Northumberland County Council understand that they are liable for these costs.

7. Expected Deliverables

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Number of new cultural facilities	1
Area of new/improved cultural facility (sqm)	2,886
Number of visitor (gross)	305,857 by 2031/32
Increased spend in the local economy	£9.2m by 2031/32
FTE jobs created/supported	122 by 3031/32
Additional GVA created in the local economy	£5.38m by 2031/32
Number of learners supported to achieve L3 Quals	150 by 2031/32
Reduction in carbon emissions (tonnes)	339 by 2031/32

8. Key Milestones

Milestone	Target Date
RIBA Stage 4 designs complete	May 2026
Main Contractor confirms final fixed cost/contract sum	August 2026
FBC finalised and approved	September 2026
NCC Council approval	November 2026
Eastern Lane development starts on site	November 2026
Eastern Lane development works complete	December 2028
Initial phased opening	February 2029
Formal full opening	April 2029

9. Key Risks & Mitigation

A full Risk Register has been provided and appended to the FBC. The table below outlines the high-level risks for the project and how these risks will be mitigated.

Key Risks	Mitigation
There is a risk that unprecedented external factors such as construction price inflation, further impact the cost of the project	Early engagement with the main contractor through a two-stage design and build contract. Value engineering exercise undertaken and external advice sought from a cost consultant to verify the final price quoted in the FBC. Continual monitoring of the budget throughout the construction phase.
There is a risk that the project construction phase is delayed	Continual review and monitoring of the programme. Early engagement with contractors, prompt escalation of any issues to ensure an efficient resolution to any timescale related issues.
There is a risk that site unknowns are revealed once demolition and refurbishment works commence	Undertaken extensive buildings surveys prior to construction that has fed into the final design package and costing. A contingency budget has been identified to cover any unforeseen costs.

There is a risk that the end user of the building considers the new theatre not fit for purpose	Continual engagement with the end user has taken place throughout the project development phase to take their needs into consideration. A robust project brief and management approach has been implemented. A comprehensive governance structure has been put in place that includes representation from the end user organisation.
There is a risk that the project is perceived negatively by the general public and local groups.	A robust communication and engagement plan is in place and will be utilised to keep the general public informed of progress. Stakeholders have and will remain involved with the development as it moves into the construction phase. Tailored engagement with local groups has taken place as part of the design process and will continue through the construction phase.

10. Project Assessment & Recommendation

- 10.1. A comprehensive **Strategic Case** has been provided that outlines a clear description of the project and what it hopes to achieve. The applicant has demonstrated the projects alignment with national, regional and local strategies and how the new theatre will support the objectives of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, along with our three big challenges. Thought has been given as to how this project supports other regeneration initiatives that are being delivered in Berwick. It has further outlined how the project aligns with the key aims and objectives of the Berwick Maltings Trust – who will be responsible for operating the theatre upon opening.
- 10.2. A clear rationale for investment has been provided, along with the evidenced need for the project. A comprehensive demand analysis has been undertaken which has factored in the catchment area for the theatre and the future visitor numbers based on an assessment of the potential market. The market failure that the project is looking to address has been outlined and fully explained. The key opportunities for the development have also been outlined to highlight the benefits that the theatre will have on the town and the surrounding area.
- 10.3. Clear strategic objectives have been provided along with a set of performance indicators against which the project will be measured. These are all realistic and measurable.
- 10.4. The case shows the level of engagement that has taken place with the local community and key stakeholders. It has outlined the feedback received as part of the engagement process and how this has fed into the final proposals.
- 10.5. The case could have been strengthened by outlining how this project would add to/support other projects that form part of the Deal, such as Lilidorei, The Tweed Trail, Ad Gefrin etc. although it is understood that more work to engage with these attractions will take place once the theatre approaches operational delivery.

- 10.6. For the **Economic Case**, five options were assessed, ranging from maintaining the current site (do nothing) to full redevelopment at either the existing or a new location. Using a RAG assessment against the five critical success factors, Option 4 (transformation of the current site) was identified as the preferred option, with Option 3 (smaller-scale improvements) used as the reference case.
- 10.7. The preferred option achieves a BCR at a national level of 1.04 based on the final costs and revised value for money assessment. It has Borderlands BCR of 1.62 reflecting the impact of the theatre at a more localised level. Benefits assessed include land value uplift, tourism growth, productivity gains, cultural wellbeing and carbon reduction, with appropriate adjustments made for deadweight, displacement and additionality. The value-for-money assessment has been completed in line with Green Book guidance, and non-monetised benefits such as regeneration, local employment and pride in place have also been considered.
- 10.8. The **Commercial Case** sets out a clear procurement strategy, with project management, design, and construction contracts procured through a compliant process. A detailed procurement plan is in place, and the appointment of the main contractor is fully documented. However, evidence of procurement compliance from NCC will need to be provided before funding is released.
- 10.9. An independent business plan prepared by AMION Consultants includes demand analysis, operating costs, income projections and 10-year financial forecasts. The venue is forecast to operate with an annual surplus, evidencing its ongoing viability and sustainability.
- 10.10. The building will remain in NCC ownership and be leased to The Maltings Trust on a long-term peppercorn rent arrangement. A copy of the lease agreement and details of the proposed rent will be required before funding is released.
- 10.11. The **Financial Case** shows that project costs have increased from £21.4m in 2021 to £33.4m in 2026, largely due to construction inflation and supply chain pressures. Cost estimates have been developed to RIBA Stage 4 standard and are supported by extensive site investigations, surveys, contractor input and supply chain testing. NCC, the design team and contractor have a high degree of confidence in the estimates due to the level of market testing undertaken in recent months, with contingency and inflation allowances included.
- 10.12. The funding package comprises £28.5m Borderlands funding and NCC match funding of £4.9m, although the increase in NCC's contribution remains subject to Cabinet and Full Council approval (November 2026). Confirmation of match funding is therefore required as a condition.
- 10.13. The **Management Case** clearly defines the roles of Northumberland County Council (NCC), The Maltings Trust, and key delivery partners. NCC will remain the asset owner, while The Maltings Trust will operate the venue under a long-term lease. Advance Northumberland has been appointed as Project Manager and reports to an established Project Board chaired by the SRO.

- 10.14. Robust governance arrangements are in place, including a Project Board and a Capital Project Delivery Group. A collaboration agreement between NCC and the Trust is in place, and clear reporting and escalation processes have been outlined. Planning consent has been secured, project milestones have been established, and delivery is expected by April 2029, which is within Growth Deal timescales.
- 10.15. The partners have demonstrated significant experience in delivering comparable regeneration and capital projects, giving confidence in their ability to manage and operate the scheme successfully. A comprehensive risk register and Benefits Realisation Plan have also been provided, with arrangements for ongoing monitoring provided.
- 10.16. The project is **recommended for approval** subject to the conditions outlined below. Although the cost of the project has significantly increased since the OBC was approved, the economic and social benefits of the project and its value for money remain above a BCR of 1 (1.04 at a national level, but 1.64 at the Borderlands level).
- 10.17. The applicant has demonstrated the wider benefits of the project to the culture-led regeneration of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the catalytic effects that the introduction of a state-of-the-art theatre and cinema will provide to a wider audience.

11. Accountable Body Review

- 11.1. The applicant has presented a well-developed Full Business Case (FBC) and, whilst some risks remain, reasonable and proportionate steps have been taken to mitigate these as far as possible at this stage. The proposal presents a credible case for investment and demonstrates strong alignment with the objectives of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. The applicant has provided a clear and compelling Strategic Case, supported by a strong case for change that aligns with both national and local policy priorities and evidences the existence of market failure. The Management Case provides a comprehensive overview of the project organisation, governance and reporting arrangements, risk management processes, and the necessary consents and approvals. The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) indicates that the project is likely to deliver value for money. Furthermore, the applicant has responded positively and constructively to the issues raised throughout the independent appraisal process.
- 11.2. The Full Business Case is currently going through the final review process by external appraisers to review the application in line with the final submitted costs. Additional special conditions may be added as a result of this review. It is therefore recommended that a final decision be delegated to the Section 151 Officer and the Borderland's Director once this process has been finalised.

12. Accountable Body Subsidy Control Assessment

- 12.1. A subsidy is present with the assessment currently being processed in line with the seven principles assessment. Funding will be conditional of a satisfactory assessment being provided. Additional special conditions may be added as a result of this assessment. It is therefore recommended that a final decision be delegated to

the Section 151 Officer and the Borderland's Director once this process has been finalised.

13. Special Conditions

13.1. The special conditions from the PMO are as follows:

Recommended Conditions	Condition Type
1. Applicant to provide evidence of a compliant procurement process for all contracted activity linked to the project.	Prior to GFA issue for any procurements already undertaken and ongoing for any to come in after funding approval
2. Applicant to provide a copy of the lease agreement between Northumberland County Council and The Berwick Maltings Trust	Prior to funding release
3. Applicant to provide confirmation of match funding following NCC full cabinet	Prior to GFA issue
4. Applicant to provide evidence of approval of any statutory consents	Ongoing monitoring
5. Applicant to provide evidence of the social value contributions to be delivered by the main contractor	Prior to funding release
6. Applicant to provide details of the approach for the end of project evaluation	End of year 1 of delivery
7. Applicant to provide and updated business plan year on year	Ongoing
8. Applicant to provide a copy of the final agreed contract with the main contractor	Prior to GFA issue
9. Applicant to provide a communications and marketing plan	End of year 1 of delivery
10. Applicant to provide a satisfactory Subsidy Control Assessment	Prior to GFA issue
11. A satisfactory review of the Full Business Case by external appraisers	Prior to GFA issue
12. Applicant to provide evidence that the works have been contracted to the preferred developer.	By the 18 th of December 2026

14. Recommendations

14.1. The Partnership Board approve of the Berwick Theatre project subject to:

- Northumberland County Council Full Cabinet approval (scheduled for November 2026)
- The special conditions outlined in section 13.
- A delegated final approval of the decision by the NCC Section 151 Officer and the Borderlands Director on the provision of a satisfactory subsidy control assessment and sign off by the external appraisers.

Report completed by:

Name	Designation	Contact Details
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Reviewed by Accountable Body by:

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Helen Hampson	Principal Officer - Funding and Assurance	Helen.Hampson@northumberland.gov.uk

Appendices:

- A – Project Business Case

Partnership Board

23 September 2026

Item 7 – Place Programme Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Partnership Board with a detailed progress update on the Place Programme.
- 1.2. The paper provides an overview of the BTIP Part As for Bedlington, Prudhoe, and Whithorn and seeks their approval by Partnership Board.

2. Recommendation

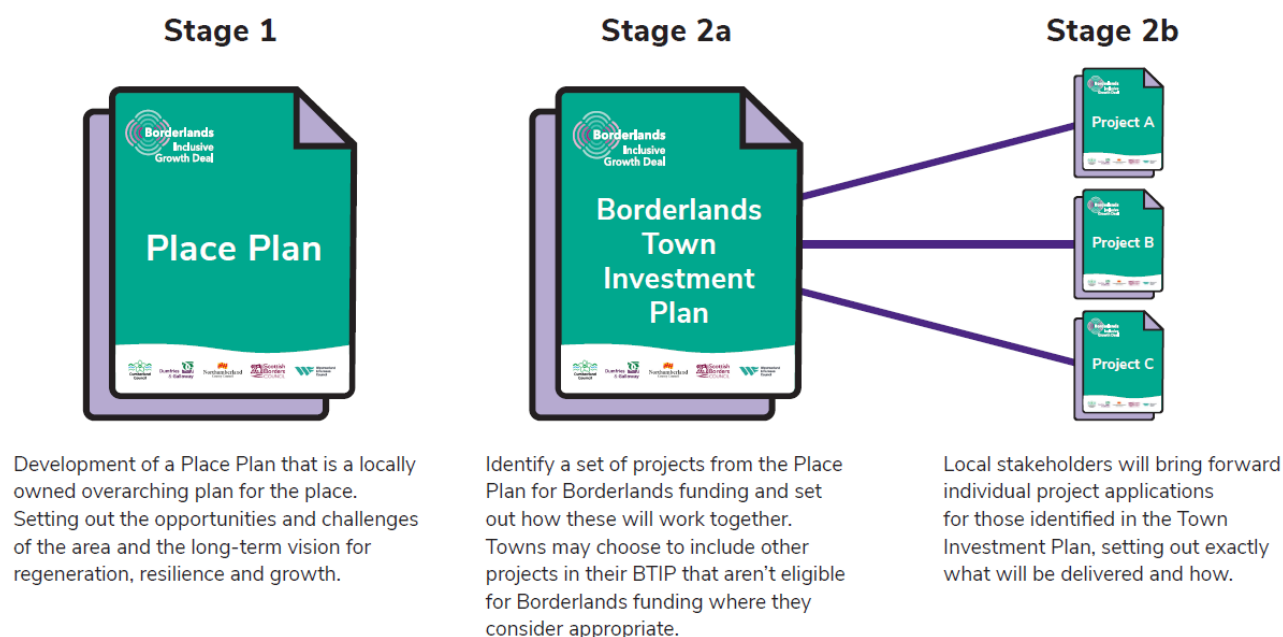
- 2.1. The Partnership Board is asked to:
 - a) Note the progress on the Place Programme
 - b) approve the Bedlington BTIP Part A (Appendix C)
 - c) approve the Prudhoe BTIP Part A (Appendix D)
 - d) approve the Whithorn BTIP Part A (Appendix E)

3. Programme Update

Background

- 3.1. The Place Programme is a core element of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal which demonstrates a commitment to locally-driven development by supporting the preparation of Place Plans which could attract funding from a wide-range of sources.
- 3.2. Through the Place Programme, investment is targeted in places that will help boost economic activity across the region. Recognising the importance of our smaller rural market and coastal towns to the local economy, this programme provides £50 million of funding across the Borderlands area with UK Government committing up to £30 million in Cumbria and Northumberland and Scottish Government £20 million in the South of Scotland to support the revitalisation of towns across the Borderlands region.
- 3.3. The Place Plans and subsequent Borderlands Town Investment Plans form the basis for dedicated funding through the Deal which demonstrates the impact of this approach and provides the stimulus for communities to engage in the development process. The process also identifies a strong pipeline of projects to be taken forward out with the Place Programme.

3.4. The Place Programme is made up of the following stages:



Progress to date

3.5. The Place Programme continues to make good progress. All 22 Places Plans have been developed by the towns and endorsed by the Partnership Board. This milestone was achieved in June 2025.

3.6. The next stage of the process is for the towns to develop their Borderlands Town Investment Plan (BTIP) Part A. The BTIP Part A identifies a set of projects from the Place Plan for Borderlands funding and sets out how these will work together to achieve the desired impact and benefits for the town. Towns may choose to include other projects in their BTIP that aren't eligible for Borderland funding where they consider appropriate.

3.7. To date 13 BTIPs have been approved by the Partnership Board with 3 to be considered at this meeting. The remaining 6 BTIP Part As are in development and due for consideration by the Partnership Board by the end of year.

3.8. The Borderlands Town Investment Plan (BTIP) Part Bs are the project specific applications. At the end of August 2026,

- 3 projects in appraisal (2 due for decision in September)
- 3 approved projects working to clear approval conditions
- 4 projects in delivery
- 1 complete project
- 1 project was withdrawn by the applicant

3.9. A summary of the approved projects can be found at Appendix B.

Key Challenges

- 3.10. The key challenges reported by project applicants and local authority officers supporting the development of projects are:
- 3.11. **Development Costs:** The main challenge is securing funding to develop projects to the level required to secure Borderlands funding. This challenge has worsened following the withdrawal of UKSPF and similar funding which had previously been used. Recognising this challenge, the Partnership Board made available up to £210,000 (£10,000 per town).
- 3.12. **Officer / Community Capacity:** Staffing resource within the local authorities and project applicants is stretched. This is compounded by the number of applications being developed at the same time in order to maintain progress with programme. One of the key outcomes of the Place Programme was around capacity building with the communities and knowledge sharing to empower communities to develop projects.
- 3.13. **Match Funding:** The withdrawal of funding programmes, such as UKSPF, is making it really challenging for projects to find match funding to support the delivery of projects. The funding pots that are still available are becoming more competitive as a result. The PMO are advising a smaller number of projects with a higher Borderland funding ask are included in the BTIP Part As to reduce the burden of finding high levels of match funding. This should help projects come forward quicker.
- 3.14. Whilst there was no formal target for match funding at a programme level, it was envisaged the average grant rate would be 50%. To date the programme has committed 13% of its funding and secured 20% of its match funding target.

Addressing the Challenges

- 3.15. **Development Costs:** The PMO are working with the Accountable Bodies and Scottish Government to explore ways in which the development costs can be incorporated into the BTIP Part B (Project Application). Whilst this option would enable projects to come forward for funding decision sooner, there is a risk that underdeveloped projects are approved and become unaffordable following detailed design works.
- 3.16. **Officer / Community Capacity:** The PMO have reviewed the processes and streamlined the application process as much as possible whilst still retaining the required level of information and evidence to enable appropriate scrutiny when awarding public funding.
- 3.17. Consideration also needs to be given to the number of projects being brought forward in the BTIP Part A. The greater the number of the projects, the greater the development costs and officer / applicant time required. Towns are encouraged to include fewer projects in the BTIP Part A and to focus on those projects that will make the greatest difference to the town, rather than spreading resources too thinly.

Financial Performance

3.18. The table below outlines the funding performance as at the end of Q1 2026/27.

Town	Project	Status	Total Project Costs	Spend to Date	% of Total Spend	Borderlands Grant Award	Grant Paid to Date	Match Received	% of Grant Paid
Penrith	P004-02 - Penrith Players	Complete	118,000	118,000	100	118,000	118,000	-	100
Penrith	P004-03 – Wayfinding & Interpretation	In delivery	196,116	13,420	7	196,116	13,420	-	7
Ulverston	P005-01 - The Roxy	In delivery	500,000	105,511	21	500,000	105,511	-	21
Alnwick	P009-01 – Bailiffgate @ Northumberland Hall	In delivery	5,728,593	134,301	2	1,700,000	40,576	93,725	2
Egremont	P002-01 - Former Red Lion Site	Approved	4,652,235	-	-	1,800,000	-	-	-
Egremont	P002-01 - Redevelopment of Florence Arts Centre	Approved	2,919,348	-	-	900,000	-	-	-
Dalton	P001-01 - Highstreet Enhancements: Pocket Park	Approved	570,000	-	-	570,000	-	-	-
Kirkconnel & Kelloholm	P007-01 - Kirkconnel Housing Project	In delivery	1,567,810	-	-	620,247	-	-	-
Longtown	P003-01 - Longtown Community Centre	Approved	1,290,502	-	-	1,290,502	-	-	-
Wigton	P006-01 - Flexible Events Spaces	Approved	1,240,506	-	-	1,240,506	-	-	-
Total			18,783,110	371,232	2	8,935,371	277,507	93,725	4

3.19. Key observations:

- Project spend to date has been slower than profiled. This presents a challenge at year end when the annual spend targets are not met. Projects are being monitored more closely and spend profiles scrutinised more thoroughly.
- There is more activity underway in England, with only one project approved in Scotland. This is reflective of the later Place Plan and BTIP Part A approvals in Scotland.

Key Performance Indicators

3.20. The table below outlines the KPIs as at the end of Q1 2026/27.

Key Performance Indicators	Programme			England			Scotland		
	Target	Actual	%	Target	Actual	%	Target	Actual	%
Place Plans endorsed	22	22	100%	13	13	100%	9	9	100%
BTIP Part As approved	22	13	59%	13	7	54%	9	6	67%
Place Programme funding committed	50,000,000	6,404,363	13%	30,000,000	5,784,116	19%	20,000,000	620,247	3%
Match funding secured	50,000,000	9,847,739	20%	30,000,000	8,900,176	30%	20,000,000	947,563	5%

Programme Level Benefits

3.21. The table below outlines the outputs and outcomes included in the Programme OBC and reports progress as at the end of Q1 2026/27.

Benefits	Programme						England			Scotland		
	OBC Target	Contracted Target	Actual	Contracted vs OBC Target	% Achieved OBC Target	% Achieved Contracted Target	Contracted	Actual	% Achieved Contracted Target	Contracted	Actual	% Achieved Contracted Target
Outputs												
New / improved floorspace (m2)	19,000	9,654	590	51%	3%	6%	7,703	590	8%	1,951	-	0%
Derelict or vacant land remediated (ha)	5.00	0.50	-	10%	0%	0%	0.30	-	0%	0.20	-	0%
Outcomes												
Existing businesses supported to grow	344	6	1	2%	0%	17%	6	1	17%	-	-	
New businesses created	56	1	-	2%	0%	0%	1	-	0%	-	-	
People into training or employment	900	3	-	0%	0%	0%	3	-	0%	-	-	
FTE jobs created / supported	670	14	-	2%	0%	0%	14	-	0%	-	-	
Additional visitors attracted (pa)	71,400	40,520	-	57%	0%	0%	40,520	-	0%	-	-	
New housing units created	19	5	-	26%	0%	0%	-	-		5	-	0%

3.22. Appendix A provides a summary of the current status of each BTIP Part A and Part B. There is a strong pipeline of activity over the next couple of months with 11 projects due to be submitted by the end of the year. This relies heavily on the project applicants and local authorities developing the BTIP Part As over the coming months and meeting the submission deadlines.

3.23. The PMO are in regular contact with each local authority to monitor progress and any potential slippage.

4. Bedlington BTIP Part A (Appendix C)

4.1. The Vision for Bedlington is for it to be *“a vibrant, growing, connected and inclusive place to live, learn, work, and invest in. The town’s community will have access to outstanding skills and educational opportunities and quality local jobs including the advanced manufacturing, clean energy and renewable energy industries. Bedlington will celebrate, innovate and invest in our key assets to deliver a new and vibrant culture and leisure offer capitalising on our community, workforce, industrial heritage, public spaces and environment.”*

4.2. Underpinning the vision there are three Investment Themes been identified:

- **Investment Theme 1: Vibrant Town:** Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, and increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors.
- **Investment Theme 2: Growing Town:** Safeguard existing employment and work collaboratively to create a skilled workforce able to access learning and training opportunities and jobs in growth sectors across south east Northumberland and the North East.
- **Investment Theme 3: Inclusive Town:** Prioritise improvements to services by working in partnership to provide residents with wider opportunities to get active, learn, participate and enjoy their local town.
- **Investment Theme 4: Connected Town:** Embrace the benefits of the Northumberland Line and future walking and cycling infrastructure improvements so that residents and businesses can access work, shopping, leisure and culture opportunities.

4.3. Following the Partnership Board’s endorsement of the Bedlington Place Plan in December 2023, the Place Partnership Group have developed their Borderlands Town Investment Place (BTIP) Part A which is now ready for consideration.

4.4. The BTIP identifies the following projects to be put forward for Borderlands funding:

- **Bedlington Station Café/Bistro:** (Borderlands funding requested: £582,000) The development of a heritage-themed café and bistro within the last remaining original building at Bedlington Station, located on the recently reopened Northumberland Line. The initiative aims to preserve and repurpose this historically significant structure, transforming it into a thriving social and cultural hub for the community. It will celebrate the town’s rich railway and industrial

heritage while contributing to the local economy, reducing environmental impact, and improving the vibrancy and connectivity of the area.

- **Bedlington Community Centre:** (Borderlands funding requested: £300,000) Refurbishment, renovation and a reimagining of the utility of the spaces available in the Community Centre. To include the creation of a bespoke cellar storeroom, refit and enlargement of the cafe space by the removal of an interior stud wall, refurbishment of the Shire Room to accommodate dance and fitness classes, installation of modern IT to the Pheonix Room to accommodate meetings and presentations, upgrade to the kitchen space and equipment, replacement of stage and sound system in the function room and modernisation of the building's electrics and plumbing.
- **West Lea Sports & Community Centre:** (Borderlands funding requested: £0) This project will provide a much-needed community, sports and leisure facility in the Bedlington West ward. The project will bring under one roof, sport provision through a sports hall adaptable to football, badminton, basketball, carpet bowls, netball etc. The facility will include a community space and a cafe/kitchen. The facility will be multi-functional to respond to demand from within the community it will serve. There will also be inclusion of new changing facilities to replace the current unused and dilapidated, changing facilities for the existing outdoor sports pitches.
- **Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements:** (Borderlands funding requested: £1,368,000) A suite of town centre improvements identified through an extensive Public Realm, Wayfinding and Connectivity study undertaken by consultants funded by the North East Combined Authority. This focuses on Bedlington Town Centre as the primary shopping area and Bedlington Station as the transport gateway into the wider area following the reopening of the Northumberland Line to passenger services.

Potential initiatives include a refresh of the Market Place in the town centre to make it more accessible and versatile to encourage more frequent events such as Farmers' Markets and the creation of extended public realm along the shop fronts to encourage an on-street Cafe culture. In Bedlington Station the gateway to the area would be enhanced with potential initiatives including a 'Pocket Park' and pedestrian/cycling safety initiatives.

PMO Assessment

- 4.5. The BTIP for Bedlington has been well thought through and demonstrates how the proposed projects align with both the Place Programme and the Place Plan for the town.
- 4.6. The applicant has show how the proposed projects have been identified and how they have worked closely with the community and the Place Programme Group to prioritise the projects that have come forward for consideration. This process could however have been made slightly clearer with the use of a matrix to show how the projects

aligned with the strategic objectives, but the applicant has explained that only eligible projects were considered and not all projects have been identified for Borderlands funding.

- 4.7. Results from the community engagement process were positive and showed support for the projects being put forward. However, response rates were low and it is recommended that further engagement take place prior to any BTIP Part B being submitted.
- 4.8. The BTIP has outlined in detail how the programme of activity will be managed effectively with roles and responsibilities clearly defined. They have shown how they have worked closely with the Place Programme Group and the project sponsors to identify activities that will benefit the local community and the vitality of the town centre.
- 4.9. The applicant has where possible identified sources of match funding for the identified projects and has also committed funding to the delivery of the BTIP across Bedlington. For those projects seeking funding from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal – all match funding has been secured.
- 4.10. The BTIP has outlined the process for measuring and monitoring the outputs/outcomes/impacts of the BTIP, but as the project move forward to submission it will be important to quantify these and provide measurable objectives against which performance can be charted.
- 4.11. The projects that have been put forward for investment are all eligible and can provide economic, social and environmental benefits for Bedlington. The projects provide a good mix of retail, hospitality, leisure and cultural activity in addition to a connected public realm that will help to revitalise the high street, by bringing additional footfall through increased town centre usage and the potential for events. It is therefore recommended that the BTIP Part A be approved to allow the identified projects to be further developed and submitted for consideration.

BTIP Project Feedback

4.12. Bedlington Station Café/Bistro:

- It is envisaged that the café will create jobs, support local suppliers by offering local produce, attract visitors and provide a welcoming first impression to those visiting the town that would increase footfall and spend – These ambitions will need to be quantified as the project develops into a BTIP Part B.
- As identified within the constraints and dependencies, there will be a need to ensure the ongoing viability and sustainability of the café along with an understanding of the operating model. The BTIP explains that the building will be sub-let to the East Bedlington Community Centre Trustees who will run the facility as a not-for-profit. A business plan is currently being developed ahead of the BTIP Part B Submission.

4.13. Bedlington Community Centre:

- This is a good project that will help to support the viability and vitality of the high street. As it moves through to the Part B stage, there needs to be a better understanding of the economic impacts of the project and a reflection on the budget which seems on the low side.

4.14. West Lea Sports & Community Centre

- This project was not fully appraised as no Borderlands funding is requested. However, there is a need to ensure that the project compliments and doesn't compete with the project proposed in the Town Centre which has some similar service offers.

4.15. Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements

- Economic impacts will include increased footfall and dwell time in the town by improving the environment and encouraging visitors into the town from the Station. These impacts would be stronger if the project could bring into use other buildings that are currently underutilised and provide an events space.
- This has the making of a strong project, and the applicant should focus on those 'potential uses' that have been outlined in the project description as this could present a significant economic impact for the town.

Key Risks

- Securing match funding
- Potential cost inflation
- Planning approval

Place Programme Board Recommendation

4.16. At their meeting on the 21 August 2026, the Place Programme Board recommended the approval of the Bedlington BTIP Part A by the Partnership Board. Subject to the conditions outlined in the recommendation below.

Recommendation

4.17. The Partnership Board is recommended to approve the Bedlington BTIP Part A subject to the following conditions:

- Further engagement with the local community will be required to evidence the need and demand for each project as they come forward for approval.
- Ensure that a baseline position for all BTIP Part A level outputs / outcomes / impacts is provided and a methodology is in place to monitor BTIP performance from an NCC perspective as owner of the BTIP.
- The economic impacts for each of the projects need to be clearly identified

5. Prudhoe BTIP Part A (Appendix D)

- 5.1. The Vision is *“By 2034, Prudhoe will be a town of opportunities for people of all ages, providing a strong economy, a destination for retail, leisure, culture and housing, with a focus on the future. Prudhoe town centre will be an even brighter, modern, thriving environment with strong connections between the existing and new assets, offering the growing population a flourishing town for young people. Prudhoe will offer a great quality of life, providing a welcoming destination for visitors.”*
- 5.2. Underpinning the vision there are three Investment Themes been identified:
- **Investment Theme 1: Vibrant Town:** Aims to maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Prudhoe to boost the visitor economy encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, increase footfall, dwell time and spend from residents and visitors.
 - **Investment Theme 2: Inclusive Town:** Aims to collaborate with local communities, including young people, to imagine and then build a long-term future for the town they live in.
 - **Investment Theme 3: Growing Town:** Aims to create and safeguard employment in Prudhoe capitalising on innovation as a driver for growth. Work in partnership to provide residents including young people, with the opportunity to be part of a skilled workforce with a sustainable future in the town and North East economy.
- 5.3. Following the Partnership Board’s endorsement of the Prudhoe Place Plan in September 2024, the Place Partnership Group have developed their Borderlands Town Investment Place (BTIP) Part A which is now ready for consideration.
- 5.4. The BTIP identifies the following projects to be put forward for Borderlands funding:
- **The East Centre:** (Borderlands funding requested £3,000,000) The project sees the demolition and new build construction with the retention and conservation of a section of the existing buildings at The East Centre site to create a new youth and community facility for Prudhoe and the surrounding area. This will provide a base for PYP providing a youth centre, a community space with associated meeting and staff spaces, business and training units, an arts and crafts workshop, a community-led retail unit as well as three residential units (2x one bedroom flats and 1x two bedroom flat). External works and landscaping complete the works. The building is currently owned by NCC and is subject to a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) to PCP on a long-term lease. The CAT application form as been approved in principle by the Council. The East Centre project is an opportunity to regenerate Prudhoe town centre through the creation of crucial facilities on a ‘gateway site’ - an important entrance point to the town.
 - **The Glade:** (Borderlands funding requested £0) The Glade site located on Front Street Prudhoe will form an important part of the growth and regeneration of the town centre, having public spaces is becoming increasingly important not only providing space for social interaction which contributes to a sense of well-being, it

encourages the development and desirability of Prudhoe's community. Investment in The Glade can create prosperity and encourage economic activity while providing an improved quality of life, especially for those without the benefit of outdoor space at home. The site will include a performance space for the many local musicians, choirs, and theatre groups, providing a dedicated cultural venue not currently available within the town.

PMO Assessment

- 5.5. The BTIP has clearly outlined how the priority projects have been selected, including the involvement of the local community, stakeholders and the Town Team in the selection process. They have outlined a plan for how those projects that have not been selected will be developed further to meet the objectives of the Place Plan.
- 5.6. The projects that are being proposed align with Prudhoe Place Plan, the Place Programme and the wider Deal.
- 5.7. The BTIP explains how it will be managed and identifies appropriate personnel within the Council to help manage and deliver the projects alongside the project sponsors. The BTIP outlines how they will manage any risks or issues and will hold regular meetings with the Town teams.
- 5.8. The projects will need to confirm match funding at BTIP Part B.
- 5.9. The BTIP has provided sufficient detail regarding the projects at this stage, therefore the BTIP is recommended for approval.

BTIP Project Feedback

- 5.10. The East Centre:
 - Confirmation of who will manage the building for the workshops and youth centre space
 - Further detail required to demonstrate the economic impact
 - Confirmation of building transfer
 - Confirmation of need and demand for the proposed retail space
 - Confirmation of whether the three residential units are for social housing
 - Confirmation of planning approval is required.
- 5.11. The Glade:
 - This project is not seeking Borderlands funding
 - Project to provide an update on progress for securing funding to deliver the project.

Key Risks

- Securing match funding
- Potential cost inflation

- Planning approval

Place Programme Board Recommendation

5.12. At their meeting on the 10 July 2028, the Place Programme Board recommended the approval of the Prudhoe BTIP Part A by the Partnership Board.

Recommendation

5.13. The Partnership Board is recommended to approve the Prudhoe BTIP Part A.

6. Whithorn BTIP Part A (Appendix E)

6.1. The future of Whithorn is multi-faceted and builds upon a number of unique and important traits of the town; while connecting with opportunities to diversify its identity and ensure it's providing a fulfilling wellbeing for all its residents from the ground up.

6.2. The foundations of Whithorn's history are singular and strong, and merging the celebration of this with efforts to revitalise economy both within and out with the tourist sector will see the town flourish.

6.3. This ambition, within the context of Whithorn's beautiful and peaceful natural surroundings, and its historic buildings and character, can see the town draw a new generation of visitors as well as residents.

6.4. Underpinning the vision there are five Guiding Principles:

- **Community Cohesion:** A community that works together, equitably across the whole town.
- **Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit:** Building both tourist draw and resident retention.
- **Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets:** History is at the heart of Whithorn's identity.
- **Alleviating Rural Isolation:** Connect Whithorn to the wider world, and bring it here.
- **Cost of Living:** Improve quality of life, and make it easier for all to live in Whithorn.

6.5. Following the Partnership Board's endorsement of the Whithorn Place Plan in June 2024, the Borderlands Town Investment Place (BTIP) Part A has been developed and is now ready for consideration.

6.6. The BTIP identifies the following projects to be put forward for Borderlands funding:

- **South Machars Community Centre Evolution:** (Borderlands funding requested £775,000) Modernise and upgrade the existing facilities to create a more accessible, energy efficient, environmentally friendly, and safer building that is safeguarded for future use by the community. Reconfigure and expand the existing facilities with a focus on enhancing accessibility and increasing the

diversity and quantity of spaces available to host an expanded programme of creative and skills-based workshops and to allow growth of the existing Reuse Shop and Pop-Up Cafe.

- **Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall:** (Borderlands funding requested £900,000) Renovate Whithorn Old Town Hall (built in 1814), offering in work heritage skills training to young people with barriers to employment throughout the project. Training opportunities will be expansive, from lime pointing and stone carving to window and shutter making and construction project management. The project will be a flagship for energy efficiency measures appropriate to older buildings, applicable to all traditional buildings across Scotland and with public outreach opportunities for learning and practical training. The building will be restored to public use as a museum, gallery and office base for Building Futures Galloway, with full disabled access.
- **Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster:** (Borderlands funding requested £500,000) Reconstruct Whithorn's Northumbrian church and burial chapel at full scale, led by a team of archaeologists, architects, and craftspeople. The project will offer training for young people from Building Futures Galloway and Douglas Ewart High School, along with public outreach in skills like clay masonry, mural art, and stained glass. Filmed from the start, it will spotlight Whithorn's emergence around 700CE as a pilgrimage centre and aims to increase visitor footfall throughout the live build.
- **Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn:** (Borderlands funding requested £375,000) A blanket project to fill gaps in the prioritised initiatives of the Whithorn Place Plan not wholly met by the five prior identified projects. This would see the town centre of Whithorn assessed for the potential to have general improvement works, with the addition of prioritised initiatives such as places to wait and rest, sheltered gathering spaces for general use and while waiting for public transport, and the formalising of key wayfinding routes connecting central Whithorn to the surrounding area.

PMO Assessment

- 6.7. The BTIP has clearly outlined how the priority projects have been selected, including the involvement of the local community and stakeholders in the selection process. They have outlined a plan for how those projects that have not been selected will be developed further to meet the objectives of the Place Plan.
- 6.8. The BTIP outlines how the selected projects align with the Whithorn Place Plan, the Place Programme and the wider Deal, as well as their critical success factors for project delivery.
- 6.9. The BTIP explains how it will be managed at a town level, by identifying appropriate personnel to manage the successful delivery of all four projects. It has outlined the processes and procedures that they will use to manage the delivery and how any risks and issues will be managed.

6.10. All identified projects appear eligible but will need to be confirmed at the BTIP Part B stage along with the status of any identified match funding.

BTIP Project Feedback

6.11. South Machars Community Centre Evolution:

- Details of potential match funders to be added.
- Additionality will need to be fully evidenced with appropriate baselines established in the Project Application.
- Detailed forward plan of events/activities to be developed
- Further details required on the Community Asset Transfer

6.12. Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall:

- Need and demand for the facility and training to be fully evidenced – i.e. are there sufficient young people to take up the training opportunities? And are there follow on job vacancies in the area for the young people to move into?
- Does the applicant have the required knowledge and skills to be able to deliver the training?
- Ongoing operating budgets will be required to demonstrate sustainability of the facility.
- There will need to be clear demarcation between training offers proposed in other projects e.g. SMCC Evolution and Anglian Minster projects.

6.13. Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster:

- Whilst the proposed delivery model demonstrates an inclusive approach, it does bring about additional risks that will need to be managed to ensure the project is completed on time and to budget.
- On going sustainability of the tourism offer will need to be fully demonstrated.
- Need and demand for such a project will need to be fully evidenced.
- As with the Town Hall project, clear demarcation between the two projects will need to be demonstrated. The application will also need to demonstrate that there are sufficient young people in the area to take up the roles to deliver the project.
- The BTIP says that the project is 5 years, the project application will need to be clear about what will be delivered within the timeframe of the Borderlands element of project and the associated outputs to be achieved.
- Evidence will be required to demonstrate the additional spend in the area as a result of the proposed increase in tourism. This will need to be considered alongside any deadweight.

6.14. Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn:

- The project appears to be at a very early stage of development.
- Further detail is required to determine eligibility.

Key Risks

- The lack of a Town Team (or equivalent) representing the community. This is in part mitigated by the proposed Programme Delivery Group.
- The reliance on external project managers to deliver the projects. This is a particular concern given the remote location of the town. This risk also applies to procuring contractors to deliver the works proposed by the projects.
- The BTIP includes four projects, the appraiser has concerns about capacity to deliver the proposed projects. This is part mitigated by the projects having different delivery organisations.
- The BTIP proposes drawing down £120k of Borderlands Funding in 2026/27. The appraiser feels this is optimistic given the status of each project. Based on the proposed delivery timescales, this spend relates to Q4 activity.
- £665k of match funding is still to be secured to support the delivery of the four proposed projects. Sources have been identified but no funding secured as yet.
- There are similarities between a couple of the projects in terms of heritage skills. The appraisers would question the diversity of projects and whether there is sufficient need and demand for such activity. This will need to be fully evidenced at BTIP Part B stage.

Place Programme Board Recommendation

6.15. At their meeting on the 10 July 2028, the Place Programme Board recommended the approval of the Whithorn BTIP Part A by the Partnership Board. Subject to the following condition:

- confirmation of the eligibility of the Townscape project by Scottish Government.

6.16. Following the meeting, the BTIP was revised to include more information on the Townscape project. This was shared with Scottish Government who have confirmed they are content with the BTIP at this stage and have provided feedback to be considered when developing the project business case.

Recommendation

6.17. The Partnership Board is recommended to approve the Whithorn BTIP Part A.

Lead Officer(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Chris Edwards	Principal Programmes Officer	chris.edwards@borderlandsgrowth.com

Endorsed by:

Designation	Date
Economic Development Chief Officer Group	04/09/2026

Appendices (5):

A – Place Programme Tracker

B – Approved Projects Summary

C – Bedlington BTIP Part A

D – Prudhoe BTIP Part A

E – Whithorn BTIP Part A

Appendix A: Place Programme Tracker

Place	Place Plan	BTIP Part A	BTIP Part B (Projects)	BTIP Part B (Application Submission)
Cumberland – Egremont	Endorsed – March 2022	Approved – September 2025	Former Red Lion Site	Approved – March 2026
			Redevelopment of Florence Arts Centre	Approved – March 2026
			Connecting Egremont	Expected March 2027
Cumberland – Longtown	Endorsed – March 2023	Approved – December 2025	Longtown Community Centre	In appraisal
			Safe and Attractive A7	TBC
Cumberland – Wigton	Endorsed – March 2022	Approved – December 2025	Throstle Park Recreational Space	TBC
			Water Street Car Park Flexible Event Space	In appraisal
			King Street Station Road	TBC
D&G – Gretna	Endorsed – December 2024	Approved – June 2025	Start of Caledonia Visitor Hub and Wayfinding	In appraisal
			Business Units	TBC
			Housing Project	TBC
D&G – Kirkconnel & Kelloholm	Endorsed – March 2023	Approved – June 2025	Housing Project	Approved – March 2026
			Business Units	Expected November 2026
			Main Street Regeneration	Expected September 2026
D&G – Stranraer	Endorsed – September 2023	Approved – December 2024	East Pier	TBC
			The Big Makeover	TBC
			Town Centre Living	Expected March 2027
			Dicks Hill Wellbeing Hub	Expected November 2026
			Sanctuary	TBC
			Wet Weather Escapes	TBC
D&G – Whithorn	Endorsed – June 2025	Awaiting BPB Approval – Scheduled for September 2026	South Machars Community Centre Evolution	TBC
			Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall	TBC
			Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster	TBC
			Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn	TBC
D&G – Wigtown	Endorsed – December 2024	In appraisal		
Northumberland – Alnwick	Endorsed – December 2023	Approved – June 2025	Bailiffgate	Approved September 2025
			Transforming Alnwick Town Centre	TBC
			Alnwick STEM and Innovation Hub	TBC
			Alnwick Playhouse Link Building	TBC
Northumberland – Bedlington	Endorsed – December 2023	Awaiting BPB Approval – Scheduled for September 2026	Bedlington Station Café/Bistro	In appraisal
			Bedlington Community Centre	TBC
			Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements	TBC
Northumberland – Bellingham	Endorsed – February 2025	In development (expected October 2026)		
Northumberland – Haltwhistle	Endorsed – February 2025	In appraisal		
Northumberland – Newbiggin-by-the-Sea	Endorsed – December 2023	In appraisal		
Northumberland – Prudhoe	Endorsed – September 2024	Awaiting BPB Approval – Scheduled for September 2026	Prudhoe East Community Centre	TBC
Northumberland – Rothbury	Endorsed – February 2025	In development (expected October 2026)		
Scottish Borders – Eyemouth	Endorsed – June 2025	In development (expected October 2026)		

Place	Place Plan	BTIP Part A	BTIP Part B (Projects)	BTIP Part B (Application Submission)
Scottish Borders – Galashiels	Endorsed – June 2025	Approved – March 2026	Redevelopment of 34-36 Channel Street	TBC
			MacArts Redevelopment	TBC
			Hike & Bike Bunkhouse	Expected August 2026
			Galashiels Community Trails	TBC
Scottish Borders – Hawick	Endorsed – December 2024	Approved – March 2026	The Arches Arts & Creative Hub Committee	TBC
			Hawick Mair	TBC
			Hawick Visitor Signage	Expected September 2026
Scottish Borders – Jedburgh	Endorsed – June 2025	Approved – March 2026	Jedburgh Community Hub	Expected September 2026
			Jedburgh Events Quarter – Town Hall	TBC
			Laidlaw Pool	Expected September 2026
Westmorland & Furness – Dalton	Endorsed – March 2022	Approved – Dec 2025	Highstreet Enhancements Phase 1 – Pocket Park	Approved March 2026
			Highstreet Enhancements Phase 1 – Property Upgrades	Expected August 2026
			Active Travel	TBC
			Dalton Leisure Centre	TBC
Westmorland & Furness – Penrith	Endorsed – March 2022	Approved – March 2024	Penrith Players	Approved Jul 2024
			Heritage Signage & Interpretation	Approved June 2025
			Castle Park	TBC
			Penrith Town Hall Arts, Culture & Creative Enterprise Zone	TBC
			High Street Enhancements & Town Centre Improvements	Expected September 2026
Westmorland & Furness – Ulverston	Endorsed – March 2022	Approved – September 2024	Ulverston Business Park (GSK)	TBC
			The Roxy	Approved Jan 2025
			Coronation Hall	TBC
			Ulverston Station	TBC
			Connected Public Realm	TBC

Place Programme

Approved Projects Summary – August 2026

Cumberland

Egremont

Project Ref:	P002-01
Project Name:	Former Red Lion Site
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	May 2026
End Date:	June 2028
Project Costs:	£4,652,235
Borderlands Funding:	£1,800,000

Project Description
The project will create a new public space surrounded by two smaller units to the front of the site that will house a small café, public toilets, and offer a creative studio/retail pop-up for artists and community makers. The disused building to the rear of the site will be repurposed to house a flexible community space on the ground floor and a studio/workshop space on the first floor. Further works to the Beck Green car park to the rear of the site will further increase accessibility and encourage use of the site.
The central public area will be used to host events and offer a flexible space for community gatherings whilst providing an impressive and welcoming entrance to the rest of the site, and a more attractive frontage to the main street.

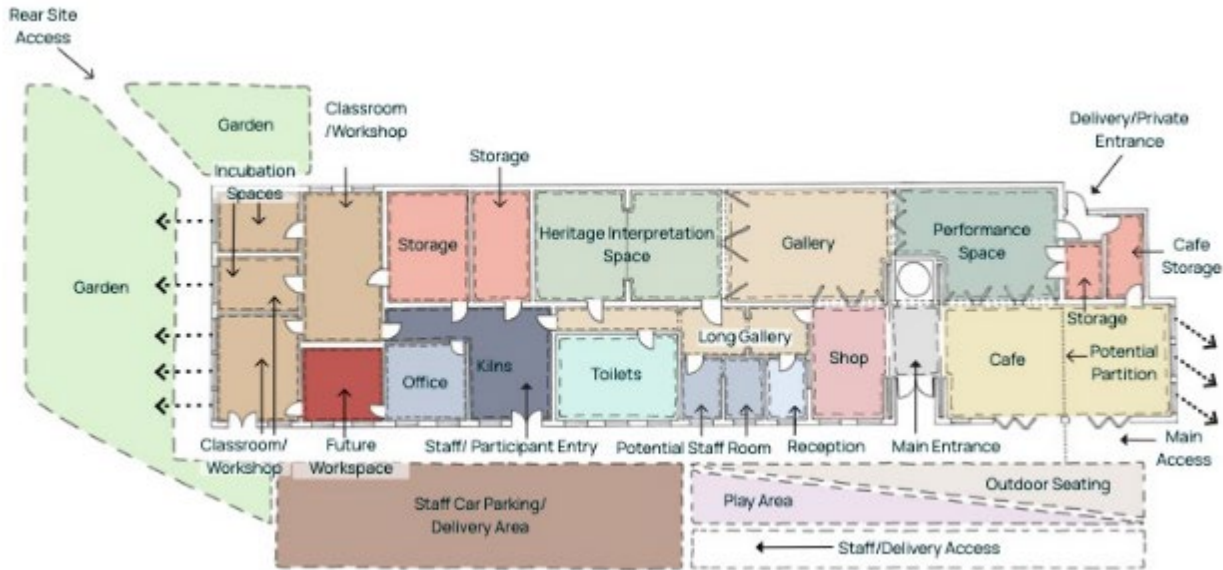


Outputs	
New retail units	2 units / 134.5 sqm
New multi-use community wellbeing hub	1 unit / 284 sqm
Workshops for local artists	4 units (inc. in sqm above)
New public space	1,663 sqm
Outcomes	
New employment in the café, community centre and workshops	4.6 FTEs
New events in the town centre	12 days of outdoor markets (pa) 3 days of Christmas market (pa) 24 films / performances (pa) 243 rentals (pa) / 4.5 (per week)
Usage of the multi-use community wellbeing building	
New volunteer post	10 volunteer posts
Visitors to events held at the public square	4,950 (pa)
Associated spend in the local area	£207,900 (pa)
Users of the multi-use community wellbeing building	9,360 visits (pa)
Impact (over 15 years, present value)	
Wellbeing benefits of new Volunteering Posts	£467,314
Impact of Local Visitor Spend from Events	£842,742
Cultural Capital of Performances	£97,286
Wellbeing from Regular Engagement	£3,943,173
GVA associated with new employment	£5,022,081
Total	£10,372,596

Egremont

Project Ref:	P002-02
Project Name:	Florence Arts Centre
Applicant:	Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	September 2028
Project Costs:	£2,919,348
Borderlands Funding:	£900,000

Project Description	
The project seeks to redevelop the site to provide the opportunity to bring together arts, heritage, science and engineering, to develop creative and heritage tourism, bring new and repeat visitors to FAC and the wider area acting as a catalyst for regenerating Egremont.	



Outputs	Target
Improved internal floorspace for community and creative use	326sqm
New/newly accessible floorspace for community and creative use	227 sqm
Improved external spaces	2,880sqm
Outcomes	
Increased participation in cultural activities by residents	8,190 (+2,340 on current levels)
Increased visits from non-residents	4,810 (+ 4,160 on current levels)
Number of Jobs	4.5FTE
No of new volunteer posts	10
Increased spending in the local economy	£149,800 pa
Artists supported in their creative and professional development	50 artists and 20 young creatives pa
Impacts over 15 years present value	
Wellbeing benefits of new volunteering posts	£463,835
Wellbeing benefits for regular engagers in culture	£4,246,541
Cultural capital benefits of visitors	£506,417
Increased GVA associated with spend in the wider area	£622,458
Additional onsite GVA	£747,108
Total	£6,586,359



Longtown

Town:	Longtown
Project Ref:	P003-1
Project Name:	Longtown Community Centre
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	March 2028
Project Costs:	£1,290,502
Borderlands Funding:	£1,290,502

Project Description

The proposed improvements to the Community Centre comprise two elements:

- Improvements to the Community Centre building, including improvements to internal areas and entrance area, provision of changing rooms for out-of-hours use of the gym, new glazing, flexible co-working and educational space and improved kitchen facilities would allow a greater diversity of uses - including the potential for a commercial café that could be let out as a business opportunity.
- Improvements to Centre Gardens, which is located to the side and rear of the building to provide improvements to landscaping & ecology works to improve the utility of the area for education and recreational uses.

Outputs	Target
Improved community facilities	299 sqm
Improved public realm / external areas	1673 sqm

Outcomes (From Business Plan, from Year 5)

Annual Visits	48,000 (an increase of 28,000 - 33,000)
Number of Events	70
Volunteers	35
Gym and Wellbeing Participants	850
Wellbeing Sessions	420

Impacts (Present Value, post-Displacement)

Value of Volunteering	£955,000
Value of Improved Physical Activity	£727,000
Value of Cultural Participation	£302,000
Offsite Spend	£320,000
Onsite Employment	£1,390,000



Wigton

Town:	Wigton
Project Ref:	P003-01
Project Name:	Wigton Flexible Events Space
Applicant:	Cumberland Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	September 2026
End Date:	March 2028
Project Costs:	£1,240,506
Borderlands Funding:	£1,240,506

Project Description:

The proposed Wigton Flexible Events Space project will provide a new flexible events space within the existing Water Street Car Park that will enable the council, plus community and voluntary groups to run festivals, events and activities that will meet local demand and attract people into the town. The improvements will also provide a new gateway to the town for those visiting by car and deliver public realm improvements to improve the character of the area and support and encourage pedestrian movement through the town.

Outputs	Target
Sqm of new events space, public realm and landscaping	1007
Sqm of highway improvement	1631
New EV charging points	11
Improved wayfinding infrastructure and orientation	1
Outcomes	
Programme of new events (days)	4 large and 8 smaller events per annum
Attendance at cultural events	18,000 per annum
% of visitors currently staying for less than 40 minutes extending their stay	10% / 980 visitors
Programme of new events (days)	4 large and 8 smaller events per annum
Impacts	
Annual uplift in spending arising from cultural events	£794,000
Annual uplift in spending arising from increased dwell time	£258,000
GVA resulting from uplift in spending arising from cultural events	£2,609,000
Increased Cultural Capital	£1,096,000
GVA resulting from uplift in spending arising from increased dwell time	£905,000



Westmorland & Furness

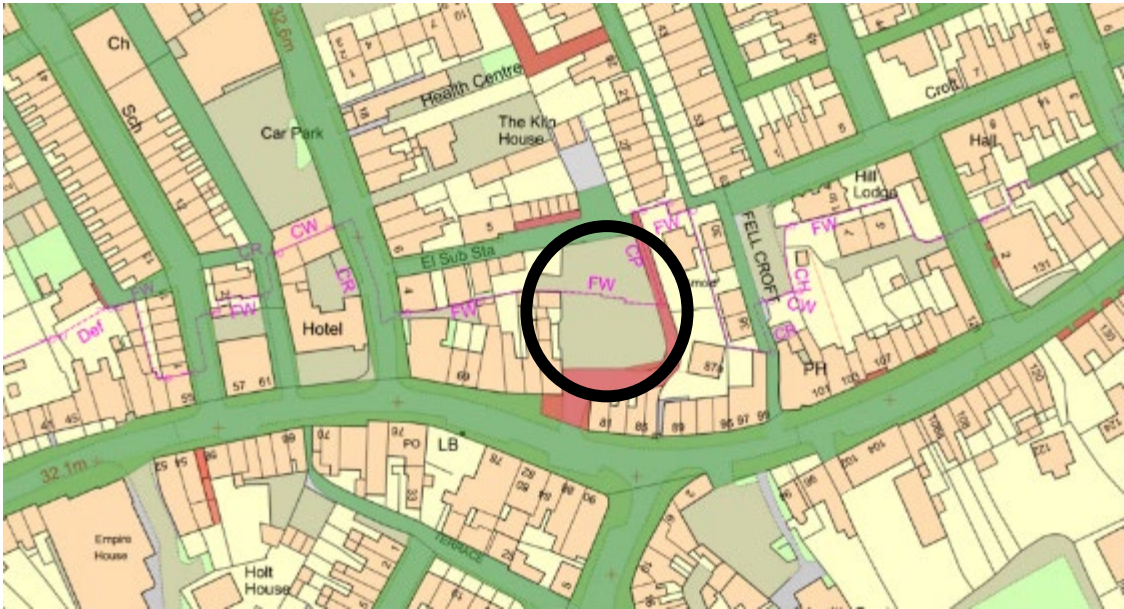
Dalton

Project Ref:	P001-01	
Project Name:	Dalton High Street Enhancements – Dalton Pocket Park	
Applicant:	Westmorland & Furness Council	
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council	
Start Date:	April 2026	
End Date:	Practical Completion	September 2027
	Financial Completion	December 2027
Project Costs:	£570,000	
Borderlands Funding:	£570,000 (100%)	

Project Description

The first phase will transform a vacant, derelict town centre site into a new Pocket Park - a high quality green space designed for everyday use and community events. The land, currently available on the open market, offers a one off opportunity for acquisition and reinvestment in the heart of Dalton. The park will provide a safe, attractive setting for families, visitors, and community activity, integrating landscaping, seating, planting, and accessible paths with flexible open space to support holding events. This development represents both a physical improvement and a symbolic step forward - a visible commitment to Dalton’s renewal and civic pride.

Outputs	Target
Public Realm Area created	920m ²
Outcomes	
Community Events delivered annually	12 per annum
Attendees at community events	1,200 per annum



Penrith

Project Ref:	P004-02
Project Name:	Penrith Playhouse
Applicant:	Penrith Players, via Westmorland & Furness Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	July 2024
End Date:	March 2025
Project Costs:	£118,000
Borderlands Funding:	£118,000 (100%)

Project Description	
The Penrith Playhouse project entails a full upgrade of the 160 seat Penrith Playhouse theatre in Penrith. The site and the building is owned freehold by the Penrith Players, a charity that organises theatrical, musical and other cultural productions.	

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Refurbished facility	1
Refurbished space	590sqm
Increased attendance at a cultural venue	3,200 pa



Penrith

Project Ref:	P004-03
Project Name:	Penrith Wayfinding and Interpretation
Applicant:	Penrith Town Council
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	October 2025
End Date:	March 2026
Project Costs:	£196,116
Borderlands Funding:	£196,116

Project Description
The Wayfinding and Interpretation project entails the removal of existing outdated and poor-quality signage within the town centre. It will be replaced with new wayfinding signage and interpretation panels that will better direct visitors into and around the town as addition to sharing key information about the town history.

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Increased town centre footfall	5% uplift per annum
Increase retail turnover in the town centre	5% uplift per annum
Improve the physical fabric of the town centre	sqm of public realm improved.
Ongoing maintenance of the Signage	Number of signs maintained per annum



Example of Refurb:



Ulverston

Project Ref:	P005-01
Project Name:	The Roxy
Applicant:	The Roxy Collective CIO
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council
Start Date:	July 2024
End Date:	March 2025
Project Costs:	£500,000
Borderlands Funding:	£500,000 (100%)

Project Description
The project will deliver improvements to the Roxy Cinema building. It is phase 2 of a long term investment plan for the Roxy. It will deliver internal building improvements to build on the existing offer to better serve visitors to Ulverston and local communities and to safeguard the future of the Roxy by putting it on a more financially sustainable footing. The project will support the delivery of the Ulverston Place Plan which sets out an aspiration to 'enhance the cultural offer to create an identifiable 'Cultural Hub' in the town centre around the iconic assets of The Coro, Roxy Cinema, Market Hall and Ford Park.

Outputs/Outcomes/Impacts	Target
Creation of new businesses	1
Growth of existing businesses	4
Increased visitor number in the building	10%
Improvements and safeguarding of building in the conservation area as part of the physical fabric of the town.	1
Safeguarding of jobs	5 x part time 3 x full time (5.5 FTEs)
Solar Panels and battery storage	10
Grey water capture system	1
Sq Mt of new space for business and community uses	140



Northumberland

Alnwick

Project Ref:	P009-01	
Project Name:	Bailiffgate @ Northumberland Hall	
Applicant:	Bailiffgate Museum & Gallery	
Accountable Body:	Northumberland County Council	
Start Date:	September 2025	
End Date:	Practical Completion	December 2027
	Financial Completion	August 2028
Project Costs:	£5,909,593	
Borderlands Funding:	£1,700,000	

Project Description

The project will restore the Grade 1 listed Northumberland Hall, an important but unused and deteriorating heritage asset in Alnwick's historic marketplace. Northumberland Hall will provide a new home for Bailiffgate Museum & Gallery (BMG), creating a vibrant and visible cultural attraction that draws additional visitors, footfall and spending to the town centre. Visitors will learn about the unique heritage and fascinating people and communities that made Northumberland what it is today, and local people will discover their history and feel a sense of pride in their past, present and future.

OUTPUTS

No of properties improved / brought back into productive use	1
Floorspace of properties improved / brought back into productive use (sqm)	538
No of people undertaking training / education pa	3
No of businesses supported pa	3

OUTCOMES

No of new facilities created	1
No of improvements to the physical fabric of Alnwick	1
No of new FTE jobs directly created	2.8
No of visitor economy jobs supported pa (gross)	23
Increased visitor numbers to Alnwick pa	17,000
Increased visitor spend in Alnwick (gross pa)	£1,568,811
No of people improving skills pa	3
No of learners progressing into jobs / apprenticeships pa	2
No of new volunteer places created	40

IMPACTS

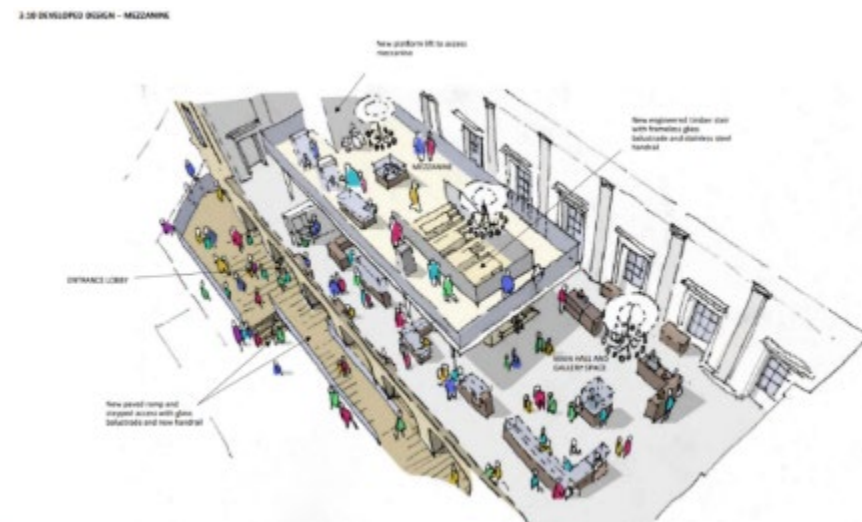
% increase in town centre footfall	3
Increased annual GVA	£0.919m (Gross)



Sketch of New Entrance and Stairwell



Sketch of Mezzanine Proposal



Dumfries & Galloway

Kirkconnel & Kelloholm

Project Ref:	P007-01
Project Name:	Kirkconnel Housing Project
Applicant:	Kirkconnel & Kelloholm Development Trust
Accountable Body:	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Start Date:	April 2026
End Date:	March 2028
Project Costs:	£1,567,810
Borderlands Funding:	£620,247

Project Description
Kirkconnel & Kelloholm Development Trust (KKDT) plan to build a development of five high-quality, energy efficient affordable homes designed specifically for older residents and individuals. The new development at Niviston Road, Kelloholm, will enable independent living for older residents, whilst also freeing up housing stock to support economic activity.

OUTPUTS	
Residential Units	5
Communal leisure/social space	1
Area of site developed	1951m2
OUTCOMES	
Borderlands Population benefitting	5-10 people housed in new housing units
IMPACTS	
Borderlands Population benefitting	20 people moving into freed up houses



Scottish Borders



www.borderlandsgrowth.com

Borderlands Town Investment Plan

Part A

Bedlington



1. Introduction

Purpose of the BTIP

This Borderlands Town Investment Plan aims to:

- Identify those projects which are eligible for, and have been shortlisted by the town for, investment through the Borderlands Place Programme and provide a clear justification for their inclusion.
- Demonstrate a clear strategic link back to the Place Plan in the way in which the totality of activity funded by the Deal will be undertaken and combined benefits realised.
- Summarise the proposed activities for each shortlisted project, including the anticipated funding request and the timetable for these being brought forward.
- Proportionally meet the HM Treasury Green Book Guidance.

Following approval of the BTIP, individual project applications will be submitted for funding approval (BTIP Part B). These applications will follow the principles of the Green Book and will describe what will be delivered and how. For more information about the level of detail that will be required in the BTIP Part B, please check the BTIP Requirements Guidance document.

BTIP Summary

Town	Bedlington
Local Authority Area	Northumberland County Council
BTIP Owner	Northumberland County Council
Main Contact	Rob Strettle / Ross Downey
Contact Details	Rob Strettle Regeneration Manager Regeneration Team Regeneration Service Economic Development and Growth Place and Regeneration Directorate Northumberland County Council County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF T: 07770642773 E: rob.strettle@northumberland.gov.uk Ross Downey Project Manager Regeneration Team Regeneration Service Economic Development and Growth Place and Regeneration Directorate

	Northumberland County Council County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF T:07971511221 E: ross.downey@northumberland.gov.uk
Date Place Plan Endorsed	April 2023
Total BTIP Costs	£4,165,000
Borderlands Funding	£2,250,000
Key Measures of Success	The success and impact of the Bedlington's BTIP will be measured against project-specific indicators, reflecting the strategic objectives of the Borderlands Place Programme and the ambition and forecast benefits of Bedlington's Borderlands Place Plan. Key benefits from the proposed projects incorporated into this BTIP are: Economic Growth • Increased town centre footfall • Increase in community and cultural events/activities • Reuse of derelict building. • New jobs created or safeguarded • Increased spend in the town centre • Improved public realm Social and Cultural Participation • Increase in volunteering and community-led events • Improved perceptions of town identity and safety Health and Wellbeing • Increased dwell time in town centres and public spaces • Improved public health outcomes from activities and services Environmental Sustainability • Energy efficiency improvements in refurbished buildings
BTIP Approved for Submission by	Sarah McMillan, Director of Economic Development and Growth, Northumberland County Council

BTIP Projects Summary

Project Name	Lead Organisation	Total Project Costs £	Borderlands Funding Request £	BTIP Part 2 Submission to PMO	Start Date	End Date
Bedlington Station Cafe	East Bedlington Parish Council	797,000	582,000	August 2026	Spring 2027	Autumn 2027
Bedlington Community Centre	West Bedlington Town Council	300,000	300,000	Spring 2027	Spring 2027	Summer 2027
West Lea Sports & Community Hub	Bedlingtonshire Development Trust	1,700,000	Nil	Spring 2027	Summer 2028	Summer 2029
Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements	Northumberland County Council	1,368,000	1,368,000	Spring 2027	Summer 2027	Summer 2028
Total		4,165,000	2,250,000			

More detail on each of the projects is to be included at Annex A.

2. Project Selection Process

2.1 What scoring criteria was used to identify the projects included in the BTIP?

The partners in the Bedlington Place Partnership Group (PPG) have followed a three-stage process to identify the projects which are most appropriate for Borderlands investment. The process is summarised below.

Stage 1: Long list of projects

The Bedlington PPG agreed to select a small number of larger scale capital projects, with potential to deliver a significant economic impact on Bedlington for Borderlands investment. Partners and organisations based in, or operating from, Bedlington were invited to submit an Expression of Interest form for capital projects that would deliver against the vision, strategic objectives, and investment themes described in the Place Plan, with a minimum project value of £300,000.

All expressions of interest received were initially checked to confirm eligibility, including:

- Alignment with the Place Plan vision
- Delivery against at least one strategic objective
- Project location is within Bedlington

A long list of projects was considered by the PPG. A total of 11 potential schemes, all of which aligned to Place Plan objectives, were included in the Place Plan.

Stage 2: Short list of projects

Following approval of the Place Plan, a further assessment of the projects was undertaken by the NCC Town Regeneration Team officers to identify those which could be included in the BTIP. The assessment criteria included:

- **Strategic fit with Place Plan:** To ensure strong alignment with strategic objectives and investment themes.
- **Strategic fit with Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:** The extent to which projects focused on town centre / economic regeneration; address Borderlands strategic objectives and challenges; and deliver eligible interventions, outputs and outcomes.
- **Evidence of need and demand:** The extent to which there is clear evidence of need and demand for the activities / facilities to be delivered; and support for the project from local people, businesses and communities.
- **Value for Money:** To assess the potential to deliver a good volume of BTIP eligible quantified outputs and benefits in return for the total project costs / funding.
- **Deliverability:** To confirm the project is deliverable within the first 1 to 3 years of the BTIP timeframe (or by Dec 2030 at latest); low delivery risks; where risks are present there is a clear plan to address them (e.g. land / asset ownership / control; statutory consents; procurement; subsidy control; match funding status; staffing; other delivery risks and constraints).

- **Suitability:** To assess the extent to which projects are suitable for Borderlands funding or whether there are more suitable funding sources available.
- **Financial sustainability of the capital investment:** Is there a business plan or business model in place demonstrating how the project will generate sufficient income to cover its future operating costs. In the absence of a business plan, is there a firm commitment from a named project partner to support future financial sustainability of any assets / facilities created.

The Bedlington PPG considered the project assessments in May 2024, selecting the three projects that meet all criteria and which are concentrated in the town centres of west and east Bedlington, and which could collectively provide the catalyst for town centre transformation.

Ref No	Project Proposal
1	Bedlington Station Cafe
2	Town Centre Improvements
3	Station Gateway Improvements

Stage 3: Review of the Short List

Prior to developing the BTIP, the three shortlisted projects were given the opportunity to update their proposals, providing more detail about the project as a result of any development work. The three projects were then reviewed against the assessment criteria, to confirm continued eligibility and suitability for Borderlands funding.

Whilst acknowledging the value of these projects to Bedlington, the PPG was keen to identify further proposals that would deliver tangible benefits to residents. A feasibility study into the proposed Community/Sports Hub on the West Lea Park that was included in the Bedlington Place Plan has shown potential benefits for one of the town's most deprived wards and a proposal for much needed improvements to the Bedlington Community Centre in the town centre was put forward to meet the public's call for additional leisure and cultural activity. The PPG unanimously agreed to include both proposals in the BTIP Part A.

The PPG agreed at a meeting on 1st June 2026 to combine the Public Realm projects in West and East Bedlington into one project for the BTIP and to include the Station Cafe, Bedlington Community Centre and the West Lea Community/Sport Hub proposals in their BTIP Part A.

2.2 Who was involved in the assessment? Particularly noting community involvement in the project selection process.

This BTIP builds on the Bedlington Place Plan, which was developed in consultation with the local community in Bedlington, and drawing on local action plans, Northumberland-wide strategic discussions, and other regional or local strategies, as well as incorporating the overarching ambitions of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Public consultation on the Place Plan, took place in March 2022, with 381 people providing feedback. Consultation was held via Citizen Space, and was advertised widely in the local press, and on social media, as well as being cascaded to the contact lists of all PPG members. There was strong support for the strategic objects (93%), and respondents broadly agreed with the vision (73%).

Enhanced culture, leisure and retail offer, was identified as one of the most important changes needed in Bedlington. Other priorities for change were home & quality of place improvements and town centre improvements.

The BTIP reflects these priorities, with a focus on enhancing the town's cultural, leisure and retail offer, in addition to investing in town centre improvements.

Since the consultation on the Place Plan was completed, regular 'drop-in' engagement events have been arranged, to ensure local residents are kept informed about progress with the BTIP and individual projects. Residents have been continuously involved in the design processes. For example, members of the PPG group have been involved in workshops for the Public Realm, Connectivity and Wayfinding study.

The PPG has been involved in all stages of developing the BTIP playing a key leading role in shaping and informing the strategy and delivery pipeline for the town, including confirming support for the two shortlisted projects; and commenting on drafts of the BTIP to ensure alignment with the Place Plan, and delivery against local priorities.

Eligibility at both the Place Plan and BTIP stage was assessed by NCC Borderlands Programme Team officers and the PPG, comprising county councillors, town councillors and representatives of local organisations and businesses, endorsed the prioritisation of the four proposals in this BTIP.

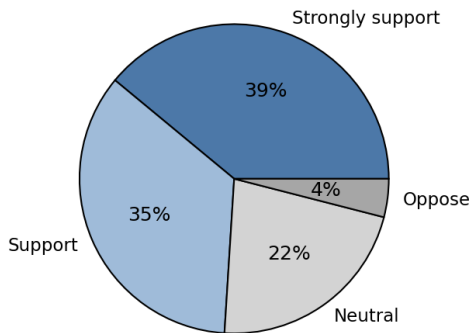
The project sponsors for proposals included in this BTIP Part A, have consulted with the local community including residents, businesses and key stakeholders throughout their feasibility and design development.

A public consultation event held on 11 June 2026 in both East and West Bedlington was attended and the package of projects in the Town Investment Plan was well received.

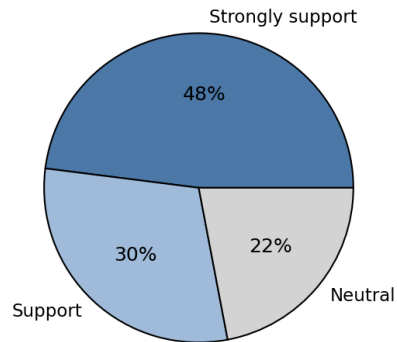
- A total of 23 responses to the questionnaire were received
- Station Heritage Cafe received 74% support (39% strongly support, 35% support, 22% neither support nor oppose, 4% oppose)
- Bedlington Community Centre Improvements received 78% support (48% strongly support, 30% support, 22% neither support nor oppose)
- West Lea Sports/Community Hub received 61% support (35% strongly support, 26% support, 26% neither support nor oppose, 13% oppose)

- Town Centre Public Realm, Wayfinding and Connectivity received 70% support (35% strongly support, 35% support, 13% neither support nor oppose, 13% oppose, 4% strongly oppose)
- Station Gateway Public Realm, Wayfinding and Connectivity received 61% support (35% strongly support, 26% support, 22% neither support nor oppose, 13% oppose, 4% strongly oppose)

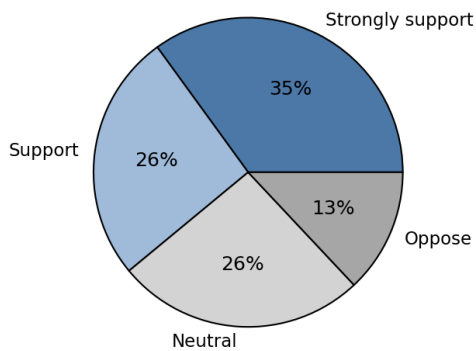
Station Heritage Cafe/Bistro



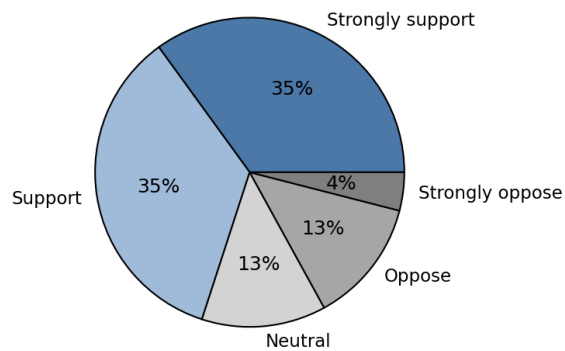
Bedlington Community Centre Improvements



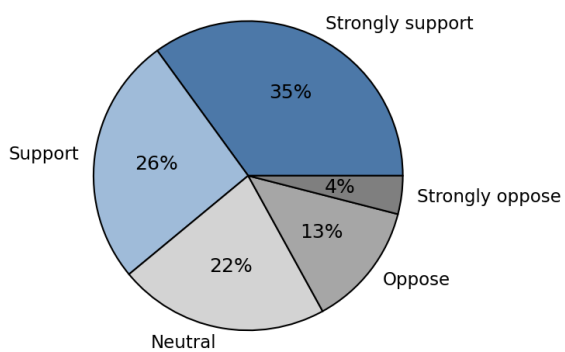
West Lea Sports/Community Hub



Town Centre Public Realm

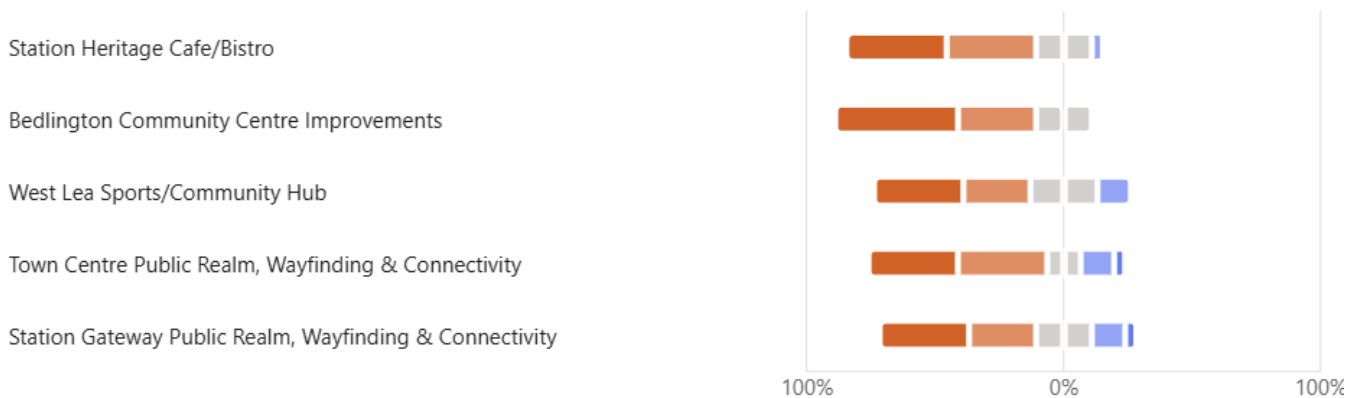


Station Gateway Public Realm



Do you support the inclusion of the five project proposals in the Bedlington Borderlands Town Investment Plan?

● Strongly support
 ● Support
 ● Neither support nor oppose
 ● Oppose
 ● Strongly oppose



PPG members, key stakeholders, and residents of Bedlington will continue to be updated on the development of the projects outlined within the BTIP. There will be further drop-in events organised prior to schemes moving into delivery.

2.3 Please include a diagram, like the one below, to visually show how the BTIP projects will deliver a spread of activity across the Place Plan Strategic Objectives. (A template is available from the Borderlands PMO.)

Strategic objectives/themes alignment with project proposals

	Themes/Strategic Objectives							
	Vibrant Town			Inclusive Town	Growing Town		Connected Town	
Projects	Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre	Encourage new uses of existing properties	Increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors	Prioritise improvements to services by working in partnership to provide residents with wider opportunities to get active, learn, participate and enjoy their local town	Create new and safeguard existing employment	Create a skilled workforce able to access learning and training opportunities in growth sectors	Embrace the benefits of the Northumberland Line so that residents and businesses can access work, shopping, leisure and culture opportunities	Embrace the benefits of the Active Travel Corridor so that residents and businesses can access work, shopping, leisure and culture opportunities
Bedlington Station Cafe/Bistro								
Bedlington Community Centre								
West Lea Sports & Community Hub								
Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements								

Key		
	Strong alignment to theme/objective	
	Some alignment to theme/objective	
	Little/no alignment to theme/objective	

2.4 Briefly describe why any unsuccessful projects identified in the Place Plan did not make the final selection and outline any plans as to how these will be taken forward (if applicable).

The following projects were identified in Bedlington's Place Plan but did not proceed to the final selection:

Bedlington Station Hotel – A second feasibility study showed that the proposal was not viable. Other future uses for the proposed site, the former Library building are being considered.

Physiotherapy centre and hydrotherapy pool – The project sponsor for this proposal was supported with business support resources to develop an outline business plan which has not progressed any further and was therefore discounted from the Borderlands PP process.

Sport for All – The project sponsor decided to focus their resources on developing the Bedlington Station Heritage Cafe project, which more closely aligns with the Bedlington Place Plan's themes and Strategic Objectives.

Bedlington County Park Paths – This project had insufficient economic benefit and outputs and park improvements have been progressed outside of the programme.

Bedlington Enriched Environment – Revenue project and therefore ineligible to seek Borderlands Place Programme funding.

Activate Bedlington – Revenue project and therefore ineligible to seek Borderlands Place Programme funding.

Bedlington to Morpeth train line – This is to be considered as part of a feasibility study into a potential further phase of the Northumberland Line, funded by other sources.

3. Management & Delivery

3.1 Please describe the roles and responsibilities of those involved in day-to-day delivery and management of the BTIP.

NCC Borderlands Programme Team will undertake the roles and responsibilities in the day-to-day management of this BTIP, as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1 – Roles and Responsibilities of NCC officers

Role	Responsibilities	Involvement in this Programme
SRO Programme Lead – Senior Officer (NCC)	Programme Team and Programme Delivery Group Chair, Project Delivery Oversight	Chair Programme Team, maintain oversight and ensure each project is executed as per plan, budget and timescales

Programme Manager	Lead Programme Management	Manage and oversee programme management arrangements working with SRO and PM
Project Manager	Lead Project Manager developing and delivering the programme and individual projects	Day to Day programme and project development and delivery supporting project sponsors
Senior Programme Officer	Project, programme and partnership development and delivery	Assigned senior programme officer providing project, programme and partnership development and delivery support to Bedlington
Project Officer	Project support and co-ordination	Supporting the day-to-day delivery of the project co-ordinating a range of key tasks including monitoring
Place Partnership Group	Advisory support to the programme	Meet regularly, at least quarterly, to receive updates on project progress. Offer advice and support where appropriate. The Place Partnership Group will continue following the Borderlands Place Programme, acting as a Town Regeneration Forum.
Project sponsors	Lead on individual projects and report regular updates to the PPG group	NCC will attend Project team meetings. Project team at PPG meetings.

3.2 Who has overall responsibility for ensuring the BTIP is delivered within the Place Programme timescales and in line with the relevant Place Plan Objectives?

Projects outlined within Bedlington's BTIP Part A will be delivered by external project sponsors, except for the Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements project. Any project specific objectives/outputs will be agreed between the project sponsor and the funder through the BTIP Part B application and will be detailed within the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). The projects outlined within this BTIP will be delivered within the Place Programme timescales, and meetings will be scheduled with specific project sponsors to offer support and guidance (where applicable), in addition to the regular PPG meetings which will be ongoing on quarterly basis.

Northumberland County Council (NCC), as lead Local Authority, alongside Borderlands PMO as the funder, will oversee the delivery of the BTIP objectives. The following governance and management structures have been established to provide the mechanisms needed to ensure effective control and delivery of the project interventions. They reflect how decisions will be made regarding the delivery of the BTIP, the spending of Borderlands funds, and the monitoring and reporting of activity, outcomes, risks and issues.

NCC has significant experience in delivering and monitoring a range of publicly funded programmes and projects. The Place and Regeneration Directorate of the Council includes Economic Development and Growth (ED&G). ED&G includes the Economic Development Service and Regeneration Service.

The Council's Regeneration Service has the expertise, capacity, and established business processes in place to ensure the BTIP is delivered in a compliant and efficient manner. Within the Service a dedicated team manages town regeneration programmes – the Regeneration Team. The team and wider service have developed and managed a number of place-based programmes including the £36m Regenerating Ashington Programme, £3.4m Hexham High Streets Heritage Action Zone, and £95m Energising Blyth Programme. Assigned officers in the team form the NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team who manage the Place Programme across the county working with other teams in the service, wider Council and partners who provide key inputs and support.

The Council's Economic Development Service includes the Funding, Investment & Assurance Team, which provides the accountable body function for the Council and is highly experienced in assuring major regeneration programmes. The team also provides the accountable body function for the Borderlands Partnership.

NCC's management arrangements will include:

NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team – part of the Council's Regeneration Service.

- This team is responsible for the development and delivery of the Borderlands Place Programme in Northumberland. The team manages a range of town regeneration projects and programmes, including the Borderlands Place Programme.
- The overall SRO for the Place Programme is the Regeneration Manager who is an experienced senior manager with a background in leading, developing and delivering economic and regeneration projects/programmes and who manages the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team.
- The SRO will work with a dedicated Project/Programme Manager and Senior Programme Officers/Project Officer from within the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team to oversee the management, development and delivery of the Borderlands Place Programme including the BTIP for Bedlington.
- The team, which reports directly to NCC's Regeneration Programme Board on progress with Place Programme delivery in the County, is responsible for the development and delivery of the BTIP.
- Individual project sponsors apply direct to Borderlands PMO by submitting a BTIP Part B application and, if approved, are issued a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) by the NCC as the Accountable Body with oversight and guidance from the NCC team. The team will support the development of individual projects and project business cases, liaising with individual lead organisations as required to advise and help progress individual schemes. They will also be responsible for monitoring overall performance, ensuring programme level risk management, co-ordinating governance arrangements, supporting

partnerships, communication and engagement, and co-ordinating delivery of individual schemes.

- The Team reports into NCC Programme Board on progress with Place Programme. Including development of Place Plans and BTIP Development, project & business case development liaising with project sponsors.
- Place Plans and BTIPs developed by the team are submitted to Borderlands PMO for endorsement following NCC Accountable Body check s.
- Project Applications – projects supported by the team are submitted by sponsors to Borderlands PMO for approval following NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team and Accountable Body input and review – project sponsors enter into a GFA with the Accountable Body for Borderlands funds.

Programme management will be overseen by the NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team, working closely with NCC's Funding, Investment & Assurance Team and wider Procurement and Legal teams. The key roles in the project delivery team include:

The lead Programme Manager is the key decision-maker reporting to the SRO and wider internal NCC assurance arrangements including the Programme Board. This ensures that the Place Programme aligns with the strategic goals and funding requirements. The role, alongside the input of the project manager and wider team is critical in delivering the programme and maintaining oversight of projects to ensure they are on time, on budget, and to the required standards. The team will maintain stakeholder and partnership engagement to address any emerging challenges. The Programme Manager approves invoices for payment ensuring spending aligns with project budget. Regular updates are provided to the NCC's Borderlands Programme Internal Management Group which is chaired by NCC's Director of Economic Development and Growth.

Funding, Investment and Assurance Team (FIAT) – within the Council's Economic Development Service, this team will support the NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team through Accountable Body functions relating to contracting and appraisal, financial monitoring, governance and assurance. This team also provides the Accountable Body function for the Borderlands Partnership so is well placed to ensure the programme is delivered in line with requirements.

The BTIP management and control systems, led by the Programme lead and Project Manager, are as follows:

- The **Borderlands Place Programme Delivery Group** is the core group managing this Programme including the Bedlington BTIP. The team meets on a monthly basis and manages the programme utilising a range of programme management tools and templates to manage, monitor progress and report on the overall delivery of the programme to NCC and the Borderlands Partnership. The core membership of the group is the above NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team complemented by representatives of the above FIAT and project leads from other depts such as strategic transport, estates, and culture.
- **The Bedlington PPG** is the advisory partnership in Bedlington which has oversight of BTIP delivery. The PPG is facilitated, managed and attended by NCC, meets regularly

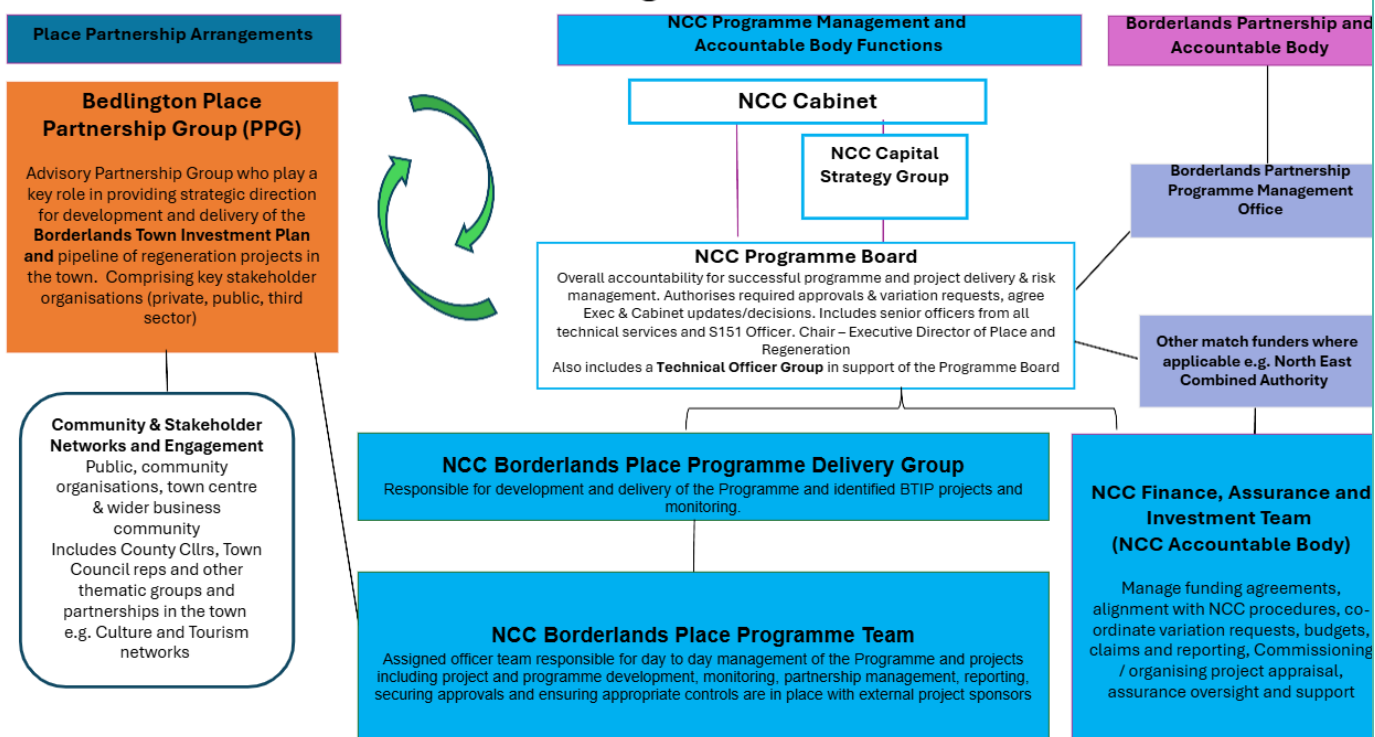
and includes key stakeholders in Bedlington including the individual project leads. The PPG provides strategic direction to support the development and delivery of the BTIP, and to develop a pipeline of projects to support delivery of the wider Place Plan. The NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team will report progress regularly to the PPG as the BTIP is implemented liaising with individual project sponsors.

- **Regular budgetary meetings with the Finance, Investment & Assurance Team and Corporate Finance.** The programme team meet the above teams regularly looking at actual spend and profiling for each financial year, identifying any issues or concerns with funding and expenditure. The Place Programme and its budgets are set out in the Council's capital plan.
- **ED&G's Local Assurance Framework** - Details how the ED&G Service will use public money responsibly, transparently and achieve best value for money. It outlines the governance and decision-making processes for ensuring accountability, probity, transparency, legal compliance, and value for money. As the Framework is applicable to external funding, the BTIP will be managed using its mechanisms. Reports will be considered at Technical Officer's Group, Programme Board, Cabinet & Senior Leadership Team as and when appropriate to obtain required approvals as part of the decision-making process and in line with delegated authority.
- **S151 Officer** - independently assesses the sustainability, viability, and value for money of the BTIP and the individual projects regarding any sign offs.
- **Audit and Scrutiny** NCC's Audit Committee, audit and scrutiny functions provide a further level of assurance in the management of public finances, compliance with legal and regulatory responsibilities, and risk management.

3.3 Include a structure chart showing the governance arrangements for the BTIP and how delivery of the BTIP feeds into the Borderlands governance arrangements.

NCC Governance and Assurance Organogram

Northumberland Borderlands Place Programme - Governance and Assurance



3.4 Please describe how you will manage any changes to the BTIP projects. What internal systems do you have in place that will then feed into the existing Borderlands Change Management approach.

Changes to the BTIP will be managed by NCC Borderlands Programme Team in liaison with lead project sponsors, the Bedlington PPG, the NCC FIAT team and Borderlands PMO and in accordance with the Local Assurance Framework. There will also be regular and ongoing communication with the local community to ensure they are kept fully up to date with progress in delivering the BTIP, including any changes to the individual projects.

For example, following submission of the Bedlington BTIP the next step a few months later will be the submission of the Station Cafe project level application to Borderlands. Prior to this a gateway review will be undertaken by the Programme team to review and update any necessary changes to the BTIP including each projects financial package and delivery plans linked to the application, in consultation with all the above parties.

All project leads will receive guidance once the GFA has been issued, to ensure that they are aware of specific Borderlands requirements.

It will be clearly understood amongst all project leads that outputs and outcomes cannot be claimed without appropriate evidence to ensure all deliverables can be verified at audit.

For Change Controls in the Borderlands Deal – the Borderlands PMO will review the proposal before providing it to the FIAT with approvals required via Investment Panel/Partnership Board in line with the delegations set out for the Borderlands Deal.

Risk Management

Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation
Match funding not secured	High	NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team supporting sponsors to identify potential funding sources
Failure to secure planning consent	Medium	NCC will work with the projects to facilitate early discussion with the planning team, to identify and address any concerns at an early stage.
Projects fail to comply with procurement requirements	Low	NCC, will provide guidance on procurement once the project has been approved for Borderlands funding and the Grant Funding Agreement has been issued.

Projects do not meet their contracted performance targets (spend, outputs, and outcomes), resulting in BTIP underperformance.	Medium	NCC will undertake regular performance monitoring, working with the applicants to ensure they are clear about the targets, and how to evidence their achievement. NCC will work with each project to review individual project progress and support them to put measures in place to address any under or over performance if required.
Opposition to proposals from general public	Low	Consultation responses to the development of the Place Plan, and to individual projects, have been very positive to date. There will be regular and ongoing consultation with the local community throughout the development and delivery of the BTIP, to ensure continued support, and that any issues can be dealt with quickly.

4. Financial Case

4.1 What are the total BTIP costs? Please complete the table below: (Add extra rows if required).

Project Name	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Bedlington Station Cafe		£717,300	£79,700			£797,000
Bedlington Community Centre		£300,000				£300,000
West Lea Sports & Community Hub			£750,000	£950,000		£1,700,000
Town Centre & Station Gateway Improvements		£600,000	£768,000			£1,368,000
Total		£1,617,300	£1,597,700	£950,000		£4,165,000
Comments:						

4.2 What is the total funding package for the BTIP? Please complete the table below: (Add extra rows if required).

Funder	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Borderlands		£1,402,300	£847,700			£2,250,000
NCC			£750,000			£750,000
Railway Heritage Trust		£175,000				£175,000
East Bedlington Parish Council		£40,000				£40,000
Unsecured match				£950,000		£950,000
Total		£1,67,300	£1,597,700	£950,000		£4,165,000
Comments:						

The unsecured match is required for the West Lea Community/Sports Hub. The project sponsors are actively seeking suitable funding sources. NCC will continue to support the Project Sponsor, in delivering their fundraising strategy by identifying and notifying them of suitable grant opportunities, as well as holding regular meetings to assess where additional support can be provided.

5. Demonstrating Collective Impact

What does good look like?

5.1 Please provide a list of key measures of success for the combined impact of the BTIP. What will good look like e.g. increase in visitor numbers, opportunities to create new businesses, increased footfall, increased local activities and spend, improved health outcomes, improved environmental assets.

The combined impact of the Bedlington Town Investment Plan will be the creation of a key attractor in East Bedlington, the Station Cafe, increased opportunities for local activities in West Bedlington in the improved Bedlington Community Centre and the new West Lea Community/Sports Hub and significant improvements to the public realm, wayfinding and connectivity in the town through the Town Centre Improvement and Station Gateway schemes. Beyond the public realm, wayfinding and connectivity initiatives, the Town Centre Improvement and Station Gateway schemes will consider the best use of NCC assets in those locations.

Footfall is expected to increase across both East and West Bedlington, from both residents and visitors. This uplift in activity is anticipated to encourage new businesses to locate within the town, which in turn will drive increased local spending and contribute to enhanced economic impact and vitality of the area.

The health and wellbeing of residents will be enhanced through social inclusion and cultural participation opportunities in the Community Centre, Community Hub, Sport facilities and improved outside spaces. Public spaces will be made safer and more accessible with improved wayfinding and lighting.

New FTE jobs will be created in the Station Cafe and the West Lea Community/Sports Hub, in addition to existing jobs will be safeguarded at Bedlington Community Centre.

Table 2 – Success criteria

Theme	Measure of Success	Evidenced by
Economic Growth	Derelict property brought back into productive use	Opening of the Bedlington Station Cafe/Bistro
	Increased town centre footfall	Footfall data in Bedlington town centre and user data from project sponsors
	Increased spend	Estimates derived from footfall data in Bedlington town centre and user data from project sponsors
	Jobs created	Project evaluations
	Jobs safeguarded	Vacancy data/monitoring
Social & Cultural	Increased participation in local cultural activity	Event records
	Improved perceptions of town identity and safety	Place Standard Tool

5.2 Please describe who will benefit from the BTIP projects and how.

The Borderlands Town Investment Plan (BTIP) for Bedlington is designed to deliver inclusive, community-led regeneration. Each project has been developed to meet specific local needs while contributing to broader strategic goals. The beneficiaries span all age groups, backgrounds, and sectors:

Local Residents

- Will benefit from improved access to high-quality community facilities, including The Station Cafe, the improved Bedlington Community Centre and the West Lea Community/Sports Hub.
- The BTIP will support healthier lifestyles, reduce social isolation, and foster civic pride through inclusive programming and welcoming public spaces.
- Residents will have more opportunities to participate in events, volunteer, and shape local services.

Children and Young People

- Will gain access to creative workshops, youth-led programming, and outdoor activities.
- Young people will benefit from volunteering, mentoring, and work experience opportunities across BTIP venues.

Older Adults and People with Limited Mobility

- Will benefit from accessible infrastructure, inclusive design, and programming tailored to their needs.
- The Community Centre and the Community Hub will offer a range of exercise opportunities, social events, and intergenerational engagement in a safe, welcoming outdoor environment.
- Improved signage and public realm upgrades will enhance usability and safety across the town.

Community Groups and Volunteers

- Will gain access to flexible, affordable venues for meetings, events, and outreach.

- Volunteering opportunities will build local capacity, confidence, and intergenerational collaboration.

Local Businesses

- Will benefit from increased footfall, visitor spend, and event-linked commerce, especially during festivals and seasonal programming on the improved Market Place.
- Pop-up retail, exhibitions, and creative showcases will support local traders and makers.
- Improved wayfinding and visitor experience will enhance visibility and customer engagement.

Visitors and Tourists

- Will experience a more vibrant, welcoming, and legible town environment.
- Improved wayfinding will aid orientation, storytelling, and access to key attractions.
- Enhanced cultural and recreational facilities will encourage longer stays and repeat visits.

People Facing Social Isolation or Mental Health Challenges

- Will benefit from inclusive, non-clinical spaces that promote wellbeing and connection.
- The Community Centre and Community Hub will offer community-led activities in a calm, welcoming environment.
- The town centre improvements will provide opportunities for outdoor social interaction and wellbeing, with sporting opportunities at the Community/Sports Hub helping to improve physical and mental health.

Monitoring

5.3 Please describe what systems are in place to monitor the collective impact of the BTIP projects.

The NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team will be responsible for the monitoring of the collective outputs, outcomes and impacts delivered by the projects included in the BTIP. Individual projects will report on progress to the Borderlands Partnership and NCC who will provide regular programme updates to the Bedlington PPG, including progress towards delivery milestones, as well as the achievement of output, outcome, and impact targets. NCC will provide support and advice to the projects if required, to address issues of under or over-performance, and support achievement of key targets.

Each individual project seeking Borderlands funding will submit a project level application to the Borderlands Partnership, which if successful will be issued with a grant funding agreement signed by NCC as the Accountable Body for the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal in England, which will contract the target outputs, outcomes and impacts to be achieved. Performance against targets will be monitored quarterly, with each project lead required to submit progress reports and grant claims for eligible spend setting out the achievement of key deliverables to the PMO. NCC's Programme Team will provide regular updates to the Bedlington PPG including facilitating project sponsor delivered presentations and information.

Furthermore, there are two key internal reporting mechanisms at NCC, the ED&G Programme Board; and the NCC Borderlands Programme Internal Management Group. Projects detailed within this BTIP will be regularly reported at these meetings.

The physical outputs contracted to be delivered by the BTIP projects (e.g. floorspace created; buildings brought back into use) will be monitored throughout the construction phase and evidenced through photographs and reports provided by the relevant capital project manager. The longer-term outcomes of the projects e.g. jobs created, training/learning activities created, will be monitored and reported on by the relevant project lead until the end of the monitoring period.

The Economic Development and Regeneration Team will be responsible for monitoring project performance, and this will be led by the Programme Manager, in liaison with the Borderlands PMO.

A range of methods will be used by the project sponsor, and supported by NCC to monitor overall performance of the BTIP including;

- Project sponsor data capturing the number and type of new cultural events and activities taking place in the town and the number of attendees
- Usage data for new facilities created including door sensor(s) for visitor numbers and annual income and expenditure reports as appropriate
- Business and community surveys
- Consultation and engagement events with residents to assess changing perceptions
- Collation of progress reporting on outputs and outcomes verifying the number of jobs, work placements, volunteer places, and training opportunities created by the supported projects
- Measured plan and photographs to support area of public realm improved

5.4 Have appropriate baselines been established to support the evaluation process?

The NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team will work with individual project sponsors to identify existing baselines as appropriate, where increases are being funded. This includes current levels of learning opportunities and activities available in the town centre which will be required to establish additionality of activities and facilities.

The Council undertake town centre monitoring as and when funding is available. In a Bedlington context this will provide a baseline for vacancy rates and footfall that can inform the project level outputs. Each project will need to develop their approach to monitoring and evaluation against the Borderlands Place Programme outputs framework and incorporate this into the funding bid.

Key baseline indicators include:

Vacancy rate

The vacancy rate in Bedlington Town Centre is: 6.5%

The vacancy rate in Bedlington Station is: 17%

Footfall

BEDLINGTON

The tables below provide the details of the footfall counts conducted in Bedlington in Summer and Autumn 2022.

Spring/ Early Summer

WEEKDAY (MARKET DAY) THURSDAY 7 TH JULY 2022			
20 MARKET PLACE		8 MARKET PLACE	
			
10.50-11.00	18	10.50-11.00	20
11.10-11.20	24	11.10-11.20	29
12.00-12.10	39	12.00-12.10	44
TOTAL	81	TOTAL	93
AVERAGE	27	AVERAGE	31
Other Notes of Interest: Weather 16° - Cloudy with slight drizzle. Town quiet.			

WEEKEND SATURDAY 9 TH JULY 2022			
20 MARKET PLACE		8 MARKET PLACE	
10.50-11.00	27	10.50-11.00	30
11.10-11.20	29	11.10-11.20	22
12.00-12.10	40	12.00-12.10	39
TOTAL	96	TOTAL	91
AVERAGE	32	AVERAGE	30
Other Notes of Interest: Weather 19° - Patchy cloud. Lovely day, traffic light. Most people heading to Greggs or Market Coffee.			

Footfall in Bedlington remained stable both during the Thursday Market Day, 31 persons per ten minutes and during the Weekend, 30 persons per ten minutes.

Autumn

WEEKDAY (MARKET DAY) THURSDAY 6 TH OCTOBER 2022			
20 MARKET PLACE		8 MARKET PLACE	
			
10.50-11.00	20	10.50-11.00	24
11.10-11.20	20	11.10-11.20	34
12.00-12.10	18	12.00-12.10	23
TOTAL	58	TOTAL	81
AVERAGE	19	AVERAGE	27
Other Notes of Interest: Weather 6° - Cloudy and windy. Traffic works.			

WEEKEND SATURDAY 27 TH SEPTEMBER 2022			
20 MARKET PLACE		8 MARKET PLACE	
10.50-11.00	29	10.50-11.00	38
11.10-11.20	43	11.10-11.20	29
12.00-12.10	28	12.00-12.10	25
TOTAL	100	TOTAL	92
AVERAGE	33	AVERAGE	31
Other Notes of Interest:			

8 Market Place provided the heaviest Weekday footfall in Autumn 2022 with an average of 27 persons per ten minutes whilst 20 Market Place recorded the highest Saturday figure with 33 persons per ten minutes.

Spring/ Early Summer 2022 v Autumn 2022

	SPRING/ EARLY SUMMER	AUTUMN	% DIFFERENCE
WEEKDAY	31	27	-13%
SATURDAY	32	33	+3%

In the busiest count point location the Autumn figure dropped by 13% from the Spring/ Early Summer average.

	NAT. SMALL TOWNS	NAT. LARGE TOWNS	BEDL. AUT. 2022	BERW. SUMM. 2022	BERW. WINTER 2020	BERW. AUT. 2020	BERW. SPRING 2020	BERW. 2013
MARKET DAY	110	310	27	31	29	28	N/A	82
NON-MARKET DAY	105	240	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	57
SATURDAY	N/A	N/A	33	32	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Footfall in Bedlington has been markedly lower since the 2013 average of 82 persons per ten minutes. Footfall in the town centre is also noticeably lower than the National Small Towns average of 110 persons.

Evaluation

5.5 Please outline how and when you plan to evaluate the performance of the BTIP.

The NCC Borderlands Programme Team, in partnership with the PMO, will assess the impact and effectiveness of the projects and overall BTIP at key stages and post completion.

It is anticipated that the projects outlined within this BTIP could commence from January 2026, subject to securing the necessary match funding to enable delivery. Monitoring of BTIP

performance will begin during the delivery phase and will continue following completion of the programme.

BTIP delivery is expected to take place between 2027 and 2030, aligned with individual project programmes (subject to obtaining match funding to commence project delivery). The Station Heritage Cafe is expected to complete in Summer 2027; Bedlington Community Centre in Autumn 2027, West Lea Community and Sports Hub in 2030. Interim monitoring and learning will take place throughout delivery, with a formal programme level evaluation expected to take place following completion of the final BTIP project.

This will include:

- Reviewing progress against and overall achievement of the benefits planned for each project, with commentary on changes approved by the Borderlands Programme
- Data on outputs and outcomes as provided by the Borderlands PMO
- The outcome of consultations and surveys with PPG members, project sponsors and stakeholders to assess perception change
- Analysis of survey responses from businesses, visitors and residents
- Collation of press articles and social media posts capturing milestones and success eg; contractor appointed, Bedlington Station Cafe opening
- Input from the project sponsor on lessons learned and guidance that can be provided to other project leads

5.6 Please describe how Sustainable & Inclusive Growth will be evaluated at a BTIP level.

Sustainable and inclusive growth will be integral to the evaluation set out above, Specific elements that will be considered for the Bedlington BTIP investments will include:

- Proportion of residents accessing retail, F&B and other services locally rather than travelling elsewhere by car (based on resident surveys)
- Diversity of residents and visitors making use of the town centre (based on town centre surveys)
- Accessibility of new or improved facilities
- Carbon reduction through active travel and energy-efficient buildings
- Enhancement of public realm
- Reuse of existing assets

The project sponsors will liaise with the project funder (Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal or NCC) to agree how Sustainable and Inclusive Growth will be evaluated during the BTIP Part B application or NCC Grant Application Form.

Annex A – BTIP Project Summaries

Bedlington Station Heritage Cafe

Lead Delivery Organisation	East Bedlington Parish Council
Total Project Costs	£797,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£582,000
Potential Match Funding	£175,000 Railway Heritage Trust(secured) and £40,000 East Bedlington Parish Council
Anticipated Impacts	Restoration of derelict building – Preserving local heritage - Creation of jobs - Training opportunities – Creating a community asset – Supporting economic growth
Start Date	Spring 2027
End Date	Autumn 2027
Deliverability	The building lease is agreed with Network Rail for 99 years on a ‘pepper corn’ rent. The Parish Council has previously successfully delivered the East Bedlington Community Centre project – a £1.3million project. Planning permission secured. Match funding secured. The building will be sub-let to the East Bedlington Community Centre Trustees who will run the facility on a not-for-profit basis. A business plan is being developed with consultant support ahead of the submission of a BTIP Part B.
Project Description	
The development of a heritage-themed café within the last remaining original building at Bedlington Station, located on the recently reopened Northumberland Line. The building has deteriorated since its closure in 1964 and subsequently presented as an eyesore in the town centre. The initiative aims to preserve and repurpose this historically significant structure, transforming it into a thriving social and cultural hub for the community. It will celebrate the town’s rich railway and industrial heritage while contributing to the local economy, reducing environmental impact, and improving the vibrancy and connectivity of the area. We intend to restore and repurpose the southbound station building - a Victorian-era railway structure, to create a welcoming, accessible café with a distinctive local and historical identity. This will be a place where residents, rail passengers, tourists, and heritage enthusiasts can come together to enjoy quality food and drink, learn about Bedlington’s rail and industrial past, and participate in community life. The proposed café will include: • A seating area with interior design inspired by the early railway period, featuring original	

materials, archival photos, and historic displays.

- A kitchen and licenced bar service area for light meals, drinks, and locally sourced produce.
- A booth style seating area with surface areas for exhibitions focused on local history, transport heritage, and creative arts.
- Outdoor space with improved landscaping to welcome visitors arriving by rail or foot, promoting walkability and green transport.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Funding package secured	Autumn 2026
Construction begins	Winter 2026
Building works completed	Spring 2027
Cafe opening	Summer 2027
Place Plan Alignment	Detail which of the Place Plan Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why. <u>Bedlington Borderlands Place Plan Themes/Objectives</u> Vibrant Town - <i>Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, and increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors.</i> The cafe will greatly enhance the physical environment by bringing a new use to an existing derelict building that will serve to increase the footfall, dwell time and spend in the area. Growing town - <i>Safeguard existing employment and work collaboratively to create a skilled workforce able to access learning and training opportunities and jobs in growth sectors across southeast Northumberland and the North East.</i> The cafe will create 9 new FTE jobs and provide training opportunities in the hospitality sector. Connected town - <i>Embrace the benefits of the Northumberland Line and future walking and cycling infrastructure improvements so that residents and businesses can access work, shopping, leisure and culture opportunities.</i> The cafe will be located directly on the station serving the Northumberland Line and also sits on the route of the Bedlington Active Travel Corridor.
Place Programme Alignment	Detail which of the Place Programme Strategic Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why. <u>Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives</u> SO 1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in.

	This project has been an aspiration for residents of Bedlington Station for many years. The facility will provide meeting space for community organisations. SO2: Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres. A successful cafe will draw additional footfall into Bedlington Station and encourage new businesses to set up in the area SO3: Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres. The cafe aims to become a visitor destination, having a positive economic impact by increasing spend in the local area. SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation. The cafe will create new job opportunities (the expected number of FTE jobs to be confirmed in Business Plan and BTIP Part B application form but expected to be 9 FTE) SO5: Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres The celebration of Bedlington Station's proud heritage in the cafe and the attraction of a high-quality venue will attract new residents to the town. SO6: Retain and increase the working age population in towns The creation of FTE jobs and the training opportunities the cafe will provide in hospitality will encourage a retention of working age residents (the expected number of FTE jobs to be confirmed in Business Plan and BTIP Part B application form). SO7: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres The building is currently derelict and has been so for over 40 years. The restored building will provide a focal point for the area and greatly improve the aesthetic of this key area in Bedlington Station.
Economic Impact	The café will stimulate the local economy by creating jobs, supporting local suppliers, and attracting visitors to the area. With the reopening of the Northumberland Line in 2024, and the newly opening of Bedlington Station in March 2026, the station now offers direct passenger links to Newcastle, Ashington, and the wider region, increasing footfall and the potential for tourism. A well-run heritage café can act as a “first impression” for Bedlington, encouraging people to explore and invest in the town.
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Passenger numbers on the Northumberland Line

The café is expected to benefit from the strong passenger usage observed on the Northumberland Line, with the assumption that these levels will remain high. However, Bedlington Station only opened in March 2026, meaning that comprehensive and reliable passenger data is currently limited. Despite this, the heritage café location within the station is anticipated to generate consistent customer footfall, supported by the expected high level of station usage.

Business Plan Development and Financial Sustainability

Further business plan development is currently being undertaken, with funding secured from NCC, to explore the operational and management costs associated with the heritage café. In light of ongoing global economic challenges, including rising energy costs, any proposed operational model for the café will need to demonstrate clear financial viability and long-term sustainability.

Demand and competition

Bedlington Station is already served by a range of food outlets, although these are predominantly takeaway-based. The proposed heritage café seeks to introduce a distinct food and beverage offering, providing a more sit-down, experience-led option at the heart of the station. As part of the ongoing business plan development, specialist food and beverage consultants have been appointed to undertake a detailed assessment of market demand and competitive positioning.

Planning permission

Planning permission for the development has already been secured. While a number of planning conditions remain to be discharged, there are currently no identified concerns that would prevent these from being satisfactorily addressed.

Construction next to a live railway/train station

Construction works carried out in close proximity to a live railway line and station require careful planning and coordination to ensure the safety of rail operations, workers, and the public. Measures typically include adherence to strict rail industry safety standards, close liaison with the rail operator, and implementing controlled working hours to minimise disruption to services. Additional considerations such as noise, vibration, site access, and passenger safety must also be managed effectively, with appropriate risk assessments and mitigation strategies in place throughout the construction period.



Bedlington Community Centre

Lead Delivery Organisation	Bedlington Community Centre Trustees
Total Project Costs	£300,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£300,000
Potential Match Funding	Nil
Anticipated Impacts	A refreshed and modernised Community Centre able to better serve the residents of Bedlington. Raising the usage of the facilities from the current 40% of capacity closer to 80-100%.
Start Date	Spring 2027
End Date	Autumn 2027
Deliverability	Concept stage
Project Description	
Refurbishment, renovation and a reimagining of the utility of the spaces available in the Community Centre. To include the creation of a bespoke cellar storeroom, refit and enlargement of the cafe space by the removal of an interior stud wall, refurbishment of the Shire Room to accommodate dance and fitness classes, installation of modern IT to the Pheonix Room to accommodate meetings and presentations, upgrade to the kitchen space and equipment, replacement of stage and sound system in the function room and modernisation of the building's electrics and plumbing. The project responds to feedback in the Place Plan process about demand from the community for improved spaces for community, culture and leisure activities and complements the wider town centre improvements including the ongoing Advance led regeneration scheme and the proposed Town Centre public realm, wayfinding and connectivity improvements which include a planned Market Place refresh as an event space for the town.	
Milestone	Delivery Date
Costed designs produced	Autumn 2026
Funding secured	Winter 2026
Works begin	Spring 2027
Works completed	Autumn 2027
Place Plan Alignment	Detail which of the Place Plan Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why. <i>Vibrant town - Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, and increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors.</i>

	The improvements to the Community Centre will encourage more use of the building and attract additional footfall to the high street • <i>Inclusive town - Prioritise improvements to services by working in partnership to provide residents with wider opportunities to get active, learn, participate and enjoy their local town.</i> Residents will be consulted throughout the design process and will influence the provision of space for learning and leisure activities
Place Programme Alignment	<u>Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives</u> SO1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in. Residents will be consulted throughout the design process and will influence the provision of space for learning and leisure activities SO2: Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres. Improvements to the Community Centre will increase footfall in the town centre and making it more attractive to potential businesses SO3: Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres. Increased use of the Community Centre will add to the number of visitors to the town SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation. The provision of spaces for classes and activities may create job opportunities for tutors and instructors SO5: Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres An increase in the available leisure activities in the town will make it a more attractive town to live in SO6: Retain and increase the working age population in towns An increase in the available leisure activities in the town will make it a more attractive town to live in SO7: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres Improvements to the exterior front aspect of the Community Centre will enhance the physical environment of the town centre

Economic Impact	Improvements to the Community Centre will attract additional use of the facility and add to the high street's footfall to the potential benefit of local businesses. Tutors and instructors will benefit financially from more, and improved, spaces to deliver their courses from.
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Planning permission Planning permission may be required for the proposed development, particularly given its location within a designated conservation area. Any application will need to demonstrate that the scheme preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area, in line with relevant planning policies. Early engagement with the local planning authority and careful consideration of design and materials will be key to securing approval. Construction costs Construction costs for the project have yet to be fully determined and will be subject to detailed design and cost planning. Further work is required to develop accurate estimates, taking into account materials, labour, site constraints, and any specific requirements associated with the location. Establishing a robust cost plan will be essential to inform the overall funding package and ensure project viability.

West Lea Sports & Community Hub

Lead Delivery Organisation	Bedlingtonshire Development Trust
Total Project Costs	£1.7m
Borderlands Funding Requested	Nil
Potential Match Funding	£750,000 NCC, £950,000 unsecured
Anticipated Impacts	Multi-sport, multi-use facilities for the local community, complementing existing provision and responding to strategic policy and local needs.
Start Date	Autumn 2027
End Date	Spring 2028
Deliverability	The proposed location of the Hub is NCC estate and a Community Asset Transfer request will be submitted. Match funding is not secured. A business case is in development to ensure sustainability of the facility.
Project Description	
This project will provide a much-needed community, sports and leisure facility in the Bedlington West ward, the Bedlington Ward area with the highest number of residents, where there is currently no community building. The project will bring under one roof, sport provision through a sports hall adaptable to football, badminton, basketball, carpet bowls, netball etc. The facility will include a community space and a cafe/kitchen. The facility will be multi-functional to respond to demand from within the community it will serve. There will also be inclusion of new changing facilities to replace the current unused and dilapidated, changing facilities for the existing outdoor sports pitches. The community centre will provide a focal point for community activity in the area and foster good relations and positivity about living in Bedlington. An initial feasibility study has been completed for this project, with further business plan development being underway.	
Milestone	Delivery Date

Business plan and building designs completed	Summer 2027
Planning permission granted	Spring 2028
Funding package secured	Spring 2028
Community Asset Transfer	Spring 2028
Construction begins	Summer 2028
Building works completed	Summer 2029
Handover and opening	Summer 2029
Place Plan Alignment	<u>Bedlington Borderlands Place Plan Themes/Objectives</u> Vibrant Town - <i>Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, and increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors.</i> The current changing facility on West Lea is dilapidated. A new build community facility will greatly enhance the physical environment. Growing town - <i>Safeguard existing employment and work collaboratively to create a skilled workforce able to access learning and training opportunities and jobs in growth sectors across south east Northumberland and the North East.</i> Learning providers will be encouraged to deliver training opportunities from the Hub to increase to the employability of residents. This will be explored further during business plan development
Place Programme Alignment	<u>Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives</u> SO1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in. The facility will provide leisure and meeting space for community organisations. SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation. The Sports/Community Hub is expected to create FTE job opportunities. This number will be confirmed in the BTIP Part B application, following business plan development. SO5: Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres A sports and community facility will attract new residents to the town and encourage retention of current residents. SO6: Retain and increase the working age population in towns

	The facilities at the Hub will encourage working age residents to remain in or move into the town SO7: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres The current changing facility on West Lea is dilapidated. A new build community facility will greatly enhance the physical environment.
Economic Impact	Rental income from the sports facilities and community rooms will provide income to be used to the benefit of residents of West Bedlington. The facility will create employment opportunities
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Community Asset Transfer A Community Asset Transfer (CAT) will be required to transfer the land from NCC in order to facilitate delivery of the project. This process must be completed prior to the commencement of any on-site works and will involve compliance with the Council's CAT procedures, including the agreement of Heads of Terms and submission of a business plan. Planning permission Planning permission will be required to enable the development to proceed. This will involve submitting a detailed application to the local planning authority, demonstrating that the proposal is acceptable in terms of design, use, and impact on the surrounding area. Approval will need to be secured, along with any associated conditions, before construction works can commence. Funding A full funding package will be required to support the delivery of the project. This will involve securing sufficient capital to cover all development, construction, and associated costs, as well as ensuring provision for ongoing operational viability. Identifying and confirming funding sources will be a key requirement prior to progressing to delivery.

Town Centre and Station Gateway Improvements

Lead Delivery Organisation	Northumberland County Council
Total Project Costs	£1,368,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£1,368,000
Potential Match Funding	Nil
Anticipated Impacts	Improved town centre potentially including interventions to support new uses on vacant sites and public realm delivering better accessibility, wayfinding and connectivity around the town centre and Bedlington Station Gateway. A more adaptable marketplace to encourage community events and an attractive and safe public realm around the Station.
Start Date	Summer 2027
End Date	Summer 2028
Deliverability	The public realm and highways are in NCC ownership and sites are in NCC or its Development Company Advance Northumberland ownership.
Project Description	
A suite of town centre improvements identified through an extensive Public Realm, Wayfinding and Connectivity study undertaken by consultants funded by the North East Combined Authority. This focuses on Bedlington Town Centre as the primary shopping area and Bedlington Station as the transport gateway into the wider area following the reopening of the Northumberland Line to passenger services. Potential initiatives include a refresh of the Market Place in the town centre to make it more accessible and versatile to encourage more frequent events such as Farmers' Markets and the creation of extended public realm along the shop fronts to encourage an on-street Cafe culture. In Bedlington Station the gateway to the area would be enhanced with potential initiatives including a 'Pocket Park' and pedestrian/cycling safety initiatives. As part of the Town Centre and Station Gateway Improvement Package there also remains the possibility of including interventions which support the delivery of new uses on strategic sites in both locations. For example, in Bedlington the former District Council offices, remaining development land as part of the Advance led regeneration scheme and in Bedlington Station the former Library site. this is subject to further market demand work to determine potential uses and the rationale for any public funding intervention.	

Milestone		Delivery Date
Prioritised package of initiatives developed in conjunction with the PPG and residents of Bedlington		Spring 2027
Fully costed designs for prioritised project/s developed		Summer 2027
Works begin		Summer 2027
Works completed		Summer 2028
Place Plan Alignment	Detail which of the Place Plan Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why. <i>Vibrant town - Enhance the physical environment and condition of the town centre, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, and increase footfall and spend from residents and visitors.</i> The key purpose of this project is to make the town centre a more vibrant and accessible location to attract more residents, more visitors and more businesses to increase spend, having a greater economic impact.	
Place Programme Alignment	Detail which of the Place Programme Strategic Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why. <u>Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives</u> SO1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in. Residents have been, and will continue to be, involved in the development of the package of town centre improvements SO2: Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres. An attractive, accessible and vibrant public realm, supported by clear wayfinding and effective connectivity will attract businesses to the high street and the wider town SO3: Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres. An attractive, accessible and vibrant public realm, supported by clear wayfinding and effective connectivity will attract more visitors to the high street and an improved Market Place will encourage more events attracting further footfall to increase spend to local businesses and traders SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation. A busier high street will safeguard existing jobs and create new opportunities in retail and hospitality on the high street whilst providing a positive economic impact	

	SO5: Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres A more vibrant high street has the potential to attract new residents to Bedlington, which in turn would increase local spending and support existing businesses. SO6: Retain and increase the working age population in towns Bedlington sits at the heart of South East Northumberland, the county's major employment area. Improvements to the town centre will encourage working age people currently commuting to the area to consider becoming residents of the town. SO7: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres The key aim of this project is to raise the quality of the Public Realm
Economic Impact	Improved public realm supported by improved wayfinding and connectivity in the town centre will encourage significant additional footfall from both residents and visitors leading to increased spend on the high street to the benefit of local businesses and their employees
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Planning Planning permission may be required for proposed public realm improvements, depending on the scale and nature of the works. Any proposals will need to be developed in accordance with local planning policies and design guidelines, particularly where works affect highways, heritage assets, or conservation areas. Early engagement with the local planning authority will be important to confirm requirements and ensure timely delivery. Funding A significantly greater number of potential improvements to the public realm, wayfinding, and connectivity within the town centre have been identified than can be delivered through currently secured funding. Northumberland County Council (NCC) will therefore seek to secure additional match funding to enable the delivery of as many of these improvements as possible. Detailed Design Detailed design work will be required to progress the project, translating initial concepts into fully developed proposals



suitable for delivery. This will include technical drawings, specifications, and coordination across all relevant disciplines to ensure the scheme is buildable, compliant with relevant standards, and aligned with project objectives. Completion of detailed design will be a key step prior to procurement and construction.

Borderlands Town Investment Plan

Part A

Prudhoe



1. Introduction

Purpose of the BTIP

This Borderlands Town Investment Plan aims to:

- Identify those projects which are eligible for, and have been shortlisted by the town for, investment through the Borderlands Place Programme and provide a clear justification for their inclusion.
- Demonstrate a clear strategic link back to the Place Plan in the way in which the totality of activity funded by the Deal will be undertaken and combined benefits realised.
- Summarise the proposed activities for each shortlisted project, including the anticipated funding request and the timetable for these being brought forward.
- Proportionally meet the HM Treasury Green Book Guidance.

Following approval of the BTIP, individual project applications will be submitted for funding approval (BTIP Part B). These applications will follow the principles of the Green Book and will describe what will be delivered and how. For more information about the level of detail that will be required in the BTIP Part B, please check the BTIP Requirements Guidance document.

BTIP Summary

Town	Prudhoe
Local Authority Area	Northumberland County Council
BTIP Owner	Northumberland County Council
Main Contact	Rob Strettle / Ross Downey
Contact Details	Rob Strettle Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager Economic Growth and Regeneration Team Regeneration Service Economic Development and Growth Place and Regeneration Directorate Northumberland County Council County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF T: 07770642773 E: rob.strettle@northumberland.gov.uk Ross Downey Project Manager Economic Growth and Regeneration Team Regeneration Service Economic Development and Growth

	Place and Regeneration Directorate Northumberland County Council County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF T:07971511221 E: ross.downey@northumberland.gov.uk
Date Place Plan Endorsed	13 September 2023
Total BTIP Costs	£4,316,963
Borderlands Funding	£3,000,000
Key Measures of Success	The success and impact of the Prudhoe BTIP will be measured against project-specific indicators, reflecting the strategic objectives of the Borderlands Place Programme and the ambition and forecast benefits of Prudhoe's Borderlands Place Plan. Key benefits from the proposed projects incorporated into this BTIP are: Economic Growth • Increase in community and cultural events/activities • Reuse of a derelict building • New jobs created • Commercial floorspace created • Increased affordable housing provision • Improved public realm • Increased spend in the town centre Social and Cultural Participation • Increase in volunteering and community-led events • Improved perceptions of the town centre • Safeguarded and more financially sustainable community services Health and Wellbeing • Improved public health outcomes from activities and services • Increase in affordable accommodation for local residents Environmental Sustainability • Energy efficiency improvements in refurbished buildings
BTIP Approved for Submission by	Sarah McMillan, Director of Economic Development and Growth, Northumberland County Council

BTIP Projects Summary

Project Name	Lead Organisation	Total Project Costs £	Borderlands Funding Request £	BTIP Part 2 Submission to PMO	Start Date	End Date
The East Centre	Prudhoe Community Partnership	3,534,213	3,000,000	Oct-2026	Jul-2027 (subject to match funding)	Jul-2028
The Glade	Prudhoe Community Partnership	782,750	0	N/A	Mar-2027 (subject to funding)	Oct-2027
Total		4,316,963	3,000,000			

More detail on each of the projects is to be included at Annex A.

2. Project Selection Process

2.1 What scoring criteria was used to identify the projects included in the BTIP?

The partners in the Prudhoe Place Partnership Group (PPG) have followed a three-stage process to identify the projects which are most appropriate for Borderlands investment. The process is summarised below.

Stage 1: Long list of projects

The PPG agreed to select a small number of larger scale capital projects, with potential to deliver a significant economic impact on Prudhoe for Borderlands investment. Partners and organisations based in, or operating from, Prudhoe were invited to submit an Expression of Interest form for capital projects that would deliver against the vision, strategic objectives, and investment themes described in the Place Plan.

All expressions of interest received were initially checked to confirm eligibility, including:

- Alignment with the Place Plan vision
- Delivery against at least one strategic objective
- Project location is within Prudhoe

A long list of projects was considered by the PPG. A total of 5 potential schemes, all of which aligned to Place Plan objectives, were included in the Place Plan.

Stage 2: Short list of projects

Following approval of the Place Plan, a further assessment of the projects was undertaken to identify those which could be included in the BTIP. The assessment criteria included:

- **Strategic fit with Place Plan:** To ensure strong alignment with strategic objectives and investment themes.
- **Strategic fit with Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:** The extent to which projects focused on town centre / economic regeneration; address Borderlands strategic objectives and challenges; and deliver eligible interventions, outputs and outcomes.
- **Evidence of need and demand:** The extent to which there is clear evidence of need and demand for the activities / facilities to be delivered; and support for the project from local people, businesses and communities.
- **Value for Money:** To assess the potential to deliver a good volume of BTIP eligible quantified outputs and benefits in return for the total project costs / funding.
- **Deliverability:** To confirm the project is deliverable within the first 1 to 3 years of the BTIP timeframe (or by Dec 2030 at latest); low delivery risks; where risks are present there is a clear plan to address them (e.g. land / asset ownership / control; statutory consents; procurement; subsidy control; match funding status; staffing; other delivery risks and constraints).
- **Suitability:** To assess the extent to which projects are suitable for Borderlands funding or whether there are more suitable funding sources available.

- **Financial sustainability of the capital investment:** A business plan or business model in place demonstrating how the project will generate sufficient income to cover its future operating costs. In the absence of a business plan, there should be a firm commitment from a named project partner to support future financial sustainability of any assets / facilities created.

The Prudhoe PPG considered each proposal against the assessment criteria above, selecting the three projects which are concentrated in the town centre, and which could collectively provide the catalyst for town centre transformation at a Place Partnership Meeting on 15 July 2024.

Project Title	Project Assessment	
	Place Plan Project pipeline	BTIP project development stage
Town Centre Improvements - Front Street and Retail Support / The Glade Redevelopment Project	✓	✓
	✓	✓
The East Centre Project	✓	✓
Prudhoe Walled Garden	✓	
Ebenezer Chapel Regeneration for the future	✓	

Stage 3: Review of the Short List

Prior to developing the BTIP, the three shortlisted projects were given the opportunity to update their proposals, providing more detail about the project as a result of any development work. The three projects were then reviewed against the assessment criteria, to confirm continued eligibility and suitability for Borderlands funding.

The Prudhoe Community Partnership, as sponsors of all three of the shortlisted projects, advised the PPG that they wish to prioritise the East Centre and Glade projects, the two projects that best meet the assessment criteria, for the BTIP and they will look to source funding for the Front Street and Retail Support Scheme through alternative funding streams. The PPG endorsed the inclusion of both The East Centre and The Glade project proposals within Prudhoe's BTIP Part A as the proposals best meeting the assessment criteria. The PPG agreed

to allocate all of the town's Borderlands Place Programme indicative allocation (£3m) to the East Centre project and to support The Glade project in sourcing alternative funding.

It was agreed by the PPG that the Front Street & Retail Support project should be excluded from Prudhoe's BTIP Part A due to the requirement by Prudhoe Community Partnership to prioritise their other schemes for delivery and the Borderlands Place Programme being overcommitted. PCP, as the project sponsor, will continue to develop the scheme as a complementary project, should alternative funding become available through other streams.

2.2 Who was involved in the assessment? Particularly noting community involvement in the project selection process.

This BTIP builds on the Prudhoe Place Plan, which was developed in consultation with the local community in Prudhoe, and drawing on local action plans, Northumberland-wide strategic discussions, and other regional or local strategies, as well as incorporating the overarching ambitions of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Public consultation on the Place Plan, took place in 2022, with over 400 people providing feedback, including feedback from around 100 young people under the age of 16. Consultation was held via Citizen Space, and was advertised widely in the local press, and on social media, as well as being cascaded to the contact lists of all PPG members. There was strong support for the vision (91%) and the strategic objectives (93%). Lack of activities for young people was highlighted as one of the most important changes needed in Prudhoe. Other priorities for change were an enhanced culture, leisure and retail offer and town centre improvements.

The BTIP reflects these priorities, with a focus on youth provision, enhancing the town's cultural offer, and investing in town centre improvements including event infrastructure.

Since the consultation on the Place Plan was completed, regular 'drop-in' engagement events have been arranged, to ensure local residents are kept informed about progress with the BTIP and individual projects. Residents have been continuously involved in the design processes. For example, members of the Prudhoe Youth Project visited the project's architect and shared their design ideas.

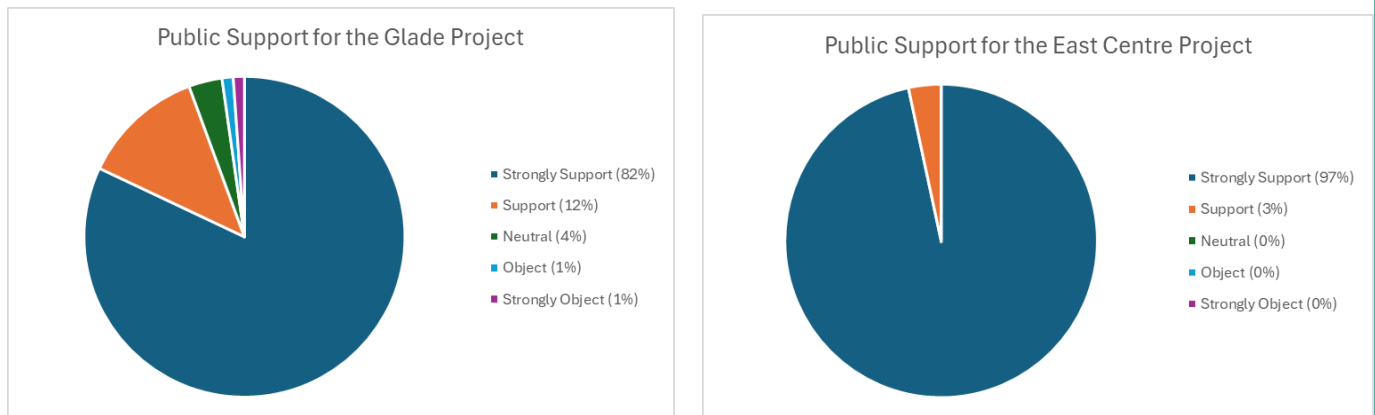
The PPG has been involved in all stages of developing the BTIP playing a key leading role in shaping and informing the strategy and delivery pipeline for the town, including confirming support for the two shortlisted projects; and commenting on drafts of the BTIP to ensure alignment with the Place Plan, and delivery against local priorities.

Eligibility at both the Place Plan and BTIP stage was assessed by NCC Borderlands Programme Team officers and the PPG, comprising county councillors, town councillors and representatives of local organisations and businesses, endorsed the prioritisation of the two proposals in this BTIP.

The project sponsor for both proposals included in this BTIP Part A, Prudhoe Community Partnership, has formed Project Advisory Groups for each proposal, and consulted with the local community including residents, businesses and key stakeholders throughout their design development.

The inclusion of the East Centre and The Glade projects in the Prudhoe BTIP Part A was discussed with residents in April 2026 at a public Drop-In event and with feedback provided via an online questionnaire. This is summarised below:

- A total of 85 members of the public attended the event, 60 over 18s and 25 under 18s.



- A total of 89 responses to the questionnaire were received.
- The East Centre received 100% support (86 strongly supporting and 3 supporting).
- The Glade received 94% support (73 strongly supporting, 11 supporting, 3 neutral, 1 objecting and 1 strongly objecting).

PPG members, key stakeholders, and residents of Prudhoe will continue to be updated on the development of the projects outlined within the BTIP. There will be further drop-in events organised prior to schemes moving into delivery, including pre-planning consultation for The Glade project as designs develop.

Figure 1 - Public support for project inclusion in Prudhoe's BTIP Part A

Figure 2 – Images from the public drop in event:



2.3 Please include a diagram, like the one below, to visually show how the BTIP projects will deliver a spread of activity across the Place Plan Strategic Objectives. (A template is available from the Borderlands PMO.)

Figure 3 – Strategic objectives/themes alignment with project proposals

		Themes/Strategic Objectives										
		Vibrant Town					Inclusive Town			Growing Town		
Projects	Borderlands funding request	Attracting people to live, work and visit	Providing an energy & vibrancy to the town centre	Creating a sense of enthusiasm towards the town centre	Adding to the cultural offer of the town centre	Offering residents & visitors a unique experience	Supporting & enhancing the strong sense of community that exists in the town	Providing opportunities for active participation by the community	Retaining and attracting young people to live & work in the town	Creating new jobs	Providing employment skills training opportunities for all ages	Supporting innovation
The East Centre	£3,000,000											
The Glade	£0											
	£3,000,000											

Key	
	Strong alignment to theme/objective
	Some alignment to theme/objective
	Little/no alignment to theme/objective

2.4 Briefly describe why any unsuccessful projects identified in the Place Plan did not make the final selection and outline any plans as to how these will be taken forward (if applicable).

The Ebenezer Chapel and Prudhoe Walled Garden proposals described in the Prudhoe Place Plan, were not selected for inclusion in the Prudhoe Borderlands Town Investment Plan. The rationale for this is primarily based on both project proposals being located outside of the town centre.

The Prudhoe Walled Garden proposal remains on Northumberland County Council's project pipeline, should relevant funding become available.

The Ebenezer Chapel has since been purchased by a private-sector housing development company. However, the original project's aims are still being pursued by the Friends of Eastwoods Park to move forward, led by the Friends of Eastwoods Park, to strengthen local connections, address the root causes of hardship, and deliver greater community resilience. Through practical support, partnerships, and resident-led initiatives, it will reduce social isolation, improve access to services and opportunities, and help people realise their potential, while taking a holistic approach to tackling economic inactivity.

The project focuses on community regeneration by building confidence, skills, and local networks so people can shape their neighbourhood. It also supports individuals and families to manage financial pressures, improve well-being, and respond to challenges collectively.

3. Management & Delivery

3.1 Please describe the roles and responsibilities of those involved in day-to-day delivery and management of the BTIP.

Role	Responsibilities	Involvement in this Programme
SRO Programme Lead – Senior Officer (NCC)	Programme Team and Programme Delivery Group Chair, Project Delivery Oversight	Chair Programme Team, maintain oversight and ensure each project is executed as per plan, budget and timescales
Programme Manager	Lead Programme Management	Manage and oversee programme management arrangements working with SRO and PM
Project Manager	Lead Project Manager developing and delivering the programme and individual projects	Day to day programme and project development and delivery, supporting project sponsors
Senior Programme Officer	Project, programme and partnership development and delivery	Assigned senior programme officer providing project, programme and partnership development and delivery support to Prudhoe
Project Officer	Project support and co-ordination	Supporting the day-to-day delivery of the project co-ordinating a range of key tasks including monitoring
Place Partnership Group	Advisory support to the programme	Meet regularly, at least quarterly, to receive updates on project progress. Offer advice and support where appropriate. The Place Partnership Group will continue following the Borderlands Place Programme, acting as a Town Regeneration Forum.
Project sponsors	Lead on individual projects and report regular updates to the PPG group	NCC will attend Project team meetings. Project team at PPG meetings. NCC supporting and monitoring of the Glade project

NCC Borderlands Programme Team will undertake the roles and responsibilities in the day-to-day management of this BTIP, as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1 – Roles and Responsibilities of NCC officers

3.2 Who has overall responsibility for ensuring the BTIP is delivered within the Place Programme timescales and in line with the relevant Place Plan Objectives?

Projects outlined within Prudhoe's BTIP Part A will be delivered by external project sponsors, and any project specific objectives/outputs will be agreed between the project sponsor and the funder through the BTIP Part B application and will be detailed within the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). The projects outlined within this BTIP will be delivered within the Place Programme timescales, and meetings will be scheduled with specific project sponsors to offer support and guidance (where applicable), in addition to the regular PPG meetings which will be ongoing on quarterly basis.

Northumberland County Council (NCC), as lead Local Authority, alongside Borderlands PMO as the funder, will oversee the delivery of the BTIP objectives. The following governance and management structures have been established to provide the mechanisms needed to ensure effective control and delivery of the project interventions. They reflect how decisions will be made regarding the delivery of the BTIP, the spending of Borderlands funds, and the monitoring and reporting of activity, outcomes, risks and issues.

NCC has significant experience in delivering and monitoring a range of publicly funded programmes and projects. The Place and Regeneration Directorate of the Council includes Economic Development and Growth (ED&G). ED&G includes the Economic Development Service and Regeneration Service.

The Council's Regeneration Service has the expertise, capacity, and established business processes in place to ensure the BTIP is delivered in a compliant and efficient manner. Within the Service a dedicated team manages town regeneration programmes – the Regeneration Team. The team and wider service have developed and managed a number of place-based programmes including the £36m Regenerating Ashington Programme, £3.4m Hexham High Streets Heritage Action Zone, and £95m Energising Blyth Programme. Assigned officers in the team form the NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team who manage the Place Programme across the county working with other teams in the service, wider Council and partners who provide key inputs and support.

The Council's Economic Development Service includes the Funding, Investment & Assurance Team, which provides the accountable body function for the Council and is highly experienced in assuring major regeneration programmes. The team also provides the accountable body function for the Borderlands Partnership.

NCC's management arrangements will include:

Borderlands Place Programme Team – part of the Council's Regeneration Service.

- This team is responsible for the development and delivery of the Borderlands Place Programme in Northumberland. The team manages a range of town regeneration projects and programmes, including the Borderlands Place Programme.
- The overall SRO for the Place Programme is the Regeneration Manager who is an experienced senior manager with a background in leading, developing and delivering economic and regeneration projects/programmes and who manages the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team.
- The SRO will work with a dedicated Project/Programme Manager and Senior Programme Officers/Project Officer from within the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team to oversee the management, development and delivery of the Borderlands Place Programme including the BTIP for Prudhoe.
- The team, which reports directly to NCC's Regeneration Programme Board on progress with Place Programme delivery in the County, is responsible for the development and delivery of the BTIP.

- Individual project sponsors apply direct to Borderlands PMO by submitting a BTIP Part B application and, if approved, are issued a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) by the Borderlands Partnership with oversight and guidance from the NCC team. The team will support the development of individual projects and project business cases, liaising with individual lead organisations as required to advise and help progress individual schemes. They will also be responsible for monitoring overall performance, ensuring programme level risk management, co-ordinating governance arrangements, supporting partnerships, communication and engagement, and co-ordinating delivery of individual schemes.
- The Team reports into NCC Programme Board on progress with Place Programme. Including development of Place Plans and BTIP Development, project & business case development liaising with project sponsors.
- Place Plans and BTIPs developed by the team are submitted to Borderlands PMO for endorsement following NCC Accountable Body checks.
- Project Applications – projects supported by the team are submitted by sponsors to Borderlands PMO for approval following NCC Place Programme Team and Accountable Body input and review – project sponsors enter into a GFA with Borderlands for Borderlands funds.

Programme management will be overseen by the NCC Place Programme Team, working closely with NCC's Funding, Investment & Assurance Team and wider Procurement and Legal teams. The key roles in the project delivery team include:

The lead Programme Manager is the key decision-maker reporting to the SRO and wider internal NCC assurance arrangements including the Programme Board. This ensures that the Place Programme aligns with the strategic goals and funding requirements. The role, alongside the input of the project manager and wider team is critical in delivering the programme and maintaining oversight of projects to ensure they are on time, on budget, and to the required standards. The team will maintain stakeholder and partnership engagement to address any emerging challenges. The programme lead approves invoices for payment ensuring spending aligns with project budget.

Funding, Investment and Assurance Team (FIAT) – within the Council's Economic Development Service, this team will support the Borderlands Place Programme Team through Accountable Body functions relating to contracting and appraisal, financial monitoring, governance and assurance. This team also provides the Accountable Body function for the Borderlands Partnership so is well placed to ensure the programme is delivered in line with requirements.

The BTIP management and control systems, led by the Programme lead and Project Manager, are as follows:

- The **Borderlands Place Programme Delivery Group** is the core group managing this Programme including the Prudhoe BTIP. The team meets on a monthly basis and manages the programme utilising a range of programme management tools and templates to manage, monitor progress and report on the overall delivery of the programme to NCC and the Borderlands Partnership. The core membership of the group

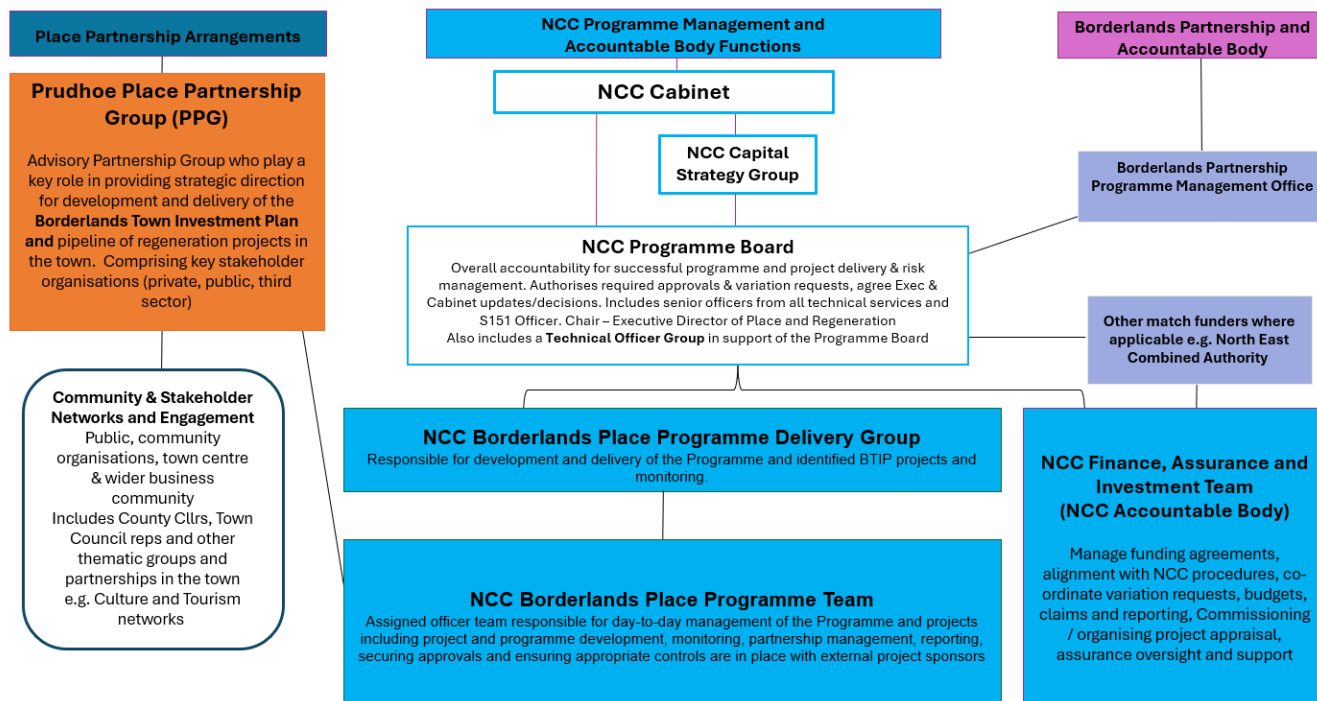
is the above Place Programme Team complemented by representatives of the above FIAT and project leads from other depts such as strategic transport, estates, and culture.

- **The Prudhoe PPG** is the advisory partnership in Prudhoe which has oversight of BTIP delivery. The PPG is facilitated, managed and attended by NCC, meets regularly and includes key stakeholders in Prudhoe including the individual project leads. The PPG provides strategic direction to support the development and delivery of the BTIP, and to develop a pipeline of projects to support delivery of the wider Place Plan. The Borderlands Place Programme Team will report progress regularly to the PPG as the BTIP is implemented liaising with individual project sponsors.
- **Regular budgetary meetings with the Finance, Investment & Assurance Team and Corporate Finance.** The programme team meet the above teams regularly looking at actual spend and profiling for each financial year, identifying any issues or concerns with funding and expenditure. The Place Programme and its budgets are set out in the Council's capital plan.
- **ED&G's Local Assurance Framework** - Details how the ED&G Service will use public money responsibly, transparently and achieve best value for money. It outlines the governance and decision-making processes for ensuring accountability, probity, transparency, legal compliance, and value for money. As the Framework is applicable to external funding, the BTIP will be managed using its mechanisms. Reports will be considered at Technical Officer's Group, Programme Board, Cabinet & Senior Leadership Team as and when appropriate to obtain required approvals as part of the decision-making process and in line with delegated authority.
- **S151 Officer** - independently assesses the sustainability, viability, and value for money of the BTIP and the individual projects regarding any sign offs.
- **Audit and Scrutiny** NCC's Audit Committee, audit and scrutiny functions provide a further level of assurance in the management of public finances, compliance with legal and regulatory responsibilities, and risk management.

3.3 Include a structure chart showing the governance arrangements for the BTIP and how delivery of the BTIP feeds into the Borderlands governance arrangements.

Figure 4 – NCC Governance and Assurance Organogram

Northumberland Borderlands Place Programme - Governance and Assurance



3.4 Please describe how you will manage any changes to the BTIP projects. What internal systems do you have in place that will then feed into the existing Borderlands Change Management approach.

Changes to the BTIP will be managed by NCC Borderlands Programme Team in liaison with lead project sponsors, the Prudhoe PPG, the NCC FIAT team and Borderlands PMO and in accordance with the Local Assurance Framework. There will also be regular and ongoing communication with the local community to ensure they are kept fully up to date with progress in delivering the BTIP, including any changes to the individual projects.

For example, following submission of the Prudhoe BTIP Part A the next step a few months later will be the submission of the East Centre project level application to Borderlands. Prior to this a gateway review will be undertaken by the NCC Borderlands Programme Team to update with any necessary changes to the BTIP including each project's financial package and delivery plans linked to the application, in consultation with all the above parties.

All project leads will receive guidance once the GFA has been issued, to ensure that they are aware of specific Borderlands requirements.

It will be clearly understood amongst all project leads that outputs and outcomes cannot be claimed without appropriate evidence to ensure all deliverables can be verified at audit.

For Change Controls in the Borderlands Deal – the Borderlands PMO will review the proposal before providing it to the FIAT with approvals required via Investment Panel/Partnership Board in line with the delegations set out for the Borderlands Deal.

Risk Management

NCC has tried and tested risk management procedures in place to manage the successful delivery of publicly funding programmes. NCC's Borderlands Place Programme Team will have overall responsibility for risk management activity, taking advice from NCC departments as required, while the individual project leads will be responsible for day-to-day project level risk management.

Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation
Failure to secure match funding. Both projects in the BTIP require match funding to support delivery. Failure to secure the match funding required by any one of the projects, could result in the project being withdrawn from the programme.	High	Prudhoe Community Partnership, as the project sponsor, will work closely with potential funders, to demonstrate alignment with funder priorities, and meet funder requirements. NCC will support all project leads to identify and apply for suitable sources of match funding.
Cost inflation and budgetary pressures. There is a risk that ongoing cost inflation and other budgetary pressures could result in the project being unable to be delivered within its approved budget allocation.	High	Northumberland County Council (NCC) will support Prudhoe Community Partnership through Value Engineering workshops should project elements be at risk of exceeding budget, to identify cost efficiencies while protecting project outcomes. Both projects will include adequate contingency allowances within their financial plans to mitigate the impact of inflationary pressures and unforeseen costs. Ongoing cost monitoring and forecasting will be undertaken throughout the project lifecycle to enable early identification and management of emerging budget risks.
Failure to secure planning consent. Both projects will require planning consent. The East Centre is currently awaiting its planning submission, and The Glade is undergoing pre-planning application advice with NCC.	Moderate	NCC will work with the projects to facilitate early discussion with the planning team, to identify and address any concerns at an early stage. Pre-app advice sought for The Glade project by the project sponsor.

Projects fail to comply with procurement requirements.	Low	NCC, as the accountable body, will provide guidance on procurement once the project has been approved for Borderlands funding and the Grant Funding Agreement has been issued.
Subsidy Control. Compliance with subsidy control creates risks to funding all costs, particularly for commercial elements	High	The project sponsor, Prudhoe Community Partnership, will seek specialist subsidy control legal advice for the East Centre project. Northumberland County Council have supported by commissioning an initial viability study and an interim viability gap appraisal based on the latest RIBA Stage 3 designs/cost plan. Guidance has been provided to the project lead to increase understanding of the maximum levels of subsidy that can be secured.
Legal constraints (land ownership, restrictive covenants, boundaries). Legal constraints create delays and financial implications to project delivery e.g. restrictive covenants and party wall agreements	Moderate	NCC has significant experience of delivering large value, complex capital projects. NCC will work closely with each project, to ensure all legal issues can be dealt with in a timely manner as part of the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process and have identified and resourced legal matters as asset owner of the East Centre.
Opposition to proposals from general public.	Very low	Consultation responses to the development of the Place Plan, and to individual projects, have been very positive to date. There will be regular and ongoing engagement with the local community throughout the development and delivery of the BTIP, to ensure continued support, and that any issues can be dealt with quickly. The PPG will continue to meet regularly, to represent the views of the local community, and ensure BTIP delivery remains aligned to Place Plan priorities.
Projects do not meet their contracted performance targets (spend, outputs, outcomes) resulting in BTIP underperformance	Low	External business plan consultants have been commissioned to support development of the business plan/operational model for the East Centre project. This will ensure that performance targets, outputs and outcomes depicted in the BTIP Part B application are realistic and have evidence to support forecasts of activity, use, costs and income and ensure practical arrangements are in place for monitoring and evaluation of the planned benefits.

4. Financial Case

BTIP Overview:

Project Name	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
The East Centre		£2,989,302	£491,898	£53,013		£3,534,213
The Glade Development		£782,750				£782,750
Total		£3,772,052	£491,898	£53,013		£4,316,963

The East Centre:

Funder	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Borderlands		£2,510,000	£450,000	£40,000		£3,000,000
Anticipated match funding (unsecured)		£479,302	£41,898	£13,013		£534,213
Total		£2,989,302	£491,898	£53,013		£3,534,213

The Glade:

Funder	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Borderlands	-	-	-	-	-	£0
Anticipated match funding (unsecured)	-	£782,750	-	-	-	£782,750
Total	-	£782,750	-	-	-	£782,750

Additional comments:

NCC will continue to support the Project Sponsor, PCP, in delivering their fundraising strategy by identifying and notifying them of suitable grant opportunities, as well as holding regular meetings to assess where additional support can be provided.

In addition, NCC has commissioned external Business Plan Consultants to work with the Project Sponsor on the East Centre project. This support is intended to enhance their existing business plan and fundraising strategy, forming a key part of the wider project workstream.

5. Demonstrating Collective Impact

What does good look like?

5.1 Please provide a list of key measures of success for the combined impact of the BTIP.
What will good look like e.g. increase in visitor numbers, opportunities to create new businesses, increased footfall, increased local activities and spend, improved health outcomes, improved environmental assets.

1. An increase in training and learning activities delivered within the town
2. Bringing a vacant building back into use
3. Increased use of public spaces within the town centre
4. Opportunities for new businesses
5. Increased access to affordable housing for the local community
6. An increase in community and cultural events/activities delivered in the town centre
7. Increased engagement opportunities with local youth groups via the East Centre project

5.2 Please describe who will benefit from the BTIP projects and how.

The primary beneficiaries of the reimagining of the East Centre will be the residents, local businesses and the young people supported by the Prudhoe Youth Project. They will benefit directly through:

- New bookable community facilities
- Bookable meeting and training spaces within the town centre
- Provision of a new workshop area
- One new commercial retail unit
- Three affordable living housing units (2x one-bedroom apartments, and 1x two-bedroom apartment)

Key beneficiaries for the East Centre:

Young people in the town (primary beneficiaries)

- Existing 400 registered members, rising to an estimated 600 after 1 year and 1,000 after 5 years
- Wider reach of around 1,200 young people engaged through schools and outreach
- Increased session capacity (from 20–30 up to 40–50+ per session)

Young people with additional needs

- Approximately 20% of members with special educational needs
- Dedicated and popular SEN provision attracting attendees from outside the town

Disadvantaged young people

- Those facing social and economic barriers, who will benefit from easier, more consistent access to a single, permanent location

Youth workforce and trainees

- Existing team of youth workers (110+ hours/week)
- New opportunities for apprentices, trainee youth workers, and support staff as the centre expands

Wider community

- Increased youth engagement, improved wellbeing, and a stronger, more accessible community resource through the East Centre development

Key beneficiaries for the Glade:

The improvements to The Glade will benefit all town centre users through enhanced public realm and space to host cultural and community events. This will enable the continuation of existing town events, increase animation in the town centre and provide new public space to deliver new events throughout the year, with the creation of a dedicated performance area, improved infrastructure and seating.

Monitoring

5.3 Please describe what systems are in place to monitor the collective impact of the BTIP projects.

The NCC Borderlands Place Programme Team will be responsible for the monitoring of the collective outputs, outcomes and impacts delivered by the projects included in the BTIP. Individual projects will report on progress to the Borderlands Partnership and NCC who will provide regular programme updates to the Prudhoe PPG, including progress towards delivery milestones, as well as the achievement of output, outcome, and impact targets. NCC will provide support and advice to the projects if required, to address issues of under or over-performance, and support achievement of key targets.

Each individual project seeking Borderlands funding will submit a project level application to the Borderlands Partnership, which if successful will be issued with a grant funding agreement signed by NCC as the Accountable Body for the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal in England, which will contract the target outputs, outcomes and impacts to be achieved. Performance against targets will be monitored quarterly, with each project lead required to submit progress reports and grant claims for eligible spend setting out the achievement of key deliverables to the PMO. NCC's Programme Team will provide regular updates to the Prudhoe PPG including facilitating project sponsor delivered presentations and information.

The physical outputs contracted to be delivered by the BTIP projects (e.g. floorspace created; buildings brought back into use) will be monitored throughout the construction phase and evidenced through photographs and reports provided by the relevant capital project manager. The longer-term outcomes of the projects e.g. jobs created, training/learning activities created, will be monitored and reported on by the relevant project lead until the end of the monitoring period.

The Economic Development and Regeneration Team will be responsible for monitoring project performance, and this will be led by the Programme Manager, in liaison with the Borderlands PMO.

A range of methods will be used by the project sponsor, and supported by NCC to monitor overall performance of the BTIP including;

- Project sponsor data capturing the number and type of new cultural events and activities taking place in the town and the number of attendees
- Usage data for new facilities created including door sensor(s) for visitor numbers and annual income and expenditure reports as appropriate
- Business and community surveys
- Consultation and engagement events with residents to assess changing perceptions
- Collation of progress reporting on outputs and outcomes verifying the number of jobs, work placements, volunteer places, and training opportunities created by the supported projects
- Measured plan and photographs to support area of public realm improved

5.4 Have appropriate baselines been established to support the evaluation process?

The NCC Programme Delivery Team will work with individual project sponsors to identify existing baselines as appropriate, where increases are being funded. This includes current levels of learning opportunities and youth activities available in the town centre which will be required to establish additionality of activities and facilities. The Council undertake town centre monitoring as and when funding is available. In a Prudhoe context this will provide a baseline for vacancy rates and footfall that can inform the project level outputs. Each project will need to develop their approach to monitoring and evaluation against the Borderlands Place Programme outputs framework and incorporate this into the funding bid.

Key baseline indicators include:

Footfall

- The average footfall count on the Weekday in 2022 was 65 persons per ten minutes in Prudhoe in Spring/ Early Summer 2022, dropping to 33 persons per ten minutes on the Saturday.
- The Weekday average footfall count in Prudhoe in Autumn 2022 was 53 persons per ten minutes, increasing to 76 persons per ten minutes on the Saturday.

Vacancy rate

The vacancy rate in Prudhoe Town Centre is 10.6%

Evaluation

5.5 Please outline how and when you plan to evaluate the performance of the BTIP.

The NCC Borderlands Programme Team, in partnership with the PMO, will assess the impact and effectiveness of the projects and overall BTIP at key stages and post completion. It is anticipated that the projects outlined in this BTIP could start as early as July 2027, subject to securing the necessary match funding to enable delivery. Performance of the BTIP will commence through project delivery and continue post completion of the BTIP,

BTIP delivery is expected to take place between 2027 and 2028, aligned with individual project programmes (subject to obtaining match funding to commence project delivery). The East Centre is expected to complete in Summer 2028, and the Glade in Autumn 2027. Interim monitoring and learning will take place throughout delivery, with a formal programme level evaluation expected to take place following completion of the final BTIP project.

This will include:

- Reviewing progress against and overall achievement of the benefits planned for each project, with commentary on changes approved by the Borderlands Programme
- Data on outputs and outcomes as provided by the Borderlands PMO
- The outcome of consultations and surveys with PPG members, project sponsors and stakeholders to assess perception change
- Analysis of survey responses from businesses, visitors and residents
- Collation of press articles and social media posts capturing milestones and success eg; contractor appointed, East Centre opening
- Input from the project sponsor on lessons learned and guidance that can be provided to other project leads

5.6 Please describe how Sustainable & Inclusive Growth will be evaluated at a BTIP level.

The project sponsor, Prudhoe Community Partnership, will liaise with the project funder (Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal) to agree how Sustainable and Inclusive Growth will be evaluated during the BTIP Part B application.

Annex A – BTIP Project Summaries

Please complete the following table for each BTIP project.

Prudhoe East Centre

Lead Delivery Organisation	Prudhoe Community Partnership (PCP)
Total Project Costs	£3,534,213 (revised costs 30/03/26)
Borderlands Funding Requested	£3,000,000
Potential Match Funding	£534,213
Anticipated Impacts	• Improved facilities and services for young people • Affordable housing for local people • Increased support for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) • Increased employment opportunities • Increased and improved training rooms and learning opportunities within the town centre • Increased footfall to the town centre to specifically utilise the building and activities • Increased animation of the high street as a vacant site is brought back into use
Start Date	July 2027 (approximately)
End Date	July 2028 (approximately)
Deliverability	RIBA Accredited Architects and Conservation Architect Mosedale Gillatt have provided architectural drawings approved by The East Centre Advisory Group; these have been submitted for pre-planning and have now been submitted for full planning permission. There have been multiple public consultations during 2025 and throughout March 2026, PCP have held a series of public information events in a variety of venues throughout the town. There is a well-established project team lead by PCP and the Prudhoe Youth Project (PYP), who have contributed financially to the design and development costs.

The wider East Centre Project Advisory Group includes local people from a wide range of interests, including officers from NCC, local elected members, Prudhoe Town Council Councillors, local retailers, housing groups and community groups.

The designs are now at RIBA3/4 level and have been submitted to NCC for planning permission. Submission date: 17 March 2026.

Project Description

The project sees the demolition and new build construction with the retention and conservation of a section of the existing buildings at The East Centre site to create a new youth and community facility for Prudhoe and the surrounding area. This will provide a base for PYP providing a youth centre, a community space with associated meeting and staff spaces, business and training units, an arts and crafts workshop, a community-led retail unit as well as three residential units (2x one bedroom flats and 1x two bedroom flat). External works and landscaping complete the works.

The building is currently owned by NCC and is subject to a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) to PCP on a long-term lease. The CAT application form has been approved in principle by the Council.

The East Centre project is an opportunity to regenerate Prudhoe town centre through the creation of crucial facilities on a 'gateway site' - an important entrance point to the town.

The central element of the project is to create a new youth and community centre, revitalising a dilapidated Victorian school. The East Centre project will give young people aged 8 to 19 years, and children with additional support needs (8 – 24yrs), an environment in which to thrive.

Specifically, the East Centre project will create:

- A large multi-use centre for youth and community activities
- Multi-use spaces/units for a variety of health, training and community development activities
- Small / medium rooms for youth work, skills and learning
- Three affordable housing units for local residents
- A new retail space
- A new workshop
- Outdoor green space for the general public and more private outdoor space for children
- A strong, welcoming visual impression from Front Street
- Low / renewable energy features, to reduce running costs and environmental impact

The youth and community centre would give the town and its young people an 'open door' to accessing youth worker support as and when they require it. PYP currently has a team of 9 youth workers which totals over 110 hours per week of youth work support, guidance and information.

PYP currently employs 2 apprentices, with this building we would require more trainee youth workers and support staff.

PYP currently runs 11 weekly sessions in 5 different venues around the town. Many parents and young people need reminding which building PYP are in on any particular day. This is a barrier to participation. With a permanent home PYP will increase its presence within the town, access will become simpler and easier especially for those who experience social and economic disadvantage.

PYP has 400 registered members. These members attend their youth provision in the form of youth clubs, projects, activities, trips and residentials. PYP work with around 1200 young people through schools, PYP provide information and guidance in assemblies, outreach work at lunch times and weekly health drop-in sessions at 2 of Prudhoe's local schools. PYP know that 20% of our registered members have additional needs and their special educational needs group is popular, young people travel from outside Prudhoe to attend these sessions.

The new East Centre development as PYP's base for all youth provision, will dramatically increase their outreach. It is anticipated that PYP would see an increase in numbers from around 20-30 to 40-50 per session. The East, when it was a thriving youth centre a decade ago, could easily see 50+ young people attend one session. PYP anticipate that after 1 year of the centre being open, will have 600 registered members which will rise to 1000 registered members after 5 years.

The new community centre, whilst focussed on young people, will provide meeting and leisure space for the whole community. The project design incorporates:

1. Training / business units assets to promote jobs and economic regeneration. A retail unit and workshop are also included in the design and these assets, too, will enhance the economic prosperity of the town.
2. Three units of affordable accommodation are built into the design, offering the town centre a better mix of retail, leisure and housing.
3. New outdoor space for social interaction, community events, markets and activities. This will give Prudhoe town centre a new arena for vibrant social and economic activity. All these elements, combined as a carefully considered package will have a significant impact on the town's future success.

Each element of the site development is important, as each addresses a local need and helps reshape the town centre's use and purpose. However, the accommodation element has the added importance of generating income which can be used to 'cross-subsidise' other, marginally profitable elements, particularly the community hall. Essentially, the community led housing is key to overall project viability.

Development proposals are based on an assessment of community needs, particularly the needs of younger people living in Prudhoe. PCP has considered the specific need for affordable accommodation, specialist retail space and small business units. PCP have embraced the findings and recommendations of the High Street Task Force teams who have visited the town.

Regarding housing needs, insights were gathered on rental market trends, preferred property types, and competitive dynamics in the Prudhoe area. The most in-demand property type is the 2-bedroom, 1 bathroom layout, appealing to a diverse tenant demographic, including those seeking shared accommodation. Consultation with the County Council Homefinder service confirmed a high demand for flatted accommodation in central Prudhoe, across a wide range of population categories. PCP's preferred option is to create 2x one bed, (two person homes) and 1x two bed, (three-person home).

The East Centre regeneration project is designed to make a significant impact on Prudhoe town centre. The design will bring a gateway site back into use supporting the resilience of the town centre overall diversifying the offer alongside retail, other community services and leisure nearby and provide new 'interlocking' facilities and opportunities particularly for young people including much needed affordable housing.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Seek match funding opportunities for funding gap and prepare grant application forms	May 2026 onwards
Plans receive approval – Planning permission granted	June/July 2026
Submission of BTIP Part B – Project specific application	September 2026
Appoint design team, undertake site investigations, extinguish any planning conditions, develop RIBA 4 technical design and cost report, issue selection questionnaire for potential contractors, prepare tender documents (Bill of Quantities, detailed drawings and specifications) and 'pre-emptive' VE exercise in case tender returns are higher than anticipated	September 2026 – February 2027
Anticipated approval of BTIP Part B - Project specific application	December 2026
Community Asset Transfer (CAT) and Lease for The East Centre	Winter - 2026
Issue tenders to contractors, assess tender returns and produce a tender report, undertake VE exercise if required, client to select and appoint successful contractor	March- May 2027
Preparation of construction contract, mobilisation period for contractor, pre-Start Meeting in advance of works starting on site.	June – July 2027
Construction works start on site for 52 weeks	July/ August 2027

Place Plan Alignment

Detail which of the Place Plan Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why.

Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives

SO1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in.

The East Centre will provide a town centre base for the local community and community organisations to support, develop and grow the education base, the employability base and the community spirit for residents of all ages and backgrounds

SO2: Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.

The East Centre will provide a town centre base for the local community and community organisations to support, develop and grow the education and employability base of the town. Training and business units, a retail unit craft workshop, and an outdoor space for markets all combine to provide and promote jobs and economic regeneration. The East Centre meets the “Supporting business, innovation and skills” Investment Theme which underpins the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

SO3: Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres.

The East Centre Project will create a new youth and community centre, providing meeting and leisure space for the whole community. Training and business units, a retail unit craft workshop, and an outdoor space for markets all combine to provide residents and visitors an opportunity to spend time and money in the town centre.

SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation.

The East Centre will provide a town centre base for new training and business units, a retail unit craft workshop, and an outdoor space for markets which all combine to provide and promote jobs and economic regeneration. The East Centre meets the “Supporting business, innovation and skills” Investment Theme which underpins the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

SO5: Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres

3 units of affordable accommodation are built into the design of The East Centre.

SO6: Retain and increase the working age population in towns

The East Centre will provide a town centre base for new training and business units, a retail unit craft workshop, and an outdoor space for markets which all combine to retain and increase the working age population in Prudhoe. The East

Centre meets the “Supporting business, innovation and skills” Investment Theme which underpins the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

S07: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres

The East Centre Project aims for sustainable, low energy to be a feature of design, thus meeting the “Encouraging green growth” Investment Theme which underpins the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. The project also raises the quality of the built environment, bringing a build in a state of disrepair back into community use.

Moreover, the project fits with the aims of PCP and the key users of the new facilities. It is the primary objective of the PCP strategy and action plan. The results of the Borderlands Town Investment survey were published in 2022. There were 424 responses, and under-19s respond in large numbers (40% of respondents). People of all ages express a strong opinion that much better youth facilities and activities are needed in Prudhoe (the 2nd highest priority after tackling crime and anti-social behaviour).

Place Programme Alignment

Detail which of the Place Programme Strategic Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why.

Borderlands Place Plan Themes/Objectives

Vibrant Town: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Prudhoe to boost the visitor economy, encouraging new uses of existing properties to attract investment, increase footfall, dwell time and spend from residents and visitors.

A mixed development is proposed, incorporating creative leisure opportunities, training and skills, retail and accommodation in a central location. This mix, PCP believe, adds to the general health, well-being and vibrancy of the town.

Inclusive Town: Collaborate with local communities, including young people, to imagine and then build a long-term future for the town they live in. Prioritise improvements to leisure, community, culture and heritage facilities and services by working in partnership to provide residents with wider opportunities to get active, learn, participate and enjoy their local town.

	The project is targeted for young people, some of whom have additional support needs. There will be new opportunities for training / skilling opportunities for these disadvantaged local-residents and the general population. The facilities will be fully accessible, including for those with protected characteristics. Growing Town: Create and safeguard employment in Prudhoe capitalising on innovation as a driver for growth. Work in partnership to provide residents including young people with the opportunity to be part of a skilled workforce with a sustainable future in the town and North East economy. This project will deliver economic growth in the Borderlands. This will include creating new employment opportunities at a new artisan retail outlet, a workshop and community centre. PCP expect that the venue will attract new businesses to the town centre. The project will provide a venue for training and support which adds to community strength and resilience.
Economic Impact	It is anticipated that The East Centre will create the following economic opportunities: • Jobs will be created to develop and run the facilities • The new community facilities will be used for training and skills, some targeted at more disadvantaged groups • New accessible, affordable housing will be available • Youth provision will be greatly improved, reducing problems often associated with young people, such as anti-social behaviour • The project will be an important contribution to the image and use of Prudhoe town centre, making it more vibrant and attractive.
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Economic Dependencies - the funding challenges, Grant deadlines can have strict deadlines, finding grants and or match funding within the correct timescales will be challenging, Borderlands funding is up to £3m however Prudhoe has submitted 2 significant projects totalling 4.1m, both these projects are a crucial element of Prudhoe's regeneration. PCP, with support from NCC, will identify potential match funders to fill the funding shortfall. Maintenance liabilities - while capital grants pay for the build the ongoing maintenance and management of the space will have an ongoing cost, it's anticipated that this will be a collective responsibility of both the Prudhoe Community Partnership and the Prudhoe Youth Project, along with

Prudhoe Town Council and volunteer groups.

Social and Environmental Dependencies

Biodiversity net gain, under current UK law the East Centre must deliver a 10% increase in biodiversity, this will be easily achieved given the plans for the open areas with trees significant landscaping which is very much a part of the design.

Community Mandate

The East Centre development has been developed in collaboration with the local community, this is being achieved through multiple public consultations and information events using a variety of different venues, architectural drawings have been made available along with information sheets. A local advisory group was set up to support communication and regularly gather feedback, its these activities that have shaped the project to date. The project has been in the planning since 2015.

The Glade

Lead Delivery Organisation	Prudhoe Community Partnership (PCP)
Total Project Costs	£782.7k (including contingency)
Borderlands Funding Requested	£0
Potential Match Funding	Currently being explored
Anticipated Impacts	The Glade project anticipates having the following impacts for the town: • Increase the number of cultural and community events within the town centre • Increase dwell time within a central site on Front Street • Increase visitor numbers to the town, having a positive economic impact on local businesses and services • Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents
Start Date	May 2027 (subject to securing match funding)
End Date	October 2027
Deliverability	RIBA Accredited Architects and Conservation Architect Mosedale Gillatt have provided architectural drawings approved by The Glade Advisory Group; these have since been submitted as a pre planning application. There have been multiple public consultations during 2025 and throughout March 2026, PCP will be holding public information events in a variety of venues throughout the town. There is a well-established project team lead by PCP and the Prudhoe Town Council who have contributed financially to the design and development costs, the wider Advisory Group includes local people from a wide range of interests, including musicians, theatrical groups, space for nature landscape and gardening group, local business owners the history society and Prudhoe & District Veterans club, in addition to elected members and NCC officers.
Project Description	

The Glade site located on Front Street Prudhoe will form an important part of the growth and regeneration of the town centre, having public spaces is becoming increasingly important not only providing space for social interaction which contributes to a sense of well-being, it encourages the development and desirability of Prudhoe's community. Investment in The Glade can create prosperity and encourage economic activity while providing an improved quality of life, especially for those without the benefit of outdoor space at home. The site will include a performance space for the many local musicians, choirs, and theatre groups, providing a dedicated cultural venue not currently available within the town.

The Glade can also act as a town square for local markets and many other events and activities, it complements the already developed Grove Pocket Park on Front Street created May 2021, The Glade's redevelopment creates a second social space on Front Street, which can attract tourism, support the local economy, improve public health and provide cultural opportunities, all of which will have a significant impact on the success of the town. The Glade will therefore have multiple purposes including musical events, theatrical performance, local makers markets, gardening and landscaping activities and educational events, while providing a space for social interactions in a safe and welcoming environment, it will be used for Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Lights switch on, local artisan markets and many other annual community gatherings and events.

The Glade will provide multiple opportunities for leisure activities, contributes to arts and culture, and provides residents with wider opportunities to get active by getting involved, participating and volunteering with various community organisations. Offers an excellent platform for young people to showcase their talent with music and theatrical performances. There will be educational, exercise and social support activities. The Prudhoe Youth Project will be actively involved in shaping how The Glade space can be used, alongside our arts and cultural groups, the gardening community, the history society and many other community organisations.

The redevelopment of The Glade will be a long-term capital project providing benefits for many years to come, its development will drive significant economic growth; while providing immeasurable benefits to people and their wellbeing, it brings communities together while making Prudhoe town an attractive investment opportunity for new and innovative businesses.

The Glade will therefore contribute to increased revenue for the town, through encouraging local shopping, increased visitor numbers and the development of new business opportunities.

The Glade redevelopment supports having access to essential services, it supports equality of opportunity empowering people through activities and events, it's an investment in human capital and the physical infrastructure, creating and enabling an environment for competition and trade.

It improves and strengthens the financial viability of the retail and business community. It provides a pleasant space for people without access to outdoor space providing opportunities for social interaction and involvement in various activities.

The Glade will provide multiple opportunities to underserved people within the community and therefore a significant contributor to inclusive economic growth.

The Glade serves as a neutral space where neighbours run into each other naturally, it also becomes the background for life's milestones, parades, Christmas tree lighting and local festivals. It's one of the few places where kids, teens and seniors occupy the same space simultaneously fostering a stronger sense of community safety and mentorship.

Having amenities around The Glade will encourage people to park once and walk, promoting physical activity. In emergencies The Glade will provide a clear, known staging area for the community to gather or receive information.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Pre -Planning Application submitted	March 2026
Seek match funding opportunities for funding gap and prepare grant application forms	May 2026 onwards
Full Planning Application submitted	TBC
Appointment of Architects	TBC
Appointment of project manager	TBC
Onsite work commences (subject to funding)	Est May 2027

Place Plan Alignment

Detail which of the Place Plan Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why.

Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives

SO1: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in.

Improved public realm and the provision of opportunities to enhance the community spirit for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

SO2: Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.

Attractive public realm and improved connectivity between the town's main supermarket and its main street will encourage future businesses to the high street.

SO3: Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres.

Improved public realm will increase footfall and dwell time. Events around the new performance area will attract more visitors to the town.

SO4: Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation.

Increased footfall and dwell time around The Glade area will increase spend along the high street safeguarding retail employment.

SO7: Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres

Current plans include the enhancement of the physical landscape of an existing open site in the heart of Prudhoe's Front Street. This will include extensive hard and soft

landscaping works to create a new pocket park, for residents and visitors to enjoy throughout the year.

Place Programme Alignment

Detail which of the Place Programme Strategic Objectives the project aligns with and include a brief explanation as to why.

Targeted at economic regeneration (Vibrant Town)

The Glade will improve the mix of uses in the town centre bringing footfall and vitality back, it provides a pleasant and safe environment for people to explore on foot and repurposes what is currently unwelcoming space, a great example of this was the development of the Grove Pocket Park previously an unofficial and very unattractive car park, now an inviting and vibrant space with trees, shrubs and artwork. The Glade a public realm in which commerce, social interaction and leisure time activities mix easily in an attractive, pedestrian friendly outdoor setting. People will be drawn by the simple pleasure of being there.

Relates to capital investment (Vibrant Town)

The redevelopment of The Glade will be a long-term capital project providing benefits for many years to come, its development will drive significant economic growth; while providing immeasurable benefits to people and their wellbeing, it brings communities together while making Prudhoe town an attractive investment opportunity for new and innovative businesses. The Glade will therefore contribute to increased revenue for the town, through encouraging local shopping, increased visitor numbers and the development of new business opportunities.

Supports inclusive economic growth (Vibrant and Working Town)

The Glade redevelopment supports having access to essential services, it supports equality of opportunity empowering people through activities and events, it's an investment in human capital and the physical infrastructure, creating and enabling an environment for everyone to use.

It improves and strengthens the financial viability of the retail and business community within the town. It provides a pleasant space for people without access to outdoor space providing opportunities for social interaction and involvement in various activities, it provides access to various organisations. The Glade

will provide multiple opportunities to underserved people within the community and become a significant contributor to inclusive economic growth.

Remediation of vacant space (Inclusive and Vibrant Town)

The Glade space is currently well underutilised and does little to contribute to the local economy or to the health and wellbeing of the community, it provides little for the underprivileged, vulnerable and poor. This project will breathe new life and vitality into the space enabling and encouraging events, becoming a focal point for the arts and culture providing many opportunities for people of all ages to become empowered and active in their communities, opening doors for those without access to outdoor space.

Development of arts and culture, visitor economy, community and skills and educational facilities (Vibrant Town)

The Glade development is essentially a project providing an arts and cultural venue, a stage for showcasing arts, music and theatrical performances, it will drive the local economy through the development of regular markets and increased footfall within the town centre, it will host cultural and educational activities across a range of subjects and play an important role in supporting Prudhoe Youth Project. Alongside Prudhoe's annual Music by Riverside event held every year, The Glade will further encourage visitor numbers to the town, it creates a collective sense of pride and belonging to the community strengthening social cohesion.

It's also important to note that having a dedicated venue for arts and culture will also help retain local businesses and so play an important role in the economic revitalization of the town.

Economic Impact

The Glade will act as a central hub for economic activity fostering increased footfall from community and cultural events, higher property values and improved business retention, by providing a dedicated space for community events, markets, and socialising, it will transform the existing space to an active vibrant location that attracts residents, tourists and investment.

Increased Footfall and Consumer Spending

Attracts visitors directly increasing customer footfall for the surrounding retail community, the space can host a variety of commercially focused activities that will encourage spending by

both residents and visitors. It provides a low-cost venue for farmers markets, craft fairs and pop-up shops. An attractive outdoor space gives visitors a reason to stop and spend rather than just driving through.

It provides a low barrier to entry for micro-businesses, allowing businesses to test the market without the high overheads of a permanent storefront. Businesses adjacent to The Glade will see spikes in revenue during events and activities through “spill over” foot traffic.

Vacancy reduction

The Glade development with strong placemaking can contribute to a reduction in vacancy rates across the high street as it contributes to making Front Street a desirable place to visit, shop, and encourage new investment.

Boost Property values

Proximity to high quality public spaces is highly desirable, homes and commercial properties located near public spaces will command higher values which in turn increase tax revenue. There are multiple private residencies and commercial properties along Front Street which will benefit.

2016-2024 has seen 225 new homes built and occupied with a forecast 354 homes scheduled for delivery 2024 -2029. The surge in new homes has 2 main factors, firstly Prudhoe town is in high demand as a location within easy reach of the A69, it also has excellent rail links to Newcastle, there has also been infrastructure developments including the retail space at low Prudhoe. The vast majority of new builds (62%) are detached houses, reflecting the “family home” focus of developers.

This will inevitably increase footfall to Prudhoe town contributing to its economic growth.

Diversification

As traditional retailing has shifted online, Prudhoe towns survival must be in offering experiences, The Glade will enable those experiences through festivals, performances, craft fairs, makers-markets and much more, creating a “destination value” encouraging regional tourists and visitors who will all spend.

Key Constraints / Dependencies

Economic Dependencies- the funding challenges

Grants can have strict deadlines, finding grants and or match funding within the correct timescales will be challenging, Borderlands funding is up to £3m however Prudhoe has

submitted 2 significant projects totalling 4.1m, both these projects are a crucial element of Prudhoe's regeneration. The PCP is working hard to identify match funding and will market the physical project while also focusing on how funds can be granted for projects contributing to the environment including waste reduction reducing carbon emissions and how The Glade can contribute to reducing social isolation, PCP will look at National Lottery, Private trusts and crowdfunding. Maintenance liabilities- while capital grants pay for the build the ongoing maintenance and management of the space will have an ongoing cost, it's anticipated that this will be a collective responsibility of both the Town Council and the PCP, along with volunteer groups like Space for Nature, the Veterans Society and Prudhoe's historical groups.

Management of the Space

Managing The Glade space is about curation, The Glade is the "front room" of the community it needs to feel safe and economically productive to avoid becoming a hollow space, PCP will establish a clear governance structure which will include representatives from the PCP and the Prudhoe Town Council. PCP will also encourage engagement from the local business community.

There will be a focus on rapid response cleaning, The Glade will have a durable infrastructure including "plug and Play" power points and integrated tie down points for gazebos. The PCP will explore the implementation of a "Town Square" charter which outlines quiet hours, loading times for traders and clean up responsibilities.

Social and Environmental Dependencies

Biodiversity net gain, under current UK law The Glade must deliver a 10% increase in biodiversity, this will be easily achieved given the existing trees and planting together with the significant landscaping which is very much a part of the design adding more trees planters' shrubs.

Community Mandate

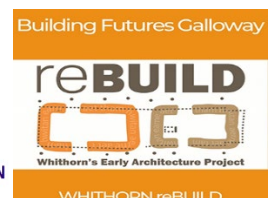
The Glade development must be done in collaboration with the local community, this is being achieved through multiple public consultations and information events using a variety of different venues, architectural drawings have been made available along with information sheets. A local advisory group was set up to support communication and regularly gather feedback, its these activities that have shaped the project to date.

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Borderlands Town Investment Plan

Part A

The Whithorn Place Plan



1. Introduction

Purpose of the BTIP

This Borderlands Town Investment Plan aims to:

- Identify those projects which are eligible for, and have been shortlisted by the town for, investment through the Borderlands Place Programme and provide a clear justification for their inclusion.
- Demonstrate a clear strategic link back to the Place Plan in the way in which the totality of activity funded by the Deal will be undertaken and combined benefits realised.
- Summarise the proposed activities for each shortlisted project, including the anticipated funding request and the timetable for these being brought forward.
- Proportionally meet the HM Treasury Green Book Guidance.

Following approval of the BTIP, individual project applications will be submitted for funding approval (BTIP Part B). These applications will follow the principles of the Green Book and will describe what will be delivered and how. For more information about the level of detail that will be required in the BTIP Part B, please check the BTIP Requirements Guidance document.

BTIP Summary

Town	Whithorn
Local Authority Area	Dumfries and Galloway
BTIP Owner	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Main Contact	Chris Churms, Economic Development
Contact Details	Chris.Churms@dumgal.gov.uk
Date Place Plan Endorsed	23 June 2025
Total BTIP Costs	£3.465m
Borderlands Funding	£2.55m
Key Measures of Success	• Increased town centre footfall • Increased Visitor Dwell time and spend • Increased local spend • Creation of new jobs, specialist training opportunities and career pathways • New businesses opening / reduced vacancies in the town centre • Improved Community resilience • Increase volunteering activities and participation in local cultural activities • Improved perceptions of the town centre

	• Increased uptake in active travel • Improved public realm
BTIP Approved for Submission by	Oliver Shimell, Interim Strategic Economic Investment Manager

BTIP Projects Summary

Project Name	Lead Organisation	Total Project Costs £	Borderlands Funding Request £	DGC Funding	BTIP Part B Submission to PMO	Start Date	End Date
1. South Machars Community Centre Evolution	South Machers Community Association	1,000,000	775,000	125,000	06 2027	12 2027	12 2028
2. Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall	Building Futures Galloway	1,100,000	900,000		01 2027	06 2027	12 2029
3. Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster	Whithorn Trust	615,000	500,000		01 2027	06 2027	03 2030
4. Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn	Dumfries & Galloway Council	750,000	375,000	125,000	04 2027	10 2027	06 2028
Total		£3,465,000	£2,550,000	£250,000			

More detail on each of the projects is to be included at Annex A.

2. Project Selection Process

2.1 What scoring criteria was used to identify the projects included in the BTIP?

The scoring criteria applied followed the guidance set out in HM Treasury's Green Book on investment appraisal in the public sector. This guidance suggests that "long-list analysis and selection of the shortlist must review the options in a workshop that includes key experts and stakeholders (to) bring together the results of research, advice of experts, and knowledge of stakeholders." The Green Book then goes on to state that "the purpose of long-list appraisal is to narrow down possible options to identify an optimum shortlist of viable options for detailed appraisal". In the Green Book framework, long-listed options are sifted by means of a qualitative (multi-criteria) analysis to arrive at a short-list of options which are then subject to more detailed quantitative cost-benefit analysis, in which the costs and benefits of each of the short-listed options are identified and valued. All options are compared to a 'Business as Usual' baseline involving a continuation of current arrangements – here, this would be a "no BTIP" scenario, involving no investment in any of the six Whithorn Place Plan projects.

Whithorn Place Plan & Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Objectives

The Whithorn Place Plan is structured to fall under five guiding principles:

1. Community Cohesion
2. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit
3. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets
4. Alleviating Rural Isolation
5. Cost of Living

Within this structure, the initiatives of the Place Plan are arranged within three major themes:

1. Community Safeguarding and Enrichment
2. A Vibrant Town Centre
3. Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets

In total there are 19 individual initiatives within the Place Plan with six projects prioritised to be progressed via the Borderlands Place Programme- known as the BTIP projects.

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, under which the Place Programme sits, includes a commitment to delivering inclusive and sustainable growth. The aim is to overcome the 3 BIG challenges that hold the Borderlands back from achieving its potential:

- Narrowing the productivity gap
- Increasing the working age population
- Delivering inclusive growth

The Place Plan has been prepared in the context of the Deal, with the vision, investment themes and strategic objectives all able to be linked back to the 3 BIG challenges. All initiatives within the plan can be seen matched against the investment objectives. The seven Strategic Objectives (SO) of the Borderlands Place Programme are:

1. Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in, firmly in partnership with local, regional and national governments.
2. Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.
3. Maintain and increase the number of visitors who spend time and money in our towns and town centres, increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season.
4. Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation, including education and training opportunities.
5. Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres.
6. Retain and increase our working age population.
7. Maintain and raise the standard of the physical environment in our towns and town centres

The Selection Process

The consultant team acted as facilitators in bringing together the project sponsors and community representatives in an assessment panel to coproduce the initial appraisal and ranking of the six place plan projects against the three Treasury Green Book criteria of Desirability, Achievability and Viability. The process was presented in a simple multi criteria analysis format with a maximum of 5 points allocated to each criterion. The scoring process was undertaken with the panel across a series of online workshops and briefings during late February and March 2026. The consultant team prepared a presentation on the background to the six projects, highlighting detail around their regeneration impacts and benefits and the panel participants were invited to score the individual projects collectively against the three 'green book' criteria.

The three criteria set out in HM Treasury's Value for Money guidance are as follows:

- **Desirability:** To what extent do the individual projects meet the aspirations of the Place Plan, the BTIP Programme Delivery Group (PDG) and other stakeholders for the town's future development? How well are they aligned to the Borderlands Growth Deal objectives
- **Achievability:** How easy will it be to realise each project in physical terms? E.g., are there any planning, traffic or environmental permissions or constraints that need to be taken into account? Are they in control of all land and assets needed to achieve the delivery of the project. Can the necessary governance arrangements be put in place?
- **Viability:** To what extent will different projects generate revenues sufficient to cover their operating costs and perhaps make a net contribution to the community's resources to help fund further regeneration projects.

In the assessment weighting was applied equally across each criterion. The final agreed scoring assessment was as follows:



Whithorn BTIP Project Scoring

	Project	Deliverability	Achievability	Viability	Total
1	South Machars Community Centre Improvements	5	4	4	13
2	Grapes Hotel Housing Infill	3.5	5	2	10.5
3	Net Zero Old Town Hall Restoration & Skills Centre	5	5	4	14
4	New Museum- Centre for Medieval Scotland	5	2.5	3	10.5
5	Anglian Minster Reconstruction	5	5	5	15
6	Townscape Improvements	5	4	5	14

In terms of **Deliverability**, five of the six projects are considered to fully align with the Whithorn Place Plan and the Borderland Growth Deal objectives. All perform strongly in relation to physical and socio-economic regeneration outcomes that can contribute to the long-term structural sustainability of the Whithorn community. (The Grapes Hotel housing project was considered potentially weak in terms of its limited economic impact- see below)

On **Achievability**, five out of the six projects are considered relatively well positioned for early delivery within the Borderlands funding programme. Three of the projects have their statutory permissions (planning and building control) in place and are considered ready to tender for construction. These are The Grapes Hotel, the Net Zero Old Town Hall Restoration (Building Futures Galloway) and the Anglican Minster Reconstruction (Whithorn Trust).

Two projects have further steps to take before they are ready for a tendering stage:

- Project 1 The South Machars Community Centre must progress through a design stage to achieve planning and building control consents in addition to the completion of a successful Community Asset Transfer to take formal ownership of the building- both actions scheduled for completion in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Council for Q3 and Q4 of 2026.
- Project 6 The Town Centre Improvements must progress through a design and community engagement exercise and achieve their statutory consents (if required)- scheduled to be completed by Q1 2027.
- There is strong confidence that both projects can achieve their respective statutory permissions and be in a position to tender for construction in 2027.

The remaining Project 4 The New Museum-Centre for Medieval Scotland, was considered challenging in terms of its ability to be achievable within the BTIP funding period. This project has been developed to concept stage by The Whithorn Trust with an individual outline business case prepared in 2024 for a singular investment of c.£6.3m. However, the project is dependent on the delivery of Project 3 The Net Zero Old Town Hall (which may be incorporated as part of the new

museum complex in partnership with Building Futures Galloway), and to a large extent Project 5 The Anglican Minster Reconstruction, a critical element of the visitor experience - both of which are subject to separate BTIP funding submissions in this round.

These two projects 3&5, although standalone, are seen as key enabling projects for the New Museum (Centre for Medieval Scotland) and are therefore considered a positive contribution to the Whithorn Trust's ultimate vision of creating a national centre for excellence in archaeological research and learning at Whithorn. In addition, the New Museum's capital funding requirement of c.£6.3m was considered challenging to achieve in the near term, as its potential funding partners would be required to assist with match fund contributions to projects 3 & 5 which are regarded as more critical early phases in the overall heritage vision for the town. For this reason, project 4 did not score strongly on achievability and viability in the near term.

On **Viability** all projects except for the New Museum (for reasons set out above) and the Grapes Hotel were scored well by the panel. Projects 5 & 6 – The Anglican Minster and the Town Centre Improvements scored maximum points. Both have the governance in place for delivery, and both will render significant regeneration benefits in leveraging direct economic benefits through employment, training, visitor number generation, extended stay and increased spend in the town.

Projects 1 & 3, The SMCC and the Net Zero Town Hall, were also well reviewed in terms of viability, the former increasing the capacity of the Community Centre to offer more support services and activities, essential to the resilience of the community and the latter providing a base for Building Futures Galloway to continue to build its specialist skills and training programme in partnership with Dumfries College and others. Both projects in combination with The Anglican Minster and the Town Centre Improvements would help build and sustain essential economic activity across the community.

Project 2- The Grapes Hotel was considered by the panel to make a vital contribution to the social fabric of the town centre by delivering the completion of the housing regeneration project at the former hotel site delivering two new family homes in the heart of the town in the social rented sector, however there were questions about the Benefit Cost Ratio of the project given the very high capital cost and level of public funding required. Whilst these would be valuable economically active households, their contribution to wider economic activity was somewhat limited compared to the other projects hence a reduced viability scoring relative to the overall scale of the capital investment required.

2.2 Who was involved in the assessment? Particularly noting community involvement in the project selection process.

At present, Whithorn does not have a functioning Community Council or Town Team. In the absence of this an assessment panel was created incorporating all the individual project sponsors and the Council support team. The panel consisted of:

- South Machars Community Centre- Management Board & Staff
- The Whithorn Trust
- Building Futures Galloway Trust
- All Roads Lead to Whithorn- Community Development Trust
- Dumfries& Galloway Council Economic Development Team
- SOSE South of Scotland Enterprise
- SOSCHA South Of Scotland Community Housing Association
- RHF Rural Housing Fund
- Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
- HES Historic Environment Scotland

The scoring process was undertaken across a series of online workshops and briefings during late February and March 2026 with the panel. The consultant team prepared a presentation on the background to the six projects, highlighting detail around their regeneration impacts and benefits and the panel participants were invited to score the individual projects collectively against the three 'green book' criteria of deliverability, achievability and viability.

2.3 Please include a diagram, like the one below, to visually show how the BTIP projects will deliver a spread of activity across the Place Plan Strategic Objectives. (A template is available from the Borderlands PMO.)

Projects	Borderlands Funding Request	Three Major Themes			Whithorn Place Plan Guiding Principles				
		Community Safeguarding and Enrichment	A Vibrant Town Centre	Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets	01. Community Cohesion - A community that works together, equitably across the whole town	02. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit - Building both tourist draw and resident retention	03. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets - History is at the heart of Whithorn's identity	04. Alleviating Rural Isolation - Connect Whithorn to the wider world, and bring it here	05. Cost of Living - Improve quality of life, and make it easier for all to live in Whithorn
South Machars Community Centre Evolution	375,000	•	•	•					
Reinstatement of Derelict Historic Building at Grapes Hotel	525,000	•	•	•					
Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall	900,000	•	•	•					
Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster	500,000	•	•	•					
Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn	500,000	•	•	•					
2,800,000									
Strong alignment with strategic objectives Some alignment with strategic objectives Little or no alignment with strategic objectives									

2.4 Briefly describe why any unsuccessful projects identified in the Place Plan did not make the final selection and outline any plans as to how these will be taken forward (if applicable).

As set out above, Project 4 The New Museum- Centre for Medieval Scotland, was considered challenging in terms of achievability within the BTIP funding period. This project has been developed to concept stage by The Whithorn Trust with an individual outline business case prepared in 2024 for a singular investment of c.£6.3m. However, the project is dependent on the delivery of Project 3 The Net Zero Old Town Hall (which may be incorporated as part of the new museum complex in partnership with Building Futures Galloway), and to a large extent Project 5 The Anglican Minster Reconstruction, a critical element of the Whithorn visitor experience - both of which are subject to separate BTIP funding submissions in this round.

Projects 3&5, although standalone, are seen as key enabling projects for the New Museum (Centre for Medieval Scotland) and are therefore considered a positive contribution to the Whithorn Trust's ultimate vision of creating a national centre for excellence in archaeological research and learning at Whithorn. In addition, the New Museum's capital funding requirement of some £6.3m was considered challenging to achieve in the near term as its potential funding partners would be required to assist with match fund contributions to projects 3 & 5 which are regarded as more critical early phases in the overall heritage vision for the town. For this reason, project 4 the New Museum was considered premature for this round of BTIP albeit its ultimate delivery would be accelerated by the incorporation of project 3 & 5 within the current programme.

Project 2, The Grapes Hotel Housing Infill was also ruled out of the final selection because of its apparent low BCR- Benefit to Cost Ratio- given the high capital cost to yield just two housing units and the match funding proposed being drawn from other public sources. Overall, the economic impact of the project was judged to be weak.

The focus of the BTIP for Whithorn has therefore been on projects which:

- Are suitable for early delivery and can help build momentum for investment in the town.
- Address some of the most significant and prominent challenges facing Whithorn (e.g. building its social and economic resilience through increased community services and improve community cohesion, raising its profile in new heritage skills careers and training, and developing its profile as a visitor destination with a new heritage visitor attraction and enhanced public realm to increase visitor dwell time and spend in the community); and
- Provide a complementary suite of projects investments that combine to deliver sustainable regeneration.

The Whithorn Trust remain committed to the delivery of Project 4, The New Museum- Centre for Medieval Scotland and will continue to work with its national and international partners and Dumfries & Galloway Council to secure its delivery. The Trust acknowledge that the delivery of the Net Zero Town Hall and the Anglican Minster reconstruction with the assistance of BTIP funding, will make a significant contribution to meeting their ultimate vision for The New Museum 'Centre of Medieval Scotland'.

3. Management & Delivery

3.1 Please describe the roles and responsibilities of those involved in day-to-day delivery and management of the BTIP.

The overall BTIP will be managed and delivered by the Programme Delivery Group (PDG), led by the 'Senior Responsible Officer' who will act as the Programme Lead working in partnership with the individual project sponsors. (The Strategic Investment Manager at DGC will take responsibility as the SRO). Day to day management of the BTIP will be the responsibility of the SRO, Place Officers and the ward officer.

The PDG will establish a working group made up of stakeholders and project leads working with the DGC place officer/ward officer with elected members invited to participate. A ToR (Terms of Reference) for the group will be established once membership is established. This will detail roles and responsibilities etc of each member of the group as an entity. The group will meet monthly.

The PDG also has representation from across the Council including Capital Programmes, Highways, Finance, Property and Legal teams. Dumfries & Galloway Council has a strong track record of successfully delivering economic and regeneration projects. The Senior Responsible Officer will be supported by the Senior Economic Officer Oversight team at D&G and the Director/Head of Service who has to date supported project development and who will continue to work alongside the Council team to ensure outputs and outcomes are delivered.

In respect of the individual project sponsors:

- SMCC will appoint a Project Manager, (funding via external sources such as SOSE or alternative) who will work under the direction of the Board of Trustees to oversee the renovations and newbuild work at the Community Centre.
- The Whithorn Trust will also appoint a Project Manager for the reconstruction of the Anglican Minster. This is a relatively mature project with a detailed business case strongly linked to the skills and training programme already in operation and coordinated in partnership with Building Futures Galloway Trust.
- The Net Zero Old Town Hall will be delivered as a continuation of the existing delivery arrangements with a full-time Project Manager from the Building Futures Galloway Trust, again working in collaboration with the Whithorn Trust overseeing the extensive conservation and restoration programme.
- Finally, the PMO team at Dumfries & Galloway Council, will project manage and coordinate the delivery of the Town Centre public realm improvements. This project will be delivered on land owned by the local authority following consultation with the local community and town centre businesses.

Whilst the direct delivery of the projects will be the responsibility of the project owners, the PDG will continue to play an important advisory role and will also offer a local point of contact for the BTIP. As Whithorn does not currently have a Town Team or Community Council, responsibility and accountability will remain with Dumfries & Galloway Council. It is anticipated a stakeholder group will be formed from representatives of the project and wider partners. Regular meetings will ensure continued information sharing and progress reporting, especially around risk and issues where local impacts and preferred local solutions need to be brokered.

3.2 Who has overall responsibility for ensuring the BTIP is delivered within the Place Programme timescales and in line with the relevant Place Plan Objectives?

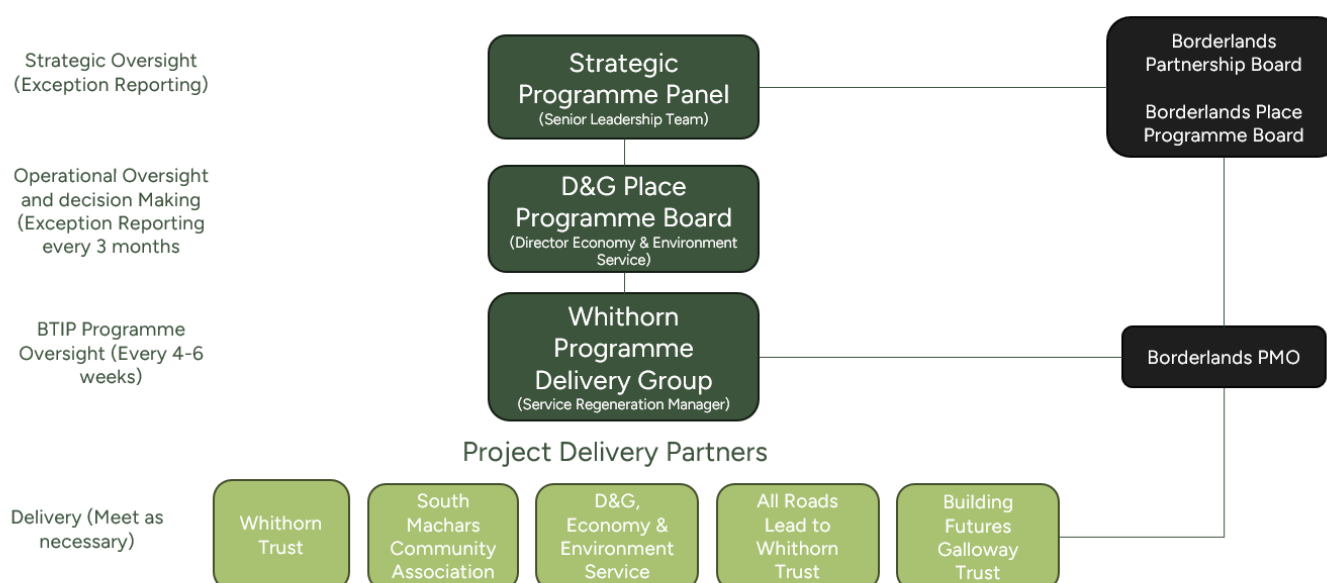
The Programme Delivery Group (PDG) will be responsible for ensuring that the BTIP is delivered within the Place Programme timescales and in line with the Place Programme Objectives. To provide additional oversight and external check and challenge through the process, the project

will also be regularly reported to the Dumfries & Galloway Senior officer oversight team and to the Elected Members as appropriate- The PDG Senior Responsible Officer will report progress to the Head of Service who will be supplied with monthly progress updates, programme and risk register. - If issues arise which require decisions outside of the agreed tolerance levels, these will be escalated to the Dumfries & Galloway Members oversight for a decision/recommendation. This structure will ensure that delivery is maintained, and any issues are addressed in a timely manner according to their level of impact and significance.

- Monthly meetings are proposed with the option for ad hoc meetings should the need arise.
- Tolerances will align with DGC Change Control process
- The Council Place Officer will be responsible for engaging with elected members who will be invited to participate in the PDG.
- The PDG and SRO (with support from place officer/ ward officer) will work to monitor project progress independently re alignment with BTIP timescales and objectives.

3.3 Include a structure chart showing the governance arrangements for the BTIP and how delivery of the BTIP feeds into the Borderlands governance arrangements.

Dumfries & Galloway Council Project Governance



3.4 Please describe how you will manage any changes to the BTIP projects. What internal systems do you have in place that will then feed into the existing Borderlands Change Management approach.

Through the management arrangements set out above, the Whithorn PDG led by the Senior Responsible Officer, will track progress against the agreed milestones and objectives. Should it become apparent that a change to the BTIP proposals is required (i.e. changes to the proposed programme or scope of works), this will be flagged to the D&G Senior Officer Oversight team through this regular and ongoing monitoring process.

Changes to BTIP projects will be managed through a combination of Dumfries and Galloway Council's internal change-control mechanisms and the Borderlands Change Management Framework. This ensures that any adjustments to project scope, cost, benefits or delivery timescales are identified early, considered appropriately and approved at the correct level.

In line with practice adopted elsewhere in the Borderlands Programme, **minor changes** - those within agreed tolerances and without material impact on the project's approved delivery baseline - will be managed by the PDG in liaison with internal Council services. The SRO will be kept informed of such changes as part of routine programme reporting.

Significant changes to the programme would include:

- Where project delivery diverts from the agreed Business Case.
- Any project overspends that cannot be managed within existing contingencies or by re-scoping the project as long as it still meets the overall outcomes of the BTIP.
- Significant delays to project delivery that impact the draw-down of Place Programme funding or, in the unlikely event, where delivery goes beyond the end date of the Programme.
- Where a project is aborted due to unforeseen circumstances at the BTIP stage.

Significant changes, such as variations to scope or outcomes, budget increases beyond contingency, or delays that affect overall programme delivery, will require formal review and approval. Where applicable, BTIP projects may be required to pass through the Capital Investment Gateway Process, in which the **CIOG** provides technical assessment and the **CIPB** provides senior-officer approval of the proposed change. These changes will then be escalated to the relevant Council Committee for Member approval.

Levels of tolerance to be agreed with Borderlands PMO prior to scheme delivery, but it is assumed that all but minor changes that have no material impact on cost, delivery or quality will be passed to the PMO. Any changes outside the tolerances agreed, D&G Council will inform Borderlands PMO at the outset as to the nature of the request to allow the significance to be established and enable forward planning. A Change Control Request setting out the rationale and the changes proposed to the Grant Funding Agreement will only be formally submitted once the PMO confirms the need for a formal process. Prior to submission all proposed changes will have been through the relevant Dumfries & Galloway governance levels.

Risk Management

Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation
Lack of capacity for delivery within support functions e.g. legal, finance, PMO, capital prog. etc	Low	Within the Councils planned structures so low risk, however capacity within the project owners in Whithorn is inherently variable although is generally considered good given recent track record in delivery. At owner level

		dedicated project managers will be in place for the development phase, with project management costs capitalised within individual project budgets reducing long-term capacity risk. At this moment two of the proposed projects (Anglian Church & Old Town Hall) are more advanced than the other two, the project leads have identified potential project managers and contractors. The other two projects (SMCC & Townscape) are still at the ideas stage but would likely be led by DGC.
Escalating costs impacting on deliverability	Medium	Two out of the five projects (The Anglican Minster reconstruction and the Net Zero Old Town Hall) have mature and updated business cases recently reviewed, with all permissions in place which will minimise delays in contracting and starting on site. The remaining two projects (The Community centre and the Town Centre Improvements) have a design and costing stage to progress but are considered low to medium risk. Each project will establish a project management steering group that will include representation from Dumfries and Galloway Council in an advisory capacity. Key project risks and issues will be discussed and resolved at this meeting with any significant risks (costs or otherwise) escalated to the PMO.
Insufficient funding impacts delivery and quality	Medium to low	Match funding discussions have taken place with all the project owners and alignment is considered positive and low risk. The PDG will monitor match funding provision and expectation with each project owner to minimise risk.
Lack of revenue support secured against projects/ maintenance long term	Low	All project owners have confidence that revenue and longer-term maintenance can be secured from existing and expanded operations for each project. As above, the PDG will monitor match funding provision and expectation with each project owner to minimise risk.

Lack of community support & engagement	Low	Whithorn has experienced some issues with community cohesion and leadership, despite this all projects have secured support within the Place Plan. Some additional consultation is required on the specification Town Centre Improvements but otherwise the 4 projects have community support. Regular updates on project progress will be shared with the community via PDG meeting which WILL provide opportunities for members of the public to engage in project development.
Lack of contractors available to deliver works, delays programme and increases costs	Medium	Given Whithorn's peripherality this can be an issue. Options to use frameworks or open tender. Will undertake soft market testing prior to commencing procurements to de risk the process.
Failure to secure all relevant permissions (development control, highways etc) for works	Low	The consenting pathway for all projects is considered straightforward with 3 of the projects 'ready to go'. This will nonetheless be closely monitored by the project owners in partnership with D&G Council to minimise risk.
Failure to deliver all 4 projects which results in reduced impact of BTIP	Low	All projects are considered achievable with match funding positioned and scalable. If needed, a second call for projects will be issued to identify Place Plan interventions that can be accelerated, with support from Dumfries and Galloway Council within the timescales of the BTIP.

4. Financial Case

4.1 What are the total BTIP costs? Please complete the table below: (Figures exclusive of VAT).

Project Name	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
1.South Machars Community Centre				£200,000	£400,000	£400,000		£1,000,000
2.Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall			£90,000	£440,000	£410,000	£160,000		£1,100,000
3.Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster			£92,000	105,250	126,250	137,500	£154,000	£615,000
4.Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn				£50,000	£350,000	£350,000		£750,000
Total			£182,000	£1,295,250	£1,386,250	£847,500	£154,000	£3,465,000

Comments:

Project 1 Costs have been estimated against similar refurbishment and extension schemes recently delivered with estimates per m2 at the higher end of the range due to location.

Project 2 has costed designs to RIBA Stage 3

Project 3 has costed designs to RIBA Stage 2

Project 4 Costs have been estimated against similar public realm schemes recently delivered with estimates per m2 at the higher end of the range due to location.

4.2 What is the total funding package for the BTIP? Please complete the table below: (Add extra rows if required).

Funder	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Borderlands			£120,000	£910,000	£960,000	£450,000	£110,000	£2,550,000
Dumfries & Galloway Council					£250,000			£250,000
Match Funding Partners (Heritage				£235,250	£138,250	£247,500	£44,000	£665,000

Lottery, Historic Scotland, Coastal Communities Fund, SOSE etc)								
Total			£120,000	£1,145,250	£1,348,250	£697,500	£154,000	£3,465,000

Comments:

Project 1 South Machars Community Centre will seek match funding from SOSE, The Coastal Communities Fund and other current partners and sponsors. Project 2 & 3 Whithorn Old Town Hall Net Zero Training Flagship and Whithorn's Anglian Minster will seek match funding from SOSE, The Heritage Fund, HES and others. Project 4 Town Centre Improvements will seek match funding from D&G Council and The Coastal Communities Fund. The project sponsors anticipate the match funding will become easier once there is an indication from Borderlands, even if it is subject to FBC

Old Town Hall funders

HES - EOI approved and application submitted

Vinehill Trust - submitted application

Pilgrim Trust - not yet submitted

Clothworkers' Foundation - submitted

Anglican Minster funders

Heritage Fund - aware but not yet submitted

Payable internships and training placements - planned though Museum Innovation Fund and Heritage Fund awarded funds. University Partnerships, also under discussion through Museum Innovation Fund, already awarded.

Garfield Weston - not yet approached - have held grants

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and or Esmee Fairbairn Communities and Collections Fund - existing grant holder, but potential for extension.

Big Lottery - for outreach (ie fine arts engagement)

South of Scotland Enterprise - tourism strand: communications held; training options and courses would be the focus of the bid.

It is worth noting the Museums Innovation Fund and matched Heritage Lottery fund, awarded to the Whithorn Trust in May 2026, will enable long-term business planning of skills courses - the funding is 2026-2028 and will investigate paid courses at different levels from schools to hobbyists and professionals, across all heritage skills, from archaeology to masonry courses.

5. Demonstrating Collective Impact

What does good look like?

5.1 Please provide a list of key measures of success for the combined impact of the BTIP. What will good look like e.g. increase in visitor numbers, opportunities to create new businesses, increased footfall, increased local activities and spend, improved health outcomes, improved environmental assets.

Whithorn is a historic town in the South of Galloway experiencing complex levels of rural economic disadvantage. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 (SIMD) there are specific vulnerabilities:

- Within Scotland, Whithorn ranks in the bottom 20% of datazones on the income domain, and the bottom 30% on employment, education/skills, and housing.
- Within South Machars, Whithorn ranked the lowest overall datazone in both 2016 and 2020.
- Income levels have exhibited a progressive decline, placing Whithorn residents in the 12% most deprived datazones in Scotland in 2020.
- Whithorn also faces challenges in education and skills, access to services, and housing- 45.6% of individuals aged over 16 lack qualifications, compared to the regional average of 32.9% and the national average of 26.8%. Only 14.7% hold a Level 4 qualification or above, lower than both the regional 21.5% and Scottish average of 26.1%.

These deprivation statistics are unlikely to improve under 'Business as Usual' despite some good initiatives under way such as the C2C (Coast to coast cycle route) route now up and running and recent investments such as the impressive New Town Hall Bunkhouse and Community Hub. Therefore, to arrest decline, investment stimulus is required, coordinated by the project sponsors, which would act as the catalyst for recovery.

The four projects within the BTIP provide a complementary package of interventions that together address key economic, social and place-based challenges identified through the Local Place Plan. While each project delivers distinct outputs and outcomes (which will be confirmed through individual Business Cases), their collective impact is greater than the sum of individual investments and is focused on place-wide change. The four BTIP projects comprise an integrated economic regeneration programme which will aim to address these issues through an inclusive economic growth agenda by:

- Drawing more visitors to Whithorn with a new visitor attraction at the Whithorn Trust in the form of the reconstructed Anglican Minster (a unique heritage attraction in the UK) supported by a programme of events and festivals extending visitor dwell time and spend in the community and raising Whithorn's profile as a visitor destination.
- Creating a heritage skills training hub for Building Futures Galloway in the Net Zero Old Town Hall, working in partnership with regional colleges and national institutions, providing training, career pathways and new jobs with all the associated multiplier benefits to the local economy.

- Enhancing public spaces and the public realm, in the town centre through the Town Centre Improvement projects, including EV and ebike charging, which will encourage longer dwell times and inducing higher spending in the town centre.
- Bringing restored historic floorspace into commercial and employment use in the heart of the town, stimulating increased vibrancy and building occupancy in the town core.
- Investing in expanded community support services at South Machars Community Centre to support greater social resilience programmes and volunteering and stimulate increasing revenues for local arts/creative organisations and food and nutrition programmes.

The combined impact can be summarised as follows:

Theme	Measure of Success	Derived From	Monitored by
Heritage Driven Regeneration	Increase in visitors to Whithorn as a national heritage destination	Increase in national and international visitors to Whithorn and town centre footfall	Visitor numbers (eg STEAM data) and footfall monitoring
	Increase in heritage skills training programme enrolment hosted in Whithorn with BFG and WT	Participation numbers, training qualifications gained and FTE created.	Training programme participation and outcomes
	Increased local spend and town centre trading activity	Boost to trade, local spend, business outcomes	Business surveys and impacts from footfall numbers
	Reduction in vacancy of heritage buildings	Town centre heritage floorspace brought into commercial use	Occupancy surveys
Economic Growth Stimulus	Increase in visitors to Whithorn as a national heritage destination and town centre footfall	Vibrancy from the delivery of all projects in addition to the growing national profile of the Whithorn Trust attraction and visitor experience	Visitor numbers and footfall monitoring
	Increased local spend and town centre trading activity	Boost to trade, local spend, business outcomes	Business surveys and impacts from footfall numbers
	Uptake of vacant units/businesses opened, or new commercial units	New investment – new business development	Vacancy Rates- New business formation

	New jobs, training places created directly or indirectly	Job numbers, training & education programmes hosted in Whithorn	FTE and training numbers
Community Resilience, Social & Cultural	Increase in volunteering and participation in local community and cultural activity	Volunteering, social participation at SMCC projects and programmes	Event records / community engagement logs
	Improved perceptions of town identity and safety	Town identity, safety and accessibility	Town Centre survey / Place Standard
	More opportunities for training provision, work experience, and volunteer experience for local people, especially older teens and young adults	Increased service and training in heritage skills, hospitality, retail and running workshops	FTE, Part time and training numbers and new business formation
	More opportunities for collaboration with other organisations and businesses in Whithorn and across the south Machars	Increasing inclusion and participation rates through running multi-facility events and projects and sharing logistical elements such as transport and catering	Event records / community engagement logs
Health & Wellbeing	More space for a wider range of activities such as a repair café, upskilling workshops, local-interest and educational groups, commercial hires	Participation numbers in resilience programmes and community events	Event records / community engagement logs
	Increased resilience and adaptation options in the face of worsening climate and ecological breakdown	Mutual aid, practical upskilling, group cooking, nutrition and food programmes and energy awareness	Event records / community engagement logs
	Increase in community animation and time spent in	Longer dwell time	Town Centre Surveys

	town centre (Dwell time)		
	Public health outcomes improved through more active, inclusive spaces	Improved Public Health	Project Monitoring
	Uptake in active travel (walking/cycling) to/from town centres	More active travel, EV/cycle infrastructure	Travel behaviour surveys
Environmental	Enhanced environmental quality and public realm	Improved public space, place improvements	Project monitoring, Community animation activity, footfall numbers
	Reduction in vacancy of town centre heritage buildings	Town centre heritage floorspace brought into use for residential and commercial use	Occupancy surveys
	Reduction in carbon emissions from increased sustainable travel	EV/cycle infrastructure, carbon reduction	Project monitoring / usage of EV chargers
	Increased desirability of Whithorn as a place to live - tackling the problem of an aging population	More balanced demographic profile.	Population change via census data

While each project has a defined beneficiary base (as set out in 5.2 below), the overlapping nature of benefits is central to the programme's collective impact. The four projects together, will deliver significant and wide-ranging benefits for residents, businesses and visitors by boosting the local economy, growing the heritage led regeneration sector, building a new regional skills base and the boosting the local business base.

Significant benefits will be generated for the local community that align with the five pillars of community wealth building:

Local Residents:

- Improved access to employment opportunities through new and safeguarded businesses resulting from increased visitor and project supply chain spending.
- Enhanced local amenities, public spaces and cultural assets.

- Increased pride in the local area due to reputational benefits of the Whithorn Trust, opportunities to access heritage training and skills programmes, and through the delivery of community led priority projects.
- Improved health and wellbeing from enhanced opportunities for physical activity and securing employment in the local area.
- Greater confidence in the future of the area as a place to live.
- Maximised potential of locally owned land assets to create social and economic benefits.
- Local businesses and employers
- Increased visitor footfall and spend supporting hospitality, retail and services.
- Improved conditions for business growth and retention.

Visitors and tourists:

- A new heritage destination with links to the National Cycle Network.
- Improved visitor experience and orientation through Town Centre Improvements and wayfinding.
- Stronger connection between attractions and the wider Borderlands offer.

Community organisations

- Long term income generation and asset sustainability through community led projects.
- Increased opportunities for volunteering, participation and local stewardship.
- Strengthened organisational capacity through partnership working and experience of project delivery.

Wider regional economy

- Increased number of day and overnight visits to Whithorn and the Rhins.
- Increased spend retained locally rather than leaking to surrounding areas.
- Contribution to Borderlands wide tourism and inclusive growth objectives.

5.2 Please describe who will benefit from the BTIP projects and how.

The five projects aim to revitalise Whithorn town centre, build new economic activity, enhance heritage and community spaces, and improve social and community resilience. Collectively, they deliver wide-ranging benefits for residents, businesses and visitors by boosting the local economy, building an inclusive community and creating more vibrant, welcoming places. The key beneficiaries are set out below:

South Machars Community Centre Evolution

Internal remodelling and a small extension to the community centre to facilitate an expansion in service delivery:

Beneficiary	How they Benefit
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Local Residents	Improved and expanded community services hub serving the rural catchment increasing community participation with an expanded programme of courses, events and social activities
Local Business	Increased customer footfall and activities in the town centre-greater community animation at events.
Trainees & Jobseekers	New and part time employment, training and upskilling opportunities directly and indirectly created at the centre through its expanded programme
Health and Wellbeing Stakeholders	Social, creative and cultural activities which support health and wellbeing
Visitors & Tourists	Enhanced experience through upgraded cultural and event facilities at the Centre
Local Authority	Helps to deliver regeneration goals and improves community resilience, town centre activity and retention. Improves the aesthetic of the town by regenerating a current 'eyesore' at the rear of the old Grapes Hotel, which in turn also improves the approach to the community centre.

Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall

Reusing and repurposing a key heritage asset at the heart of the town as a training and skills hub for Building Futures Galloway in partnership with regional schools and colleges.

Beneficiary	How they Benefit
Local Residents	Opportunity for local people to avail of a new heritage skills and training hub- developing new career pathways and job opportunities
Local Business	Increased customer footfall from training and skills development programmes hosted in the town centre -building momentum for town centre commercial activity and reducing vacancy. Generating sustained economic activity as a training and skills centre for BFG retaining visitors and spend in the high street
Investors & Developers	Improved business confidence and market demand for further investment in town centre sites. Generating sustained economic activity as a training and skills centre for BFG retaining visitors and spend in the high street
Local Authority/ Heritage Sector Partners	Helps to deliver regeneration goals and improves community resilience, town centre activity and retention. Creates a distinctive sense of place rooted in Whithorn's history and skills Supports inclusive growth, particularly for young people remote from the labour market and delivers low-carbon, demonstrator retrofit of a historic building

Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster

Reconstruction of Whithorn's Northumbrian church and burial chapel at full scale, led by a team of archaeologists, architects, and craftspeople. The project will offer training for young people from Building Futures Galloway and Douglas Ewart High School, along with public outreach in skills like clay masonry, mural art, and stained glass. Filmed from the start, it will spotlight Whithorn's emergence around 700CE as a pilgrimage centre and aims to increase visitor footfall throughout the live build and create a new regional visitor attraction once complete.

Beneficiary	How they Benefit
Local Residents/Community	The heritage reconstruction project will improve wellbeing through extensive community involvement and engagement, while offering young people meaningful opportunities to gain qualifications, build confidence, and access employment pathways. Opportunity to introduce a new visitor attraction to celebrate Whithorn's international profile in the heart of the town with increased vibrancy from community events and animation.
Local Business	The project will deliver long-term economic and social benefits by increasing visitor numbers, supporting local businesses, and providing hands-on training in endangered heritage skills. It will improve wellbeing through community involvement and engagement, while offering young people meaningful opportunities to gain qualifications, build confidence, and access employment pathways. Increased customer footfall from town centre tourism activity building momentum for town centre regeneration.
Investors & Developers	Improved business confidence and market demand for further investment in tourism infrastructure and town centre sites.
Local Authority/ National and Regional Heritage Partners	Helps to deliver regeneration goals and improves community resilience, town centre activity and retention. Creates a distinctive sense of place rooted in Whithorn's history and skills Supports inclusive growth, particularly for young people remote from the labour market.

Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn

A programme of town centre public realm improvement works, with the addition of prioritised initiatives such as places to wait and rest, active travel infrastructure, sheltered gathering spaces for general use and while waiting for public transport, and the formalising of key wayfinding routes connecting central Whithorn to the surrounding area.

Beneficiary	How they Benefit
Local Residents	Benefit from safer, more attractive streetscapes, community morale and active travel infrastructure

Tourists & Visitors	Improved wayfinding, town identity, and a more cohesive visitor experience and space for outdoor dwell time.
Local Business- Retail and Hospitality	Increased customer footfall from town centre activity. Longer dwell times and increased local spend boosting their viability. Building momentum for town centre regeneration and reducing vacancy
Cyclists and EV Users	Gain better facilities that make sustainable travel more convenient and attractive.
Investors & Developers	Improved business confidence and market demand for further investment in town centre sites.
Local Authority/ Regional Housing Partners	Helps to deliver regeneration and housing goals and improves community resilience, town centre activity and retention.

Monitoring

5.3 Please describe what systems are in place to monitor the collective impact of the BTIP projects.

Projects will be evaluated by DGC and Borderlands PMO working in conjunction with project owners (economic impact, satisfaction, footfall, spend etc) on an ongoing basis during the development stage to ensure timelines and budgets are being adhered to. After completion an annual Impact Report will be produced for the first 3 years and following this longer-term impact evaluation at 5 and 10 years. This evaluation will be delivered by the project leads as coordinated by the PDG.

- The PDG will take responsibility for Annual Impact Reports in association with DGC
- The PDG will take responsibility for evaluating the combined impact of the BTIP in coordination with DGC elected members.

Some evaluation will not incur additional cost and monitoring should be built into the project delivery, however where a more detailed evaluation is required, the cost will be included in each of the individual project (at an estimated cost of 2% of project cost or turnover)

1. Increased visitor numbers and footfall will be monitored through:
 - a. Visitor survey returns from events and festivals;
 - b. Sample footfall counts;
 - c. Surveys of vendors and participants at events within Whithorn
 - d. Event specific Economic Impact surveys (exploring visitor origin, spend behaviour and marketing influence).
2. Increased business turnover will be monitored through business surveys, including Economic Impact surveys as detailed above. Businesses will be asked for an indication of the percentage increase in their turnover year-on-year and in particular weeks (e.g. weeks in which an event or festival was held) compared to a typical week. They will not be asked for monetary data which may be regarded as commercially confidential.

3. Direct job creation and training placements will be monitored through surveys of the businesses and community enterprises directly supported by the Whithorn BTIP. Indirect job creation will be estimated on the basis of information secured on additional visitor numbers and business survey returns.
4. Vacant and derelict sites brought back into use will be monitored through project data on site and building areas (in m²) redeveloped under the Whithorn BTIP, and a survey of buildings positively impacted by the programme.
5. The area of enhanced public realm will be calculated on the basis of tenders received and works completed on each of the five individual projects covered by the programme.
6. Improved community cohesion will be evaluated through measurement of participation numbers and frequency. Programme level monitoring, reports and project progress will also from part of the measurement

5.4 Have appropriate baselines been established to support the evaluation process?

Baseline figures will be confirmed prior to the delivery of the first investment for footfall and vacancies. Other outputs represent an improvement on the current position.

- SMCC have an existing audit of current facility provision and community services with attendance numbers, volunteering levels, participation and employment and skills provision. Full business case in Part B will detail the baseline for participation today and model the impact of the new proposals set out in the modernisation plans.
- Building Futures Galloway (The Old Town Hall Net Zero Training Hub) have 11 employees (9 FTE and 2 part time). This project will add at least 3 full-time masons and an additional site manager. (There will be additional project-specific jobs of electrician, horologist, Air Source Heat pump and other technicians on short term contracts)
- For the Anglican Minster reconstruction the employment baseline is zero. The build is anticipated to take four to five seasons. There is anticipated to be a full-time project lead for timber-framing, full time wood carver, and the project will employ 6 young people full time. The project will also create posts for a part-time archaeologist, part time clay mason, stained glass maker, and part-time public outreach in fine arts (part time) x 4. The Whithorn Trust anticipate more front of house staff to cater for increased demand - a minimum of 2 part time jobs in addition to the above; and those should be sustained and even increase as visitor numbers rise. (Front of house staff at present number five part time, plus one Museum guide).
- On skills development at The Old Town Hall, The Trust will be awarding Professional Development Awards in masonry (Repair of Traditional Masonry Structures) and slating (new award coming out soon). On the Minster reconstruction, there are Level 2 or 3 NVQ Diploma – Structural Post and Beam Carpentry and the Trust aim to create their own bespoke heritage construction SVQ, with or without input from Historic Environment Scotland. They estimate that around 10 young people will participate in each award. On the Minster, school awards in green woodworking and also King's Trust, John Muir and Youth Awards for around 15 pupils per year of the build.

- On visitor numbers the baseline for the Old Town Hall is zero and BFG and the Whithorn Trust estimate attracting around 2000 a year, rising as the critical mass of heritage construction and courses gets going for the partnership of Whithorn Trust and Building Futures Galloway. At the Minster - current baseline around 8000 per year aiming for a 20% increase each year of the four to five seasons of building, as the project becomes well known through targeted marketing.
- A Town Centre footfall baseline will be established by survey at the outset of the Town Centre Improvement Plans by D&G Council.

Evaluation

5.5 Please outline how and when you plan to evaluate the performance of the BTIP.

Dumfries & Galloway Council and the PMG in partnership with the individual project PMO's, will assess the impact and effectiveness of the projects. Tasks will include:

- Review of investment delivered to confirm that it addressed the identified rationale for investment
 - Analysis of monitoring data to assess performance against objectives, outputs/outcome targets, and delivery effectiveness –
 - Consultations with delivery team and stakeholders
 - The PMG will coordinate baseline surveys for footfall, occupancy levels and vacancies with project partners
 - Beneficiary surveys including visitors and local residents – the approach and scale will be determined at a project level during the business case development stage.

Baseline analysis will be carried out prior to the first investment being delivered. Monitoring of progress will take place throughout the project delivery phase. Beneficiary surveys will be carried out circa 6 months after the completion of the final BTIP investment. Monitoring data will be collected on an annual basis as set out in the previous section.

5.6 Please describe how Sustainable & Inclusive Growth will be evaluated at a BTIP level.

Sustainable and inclusive growth is a development approach that seeks to balance economic progress with social equity and environmental stewardship. It focuses not only on generating prosperity but on ensuring that the benefits of growth are widely shared and that future generations are not compromised in the process.

Sustainable growth involves meeting present needs (such as education, health, job opportunities, and environmental protection) without depleting natural resources or exacerbating climate change. Meanwhile, inclusive growth aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of background or income, have equal access to opportunities, resources, and economic participation.

When looking at the 4 projects for BTIP together, the following possible indicators may be

used to help to evaluate success in relationship to sustainable and inclusive growth:

- Number of Community Groups and Organisation Events/Attendance/Participation - local data
- Number of trainees (particularly youth) enrolled in skills development programmes at BFG/WH/SMCC
- Number of Workers on Living Wage -a business survey would be needed to ascertain data specifically for Whithorn.
- Number of visitors/tourists attracted to Whithorn

Annex A – BTIP Project Summaries

Please complete the following table for each BTIP project.

PROJECT 1 South Machars Community Centre Evolution

Lead Delivery Organisation	Trustees of SMCC (working closely with Dumfries and Galloway Council)
Total Project Costs	c.£1,000,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£775,000
DGC Funding	£125,000
Potential Match Funding	£100,000
Anticipated Impacts	• Improved community cohesion, community resilience, town centre activity and retention • Improved and expanded community services hub • New and part time employment, training and upskilling opportunities • Improved health and wellbeing through Social, creative and cultural activities • Improved visitor hospitality offer
Start Date	Q4 2027
End Date	Q4 2028
Deliverability	The project is at Concept Design Stage
Project Description	
Modernise and upgrade the existing facilities to create a more accessible, energy efficient, environmentally friendly, and safer building that is safeguarded for future use by the community. Reconfigure and expand the existing facilities with a focus on enhancing accessibility and increasing the diversity and quantity of spaces available to host an expanded programme of creative and skills-based workshops and to allow growth of the existing Reuse Shop and Pop-Up Cafe. The South Machars Community Centre provides a safe, welcoming space where people can connect, improve wellbeing, and access vital services. This project will enhance physical and mental health and wellbeing, reduce isolation, and offer learning and development opportunities. It will attract more visitors through creative and cultural activities and also provide a much-needed additional hospitality offer, boosting local spending and supporting the economy. Energy-efficiency upgrades will reduce carbon emissions and improve the Centre's sustainability and resilience. This project will enable SMCC to continue delivering meaningful benefits to the community.	

South Machars Community Centre exists to provide social and recreational facilities and activities to enhance the lives of the local community. The centre in Whithorn provide spaces for both recreational activities and the trading activities that fund them. The aim is to expand and remodel the space, and make the facilities flexible, fit for purpose, and compliant. These changes would then enable SMCC to increase its trading activities and generate additional income with which to expand its charitable provision. In turn, the centre would contribute to the long-term viability of the south Machars as a community in which to live, work, and flourish. The project would thus contribute to the delivery of the Whithorn Place Plan¹ by:

- a) helping to regenerate the local economy and employment and
- b) improving wellbeing and social inclusion.

SMCC also operates within the context of wider regional and national concerns. In January 2026, the Centre for Social Justice Foundation and Enlighten published *Voices from the Margins: Rural Poverty in the South of Scotland*. Their conversations with local charities and community groups identified issues such as sparse bus networks and high transport costs that restrict access to work and training; fragile local labour markets with high proportions of part-time, seasonal and low-paid employment; limited opportunities for career progression; and the ways in which rural poverty contributes to poorer housing, social isolation, and reduced physical and mental wellbeing. The south Machars – like everywhere else – is dealing with the impacts of existing and worsening climate and ecological breakdown on health, food systems, national security and the economy.

It is likely that heatwaves, storms, flooding, and resulting utility outages will increase in both frequency and severity. Dumfries and Galloway Council's 2019 declaration of a climate emergency recognised 'the existing impact of the changing climate on the lives of local populations' and committed the Council to helping individuals, communities and businesses 'to make informed decisions on how to adapt to climate change.'

By fulfilling its charitable purposes through delivery of a wider programme of activities in upgraded premises, it will support community wellbeing and living standards, develop work prospects through volunteering, training and employment opportunities, and establish and access community resilience in the face of current and future challenges.

The SMCC project has four elements:

- 1) building an extension to create a better space for our reuse shop,
- 2) remodelling the vacated reuse space and kitchen to increase our café capacity,
- 3) rebuilding and modernising our toilet facilities, and
- 4) running a small mobile 'coffee cart' facility and, in the event that the Townscape Improvement project is successful, running a two-year pilot project to manage an outdoor market in Whithorn.

This infrastructure and management project would give SMCC long-term viability by diversifying and expanding its income generation (making the centre less dependent on further external funding) and making the premises fit for purpose. The starting point would be an asset transfer of from Dumfries and Galloway Council to bring the property under direct SMCC control

and provide greater capacity for future activities and improvements. SMCC would seek match funding for the above elements to reduce the draw on the Borderlands funding pot and so make more of it available for other Whithorn projects. SMCC would also seek other funding for projects that would enhance this work, such as improving the building's energy-efficiency.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Community Asset Transfer	Q2 2026-Q2 2027
Scheme Design & Planning & Building Control	Q4 2026-Q4 2027
Tenders	Q3/Q4 2027
Construction	Q1- Q3 2028
Place Plan Alignment	The Whithorn Place Plan is structured to fall under five guiding principles: 1. Community Cohesion 2. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit 3. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets 4. Alleviating Rural Isolation 5. Cost of Living Within this structure, the initiatives of the Place Plan are arranged within three major themes: 1. Community Safeguarding and Enrichment 2. A Vibrant Town Centre 3. Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets The SMCC project aligns directly with Principle 1 Community Cohesion, Principle 4 Alleviating Rural Isolation and Principle 5 Cost of Living structured under the leading Place Plan theme of Community Safeguarding and Enrichment. The project delivers on these principles through the provision of an expanded community services offer at the SMCC with an expanded programme in community participation, education, training, support services and skills development.
Place Programme Alignment	(Borderlands Place Programme Objectives) S02 The SMCC's development plans - including enhanced professional grade facilities and workshop spaces - will create opportunities for local micro-businesses and entrepreneurs in areas like food production and cooking, heritage crafts, and the arts. The centre will showcase local talent - hosting markets, events, and pop-ups, encouraging new business activity in Whithorn.

	S03 Enhanced unique creative and cultural programming, including cinema, cooking schools, crafts, and performance arts, will draw visitors from surrounding areas. New facilities like EV chargers, Changing Place toilets, and accessible event spaces will encourage longer stays and increased visitor spend, directly benefiting Whithorn's economy and visibility as a destination.
Economic Impact	See below
Key Constraints / Dependencies	Dependant on a successful Community Asset Transfer proposal

Impacts on SMCC

Element	Current	Plan	Impacts
Reuse shop	Open four hours each on Tue/Thu/Fri/Sat in a room that accommodates housewares, small appliances, books, games, etc. but is too small for regular trade in larger items of furniture and white goods. We did sell these for a short time, but the challenges of transport and storage/display made it impractical to continue. We direct items that we cannot accept to other organisations for sale (Community Reuse Shop, Stranraer), immediate use (Wigtownshire Women's Aid) or repurposing (local Men's Sheds). We sell worn-out clothing in bulk to a textile recycling facility near Falkirk.	Build an extension on the south of the building, with access and display space designed to accommodate larger items. Collection/delivery of these items: have customers arrange transport themselves and, where this is not possible, have a small delivery charge and either purchase a suitable van or collaborate on a van-share with another charity.	Charitable purpose: local services meeting local needs, volunteering opportunities. Free up the current reuse space for a larger café provision. Increased net profit, as our experience has shown that 'big ticket' items sell reliably well. The new space will be built to a high standard energy efficiency, giving a new room with additional running costs per m² lower than our current average. Potential for additional staff hours to manage the increased trade.
Café	Open four hours every Tuesday in our Living Room with seating for ≤19 visitors, which can become cramped when full or both people and their belongings. Two doors and a hallway separate the room from the kitchen. Demand is higher than our seating capacity, especially during large events such as markets. Whilst we can sometimes use the Creative Room as overflow, it is often booked for crafting and it is less popular with visitors attracted by our café ethos of a	Knock through from the kitchen into the vacated reuse space and install large bi-fold, swing, or sliding doors, then fit out the expanded space with flexible-arrangement café furniture to seat c. 60 people.	Charitable purposes: social and leisure activities, local services, volunteering opportunities, meeting local needs. Free up the Living Room for its intended function as a relaxed, cosy space for the support groups. Increased net profit by trebling the seating space and enabling us to serve more people on longer opening hours daily whilst retaining our 'all together' ethos.

Element	Current	Plan	Impacts
	gathering place for people to meet, eat and converse together. During other weekdays, we have to turn away visitors who would like a drink and a bite to eat before their event or shop browsing. There is nowhere to eat in the town on Saturdays, which is a particular problem during the tourist season.		Allow us to extend the opening hours from four hours once per week to 18–24 hours per week, including Saturdays, without negatively impacting SMCC provision or other businesses in the town. Make better use of our excellent new kitchen facilities and make the tasks of preparation, service, and cleaning more efficient. Additional staff hours/post to manage the café provision.
Toilet facilities	Our current toilet block is dilapidated and unfit for purpose: damp, peeling plaster; one permanently closed stall; requires frequent repair. It has poor disabled access and limited changing facilities. For these reasons, it is time-consuming to keep the facility hygienic, functional, and comfortable.	Fit out a new toilet and changing block to incorporate a Changing Places⁵ facility and to meet modern standards of hygiene and functionality. Potentially, making these at least some of the facility gender-free, with toilet and handwash basin in same cubicle.	Charitable purposes: fully inclusive, welcoming and effective centre, support involvement in activities, accessible local services. Easier maintenance for volunteers/staff and a more hygienic and pleasant experience for our visitors. Access, dignity, confidence, and comfort for all users. Reduce or eliminate wasted water.
Market management and related	Four seasonal markets held throughout the year, with stalls booked by a range of producers of foods, crafts, and services from the Machars and further afield. No mobile/off-site provision.	A 2-year pilot project for SMCC to manage the new trading market made possible by the completion of the Townscape Improvement project.	Charitable purposes: wider range of social and leisure activities, volunteering opportunities and new skills, enhanced local services, meeting local needs. Putting SMCC trader contacts and experience of stallholder recruitment and

⁵ Available at <https://www.changing-places.org/> (Accessed 26/02/2026).

Element	Current	Plan	Impacts
		Purchase of equipment: branded stallage (gazebos, tables, etc.) and outdoor electrical equipment. A 'coffee cart' van or other small vehicle that SMCC can take out across the south Machars for general sales and for events.	market management to wider and more frequent use. Combined service and advertising via the coffee cart. Potential costings and revenue would need to be researched, but the potential exists for a regular and not insignificant net profit via stallholder fees to SMCC (basic fee + portion of fees paid by SMCC to D&G Council). Potential for additional staff hours and/or numbers to manage the market and run the coffee cart.

Impacts on the south Machars

Added value

Element	Community and social value	Economic value
Reuse Shop	Keeping good-quality items out of landfill. Supporting our neighbours' dignity and comfort through access to affordable homewares and other goods. Offering of appropriate items to other organisations for sale, use, or repurposing will continue, although in varying quantities.	Potential for ad hoc local employment for delivery driver. Helping to mitigate rural poverty by giving households with low incomes affordable access to good-quality items, especially conventionally 'big-ticket' furniture and white goods.
Café	The larger space will facilitate much more opportunity for lunch dates, socialising, and making new friends. Additional space for mid-sized meetings and events. Affordable, high-quality and nutritious food. Wider range of local, foraged, and foods 'saved' from our community fridge.	Many more visitors will be able to access wholesome and varied food at a very affordable cost and with no requirement for cooking or washing-up. This is particularly important for many of our elder residents. More business for local suppliers, e.g., vegetables, bread, fish. Training opportunities for local people considering careers in service industry, hospitality, etc. This is particularly important for older teens and young adults in the area.
Toilet facilities	Public facilities (during our opening times). More convenience, confidence, accessibility, and dignity for all users through layout, disability aides, free menstrual health items, etc.	No direct economic value. See Synergistic Value below.
Market management and related	A regular and more frequent event than our current provision, and with the excitement and bustle of outdoor activity. Plenty of opportunity to browse, shop, catch up with friends. Possibility of attracting a wider range of stallholders and from farther afield than our current indoor seasonal markets.	More trade opportunities and income-generation for established local traders and helping new traders to get off the ground. Potential for ad hoc employment for stall roadies.

Synergistic value

We anticipate high potential for the project to generate synergies both within SMCC and between SMCC and our community.

We already know that visitors attending for one activity will often stay for another: come to the Café and visit the Reuse Shop, come for a workshop and stay for a meal, etc. Similarly, we know that visitors come from across the Machars and beyond to visit SMCC, especially for Café and regular music and craft groups and for events such as our seasonal markets.

Other likely impacts include:

- 1) Increased footfall in response to expanded physical and activity capacity. In addition, better toilet facilities will make a greater diversity of visitors feel welcome and supported, including those with disabilities and parents/guardians with young children, and make it possible for visitors to stay for longer.
- 2) More venues for a wider range of activities such as a repair café, upskilling workshops, local-interest and educational groups, commercial hires (with small, medium and large rooms).
- 3) Café expansion will let us use more of the on-sell-by-date food items that we collect from supermarkets in Wigtown and Newton Stewart for our Community Fridge, thus redirecting even more food from landfill to tasty, nutritious and affordable meals and snacks.
- 4) Prioritising local contractors when inviting quotations for the planning, building and outfitting works will support employment and training and inject a significant amount of money into the local economy.
- 5) More opportunities for training provision, work experience, and volunteer experience for local people, especially older teens and young adults, for example in service and hospitality, retail and running workshops.
- 6) The additional staffing hours and/or posts, and the ad hoc driving and stall roadie work would create additional local employment and our existing staff will benefit from improved career progression opportunities.
- 7) The greater activity provision and, especially, the outdoor market would become a destination event for Whithorn, attracting more local visitors and tourists during the season with the result of increased footfall for other business and attractions in the area, e.g. the Whithorn Trust Roundhouse, Whithorn Way Café, The Steam Packet Inn at the Isle of Whithorn, the campsite and shops in Port William, etc. This would generate additional activity, social engagement, employment, and income in the area.
- 8) Increased resilience and adaptation options in the face of worsening climate and ecological breakdown: mutual aid, practical upskilling, group cooking and eating. The coffee cart would join our minibus as another way of letting us deliver necessities (food, water, blankets, books, games, etc.) to our neighbours in times of need.
- 9) More opportunities for collaboration with other organisations and businesses in Whithorn and across the south Machars by increasing inclusion and participation rates through running multi-facility events and projects and sharing logistical elements such as transport and catering.

PROJECT 2 Net Zero Training Flagship at Whithorn Old Town Hall

Lead Delivery Organisation	Building Futures Galloway
Total Project Costs	£1.1m
Borderlands Funding Requested	£900,000
Potential Match Funding	£200k
Anticipated Impacts	• Reusing and repurposing a key heritage asset at the heart of the town • Creating a distinctive sense of place rooted in Whithorn's history and skills • Supporting inclusive growth, particularly for young people remote from the labour market • Delivering low-carbon, demonstrator retrofit of a historic building • Generating sustained economic activity as a training and skills centre for BFG retaining visitors and spend in the high street, not one-off construction impact
Start Date	Q2 2027
End Date	Q4 2029
Deliverability	The project currently sits at the end of RIBA 4, with the completion of building warrant packages at end of March 2025. Construction works are estimated to take 2.5 years to complete. To date, planning consent has been granted for Change of Use to a public building (private building conversion consent was granted in 2011 and had to be reversed). Reports completed include historical research, condition reports, M&E, steeplejack survey, environmental survey, lightning rod inspection, clock inspection, and energy efficiency report, hygrothermal survey.
Project Description	
Renovate Whithorn Old Town Hall (built in 1814), offering in work heritage skills training to young people with barriers to employment throughout the project. Training opportunities will be expansive, from lime pointing and stone carving to window and shutter making and construction project management. The project will be a flagship for energy efficiency measures appropriate to older buildings, applicable to all traditional buildings across Scotland and with public outreach opportunities for learning and practical training. The building will be restored to public use as a museum, gallery and office base for Building Futures Galloway, with full disabled access.	

The Old Town Hall will operate not as a static restored asset, but as a living, working heritage building, forming a flagship anchor within a wider campus that includes the new museum, Whithorn Trust visitor centre, archive and archaeological site.

Post-capital, the building will function as:

- A base for Building Futures Galloway, consolidating offices currently shared with the Whithorn Trust
- A continuing restoration and learning site, where the building itself remains part of the curriculum
- A theory, teaching and coordination base for heritage skills training delivered across Whithorn and Dumfries and Galloway
- A public-facing exhibition and interpretation space, including:
 - display and sale of furniture and craft made by trainees
 - exhibitions by independent artists (space hire)
 - living exemplar interpretation of low-carbon retrofit in a historic building, arguing for the young people's Green skills.
 - A small burgh museum, reflecting the building's civic role since 1814, displaying its unique features such as the town gaol.

This approach builds on discrete phases of work already undertaken, including SPEN-funded energy efficiency measures (ASHP and innovative lime plaster), stone carving by trainees of balusters (not installed), and the securing of Building Warrant and architectural design funding (£100k raised to date).

Benefits Overview

The restoration of the iconic Listed “B” building which is central to Whithorn’s identity will return it to public use and showcase local history, diversifying the existing tourist offer. It will provide hands-on heritage training for vulnerable young people, helping them build skills, confidence, and employment prospects, and strengthens Whithorn’s social fabric.

- **Reusing and repurposing a key heritage asset** at the heart of the town
- Creating a **distinctive sense of place** rooted in Whithorn’s history and skills
- Supporting **inclusive growth**, particularly for young people remote from the labour market
- Delivering **low-carbon, demonstrator retrofit** of a historic building
- Generating **sustained economic activity retaining visitors and spend in the high street**, not one-off construction impact

The Old Town Hall becomes both a destination and a productive asset, increasing footfall, dwell time and local spend.

The sustainability of the Old Town Hall is based on **diversified, mutually reinforcing income streams**, reducing risk and reliance on any single source.

The Old Town Hall will act as the offices for the charity, a small exhibition for visitors, a showcase for young people's skills and therefore a customer demonstration building, and an

area for sales of products/local artists. It will be adjacent to the Minster project and Whithorn Trust museum.

The building will be built to the highest standards of energy efficiency possible for a building of the early 19th Century and, with an Air Source Heat Pump, energy costs will be kept low. Maintenance of the building will continue to be carried out by young people in the team. Sales to private clients are a growth area for the charity, comprising around £315,000 this year and a high-profile building will act as a showcase for gaining contracts. BFG have a potential market extending across historic properties in Dumfries and Galloway, which, according to HES, comprise around 31% of all houses in the region. We expect a small stream of income from tickets to see the building and historic jail cells, a small amount of sales of furniture and carved stone components and products, and fees for exhibition artworks of third parties.

The charity will also continue to work with partners on commissioned projects such as school and employability programmes, to sustain itself. A major area of expansion is planned in partnership with the Whithorn Trust, as Heritage Fund and Museums Galleries Scotland have awarded c.£300,000 for investigating and business planning for heritage skills courses at different levels eg. home owners, CPD and employability. The building will be sustained by the entirety of the charity's operations and not simply by visitor footfall into the building.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Tender Packages	Q3/4 2026
Construction	Q1 2027
Completion	Q2 2029
Place Plan Alignment	• Initiative N. Improvement, Reinstatement & Care of Buildings • Initiative A. Intergenerational Upskilling and Training • Initiative O. Safeguarding Existing Heritage Assets The Whithorn Place Plan is structured to fall under five guiding principles: 1. Community Cohesion 2. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit 3. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets 4. Alleviating Rural Isolation 5. Cost of Living Within this structure, the initiatives of the Place Plan are arranged within three major themes: 1. Community Safeguarding and Enrichment 2. A Vibrant Town Centre 3. Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets The Net Zero Old Town Hall project aligns with all five Place Plan principles as set out above. The project delivers on these

	principles through the restoration of historic floorspace, the development of town centre commercial accommodation and the regeneration of a formerly derelict signature site in the heart of the town.
Place Programme Alignment	Borderlands Place Programme Objectives S03 This unique and signature building will be brought into use as a training and skills hub in the heart of the town with multiple benefits across employability, training pathways and heritage conservation. S06 The project will assist in alleviating the record of youth unemployment in Whithorn, often generational, which is a structural issue in the economy of the South Machars, by linking young people with a national market for critically-endangered heritage skills. The venture will provide a new and different, non-academic pathway to qualifications, close to the place where young people live, but where there is also a preponderance (more than 50%) of Listed and traditional buildings.
Economic Impact	A. Skills Training and Education (core income) Aligned with the Museum Innovation Fund projections, the Old Town Hall will support: • Heritage skills short courses (stone, lime, joinery, conservation) • Coordinate with the Whithorn Trust's proposals for archaeology and research skills, including 15–20 days per year of community archaeology training, plus post-excavation recording • University field schools and placements • Professional CPD in conservation and net zero retrofit Indicative steady-state income: £40,000–£55,000 per year Archaeology represents the highest delivery cost because it is inherently labour-intensive, requiring extended supervised fieldwork and specialist post-excavation processes. Costs are benchmarked against previous community archaeology projects. B. Commissioned and Institutional Delivery • Local authority, SDS-linked and education programmes • University partnerships and research residencies • Heritage and climate adaptation projects

Indicative income: £30,000–£60,000 per year

C. Cultural Production, Exhibitions and Hire

- Commission on sales of trainee-made furniture and craft
- Hire of exhibition and teaching space to artists and partners
- Talks, events and learning hire

Indicative income: £10,000–£20,000 per year

D. Indirect Place-Based Uplift

As part of a combined museum and heritage campus, the Old Town Hall will increase dwell time and shoulder-season activity, supporting café, retail and local spend.

Indicative indirect uplift: £8,000–£15,000 per year (conservative)

5. Operating Costs and Energy Efficiency

The building is currently unoccupied, so no historic energy baseline exists. However, Harley Haddow engineer's report indicates that the installed and proposed measures (ASHP, lime plaster, fabric improvements) will deliver c. 72% energy savings compared to a conventional heated historic building.

This significantly reduces future operating risk and running costs, strengthening long-term sustainability.

Staffing is deliberately lean:

- **Part-time administrative support is shared with the Whithorn Trust**, avoiding duplication, providing a model of how small charities can reduce overhead costs
- Skills delivery relies on existing staff, trainees and freelance tutors (c. £350/day, sector standard)

Indicative Income vs. Cost Table (Steady State)

Annual Operating Position (Post-Capital, Indicative)

Category	£ per year
Income	
Skills training & education	45,000
Commissioned delivery	45,000
Exhibitions, hire & sales commission	15,000
Total Direct Income	105,000
Indirect visitor uplift (non-cash)	10,000
Operating Costs	
Freelance tutors & archaeology delivery	45,000

Part-time admin (shared resource)	15,000
Utilities (post 72% energy saving)	6,000
Maintenance, insurance, consumables	12,000
Total Operating Costs	78,000
Indicative Operating Surplus	c. £27,000 p.a.

Note: figures are indicative and conservative; surplus supports long-term maintenance and resilience.

Additionality and Risk Reduction

Without Borderlands capital funding, the Old Town Hall would remain partially restored and underutilised, unable to function as a productive anchor for skills and cultural activity.

With Museum Innovation Fund support, a partnership of both Whithorn Trust and BFG will be able to justify the planning, curriculum integration and market testing required to align skills delivery with the building, given limited unrestricted reserves over the next two years.

Together, these investments:

- De-risk capital spend
- Maximise long-term return on public investment
- Embed inclusive growth, skills and sustainability

Conclusion

Borderlands Place Strand investment in the Old Town Hall will unlock a flagship asset at the heart of Whithorn's regeneration. Combined with museum development and skills innovation, the building becomes a living heritage campus anchor, delivering inclusive growth, low-carbon learning and sustained economic impact long after capital works are complete.

Key Constraints / Dependencies

None other than Match Funding

Old Town Hall funders:

- HES - EOI approved and application submitted
- Vinehill Trust - submitted application
- Pilgrim Trust - not yet submitted
- Clothworkers' Foundation - submitted



It is worth noting the Museums Innovation Fund and matched Heritage Lottery fund, awarded to the Whithorn Trust in May 2026, will enable long-term business planning of skills courses in partnership with BFG - the funding is 2026-2028 and will investigate paid courses at different levels from schools to hobbyists and professionals, across all heritage skills, from archaeology to masonry courses.

PROJECT 3 Aet Hwitan-Aerne: ReBuilding Whithorn's Anglian Minster

Lead Delivery Organisation	Whithorn Trust in partnership with Building Futures Galloway
Total Project Costs	£615,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£500,000
Potential Match Funding	£115,000
Anticipated Impacts	• Exhibition live heritage reconstruction project over 5 years • Major new Visitor Attraction for Whithorn • Heritage Skills and Training Exemplar • New FTE's and Training apprenticeships/ Youth employment upskilling programmes • Increased Visitor numbers and community animations through events and festivals
Start Date	Q2 2027
End Date	Q4 2029
Deliverability	Project at concept design stage with costs to RIBA Stage 2 and all statutory consents in place.

Project Description

Reconstruct Whithorn's Northumbrian church and burial chapel at full scale, led by a team of archaeologists, architects, and craftspeople. The project will offer training for young people from Building Futures Galloway and Douglas Ewart High School, along with public outreach in skills like clay masonry, mural art, and stained glass. Filmed from the start, it will spotlight Whithorn's emergence around 700CE as a pilgrimage centre and aims to increase visitor footfall throughout the live build.

Benefits Overview

The project will deliver long-term economic and social benefits by increasing visitor numbers, supporting local businesses, and providing hands-on training in endangered heritage skills. It will improve wellbeing through community involvement and engagement, while offering young people meaningful opportunities to gain qualifications, build confidence, and access employment pathways.

The project will begin in late 2026 with the creation of a temporary medieval workshop and toolmaking, while planning applications are progressed. The build is phased over five years, with work taking place each spring to autumn to maximise visibility, visitor engagement, and seasonal tourism benefits. Delivery will be led by the Whithorn Trust in partnership with Building Futures Galloway, with oversight from a joint project board and an advisory research committee of archaeologists, architects, and crafts specialists. Local young people, schools, and

community members will be actively involved, supported by external partners including Historic Environment Scotland, National Museums Scotland, and Douglas Ewart High School.

Milestone	Delivery Date
Full design and specification	Q1 2027
Tenders	Q2 2027
Construction	Q3 2027
Completion	Q4 2029
Place Plan Alignment	• Initiative N. Improvement, Reinstatement & Care of Buildings • Initiative A. Intergenerational Upskilling and Training • Initiative O. Safeguarding Existing Heritage Assets The Whithorn Place Plan is structured to fall under five guiding principles: 1. Community Cohesion 2. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit 3. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets 4. Alleviating Rural Isolation 5. Cost of Living Within this structure, the initiatives of the Place Plan are arranged within three major themes: 1. Community Safeguarding and Enrichment 2. A Vibrant Town Centre 3. Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets The Anglican Minster project aligns with all five Place Plan principles as set out above. The project delivers on these principles through a highly innovation historic reconstruction of the original Northumbrian church and burial chapel, embracing a skills and training programme in partnership with Building Futures Galloway to create a major visitor attraction and heritage event in Whithorn over a 5-year live construction/exhibition period.
Place Programme Alignment	Borderlands Place Programme Objectives SO3 With decreasing revenue support available to independent museums, it is critical that the Trust, as the main economic driver

for Whithorn, creates new compelling reasons for visitors to come and spend. Over the five years of the project, the Northumbrian Church reconstruction will offer a live visitor spectacle during the peak season from late Spring to early Autumn and promote confidence and a positive public image for young people, who may then choose to become involved in the management and strategic planning for the future. From experience of our building of the Roundhouse, a relatively smaller reconstruction project, visitor numbers increased by 75% during and after the reconstruction. We would aim to build in high profile publicity into our project, creating the footage for a public broadcaster from the start, and a professionally managed social media campaign to drive increased visitor numbers.

S06

This proposal increases and helps retain the working age population by creating pathways into employment through accredited training in heritage construction skills, specifically targeting young people aged 14–28. By offering local, high quality opportunities in a sector facing national skills shortages, it encourages young residents to stay and work in the area rather than leave for education or jobs elsewhere. The project also supports the growth of social enterprises and local businesses, generating employment and strengthening Whithorn's appeal as a place to live and build a future.

Economic Impact

Direct economic impact will be measured against construction stage impacts, increased visitor numbers and spend, and an increased profile of the Whithorn as an international heritage destination project in the South of Scotland. Further benefits will accrue from the training, apprenticeships, heritage skills and learning programme that will be central to the project's delivery

1 Construction stage impacts

The capital cost of the project at c.£650,000 will have direct benefits in construction employment, training and skills development with increased turnover per employee in the region and locally within Whithorn.

2 Visitor Economy Benefits:

On completion the project is expected to increase visitor numbers to The Whithorn Trust by 6000 pa to 15,000 pa. (As a comparable, the Iron Age Roundhouse increased visitors by

75% once it was completed). This increase in visitor numbers will have wider economic benefits associated with extended dwell time and visitor spend throughout the community and region particularly within the hospitality sector.

3. Training skills & Learning

Similar to the Old Town Hall project, as an authentic historic reconstruction, the project will support:

- Heritage skills short courses (engineering, joinery, conservation)
- Coordinate with the Whithorn Trust's proposals for archaeology and research skills
- University field schools and placements
- Professional CPD in conservation and net zero retrofit
- Boost income generation, employability and viability at the Whithorn Trust
- Boost commissioned and institutional delivery partnerships via Local authority, SDS-linked and education programmes, University partnerships and research residencies, Heritage and climate adaptation projects
- Increased events programming through talks, events and learning hire
- Increase dwell time and shoulder-season activity, supporting café, retail and local spend.

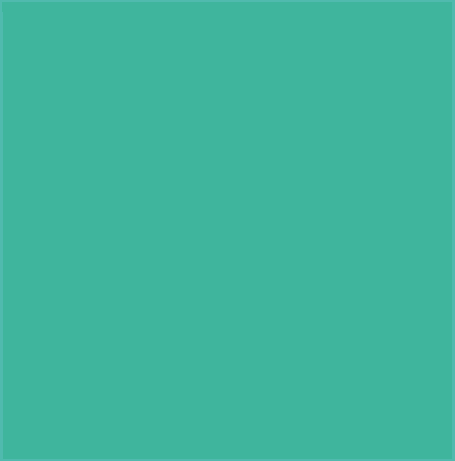
All benefits will be modelled in more detail for the Part B BTIP submission.

Key Constraints / Dependencies

None other than Match Funding

Anglican Minster funders:

- Heritage Fund - aware but not yet submitted
- Payable internships and training placements - planned though Museum Innovation Fund and Heritage Fund awarded funds.
- University Partnerships, also under discussion through Museum Innovation Fund, already awarded.
- Garfield Weston - not yet approached - have held grants
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and or Esmee Fairbairn Communities and Collections Fund - existing grant holder, but potential for extension.
- Big Lottery - for outreach (ie fine arts engagement)
- South of Scotland Enterprise - tourism strand: communications held; training options and courses would be the focus of the bid.



It is worth noting the Museums Innovation Fund and matched Heritage Lottery fund, awarded to the Whithorn Trust in May 2026, will enable long-term business planning of skills courses in partnership with BFG - the funding is 2026-2028 and will investigate paid courses at different levels from schools to hobbyists and professionals, across all heritage skills, from archaeology to masonry courses.

PROJECT 4 Townscape Improvements at the Heart of Whithorn

Lead Delivery Organisation	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Total Project Costs	£750,000
Borderlands Funding Requested	£375,000
DGC Funding	£125,000
Potential Match Funding	£250,000
Anticipated Impacts	• Increased visitor numbers and footfall • Increased business turnover • Direct job creation and training placements • Vacant and derelict sites brought back into use • Enhanced public realm for events and festivals • Improved community cohesion, confidence, pride of place and wellbeing
Start Date	Q4 2027
End Date	Q4 2028
Deliverability	Project at Concept Stage- D&G Council will progress the project through a community engagement and coproduction exercise.
Project Description	
A blanket project to fill gaps in the prioritised initiatives of the Whithorn Place Plan not wholly met by the five prior identified projects. This would see the town centre of Whithorn assessed for the potential to have general improvement works, with the addition of prioritised initiatives such as places to wait and rest, sheltered gathering spaces for general use and while waiting for public transport, and the formalising of key wayfinding routes connecting central Whithorn to the surrounding area. Benefits Overview Enhancing the everyday experience for residents and visitors, encouraging longer stays and greater use of local services. Signature heritage-sensitive structures and creative route markers would strengthen Whithorn's identity, support active travel, and make the town a more attractive and accessible hub for cycling and walking tourism, boosting footfall and local economic activity.	
Milestone	Delivery Date
Design Development & Engagement	Q4 2026
Statutory Consents	Q2 2027

Tenders	Q3 2027
Construction	Q1 2028
Completion	Q4 2028
Place Plan Alignment	• Initiative P. Improve Connections Within & Beyond Whithorn • Initiative J. Places to Wait and Rest • Initiative E. 'Filling the Gaps' in the Bus Service The Whithorn Place Plan is structured to fall under five guiding principles: 1. Community Cohesion 2. Cultivating Reasons to Stay and Visit 3. Celebrating Whithorn's Unique Assets 4. Alleviating Rural Isolation 5. Cost of Living Within this structure, the initiatives of the Place Plan are arranged within three major themes: 1. Community Safeguarding and Enrichment 2. A Vibrant Town Centre 3. Nurturing Whithorn's Unique Assets The Town Centre Improvements project aligns with all five Place Plan principles as set out above. The project delivers on these principles through a series of design interventions on the High Street to improve the public realm, restore frontages, improve active travel infrastructure and provide gathering spaces to extend dwell time and facilitate events. This project requires further options appraisals and feasibility analysis to understand what improvements and initiatives within the town would be required and could be carried out within the context of Borderlands (or other) funding. Work on this further audit and study to inform the project could start immediately and take place prior to the end of the 2025-2026 financial year.
Place Programme Alignment	Borderlands Place Programme Objectives SO2 Potential to safeguard existing businesses by increasing footfall, dwell-time, and overall visitor experience in the town centre, making it a more attractive place to shop, eat, and explore. Improved accessibility, signage, and creative public

	spaces encourage locals and tourists to spend more time—and money— locally. By enhancing the town’s appearance and functionality, the project creates a welcoming environment for new enterprises, particularly those in tourism, hospitality, and creative sectors, helping to build a more resilient and vibrant local economy. S03 Such improvements would maintain and increase visitor numbers by creating a more attractive, accessible, and engaging town centre, encouraging people to stay longer and explore more. Features like heritage-sensitive shelters, creative wayfinding, and connections to major walking and cycling routes enhance the visitor experience and support active travel. By providing flexible outdoor spaces for events and improving year-round usability with covered waiting areas, the project also helps extend the visitor season and boost spend per visit in local shops, cafés, and services.
Economic Impact	1. Increased visitor numbers and footfall 2. Increased business turnover 3. Direct job creation and training placements 4. Vacant and derelict sites brought back into use 5. Enhanced public realm for events and festivals 6. Improved community cohesion, pride of place and wellbeing
Key Constraints / Dependencies	• Community Engagement & Participation • Scheme Design

Annex B – Project Long List Process

This Annex is to be completed where the Place Plan did not include the long list of projects and/or the selection process. Please contact the Borderlands PMO if you are uncertain if you need to complete this section.

Please describe the process undertaken to identify the long list of projects.

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Please list the long list of projects.

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Borderlands Partnership Board

23rd September 2026

Item 8 – Programmes Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper sets out the latest position with regards to the Energy Programme, Digital Programme, Natural Capital Programme in Scotland and Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme.
- 1.2. A separate paper has been prepared to provide a more in-depth update on the Place Programme.

2. Recommendation

2.1. The Board is asked to:

- a) Endorse the direction of travel and next steps for the Digital Programme.
- b) Note the progress on the Energy Programme, Natural Capital Programme and Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme.
- c) Note Government endorsement of the SCAMPP Research Centre (natural Capital in Scotland) business case.

3. Digital Programme

Background

- 3.1. When developing the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal (the Deal) there was a strong need to improve full-fibre and 4G coverage across the region. As such, the Deal recognised the need "to improve full fibre connectivity together with mobile connectivity" and committed up to £16.2m in Scotland and £16m in England. To compliment the R100 programme operating in Scotland, up to £4m was made available to deliver a voucher 'top-up' scheme in England. As part of the Deal Reset in 2025, the allocation to the Digital Programme was revised to £22.13m (£9.86m in England and £12.27m in Scotland).
- 3.2. Since the signing of the Deal, public investment through programmes such as the Shared Rural Network, Project Gigabit and R100 programme in Scotland, have been announced. These programmes, together with the planned commercial activity, have and will continue to greatly improve full-fibre and 4G coverage across the Borderlands region, however the full extent will not be fully known until the work is complete.

Challenges & Opportunities

- 3.3. Whilst the planned activity forecasts the Borderlands will have improved coverage there is a risk that the public programmes and commercial activity change during delivery and therefore won't provide required coverage. Currently we are unable to guarantee that the Borderlands will receive the coverage it requires to support our inclusive and economic growth ambitions. Therefore, there is a requirement to monitor the delivery of these programmes and challenge where appropriate.
- 3.4. This also presents a challenge when developing the Digital Programme so that it best utilises the Borderlands funding identified in the Deal. We don't want to use Borderlands funding on activity that could/will be delivered by other public resources or commercial deployment. However, we can't wait until these programmes have completed to understand where there are gaps in coverage across the region.
- 3.5. The planned public and commercial activity provide an opportunity to reshape the focus of the Digital Programme from purely an infrastructure programme to one that includes investment in broader digital activity that would help deliver against the three principal socio-economic challenges facing the region outlined in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal:
 - **Narrowing the productivity gap:** Digital infrastructure is vital to securing a larger base of higher value economic activities which are needed to close our growing productivity gap on the UK.
 - **Increasing the working age population:** Young people and families will be encouraged to locate and work from the Borderlands region secure in the knowledge that digital infrastructure will allow them to engage with work opportunities across the globe from home. Older people, and parents of young children, who may have become economically inactive will also be encouraged to return to work, taking advantage of new employment opportunities and alternative ways of interacting with customers or colleagues.
 - **Delivering inclusive growth:** New ways of working and learning driven by digital technology will open up new opportunities for people who have traditionally found it difficult to engage economically.

Funding Allocations

Area	Original Allocation £m	Revised Allocation £m	Difference £m	Spent to date £m	Remaining Funding £m
Cumberland	3.50	0.36	-3.14	0.36	-
Westmorland & Furness	3.50	2.50	-1.00	1.45	1.05
Northumberland	9.00	7.00	-2.00	1.50	5.50 ¹
England Total	16.00	9.86	-6.14	3.31	6.55
Dumfries & Galloway	6.75	3.32	-3.43	-	3.32
Scottish Borders	9.45	8.95	-0.50	-	8.95
Scotland Total	16.20	12.27	-3.93	-	12.27
Borderlands Total	32.20	22.13	-10.07	3.31	18.82

- 3.6. Spend to date figures represent the final spend of the Digital Borderlands Vouchers Scheme in England. No spend has taken place in Scotland.

Proposed Way Forward

- 3.7. Reflecting on the challenges and current coverage data, it is proposed to reshape the focus of the Digital Programme into two distinct Investment Themes:



Investment Theme 1: Digitally Inclusive Deal

Purpose:
To provide new or better access to digital services. Potentially linking to activity in the Place and Energy Programmes to enhance existing schemes.

Example Activities:
Digital hubs, access to SFB, temporary solutions (pop-up access), voucher schemes (R100 extension), community resilience.

Impact:
Delivering inclusive growth and tackling inequalities.



Investment Theme 2: Digital Adoption & Usage

Purpose:
To provide new, innovative or improved digital technologies to support business sustainability and growth.

Example Activities:
Natural Capital monitoring, visitor management / experience, trail management, pop-up infrastructure to enable quicker and more reliable payments at events, agricultural management, smart meter technologies.

Impact:
Drive economic growth through adoption/application of digital services/technologies.
Increasing productivity through the application of digital technologies.

3.8. Next Steps

- 3.9. The key next step is to ensure the proposed direction of travel is acceptable to the funders. In Scotland, UK Government (Scotland Office) are the funder. In England, the funding simplification agreed as part of the Deal Renegotiation means decisions on how best to utilise the funding can be determined locally.

¹ Subject to the Partnership Boards decision in relation to Berwick Theatre, this figure would reduce to £2.5m, representing a £3m reallocation from the Digital Programme to the Berwick Theatre project.

- 3.10. In order to support the discussions with UK Government Scotland Office, the PMO will work with colleagues in Dumfries & Galloway Council and Scottish Borders Council to identify potential projects that could be taken forward through the Digital Programme.
- 3.11. In England, the PMO will work closely with Cumberland Council, Northumberland County Council, and Westmorland and Furness Council to agree a set of projects for the Partnership Board to agree at a future meeting. Although there is no Borderlands funding allocation remaining in Cumberland, there may be opportunities to coordinate and align activities being developed and funded through other means, such as gainshare.

Recommendation

3.12. The Partnership Board is asked to

- Endorse the direction of travel and next steps for the Digital Programme.

4. Energy Investment Programme

4.1. Following the Partnership Board in December 2025 where projects to be taken forward were agreed, good progress has been made across the programme. The PMO are actively supporting applicants with the development of their business cases. Key support includes:

- **Business Case Template:** Projects have been provided with a business case template which also includes guidance on how to complete.
- **Technical Annex:** The Green Book approach doesn't neatly capture the technical aspects of energy projects, therefore a Technical Annex template bespoke to each project has been developed to accompany the business case. Projects will need to clearly set out the technical requirements of their project, enabling a full assessment of the technical deliverability of their proposals.
- **Regular Project Meetings:** The PMO have regular meetings with the projects to monitor progress using the Business Case Development Plans. The PMO are also on hand to review drafts of the business case and provide feedback on how it could be strengthened before formal submission.
- **Economic Case Support:** Following a competitive tendering process, GC Insight has been appointed to provide the Economic Case Support. A programme level inception meeting took place in mid-June. All individual project level inceptions meetings have taken place, the more developed projects have been prioritised.

Using information gathered through the inception meetings, GC Insight have developed an overarching economic model to be applied across the Energy Programme. An initial draft appraisal specification report has been shared with UK Government (Scotland Office) for consideration.

GC Insight have also provided a critical friend review of the draft Outline Business Cases available. Project applicants are considering their feedback and updating the business case accordingly.

- **Subsidy Control Assessment:** A Subsidy Control Advice Fund has been established for projects in the Borderlands Energy Programme. This allows projects to bid up to £5,000 towards the cost of the legal advice. The application process is proportionate to the level of funding being provided.

Project Updates

4.2. The table below provides an update on the status of each project within the programme.

Project	Update
E002 BEST CAES BEC	The OBC is in the final stages of development and is due to be submitted late September 2026.
E003 D&G Net Zero Energy Centre Dumfries & Galloway College	Development work underway. Project working towards RIBA Stage 3. Applicant is keen to progress quickly, OBC likely to be submitted early 2027. This project is also part of the South of Scotland Skills Programme. The SOBC was approved by the Partnership Board.
E004 Northumberland Community Energy Ltd	The OBC is in the final stages of development and is due to be submitted late September 2026. Planning applications underway, 21 approved, 19 in progress. 54 feasibility studies completed. Building prioritisation process undertaken to rank buildings in order of deliverability.
E005 Hydroluminium Hydroluminium Ltd	Applicant actively drafting the OBC. Project site identified and Heads of Terms agreed. OBC due to be submitted Autumn 2026.
E006 PowerHub Demonstrator Scottish Borders Housing Association & Wheatley Homes South	OBC development progressing well and due to be submitted September 2026. Awaiting confirmation of Power-Hub supplier 'go-live' date for the assembly plant in D&G.
E007 Alnwick District Heat Network Northumberland Estates & Reheat	Detailed design process underway, expected Q2 2026/27, will then trigger planning approval process with a decision expected in Feb 2027. OBC due to be submitted Q1 2027.
E008 Sustainable	Commissioning of technical advice underway. Initial list of buildings being developed alongside a forward plan of

Project	Update
Community Buildings Voluntary ACTION Cumbria & Community Action Northumberland	activity. The OBC is in development and due to be submitted Autumn 2026.
E009 Sustainable, Circular, and Low-Carbon Energy (SCALE) ACAP Ventures Ltd	Formally known as Negative Emissions. Heat demand for private off-taker quantified. Land agreements are at HoTs with initial drafts prepared. RIBA 3 activity has started, expected to complete Q2 2026/27. First draft of OBC reviewed by PMO and feedback provided. Further development work underway, aiming to submit revised OBC Autumn 2026.
E010 Borderlands Optimised Output for Sustainable Transport (BOOST) Cybermoor Services Ltd	Draft OBC received August 2026 and reviewed by the PMO. The queries raised with applicant have now been addressed and the updated OBC returned ready to be formally assessed by the external appraiser and the Accountable Body.
E011 Woodhorn Powering the Past and the Future Northumberland County Council	Applicant is in the process of procuring the design team for the project. Project development is progressing and an OBC is expected to be submitted early 2027.
E012 Electrification in Papermaking James Cropper PLC	Following a review of the project, the applicant has withdrawn from the programme as the project is no longer financially viable. The applicant continues to explore alternative approaches to carbon reduction.
E013 Scottish Borders Rural Community Energy Programme Scottish Borders Council	Meeting with Scottish Government to understand interdependencies with existing funding programmes has taken place to support the development of the programme. Project development is progressing and an OBC is expected to be submitted late 2026.
E014 Housing & Net Zero Accelerator Hub Borders College	This project is being funding through the South of Scotland Skills Programme, however, given the relationship to the Energy Programme updates are being reported here. The SOBC was approved by the Partnership Board. Project development is progressing and an OBC is expected to be submitted early 2027.

Key Risks

- 4.3. The common challenges faced by most projects in the programme are outlined below, these remain the same as previously reported:

Risk	Mitigation
Level of detail required for both Outline and Full Business Case.	Status: Reducing. Consultancy support now in place. Consultants will also provide generic business case support on a case-by-case basis.
Secure match funding to deliver projects.	Status: No change. Each project outlined the proposed funding model at EOI stage. Projects continue to refine their funding approach during OBC development. Projects have been linked with the relevant support agency (SOSE, NECA, EC).
Ensuring Public Procurement Regulations are adhered to, especially with partner involvement.	Status: No change. Projects have already engaged delivery partners who will provide goods / services to deliver the project. The PMO and Accountable Body will engage with projects to ensure a compliant procurement route can be established.
Ensuring funding can be awarded whilst complying with Subsidy Control Regulations.	Status: Reducing. Up to £5k of funding made available to projects to obtain independent subsidy control opinions, demonstrating how funding can be awarded in a compliant manner.
Cost escalation due to current economic climate.	Status: No change. PMO to monitor impacts reported by projects.

Next Steps

- 4.4. The Borderlands PMO continue to support project applicants to bring forward business cases as soon as possible. Subject to ongoing reviews, we intend to bring the following projects to the next Partnership Board meeting in November / December:
- E002 – Borderlands Energy Storage Transformation: Compressed Air Energy Storage
 - E004 – Northumberland Community Energy

- E006 – PowerHub Demonstrator
- E010 – Borderlands Optimised Output for Sustainable Transport

4.5. The PMO will continue to work closely with Westmorland & Furness Council to identify a suitable replacement project to utilise the funding available. The outcome of this process will be presented at a future Partnership Board meeting for approval.

5. Natural Capital Programme

Scotland

5.1. The Natural Capital Programme in Scotland will deliver five pilot projects across the Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway, all aimed at testing new and innovative ways to make the most of the natural capital in our region. The results will help inform policy and delivery in Borderlands and beyond.

5.2. The table below provides an update on the status of each project within the programme.

Project	Update
Whole Farm Audits (OPIN) Dumfries & Galloway Council	Status: In delivery Work has been progressing well and the first 4 farms have been selected to join the pilot, with work underway on their audits.
SCAMPP Dumfries & Galloway Council	Status: Phase 1 - Research Work in delivery / Phase 2 - Research Centre: Business Case now endorsed by Scottish and UK Governments The research element of the project is underway, and all project staff are now in post. They are based in the temporary office in Stranraer until the Research Centre is built. Work is progressing well on the seagrass and saltmarsh restoration work. The Marine Research Centre is part of the Stranraer Marina Masterplan, and a separate business case has been developed for this element of Borderlands natural capital funding. The purpose-built Centre will enable the project to carry out the Borderlands funded research much more effectively and provide an ongoing base for future work, creating a centre of excellence and delivering sustainable economic and environmental benefits to the area. The business case was presented to the Board in March and was approved subject to Government endorsement. The business case has now been endorsed by both Scottish Government and UK Government (Scotland Office) and the Centre will be taken forward as part of the Stranraer Marina project.

Project	Update
Species Rich Grassland Project Scottish Borders Council	Status: In delivery Significant progress has been made since the project started, identifying farms and sites to take part in the pilot and recruiting volunteers for the work. Five farms and two estates took part in management trials in autumn/winter. This has been followed up by successful fieldwork and volunteer days through spring and summer. Work is progressing on attracting match funding for the project.
Woodland Creation Scottish Borders Council & Tweed Forum	Status: In development Following feedback from the Government that the existing proposal had too many risks and uncertainties for the business case to progress, SBC and Tweed Forum have developed an alternative woodland project which will still contribute to the aims of the Natural Capital Programme. This was developed in consultation with Government policy teams and Government agencies to bring in their support and expertise. A business case will now be developed and brought forward for review and approval early in 2027.
Data and Investment Pilot - BRICHT South of Scotland Enterprise	Status: In development The Data and Investment pilot 'BRICHT' (Borderlands Regional Investment and natural Capital Hub for Transition) pilot aims to: • Showcase investable Natural Capital opportunities in the region • Facilitate collaboration of smaller projects to generate investment opportunities at scale • Develop blended and private finance models for identified opportunities • Leverage robust data in order to secure investment • Align on the ground action with policy objectives through information provision. The project business justification case is being finalised so it can be endorsed by Scottish and UK Governments, before being brought to the Partnership Board for approval.

England

- 5.3. The PMO continues to seek confirmation from UK Government (Defra) that the £5m identified in the Deal remains available and seeks to understand how this can be drawdown. Following recent engagement with the local MPs and MSPs, new contacts within Defra have been identified and followed up by the Borderlands Partnership Director.

6. Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme

- 6.1. The projects within the Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme continue to progress development of their full business cases. This is taking longer than expected, however good progress is being made with a number of business case expected to be submitted later this year.

Project / Applicant	Update
Reimagining Roman Maryport Senhouse Museum Trust & Cultura Trust	Stage 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund application was resubmitted in May 2026 the outcome of the bid is expected in late September. This has set the project back by 9 months. A draft OBC is due to be submitted in September with the aim of being considered by Partnership Board in December. If both submissions are approved, detailed development of the project will take place over 2027 culminating in the NLHF Stage 2 application and Borderlands FBC being submitted Autumn 2027 for a January 2028 project start.
Children's Experience Tullie	The project has produced an initial conceived idea which is being further refined with RIBA 4 designs expected and business case submission towards the end of 2026.
Discover Hadrian's Wall West Cumberland Council	This project was approved by the Borderlands Investment Panel at the meeting in September 2026. The project is in the process of clearing any approval conditions.
Walltown Horizons Northumberland National Park Authority	A change control was submitted in June 2026 to rescope the project, due to higher than anticipated costs for the original proposal. As the objectives of the project remained the same, and the change control did not impact the on the focus, nature or key deliverables of the project, the change control was approved by the PMO Manager and Accountable Body in line with the agreed tolerances. The FBC is due to be submitted in Winter 2026, and a first draft has now been received by the PMO.
Hadrian's Wall into the 21st Century English Heritage	The project has successfully secured National Lottery Heritage Fund funding to support the development of the project. The development stage has been extended by three months to enable further survey work to be undertaken. This will strengthen the application to NLHF and the Borderlands business case. During development, the project costs have increased. The Investment Panel approved a Change Control at their meeting in September 2026 to revert back to the original funding allocation for the project. First draft of the OBC is expected in early 2027 and the FBC

Project / Applicant	Update
	to follow in Summer 2027 alongside the NLHF Stage 2 application for the match funding.
Visitor Exploration Northumberland Northumberland County Council	The Partnership Board received an overview of the project at the June 2026 meeting and subsequently approved the project by written procedure in August 2026. The project is working to clear the approval conditions and the Accountable Body is developing the grant funding agreement.

6.2. A more detailed overview of the Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme will be provided at the December Partnership Board meeting.

Recommendation

6.3. The Partnership Board is asked to:

- Note the progress on the Energy Programme, Natural Capital Programme and Hadrian's Wall Investment Programme.

Lead Officer(s)

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Endorsed by

Designation	Date
Economic Development Chief Officer Group	04/09/2026