



## PLACE PLAN 2023/24

Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning Scotland Act, 2019 which contains a new right for Communities to produce their own plans as part of the Scottish Planning system. Place Plans are a way for communities to achieve change in their local area. They provide an opportunity for local communities to think about how to make their “place” better, agree priorities, and take action (often working with others) to make change happen. Community led place plans are more than just a plan: they can help your community understand what it wants to be like in the future. Having a plan and working together with Scottish Borders Council and others, we can make positive change happen. The process of consultation and planning started at our meeting in Eccles on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2022. This plan reflects planning and progress from that date.

This plan has been created following consultation with the people residing in our area and take cognizance of the questionnaire delivered to every household in Spring 2023. It is a living document which will be amended and updated in the light of further consultation or changes to priorities.

### **Our Vision:**

To promote a vibrant, friendly, supportive, sustainable community, which is well connected, healthy and safe. A place we are proud to live.

### **OUTCOME: Our Community will be well connected:**

- Our communications network will ensure that our community, both village and rural, know what is happening and have the opportunity to get involved.
- Partnerships will be developed with our elected members, public officers and local businesses to support the delivery of our plan. Further partnerships will be developed with neighbouring communities to share resources and ideas.
- We will have better public transport for our villages and suitable cycle routes to connect our village with neighbouring villages and towns.

### **Community Council:**

*Over the past year we have held consultative meetings in each of our villages and recently delivered a comprehensive questionnaire to all households in our area. Our plan takes cognizance of these consultations. In addition, we have met with the Road Safety Officer, Scottish Borders Council and our local Community Police Sergeant to discuss road safety concerns and general policing of our area. Improvements to signage and road marking for each of our villages have been agreed. We now have a Facebook presence and recently harvested emails from those who wish to keep in touch with our work. Through the Scottish Tech Army we have been gifted a website build.*

We will consult with young people in our area through contact with schools.

We will meet with companies intending to develop Battery Storage sites in our area:

- a. To try to limit the impact on local residents and our rural environment.
- b. To seek mutual partnerships for the benefit of our communities.

We will continue to develop our communications through both electronic means and use of noticeboards.

***Public Transport is sadly lacking in our communities and has been raised as a serious concern throughout our consultations.***

- We will seek meetings with bus operators and our elected representatives to see what can be done to improve this situation.
- We will explore alternative methods of improving transport for our communities including extension of Pingo service, car clubs and car sharing.

**Leitholm:**

*Our Community Councillors have been fully involved in consultations and have worked hard to ensure that their community is listened to and informed.*

In addition to CC priorities:

- We will secure a second noticeboard for our village.
- Lack of any Public Transport is a priority for our community, we will campaign for public transport for our village, particularly between Leitholm and Kelso. We will explore potential for extension of Pingo service and/or car club.
- A regular Newsletter design and delivery system will be considered and any relevant funding applied for, as a means of connecting residents in village and outskirts.

Planning for a Cycle route linking at least Eccles with Leitholm, will be initiated and relevant funding applied for.

A grass footpath with signage will link Leitholm village to the newly opened Admiral Ramsay Museum. A Core Paths Walking Map and required signage will start to be collated with consultations with relevant land owners and advice sought for product design.

**Eccles:**

*Our Community Councillors have been fully involved in consultations and have worked hard to ensure that their community is listened to and informed.*

Lack of any Public Transport is a priority for our community.

**Birgham:**

*Our Community Councillors have been fully involved in consultations and have worked hard to ensure that their community is listened to and informed.*

Development of footpath from Birgham to Home Farm has been noted as a priority.

While there is a bus service to Birgham, extended evening hour service is desired.

**OUTCOME:**

- **Our Communities will be Vibrant, Friendly and Supportive.**
- **Our People, irrespective of age or background, will be valued, included and supported.**

**Community Council:**

From consultations and questionnaire there are clearly different challenges facing each of our villages.

- We will continue to support the priorities highlighted by our villages and communities.
- We will seek to recruit, support and acknowledge the work of volunteers in our communities.
- We will look to develop policies to allow our communities to work effectively and safely: Safeguarding, Health & Safety.
- We will signpost funding opportunities for our communities to deliver on their priorities.

- We will explore the needs and aspirations of our young people.

**Leitholm:**

Through the work of our Community Councillors and others our Village Hall is now financially secure and a vibrant place for people to meet and participate in a wide range of activities. Through our communications on Facebook, Noticeboard and word of mouth we are now engaging a wider range of people in our community.

- We will seek to extend the work of our gardening team as a means of enhancing our village and engaging our people.
- We will explore the potential of a village shop &/ or communicate those goods and services already brought to the village by weekly traders.
- Provide training and support about the use of IT. Obtain funding for installation of Broadband and a TV license at the Village Hall.
- Provide those with hearing disability access to a functioning Loop System in the Village Hall.
- Apply for the Greener gateway Award 2023.

Establish a What's App Friends of Leitholm group.

Work with the Kirk to create a Community Garden ( further discussion in September).

Assess need / enthusiasm / ideas for a Women's Group to replace the recent loss of the SWI.

**Eccles:**

Our village lacks a place to meet and open areas for recreation. In consequence, we currently lack a sense of community. Significant work has been done over the past year to improve communications. We have a small committee who are dedicated to improving the ethos of the village and achieving our goals.

- We will engage with a wide range of people in our village to work together to provide a place to meet and an outdoor area for recreation.
- We will pursue, in partnership with Scottish Borders Council the potential for community use of the disused Primary School.
- We will seek funding to make the project viable.

**Birgham:**

Our village has an active, vibrant community led by our Birgham Community Development Trust.

- We will work in partnership with BCDT and others to continue this good work in line with our Community Council targets.

**OUTCOME:**

**Our Community will be sustainable:**

**We will work with our residents and businesses (including farmers and landowners) and partners towards becoming a greener, more sustainable community. We will explore how we can:**

- **Better insulate our homes.**
- **Generate Green Energy.**
- **Improve on our recycling of materials.**

**Community Council:**

We will work with our residents and businesses (including farmers and landowners) and partners towards becoming a greener, more sustainable community. We will explore how we can:

- Better insulate our homes.
- Generate Green Energy.
- Improve on our recycling of materials.
- We will work in partnership with companies developing battery storage in our area in line with Scottish Government infrastructure plans for a greener community, whilst opposing expansion of the project if this is to the detriment of our rural environment and impact on our people.
- We will signpost opportunities for our communities to access funding to better insulate their homes or produce green energy.

**Leitholm:**

- Provide information about sustainable living opportunities / funding / contacts.
- Invite relevant speakers &/ or provide information on topics such as better recycling, zero waste, turning garden waste into community compost and bio-diversity projects.
- Enable the village Swap Shop to be a positive asset to use.

[Set up a community garden waste composting system.](#)

**Eccles:**

A/A

**Birgham:**

A/A

**OUTCOME:**

**Our community will be a healthy and safe place to live and work:**

**All of our people, irrespective of age, will have access to exercise and social interaction.**

**All of our people will have access to medical services and care support locally.**

**Our villages and community will be a safe place to live and work.**

**Community Council:**

Road safety within our villages has been highlighted as a priority. We have met with both Road Safety at Scottish Borders Council and local police to explore enforcement of speed limits and problem parking. Consequently, SBC are improving signage and road markings in our villages. Further reductions in policing numbers for Berwickshire alongside high levels of officer extraction means that a programme of regular enforcement is not possible. Policing priority if given to serious accident hotspot areas. Our villages are not priorities. Poor condition of pavements in villages has been highlighted with a specific need that they be disability friendly.

- We will work with partners to explore other means of speeding enforcement.
- We will work with elected members and the council to have our village pavements improved.
- We will support village priorities in relation to access to exercise and social interaction.
- We will monitor feedback in relation to access to medical services and care support locally.

**Leitholm:**

- We will work with the full Community Council regarding road safety, pavement and road improvement goals. Particular concern regarding condition of pavements/access for disabled.
- We will continue to encourage the use of our village facilities and classes instigated at our hall.
- We will work with Scottish Borders Council regarding parking issues, in particular at the Ramsay Crescent junction and Coal Lane.

Buddy groups set up with Kirk support to help residents with day to day living needs and in the event of winter weather extremes.

**Eccles:**

We will work in with the full Community Council regarding road safety, pavement and road improvement goals.  
Realistically, our main focus will be on the provision of meeting and recreational facilities for the village.

**Birgham:**

We will work in with the full Community Council regarding road safety, pavement and road improvement goals.  
BCDT has carried out significant projects over recent years to improve the fabric of our hall and the facilities in our park.  
We will work with them to take stock of what now needs to be done to further enhance our amenities.

**OUTCOME:**

**Our Communities will be places we are proud to live.**

**Community Council:**

Our Village and surrounding area will be neat and tidy, litter free with suitable floral displays. We are delighted in the work which has been done in all three villages through teams of volunteers to enhance the appearance.

- We will continue to support this work through provision/signposting of funding for small projects.

**Leitholm:**

- We will seek funding to purchase a rechargeable/petrol strimmer to assist us to maintain common ground.
- We will work with villagers to ensure that plants which overgrow our pavements and village signage are managed.
- We will apply for a litter bin in the west layby.
- We will start a campaign & display signage / poop bags around the village to support dog owners to clear up after their pets.
- Village flower displays will continue to develop. Shrubs will be planted at the West and East approaches to the village and we will work with Parks and Environment to enhance land owned by SBC.

Play Park railings will be sanded down and repainted with relevant funding and / or SBC support.

**Eccles:**

As Community Council

**Birgham:**

As Community Council