



# Community Engagement Newsletter

## Autumn 2022

Time is really flying by, it's hard to believe that it is autumn already and that this is our third newsletter of 2022. We've all been really busy over the summer and have enjoyed catching up with many of you and also meeting others for the first time.

We've done something a little bit different in this edition and have included some video clips - so now you'll know what we sound like as well as look like. We are really keen to get to know you all and find out what we can do to help community projects in your area.

You can email us at [communitygrants@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:communitygrants@scotborders.gov.uk) or call us on 0300 100 1800

### ACROSS THE BORDERS

#### Cost of Living Crisis

Something that is affecting us all is the current cost of living crisis. We are working closely with partners including foodbanks, community and third sector organisations in each of our areas to identify ways that we can work together to provide support and assistance.

One example of this is the Low and Slow project that can provide slow cookers, food and recipes to families. The successful pilot in Teviot & Liddesdale is being rolled out to other localities in the Borders. We are also working with partners to set up cook clubs which will provide cooking skills too. Please let us know if you're interested in finding out more about cook clubs in your area.

We have recently put together a flyer that highlights where communities can access their nearest community larder, swap shed or foodbank. It also includes contact information for financial support, energy advice, pension credits and more. We are distributing the flyers to community councils across the Borders, but if you would like a digital version (PDF), please drop us an email, saying which locality you want the leaflet for, and we will send it to you.

#### Investment in Play Areas

SBC is investing over £4 million in Play Areas and Outdoor Community Spaces over a seven year period to enhance inclusive outdoor activity for all. We have been working with communities in Gavinton, Newstead, Selkirk, Peebles, Kelso and St Boswells to discuss the play equipment they would like to see in their area.

#### Area Partnerships

If you haven't been to an Area Partnership meeting why not come along to the next one in your area to find out what they're about:

**Berwickshire** – in Coldstream at 6:45pm on Thursday 1 December

**Cheviot** – online via Teams at 6:30pm Wednesday 23 November

**Eildon** – on line via Teams at 6pm on Thursday 17 November

**Teviot & Liddesdale** – in Hawick at 6pm date and venue tbc

**Tweeddale** – online via Teams 1 November at 7pm

Further information will be available on the [SBC website](#) nearer the time.



# Berwickshire

James Purves is the Community Engagement Officer out and about in Berwickshire



## Eyemouth Primary Playing Field junior parkrun up and “running”

As a member of the NHS Eyemouth Gateway to Good Health working group, which aims to reduce obesity and diabetes, it was wonderful to see the junior parkrun, the first such event in the Scottish Borders, get started on Sunday 14th August. I worked with the volunteers to help them establish a route and it has been fantastic to see everything come together. The Sunday morning events have been well attended by an enthusiastic number of children, parents and volunteers and it's hoped that numbers will increase steadily enjoying all the fun and health benefits.

However, more volunteers are needed to help on a Sunday morning, on a rota system not every week, from about 9.00 - 10.00am – please get in touch with me or message the group's Facebook page if interested on getting involved: [Eyemouth Primary Playing Fields junior parkrun](#)

## Berwickshire Swap

I supported Berwickshire Swap to develop a successful funding application for the Neighbourhood Support Fund. The grant will cover the maintenance and running costs for the recently acquired van which was funded by the National Lottery.

Berwickshire Swap run children's clothes swaps around Berwickshire. At these swaps, you can donate unwanted clothes and take away some new items. Berwickshire Swap stores clothes between swaps to supply emergency clothing parcels to those who need them, referrals are through services such as schools, Health Visitors and Social Work. They also run the Berwickshire Cloth Nappy Library which supports families who want to try out cloth nappies.



## Eat Sleep Ride, Lamberton

I was recently invited by Danielle at Eat Sleep Ride at Lamberton, to go along and visit their Equestrian Centre where, in addition to their riding therapies, they also have therapies such as their sensory garden and a rewilding project so they can offer safe outdoor spaces to their clients.

As you can see from the photo Eat Sleep Ride is a fun place for horses and humans!

This followed on from recent funding conversations I have had with Eat Sleep Ride. The group hopes to create a self-sustaining, chemical free community garden which will help clients learn new skills and reduce social isolation. Eat Sleep Ride are also interested in Place Making. I will be supporting the group to be part of the Place Making conversations in Berwickshire where, hopefully, the voices of their clients can be heard and contribute to the Berwickshire community Place Plans where they live.



**Berwickshire Place Making Working Group** continues to meet regularly working with Berwickshire communities who have expressed an interest in creating their own Place Plans. I attended a recent meeting of Coldstream Community Council to find out how Coldstream are progressing with creating their Place Plan. They are seeking to engage with and hear views from as wide a range of the population as possible in Coldstream.

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about Place Making and how you can get involved. BAVS and I as well as the Working Group are here to support communities with engagement activity and the development of local plans.

[Berwickshire Neighbourhood Support Fund 2022-23](#) opened with £100,657.21 available for Berwickshire community projects. The fund provides support and assistance with the development of community-based projects for voluntary and community groups that are active in their area. Applications to the fund are assessed by a panel of Berwickshire community volunteers who then make recommendations to the Berwickshire Area Partnership. Berwickshire Area Partnership then make the final decision on what should be funded.

Please contact me if you would like to have a chat about your idea or project or need any assistance with completing the application form.

## Berwickshire Community Council meetings

I am in the process of contacting community councils in Berwickshire as I am keen to meet with as many as possible. If you have not heard from me yet and have a meeting coming up that you would like me to attend, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



# Cheviot

There's been a change in staff recently and the new Community Engagement Officer for Cheviot is currently being recruited. There will be a new face in place in the next newsletter.

However, this doesn't mean that work in Cheviot has stopped, far from it.

Gillian Jardine, the Community Co-ordinator, who covers Cheviot as well as Berwickshire and Teviot & Liddesdale has been out and about.

## Highlights

### Place Making Working Group

Meetings of the Cheviot Place Making Working Group are now underway with representatives from Jedburgh, Kelso and the surrounding areas in attendance. There is enthusiasm for local communities developing their own Place Plans and using the plans to bring about change and investment in their area. The Working Group are developing an approach which provides support for communities to undertake engagement activity and develop their Place Plans. Both Kelso High School and Jedburgh Grammar campus sit on the working group and will be actively involving children and young people in place planning. The group will keep people updated through the Cheviot Area Partnership and local networks in the area. If your community is keen to develop a local plan, please get in touch.

### Redevelopment of the former Jedburgh Grammar School site

Engagement was held over the summer to find out what people's priorities are for investment in Jedburgh and how they would like to see the former school site redeveloped. An online consultation received over 600 responses with paper copies also submitted. SBC Officers received a positive response from residents who dropped into the Port House to share their thoughts with us on what changes they would like to see in Jedburgh. We're in the process of analysing the responses and will share a summary of the responses on SBC's website and with local groups and organisations. Thanks go to Jedburgh Community Trust for providing SBC with use of the Port House; it's a fantastic facility and great to see the building back in use.

### Cheviot community groups

It's been great to catch up with some local groups to hear about their plans and ideas and help make connections to different areas of support for their projects. Jedburgh Tourism Alliance recently shared the ambitions they have for Jedburgh as did Ancrum Astronomy Club with plans for a scaled model of the solar system. It was good to catch up with Community Learning and Development to look at different areas of support for the activities taking place in Kelso and Jedburgh. I'm always pleased to come out and meet groups and hear about their projects if you have any ideas or plans you would like to discuss.

### Neighbourhood Support Fund

The first meeting of Cheviot Area Partnership in the new financial year saw a grant of £2,492 awarded to Abundant Borders who will be working with Eildon Housing Association and Kelso High School to create a community garden in the town.

If you are part of, or know, a group in the Cheviot area that would benefit from a grant of up to £2,500 for a project in the area please don't hesitate to get in touch.



## Eildon

Erin John Coltman is the Community Engagement Officer for the Eildon area

See and hear Erin in his [video](#)



## Melrose Bowling Club

One of the highlights of my summer was being invited to visit Melrose Bowling Club to see how they had benefitted from the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund grant award they received in November 2021 to purchase a new mower.

This photo shows me trying out the new mower!



The mower has acted as a catalyst for greater engagement with the local community. The club organised a free bowls day for a local sports club and a free “Try Bowls Family Day” event which attracted over 30 people. Following these events, the club had around 20 new members joining for a hugely discounted rate for their first year. This aligns perfectly with the aims of the BBBB Recovery Fund, encouraging intergenerational activity and building community capacity.

## In need of a meeting space in Melrose?

Melrose Bowling Club offers its clubhouse facilities for hire at no cost. This has benefitted community-focussed groups such as Melrose In Bloom, Melrose Pipe Band and the local paths walking group to who meet there. If you are interested in trying bowls or just fancy popping up for a visit, please contact Lee (Club Secretary) at [melrosebc@outlook.com](mailto:melrosebc@outlook.com).

## Philphaugh Community Centre

I have been a part of the ongoing discussions with the Philphaugh Community Centre (Selkirk) committee as they work hard behind-the-scenes to ensure the newly renovated space is ready to welcome new and existing groups. The committee are currently in the process of developing an online booking system so in the interim, if you are interested in booking the community centre on behalf of a local group or for a one-off event, please get in touch with me and I will pass on your contact details.





## Ettrick & Yarrow Community Development Company



I met with Vicky (Project Coordinator) from Ettrick & Yarrow Community Development Company (EYCDC) for a full tour of the ongoing [Kirkhope Steading project](#) which is now accepting expressions of interest from potential tenants at [info@ettrickandyarrow.org.uk](mailto:info@ettrickandyarrow.org.uk).

I was also lucky enough to receive a tour of the Ettrick Valley in the group's electric vehicle! The tour included a visit to the Ettrick Marshes, a project which has seen EYCDC purchase 53ha of land. The group's Forest Rangers have been hard at work restoring and repairing marsh boardwalks to improve access to the wetland, paths and ancient woodland.

### The benefits of Community Asset Transfer

The Ettrick & Yarrow Valley tour also included a visit to the James Hogg exhibition, housed within the former Ettrick Primary School which the group acquired from SBC through an Asset Transfer request, alongside a very impressive collection of e-bikes that are available to hire.

### Neighbourhood Support Fund

The Neighbourhood Support Fund is still open in Eildon. If you are part of a community group that would like to apply to the Neighbourhood Support Fund to assist in the delivery of a project that will benefit the local community [please go to our website to find out more information.](#)





# Teviot & Liddesdale

Community Engagement Officer Scott McKail is becoming a familiar face in Teviot & Liddesdale



## Highlights

### Burnfoot Community Orchard

A highlight for me has been supporting a group of partners to create a community orchard next to Burnfoot Community School in Hawick. From identifying and assessing the space, to finding funding and bringing in the right partners this project is growing (excuse the pun), and building momentum all the time. The journey has included many key partners and collaborators including local groups and initiatives – Hornshole Greenway Development Trust, Abundant Borders, Burnfoot Community Hub, Burnfoot Community School as well as Burnfoot Boys Brigade.

A big day for the project recently was a visit from a BBC film crew. They were visiting to film the making of a documentary series called 'My Kind of Town'. We set out stalls for apple pressing, eco art creations and sang a few songs. Pupils from Burnfoot Primary School, who have been involved since the beginning of the project, were there to make apple juice and get a first look at the orchard sign they designed.



### Denholm Orchard Plans

I have been involved in discussions around creating a community orchard in Denholm. In a collaboration between Denholm Community Council and Denholm Feuars alongside the already established Kelso Community Orchard and Hornshole Greenway. The land and lead individuals have been identified. The goal will be to improve and cultivate the greenspace and community involvement in Denholm. Watch for updates in future newsletters.

### Pension Credit awareness - Newcastleton

I am involved in looking at ways to increase uptake of Pension Credit across the Borders, working with partners, including NHS Borders and the DWP as well as SBC colleagues. Starting in Newcastleton and working with Newcastleton & District Community Trust we will aim to raise awareness and encourage people to claim. This is an important issue, not just because of the current cost of living impacts, but also because by receiving pension credit, people qualify for a range of other benefits.



## Place Making

As part of Place Making discussions I met with the Community Councils in Upper Liddesdale and Southdean. The ongoing discussions were very engaged and the ideas and possibilities were clear. Southdean and Hobkirk have chosen to combine their efforts and develop a joint plan, and Newcastleton has also expressed a desire to embark on developing a place plan. These discussions have been a great example of how each area will develop a unique place plan which is reflective of priorities and aspirations of the community.

Part of this work is the creation a town network of local groups. The Scottish Community Development Centre has been working with a number of key groups in Hawick to improve networks and find opportunities to work together. My colleague Sharon Renwick Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer, and I have been supporting the activity wherever needed – it's been great seeing the number and variety of groups involved.

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about Place Making and how you can get involved.

## Volunteering Celebration T&L

I have also been supporting A Future Hawick to develop their ambition in creating an annual volunteer celebration. This idea came from the huge efforts of many in Hawick throughout the Pandemic, but also in recognition that volunteers are a vital part of the fabric of Hawick. We have had ongoing discussions about how and when to deliver this celebration. I made the link with the Volunteer Centre Borders and discussed various funding opportunities. This will be coming soon, so watch this [space](#).

**There is funding available in both Pot A and pot B of Teviot & Liddesdale Neighbourhood Support Fund. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you'd like more information about the funding and how to apply.**





# Tweeddale

Hannah Lacon, Tweeddale Community Engagement Officer

Watch Hannah's [video update](#)



## Highlights

### Community Benefits for Tweeddale

Walkerburn Primary School were the lucky recipients of £550 worth of Community Benefit funding to help with their Breakfast Club project. With Walker-love and Instock both donating £250 each to the project, and Carruthers donating £50, they now have a grand total of £550 that they can use to purchase equipment for their school's kitchen! I can't wait to see how they spend the money and such a worthwhile project which will help to make sure pupils have a full tummy at the start of the day.

Halyrude Primary School were also awarded £50 of Community Benefit funding to aid in their upcoming school gardening project. With the cost of living crisis affecting so many of their families it is great to hear they are embarking on a growing project to help the children grow healthy food they can share with their families. I have been helping to support the school and members of the parent council with access to further funding to help turn their community garden into a reality.

### Visit to the Edible Garden

I had the pleasure of meeting with Shirley, Alex, Jean and Julie at The Edible Garden in August! Set in the grounds of St Ronan's Primary School this garden is a hidden gem in Innerleithen. The volunteers have created a wonderful space where they welcome, community groups as well as hosting regular after school sessions on a Friday for the children and their families to learn skills in the garden and enjoy harvesting the produce. I was able to appreciate their hard work for myself and I will be supporting them going forward with looking into possible avenues for funding.

The ladies at The Edible Garden also help to look after a second garden at Old Manse House in Peebles. The Glebe as it is known was gifted to the community by the owner who wanted to donate some of the grounds to be used as a recovery and healing garden for those recovering from cancer or struggling with mental health issues. I will again be helping the group to source funding as well as putting them in touch with resources such as the Justice Services Team at SBC.



If you would like to get involved in the gardens as a volunteer or if you are a community group looking to use the space then please get in touch with me and I will pass your details along. Both gardens are open to anyone, everyone is welcome!

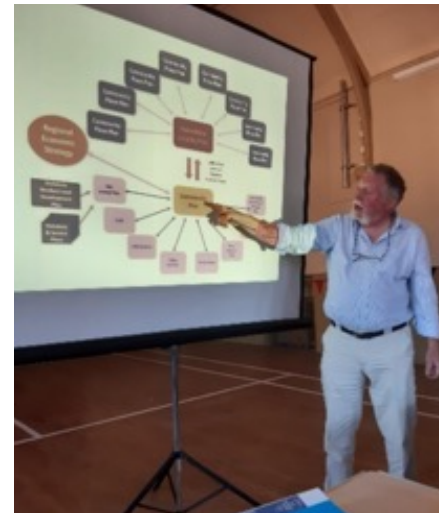


## Kingsland Primary School Support Showcase

Kingsland Primary School held a support showcase at the school on Tuesday 13th September. The event was held to highlight the support available to families to help with the cost of living crisis. Organisations such as Changeworks, Social Security Scotland, SBC's Financial Inclusion Team, Greener Peebles, Peeblesshire Youth Trust and The Bridge were all in attendance to offer support and guidance. The showcase was very well attended and the feedback has been hugely positive. It was so successful they have decided to host a yearly Support Showcase every September! Well done Kingsland Primary School!

## Tweeddale Area Partnership Place Making Working Group

Place making in Tweeddale is picking up pace with two face to face community meetings being held in August. Working Group Chair Crick Carleton held meetings in Walkerburn and West Linton for communities who had an interest in being involved in place making. Both meetings were well attended and feedback was very positive; communities discussed the meaning of the term 'place' and how this would work alongside a town plan.



## Tweeddale Neighbourhood Support Fund

If you have a project you would like to be considered for funding you can apply through the link below.

[Tweeddale Neighbourhood Support Fund | Neighbourhood Support Fund | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#)

We'd really welcome your feedback on this newsletter. Did you like Erin and Hannah's videos? Would you like to see more of these in future newsletters?

We've also recently created videos about [Participation Requests](#) and [Asset Transfers](#) – both part of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Please have a look and let us know if you have any comments.

Don't forget to let us know if there's anything you would like to see included.

You can contact us all through the same easy to remember email address:

[communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk)